

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS AND DECISION ON THE NEED
FOR AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT (EIS)

Form 1600-1

Rev. 6-2001

Department of Natural Resources (DNR)

Region or Bureau

Northern

Type List Designation

NR 150.03(8)(d)1.c.

NOTE TO REVIEWERS: This document is a DNR environmental analysis that evaluates probable environmental effects and decides on the need for an EIS. The attached analysis includes a description of the proposal and the affected environment. The DNR has reviewed the attachments and, upon certification, accepts responsibility for their scope and content to fulfill requirements in s. NR 150.22, Wis. Adm. Code. Your comments should address completeness, accuracy or the EIS decision. For your comments to be considered, they must be received by the contact person before 4:30 p.m., April 16, 2004.

Contact Person:

Todd Anderson

Title: Douglas County Forest Liaison

Address: PO BOX 60

SOLON SPRINGS WI 54838

Telephone Number

(715) 376-2299

Applicant: Douglas County Forestry Department

Address: PO Box 211
SOLON SPRINGS WI 54873

Title of Proposal: Douglas County Forest Land Withdrawal

Location: County: Douglas City/Town/Village: Township of Wascott

Township Range Section(s): S½ NE ¼ NE ¼ NE ¼ Sec. 12 T43N R12W 5 acres

PROJECT SUMMARY

1. Brief overview of the proposal including the DNR action (include cost and funding source if public funds involved)

Douglas County proposes to withdraw 5 acres that is located in the Town of Wascott from the County Forest Law, s. 28.11, WI Statutes, and trade it for a parcel of land in the Town of Gordon that is owned by the Township. The Douglas County Board resolution stipulates that the traded parcel will be of equal value. This newly acquired parcel will be entered under the County Forest Law. Mature jack pine was harvested from the proposed withdrawal site in 1999 and replanted to jack pine. This parcel is bounded on the east side by State Highway 53.

2. Purpose and Need (include history and background as appropriate)

The Townships of Gordon and Wascott jointly own the Advanced Life Support-Intermediate Service that provides ambulance service for 911 dispatched emergencies, non-emergency hospital transport and fire department standby at structure fires within the two townships. Formerly a Basic Life Support service serving the Town of Gordon, it is now operated as a department of both towns. At the present time the ambulance service houses its two ambulances in the same building as the Gordon Fire Department. The rest of the ambulance operation – office, supplies, and equipment storage is located about 1 mile away in space rented from a Gordon church.

3. Authorities and Approvals (list local, state and federal permits or approvals required)

Authority is provided in the Douglas County Forest 10-Year Comprehensive Management Plan, Chapter 900, Section 905, Paragraph (11); Douglas County Forestry Ordinance and Chapter 28.11, WI Statutes. The Douglas County Board of Supervisors has unanimously passed a resolution to petition the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to begin withdrawal of the above-described parcel.

PROPOSED PHYSICAL CHANGES (more fully describe the proposal)

4. Manipulation of Terrestrial Resources (include relevant quantities - sq. ft., cu. yard, etc.)

The approach to Highway 53 will need to be graded in order to provide for a driveway. The site is fairly level, but soil will have to be moved in order to provide a level area for a building and helicopter landing pad site. It is unknown what volume of soil will have to be moved in order to construct the proposed facility.

A snowmobile trail is present on the parcel. This trail will need to be relocated in order to accommodate the building site and to provide a safe operating distance from the helicopter landing pad.

5. Manipulation of Aquatic Resources (include relevant quantities - cfs, acre feet, MGD, etc.)

There are no aquatic resources present on this site.

6. Buildings, Treatment Units, Roads and Other Structures (include size of facilities, road miles, etc.)

The townships propose to construct a building to house three vehicles, and provide space for offices, training, and supplies. A preliminary floor plan proposes a building 40x102 feet in size. In addition, space is needed for a helicopter landing pad, fueling station and possibly a septic field. The site will need to be graded in order to provide a driveway connecting to Highway 53, and to provide a level site for the building and helicopter landing pad.

