

Date: November 7, 1986

File Ref: 2300

To: Charles Higgs - Green Bay

From: James R. Huntoon



Subject: Miscauno Wildlife Area

The Conceptual Element of the subject Plan has been approved. I am enclosing extra copies of the final draft for your future use. I suggest a copy be retained on file by the District Master Plan Coordinator.

Please complete the Implementation Element of the Master Plan as outlined in the Master Plan Handbook and submit to this office by February 28, 1987.

Enc.

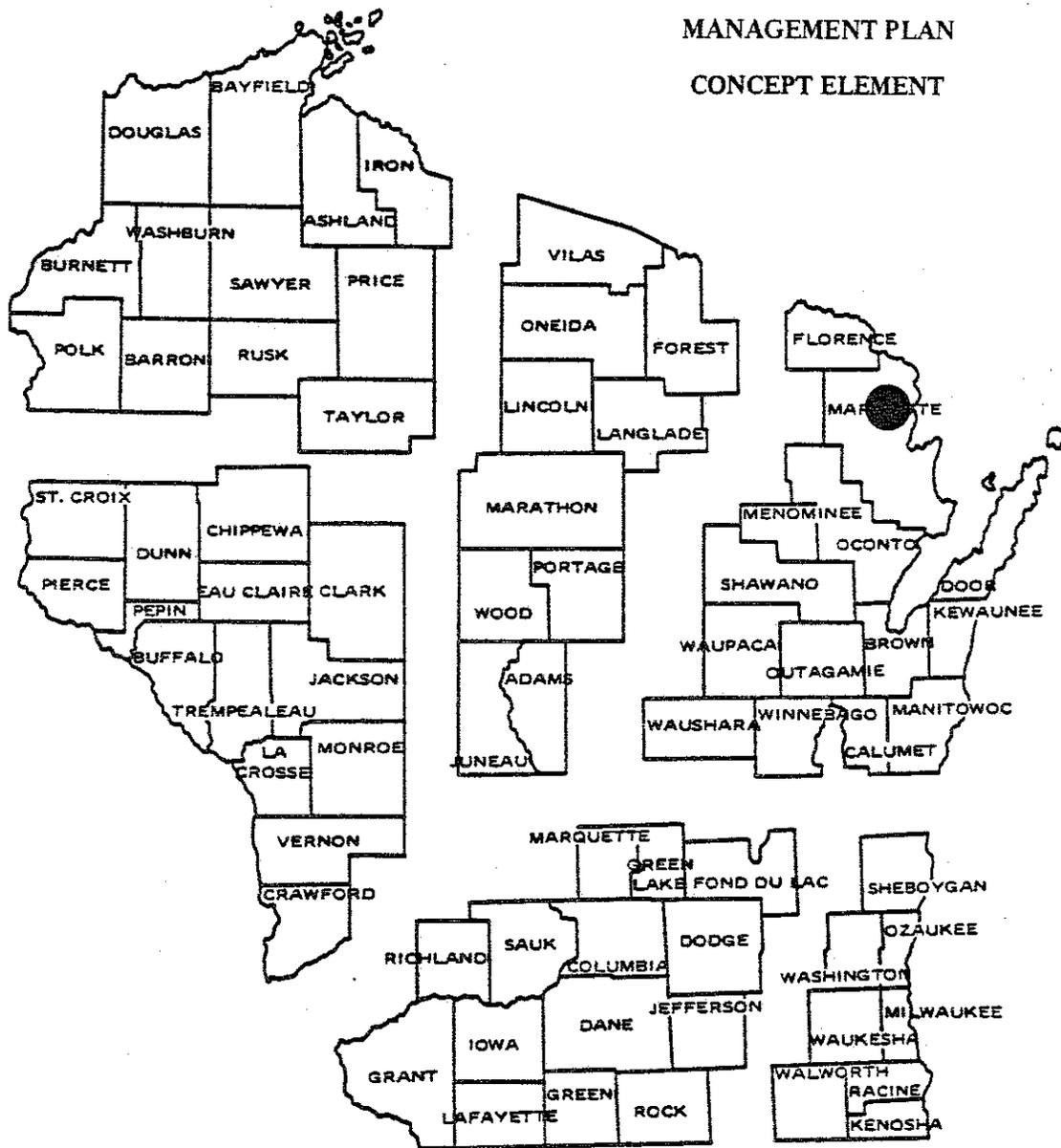
cc: C. Karr - AD/5

S. Miller - WM/4

MISCAUNO WILDLIFE AREA

MANAGEMENT PLAN

CONCEPT ELEMENT



Property Task Force

Leader: Roger Amundson, Wildlife Manager  
Robert Cook, Forester  
Milt Burdick, Fish Manager

Approved By: James R. Hutton

Date: 11/10/86



TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ADDITIONAL BENEFITS . . . . .	1
BACKGROUND INFORMATION . . . . .	1
