

STATE OF WISCONSIN
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
Madison, Wisconsin

ITEM RECOMMENDED FOR NATURAL RESOURCES BOARD AGENDA

TO THE SECRETARY:

Date November 13, 1979

FROM: James T. Addis

SUBJECT: MASTER PLANNING - Approval of conceptual master plan for the Upper Wolf River Fishery Area, Langlade County, with a new acreage goal of 19,883.56 acres.

1. To be presented at November Board meeting by Jim Addis.

2. Appearances requested by the public:

Name

Representing whom?

3. Reference materials to be used:

Memorandum dated November 13, 1979 from James T. Addis to Anthony S. Earl. Upper Wolf River Master Plan.

4. Summary:

The Master Plan for the Upper Wolf River, Langlade County, has been finalized and is presented for review and approval. The fishery area presently has boundaries with an acreage goal of 11,723.56 acres. It is recommended that a state-owned block of 800+ acres outside of the boundary be added to the area and that the property be further expanded with the purchase of 1,100 acres to control 8 miles of stream from Pearson upstream to Post Lake, and 260 acres on the Hunting River.

5. Recommendation: That the Master Plan be approved with a new acreage goal of 19,883.56 acres.

APPROVED:

C. D. Besadny 11-14-79
C. D. Besadny, Administrator Date

A. C. Damon 11/15/79
A. C. Damon, Deputy Secretary Date
Anthony S. Earl
Secretary Date

Signed:
James T. Addis
James T. Addis, Director
Bureau of Fish Management

cc: Judy Scullion - ADM/5
Jim Addis - FM/4
Vern Hacker - Oshkosh
Ron Nicotera - ADM/5
C. W. Threinen - FM/4

CORRESPONDENCE/MEMORANDUM

STATE OF WISCONSIN

Date: November 13, 1979 File Ref: 2100
To: Anthony S. Earl
From: James T. Addis
Subject: Upper Wolf River Master Plan, Langlade County

We are herewith submitting the Upper Wolf River Master Plan, Langlade County, for Natural Resources Board approval. It has had the benefit of an environmental impact assessment report which was approved. It has also been subjected to 45-day review by other interested parties and internal bureaus. Comments of internal bureaus have been evaluated and accommodated where possible. Comments of outside agencies and the DNR responses are addressed in Appendix III of the Master Plan.

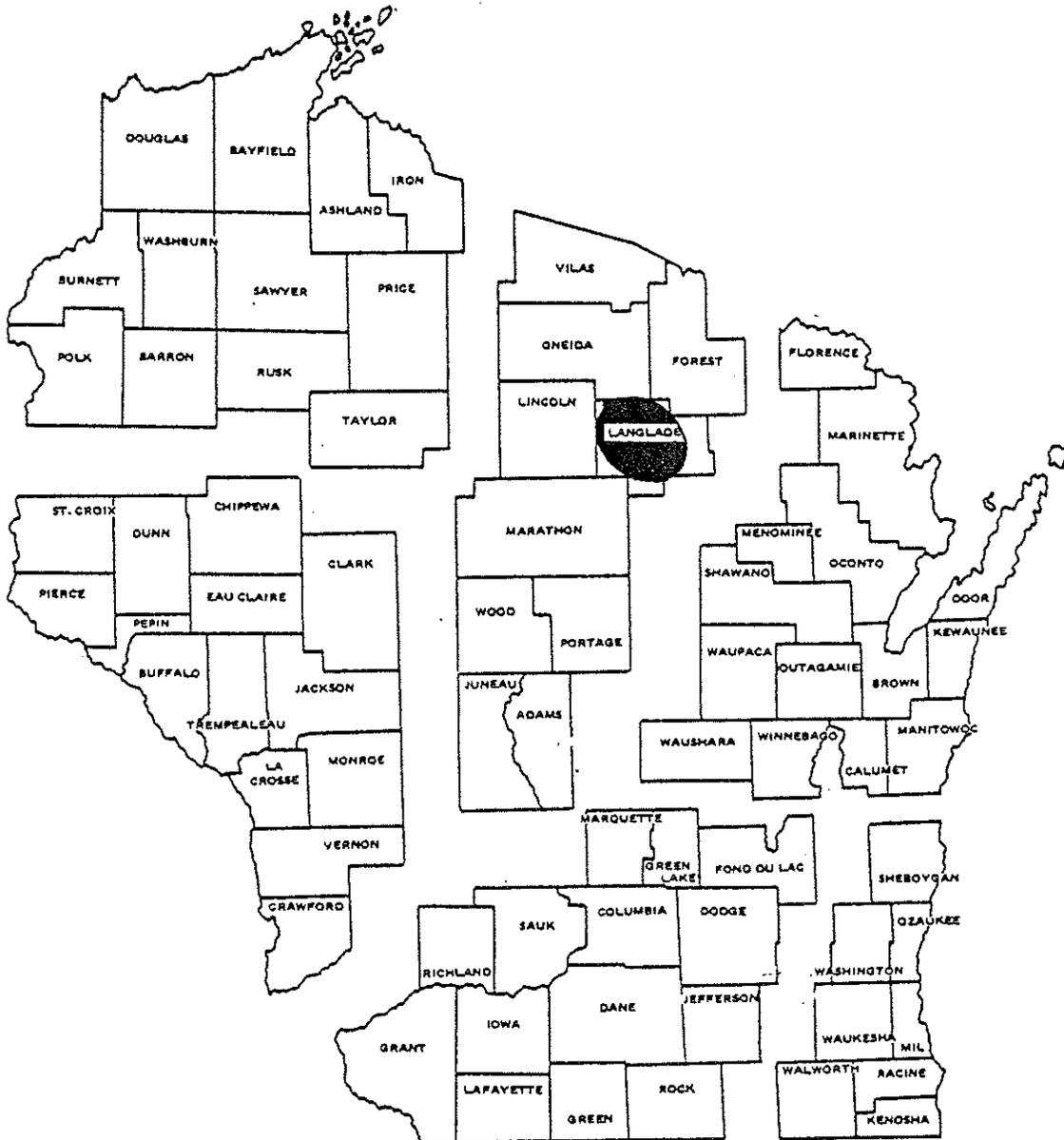
The Master Plan Task Force recommends that the present acreage goal of the fishery area be enlarged from 11,723.56 acres with (1) the addition of 800+ acres, most of which are already owned and in one large block south of the Village of Langlade; (2) the purchase of 1,100 acres to include an 8-mile stretch of the Wolf River from Pearson upstream to Post Lake; and (3) the purchase of 260 acres on the Hunting River to connect the upper and lower tracts presently owned. Combined, the three recommendations would add 2,160 acres to property boundaries for a new acreage goal of 13,883.56 acres.

Your approval to submit the plan to the Board at its November meeting would be appreciated.

