

STATE OF WISCONSIN
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
Madison, Wisconsin

ITEM RECOMMENDED FOR NATURAL RESOURCES BOARD AGENDA

TO THE SECRETARY: L. P. Voigt - 14

Date May 7, 1975

FROM: D. L. Weizenicker

SUBJECT: Approval of master plan - Copper Culture Mounds State Park, Oconto County.

1. To be presented at May Board meeting by Dave Weizenicker.

2. Appearances requested by the public:
Name

Representing whom?

3. Reference materials to be used: Master plan narrative and conceptual development plan.

4. Summary: The Department has completed a master plan for the 46.8-acre Copper Culture Mounds State Park located in the City of Oconto, Oconto County. Emphasis will be placed on preserving and interpreting for the public the archaeological features at this historical park.

The environmental impact assessment supports the Department's recommendations and is compatible with the master plan.

5. Recommendation: That the Board approve the master plan for Copper Culture Mounds State Park.

APPROVED:

S. W. Welsh 5/9/75
Mr. Welsh Administrator Date

DM
Mr. Mackie ~~Administrator~~ Date

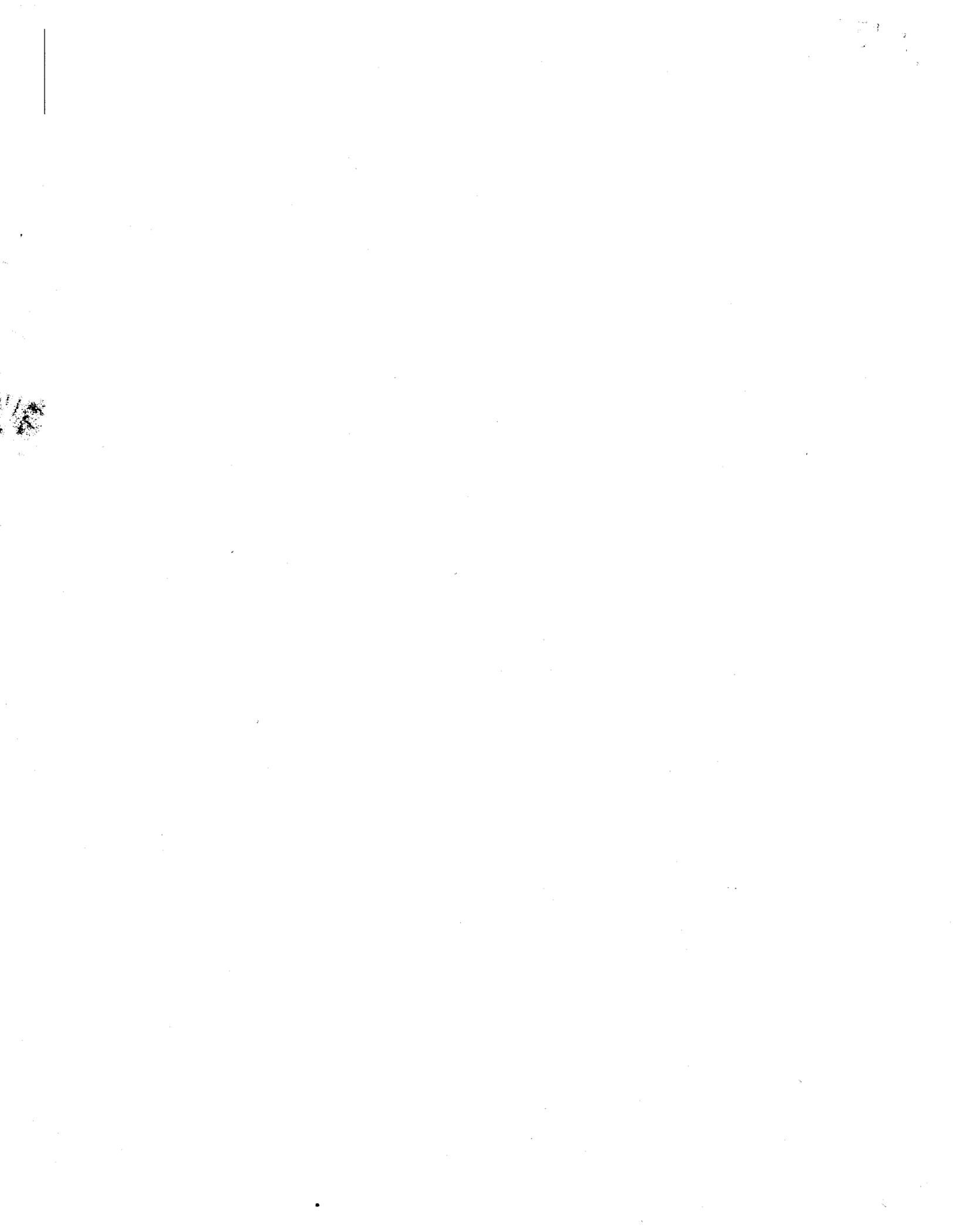
N 5/9
Secretary L. P. Voigt Date

Attach.