RECOMMENDED MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM . . . . .	4
APPENDIX . . . . .	5

## GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND OTHER BENEFITS

### GOAL:

To manage a state-owned wildlife area for public fishing, forest game hunting, compatible recreation and education.

### ANNUAL OBJECTIVES:

1. Provide 400 participant-days of hunting opportunity as follows:

<u>Activities</u>	<u>Participant-Days</u>
a. Deer (bow/gun)	200
b. Ruffed grouse/woodcock	100
c. Other small game	100

2. Provide 100 participant-days of angling.
3. Protect a 555-acre Natural Area.

### ANNUAL ADDITIONAL BENEFITS:

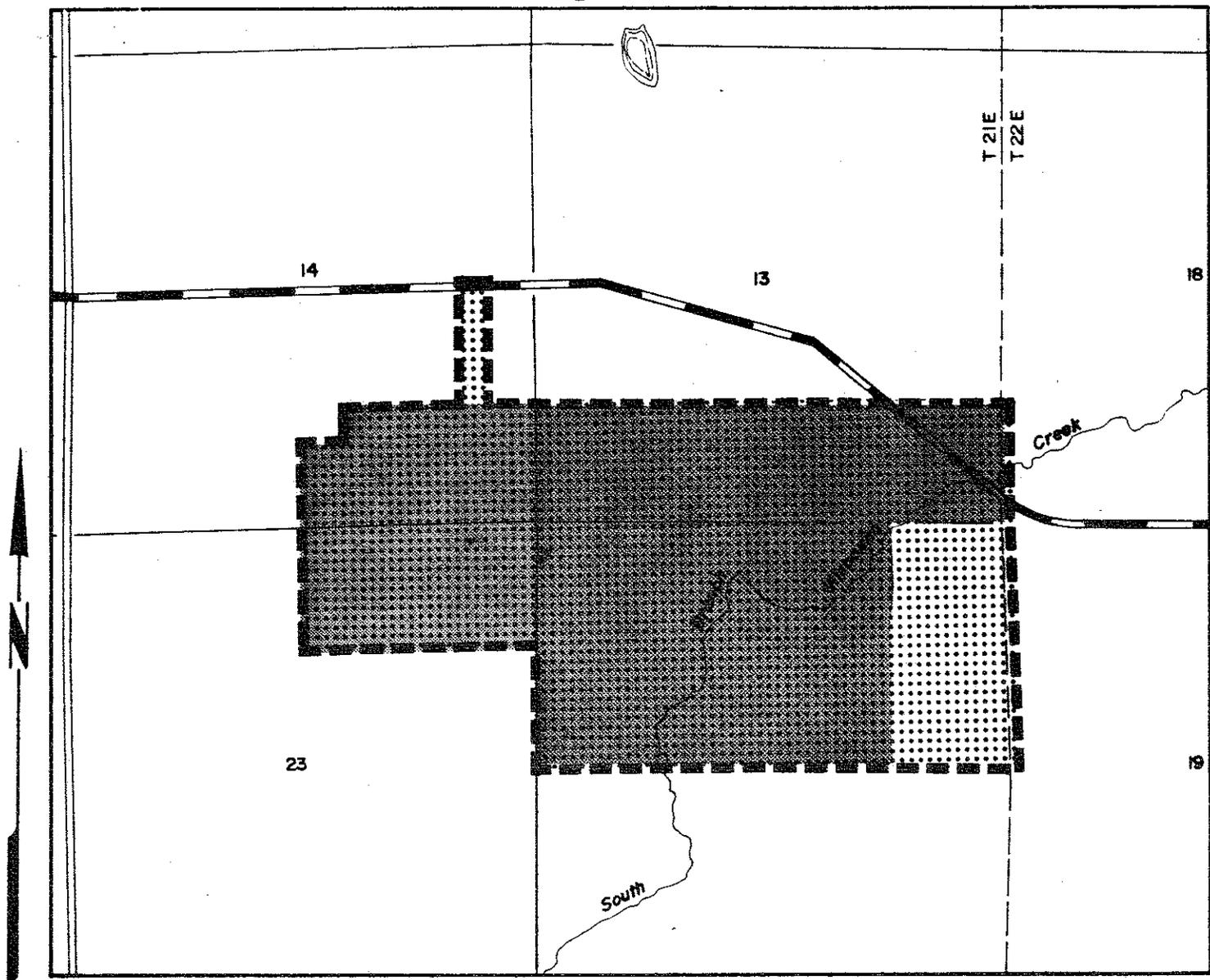
1. Accommodate 500 participant-days of other recreation and education including trapping, hiking, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, photography and nature observation.
2. Harvest forest products consistent with property objectives.
3. Contribute to the habitat of resident and migratory wildlife.

