

CORRESPONDENCE/MEMORANDUM

STATE OF WISCONSIN

Date: January 11, 1983
To: Charles Higgs - Green Bay
From: James R. Huntoon *JRH*
Subject: Outagamie Wildlife Area

File Ref: 2300

*For your files
I forwarded orig
on to Walt*

I have approved the subject Plan and am enclosing extra copies of the final draft for your future use. I suggest the original be retained on file by the District Master Plan Coordinator. The original will serve as a district reference copy and provide the base for accommodating any future photocopying needs.

Please complete the Implementation Element of the Master Plan as outlined in the Master Plan Handbook and submit to this office by April 4, 1983.

DG:df

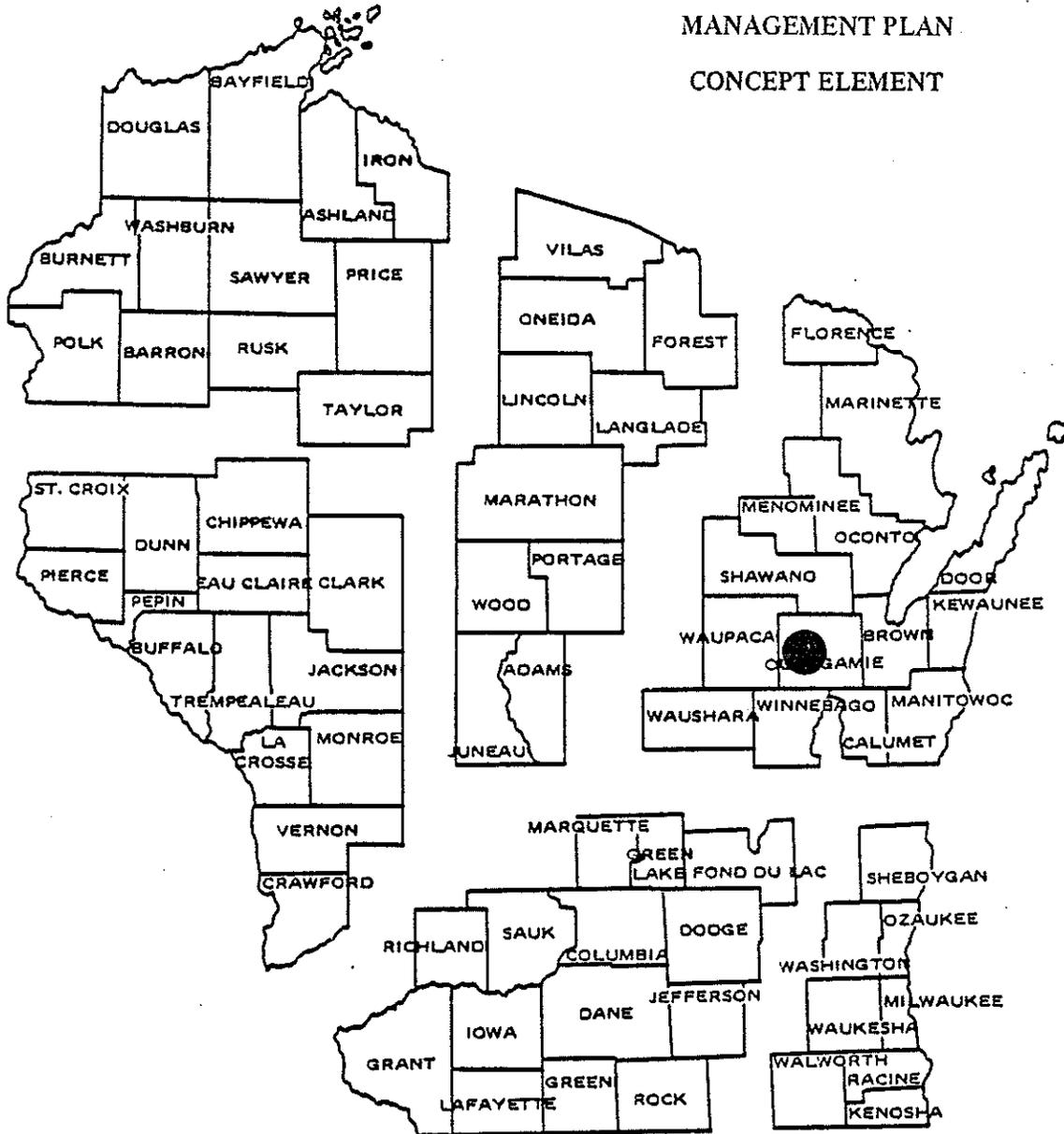
Enc:

