

Ecological Opportunities
It will be important to preserve the natural sanctuary for wildlife, plants, there are some pristine areas.
Prairie restoration.
Restore a prairie plant community, and woodland community.
Oak Savannah Prairie restoration
Return to what it was before Badger took over.
Adaptive harvest management, pheasant stocking, disabled hunts, dog training area.
A tremendous opportunity exists to recreate some lost land/ecology forms on a <i>large scale</i> ! Opportunities such as this are rare and with continued land practices will be non-existent in the future ON THIS SCALE.
I'm concerned about what will happen to Pine Glen when access through BAAP is possible. Pine Glen is a sensitive and beautiful natural area. I would like to see some form of limited public access, but in a manner that protects the very fragile glen. Perhaps limited trails and maybe a boardwalk partway up the glen with signage restricting off-trail use. (This comment is intended for both ecological and recreation opportunities.)
Please carefully read and understand the Badger Reuse Plan. This land should be used for conservation and prairie restoration primarily! This is an opportunity to heal the land.
Restore to prairie.
We are really encouraged by the potential ecological opportunities for grassland bird species and river ecosystem preservation along the shore.
<p>A word on behalf of the Badgerlands.</p> <p>We hold the future of these fragile lands in our hands, and the plans we make for them will play out long after we are gone from the earth. On this ancient and battered landscape the history of the earth is written, from a billion years ago when the bedrock of the Baraboo Hills was formed to the march of the glaciers and the rise of the native people. Then the first European settlers came to tame the prairie and they were followed by the years of ammunition and contamination.</p> <p>Now we have a rare and dazzling chance to reach a healing hand into the future. Life lingers on the Badgerlands that has vanished elsewhere: birds like bobolinks and meadow larks, healthy populations of bluebirds, native prairie grasses and flowering plants, even a Badger or two! If they are to survive and prosper, they need our help and our protection.</p> <p>We must try not to interfere with the natural healing powers of the land. We must work to remove the invasive species that threaten the balance of life on the land. We must use the land with respect for the entire living community that calls it home.</p> <p>Never again will so large a tract of land come into public ownership in this part of the Midwest. We have an amazing opportunity to come together and preserve this piece of the Great Sauk Prairie for generations of plants and people. Let us do so with generosity, with energy and with fellowship. Let us be a model of how people can live with the land in healthy and sustainable ways.</p>
I would like to see major prairie restoration occur on this property due to the flora that is already present this has potential to be a major bird watching area with the existing road structure. Keep the majority of this property primitive for wildlife (allow hunting / trapping / fishing). I would really like to see a buffalo herd restoration effort here as a management tool – would also be a huge tourist draw.

<p>Great opportunity to team up with local school and universities to do prairie restoration, removal of invasive species, trail building, and interpretive signs. Study populations of native plants and animals.</p>
<p>Just drive anywhere with eyes open, and it is obvious that the primary use this great opportunity presents is for grassland birds, that should be the most land dedicated to their undisturbed breeding season. All of their habitat has or is being DESTROYED, and if it isn't in corn and beans it's mowed over and over for hay,</p>
<p>I support a plan which has as its main focus the conservation of prairie and shrubland birds at the Sauk Prairie Recreation Area. These birds are suffering from significant declines statewide (and nationwide). They require very large expanses of habitat to be successful and are adversely affected by habitat fragmentation.</p>
<p>The prairie chicken biologists know the minimum spatial requirements for the central sands region, a somewhat limited landscape, but that may differ in the richer landscape of southern WI. I suspect Mike Mossman and Dave Sample have already contemplated the prairie chicken option, but it would be worthwhile asking their opinions.</p>
<p>If I read history correctly, elk were more abundant than both deer (!) and bison (that may never have had much—or any—presence in southern WI) in the Baraboo Hills & area. It might be worthwhile to explore the viability of an elk reintroduction. Woodland—prairie—agricultural-wetland complexes like we have in southern Sauk County might be favorable to elk.</p>
<p>Thinking BIG seems appropriate for this amazing landscape-scale opportunity. Instead of trying to accommodate all special interests on Badger alone (where nobody would be fully happy with the outcome), maybe there is inherent wisdom in trying to look at a unique role for the entire Badger- Riverland Conservancy-Devils Lake- TNC- Ice Age Trail/NPS land complex that comprises, all told, a rather large acreage.</p>
<p>The WDNR's land use planning process is an opportunity for a new beginning for the former Badger Army Ammunition Plant lands – above all, these decisions must protect our water, soil, air, and biodiversity. Please assure that all future land use activities enhance the peaceful beauty and environmental integrity of the Sauk Prairie.</p>
<p>As noted in the draft analysis, grassland and shrubland birds, a group of species of critical conservation need in Wisconsin, benefit from a diversity of grassland habitat in large unfragmented tracts.</p>
<p>We have a fabulous opportunity to provide habitat for the declining group of birds, grassland birds. Please count me as a very strong supporter of grassland birds!</p>
<p>I would hope that any plan for this area would largely involve conservation of grassland bird habitat. There are so few areas of this significance that it would be a shame to waste the opportunity.</p>
<p>Please insure that the reuse plan for Badger Army Ammunition protects and encourages grassland bird conservation. Many grassland birds are identified by the National Audubon Society as being at risk. Populations are falling at an alarming rate. These birds profit greatly from having large blocks of habitat like Badger. They are sensitive to habitat fragmentation and I'm afraid that trails for offroad vehicles and the presence of dogs would unnecessarily fragment the habitat. Central Regional Director, National Audubon Society</p>
<p>I am delighted that a conservation grassland area is being considered for this site. The grassland birds are in more of a decline than any other group of birds.</p>
<p>I urge you to choose options that will optimize the preservation of grassland / shrubland habitat, in particular for preservation of grassland bird species, which need large tracts of land to breed successfully. Many of these species are under threat due to habitat loss, and the Badger area will be an important wildlife preserve to counter these losses.</p>

I agree with others that, as of now, the idea of a prairie chicken population at this site is not feasible. However, things change and the future may hold something far different. For one, results from the current attempt to better genetic diversity in the Central WI population will be known (hopefully soon) -- and these results, together with maybe others in the future from who knows where, may be the key to preserving (and perhaps restoring??) chicken populations throughout the historic range (US, Canada, as well as WI). THINKING LARGE!! I think populations of prairie chickens are (will) declining everywhere (just in different degrees -- some gone; some currently still viable; some struggling mightily to hold on) -- largely due to land use changes on private lands. Changes that are driven primarily by economics. Periodic infusion of genetic material may well prove to be the only way to maintain what turns out to be an isolated population somewhere within the current range.

I certainly encourage the active development and maintenance of grassland habitat on as much of the old Badger property as possible. Keeping in mind the Sample / Mossman model that was mentioned recently, perhaps the area can realize a core of actively managed grassland with a great deal of surrounding "grassland friendly" land use. Many species of grassland wildlife will benefit. A future for prairie chickens in the area may be greatly optimistic, but other grassland wildlife (avian species, invertebrates, etc.) is a tremendous objective in itself. Achieving this, the area is ready for a prairie chicken translocation should the opportunity present itself in the future.

I would echo the concern Bill mentioned, regarding isolation of any prairie chicken flock established at Badger. Our current efforts are focused on restoring demographic and genetic health within our current GPC range in central Wisconsin. Even there, with large grassland areas in relatively close proximity, genetic diversity has declined and required a recent and expensive interstate translocation of birds. Given the heavy land use pressures (corn, cranberries) and reforestation issues in the surrounding landscape, any flock established at Badger would certainly be isolated and likely experience similar demographic and genetic issues, adding another management issue to our dockets. Prudently restoring chickens to large grassland areas in southern Wisconsin would necessitate not only the establishment of large (>5-10,000 ac) grassland areas, but the development of a significant grassland component in the surrounding agricultural matrix such that movement of birds among subpopulations would be possible. Optimistically, down the road land use trends may lead us toward these types of discussions, but for now I think our best bet is to invest resources on and in areas surrounding the Central Wisconsin Grasslands.

There was quite a bit of discussion in the 1980's and 1990's about stocking prairie chickens or translocating prairie chickens from Central Wisconsin to various sites in southern Wisconsin (including the Badger Army Ammunition Plant) as a way to expand the range and genetic diversity of prairie chickens in WI. As I recall, there was pretty general agreement that Badger, even in combo with surrounding properties, was too small to support a genetically diverse population.

We urge your consideration to save a huge portion of the land from the Badger Army Ammunition Plant to be conserved for grassland birds. Many species are dropping in numbers due to habitat loss. Here's an opportunity to set aside a large tract of land in order to help conservation of species such as bobolinks, meadowlarks and short eared owls. President, Wisconsin Metro Audubon Society

Eastern Meadowlarks, Clay-colored Sparrows, and Henslow's Sparrows were among the species we found there. I believe this large area of grasslands and shrublands should be used primarily for conservation of habitat for grassland and shrub land birds. Birds dependent on this kind of habitat are the fastest declining bird species in Wisconsin. This is an opportunity to provide a large block of habitat for them.

<p>From an ecological standpoint, there is an opportunity to reestablish some long grass prairie ecosystems that could provide volunteer opportunities as well as environmental education and interpretation opportunities.</p>
<p>The populations of these species, such as Eastern Meadowlarks, Bobolinks, Dicsesils, and grassland sparrows have been declining for decades and are now becoming rather difficult to find. The site in Badger that has been improved by volunteers over the past few years now has these species nesting. We should protect the grassland bird nesting areas in Badger and enlarge them. It would be a shame to reduce or damage the existing grassland bird habitat that is now at the Badger Army Ammunition Plant.</p>
<p>I hope you will maximize and optimize habitat for grassland birds. There are so few places in Wisconsin where these birds can find the habitat they need: large tracts of unmowed and unherbiceded prairie. Badger is the perfect place. Please keep it for the birds!</p>
<p>I favor prioritizing grassland birds until they are conserved. There will always be a time in the future for personal use. That is WI most plentiful resource.</p>
<p>When you consider the plans for the land of the Badger Powder Plant, please keep in mind that our grassland birds are losing their habitat. I grew up in Prairie du Sac and would love to ride my bike to the country and hear the Meadow Larks. They are seriously losing ground because their habitat is being destroyed. I truly hope that you will make a decision that will preserve their habitat.</p>
<p>I very much support the current Reuse Plan, which is an excellent blueprint for restoring the Badger lands in an ecologically meaningful way.</p>
<p>There will never again be so large a property that contains such a diverse population of plants and animals available for public use in this part of the Midwest. I am depending on my DNR to protect and restore where there is something to be protected and restored. The Sauk Prairie is that place. Please take care of it.</p>
<p>I think the Badger site is a treasure, in that it represents the opportunity to recreate prairie as it was before 1812. The plan should require that all landholders at the site use work to restore prairie and that the site be used for study of prairie restoration on a large site.</p>
<p>There are unique opportunities because of the proximity to the extensive Devil's Lake wild areas and the Wisconsin River. All users could coordinate to meet the overall goal of prairie restoration, intensive rotational livestock management, and non-motorized recreation, suitable to a prairie site.</p>
<p>A major challenge facing conservationists is the increasing isolation of conservation parcels. The regional context of the Badger Recreation Area, with its position adjacent to both the Baraboo Hills and the Wisconsin River, make it an important parcel for facilitating movement and dispersal of individuals of many wildlife species. This landscape connectivity minimizes the probability that DNR will be faced in the future with the need to intensively manage and manipulate populations inhabiting the property through capturing and moving individuals around in an effort to maintain population viability. I strongly oppose any activities that would limit wildlife movement among adjacent parcels.</p>
<p>Globally rare habitat types- savanna and prairie- are found in the Badger Recreation Area. Fire is an important process in maintaining these habitat types. I strongly oppose any activities that would interfere with maintenance and restoration of these habitat types.</p>
<p>Grassland birds are declining in Wisconsin, but I understand Mike Mossman's census found a good population there. We can't give this land back to the farmers we took it from, but I believe its ecological value should be our primary consideration in deciding how it should be used in the future.</p>

I've had the good fortune to have lived and worked in the Baraboo area on and off since 1976 and confess that I am entirely smitten with the grandeur of the region's landscape. As I've spent time in the region I've come to greatly appreciate the geological, geographic and ecological splendor of the Baraboo Hills, the Wisconsin River, and the landscape that connects the two—the former Sauk Prairie.

I had the good fortune to work under contract to one of my friends and colleagues—Dave Fordham—then-property manager at the Badger Army Ammunition Plant, who had a great vision for the future of Badger once it was decommissioned by the Army. That vision? To undertake a landscape-scale ecological restoration of the original Sauk Prairie and oak savanna that grades into the oak woodland of the adjoining Devils Lake. As you are aware, I prepared a preliminary restoration plan for the Army for a 1,300-acre area in the northeast of the Badger property even before it was mothballed by the Department of Defense. Dave, having helped with prairie restorations at the International Crane Foundation and the Aldo Leopold Memorial Reserve in the 1970s and 1980s, fully understood the opportunity for and significance of a landscape-scale restoration project at Badger. He did his best to implement that dream. before his life came prematurely to an end. In his memory, I share the following sentiments and suggestions.

It's been said before, and I repeat the message here: the Baraboo Hills and Sauk Prairie represent a truly unique Wisconsin landscape with a markedly visible and interpretable geological story. The construction of the Badger facility abruptly altered that dramatic landscape many decades ago. However, with the transfer of a significant parcel of land to the People of Wisconsin served by your agency, there arises an opportunity to re-create the integrity of the ecological gradient from the Wisconsin River shoreline through prairie grassland, into savanna openings, then into a mixed hardwood forest of Devils Lake and beyond. I truly hope that you and your fellow planners acknowledge this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity as you proceed with the planning phase on the lands being transferred to DNR.

Understandably, there will be many inputs and much pressure from diverse interest groups during this planning process, all of whom want a piece of the action at Badger. Arguably, were the plan to attempt to address all interests, ultimately none would be satisfied with the outcome and significant opportunities would have been lost. Some hard decisions need to be made, and not all citizens will be happy with the outcome.

The three key management goals identified when the Natural Resources Board approved establishing the Sauk Prairie Recreation Area (2002) should be the primary focus of your master plan:

- Maximize the potential for grassland and oak savanna restoration and public recreation;
- Preserve and enhance the transition zone between the Baraboo Hills and the Badger prairie lands.
- Preserve and enhance the ecological corridor from the Baraboo Hills to the Wisconsin River.

Were that simple directive followed in its entirety, future generations would be gifted an ecological, educational and recreational treasure with almost 15,000 acres of contiguous land encompassing Devils Lake, Badger and Riverland Conservancy and representing a rich and diverse restored ecoregion, not to mention the nearly 9,000 acres under stewardship by The Nature Conservancy. Such a large-scale ecological restoration effort would be unique to the highly populated southern portion of the state; it may eventually lend itself to the reintroduction of charismatic and endangered wildlife species such as prairie chickens and elk. Please don't let this opportunity slip away by encouraging a whole suite of recreational activities on the

property that would be inconsistent with the ecological restoration goals identified above.
Please keep the Sauk Prairie Recreation Area for the grassland birds. Their nesting areas are disappearing much too fast. Sheboygan County Audubon Society
Please do all you can to protect this precious habitat. This will benefit wildlife as well as society. Thanks for what you are doing.
The Sauk Prairie Recreation Area within Old Badger Army Ammunition Plant presents an unprecedented opportunity to manage for grassland and shrubland birds in one of the largest, unfragmented landscapes in southern Wisconsin. The opportunity to provide Grassland / shrub land habitat for nesting grounds/habitat for several species of birds that have been in decline for many years because of a lack of habitat should be the primary focus at the DNR's Sauk Prairie Recreation Area. Several bird species that I use to see regularly 35 years ago have been seen on this site. I saw a Bob-O-link for the first time in 28 years, this past year. It would be an opportunity to replace habitat that was lost do to changes in farm haying practices and roadside mowing, or clearing as much land as possible for a mono-crop.
ALAS appreciates the opportunity to provide information for the future management of the Sauk Prairie Recreation Area for master planning purposes. ALAS is a strong advocate for wildlife conservation, habitat restoration and preservation, education, research and public outreach in Central Wisconsin and supports other conservation organizations and individuals in these efforts. Being in a community that lies just north of one of the largest unfragmented grassland in the eastern United States, the Buena Vista Grassland, we recognize the value these natural areas play in maintaining grassland bird communities and acknowledge that these habitats and the birds that depend on them have been in serious decline the past several decades. We therefore support the efforts of this planning process and encourage team members to focus on grassland bird conservation efforts.
Comments and Considerations -grasslands-shrublands-woodland/savanna and associated bird communities should be a primary focus -management should be considered on a landscape level in context with surrounding areas to maximize large scale habitat effect -diversity should be considered including grassland, grazed and ungrazed pastureland -haying operations should occur only after the third week in July to protect nesting birds -consider management for a mosaic landscape to include prairie, savanna, and woodlands -consider using fire where possible to maintain the above mentioned mosaic -low impact public use should be a primary consideration -consider uses that are compatible with the primary purpose of grassland bird conservation Aldo Leopold Audubon Society
As you most likely know, habitat for many species is not adequate unless it in large acreages in its natural or nearly natural state. An excellent plea for preservation of habitat is presented in Stephen M. Meyer's book, The End of the Wild (MIT Press, 2006. If you haven't read it, I hope that you have the opportunity to do so soon.
I hope that has not changed I want you to know how I hope we all can enjoy this land and preserve this land back to it natural habitat

As noted in the draft RPA, grassland and shrubland birds, two bird communities of critical conservation concern in Wisconsin, benefit from a diversity of grassland habitat in large unfragmented tracts. Because the BAAP property presents such an extraordinary opportunity in this regard, WSO wishes to be directly involved in the master planning process and to participate as needed to accomplish as much for birds on this property as we can.

Since BAAP is a large area with lots of recreation potential, we can foresee potential user conflicts between habitat protection and recreational pursuits. It is our hope that future planning efforts for BAAP carefully consider the timing and location of any recreational activities, and that planning decisions are guided by sound land management and stewardship principles.

We want to reiterate the following from the Conclusion section of the RPA:

“The regional significance of the property’s ecological capabilities sets the context for providing compatible recreation opportunities...”

“Within the larger Sauk Prairie Recreation Area landscape lays an incredible and unique opportunity to reestablish an example of the natural mosaic of prairie-savanna-woodland that characterized so much of the Midwest prior to Euro-American settlement, but which has since disappeared.”

“Major opportunities exist at SPRA with regard to breeding birds, as a result of the site’s rich avifauna, large size, extensive grasslands, public ownership, proximity to other significant public and private properties, and accessibility for research, education, and recreation. The property already has one of the most significant grassland bird populations in the state. It has been said that if grassland bird populations are ever to recover in the Midwest, it is essential that we learn how farming and wildlife can once again coexist. The SPRA in its entirety offers this opportunity.”

The Conclusion section also highlighted the key management goals identified by the Natural Resources Board in 2002 regarding the SPRA:

1. Maximize the potential for grassland and oak savanna restoration and public recreation.
2. Preserve and enhance the transition zone between the Baraboo Hills and the Badge prairie lands.
3. Preserve and enhance the ecological corridor from the Baraboo Hills to the Wisconsin River.

And finally:

“Based on this report’s findings, the best overall functional role for the Sauk Prairie Recreation Area is to fulfill the highlighted ecological opportunities available while maximizing compatible recreation opportunities.

DNR Portion of Badger

With intensive agricultural practices in the USDA portion of the property and the uncertainty pertaining to ownership and future management of the Ho Chunk portion, habitat protection on the DNR portion of BAAP is critical.

The RPA states that the BAAP site “has one of the most significant grassland bird populations in the state.” The conversion of Badger to the SPRA is a unique opportunity to preserve and further enhance the remarkable grassland bird habitat at this site. We doubt the opportunity to restore or preserve a grassland of this size exists anywhere else in southern Wisconsin. Along

with the grasslands (highlighted in RPA Figure 2), the plan also identifies high quality shrubland areas (RPA Figure 2), prairie/savanna areas (area SPRA01, RPA pages 39-41) and the northern transition area into the bluffs (area SPRA02, RPA pages 36-37) as being high value resources. WSO considers all of these areas high value resources worthy of protection and enhancement.

Shrubs

BAAP continues to support a diverse grassland bird community but rampant shrub encroachment threatens its persistence. The elimination of grazing has allowed shrubs to spread and thrive in many portions of the site. DNR should prioritize shrub control and removal to those areas containing the highest quality grasslands and the highest concentration of grassland-dependent birds. Some of the better grassland patches, while still relatively shrub free, are threatened with imminent shrub encroachment due to high shrub cover in adjacent areas.

Conifers

There are a number of small conifer plantations on the Badger site. Given the limited ecological value of these conifer monocultures, WSO encourages DNR to remove them and replace with vegetation that could provide better bird habitat. In particular, conifer plantations adjacent to high quality grassland parcels should be prioritized for removal. Many species of grassland birds are sensitive to woody cover, and thus may not use an otherwise suitable grassland if it is bordered by mature trees.

Invasives

Control of invasive species should be a major management goal for the SPRA. Invasives can displace native vegetation, or inhibit the reintroduction of natives, often resulting in vegetation dominated by the invasives. Many invasives are so dominant over the native plants that the resulting habitat value for birds is greatly reduced. Management of invasives has multiple facets, preventing their introduction, limiting their spread, and eradicating their populations once established. Recreational activities can contribute to the spread of invasive species. Emphasizing recreational activities with lower potential for spreading invasives into the high biological value areas should be a consideration in planning the future use of the site.

Burma Road

There is an existing road (Burma Road) that extends southward through Devil's Lake over the bluffs, ending at Badger's northern fence line. Currently you can drive about halfway down this road towards Badger, it's then gated off allowing only foot traffic. Keeping this section of roadway restricted to foot traffic and not allowing through motorized traffic would probably keep a lot of future disturbance out of this area. This could also help limit invasive species spread in this area.

Scope of Current RPA

It appears that if the Ho Chunk does not get their portion of Badger, then DNR would be next in line for it. Incorporating this property into that already destined for the DNR could significantly change the scope and results of the planning process. WSO encourages DNR to consider revising the current RPA and subsequent master plan steps if DNR acquires the Ho Chunk portion. WSO Conservation Committee

Please leave this land undisturbed and open and free for the birds.

I think it would serve the WDNR well to follow the "Reuse Plan" as a blue print to write the future plan of the Sauk Prairie Recreational Area.

This is a one-time chance to have a vast grassland lying next to the Baraboo Range in the Wisconsin River Valley. This would also serve as a living classroom to future generations to show what can be done with a property that during wartimes had been stressed with pollutions.

Before wartimes this was once the "Majestic Sauk Prairie" and dutifully we should return it to the wildlife so that it can establish itself with our help again into the "Majestic Sauk Prairie". This vast grassland again will be there for all to enjoy for many generations! Pheasants Forever

We would like to see the DNR land at the old Badger Plant be used to provide habitat for grassland birds. Habitat could be in prairie restorations or old field habitat for grassland birds. Management trails could be used for hiking trails.

Please save the grasslands and bird sanctuary on the Badger Ammo site. We've lost enough birds already!

I think it is extremely important to preserve an unbroken habitat for grassland birds at Badger, rather than cut it up and open much of it to recreational uses. This is our one chance to set aside the very large area needed by these threatened birds.

Bobolinks, whose beautiful bubbling song is one of springs happiest moments, come here from South America to nest. Most of the grassland habitat used by these birds is, unfortunately, hayfields, meaning they lose their nests when the farmers cut the first hay crop. They can successfully nest at Badger.

I haven't seen an Upland Sandpiper in many years. These large plovers nest at Badger. The rare grassland sparrows, Henslows and Grasshopper, are declining because of loss of Badgers type of habitat.

All these birds require large unbroken prairies or grasslands to breed successfully, avoiding forest edge predators and farming and recreational disturbances.

As a Sauk County resident I am very interested in this issue. Please keep Badger Ammunition as a place to bring back these threatened bird species.

I would like to weigh in on the side of allowing this tract of land to remain undeveloped and allowing the grassland birds to remain undisturbed. Perhaps this will allow their numbers to rebound in the next 50 years.

Please slow down, you do not have to develop every square inch of the planet in your lifetime!

If you allow the birds some undisturbed habitat to breed & live in then humans can enjoy the space as well for bird watching, hiking, etc. green open spaces are a psychological necessity to mankind's well-being!

Grassland bird habitat in Wisconsin has taken many hits over many decades of farming and other use of grasslands. Recreational use planning at the Badger Munitions Plant could be a positive for bird habitat AND recreational use if done correctly. Grasslands must be managed to encourage grassland bird species to live and breed successfully. In turn, this properly-managed habitat can be a magnet for other species, including human beings. The importance of natural areas to our mental and physical health cannot be underestimated.

I am in favor of leaving as much land as possible for prairie. Grassland birds and other grassland species are in need of places to live.

I really heartily support grassland bird conservation, having witnessed the decline of meadowlarks since I was a child. In those days we always saw and heard meadowlarks on fence wires and knew their beautiful song when driving in the country. They are no longer there.

In recent years I have been a part of helping to conserve grasslands at Goose Pond Sanctuary. The recently restored prairies there are providing safe nesting for the grassland birds, especially for my beloved meadowlarks; the counts have increased considerably. This gives us confidence that such protection is achievable, and worthwhile, because every species is important to the overall ecology of the planet. Large unfragmented landscapes must be maintained for the existence of all living things, and for the education of the children.

Just a brief note to support the allocation of Badger Army Ammunition Land to grassland bird habitat. We all know the diminishing numbers of these birds...due to loss of habitat. Wouldn't this be a magnificent gift to the people of Wisconsin from the DNR. I think so. And I for one would be forever grateful, as would future generations.

I see this area as a priceless Midwestern ecological jewel where protection of the grasslands and tranquility for ground-nesting birds and other wildlife is paramount. We should be able to enjoy it while still protecting the peace and tranquility of the area.

I would like to register my *strong* support for making wildlife conservation the primary focus of the former BAAP site. I believe that non-motorized, low-impact uses of the property are the best choices economically and for the future of Wisconsin.

Wisconsin's wildlands and natural beauty are envied throughout the country. Once we lose these precious areas they are gone for good. The DNR now has the rare opportunity to combine the Baraboo Hills area and the former BAAP site into a gem that future generations will forever be thankful for.

This is unprecedented opportunity to preserve and manage this 7,354 acre natural treasure, and should not be taken lightly. This area represents one of the largest, unfragmented tracts of land in Wisconsin, and excitingly this land can be restored to a functional, and environmentally sound, grassland / shrubland habitat. This opportunity should not be wasted. The BAAP is host to a variety of unique geological and ecological treasures, which need advocates for their continued existence. For example, many native species of grassland birds are sensitive to habitat fragmentation, and as such, require large tracts of undisturbed grassland habitat for their continued existence. The BAAP is perhaps Wisconsin's best opportunity to step in and protect these birds for future generations. In addition, the BAAP is home to a unique paedomorphic strain of tiger salamanders. The biology and genetics driving this population is yet to be understood.

I strongly advocate that any proposed use of the land, firstly and foremost, is aimed at protecting the unique geology and wildlife that depend on the unique environment that is BAAP. Their continued existence is not dependent upon the tract of land that is the BAAP. On the other hand, the very existence of many grassland birds, and the paedomorphic population of tiger salamanders, may well be in jeopardy if the land is managed in such a way as not to promote their well-being above all other activities.

In conclusion, I strongly advocate that the goal of the management of the BAAP should be to promote the restoration of the unique grassland/shrubland habitat that is native to the area. This, in turn, will promote the future health and existence of a myriad of fauna species. Activities that do not directly promote this goal, and especially those that compromise it, should be pursued elsewhere, without regret or remorse. To quote Aldo Leopold, "Examine each question in terms of what is ethically and aesthetically right, as well as what is economically expedient. A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise." Thank you for considering my thoughts in this manner.

I am writing in support of reserving the Badger Ammunition lands for grassland bird habitat. Grassland birds are threatened by severe loss of habitat throughout Wisconsin and beyond, and it is very important that we do everything we can to conserve habitat for them. The consequences of habitat loss are irreversible.

It is my sincere wish that a major portion of the Badger Army Ammo Plant property is returned to its natural condition. I believe this is progress, as we have already lost so much of the areas original inhabitants: indigenous people, plants, and rare animals. I am so hopeful for a return for our amazing natural area. I feel very optimistic that we can have some of our precious past given back to us.

I have been very encouraged to see the cooperation among many interest groups as plans are made for this area to restore it to its former health. My husband and I toured the area and learned of the exhaustive work being done by the Army. As people with a strong interest in grassland birds, we hope these creatures will be a focus of the planning. Birding is growing in popularity and interest and reflects the high value birds and their habitat have claim to.

I am writing to express my strong opinion that management of the Badger Plant should focus on nature conservation - particularly on the prairie ecosystem including grassland and shrubland birds, which are of extremely high conservation concern in Wisconsin.

We at the Northeastern Wisconsin (N.E.W.) Audubon are concerned about the advocacy for recreation activities on the Badger Army Ammunition Plant land. As prairies and grasslands continue to disappear from our landscape, the opportunity to protect these areas must occur now before it's too late. It is extremely important to minimize disturbance on such species as eastern and western meadowlarks, upland sandpiper, Bell's vireo, and many species of sparrow during their breeding season since many of the populations are already in decline. Large, unfragmented areas like this are a rare gem, and like a gem must be protected to the utmost to preserve their high value.

I am concerned that some groups new to this process believe that Badger is a clean slate with "no history" and do not know that conservation and restoration have been a primary focus of research and land use at Badger for over 30 years. Many species at Badger are rare or becoming rare, and any activity that will have a negative impact on bird nesting, rare plants, invertebrates, snakes, amphibians, and other species should be excluded. I do not think the DNR is required to provide space for activities that are detrimental to the health of the land and that will diminish the quality of ecological restoration that has been a part of Badger for over 30 years.

Between 1996 and 2007 or so, I was responsible for planting or providing seed for most of the restoration projects at Badger and spent many hours inside the plant working with Doug Rhead, Bob Speaker, Dave Fordham, and others. The DNR leased land for seed production from 1996 through 2003. Many of these seed plots have long lived perennials that represent seed collected from State Natural Areas at substantial cost, including some rare species, and most are still present or can be rehabilitated with appropriate management. These seed nurseries can provide future restoration projects at Badger with guaranteed local Wisconsin genotype seed.

I've incorporated several photos here (all photos taken by me), but this is by no means complete (see following pages). It is only an attempt to fill in some Badger history that you may or may not have in your database. My main concern is establishing a record so that the many hours of hard work and expense are not wasted by land use decisions that are not compatible with conservation or that inadvertently destroy past projects. I am certain that the value of prairie seed alone invested in Badger is well over \$100,000. That was my estimate of the value of seed in inventory collected from State Natural Areas in 1995 before nursery plot establishment at Badger. If I were to factor in the SCNBC plantings, Army plantings, Boy Scout plantings, SPCA plantings, etc., my estimate would be much greater than that. Add in the labor for planting, harvesting, burning, mowing, weeding, planning, monitoring, etc. and that adds up to a lot of time and money already invested in Badger conservation activities. If you need additional information concerning the location and composition of nursery acreage and prairie plantings, please contact me.

Please do not neglect the bird conservation - open grassland is critical! NEW Audubon

He also disagrees with our assessment that the natural cover types at BAAP would be grasslands, prairie, and savanna. He stated that the only reason that was the land cover was because of native americans burned the area. He thinks the natural land cover would be forest and would like to see that as the goal.

I'm writing to express my opinion that the WDNR consider preservation and conservation as top priorities in its plan for the Badger Army Ammunition Plant lands. These lands are jewels, and the opportunity to return them to a near pristine condition should not be wasted. To develop part of them for dog parks or ATV trails seems to me a desecration, like tearing down the State Capitol to build a strip mall.

I would like to express my strong support for devoting the Sauk Prairie Recreation Area within the greater (former) Badger Army Ammunition Plant to grassland /shrubland habitat and grassland /shrubland birds. This type of habitat and these species are in sharp decline, and will not prosper if the habitat is fragmented.

Please encourage a "natural" use of the site; I'm sad that the Ho-Chunk people no longer wish to have a bison herd there.

Please restore the site to natural prairie and oak savannah

Please do whatever possible to preserve the Badger Army Ammunition Plant site for grassland bird habitat. These birds are the fastest declining group of species. My understanding is that this is due in part to the change in farming practices to harvest alfalfa earlier in the season, thus destroying the nests of grassland birds before their eggs are hatched or their young have fledged. The BAAP preserve is a unique treasure for providing much needed habitat for grassland birds.

I would like to express my sincere concern to conserve grassland and shrubland birds at the Badger army ammunition plant, as these birds are in fast decline, and this area is critical to their preservation. I would like to support planning activities that are consistent with their preservation, such as eco-tourism and oppose activities that may threaten their populations, as determined by scientific experts.

Thank you for your serious consideration of ecosystem preservation in this habitat.

Ecological Opportunities: The Sauk Prairie Recreational Area is unique in the total size of the block which was once the "Sauk Prairie" which contained significant areas of native prairie and oak savannah, which are key habitats for many species of plants and animals which are declining and some which are endangered in Wisconsin. The on-going prairie restoration work at a number of sites in and around the BAAP has been very successful and shows great potential for restoring the largest block of restored native prairie in the entire region! This opportunity offers something of immeasurable value to the entire state and nation.

The scientific surveys of the former BAAP discovered that this block of land has the highest densities of grassland birds, such as Western and Eastern Meadowlarks and Bobolinks, which have been seriously declining in Wisconsin as well as nationally. Based on the findings of the bird censuses conducted over a series of years, this area will be designated officially as an "Important Bird Area." The protection and conservation of these grassland birds in the Sauk Prairie area depends both on prairie restoration and on developing a grassland-grazing system which existed in the former BAAP and needs to be developed and managed for the grassland birds as well as for an example of a valuable healthy, productive, and sustainable grazing practice for cattle and possibly bison, which would restore a key ecological element of the native Sauk Prairie that is still needed today.

I look forward to the day when I can explore the extensive grasslands, especially to listen and see the many grassland bird species that are known from the site. I support the primary use of this state property for the protection and appreciation of prairie and grassland species. I support efforts to allocate necessary funds to WDNR for prairie plantings, invasive species control, use of fire and the removal of unwanted trees.

Collaborative efforts with the adjacent USDA's Dairy Research farm should be promoted to encourage wildlife friendly farm practices on their land. Allowing grazing on the WDNR land is a good idea to encourage a different habitat for some grassland species.

The first and foremost value of the BRP was that the Badger property should be managed as a whole, to maximize the benefit of the site's multiple values. With that in mind, I urge the WDNR to pursue its planning process in close and constant consultation with the other landowners and stakeholders at Badger. We have all walked this long trail together; we must continue to do so. To do anything less is to risk falling back into contention and conflict.

The BRP identified a suite of compatible uses that would build upon and maximize the benefit of the property's unique values. These uses specifically included land restoration, education and research, sustainable agriculture, and low-impact recreation. In the process of developing the BRP, many parties came forward to offer suggestions for specific future activities, in a fully open and public process. Many of these suggestions were found by the committee to be acceptable; others were not. In reviewing the Property Analysis, I find much to be pleased with on this theme, as well as several points of concern:

The Analysis clearly emphasizes the ecological significance of the property and the need and potential for ecological restoration to enhance the rich biological values of the site. However, I am disappointed that the Analysis does not explore in any way the clear connections (and potential conflicts) between restoration and the "recreational significance and capability" of the property. Recreational planning cannot take place in isolation. There is no explicit recognition of restoration as itself a form of recreation. There is no clear vision for how the long-term restoration of the degraded landscape at Badger can and should fit together with appropriate recreational activity.

The Reuse Plan recognizes, as does the draft analysis, the unique opportunity to restore imperiled ecosystems at a scale that can scarcely be imagined anywhere else in southern Wisconsin. Already, 40 rare species of plants and animals (endangered, threatened and special concern) reside at Badger. Clearly the Department has a large responsibility to insure the continued survival of these imperiled creatures at Badger. Further ecological restoration will bolster their populations and provide habitat for additional rare species needing the larger tracts of land that will be provided by restoration. Also, the Department has an important opportunity to restore an ecological gradient ranging from the forested Baraboo Hills through woodland, savanna, and prairie to the shore of Wisconsin River. This action will re-establish an important but damaged ecological corridor. Clearly, acting upon the potential for ecological restoration at this property will truly make it a statewide resource and an important example for our Nation.

Please restrict future uses of the former ammunition plant to non-motorized, low impact activities to protect the habitat for the endangered grassland and shrubland birds that have been able to thrive at that location due to low human impact most of the past 70 + years. Since Europeans came to Wisconsin in the 1800's they plowed the grasslands to raise crops. This activity took away the homes of many species of birds that rely on large open fields for their lifestyle.

The birds on the other hand will be without their nesting sites and food sources because of the unique nature of these species if Badger is not kept quiet, open and peaceful. The birds don't have money to purchase what they need. Please don't take Badger away from them.

Finally, remember the Passenger Pigeon and what happened to it. The same thing could happen to grassland birds. How will you be able to sleep at night if you let this happen?

It's my opinion that opportunities to conserve patches of grassland at this scale are very rare now in the Upper Midwest. Recent research on grassland birds, summarized in the WBCI Strategic Grassland Conservation Plan, suggests that most species are responding to the amounts and types of grass at scales much beyond the individual patch or field. Many of the DNR and USFWS grassland conservation efforts to date have ignored these issues of scale, and as such have restored many acres of low-performing habitat. Future efforts should be directed at building Grassland Bird Conservation Areas (GBCAs) or multiple GBCAs within a Focal Landscape. GBCAs are 10,000 acre+ landscapes that contain 40%-60% grass and low amounts of woody edge or other hostile habitats. See the Southwest Grasslands and Streams Conservation Area for an example of a progressive conservation design for area-sensitive species. Recent work undertaken by UW/DNR/USFWS in Wisconsin to evaluate GBCAs here in the state suggest that some areas have more than 10x the densities of target species within a GBCA as opposed to outside the GBCAs. Thus we're getting a much higher return on our investment by building these GBCAs. This is a prudent policy choice given the competing interests for open lands today.

Even though this site isn't within a grassy landscape, managing for grasslands and savanna at this scale will still produce high densities and productive populations of many species of declining grassland birds of high conservation concern. Other grassland areas of similar size seem to be producing respectable densities of target species and future restoration efforts would push this area close to the conceptual model of a GBCA.

As you are aware, grassland/shrubland birds are declining faster than any other group of birds in the Upper Midwest. Recent gains in Henslow's Sparrow populations and other grassland obligates are now likely offset by massive losses of grassland due to high corn prices and declining CRP enrollment. Protecting and enhancing thousands of acres of grassland in a large patch will help to offset some of these losses and will work towards department goals for grassland species of Greatest Conservation Need.

This landscape also offers a chance to experiment with prairie and savanna restoration techniques at larger scales or scales that where we would expect to see some meaningful population response by area-sensitive species. Not only will this help to conserve SGCNs on this site -but these efforts could be translated to other conservation partner projects throughout the area. Recent publications from SC Iowa/NC Missouri call suggest that public lands of this scale should be demonstration areas that model innovative management techniques that the partners wish to replicate across a larger privately held landscape. If the department is interested in promoting prairie/savanna restoration or grass-based agriculture in the surrounding area, this property offers a chance to model this work and experiment with techniques in partnership with local landowners.

I'm with Audubon in pointing out that this is a perfect opportunity to make a very good habitat for grassland and shrub land birds which are facing ever shrinking habitat. To me this should be the top priority for this land.

I would like to express my hope that the Wisconsin DNR will set aside most of this land for wildlife conservation. The size of the area makes it ideal habitat for wildlife that once inhabited our part of the state in great numbers, but which are now greatly diminished.

Please know that I fully support grassland bird conservation at the Badger Army Ammunition Plant.

