

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
Natural Resources Board Agenda Item

SUBJECT: Land Sale –West Fork Kickapoo River Watershed –Vernon County
–Bad Axe Watershed – Vernon County

FOR: June 2015 Board meeting

TO BE PRESENTED BY: Douglas J. Haag, Deputy Director, Bureau of Facilities and Lands

SUMMARY:

The Department proposes to sell 383.15 acres of land in the West Fork Kickapoo River Watershed and 487.13 acres of land in the Bad Axe Watershed to Vernon County for \$596,000.00. The land is no longer needed by the Department for conservation purposes. This item is being presented because it is both a sale of land where the value exceeds \$50,000.00 and the acreage exceeds 40 acres.

The parcels are known locally as Jersey Valley County Park and Sidie Hollow County Park. Jersey Valley is a 371 acre park near Westby. The park's most prominent feature is a 52 acre lake formed by a large flood control dam on Peaceful Valley Stream at the headwaters of the West Fork Kickapoo River. The lake is a popular fishing destination and is known for good bluegill, crappie, perch, trout and largemouth bass fishing. Vernon County Land & Water Conservation Department is in the process of implementing a grant to make significant improvements to Jersey Valley County Park. Sidie Hollow Park, in the Bad Axe Watershed, is a family campground and nature based recreation area. The park has 521 acres for people to explore, via hiking trails, mountain bike trails or a walk through the forest that surrounds the lake and campground. There are 3 separate camping areas spread throughout the park. Sidie Hollow Lake covers 35 acres. Visitors have access to the lake from a public boat landing. Fish include panfish, largemouth bass and trout.

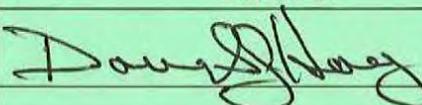
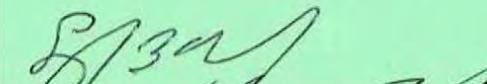
In 1965 and 1969, flood control structures were built at Sidie Hollow and Jersey Valley, respectively. These dams have maintained lake levels providing county residents and tourists unique recreational opportunities in the Driftless Area, where there are very few natural lakes. Vernon County provides annual funding for maintenance of dams, parking areas, restrooms and showers, roadways, hiking trails, multi-use trails, swimming areas, boat launches and fishing access points.

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 2]

RECOMMENDATION: That the Board finds the 383.15 and 487.13 acre tracts no longer needed by the Department for conservation purposes and approves the sale of the land to Vernon County at the price of \$596,000.00. Under the authority of s. 23.15 Stats. the proceeds from the land sale shall be used for future land purchases.

LIST OF ATTACHED MATERIALS (check all that are applicable):

- Background memo
- Type name of attachment if applicable
- Type name of attachment if applicable
- Type name of attachment if applicable

Approved by	Signature	Date
Douglas J. Haag Bureau Director		6-9-15
Sanjay Olson, Land Division Administrator		6-10-15
Cathy Stepp, Secretary		6-10-15

GREEN SHEET PAGE 2

SUMMARY (CONT.):

Vernon County purchased both parcels of land in the 1960's and transferred the land to the Department for \$1.00. The Department conveyed an easement to Vernon County to develop, operate and maintain the dams and the parks created on the properties and provided funding for the development of the facilities. The easement also granted the County the right to control public use of the land and required that the public have access to the lakes created by the dams. The Department reserved certain management rights in the easement. There has been some ambiguity related to management obligations including timber harvest and management and the County desires to acquire the remaining fee title interest and gain full control of the properties.

Both parties have agreed that the best path forward is for these two county parks to be placed into county ownership with the agreement that lands will be open for public use in perpetuity. Under outright ownership of Sidie Hollow and Jersey Valley, Vernon County's objective will be to enroll the lands into the County Forest Program for optimum production of forest products together with continued management of the land for public outdoor recreational use. To achieve this objective the land will be conveyed to the County with a deed reservation that requires the land stay open to the public for recreational purposes and be managed for forest production. Vernon County has had lands enrolled in the Wisconsin County Forest program since 1999 and began employing a full-time forester to manage its forest lands enrolled under the county forest law around that time.

CORRESPONDENCE/MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 8, 2015 FILE REF: FI 559 & FI 1238
 TO: Governor Scott Walker
 FROM: Cathy Stepp
 SUBJECT: Proposed Land Sale, DNR to VERNON COUNTY, File # FI 559 & FI 1238
 Approval requested by: July 31, 2015

1. PARCEL DESCRIPTION:

WEST FORK KICKAPOO RIVER WATERSHED Vernon County	BAD AXE WATERSHED Vernon County
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Grantor:

State Department of Natural Resources 101 S. Webster Street Madison, WI 53707	State Department of Natural Resources 101 S. Webster Street Madison, WI 53707
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<u>Acres:</u>	383.15	487.13
<u>Price:</u>	\$265,000.00	\$331,000.00
<u>Appraised Value:</u>	\$265,000.00	\$331,000.00
<u>Improvements:</u>	None	None
<u>Interest:</u>	Fee Title	Fee Title

Location: The West Fork Kickapoo property is located 5 miles west of the City of Viroqua. The Bad Axe Watershed is located 4 miles northeast of the City of Westby.

