

# **Powell Marsh State Wildlife Area Master Plan Revision - Public Involvement Plan -**

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) recognizes sound planning is a partnership effort with the people it serves and that the end product must be broadly supported by them as well as fit the capabilities of the property. The WDNR encourages citizen input throughout the planning process. This document outlines the strategy for soliciting continued public review and input in the revision of the Powell Marsh Wildlife Area master plan. This planning process continues and builds upon the planning efforts that were begun in 1998-1999.

Master Plan development will be based on and be influenced by existing statutes, administrative codes, scientific data, management opportunities and resources capabilities, surveys, judgment of resource management experts and public opinion. The local and regional recreational supply and demand, economic and social needs also will be considered. Management alternatives for the property are influenced by these factors with the final master plan representing a balance of key benefits.

## **Overview of the Planning Process**

The Master Planning process has three primary phases.

### Phase 1

Phase one is completing preparatory work. Good, current information on the property's resources, public uses, as well as on regional demands and opportunities is needed as a foundation for the planning process. Prior to starting development and public involvement, the Department is busy updating natural resource data for the property and examining regional data in order to better understand the property's best capabilities and its present and potential functional role. Planning staff have now completed phase 1.

### Phase 2

Phase two is plan development. It begins with the public announcement that the process to revise the Powell Marsh master plan will be resumed. This announcement is followed soon by a public meeting and comment period to review the work of the previous planning team and public participants, to review current management issues and general management alternatives, and to identify any new issues that should be addressed in the planning process. Then a draft revised property plan and an Environmental Assessment (EA) will be developed. The public is a valued partner in the plan's development. Various ways the public can give be involved in this process is discussed below.

### Phase 3

Phase 3 is presentation of the Plan to the Natural Resources Board for approval.

## **Opportunities for You to Participate in the Powell Marsh Wildlife Area Plan Revision**

The Department's goals for public involvement in master planning are to offer the public meaningful ways to be involved in shaping the future management and use of their favorite properties, and to provide a means for interested people to stay informed about the property and planning progress.

Public review and comment will be formally sought at key milestone points during the plan's development and approval process (planning phases 2 and 3 discussed above). The Department may announce additional public reviews or other public involvement activities at any time during the planning process if deemed warranted. Please note that your comments may be submitted at any time throughout the process as well.

The formal public review/input points are:

1. At the beginning of the plan development process (Phase 2) to identify additional issues to be considered in the planning process, and to comment on the plan alternatives,
2. To review and comment on the draft revised plan and its environmental impact assessment (EA) and,
3. Lastly, at the end of the process the Natural Resources Board offers the public an opportunity to provide input when they consider approval of the proposed master plan.

## **How the Department will Provide Planning Information to You**

### **A. Issue Press Releases**

Press releases will be issued at key stages of the project to announce public meetings, provide information updates and to solicit public comments.

### **B. Direct Mailings (postal and email)**

A list of interested and potentially affected parties will be developed and maintained. This list will be used to keep interested parties informed about upcoming planning events. You may sign-up on the GovDelivery system to receive notices and announcements. Mailings will be done at key points in the planning process to provide valuable information about the property and planning issues; to announce meetings or the availability of drafts for review, and to inform about other planning developments.

The planning team compiles the initial contact list by considering who may have an interest or would be affected by the plan. This typically includes nearby landowners and businesses, property recreational users, sporting clubs, environmental groups, service groups, news media, local and county governments, state and federal agencies, and Indian Tribes. Throughout the planning process the Department actively solicits interested parties to add to the contact list. You may sign up for the contact list by contacting the Department at the address or phone number given at the end of this document.

### **C. Web Page**

The Department will set up a special web page where information about the property, the planning process, draft plan documents, notices, planning progress reports and other important planning information will be posted.

### **D. Planning Reports**

After each formal public input step the Department will send out a planning report summarizing the results of the review. These will be sent to everyone on the contact list and posted on the planning website.

### **E. Conduct Special Meetings**

If needed, additional public meetings may be held to discuss specific planning issues in depth. Meetings will be publicly announced ahead of time.

## **F. Consultation with Other Governments**

As needed, throughout the planning process the Department will consult directly on a Government-to-Government basis on mutual planning interests with other government bodies. They include Tribes, Town and County officials, committees or boards; and federal agencies. Particularly, the Department will continue to correspond with the U.S. EPA and will consult with the Lac du Flambeau Band of Chippewa, Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission (GLIFWC), and the Voigt Task Force.

## **Ways You May Make Your Voice Heard**

You may review planning materials and leave comments on the Powell Marsh planning website. You may also email the planning team directly, use postal mail, or comment by phone using the contact information at the end of this document.

DNR staff will also hold informal public informational meetings at key points of the master-planning process (described above). The purpose of these meetings is to present and discuss information on the property and plan proposals, and to listen to your comments and suggestions for improving the plan. These meetings will be held in the vicinity of the property and in other locations as appropriate.

## **How Plan Decisions will be Made**

To make sound master plan recommendations the Department must, on one hand, consider technical data and meet statutory and code requirements and Department policies; and, on the other hand, must listen to the many and varied voices of the public. Decisions on which ideas to incorporate into the Plan and on how to best incorporate them will be made based on the property's purpose (i.e. wildlife area), its physical/biological capabilities, the best role of the property in its local, regional and state-wide context, and on the professional expertise of DNR staff. Every reasonable effort will be made to communicate the reasons for key plan decisions.

While a broad range of public interests and staff recommendations will be listened to and considered in developing a proposed master plan, the final decision-making responsibility and authority on the plan rests with the DNR's citizen policy-making Natural Resources Board.

## **Master Planning Contact Person**

For more information about the planning process or to add your name to the contact list contact:

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