cc: R. Nicotera - ADM/5
J. Keener - WM/4

OUTAGAMIE WILDLIFE AREA

MANAGEMENT PLAN

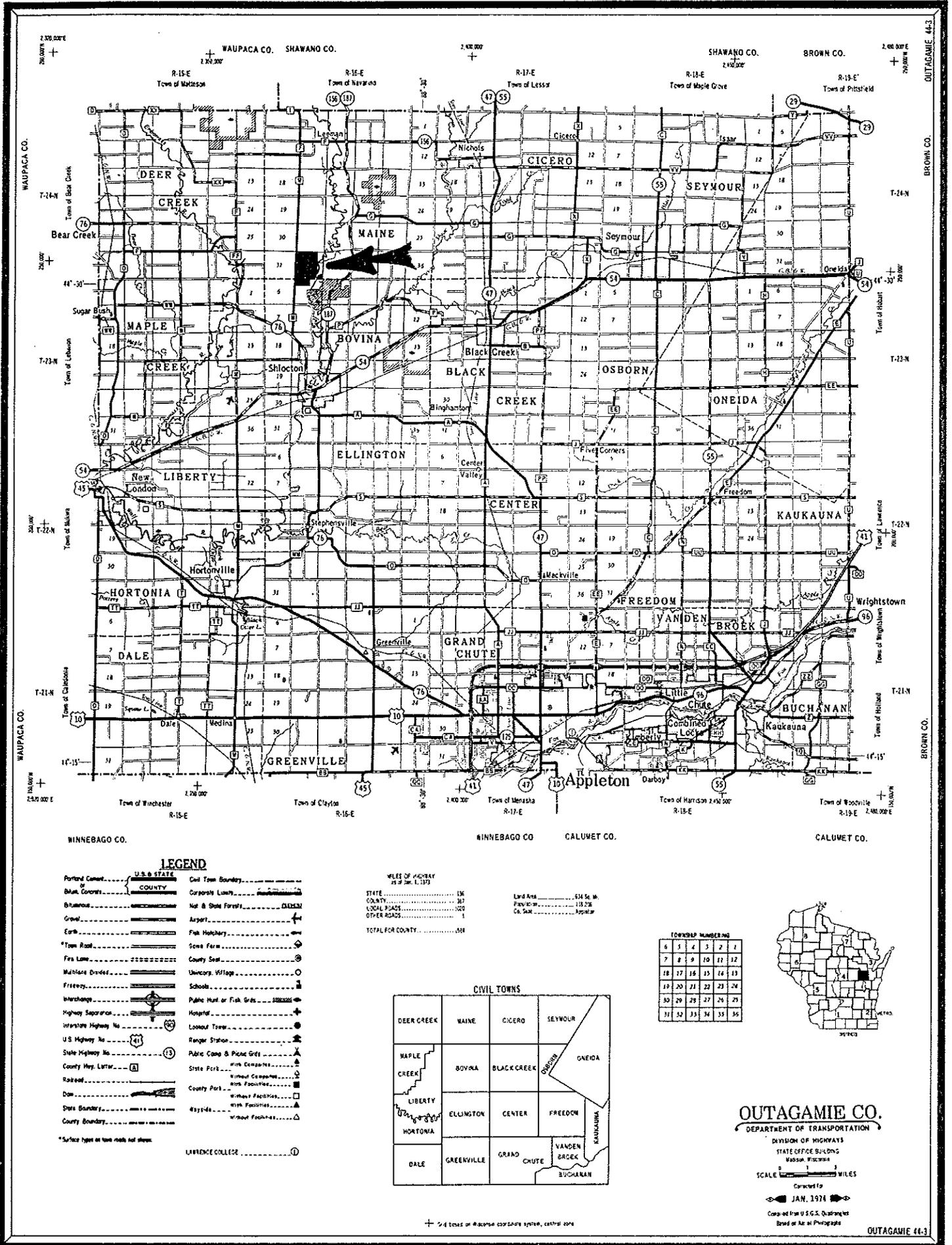
CONCEPT ELEMENT



Property Task Force

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

Approved By: J. P. Huntington
Date: 12-31-82



- LEGEND**
- Portland Cement..... U.S. STATE
 - Black Concrete..... COUNTY
 - Disturbance.....
 - Creek.....
 - Canal.....
 - *Town Road.....
 - Fire Lane.....
 - Multiple Divided.....
 - Freeway.....
 - Interchange.....
 - Highway Separation.....
 - Interstate Highway No.....
 - U.S. Highway No.....
 - State Highway No.....
 - County Reg. Letter.....
 - Roadbed.....
 - Dam.....
 - State Boundary.....
 - County Boundary.....
- Civil Town Boundary.....
 - Corporate Limits.....
 - Nat. & State Forest.....
 - Airport.....
 - Fish Hatchery.....
 - Game Farm.....
 - County Seat.....
 - Unincorporated Village.....
 - Schools.....
 - Public Mill or Fish Gilt.....
 - Hospital.....
 - Lookout Tower.....
 - Ranger Station.....
 - Public Camp & Picnic Gilt.....
 - State Park.....
 - County Park.....
 - State Boundary.....
 - County Boundary.....
- *Surface type as shown on last sheet.