Please preserve the Badger Ammo acreage as a reserve for grassland birds. The land is a treasure in the southern half of the state! and the birds REALLY need it.

<p>Preserve the grassland for the birds. We are losing populations of grassland birds. Do what you can to help.</p>
<p>I am interested in having the Badger Plant lands used for activities that are not detrimental to the natural resources that are found there. Specifically, the large grassland landscape provides a unique setting for grassland birds. Such birds require large areas, and Badger provides this. I hope that recreational activities that would hinder such natural landscapes would not be permitted. Badger presents a wonderful opportunity to preserve a large natural landscape.</p>
<p>I hope the Badger Plant land will be used for grassland bird conservation and low impact recreational activities such as biking and hiking. It is already documented that grassland bird populations are declining. I just returned from a trip to the prairies of western Minnesota where there is great concern because existing grasslands are being plowed to plant more corn. This is something happening throughout the mid-west as grassland bird habitat continues to dwindle.</p>
<p>I would like to cast my vote on behalf of the unique species of plants and animals that reside in this special area. My view is that the land should be preserved and restored and the focus should be on conservation.</p>
<p>I am writing to support managing the Sauk County Badger Army Ammunition Plant area for birds and insects and other wildlife, and not turn any of it into another noisy entertainment park with paintball, 4 wheelers, etc. Not too far away is the Wisconsin Dells with plenty of alternative entertainment. Badger's proximity to Nature Conservancy lands and Devil's Lake and other natural areas makes it really easy to see that it should continue to be restored as native habitat. Areas of grassland, prairies, perhaps oak savanna, and native shrubs would be ideal.</p>
<p>Though it is important to consider multiple uses of this site for the citizens of the state, it is important the value of this site as a conservation area for grasslands and shrublands birds be prioritized. All other uses should be compatible with this priority, and therefore should be non-motorized, low impact, and seasonally compatible with birds' use of the habitats. Thank you for recognizing how important this approach is to many citizens of Wisconsin and to the future of biodiversity in this state.</p>
<p>We believe that the badger land should be kept in as natural state as possible, in order to have 1 small place where original species can re generate and provide people a place to observe the work of nature without the close interference by man.</p>
<p>We would strongly urge that management of grassland and shrubland habitats and grassland and shrubland birds be the primary focus at Badger. With 7,354 acres available, this is one of the very best opportunities anywhere in the state to restore these suites of birds, which are declining faster than any other groups of birds in Wisconsin. Recent studies of nesting grassland birds at Sauk Prairie Recreation Area and BAAP have led to its nomination as a state Important Bird Area, a program that is international in scope and for which sites must meet strict objective, standardized, and science-based criteria. Bird species that have been found here include Eastern and Western meadowlarks, Bobolink, Upland Sandpiper, Orchard Oriole, Bell's Vireo, Dickcissel, and Clay-colored Vesper, Savannah, Field, Grasshopper sparrows, and more. Many of these species are sensitive to habitat fragmentation and need very large blocks of habitat to successfully breed. In addition, climate change may shift the range of many southern shrubland birds into Wisconsin, one more reason we recommend that management of Badger for grassland and shrubland bird habitat be a very high priority. Wisconsin Audubon Council</p>

The opportunity to thoughtfully plan and restore an area as significant in size and ecological value as the former BAAP is an extremely rare occasion – particularly in the context of a highly fragmented landscape such as that found in Southern WI. As a partner to the WDNR, we appreciate the opportunity to provide comment at the onset of this exciting master planning process.

The WDNR's Draft Regional & Property Analysis: Sauk Prairie Recreation Area recognizes and discusses the site's ecological significance and capability, particularly for landscape-scale management and conservation values. A substantial portion of the proposed SPRA has the potential to be restored and managed as a complex of dry prairie, surrogate grassland, oak savanna, and oak woodland habitats. These ecological communities provide critical habitat to an array of rare and declining species, particularly grassland and shrubland birds, a group of species of critical conservation need in WI. The opportunity to restore and maintain a large, unfragmented block of habitat—particularly an area supporting the impressive array of biodiversity already known to exist on the property – is unparalleled in Southern WI. With this in mind, we encourage the WDNR to carefully consider the true compatibility and potential impacts that many of the proposed recreational uses may have on these habitats and the viability of the species that depend on them. Recreational uses should allow resource managers to maintain the ability to manage the area as a whole, with long term ecological integrity at the forefront.

The northern section of the proposed SPRA offers further opportunities as it transitions from grassland to the forested south slopes of Devil's Lake State Park. The property's Bedrock Glade and Oak Woodlands support habitat for another suite of rare plant and animal species. We strongly agree with the WDNR's Draft Property Analysis when it states "restoring these historically fire dependent communities to a more natural state would allow for a gentle transition zone between the vast closed canopy forests of the Baraboo Hills and the expansive grasslands of BAAP."

As a whole, the proposed Sauk Prairie Recreation Area will continue to provide an important wildlife corridor between the Lower WI Riverway and the Baraboo Hills – both areas that have been the focus of conservation activities for decades, and that constitute some of the state's most significant areas for biological diversity. The Southern Range of the Baraboo Hills, which were designated as a National Natural Landmark by the National Park Service in 1974, encompass over 53,000 acres of private and public land, harbor more than 1,800 plants and animals, and contain the largest block of intact upland forest in Southern WI. The avenue of connectivity which the proposed Sauk Prairie Recreation Area will continue to provide between the natural communities found along the WI River corridor and the Baraboo bluffs will become ever more important as fragmentation from the pressures of development and other land uses will undoubtedly continue in the future.

The rich array of outdoor recreation opportunities found in Sauk County make it a destination for hikers, bird watchers, hunters, anglers and naturalists from around the country. If appropriately and wisely managed to enhance the ecological attributes that make the proposed SPRA so special, this site can significantly benefit the entire region's biological and economic vitality without compromising its ecological integrity and biological diversity.

Finally, we strongly encourage the WDNR to chart a course for the SORA that is guided by the vision of the Badger Reuse Plan, to which the WDNR was a signatory. Through the time and dedication of a diverse group, the Badger Reuse Plan was developed over many years and provides many sound recommendations for the future of the proposed SPRA. Quoting the

executive summary:

“The conversion of the Badger lands provides remarkable opportunities for the protection, enhancement, use, restoration, and enjoyment of the property’s unique natural and cultural features. In its work, the BRC has sought to highlight these opportunities, and to achieve a realistic, community-based, consensus vision for realizing them. In the past, the Badger lands have too often been a place of division, pain, and conflict. It is the hope of the committee that all members of our community may now contribute to a new beginning at Badger, on the honors the past while serving future generations.” Nature Conservancy

I would like to cast my vote on behalf of the unique species of plants and animals that reside in this special area. My view is that the land should be preserved and restored and the focus should be on conservation.

Ecological Opportunities:

I would like the land to revert to presettlement natural state with native flora and fauna, keeping intact as much of the parcel as possible to serve as a link between the Baraboo hills and WI River wildlife corridors

I would like to see well-labeled nature trails identifying plants and also what insects, birds and other animals may be present.

Any chance of seeing a largely undeveloped area will provide many chances for increasing ecological knowledge and appreciation of the natural ecosystem.

Broad-stroke restoration of systems; grazing, burning; restore historic hydrology to help reduce otter creek flooding

No motorized vehicles!

Farming, a great way to produce something; this also will have a very positive effect on the local economy

Badger/Sauk Prairie should be managed as a single unit; plans should be implemented in phases so impacts can be studied and plans adjusted as necessary; army should retain liability for undiscovered contamination; establish a wildlife corridor between Devil’s Lake SP and WI river; greatly reduce the number of roads.

-Ecosystem restoration of prairie and oak savanna (large-scale high quality systems)

-Well-staffed ecological team

-Habitat protection for grassland savanna and migratory birds, careful use to encourage native prairie

-Integrating conservation and agriculture through research (collaborating with USDA DFRC and ag neighbors)

I am writing to voice my support for protecting the lands of the former Badger Ammunition Plant as habitat for grassland birds. I recently went camping at Devil's Lake State park and drove down to the ammunitions plant to observe the area. Native grasslands of this size are extremely rare. This habitat area is large enough to really make a difference in protecting grassland species breeding areas. I am an environmental science teacher at both the high school and college level. I teach my students that habitat loss is one of several major environmental problems. There is less than one-tenth of a percent of original grassland habitat that remains. I was happy to learn that species like the bobolink, Upland Sandpiper, Orchard Oriole, Bell's vireo and Dickcissel are actually found there. They are very rare and need large grassland habitats for survival and nesting.

As a descendent from a family that was displaced by BAAP I feel this is a great opportunity to restore the land to presettlement state with the ultimate goal of providing a rare place for solitude in nature with open skies.

<p>Rare opportunity to conserve critical and unique grassland habitat connected to Lake WI and Devil's Lake State Park.</p>
<p>Just as the HoChunk has performed a miracle with the 8,000 acres on the Kickapoo, so also should we restore the Badger to where nature can work to restore the Prairie, including the heavily polluted ground water.</p>
<p>I am writing you today to voice my opinion about the future use of the BAAP landscape. I am in favor of turning this property back into a prairie that favors a grassland habitat. This would provide an excellent opportunity for the public to view grassland bird species. There are not many places in the surrounding area for viewing these unique bird species that only inhabit grassland habitats.</p>
<p>I am writing to voice my support of turning the Badger munitions facility into a large, contiguous grassland bird habitat. I support the collaborative efforts that went into drafting the Badger master Plan and I would like to see the recreational activities on the site to be limited to things that are compatible with the vision of grassland restoration and protecting grassland birds. Ecological restoration is, in itself, a wonderful form of recreation and it provides many other opportunities and benefits for others.</p>
<p>It is clear to us that the Draft Regional & Property Analysis: Sauk Prairie Recreation Area is responsive to the above contexts and opportunities. We urge the WDNR to keep the unique ecological and historical significance the focus of its planning for the Sauk Prairie Recreation Area.</p> <p>We hope that WDNR will continue its focus on fulfilling "the ecological opportunities available" while very carefully choosing recreational activities which are truly compatible with that focus.</p> <p>We appreciate the opportunity to comment on proposed uses of this vital ecological area and look forward to continuing to work with the WDNR to protect and enhance this unique environment.</p>
<p>I am taking a moment to express my personal thoughts related to the DNR's master planning for the Badger property. I speak from fifteen years of involvement with this project. I was originally interested in the threat of groundwater contamination, and remain so. But my imagination was stirred in 1998 after hearing from representatives of the Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie in Illinois, which was created following the decommissioning of the former Joliet Arsenal. The possibility of returning a huge swath of degraded industrial land to health using ecological restoration techniques developed at Madison's own UW Arboretum appealed to me, and to many others it turned out, as an unmatched opportunity to turn a decrepit and sad reminder of conflict and destruction into a unique community asset. As a planner myself, I saw the regional potential of Badger as the lynchpin in a larger complex of significant natural resources that include the Baraboo Range and Devil's Lake State Park, numerous State Natural Areas in the Baraboo Hills, the Riverland Conservancy and Lake Wisconsin, and the Lower Wisconsin State Riverway. The Sauk Prairie community and the city of Baraboo, not to mention Sauk County and the south central Wisconsin region in general would surely benefit economically and culturally from the protection of this area for wildlife habitat and recreation.</p>
<p>I would like to see this property, along with the other Baraboo recreation area lands and Devil's Lake, more intensely managed for habitat. DNR should have a portion solely dedicated for habitat management on these properties.</p>
<p>Please relate to the on-going health and healing of the entire 7,300 acres. Keep the property ecologically intact.</p>

Recreation Opportunities
Hiking, bike trails (non-motorized). Maintain the quiet and serene natural setting. Hopefully this will happen in my lifetime.
Please include horse trails w/water and parking & Nordic skiing.
Parcel L & N – S/B non-motorized watercraft accessible. Shuttle vehicle used from parking lot to minimize vehicle traffic. Provide dog sled trails. Dog sledding – a growing popular activity needs more accommodation – too many conflicts w/ other sports. Walk-in camping.
Integration of the “Great Sauk” Multi-purpose Trail that will start at Sauk City and run to the south end of BASAP of the current easement that DOT purchased.
Create a championship-level disc golf course. 18 holes. I know people that would design courses and assist with the labor of installing the equipment for free.
I would strongly support removing the word “recreation” from the wording & final title. Recreation should be secondary to the ecological restoration.
Horse trails and horse camping.
Horse trails & overnight camping. Horse industry is a multi-billion dollar industry, will bring business to the area. Trails can be designed as low maintenance.
It seems to me that the vast majority of the recreational suggestions could be handled on any farm parcel anywhere.
The opportunity for landscape level ecological restoration etc., however, appears to be non-existent anywhere else. 200 acres for this or that does not seem like a very good use of the opportunity. It would be a travesty to allow motorized recreation here.
IF parts of the property MUST be used for these small parcel activities I would hope they could be clustered next to Hwy. 12. Dog Trial?! Try Pine Island or Mazo.– neither are far from here.
Recreation should be non-motorized and preserve a quiet contemplative atmosphere.
Again favor low impact, low noise, low pollution recreational opportunities.
Paved biking trails, hiking trails.
Open to public for non-motorized recreation, biking, hiking, etc. Picnic facilities etc. No ATV – Hunting.
Please include equestrian trails and horse camping areas in the SPRA.
State ATV & UTV & snowmobile trail through the park. Multi-use trails for all people. UTV for family outing.
Interested in single track Mt. Bike trails. Trails would work well as snowshoe trails in winter. Keeps snowshoers off cross country ski trails. Trails can be built and maintained by volunteers according to International Mountain Bike Assoc. (I.M.B.A.) standards. Perhaps build at the South Nose of Devils Lake State Park? Not sure if there is appropriate wooded terrain in the Sauk Prairie Rec. Area or not. It is important to differentiate the difference between well designed single track trails that are not highly eroded rather than existing trails that Mt. Bikes are allowed on. Single track trails can serve as hiking and trail running trails also, for recreation users that prefer more seclusion and challenge. These trails tend to be rolling, narrow, and twisty. Very fun and surprisingly quiet nature recreation activity.
Add public shooting area. Rifles .22 cal. to 50 cal., 50 yd. to 1,000 yd. 3-gun shooting tournaments – rifle, pistol, shotgun. Designate area for automatic weapons (controlled) competitions could come in from all over nation. Nevada has an area.
A place for people to run their remote control (RC) cars – planes (Bong State Area).

<p>Hiking /biking trails with a historical theme are a popular recreation.</p>
<p>I understand the need incorporate more recreational uses than the purist /idealist envision. Hopefully these uses can be clustered in areas liked the North Magazines Area or along Hwy. 12 to allow restoration on a large scale but still allow alternative uses – the dairy forage land could act as a buffer for some of these activities & noises they generate.</p>
<p>I'm concerned about what will happen to Pine Glen when access through BAAP is possible. Pine Glen is a sensitive and beautiful natural area. I would like to see some form of limited public access, but in a manner that protects the very fragile glen. Perhaps limited trails and maybe a boardwalk partway up the glen with signage restricting off-trail use. (This comment is intended for both ecological and recreation opportunities.)</p>
<p>Mountain bike (single track) trails in the hills in the Northeast corner of SPRA. Trails could be used for snowshoeing in the winter. If they are built for this use, it would take away the hiker / bike conflicts at Devils Lake. There are not many snowshoe trails in the area. These trails would not be suitable for cross country skiing. That could be at Devils Lake / Mirror Lake / Indian Lake.</p>
<p>Softball and soccer fields, dog activities, ATVs, horses.</p>
<p>An additional arm of the Ice Age Trail would help preserve the fragile environment. Promotes education.</p>
<p>Cycling, consumer recreation & single track recreation. Cycling participation is solid and growing. Baraboo area supports a large cycling community. Tourism dollars exist in cycling. The [? not legible] of the Sauk Prairie / Baraboo Area could prove to have unique and exciting single track riding. MTB riders are very sensitive of trails and build community support around trail building.</p>
<p>I am excited about the Sauk Prairie Recreation Area being opened near Baraboo, Wisconsin.</p>
<p>I am also writing as an off-road motorcycle enthusiast. I am hoping the Sauk Prairie Recreation Area can include single-track motorcycle trails as part of the development of the property. (Myself and members of my riding club are also eager to help with any part of this development).</p>
<p>Trail riding with an off-road motorcycle is one of the best activities on earth – it provides a beautiful nature experience, along with great exercise and concentration.</p>
<p>Trail riding will also be an activity that is “gentle” on the environment. Most trail bikes now have 4 cycle engines with quiet mufflers. The 4-cycle engine greatly reduces emissions (over 2-cycle engines) and the quiet mufflers should keep noise levels below 96 dB for a given bike. I most often choose my Suzuki DR350 for trail riding up north because it has a very quiet muffler. I am able to see much more wildlife because the bike is so quiet while gliding through the woods.</p>
<p>A single track is all that is required for trail riding – this is a single path on the ground about 12 inches wide. This will make a small “foot-print” on the park, and should only be visible while you are on the trail. Most off-road motorcycle enthusiasts prefer a challenging trail which means that the single-track can be laid through the park’s toughest terrain. We prefer hills, rocks, gullies, and un-even ground.</p>
<p>If the DNR will include single-track motorcycle trails in the park, then I and my riding group will help you any way we can. Please call me anytime to discuss.</p>

<p>Cycling – Mountain Biking as well as hybrid (light off road) riding. With a network of light off road trails, more aggressive single track trails can easily fit in small sections covering a lot of miles in very few acres. It would be nice to involve the International Mountain Bike Association (IMBA). IMBA is available to help lay out design and build low impact trail systems. Sauk Co. has little opportunity for Mountain Biking. As a bicycle retailer we are often asked where to ride. We recommend Blue Mounds State Park, Kettle Moraine, Levis Mound (Neilsville). None of which are in Sauk Co. Yes, DLSP and Mirror Lake SP have some bike trails, but they are not technical enough for the riding most mountain bikers like. These are hiking trails and hikers get upset when bikes come flying past. To have a degree of separation between hiking and bike would be valuable. The single track bike trails make great snowshoeing in the winter.</p>
<p>Any recreational uses should be LOW impact and Not disturb or negatively affect other visitors.</p>
<p>Silent sports, hiking, biking, horseback riding.</p>
<p>The horse industry is a multi-billion dollar contributor to Wisconsin. More and more people are turning to trail riding and camping for recreation. Looking to the future as more area is developed it is becoming harder to find safe places to go with a horse. With proper master planning trails can be designed for safe use by all. Hiking, biking, horses and even motorized vehicles can share the trails.</p>
<p>Eco tourism including bird watching, hiking, education, historic sites, family recreation. This property is unique to grassland and savannah birds. Other forms of recreation have more alternatives that do not interfere with ecological integrity of this last tract of public owned land in the southern part of the state.</p>
<p>I feel the community would continue to benefit from the further development of hiking trails, birding blinds, cross country ski trails and mountain biking trails within this property's boundaries.</p>
<p>Hunting /trapping /bird watching OK. I think existing trail structure would also be conducive to skiing / hiking / dog sledding. IF ATVs, dirt bikes, rockets, etc. are allowed – keep in the far NW quadrant of property that is already heavily disturbed.</p>
<p>Horse trails – for day riding.</p>
<p>Please keep them low-impact in respect for the natural community of plants and animals. Several endangered species of birds nest on the property.</p>
<p>I am a member of several spaniel clubs in Wisconsin and would support use of a dog training/trialing area.</p>
<p>I would support that NO HORSES were allowed on the dog training grounds.</p>
<p>My husband and I had a home built in 2005 in a subdivision on Weigand's Bay called Lakeview Estates. We live there year round and enjoy the natural beauty, peace, and quiet. We are against a boat landing on the bay for many reasons. We are concerned about its impact on the newly established conservation area at Richard Grant Park nearby. We are also worried about having more vehicular traffic around the bay and the resulting noise and lights. We are concerned about surface water runoff into the bay from the parking lot that would be built. Also we are worried about the landing's effect on the safety of those swimming or boating in the bay as it is a small bay with many shallow areas/sand bars. We are concerned too about shore erosion and about a negative impact on our property values.</p>
<p>Since a public boat landing already exists less than a mile away near the Hillcrest Restaurant and a second one exists in the opposite direction at Moon Valley less than two miles away, we doubt that a landing in Weigand's Bay is even necessary in between the other two. It would be an unwise expenditure of public funds with detrimental effects on the environment and on those of us who currently live around the bay.</p>

I am writing to express my sentiments regarding the proposal for a boat landing and other development on Weigand's Bay. I live on the bay and contributed to the Richard Grant Park. The bay is very busy already, especially on the weekends when any boat landing would be most heavily used, contributing even more to the congestion, and to the dangers inherent to that congestion. Any boat would need to "commute" essentially through the center of the bay to get to the landing. As I assume you know, the bay also has finger like inlets so to speak that provide a place for wildlife to live and thrive, and additional traffic would impair this as well, and I think more likely than not it would damage the fishery, and the bay is very commonly fished.

In addition there are already two other boat ramps open to the public that are nearby, so I don't really understand the need for a third on Weigand's Bay. What is the rationale for this?

I am not opposed to the taking down of the blue building, which I believe was a pump station of some type, as it is a bit of an eyesore. I do understand the need to strike a balance between no development and over-development. I would not be opposed to a small development, perhaps a small park and parking lot, that would close by 9 PM or so, a smallish swim area, a few picnic tables, additional tree plantings to preserve what is left or the rustic-ness of the shoreline and to provide shade for future generations, etc., but I think to build a boat landing invites a whole other kind of land/lake use, more alcohol, more loudness, more chaos in a small area, etc., and I am strongly opposed to it.

I own a property in Weigand's Bay on Lake Wisconsin, and it has come to my attention that a third, completely unnecessary, public boat launch is being considered on the peninsula between North and South Weigand's Bay.

This not only would have a negative impact on the environment and wildlife, it poses safety concerns for landowners in the area, and would be an irresponsible waste of money.

With a boat launch at the Hillcrest, and a boat launch at Moon Valley, which are only 2 miles apart, is it really necessary to have yet another launch between these 2 locations? Is it necessary to have a boat launch for every mile of shoreline? Not only that, but the Ferry landing has a boat launch, The Windings has a boat launch, along with The Water's Edge, Lakeview Estates, and Eagle Point, not to mention multiple public access areas along the shoreline in the township of Merrimac.....and this is only the Sauk County side. Just across the lake in Columbia county, there are also many, many boat launches.

Please help us and the other property owners in the area, to prevent this from happening.

I am writing to you to voice my support of the creation of OHV recreation areas in the State of Wisconsin. I recently learned that the Wisconsin Off-Highway Motorcycle Association (WOHMA) has been active in trying to get single track motorcycle trails added into the Sauk Prairie Recreation Area (former Badger Army Ammunition Plant) Master plan. I am asking that you consider supporting the efforts of WOHMA to create a OHV recreation area in Wisconsin. I enjoy spending time with friends and my daughter riding off-highway motorcycles, but currently have to go outside the state (upper Michigan) to use their public trail systems. Northern Wisconsin has a decent trail system for ATV's, but for some reason motorcycles are not allowed to use the trails? Please help support the development of OHV recreation areas that provide the opportunity for Wisconsin residents to stay in their home state and contribute to local economies rather than travel outside the state.

I live at E12667a Weigands Bay North. I oppose the proposal of a new boat ramp in this area. This bay is heavily used for fishing and other recreational sports and does offer "a place off the main channel" to do those things without a bunch of additional boat traffic getting in and out of the lake. The shape of the bay has a lot of residences around it and is a little more conducive to noise bouncing around more than just being on the actual lake. I use the 2 boat ramps that are both within 2 miles each way of our home and they are both nice to use. I don't see needing another one in this part of the lake.

The area that is proposed is home to a lot of wildlife and a nest of Blue Heron have been across our place for 7 years now. I think it would be a nice place for a nice wooded conservancy that people could hike around. I do not like the idea of runoff from additional parking or the additional disturbance to get the lot in. This is an amazingly quiet and area free of car headlights. Let's keep it that way.

Hi Bill, I'm the President of the Southern Wisconsin Sporting Spaniel Club. We have heard about the new land near Baraboo that the DNR has acquired and that you are the Manager. As a club we would like to express our concern that there are too few field trial grounds in the state that accommodate foot trials. Most Class 1 Field Trial grounds get chewed up by horses from Bird Dog trials and are unfit for a foot trial such as we run. This requires us to find private farms that are in CRP and as you are aware the CRP program is waning or the cover planted is unsuitable. We plant all pen raised pheasants for our trials and there are some benefits to the land. Leftover pheasants etc. It would be great if there was a foot trial location in southern Wisconsin with good brome grass cover or a CRP mix that doesn't include Canadian Wild Rye, Virginia Wild Rye, or Foxtail. These are extremely harmful to dogs as we have been finding out in the past few years. For a good foot trial for springers we need less than 100 acres if the cover is good, obstructions and shooting lanes are few, and it is accessible. Well I've said my piece and hope you will consider this as a partial use for the land in question. Thanks Bill!

I might be making a pest of myself. I also chair the Rails to trails county sub-committee and I just put together the information about what already exists in support of the trail from the villages and the town of Prairie du Sac. Craig has it.

Ideal riding experience: one-way single track (about 30 inches wide) trail in the woods. One-way - it is a safety issue. Single track - motorcycle only. No ATVs. (It is about the ruts they create.) The ground is the ground (rocks, sand, clay, dirt). It only changes how the trails will need to be maintained and/or laid out.

As a girl, I'd like to see toilets. Although, I'm not averse to going in the woods as long as there isn't too much poison ivy.

Trails of varying difficulty (it is a family sport) and a loading dock would be nice also. I hope this helps. I know we are one of the smaller user groups. However, you will find we are willing to step up and volunteer to work on our trails. Also, you have several large metropolitan areas (with lots of riders) within a couple hours' drive of this facility. I'm familiar with the area and would definitely like to ride there.

My family is avid off-road motorcycle riders and we plan vacations around different riding areas. I feel our needs are underserved in the state of Wisconsin. While ATV's, snowmobiles and other trail user groups have made headway, our user group seems to be shunned at every opportunity. Please bear in mind, when I talk about off-road riding, I'm not talking about motocross types of tracks with jumps and such. I'm looking more for a 12 inch wide path that winds through trees and fields. Here is a link to some information on MI trail systems.

We travel to various trail systems in MI every year. We also ride in WI using the Jackson County trails and use the adjacent campground. The wide ATV trails that we are allowed on, are not desirable for our type of riding.

Unfortunately, the SCORP report doesn't reflect our user group fully due to the lack of riding opportunities in the state. If we had more trails, we would have more participants as is evidenced by the trail system in our neighboring state of Michigan.

We would like to see more riding opportunities within WI, and more spread out, throughout the state. Currently, there are very few opportunities in WI and that a trail system that winds through the Badger Ammunition Plant with its central location, would see quite a bit of usage.

Thank you for getting back to me! I would like to point out something I didn't add previously. Currently we have around 30 miles of single track motorcycle trail in WI in 3 northern locations as opposed to MI having around 1200 miles.

If I remember correctly, about five miles in Douglas Co, about 19 miles in Jackson Co, and about 6 miles open in Clark Co.

The minimum number is difficult to quantify. For some people 30-40 trail miles fits the bill, for others it's not the distance, but how technical. For instance Tin Cup and Moss lake trails are very technical and a little over 20 miles in length. Porterfield and Drummond island trails are more a series of small loops, than one long flowing trail. This link shows maps of the trails in MI, they also give you an idea of the footprint size of some trails. http://michigan.gov/dnr/0,1607,7-153-10365_15070-38330--,00.html

I know a few people that own land that have built trails and one has 2 miles in 20 acres, one has 6 miles in 20 acres, one has 7 miles on 30 acres.

Being an avid trail rider, I would love to see horse trails and even a horse camp included in the plans.

But I wanted to add my voice to the community discussion to support horseback riding trails in the Sauk County Recreation Area. The area is about 60 min from my barn and it would be a fantastic opportunity for the summer

I am an avid hunter of upland birds such as Rough Grouse and Pheasants and occasionally waterfowl. I am active in training and handling my dogs in field trials as well as hunt tests.

I am the president of the Northeast Wisconsin Spaniel Club, as well as a member of several other spaniel and all breed clubs. Our club will be putting on our 31st Annual Trial this year.

Spaniel trials in Wisconsin number about 10 or 12 per year as well as 8 to 10 flushing spaniel hunt tests. The AKC has broadened the eligibility of flushing spaniel tests to include Airedales, Boykin spaniels, American Water Spaniels as well as Flat coated and Curly Coated Retrievers.

Grounds are becoming increasingly hard to find, with private landowners removing land from CRP due to the high price of corn and other crops. This has most clubs scrambling to find areas to hold trails.

Grounds need to be a minimum of 50 acres with prairie grasses high enough to hold live birds (pheasants and chukers) but not so high as to preclude seeing the dog work.

There are a very limited number DNR managed properties that are suitable for such trials, and many are not allowed to be used during the hunting season.

Some grounds cannot be used for walking trials for spaniels and pointing dogs because of the use of horses on the same grounds. This type of use can make it unsafe for humans on foot as well as dogs. If that type of use is contemplated it should be segregated specifically for that use.

I and many others believe that the DNR should take into consideration the need for such areas and under take to develop some part of the Sauk Prairie property for such use.

Training and hunting with dogs has a strong heritage in Wisconsin and deserves to be encouraged

We must recognize that preserving that heritage is worthwhile.

I live in Pleasant Prairie, WI and like to trail ride motorcycles with my two daughters. They have been riding since they were 6 years old. Most of our riding has been in Michigan because of the limited trail network in Wisconsin. Our bikes are quiet, in fact the first accessory I purchased was a quieter muffler called an FMF Q Stealth. Please consider adding single track motorcycle trails to the Sauk Prairie Recreation Area. If you want to see just how involved Michigan is in this, visit www.cycleconservationclub.org. I have attached a picture of me with my daughter.

I got the notice about the hearing and have shared the information with some in the off-highway motorcycling community. I serve as the off-highway motorcycle representative to the State Trails Council so if you need additional information about our interests I will be happy to help.

There are many opportunities here. I'd like to share the park. Here are a couple of comparisons that comes to mind.

Note: I am 54 years young. I am still using ORV parks and areas. I also bike and walk with my wife. Horse people have plenty of room too. If a hands on introduction to these parks / areas is in order I'd be happy to show you around.

St. Joes State Park in Mo.

I'd be *happy to present these ideas at the meeting if you think they are appropriate.*

[attached web links to suggested trail maps and designs]

I am an active horse rider and barn owner with several adult and child riders involved here. We are hoping you will consider horse trails on the Badger Ordinance property. There are none on our area, and federal fundings have specified that some of the funds going to states for recreational trails be for horse trails. We are too often excluded from trails. Please consider adding horse trails in the Badger Ordinance property.

I'm writing as a long time dual sport and off-highway motorcycle (OHM) enthusiast. I'm part of a much larger, loose knit community of individuals and clubs with a shared interest in off-highway and dual sport motorcycling.

I strongly urge that single-track motorcycle trails be established as part of the Sauk Prairie Recreation Area.

Single track motorcycle trail riding opportunities are extremely limited in Wisconsin, especially so in the southern part of the state. Many Wisconsin riders must travel to other states for this favored type of riding opportunity. On the other hand, many riders from other states would readily travel to Wisconsin if new single track riding opportunities were available.

I'm a current Minnesota resident, though I was raised in Solon Springs, Wisconsin, and attended college in Milwaukee. My personal experience during my youth in northern Wisconsin was that finding riding opportunities was difficult; but while in Milwaukee the lack of local riding opportunities forced me to essentially abandon off-highway riding altogether. Thankfully, I once again have off-highway riding opportunities local to me, but I also have means to travel to riding areas away from my home locale – such as a trail system at Sauk Prairie would be.

Single track motorcycle trails, similar to mountain bike trails, are curvilinear with narrow tread ways that are generally intended to flow with and amongst the natural terrain and vegetation. Wooded areas and with elevation changes are often highlights of this type of trail. Sustainable trail design makes them low maintenance, and generally any needed upkeep is performed by local clubs or user groups.

Tangentially, I understand that legislation is being developed in Wisconsin to establish a trail sticker program for OHMs, similar to that for ATVs, which will generate funds to build and maintain motorcycle trails within the state.

As I mentioned, there is a wide community of riders interested in this trail development opportunity. I worry, though, that our interests may be viewed by some planners as low demand. I can assure you that any perceived lack of demand is an unfortunate byproduct cascading from the lack of opportunity, therefore the lack of activity, and therefore the lack of visibility that our group has had in Wisconsin. Other user groups that have had much more opportunity to recreate have by default also been much more visible to resource planners, and as a result may be perceived as having higher demand. A single track trail system within the Baraboo Hills Recreation Area will be a popular destination.

I'm excited to hear that additional outdoor recreational area may soon be available in the area. As a long time outdoorsman, I appreciate all the hard work people are willing to endure to provide these opportunities.

I participate in a multitude of outdoor activities including ATV riding, hiking, riding horse, photography, and canoeing. During the last 5 years, I've taken up off-road motorcycling. In my opinion, it is the best motorized way to enjoy the great outdoors. I've been pleasantly surprised how little impact a motorcycle has on the environment. In fact, without frequent riding, the small network of trails on my property quickly disappear.

Unfortunately, the state of WI has very little opportunity for off-road motorcycles (including dualsports motorcycles; which I ride). Knobby Ridge in Clark County was a favorite destination of mine for riding singletrack (narrow trails passable only by a single motorcycle/horse/bike), but has sadly been closed (indefinitely?) the last two seasons. The only other area available specifically for singletrack is in Jackson County. There are so few alternatives, I've started planning trips to Michigan, South Dakota (Black Hills), and even Colorado.

If there's any possibility of singletrack trails being incorporated into the Sauk Prairie Recreation Area, it would be a very popular addition for a large group of Wisconsin OHM riders currently feeling left out in the cold.

I appreciate all the hard work you're doing to open these areas and hope OHM can be incorporated into the master plan for the site.

I would like to support the creation of dog training and Class I field trial grounds at the site. I am involved in spaniel field trialing which has an extremely low impact on grassland property compared to some other dog trial events. Private land available to hold a spring or fall field trial is very limited. Please confirm you received my message and I would be happy to respond to questions.

I just heard about the possible planned usages for this area. I would very much like to see some kind of OHV (off highway vehicle) park for jeep/truck type vehicles in this property. I travel to Minnesota to the Gilbert area OHV Park at least twice a year and to many other out of state destinations to be able to use my Jeep on approved trails to play on.

I am writing to support the concept of multiple-use recreation for the former Badger Army Ammunition Plant.

In particular, the inclusion of "single-track" off highway motorcycle trails. The southern part of Wisconsin is underserved with this type of recreational opportunity. I am involved with both the Madison Motorcycle Club and the Jackson County Trail Riders: we have worked on the single-track trails in Jackson County (Crawford Hills) and Clark County (Knobby Ridge). Single-track motorcycle trails have a limited impact (only about 36" wide) and are compatible with many other uses. In Jackson County we have relocated and rebuilt the trails after forest harvests, some horseback riders have used the motorcycle trails early in the Spring prior to the official opening date for motorcycle use.

I am confident that local off highway motorcyclists will strongly support single-track trails. By user fee and/or trail maintenance.

I would like to express some interest in having some motorcycle single track considered in the development of this land. Right now there are very few places to ride single track on my ohm. I would like to get my two sons involved as well. The nearest one to me right now is over two hrs. away and has no option for beginning riders. Perhaps two tracks one for family and one for more experienced riders. I do not ride loud bikes, they are kept stock and have always met sound test requirement when I have gone to places that require testing in the past.

I am a Wisconsin motorcyclist and have ridden road and off-road for the past 43 years, I am currently 58 years old. Wisconsin has many great roads for motorcycling and does a great job of promoting those opportunities for tourism. Many national motorcycle magazines list southern Wisconsin as one of the top five (5) places to ride motorcycles in the United States. Many of my motorcycling friends come to Wisconsin to ride the fantastic roads, enjoy the scenery, and spend money at hotels and restaurants as well as other tourist areas.

However Wisconsin motorcyclists are not so fortunate for off road riding opportunities. There are very few off road single lane riding areas. If I want to go riding with my sons I have to travel to Mineral Point for limited riding on old railroad beds, or travel to the Black River Falls area. The Sauk Prairie Recreation Area would be an ideal spot for an off road motorcycle riding area. The proximity to hotels and restaurants in Wisconsin Dells and Sauk City make it an ideal location.

Second only to the Motorcycle Safety course, an off road riding area for motorcycles is the best way to train young motorcyclist on how to safely ride motorcycles.

Please consider further the possibility of adding motorcycle off road riding to the Recreation Area plan.

I am writing you as a dog training enthusiast. I am requesting you reserve a portion of the prairie area for a Class A Field Trial Grounds. I am active in 4 different dog training and breed clubs. I can tell you this area, being a prairie area, is a perfect example of an area that can serve as a trial grounds and well as serve other purposes for other groups. Bong Recreation Area is a prime example of trial grounds that are in use nearly every weekend spring through fall. They also have a group associated with the manager that assists in maintaining the grounds throughout the year. Pine Island requires membership in their association to be able to use the grounds which is public grounds.

My second request is to not allow horses on the trial grounds. This has caused irreparable damage to the trial grounds at Bong Recreation area that makes some areas at bong unusable by hunters and dog trainers on foot. They have created hoof depression in areas and ruts that make it hazardous to walk without hurting yourself.

I am excited that the State of Wisconsin is making this into a public area and asking for input from the public.

I am very interested in the chance to have Off highway motorcycle trails included in that plan. I am an off road motorcycle rider and in west central Wisconsin there are very few places to enjoy my hobby. This area would be close enough to do day trips, and possibly camping outings with its proximity to campgrounds. I hope other riders will speak up for this chance, as we are always looking for a place to go.

I am writing to offer support for a proposal to provide single-track motorcycle trails as part of the master plan for the Sauk Prairie off-road recreation area. I am a 52 year old business owner, who has also served as a local elected official and chaired several non-profit organizations. I am also a member of the Wisconsin Dual-Sport Riders and the Cycle Conservation Club of Michigan.

Off-road motorcyclists have been under served in Wisconsin for many years, as we have few trails available to us. Because of this, I have travelled to Michigan's UP on many occasions with my son & other family friends. Trail riding with a group of parents & children is one of my favorite things to do, however we don't get to do it often enough because of limited local opportunities and the travel distance involved.

While we do have a few riding areas in Wisconsin, they tend to be in the North and the sport is greatly under served. This can be verified by looking in the beds of trucks and on trailers headed North of Green Bay every weekend.

Thanks for your consideration of adding single-track motorcycle trails to the Sauk Prairie Recreation area. These trails would be well received.

I belong to a couple of clubs that train spaniels for hunting, field trials and hunt tests. This land is of interest for training our dogs

A Spaniel field trial is a traditional hunting dog sport that has been around since the 1930's.

It is a sport that embraces training spaniels for upland bird hunting and preserving native prairie landscapes.

As a controlled event it is probably safer than open hunting as anyone using a gun at a trial has been trained and selected as an official gun by the English Springer Spaniel parent club. The event stays on a designated course that can be marked with signs by the club holding the event.

There are 4 sporting spaniel clubs in the state that hold a total of 7 events per year. Our trials take place in March and April then again in the fall, late September to early November

Our clubs would welcome an area we could count on to hold these trials.

An area similar to the "Special Uses Zone" at the Bong Recreation area would work well - IF THERE WERE NO HORSES ALLOWED. Horse hoof potholes and trail ruts have made Bong very hard to utilize for our on foot events and even for dog training. Unlike Bong, we would prefer unrelated groups like the dirt bike trails be a greater distance away from the dog training/trialing area of such a "ZONE" with in this parcel.