Land Description: The West Fork Kickapoo parcel varies from rolling to rugged and steep with a mixture of woodland, parkland, wetlands and waterways. The Bad Axe parcel varies from rolling to rugged and steep with a mixture of woodland, parkland, wetlands and waterways.

Covertypes Breakdown:

Type	Acreage	Acreage
Open Parkland, Wetlands and Water Area	123.15	100.13
Forest	260.00	387.00
Total:	383.15	487.13

<u>Zoning:</u>	Unzoned/ Special Use (Parkland)	Unzoned
<u>Present Use:</u>	Public Recreation	Public Recreation
<u>Proposed Use:</u>	Public Recreation	Public Recreation
<u>Tenure:</u>	49 years	52 years
<u>Property Taxes:</u>	Tax-Exempt	Tax-Exempt

Agreement Date: June 9, 2015

2. JUSTIFICATION:

The Department has reached an agreement to sell 383.15 acres of land in the West Fork Kickapoo River Watershed and 487.13 acres of land in the Bad Axe Watershed to Vernon County for \$596,000.00. The parcels are known locally as Jersey Valley County Park and Sidie Hollow County Park. Jersey Valley is a 371 acre park near Westby. The park's most prominent feature is a 52 acre lake formed by a large flood control dam on Peaceful Valley Stream at the headwaters of the West Fork Kickapoo River. The lake is a popular fishing destination and is known for good bluegill, crappie, perch, trout and largemouth bass fishing. Vernon County Land & Water Conservation Department is in the process of implementing a grant to make significant improvements to Jersey Valley County Park. Sidie Hollow Park, in the Bad Axe Watershed, is a family campground and nature based recreation area. The park has 521 acres for people to explore, via hiking trails, mountain bike trails or a walk through the forest that surrounds the lake and campground. There are 3 separate camping areas spread throughout the park. Sidie Hollow Lake covers 35 acres. Visitors have access to the lake from a public boat landing. Fish include panfish, largemouth bass and trout.

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3. FINANCING:

No land acquisition funding is needed for this sale of state land.

4. a. ACQUISITION STATUS OF THE WEST FORK KICKAPOO RIVER WATERSHED:

Established: 1966

Acres Purchased to Date: 383.05

Acquisition Goal: 383.15

Percent Complete: 99.97 %

Cost to Date: \$2.00

b. ACQUISITION STATUS OF THE BAD AXE WATERSHED:

Established: 1963
Acres Purchased to Date: 489.20
Acquisition Goal: 489.20
Percent Complete: 100.00 %
Cost to Date: \$2.00

5. a. APPRAISAL – West Fork Kickapoo River Watershed:

Appraiser: William M. Steigerwaldt
Valuation Date: March 4, 2015
Appraised Value: \$265,000.00
Highest and Best Use: Timber Investment

Allocation of Values:

- a. land: 364.37 acres @ \$727.00 per acre: \$265,000.00
(18.78 acres is also being deeded to the county to resolve a title issue)
- b. income approach used

b. APPRAISAL – Bad Axe Watershed:

Appraiser: William M. Steigerwaldt
Valuation Date: March 4, 2015
Appraised Value: 331,000.00
Highest and Best Use: Timber Investment

Allocation of Values:

- a. land: 487.13 acres @ \$680.00 per acre: 331,000.00
- b. income approach used

RECOMMENDED:



Douglas J Haag, Deputy Director, Bureau of Facilities and Lands

6-8-15

Date



Kristin A. Hess, Bureau of Legal Services

6-9-15

Date



Sanjay Olson, Land Division Administrator

6-10-15

Date

Vernon County - Sale & Title Clearing

Bad Axe
Watershed

FI 559

T12N R8W Sec 2, 3,
9, 10 & 11

Town of Jefferson
Vernon County

- Subject
- Title Clearing

DNR Fee Title

DNR Easement

WDNR Easement
(Closed to Public Access)