MILES OF HIGHWAY
as of Jan. 1, 1974

| | |
|-------------------------|-------------|
| STATE | 136 |
| COUNTY | 361 |
| LOCAL ROADS | 1000 |
| OTHER ROADS | 1 |
| TOTAL FOR COUNTY | 1538 |

Land Area..... 534 Sq. Mi.
 Population..... 118,276
 Co. Seat..... Appleton

TOWNSHIP NUMBERING

| | | | | | |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 6 | 5 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| 18 | 17 | 16 | 15 | 14 | 13 |
| 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| 30 | 29 | 28 | 27 | 26 | 25 |
| 31 | 32 | 33 | 34 | 35 | 36 |

CIVIL TOWNS

| | | | |
|-------------|------------|-------------|--------------|
| DEER CREEK | MAINE | CICERO | SEYMOUR |
| MAPLE CREEK | BOVINA | BLACK CREEK | ONEIDA |
| LIBERTY | ELLINGTON | CENTER | FREEDOM |
| HORTONIA | GREENVILLE | GRAND CHUTE | VANDEN BROEK |
| DALE | | | BUCHANAN |



OUTAGAMIE CO.
 DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
 DIVISION OF HIGHWAYS
 STATE OFFICE BUILDING
 WAUKESHA, WISCONSIN

SCALE 0 1 2 3 4 5 MILES

Corrected to
 JAN. 1974

Copyright © U.S.G.S. Outagamie
 Based on Aerial Photographs

FIGURE 1 LOCATOR

OUTAGAMIE 44-3

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GOAL, OBJECTIVES AND OTHER BENEFITS

Goal

To manage a state-owned wildlife area for wetland and forest wildlife, walleye production and to provide public hunting, fishing and trapping opportunities as well as accommodate other compatible recreation.

Annual Objectives

1. Provide 2,150 participant days of hunting, fishing and trapping recreation as follows:

| <u>Activities</u> | <u>Participant Days</u> |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| a. Ducks | 1,000 |
| b. Deer (bow and gun) | 550 |
| c. Ruffed grouse/Woodcock | 150 |
| d. Furbearers | 300 |
| e. Other game | 150 |
| f. Fishing | 500 |

2. Produce about 15,000 harvestable size walleyes for the Winnebago River System.
3. Produce 0.5 ducks per acre on 235 acres of permanent water (120 ducks).
4. Harvest 85 cords of merchantable timber off 6 acres compatible with wildlife objectives.