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION (Figure 2)

The Miscauno Wildlife Area is located in northeastern Marinette County in the Town of Beecher. It lies 70 miles north of Green Bay and 15 miles south of Iron Mountain, Michigan. It is just two miles east of Highway 141.

Currently, 634.99 acres of land are in state ownership. The majority of this area was purchased from Marinette County. No lands remain to be purchased within the boundaries. Acquisition is complete.

The wildlife area is surrounded by private lands except in Section 24 where the southern property line adjoins Marinette County Forest lands.



LEGEND

- ▬▬▬ BOUNDARY
- ⋯⋯⋯ STATE - OWNED
- ▬▬▬ EXISTING NATURAL AREA
- ▬▬▬ EXPANDED NATURAL AREA

MISCAUNO WILDLIFE AREA

FIGURE 2 LAND CONTROL

The area is probably an old glacial lake bed in ground moraine. Miscauno is a northern wet-mesic conifer forest of white cedar, balsam and spruce. It contains the headwaters of the South Branch of Miscauno Creek. The South Branch of the Miscauno is class I trout water. A good self-sustaining brook trout population exists. No trout stocking takes place. In addition to brook trout, white suckers, pearl dace, blacknose dace, redbelly dace, finescale dace, creek chub, brassy minnows, central mudminnow, fathead minnows, and brook stickleback are known to be present in the stream.

The headwater springs support a rich ground layer of mosses, lichens and orchids.

The uplands along the perimeter of the area are mainly aspen, oak and pine cutover.

<u>Cover Type</u>	<u>Acreage</u>
Swamp conifers	335
Fir-Spruce	23
Pine	15
Northern Hardwoods	111
Swamp Hardwoods	30
Aspen	53
Upland brush	28
Lowland brush	34
Stream	2
Right of way	3
Total	<u>635</u>

Miscauno was originally purchased as a deer yard. Some experimental cutting was conducted by the Lake States Forest Experimental Station over a period of 20 years. The area has never been heavily used by deer, and yard management efforts have been discontinued.

A series of small jackpine, cedar, and aspen timber sales have been conducted over the years. In the early 1960's small food patches were established in the eastern part of the project but were ultimately allowed to return to forest. The swamp has not been disturbed for 75 years.

In 1971, a portion of the property (155 acres) was designated a Natural Area. This designation was to protect the cedar swamp and the ground layer association. The department conducted a biological reconnaissance of the area in August of 1980 and found the area to be rich in understory species with several orchid species present. By agreement with the Bureau of Endangered Resources, the remainder of the property is managed as a buffer to the Natural Area.

