

I. INTRODUCTION & EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources proposes to establish the Turtle-Flambeau Scenic Waters Area (TFSWA) in south central Iron County. In 1990 and 1991, the department purchased 22,343 acres of the Turtle-Flambeau Flowage bottom and surrounding shoreline for \$9.4 million. The department proposes to purchase an additional 20,386 acres of lands surrounding the flowage to protect, maintain, and enhance the TFSWA's scenic qualities, outstanding water and wetland resources, plant and wildlife communities, and diversity of outdoor recreational opportunities (see Figure 1). Subdivided lands or lands with significant capital developments will be excluded from the project. The estimated acquisition cost in 1995 dollars is \$4.5 - \$6 million. The projected annual tax payments to local government is \$192,357.

A primary objective of the master plan is to maintain the wild scenic character of the flowage shoreline and surrounding uplands. The master plan classifies project lands into five land use classification areas: Scenic, State Natural, Wild, Demonstration Management and Habitat Preservation. These areas will be divided into shoreline, viewshed and backland zones. The shoreline and viewshed zones will be managed to promote later successional species; the backlands zone will be subject to manipulation to encourage a diversity of habitats. The TFSWA will link surrounding federal, state and county conservation lands. The Wild Area and State Natural Area will complement a Wilderness Area designation and landscape-level old-growth patterns on other conservation lands east of the TFSWA.

The TFSWA Master Plan proposes to designate 60 developed island campsites, including two group sites and one site that meets Americans with Disabilities Act requirements. The department will maintain six boat access sites and develop a self-guided nature trail near Fisherman's Landing. The Deadhorse Lake Ruffed Grouse Management Demonstration Area will continue to provide public education opportunities. Secondary roads and trails will remain open to public foot access but will be closed to motorized traffic to reduce user conflicts and maintain a wild scenic character. The plan proposes to improve navigation at three bridge/culvert crossings by removing or upgrading the structures. Removal or burial of overhead utility lines will be encouraged where economically and environmentally feasible to enhance natural aesthetics. The plan will establish a "voluntary quiet area" on the eastern 1/5 of the flowage to provide a setting for quiet sports. It will encourage slow-no-wake operation of power boats but will not prohibit motorboat or snowmobile access on flowage waters. The estimated capital development cost for the TFSWA is \$336,651.

The annual cost of operating the TFSWA will vary depending on the intensity of management required during a given year. However, the projected average annual cost of operating the property in 1995 dollars is \$120,000.