

Sauk Prairie Recreation Area

Issue Questionnaire and Comment Form



The purpose of this form is to receive your feedback regarding the Preliminary Vision and Goal Statements and the Draft Conceptual Alternatives.

Information & Questions

- You can review the draft materials at:
<http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/lands/masterplanning/saukprairie/>
- An Informational Open House Meeting has been scheduled for July 31, 2013 from 5 pm to 7:30 pm at the River Arts Center, 105 Ninth St., Prairie du Sac.

For the Public Record

- Record your thoughts on this form and return it to us by mail.
- You may also email your comments to: diane.brusoe@wisconsin.gov
- Or, see our web page and fill-out the questionnaire at:
<http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/lands/masterplanning/saukprairie/>
- Please get your comments in by August 30, 2013.

Thank you for sharing your time and thoughts with us!

Fold, Tape, Stamp & Mail



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TAPE HERE ↓↓↓ DO NOT STAPLE!

DRAFT Conceptual Alternatives: No Action Alternative

This alternative describes how the Sauk Prairie Recreation Area would look in the future if we took no new action. This description will be used as a baseline to assess additional benefits, costs, and impacts of the next two alternatives, which do propose new actions.

As a new property not yet opened for public use, the Sauk Prairie Recreation Area is undeveloped for visitor use and minimally maintained with management activities focused on keeping some of the roadways cleared of invasive species. The property has roads of varying condition throughout and areas to pull-off on the side for parking. There are currently no improvements to facilitate visitor experiences. Possible property access points are identified with a star.

The property will have limited public access for Nature Based Outdoor Activities (NBOAs) of hunting, trapping, fishing, hiking, and cross country skiing. Public access to the cemeteries will be maintained. No additional funding will be spent on restoration or property development. Any structures or debris left on the property at the time of the land transfer will remain. The Department will restrict areas due to any public safety concerns.

DRAFT Conceptual Alternatives: Ecological Restoration Emphasis

Under this management alternative, the primary emphasis is on restoration work of the grassland ecosystem. A variety of management tools will be used to maintain grassland and savanna. No development is proposed, and vehicle access will be limited. Visitors would enjoy a perceived remoteness and quiet. Recreation opportunities will be limited to the NBOAs (hunting, fishing, trapping, hiking and cross country skiing).

This management concept will be implemented by:

- Restoring large, unfragmented tracts of grassland and shrubland (Habitat Management Zone) to support grassland and shrubland dependent birds
- Restoring remnants of rare natural communities and the species they support (Native Community Management Zone); access will be limited to pedestrian use
- Removing any infrastructure, buildings or debris that remain on the property, with the exception of several BAAP bunkers retained to support bat research
- Limiting vehicle access
- Managing the property from an off-site location; there would be no permanent staff stationed at the site and visitor interaction with DNR staff would be limited
- Providing limited interpretation and education opportunities regarding the management practices being used
- Using volunteers to promote community participation in education
- Providing outdoor classroom opportunities for schools

DRAFT Conceptual Alternatives: Outdoor Recreation Emphasis

Under this management alternative, the primary purpose is getting users onto the property. Visitors would be offered a variety of outdoor recreational experiences while providing interpretive and educational opportunities related to the property's history and restoration efforts. The visitor experience will include a higher level of development and accessibility. Opportunities for NBOAs (hunting, fishing, trapping, hiking, and cross country skiing) will be provided as well as opportunities for biking, horseback riding, motorized use and a shooting range.