Public Land - Funded
by Stewardship Grants

County Forest

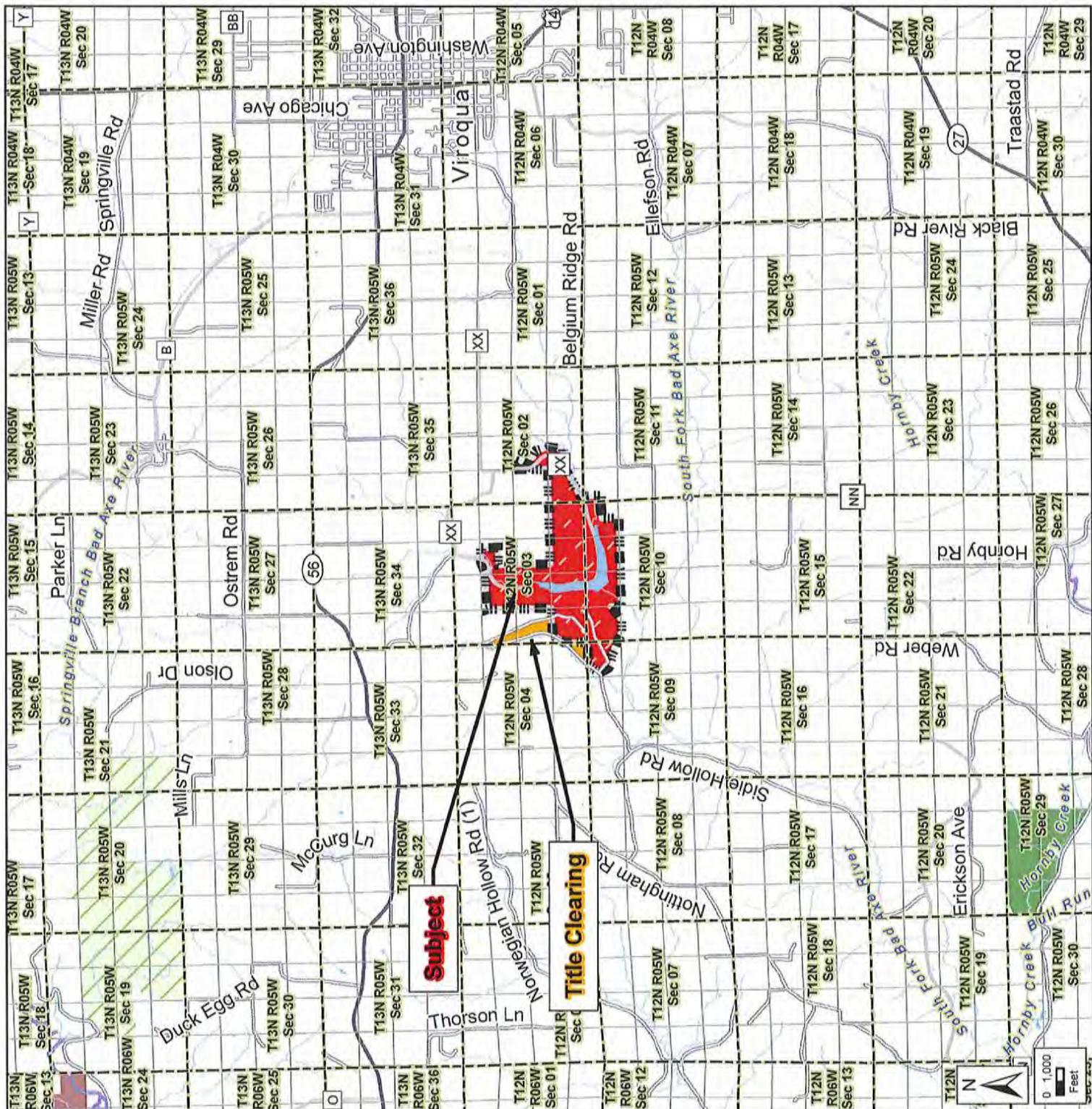
Regional View



Location of Property

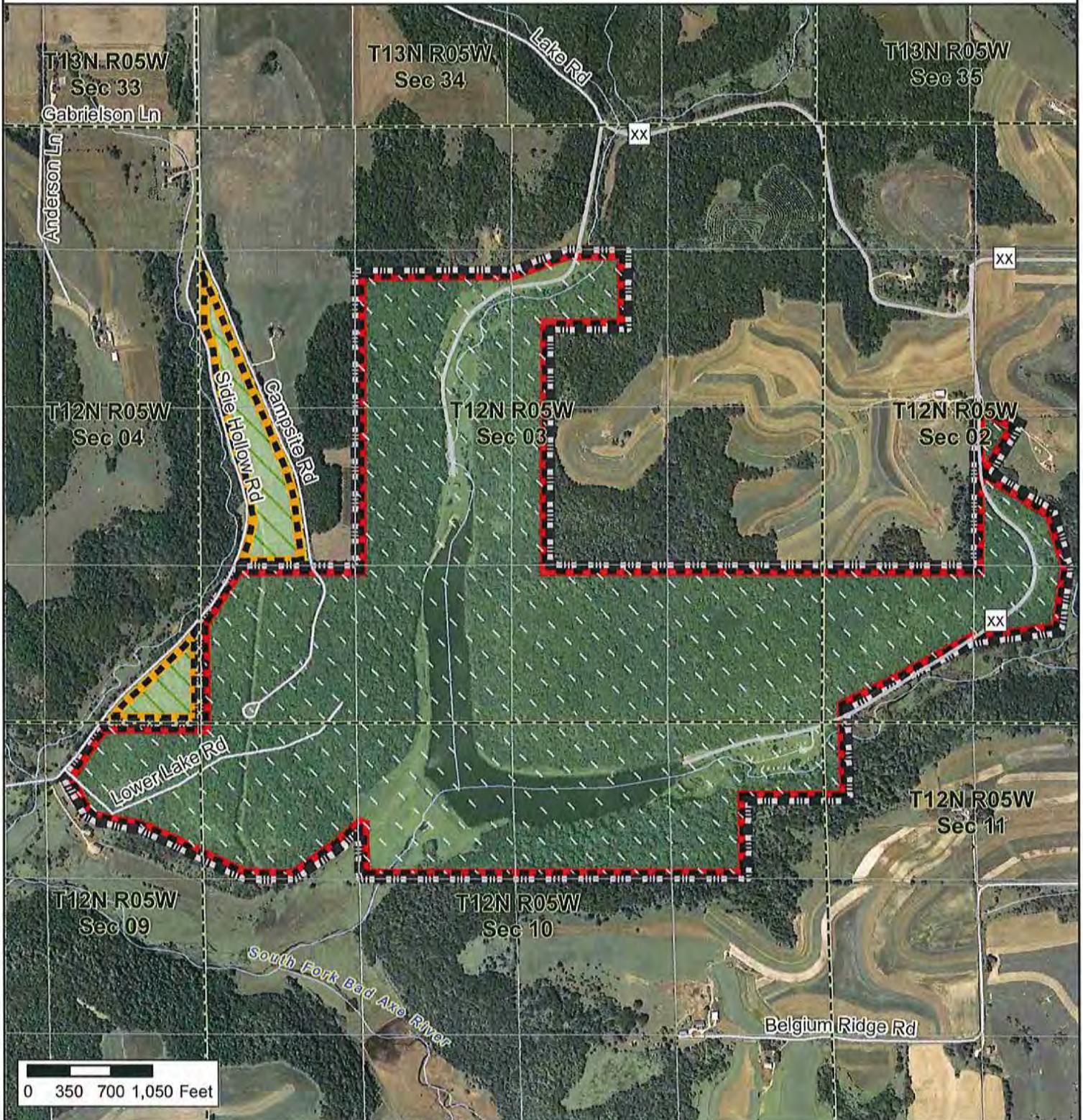
WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT
OF NATURAL RESOURCES
Bureau of Facilities of Lands
Map Created: Jun 09, 2015 kmh

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Vernon County - Sale & Title Clearing