- cc: Miss Korn - 14 R. W. Cook - Marinette
S. DeBoer - Green Bay
C. Higgs - Marinette
→ J. L. Treichel - 8

Signed:

D. L. Weizenicker
D. L. Weizenicker, Assistant Director
Bureau of Parks & Recreation



Department of Natural Resources
INTRA-DEPARTMENT
MEMORANDUM

Madison
Station

Date..... May 7, 1975

IN REPLY REFER TO: 2510

TO: L. P. Voigt - 14
FROM: D. L. Weizenicker
SUBJECT: Copper Culture Mounds State Park - Approval of Master Plan

Board approval is requested for the master plan for Copper Culture Mounds State Park.

History

Believed to be among the earliest metal smiths in the world the "Old Copper Culture" people were also the earliest known inhabitants of what is now Wisconsin. They were living in the Oconto Area between 5500 and 5600 B.C. It is estimated that there are about 200 burials at the Oconto site, many of which remain undisturbed. Arrowheads, spearheads, bracelets and other tools and ornaments made of copper are preserved at the Oconto County Historical Society's museum in Oconto.

This historical-memorial State park was established in 1959 by legislative action.

Acquisition

The 46.8-acre park is comprised of the following parcels:

- | | |
|--|-------------------|
| 1. Donation by the Oconto County Historical Society (1959) | - 24.0 acres |
| 2. Purchased from County Dept. of Social Services (1971) | - 7.0 " |
| 3. Donation by the City of Oconto (1974) | - 12.5 " |
| 4. Donation by Oconto County (1975) | - 2.0 " |
| 5. City of Oconto street vacation (1975) | - 1.3 " |
| | <u>46.8 acres</u> |

No additional land acquisition or property boundary expansion is planned or needed.

Development

No recreational development has taken place on the site since the park was established. However, public access is provided by a section of Mill Street which serves as the park entrance road. A State historical

sign and marker exist explaining the "Copper Culture" and the Werrebroeck House, the historical home acquired from the Oconto County Department of Social Services.

Park Mission

The planning concept is for minimal development with major emphasis placed on the preservation and the interpretation for the park visitor of the archaeological and historical features of the site.

Public Input

All planning for the project has been closely coordinated with the Oconto Historical Society and the City and County of Oconto.

Proposed Development

Development of the property will be staged in two phases with the first phase to occur during the 1975-77 biennium and the second phase at some future date. The development items are as follows:

	<u>Estimated Cost</u>
<u>Phase I</u>	
1. Parking for 25 cars	\$ 9,000
2. Picnic tables (25)	1,250
3. Grills (10)	750
4. Toilet (8-unit combination pit toilet)	13,000
5. Active day use area site preparation (5 acres)	10,000
6. Well and hand pump	3,660
7. Signs and gate	5,500
8. .46 miles of trail	<u>1,000</u>
	\$44,160
 <u>Phase II</u>	
9. .4 miles of road (new entrance)	\$47,200
10. Interpretive devices (indoor and outdoor)	4,800
11. Picnic shelter	<u>21,950</u>
	\$73,950
Grand Total	\$118,110

Management

Prior to completion of Phase I of the park development, the Department and the City of Oconto will establish a written agreement dealing with the management and operation of the park whereby the city will maintain the park on behalf of the State.

Environmental Impact Assessment

An Environmental Impact Assessment has been prepared concerning the proposed course of action. The assessment supports the recommendations and is compatible with the proposed master plan.

TO: L. P. Voigt - May 7, 1975

3.

Recommendation

We recommend that the Board approve the master plan for Copper Culture Mounds State Park which will guide its development for approximately a 10-year period.



D. L. Weizenicker

DJK:dji

cc: Miss Korn - 14
S. G. DeBoer - Green Bay
C. Higgs - Marinette

R. W. Cook - Marinette
J. L. Treichel - 8

RECOMMENDED:

SWW 5/8/75
S. W. Welsh Date

DJM 5/8/75
D. J. Mackie Date

APPROVED:

[Signature] 5/8
L. P. Voigt Date

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
Box 450
Madison, Wisconsin 53701

MASTER PLAN
COPPER CULTURE MOUNDS STATE PARK

I. Introduction

The 46.8 acre Copper Culture Mounds State Park is located on state-owned land within the City of Oconto, Oconto County.