This management concept would be implemented by:

- Restoring tracts of grassland and shrubland with compatible low-impact recreation trails
- Developing parking, picnic areas, and viewing areas in the Expanded Recreational Zone
- Developing a fishing pier, canoe/carry-in boat access, and picnic area at Lake Wisconsin parcel
- Selectively siting and constructing (through community partnerships) a new visitor center with interpretation and education opportunities; the center could also serve as a trailhead facility near the railroad corridor, which will serve as a designated recreation corridor in the future
- Identifying and improving primary auto access routes through the property; and abandoning roads no longer needed
- Providing extensive, developed trails across property that complement the topography and resource management
- Providing hiking and biking opportunities into Devils Lake State Park via Burma Road
- Providing motorized recreation opportunities in the Special Use Zone
- Providing shooting range opportunities in the Special Use Zone
- Providing facilities such as a classroom, parking area, staging area, wash station, bathroom and water area in the Special Use Zone
- Providing interpretation and education opportunities about this property's location at the juncture of major landforms, acknowledgement of Ho-Chunk Nation and Euro-American histories and displacements, and the design, operation and decommissioning of the Badger Army Ammunitions Plant.
- Selectively siting and constructing auto and trail access to better route visitors past interpretive displays highlighting both natural and cultural points of interest
- Preserving and enhancing key vistas through vegetation management
- Providing vehicle access to the property to improve user access to more educational, research and recreational opportunities

Please provide your thoughts on the following:

You may also submit your answers to these questions through our website at - <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/lands/masterplanning/saukprairie/>

What do you like about each alternative?

No Action Alternative:

Ecological Restoration Emphasis:

Outdoor Recreation Emphasis:

Are there elements of the alternatives that concern you? Please explain.

No Action Alternative:

Ecological Restoration Emphasis:

Preliminary Vision

The vision is a concise, broad statement describing the general desired future state and function of a property. It is not quantified and is timeless. The vision must be consistent with the property's statutory direction, NRB policies, division and program strategic plans and other appropriate guidance regarding the property's purpose.

Preliminary Vision Statement:

The Sauk Prairie Recreation Area contributes important areas of grassland habitat needed to reconstruct and experience a natural mosaic of prairie-savanna-woodland at a landscape scale. Directly adjacent to Devils Lake State Park, it serves as an ecological transition from the Baraboo Hills to the Wisconsin River, and creates a recreational corridor that enhances and complements regional recreation opportunities. The site's significant history is incorporated into the management and interpretation of the natural, agricultural, historical and cultural resources.

Suggestions

Please provide suggestions on how you think we can better address the property vision and other recommendations related to this issue.

I believe that proposed Alternative 4 meets the preliminary Vision Statement and agreements with the Federal government.

Preliminary Goal Statements

Ecological Management

Provide extensive areas of grassland and oak savanna habitats to support the significant grassland and shrubland bird populations. Restore and enhance the ecological transition zone between the Baraboo Hills and the Wisconsin River to promote quality habitat for desirable game and non-game species, including rare and special concern species.

Suggestions

Please provide suggestions on how you think we can better address this use and other recommendations related to this issue.

As urban creep takes away from the natural habitat of many game and non game species, I believe this tract of land should be kept as natural as possible. This will help heal the land and our ecological system. This is reflected in Alternative 4.

Recreation

Provide for public recreation that complements and fulfills regional needs while providing opportunities that draw users past significant cultural and natural points of interest as well as aesthetic vistas.

Suggestions

Please provide suggestions on how you think we can better address this use and other recommendations related to this issue.

We took the tour of the Badger Plant last Saturday. I don't see it as a place that would draw many ATV riders after an initial visit.

We have a number of private gun ranges in the area that I believe would better serve Sauk County as a whole.

Providing a nature area land for the Native Americans and addition to Devil's Lake seems much more in alignment with this land. Please approve Alternative 4.

Cultural Resource Preservation

Identify and preserve significant sites that contribute to the property's storyline from geological history, Native American life, Euro-American settlement, and the design, operation and decommissioning of the Badger Army Ammunitions Plant.

Suggestions

Please provide suggestions on how you think we can better address this use and other recommendations related to this issue.

I would like to see a museum or historical building that reflects the transition of this land over the years from before man settled the area to the current day. What better way to honor those who lived on the land, worked to support our freedom. See Alternative 4.