Ideally Wisconsin spaniel clubs would hope for a scenario something like this: 2-3 separate year-round training areas of about 80 acres each. Flat areas of native grasses is what we are looking for. These areas could be first come first served and/or available to reserve. A parking area for up to 12 cars would be needed at each training field. Most training would occur on the weekends. A typical training group would gather from mid-morning to early afternoon on weekends. Dog trainers closer to the property would be inclined to also come out on weekdays or weekday evenings.

1-2 large event areas of about 200 acres or more of prairie grasses (flat and/or rolling), that clubs would reserve for the field trials I mentioned in the spring and the fall. These events have entries from out of state and need about 1-2 acres for parking, tents, toilets and trailers.

These field trials would be an economic boost to local motels, gas stations and eating establishments before and after the summer tourist season. People arrive Friday night and leave Sunday night, some clubs host a banquet in a local restaurant.

Should a use like ours fit into the Master Plan and have the type of terrain and grasses we need, it could be possible to rally all our spaniel clubs to sponsor these training and trialing areas. Grounds safety, weed control, elimination of old fence and other unsafe objects would be a start of what a spaniel work party might be. Fun trials to get new people involved could be another joint effort.

If our cause is being considered for the Master Plan, a group representing the various clubs would be interested in touring the area. I hope having our spaniels as part of your plan is as intriguing to your group as it is to ours.

<p>I am sending this e-mail to request that you and your team include single track motorcycle trails in the plan for Sauk Prairie Recreation Area. Our entire family rides and my husband and I see motorcycles as a way of keeping our teenage children. It is an exciting sport that brings the family together for fun and exercise. Wisconsin is far behind our neighboring states when it comes to providing areas to ride which forces us to travel to these states to enjoy our sport.</p>
<p>As land owners in the south Weigands Bay area, we are very concerned about the future land use there. We are very opposed to a boat landing in that area because of safety and environmental concerns. There would be increased car traffic and lights, noise, shore erosion and it would impact swimming and boating safety.</p> <p>There are approximately 6 boat landings already within a mile or two of that site, so another one really should not be necessary. We would like to see the ugly blue building torn down and a nice family-oriented park in that area.</p>
<p>Since BAAP is a large area with lots of recreation potential, we can foresee potential user conflicts arising during the planning process over what recreational pursuits are acceptable for the property and where and when they should occur in relation to the need to pursue wise land management and stewardship activities.</p> <p>Because this is such an important site for birds and other wildlife, we hope to offer valuable input that will place the site's natural resources first and foremost in the planning process.</p>
<p>I would love to see this area being used for horses and horse camping. I am with the Lake County Mounted Posse</p>
<p>I am a member of the Northeastern Wisconsin Audubon Society and the Bay Area Bird Club. I received an email about the DNR creating a management plan for the Sauk County Ammo Plant and as I was reading, got excited about the opportunity to secure a large amount of grassland and shrubland for birds and other wildlife that inhabit these areas. I also realize that these lands are being considered to be open to be utilized by other types of recreation such as ATV trails, etc. I am not a big fan of these types of activities but understand their roles and importance in the Wisconsin society. I hope you take careful consideration in figuring out how to balance these demands. This area has the potential to become a must-see destination for not only Wisconsin birders, but birders throughout the Upper Midwest.</p>

Is it true there are requests for paintball, off roading and high-powered shooting that has targets 1/4 mile down the line? I heard this and, not only do they seem incompatible with each other, it seems incongruous with the mission of Dairy Forage, habitat preservation, restoration and the established education programs that now exist.

Maybe they fit into a recreation area, but this area is surrounded by lots of neighbors, and a trail is supposed to run through it - a trail connected to three municipalities to the south where they plan to loop it through their residential areas - and connected to the state park, possibly a portion of the Ice Age Trail and the Merrimac Preserve. The trail routing to Baraboo and connection to Reedsburg's 400 Trail to be determined. It's intended to become a regional trail connecting Dane, Columbia, Sauk and counties west to the Mississippi.

I wonder if the sound of high-powered rifles over a period of time would not be appreciated by neighbors and their livestock. How much of a safety zone would need to be established? And how would people know where they were supposed to be to do these activities? Where on the site could such a high-powered rifle range be located that would not restrict the missions of the landowners, damage or compromise habitat and could public safety also be guaranteed? Would this be a leased site, would DNR take responsibility for managing this activity site or would this mean the property would no longer be managed as a single entity? National Parks Service does not allow DNR leases and the reuse plan calls for managing the site as a single entity.

It may be a vision, but there are lots of grassland and savannah birds that need all this biodiversity, and the reuse plan involved 21 stakeholders: municipalities, the Ho-Chunk Nation, state and federal agencies and lots of interested area residents. Their meetings had frequently had standing-room only audiences.

I know considerable effort was made to remove all the shooting residue from the Badger Conservation Club. Clean up was required. What kind of residue would be deposited by a high-powered shooting range? Maybe they want the cannon range and that would be in Ho-Chunk area if they can get BIA to reopen their request. I know they are working on making that happen. DNR has nearly 2 million visitors annually, coming to enjoy the natural beauty. There will be plenty of traffic flow from the state park to this site. Some may be coming by Burma Road. It's a great hiking road and hikers stand over the cannon range. I have trouble understanding compatibility with a significant birding area, hiking venue, the ancient festival circle, medicinal plant site, and conservation ag research.

I know my son has a gun like that. He's military, a marksman and he enjoys shooting. So he travels to sites where he can shot the types of guns he has. They like to get away from people when they do that. It's loud. How many people comment now about the explosions coming from the site as clean-up winds down? Some explosions shake my house and I'm several miles away. People who live closer hear much more. They can't wait for the noise to end.

Off-roading sounds like a recipe for spreading invasive species and destroying habitat for grassland and savannah birds. If having a significant birding area is no longer important to DNR, then it wouldn't matter if vehicles overran the place. No doubt they'd enjoy climbing the Johnstowns Moraine and even the Baraboo Bluffs. I'm sure they'd have a blast ripping up the Hillside Prairie and bounding through what may be special sites to the Ho-Chunk.

If they have accidents and their toys leak, maybe their owners figure that's okay because this was a munitions plant; it's not pristine. The Army cleans up as best they can and to regulator

standards; DNR is one of their regulators. Once land is clean enough to transfer, Army no longer is responsible - unless it can be proved it was related to munitions production. New spills become the responsibility of the spiller; their lawyers would probably argue if the activity is allowed, than the landowner is responsible for cleaning up the spill.

With groundwater issues in the area because of the munitions production, people in the area are sensitive to keeping the land clean. That's several municipalities. While there's talk about a water district for people who now have issues with their private drinking water wells - and I don't see how farmers will be able to afford irrigating their fields or watering their stock if they must be on a municipal-style system - the village of Prairie du Sac watches their Well 1. I get the feeling, because no one can give a definitive answer about which way the plume is flowing without stipulations, with concerns about what is seeping into the Wisconsin River near the village and concerns about what could get into their drinking water well supply- people want answers and if they don't or can't get them, they speculate, research, talk. They just don't want more problems before they get these old ones resolved. It may not be how life goes, but try to understand where these people come from. They drink the water.

Of course, those off roaders might encounter farm equipment any time day or night, and that could be interesting. Bill and I encounter Dairy Forage when we do our bird trail. They got work to do. Who would regulate off roaders? How would these people know where DNR land was and where Dairy Forage land was and where the wildlife corridor is? What would happen to the established bluebird trails? Will there be directional or location signs? Would there be schedules for off roaders and Dairy Forage operations? Dairy Forage has land on the north and south side of the property. There are lots of slopes - oh, so much fun tearing up the place. Who repairs the land damage? Who would police the off roaders - DNR? Dairy Forage? Friends? And how? And what about the birds?

How well do horses mix with high powered rifles? I know some animals are skittish, especially when there are loud noises. I've seen some interesting things happen to livestock in show rings at county fairs and state fair. People cleared the venue any way they could. I wonder if there is any concern about diseases that can be transmitted from hooved species to another hooved species. I know Dairy Forage had concerns about Ho-Chunk bison. When Cherrie wanted to expand her goat project to include Norwegian draft horse, she brought the proposal to the BOMC for review. Cooperation, Collaboration. Respect.

But I get the impression the equestrians figure there will be a parking lot and a building for their use or they'll lease land or purchase land. The Reuse committee members evaluated an Olympic-style Equestrian center - year-round use, lots of anticipated participants and spectators. Stalls, manure piles, concessions, indoor and outdoor competition areas. It's all part of the Reuse plan history. The more the presentation went on, the wider-eyed the committee members became. Nutrient management in this area is a major concern. Then there's traffic. They proposed managing that center. Is that what this new proposal also expects? I'm not sure how that would be possible? DNR can't extend leases. Can DNR sell the land National Parks Service received on their behalf from GSA or does the whole federal land process have to be done again?

Today when the County Fair Ag Board came to the county UW-Extension committee to ask for their annual request, I learned their competition horse rink is available for rent. They host horse shows, competitions, dogs shows and trainings. They off parking suitable for cars with trailers, water, restrooms, barns, grandstand. Rent is reasonable and there's also a digital sign for

promoting events. With motels, other entertainment, restaurants - this is a great venue ready to go for equestrians, ready and waiting. Otherwise, I've been to the Horse Fair. The coliseum works. They have stalls and parking.

I do apologize for the questions. I'm trying hard to understand how all those details work. I heard so many explanations during RAB, BEBA, REUSE, BIG and now BOMC meetings. Just trying to reconcile or apply what I've heard.

It has been rumored that all types of "sporting" enthusiasts, including paint ballers and dirt bikers are being given the chance to lobby in favor of their special interests and vying for pieces of the BAAP property. This seems to be in direct contradiction to the plan that has been talked about for years which has had a focus on conservation, restoration and low impact recreation activities. This tract of land has had a special place in the lives and minds of many people in South Central Wisconsin and it would be a mistake to open it up to activities that could have a devastating environmental impact. Please consider my appeal to stay with the existing long term plan that would encourage prairie restoration and activities such as hiking or biking.

I would please encourage you to include in your plans for the new addition of the Badger Ammo Plant property to Devil's Lake State Park horse trails and even possible horse camping sites. The Devil's Lake area would be a perfect location for trips and camping from horse people all over the state. I truly believe Devil's Lake State Park to be the best camping park in the state. My family used to camp there with my kids when they were younger, but now they are grown with families of their own and we now have horses. It would be wonderful to return to Devil's Lake for camping with the grandkids and bring the horses as well. There are other horse camping places in the state but nothing compares with the swimming beach at Devil's Lake. Horseback riding and then swimming at such a quality beach is something other horse camping parks can't offer. I'm sure I'm not the only horse person who would support a plan like this for your new addition. This use of the new land would bring in more tourist dollars and jobs to Wisconsin and the Devil's Lake area. This sounds like such a great opportunity. Horses economically provide an abundance of agribusiness jobs and businesses in Wisconsin and it would be wise use of tax money to support that business by providing such an addition to your state park.

[grassland management for birds] This value is obtained only if Wisconsin avoids introducing incompatible recreational uses such as motorized recreation that would destroy the very unique value of this property. There are other already-disturbed tracts of smaller size that can and should be developed for additional motorized recreation, but not Badger Ammunition.

We have been made aware that paint ball enthusiasts, gun dog trainers and motor bikers are all lobbying for pieces of the Badger Ammunition Plant. PLEASE do not let this happen. This is sacred land and a place where special prairie plants, birds and animals safely live. The meadowlarks and vesper sparrows are disappearing in Wisconsin due to NOISE. And we are concerned that this land be kept quieter than these activities would permit. Please abide by the carefully crafted Reuse Plan which is a blueprint for restoring and preserving the land at Badger for future generations of people, plants and animals. We believe Badger would best serve the public by being open to the general public for low-impact recreation.

We have been concerned and aware of the development concerning this property for ten years. If you have not walked the land, we suggest that you do it before you make a decision. It is blessed land and very beautiful. It needs to be cared for in the best possible way for future generations.

For ten long years, a core group of concerned citizens has attended every meeting regarding the future use of the Badger Army Ammunition Plant located outside of Baraboo in Sumpter and Merrimac Townships. During those ten arduous years, hundreds of others, including the two of us, attended the meetings on a much less frequent basis but kept our eyes open and our fingers on the pulse throughout the process of the drafting of the Badger Re-Use Plan.

As concerned local citizens, we have a long history with Badger. We fought SMES in the early 1980's, a government plan that would have installed a super magnetic energy coil in the earth that would have endangered the migratory pattern of birds. Also, for years now, we have been contributing members of the Citizens for Safe Water Around Badger (CSWAB) group.

We slogged through the years when we saw the Native American community delay the re-use process, withdraw from meetings altogether, and then return to the table. At one time, the Ho-Chunk had wonderful plans to reintroduce buffalo and showcase their history and conduct outdoor education events, and it is our understanding that their contributions to the environmentally friendly re-use plan are back in play and, once again, welcomed.

Now, after ten years of blood, sweat and tears over the future of this 7,000+ acres property, it is our understanding that special interest recreation groups are hopping aboard at the eleventh hour with ideas that will run contrary to the proposed natural setting that has been advocated by the Badger Re-Use Committee Report. We would like to think that the care and concern exhibited by those who have "carried the water" and attended hundreds of meetings over the years would carry far more weight than the newcomers who didn't honor the process or pay their dues but who now want a place at the table to sculpt out the fine details.

All of a sudden, there are motor bike enthusiasts and gun aficionados ready to add their noise to what was to be an extension of Devils' Lake. Throughout the process, it was stated and understood that the area was to be open to the public for low-impact recreation activities such as hiking, camping, picnicking, bird watching, educational opportunities and prairie restoration.

As a native of Wisconsin for over sixty years and as a direct descendant of the Kings who relocated from Ohio to Kings Corner in Sumpter across from what is now Badger in the year 1850, I have more than a casual interest in seeing this area preserved for posterity. I have relatives buried in Pioneer Cemetery. I cannot begin to tell you how wonderful it is to come over the bluffs from Baraboo and see the serene natural beauty of the area unfolding. It is breathtaking. The awful, holocaust-looking Badger plant (at which I worked at one time) is removed and the scarring is starting to heal. Badger was an eye-sore of the very worst kind.

We have a unique opportunity here. Never again will there be so large a piece of land with such a diversity of flora and fauna available to the public in the Midwest. As you are well aware, we now have twice the population on earth that we had in 1970. Soon it will double again. Places of sanctuary will be more rare than ever. This is our last chance to hold on to the beauty of nature in our area and to proclaim to our future generations that we cared about setting aside this beautiful land for the good of our children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Please abide by the Badger Re-Use Plan. There are people who have put their hearts and souls into this project for over a decade and thousands more who are in agreement with the great work that has been accomplished to date. Their voices, energy and time commitment have led the way. Please honor the process and abide by the blueprint for making this property one that will be available to the general public for low impact recreation.

** Any proposed recreation must be non-motorized, low-impact, and compatible with grassland bird conservation. Ecotourism, especially birding, is a growing interest that will benefit this entire area of the state economically. Managing the property primarily for birds and other wildlife would be very low cost, especially when compared to development for more active recreation.

Other proposed uses include "rocketeering, shooting ranges, geocaching, dog parks, paintball, community gardens, and other recreation activities not typically found on Department lands" should not be considered due to cost.

Any recreational activities should be low impact and non-motorized.

I believe this bird habitat area is a treasure that needs to be preserved in a way that supports grassland birds. We are losing so many species today. Once they are gone, they cannot ever be replaced.

A non-motorized, low-impact conservation plan would preserve the peace and beauty of an oasis for people, too. A place away from the noise of our cities and towns and the thoroughfares that connect them.

Please, please open the Sauk Prairie Recreational Area to the general public only for low-impact recreation. Let the noisy, destructive groups use private lands.

I would encourage a strong refuge-like set of activity restrictions for the area in order to make a positive difference. (We have seen the degradation of grassland conservation habitat locally at Richard Bong with activities such as dirt biking, model airplane flying, rocketry, etc.)

Seven years ago we bought the land and now have built our full time retirement home.

When we bought we were told that the Pump House was going to be donated to the village and added to the Richard Grant Park Conservation area. Now we find out that the Army gave it to you (the WDNR).

We now have a relatively quiet little bay. If you decide to build a boat launch here we will be VERY UNHAPPY.

Our lives will be directly affected by boat launching at all hours of the day & night, increased car traffic, noise, lights, safety for our children and grandchildren, not to mention more pollution in a small area such as Weigand's Bay.

There is a sizable shallow spot just out from the pump house now where boats will run aground and cause all kinds of congestion in the remaining area.

Our bedroom is just a matter of feet away and I can just imagine how noisy the area will be if the area is made into a boat launch!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

I would like to extend to you an invitation for you to come and visit our house and take a boat ride to better explain our position against any plans that would increase traffic in the area.

We also hope that you will be careful with the other Badger Property that will become the Sauk Prairie Recreation Area. It is a very nice piece of land and we would hope that very careful planning be done to make it usable to everyone in the area. Please consider coming to our home; we are serious in showing you how nice we have it now, and want it to stay that way.

Anything quiet and peaceful; hiking, biking, bird watching, cross-country skiing. Please keep out the noise makers like snowmobilers.

Ms. Brusoe, please put my name and voice in lobbying for low impact, non motorized usage for the open Badger Ord. lands. Pristine lands do not mean unused lands, there are a million animals, insects and birds that use the land. They count as well or even more than ATV's .

I also encourage options for the areas designated for recreation that will prohibit motorized traffic and activities such as target practice, as this also will be helpful not only for preserving grassland bird habitat but also an environment that supports low-impact recreational activities such as hiking

I am a Trustee on the Village Board for Prairie du Sac and as such, have a great deal of interest in what happens with this new recreation opportunity. I think it's a great opportunity to get people out on a restored prairie and realize the up close beauty that lies within. That being said, it is the hope of the entire Sauk Prairie area that we will one day have a bike/multi-use trail that leads from Mazomanie, through the villages of Sauk City and Prairie du Sac, and through Badger to connect to Devil's Lake State Park. With that and the hopefully many other foot paths that might loop the property, I would like to see primitive campgrounds set up. The kind one would hike or bike into. I realize that it has been the DNR's position that Devil's Lake already hosts campgrounds and that a full service campground could spread resources too thin. However, I think primitive camping could work well here to serve the needs of a large group of people who would make use of the facility and could be maintained by a friends group. It would also guarantee that people looking to use the multi-use trail would have a destination for an overnight trip. It is also my hope that many of the roads currently in place on the property will be continued to be maintained. I think this opens the opportunity for other multi-use possibilities. I remember a long time ago when the Badger State Games would use the perimeter road for a "road race course." I see that as a future potential for economic growth in the area and hope it can be further explored. Please feel free to contact me for further input. I look forward to seeing more of the property and the outcome of a future use plan.

I have been informed that the DNR will soon be deciding how the reclaimed Badger Army Ammo Plant lands will be used. I would ask that special attention be paid to the Badger Reuse Plan's 9 key values in guiding any decision making that will happen. While I'm sure that there are many, MANY groups who would like their own, specific agendas considered as well, I believe that low-impact recreational opportunities would be best. I am alarmed that trails may be created for 4 wheeler use. The noise alone would keep me away from any hiking or picnicking I would want to do with my students and grandchildren. Of course I know that many people who ride 4 wheelers are responsible and law abiding. It's just the handful who are not, and could ruin it for the rest. As the BAAP lands begin to be used for different purposes, in a few years it may be appropriate to add 4 wheeler trails. But I would think that creating and establishing a simple, low-impact plan first would be best for everyone.

If you haven't done it lately, read "The Lorax" by Dr. Seuss. "Unless someone like you...cares a whole awful lot...nothing is going to get better...It's not." Dr. Seuss

As a landowner and nature advocate living and paying taxes in Sauk county, I ask for the property previously known as the Badger Ammunition plant to be open to the general public for low-impact recreations. My understanding is that the Reuse plan is an excellent blueprint for restoring and preserving Badger for future generations. In the tradition of one of our state's most esteemed leaders, Gaylord Nelson, let's take the environmentally responsible path!

I understand the DNR is again open for ideas for the future of Badger Ammo.Plant. It is my understanding that issue had been decided quite a while ago with a focus on restoring the land to its natural state and using the area for "peaceful" activities such as biking, hiking, nature study, etc.

There are plenty of places for "non-peaceful" activities to do their thing. PLEASE don't let moneyed special interest groups take over Badger!

We would encourage the DNR to maximize use of this area for dispersed recreation opportunities for hiking and other day uses.

Of particular interest to us, would be the opportunities for bike trails. The existing RR bed could be used as a primary artery to connect the Sauk Prairie area to Devils Lake and eventually be an extension of a trail from Madison through this area toward Reedsburg and The 400 trail. In addition, the existing perimeter road would provide an opportunity for biking, hiking and possibly snowmobile trails throughout the property

Please consider how very much, so very much of Wisconsin's environment is given to kinds of recreation that disturbs nature in harmful ways. Can't we give some primary concerns to planning for wildlife, i.e. grassland birds in this case, but also prairie and savanna and all they contribute to the balance and diversity in the environment.

As a horse owner who frequents our wonderful state parks in southern Wisconsin, I would like encourage the DNR to include horse trails, overnight camping, and carriage trails(if possible) to the Sauk Prairie Recreation Area plan. Horse riding trails do not need to be wide like horse carriage trails so they might be the easiest to start with. Several of us from Rock County, already camp and ride at Kettle Moraine South and Governor Dodge State Parks as they are the closest to us for camping. We also enjoy Wildcat Mountain and the Kickapoo Reserve although they are a little farther away.

When my sister was visiting from Ohio, Governor Dodge was my first choice to take her to see our beautiful rolling terrain and rock formations. We enjoy camping with our horses and use the electric hookups every time. I realize that it might take time to evolve from horse trails to camping to electric sites but we are very grateful and have helped with some of the trail work and donated to see these improvements made.

Our group of friends is also very willing to share trails with bikers, hikers, and hunters(after Nov. 1st). ATVs are also usually fine as long as their riders are sensitive to the fact that some horses could be frightened if they are come up upon from behind or with high speed. We totally understand that our state parks are for the enjoyment of all types of users. Thanks for considering horse trails at this location.

I am writing to advocate for horse trails at the Badger Ammunition land. We do not have many trails in Sauk County and this would provide an opportunity to ride for us and other local riders. With the price of gas it would be appreciated by many area horsemen to be able to ride locally. Our area state parks (Mirror Lake and Devil's Lake) do not have horse trails and horse interest is under represented.

We would very much like to see loop trails in the woods as most riding open dates are in summer. 20 miles can be ridden in 1 day and that would be a minimum number to have with a day rider parking lot. Another wish list item is an area for horse overnight camping. We would be willing to consult on the plan and represent horse interests. I currently volunteer for the Wisconsin State Horse Council trail committee and have served on other horse club boards. I also have written many published horse travel articles for horse publications and have a good handle on what horse riders would like to have for trails, parking areas and camps.

<p>I am an active equestrian and would love to see the area be able to accommodate equestrian activity and provide parking for horse trailers. I am a member of the Lake County Mounted Posse, an active horsemanship club. Please consider our wish to include equestrian activity to be integrated into the planning for this beautiful area.</p>
<p>I strongly believe that this land needs to be restored to its natural state with a focus on conservation, restoration, and LOW IMPACT recreations.</p>
<p>To admit high-impact, motorized recreation into the Badger lands is to foul up a wonderful, once in a lifetime opportunity. Let's open the lands to activities such as hiking, picnicking, camping, bird-watching, outdoor education - - maybe even a well-planned biking trail -- but keep it closed to high-impact recreation that will severely compromise the very things that make the Sauk Prairie special.</p>
<p>I firmly believe the best use for Badger, would be an extension of Devils Lake State Parks current allowed activities, such as all non-motorized silent sports, including hiking, biking, and cross country skiing.</p>
<p>This great remaining "Sauk Prairie" the name sake of the village's to it south, is the reminiscence of what attracted people to this area and shouldn't be regarded as another sports venue like the Wisconsin Dell's.</p>
<p>New proposals (such as the motorcycle or ATV recreation I heard about recently) MUST be evaluated in light of the deep deep roots of the planning that has been done thus far - and those that are consistent with that planning should go forward, but those that are not need to be vetted by the community that has dedicated years to laying down the "ground rules" for reuse of Badger. The bison have first priority at Badger-- if the ATVs want a home where the buffalo roam, they may need to re-evaluate the idea.</p>
<p>We would most definitely like to see this property opened to the public for ONLY low impact, non-motorized uses. We would ask that your group not succumb to random special interests and return to its original plan of restoring this land to its natural state with a focus on conservation. Thank you for your consideration of our wishes as taxpayers.</p>
<p>I'm totally in support of Birding & conversation- please do not change The Ammo area</p>
<p>Just a few comments about the Badger reuse plan. I support multiple use to a point . I believe the early discussions/plans concerning Badger were centered around "Low-Impact" users. I would support hunting, hiking camping , and horses trails with very little motorized vehicle access except for disabled participant applications. Turning parts of Badger into a motocross or atv track would be inappropriate use and not compatible with a low impact philosophy.</p>
<p>...the only major flaw in the document comes near the very end, in the section titled ""Non-Traditional Outdoor Recreational Uses." This section seems to have dropped in from the sky, with little logical relation to the preceding 49 pages --- such uses as rocketeering, rifle ranges, dog parks, and paintball pits clearly do not derive from any of the extensively documented material facts presented in the prior "Analysis", nor do such uses further the values and criteria of the Badger Reuse Plan, which explicitly states in Criterion 5.3 that "Recreational activities should focus on Badger's natural and cultural features and values. Activities should be low-impact in nature... etc." This section of the "Draft Analysis" should simply be removed, as being incompatible with both the "Analysis" itself, and the Badger Reuse Plan</p>

WOHMA and its affiliates have been working with state and county agencies to improve the recreational trails available to riders in Wisconsin. Recently we successfully negotiated the inclusion of street legal dirt bikes on the trail system in Forest County, and we were part of the effort to improve the ATV/OHM trails at the Richard Bong Recreational Area.

But these successes still leave us very short on miles of trails in Wisconsin compared to other user groups, such as ATV and side-by-sides. Total off highway motorcycle trails in Wisconsin are approximately 100, centered mostly in Jackson and Clark county as well as a few miles in Douglas County and short sections of trails in a few other locations. Nothing substantial in the southern part of the state, where most of the riders live and work. We have been working with the DNR for years and have been promised 4 OHV parks in the state, one in each quadrant. Unfortunately not much has happened the last 10 plus years in regard to those promises.

WOHMA is working closely with Representative Jeff Mursau to introduce an OHM registration program this coming legislative session, in order to establish a funding source for trail construction and maintenance similar to the existing ATV program. Our goal is to establish trails not only up north but nearest the larger population centers where the riders live. That is what makes the Sauk Prairie location so enticing. A property large enough to accommodate many diverse recreational activities, including some trails for the OHM riders. I envision about 20 miles of trails, hopefully more, and 20 miles of a trail only 36 inches wide does not take up that much space. I also envision the DNR partnering with the OHM clubs to help build and maintain these trails. We have a lot of expertise in this area, and a number of us are certified through the DNR as Trail Masters (I just graduated from the DNR sponsored July 30, 2012 class).

The states OHM riders have been exposed to best practices regarding building sustainable and environmentally friendly trails through classes presented by WOHMA at a number of state off road conferences we have participated in. I am the Wisconsin State Partner for NOHVCC (National Off Highway Vehicle Conservation Council) (www.nohvcc.org) and have taught their trail building classes at WOHMA, WOHVA, AMA District 16 conferences as well as at many individual club meetings. I believe you will find the off highway motorcycle community very proactive in protecting the environment and building sustainable trails on public properties when allowed to.

We previously have worked with Dan Schuller, Peter Biermeier, Gary Eddy, and Brigit Brown from the DNR to establish a 96 dBA sound level for all dirt bikes, as well as requiring helmets on all DNR properties. As an acoustic engineer (www.ohvacoustics.com) I have worked with sound for the past 36 years and have presented to many clubs in the state in regard to the goal of reducing noise complaints by reducing sound exposure to the non-riding public. The incidence of loud bikes on the trail has been drastically reduced by our efforts.

Please include off highway motorcycle trails in your plans for the Sauk Prairie Recreation Area. It's a growing recreational activity and including trails at this location would help in providing a facility that is much needed in that part of the state.

I argue that not all recreational activities are “compatible,” including ATV/snowmobile trails and many of the “Non-Traditional Outdoor Recreation Uses” you mention in your Analysis. To introduce those kinds of activities at this late date in the 15-year planning process might be deemed short-sighted and clearly not in line with the original intent of the contributors and signatories to the 2001 Reuse Plan. To do so would clearly be an attempt to placate all (and arguably, newly involved) parties, but the end result would be to compromise the desires of the majority of the area’s stakeholders that have invested years in this planning effort.

To allow motorized trails and shooting ranges on the Badger landscape would be akin to allowing 100-HP motors and waterskiing on Devils Lake. There’s a reason that motors are not allowed there! Those same values should be consistently imposed on the future Badger property. Both properties, after all, are part of one continuous landscape and should be treated as such. There are better places for the non-traditional and motorized recreational uses outlined in the Analysis.

Some aspects of the recreation drafts (e.g., Property Analysis) in circulation do raise questions, no, I would say concerns would be a better word. We refer to the potential of alternative, or non-traditional uses such as paint ball, ATVs, and shooting ranges. Oh, yes, also rocketeering. Rocketeering? Not really! Furthermore, there are opportunities for these activities already in the area through private enterprise, e.g., paintball options both in the Wisconsin Dells and Lake Wisconsin areas. Why would the DNR think there is a need to compete with these private enterprise ventures? If there is no compelling public issue, such as lack of access, then why duplicate the private sector and compete with it? Access is not an issue for these kinds of non-traditional uses, which certainly are inconsistent with low-impact recreation.

Would you plant a cactus garden on a public boat dock in Milwaukee? That is about as compatible as desecrating the Sauk Prairie with paint balling and ATVs and what such.

Please use consistency with the values of the Prairie. The Badger Reuse Plan is a great guide.

I’m writing to you concerning the Sauk Prairie Recreation Area. As a horse riding enthusiast I’d like to see horseback riding trails included into this area. These trails could eventually tie into trails at Devil’s Lake State Park and this option should be explored when the master plan for the park is revisited next year. Additionally, I would like to see a horse camping area developed as well.

I am currently a member of the Wisconsin State Horse Council, the Upper Mid-West Endurance and Competitive Riding Association, the American Endurance Ride Conference, the Minnesota Distance Riding Association, and the Distance Riding Association of Wisconsin. While I am not speaking for any of these organizations I do know other members of the organizations would use any new trails which were developed.

I have heard that there is a possibility of a long range (1000 yard) rifle range being developed on this property. I find this to be very incompatible with a property that is could be developed for camping, horseback riding, and other silent sports. Additionally I think this would have a very negative impact on the experience that people canoeing the Wisconsin River would have.

Any motorized use of this property could also only be a negative. ATV or UTV trails should not be developed on this property but I would surely support either mountain biking or other bike trails. Running/hiking trails should also be encouraged.

The need for ATV and UTV recreational riding opportunities has been growing for a long time; the Wisconsin ATV Association has seen this trend for years with ATV's and UTV's continuing a strong upward increase in registration numbers. This is also confirmed with data from the SCORP.

Over the last few years through discussions with State Parks staff at the DNR, we have concluded that additional ATV / UTV areas are to a great extent necessary and required for those that would like to recreate with motorized vehicles in southern Wisconsin.

The availability of public land and the amount of land that is in agricultural production and the many metro areas throughout Southern Wisconsin make it very difficult to provide additional trails in this part of the state. Therefore it was determined that an area designated for ATV / UTV usage would go a long way in addressing this shortage of recreational opportunities for these motorized recreationalists.

The DNR has looked at a few locations and for various reasons those sites did not meet their criteria. However, we feel that the Sauk Prairie Recreation Area has many of the attributes needed for ATV / UTV recreation and those include:

1. Short travel distance from large metro areas in Southern Wisconsin.
2. Large enough land base to provide adequate riding opportunities.
3. Minimal number of adjacent property owners.
4. DNR already has possession of the property.

We see this as good location for motorized recreation and the Wisconsin ATV Association supports the development of this property for ATV and UTV use.

Diane, we would also like to invite you to attend the Wisconsin ATV Association VIP ride and workshop being held Friday, September 14, 2012 at the Embarrass River ATV Park in Tigerton Wisconsin. This will provide you with an opportunity to ride an ATV or UTV on a funded trail system within the park and in addition, you will be able to discuss many topics concerning this type of recreational area with other land managers and members of our association. I have attached an invitation to this email and full details are available at www.vipride.org

Thanks again for the opportunity to offer our input on behalf of our constituency.

I am concerned regarding the ATV usage as being proposed. I don't believe that this reflects the spirit of this property. I'm all for recreational opportunities (biking, hiking, etc.) but of a non-motorized variety. There's more than enough emissions already. Let's face it, it is so nice to not have the pollution threats that used to emanate from the property, specifically in the water and air. Let's not go backwards. We have an excellent opportunity to set an example here. This is part of the special conservation legacy of Sauk County and the State of Wisconsin.

The purpose of this e-mail is to provide feedback on the Draft Regional & Property Analysis for the Sauk Prairie Recreation Area. Please find attached, various resolution and correspondences related to a recreational trail through the Sauk Prairie Recreation Area (Badger). The goal of the creation of a recreational trail from Sauk Prairie to Devil's Lake State Park has been one for our area for over ten years. Most discussions for users of the trail have been bicyclists, walkers, runners, cross-country skiing and snowmobiling. I do not remember any discussions regarding ATV. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions. [resolutions and a letter to the governor describing the recreational rail trail initiative were attached with this comment]

<p>Recreation Opportunities: I would like to see a trail system for Street Legal Offroad Jeeps and Trucks. There is no trails system in the state of Wisconsin for those type of vehicles. This area would be perfect for those types of trails.</p>
<p>I hope horse trails will be considered as part of the plan for this recreation area. There are organizations willing to help plan, create, and maintain horse trails that are sustainable and preserve the landscape. For example, I belong to AERC which has a trails program.</p>
<p>It would be great to use some of this land for trails that can be traversed for fun and family enjoyment. A small campground and picnic area would also be good. Some single track trails for four wheelers and dual sport bikes and some trails for mountain bikers would also be beneficial to this state. I travel to many different states for recreation (Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Illinois etc.) to find places to recreate at, our state does not have many options for motorized recreation and to add another would be a wonderful opportunity to bring in others from other states for motorized recreation.</p>
<p>This is to request that the 3,000 acres at the badger plant for which the DNR has responsibility be dedicated in its entirety to general public, low-impact recreation.</p>
<p>Please make sure the Sauk Prairie State Recreational Area is reserved for low impact, non-motorized recreation and educational purposes.</p>
<p>I am writing you to let you know that I hope that the plan have not changed from what I understood that we were going to make the badger plant into a low impact recreation area!</p>
<p>I am writing to express my support of developing single track motorcycle trails at the Sauk Prairie Recreation Area. In April of this year I saw Mr. Peter Biermeier of the Wisconsin DNR speak at an off highway vehicle conference in Mole Lake, he said the DNR recognizes the need to develop motorized recreation areas, especially in the southern part of Wisconsin near the large population centers. This may be a good location to consider in accomplishing that objective.</p> <p>Off road motorcycling, especially trial riding opportunities are severely limited and underserved in the State of Wisconsin. Surrounding states offer significantly more riding areas than does Wisconsin. Many citizens travel out of state, especially to Michigan to participate in trail riding at developed trail networks. I myself was in Michigan for three days earlier this month along with other people from Wisconsin.</p> <p>Although our user group is diverse in age and background, a lot of us are middle aged and have children; this would be a great place to ride as a family. You will find us to be a responsible user group that is concerned about developing and maintaining sustainable trails, operating motorcycles with quiet exhausts, and want to leave a favorable impression on the general public.</p>

I'm emailing you to advocate for putting a simple, no frills horse trail in at the old Badger Ammo plant. Here are a few reasons why it makes sense:

- 1) The land is lovely, yet not prone to erosion because of how flat it is. Think of how lovely it would be to offer people a chance to ride a trail through the prairie grasses, experiencing what early European settlers saw when they arrived!
- 2) We need more horse trails. The horse industry is a big deal in WI; help it grow by providing places to ride. Sauk Co has few places to ride. White Mound Park is great, but it is a rugged place to ride and not right for novice horses or riders. The 400 Trail can be nice, but the river can present issues (bugs, too wet, etc.) and the bridges cause some horses issues.
- 3) Having a nice horse trail around the perimeter of the old Badger Ammo plant would be a great place for people to come from Madison, which is only 35 minutes away.

I once tried to get horse trails introduced at Mirror Lake Park, and was shot down despite hundreds of signatures. Please think about the Horse Lovers in our area this time around!

Please consider opening this land up to 'Jeep's and other 4WD vehicles. Our state does not offer any recreation areas like this currently. Most of our 100(+) club members stated that they would visit this area twice per month. Others said they would spend two days there. Myself as well as the other 4WD enthusiasts have been looking forward to something like this for more years than I can remember.

...would like to add my opinion that the Badger Reuse Plan should be receiving primary consideration in this process. It was an inclusive, time-consuming and expensive endeavor, resulting in a solid plan which should provide guidance for this current planning process. In particular, I am concerned that Criteria 5.3, 7.2, 7.3 and 7.4 be given due consideration. I believe that many of the recreation opportunities being considered are outside the vision developed in the Badger Reuse Plan. In fact, even the current designation "Sauk Prairie Recreation Area" is unfortunate, giving more emphasis to recreation than the many other values articulated in the Plan. In planning for this fortunate extension to the Baraboo Hills region, with its truly unique biological importance, preservation of natural landscape, flora and fauna should be primary, with recreational activities focused on appreciation of and education about the natural environment.

At the July 30 Open House, many advocated for recreation activities that could compromise grassland bird conservation at the Sauk Prairie Recreation Area. I would like my voice to be considered in advocacy for the grassland birds that inhabit this area.

I do not support the plan for using this space for recreation activities.

I am a new resident of Merrimac and live on Lake Wisconsin. We built our house a year ago and as a matter of fact we are located directly across from the Pump house.

When we bought our property we were told that the Pump House was going to be donated to the village for a beautiful park and handicap fishing pier. We have now found out that the army gave it to the WDNR.

We would appreciate you using that property for a quiet place for people to enjoy instead of building a boat launch for the public to use. Our lives would be directly affected by all the traffic and noise that would come with a public boat launch. We live in a nice quiet bay and would like to keep it that way.

Hopefully this will happen and soon that horrible huge blue building will be taken down and will not be an eyesoar on the lake.

Please consider this and hopefully other Badger Properties will be considered for park and recreation areas.

Let's not continue to encourage the use of motorized vehicles when we could manage this beautiful space to encourage walking and the use of wheeled transport assisting the disabled.

I'd like to offer comments on the potential future uses of the Sauk Prairie Recreation Area, at the current site of the Badger Army Ammunition Plant. I would like the DNR to consider the installation of one or more disc golf courses. Disc golf is an inexpensive, healthy, lifetime activity that has exploded in popularity over the last decade or so. In the year 2000, there were approximately 40 disc golf courses in Wisconsin, while today, there are over 200. I feel that disc golf would be a great complement to other outdoor recreation activities that might be considered for the property, such as hiking, biking, ATV, paintball, and other "non-traditional" uses. This property, over ten square miles in size, is plenty large to accommodate conservation, restoration, AND a variety of outdoor recreation uses. Its proximity to both Madison and Wisconsin Dells, as well its adjacency to Devil's Lake State Park, means that it could attract residents of the region as well as tourists.

From a preliminary view of the maps, and some personal knowledge of the site and general area, one spot that caught my eye as a potential location for disc golf and other outdoor recreation uses is in the south-central portion of the property, labeled as "North Magazines". This appears to be rolling terrain, with a variety of open spaces and wooded areas, which is ideal for disc golf, and many other outdoor recreation activities. There are likely other portions of the property that would also be attractive.

