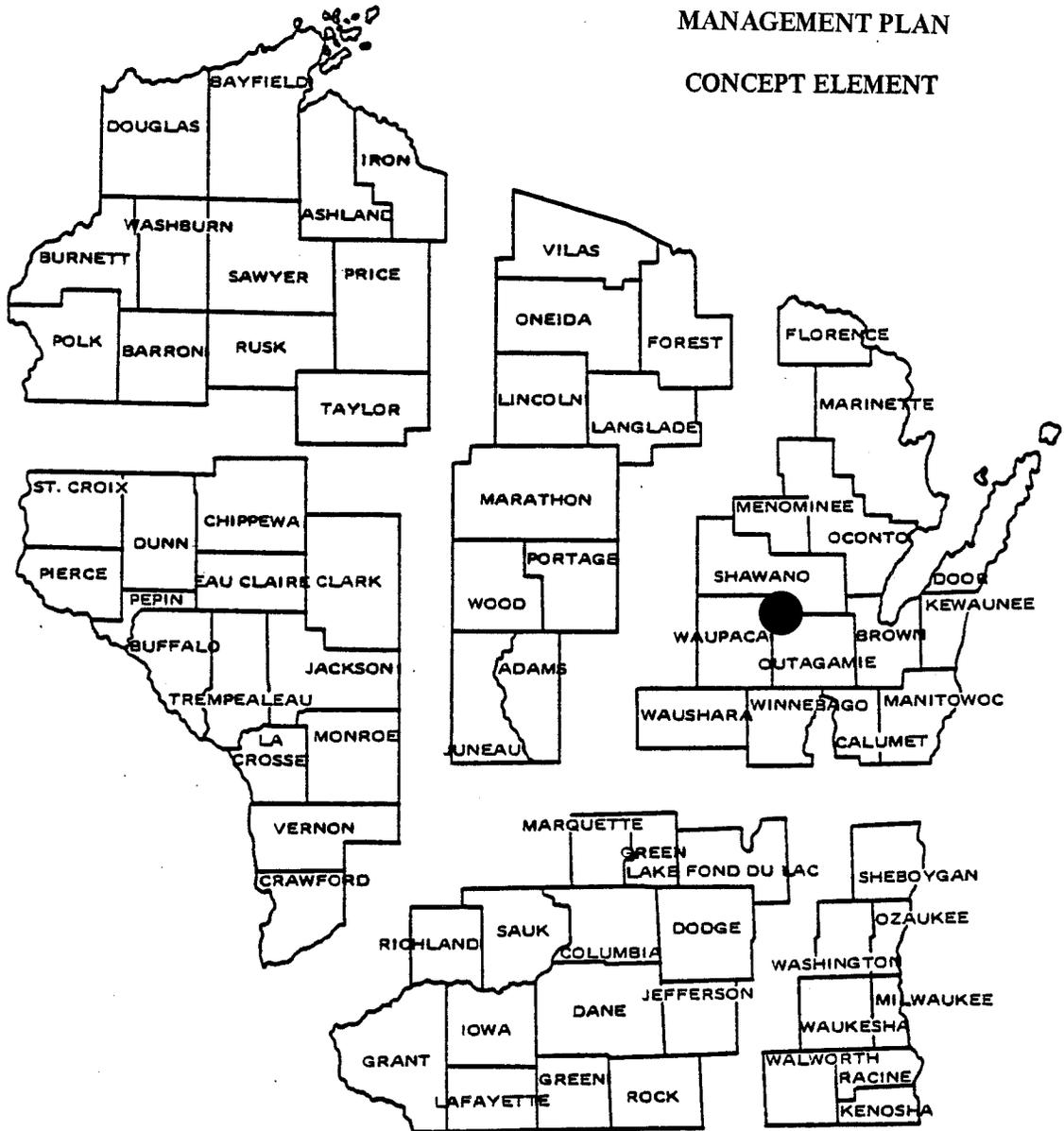


DEER CREEK WILDLIFE AREA

MANAGEMENT PLAN

CONCEPT ELEMENT



Property Task Force

Leader: Dave Evenson, Wildlife Manager
Ron Jones, Forester
Lee Meyers, Fish Manager