VH:mg

cc: Judy Scullion - ADM/5
Ron Nicotera - ADM/5
C. W. Threinen - FM/4
Vern Hacker - Oshkosh
Jim Addis - FM/4

UPPER WOLF RIVER FISHERY AREA
 MASTER PLAN CONCEPTUAL PHASE
 LANGLADE COUNTY



PROPERTY TASK FORCE:

- MAX JOHNSON, AREA FISH MANAGER, LEADER
- JOHN GROSMAN, FORESTER-RANGER
- CARL McILQUHAM, AREA WILDLIFE MANAGER
- LYLE HANNAHS, PARKS & RECREATION
- BERNARD KRUEGER, LAND AGENT
- L. M. ANDREWS, WATERS INVENTORY & CLASSIFICATION BIOLOGIST

DATE SUBMITTED BY TASK FORCE: _____

DATE APPROVED BY NATURAL RESOURCES BOARD: _____

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
<u>Location Map</u>	i
<u>Background Information</u>	1
History of property creation	
Current management activities and controls	
Miscellaneous introductory and explanatory information	
Location	
<u>Goals, Objectives and Additional Benefits</u>	3
<u>Resource Capability</u>	3
Soils and geology	
Fish and wildlife	
Vegetative cover	
Water resources	
Historical and archeological features	
Ownership	
Potential expansions of the fishery area	
Current use	
Land use potential	
<u>Resource Management Problems</u>	12
Private development	
Wildlife habitat	
Public overuse	
Difficulties in law enforcement	
Water quality	
Forest management	
Land acquisition	
Facilities	
Board resolutions and statutory changes needed	
<u>Long Range Resources, Recreation Needs and Justification</u>	14
Fishing	
Canoeing, tubing and rafting	
Sightseeing .	
Snowmobiling	
Cross-country skiing	
Camping	
Wildlife	
<u>Analysis of Alternatives</u>	17
Maintain present status	
Enlarge the property boundary with state-owned lands	
Enlarge the boundary with additional purchases	
Reduce property size	
For nonconsumptive uses only	
Combine fishing, hunting and nonconsumptive recreation	
Land use classification	

	<u>Page</u>
<u>Recommended Management Program</u>	18
<u>Appendix</u>	
I. Questionnaire to Town of Wolf River property owners	20
II. Town of Wolf River Bylaws	22
III. Master Plan comments by outside agencies	24

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

History of Property Creation

The Wolf River in Langlade County has long been recognized for its unique aesthetically pleasing characteristics. It is a wide, boulder-strewn, natural, undeveloped stream with a rapid gradient in many locations. Trout, smallmouth bass and a number of additional fish species inhabit its waters, and many anglers have persisted in recognizing it as their mecca of Wisconsin trout streams.

Thus, fishing was the primary concern in the 1950-1960's when the fishery area was first considered. In June of 1966, the Upper Wolf Fishery Area was approved by the Wisconsin Conservation Commission (now the Natural Resources Board). The major goal of the property then was to provide fishing opportunities on a large trout river, with long, undeveloped aesthetically pleasing stretches which could be fished in relative seclusion.

Since that time, the Upper Wolf River has become the focus for whitewater canoeists, and commercial interests provide over 500 rafts which rent at prices up to \$20.00 per day. No sanitary facilities, other than those supplied at raft rental agencies, are available to the thousands of persons that drift and use the river. Conflicts between persons with differing recreational philosophies are now commonplace, because the best fishing sites are also the best rafting or canoeing areas. Today, the quiet sport of fishing is being displaced. The river and its fishery area is annually the site of privately sponsored races for rafts, canoes and kayaks, which draw hundreds of contestants and thousands of spectators.

Current Management Activities and Controls

Management activities have been generally confined to land control and restoration of general aesthetics. Approximately 58.3 percent of the streambank within the property boundary on the Wolf and Hunting Rivers is under DNR control. Land control presently consists of a total of 5,761.89 acres, with 5,327.89 acres in fee title which were purchased at a cost of \$1,942,900 and 434 acres in perpetual easement. Controlled lands represent 54.6 miles of frontage including both banks. The NRB approved property goal of the fishery area is presently 11,723.56 acres.

DNR land acquisition has permitted the removal of some streambank dwellings and has contributed toward restoration of natural aesthetic values. DNR land control has provided the opportunity for public access to significant areas along the Wolf and Hunting Rivers and certain tributaries. Thus, while fishing interests were initially of primary concern, opportunities for hiking, cross-country skiing, hunting, rafting and canoeing have been enhanced as well. The river is now being used more heavily by rubber rafters than all other uses combined.

Surveys to assess the fishery resources of streams in the Wolf River watershed are complete. A trout stocking program is maintained on the Wolf River, and certain contiguous waters including the Hunting River and Nine Mile Creek where a total of 13,500 yearling brown trout, and 17,500 brown and brook trout fingerlings are stocked annually. Special regulatory provisions are applicable to a selected stretch of the Wolf River known as the Oxbow Area where fly fishing only is permitted in conjunction with a reduced bag and increased size limit. Section 30.25 of the Natural Resources laws prohibits navigation improvement or dam construction on the Wolf River north of the southern boundary of Shawano County. This provision assures a free-flowing Wolf River within the property boundary. Chapter 45 of the Administrative Code allows for the prohibition of certain recreational pursuits deemed incompatible with area objectives. The Town of Wolf River has passed a town ordinance which regulates boating hours and the carrying of filled beverage containers while wading or in watercraft (Appendix I).

Miscellaneous Introductory and Explanatory Information

It is the feeling of members of the Task Force that this river is unique. Relatively long stretches of the river are essentially natural or undeveloped. The Upper Wolf has extensive white water areas which are unmatched by any other stream in the state. The white water character of the stream provides unique recreational opportunities. Through much of its length, the stream supports a trout population which contains many large specimens. Fishing in relative seclusion in an undeveloped, aesthetically pleasing atmosphere can be attained.

While it is felt that multiple use of the fishery area should be encouraged, its use should be regulated so as to achieve preservation of a quality experience in a natural environment.

The Department intends to preserve, and if possible, improve the natural aesthetics of the property, but does not wish to preclude necessary management of the natural resources. Accordingly, three large sections of the Upper Wolf River within the property boundary have been designated as scenic areas (Figure 2) up to 300 feet from the banks of the stream. Timber management activities in the scenic areas will be controlled by the provisions contained in the Master Planning Handbook and the Forest Aesthetics Handbook. Other management activities may be considered for fish, wildlife and forests, in the scenic areas locations beyond the 300 foot restriction zone.

It has become apparent that some of the qualities which should be preserved are already being threatened by over-use. Conflict between groups such as fishermen and rafters have developed. Without the authority to control use, the desired goal of quality experience cannot be achieved.

Location

The Upper Wolf River Fishery Area is located in eastern and northern Langlade County in the North Central portion of Wisconsin (Figure 1). It consists of the Wolf River from its junction with the Hunting River south to the Menominee County line. Also included within the property boundary (Figure 2) are portions of the Hunting River, Nine Mile and Squaw Creek, several small tributaries, Turtle Lake and 13 spring ponds.

The fishery area boundaries are within 20 miles of Antigo, 45 miles of Rhinelander and Wausau, and 60 miles of Stevens Point and Green Bay. The Fox River Valley cities of Appleton, Neenah, Menasha, Oshkosh and Fond du Lac all lie within 80 miles, and Milwaukee and Madison are 165 and 190 miles away, respectively.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ADDITIONAL BENEFITS

GOALS

To obtain land control, and to manage, preserve and protect all property within the boundary of the Upper Wolf River Fishery Area in Langlade County; to enhance fishing and other recreational activities while perpetuating or restoring the scenic and aesthetic qualities of the waterway.