I am the current President of the Madison Area Disc Club, and also a member of the Disc Golf Course Designers group. I would be very interested in discussing the possibilities for disc golf at Sauk Prairie Recreation Area, as well as any other State Parks or state-owned recreation lands in the region. I feel very strongly that a wide variety of recreational opportunities should be considered for this area.

I am a former Park District President, in another state, and understand the cry for recreation on public lands. Bird Watching is Recreation...and a big one at that. Two birds with one stroke of the pen. Preservation of an important species and recreation for thousands.

I am writing as a member of the Southern Kettle Moraine Horse Trail Association. We have over 50 members who enjoy trail riding with their horses. and for this reason I hope you will establish horse trails on this property.

Our members use the horse trails in the Southern Kettle Moraine. In addition, many of our members trailer their horses to numerous trailheads throughout Wisconsin and other states. We are always looking for additional places to ride. The Sauk Prairie Recreation Area is about a two hour ride from the Southern Kettle. This is within the feasible amount of time to drive and take a home. Bridle trails located near the central part of our state would make them an attractive, easy-to-get-to destination for riders throughout the state.

Additional features to consider include camping areas and water availability.

I encourage the DNR's use of The Badger Reuse Plan that includes important conservation considerations of the property. This plan was developed through a collaborative public process and should be used as the guide to any decisions made for the land use.

My grandparents and great-grandparents were among the farmers displaced from the Sumpter area in the early 1940's to make space for the construction of the Badger Ammunition Plant. Once every summer, my grandparents took us to the area where their farm had been located (we could go inside with supervised escort on certain Sundays). I have always had a special attachment to this area – the space where my mother grew up picking blackberries, where her school and church were located. I have relatives buried in one of the cemeteries.

Because of my connection to this land, I have followed the development of The Badger Reuse Plan and feel that is an appropriate way of restoring that area. i.e., bringing back the natural prairie that is home to many prairie birds. I have gone on work days to pull invasive plants. I have participated in tours of the plant at various times.

It has been noted that the DNR is thinking part of this area would be a "recreation" area that might include ATV use, rocketeering and shooting ranges. I think these types of activity are NOT appropriate for this area. These will destroy the prairie plants and their feathery inhabitants and not follow the vision of The Badger Reuse Plan that was developed by so many. This is a great opportunity to restore this area to its original state. It was very difficult for my ancestors to leave their farms. They made a great sacrifice and, if they were living, they would be appalled to have the area turned into an ATV track or shooting range.

I am writing as a concerned citizen of the Sauk Prairie Area. I would like to express my opinion regarding recreational use of the land at Badger Ammo. This is a choice piece of land that is connected to one of the most beautiful state parks on Earth. First off, I think that any type of ATV or shooting ranges are a terrible idea. Not only will it disrupt the precious wildlife that currently resides there, it will open gates for bad behavior unless carefully monitored. Furthermore, this being one of the largest contiguous natural prairie and savannah lands it should be treated as such. Recreational uses should involve educating people about wildlife and how to preserve it. Walking trails, biking trails, nature exhibits, dog parks and animals native to the area. Not things such as rocketeering or paintballing. There are designated places for these things, places where they will not disrupt nature as greatly. There are an ample amount of shooting ranges in the area. And ATV trails would quickly become windows for destruction, litter and abuse. Let's take this once in a lifetime opportunity to preserve what God has given us a chance to take back and not ruin it with the selfish greed and gluttonous behavior of mankind. Let us use this opportunity to give a glimpse of the natural splendor of this area without letting it be destroyed by reckless hobbies. If done properly, this could be a prosperous place for many urban visitors to enjoy!

I was very disappointed that some uses suggested were for rocketeering, ATV use, paintball and shooting ranges. This is a very special area. It is the only large area of prairie and savannah we have in this state. There are many species of birds that nest there and nowhere else. We don't need ATVs or other loud noises scaring them off.

I would like to see this area used for quiet activities such as a walking trail, flying a kite, bicycling, etc; something that does not disturb the wildlife.

Thank you so much for reading my comments, please include them in your final analysis.

I read in the latest Cap Times about the DNR planning for the future of the 7,354 acre former Badger Army Ammo Plant. While I understand that people enjoy a various range of recreational activities, I do not feel that activities such as rocketeering, paintball ranges, shooting ranges and, especially, ATV use would be appropriate for that area of the state. Even though the former plant grounds are large they border on Sauk Prairie Recreation Area, Devil's Lake State Park and its South Bluff/Devil's Nose State Natural Area #97 that encompasses a huge expanse of the forested southern flank of the Baraboo Hills and provides habitat for numerous rare plants and animals. The aforementioned recreation uses would not, I feel, mesh well with their current uses as peaceful areas for study and contemplation away from loud human activity.

Please consider four wheel drive(4X4) trail access for motorized recreation as part of the plan. I am referring to Jeeps, trucks, Broncos' etc. As very active users of 4x4 trails, my husband and myself would like to see a trail system area included for our sport.

We have traveled to many states to be able to use our vehicles. This includes Kentucky, Michigan, Montana, Minnesota, Wyoming, and the Dakotas. It is a fact the State of Wisconsin is lacking in areas open to trail riding with trucks

We support a "multiple use" concept which would include ATV's, off road motorcycles etc. This concept is working very well in the Gilbert Area of Minnesota where a multiple use park for motorized off road has been established. Green Bay High Riders 4x4 Club

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on recommendations for future use of the Sauk Prairie Recreation Area. I am writing on behalf of the Southern Kettle Moraine Horse Trail Association. We have over 50 members who enjoy trail riding with our horses. We would encourage the installation of horse trails on this property.

Our members use the horse trails in the Southern Kettle Moraine. In addition, many of our members trailer their horses to numerous trailheads throughout Wisconsin and other states. We are always looking for additional places to ride. The Sauk Prairie Recreation Area is about a two-hour ride from the Southern Kettle. This is within the feasible amount of time to drive and take a day trail ride and come home.

Additional features to consider include camping areas and water availability, Southern Kettle Moraine Horse Trail Association

I think the best use of the badger army ammunition plant would be as an extension of devils lake, with similar uses and rules. No atvs and no gun range - the noise from these activities significantly reduces other users' enjoyment of the area. I have hiked on a trail near a gun range and I could hear it on the entire four mile trail (part of the Appalachian trail). It was like being in a war zone - the opposite of what I think most want when they go hiking. The madison.com article on this park also mentioned rocketry, paintball and a dog park. I think these are good uses of the park as they won't bother other users with loud noise.

I represent the Wisconsin Dual Sport Riders, an American Motorcycle Association (AMA) sanctioned club with over fifty members. Our club sponsors two, two-day AMA motorcycle trail rides each year. Events have approximately 175 participating trail riders. Our club brings dollars to the community and our charity ride raised over \$16,000 for cancer research this past June. Each bike is inspected for sound before riders are permitted to participate.

On behalf of our club and club members, I would like to express our interest in the inclusion of single track motorcycle trails in the Sauk Prairie Recreational Area. Outside of four AMA trail riding events each year, there are not many opportunities or places in the state of Wisconsin to enjoy our sport. Many times, we need to travel to surrounding states to find motorcycle trails. Our club members believe the Sauk Prairie Recreational Area is a great way to provide more riding trails in our state.

Single track trail in Sauk Prairie would be used frequently by our club members and other motorcycle trail riding enthusiasts. Our members are responsible adults that realize the importance of safety, low sound output, trail maintenance and environmental conservation. To prepare for our own events, we manage, develop and maintain trails and would appreciate the opportunity in Sauk Prairie to help contribute to the development and maintenance of single track trail.

If you have any questions or would like to learn more about our club, club events or how we would be able to assist in the development or maintenance of single track track in the Sauk County Recreational Area, please do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you for considering single track in the Sauk Prairie Recreational Area. Wisconsin Dual Sport Riders

I would like to be able to use some of the area for riding my Jeep Wrangler on various trails, camping and hiking.

I live across the road from this area. I spent many hours on the facility assisting in prairie evaluation. I support low impact/low or no noise activities such as hiking, bicycling and DNR controlled hunting in the fall. I oppose atv trails and other high noise producing activities, except strictly controlled use of atvs during hunting season.

I am writing to convey my strong support for keeping the Badger Army Ammunition Lands primarily for low impact use. This is a precious resource for bird populations that are in serious decline largely because of habitat fragmentation. At the same time, birding is growing rapidly as is hiking and other low-impact activities.

This is also a time when all citizens need to get more exercise and ride less in motorized vehicles. We all need more quiet activities and less noise.

A large, unbroken area such as the Bader Ammunition lands are precious and rare.

I hope that Wisconsin can continue to find ways to meet the needs of all of its citizens, but we must balance the types of use where the few interfere with the enjoyment of many, and where the activities of some destroy the declining natural resources that can never be replaced

The property would provide an excellent addition to the DNR's Class 1 dog training and trial grounds to allow training and trialing off horse back. The size and terrain would provide a tract of land to develop multiple courses to allow the state's field trial clubs to host National Championships. Badger Brittany Club

Do not allow this property to become another Bong. Rockets & ATV's are a disaster. A property cannot accommodate all recreational pursuits within a confined area. If being considered, the activities must be spread out on the whole property. I am currently active in the Pine Island and Mazomanie grounds associations and realize issues & problems with multiple use properties

It is my stance, that recreational activities such as rocketeering, paintball, community gardens, ATV use, along with others may be pursued elsewhere.

Many of the proposed activities, such as geocaching, paintball, shooting ranges, and dog trials can, and do, occur on both private and public lands.

There is a terrific area only a short drive north of the Ammo Plant, and that is the Wisconsin Dells area. They are able to provide many options of similar indoor and outdoor recreation.

It would be appropriate for such a unique and large parcel - and one which connects with Devil's Lake State Park - to be devoted to low-impact and non-motorized recreational activities. I feel that the concepts laid out in the 2001 Badger Reuse Plan, which was painstakingly developed over a long period of time, should be honored.

Nothing would be more contrary to the spirit and best use of the Badger Army Ammunition Plant than to permit the possible establishment of trails for all-terrain vehicles, and areas for rocketeering, paintball and dog parks. Please do not include such activities in the Master Plan for the area. They would compromise the historical and ecological values of the land. Recreation should be low-impact in nature, to encourage more ecotourism in Wisconsin.

I support the environmental and educational uses of the land, but oppose recreational uses that include ATVs, shooting ranges, rocketeering, paintball and other activities that disturb wildlife. Recreational uses such as hiking and bird watching are quieter and less destructive to habitat. Wisconsin's natural heritage is too important to allow further erosion.

I have written before to say that I (and I'm sure plenty of others) would be willing to pay the same fee charged to hunters and fishermen, to use DNR property for hiking. That way you wouldn't be so beholden to one group and have to make decisions that favor their interests. I would buy a hunting license and not use it, but I don't want to contribute to the statistics about how many people hunt. Please prioritize sound environmental decisions over recreational ones on this property.

I would like to make my plug for recreational use of a portion of the Badger Plant property. I read an article in the Wisconsin State Journal this morning, the head line of which read "Group eyes DNR plan" Conservationist worry area might be used for recreation. It struck me as odd that this group seems to feel their plan is the only plan and everyone else wants to destroy the land. I would like to applaud the DNR for keeping open the idea of all types of recreation on this property.

My personal plea would be for a small portion of land to be set aside for use as an off road riding area for ATVs and motorcycles. The town of Rome and the Rapid Angels motorcycle club have set a great example of how this can be successful. Please take a look at the Dyracuse Recreational Area, this has been in operation since 1979 and has been enjoyed by tens of thousands of people over the years. <http://www.dyracusepark.dustndirt.com> The interesting thing is this is on a relatively small (240 acre) section of property and through a small, "day use fee" it is self-sustaining.

I am 58 years old, approaching retirement and looking for a project. I have worked in design and construction management my entire career. I would love to volunteer to oversee the planning, construction, and management of a facility like this.

I am fully against any motorized use of any vehicles on the land. It has been violated more than any piece of earth should be. But in spite many valuable plants and ecological important species have survived and we have much to learn from what is left. Please appreciate what a valuable treasure that you have left.

I've had many conversations with people about finding land to turn into an ATV park and trail system that accommodates all kinds of ages and riding styles. Much like the one up in Adams county called Dyracuse.

See this link for information on the park: <http://www.dyracusepark.dustndirt.com/index.html>. I think the park would use around 400 to 500 acres. Plenty of land left over for other interest. Several of us in the community travel anywhere from 2 to 4 hours to ride our ATVs on trails or similar parks. Badger is a perfect centralized location in Wisconsin. I know many people and businesses in the area and surrounding cities that would love something like this nearby. This would also be great for the kids in the area. It would give them something fun and exciting to do while keeping them out of trouble.

A recreational park and trail system in the area would have a very positive effect on the local economy in so many ways. It will also go a long way toward preserving the natural elements and beauty unique to this part of the state. For example, there are several popular trail systems that run through the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest that highlight and preserve that area. <http://www.fs.usda.gov/activity/cnnf/recreation/ohv/?recid=27717&actid=93>

I would love to talk more about this with you. Please give me a call sometime to discuss. I have several plans and connections to people in this sport that would help in any way possible.

Spaniel field trials are very different from other venues. We require large open spaces with brome grasses and other native grasses. We do not want cut paths like the pointers and do not want the cover cut like a lawn, as for Labrador events. We need some cover in order to plant our game birds being used for the event but not so high that the judges and handlers cannot see the dogs, about knee high works very well.

For these reasons, as I pointed out at the Open House, a space of land of approximately 200 acres would be adequate. It could be designated for spaniel only events. This would cover all the spaniel activities such as the cocker spaniel field trials and other spaniel events not only springer events. This amount of space would be adequate for several groups to have training sessions in different parts of the area without impacting each other. In many cases, for a field trial event, it's necessary to use one area for the first and second series work and then move to a totally different area to run the third and final series. A 200 acre parcel would be suitable for our springer trialing events and adequate for any of the other spaniel field trials and hunt tests.

Currently, the areas designated as Class 1 Field Trial and Training grounds, are NOT available after hunting season. That happens to be the prime time for our field trial competitions.

Also, it's important, that no matter what happens with this property, that Canada wild rye and Virginia wild rye are NOT planted. These grasses have barbed seeds and have proven detrimental to our dog's health. These grasses can affect any dog that is in contact with them, not just our field, hunting types but even some dog going for walk in these grasses can be affected by these seeds.

The Federation strongly supports the recommendation of the Citizen Advisory Council that public recreational uses be allowed that are compatible with the restoration of the land to its former natural condition. Such compatible uses include hunting, fishing, trapping, hiking and bird watching. In addition, the Federation and the seventeen dog-related groups it represents, recommend that a reasonable area of the property be established as a Class 1 Dog Trialing area for dog training and trialing. This is a use that is compatible with the stated purposes of the Reuse Plan.

The Federation cautions against allowing recreational uses on the property which are incompatible with the above-stated uses, the game and non-game wildlife that exist there and the passive nature of the site. The Federation and our groups are very sensitive to this issue because of the long-standing serious problems from the large number of incompatible uses at the Bong Recreation Area in southeastern Wisconsin.

Additional specific comments and questions are attached.

Thank you very much for your hard work in this planning effort and your consideration of these comments.

I favor management of these lands for grassland birds and native prairie habitat, and while I welcome the construction of trails for hiking, nature study and hunting, I believe that use of the area for motor sports, dog field trials, paintball games, rocketeering etc. would very negatively impact conservation efforts.

"Multi-use" will compromise any conservation efforts, and then one more potential jewel will have been sacrificed to the demands of people who want yet another playground to play with their destructive toys.

I support the property formerly called the Badger Army Ammunition Plant to be open to the general public for low-impact recreations like hikes, picnics, nature studies, etc. I have taken my students there to experience the wonders of nature and hope to do so in the future. There are enough concrete slabs and noisy areas of recreation.

<p>Recreational activities that are consistent with the values and goals of the Reuse Plan should be encouraged; recreational activities that are inconsistent should not be considered appropriate and should not be included in the DNR's plan.</p>
<p>I strongly encourage the DNR to consider uses of the property that would benefit all recreational users, and not only those who desire hiking opportunities. For example, I urge the DNR to develop a shooting range on the property. This would have many benefits for Wisconsin residents:</p> <p>It would provide a practice and training venue to allow shooters to sharpen their skills. Better skills promote increased safety while hunting. Better skills reduce the potential for wounding and/or losing game, instead of a clean quick kill. A local shooting venue would provide increased opportunity to safely introduce youth to the shooting sports. Please incorporate a shooting range complex into this land use plan. Ideally, such a facility could accommodate shotgun, pistol, and rifle ranges.</p>
<p>The section entitled "Non-Traditional Outdoor Recreation Uses" is not consistent with the Reuse Plan and DNR's request to the National Park Service for transfer of land and should be eliminated from the Analysis and all future planning and management considerations.</p>
<p>I have some concern about some of the recreation proposals: I think that recreation at SPRA must be non-motorized, low-impact and compatible with grassland bird conservation. I fear that the open landscape will invite users to leave designated trails, and the noise of motorized vehicles (ATVs, dirtbikes, etc) would be harmful to wildlife, especially birds. I would also support a ban on the use lead ammunition and fishing tackle at the SPRA.</p>
<p>I would like to see the Badger Ammo plant be an archery only hunting preserve. It had been years ago, and had amazing hunts to remember. Please keep this in mind.</p>
<p>Please consider my interest in keeping most of the Badger Ammunition Plant property for prairie restoration and low impact public usage like hiking and bird-watching. I have had a tour of this beautiful property. Please--- no motorized vehicles, gardens or dog parks! I am more neutral about trapping and hunting. Don't know much about the issues.</p>
<p>Why is there discussion of loud, disrupting recreational uses of a land that was intended to be restored to its natural state? There is nothing natural about shooting ranges, atv trails, skyrocketing and paintball uses. Let's keep it to the original plan to restore it to its natural state, for all of us to enjoy. An natural arboretum would be a great contribution. The Dells is 10 miles away. That's a good place for loud recreation now that it's been mostly ruined of its natural beauty. Let's keep a beautiful treasure just that, beautiful!</p> <p>Perhaps if you really want public input, you should post things more publicly and give us much more notice.</p>

My recreational activity of choice is off-road motorcycle trail riding. I live in South central Wisconsin and the closest legal off-road recreation area for me is in the state of Illinois. I would rather keep the money I spend on this family activity in my home state of Wisconsin.

I'm not the only one that will travel over an hour to trail ride at Sauk Prairie Recreation Area. There are other enthusiasts out there. Not only will we willfully spend money on the DNR fee to ride at the recreation area, but local Wisconsin businesses will also benefit: We spend money at gas stations to fill up our motorcycles and transport vehicles. We ride machines that will need replacement parts that can be purchased at the local hardware stores. We will stop at convenient stores to buy snacks, soda and water. And after a fun day of riding, we will eat at a local restaurant. For those extended weekends, we will need local lodging.

Southern Wisconsin is the most densely populated area of the state. The need for such a facility is obvious. The trails would be used often and clubs would contribute to their maintenance and care. I see this as a win, win situation for off-road motorcycle trail riders and the State of Wisconsin.

I believe that the primary recreational use should be low-impact, silent activities such as hiking, bird watching, cross-country skiing, and snow shoeing. I believe the plans for the property should be consistent with the Badger Reuse Plan that was developed with considerable local input from a wide variety of stakeholders. The reuse plan emphasized that recreational activities should be compatible with the protection and enhancement of the natural and cultural resources of the site and should not impact the educational and research opportunities of the site.

Please no ATV trails; only walking/hiking, XC ski trails, perhaps equestrian trails.
Please no hunting. If it must be allowed, please no guns only bow hunting.
Please no paint ball; haven't we had enough focus on war at this site?

Disc Golf Course - Preserves nature and it is low maintenance. Sauk Prairie Area could benefit from a professionally built course.

Biking Paths - Would be nice to see a connection to Madison all the way to Reedburg and beyond.

I do think this land has a lot of potential and I hope that the people planning the Recreational Area takes a lot of thought and consideration when finalizing everything.

I am opposed to allowing access to the decommissioned badger ammunition plant land by motorized vehicles under any circumstances.

I urge the DNR to NOT include motorized trail networks in its plans for the Sauk Prairie Recreation Area.

Given the Area's proximity to the Federal Highway system and very heavily trafficked recreational facilities (the largest of which is the adjacent Devil's Lake State Park) and communities (Baraboo, Wisconsin Dells), I am very concerned that providing a potentially large pool of motorized trail users with access to the Area will counteract the preservation opportunities outlined in the Department's Analysis.

I know several of the people who have worked tirelessly for many years to bring different groups of people together and work out a plan for the future of Badger. It was a labor of love, and rarer still in this day and age, a labor forged out of compromise, public input, and mutual consideration. Dedicated groups of volunteers have been working for years to restore prairie plants. It has been a community effort. The intent is to open the land for public use, but public use that would allow the prairie, and the plants and animals that live there to thrive and coexist with the people who will come to visit.

There are many low impact, recreational pursuits that would complement the restoration of the land. Public use could center around hiking, picnicking, camping, birdwatching - which has become an important part of the tourist industry, and outdoor education. Instead of motorized ATVs, how about bicycles instead? Instead of paintball ranges, how about horseback riding? Instead of activities that create noise, how about creating a place where people can find quiet?

I support the Reuse Plan for Badger Army Ammunition Plant that focuses on conservation and low-impact use.

I was very disturbed to read the "paragraph" of suggested uses for the Badger Army area. All of the activities listed were ones which would interfere with the ecology and tranquility of this unique area. Much stronger consideration should be given to hiking and biking trails (not motorized), picnicking in designated areas, birding etc. All activities that do not (for the most part) interfere with the enjoyment of others.

I am especially disturbed by the suggestion of facilities for an ATVs. This seems contrary to the purpose of conservation. The noise of ATVs destroys the tranquility for other recreational uses. There is nothing worse than being in a natural area enjoying the peace of nature only to have the loud obnoxious noise of an ATV or snowmobile disturb it. Also ATVs are polluting and contribute to global warming. A paintball course also seems inappropriate. I have less trouble with a dog park or hunting, because they would have less impact. Remember that this area was a large prairie and oak savannah at one time, and that it was polluted and destroyed by the manufacture of munitions. It should be returned to its natural state, not made into a playground.

I am writing to support the Badger Reuse Plan for the site of the former Badger Munitions plant and to express my opposition to allowing "high impact" recreational activities inside the site. I have been tremendously impressed with the way the various groups involved in the Bader Management Oversight Council have come together to develop the Reuse Plan. They have worked diligently to obtain input from all of the key constituencies who have an interest in how the property is used. I believe that the Reuse Plan is a model for how this kind of property can be reconverted and made beneficial to the surrounding community. High impact uses are inconsistent with the plan. There is no scarcity of space for hunting and ATV or snowmobile use in the surrounding region; incorporating it in Badger would endanger the prairie habitat restoration and wildlife projects that the plan provides for.

The crucial focus for the Sauk Prairie Recreation Area should be, in my view, forms of recreation that enhance and maintain the goal of protection and enhancement of the natural features. That said, only non-motorized, low-impact forms of recreation will be compatible. Hunting, hiking, bird-watching, horse trails, and the like. There are large numbers of citizens who prefer this.

I am troubled by the idea of a "full range of recreational experiences." This approach is inappropriate. It hasn't worked for the US Forest Service, trying to do all things on all properties, just because it is a large area, and it won't work here if we hope to have value going forward. Shooting ranges, rocketeering, paintball, and these sorts of recreation pursuits do not belong in a natural area. Grassland and scrubland bird habitat should be the goal.

Please take this as my 'comment' in regard to the suggestion that ATV's or other fossil fuel burning vehicles be allowed on the DNR land at 'Badger Ordinance'. I believe that the reuse plan states that 'low impact recreation' be allowed. In light of the overall air quality, which I believe DNR is supposed to be responsible for, this should certainly NOT allow any fuel burning, CO2 creating motorized toys. Running, bicycle trail riding, horses, and that sort of thing is what 'low impact recreation' means-Not motorized, noisy, environment wrecking motorized vehicles.

Recreational Opportunities: The Sauk Prairie Recreational Area offers many opportunities for a variety of "low impact" types of recreation: outdoor nature observation, bird-watching, nature photography, participation in prairie restoration, service learning activities, and, with appropriately designed trails, great opportunities for trail walking, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, and bicycling.

However, it is critical that all these recreational activities be compatible with the goals of the Badger Reuse Plan. High impact recreational activities, such as shooting with guns (including paint ball shooting) and motorized ATVs are not compatible with the goals of prairie restoration, protection of grassland fauna, nature recreation activities, and the special, unique outdoor nature educational and service learning educational opportunities.

The Sauk Prairie area is unique and offers a one-of-a-kind opportunity to benefit the people of Wisconsin and create a remarkable example of the unique natural legacy of Wisconsin for now and future generations.

Efforts to allow some off leash dog areas and horseback riding are fine with me, especially if the dog areas are not in sensitive areas identified for grassland birds. I support non-motorized recreation opportunities, including hunting on much of the land, except and off leash dog areas. I see bird watching, hunting, hiking, bicycling and dog areas as allowable recreational activities that will allow people to appreciate the unique grassland habitat. Managing this habitat, planting native prairie are essential. What a great opportunity to do wonderful things for grassland birds and prairie.

I believe that the ones allowed be non-intensive, such as hiking, nature study, and activities which promote and don't degrade or harm the habitats or users' senses of calm and serenity. ATV's (disruptive), paintball (there are other places available), horses (spread of invasive species), are a few of the intensive activities which I am not in favor of on Badger.

The Analysis focuses on potential recreational uses in its section "Property's Recreational Significance and Capability." I am disappointed, and somewhat surprised, that this section does not reference the specific language of the BRP, or of the WDNR's "Acceptance of Terms and Conditions by the Applicant" agreement with the U.S. National Park Service. These documents provide crucial guidance for intended and appropriate recreational uses at the Badger property. I urge the WDNR to return to these documents for review. In particular, I urge the WDNR to recognize that "motorized trail networks" and the activities listed under "non-traditional outdoor recreation uses" are inappropriate at the site. The Reuse Committee was explicit in encouraging and recommending appropriate, "low-impact" recreational uses. This site will provide remarkable recreational benefits and opportunities for all the citizens of Wisconsin. However, it cannot accommodate all recreational activities without sacrificing its other values.

I am glad to see the draft Master Plan recognizes the importance of the Badger Reuse Plan in most parts. However, I am greatly concerned by mention of a number of non-traditional uses in the draft plan or proposed by interests coming late to the process. These uses include rocketeering, trails for motorized vehicles, shooting ranges, paint ball games, dog parks and more. These sorts of uses were addressed by the Badger Reuse Plan and rejected. The Department did likewise in its application to the National Park Service. I strongly urge that the Department continue on this course for many reasons. First, I believe a place for quiet contact with nature is increasingly important for our harried society. Many of these non-traditional uses, even if practiced by only a handful of people, will disturb the use of this land by all others. Second, habitat fragmentation is a serious threat to many wildlife populations. Breaking up Badger into a variety of uses can fragment the habitat these populations currently use or could use by way of restoration. Third, adding non-traditional uses, especially those requiring additional infrastructure, will impede restoration of endangered ecosystems and reduce their size. Fourth, many of these non-traditional uses can already be practiced nearby. For example, there is a rifle range in Lodi and a shotgun range in Prairie du Sac. Further, the Department already has a dog training area nearby at the Mazomanie wildlife area. Finally, installing these uses at Badger would compete with private businesses already providing these kinds of recreation.

I believe that this site should be reserved for conservation and restoration. To consider opening it up to such activities as ATV riding, shooting ranges, paintball and rocketeering would be a mistake. The noise and destruction associated with such forms of recreation should not be a part of the plans for the area. Sensitivity to the beauty of the area and the detraction that would come from permitting this kind of recreation should guide the decisions about the site's future.

Recreational activities that are in keeping with the values and goals of the Badger Reuse Plan should be encouraged; recreational activities that are inconsistent with it should not be included in the DNR's plan.

The greater Devil's Lake Area is a wonderful area for both consumptive and non-consumptive recreation. Opening up this property to hunting, trapping, birding, wildlife watching, botanizing, etc. would be a natural fit. Due to the high traffic at Devil's Lake, this property would seem to be an obvious choice for introducing the public to grassland/savanna ecosystems as well as offering more serious birders a place to get off roads and into the grasslands to view these birds. Hunting should be compatible with birding during most times of the year provided hunters and birders take the necessary safety precautions.

I'm concerned about more intensive recreational uses (ATV, high-density dog training, etc.) on the overall productivity of grassland birds at the site. I think dog training can be a wonderful compliment to the area and fits well within the goals - however; I would refrain from offering up large sections of the property to high-density training use during May - July. ATVs would seriously conflict with the other recreational uses of the property AND could potentially spread invasive plants and disrupt breeding activities across a large portion of the site. ATV use would also require higher enforcement presence at the site as they often won't adhere to posted signs about trails, etc. Limiting the ATVs to a small portion of the site or to an exterior trail that avoids sensitive areas may be a compromise, but I'd suggest that ATVs just aren't a great fit here. After all, many people like to go surfing, doesn't mean it would be smart to build a wave-pool here.

I appreciate the chance to comment and look forward to seeing Upland Sandpipers and Eastern Meadowlarks greet future birders, turkey hunters and wildlife watchers for years to come here!

I would like to see some facilities for working dogs - definitely not "dog parks."
My personal favorite outdoor activity is dog sledding - which is a winter activity and would not conflict with the interests of grassland birds. In all the other parks whenever a ski trail is developed or improved sleds are not allowed. Some dedicated Sled dog trails would be wonderful. Question 92 of the 2010 WCC included all the working dog activities that we could think of, but again not dog parks. The idea is to have an area for training and enjoying many of these activities.

The people working on the Question 92 would be to very flexible and would work to figure out how to keep our activities from conflicting with any conservation issues. We would like to be a part of the planning process.

Because, as mentioned on p. 49 of the DNR's DRAFT Regional & Property Analysis: Sauk Prairie Recreation Area, "The Department's 3,800 acres of public land is connected by a four lane highway to major population centers offering easy access to outdoor recreation opportunities,"

I urge the DNR to NOT include motorized trail networks in its plans for the Sauk Prairie Recreation Area.

Given the Area's proximity to the Federal Highway system and very heavily trafficked recreational facilities (the largest of which is the adjacent Devil's Lake State Park) and communities (Baraboo, Wisconsin Dells), I am very concerned that providing a potentially large pool of motorized trail users with access to the Area will counteract the preservation opportunities outlined in the Department's Analysis.

But I feel the Badger Ammunition would be much better suited for the potential listed activities, including ATV trails, shooting ranges, rocketeering area, paintball & bicycling activities. Currently ATV riders have to go to Black River Falls, Darlington or Dyracause. Nothing in Central Wisconsin. Shooting ranges are club membership only except prior to deer gun season. The Bluffs make a perfect backdrop for a shooting range for safety purposes. Today's youth is not content with walking/biking trails for more than a couple hours. They need more outdoor activities.

In closing, there is plenty of room in this 73909 acre parcel to accommodate all previously mentioned activities as well as conservation, prairie restoration, education & sustainable agriculture (the agriculture could be the natural barrier between, recreational & conservational activities).

So I ask that you keep an open mind, when working with the conservationalist group as they do not speak for the whole, but rather a well intend few.

I am opposed to use of this land for high impact sports, such as ATV or snowmobile trails. Too much of our land has been devoted to motorized vehicles. Please do not try to "balance" these high impact uses against the needs of wildlife. They really are not compatible.

Hi! Hope it's not too late to sound off on plans for reuse of Badger Army Ammo Plant. I'm excited about the possibilities for this wonderful, unique area. I totally support ideas such as prairie restoration, environmental and outdoor education, ag research and light recreational use. I would urge those in charge of planning to exercise caution, however with regard to opening up the area to all kinds of uses in order to be inclusive. Just because the area might support a particular sport, doesn't mean that it would be best for all. Imagine, for example, hiking along the edge of the prairie, enjoying the native plants, and birds, the peace and quiet – only to have the roar of ATVs nearby infringing on that enjoyment. I really appreciate the time and effort given by those involved in the planning process. I'm sure that a comprehensive plan that considers best uses for this ecologically important area will prevail.

- dog park
- walking and biking trails
- possible access to Lake Wisconsin
- maybe put some type of manmade lake on the property for fishing

I have just today received an email from a fellow musher who has asked me to comment on whether or not we would like to see this area to be able to be used for dogsledding in the winter months, and training on carts when there is no snow. Truly there is a shortage of areas where we are able to train our dogs for this sport in this area. The trails we used to run on in past years have been built up with housing in many places, making encounters with loose dogs a problem. It would be a godsend to have somewhere safe to run a dog team. I would be willing to pay a fee for this ability and I believe others would also. The dogs would not do damage to the grounds. They only need to be able to see some sort of trail through the grass to start following it. It would be fun to be able to have organized races there someday, but if not, I would at least like to see the ability for recreational mushing and training to take place. I live in Sauk County on Hwy 60 between Sauk City and Spring Green. My teams are from 4-6 dogs in size.

I am against having any of the following activities occurring within the recreational land; rocketeering, shooting ranges, geocaching, dog parks, paintball, and community gardens.

As a citizen who lives on land bordering the current site, it would be more than an occasional nuisance listening to even one of the listed activities. A shooting range, rocketeering, even paintball are all activities that would contribute to excessive noise pollution and destroy what remains of the quiet atmosphere of the area. Neighbors of BAAP have had to listen to LOUD, sporadic, structure rattling booms over the last several years as blasting/demolition was being carried out at the site. Enough is enough... no more noise.

The SPRA site would best be used for non-motorized uses. Hiking and bike trails are what I think the area should contain.

On the use of community gardens.... if the land is going to be used to grow food, why not let the local farmers buy/rent some of the agricultural land to use. How do you police the use of the gardens, what is grown, who gets some of the space, ect.

I am concerned that some of the recreation proposals in the Regional and Property Analysis draft report may negatively impact the conservation goals in the Sauk Prairie Recreation Area. I am convinced that the goal of conserving a large area for grassland bird habitat should be first priority because the opportunity to have this on such a scale is unparalleled. I ask that recreation at SPRA be non-motorized, low-impact and compatible with grassland bird conservation. (Paint ball....really?)

I am writing as a representative for all off road street legal motorcycle riders. We are involved in numerous motorcycle events in Wisconsin that involve hundreds of off-highway and dual sport motorcyclists each year.

It is our strong desire to have a single-track motorcycle trail established as part of the development of the DNR property at the former Badger Army Ammunition plant. We have little opportunity for riding off-highway motorcycles on single track motorcycle trails in Wisconsin. This is especially true in the southern part of the state. Many of our riders have to travel to other states to find opportunities to enjoy this preferred riding experience. Personally, I look forward to using the Michigan Upper Peninsula trail system, and would like to see Wisconsin improve our off highway motorized vehicle trail opportunities.

As a side note, I would also like to see legislation introduced that will establish a trail sticker program, similar to the program for ATVs, that will allow us to generate funds to build and sustain motorcycle trails in Wisconsin.

Single track motorcycle trails are similar to mountain bike trails in their curvilinear design. They are narrow, often in wooded areas, and only have a small tread way. Elevation changes on the track are also preferred. Constructing sustainable trails make them low maintenance with what maintenance there is usually being done by local clubs or friends of the facility groups.

There are several clubs interested in this opportunity. A point of contact for all of us is our Off-Highway Motorcycle representative to the State Trails Council Bryan Much. He can be reached at bryan.much@charter.net <<mailto:bryan.much@charter.net>> or at 262-569-1474. We will subscribe to the master planning news on your web site as well.

We are looking forward to developing this opportunity at Sauk Prairie. Thank you for your consideration and support of off highway motorcycle trail development at Badger Ammunition Plant

Installing hiking trails would be terrific, once all the explosives are gone. It would attract more hikers to the area, thus boosting the area's economy. People do not need to travel far to play paintball, etc. but they will for beautiful hiking areas.

Do NOT include motorized trail networks in plans for the Sauk Prairie Recreation Area. Apart from the immediate destructive effect of ATVs on wild habitat, it should be obvious from the extreme weather we've been experiencing recently that global warming is happening even faster than we expected. It was time 40 years ago to begin discouraging the use of petroleum-fueled automobile vehicles, and now it may well be too late.

I am writing to profess my interest in having horse riding trails at the Badger plant acreage. This area would be so ideal for easy safe trail riding that is close to Madison as well as centrally located for many of us horse enthusiasts. I actually had the pleasure of riding on the land at the plant back in 2000 for The Kids Ranch benefit and was able to drive my horse and buggy on the many miles of roads that are existent there. The terrain would be accommodating for most any level of riding and the roads would provide easy buggy access to enjoy the beautiful views and countryside available there. Erosion issues would be minimal due to the flat terrain. I am hopeful that the governing board would consider this an option for land use at the Badger plant. There are so few horse designated trails available in Sauk County that this would be an ideal location with a wide spread access from many other counties.

I will eagerly be awaiting the board's options and decisions for the use of this absolutely beautiful land use opportunity.

I would definitely like to see this property opened to the public for ONLY low impact, non-motorized uses. I would ask that your group not succumb to random special interests and return to its original plan of restoring this land to its natural state with a focus on conservation.

It is our strong desire to have a single-track motorcycle trail established as part of the development of the DNR property at the former Badger Army Ammunition plant. We have little opportunity for riding off-highway motorcycles on single track motorcycle trails in Wisconsin. This is especially true in the southern part of the state. Many of our riders have to travel to other states to find opportunities to enjoy this preferred riding experience. As a side note, our user group will soon see legislation introduced that will establish a trail sticker program, similar to the program for ATVs, that will allow us to generate funds to build and sustain motorcycle trails in Wisconsin. Single track motorcycle trails are similar to mountain bike trails in their curvilinear design. They are narrow, often in wooded areas, and only have a small tread way. Elevation changes on the track are also preferred. Constructing sustainable trails make them low maintenance with what maintenance there is usually being done by local clubs or friends of the facility groups. There are several clubs interested in this opportunity. A point of contact for all of us is our Off-Highway Motorcycle representative to the State Trails Council Bryan Much. He can be reached at bryan.much@charter.net <<mailto:bryan.much@charter.net>> or at 262-569-1474. We will subscribe to the master planning news on your web site as well.

Creating mtv trails which add noise and pollution will have a definite bad influence on the regeneration of nature. Badger can be used for many recreational non motorized purposes. If motors are allowed in the pressure and spill off from the wisconsin dells recreation area will gradually dominate and minimize the natural value of the area.

.We originally were part of a small group who wrote Question 72 “Dog Access Regulations at Badger Ordinance Site (#1104110)” and shepherded it through the Conservation Congress processes to obtain statewide approval. As part of that effort, we obtained several hundred signatures on petitions supporting the question. We are now planning to contact several of those people, who are familiar and experienced in various dog activities and might be willing to volunteer to serve as liaison persons to your planning committee, to regional dog activity clubs, and other interested dog groups. For instance, we are members of several dog clubs and have experience in dog sledding, carting, racing, herding, tracking, obedience and agility. We have subscribed to receive the SPRA master planning news and would be happy to help you in any way you might desire in the future. Please feel free to contact us at any time.

Management of Badger should strive to minimize conflicts between conservation and recreational uses. Wisconsin Audubon Council would strongly emphasize that any proposed recreation must be non-motorized, low-impact, and compatible with grassland bird conservation. Ground-nesting grassland birds are especially vulnerable to disruptions, especially from users leaving designated trails, a temptation in a landscape as open as Badger. Low-impact ecotourism, especially birding, is a growing interest that will provide economic benefits to the “heart of Wisconsin conservation”. And, keeping state budgets in mind, managing the property primarily for birds and other wildlife would be very low cost, especially when compared to development for more active recreation.