7. Emissions and Discharges (include relevant characteristics and quantities)

No emissions or discharges.

8. Other Changes

No other changes are proposed.

9. Identify the maps, plans and other descriptive material attached

Attachment County map showing the general area of the project

Attachment USGS topographic map

Attachment Site development plan

Attachment Plat map

Attachment DNR county wetlands map

Attachment Zoning map

Attachment Other - Describe: Building plan, correspondence

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT (describe existing features that may be affected by proposal)

10. Information Based On (check all that apply):

Literature/correspondence (specify major sources)

Personal Contacts (list in item 26)

Field Analysis By: Author Other (list in item 26)

Past Experience With Site By: Other (list in item 26)

11. Physical Environment (topography, soils, water, air)

Parcel to be withdrawn:

The topography is gently rolling, with sand soils. No wetlands are located on this parcel

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18. Other Special Resources (e.g., State Natural Areas, prime agricultural lands)

No consequences are foreseen at this time.

19. Summary of Adverse Impacts That Cannot Be Avoided (more fully discussed in 15 through 18)

A forested site will be developed, removing 5 acres of county forest land from timber production.

DNR EVALUATION OF PROJECT SIGNIFICANCE (complete each item)

20. Environmental Effects and Their Significance

- a. Discuss which of the primary and secondary environmental effects listed in the environmental consequences section are long-term or short-term.

The construction of the driveway, parking lot, building, fueling station, helicopter landing pad and septic system are all long-term impacts upon the site.

- b. Discuss which of the primary and secondary environmental effects listed in the environmental consequences section are effects on geographically scarce resources (e.g. historic or cultural resources, scenic and recreational resources, prime agricultural lands, threatened or endangered resources or ecologically sensitive areas).

Impact of environmental effects will be minimal due to the nature and limited size of the proposed project. There are no unique or special environmental qualities on this parcel.

- c. Discuss the extent to which the primary and secondary environmental effects listed in the environmental consequences section are reversible.

If the site is not developed, then no adverse environmental consequences will occur.

21. Significance of Cumulative Effects

Discuss the significance of reasonably anticipated cumulative effects on the environment (and energy usage, if applicable). Consider cumulative effects from repeated projects of the same type. Would the cumulative effects be more severe or substantially change the quality of the environment? Include other activities planned or proposed in the area that would compound effects on the environment.

Similar requests may be received. Each request will be considered on its own merit. All withdrawal requests are considered only if they are environmentally sound and if the withdrawal serves a higher use and benefit for the citizens of Douglas County. Withdrawal is considered only if there are no other alternatives.

22. Significance of Risk

- a. Explain the significance of any unknowns that create substantial uncertainty in predicting effects on the quality of the environment. What additional studies or analysis would eliminate or reduce these unknowns?

There should be no unknowns affecting risk to the quality of the environment. This is a routine construction project requiring no special studies or tests.

- b. Explain the environmental significance of reasonably anticipated operating problems such as malfunctions, spills, fires or other hazards (particularly those relating to health or safety). Consider reasonable detection and emergency response, and discuss the potential for these hazards.

The proposed fueling station presents the potential for a hazardous spill of fuel into the environment. If it is constructed to current state code, it should present very little or no hazard.

23. Significance of Precedent

Would a decision on this proposal influence future decisions or foreclose options that may additionally affect the quality of the environment?

Precedent has already been established with similar withdrawals from the County Forest Program. Future requests will be evaluated based on the merits of individual cases as established in County Forest 10 year plan chapter 420.2.

Describe any conflicts the proposal has with plans or policy of local, state or federal agencies. Explain the significance of each.

No known conflicts exist.

Significance of Controversy Over Environmental Effects

Discuss the effects on the quality of the environment, including socio-economic effects, that are (or are likely to be) highly controversial, and summarize the controversy.

An area is being taken out of timber production and developed with an asphalt driveway, parking lot and buildings in view of a major state highway. The perception may be that more forest is being cleared for development.