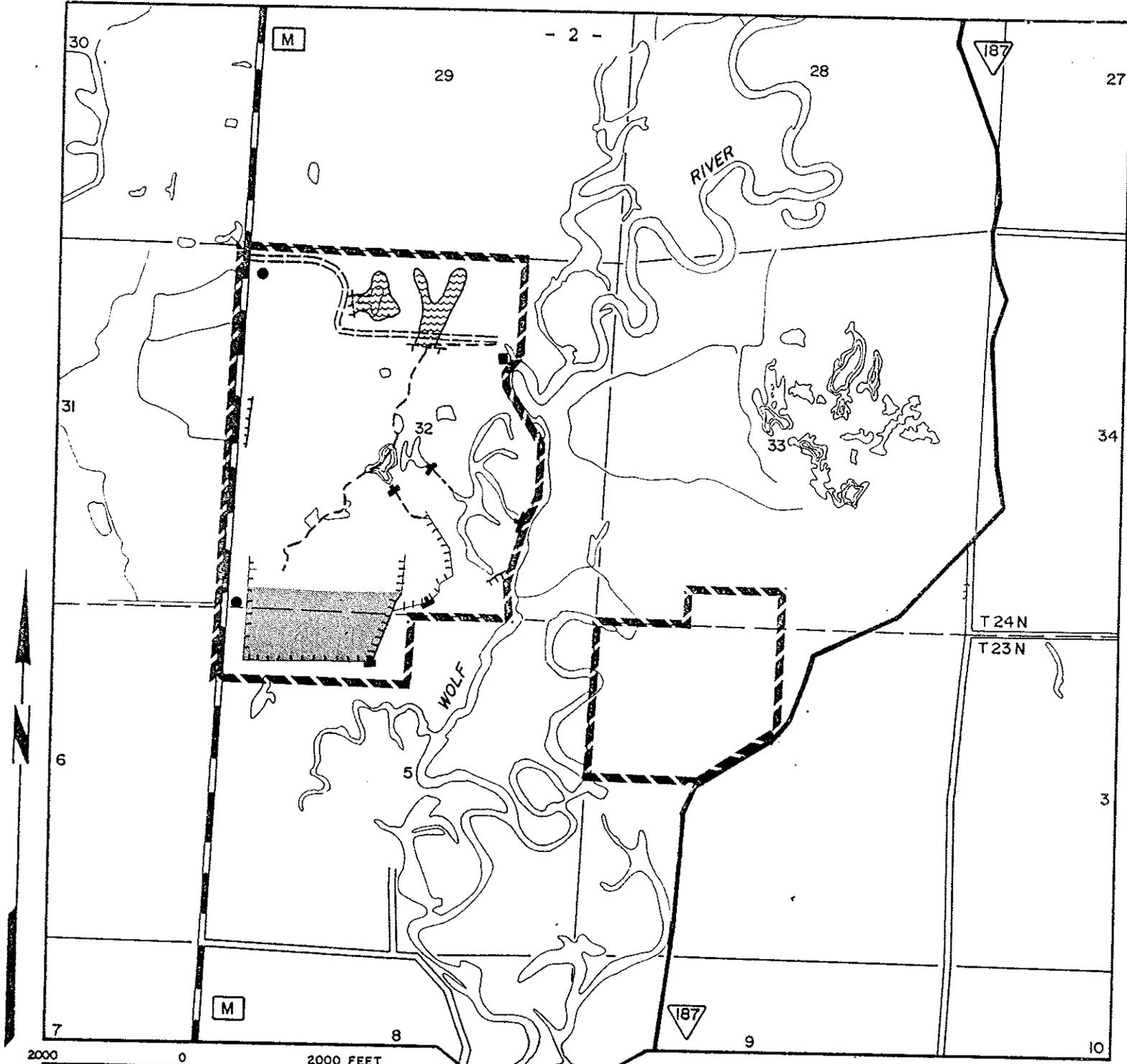
Annual Additional Benefits

1. Accommodate 200 participant days of compatible recreation and education including cross-country skiing, hiking, berry picking, snowshoeing, nature observation, and education.
2. Contribute to the habitat of nongame wildlife including migratory and resident endangered and threatened species.

RECOMMENDED MANAGEMENT (Figure 2)

Most of the major development on the complex is already accomplished and, as it exists today, it is a productive property which should be classified as Fish and Wildlife Management Area (RD₂) in its entirety. Future management will consist mainly of posting, maintaining dikes, cleaning wood duck boxes, maintaining the fish production in the marsh, and pumping water when necessary. Fence maintenance with adjoining landowners is not required.

Because an electric pump has already been installed on the wildlife flowage, the cost of pumping is not excessive. Pumping has not been required in most years. Two small flowages on the north end of the wildlife property were temporarily diked off with sand bags and gravel in 1981. If the water source is adequate, these flowages should be made more permanent.



- LEGEND
- PROJECT BOUNDARY
 - ROAD
 - DIKE
 - DITCH
 - TIN WHISTLE
 - PUMP
 - PROPOSED DIKE
 - PROPOSED FLOWAGE
 - CLOSED AREA
 - PARKING LOTS

OUTAGAMIE WILDLIFE AREA

FIGURE 2 EXISTING AND PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Game production remains the primary management objective on most of the complex, with waterfowl receiving the most management effort. Hunting and fishing will be emphasized as the principle uses, and wildlife related activities will be encouraged.

Except for 40 acres of sharecropped land, there is little opportunity for establishing nesting cover for wildlife. The major emphasis for waterfowl production will be brood water and nesting structures (wood duck boxes).

The walleye spawning marsh will be brushed periodically to prevent the invasion of dogwood and willow, a constant problem to grass-sedge maintenance. If matted vegetation continues to accumulate, a prescribed burn may be necessary to insure the grass-sedge does not deteriorate.

Silvicultural 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 188 acres of aspen on the property will be maintained and clear cuts should be designed not to exceed 20 acres to maximize the interspersed forest age classes. Swamp hardwood type (346 acres) will be maintained, with swamp white oak favored where possible.