Wisconsin Audubon Council strongly urges that non-toxic ammunition and fishing tackle be required for any hunting and fishing on the property. A heavy burden of lead shot is being deposited on DNR-managed lands throughout the state, and the result is continued contamination of these sites and the predictable negative consequences for our waterfowl, game birds, and other wildlife. Just two or three pellets can kill some bird species. Lead can also cause behavioral changes, making wildlife more susceptible to disease, predation, and accidents.

Similarly in the draft conclusions, motorized trails and some of the non-traditional recreation uses such as rocketeering, shooting ranges, dog parks, paintball and similar such activities will not work together with the endangered resources and restored ecosystems. It was disappointing even to see them in the plan after the draft had so much information about the area's important natural resources.

In order to promote global biodiversity and sustainable land use, Community Conservation, Inc. catalyzes, facilitates and empowers local people to manage and conserve natural resources within the social cultural and economic context of their communities

The Sauk Prairie Recreation Area presents an important opportunity for low impact recreational activities. Based on its conservation value, it can have a major function of education by stressing such activities as prairie restoration, school classes, bird watching, and hiking and bicycling on low impact trails. Community Conservation Inc.

I also urge you to prohibit any recreation which would not be compatible with this primary focus on prairie / shrubland birds. Quiet recreation opportunities would be ideal - hiking, birdwatching, etc. Hunting can also be important to avoid excess deer populations. But many other proposed recreational activities, such as paintball, dog parks, and rocketeering, are certainly not compatible. I urge you to oppose such activities and any others that would not be compatible with the conservation of prairie and shrubland birds.

I am in strong opposition to the use of ATVs on the property, as their use rips the prairie sod, kills native plants, and contributes to erosion.

In the conclusion to your Analysis document, you identify the need for "compatible recreation opportunities" on the property. This is laudable, and in fact obligatory, if I read the 2004 conveyance agreement between NPS and DNR correctly. A good many of those compatible activities were highlighted in that agreement, including, "hiking, picnicking, primitive camping, Lake Wisconsin access and viewing, savanna and grassland restoration, environmental education and cultural/historical interpretation." These proposed activities are consistent with the core values identified in the Badger Reuse Plan approved by a wide variety of participating stakeholders more than a decade ago. ...

The Conclusion of the RPA begins with the statement that “[t]he regional significance of the property’s ecological capabilities sets the context for providing compatible recreation opportunities.” The term “compatible” is critical. Recreational activities affect the landscape in many ways and no two activities have the same impact. WSO believes a planning priority should be to carefully design recreational activities in areas with exceptional natural resources, such as the high priority grasslands and shrubland parcels, the north transition area into the bluffs, the prairie/savanna area in the Magazine Area. Intensive recreational activities should be confined to areas of the site with limited biological value.

Unfortunately, there is only limited information in the RPA regarding potential recreational activities. It notes that the location along STH 12 allows easy access from major population centers. Only general comments are given to possible recreational uses of the site, such as:

- both motorized and non-motorized trail networks should be considered (possibly using some of the site’s existing road network)
- robust hunting and trapping activities could be supported on the site
- non-traditional recreation, such as rocketeering, shooting ranges, geocaching, dog parks, paintball, community gardens, and other activities not typically found on Department lands might be possible.

Additional suggestions for uses such as horse trails and horse camping, hunting dog training areas, and others were made at the open house. The lack of specified recreational activities makes it very hard to comment at this time, given how varied the activities can be and how varied their impacts to bird habitat would be.

It should be noted that birding and other nature studies activities is an important recreational pursuit for Wisconsin citizens. WSO would like to emphasize the great potential for the SPRA to become a major birding destination. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service estimates that 26 percent of Wisconsin’s residents enjoy birding as a recreational pursuit. During 2006, about 1,434,000 people were estimated to have engaged in some form of birding in Wisconsin and almost one-fifth of those birders were visitors from out-of-state

I would look forward to frequent hiking with my dog (who is always under my control).

We are not naive to the fact that motorized recreation have an important role in the enjoyment of Wisconsin's outdoors. We hope that, as a professional, you will see the natural value of this great environment is more vital and necessary than the social value.

This is an absolutely unique area and habitat in Wisconsin; can we please set aside this one gem and prevent it from being ruined by such destructive, violent, nonpeaceful, and noisy recreational activities involving guns, motorized vehicles, and the like? If we respect nature as much as we say we do, then let’s live up to our principles and treat the land in just this fashion.

Land use should be limited to low impact activities such as hiking, picnicking, bird-watching.

My grandparents, Essie and Lyman Kindschi, lived in the house across from BAAP land. They loved all of that Sumpter township land. In their honor, I ask DNR to abide by the Reuse Plan. Please open that property to the general public exclusively for low-impact recreation.

It has been noted that the DNR is thinking part of this area would be a “recreation” area that might include ATV use, rocketeering and shooting ranges. I think these types of activity are NOT appropriate for this area. These will destroy the prairie plants and their feathery inhabitants and not follow the vision of the Badger Reuse Plan that was developed by so many.

This is a great opportunity to restore this area to its original state. It was very difficult for my ancestors to leave their farms. They made a great sacrifice and, if they were living, they would be appalled to have the area turned into an ATV track or shooting range.

Up until page 50 of the plan I was enthusiastic and in agreement. I object to trapping, I think it is barbaric and should be outlawed. We are not in the 19th century and realize animals suffer pain as well as humans – “hunts will offer a unique experience not found anywhere in the region.” Have you been outside the plant boundaries that are open to hunting?

Rocketeering? We’re trying to get rid of the residues from rocketing. Shooting ranges (noise and ----(can’t read)) we have successful gun clubs. Geocaching? Webster doesn’t have a definition – I tried looking it up, dog parks – communities have dog parks and paint ball? Whatever were you thinking? That’s a commercial enterprise needs supervision and also of liability insurance.

You have done wonderful studies on the birds, ----, plants and you even suggest the counterproductive activities that will threaten them? Natural Resources. That’s what your department is called. There is too much natural at stake to not plan wisely. Next it will be a water park! These non-traditional/off the wall ideas do not fit the key values – I know because I helped write them!

In addition, it is important to stress the fact that the future planning for the SPRA should consider its contiguity with Devil’s Lake State Park. Indeed, the SPRA might ultimately be incorporated into the park. In any event planning for the SPRA should be coordinated with that for the park. For example, maintaining the SPRA as a more natural area with only hiking and nature trails would nicely complement the already more developed parts of the Devils Lake State Park.

The Findings section talks about non-traditional outdoor recreation uses. This idea is entirely unwarranted. There should be no consideration of such activities as dog park, shooting ranges, paint ball use, ATVs etc. The uniqueness of the property with its extending all the way from the Baraboo Hills down to the WI River certainly warrants maintaining it in as natural a state as possible

The draft RPA in its Findings and Conclusion section states that motorized trail networks should be considered as recreational options in the Area. Draft RPA at 49. The Alliance does not support the use of motorized trails in the Area and believes this option should be removed from consideration.

The NPS in its letter approving the land transfer explicitly requires that the WDNR “develop and use the property as described in the Program of Utilization submitted as part of its application....” Part A of the WDNR’s application, which is titled “Acceptance of Terms and Conditions by the Applicant,” further provides that the WDNR “shall forever use the property exclusively for public park and recreational use in accordance with its application for the property, particularly the program of utilization...” The WDNR listed the following intended uses for the property in its Program of Utilization: “hiking, picnicking, primitive camping, Lake WI access viewing, prairie, savanna and grassland restoration, environmental education and cultural/historical interpretation.” The Program of Utilization also states that the property will be converted to “low impact recreation(al)” uses through a master planning process, which would “build upon work done on this project by the Badger Reuse Committee.”

Motorized trails are not listed uses in the Program of Utilization and are not low impact recreational uses, and therefore such uses are not approved by the NPS. Moreover, motorized trails are at odds with the uses envisioned in the Badger Reuse Plan that was adopted by the Badger Reuse Committee. As such, the WDNR should remove motorized trails from consideration as an Area use.

The draft RPA in its “findings and conclusions” section also states that “a number of non-traditional outdoor recreation uses should be considered...such as rocketeering, shooting ranges, geocaching, dog parks, paintball, community gardens and other recreation activities not typically found on Department lands.” Draft RPA p. 50. The Alliance does not support allowing rocketeering, shooting ranges, geocaching, dog parks, paintball or any other such high-impact uses in the Area. For the reasons identified above, the NPS has not approved of such uses and they do not align with the Badger Reuse Plan. The WDNR should therefore remove them from further consideration. The Sauk Prairie Conservation Alliance

Recreation Opportunities (RO):

Bike trail from southeast corner of SPRA to Burma Rd, cross country ski trails, hiking trails, open country walking allowed, back country no trace camping with permit 2-3 tents mix in one area, road accessible for handicapped at certain times, opposed to any other motorized vehicles; rare opportunity for solitude with open skies in Midwest.

Allow only low-impact of recreational activities in vast majority of Badger (hiking, birding, tent camping, X-country skiing); consider motorized recreational uses only on perimeter of property provide these activities do not compromise endangered species or create an unwelcoming atmosphere for majority of visitors.

Radio control air craft field 600'X600' 1000' fly over; radio control car track

Jeep and truck 4X4 trails

Trails for OHV (jeeps, trucks, etc)-not necessarily tough trails, but unsurfaced trails and reasonable narrow and maintained only as necessary to keep trail from being eradicated.

Allow some 2-track motorized trails that include OHVs (jeeps, trucks, etc); fire breaks, etc are quite usable as such

Today's WI State Journal carries the news that the DNR recently inserted into the prairie-savanna plan provisions that might allow for high-impact human recreation at the location. I oppose. Let us humans allow birds, bees and plants to have their fun, too.

Horse trails, horse trails, horse trails!!! It is a beautiful area and I'd love to be able to ride it – miles of it!

Hiking, cross country ski trails, please, please equine trails

Places for people to hike, bike, run, exercise pets and train various hunting and working/racing dogs

I would like to see part of this property set up with trails for 4X4 trucks and jeeps. Land for this hobby keeps disappearing to the point we have to leave the state to find any decent places to go

Low impact is best; nonmotorized

We now have more than enough land for recreation

Since at least 1999 the BAAP has hosted bow, and in some years gun, hunts for people with physical challenges. We would like that to continue as it is so accessible.

Off-highway vehicles; 4X4 truck trails with rock and vertical challenges, berry picking, camping, hunting, trapping ,fishing

4X4 truck trails, hunting, fishing

Dog sledders need a place to go. This would be a great area for sledding trails

I've been driving past this property for 35 years and wishing for some additional horse trails here. What a fantastic opportunity and great terrain without serious concern about erosion! PLEASE consider some new horse trails in the master plan. It is a wonderful "silent sport" that is very compatible with non-motorized activities. I have 30+ years of experience with horses and trail riding if you need any volunteers on your planning committee.

To further the dog access motion #72 of the Conservation Congress, there should be dog mushing, skijoring and dog carting trail loops of various lengths such as 10 mi, 5 mi, 2 mi distances thru natural landscapes

I would like to see some trails or a play area for off road, 4X4 trucks and jeeps

I would like to see as many horse trails as possible. According to WI state shores council general population survey and horse owner's survey report from 2008, the best estimate of the number of households in the state that currently own horses is between 103,432 and 113,078.

One of the results of the study is: "the issues facing WI's horse owners focus primarily on land use concerns. Housing developments that limit where horses can be ridden (61%) and lack of local trails (50%) were the most commonly cited issues facing the state's equestrians."

Another statistic from the study indicated "18% of WI's households report that they go horseback riding in a typical year. This suggests that more residents go horseback riding than are licensed hunters or report that they go snowmobiling. Most of the state's residents who ride, do so once to several times per year."

I would like to have more opportunities to trail ride.

Additional features to consider include camping areas and water availability.
[Wis. State Horse Council survey report attached with comments]

- Single-track mountain bike trails
- Single-track motorcycle trails
- Integration of the "Great Sauk Trail" into Devil's Lake
- Championship level disc golf course 18-6K\$ 144' sidewalk
- Equestrian trails with facilities
- Eco-tourism: bird watching, hikers, education
- Spaniel training/trialing area; 200 ac knee high brome-bluestem grass
- Dog sled trails, 2-10 miles, races and training, dog/human exercise (skijoring non-motorized ---- ?)
- Off road 4-wheel drive (OHV) trail for truck/jeeps/etc: rough course, multi-use encouraged, logging roads used in WI
- Sheep dog training and trials
- Horse trails and overnight camping; carriage driving trails
- Cross country skiing, snow shoeing trails
- Prairie restoration is recreation
- Low impact recreation – hiking trails, prairie restoration, no motor trails
- Provide "walk-in" camping opportunities
- Recreational activities should not jeopardize (reverse) restoration efforts of threatened ecosystems (introduce exotics)
- Location for sheep dog training year round and trials including parking for 100 cars, the best location in the state recently closed due to age of owner (was on 78 S of Portage)
- Opportunities unavailable in this part of the state like hiking/biking in large grassland/ag landscape
- Prairie area/bird hunting
- Low-impact conservation-compatible use (Badger Reuse Plan0
- Class I dog training area Because it will take time to get some things done in the great open space, there needs to be public accessible space from the Kirner Stone to the Fordham Prairie

Consider cumulative impacts of current and future uses and activities; rails-to-trails option should be explored; explore partnerships with state, federal, regional organizations with expertise in ecological restoration and conservation (also Leopold, International Crane Foundation); allow permit-based hunting to the extent necessary to restore and preserve the greatest diversity of native flora and fauna; consider both the negative and positive impacts of restoration activities and uses upon the planet's climate (carbon sequestration, emission's, etc.)

<p>Make as many trails multi-use with as many other users as possible. Concerned about safe drinking water for any visitors; ok to let horses nibble at the grass or not? Equine users would be willing to pay a reasonable user fee, from the “horsey” people I’ve spoken with. Only requirement would be a parking area for horse trailers (not paved) and marked trails (Black Hawk Ridge has experience in this)</p>
<p>Speed limits if ATV, UTV, and OHM trails are shared with OHV as the ATV’s travel considerably faster than OHVs. -</p>
<p>Preserve as many natural ecosystems as possible with multi-use, multi-season trails Please care for our beautiful land – animals and plants</p>
<p>Please can’t we have one place where it’s relatively quiet. We have an impending oil and water shortage and people don’t seem to realize what is happening. We are cleaning up one mess to create another. I object to special interest groups always getting their way over the majority of people who merely want to go out for a walk. Paintball shooting, you have to be kidding me. Grown men running around through the woods with guns shooting at each other. Why don’t they face up to the fact they like violence. Join the armed forces. You can fire a rifle there. Am being serious about this, not sarcastic.</p> <p>As a Navy veteran, I joint with my wife, Elyn in requesting that the 3,000 acres at the BAAP grounds be restored to low impact activities such as hiking, picnicking, camping ,biking, horseback riding, bird-watching and other non-motorized outdoor activities and education. – There is so much potential here for creating a low-impact, non-motorized public area, with prairie and savanna restoration projects. It is my fervent wish that we implement this once in a lifetime opportunity.</p>
<p>The property would also serve the community as a place to come hiking, watching wildlife, and just enjoying the great outdoors. The utilization of this property should comply with the guidelines set in the master plan created by the Sauk Prairie Conservation Alliance, where recreation activities will not leave a negative impact on the land.</p>
<p>I am concerned, however, about potential destructive uses of the land – as you know, there are special interest groups that would like to secure Sauk Prairie for their own narrow-minded and selfish uses. Such practices are best left to private lands and not public ones! Activitie4s that I would NOT like to see on the Sauk Prairie/Badger site include the use of ATVs and snowmobiles, paintballing access, shooting ranges, dog parks/dog training grounds, or community gardens. These activities would hurt the overall vision of grassland habitat and seeing a glimpse of what Sauk County may have looked like 500 years ago.</p>

In 2003 the Town of Merrimac raised \$260,000 through private donations and a WDNR Lake Protection Grant to purchase property adjoining the former BAAP pumping station property (Parcel N).

Located in an area of Lake WI known as Weigands Bay, this unique area is somewhat isolated from the traffic and congestion of the main channel. It offers natural habitat not otherwise available on other parts of the river. Wildlife that frequents the Weigands Bay area include bald eagle, osprey, blue heron, wood duck, loon, flocks of migratory waterfowl, muskrat, beaver and scores of other species.

When soliciting donations the town emphasized that this property was one of the last truly undeveloped parts of Lake WI. The natural surroundings created one of the oldest growth forests on Lake WI as well as one of the largest undeveloped shorelines on the lake. Purchasing this land, the Town stated, would keep this gem out of the hands of developers.

Press releases stated that the Town's vision for the property included preserving the natural area, providing on-shore fishing access, hiking trails and nature observation points.

In keeping with this vision, a majority of residents around Weigands Bay are strongly opposed to any plan to build a developed boat landing and parking lot on WDNR property at Weigands Bay.

There is a far greater public need to preserve the Weigands Bay area as one of the very rare opportunities for people to fish, hike and relax on an undeveloped public shoreline anywhere on Lake WI. The need to preserve this natural area far outweighs any need for yet another boat landing. Developed public boat landings are already located less than 1 mile upstream and less than 1 mile downstream of this area. Also most developments and subdivisions in the area have their own private boat landings. Funds should be spent to upgrade and improve existing boat landings as usage and capacity dictate.

Included with this letter is a sample of a flier that we distributed to property owners of the area. An attached map pinpoints the locations of 49 property owners that signed and returned postcards in support of keeping this land preserved as a natural undeveloped area.

We urge the WDNR to work closely with the Township of Merrimac to jointly manage these adjoining properties and to share in the vision of preserving the natural undeveloped beauty of the area.

The Sauk Prairie Recreational Area Draft Master Plan includes a one paragraph discussion titled, "hunting and trapping" on page 50. I would ask that the master plan include consideration for upland bird hunting on this property. The SPRA draft master plan provided on page 33, a list of common species present on the property to include: turkey, woodcock, pheasants, and doves. Upland bird hunting is a traditional season (fall) activity that is common on many public properties in the state of WI. Upland bird hunting should be included in the final document.

Upland bird hunting generally requires that use of a dog which has been bred and trained for finding, flushing and retrieving game birds. No dog is born ready to hunt. A considerable amount of effort is necessary to train and prepare a dog to develop its obedience and fieldwork. I am an owner of spaniels, an upland bird hunter, and a member of the Central WI Sporting Spaniel Club. Once a young dog has learned obedience, the fieldwork begins. It is common to train (in the field) with a young dog, 3 to 5 days per week over 3 to 12 months to become proficient and ready for upland bird hunting. Once trained, dog training continues in preparation for the next fall hunting season. There are few public lands in WI which allow dog training for upland bird hunting. The Sauk Prairie Recreation Area Master Plan should include the opportunity for dog training in the field. A prairie grass field of approximately 100 acres would be needed for each dog training site, and ideally available year around. Providing two dog training fields of 100 acres (and be adjoin one another) would likely satisfy this need.

Another use of the 200 acres of grasslands used for dog training is the ability for area sporting dog clubs to host annual field trail events. There are seven sporting spaniel clubs in WI which host AKS sanctioned field trials annually. These clubs often have problems locating property to conduct their field trial. These events are generally held over a two day weekend. Competitors from our State and from around the Country participate in field trials. These events generate local tourism dollars for communities where field trials are held. In WI, field trials for spaniels are usually held during the months of September, October, November, March and April. Approximately seven events are held each year. The spaniel field trialing activity should also be included in the final master plan.

Don't let the ATV people have access to this space. Let's grow Wisconsin and provide jobs. If the ATV people want places to run their noisy machines they can buy some farms and make their trails. They want to be at Badger because it would be "free" to them. They have money to buy these machines, they can buy property to run them on.

Based on what we heard at the July 30th open house in Baraboo, we are concerned about the pressure on WDNR to accommodate a smorgasbord of recreational uses which could undermine the overall restoration opportunity that Badger offers and guarantee ongoing conflict among uses. Our concern is heightened by the nature of some of the “non-traditional outdoor recreation uses” being proposed for Badger. We agree with the conclusion of the Draft Regional & Property Analysis...that the “best overall functional role for the Sauk Prairie Recreation Area is to fulfill the highlighted ecological opportunities available while maximizing compatible recreation opportunities. This approach also takes into consideration the nine key values identified in the Badger Reuse Plan, approved by the Sauk County Board in 2001.”

Low-impact recreational uses will likely be compatible with the overall goals of ecological management and the Badger Reuse Plan. The Wisconsin Stewardship Program can be utilized by WDNR, municipalities, and non-profits to acquire more appropriate land nearer to population centers than Badger to accommodate some higher impact uses such as dog parks and field trial areas, community gardens, and other “recreation activities not typically found on Department lands.” Sites already exist in the vicinity for some “non-traditional” uses such as shooting ranges. Others, like trails for motorized vehicles, can be located along the boundaries of Badger. Other non-traditional uses such as paintball battlefields are best served by off-site, for-profit businesses.

The effect of trails on wildlife is unclear (it is a question that has received virtually no research attention, especially within prairie – savanna context). I strongly recommend conducting research to determine the effects of trails on ground nesting birds (and other taxa as well), since many of the ground nesting birds found at Badger are of conservation concern. Small predators certainly use trails, and ground nesting birds are especially vulnerable to these small predators (i.e. skunks, opossums, raccoons, fox, etc). Before proceeding with trail development, determination of an estimate of the impact of trails on wildlife of prairies and savannas is an important step that can be used to assess trade-offs and to plan trail routes so as to minimize their impact on wildlife populations.

Roads limit the movement ability of some invertebrates, small mammals, and herpetiles, and use of roads by these species as travel corridors or basking sites may expose them to high predation risk. I strongly favor removing roads from substantial portions of the property.

Dogs are predators on small vertebrates of many taxa. A dog park in an area of the property currently covered by non-native grasses seems reasonable, but use of existing native habitat as a dog park has high potential to convert that habitat into an ecological trap for ground nesting birds and any herpetiles or small mammals that select the potential dog park area (an ecological trap is an area that is attractive to these species, and where they settle, but where their survival and/or reproduction is very low – in this case it would be because of predation by dogs) .

Use of a portion of the property as community gardens seems like a very nice idea, but I have strong concerns about gardens facilitating the introduction and spread of exotic species into the Badger property.

Any recreation allowed on this area should be compatible with grassland conservation – low impact, nonmotorized. There are so few areas left for these imperiled birds, and here we have an opportunity to preserve a large block of the kind of habitat that is essential for their long-term survival.

<p>Any proposed recreation on this site should be non-motorized, low-impact and compatible with grassland bird conservation. It must protect from disturbance during nesting and provide habitat for the year round bird residents. There will not be many other opportunities to provide such places. I know you will be pressured to open this area to many types of activities that will not be compatible to providing wildlife habitat, but my input is to maintain in as wild and undisturbed as possible.</p>
<p>Low impact recreation would blend well with the ground nesting birds that would have an area big enough to mount a significant comeback in the area in comparison to fragmented property that serves no one well</p>
<p>Please leave the open grasslands undisturbed without motorized or dog sled access.</p>
<p>Please only allow recreation activities that will not disturb the bird populations. Please Do not allow motorized vehicles such as 4-wheelers, shooting ranges, paintball and other activities that would disturb or harm the birds. Many grassland species nest on the ground. This is a rare opportunity to protect a large grassland bordering the amazing Baraboo Hills for generations to come.</p>
<p>Hiking and cross country trails will give many people an opportunity to learn more about nature, but ATV use would not be compatible. And I don't think baby fauns would like rocketeering, paintball, or shooting ranges.</p>
<p>He is in favor of managing BAAP in as close to its natural state as possible and allowing rec activities such as skiing, trails, hunting etc., and is not in favor of any motorized recreation.</p>
<p>There is a need for another boat landing on lake Wis. the pump house area would be ideal for this. Also there is a real need for Shoreland fishing areas. Piers and or shoreline boardwalks would allow people access both at the pump house area and in Area L (River Corridor) without degrading the shoreline.</p>
<p>I know that numerous special interests will want their form of recreation to be allowed on this once fertile land. They will have the money. They will have the backing, most probably, of your Dept. Secretary, who along with her boss, the governor, thinks privatizing everything possible is a good idea. We wish to stand for the opposite vision, the one previously developed years ago and as its neighbor to the north, oppose any special interest use of this precious land, which would impair that vision.</p>
<p>Recreational activities should be consistent with the values and goals of the Badger Reuse Plan. Activities not consistent with this Plan, should not be included. Low-impact recreation only.</p>
<p>As a volunteer in the prairie restoration activities on the Sauk Prairie Recreation area, I am concerned that the DNR plan for appropriate recreational uses of that land. I write to advocate that the DNR honor the Badger Reuse Plan's values in planning regarding the Sauk Prairie Recreation Area, i.e., land restoration, education and research, low-impact recreation, sustainable agriculture. Recreational activities that are consistent with the values and goals of the Reuse Plan should be encouraged; recreational activities that are inconsistent-- rocketeering, paintball activities, gun targets-- should not be considered appropriate and should not be included in the DNR's plan.</p>
<p>Recreational activities that are consistent with the values and goals of the Reuse Plan should be encouraged; recreational activities that are inconsistent should not be considered appropriate and should not be included in the DNR's plan. Please reconsider the idea of allowing rocketeering, ATV use, paintball and shooting ranges. While all these uses have their place, they do not fit the values and criteria of the Badger Reuse Plan, and should not be considered for this unique property.</p>
<p>Recreational activities that are consistent with the values and goals of the Reuse Plan should be encouraged; recreational activities that are inconsistent should not be considered appropriate and should not be included in the DNR's plan</p>

<p>It would be a misfortune to see this beautiful area disrupted in any way. People go up "north" for peace and quiet but that too have been taken away by ski jets on lakes and ATVs in areas that were meant to be quiet. Please continue in your fight to keep the area natural and conserve what is there.</p>
<p>Reviewing the proposals made at the open house on July 30, it is clear that alternative recreational activities proposed for the SPRA could be accommodated at much smaller, separate landholdings, and it must be noted, on lands that are of much lower conservation value due to small size or ecological degradation.</p>
<p>The DNR's planning for its 2011-2016 Wisconsin Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) also recognizes the same values and goals as the Reuse Plan and points out the potential National significance of what Badger represents.</p> <p>A major goal of the proposed 2011-2016 Wisconsin Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) is to identify essential and contemporary issues that affect the future of outdoor recreation in Wisconsin. In addition to this, on April 16, 2010, President Obama hosted the White House Conference on America's Great Outdoors. The meeting was about working together to conserve America's precious land resources and to encourage people to get outdoors and reconnect to the land.</p> <p>During the meeting, he signed a Presidential Memorandum to launch what is being called America's Great Outdoors Initiative for the 21st Century. This Presidential Initiative has three main goals:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Reconnect Americans, especially children, to America's rivers and waterways, landscapes of national significance, ranches, farms and forests, great parks, and coasts and beaches by exploring a variety of efforts.2. Build upon state, local, private and tribal priorities for the conservation of land, water, wildlife, historic and cultural resources, creating corridors and connectivity across these outdoor spaces, and for enhancing neighborhood parks. ... through public private partnerships and locally supported conservation strategies.3. Use science-based management practices to restore and protect our lands and waters for future generations. <p>This SCORP will build upon this Presidential Initiative to include appropriate management recommendations that serve as proactive approaches to address critical issues identified in the process. http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/parks/planning/scorp/outline.html</p>
<p>Would be great to have shared use of multi-use trails so there will be more trails for all groups and a greater amount of moneys available. This would also create better education [and] communication among users.</p>
<p>Prefer no ATVs, snowmobile trails, off road vehicles allowed. Noise is common. Silence S/B considered a valuable resource.</p>
<p>The Weigand's Bay area (Parcel N) is Not a suitable location for a developed boat landing and parking lot. There are already boat landings less than 1 mile upstream at Moon Valley and less than 1 mile downstream at the Oak's. There are also private landings at all the subdivisions surrounding Weigand's Bay.</p>
<p>Is it possible to connect this to Devil's Lake State Park? Multiuse recreation areas tend to try to do too much and end up serving none very well.</p>
<p>I am uncertain of the economic impact to the area as far as a realistic estimate [of a 4WD trail] but personally I am willing to spend whatever it takes to get there, eat while there, fueling up while there and whatever other incidentals that would be needed.</p>

I would appreciate the DNR looking at creating an area where 4-Wheel Drive enthusiasts can recreate. An "Off-Road Park" if you will. There is a huge demand for Off-Road motorized recreation in Southern Wisconsin and no opportunity within a 4 hour drive in which to do it. Madison is a very large Metro area with many Jeep, SUV, ATV, and Off-Road Motorcycle enthusiasts. People will literally come from hours around to enjoy a nicely setup Off-Road Challenge area.

There is a town in Indiana with an Off-Road Park on the outskirts, and it provides many economic boosts to the area. The State of Minnesota, and the State of Indiana have found that providing such areas is not only a boon for their DNRs, but take the pressure off other areas enthusiasts would otherwise flock to. Something to think about as this ecologically damaged area is repurposed. Off-Roaders are not that concerned that the area that they recreate in is "Pristene". In MN, the Iron Range Off-Road Park near Gilbert MN is an old strip mine. Using it as an Off-Road Park has saved the State of MN billions in reclamation costs for the State, and the Park users love it.

Land Resource Opportunities

Develop wetland area.

The TV News version of DNR's July 30 open house presented a call for ideas about Sauk Prairie, emphasizing shooting ranges, archery, and racing cars – not at all the carefully-crafted and well-reasoned vision for integrating ecological restoration, education, research, agriculture, and recreation at Badger that I and fellow conservationists support. Therefore, I write to urge you to be guided by the Badger Reuse Plan and ensure that uses are consistent with its values.

To keep the emphasis on land restoration, I suggest replacing "recreation" with "restoration and revitalization" in the title or similar words that capture the unique vision that this place alone can fulfill for residents of Wisconsin and visitors from afar.

I recommend retaining the Oversight Management Commission to achieve collaboration and integrated land use and management, according to the vision of the Reuse Plan. The Commission can assure that proposals are consistent with the Values and Criteria of the Reuse Plan. It can assure that all proposals from diverse stakeholders undergo the same level of scrutiny. It can help implement adaptive management, which will be essential to restoration of the Sauk Prairie.

I urge DNR to follow the recommendations of Sauk Prairie Conservation Alliance (abbreviated):

1. Manage Badger / Sauk as a single unit,
2. Create a place to communicate the Vision.
3. Respect and make consistent use of the Reuse Plan / OMC evaluation process
4. Continue to support the Oversight Management Commission.
5. Take an adaptive management approach...
6. Execute an agreement with...centers to recognize the educational and research utility and potential...
7. Emphasize the unique character of the Badger / Sauk Prairie site...
8. Give recognition to the promise of cultural healing in the design of the Master Plan.

As a citizen and restoration scientist, I see tremendous potential for research, teaching, and outreach at the Badger/Sauk Prairie site. I envision experiments and restoration taking place hand in hand, with citizen scientists, training programs, volunteers, and workshops helping to disseminate new knowledge on how to meet the challenges of restoring the Badger / Sauk Prairie.

...This isn't the first such document the alliance and its predecessor organization, the Community Conservation Coalition for the Sauk Prairie (CCCSP) have generated, in our efforts to give shape to the debate about Badger's future. As we prepared these pages, I and the other Alliance members dug into our own history a bit to review several previous statements of purpose, from the original Vision for the Sauk Prairie, drafted in 1998 during the days of the old Klug Commission on Badger, to the CCCSP Proposal for Badger issued in 2000, just prior to the forming of the Badger Reuse Committee, and including various letters, newspaper editorials and public statements clarifying important concepts that the Coalition and later the Alliance have advocated throughout this long and often confusing public conversation. But the archive search has proved informative and helped affirm the consistency of our message. As before, we lead with the first principle: Badger/Sauk Prairie should be managed as a whole, to realize its true potential as a restored natural community through careful integration of land uses.

The enclosed document describes a short list of high priority ideas for early program development and implementation. These priority issues are followed by an abbreviated version of the *Plan Elements* section of the Badger Reuse Plan, including those *Plan Elements* that the Alliance feels are of utmost importance and would give greatest substance to the Master Plan. While the Reuse Plan was not a land use plan per se, the Plan Elements section does offer some highly specific and operational recommendations, some of which suggest physical development of the site (e.g., the Visitor Center, hiking trails, etc.), and others focusing on programmatic aspects, such as educational efforts and public outreach programs. If the Master Plan proposed nothing more than to implement the *Plan Elements* laid out in the Badger Reuse Plan, it would give the Department and community plenty to work on for the coming years.

The Oversight Management Board (now Commission) is one element of the Badger Reuse Plan that has been implemented, and which has already had some impact, notably with the agreement reached to set aside the abandoned rail corridor for a recreational trail. While the continued functioning of the OMC is an issue for all owners and not specific to the WDNR Master Plan for the Sauk Prairie Recreation Area, we can't overstate the case for the critical role of the OMC in realizing the kind of collaborative effort required to achieve the integrated land use and management vision of the Reuse Plan. Our proposals emphasize the continued role of the OMC in organizing and facilitating much of the programming, but its success will depend upon the institutional and financial support of the owners and community. With support the OMC could be a powerful force in generating the regional and even national interest in Badger / Sauk Prairie that could lead to funding and program assistance for the larger mission.

A crucial role that the Reuse Plan designed for the Oversight Management Commission is to evaluate land use proposals. We recommend that all land use proposals given serious consideration be subject to the evaluation process that the Commission has developed. This step will assure that final proposals are consistent with the Values and Criteria of the Reuse Plan, and will help establish the precedent that all owners, community stakeholders and others seeing Badger as a good site for their favorite activity, will need to undergo the same level and scrutiny. Adherence to the evaluation process will help assure that the flexible, adaptive management approach suggested by the proposed title of the property will yield land uses and activities that respect the values of the Reuse Plan.

On a related note, we would like to suggest also that additional consideration be given to how the Badger property will be identified to the public. We understand that the title "Sauk Prairie Recreation Area" reflects the statutory category to which the State's portion of the property has been designated, and the fact that the Recreation Area designation offers a certain flexibility in

programming and land uses that other more restrictive classifications would prohibit. But the emphasis in the title on “recreation” could undermine the public perception that the true value of the Badger site is its unique ecological and historical significance rather than its simple readiness for human play. We believe that careful thought should be given to a title which accurately describes the more profound aspects of the site and places the recreational value in its appropriate, subordinate context. Having said that, we’d like to make the point that our prairie restoration volunteers have come to realize the recreational value of being out on the land, with others of like spirit, exerting themselves in the contest of returning the field to a sense of ecological balance and harmony. They find enjoyment, pleasure and community in our restoration activities and educational opportunities. Badger offers “Re-creation” in the most fulfilling sense of the word: re-creation of the land, of community, and of health.

We are excited to have the opportunity to participate in the Master Planning process and encouraged that you have reiterated the long-standing commitment of the Wisconsin Dept. of Natural Resources leadership to upholding the Values and Criteria of the Badger Reuse Plan in the development and management of the property. Thank you.

Grazing buffalo.

Utilizing a mixed-resource, multiple land type structure would help maintain a variety of land use opportunities.

Use the land for community efforts at conservation, restoration, education, and agricultural research.

PRESERVE LARGE OPEN TRACTS OF BADGER AMMUNITION TO SUSTAIN HEALTHY GRASSLAND BIRD AND WILDLIFE POPULATIONS

The large tract of Badger Ammunition coming to public ownership and management for Wisconsin, is a unique opportunity to restore and preserve large tracts of natural areas including restored prairies. Because this habitat is already in place, this goal should be a very high priority. It has scientific, historical, and natural recreation value as well as life-critical value for sustaining healthy populations of widely threatened birds and animals.

A specific concern is grassland birds. Grassland birds including Meadowlarks, Bobolinks, and Dickcissles are protected species and they are already threatened species in most areas in Wisconsin. Their numbers have been greatly reduced to roughly 10% of what they were historically, and what could be naturally sustained, due to intensive non-organic agriculture practices, tree planting, rural land fragmentation, and development. These species require large open tracts of grasslands and prairies, and are highly compatible with bison restoration and other native prairie wildlife including Wisconsin's much-touted Badger! Let's do this for the Birds and the Badgers.

Badger Ammunition is a unique opportunity for Wisconsin because unlike most areas it has been relatively undisturbed. Because it is undisturbed and unfragmented, it already currently supports relatively large and healthy populations of the threatened grassland bird species. This benefit and success should not be thrown away.

Wisconsin can only preserve and protect this natural habitat and these threatened bird species if we don't try to accommodate too many incompatible uses, such as motorized recreation, or segment it into small chunks for many different purposes that will no longer offer large tracts of relatively undisturbed natural habitat.

The best and highest use of some large tracts of Badger Ammunition will be grassland and prairie preservation and restoration, and their historically and naturally significant populations of grassland birds, bison, and other wildlife that share this type of healthy ecosystem, that Wisconsin citizens and generations to come can enjoy, and a huge tourist attraction like a modern-day Serengeti right here in the Baraboo area.

My father was on the original Badger Reuse Committee. I am certain that when he signed off on the agreed upon plan for the future use of Badger, it was with the understanding that the state's portion of the land was to be restored and used as a natural recreation site. It was to be preserved and used respectfully by the people. It was to be a place where one could quietly enjoy and study nature. Please continue to uphold the intent of that first committee. Do not allow interest groups or activities that would erode and eventually destroy the integrity of that land. It is an area that should be preserved for the generations to come. This was an issue that was thoroughly researched, discussed, and debated previously. The use of the land should not be questioned or changed. Much thought went into the decisions that were made. Please support the original plan for preservation and soft recreation. It has been a slow, extremely difficult task to restore the area to its natural beauty. Do not allow for the next destruction of this land to begin. My grandchildren and great-grandchildren should be able to enjoy this area, and not be responsible for again having to clean it up and restore it. Preserve the Sauk Prairie Recreation Area and not open it up to activities that will endanger the land, wildlife, and plants.

I fully support the Audubon plan to make the 7,354 acre Badger Army Ammunition Plant habitat for grassland and shrub land birds as one unfragmented landscape. These groups of birds are declining faster than any other groups of birds in Wisconsin and need our help.

Grassland/shrubland habitat and grassland/shrubland birds should be the primary focus at DNR's Sauk Prairie Recreation Area within the greater Badger Army Ammunition Plant (BAAP). Bird species that have been found here include Eastern and Western meadowlarks, Bobolink, Upland Sandpiper, Orchard Oriole, Bell's Vireo, Dickcissel, and Clay-colored, Vesper, Savannah, Field, Grasshopper sparrows, and more. Many of these species are sensitive to habitat fragmentation and need very large blocks of habitat to successfully breed.

For the past ten years, the plan at Badger has been to return the prairie to its natural conditions with an emphasis on restoration, conservation, and low impact recreation. I only hope this plan continues as the old plant comes down. The Reuse Plan was a commonsense approach to that restoration.

I am writing to express my husband's and my concern about preserving the Badger Ammunitions Plants 3000 acres, which are a wonderful gift. Our wish is that they be preserved for the birds, plants, wildlife, and future generations of school children, who would have a chance to experience and walk through a prairie on this precious piece of land. We would like to see the land at Badger opened to the general public for gentle, non-motorized uses. Please abide by the carefully crafted Reuse Plan, which is a blueprint for restoring and preserving the land at Badger for future generations of people and nature to live compatibly. Thank you for this opportunity to express our concerns.

We're writing on behalf of the members of the Baraboo Range Preservation Association to provide comments on the Master Plan and planning process for the proposed Sauk Prairie Recreation Area.

The former Badger Army Ammunition Plant presents a rare and unique opportunity to restore a degraded yet ecologically important landscape, honor and commemorate the human history of this area of our state, honor and celebrate the recommendations of the diverse groups (including WDNR) which developed the Badger Reuse Plan, and respect the time and resources local citizens have dedicated to Badger through the Sauk Prairie Conservation Alliance.