Education and Interpretation

Provide interpretive and educational opportunities focusing upon natural history, restoration efforts, and the impacts of human uses. Integrate education and research related to restoration and conservation land use activities.

Suggestions

Please provide suggestions on how you think we can better address this use and other recommendations related to this issue.

The USDA appears to be providing one area of education on this land. As stated above I think we can do better to provide an educational center for the history of the area and of restoration back to a nature setting. See Alternative 4.

Please provide your thoughts on the following:

You may also submit your answers to these questions through our website at - <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/lands/masterplanning/saukprairie/>

What do you like about each alternative?

No Action Alternative: *Not acceptable.*

Ecological Restoration Emphasis: *Very high priority See Alternative 4*

Outdoor Recreation Emphasis: *Low Impact Activities that will be suitable for the various users - Native Americans, hikers, people visiting cemeteries, educational programs, history of area and people using Devil's Lake*

Are there elements of the alternatives that concern you? Please explain.

No Action Alternative: *Not acceptable*

Ecological Restoration Emphasis: *Concerned for effect on ecological restoration if low impact becomes higher impact activities such as HVs & gun range. We need to clean up and restore the area.*

Outdoor Recreation Emphasis:

I believe and stress that the outdoor recreation activities on the Badger land should be low impact which would not include the use of ATVs and a gun range. = Alternative 4 Conservation/Low Impact Recreation Emphasis best meets the criteria of the preliminary vision statement.

I understand the DNR does not want to oversee ATV and gun range activities which could result in destruction and unsafe activities.

Do you think the range of alternatives is complete? Are there things we have missed or overlooked?

Please consider and approve Alternate 4 Conservation/Low Impact Recreation Emphasis

Do you have any other comments or concerns you would like the planning team to take into consideration?

After taking the farm this past Saturday, I am more committed to stress acceptance of Alternative 4. I think providing a historical emphasis from the original farm land, to the military use to the USDA for learning should be emphasized.

I talked to so many people who did or have relatives who worked at the Badger Powder Plant, that I think it is important to preserve that history for the next generations.

Preliminary Vision

The vision is a concise, broad statement describing the general desired future state and function of a property. It is not quantified and is timeless. The vision must be consistent with the property's statutory direction, NRB policies, division and program strategic plans and other appropriate guidance regarding the property's purpose.

Preliminary Vision Statement:

The Sauk Prairie Recreation Area contributes important areas of grassland habitat needed to reconstruct and experience a natural mosaic of prairie-savanna-woodland at a landscape scale. Directly adjacent to Devils Lake State Park, it serves as an ecological transition from the Baraboo Hills to the Wisconsin River, and creates a recreational corridor that enhances and complements regional recreation opportunities. The site's significant history is incorporated into the management and interpretation of the natural, agricultural, historical and cultural resources.

Suggestions

Please provide suggestions on how you think we can better address the property vision and other recommendations related to this issue.

Thanks to the team that worked on
the development of ideas for Badger
these past years

DRAFT Conceptual Alternatives: Outdoor Recreation Emphasis

Under this management alternative, the primary purpose is getting users onto the property. Visitors would be offered a variety of outdoor recreational experiences while providing interpretive and educational opportunities related to the property's history and restoration efforts. The visitor experience will include a higher level of development and accessibility. Opportunities for NBOAs (hunting, fishing, trapping, hiking, and cross country skiing) will be provided as well as opportunities for biking, horseback riding, motorized use and a shooting range.