T12N R5W Sec 2, 3, 9, 10 & 11 Town of Jefferson, Vernon County



Bad Axe Watershed

-  Subject
-  Title Clearing

-  County Forest
-  Section Line
-  QQ Section Lines
-  DNR Fee Title



Jun 09, 2015 kmh

Real Estate Section
Bureau of Facilities and Lands

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Vernon County - Sale

West Fork Kickapoo River Watershed - Sale

FI 1238

T14N R3W Sec 7, 12 & 13
Town of Christiana & Clinton
Vernon County

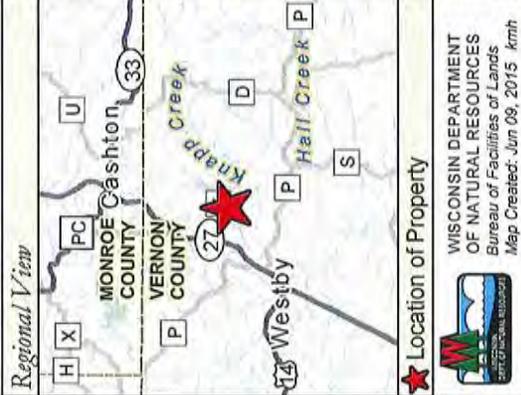
 Subject

 DNR Fee Title

 DNR Easement

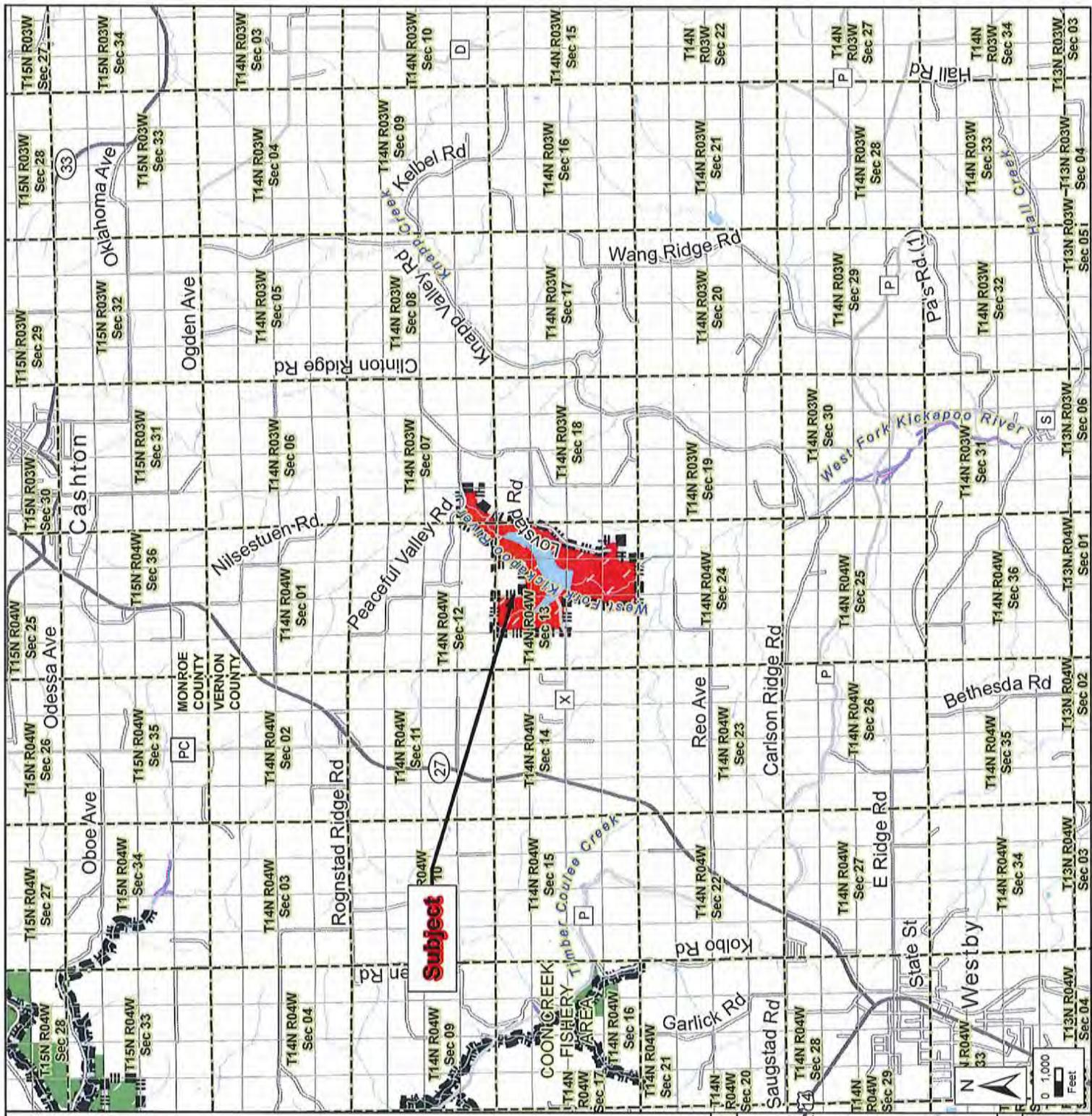
 Public Hunting Grounds

 Voluntary Public Access



 Location of Property

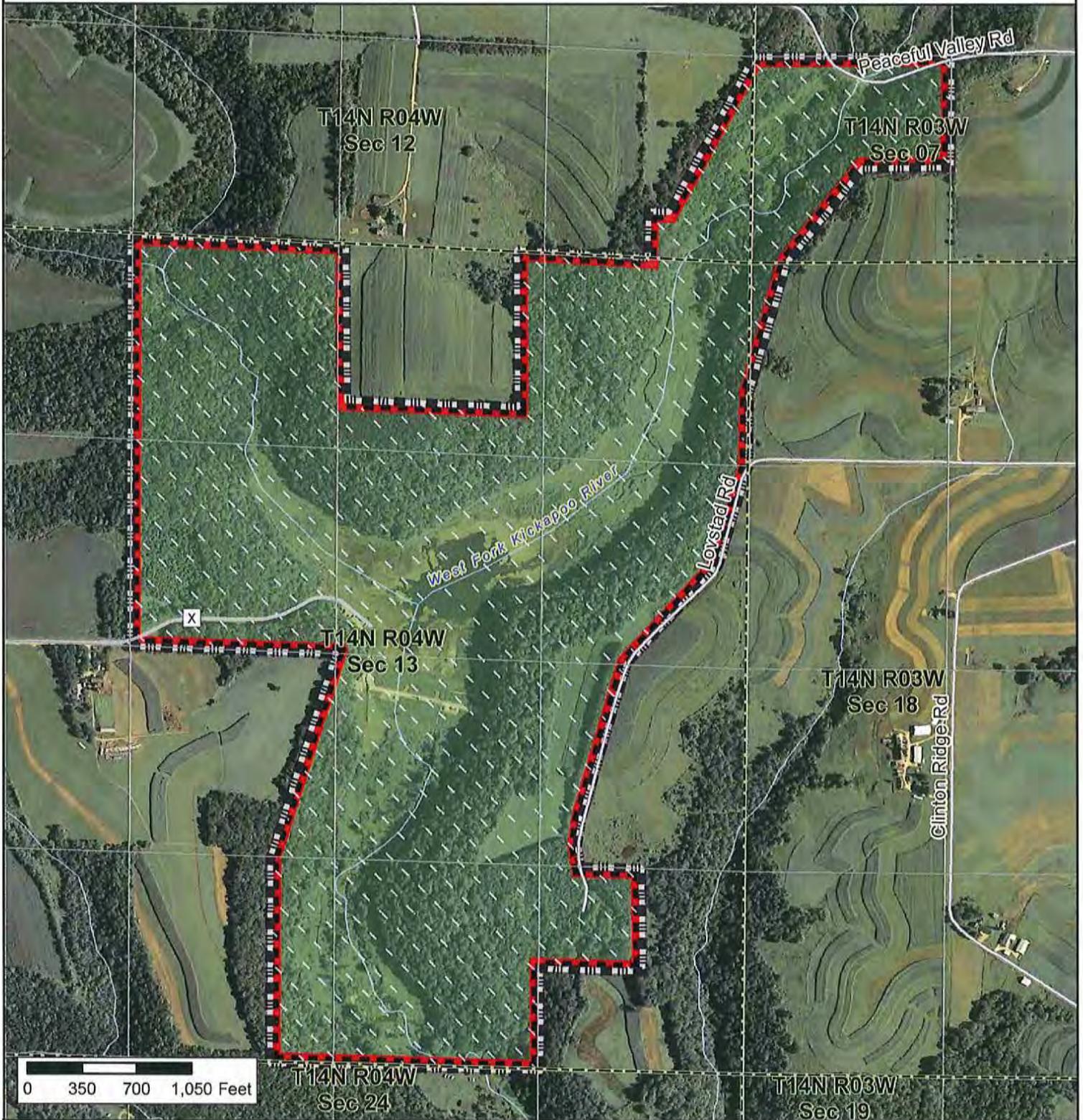
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Vernon County - Sale

T14N R4W Sec 7, 12 & 13 Town of Christiana & Clinton, Vernon County