Our organization and its members are pleased that WDNR recognizes the conservation values and restoration potential of Badger in its Draft Regional & Property Analysis: Sauk Prairie Recreation Area.

We agree with WDNR that:

“Within the larger Sauk Prairie Recreation Area landscape lays an incredible and unique opportunity to re-establish an example of the natural mosaic of prairie-savanna-woodland that characterized so much of the Midwest prior to Euro-American settlement, but which has since disappeared.

Major opportunities exist at SPRA with regard to breeding birds, as a result of the site's rich avifauna, large size, extensive grasslands, public ownership, proximity to other significant public and private properties, and accessibility for research, education, and recreation. The property already has one of the most significant grassland bird populations in the state. It has been said that if grassland bird populations are ever to recover in the Midwest, it is essential that we learn how farming and wildlife can once again coexist. The SPRA in its entirety offers this opportunity.”

WDNR and Sauk County residents will not have another opportunity to thoughtfully manage as much contiguous land in this highly fragmented part of Wisconsin. As WDNR recognizes, Badger is of the size and type to re-establish a mosaic of rare natural communities once common in Wisconsin – this opportunity should be jealously protected and acted on.

It should also be stressed that Badger is adjacent to and can complement the conservation values and human uses of a popular state park and large tracts of privately and publicly protected land.

WDNR has collaborated with sovereign, federal, state, and local authorities to come to an agreement on the future use of Badger. There has been an extraordinary and extensive public process to shape the future of Badger. It would be counterproductive to diverge unduly from this agreement (regardless of new pressures to do so) in deciding the fate of the WDNR portion of Badger.

Local residents and their representatives have remained engaged about the future of Badger and in ongoing management of prairie remnants. These citizens will be future enthusiastic volunteers and partners with WDNR should the ecological and cultural values remain the focus of management.

The decommissioning of the Badger Plant presented a unique opportunity to create a natural area of regional and national importance. As you will know, the Devil's Lake park, in addition to being a popular place for recreation, is internationally recognized as a site where the action of glaciers is dramatically demonstrated, made all the more interesting because of the involvement of some of the most ancient rock formations in the world. The Badger Plant lies immediately to the south of this and continues the story of glaciation which shaped the Sauk Prairie. Taken together, Devil's Lake and the Sauk Prairie and its adjacent moraines provide an opportunity to appreciate and teach the history of glaciation in Wisconsin. There is the possibility of restoring the vegetation to add to the interest and value of the site. The Badger Plant is hardly pristine, though there are some remnant patches of vegetation. Large areas were covered with buildings and roads, and this infrastructure was imposed on a landscape with a long history of agriculture. It is for this reason that the need for a long-term restoration project was seen as necessary to bring the Badger lands to a state appropriate for a public natural area. I believe that restoration is possible, and that the process of accomplishing the restoration can be a project that can involve students and citizens in healthful and rewarding activities. It will be a long-term project, but if it is undertaken in an appropriate way it is a project that can be used to involve interested citizens and students at all levels including graduate level researchers. What is from an unimaginative view a negative can be made into an inspiring positive.

From the first announcement of the decommissioning there have been pressure to exploit this site for commercial projects and for intensive recreational uses. Most troubling would be any attempt to divide up the land with possibly incompatible and even conflicting uses. I strongly recommend that the DNR resist the demands for developments that will be counter to the objective of restoring as much of the area as possible and keeping the Badger Plant lands intact as one coordinated development. If the relatively large area of the Badger plant is subdivided into small high use areas it will be throwing away a unique opportunity

I want to add that this strong desire to keep Badger intact is not prompted by a "keep the public out" philosophy. On the contrary, as noted above, there is the possibility for many positive programs potentially involving thousands of participants that would further the restoration process and enhance the natural values of the land. The kind of recreation that could be supported would involve many more, and could range from accommodating the casual "one hour visitor" to the determined long-haul hikers who might wish to traverse the entire property and on to Devi's Lake.

My hope is for the DNR to continue to recognize the important values of the Badger Reuse Plan. The entire property at Badger must be managed as a whole.

This is the DNR's opportunity to establish a conservation legacy of Sauk County and the entire State of Wisconsin. The opportunities for land restoration, education and research, may never happen again in this area. It's a prime opportunity to set an example of conservative land re-use in the State of Wisconsin. The benefits for all of the people of Wisconsin will be well worth it.

This site represents a unique conservation opportunity, and should be managed as a whole, not subdivided into such consumptive uses as paintball, rocketeering, etc. I support the goals of the Badger Reuse Plan, and hope DNR does not stray from them. Too many people have put in too much work toward the end of restoring this landscape; to change directions now would make a mockery of all this citizen effort.

I admire the careful process that the badger reuse folks went through. It seemed to an interested outsider to be deliberate, thoughtful and inclusive. I have been told that the DNR is about to release a new policy on use of the lands. I am writing to ask that the fundamental natural qualities of the place be the prime value and that the recommendations of the badger reuse committee be followed.

I see the return of the badger lands to their natural state as a crowning accomplishment for my generation of local people and a gift to our children of huge value.

I have watched with interest as Badger has been dismantled and the prairie has emerged. I have learned about the troubling history beginning with Native settlers and continuing through the Vietnam era and clean up. This land has had enough. It is time to let it heal and time to set aside land on which only positive activities and growth take place. Let's not waste this opportunity; there is not likely to be another chance to restore land that, despite the violence in its history, is ideal for restoration. Please follow the Badger Reuse committee's plan.

I have been volunteering to pull invasive plants out at the former Badger plant and have had a chance to get to know the area just a little bit. I urge the DNR to continue to recognize fully the values of the Badger Reuse Plan, the first of which is that the entire property must be managed as a whole. I would like to see land restoration, education and research, low-impact recreation, sustainable agriculture - in a manner compatible with the Badger Reuse Plan's values.

Value 1 stresses the need to manage the Badger property collaboratively, and as a single unit. Value 2 directs the federal government to complete the highest quality cleanup of the Badger property in a timely manner.

Value 3 pertains to maintenance of buildings and infrastructure that are historically significant or are needed to support cleanup activities and other approved uses.

Value 4 emphasizes the desire to reuse the Badger property in a way that contributes to reconciliation and the resolution of past conflicts.

Value 5 recognizes the great potential of the Badger property to provide educational, research, and recreational opportunities.

Value 6 focuses on the role that sustainable agriculture opportunities can and should play in the reuse of the Badger property.

Value 7 emphasizes the protection and enhancement of the Badger property's natural features, and its critical role within the broader landscape.

Value 8 recognizes the importance of the Badger property in providing open space and protecting the characteristic rural landscape of our area.

Value 9 involves the need for future uses of the Badger property to contribute to economic stability and sustainability in our local municipalities.

I think this approach will be particularly important in the attempt to pursue Value 9. Because this will be a unique use of state land, it will be a valuable resource for individuals, groups and organizations far and wide. While those people learn and restore at Badger, they will need to be housed, fed and entertained in the surrounding communities. Sauk City, Prairie du Sac, Baraboo and the Dells will benefit from those visiting the land. By extension, the entire state of Wisconsin will benefit. this is an opportunity to create balance, let's not waste it.

The River Alliance of Wisconsin was an early and enthusiastic supporter of the effort to clean up the Badger Ammunition Plant lands and of the vision laid out in the 2001 Badger Reuse Plan for the property.

We support the DNR's efforts to create a master plan for the Sauk Prairie Restoration Area and are encouraged to see that you emphasize the conservation value of the site and specifically reference the 2001 Badger Reuse Plan in your Regional and Property Analysis for the Sauk Prairie Recreation Area. As you move forth with evaluating recreational uses for the site, we ask you to continue to keep in mind the principals of the Badger Reuse Plan, specifically the consideration of the site as an entire single unit. We also ask that you continue to provide ample opportunities for creative involvement of citizens in realizing the recommended uses of the site: land restoration, education and research, low-impact recreation, sustainable agriculture - in a manner compatible with the Badger Reuse Plan's values.

This is a unique opportunity for DNR to further the conservation legacy of Sauk County and the state of Wisconsin and honor the history of peoples that have come before us on this land. River Alliance of WI

we support the letter from the town of Merrimac and want our property excluded from the project boundary. It is south of the Clingman property and owned by the Richard J Anderson and Kathryn J Anderson joint revocable trust- Please reply-

Please abide by the carefully crafted Reuse Plan for the Badger Army Ammunition Plant. I believe the property should be used for the general public for low impact recreations. Do not make it so we have been lied to for the last 10 years of how this land would be used.

The Wisconsin Wildlife Federation respectfully requests that the following comments be considered in the plan development for the Sauk Prairie Recreation Area. The Federation Board of Directors voted unanimously on August 10, 2012 to support these comments and the enclosed attachment. The Federation is the state's largest conservation organization representing over 180 hunting, fishing, trapping and forestry-related groups in Wisconsin. The Federation has been very active in the restoration planning effort for the former Badger Ordnance Plant. Don Hammes, a WWF Board Member, has served several years on the Citizen Advisory Committee that developed the Reuse Plan for the facility and has contributed extensively to that effort. In addition, our Executive Director, George Meyer, was Secretary of the DNR when the initial efforts were initiated by the State of Wisconsin to recover the Badger Ordnance Facility from Federal ownership in order that it could be restored to a natural condition open to public use.

The Federation strongly supports that the Department in its planning efforts follow closely the tenets and details of the "Badger Army Ammunition Plant Reuse Plan". This plan was developed over a number of years with broad public input and is sensitive to the historical and natural setting of the site and the surrounding area.

The Federation believes that the site should be restored to the natural conditions of prairie and oak savannah with the resulting benefits of high quality wildlife habitat. Natural prairie and oak savannah land types dominated Southern Wisconsin in pre-settlement times and are now very rare. This type of restoration would be very similar to excellent restoration efforts undertaken for other prior military properties in Illinois and Colorado. These land types would provide excellent habitat for both game and non-game species as already evidenced by the outstanding array of bird species currently on the property.

Wisconsin Wildlife Federations Recommendations for the Sauk Prairie Recreation Area

1. That the land under DNR control should be predominately grassland prairie with a limited provision made for other land types that are compatible with a predominately grassland prairie.
2. That the majority of the DNR land will be made available for public hunting, trapping and fishing including educational and training opportunities for these activities
3. That all land uses be in concert with and clearly follow the key values of the Badger Reuse Plan listed below.
4. That a reasonable area of the property be designated and developed as a Class 1 Field Trial Area for dog training and trialing

Key Values from the Badger Army Ammunition Plant Reuse Plan, March 2001

Value 1 stresses the need to manage the Badger property collaboratively, and as a single unit.

Value 2 directs the federal government to complete the highest quality cleanup of the Badger property in a timely manner.

Value 3 pertains to maintenance of buildings and infrastructure that are historically significant or are needed to support cleanup activities and other approved uses.

Value 4 emphasizes the desire to reuse the Badger property in a way that contributes to reconciliation and the resolution of past conflicts.

Value 5 recognizes the great potential of the Badger property to provide educational, research, and recreational opportunities.

Value 6 focuses on the role that sustainable agriculture opportunities can and should play in the reuse of the Badger property.

Value 7 addresses the protection and enhancement of the Badger property's natural features, and the critical role of the Badger lands within the broader landscape.

Value 8 recognizes the importance of the Badger property in providing open space and protecting the characteristic rural landscape of our area.

I am writing to express my strong support for the Badger Reuse Plan's Values and Criteria serving as the guide by which all use of the former Badger Army Ammunition Plant site must be judged. Recreational activities that are in keeping with the values and goals of the Badger Reuse Plan should be encouraged; recreational activities that are inconsistent with it should not be included in the DNR's plan.

The DNR has a unique opportunity to create a living laboratory for a new way of stewarding the land, one that reflects the conservation legacy of Sauk County and the state. The reuse vision for Badger, involving the DNR and a wide array of stakeholders and citizens, will provide far-reaching social, economic, and ecological benefits for all of the people of Wisconsin.

Please use that opportunity to its full potential by honoring the Badger Reuse Plan in word and deed.

As the planning process continues, we urge the DNR to continue to recognize fully the values and specific provisions of the Badger Reuse Plan, the first of which is that the entire property must be managed as a whole.

Good job on emphasizing the Badger Reuse Plan. Please be certain that the Reuse Plan is and continues to be the cornerstone for planning and future management decisions.

With respect to the Sauk Prairie Recreation Area, I found the Regional and Property Analysis draft report to be a good description and inventory of the habitats, and plant and animal communities at the site, as well as its context within the larger landscape. I'm excited about the potential for SPRA to become a quality habitat for rare and endangered plants and animals, especially grassland and shrub-land birds. I support the concept in the 2001 Badger Reuse Plan that the former BAAP lands should be managed as a whole, as well as the eight key values listed in that report. The report is generally consistent with the vision outlined in the Badger Reuse plan. There are many rare and endangered grassland birds already nesting there, and many other high quality ecological features. Grassland birds have undergone major declines and need unfragmented habitat of this kind.

The proposed recreation area offers a rare opportunity to develop one of the largest contiguous parcels of land open to the public in southern Wisconsin. The value of a large unbroken land adjacent to Devil's Lake State Park and Riverland Conservancy can provide a landscape scale corridor valuable to wildlife and native plant species.

Pheasants Forever is not just about hunting, we're a national organization devoted to education and development wildlife habitat that enriches vertebrate and invertebrate species. As an organization experienced in habitat restoration we are excited about the possibility of the property being restored in a manner that allows for limited multiple use and offers an environment consistent with the needs of local and migratory wildlife species. We believe the natural community should be used for hunting, biking, trapping, hiking, dog training and wildlife observation. We suggest that only the roads necessary for fire control, land maintenance and handicap access be developed and maintained.

Unfortunately past land management practices have allowed the land to host extensive populations of invasive plant species that are both expensive and difficult to control. As part of your long term management plan we suggest that much of the land be retained in cultivated crops to help control invasive plants until enough land rental monies are accumulated to finance significant land restoration projects. We suggest a minimum of 2 years of soybeans prior to prairie restoration efforts, farming should provide cash rent to support restoration efforts and enable early control of invasives ahead of restoration, in addition agricultural use would provide excellent site prep, and help ensure positive results. While it will take decades to restore a property of this size, it's prudent to scale restoration project areas for success while meeting budget limitations and while providing adequate restoration and continuing maintenance. To enhance public education opportunities and achieve land restoration objectives it may be useful to offer a land adoption program allowing conservation groups and others to participate in achieving the Departments land management objectives. Sponsoring organizations would provide financial and labor support for establishment and maintenance of the prescribed land management areas. The Sauk County Chapter of Pheasants Forever supports efforts to restore the land in a ways consistent with our land ethic and would make an effort to provide financial and human resources to support restoration and continuing land management.

From pre-settlement times through today the land used as the Badger Ammunition plant has a rich history of use and abuse, the public should be proud to learn that history and witness how land restoration can enrich our environment and also be used as a tool to mitigate contamination from the ammunition plant. From prairie to oak savannah to the Baraboo range woodlands this land offers a history of cultural and land use diversity that can serve as a showcase and living laboratory for many to appreciate, learn and enjoy.

As the DNR engages in the master planning process for your lands around Badger Army Ammunition Plant we urge you to continue to support the conservation vision outlined in the Badger Reuse Plan. We commend the clear recognition of the Badger Reuse Plan in the recently issued Regional and Property Analysis: The Sauk Prairie Recreation Area. As the planning process continues, we urge the DNR to continue to recognize fully the values and specific provisions of the Badger Reuse Plan, the first of which is that the entire property must be managed as a whole.

He is not interested in the recreation or conservation aspects of the plan, but wants to indicate his interest in re-establishing the old (1930's) county highway Z that used to cross the plant and connect hwy 12 and 78. He believes this should be a 2 lane road with fences on both sides.

The DNR's planning process is a critical step in the reuse of the former Badger Army Ammunition Plant lands and the realization of the conservation vision outlined in the Badger Reuse Plan. We applaud the DNR for its important efforts in helping to develop the reuse vision at Badger, and for its explicit recognition of the Badger Reuse Plan in recently issued Regional and Property Analysis: The Sauk Prairie Recreation Area. As the planning process continues, we urge the DNR to continue to recognize fully the values and specific provisions of the Badger Reuse Plan, the first of which is that the entire property must be managed as a whole.

The DNR's master plan should provide opportunities for the creative involvement of the citizens of Wisconsin and Sauk County in realizing the recommended future uses of Badger - land restoration, education and research, low-impact recreation, sustainable agriculture - in a manner compatible with the Badger Reuse Plan's values. Recreational activities that are consistent with the values and goals of the Reuse Plan should be encouraged; recreational activities that are inconsistent should not be considered appropriate and should not be included in the DNR's plan.

In its planning, the DNR has a unique opportunity to contribute to the special conservation legacy of Sauk County and the State of Wisconsin. The reuse vision for Badger, involving the DNR and all of Badger's stakeholders, will provide far-reaching social, economic, and ecological benefits for all of the people of Wisconsin, while honoring the stories and sacrifices of all those who have come before us at Badger.

I was saddened to learn that the DNR is considering opening some of the land around the decommissioned Badger Ammunition plant to recreational pursuits that would jeopardize the Reuse Plan that was painstakingly created to restore the land and preserve it for future generations. Not only for future generations of people, but species of flora and fauna that depend on expanses of open land to survive. Only tiny slivers of prairie lands remain scattered in corners of Wisconsin, and the restoration of Badger Ammunition is a rare and unparalleled opportunity to preserve something that is in danger of vanishing completely.

I ask that you honor the hard work of the people who created the Reuse Plan, who had the foresight and wisdom to try and craft a blueprint that bequeaths something to future generations; those who volunteered countless hours to make the most of a rare opportunity to reverse the damage from decades of exposure to the toxic residue from the ammunition plant. Nature is pretty good at restoring herself when given the chance. Instead of making more careless choices, why not become caretakers instead? Instead of pushing aside the wild places and the beauty that resides there, why not celebrate it?

I ran across a quote that speaks to the preservation of the land around Badger. "We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors; we borrow it from our children." Chief Seattle. I hope I can bring my grandchildren to Badger someday so they can hear the summer symphony of the Meadowlarks, the Bobolinks, and the Song Sparrows.

The Badger Army Ammunition Plan is part of our history here in Sauk County and its future should be carefully considered, not only to meet the needs of current citizens, but to protect the natural beauty and historical significance of the area for future generations as well.

To that end, the Badger Reuse Plan represents a collaborative effort of interested parties coming together with a vision for the future in our area and investing years of work on a process designed to build consensus. One of the great strengths of the BRP is the collaboration among diverse interest groups. As you proceed in your planning process, above all, please do so in consultation with all parties that have been previously engaged in the process.

I support the goals set forth in the BRP that include ecological restoration, education, agriculture, and low-impact recreation. We have a great opportunity to make over 7,000 acres of land into a community resource—let us not give it away to special interest recreation such as paintball, rifle ranges, dog trial areas, or ATV use. Let us proceed with clear eyes for the benefit of the future. Uses that undermine the ability of current or future generations should not be permitted. Aldo Leopold, our conservation forefather in this county, wrote “To build a road is so much simpler than to think what the country really needs.” I challenge the DNR to not take the simple route, but to do the hard work to think about what will actually benefit current and future citizens of Wisconsin.

I applaud the DNR in its willingness to listen to citizen input thus far in the planning process. Please continue to engage the citizens of Sauk County and the entire state as you proceed. This project will have profound impacts on the citizens of the area, positive or negative, and they should be consulted on every step of the process.

I urge you to adopt the focus and recommendations of the Badger Reuse Committee, which involved a cross-section of interested parties and points of view. The primary goal, in my view, is the protection and enhancement of the area's natural features. This involves protecting the rare areas, like the bedrock glades and savannas, continuing to deal with eradicating the invasive species and maintaining the open spaces and rural landscapes. There are areas of high conservation significance themselves, as well as the inherent value of the ecological corridor between the river and the Baraboo Hills.

Surveys have shown the presence of declining species that we work hard to provide habitat for: grassland birds, at-risk bats, reptiles and amphibians. Many of these species are sensitive to habitat fragmentation, and the size of Badger Prairie allows for protection of these. At my home, we have been working with neighbors to link small fields of restored prairie to provide habitat. Badger has the size to do this.

The Sauk Prairie area offers a number of unique opportunities of ecological importance, for low-impact nature recreational activities, and opportunities to develop sustainable livestock grazing practices combining conservation and sustainable animal grazing which bring significant benefits to both, a unique opportunity to show the world.

The Department can best manage the Sauk Prairie Recreation Area – a designation that should be reconsidered- by closely following the original Badger Reuse Plan. This course will best serve the land and the Department in several ways. First, the Reuse Plan resulted from years of effort to defuse the controversy and acrimony that engulfed the property since its creation as a munitions factory. Veering away from that Plan threatens to reignite that controversy. Second, in its land transfer agreement with the National Park Service the Department specified land uses at Badger as “hiking, picnicking, primitive camping, Lake Wisconsin access and viewing, savanna and grassland restoration, environmental education and cultural/historical interpretation.” I strongly urge the Department to strictly adhere to these uses as they best reflect the Badger Reuse Plan. In addition, the General Services Administration emphasized repeatedly that failure to adhere to the uses specified in applications for this land could result in the revocation of an agreement and loss of land. I would hate to see the Department lose any or all of this land by a failure to adhere to its request to the National Park Service and General Services Administration. This would be a great loss and disappointment to the State and the hundreds of people who have worked tirelessly to bring a vision of renewal for Badger so close to reality.

This is a bit of history based on definitions and signed documents for inclusion in the master plan. This piece of history should not be forgotten as master planning proceeds.

Supported by an intergovernmental agreement signed by representatives of the Sauk County, the Ho-Chunk Nation, the state of Wisconsin, the WDNR, USDA, and the chairs of both the town of Sumpter and Merrimac, the Badger Oversight Management Commission, composed of stakeholders representing the interests of Wisconsin residents and the Ho-Chunk Nation, was created. Its stated mission is to oversee development and implementation of a long-range land-use and stewardship plan for the land and facilities.

The Badger Oversight Management Commission MOU specifically defines the definition of stakeholders and their role, parties and their roles, and the responsibilities of the commission as well as its authority and operating procedures. Its authority, operation and specific responsibilities are defined in Wisconsin statutes – s.66.00.0301. WDNR is a member of the commission.

The Badger Reuse Plan approved by the Sauk County Board includes a tried process for evaluation of reuse proposals based on the values and criteria of the Badger Reuse Plan. This is the process BOMC commissioners will employ.

- BOMC commissioners will promote an appreciation of Sauk Prairie wildlife, landscape, history, culture and community through education, restoration, research, recreation, agriculture and other activities consistent with the values and criteria of the Sauk County Badger Reuse Plan.

Commissioners will promote reconciliation of conflicts through discussion in an open forum and collaboration.

- They will coordinate between parties and stakeholders and seek support for restoration and enhancement projects and also distribute information to the public.

- They will seek appropriate legislative and federal funding for ecological restoration and general property enhancement projects, consistent with the values and criteria of the reuse plan.

- They will promote and facilitate agricultural and conservation related research and activities.

- They will work to benefit local communities.

- They will develop and coordinate opportunities for cultural, educational and recreations use of the land by citizens.

- BOMC commissioners advocate for protection of the land's natural features.

- BOMC will make and administer contracts and all their actions will be consistent with the values and criteria of the Reuse plan.

I am writing to express my strong support for the Badger Reuse Plan's Values and Criteria serving as the guide by which all use of the former Badger Army Ammunition Plant site must be judged. Please use that opportunity to its full potential by honoring the Badger Reuse Plan in word and deed.

We also need to provide a context for our response. Being part of the historic Anabaptist peace church tradition, the future of the closed Badger Army Ammunition Plant lands has long been a matter which touches directly on the faith commitments of our congregation, and thus we have been involved at Badger for more than a decade, in fact since before the creation of the Badger Reuse Plan. Having in those early years investigated the issues surrounding the reuse of the plant, having met with and listened to many of the individuals, organizations, and governmental bodies involved, and having discussed and weighed the matter as a congregation, we became an early public advocate of the plan proposed for Badger by the Community Conservation Coalition for the Sauk Prairie (aka CCCSP, the organization which later became The Sauk Prairie Conservation Alliance).

To quote a portion of our August, 2000, public endorsement letter, "The gospel of Jesus says that the possibility of healing and reconciliation is always available to us. We are endorsing the CCCSP land use proposal because we understand that this proposal involves just such a transformation from the land's most recent uses, into more peaceful and life-affirming uses, for both the human community and the land itself. If people can work cooperatively in allowing this land once again to bloom as it did in former times, as the CCCSP proposes, an example of the restoration of harmony among people, and between people and the land could be passed down to future generations."

As the deliberations of the Badger Reuse Committee progressed, we were very happy to see the primary substance and spirit of the CCCSP proposal emerge in the Badger Reuse Plan (BRP), making the BRP in effect the logical extension of what we had earlier endorsed, and thus it is gratifying to see the degree to which the BRP and its perspective is reflected in the Regional & Property Analysis document. We urge that the Badger Reuse Plan continue to be, and in fact be even more, the values and criteria which guide the the DNR in its entire Master Planning process.

Incorporated in the BRP is the value and goal of cooperative management, by the several land owners, of the property as a single landscape unit. This value should be given more prominence than it has received in the "Analysis" document --- this value is certainly one of the most unique opportunities and potentials present at Badger, especially in relation to the Ho Chunk Nation. To again quote from our congregation's earlier letter, "Although the CCCSP land use proposal is not intended to advocate any particular set of eventual owners, in recognition of the historical, cultural, and spiritual ties of the Ho Chunk Nation to this land, and in the interest of the Badger Army Ammunition Plant land becoming a symbol of reconciliation and healing, our congregation wishes to call attention to the importance of the Ho Chunk Nation having a central role in land use decisions and actual ownership of the land." And by extension, a similar appeal could be applied to the DNR and Dairy Forage as collaborative partners in this symbolically significant arrangement, both ecologically and socially.

As has likely been pointed out by many others, a disappointing part of the Analysis is the insertion of high-impact recreational proposals into the document. It is hard to see how such uses as shooting ranges, rocketry, and the like, are consistent with the values and criteria of the BRP. In addition, it is our understanding that such high-impact uses would be in violation of the conditions to which the DNR agreed in the land transfer agreement between the DNR and the National Park Service, through which the DNR is a recipient of Federal excess land.

To conclude, we wish to emphasize the historic opportunity represented by the Badger lands, as perhaps the final time such a large stretch of landscape can be added to the conservation

legacy of southern Wisconsin. And if this opportunity is properly managed to its full potential, it will be of multidimensional importance to the people of Wisconsin and the nation: significant ecologically, significant in new ways of collaborative management, and significant as to new ways of healing both the land and the human community.

Land use should be limited to low impact activities such as hiking, picnicking, bird-watching. My request, as a citizen, and on behalf of my granddaughter and all future generations, is that we carefully preserve this unique area, taking great care and applying much mindfulness in deciding on future use. Please abide by the carefully crafted Reuse Plan. Once this area is gone, it is gone, and many generations to come will lament our carelessness. Let us instead, reach forward with a priceless gift and an example of thoughtful stewardship.

I am a resident of Sumpter and I would like to see a use of the land for crops and recreation. Bike trails and walking trails, some natural and some foraging areas for dairy, for maintaining it as those hard working pioneers who built there lives there would have liked. It is sad that those lives were left in shambles when the government took their land and it should include a memorial to their hard work in making that land usable. I see a vision of a prairie with space for all people. Perhaps, connect to Devils Lake with trails, also.

INTRODUCTION:

Citizens for Safe Water Around Badger (CSWAB) was organized in 1990 when rural families near the 7,400-acre Badger Army Ammunition Plant learned that private drinking water wells were polluted with high levels of cancer-causing chemicals. In 1992, with the threat of open burning, continued major chemical spills and annual maintenance costs in excess of \$17 million, CSWAB decided to push for Badger's permanent closure and began the work to build a sustainable future for these lands.

In the years that followed, CSWAB gained the Army's withdrawal of a proposal to incinerate 1,000,000 pounds of waste munitions, blocked a proposal to open burn 2,500 pounds per day of hazardous waste, and secured comprehensive water testing for neighbors living near the Badger plant. Following six years of resistance, CSWAB's community organizing efforts later ended a proposal to convert the mothballed ammunition plant to commercial production of varnish, fertilizer, lacquer, and other toxic chemicals.

Today, hundreds of toxic-laden buildings that were slated for open burning have now been safely dismantled, preventing the uncontrolled release of dioxins, lead, asbestos and other toxins to the environment – the culmination of a seven-year campaign led by CSWAB that set a national precedent for innovative non-thermal treatment of contaminated military buildings and infrastructure.

As a member of the Badger Reuse Committee, CSWAB helped lead a cooperative public process in 2001 to develop a common vision for the reuse of the Badger property known as the Badger Reuse Plan. Through our formal endorsement of this plan, CSWAB affirmed its support for land uses that promote an appreciation of the Sauk Prairie landscape through education, restoration, research, nature-based recreation, sustainable agriculture, and other activities defined in this plan.

Principal among the values outlined in the Badger Reuse Plan is the commitment to environmental restoration. Value 2 stipulates that the U.S. Army and/or the federal government complete the highest quality cleanup of the Badger property's contaminated land, water, buildings, and infrastructure in a timely manner, and that any land transfers do not entail the transfer of unforeseen cleanup responsibilities or liabilities to any party other than the federal government.

The toxic legacy of industrial operations at Badger remains a challenge but one that can be overcome if the U.S. Army is required to meet its responsibility to fully restore the damage that has been done. This final hurdle will require our collective vigilance, participation and dedication to a safe and healthy future free of military toxins for ourselves and the generations that will follow.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS:

While there is significant publicly-available information concerning known hazardous waste sites and structures at Badger Army Ammunition Plant, there is a tendency to assume that outside these distinct areas that there is little or no potential for residual contamination. These potential environmental health considerations need to be brought to the attention of future owners, site visitors, teachers, workers, hunters, anglers and the public including children, expectant mothers, and other populations at risk. Becoming informed not only protects human health, it also serves as the foundation for successful future use such as grazing, ecological restoration, research, and wildlife habitat.

For these reasons, in areas where site conditions are not well characterized, CSWAB strongly recommends appropriate independent environmental testing before prescribed burning,

ecological restoration, agriculture, grazing, road construction, and all other site disturbance activities occur. Resources for such testing may be negotiated for prior to transfer and secured as a condition of transfer. In the interim, appropriate signage and other institutional controls should be implemented and maintained.

In areas where residual contamination, certain activities and/or site disturbance poses a potential risk to human health or route of exposure, appropriate signage and other institutional controls should be implemented and maintained.

DISCUSSION:

Undocumented releases. Environmental investigations by the Army are only conducted in areas where there is evidence that a spill or release to the environment was likely. Early environmental investigations by the Army, beginning in the 1970's, relied primarily on records searches and interviews with site personnel. Unfortunately, historical records for certain activities such as spills and other environmental releases are limited and in many cases do not exist. Prior to 1970, for example, there are no publicly-available records for chemical spills that may have occurred during active production and interim years. Environmental sampling is only conducted in specific areas where there is sufficient evidence to justify the effort and associated costs.

CSWAB is not the first group to recommend facility-wide testing for certain contaminants at Badger. In 1983, a facility-wide Hazardous Materials and Pesticide Management/Control Study was recommended by the Army however it is our understanding that this study was never conducted. In accordance with Army Regulations 200-1, the Army recommended a special study to "define sources of pollution and develop remedial measures." The basis for the study was that "during normal operations and agricultural leasing over the past forty-plus years, many potential toxic and/or hazardous chemicals and/or pesticides have been used within Badger AAP's boundaries." The Army notes that "no accurate records exist as to type or quantities that may have found their way into the environment." The Statement of Work recommends a "systematic soil sampling and analysis study" for "all areas at Badger AAP." The responsibility for the use, control, and disposal of pesticides at Badger, including but not limited to insecticides, herbicides, and rodenticides, is the responsibility of the U.S. Army Armament Material Readiness Command.

At other Army sites, particularly in Kansas, there has been significant national discussion concerning residual pesticide cleanup. Although RCRA (federal hazardous waste law) generally exempts pesticides from corrective action requirements if they are applied in accordance with their intended use, EPA has maintained that cleanup is now required because the treated buildings are now slated for demolition (so the chemical's intended use no longer applies). The military is challenging the EPA's position, particularly whether the military or the new owners are responsible for cleanup.

In southern states, these pesticides were often applied for treatment of termites. Pesticides used in and around buildings at Kansas Army Ammunition Plant include chlordane, heptachlor, aldrin, and dieldrin. According to the 2004 Environmental Site Assessment for Badger, chlordane was present in Accounts 214 (Section 1006) and 235 (Section 1006A). Also of interest, at Kansas AAP, EPA found that soils contaminated with pesticides around buildings could be co-mingled with other hazardous wastes, including lead from deposition of lead base paint, resulting in a mixture that is also subject to correction action obligations pursuant to RCRA.

It is not unusual to find contamination in unexpected areas at Badger. As recently as 2009,

environmental testing detected explosives contamination in areas that both regulators and the Army believed were completely unaffected by historical site activities. As part of an ecological risks assessment study by the Army, two areas were selected in a cooperative effort by the Army and the WDNR (Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources). The Army's environmental consultants found the explosive DNT at levels above remediation goals in both areas even though there was no known history of manufacturing activities, spills, or disposal. According to all the information available to the Army, these sites should have been clean and unaffected by historical activities by the Army. DNT is not naturally occurring and was used in the manufacture of military propellants at Badger. DNT is classified by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as a probable human carcinogen. According to health officials, exposure to high levels of two forms of DNT (2,4-DNT and 2,6-DNT) may affect the nervous system and the blood. Both are known to cause cancer in laboratory animals.

The Wisconsin Division of Health has determined that the four lesser DNT isomers are as toxic or more toxic than 2,4- and 2,6-DNT. However, the Army has tested soils for only 2 of the 6 isomers (forms) of DNT found at Badger. Unlike 2,4- and 2,6-DNT, these less common isomers have not been shown to biodegrade and are therefore expected to be more persistent in the environment. While the Army at Badger regularly tests groundwater for all six forms of DNT, the military balked when state regulators issued an order in late 2011 requiring the facility to similarly test contaminated soils. The Army argued that there was not a "clearly identified legal obligation" to comply with the soil sampling sought by the WDNR. State regulators subsequently rescinded the order which would have required the Army to improve testing in areas that are causing

Department of Army, Headquarters, United States Army Armament, Munitions, and Chemical Command, Environmental Assessment for Total Plant Operations, BAAP, Introduction, Mission and Operations, page 6, July 1983. The use of road oil 2 has declined in recent years because of reductions in the proportion of unpaved roadways, the presence of highly toxic contaminants in used oils (PCBs, dioxins, furans), competition from other used oil end uses (re-refining), and new environmental regulations.³ Used mineral-based crankcase oil (used motor oil or used engine oil) contains polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) and may contain metals such as aluminum, chromium, copper, iron, lead, manganese, nickel, silicon, and tin.

U.S. Army records confirm that road oil was indeed present at Badger – and in extremely large quantities. A July 1983 report published by the U.S. Department of Army documents that Badger Army Ammunition Plant had a 52,000-gallon above ground tank that was used for storing road oil.⁵ A 1977 building inventory by the U.S. Army identified the same facility as "road oil storage."

By comparison, other used oil storage tanks at Badger held only 500 to 1,000 gallons. Badger Army Ammunition Plant has an extensive network of more than 130 miles of roads.⁷ While many of the roads in the core industrial area are paved, the majority of outlying roads at Badger are unpaved.

Reliability of Data. In other areas where independent environmental testing has been conducted, results contradict those that the Army reported to the public. In 2007, the Army tested sediments at Gruber's Grove Bay on Lake Wisconsin and reported that all samples throughout the bay were below the approved cleanup goal of 0.36 parts per million (ppm) for mercury. The WDNR conducted independent sampling of bay sediments and found that the majority of samples (6 out of 8) failed to meet the cleanup goal of 0.36 ppm. The highest

concentration found was 9.0 ppm, making it one of the worst mercury-contaminated sites in the state even after two remedial actions involving dredging and sediment removal.

As recently as September 2008, WDNR representatives said that the Army continues to find building foundations and other structure remnants where none were expected. Many of these areas were subsequently tested and required remediation.

Asbestos Risk Assessment. On June 21, 2012 CSWAB submitted a formal petition urging state regulators to require environmental testing for asbestos in soils on former Badger lands.

Asbestos fibers found in soil can become airborne as the result of site disturbance by wind, weathering, or

The term "road oil" refers to any heavy petroleum oil that is used as a dust suppressant and surface treatment on roads and highways. Source: County of Santa Barbara Planning and Development Energy Division, Oil and Gas Glossary, undated.

United Nations Environment Programme, Secretariat of the Basel Convention, Basel Convention Technical Guidelines on Used Oil Re-Refining or Other Re-Uses of Previously Used Oil, Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements on Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal, September 1995.

U.S. Army Toxics and Hazardous Materials Agency, Public Health Statement for Used Mineral-based Crankcase Oil, September 1997.

Department of the Army, Headquarter, United States Army Armament, Munitions, and Chemical Command, Environmental Assessment for Total Plant Operations, Badger AAP, July 1983.

U.S. Army Toxics and Hazardous Materials Agency, Installation Assessment for Badger Army Ammunition Plant, May 1977.

General Services Administration, Preliminary Highest and Best Use Analysis, Badger Army Ammunition Plant, May 15, 1998.

Exposure to asbestos fibers through inhalation has been associated with lung cancer, mesothelioma, and other cancers, as well as asbestosis and other nonmalignant respiratory diseases. The toxicity of a given asbestos fiber depends on a number of variables including chemical composition, fiber shape, and fiber size.

The effects of asbestos on children are thought to be similar to adults, however, children could be especially vulnerable to asbestos exposures because they are more likely to disturb fiber-laden soils or indoor dust while playing, they are closer to the ground and thus more likely to breathe contaminated soils or dust.

Children have faster breathing rates that may increase the level of exposure to asbestos and children could be more at risk than those exposed later in life because of the long latency period between exposure and onset of asbestos-related respiratory disease.

CSWAB has asked the WDNR to require soil testing using polarized light microscopy which is capable of detecting asbestos fibers not visible to the human eye. The Army is currently required to remove only visible pieces of asbestos-containing materials generated during building demolition to qualify for clean site closure.

The test method sought by CSWAB is recommended by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and has been used at other Army bases around the country including the Radford Army

Ammunition Plant in Virginia, the Ravenna Army Ammunition Plant in Ohio, and the Seneca Army Depot in New York State.

Activities that Could Liberate Asbestos and other Contaminants. Activities such as prescribed burning may liberate certain contaminants that are found in soils at Badger, including those that are readily taken up by plants. Toxic metals, in particular, are a concern as burning does not destroy these contaminants and may cause the dispersal of soil and plant contamination to the air often as respirable particulates. Through inhalation, incidental ingestion, and, to a lesser degree, dermal exposure both adults and children may be exposed to emissions and fugitive dust.

Proposed deed restrictions on properties pending transfer include no commercial, residential (including any type of educational purpose for children/young adults in grades kindergarten through 12), utility, or subsurface recreational use; no use of groundwater without United States Department of the Army and WDNR approval; and no digging or disturbance of soils within certain areas at Badger. Prohibited ground intrusive activities in certain areas include raking, scratching, scraping, tilling, moving, digging, excavating, and plowing.

SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS:

Signage and Institutional Controls. For many years, CSWAB has actively encouraged future owners to address data gaps sooner rather than later. Once identified, risks are much more likely to be addressed while there is still an Army presence at the base. In such cases, comprehensive independent environmental testing may be the only means to define these risks and leverage

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, Division of Health Assessment and Consultation, Health Consultation, W.R. Grace Newark Plant, Newark, California, September 22, 2005.