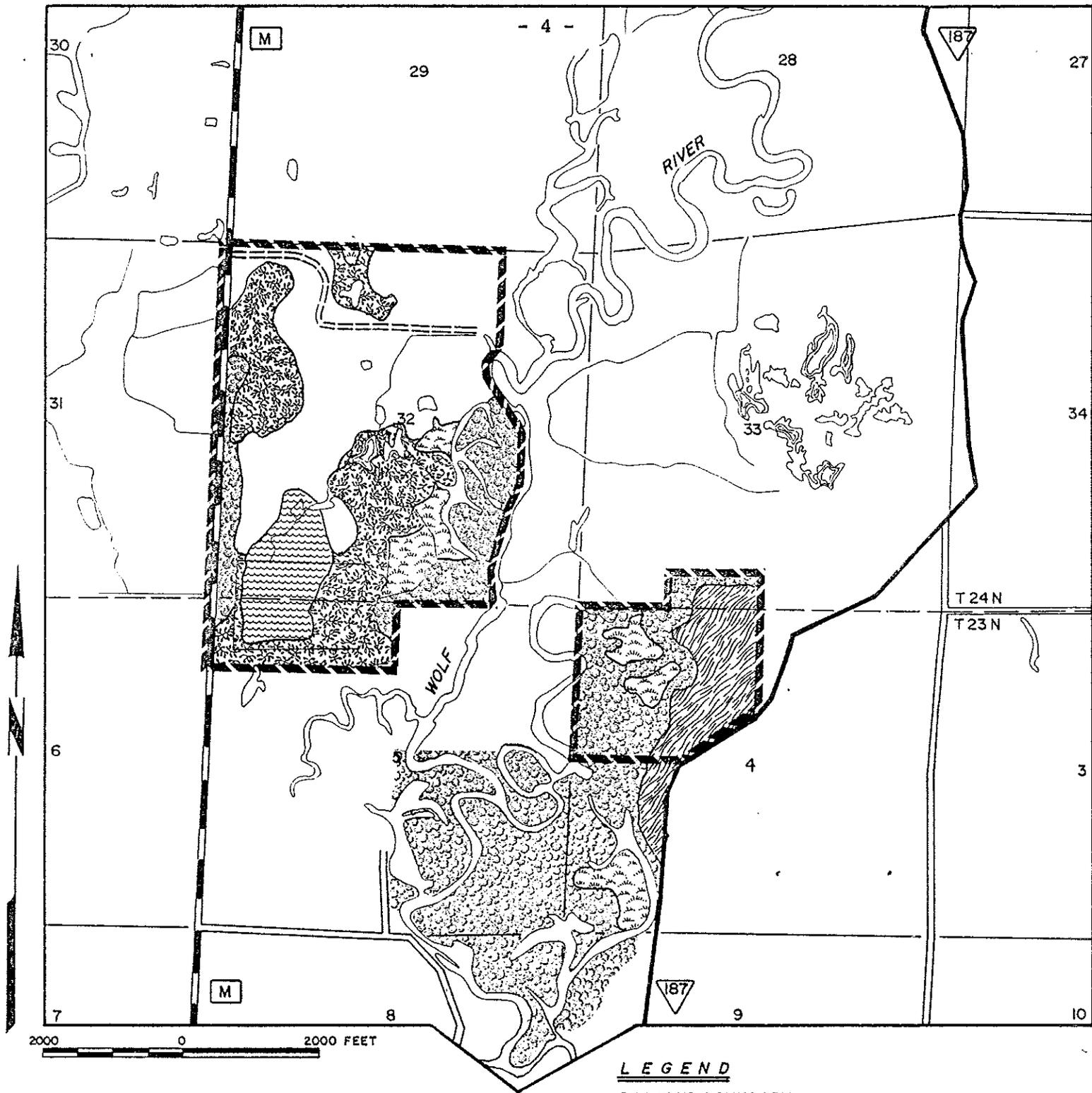
Management of the forest lands will be in accordance with the guidelines in the Silvicultural and Aesthetics Management Handbook and based on Forest Reconnaissance completed in 1979.

| <u>Cover Type (Figure 3)</u> | <u>Acres</u> |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| Aspen | 188 |
| Swamp hardwood | 346 |
| Fresh meadow (Type II) | 35 |
| Shallow fresh meadow (Type III) | 169 |
| Deep marsh (Type IV) | 22 |
| Open water (Type V) | 23 |
| Brush marsh (Type VI) | 124 |
| Agricultural land | 40 |
| Upland brush | 10 |

The wildlife boundary (Figure 4) should be adjusted to incorporate all state-owned lands including the adjoining remnant fishery area (Spoehr's Marsh).