**West Fork
Kickapoo River
Watershed**



Subject

- Section Line
- QQ Section Lines
- DNR Fee Title



Jun 09, 2015 kmh

Real Estate Section
Bureau of Facilities and Lands

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Directions from 101 S Webster St to Sidie Hollow County Park

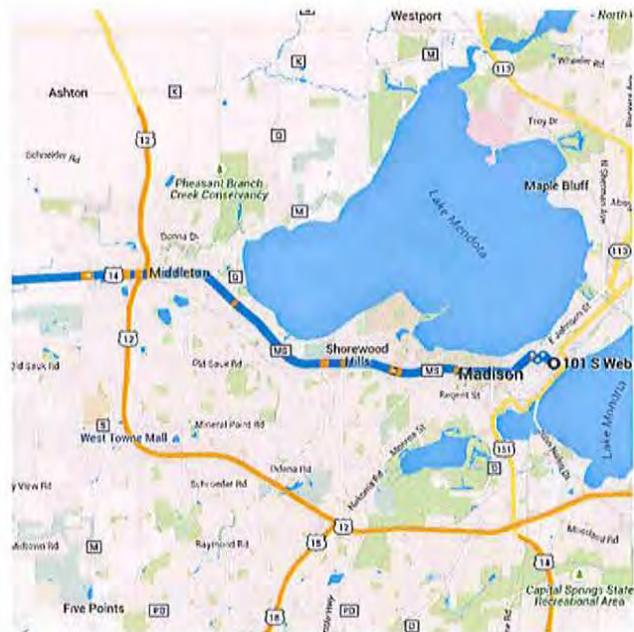


o 101 S Webster St
Madison, WI 53703

Take University Ave to US-14 W in Middleton

8.7 mi / 22 min

- ↑ 1. Head northwest on S Webster St toward E Main St
0.2 mi
- ↑ 2. S Webster St turns slightly left and becomes E Dayton St
0.1 mi
- ↗ 3. Turn right at Wisconsin Ave onto Wisconsin Ave
0.1 mi
- ↶ 4. Turn left at the 2nd cross street onto W Gorham St
0.4 mi
- ↗ 5. Slight right onto University Ave
0.8 mi
- ↑ 6. Continue onto Campus Dr
1.2 mi