This management concept would be implemented by:

Good - Restoring tracts of grassland and shrubland with compatible low-impact recreation trails

OK - Developing parking, picnic areas, and viewing areas in the Expanded Recreational Zone *but not too much development*

- Developing a fishing pier, canoe/carry-in boat access, and picnic area at Lake Wisconsin parcel - *canoe only*
- Selectively siting and constructing (through community partnerships) a new visitor center with interpretation and education opportunities; the center could also serve as a trailhead facility near the railroad corridor, which will serve as (a designated recreation corridor in the future) - *what is this?*
- Identifying and improving primary auto access routes through the property; and abandoning roads no longer needed *limited*
- Providing extensive, developed trails across property that complement the topography and resource management *no necessity?*
- Providing hiking and biking opportunities into Devils Lake State Park via Burma Road

wrong! Providing motorized recreation opportunities in the Special Use Zone - *please, no!*
wrong! Providing shooting range opportunities in the Special Use Zone *never*

helpful - Providing facilities such as a classroom, parking area, staging area, wash station, bathroom and water area in the Special Use Zone

good - Providing interpretation and education opportunities about this property's location at the juncture of major landforms, acknowledgement of Ho-Chunk Nation and Euro-American histories and displacements, and the design, operation and decommissioning of the Badger Army Ammunitions Plant.

- limited*
- Selectively siting and constructing auto and trail access to better route visitors past interpretive displays highlighting both natural and cultural points of interest
 - Preserving and enhancing key vistas through vegetation management
 - Providing vehicle access to the property to improve user access to more educational, research and recreational opportunities

Please provide your thoughts on the following:

You may also submit your answers to these questions through our website at - <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/lands/masterplanning/saukprairie/>

What do you like about each alternative?

No Action Alternative:

Ecological Restoration Emphasis:

good with some

Outdoor Recreation Emphasis: → no emphasis

OK - limited - and no guns or shooting range, never
and no, none, never ATV vehicles!

Are there elements of the alternatives that concern you? Please explain.

No Action Alternative:

yes - please do not include any of the
above mentioned, whatever plan is
finally implemented

Ecological Restoration Emphasis:

Outdoor Recreation Emphasis:

KRB invites no ATV vehicles
no shooting range
snowmobiles

Do you think the range of alternatives is complete? Are there things we have missed or overlooked?

Do you have any other comments or concerns you would like the planning team to take into consideration?

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FACILITIES AND LANDS

Outdoor Recreation Emphasis:

Do you think the range of alternatives is complete? Are there things we have missed or overlooked?

Do you have any other comments or concerns you would like the planning team to take into consideration?

No ATV's + Shooting ranges @ SPRA

Use Alternative #4

Preliminary Goal Statements

Ecological Management

Provide extensive areas of grassland and oak savanna habitats to support the significant grassland and shrubland bird populations. Restore and enhance the ecological transition zone between the Baraboo Hills and the Wisconsin River to promote quality habitat for desirable game and non-game species, including rare and special concern species.

Suggestions

Please provide suggestions on how you think we can better address this use and other recommendations related to this issue.

We could engage with community groups like Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, 4-H, church youth groups to help with prairie restoration. Or have local groups and individuals adopt specific areas for maintenance and restoration. Maybe organize a "Friends of SPRA" group. Or join with The Leopold Foundation as an outdoor classroom.

Recreation

Provide for public recreation that complements and fulfills regional needs while providing opportunities that draw users past significant cultural and natural points of interest as well as aesthetic vistas.

Suggestions

Please provide suggestions on how you think we can better address this use and other recommendations related to this issue.

Make hiking and cycling trails, maybe horse trails. Maybe primitive camping + some picnic areas. A visitor center would be nice, telling geology, human history, ecology, etc. Like it is at Devils Lake.

Cultural Resource Preservation

Identify and preserve significant sites that contribute to the property's storyline from geological history, Native American life, Euro-American settlement, and the design, operation and decommissioning of the Badger Army Ammunitions Plant.

Suggestions

Please provide suggestions on how you think we can better address this use and other recommendations related to this issue.

Could the HoChunk Nation create a museum to show their history, up to the present? Label significant trees + plants + tell the story of the cemeteries.

The Badger History Group has some great exhibits.

Education and Interpretation

Provide interpretive and educational opportunities focusing upon natural history, restoration efforts, and the impacts of human uses. Integrate education and research related to restoration and conservation land use activities.