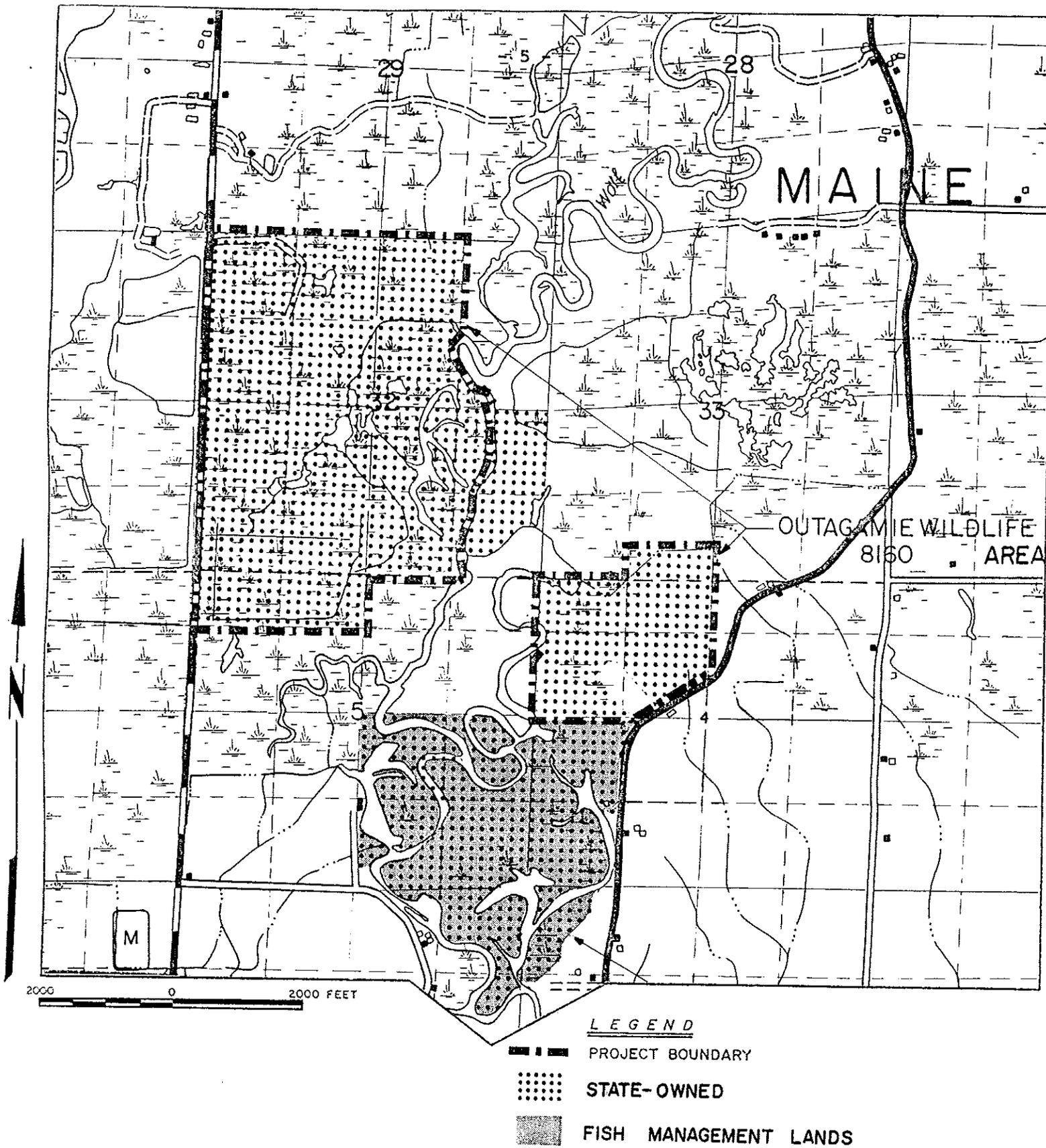
All areas proposed for development will be examined for the presence of endangered and threatened wild animals and wild plants. If listed species are found, development will be suspended until the District Endangered and Nongame Species Coordinator is consulted, the site evaluated, and appropriate protective measures taken.

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.



OUTAGAMIE WILDLIFE AREA

FIGURE 3 VEGETATION



OUTAGAMIE WILDLIFE AREA

FIGURE 4 OWNERSHIP

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.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Outagamie Wildlife Area is located in northwest Outagamie County in the towns of Main and Bovina. The complex lies 4 miles north of Shiocton and 23 miles northwest of Appleton.

The wildlife area lies in the Wolf River floodplain adjoining the river, and most of the area is flooded annually. To the northeast and west are large privately-owned hunting clubs developed and used primarily for hunting waterfowl and deer. South, corn and cabbage are the predominant farm crops. Soils on the lower portions of both areas are Markey and Cathro mucks; uplands are primarily Keowns silt loam.

Cattail, wild rice, willow, bulrush, coontail and duckweed are common plant species in the flowages and oxbows. Adjacent to flowages, willow, tag alder and canary grass are dominant. Uplands are forested with aspen, soft maple, ash and swamp white oak with understory of gray dogwood, red osier dogwood and various sapling tree species. About 40 acres of cropfields exist east of the river.

Originally, a 412-acre parcel in the core of the wildlife property was tax delinquent and reverted to Outagamie County. In 1940, a 20-year lease was negotiated between Outagamie County and the Wisconsin Conservation Department to use this area as a public hunting grounds. The lease permitted use of the lands, but it did not authorize the lessee to develop and manage the lands by soil manipulation. With intense interest and help from local sportsmen's clubs, this parcel was purchased from the county in 1958. To date, 690.43 acres have been purchased for a total cost of \$19,894.02.