Map data ©2015 Google

↑ 7. Continue onto University Ave
5.7 mi

Follow US-14 W to W South St in Viroqua
86.2 mi / 1 h 39 min

↑ 8. Continue onto US-14 W
6.1 mi

↶ 9. Turn left onto Co Hwy P/County Rd P
325 ft

↷ 10. Turn right onto Bourbon Rd
0.8 mi

↷ 11. Turn right onto Market St
0.2 mi

↶ 12. Turn left onto US-14 W/Main St
Continue to follow US-14 W
45.8 mi

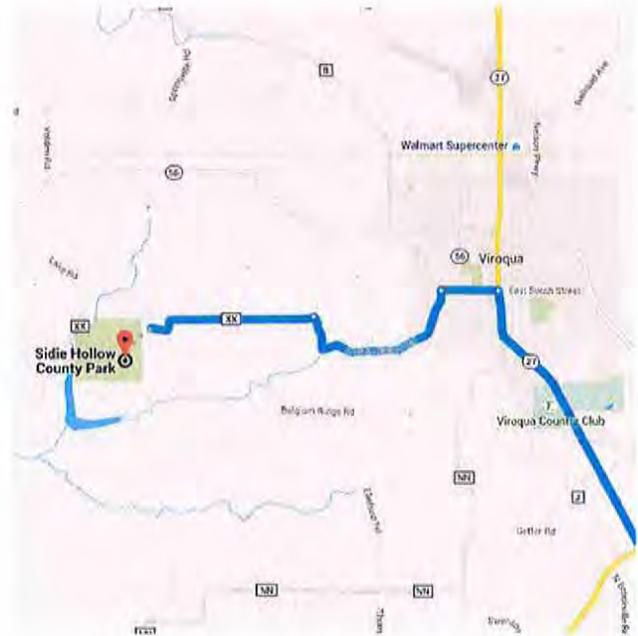
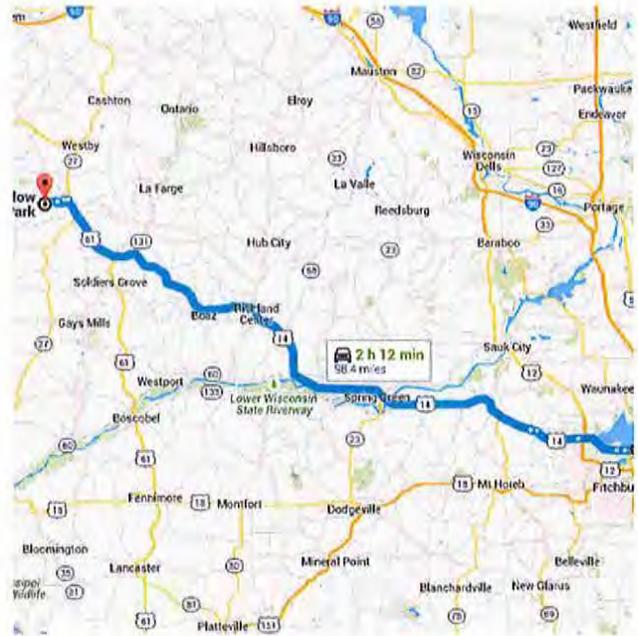
↶ 13. Turn left onto US-14 W/W 6th St
Continue to follow US-14 W
33.3 mi

