

# Kettle Moraine State Forest Mukwonago River Unit / Lulu Lake State Natural Area Master Plan

## Purpose of State Natural Areas

State Natural Areas are managed in accordance with Wis. Stat. s. 23.27 to assure sustainably managed natural areas that provide ecological, social, and educational benefits for present and future generations. The definition and Importance of natural areas are outlined in Wis. Stat. s. 27.27:

(1)(e) "Natural area" means an area of land or water which has educational or scientific value or is important as a reservoir of the state's genetic or biologic diversity and includes any buffer area necessary to protect the area's natural values. Frequently, "natural areas" are important as a reserve for native biotic communities. Frequently, "natural areas" provide habitat for endangered, threatened or critical species or for species of special concern to scientists. In some cases, "natural areas" include areas with highly significant geological or archaeological features. Generally, "natural areas" are areas which largely escaped unnatural environmental disturbance or which exhibit little evidence of recent environmental disturbance so that recovery of natural conditions has occurred.

(2) Importance. The department, with the advice of the council, shall maintain a system to evaluate the importance of natural areas. The system shall include standards for determining low, high and critical levels of importance for natural areas. This system shall consider the following natural values:

- (a) The value of the area as a preserve or reservoir which exhibits an outstanding or high quality example of a native plant or animal community.
- (b) The value of the area as a preserve or reservoir for any endangered, threatened or critical species or for a species of special concern to scientists.
- (c) The value of the area as a preserve or reservoir of genetic or biological diversity.
- (d) The degree to which the area was subject to unnatural environmental disturbance and the degree of recovery.
- (e) The value of the area for educational or scientific research purposes and as a reference site for comparison with areas subjected to environmental disturbance.
- (f) The value of the area for educational or scientific research purposes because of important or unusual characteristics.
- (g) The significance or uniqueness of the area in the locality, region and state.
- (h) The existence of highly significant geological or archaeological features.
- (i) The value of the area for public educational purposes, including the value of the area in promoting public awareness, appreciation, understanding and respect for the state's natural heritage.

## Purpose of State Forests

State Forests are managed in accordance with Wis. Stat. s. 28.04 to assure sustainably managed forests that provide ecological, social, and economic benefits for present and future generations. The purposes and benefits of state forests are outlined in Wis. Stat. s. 28.04 (2):

a) The department shall manage the state forests to benefit the present and future generations of residents of this state, recognizing that the state forests contribute to local and statewide economies and to a healthy natural environment. The department shall assure the practice of sustainable forestry and use it to assure that state forests can provide a full range of benefits for present and future generations. The department shall also assure that the management of state forests is consistent with the ecological capability of the state forest land and with the long-term, maintenance of sustainable forest communities and ecosystems. These benefits include soil protection, public hunting, protection of water quality, production of recurring forest products, outdoor recreation, native biological diversity aquatic and terrestrial wildlife, and aesthetics. The range of benefits provided by the department in each state forest shall reflect its unique character and position in the regional landscape.

b) In managing the state forests, the department shall recognize that not all benefits under par. (a) can or should be provided in every area of a state forest.

c) In managing state forests, the department shall recognize that management may consist of both active and passive techniques.

Mukwonago River Unit is a Southern Forest as defined in Wis. Admin. Code s. NR 45.03(21). Southern Forests are administered by the Bureau of Parks and Recreation.