A nearby remnant fishery area (Spoehr's Marsh) containing 307.33 acres was first established in 1962. The property was purchased for habitat protection purposes and provides local fishing opportunities. Spoehr's Marsh is identified as one of 19 major walleye spawning marshes in the Winnebago system. Experimental management practices (brush removal, removal of a road bed and widening of the inlet) in 1963 resulted in increased egg survival and fry production from the marsh (reference DNR Technical Bulletin 45 by Gordon R. Priegel, 1970). In 1981, brush removal was completed on 20 acres of the walleye spawning marsh.

During 1960, dragline operations on the wildlife area constructed 6,500 feet of dike, creating a flowage of approximately 145 acres. Other short dikes and plugs on old oxbows created another 40 acres of flowage area. Five water control structures and water transfer ditches connect the various flowages. In the early 1960's, a diesel pump was installed on the Wolf River to permit flooding of the flowages during dry periods. This was replaced in 1969 by a permanent 15 horsepower electric lift pump which is still serviceable.

About 50 acres of the main flowage is closed to hunting and attracts ducks and a few geese in the fall. Waterfowl also use nearby private areas and provide pass shooting for hunters.

More recently, management has included building 2 parking lots, maintaining 25 wood duck boxes, aspen regeneration and maintaining the dikes. Two short dikes subject to spring overflowing have been extensively rebuilt.

In addition to waterfowl, other game found on the property include deer, ruffed grouse, woodcock and cottontail rabbits. Furbearers include muskrat, mink, red fox, beaver, otter and raccoon. This is a very popular bow and gun deer hunting area.

Carp are present in the impoundment and fish found in the Wolf River move in during the spring floods, but no public fishing has ever been observed. Leopard frogs (threatened) are abundant. Also common are great blue herons, little green herons, sandhill cranes and great egrets (threatened). A double crested cormorant (endangered) has been seen on the property.

ANALYSIS OF ALTERNATIVES

1. Decrease size or management level. It might be possible to eliminate portions of the property if hunters were willing to tolerate more crowding. However, decreasing the size of the complex would limit management options and prevent meeting reasonable objectives. Management effort on the properties could be decreased only if a reduction in use levels was acceptable to the public, which is unlikely. Not maintaining dikes, allowing timber to go well beyond normal rotation, or letting the spawning marsh grow to brush will reduce the fish and wildlife production capabilities of the habitat and, subsequently, provide reduced levels of public recreation.
2. Change closed area status. Currently, a small closed area (50 acres) exists on the main flowage of the wildlife area. This closed area probably contributes to duck hunting beyond the opening weekend by providing a resting area for waterfowl. Negative features of a closed area include loss of hunting space, commitment of enforcement time and a firing line problem. Because the closed area is very small by state standards, it could be changed either by enlargement or by elimination. However, despite its small size, it appears that the closed area "works", but should be monitored annually.
3. Expand Ownership. Most of the land lying between the current state ownership is within the floodplain of the Wolf River. While the habitat in this area could provide additional public recreational opportunities, projected use levels do not appear justified in light of other state priorities, i.e., other state properties which provide more of a return for the dollar.
4. Manage at a more intensive level. In its early years, the flowage area was farmed and flooded for attracting fall migration of waterfowl. However, cropping was always difficult. Currently, every logical impoundment is in place or identified as a proposed flowage. Further waterfowl development could include dug ponds or ditches but are quite costly. The greatest potential for increased waterfowl development lies in either nesting structures or nesting cover. About 40 acres are being sharecropped with the intention of seeding the fields to nesting cover. In addition, about 10 acres of old crop fields which have converted to upland brush since Department ownership could be reclaimed for nesting cover if costs are not prohibitive.
5. Status quo. (Selected alternative) Because of the limited potential for providing high levels of public recreation, maintaining the fish and wildlife ownerships in its existing condition with minor development appears justified. This alternative is elaborated on in the Recommended Management Section.

AGENCY AND ADVISORY GROUP COMMENTS

Date: July 1, 1982
By: Forest Stearns
Representing: Scientific Areas Preservation Council

We have reviewed the Outagamie Wildlife Area Master Plan and find no conflicts with our program interests.

Since the property adjoins or is near the Spoehr's Marsh Fishery Area, extensive wetlands in the Wolf River flood plain between these two properties might be considered as a logical addition. Planning for these two properties should be coordinated so that appropriate boundaries could be determined based on all department program interests.

DNR RESPONSE: The plan has been adjusted to combine the fish and wildlife properties. Additional purchases cannot be justified adequately.

Date: July 21, 1982
By: Roy C. Willey, Jr.
Representing: East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

The East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission has reviewed the Outagamie Wildlife Area Master Plan as it relates to local and regional plans. East Central has no comments on the master plan other than to state it is consistent with plans for the surrounding area. The Commission, therefore, supports the Recommended Management and Development Program contained in the plan.