Suggestions

Please provide suggestions on how you think we can better address this use and other recommendations related to this issue.

Encourage school trips, have teacher materials sent out to surrounding school districts. Maybe recruit volunteer tour guides for school groups. Put on classes in prairie restoration and management of invasive species. Run some programs with The Leopold Foundation.

Please provide your thoughts on the following:

You may also submit your answers to these questions through our website at - <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/lands/masterplanning/saukprairie/>

What do you like about each alternative?

No Action Alternative: Not much to like here, the whole place would be wild parsnips and burdock without some maintenance.

Ecological Restoration Emphasis: This would help heal the land and it would benefit birds + wildlife, but it misses the opportunity to introduce the public to the prairie + its beauty.

Outdoor Recreation Emphasis:

Keep it quiet and make the uses compatible with each other + with nesting birds. Keep the restoration + conservation parts, and education, too. This option gets more people out on the prairie

Are there elements of the alternatives that concern you? Please explain.

No Action Alternative: Not enough opportunity for the public to enjoy the property. Wastes a great opportunity for education.

Ecological Restoration Emphasis:

Again, not enough public involvement. People need peaceful open spaces to re-create themselves.

Outdoor Recreation Emphasis:

This is fine if we leave out the special interest groups & their high-impact sports. They would be disruptive to all the other uses.

Do you think the range of alternatives is complete? Are there things we have missed or overlooked?

You have covered it if you will tweak the plans, keep all the restoration, conservation and education options and then include lots of quiet, low-impact uses for people like hiking, bird watching, picnicking, cycling, etc.

Do you have any other comments or concerns you would like the planning team to take into consideration?

We have an amazing opportunity here to make a great gift to the future, to our grandchildren and to the prairie ecosystem. Let's not cave in to destructive uses of this magnificent property. Thank you.

Preliminary Vision

The vision is a concise, broad statement describing the general desired future state and function of a property. It is not quantified and is timeless. The vision must be consistent with the property's statutory direction, NRB policies, division and program strategic plans and other appropriate guidance regarding the property's purpose.

Preliminary Vision Statement:

The Sauk Prairie Recreation Area contributes important areas of grassland habitat needed to reconstruct and experience a natural mosaic of prairie-savanna-woodland at a landscape scale. Directly adjacent to Devils Lake State Park, it serves as an ecological transition from the Baraboo Hills to the Wisconsin River, and creates a recreational corridor that enhances and complements regional recreation opportunities. The site's significant history is incorporated into the management and interpretation of the natural, agricultural, historical and cultural resources.

4 Suggestions

Please provide suggestions on how you think we can better address the property vision and other recommendations related to this issue.

I have lived right beside the Badger Plant all my life except 2 years when I was drafted into the Army during the Korean War. In fact, I was 9 years old when they started building plant. Our family has seen all phases of the plant - from seeing our neighbors forced to sell and leave the area, the building of Badger Ord. - production years, and the "mothball" years and now the dismantling of it.

Sure would be nice to see a wide variety of people able to use the area for recreation, not just a select group - many of which I believe are outsiders, not local.

We have no problem with a big part of the area used as grassland, bird viewing, hiking, bike riding, etc.

We feel there is enough space that it should be available to share with persons of other interests and not want to control the entire area, just for their interests.

I want to thank you for making our feelings and thoughts known when considering the final plan.

Please provide your thoughts on the following:

You may also submit your answers to these questions through our website at - <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/lands/masterplanning/saukprairie/>

What do you like about each alternative?

No Action Alternative:

Ecological Restoration Emphasis:

(X Outdoor Recreation Emphasis: I like the idea as it will make the area much more available for a larger number of people to use. Most local farmers and others in the community are not that interested in natural prairie & bird watching as we live with it every day. There is a growing number of area persons who are taking up other family interests - ATV and target shooting, both of which are becoming more popular. How much better and safer it would be on an approved range - rather than shooting in backyards and gravel pits.