Approved By: J. P. Huntman
Date: 4/27/82

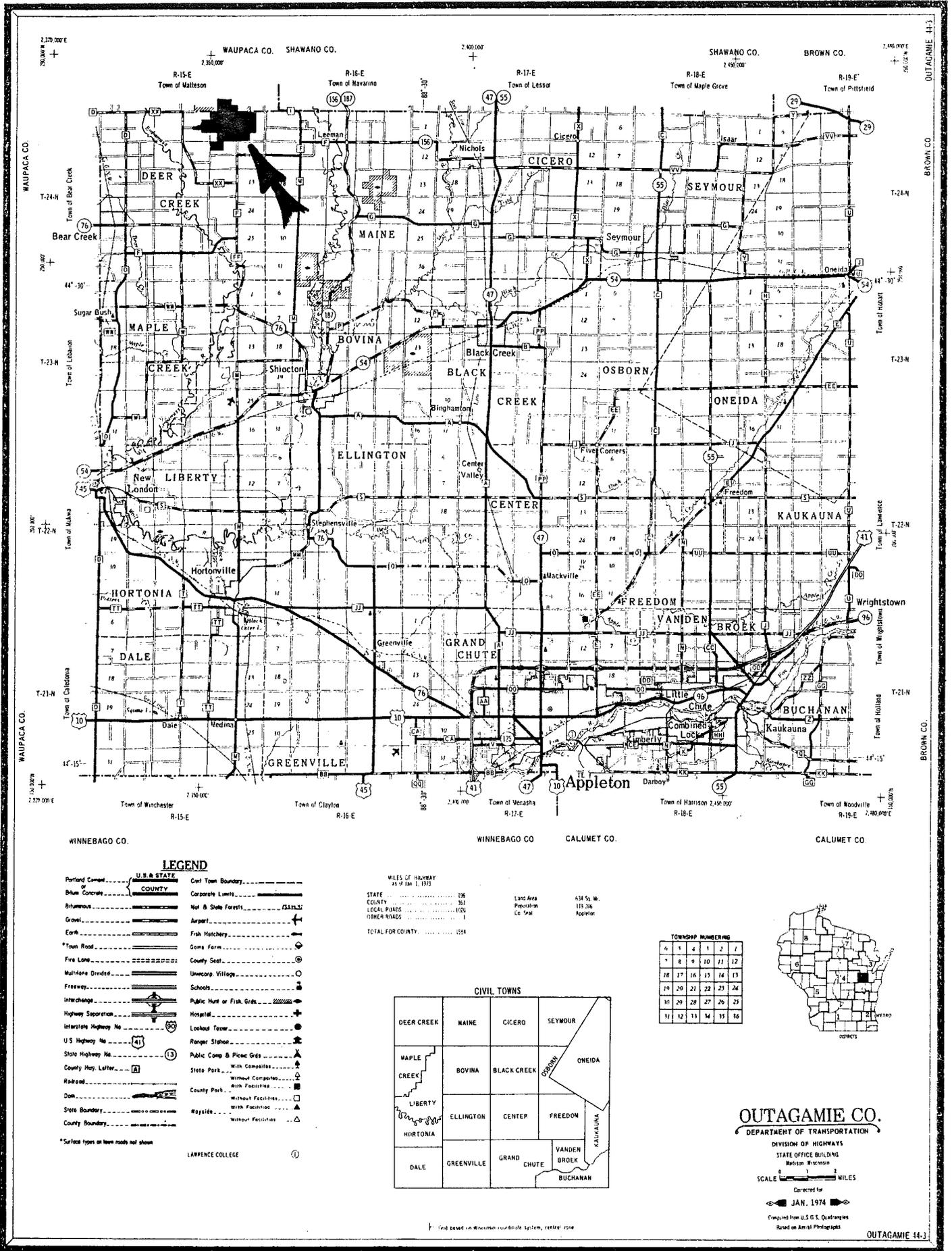


FIGURE 1 LOCATOR

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Deer Creek Wildlife Area is located in northwest Outagamie County and northeast Waupaca County in the Towns of Deer Creek and Matteson. Acquisition is complete at 1,490.46 acres. The property lies 10 miles east of Clintonville and 30 miles northwest of Appleton.