U.S. Army, Finding of Suitability to Transfer, (FOST), Badger Army Ammunition Plant (BAAAP), Parcels O, O1, O5, Q2, U2, and X1, October 2008.

Propellants and Munitions Constituents. Fixed or semi-permanent activities which are expected to release propellants, by-products of combustion, or munitions constituents should be eliminated or deferred. Proposed recreational activities such as a skeet/shooting ranges or other activities involving the use of firearms or propellants would be expected to release many of the same contaminants associated with historic munitions production and disposal activities at Badger. As a result, such activities could blur the lines of responsibility in terms of identifying potential responsible parties. If DNT or PAH contamination, for example, was detected subsequent to transfer, the military would be expected to argue that these public activities had caused or contributed to the contamination. Again, independent environmental baseline testing would protect the State from potential future liabilities and associated cleanup costs.

Clean Water Act. We concur with the recommendation to consider adding the Ballistics Pond and other surface waters at and near Badger to the Impaired Waters List. On March 11, 2004, CSWAB formally petitioned the WDNR to add the Ballistics Pond to its Impaired Waters List pursuant to the Clean Water Act. The organization also asked that the Oleum Pond, the Wood Duck Pond, Gruber's Grove Bay, and all other surface water, wetlands and springs in and near Badger Army Ammunition Plant be added to and/or remain on this registry. The Federal Facilities Compliance Act requires that federal entities, including the U.S. Department of Defense, comply with all environmental law including the Clean Water Act. If the Army is not held appropriately accountable, this responsibility and liability may fall to the State.

Children, expectant mothers, and other populations at risk. Based on current site knowledge, CSWAB recommends the following:

- Children, expectant mothers, and other susceptible populations such as the elderly and those with compromised immune systems should avoid certain areas and buildings at Badger that may contain lead, explosives, PCBs, asbestos, and other toxic substances.
- Children, expectant mothers, and other susceptible populations should avoid direct contact with soils and inhalation of fugitive dust in certain areas at Badger.
- Children, expectant mothers, and other susceptible populations should avoid exposure to sediments at Gruber's Grove Bay. Bay sediments contain elevated levels of mercury and other toxic metals.
- Children, expectant mothers, and other susceptible populations should avoid exposure to smoke and fumes from prescribed burning and decontamination activities in certain areas at Badger.
- All people should limit consumption of fish from the Ballistics Ponds and other ponds at Badger as consistent with guidance from the Wisconsin Division of Health. • Children, expectant mothers, and other susceptible populations should not consume fish from the Ballistics Pond at Badger. This advisory extends to all ponds where data is unavailable.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

CSWAB has previously submitted more detailed formal comments and recommendations to the State including comments on Findings of Suitability of Transfer for all parcels that have been transferred to the State of Wisconsin. A copy of these comments is attached and should also be considered as part of our formal comments on the Regional and Property Analysis.

Thank you for the good work that you and other DNR staff have contributed thus far toward the master planning process for the former Badger Army Ammunition Plant lands. I was encouraged by the clear references to the Badger Reuse Plan in the document entitled 'Regional and Property Analysis: The Sauk Prairie Recreation Area.' As you know, the Badger Reuse Plan represents the consensus vision of a diverse group of individuals, organizations, and government agencies. The Plan was the culmination of a long, difficult process that was, in part, intended to heal past conflicts and facilitate a new collaborative future for the property. While it is clear that the transfer of such a significant tract of land to the state will attract new interest groups, I respectfully request that the DNR endorse the Badger Reuse Plan, in its entirety, as the guiding document for determining appropriate land use activities within the site.

I originally became involved with the Badger lands through my graduate research in 2003 - 2005. I was fascinated by the potential of the property for large-scale ecological restoration. While the focus of my master's thesis was a simple proposal for prioritization of ecological restoration within the facility, I remained involved as a volunteer because of the inspiring potential of the property to bridge research disciplines in ecological restoration, education, sustainable agriculture, and historical preservation. Thanks to a unique geological and cultural history, the Badger lands will always provide a fascinating narrative of our relationship with the land, and with each other. Now is our opportunity to build on this narrative by embracing this landscape as a center for discovery for many of our most pressing concerns. With the presence of the US Department of Agriculture's Dairy Forage Research Center, and the potential land transfer to the Ho-Chunk Nation, the Badger property as a whole could be a fascinating microcosm for studying new approaches in collaborative management, conservation, landscape interpretation, and working toward a more sustainable relationship between our agricultural production and environmental preservation.

While there is much to praise in the property analysis document, I was concerned by the paragraph entitled 'Non-Traditional Outdoor Recreation Uses.' This section seems out of context with the rest of the document, and seems to invite land uses that would be incompatible with the proposed activities that were listed by the DNR in their conveyance agreement with the National Park Service in 2004, listed as: 'hiking, picnicking, primitive camping, Lake Wisconsin access and viewing, savanna and grassland restoration, and environmental education and cultural/historical interpretation.' In the spirit of treating the Badger lands as a whole, rather than divided by land ownership, I also would support greater consideration of the role of sustainable agriculture in the future management of the property.

I appreciate the thoroughness and transparency with which you have conducted the property analysis. As this process continues, I hope that the vision of the Badger Reuse Plan – with an emphasis on collaborative management of the landscape as a whole – will remain at the forefront of decision-making within the DNR.

The master planning process presents an unprecedented opportunity to the people of Wisconsin to conserve, restore, and manage for grassland and shrubland birds and other wildlife in one of the largest, unfragmented landscapes in southern Wisconsin.

It is vital that the Badger property be managed as a whole, with a structure that will foster dialogue among all property owners and the involvement of citizens in the protection of the property's unique natural and cultural features. We continue to support the vision articulated in the 2001 Badger Reuse Plan, as well as the nine key values listed there, especially Value 7: the protection and enhancement of the Badger property's natural features and the critical role of BAAP lands within the broader landscape and Value 8: the importance of providing open space and maintaining rural character.

The draft Regional and Property Analysis for the Sauk Prairie Recreation Area (SPRA) does a good job describing the property, gives a useful inventory of the plant and animal communities it currently supports, and puts these in context with the surrounding local and regional landscape. It gives a good outline of the restoration potential, particularly with respect to rare species and habitats, and the value of protecting and enhancing the integration of the diverse habitats within and adjacent to the property. We support the recommendations to continue to map high value plant communities and to monitor, survey, and inventory biodiversity values as well as populations of breeding birds, bats, prairie voles, and herptiles. We also support efforts to track and control invasive species. We encourage the DNR to focus on the long-term potential of the SPRA to support the diverse ecosystem that existed here prior to European settlement and to continue to engage all interested organizations and the public in efforts to realize this potential.

Although prairie and savanna comprised a large share of presettlement landscape in southern Wisconsin, they are not well represented within the inventory of protected lands, as rich prairie soils were favored for agriculture and urban development. The large size of this tract and its proximity to the Wisconsin River, Devil's Lake State Park, and the Baraboo Hills offers great potential to conserve and restore a rich part of the state's natural heritage for future generations. At the same time, population growth in southern Wisconsin presents a need for this land to be used for outdoor recreation. Enjoyment and appreciation of our native landscapes by the public in public spaces benefits people while fostering support for conservation of natural systems on both public and private land.

We encourage you to continue to emphasize the conservation value of the site and specifically reference the 2001 Badger Reuse Plan in your Regional and Property Analysis for the Sauk Prairie Recreation Area. We ask you to consider the site as an entire single unit. We also ask that you continue to provide opportunities for creative involvement of citizens in realizing the recommended uses of the site: land restoration, education and research, low-impact recreation, sustainable agriculture - in a manner compatible with the Badger Reuse Plan's values. We ask you to carefully consider recreational activities that may not be appropriate and consider only those activities that are consistent with the Badger Reuse Plan.

The conservation legacy of Sauk County can be advanced through thoughtful consideration of this land so important to us all.

Value 1, managing the Badger property as a single unit, collaboratively and holistically is primary and I was happy to see in the draft the attempts to additionally connect management of the area with adjacent and nearby protected areas. However, from talking with Dairy Forage Research Center people, I did not get any impression that managing the land as a unit was important. Dairy Forage has a great opportunity to work with organic farming, a bright light in this time of economic problems, It is an industry that is one of the few that is still growing specifically in Wisconsin, while other kinds of farming and other economic endeavors are failing. Research on organic dairy and other crops would work well with restoration and other educational things. I additionally heard of specific groups requesting exclusive use of specific areas. Both of these things, dividing management and exclusive use areas would detract from holistic and collaborative managing the area as a single unit. Dividing the area and its management defeats much of the value that the land has for conservation that is elaborated in the draft.

I agree that the property should remain intact and should be managed as a whole. It has a unique history and setting and any reuse activities should take into account the site's cultural history and contiguous physical setting. Ten years ago, the members of the Badger Reuse Committee explicitly highlighted the value of the Badger lands for education and research in the Badger Reuse Plan. At the UW-Baraboo/Sauk County, we have already benefitted from, and built upon, these opportunities. Our biology department has been working on research concerning the unique salamander population on the property. Our faculty and students have also been involved in prairie restoration, historical analysis of the 20th century use of the property, and in the geology of the surrounding region. Based upon this research and its future potential, it is clear to me that the property has long term environmental, historical, and recreational value. We see the Badger lands as a site for diverse educational opportunities for our students, the majority of whom have grown up and live within an hour's drive of the Badger Plant. I would urge the DNR to support proposed activities that have a minimal impact on the natural and cultural resources of the property and that maximize public involvement and interests. Additionally, I also recommend that the DNR continue to utilize community and professional scientific expertise in the implementation of the principles and values laid out in the Badger Reuse Plan.

In general support BRC's adoptive values – quite strongly – i.e. adequate clean-up of the land, use for reconciliation, educational research & recreational opportunities as long as those are of fairly low impact environmentally.

I am writing in support of the Sauk Prairie Vision.org statements, and want to take the opportunity to underscore the key points:

- I urge the DNR to continue to recognize fully the values and specific provisions of the Badger Reuse Plan, the first of which is that the entire property must be managed as a whole
- It is my hope that the DNR's master plan should provide opportunities for the creative involvement of the citizens of WI and Sauk County in realizing the recommended future uses of Badger – land restoration, education and research, low-impact recreation, sustainable agriculture – in a manner compatible with the Badger Reuse Plan's values.
- The DNR has a unique opportunity to contribute to the special conservation legacy of Sauk County and the State of WI. The reuse vision for Badger, involving the DNR and all of Badger's stakeholders, will provide far-reaching social, economic, and ecological benefits for all of the people of WI, while honoring the stories and sacrifices of all those who have come before us at Badger.

I am greatly appreciative of your time and consideration, and for your long-term commitment to the bold and visionary work on the future of land use at Badger.

<p>My request, as a citizen, and on behalf of my granddaughter and all future generations, is that we carefully preserve this unique area, taking great care and applying much mindfulness in deciding on future use. Please abide by the carefully crafted Reuse Plan. Once this area is gone, it is gone, and many generations to come will lament our carelessness. Let's instead, reach forward with a priceless gift and an example of thoughtful stewardship, which future generations will be grateful for.</p>
<p>I encourage the DNR's use of the Badger Reuse Plan that includes important conservation considerations of the property. This plan was developed through a collaborative public process and should be used as the guide to any decisions made for the land use.</p>
<p>Missing from the documentation is any mention of the EIS that was prepared by the General Services Administration in 2002-2003 (2 volume draft and one volume final report). These volumes present a trove of additional data and suggestions that could prove useful in arriving at a final plan for use of the BAAP property.</p> <p>The long term planning document for the SPRA should include a statement concerning the possibility of rearranging and adding to the configuration of the property. At present, the bulk of the property is only connected to Hwy 12 by a thin irregular corridor. However, if the BIA and the HoChunk Nation decide to relinquish their property to the state of WI, then adequate access is assured and the total size of the property would be greatly increases. Also the map shows an entirely separate tract of land in the south central part of the BAAP, presumably part of the SPRA, which by swapping with the USDA-DFRC could be continuous with the more northerly part of SPRA. Also negotiation with USDA could greatly improve access to the WI River.</p>
<p>Consider "land resource" as resource for native plants and wildlife as well as humans well-being derived from contact with the natural world (suggested reading for all decision makes: The Nature Principle by Richard Louv)</p> <p>Do not allow industrial or commercial activities of any kind (mining, manufacturing, retail or restaurants, etc) except as necessary to restore and clean up (e.g. toxic chemicals from the old ammo plant) the property.</p> <p>Varying trail lengths and changes in terrain make this an ideal spot for animal use and training</p> <p>Rent for farming=crop production, most land controlled by the state of WI costs taxpayers a lot of money</p> <p>Timber harvest, select cut, no clear cutting</p> <p>Timber harvest, no clear cutting</p>
<p>-Large-scale conservation and restoration</p> <p>-Partners: horicon, sauk prairie, crane international, leopold, goose pond sanctuary, Mackenzie, devil's lake</p>
<p>Saw the article in the Wis State Journal on the Army ammunition plant grounds. I grew up in the Roxbury area and we made annual trips to Sky Hi for apples in the fall. Have always considered it one of the most beautiful areas, anywhere. Still come to the area a couple of times a year to enjoy the PEACE and QUIET. Do not want to see it used for industrial use or loud recreational use, including snow mobiles and ATV's.</p>

<p>I encourage the DNR to honor the Badger Reuse Plan during the master planning process for the Sauk Prairie Recreation Area, and to ensure that uses of this land do not conflict with the goals and needs of ecological restoration, sustainable agriculture, and low impact recreation (including hunting). A broad constituency was at the table during the Badger Reuse planning process, and the plan they developed reflects values held by the local community as well as the insights of nationally-renowned research, education, and conservation institutions. Members of the reuse planning process united around the vision of the former BAAP providing an unparalleled opportunity for the people of WI to conserve a large landscape. Smaller areas being managed by the DNR and other conservation agencies are inherently limited in their potential to protect wildlife, promote ecological processes, and integrate complementary uses. .</p>
<p>Many special interest groups have speculated that the SPRA could meet their desire for space to accommodate their specialized forms of recreation. While trying to accommodate many conflicting land uses is a laudable goal, breaking up Badger to meet a wide variety of demands would sacrifice the most unique and valuable use of this special place.</p>
<p>I urge you to implement the proposals for the Recreation Area established in the Badger Reuse Plan and allied documents and analyses. Certainly the highest priority should be given to these documents, which represent an inordinate amount of time and effort by an array of individuals with a variety of backgrounds.</p>
<p>Buffalo herd along Hwy 12 with Prairie would be great? Sell the meat to be self-sustaining.</p>
<p>I would like to see the property placed in ag. production – a positive for rent income. Economic stimulus = inputs for crops – great for local economy. It would be great to see a gov't entity earn revenue rather than cost taxpayers money.</p>
<p>I would like to see the continuation of the Badger Reuse Plan and also encourage local opinion on this matter. There are some incredibly talented and dedicated people who have put a whole lot of time and effort in the transition from the Badger Army Ordinance Plant to its current state. We urge the DNR to continue to recognize fully the values and specific provisions of the Badger Reuse Plan.</p>
<p>I encourage you to use the ideas in the Badger Reuse Plan as the DNR continues its efforts, especially keeping in mind that the entire property is best used if it is managed as a whole. This piece of land is highly valued by the people of Wisconsin as a low-impact recreational asset and a site for sustainable agriculture and I hope that the voices of concerned citizens will be heard as the master plan is developed. There are also opportunities for land restoration, education and research that would be compatible with the values in the Badger Reuse Plan.</p>
<p>Again, thank you for the critical work that the DNR is doing in the reuse of the Badger Plant, work that has the potential to provide social, economic, and ecological benefits to the people of Wisconsin for decades to come.</p>

We're writing on behalf of the members of the Baraboo Range Preservation Association to provide comments on the Master Plan and planning process for the proposed Sauk Prairie Recreation Area.

The former Badger Army Ammunition Plant presents a rare and unique opportunity to restore a degraded yet ecologically important landscape, honor and commemorate the human history of this area of our state, honor and celebrate the recommendations of the diverse groups (including WDNR) which developed the *Badger Reuse Plan*, and respect the time and resources local citizens have dedicated to Badger through the Sauk Prairie Conservation Alliance.

Our organization and its members are pleased that WDNR recognizes the conservation values and restoration potential of Badger in its *Draft Regional & Property Analysis: Sauk Prairie Recreation Area*.

We agree with WDNR that:

"Within the larger Sauk Prairie Recreation Area landscape lays an incredible and unique opportunity to re-establish an example of the natural mosaic of prairie-savanna-woodland that characterized so much of the Midwest prior to Euro-American settlement, but which has since disappeared.

Major opportunities exist at SPRA with regard to breeding birds, as a result of the site's rich avifauna, large size, extensive grasslands, public ownership, proximity to other significant public and private properties, and accessibility for research, education and recreation. The property already has one of the most significant grassland bird populations in the state. It has been said that if grassland bird populations are ever to recover in the Midwest, it is essential that we learn how farming and wildlife can once again coexist. The SPRA in its entirety offers this opportunity."

WDNR and Sauk County residents will not have another opportunity to thoughtfully manage as much contiguous land in this highly fragmented part of Wisconsin. As WDNR recognizes, Badger is of the size and type to re-establish a mosaic of rare natural communities once common in Wisconsin – this opportunity should be jealously protected and acted on.

It should also be stressed that Badger is adjacent to and can complement the conservation values and human uses of a popular state park and large tracts of privately and publicly protected land.

WDNR has collaborated with sovereign, federal, state, and local authorities to come to an agreement on the future use of Badger. There has been an extraordinary and extensive public process to shape the future of Badger. It would be counterproductive to diverge unduly from this agreement (regardless of new pressures to do so) in deciding the fate of the WDNR portion of Badger.

Local residents and their representatives have remained engaged about the future of Badger and in ongoing management of prairie remnants. These citizens will be future enthusiastic volunteers and partners with WDNR should the ecological and cultural values remain the focus on management.

It is clear to us that the *Draft Regional & Property Analysis*...that the "best overall functional role for the Sauk Prairie Recreation Area is to fulfill the highlighted ecological opportunities available while maximizing compatible recreation opportunities. This approach also takes into consideration the nine key values identified in the Badger Reuse Plan, approved by the Sauk County Board in 2001."

Low-impact recreational uses will likely be compatible with the overall goals of ecological management and the Badger Reuse Plan. The Wisconsin Stewardship Program can be utilized by WDNR, municipalities, and non-profits to acquire more appropriate land nearer to population centers than Badger to accommodate some higher impact uses such as dog parks and field trial areas, community gardens, and other "recreation activities not typically found on Department

lands.” Sites already exist in the vicinity for some “non-traditional” uses such as shooting ranges. Others, like trails for motorized vehicles, can be located along the boundaries of Badger. Other non-traditional uses such as paintball battlefields are best served by off-site, for-profit businesses.

We hope that WDNR will continue its focus on fulfilling “the ecological opportunities available” while very carefully choosing recreational activities which are truly compatible with that focus. We appreciate the opportunity to comment on proposed uses of this vital ecological area and look forward to continuing to work with the WDNR to protect and enhance this unique environment.

With the Department of Natural Resources leading the effort to develop a master plan for the former Badger Ammunition Plant, I want to encourage you to ensure the Department continues to consider the unique history and the incredible amount of work that has gone into planning for the future of this property. This property is special not only for its historic and cultural significance but also its potential for ecological restoration, wildlife management, agricultural use, and recreational opportunities. The Badger Reuse Plan, to which the Department is already a signatory, is a document that reflects the collaborative efforts and dedication of stakeholders that includes local, state and federal interests. The authors and signatories to the Badger Reuse Plan are committed to identifying a sound vision for the future of this property that reflects cultural, educational and recreational uses.

The planning and restoration effort that has already begun at Badger is, in many ways, a first for the State of Wisconsin. The Department should ensure the Master Planning for what is being called the Sauk Prairie Recreation Area continues to bring to the table nearby landowners, local groups, and state agencies as well as the US Department of Agriculture, US Army, and the Ho-Chunk Nation – all working collaboratively.

The DNR’s role in the development of the Sauk Prairie Recreation Area is a critical one. I applaud your commitment to ensuring the recommendations for the Recreation Area approved by all parties will be honored and incorporated into the master planning process. This goes a long way in easing the concerns of many who have worked tirelessly for years to turn the Badger Ammunition Plant into a multi-use and ecologically protected area.

As a state legislator for the area as well as a long-time resident of Sauk County, I am encourage by the widespread continued recognition of the significance of the Badger property. Please let me know if I can be of assistance to you or others in the Department in any way as you move forward with planning for the future of Badger.

Education/Historical/Cultural Opportunities

Garden education, invasive species.

Badger History Group should be given a land space to preserve the history of the plant. It had a great influence on the face of Sauk Prairie. People came here for the jobs and never left. The 3rd generation is living here now.

Native crafts – ongoing projects – food preservation, basket making, gathering natural materials for human use.

Signs about horses, historic use of horses for farming, military, logging etc.

Educational signage of what the site was.

Teaching about history, geology, ecology. Some recognition of former uses of the property.

Seems like great place to study the environmental impact of the pollutants used at the plant. Don’t know the history of the historical & cultural conflicts but certainly favor some way to use the land & facilities for conflict.

Museum – from pre-settlement to present historical walking trail.

Historical programs on the Badger Story.
Show off the Great Hills of Sauk county.
The unique history of the property, especially the “powder plant” era must be part of any plan. It should be in the vision /mission statement. The human history of the property is as important as its natural history.
To restore Oak Savanna / Prairie on this scale would actually allow people to see what large parts of Wisconsin looked like.
Welcome Center with museum outlining entire history and geology of the property from glaciation to prairie to farms to plant – <i>Museum needed.</i>
An additional arm of the Ice Age Trail would help preserve the fragile environment. Promotes education.
Keeping some portion of the Powder Plant history is important. Once the buildings are gone a big piece of Sauk county’s history will as well.
The development of interpretive trails and educational signage would be a spectacular addition to preserve the cultural and historic story of this property. Allowing concrete slabs to remain in place and other ‘safe’ structures would make space for additional educational opportunities. These ‘safe’ structures are also interesting artifacts to remain on an open landscape for photographic opportunities and historic aesthetics.
Play up any historical / cultural resources on property.
Involve school groups so that children will feel an investment in the future of the property. Gary Williams (524-2028) currently brings kids from eight different school districts to do restoration work at Badger, 600-800 children / year. This is a very important program.
The Adams County Historical Society, of which many of its members with personal memories and history of working at Badger Ordnance, supports the efforts of the Badger History Group to preserve the history of the Badger Ordnance Works, also known as Badger Army Ammunition Plant, as part of the mission of the new Sauk Prairie Recreation Area.
Attached are four pictures that may be important for capturing visitors to the site. One is the view of the Great Sauk Prairie from the Wisconsin Heights Battle Site 25 years after the Black Hawk War; one is a painting of the Great Sauk Prairie when pioneer farm families tended the land. The third is Sauk Prairie Remembered: A Vision of the Future. One is an interesting rock inside the fence on the side of the bluff over the cannon range. From different perspectives it takes on different images and the lichen hangs like grapes. It's an old witness stone.
At some point in time, I would like to have you look at the stories I've researched/collected and then written for use by our school district teachers. They do pertain to how this place came to be, people who lived here, when the ice walked on the ground, the trails across the prairie, profiles of people who lived here and did things, first Fourth of July, Finding Lake of the Hills, how places got their names.
I should get you a copy of our walking and wheels tour. three years of researching and several edits, lots of photos, collaboration with the school, county SP Chamber and county historical society. Our village historic preservation committee released it on Fathers' Day weekend with horse-drawn wagon tours.
Some 20 years ago, I orchestrated a field day at home for fourth graders and it still happens every October as part of their Badger History curriculum. They don't know it yet, but they will be getting visitors in the classrooms before the field day this year. I just need to find two or three volunteers.

The Value of the Reservoir Area Early Earth, Young Sun, Deep Time

Although an actual reservoir would probably no longer be needed and it's a bear to maintain, the site itself is extremely valuable educationally, and so the site should become a classroom for all ages.

Yes, it's up in the bluff. That's the old stagecoach road and what a thrill to discover you are on the old stagecoach road as a shuttle bus takes you to class. Imaginations are turned loose. Even tourists can go to class; hawk it like a medicine show salesman, "guaranteed to entertain and educate." The site needs parking enough for maybe three shuttles and some additional for emergency vehicles. We always need to make sure emergency vehicles and school buses can enter and turn around in the hills. Most area municipalities make that part of their ordinances.

Instead of covering a hole in the ground, there could be a basement geology lab, complete with windows for viewing the geology (e.g. Bank of Prairie du Sac). The ground floor should be an open space; maybe the roof could be equipped with a space from which to get a great, safe view, weather and seasons permitting. The exterior should look like glacial drift with ample window space, and the floor could be polished concrete with area pebbles. A boulder of Baraboo Quartzite would be a touching stone where everyone enters and leaves. Leaf prints, tracks, bird calls, insect chirps and buzzes. What an atmosphere to enter into!

A system of sliding panels could easily divide the interior open space into several classrooms equipped with screens and projectors (ceiling and wall mounted), a lecture counsel equipped to move about and plug into floor outlets so the various sound and light shows could be readily available, and enough kitchen space to place coolers of student lunches and beverages and also serve fund-raising events. Done right, the classrooms could provide programs in geology, astronomy, night time nature...

It would need water and restrooms. I'm not sure about the connections to Bluffview Sanitary District. But I bet something could be done with holding tanks or composting toilets; this technology might be grant-funded if it's part of a research project – partner with UW-Madison. The actual water well could bring an addition to the curriculum: hydrology. Hydrology and groundwater have been such an integral part of the area and the knowledge already accumulated should be used and expanded. It would be phenomenal if a core could be taken from the well shaft and kept for classroom viewing. View the heart of the hills! Aside: Once upon a while not too long ago, the military complex considered the Baraboo Bluffs as an ICBM silo site!

The geology lab could also be set up to analyze water, and if there are catch-systems on the roof, meteorites could be collected and identified. People could touch meteorites and learn how to catch them in August. Our district teachers have had student clean house gutters to gather debris for meteor analysis. So have meteor-gutters on the roof.

Who knows – this might be a great place for viewing Northern Lights. I do know there are times, providing vegetation is not super lush, when it is possible to catch a great view of Northern Lights from Wisconsin Heights and also along STH 60 between I-94 and Lodi. You don't forget seeing such grand beauty. It is the ancients dancing. Imagine special star concerts featuring area musicians in this building; it must have tremendous acoustics – a bit of a vault. Admission could fund projects, but charge reasonable ticket prices so it doesn't become exclusive. Families should be able to come.

I once witnessed a UW Geology Grad student present a tour of the Driftless and Glaciated area. He made everything come alive. We all journeyed back in time and witnessed the glacier and its impact. To realize during the last Ice Age, the Green Bay Lobe of the Wisconsin Glacier met the Driftless area at the Baraboo Bluffs – that’s truly awesome. I saw the eyes of many of the people on that tour grow wide as they realized the impact of nature and time.

You could hear it in their voices when they started noticing all sorts of things that were always there before, but they had never noticed. It’s akin to holding a young child in your arms and experiencing this child sense shadows, leaves, the breeze, birds for the first time. You can feel their surprise and delight, and suddenly you see the whole world new again and delightfully exciting. You want to giggle, coo and clap like that baby. That is the definition of awe, and humans must maintain the ability to be in awe. It’s as critical as maintaining a dream. Humans without awe and dreams tend to die from within – something beyond cynical and jaded. Chief Joseph called it hard-hearted. Richard Louv (Last Child in the Woods) labeled it the nature deficit disorder.

There is the bluff wall with its layers of glacial drift; then there are pock-marked rocks on the ancient shoreline (Imagine hurricanes of eons ago whipping stones from the ancient ocean floor up against the shoreline worn into some ancient mountains!). Below stretches the grand panorama of what was the munitions plant, farms, the prairie, the outwash plain, the driftless area hunting preserve of Ice Age humans and creatures, the ancient sea floor and an even more ancient sea of molten lava where massive meteorites slowly melted. This presents a journey back to Deep Time, the Young Sun and Early Earth.

Beyond are Ferry Bluff and Blue Mounds - loads of history and culture. People who gather on the raised platform to look out drink it in. It is beautiful, even if misty. Meaning is increased once you know more about what happened here over eons of time. People need meaning in their lives and connecting with nature is the key.

There need to be exhibits in the classrooms and lab – rotating works by area artists pertaining to the natural, social, cultural, historical and pre-historical of the area and music should be the background: Ken Lungquist’s Geological Score and The Oak Savanna, his bicentennial creation.

The only way the bluff wall, the pock-marked stones and the view will be preserved is if it is used and if this is a classroom reached only by shuttle, use is controlled. I realize we have fence-jumpers now. Some are deer, raccoons, skunks; some are turkeys, and some are human. Surveillance is always possible and it gets more discreet, remote and effective with time. Some of the guards no longer needed for the munitions plant know the land, even the jumpers and when they are most likely to jump. Perhaps there’s a way to utilize their knowledge and expertise.

There are opportunities for geologic interpretation on the north end of the BAAP near the water retention reservoir that was previously going to the HoChunk tribe. This could be integrated into some general ecology/environmental interpretation of the Baraboo Bluffs area and existing efforts at Devil’s Lake SP.

The entire are could become a living laboratory for local schools and community groups for environmental education.

I'd like to add my voice to the effort to encourage development of a plan for "reuse" of the Badger Army Ammunition Plant that takes full advantage of the opportunities it offers for development of a program of ecological restoration, education and public participation. It's special value as a sizable landscape in an area that has played a special role in the history of conservation (I'm thinking of the legacy of figures like John Muir, Frank Lloyd Wright and Aldo Leopold, not to mention contemporary initiatives such as the Leopold Center and Crane Foundation) is obvious. Besides that, we need projects that demonstrate the value of community-oriented restoration efforts as a new way to "do" nature, and the plant's location within a short drive of population centers in Madison, Spring Green, etc. only add to that value.

Over the past dozen years, I have been fortunate to spend many days under the sky on the now quiet Sauk Prairie at the former Badger Army Ammunition Plant, going on tours, participating in prairie and savannah restoration work, gathering seeds for subsequent plantings, helping with prairie burns, accompanying school children visiting the plant on environmental education field trips, and sharing with other participants the joys of seeing progress toward healing and a renewed abundance of beauty on the land.

These days and experiences have particular resonance because of the past history of upheaval and destruction associated with this piece of land, both socially and culturally for Native American and farm families, and ecologically for the land itself. The daily collaborative process of transforming this site into a place representing recuperation, healing, and reconciliation, involving many individuals and organizations, multiple governmental structures, and even a sovereign Native American nation, now extends across many years, and has built up into a tradition with its own momentum and life. The goals and formative vision of this tradition is of course expressed in the details of The Badger Reuse Plan, a land use document which was itself created through a broad based public collaborative process.

It is thus very hopeful to see the goals and values of the Badger Reuse Plan frequently referenced in the "Draft Regional and Property Analysis" document --- yourself and the other DNR staff involved well deserve the community's thanks and congratulations for that. The Department of Natural Resources is of course a signatory to the Badger Reuse Plan, and in order for the vision of that document to come to full blossom, the DNR's Master Plan must itself carry forward the good beginning which has already been established in the years since the creation of the Badger Reuse Plan.

Although several minor improvements might be made to the "Draft Regional and Property Analysis" (for example, a full discussion about collaboration between the three primary land owners in managing the Badger property as a single unit; a fuller exploration of the potential for collaborative scientific restoration biology research; or about incorporating interpretation of the land's history into how it is utilized),.

Thank you for considering my thoughts, and I look forward to many future days under the open sky at Badger, on a restored and quiet Sauk Prairie.

As a member and volunteer of the Sauk Prairie Conservation Alliance and a resident of the city of Milwaukee, I am keenly aware of what a treasure the former Badger Ammunition Plant is. This is a opportunity to preserve natural and geologic history, do scientific research, study sustainable agriculture and just provide a unique green space for city dwellers like me.

My hope is that the DNR will adhere to the land use plan that was result of the hard work of so many concerned and dedicated people. This is a chance for us to, in my view, do the right thing.

Preserve historic and cultural values with a focus on traditional farming communities of 50 to 100 years ago. Small family owned farms of the past provided significant wildlife habitat and agricultural profit. These farms typically had small woodlots, tree and hedge rows, pasture (grazed and ungrazed), relied less on pesticides and had croplands with their associated weeds. The farm historically was more a part of the natural community than it is today.

Consider interpreting the history and culture of an early farm such as a Wisconsin Heritage Farm Site that accommodates wildlife with farming, serves as an outdoor classroom for learning and agricultural research, and as an interpretive opportunity

Please make sure the Sauk Prairie State Recreational Area is reserved for low impact, non-motorized recreation and educational purposes.

Additionally, as I am an educator, I see the opportunity for learning, research and scholarship, in the preservation of the BAAP as a natural treasure. I have taken my classes to the BAAP to learn about ecology and geology of the area. The BAAP is a wonderful natural laboratory. As restoration efforts continue to progress, students from all over Wisconsin, the US, and probably the world, will be able to learn about restoration and the unique grassland/shrubland habitat to which the BAAP land should be restored. In addition, there will be a rich opportunity to study the animals that will make their homes in this unique habitat.

I believe part of the reason that our visitors come to the special area that is Sauk County is for the fresh air, scenic beauty, and our preservation of our notable history.

I know you realize that fads in outdoor activities change over time, but our precious grasslands, the animals, and beneficial insects dependent on those unique lands cannot change. These uniquely adapted animals and plants simply die off when their land does.

I would also love to see a memorial site set aside to all who have loved the area, yet sacrificed for their relationship to it:

The original Native Americans.

The complex prairie, and its many creatures, including the American Bison.

The farmers who so loved this productive land. (My Grandmother, born 1898 in Sauk County, told of the many farmers and their families who cried when their land was taken from them).

The many workers at the Badger Army Ammo Plant who strove to protect our country.

The service men and women, and their families who served our country, some who returned, and some who did not.

It is also very important that there be established on the property educational displays which provide the public information on both the natural history of the area and the very important modern history of the former farm landowners whose property was condemned for the Badger Facility and the important history of the Ammunition Plant and its workers relative to the defense of the country.

The DNR's master plan should provide opportunities for the creative involvement of the citizens of Wisconsin and Sauk County in realizing the recommended future uses of Badger - land restoration, education and research, low-impact recreation, sustainable agriculture - in a manner compatible with the Badger Reuse Plan's values.

In its planning, the DNR has a unique opportunity to contribute to the special conservation legacy of Sauk County and the State of Wisconsin. The reuse vision for Badger, involving the DNR and all of Badger's stakeholders, will provide far-reaching social, economic, and ecological benefits for all of the people of Wisconsin, while honoring the stories and sacrifices of all those who have come before us at Badger.

The children of Bluffview are in dire poverty. They often play between cars on the crowded streets. Some of them live in homes with 12 people. You would not believe how many children are crammed into such a small geographic area! I would like to see an underground tunnel or over the road foot bridge with a special fenced in play area for the children complete with walking trails and play houses, playground, etc... I would really love to see buildings, too, that could be of service to the Bluffview people; a Head Start Center, a computer lab, library, job center, a language learning center, laundry mat, teen game center, a food pantry, free clinic/dentist, auditorium for church services and family concerts, soccer fields, basketball courts, skate park, bike paths through the prairie, whatever it is they are in need of. Their village is truly the poorest area in the county and I would like to see the use plan cater to their success and happiness. The majority of the Bluffviewers are immigrants from Mexico and Texas so a place that honors their culture would be a blessing for them (I'm envision Mexican decorations and signs in 2 languages). I think sending a paper survey to everyone in Bluffview in both languages to determine their needs would be wonderful. If you just open to prairie up to hiking enthusiasts, it will be used a little. But if you cater it to the people of Bluffview I think it could be used so much allowing the people to flourish in its glory. I know funds are probably limited but this would be my dream. I think having activities such as soccer fields and basketball courts would allow the children of Bluffview to maintain an active lifestyle while staying occupied and out of trouble. I can just imagine the community bonding in their very own soccer fields each night. Please consider enriching the lives of the people of Bluffview in your plan.

This land has a strong history and future potential as a valuable educational resource involving diverse areas such as restoration, ecology, agriculture, history, public health, and community-based conservation. We strongly support the continued collaboration with the University of Wisconsin.

We hope that the DNR's master plan continues to promote opportunities for the citizens of Wisconsin and Sauk County to be actively and creatively involved in implementing the recommended future uses of Badger including land restoration, education and research, low-impact recreation, sustainable agriculture. Recreational activities should be encouraged in a manner that is consistent with the values and goals of the Reuse Plan.

We hope that this area continue to advances the conservation legacy of Sauk County and the State of Wisconsin. Involving the diverse community members in the vision for the future use of Badger has the potential to have far-reaching social, economic, educational, and ecological benefits for all of the people of Wisconsin, while honoring the stories and sacrifices of all those who have come before us at Badger.

I live about 12 miles from Badger Army Ammunition Plant and am going to be a senior at Sauk Prairie High School. I've spent a lot of time at Badger in my life going on field trips and helping out with DNR projects such as small mammal trapping, monitoring the neotenic tiger salamanders in the reservoirs. I have learned a lot about the history of the area and about conservation from my experiences there. I feel that Badger would be beneficial to the community and state of Wisconsin if it became a place of low recreation use where people could go hiking and learn about the prairie and environment there as well as species of birds and mammals that are so important to the area. It could also provide an educational opportunity for kids to learn about conservation techniques and management.

The Sauk Prairie area offers a number of very special educational opportunities, such as outdoor nature observation, bird-watching, nature photography, participation in prairie restoration, service learning activities associated with prairie restoration. In addition the amazing story of the long series of changes in the use of this Sauk Prairie land offers special opportunities for historical preservation and cultural preservation, which in turn offers educational learning opportunities which greatly enriches the experience of people visiting and studying the Sauk Prairie area. I know of no other area that offers such a deep and rich social-cultural-ecological history as this very special, unique area.

I have been connected with the Badger property through the Badger History Group and from having spent time out there surveying mammals, birds, and anurans (frogs/toads). This property is so important historically and ecologically and I am in favor of non-intensive uses now which support both. Much has been done to return the property to its historical condition prior to European settlement and I would like to see this continue.

The Analysis says very little about education and research opportunities at Badger. These activities are fundamental to the reuse of the Badger property, yet they are not reflected at this stage of the master planning process. Over the last decade thousands of schoolchildren, college students, researchers, volunteers, visitors, and others have benefitted from the limitless potential of Badger for education and research. I look forward to seeing this reflected in the next stage of the WDNR planning process.

Similarly, the Analysis says very little about opportunities for sustainable agriculture to enhance the landscape at the Badger property, and for Badger to serve as a research and demonstration site where conservation and agriculture work hand-in-hand. This again was a fundamental value and activity recognized in the BRP. It is (or ought to be) of special importance to the WDNR. It can greatly benefit itself by using Badger as a site to develop and demonstrate, with its partners, new and innovative means of land stewardship. Looking to the future, these innovations will be important for private landowners across the state, and for the WDNR in the stewardship of its own landholdings.

The Analysis says little about citizen involvement in the reuse and rehabilitation of the Badger property. Yet the involvement of Wisconsin's citizens will be essential to realize the property's potential. We live in a time when public budgets are constrained, children are increasingly disconnected from the natural world, landowners are eager for experience in land stewardship, and students may never have learned the lessons of their own history. Badger provides a once-in-a-lifetime (and "once-in-a-state") opportunity to reconnect people of all backgrounds back to the land, to their own history, and to the future. It offers special opportunities for all our citizens to give something back, and to contribute to the health of what Aldo Leopold called "the land community." The WDNR master plan should provide for these opportunities.

Sauk County has a strong conservation ethic and heritage. It is here that Aldo Leopold and his family began their efforts at ecological restoration on a degraded farm. The Department has a parallel chance to do the same for the farms that existed before the munitions factory. The Badger Reuse Plan builds upon that heritage and I urge the Department to honor it.