ALTERNATIVES

25. Briefly describe the impacts of no action and of alternatives that would decrease or eliminate adverse environmental effects. (Refer to any appropriate alternatives from the applicant or anyone else.)

If this land trade would not occur, then no building would take place on the tract of land. The site would continue to be managed for jack pine.

SUMMARY OF ISSUE IDENTIFICATION ACTIVITIES

26. List agencies, citizen groups and individuals contacted regarding the project (include DNR personnel and title) and summarize public contacts, completed or proposed).

Date	Contact	Comment Summary
12/01/03	Douglas County Forest, Parks And Recreation Committee	Recommended withdrawal to County Board
12/01/03	Todd Anderson – DNR Liaison Forester	Attended Forest, Parks and Recreation Committee meeting. Advised withdrawal request would have to go through normal process and meet statutory requirements.
12/18/04	Douglas County Board of Supervisors	Resolution 148-03 approved withdrawal
02/24/04	Al Tatzel – DNR NOR Forestry Specialist	Advised County Clerk environmental assessment would be developed and may solicit public comment.
3/01/04	Victoria Dirst DNR-Archeologist	No known archeological/historical features
3/01/04	Douglas County Zoning Office	Zoned F-1. Need conditional use permit.
3/10/4	Elizabeth Spencer DNR Endangered Resources Specialist	No endangered or threatened resources within parcel being developed. Traded parcel by Hwy. A contains some butterflies and a plant listed by the state as species of special concern.

DECISION (This decision is not final until certified by the appropriate authority)

In accordance with s. 1.11, Stats., and Ch. NR 150, Adm. Code, the Department is authorized and required to determine whether it has complied with s. 1.11, Stats., and Ch. NR 150, Wis. Adm. Code.

Complete either A or B below:

A. EIS Process Not Required

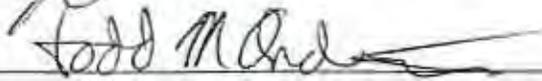


The attached analysis of the expected impacts of this proposal is of sufficient scope and detail to conclude that this is not a major action which would significantly affect the quality of the human environment. In my opinion, therefore, an environmental impact statement is not required prior to final action by the Department.

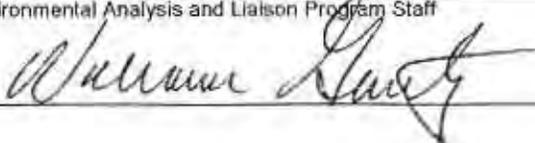
B. Major Action Requiring the Full EIS Process



The proposal is of such magnitude and complexity with such considerable and important impacts on the quality of the human environment that it constitutes a major action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment.

Signature of Evaluator 	Date Signed 04/02/2004
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Number of responses to news release or other notice: 0

Certified to be in compliance with WEPA Environmental Analysis and Liaison Program Staff 	Date Signed 4/22/2004
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NOTICE OF APPEAL RIGHTS

If you believe that you have a right to challenge this decision, you should know that Wisconsin statutes and administrative rules establish time periods within which requests to review Department decisions must be filed.

For judicial review of a decision pursuant to sections 227.52 and 227.53, Stats., you have 30 days after the decision is mailed, or otherwise served by the Department, to file your petition with the appropriate circuit court and serve the petition on the Department. Such a petition for judicial review shall name the Department of Natural Resources as the respondent.

To request a contested case hearing pursuant to section 227.42, Stats., you have 30 days after the decision is mailed, or otherwise served by the Department, to serve a petition for hearing on the Secretary of the Department of Natural Resources. The filing of a request for a contested case hearing is not a prerequisite for judicial review and does not extend the 30-day period for filing a petition for judicial review.

Note: Not all Department decisions respecting environmental impact, such as those involving solid waste or hazardous waste facilities under sections 144.43 to 144.47 and 144.60 to 144.74, Stats., are subject to the contested case hearing provisions of section 227.42, Stats.

This notice is provided pursuant to section 227.48(2), Stats.