The primary purpose for establishing the park was to commemorate the remains of a cemetery of one of the earliest examples of the "Old Copper" culture, (This civilization dates back thousands of years and represents one of the earliest uses of metal in the world) and to provide citizens with a historical interpretive park experience.

Though all known artifacts have been removed, some evidence of this culture may remain on the site.

Activities will be limited to the day-use variety with emphasis on education, picnicking and hiking.

No state development has taken place on the site since the property was established in 1959 for recreational purposes. However, there are some existing site improvements which include a 730 foot blacktop section of Mill Street, which can be used as a park entry road, and a commemorative sign and marker explaining the Copper Culture and Werrebroeck House.

Present use pressure is low, but is expected to increase to approximately 15,000 visitors annually upon construction of minimal parking and day-use facilities. To accommodate the growing demands and yet preserve the property's integrity, it is necessary that a comprehensive plan be formulated and implemented.

II. Concepts

The following concepts are those upon which the development of Copper Culture Mounds State Park is based. They will also serve as a guideline for further discussion.

The components are:

A. Major emphasis will be placed on the preservation of the outstanding archeological and historical features yet provide people with an opportunity to enjoy the out-of-doors and become better acquainted with their natural heritage.

B. Minimal development and maximum preservation will be stressed to insure that the burial mound and its environs are protected in perpetuity. (The limits of the historical or burial area have been verified by the State Historical Society.) Therefore, active day-use area development will be restricted to the 5 acre parcel of land as shown on the Development Plan.

C. The active day-use area will be located 800 feet northeast of the burial mound to protect it and its environs from detrimental development and recreational activities.

D. Development will include: parking, trails, water and restroom facilities, picnicking, open recreation space, shelter house, and an office-museum building utilizing the Werrebroeck House. (The Oconto County Historical Society may utilize the former Werrebroeck House for a meeting home and museum.)

E. No other park development will occur beyond that shown on the plan in order to eliminate potential overuse and conflicting recreational uses.

F. The burial mound, Werrebroeck House and surrounding area will be interpreted along the walks and trails located on the property.

G. If any new archeological or historical features are discovered during site development, construction will be suspended and the State Historical Society will be notified. Further construction would proceed only after the Society has excavated the area and given their consent to resume construction.

H. Maintenance practices which insure protection of the unique archeological and historical features will be stressed. Environmental modifications will be limited to the extent required to assure preservation of the resource and facilitate safe use.

No artifacts or plant material should be removed, nor shall camping, hunting, snowmobiling or ATV use be allowed as this type of activity is contrary to the historical park concept.

I. The former sanitary landfill site should be rough cut annually to control weed growth. Fill should be added as needed to improve the top soil quality in the area.

J. Tree and shrub planting for shade, screening, space definition and aesthetic accentuation of site features will take place to supplement existing vegetation.

→ K. Utility lines, such as the electrical line servicing the Werrebroeck House, should be buried to eliminate the negative visual appearance of above ground wires.

II. Development Goals

The following goals are specific items that must be achieved to complete the development of Copper Culture Mounds State Park. They are listed in view of the general development concepts laid down in the preceding section.

A. Active day-use area facilities

1. Office-Museum facility

The Werrebroeck House may be utilized by the Oconto County Historical Society as a meeting place and museum. Artifacts, photos and various exhibits describing the "Early Copper" culture will be displayed in the building.

2. Restrooms

One eight unit-combination pit toilet will be provided in the 5 acre active day-use area. This facility will serve the needs of all park visitors.

3. Entrance road and parking lots

The asphalt entrance road and 25 car capacity parking lots will have a controlled access point off of Mill Street for security purposes. Entry and exit will be regulated by a gate to eliminate park use after closing hours. Initially, the parking lots will have a 25 car capacity with expansion potential for 15 additional parking stalls if needed based on user demand. Construction of a new entrance road, connecting Mott Street with the parking lots, will be determined in the future based on use pressure and vehicular impact on Mill Street and adjacent homes.

4. Picnic facilities

A portion of the 5 acre active day-use area will be developed for picnicking. Twenty-five picnic tables and 10 grills will be provided for this activity. A well and handpump for water will also be available in this area.