The wildlife area is surrounded by privately-owned small farms with some extensive woodlands to the north and west. It lies about 2 miles east of the Embarrass River, to which it drains, and 3 miles west of the Wolf River. The center of the property has peat soils, ineffectively drained by a series of ditches, about 6 miles in length. These are remnants of the Deer Creek Drainage District, active from 1913-1923 or perhaps slightly later. Around the perimeter are gently rolling uplands of fine and very fine sands.

The lowland community is represented by soft maple, tag alder, willow, tamarack, sedges, leather leaf and sphagnum moss. Most of the upland is forested with aspen, white birch, soft maple, oak, red raspberry and blackberry as common species. About 80 acres of upland are in grasses and herbacious cover and 10 acres have been planted to pines.

In 1942, 440 acres were purchased from Outagamie County. Most of the additional acquisition occurred from 1957 to 1965. The last active farm on the area was purchased in 1965. During the 1950's and early 1960's, other lands, both inside and outside the present boundary, were leased for public hunting.

As late as 1957, a small flock of prairie chickens as well as sharp-tailed grouse were present on the area. Since state ownership, vegetation succession has resulted in habitat changes which no longer support these species. Management efforts turned toward deer, ruffed grouse, cottontail rabbits and snowshoe hares. Pheasants for public hunting were stocked on the uplands and leased farmlands during the 50's and 60's.

More recent management efforts have concentrated on maintaining the aspen type through timber sales and firewood permits. The main ditch draining the area was fitted with a tin whistle in 1971. This action combined with a well placed beaver dam upstream of the structure has flooded about 120 acres and raised the water table in most of the remaining wetland.

A five mile loop trail used by hunters, hikers and cross-country skiers was built in 1974 but has not been maintained since 1978 because of fiscal constraints. A club-sponsored snowmobile trail passes across the north portion of the property. No fishery exists on the property due to poor water quality and winter freeze out.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND OTHER BENEFITS

GOAL: To manage a state-owned wildlife area for forest and wetland wildlife, provide public hunting and trapping opportunities as well as accommodate other compatible recreation and education.

Annual Objectives

1. Provide 1,050 participant days of hunting and trapping as follows:

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Participant Days</u>
a. Deer (bow and gun)	600
b. Ruffed grouse/woodcock	250
c. Ducks	50
d. Furbearers	50
e. Other game	100

2. Preserve 80 acres of natural area for aesthetic, educational and scientific purposes.
3. Provide 200 participant days of snowmobiling associated with a county trail system.

Annual Additional Benefits

1. Accommodate 500 participant days of compatible recreation, including cross-country skiing, hiking, berry picking, snowshoeing and nature observation.
2. Produce 0.4 ducks per acre on 120 acres of water (50 ducks).
3. Contribute to the habitat of other wildlife, including migratory endangered and threatened species.
4. Harvest 240 cords of merchantable timber.

RECOMMENDED MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Various development has been carried out on this property and, as it exists today, it is a productive wildlife area. With the exception of an 80-acre natural area composed of a leatherleaf sphagnum moss bog (N 1/2 SW 1/4, Sec. 1), the entire property is classified as Fish and Wildlife Management Area (RD2). Most of the future management will consist of maintaining parking lots, property signs and wood duck boxes. New management efforts should include an investigation of the possibility of developing the right-of-way on the west side of the property. This easement was purchased in 1965, but has not been used. Just south of the north parking lot is a potential runoff pond. This dike could also improve access for loggers from this side.

Wildlife production remains the primary management objective with forest wildlife receiving emphasis. Hunting will be emphasized as the principal use and wildlife centered non-hunting use will be encouraged. Silviculture techniques will be used as the major tool with which to achieve forest wildlife management objectives and commercial sales will be designed to maximize wildlife benefits.

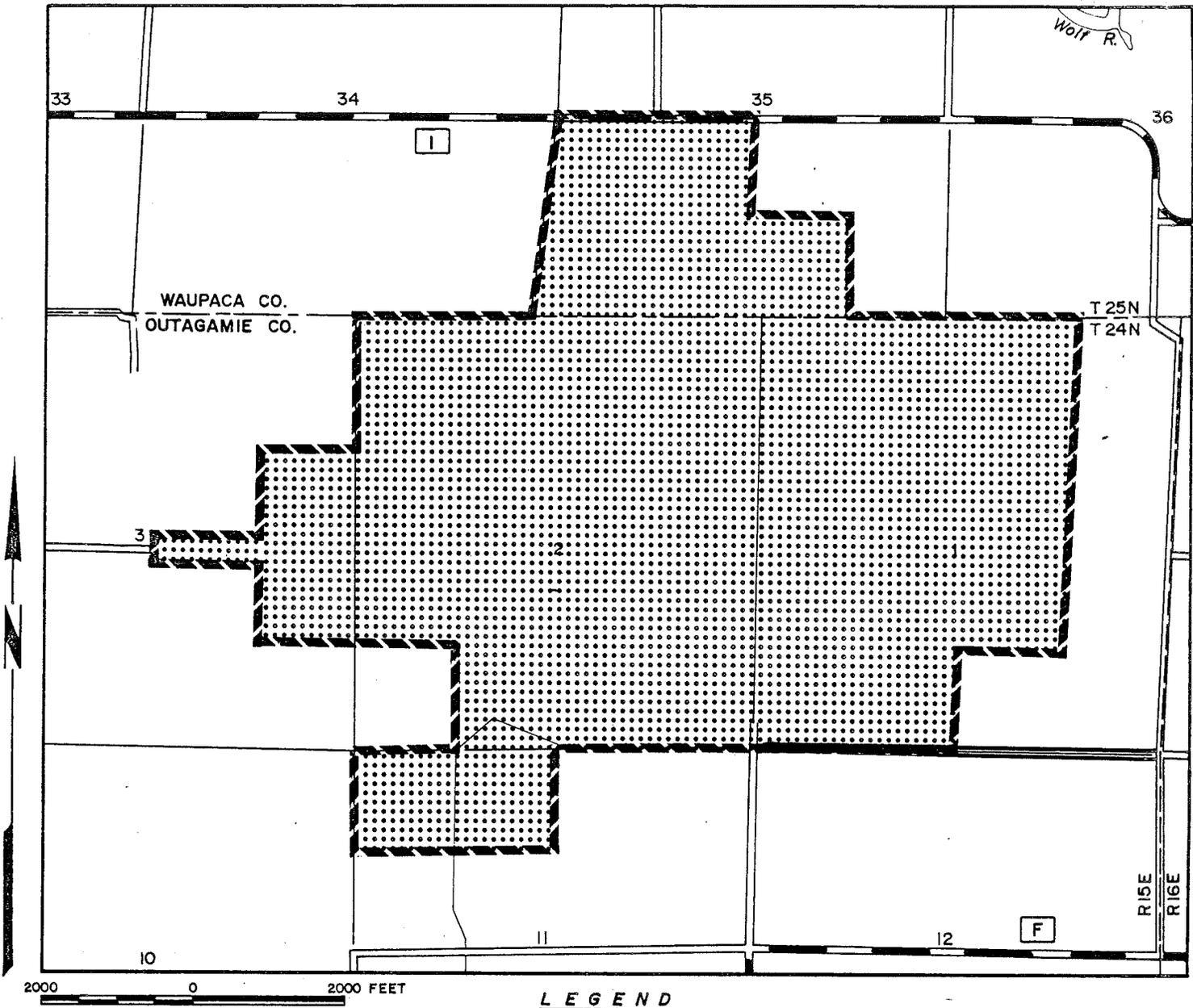
The 731 acres of aspen on the property will be maintained and clear cuts should be designed not to exceed 20 acres to maximize the interspersions of forest age classes. Management of the remaining 208 acres of forest lands will be in accordance with the guidelines in the Silvicultural and Aesthetics Management Handbook and based on the Forest Reconnaissance completed in 1979.

A "heath" consisting of a hummocky, leatherleaf-dominated low shrub community over peat is located in the southeast portion of the property and will be designated a Public Use Natural Area. Other heaths present include bog rosemary, labrador tea, bog laurel, and blueberries. Sphagnum moss is common along with numerous mosses and lichens. Some tamarack (small) and white pine occur. This area is unique but may be of disturbance origin.

<u>Cover Type</u>	<u>Acres</u>
Aspen	731
Lowland brush	233
Swamp conifer	151
Flowage	124
Grass/herbs	106
Bog/marsh	88
White birch	19
Pine	16
Swamp hardwood	12
Red oak	10
	<hr/>
	1,490

All areas proposed for development will be examined for the presence of endangered and threatened wild animals and wild plants. If listed species are found, development will be suspended until the District Endangered and Nongame Species Coordinator is consulted, the site evaluated, and appropriate protective measures taken. No endangered or threatened plant or animal species are known to occur on the property. A complete biological inventory of the property will be conducted as funds permit. Additional property objectives may be developed following completion of such an inventory.

All areas of future development will also be investigated for the presence or absence of historical or archaeological sites and appropriate protective measures taken to protect significant sites. Should any sites be found during development, construction will be suspended until the State Historical Preservation Office is consulted.



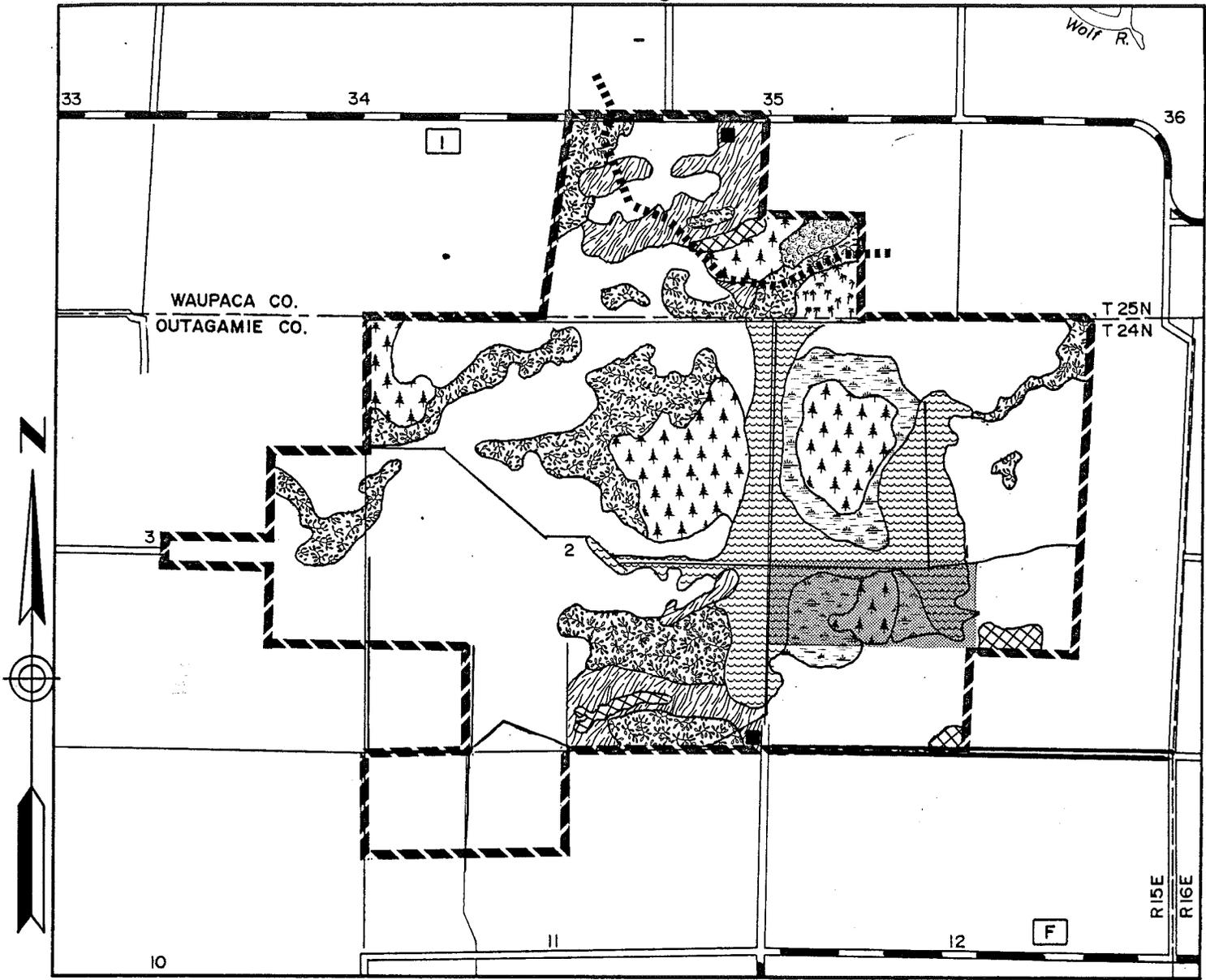
LEGEND

▨ PROJECT BOUNDARY

••• STATE OWNED

DEER CREEK WILDLIFE AREA

FIGURE 1 OWNERSHIP



LEGEND

- PROJECT BOUNDARY
- WHITE BIRCH
- LOWLAND BRUSH
- ASPEN
- PINE
- SWAMP CONIFER
- FLOWAGE
- RED OAK
- UPLAND GRASS
- BOG
- PARKING LOT
- DITCH
- SNOWMOBILE TRAIL
- PUBLIC USE NATURAL AREA

DEER CREEK WILDLIFE AREA

FIGURE 2 VEGETATION AND DEVELOPMENTS

APPENDIX

Master Plan Comments

By: Henry W. Kolka
Representing: Wild Resources Advisory Council
Date: December 28, 1981

General Review

The Wild Resource Advisory Council is extremely critical and disappointed in the limited perspective provided in the Deer Creek Wildlife Area Management Plan Concept Element by the Task Force during the first phase of the 1,490.46 acre property review. The Bureau of Wildlife Management deserves a much better assessment of the natural resources found on the property. An adequate inventory of all wildlife in the project area is an absolute necessity before any meaningful management program can be projected or proposed. Nothing could be more depressing than to expect a replacement of the Task Force to share in property management with the analysis of the resources base provided in the document.

DNR RESPONSE: Inventory needs to be added to text.

Comments and Recommendations

1. Background Information

This segment makes up about one-half of the Concept Element and the WRAC considers it a very adequate treatment of the topic. The Council recommends that in the fourth line of the last paragraph a correction be made for the word flowed. The Council assumes flooded is intended.

DNR RESPONSE: Corrected.

2. Goal

WRAC recommends the addition of and education following recreation.

DNR RESPONSE: Concur.

3. Annual Objectives and Annual Additional Benefits

These two sections are extremely well presented and wisely projected. The WRAC is very pleased with the designation identified under item 2 of the Annual Objectives. In item 3 under same heading, the Council recommends that the snowmobile trail be listed in the legend and shown on the chart on page 5 under Figure 2.

DNR RESPONSE: Concur.

4. Recommended Management and Development Program

A heading labeled Assessment of the Resources of the Deer Creek Wildlife Area should precede this heading.

a. First sentence of first paragraph

Reference is made to "various development has been carried out on this property" and "its a productive wildlife area." Both are excellent general statements. However neither without substantial proof mean a great deal.

b. Second sentence, second paragraph

Quote "Wildlife centered nonhunting use will be encouraged." The only meaningful encouragement of this activity would need substantial inventories of animal and plant species.

DNR RESPONSE: Existing heading is adequate. Inventory needs identified.

5. Figure 3

Needed to be legended and labeled on the chart are the following:

Snowmobile trail
Access and peripheral roads.

DNR RESPONSE: Snowmobile trail labeled. Road access self evident.

By: Forest Stearns
Representing: Scientific Areas Preservation Council
Date: December 1, 1981

We have reviewed the Deer Creek Wildlife Area Management Plan and concur with the objectives. The proposed 80-acre public use natural area was examined by the Scientific Areas Section botanists and found to merit this recognition.

By: R. W. Baker
Representing: Department of Transportation
Bureau of Environmental Analysis and Review
Date: December 10, 1981

We have reviewed the above-noted document and determined that the Management Plan will have no effect on transportation.

By: Henry Liebzeit
Representing: Wisconsin Conservation Congress
Date: December 24, 1981

Overall View

Not a large project, but glad we own it.

Major Comments

Dave Evenson visited with me on the project. It is written as well as it could be. Good piece of land for the state to own. Goals and objectives should easily be met.

We should have more land in these projects as long as the public has benefits to use them. There's lots of demand, but little money.

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