Another aspect of the Reuse Plan deserves mention and endorsement. This plan is visionary in calling for the coordinated management of the entire Badger property by multiple stakeholders. This arrangement offers the chance to reinforce and develop additional conservation practices between the Department and the Dairy Forage Research Center and perhaps the Ho-Chunk Nation. Improving farming practices that at the same time conserve natural ecosystems is greatly needed in Wisconsin and throughout our country. This joint opportunity for management and research should be vigorously pursued. Further, the research opportunities for large-scale ecological restoration are well worth pursuing and can attract researchers and grant money. This research can aid the Department by carrying out restoration at Badger and provide guidance on how to restore and manage these and other Department lands.

The DNR has a unique opportunity to create a living laboratory for a new way of stewarding the land, one that reflects the conservation legacy of Sauk County and the state. The reuse vision for Badger, involving the DNR and a wide array of stakeholders and citizens, will provide far-reaching social, economic, and ecological benefits for all of the people of Wisconsin.

Attached you will find comments from Badger History Group on the Draft Analysis. They were written before the recent bit of publicity on the "non-traditional use" question appeared. BHG is arguing that heritage tourism to Sauk Prairie is a non-traditional use that should be added to your list. We also really want to help you draw a complete cultural and historical site map(s) of the property.

Introduction

These comments from the Badger History Group consist of two parts. Part One addresses the content of the Draft Analysis in relation to the unique historical significance of the SPRA as the site of the Badger Ordnance Works/Badger Army Ammunition Plant, i.e., "the powder plant." Part Two discusses the Draft Analysis in terms of the Badger Re-Use Plan. They are submitted to the WDNR as constructive criticism to help Department planners meet their goal of producing the best possible master plan for the property.

Part One

The Analysis makes scant reference to the powder plant in terms of the historical context of the local area and the state of Wisconsin. As part of the defense establishment of the United States from the start of World War II to the end of the Cold War, Badger's impact was worldwide. In addition, as the largest employer in Sauk and most surrounding counties, Badger made an equally important economic and social impact locally and statewide.

In the 1940s Badger ended the Great Depression in Sauk and surrounding counties, and later set a precedent for non-farm economic development here and throughout the state. It also helped change the perceived role of women as participants in the out-of-home work force and anticipated the process of suburbanization that has dominated rural Wisconsin since the 1960s. The powder plant was also the focus of action on the part of activists in the early days of the environmental movement of the 1970s and remains so to this day.

The history of Badger is also the history of Wisconsin. By telling the story of the powder plant, the SPRA tells the story of the entire state and, by doing so, serves the entire state of Wisconsin.

Therefore, in WDNR's next planning document, we hope to see an expanded treatment of the history of the powder plant. More importantly, we want to see a commitment to the preservation of the plant's history in the plan's vision/mission statement.

We understand that WDNR is not a historical agency. However, it is the custodian of a historically significant property. Therefore, we also want the WDNR to pledge to work with historical organizations like Badger History Group to present the history of the powder plant, as well as the history of the farm community that preceded it on the land, and of the native American people who were here earlier and remain today.

An expansion of the meaning of the term "recreation" is also in order. Traditionally, WDNR's recreation areas focus on "outdoor recreation," i.e. hunting, hiking, fishing, birding, to name a few. This is appropriate and adequate at other recreation areas, but no other recreation area in Wisconsin possesses the historical significance of the SPRA site. Recreation here must include history.

Survey after survey reports that historic sites are among the most popular travel destinations worldwide, including Wisconsin. At the SPRA, traditional outdoor recreation and history combine to create what might become the most popular site of its kind in the state.

Consequently, visits to learn the history of the property and visits to historic sites on the property must be added to the list of activities at the SPRA.

To reinforce this message and to acknowledge its historical significance, we also want to see the name of the recreation area expanded to include a reference to the powder plant, e.g. The Badger Ordnance Works/Sauk Prairie Recreation Area.

The map of Areas of Cultural and Historical Importance has a number of omissions. The following are not indicated:

The Pioneer Cemetery

The Theolke Cemetery

The Miller grave stones

The Workers' Memorial

The Farmers' Memorial

The three churches of 1941

The three rural schools of 1941

The sites where workers died producing ammunition for the national defense

Powder plant production areas

["Pioneer farmsteads" are indicated on the map, but the farms marked were not necessarily established in the pioneer period of the 1840s-'50s. The farms indicated should be labeled "Farmsteads in 1941."]

Including all these sites on one Cultural and Historical map is problematic. It is also unnecessary.

We suggest that WDNR create three Cultural and Historical maps indicating:

1. Native American/Pre-Settlement sites.
2. Settlement/Farm Community sites.
3. Badger Ordnance/Ammunition Plant sites.

Maps indicating the sites listed above are available in the collections of the Badger History Group and elsewhere. We are ready, willing and able to supply the necessary information to WDNR's cartographer.

Part Two

We frequently hear references to the Badger Army Ammunition Plant Reuse Plan, (Reuse Plan), yet when it comes to the historic part of the Reuse Plan the people who lived that history are consistently left out and ignored. Unfortunately this report has fallen into that same trap.

Following are comments referencing the Reuse Plan Criteria to be considered for this report and the WDNR Master Plan for the Badger AAP property.

Reality is that historically significant buildings will not be preserved. These buildings represent the lives of the more than 60,000 people who have worked in the ammunition plant in its 70 year history. Add to that, over 100 land owners, mostly farmers, who lost their property for the construction of the B.O.W., and we don't know how many people called this land home since the Indians moved onto this land following the receding glacier.

A Badger History Group Museum would provide an educational facility and information resource to teach the history of all the people who lived and earned their living on this land.

The Badger History Group supports the establishment of trails on the property and is prepared

and preparing to be an information resource for historical markers along those trails.

The best way to memorialize any group of people is to learn about them and teach others about them. A stone or concrete memorial alone does not, and cannot, do this in a manner that does justice to those people and their stories. At some future time when the people who lived these stories are dead the memorials will lose their significance and be deemed to be in the way and removed. The people and their life stories forgotten.

The Badger History Group has not and is not asking or suggesting that the WDNR build us a museum. However, it would be consistent with the Reuse Plan for the WDNR to transfer to the Badger History Group a ten acre parcel of land at the location of the Farmers' Memorial for the purpose of constructing and operating a museum to collect, preserve and share the history of the Badger Army Ammunition Plant area, (education, Criterion 4.1 & 5.1).

Agriculture, historical and cultural resources are peoples' lives and life stories that out of respect for those people must be told. This can best be accomplished by the joint functions of a museum, trails with informational markers, and the school class room. A complete and accurate history of these people includes:

- The natural environment, the place where they were born, lived, and died;
- Agriculture is how these people supported themselves and their families;
- Culture is people, not a place.

We recognize that the mission of the WDNR is natural resources and not people resources, but for any of us to speak of the importance of following the Reuse Plan and in the same breath ignore the people who lived on that land and the culture of those people is a dis-service to all the people and tends to reduce the value of the Reuse Plan.

We should also recognize that the Sauk Prairie Recreation Area would not be a subject of discussion if in 1942 the U. S. Army had not acquired this land, constructed the Badger Ordnance Works and inadvertently created a wildlife refuge that has now been altered with the demolition of the Badger AAP. The buildings were a forest to the wildlife and now, once again, humans have altered the natural habitat and continue to plan changes to make it more interesting to, and fit the vision of the humans. Good or bad, only time and history will tell.

The value of the Badger Army Ammunition Plant lands does not lie in what we can do With it or to it now as a prize for the gratification of some but in what it will mean to those yet to come.

When the General Services Administration began the disposal of the Badger Plant, many could not see past the miasma of a deteriorating industrial munitions plant. A small handful of people had a different vision. Behind that veil was a neglected treasure that could become a major public asset to Sauk County and the entire state of Wisconsin. Year after year of dedicated effort made that vision public, widely accepted, nationally important and formally implemented. The last chapters of the story of the new beginning for Badger are now being written.

Wisconsin, through its Department of Natural Resources, now faces a stark choice. A unique opportunity to make the Badger site a true gift to Wisconsin's future received with gratitude and joy well beyond our borders or a painful permanent monument to failed vision and missed opportunities.

The initial group grew and their vision spread. The Sauk County Board of Supervisors was convinced to support that vision with a formal resolution. A member of Congress, Tammy Baldwin, became a key supporter who helped find a grant for the County to fund the professional team that allowed the County to form and maintain the Badger Reuse Committee. In the end a small grant from the DNR provided the bridge that allowed the Committee to complete enough of its work to generate its consensus document, The Badger Reuse Report. In turn that led to a formal MOU and the Intergovernmental Agreement. That agreement is the foundation for the Badger Oversight and Management Commission (BOMC) for the Badger property. The BOMC has the basic responsibility to maintain, promote and implement the findings of the Reuse Report as the guiding principles for the future of the Badger lands as a whole.

The Reuse Report is an example of the power of genuine community consensus. It is not the result of compromise positions arrived at through side-bar negotiations, vote trading and political pressure. It is not the result of an orchestrated web based deluge of boilerplate letters pushing a special interest at the expense of all others. There was and is no residual resentment among the members of the Reuse Committee that they were outmaneuvered and outvoted through processes taking place without their knowledge and outside of public view.

One of the keys to the overall success the entire process was the agenda format established for the Reuse Committee and now used by the BOMC. As is common in Wisconsin, all meetings opened with a provision for a period of public comment but they all ended with an additional public opportunity for comment about the meeting just concluded. That addition allowed every meeting of the Reuse Committee to begin before a fully informed public audience. Other traditions for the meetings evolved as the Reuse Committee progressed and the audiences for the meetings became informal but highly active participants in the entire process. This has also carried over to meetings of the BOMC whose agenda has the same double provision for public comment. The strength of the Reuse Report comes directly from how it reflects the intensity of the widespread community joint vision that grew from the original and the intensity of the ongoing public involvement in the process.

The record of the history of Badger is an important part of its value to the future. There are the continuing negative residues of past interactions between the Native American inhabitants of this area and the incoming European settlers. There was the disruptive pain inflicted on the

Sauk Prairie farm families by their eviction from established family farms by the US Government as preparations for WWII ramped up and the history of the Badger property as a munitions plant. The Badger History Group is the custodian of much of the physical record the military phase of the history and their ongoing role as a fully integrated part of the BOMC will allow the story of Badger to be told as a whole as part of the BOMC's stewardship of Badger as a whole.

The tangible part of the resentment over the evictions is readily identified. The evictions themselves are memorialized in many contemporary documents, photographs and stories as is the impact of the inadequate compensations for the land and its improvements. So many people looking for neighboring farmland to replace their losses raised local prices beyond the value of the compensation received. This resentment was powerfully expressed by the descendants of the farm families at many meeting of the Reuse Committee although at the time of the evictions resentment over money could not be voiced. How could it be when so many neighbors, friends and family members were receiving the dreaded telegram: "THE SECRETARY OF WAR DESIRES ME TO EXPRESS HIS DEEP REGRET THAT YOUR SON...WAS KILLED IN ACTION ON . . ."

Badger is one more place in the US with a concentrated history of pain. Perhaps it is not as overt as more widely known sites of actual physical violence but it is just as real. Wisconsin recognizes sites such as this as worthy of special protection in its laws. (See: State Statutes 44.30 and 44.31 copied below.)

Badger is not a static display. It is not a background, backdrop or venue for the entertainment of a few and the exclusion of others.

All of Badger's complex intertwined history, the years of meetings, the Reuse Report, the MOU, the Intergovernmental Agreement, State law, the new SCORP, the transfer agreements with the US Parks Department and almost all of the Draft Plan point to Badger as a restoration experimental laboratory, a classroom and a place of reconciliation.

The Badger Reuse Report identifies many roles for the Badger property and the stories it embodies from local to national and perhaps beyond. They all share a common feature; they are dynamic. They grow and change. Repeating visitors will find new stories to learn. That is not common and most of the monuments or memorials where that happens are on the Mall in the Capitol.

The choice is as clear as it could possibly be. Badger must be an inclusive uncompromised ongoing dynamic gift to the future and, in the fullest possible meaning of the word, a memorial to its past.

- for its historical reasons to the property
- have old pictures and a short film running about the old military factory
- planting native plants and wildflowers
- would like to see some of the original building refurbished, and left up

Re: the Wis. State Journal article on the Badger Munitions plant, mention needs to be made of the fact that this land was originally taken from the local farmers against their will. There were suicides over this.

For me as a researcher and as a citizen, Badger was, and is, a laboratory for innovative ideas in community conservation. I was so captivated by the idea of large-scale restoration at Badger, that I visited and investigated other sites of a similar scale & ecological setting to look for lessons in how to undertake this successfully. I can attest that the process in Sauk County is unmatched in other comparable projects, and I think that reflects the quality of the property-- its value for conservation, for reflecting the history and culture of the people who live there, and its importance for agriculture, education, and low-impact recreation.

For me, Badger offered me an invaluable research opportunity, and I think it's essential that research continues to be a critical element of the transformation process there. I can recall being surprised by plants and animals there that for many years no one knew were there. I know many other students, researchers, and volunteers have been indelibly touched by the DISCOVERY of the secrets Badger holds quietly. As we've worked together, we've discovered lots of things about ourselves, about the land, and about each other. The transformation process involving many partners with common goals needs to be documented in ways that can help us continue to solve other complex problems.

While I was a student, and continuing afterward, I was deeply involved in the process of creating a vision and a plan for the Badger lands, and I was deeply moved by the neighbors' dedication to creating solutions that work for all of us. I know you have a strong sense of the years of energy that people have poured into that process. I believe that process must be honored, and that those years of energy and relationships and discoveries of common ground, must be honored.

School training outdoor life & woods.

Invasive education

We also realize that there are important historical and cultural values and future public uses that need to be considered during the planning process.

My grandparents and great-grandparents were among the farmers displaced from the Sumpter area in the early 1940s to make space for the construction of the BAAP. Once every summer, my grandparents took up to the area where their farm had been located (we could go insider with supervised escort on certain Sundays). I have always had a special attachment to this area – the space where my mother grew up picking blackberries, where her school and church were located. I have relatives buried in one of the cemeteries.

Because of my connection to this land, I have followed the development of the Badger Reuse Plan and feel that is an appropriate way of restoring that area. i.e. bringing back the natural prairie that is home to many prairie birds.

This is a well written survey of the background, natural history, timeline, and cultural history of the BAAP.

<p>Include interpretive trails, potential for guided hikes, school field trips, astronomy outings, one building at main entrance to tell the history of the land.</p> <p>Create a visitor/interpretive center outside the fence; execute agreement between DNR, UW, MATC and other research and teaching centers that recognizes the educational and research potential of the property; involve federal, tribal, state and local historical preservation organizations in historical interpretation and programming; preserve important historical features (native American sites, cemeteries, etc.)</p> <p>I would like to see a building that is a combination nature center/historical center. This historical part should include the entire history of the BAAP, and should include the environmental groups who have helped shape the outcome, ie. CCC and CSWAB and any of hers; also Tammy Baldwin and Herb Kohl should be recognized for their support; I see this as a great place for field trips for local schools.</p> <p>Many local schools now have a program of following the Iditarod Sled Dog Race and the various mushers. Having a sledding training and racing area here would certainly be fun for local students and teachers as well as the general public.</p> <p>Show that land controlled by the state of WI can be used positive for tax payers</p> <p>Historical geography stops along trail system</p> <p>Historical geography stops along trail system</p> <p>Bird Watching</p> <p>Dog mushing harkens back to historical transportation of the northwoods</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">-Adaptive management informed by scientific research (monitoring and experimentation)-Collaborative research by all property managers (whole ecosystem)-Living laboratory for innovative restoration techniques and agriculture-Facilities for education the public ---? this info support for volunteers to advance about endeavors-Building 207 can serve as a museum/ed center for some time; there need to be interactive exhibits for schools, families and individuals-History, culture, preservation, conservation, agriculture, plus healing the land, the people, the community-Interpretive and educational opportunities that highlight unique history of this land and how this history intersects with conservation and sustainable agricultural uses in the future-“visitor center” for Badger History Group, DNR, HCN, DFRC – one building, one use – be green! LEED
<p>This beautiful productive farmland was seized by the Federal Government for war purposes. Now that it is no longer serving that purpose it should be restored to agricultural use. Indications are that there in now, or soon will be, a desperate need for all the good crop land that is available and 7,300 acres of prime land should not be sacrificed to ATV trails and other trivial uses.</p> <p>This area presents opportunities we may never have again in central WI; let’s use the area as best we can to serve environmental awareness for all.</p>
<p>If as much land as possible could be used for cropping/feed productions it would be an excellent example of responsible use of natural resources. To draw water for some irrigation could help clean up ground water contamination.</p>

Conservation, education and agricultural use are acceptable. There are not many tracts of land left that have so many natural resources available. Sustainable agriculture, education and low impact recreation complement the vision of a healthy landscape

Finely, I encourage DNR planners to consider the great potential to utilize this land for research into better integration of conservation and agriculture. The former BAAP is unique given the strong partnership that has developed between the DNR, the Sauk Prairie Conservation Alliance, the UW, and the USDA-DFRC. DNR lands at the former BAAP can serve as a place for farmers, agronomists, and ecologists to collaborate and develop innovative methods for managing livestock and cropping systems in ways that suppress exotic species, such as cool-season grasses and invasive shrubs, and improve native plant diversity, wildlife populations, profitability of marginal farmlands, and the health of the land. By researching the demonstrating techniques that could be utilized on private and public land across southern WI and other parts of the Upper Midwest, partnerships at the former BAAP could nurture the nascent connections between conservation of land health and sustainable agriculture-ultimately promoting the vitality and resilience of human and natural communities. Learning that the DNR is taking the initiative to delve into such a complex and timeless issue on the Sauk Prairie would bring great joy to many people.

In addition, the restored prairie would provide a great place where the public schools and private groups could come and learn about historic prairies, restoration, and conservation. This would be a valuable tool for all levels of education.

I feel this area of land is an important part of the area's history and should be put back into its original form for the use of future generations to come.

"the oldest task in human history is to live on a piece of land without spoiling it – Aldo Leopold"
The document your department has prepared shows very clearly in the historical chronology just how short a period of time it has taken for the human settlers on the Sauk Prairie to show how little we understand the above statement. But now we have the opportunity to reverse that process and return that land to as near a natural state as possible. The painting by Victor Bakhtin, "Sauk Prairie Remembered, A vision for the future" most clearly depicts the dream that many of us have for the land now being called the Sauk Prairie Recreation Area. Following a long process that is clearly detailed in the Federal Lands to Parks Document, Sauk County was asked to form the Badger Oversight Management Commission to act as overseer of the land until it was actually transferred to its new owners following satisfactory removal of the contaminated soils and structures. The BOMC has functioned for the past several years and through its Planning and Land Use Committee it developed more detailed guidelines for ALL land owner's, and individuals or groups who want to use the land in any way. These guidelines are all based on the Badger Reuse Report and have proven to work quite well thus far. This is the model which should be incorporated into the DNR planning activity as the next step. It offers an open door within the guidelines already established to all who want to work with the DNR in helping to return the SPRA land to as near its original appearance while providing the opportunity for research, education, conservation and low impact recreation. I wish you well as this exciting activity moves forward. And I personally hope, as one of the owners of the Bakhtin painting, to see it on display in the Reception/Welcome Center in the not too distant future. A lot of hard work has been done! The process is ready to move forward. The community will be 100% behind you with this approach. Best wishes to you and your associates and to the Greater Sauk Prairie!!-

Finally, more extensive discussion of how the historical and cultural legacy of the Badger landscape will be preserved is critical to fulfilling the educational and preservation goals outlined in the Badger Reuse Plan.

Tied to [prairie] restoration is its own list of recreational and learning activities—volunteer and classroom participation in site preparation and seed collecting, research & monitoring, stewardship, and interpretation. The restored landscape attracts a diversity of wildlife, offering wildlife viewing opportunities. And the list goes on!

We at Worm Farm are excited about Badger's potential as a site for community and cultural activities that honor the land, its natural and human history, its beauty and its story, its potential for integrating conservation and agriculture for the benefit of current citizens and future generations.

Casualties of War -- Harry O. Borland , Arnold Swansby , Alexander Libke , Erwin Pugh, Mark E. Shearer, Edwin E. Goff, William M. Denny , Leslie Barkley, Richard D. Hardy, John. F. Mitchell

These are the names of the ten workers who died in accidental explosions while producing munitions for the defense of the United States at the Badger Ordnance Works/Army Ammunition Plant. In addition, at least twenty more workers died in accidents while working on construction, materials handling or security.

Their sacrifices and the labor of the estimated 60,000 others who worked at Badger from 1942 until 1998 make the property soon to be included in the "Sauk Prairie Recreation Area" unique in the true sense of the term. That is, one of a kind.

The Badger property was part of the defense establishment of the United States for over sixty years. It played a key role in the American victory in World War II and in the decades-long Cold War against communism that followed. Badger supplied munitions for American and Allied troops fighting in Korea in the early 1950s. In ten years of operation in the 1960s and 1970s, Badger was America's largest and most important producer of munitions for American troops fighting in Southeast Asia. Badger continued to be an important part of America's defense against communism. Not until the demise of the Soviet Union and the overthrow of communist governments in eastern Europe did America's defense strategists feel safe enough to decommission Badger. These are facts of history and cannot be ignored in any future planning.

The property has a distinctive geological and geographic history. It is historically significant to the Ho-Chunk people and the American farming community that displaced them. It is unique—one of a kind—because of the "powder plant."

The Badger Re-Use Plan, adopted by Sauk County Board in 2003 and to which the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources is signatory, is intended to serve as a mandate for planning on the Badger property. It has numerous statements calling for the preservation of the history of the property from geologic times to decommissioning, including landscape features and historically significant buildings. It also makes repeated statements calling for the creation of educational facilities and programs, and for the establishment of memorials to the Ho Chunk, the displaced farmers, and the munitions workers. It is easy to cite chapter and verse from the Re-Use Plan and find declarations of support for all the proposals listed below. In the interest of keeping this statement as brief as possible, we have chosen not to do so. At the same time, let us reiterate that every point on this list meets the stated values and goals of the Re-Use Plan.

Recommendations

Mission Statement

The mission statement of the "Sauk Prairie Recreation Area" should include, as one of its leading points, a commitment to preserving and sharing the history of the property. This is compatible with the educational role of "a recreation area" as defined in state statute.

Name

Because of the unique status bestowed on the property as part of the defense establishment of the United States, the name of the property should be "The Sauk Prairie/Badger Ordnance Recreation Area." Badger Ordnance Works was the original name of the facility.

(Let it be noted that the Badger plant has been resident in "Sauk" County longer than the Sauk

Indians were. Refugees of fur-trade warfare, the Sauk migrated to Wisconsin first from Michigan then from Iowa and settled on the edge of the prairie that bears their name in the 1740s. Still pursued by their enemies, the Sauk started to leave the area in the 1760s and, by the 1780s, the site of their village was abandoned. The powder plant possesses as legitimate a claim to the name of the recreation area as the Sauk, and certainly the right to share it.)

Visitor/Heritage Center

In keeping with the recreation area's commitment to education, a visitor/heritage center should be in the master plan. It should include space for educational programs, meetings, a theater for video programs, space for historical displays and offices for DNR staff and volunteer organizations. This is not merely a history museum. It is a multi-use structure. As models for this center, we recommend the visitor centers at the Midewin National Tall Grass Prairie in Illinois and the Necedah National Wildlife Refuge in Wisconsin.

Memorials

Space should be set aside, accessible to all, within the borders of the recreation area for the following memorials:

The Farmer's Memorial was erected off Highway 12 by family members and has been maintained by members of the families who sacrificed their farms in defense of the United States in 1942.

The "Symbol of Strength" Munitions Workers Memorial is a stone and plaque currently in the parking lot off Highway 12. It should be preserved and, in time, replaced by a larger monument to those who gave their lives for their country at Badger and those who worked for its defense.

Ho-Chunk Removal Memorial. There is no memorial to this sad chapter of American history in Wisconsin. The Ho-Chunk people were seized and forcibly exiled from Wisconsin many times between 1840 and 1870. The recreation area is a suitable place for such a memorial. This is not just a matter for the Ho-Chunk. Their removal, and return, is part of the heritage of all Americans, especially in Wisconsin, and specifically in Sauk County, where the man who led the Ho-Chunk back to their homes, is buried.

Cemetery Access

With the final status of the transfer of land to the Ho-Chunk unresolved, access to the Pioneer Cemetery, the Thaelke Cemetery, and the plot containing the Miller family stones is in the hands of the Wisconsin DNR. Access for all to the cemeteries must be maintained. It should be noted that at some time in the future, the Miller plot is likely to be examined to determine if it is truly a grave site. If not, the stones may be moved to the Pioneer Cemetery and retained as memorials to the children they commemorate.

The Railway Trail

The rail right of way bisecting the property is destined to become a recreational trail. The Master Plan should include provisions for the erection of informational signs or kiosks along the route. They should utilize up-to-date technology and present the history of the property from geological time to decommissioning. The story of the ancient seas that covered the property, the glacial period, the woodland and grassland regimes that followed, and the first evidences of human habitation should be portrayed. The native American years, the settlement and farm community, the powder plant years, the clean up process, the efforts of environmental activists, and the grassland restoration era that followed can all be displayed with traditional signage or in

the latest digital form.

Digital Trails

Significant historic sites can be located and identified with GPS markers. These might include geological and geographic features, important Indian sites, pioneer farmsteads, sites where powder workers died, production sites and more. The markers can be incorporated into web-based/ smartphone applications. Photos from the BHG archives can be added, along with identifying text. When completed this system would constitute a virtual historical museum of the property.

Family Farm Markers

Many descendants of the farmers who gave up their homes in 1942 maintain a strong attachment to their former family farms. Many of them would be happy to fund the erection of a permanent as possible marker at their homesteads. This proposal is similar to the state park program that allows citizens to place memorial benches to loved ones in parks at their own expense. In fact, the markers might take the form of benches to be used by hikers on the Digital Trails.

Funding

To implement any of the above recommendations will require funding. We recognize that, in the current fiscal climate, WDNR cannot do it alone. Therefore, the master plan should include provisions for the formation of partnerships between the public and private sector to fund the projects and programs we advocate. We also pledge to help build these partnerships to help realize our mutual goals.

Conclusion

We conclude where we began. The property to be occupied by the "Sauk Prairie Recreation Area" is unique because of the role it played in the defense of the United States and the sacrifices made by the men and women who worked there. Their legacy must be preserved as part of the Master Plan. Badger History Group, Inc.

Activities need to be compatible with Dairy forage Ag operations, invasive brush control by goats and horses and educational tours

Much of what has been suggested is in fact and ----? a permanent restriction on the future

Other Issues or Concerns

At the public open house held on 7/30/2012 for the Sauk Prairie Recreation Area, maps were handed out that define the project boundary. These maps are also available on the DNR website. For example, see http://dnr.wi.gov/files/PDF/pubs/lf/LF0063Map_C.pdf

On the east side of the property, the project boundary is somewhat shaped like a funnel where it ends at the river pumping station. Within this area lies a number of privately owned properties. There is no designation anywhere on the maps that indicates these as privately owned lands. People not local to the area who view these maps are incorrectly led to believe that the DNR owns this property. Even worse, property owners within this area are at a loss to understand how it is that their land has been unilaterally included within the DNR's project boundary.

I strongly recommend that the project boundary lines be redrawn to exclude privately held properties and the maps reprinted and website immediately updated.

In the interim, please explain why the project boundary lines were drawn this way in the first place.

I am very much in favor of DNR managing the property – concern is how will we support it. More staff must be added – can't just stretch the D.L. staff.

Please continue to support & incorporate the elements of the Badger Reuse Plan.

Druid "Circle of Oaks" temple.

Human activities should not unduly disturb the environment for native flora & fauna.

I live on Wiegand's Bay am concerned about the proposed boat landing, & strongly oppose it. The bay is already congested on weekend days with skiers, boaters, pontoons, etc. & I think a boat landing would significantly increase this traffic, the amount of alcohol going through the Bay would increase, & it would be inside of people coming back through the Bay to any boat ramp. I don't think it would be at all low-impact, which is how I have heard the BRC values characterized. I think it would also (missing sentence fragment.....)

Would not favor rocketeering, paintball, dog parks, or (shooting range – unless on a restricted schedule)

Help educate people on the outdoors.

Also very hopeful for multi-use hiking and biking trail that connects Sauk Prairie community to Devils Lake State Park.

All this commentary is part of a public record. Please make sure it is public.

As a volunteer firefighter (SCFD) access to a large restoration is a concern. A) Because access leads to a greater chance of fire. B) Access is vital to contain (to whatever extent) such an event. Access routes through restoration could be used (I feel not threateningly to ecosystem & noise) by bicycles and hiking.

I would think that one Bong is enough.

While I have you, I checked the land use map and noticed that a number of small areas with land use restrictions that are missing but this level of detail would be better discussed in a one-on-one conversation with whoever is doing the mapping. Can you please send me her and email address?

In looking at the maps, it is unclear why the area previously requested by the HoChunk and more recently requested by the DNR is not being addressed in this planning process. It is our understanding that the DNR is the only one who has requested the property from GSA. Therefore, please update the maps and planning information to at least acknowledge that the DNR is likely to get it and explain on your website how this area will be integrated into the planning process once a decision is received back from GSA.

My interest led me to link up with an interesting and energetic group of local citizens who had generated a coherent vision for the future of the Badger property based on its spectacular natural history and ecological significance, its vast size, and its potential as a site for learning about native communities, ecological functions and the application of restoration techniques on a landscape scale. Nowhere in the upper midwest is there a more appealing publicly owned location than Badger for the long-term and in-depth research on landscape scale ecological restoration.

In 2000 I was hired by the Sauk County Department of Planning and Zoning, where I helped manage the Badger Reuse planning process. I can say without reservation that without the professional expertise and patience of Diane Adams and Ruth Siguenza of Envirolssues, a Seattle-based facilitation firm, there would be no Badger Reuse Plan. This is why I continue to advocate for opportunities for the public to engage in a real discussion about Badger. I have witnessed firsthand the power and effectiveness of a facilitated small group process in overcoming a history of rancorous debate and conflicting interests.

So I hope that the process you have in mind will include more substantive discussions with local citizens and stakeholders in a public setting. These discussions will be especially important as the process moves from information gathering into the visioning and goal-setting phase, elements of the plan that must be informed by public participation before the language is drafted. The department's original land transfer application to the National Park Service specifies that the master planning process will include a "series of open forums" for "gathering the thoughts and ideas of the public as to how the property should be managed and developed", all in advance of any development by the "core team" of "a goal statement and objectives for the project." (P. 20 Section B), I assume such open forum opportunities will be conducted soon, in the earliest stages of the visioning and goal setting phase of the project.

As a stakeholder to the Badger Oversight and Management Commission, The Sauk Prairie Conservation Alliance will advocate for an OMC role in providing public participation opportunities. The OMC could take on the role that Sauk County did during the Reuse process, as the sponsor and organizer of an extended community dialogue, and my hope is that the DNR will partner with the OMC to invite the public in for a set of facilitated conversations to identify the elements of a future vision for Badger and more specific management goals. This level of support for the community interest will only reinforce the legitimacy of the planning process and its ultimate chance for success.

As an alternative, the department could save time and money by simply stating the obvious: open public forums to discuss Badger and identify a vision for its future have already been conducted by the Badger Reuse Committee from August 2000 to March 2001. The Vision is written, and could be easily incorporated into the current Master Plan.

I should comment on the significance of the community interest itself. There may be a tendency by some to regard the local public interest as merely subordinate to the state's interest in the Badger property and the larger interest of Wisconsin's recreational public. But the vision expressed in the Badger Reuse Plan is not just the local interest. The Badger Reuse Plan was developed by local, state, tribal and federal representatives, and reflects their common understanding of its special value, their mutual concerns over its current and future condition, and their shared hopes for its potential benefit not only for the Sauk County community but for all of their constituents, from local to national in scope. This point is also clearly articulated in the department's original NPS application.

In closing I wish you all the best in your efforts to write this Master Plan, which is so greatly anticipated and so important to the future health of the Sauk Prairie landscape, and which offers such great promise for realizing the full potential of this incredible place and the surrounding community. I don't envy you the responsibility, but if you and your colleagues are successful, as I have every reason to believe you will be, I can promise that you will have earned your own page in the long history of the Sauk Prairie. Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

...wanted assurance that DNR would not weigh master plan input by quantity (the most votes for an issue wins).

She also wanted to be sure that her input piece is built into the summaries in various categories. Her two page letters offers suggestions on (at least) 4 topics:

- Low impact recreation
- Value #9 from Reuse Report is missing in the RPA
- Plan for the property as a whole – how are Ho-Chunk and USDA involved in development of the plan?
- A new name is needed.

"The DNR's planning process is a critical step in the reuse of the former Badger Army Ammunition Plant lands and the realization of the conservation vision outlined in the Badger Reuse Plan. We applaud the DNR for its important efforts in helping to develop the reuse vision at Badger, and for its explicit recognition of the Badger Reuse Plan in the recently issued Regional and Property Analysis: The Sauk Prairie Recreation Area. As the planning process continues, we urge the DNR to continue to recognize fully the values and specific provisions of the Badger Reuse Plan, the first of which is that the entire property must be managed as a whole.

The DNR's master plan should provide opportunities for the creative involvement of the citizens of Wisconsin and Sauk County in realizing the recommended future uses of Badger - land restoration, education and research, low-impact recreation, sustainable agriculture - in a manner compatible with the Badger Reuse Plan's values. Recreational activities that are consistent with the values and goals of the Reuse Plan should be encouraged; recreational activities that are inconsistent should not be considered appropriate and should not be included in the DNR's plan.

In its planning, the DNR has a unique opportunity to contribute to the special conservation legacy of Sauk County and the State of Wisconsin. The reuse vision for Badger, involving the DNR and all of Badger's stakeholders, will provide far-reaching social, economic, and ecological benefits for all of the people of Wisconsin, while honoring the stories and sacrifices of all those who have come before us at Badger."

Diane, thank you for carrying this process forward, thank you for listening, and thank you for your stewardship -- not just of our land, but of our history and relationships on the Sauk Prairie.

Since the late 1990's we have been involved with and interested in the future of the Sauk Prairie Recreation Area. Paula was one of the photographers for "Inside the Fence", the documentary photo essay of the Badger plant done by the Badger History Group. We both participated, with the Sauk Prairie Conservation Alliance, in many of the meetings, forums, and discussions concerning the future of the property. And we also spent much time inside the plant with the Alliance's restoration activities.

We were always personally interested in a vision for the property that included low impact recreation, education, restoration and conservation.

It was inspiring to us that the Sauk Prairie community came together in a unique planning process that involved diverse and representative community groups, considered input from all sources, and developed a plan by consensus. This consensus required 100% agreement and it resulted in the Badger Reuse Plan, a comprehensive community vision.

We encourage the DNR to use the vision of the Badger Reuse Plan as a guide in the master planning process and to work on a plan that will manage the Badger property as a whole.

We are encouraged by the DNR's intentions to create a plan for the Sauk Prairie Recreation area, including the former Badger Ordnance lands. In your process, we are most hopeful that you and the DNR place this distinctive acreage in its proper perspective, and create standards for use that reflect its historic beauties and uses (excluding the Badger Ordnance years, of course).

Many local citizens who appreciate the potential of this area for restoring it to a natural use have worked with state, township, tribal, and federal officials for years, and produced the Badger Reuse Plan. The vision, the values, and the aspirations of many people and many organizations are ably reflected in the Badger Reuse Plan. It is a model for low-impact recreation, consistent with the vision it offers. We hope that document will be a primary template for your recreational plan.

In closing, I would like to issue a challenge to you: Perhaps "Recreation Area" is not the correct term for what was formerly known as the Badger Army Ammunition Plant. Perhaps we need a new definition. Recreation can and should be one element of the reuse of Badger, but it should not dominate our view. The history and legacy of the site, the ecological value, the aesthetics of the landforms, the investment in agricultural research—all of these should receive weight in the final plan as well, yet "Recreation" frames the debate because it is the title given to the area. Names are powerful things; I challenge you to rethink the words you use for this project. Perhaps they may reshape the final result.

All of the amazing opportunities that the Sauk Prairie offers to all the people of Wisconsin can be realized, but ONLY IF the entire former BAAP property is managed following the values, principles, and guidelines of the Badger Reuse Plan, managing the entire land as an integrated unit with all the activities managed by a multi-governmental and public entity as is embodied in the Badger Oversight and Management Commission (BOMC), which includes the Sauk Prairie land-owners as well as representatives of local government and public entities as well as representatives of key stakeholders who have participated substantially and contributed significantly to the Badger Reuse Plan as well as to the ongoing work of the BOMC.

As my final point, I offer an opportunity for the WDNR:

“On the 100th anniversary of the Wisconsin Idea, the WDNR has an opportunity to highlight the Sauk Prairie Recreational Area and its Reuse Plan (and subsequent restoration, education, outreach, and research activities) as a shining model of the active implementation of the Wisconsin Idea created by the public to serve the public and the greater good of the people of Wisconsin! How could the WDNR gain greater positive attention for the people of Wisconsin than to showcase this example with their positive and continuing role in working with the people --local communities and country as well as major statewide stakeholders-- to bring this to reality and demonstrate the WDNR's longer-term commitment to protecting the special natural resources of Wisconsin for all!”

My second point is intended as a challenge. As I understand it, the WDNR has few legal and administrative categories to use in carrying out its land management responsibilities. The term “Sauk Prairie Recreation Area” was chosen as perhaps the most appropriate option. Given that recreation is only one of the future uses envisioned at Badger, the name itself may be inappropriate. It implies that this property has a single use, and forces the other values and future into the background. I would urge the WDNR to consider adopting an alternative name for the area (and, if necessary, to work with our state legislators to accomplish that). I would suggest that Sauk Prairie Conservation Area is a more appropriate designation—one that recognizes and accommodates recreational uses, but that integrates recreation with the other uses and expresses our sense of shared responsibility for the health of the land and for future generations.

The WDNR has a unique opportunity at this moment in history. Over the last fifteen years, dedicated citizens and public officials, representing all of Badger’s stakeholders (including the WDNR), have worked together to define a creative reuse plan for Badger. That plan provides far-reaching social, economic, educational, and ecological benefits for all of the people of Wisconsin, while honoring the stories and sacrifices of those who have come before us at Badger. I urge the WDNR to bring the Badger Reuse Plan closer to reality through its current planning process. In so doing, it will make the Badger property an example of creative land stewardship, while contributing an important new chapter to the special conservation legacy of Sauk County and the State of Wisconsin.

I ask the Department to consider a designation for Badger other than that of a recreation area. The Badger Reuse Plan calls for ecological restoration, education, research, and low impact recreation as the primary uses of the former munitions plant. This plan has an emphasis that none of the Department's existing land categories readily includes. Instead, I suggest an alternate designation, such as the Sauk Prairie Stewardship Area. Such a designation would reflect the evolving needs of conservation, land management and the relation of people to the land. I think this is something Aldo Leopold would endorse.

I encourage the Department in its efforts to develop a coherent management plan for the Sauk Prairie Recreation Area. This effort will best succeed by closely following the Badger Reuse Plan which the Department worked so carefully at developing with multiple stakeholders. Don't change course now. You are so close to achieving the visionary principles found in the Reuse Plan. If you continue this path, the Department will be recognized far into the future for its foresight, intelligence, and compassion for this unique piece of land and all that it reflects of its history and future.

Having followed the long process I was happy to see that the values of the BAAP Reuse Plan were present in the Introduction since they are the most important guides in the planning process. However, you inadvertently omitted Value 9 – Uses and activities at the Badger property contribute to the area's economic stability and sustainability and have a positive impact on local municipalities.