5. Picnic shelter

A 30' x 50' picnic shelter will be included during Phase II construction as shown on the Development Plan.

6. Signs

Three major signs will be constructed on the property to include; a historical marker, a Copper Culture Burial Mound marker and an entrance sign. The entrance sign will be made of wood and can be moved if or where a new entrance is constructed. This will only happen if at a later date traffic builds up to the extent it is deemed too great for the existing local street.

7. Interpretive devices

Interpretive devices will be erected along the paths and be included in the museum section of the Werrebroeck House to convey historical and archeological information to the park visitors.

8. Trails

One half mile of trails and pedestrian walkways will be provided on the property for visitor access and convenience. The system will link the active day-use area to the Werrebroeck House and Copper Culture Burial Mound. Historical markers and interpretive devices will be placed along these paths describing significant archeological, historical and natural features.

9. Landscaping

Landscaping will include tree and shrub planting for shade, screening, space definition and aesthetic accentuation of the Werrebroeck House as well as for supplementing existing vegetation.

B. Undeveloped Park Land

Park land outside of the 5 acre active day-use area will, for the most part, be left in its natural state. However, portions of the remaining 41.8 acres will be planted with trees and shrubs to define the park boundary and complement existing vegetation. No other land manipulation or development should take place on this section of property.

C. Development Alternatives

1. One solution would be to do nothing. This action would deny a historical interpretive experience to citizens.
2. A second alternative would be to increase development through an increase in the project acreage.
3. A third alternative would be to provide camping. This site does not lend itself to this use by virtue of its size and basic intent.
4. A fourth alternative would be to provide a boat or canoe launch. The possibility was discarded because of its incompatibility with the site development philosophy.

IV. Landscape Management

- A. Grass mowing on a regular schedule should occur only in the active day-use area and along the paths leading to the burial mound. Periodic mowing of designated open areas and property boundaries should take place to keep them open and retard shrub invasion.
- B. Periodic top dressing may be applied on the former sanitary landfill site to improve the soil quality.
- C. Private motor vehicle use will be restricted to the entrance road and parking lots. Only maintenance vehicles will be allowed on unpaved areas of the property.
- D. Tree and shrub planting will be included to provide shade, screen objectionable views, define spaces and add aesthetic visual effect to the entire property.
- E. No timber harvest or plant removal is to take place with the exception of diseased and dead trees for safety reasons as well as some selective cutting for creating views and interesting spaces.
- F. No excavation or artifact removal is to take place without the consent of the Wisconsin State Historical Society and the Oconto County Historical Society.

V. Acquisition

Land acquisition for the Copper Culture Mounds State Park has been completed as of March 1975 with a total of 46.8 acres acquired. An itemized list of the parcels which makes up this park property follows.

- A. 24.00 acres donated by the Oconto County Historical Society in 1959.
- B. 12.5 acres donated by the City of Oconto in 1974.
- C. 2.00 acres donated by Oconto County in 1975.
- D. 7.00 acres purchased from the Department of Social Services in 1971.
- E. 1.30 street vacation by City of Oconto in 1975.

have 12 new copies made + 3 for district

No additional land acquisition or property boundary expansion is planned or needed.

VI. Project Development

Development on the property will occur in two phases. The first phase will occur during the 1975-1977 biennium and the second will occur at some future date. Components of each phasing period are itemized in the following table.

<u>Phase I</u> <u>Priorities</u>	<u>Engineering Cost Estimates</u>
1. Parking for 25 cars	\$ 9,000
2. Picnic tables (25)	1,250
3. Grills (10)	750
4. Toilet (8-unit combination pit toilet)	13,000
5. Active day-use area site preparation (5 acres)	10,000
6. Well and handpump	3,660
7. Signs and gate	5,500
8. .46 miles of trail	1,000
	<u>\$44,160</u>
<u>Phase II</u> (FUTURE) <u>Priorities</u>	
9. .4 miles road	47,200
10. Interpretive devices (outdoor)	2,400
11. Interpretive devices (indoor)	2,400
12. Picnic shelter	21,950
	<u>\$73,950</u>
GRAND TOTAL	\$118,110

VII. Park Management

Before and upon development of Phase I of the park, it is expected the Department of Natural Resources and City of Oconto will establish a written agreement dealing with the management and operations of the park.

~~M.D.T. responsibility~~
~~and forestry~~

VIII MASTER PLAN IMPLEMENTATION:
 the person responsible for implementation of the master plan will be ~~the manager~~ area forester at Marinette who also has responsibility for Thunder Mountain State Park.