Take E Sidie Hollow Rd to County Rd XX
in Jefferson
3.5 mi / 10 min

↶ 14. Turn left onto W South St
0.5 mi

↶ 15. Turn left onto E Sidie Hollow Rd
1.6 mi

↶ 16. Turn left onto County Rd XX
1.4 mi

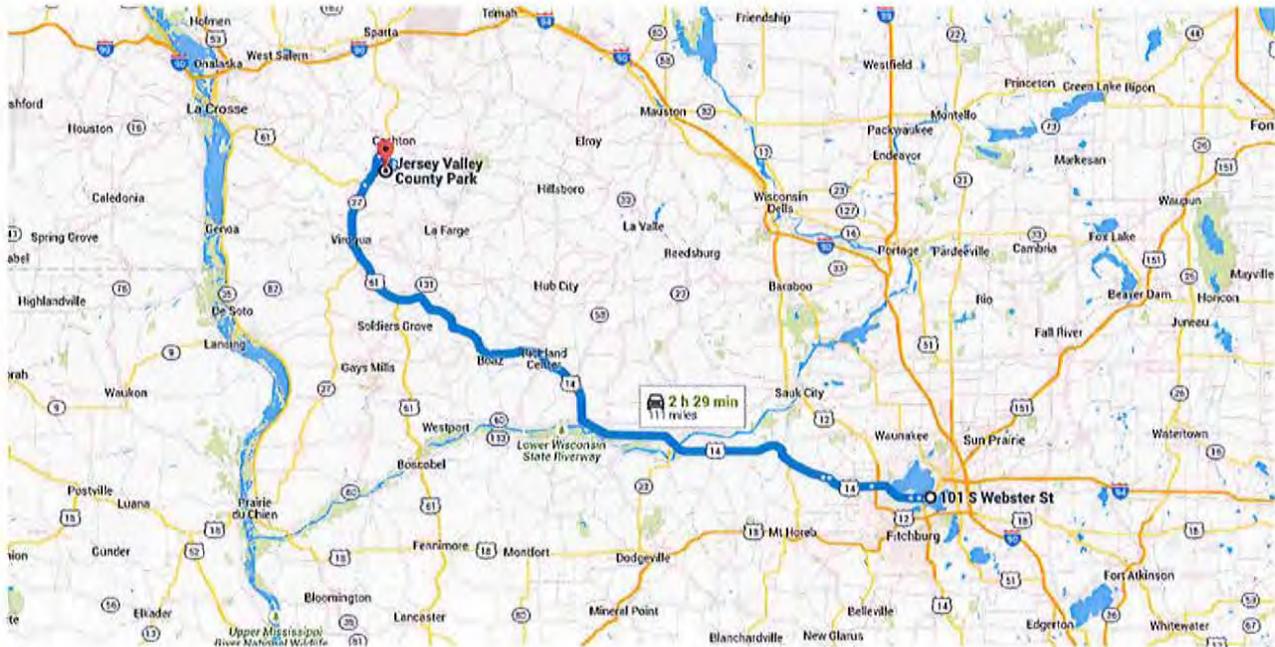


📍 Sidie Hollow County Park
Viroqua, WI 54665

These directions are for planning purposes only. You may find that construction projects, traffic, weather, or other events may cause conditions to differ from the map results, and you should plan your route accordingly. You must obey all signs or notices regarding your route.



Directions from 101 S Webster St to Jersey Valley County Park

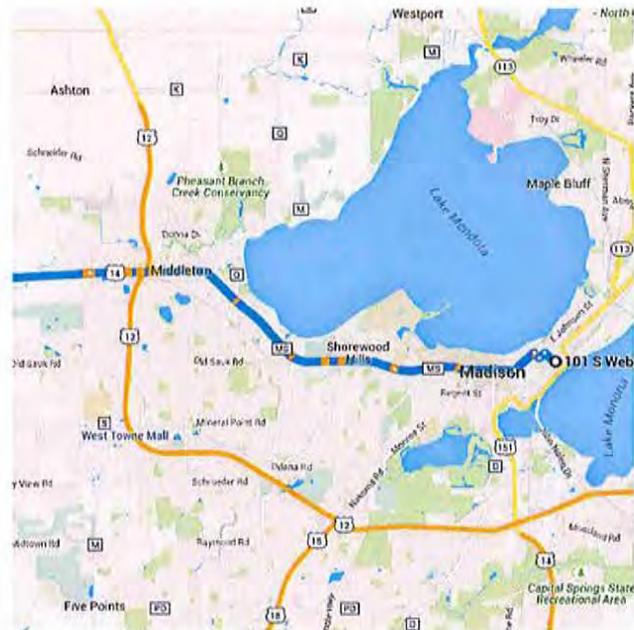


o 101 S Webster St
Madison, WI 53703

Take University Ave to US-14 W in Middleton

8.7 mi / 22 min

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- ↑** 6. Continue onto Campus Dr 1.2 mi



Map data ©2015 Google

- ↑ 7. Continue onto University Ave
5.7 mi

Follow US-14 W to WI-27 N/Main St in Westby
93.9 mi / 1 h 50 min

- ↑ 8. Continue onto US-14 W
6.1 mi
- ↶ 9. Turn left onto Co Hwy P/County Rd P
325 ft
- ↷ 10. Turn right onto Bourbon Rd
0.8 mi
- ↷ 11. Turn right onto Market St
0.2 mi
- ↶ 12. Turn left onto US-14 W/Main St
 - ➊ Continue to follow US-14 W
45.8 mi
- ↶ 13. Turn left onto US-14 W/W 6th St
 - ➋ Continue to follow US-14 W
41.0 mi



Continue on WI-27 N. Take Peaceful Valley Rd to Lovstad Rd in Christiana
8.8 mi / 16 min

- ↷ 14. Turn right onto WI-27 N/Main St
 - ➌ Continue to follow WI-27 N
4.5 mi
- ↷ 15. Turn right onto Peaceful Valley Rd
2.6 mi
- ↷ 16. Turn right onto Clinton Ridge Rd
0.5 mi
- ↷ 17. Turn right onto Lovstad Rd
1.1 mi



📍 **Jersey Valley County Park**
County Road X, Westby, WI 54667

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