Public use has not been high. Hunting for deer and ruffed grouse along the perimeter of the swamp and for snowshoe hare throughout has provided some public recreation. Limited angling for brook trout occurs in Miscauno Creek close to the point where it leaves the property. Snowmobile use, common on the property in the 1970's has dwindled in recent years.

RECOMMENDED MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Ownership on the Miscauno Wildlife Area is complete, and no further acquisition should be planned.

Management activities should focus on the preservation and protection of the Natural Area. The Natural Area should be expanded to include all state-owned land except for 80 acres in the southeast corner of the wildlife area. The acreage of the expanded Natural Area is 555 acres and the remaining 80 acres will be managed for wildlife production.

4142N

APPENDIX  
Management Plan Comments

By: Cynthia A. Morehouse  
Representing: Department of Transportation  
Date: February 20, 1986

We have reviewed the Management Plan for the Miscauno Wildlife Area in Marinette County. We have determined that the Recommended Management and Development Program would not have significant adverse effects on our transportation facilities or interests.

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on this Management Plan.

By: Daniel Felker  
Representing: Wisconsin Conservation Congress  
Date: February 20, 1986

It is always nice to have land available to the public for recreational purposes as more private land is posted each day. Page 3 (no trout stocking takes place) would be nice to see some stocking again especially in early part of season when fishing pressure is high. 20 years ago I personally did well fishing early in the season in this area. Stream improvements would also help.

It is the feeling of the sportsman in Marinette County that it would be nice if the DNR would plant a variety of food crops for the wildlife in this area. Some sportsmen felt this was done on this property years ago.

DNR RESPONSE: The Miscauno brook is a Class I trout stream (with adequate natural reproduction). Department policy does not include stocking Class I streams. The poor soils present on this property make crop production very impractical. It is also unlikely that a farming effort would increase wildlife numbers significantly.

By: Stanley Nichols  
Representing: Wisconsin Geological and Natural History Survey  
Date: February 13, 1986

This document provides so little information that it is worthless as a planning or management tool.

Page 1 - The participant days add up to no where near 1,000.

DNR RESPONSE: Text modifications have been made.

By: Dick Lindberg  
Representing: Wild Resources Advisory Council  
Date: April 17, 1986

The Wild Resources Advisory Council recognizes this property as being a Scientific Area. Therefore, the Council will rely on the judgment of the Scientific Areas Preservation Council for the response. The property has no other wild resource values.

DNR RESPONSE: The Department appreciates the time taken to review this plan.

By: Richard W. Dexter  
Representing: State Historical Society of Wisconsin  
Date: April 3, 1986

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the Miscauno Wildlife Area Master Plan.

There are no structures located in the wildlife area that are either listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

There are no known archeological sites in the study area, but the area has never been surveyed for such resources. The management plan indicates that no construction is proposed for this wildlife area. Therefore, as yet undiscovered archeological sites which may be present are not threatened. However, if construction is proposed at some future time, please contact us again so that we can advise you whether an archeological survey is necessary.

DNR RESPONSE: The Historical Society will be consulted prior to commencing any ground disturbing activities.

By: Forest Stearns  
Representing: Natural Areas Preservation Council  
Date: March 28, 1986

The Natural Areas Preservation Council has reviewed the Miscauno Wildlife Management Area Plan and concurs in general with the concept element. We have discussed certain minor concerns with the Natural Areas staff, concerns that we both shared regarding timber harvest, buffer identification and land use classification. We understand that the Bureau comments have dealt with and explained those concerns satisfactorily. We greatly appreciate the support of the Bureau of Wildlife Management in enlarging and managing the valuable Natural Area included here.

I am personally pleased to see this plan. It reminded me of the research efforts of the, then, Lake States Forest Experiment Station when they were involved in work on lowland forest regeneration at Miscauno many years ago. During the later years of that work I served as project leader for the USFS Lake States Wildlife Habitat Project.

DNR RESPONSE: The Department appreciates the comments and support of the Natural Areas Preservation Council.

By: James Siek  
Representing: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Date: March 6, 1986

We believe this is a good to excellent overall view as expressed.

4142N