By: Henry Kolka
Representing: Wild Resources Advisory Council
Date: June 30, 1982

General Review

The 2 blocks of state-owned property of 555 acres in the Wolf River floodplain, most of it subject to annual flooding, has been exceptionally well planned for its major use. Since large privately owned hunting clubs flank this state-owned piece of property, it is most necessary and just that the interested public have a place to share in the seasonal action. Water manipulations by the managers have boosted the capabilities of waterfowl regeneration and fall harvests of target game species. Wild Resources Advisory Council is impressed with Dave Evenson, Ron Jones and Lee Meyers, the Property Task Force presentation of management programs.

The nonhunting activities of the wildlife areas are limited because of physical nature of the property and limited access. It is this segment of users that could benefit most from full inventories of plant and animal species. The WRAC recommends that substantial inventories be secured of all species of wildlife so that this base data can act as a checklist when the next phase of property evaluation rolls around.

DNR RESPONSE: Inventory needs noted.

Comments and Recommendations

1. Background Information

Excellent history and presentation of water management for the wildlife area. WRAC has three comments on this heading.

A. Refuge.

About 50 acres of refuge closed to hunting. An excellent proposal in the estimation of WRAC. We suggest that it be delineated on one of the figures, preferably on Figure 2, and also that it be legended.

B. Wildlife.

To clarify the intent of the paragraph, WRAC recommends the insertion of other game following the comma after waterfowl and wildlife.

C. Inventory.

The WRAC recommends that besides the fine list of the nongame water birds that inventories of songbirds, mammals (nongame), reptiles, other amphibians and plants be expanded.

DNR RESPONSE: Closed area added to Figure 2. Text modified.

2. Goal, Objectives and Other Benefits.

Very appropriate and excellently stated the WRAC recommends a couple of adjustments.

A. Goal

The Council, in light of item 1 of Annual Additional Benefits, recommends the addition of and education to the end of the sentence.

B. Annual Additional Benefits (item 2).

WRAC recommends the deletion of the word other and replacing it with nongame. Further, WRAC recommends the insertion of and resident between migratory and endangered.

DNR RESPONSE: Concur; text modified.

3. Recommended Management and Development Program.

Very realistic and practical proposal. WRAC suggests one modification to paragraph two, page 3. The Council suggests that the sentence begin with Game preceding wildlife. To the Council this sets the true meaning of the paragraph.

DNR RESPONSE: Concur; text modified.

4. Figures

WRAC considers them very appropriate and meaningful to the text. There are some questions that have arisen.

A. Figure 2

The chart shows some 40 acres plus of state-owned land east of the big block project boundary. This discrepancy should be explained in the Concept Element.

B. Figure 3

Refer to A under item one of WRAC Comments and Recommendations.

DNR RESPONSE: Acreage shown was in error. Figures corrected.

By: Outagamie County Planning Department

Date: June 28, 1982

1. Overall View

The property has enormous potential for public utilization to meet goal. The proposed activities are very acceptable.

Major Comments:

The property, along with its compatible adjacent land uses, offers greater duck hunting opportunities with the proposed development. This complements many of the concerns cited in the county's outdoor recreation plan which is currently being updated. The planning department is in full support of the plan and hopes the management and development program receives favorable consideration for approval.

Date: June 30, 1982

By: Henry R. Liebzeit

Representing: Wisconsin Conservation Congress

As this plan shows, and as the Department knows, there are a limited amount of wildlife areas in Outagamie County. Public use of all types as the plan shows are very important to all concerned in this county.

Every acre that we have is being used and needs to be preserved for both fish and wildlife. Both fish and game managers in this area have done an outstanding job getting every mile out of the limited dollars and time that they spend in Outagamie County.

Both fish and game managers follow the multi-use concept and the Outagamie Wildlife Area is an example. Ditches, dikes and brush removal have been done and the objectives of the plan with its limited size are above average, and maximum use by the public is apparent.

What needs to be done to improve this area is to expand the boundaries to include Spoehr's Marsh and that area not owned by the state, in Sec. 5, Town of Bovina, this would include the Erke, Gallum, and Remick property. This total land involves about 275 acres. This purchase would block in with the rest of our state land, making more land available for public use.

The small [50 acre] refuge in the project could be moved with this added land purchase. Ducks and geese are held in the area with this refuge, and is needed because of the private land ownership that is north, east, and west; all being hunted privately.

The suggested land would benefit fish and wildlife for most of it is wetlands, the few that remain would not be developed if the state owned it, and held it in public trust.

Please refer to the enclosed map and area penciled in red, it is the suggested land purchase, the priority of this land should be changed because of it being wetland, and the need for existing property improvement.

DNR RESPONSE: The Department recognizes the concern for providing more public use areas in Outagamie County. While the plan does incorporate Spoehr's Marsh into the wildlife area boundary, program constraints and budget limitations prevents further expansion. The use of public hunting and fishing leases will be explored as an alternative to meeting public needs.

1113M