No-Action Alternative: ATV's is not as many people portray it is - Trails are kept up very well. There are posted rules regarding speed limits - stay on trails - preventing littering.

When some say ATV's do not have economic value to the community - All I have to say is go to Darlington, Wis and look around. I like the way the Cheese Country Trail

Ecological Restoration Emphasis: is operated. It is open to snowmobiling in winter - in summer is open to ATV, biking, walking, horse riding & motor bikes. What a perfect arrangement - while we have been on the trail we have found all to be very friendly and courteous

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Outdoor Recreation Emphasis:

I am very passionate about allowing handicapped hunters into the area. In the past ~~the~~ and currently we farm land on 3 sides of the fence and when working in the field during fall it sure makes me feel good to see those hunters, dressed in blaze orange, in motorized wheel chairs. They are able to move around with all the roads available to them. Where else do they have this available to them?

It would seem to me this area should be set aside for handicapped hunters only.

Do you think the range of alternatives is complete? Are there things we have missed or overlooked?

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Do you have any other comments or concerns you would like the planning team to take into consideration?

We and others in our community would like to see the road opened again - from Hwy. 78 near Summer Oaks - to Hwy. 12 by the "S Curve" as it was before the plant was built.

Sure would save local citizens a lot of time, gas, and money. Not sure if it was a township or county road.

If a rifle range is made available I feel it should be located away from the plant border - so as not to bother any residence near the boundary.



Outdoor Recreation Emphasis:

Do you think the range of alternatives is complete? Are there things we have missed or overlooked?

Do you have any other comments or concerns you would like the planning team to take into consideration?

Low impact use -

no ATV's

no shooting range

Consider and adopt alternative 4

Please provide your thoughts on the following:

You may also submit your answers to these questions through our website at - <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/lands/masterplanning/saukprairie/>

What do you like about each alternative?

No Action Alternative:

~~Ecological Restoration Emphasis:~~

OUTDOOR RECREATION EMPHASIS

This is the plan I like most because it includes horse trails. I would also like to be able to drive horses with a buggy or cart. I think this plan would allow most people to enjoy this great place.

Outdoor Recreation Emphasis:

Are there elements of the alternatives that concern you? Please explain.

No Action Alternative:

Ecological Restoration Emphasis:

Outdoor Recreation Emphasis:

Would ^{not} horseback riding to be called horseback riding and driving (carts and buggies)

Would like Wisconsin State Horse Council to be involved.

Do you think the range of alternatives is complete? Are there things we have missed or overlooked?

Do you have any other comments or concerns you would like the planning team to take into consideration?

Cultural Resource Preservation

Identify and preserve significant sites that contribute to the property's storyline from geological history, Native American life, Euro-American settlement, and the design, operation and decommissioning of the Badger Army Ammunitions Plant.

Suggestions

Please provide suggestions on how you think we can better address this use and other recommendations related to this issue.

This is all OK but other uses of recreation need to be included in the park.

You call it a Recreation Area = recreation is not, the same for all of the public!

Education and Interpretation

Provide interpretive and educational opportunities focusing upon natural history, restoration efforts, and the impacts of human uses. Integrate education and research related to restoration and conservation land use activities.

Suggestions

Please provide suggestions on how you think we can better address this use and other recommendations related to this issue.

I hope the DNR board remember all of the people, not just the bond groups that have overrun everyone else!

Thank's
Large pond just west of Park!

Please provide your thoughts on the following:

You may also submit your answers to these questions through our website at - <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/lands/masterplanning/saukprairie/>

What do you like about each alternative?

No Action Alternative:

Ecological Restoration Emphasis:

Outdoor Recreation Emphasis:

use the Rec. Area
user
area

More people brought in to
use the Rec. Area
More of a diverse group of
More supervision of the Rec
Lots more money spent to make
it usable
for all.

Are there elements of the alternatives that concern you? Please explain.

No Action Alternative:

Ecological Restoration Emphasis: