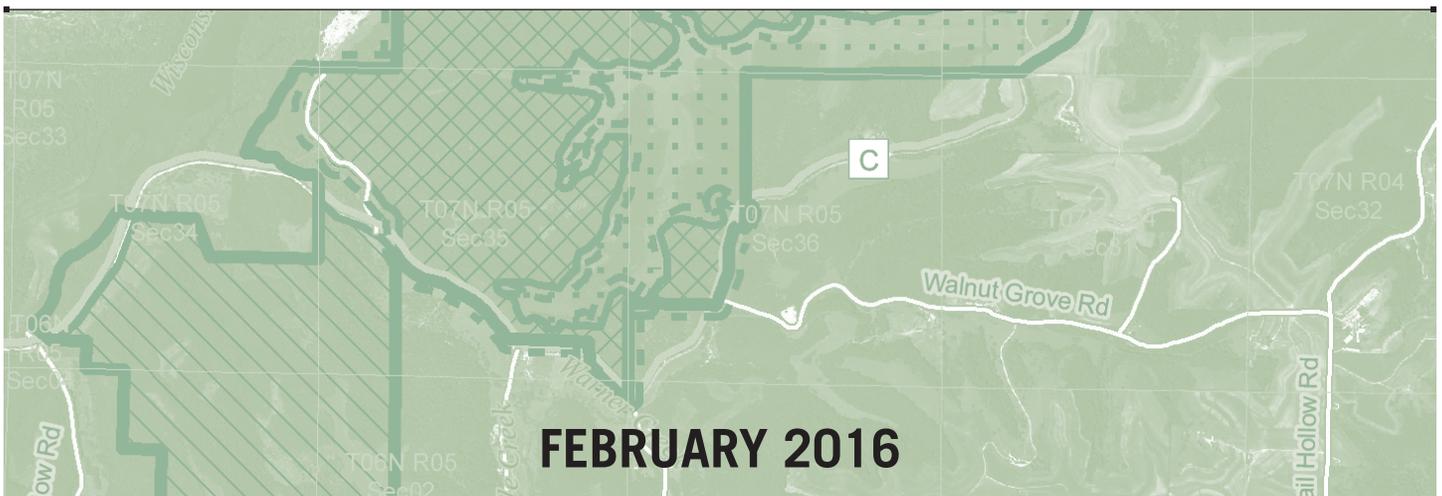




LOWER WISCONSIN STATE RIVERWAY

DRAFT MASTER PLAN & ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS EXECUTIVE SUMMARY





RECREATION MANAGEMENT OVERVIEW

The revised plan maintains the range of recreational uses on the Riverway that people have enjoyed for decades while adding many enhancements and new facilities.

The primary new recreational proposals include the following:

The Sauk City/Prairie du Sac – Mazomanie Area: Significant improvements are proposed for the eastern portion of the Riverway. This area is nearest to major population centers and already receives high recreational use. Developing an array of new facilities or improvements to existing ones will greatly enhance the recreational opportunities and experiences here. This will be an important destination for a wide variety of nature based recreation.

BLACK HAWK RIDGE

The rugged hiking and equestrian trails at Black Hawk Ridge have been popular for decades. A large grass area, a cabin pavilion (called the Rhinelander cabin), an open picnic shelter, and a few other buildings are located on top of the ridge. Currently the ridge top facilities serve as a special events area available by permit. The area is accessed via a narrow, steep service road that is generally closed to the public, except for special events. General public access is primarily from parking lots at the base of the ridge.

Under this plan the ridge top facilities would be redeveloped and upgraded to a modern day use area that would be open for general public use. The access road would be open to the public, except during ice/snow conditions.

MAZOMANIE RECREATION AREA

This 2,000 plus acre area extends from the Mazo beach on the river shoreline to CTH Y on the east. In addition to beach use, hiking, and hunting, particularly for pheasant and deer, the area has a class 1 dog trialing area. Recreational opportunities for hiking and day use activities will be substantially expanded in this area. River bank facilities supporting intensive recreational uses will be developed along the river. Included will be a rustic day use area, new boat access site, and beach area facilities. Hiking trails will be formalized and expanded throughout the area, except within the dog trial area. A hiking trail link will connect to Dane County's Walking Iron Park near Mazomanie. The dog trial area and use here would remain largely unchanged.

OTHER RIVERWAY DEVELOPMENTS AND RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

Hunting and trapping: The plan maintains and improves game habitat and hunting opportunities, particularly opportunities for deer, turkey and pheasant hunting. There will be improvements in hunter access, including opportunities for hunters with mobility issues.

Fishing: Access for both shore and boat fishing will be improved at a number of locations up and down the Riverway.

DNR managed boat landings: The DNR managed river boat landings will receive improvements, often including day-use facilities. Improving access and opportunities for people of all ages whenever possible is a priority for all sites. A new landing is proposed near Boscobel and the existing landing there would be closed.

Satellite day use/wildlife watching sites: Small lightly-developed day use areas and wildlife viewing sites will be developed at various locations along the length of the Riverway. Most of the proposed improvement are situated on backwaters, flowages or sloughs and are currently in use but have no or minimal facilities at this time. Many sites will feature walking trails and viewing sites; some will have small picnic areas, or accessible hunting and wildlife viewing blinds, or improved bank fishing access.

Walking/hiking trails: Walking/hiking is very popular across the Riverway and it mostly occurs on management roads and "volunteer" trails. This plan will expand the designated hiking trails from around four miles to between 30 and 40 miles. Some of these miles are associated with the sites discussed above.

Equestrian use: The Millville horse trails will be expanded from the current five miles to about 15 miles. With the proposed addition of an equestrian campground as well, day-long riding opportunities will be available.

Boating and river camping: Current "on river" recreation will be maintained. The plan calls for improvements at a number of DNR managed boat landings. Sandbar camping continues unchanged, and two new on-shore water-access-only campgrounds are proposed at down-river locations.

ADA access: Many actions in the plan will provide expanded opportunities for less mobile persons to enjoy the outdoors, such as accessible hunting/wildlife viewing blinds, viewing sites, developed day use sites, and trails.

Interpretation and education: Interpretation and education programs will be developed. On-site interpretive trails at several effigy mound sites are planned as well as access and interpretive improvements to the Wisconsin Heights Battlefield.

ACCESS SUMMARY

ROADS

The LWSR has 68 miles of roads, 26 miles are open to the public and 42 miles are management roads. The plan proposes 4 miles of new public road. The plan also proposes to close 4 miles of difficult to maintain road between Muscoda and Blue River (Highbank Road). Public access along this stretch will be maintained via a series of new parking lots at town road access points.

TABLE 1 ROAD SUMMARY

Road Type	Existing (miles)	Proposed New (miles)	Proposed to Abandon (miles)
Open Public Roads	26	4	4
Closed Mgt. Roads	42	0	9

TRAILS

Although there are miles of volunteer trails on the Riverway, there are only 3.3 miles of designated hiking trails currently on the Riverway. The master plan proposes an additional 30 to 40 miles of designated hiking trails. The LWSR has about 20 miles of existing equestrian/hiking trails. With the addition of 8 to 10 miles of new trail and the abandonment to 6.25 miles of underutilized trail, the net total will be 20 to 25 miles.

TABLE 2 TRAIL SUMMARY

Trail Type	Existing (miles)	Proposed New (miles)	Proposed to Abandon (miles)
Hiking Trails	3.3	30-40	0
Equestrian/Hiking Trails	20	21-25	6.25 (Blue River Bridle Trail)

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT OVERVIEW

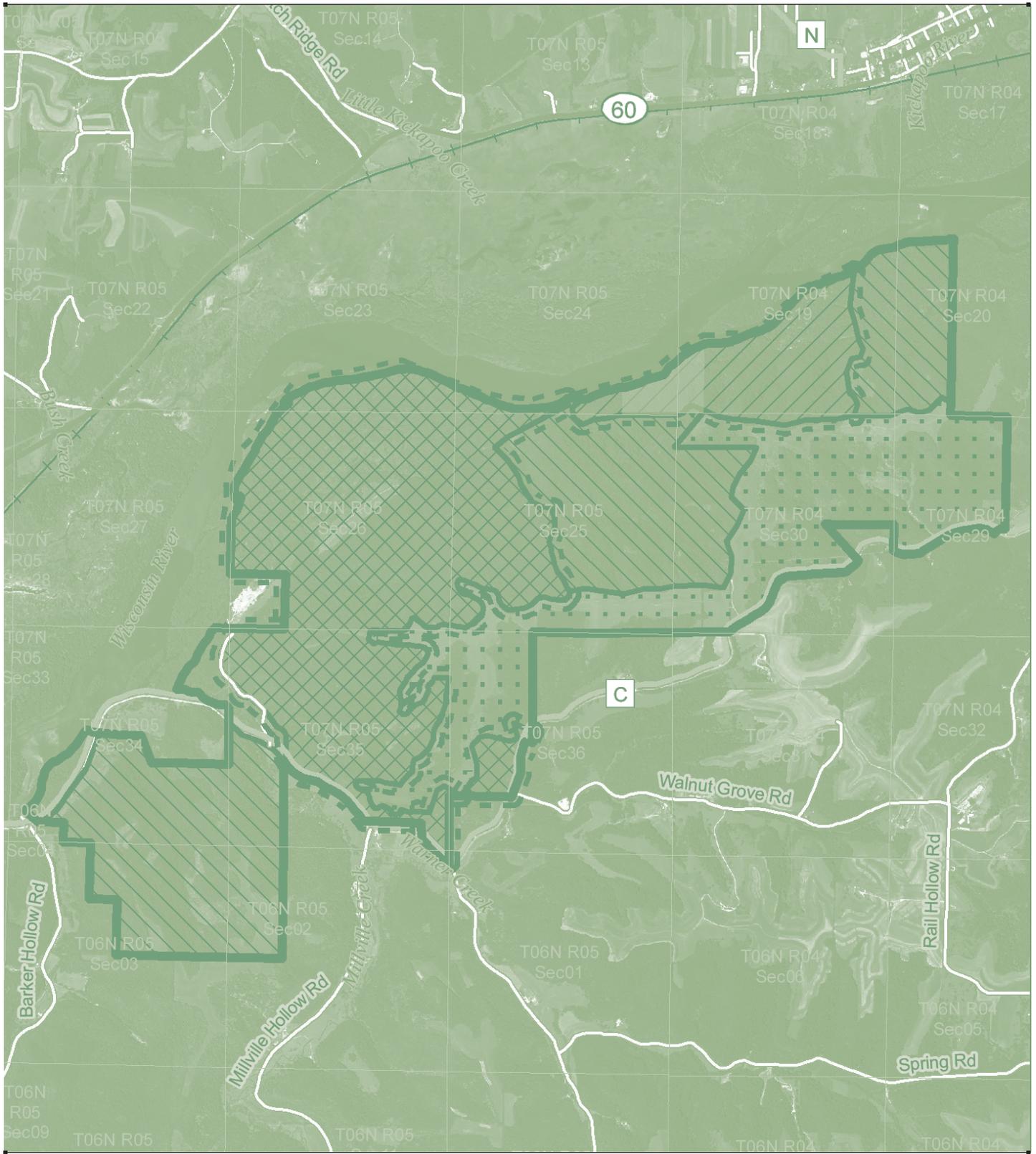
The Riverway hosts a wide assortment of wildlife habitats, ranging from the waters of the river, sloughs and flowages, to wetlands of several types, grasslands, prairies, savannas and barrens, to large tracks of bottomland and upland forests. About 23,960 acres are under general management for a variety of game and non-game species alike. The plan focuses on maintaining and improving the quality and extent of this habitat to sustain wildlife populations and provide recreational opportunities.

The Riverway also supports a wide array of high quality native communities that are important for sustaining rare species. In total, 24 Native Community Management Areas (NCMA) totaling 20,184 acres are delineated in the plan for site specific management that will maintain or enhance their long-term ecological values. There are 18 DNR managed designated State Natural Areas in the Riverway, all are within Native Community Management Areas. This plan will continue to protect, and in many cases, enhance the ecological function and values of these important communities and habitats, both at a regional and site-specific scale.

FIGURE 1 RIVERSIDE SCENE AT GOTHAM







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