ANNUAL OBJECTIVES

1. Provide opportunities for 8,000 angler days of fishing, and 1,000 participant days of hunting and trapping.
2. Provide opportunities for 41,000 days of rafting, tubing and canoeing, while regulating watercraft usage to no more than 250 units per day.
3. Manage timber lands to provide an annual allowable cut of 740 cords of pulpwood and 9,100 board feet of lumber.
4. Maintain a minimum of three designated river reaches as scenic areas to enhance the aesthetic appeal of the area.

ADDITIONAL BENEFITS

1. Provide 20,000 days annually of nonconsumptive use activities including sightseeing, berry and mushroom picking, photography, swimming, picnicking, hiking and cross-country skiing.
2. Contribute to the habitat of migratory endangered and threatened species.
3. Benefit non-game species indigenous to the area.

RESOURCE CAPABILITY

The approved boundaries of the Wolf River Fishery Area confine all terrestrial recreational activities to a narrow corridor of 300 feet along the stream.

Soils and Geology

The project area is underlain by Precambrian alkaline granite and associated igneous and metamorphic rocks that are more than a billion years old. The bedrock is buried under one to two hundred feet of glacial drift, except where exposed locally in the Wolf River channel. The Wolf and Hunting Rivers lie east of and roughly parallel to the southeast trending Summit Lake end moraine of the Langlade glacial lobe. Near Hollister the Wolf River cuts

through that moraine and enters the terrain of the Green Bay glacial lobe. Near Langlade the river crosses the Bowler recessional moraine.

The Wolf and Hunting Rivers and Nine Mile Creek are bordered for about one third of their combined length in the project area by peats and mucks, 14% by droughty outwash sands (Omega and Pence series), 33% by hilly pitted outwash and till on which Pence, Onamia and Kennan soils are formed. Agriculturally productive Antigo, Onamia, Norrie and Kennan soils are present along about 23% of the length of the corridors on level to sloping land. Soils of approximately 47% of the area that is more hilly and is naturally well drained are productive for forest growth. Sandy and gravelly soil materials and steep soils are particularly susceptible to erosion along trails and unvegetated stream banks. The good natural drainage condition of most of the soils listed above indicates that location of parking areas and sewage effluent disposal fields should not be difficult.

Fish and Wildlife

A minimum of 49 species of fish, none of which are endangered or threatened, are known to inhabit the various waters of the fishery area. A list detailing the species is kept in files of the Antigo office. The species supporting most of the fishing are brown trout, smallmouth bass and brook trout. Some fishing for northern pike, walleye, largemouth bass, and panfish takes place on the river between Pearson and Lily. However, most warm water fishing, excluding smallmouth bass, is confined to Turtle Lake.

The Wolf River Fishery Area has management potential for brown trout, and the tributary streams and spring ponds have the necessary habitat requirements to support both brook and brown trout. Habitat development including instream structures, brush removal on the tributaries, and spring pond dredging would, no doubt, enhance fishing. Any activity which would improve the water temperature regime on the Wolf River would be of maximum benefit. The Wolf River does have water temperature problems, often being too warm in summer and too cold in winter.

The area presently supports a good fishery and could probably support an increase in fishing at times. The fish populations are controlled more by weather conditions than by fishermen.

Mammals and birds commonly considered "game" species which can be managed within the area are whitetail deer, snowshoe hare, ruffed grouse, coyote, raccoon, woodcock, mallards and woodducks. Both winter range and summer range for deer is present within the project boundary and the potential for management exists.

Other game animals present, but with limited management capabilities except through harvest regulation, are bobcat, red fox, black bear, grey squirrel, cottontail rabbit, hooded mergansers, blue-wing teal, mink, beaver, otter and muskrats.

Endangered species present are bald eagles and osprey. Both can be enhanced by management on the project. Complete listings of other wildlife species present have never been compiled because of the size of this property.

The fishery area could withstand additional hunting pressure without damage. Under the proposed management limitations, significant increases in wildlife populations are not anticipated.

Vegetative Cover

Forest types cover 84 percent of the fishery area. The remaining land cover includes the type classifications of upland grass, upland brush, lowland brush, and marsh. A 3,313 acre forest reconnaissance (Table 2) was completed in 1975. General vegetative cover is shown in Figure 3, and a more detailed report is on file in the Antigo office.

Table 2 - Forest Reconnaissance Types (completed on 3,313
DNR owned acres within boundary)
Upper Wolf Fishery Area, Langlade County

<u>Type</u>	<u>Acres</u>
White pine	35
Red pine	12
Fir spruce	108
Swamp conifer	167
Black spruce	71
Tamarack	3
White cedar	366
Hemlock - hardwood	13
Northern hardwood	1,135
Swamp hardwood	148
Aspen	745
White birch	17
Grass	201
Low shrubs	52
Upland brush	46
Lowland brush	2
Alders	52
Willows	11
Minor lakes	111
Noncommercial - lowland grass	5
Recreational-industrial-residential	13
TOTAL	<u>3,313</u>

Northern hardwoods are the dominant forest types while swamp hardwoods, swamp conifers, hemlock-hardwoods and fir-spruce are types commonly found bordering the Wolf and its tributaries. Small scattered acreages of natural red and white pine are found in the northern quarter of the project area.

Management potential of the forest lands is limited by the scenic area land use designation on much of the area due to the narrow 300' zone along each bank. The "back land" acreage will be managed to provide an allowable cut of 740 cords of pulpwood and 9,100 board feet of saw timber per year.

TABLE 1a - Physical dimensions of named streams in the Upper Wolf River Fishery Area, Langlade County.

Stream	Total Length (in miles)	Length Within		Average Width in Feet	Miles of Waters			Warm Waters
		Fishery Area (in miles)	Area (in miles)		Trout I	Streams II	Class III	
Wolf River	223.0	38.0		176		38.0		
Hunting River	15.6	1.4		40		1.4		
Upper Section		3.1				3.1		
Lower Section		(4.5)				(4.5)		
Nine Mile Creek	12.3	8.2		10-15				
Lilly River	13.1	0.08		45		0.08		
Markgraf Creek	1.0	0.03		9		0.03		
Stevens Creek	1.8	1.0		24		1.0		
Squaw Creek	1.7	1.1		18		1.1		
Turtle Lake Outlet	0.02	0.02		60				0.02
White Lake Outlet	2.2	0.3		24				0.3
Spring Creek	3.1	0.08		8		0.08		
Demster Creek	0.6	0.2		4		0.2		
Rasmussen Creek	1.1	0.6		20	0.6			
Poor Farm Spring Outlet	1.3	1.3		5-10		1.3		
Emil Spring Outlet	0.4	0.4		12		0.4		
Little Emil Spring Outlet	0.2	0.2		6		0.2		
Unnamed Tributaries		3.25				3.25		
Total - All Streams	277.42	59.26			0.6	58.34		0.32

TABLE 1b - Physical Dimensions of Named Lake and Spring Ponds
in the Upper Wolf River Fishery Area, Langlade County.

Name	Surface Acres	Maximum Depth (Feet)
Augustyn Springs	28.0	
Turtle Lake	61.2	11
Rasmussen Spring Pond	0.8	4
Poor Farm Spring Pond	27.6	5
Emil Spring Pond	4.4	4
Little Emil Spring Pond.	2.6	3
Anderson Spring Pond	1.2	3
Totals	125.8	

The Wolf is a medium hard water stream having slightly alkaline, light brown colored water. Average discharge at Langlade is 494 cubic feet per second and ranges from 156 to 2,170 cubic feet per second. River flow is usually between 200-1,000 cubic feet per second. Water temperatures range from 32°F to 83°F. The maximum temperature is usually of short duration, whereas 32°F is maintained for a period of four to five months. River stage or water level fluctuation does not exceed 2.43 feet at Langlade. Except during precipitation or runoff extremes, stage seldom varies more than one foot. Stream velocity at Langlade ranges from 0.9 to 4.7 feet per second. The average stream gradient is 12 feet per mile.

The lower 24 miles of river from Lily to Markton features a significant amount of white water with 24 rapids and a gradient of 15 feet per mile. The dominant bottom materials are rubble and boulders. The streambanks are predominantly upland with occasional wetland or lowland areas. This stretch has the greatest development with 79 dwellings, 2 resorts, a motel, an organizational camp, several farms, 2 highway crossings, 2 waysides and 6 public access points. The developed areas tend to be clustered near Markton, Langlade, Hollister and Lily. The river between these points is relatively undisturbed.

The upper 14 river miles from Pearson to Lily have the lowest gradient. There are 3 rapids in this stretch and the average gradient is 6 feet per mile. The dominant bottom materials are sand, gravel, rubble and some boulders. The stream banks are a mixture of wetlands, timber swamps and upland, with wetlands the dominant feature. Developments in this section include 31 dwellings, 2 farms, 2 highway crossings, a wayside (Military Park), which is the finest public use facility in the fishery area and 4 public access points. Most of the developments are

in the portion between Lily and Turtle Lake.

Hunting River - Of the 16 miles of the Hunting River in Langlade County, 4.5 miles are in the property in two different segments. The lower unit begins at the confluence with the Wolf River and proceeds upstream for 3.1 miles, terminating in the northwest quarter of Section 1, T33N, R11E. The upper unit of 1.4 miles lies in Sections 29, 32 and 33, T34N, R11E. Nearly 80 percent of the stream thread between the lower and upper unit boundaries is in Langlade County Forest.

The 39 square miles of watershed are predominantly wooded and/or wild with about 15 percent cleared land. The Hunting is a medium hard water stream having slightly alkaline, light brown colored water. The average width is 44 feet and it is a major tributary to the Wolf River. Water temperature in the lower stretch has reached 82°F; however, this is of relatively short duration. Brook and brown trout, and 14 additional species are found in this stream.

Nine Mile Creek - There are 10.4 miles of Nine Mile Creek in Langlade County and the lower 8.2 miles are in the project area. The upper 2.2 miles outside the project are in the Nicolet National Forest. The 26 square miles of watershed are mostly wooded and/or wild lands with about 5 percent being cleared. The stream's average width within the project boundary is 16 feet. The Nine Mile is a hard water stream, with slightly acid, clear water.

Brook and brown trout inhabit this stream as do twelve companion fish species. The entire stream is Class II trout water. Natural reproduction of brook trout is good, however, there is no evidence of brown trout reproduction. Present management includes stocking of brown trout. Maximum stream temperature recorded at Highway 55 is 72°F. Most of the streambank is undeveloped. Public access is available at two road crossings and from the 2.8 miles of DNR frontage. Conditional public access is also provided by 6.6 miles of private forest cropland frontage.

Turtle Lake - T33N, R13E, Section 28, is a hard water spring lake having alkaline, clear water of high transparency. The lake has an area of 61.2 acres and a maximum depth of 11 feet. The immediate shoreline is predominantly hardwood upland (90%) with the remainder being marsh wetland. The littoral materials are diverse consisting of silt (70%), sand (10%), gravel (13%) rubble (6%) and boulders (1%).

The lake has a population of northern pike, largemouth bass, walleye, panfish and forage species. Submergent aquatic vegetation is dense while emergent and floating vegetation are sparse. A short navigable outlet flows to the Wolf River. A public boat landing with parking is located on the east shore.

Other Waters - In addition to the many small spring seeps and rivulets, the fishery area contains parts of many small tributaries. Four of the tributaries are: Hanson Creek, Hoffman Creek, Squaw Creek and Rasmussen Creek. There are seven named spring ponds including Augustyn, Duck, Rasmussen, Anderson, Poor Farm, Emil, and Little Emil Springs. There are also six unnamed spring ponds on the area. Specific information on the small streams and named spring ponds is shown in Tables 1a and 1b.

Historical and Archeological Features

The Wolf River played an important part in the settlement of eastern Langlade County and southern Forest County. The settlement and development occurred in the mid-1800's and was almost entirely oriented around logging. The Wolf River Improvement Company was formed in 1870 and a series of five dams were built in Langlade County, but are no longer present. The dams were used in making log drives to the mills on the lower Wolf River. Many logging camps were established at various points along the river. Today few indications of these developments remain.

Two historical travel roads traverse the fishery area. The Superior Trail, an old mail route from Shawano to Rockland, Michigan, crosses the property. Writings found in the Langlade County Historical Society refer to this trail as being old in 1864. In 1868, congress authorized the construction of a military road which paralleled the Wolf River through Langlade County. This trail or road is now approximated by State Highway 55 which in several places is the eastern boundary of the Upper Wolf River Fishery Area. This road was supposedly authorized for military purposes to protect against attack from the north; however, historians indicate the actual reason for the road was to get at the valuable timber along the route. A fairly extensive history of the Wolf River logging days and maps of the two trails is kept by the Langlade County Historical Society.

Langlade County has never been systematically surveyed for sites of archeological or historical significance. According to the State Historical Society, it is extremely probable that numerous archeological sites will be present along the Wolf River when a study is completed. A one and a half story building exists along the Wolf River near Markton. Depending upon the historical background of this structure the State Historical Society feels it could be eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historical Places.

Regarding potential historical or archeological sites, all areas of development will be thoroughly investigated for the presence or absence of sites and appropriate protective measures will be taken for significant sites. If any are found during development, construction will be suspended until the State Historical Preservation officer is consulted. The site(s) will be evaluated and, if significant, would be preserved.

OWNERSHIP

The approved Upper Wolf Fishery Area acquisition boundary encompasses 11,731.43 acres of land having 93 miles of river frontage. A total of 5,761.89 acres are presently controlled by the state, with fee title ownership totalling 5,327.89 acres, while 434 acres are covered by perpetual easements. (Figure 2)

State-owned land in the property is used primarily for recreation and protection of Wolf River water quality and aesthetics. Land within view of the river provides a natural atmosphere for fishermen, rafters, hikers and others enjoying the out-of-doors. Land beyond view of the river is used primarily for hunting, hiking and forestry. These lands are important since they prevent private development near the river incompatible with property goals.

Potential Expansions of the Fishery Area

The opportunity for enlargement of the area does exist and is shown in Figure 2. The State presently owns in excess of 800 acres outside the project boundary. Most of this is in one large block which was purchased from the Wisconsin Power and Light Corporation, south of the Village of Langlade. Retaining this additional acreage would prevent incompatible private development near the river and provide added use and management opportunities. This would be the only large block of land on the entire fishery area. If this acreage were retained, the cost of a boundary survey will be considerably reduced since the recommended boundary will encompass entire 40-acre descriptions rather than present 5 and 10-acre parcels. The sale of this acreage would be of no benefit to the Department. Trade for other key parcels on the area could be beneficial; however, many trade proposals have been explored without success.

A second feasible project enlargement would include an eight mile stretch of the Wolf River from Pearson upstream to Post Lake. This is a relatively undeveloped stream section of placid waters suitable for novice canoers which would blend nicely into the present project. Nearly one-half of the frontage in this stretch of stream is presently in Langlade County Forest lands. Expansion of the property would require purchase of 1,110 acres of privately-owned land along the Wolf River from Pearson upstream to Post Lake. Present use of Langlade County Forest land in the 8-mile section is compatible with property goals and the need for acquisition would be minimal. This low gradient section of river has a warm water fish population and excellent waterfowl and furbearer habitat. Land adjoining the river is mainly unimproved woodland and wetlands. The area offers excellent canoeing, hunting and trapping.

A third enlargement of the fishery area could involve 260 acres on the Hunting River. Inclusion of this 260 acres would provide for continuous public ownership (County or DNR) on the Hunting River.

All of the potential property expansions would protect more resources, allow more flexibility for compatible management and expanded use opportunities.

Current Use

The Upper Wolf River Fishery Area is extensively used by a wide variety of recreationalists. By far, the most extensive use is rubber raft river float trips. Most of this use is concentrated between Hollister and the Menominee Reservation. On holiday weekends as high as 50 watercraft or 80 people per hour pass certain points. Most of this traffic is with rubber rafts of which 95% or more are supplied by at least 7 different outfitters. Canoes, kayaks and inner tubes are also in common use.

This river is the site of several sponsored races for rafts, canoes and kayaks annually. These events draw hundreds of contestants and 3-4 thousand spectators. The U.S. Canoe Association holds sanctioned races on the Wolf and members of Olympic white-water teams have worked out on the river.

Visitations by fishermen, hunters, sightseers, skiers, berrypickers and scout groups exceed 25,000 visits per season. Fishing and sightseeing make up a major portion of these visitations.

Land Use Potential

The criteria of the uniform classification system of land use as prescribed by the Master Planning Handbook was used to designate stream reaches, stream banks and surrounding lands within property boundaries. Three classification were used to designate the scenic, fish and wildlife and intensive recreation areas (public access, parking, toilets and water) on the property (Figure 2). Other potential classes were considered, but were discarded because the criteria needed were not fulfilled.

The scenic areas delimited are to extend 300 feet from the banks of the stream. In that portion, all forest, wildlife and fish management practices will be governed by the criteria established for the scenic area category of land usage, and by the Forest Aesthetics Handbook.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PROBLEMS

Private Development

Over 50% of the fishery area acreage goal remains to be acquired (Figure 2). Private holdings continue to foster incompatible development within the fishery area. Commercial enterprises, subdivisions, private access and camping contribute to the over-use of the area and detract from the scenic quality of the river.

Wildlife Habitat

The fishery area consists of only limited acreage of intolerant forest species utilized by wildlife and lacks adequate interspersions of age classes. As a result, much of the area is not quality deer, ruffed grouse or woodcock habitat. Management of the upland could be geared toward changing the forest, though at considerable expense, from an even-age shade-tolerant species composition, to intolerant species with an adequate age class distribution, that would be more extensively used by wildlife.

The waters on the property are not ideal waterfowl habitat in that water temperatures are lower than desirable, growing less food, while the gradient of the stream is too great, and fertility is not high. Realistic management potential for waterfowl is confined to the improvement of nesting habitat.

The narrow corridor of public ownership and restrictions imposed by land classification severely limit development to improve the habitat of waterfowl and forest game.

Public Overuse

At certain times the area receives more use than is considered desirable. Only legislation to limit activities and the number of participants can be effective to control this overuse.

Use by rafters far exceeds all other activities combined. Surveys made by Department of Natural Resources personnel over a two-year period indicate the following summer use levels by people floating the river:

<u>Time</u>	<u>Watercraft/hr.</u>
Average weekday	21
Average weekend day	30
Average holiday	50

At this rate of use based on a 100-day season, approximately 41,000 visits by watercraft users would be made. Based on river mileage and spacing, this would exceed the recommended 28,000 visits per year that the State of Wisconsin Outdoor Recreation Plan considers a quality experience. In addition to rafting, tubing and canoeing, sightseeing and fishing are popular activities on the river. A major portion of this use is concentrated on less than one-half the stream length from Hollister to Markton. Disbursement of use is difficult as white water is confined to this stream section.

Heavy use also brings problems of conflicts, litter, lack of sanitary facilities with resulting human pollution, and erosion at access points. A DNR survey of approximately 200 mostly local people indicated overuse problems detracted from their river experience. A copy of the survey summary is attached. (Appendix II)

Difficulties in Law Enforcement

Littering, fishing regulation violations, unauthorized vehicular travel and camping are the major law enforcement problems. Increased law enforcement activity is needed.

Water Quality

Water quality from a health and safety standpoint is quite good, but water quality for fishery needs is less desirable. Groundwater input is relatively low; as a result, water temperatures are often undesirably high in the summer and far too low during winter months. Because of this, trout reproduction is very limited. In many places trout habitat is relatively poor, and it could be vastly improved, by strategic movement of boulders in some locations.

Forest Management

The fishery area presents a significant problem for forest management by virtue of the acquisition plan. The property ownership map shows that the land area is located in a narrow corridor bordering the river (Figure 2). Only in situations where the ownership exceeds 300 feet from the river is commercial timber harvest considered. In many cases where the 300 foot criteria is met, the remaining available acreage is very small. Thus, while per acre volumes may present the prospect of a commercial sale, the small acreages severely restrict operability.

From a fire control standpoint, the area presents a variety of hazards, though the overall hazard classification is low. The prospect of river users building cooking fires during the course of a float trip presents

significant fire risk during the spring and fall. However, fire incidence from this ignition source has been low within the project area in the past ten years.

The only major disease problem is dutch elm disease. Many elm trees are dead and dying, particularly immediately adjacent to the stream course.

Land Acquisition

Completion of acquisition of lands within the boundary presents several problems. The fishery area has a large number of landowners and many small parcels. Most have expensive improvements and little actual frontage resulting in a reluctance to purchase such property.

Many landowners now seem to feel development of a subdivision will yield more money than sales to the state. If this trend continues, it will lead to obvious problems in acquisition and expense. It is probable that property completion will not be achieved if the power of eminent domain is not exercised.

In the past, a constant source of acquisition funds has not been available. If this pattern continues, completion of the project will be delayed.

Facilities

Many view the lack of user facilities on the area as a problem. There is a definite lack of facilities considering the present use level. More facilities can be provided if the money is available, and it is recommended that parking, drinking water and toilets be provided at six additional sites. However, if the property is already being overused, adding more facilities may only compound the problems by inviting more visitors.

Board Resolutions or Statutory Changes Needed

Statutory authority to control user numbers will be needed before many of the serious problems on this project can be improved or solved. Licensing of commercial outfitters and all watercraft on this river would add another dimension of control.

The Town of Wolf River passed an ordinance which attempts to regulate time of rafting and litter. This appears to be a step in the right direction if it can be enforced. (Appendix I)

LONG-RANGE RESOURCES, RECREATION NEEDS AND JUSTIFICATION

The 1970 census indicated that Langlade County had a population of 19,220, having declined from 21,975 in 1950. Little change is expected in the next ten years. However, the local census figures do not indicate the pressures being exerted on Langlade County from the urbanized areas of Stevens Point, Green Bay, Appleton, Oshkosh, Madison, Milwaukee and Chicago, all within easy driving distance with four hours the maximum driving time to the project area. The urban areas in Wisconsin have been growing much faster in population than rural areas. From 1960 to 1970, the urban population of the state increased by 15 percent with the

rural population showing only a five percent increase. While the use of outdoor recreational facilities by residents should continue to vary directly with the population, it will likely constitute a smaller percentage of the total demand. What is important is the anticipated growth of the surrounding urban areas and the impact this is likely to have. In short, northern Wisconsin with its sparsely populated counties will be increasingly affected by demand for outdoor recreational facilities generated outside of its own area.

Langlade County is located in Planning Region 10. The 1972 State of Wisconsin Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan shows that Region 10 includes Langlade, Vilas, Oneida, Lincoln, Forest and Florence Counties. It contains a combination of lakes, streams and forests found in few other regions of the state. The resources are a source of outdoor recreation opportunities for people throughout the state and the midwest. Protecting and maintaining this resource base is the most critical task facing this region.

Fishing

Regional fishing participation by residents equals the state average. Out-of-state residents fishing in the region equals local participation. Fishing demand in the region is presently 64,000 persons on an average weekend day and is projected to reach 69,000 by 1990. Of greater concern than surface water quantity, quality or access, is shoreline protection. Much of northern Wisconsin's appeal to tourists is its many lakes and rivers with natural shorelines. If the shorelines are allowed to be developed, both the quality of outdoor recreation experiences and economic benefits derived from visitor use will suffer.

Fishing demand on the Wolf River will undoubtedly increase if conflicts with other users can be minimized. It is doubtful that the quality of fishing can be consistently improved or maintained without habitat improvements.

Canoeing, Tubing and Rafting

Presently, Region 10 has 621 miles of canoeable streams. The demand now is for 2,162 miles of stream and the demand in 1990 will be for 2,570 miles of streams within Region 10 to meet the demand. No figures are available for rafters, tubers and kayakers who also utilize many of the same streams as do canoers and fishermen. Much canoeing does take place on lakes and flowages as opposed to rivers and streams, thus reducing the deficit in miles of canoeable stream availability. As use increases, the need for greater regulation will become more apparent.

The need for regulation is already visible on the Upper Wolf River. There have been conflicts between watercraft users and also between watercraft users and fishermen on various segments of the river. Watercraft and fishing use will both be continued, but cooperation and regulation will both be needed to reduce conflicts.

Sightseeing

Continued land use changes in Region 10 may reduce the desirability of the area for sightseeing. Development along forested town roads and waterfronts is reducing the opportunities for desirable sightseeing. Present participation amounts to 26,781 occasions per average weekend day, and is expected to rise to 32,024 occasions by 1990. This activity more than any other recreational activity requires resource protection.

The specialized management proposed for the Upper Wolf River will encourage aesthetic management and increase the desirability of the Langlade County area for sightseeing.

Surprisingly, the sampling of local residents (Appendix II) revealed that enjoyment of scenic beauty ranked second among preferred uses of the river. Fishing was the number one activity of local residents.

Snowmobiling

The exceptionally good snowmobiling conditions found in Region 10 generate levels of participation which exceed those of almost every other region in the state. Regional resident participation is 366 percent above the state average. Presently, snowmobile demand is being met. However, if machines would be restricted in the future to only designated areas as opposed to existing informal use patterns, a need for additional trails would arise.

No snowmobile trails are planned within the project area. As in the case of horseback riding trails, a snowmobile trail may be allowed to cross the area to provide a connecting link. Such requests will be reviewed on a case by case basis. One approved trail now crosses the fishery area.

Cross-Country Skiing

This sport is rapidly becoming popular. Although no statistics are available in the state recreation plan, the sport appears to be growing in popularity very rapidly. As with any new sport, its popularity will continue to increase and then tend to level off. No cross-country ski trails are planned within the property boundary. Requests for linking trails will be reviewed on an individual basis.

Camping

A need for additional primitive camping as well as family camping facilities exists in Planning Region 10 according to the state recreation plan. Demand for primitive camping facilities is expected to increase from 3,630 occasions per average weekend day to 3,850 occasions per average weekend day in 1980.

Camping will not be provided along the river as it lends itself to a day's, or portion of a day's travel with the existing and proposed access points. The day use concept seems more appropriate on this project. Providing camping facilities would make an already overused river even more attractive and convenient to use, thus indirectly increasing overall use of the riverway.

Wildlife

It is anticipated that there will be increased hunting pressure on the area due to increased public ownership and increased public awareness of these lands. Significant increases in the wildlife population are not likely because of the nature of the fishery area and the limited management opportunities.

ANALYSIS OF ALTERNATIVES

Maintain Present Status

Leave the fishery area as it now exists. This alternative would leave the project only 44% complete and with no facilities for the present users. With this alternative the most important objectives of the project could not be achieved and much of the past expense and effort would be largely negated.

Enlarge the Property Boundary with State-owned Lands

The opportunity for enlargement of the project does exist. The state presently owns in excess of 800 acres outside the project boundaries, with most of this in one large block. Retaining this acreage would prevent incompatible private development near the river and provide additional use and management opportunities. This enlargement is shown as alternative 2 on Figure 2.

Enlarge the Boundary with Additional Purchases

An eight mile stretch of the Wolf River from Pearson upstream to Post Lake is relatively undeveloped and would blend nicely into the present property. Nearly one-half of the frontage in this stretch is in Langlade County Forest lands. This expansion of the property would require acquiring 1,100 acres of privately owned land. Present use of the county forest land is compatible with project goals and the need for acquisition minimal. This low gradient section of the Wolf has a warm water fish population and excellent waterfowl and furbearer habitat and offers canoeing, hunting, and trapping. Land adjoining the river is mainly unimproved woodlands with large amounts of wetlands.

An additional feasible enlargement of the fishery area would involve the addition of 260 acres on the Hunting River in the boundary. Inclusion of this acreage would provide for continuous public ownership (County or DNR) on the Hunting River. The suggested enlargements are shown as alternative 3 on Figure 2.

Reduce Property Size

The State presently controls 5,762 acres with 54.6 miles of water frontage. The size of the property cannot be reduced and still achieve our major objectives. Reduction would further complicate management and use of the project.

For Nonconsumptive Uses Only

An obvious option when hunters and fishermen are far outnumbered by "nonconsumptive users" is to consider only the needs of the "nonconsumptive user". Management options for fish, wildlife and forestry would be lost. Property management effort would be placed on trail development, toilet facilities, picnic areas, campgrounds, and the continued maintenance that these facilities generate. There would be a serious adverse reaction from the sportsmen who have paid for much of the program and have supported the Department's acquisition efforts. The multiple use concept would be lost.

Combine Fishing, Hunting and Nonconsumptive Recreation

This approach fully utilizes the resources available. Management of the fishery resource, including habitat protection and improvement while limiting other activities to proposed levels of use will provide recreational opportunities compatible with master planning objectives.

Land Use Classification

The fishery area may contain possibilities for a Scientific Area designation, but analysis has not been completed. Such a designation could be added if the criteria are met and compatible with property goals and objectives.

The Wolf River has been considered for designation as both a State and Federal Scenic River, and does have many of the necessary qualities. Such a designation would bring wide-spread attention to the river, probably increasing use or pressure. Management and protection of flora and fauna would be complicated.

RECOMMENDED MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

It is recommended that the fishery area be continued and expanded. All land in the present project boundary should be acquired and alternatives 2 and 3 are recommended for approval, totalling an additional 2,170 acres. All development and man-made intrusion should be systematically eliminated as lands are acquired or whenever the opportunities develop.

Day use facilities including parking, drinking water and toilets should be developed at major access points, including Langlade, Markton, Pearson, Hollister, on the former Buettner land and Dierck's landing. Some existing undesirable access sites will be closed as other sites provide alternatives.

All water access points will be set back at least 100 feet from the edge of the river and preferably 300 feet if at all possible. Walk-in access only would be permitted. Parking areas will be screened from the water by native vegetation.

The river itself and its shoreline constitutes the area where specialized management is needed. The lands immediately adjacent to the river are the most significant from the standpoint of visitor use. Lands within 300 feet of the river's edge require special measures to preclude inappropriate developments or uses which could originate an intrusion of sights, sounds or smells that would decrease recreational quality.

As stated previously, the over-riding priority on the fishery area is to preserve and, if possible, improve the natural aesthetics. It is intended that management of fish, wildlife, forests, etc., be carried

out while always keeping in mind the number one priority of naturalness.

The Task Force recommends allowing day use of the project, but regulated use so as to achieve preservation of a quality experience in a natural environment.

All areas of development will also be examined for the presence or absence of endangered and threatened species and appropriate protective measures will be taken for significant sites. If any sites are found during development, construction will be suspended until the Office of Endangered and Nongame Species (DNR) is consulted. The site(s) will be evaluated and protective measures taken for significant sites.

It is estimated that at least 15 years will be required to complete a high percent of the acquisition in the fishery area. Complete acquisition is not anticipated if the power of eminent domain is not exercised. The estimated cost is at least 22 million dollars.

Development of day use facilities will require 4-5 years, and is partially dependent on acquisition of key land parcels. Completion of facilities at two major access sites (Langlade and Markton) is expected within two years if money is available. Development cost is estimated at \$39,000. Maintenance and operations on the project are expected to cost \$5,000-\$6,000 annually.

APPENDIX I

TOWN OF WOLF RIVER BYLAWS

RESOLVED that in the interest of peace, the general welfare and good order, public health and safety within the Township of Wolf River, Langlade County, Wis., the following bylaws be adopted:

BYLAW NO. 1

No person shall do any of the following on any river or stream within the Township, nor on any spring-pond, or lake lying completely within the boundaries of Town of Wolf River.

- a. Carry any glass bottle, or metal beverage can containing any of their original contents, in any boat, raft, canoe or any other water-craft on the waters, or any person when in said water-craft on the water, nor carry on his person when wading in said waters. (This bylaw does not prevent anyone from carrying any bottles, cans, or other litter removed from the water on his person or in any water-craft.)
- b. Any person violating the provisions of this bylaw may be fined Five dollars (\$5.00) for the first offense and Ten dollars (\$10.00) for the second or subsequent convictions within one year.

BYLAW NO. 2

Any person, who from a base or landing within the Township of Wolf River, rents any raft or other watercraft for a fee for use on the Wolf River, must before the first day of May each year, obtain a license from the Town Clerk, approved by the Town Board authorizing him to do so.

- a. The license fee shall be Fifty dollars (\$50.00) payable upon receipt of license.
- b. The license fee receipt shall be used by the Town for enforcement of Town bylaws relating to boating and litter prevention on waters within the Township.

BYLAW NO. 3

Any person, who from a base or landing within the jurisdiction of the Town of Wolf River, rents for a fee, any boat, raft, or canoe, or any other water-craft for use on the waters within the Township must do the following:

- a. Inform all persons renting his equipment of the Town bylaw prohibiting glass bottles or metal beverage cans in any watercraft or on any person on the waters within the Town of Wolf River.

b. He shall not allow anyone renting his equipment to proceed onto the water knowing the person is, or intends to violate any Town of bylaw.

c. When renting equipment for use on the Wolf River, he shall not allow his watercraft on the water before 8 o'clock AM, nor shall he start his equipment on a trip of more than six miles after Two (2) o'clock PM, nor a trip of less than six miles after Four (4) o'clock PM, the purpose of this bylaw being that all float trips end by Seven (7) o'clock PM.

d. He shall gather and properly dispose of any and all litter in his watercraft and in the landing area generally used by his customers.

e. Any person violating the provisions of this bylaw may be fined Five dollars (\$5.00) for the first offense and Ten dollars (\$10.00) for subsequent violations within one year.

SIGNED: Roger Maas, Chairman
Frank Antoniewicz, Supervisor
Marvin Zaddack, Supervisor

May 8, 1976

Appendix II

The following questionnaire was submitted to property owners attending a Town Meeting, Town of Wolf River, Langlade County, on September 17, 1975, by Department of Natural Resources personnel in attendance. A summary of response to the questionnaire is included.

1. The DNR in its management of the Wolf River proposes to preserve, and if possible, improve the natural aesthetics of the river. It is their intent that the river be used, but that use be controlled so that a quality experience can be enjoyed. Do you agree with this philosophy?

65 Yes 12 No

2. In your use of the river, what other use detracted most from your river experience? (EXAMPLES: Private development, other users, state development or lack of, timber management, fish mngement, etc.)

<u>Category</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Category</u>	<u>No.</u>
Rafters	15	State Development	3
Litter	11	No Detractions	3
Private Development	9	Lack of Sanitary Facilities	1
Lack of Fish Management	9	Congestion at Bridges	1
Other Users, or Too Much Use	6	Too much DNR Land Buying	1
Lack of Timber Management	4		

3. Do you feel the river is excessively littered: If so, what do you feel could and should be done to improve the situation?

52 Yes 17 No

4. What primary use do you make of the river?
Secondary?

<u>Primary Uses</u>		<u>Secondary Uses</u>	
Fishing	41	Aesthetics	15
Scenic beauty	11	Fishing	12
Rafting	8	Rafting	9
Recreation	6	Canoeing	4
Raft rental	3	Swimming	2
Living	2	Camping	1
Trapping bait	1	Hunting	1
Canoeing	1		

5. Do you feel the state or local units of government should provide more facilities than presently exist? 62 Yes 10 No
What type of facilities?

Sanitary facilities	49	Parking	2
Access or waysides	8	Drinking Water	1
Law Enforcement	5	None	1

Should facilities be limited or provided to meet the needs no matter what the use level builds to?

Limited facilities 25
Meet needs 11

6. It has been alleged, and this seems quite logical, that large numbers of rafters, canoers, tubers, etc., interfere with fishing. Do you feel it would be unreasonable to restrict floating activities in the early morning and evening hours?

58 Yes 22 No

7. Do you feel development along the river by private, state or local government is acceptable or should it be prevented if possible?

Acceptable 26 Prevented 44

8. Do you feel the river is over-utilized now? _____ If so how and when?

48 Yes 26 No

9. Do you feel state purchases along the river have caused a rise in local taxes? 59 Yes 12 No

If so, do you feel this rise is offset by the benefits of preservation of the river and/or money brought into the community because of this resource and the project? 19 Yes 38 No

Appendix III

MASTER PLAN COMMENTS BY OUTSIDE AGENCIES

A number of comments were received from outside agencies relative to the Upper Wolf River Master Plan. The DNR response is indicated where required.

1. Thomas J. Evans, Geological and Natural History Survey:

Mr. Evans supplied the following rewording of two paragraphs in the preliminary master plan relating to soils and geology as follows:

(Suggested rewording of D.I.--Soils and Geology--on page 4.) The project area is underlain by Precambrian alkaline granite and associated igneous and metamorphic rocks that are more than a billion years old. The bedrock is buried under one to two hundred feet of glacial drift, except where locally in the Wolf River channel. The Wolf and Hunting Rivers lie east of and roughly parallel to the southeast trending Summit Lake end moraine of the Langlade glacial lobe. Near Hollister the Wolf River cuts through that moraine and enters the terrain of the Green Bay glacial lobe. Near Langlade the river crosses the Bowler recessional moraine.

The Wolf and Hunting Rivers and Nine Mile Creek are bordered for about one third of their combined length in the project area by peats and mucks, 14% by droughty outwash sands (Omega and Pence series), 33% by hilly pitted outwash and till on which Pence, Onamia and Kennan soils have formed. Agriculturally productive Antigo, Onamia, Norrie and Kennan soils are present along about 23% of the length of the corridors on level to sloping land. Soils of approximately 47% of the area that is more hilly and is naturally well drained are productive for forest growth. Sandy and gravelly soil materials and steep soils are particularly susceptible to erosion along trails and unvegetated stream banks. The good natural drainage condition of most of the soils listed above indicated that location of parking areas and sewage effluent disposal fields should not be difficult.

DNR response: Concur. Paragraphs above replaced the original commentary.

2. Forest Stearns, Chairman, Scientific Areas Preservation Council.

A. "The concept phase of the Upper Wolf River Master Plan, expresses the project objectives in more detail, but does not remove our concern that even the most natural reaches of the stream will be 'manicured'."

DNR response: The Task Force does not concur with this statement. It emphasizes that its total concern is for the environment and that concern is clearly stated in the goals of the master plan.

B. "Two major problems identified by the master planning task force were, excessive recreational boating use and winter temperature extremes not ideal for trout."

DNR response: Re: Excessive recreational boating use. Recognized by the Task Force and it asks for authority for control to prevent abuse in the master plan. Only the Legislature can supply authority for control.

Re: Winter temperature extremes. The Task Force is aware of winter temperature extremes, but points out they have long been present, yet the stream consistently produces larger than average trout. No known feasible technology exists to solve the problem.

- C. "While we can agree with the objective of in-stream work on the tributary streams to reduce water temperatures in summer, we fail to see much benefit from instream management on the main stem of the Wolf River. This management is not described in detail, but presumably, would involve use of heavy equipment in-stream, to construct devices and move boulders. Such management would be especially objectionable in the most natural reaches of the river classified by the task force as scenic."

DNR response: The Task Force has no intention to create artificially appearing devices, boom covers or solid wing deflectors in the main stem of the Wolf River. It does suggest that boulders may be rearranged to improve habitat in some locations. In all work of this nature, the Task Force will strive to maintain the highest aesthetic qualities of the stream.

- D. "Special recognition was afforded to the Upper Wolf River by the federal government when they qualified the project for special contingency LAWCON funding, 'to preserve the Wolf River in its natural, free-flowing state', (U.S. Dept. of Interior news release, January 17, 1967).

Furthermore, the Environmental Impact Assessment dated August 5, 1977 (page 7) describes a 'no-cut zone' where commercial timber harvest and timber stand improvement would be prohibited - however, noncommercial vegetative manipulation would be permitted for aesthetic, safety, and management purposes. Permissible management in the so-called 300 foot preservation zone is not clear. It appears, there may be little difference in management techniques applied to the river shore in the scenic zone and in the fish and wildlife development zone. We believe strongly that several extensive reaches of the Wolf River should be left completely natural with no in-stream or shoreline manipulation."

DNR response: The Task Force concurs. By creating the three large scenic areas and specifying that no commercial timber sales will take place within 300 feet of the stream, the area will remain completely natural while on many stream sections, the character of the stream prohibits habitat manipulation of any type. The Task Force does recommend however, that if dead trees resulting from dutch elm disease, for example, become a safety factor, they should be removed. Similarly, if diseased trees threatened stands of living trees, the Task Force recommends that they be removed to prevent further losses.

- E. "We are also concerned that the plan includes no scientific areas or natural areas. The Council visited one site known as the Oxbow in 1977 and agreed that the site should be designated a state scientific area (descriptive form and map attached). Though natural area inventories for Langlade County are not complete, we are aware of several additional potential scientific areas or public use natural areas. One area on private lands in the vicinity of the Gardner Dam, the other on state property in the Twenty Day Rapids area. The Oxbow area is quite exceptional. It should be included in the plan and designated without further delay."

DNR response: The Task Force has requested additional information of the Scientific Areas Preservation Council relative to the Oxbow area proposed as a scientific area, and wishes to point out it is the center of the only access on the west side of the river. Furthermore, many springs are present that when concentrated, could conceivably positively affect the water quality of the stream. By declaring the Oxbow area a scientific area, the Task Force feels it could possibly lose some management alternatives of positive benefit.

The Task Force is not aware of the specific features of the proposed scientific or natural area on private lands in the vicinity of Gardner Dam. The additional area near Twenty Day Rapids was proposed by the Task Force, but has not received details from SAPC.

3. William Schultheis - Wild Resources Advisory Council.

Comments were received too late to be addressed, and noted on the Green Sheet. They will be considered in the presentation to the Natural Resources Board.