Southeast Glacial Plains

ecological landscape

Attributes and Characteristics

This ecological landscape is home to some of the world’s best examples of continental glacial activity. Drumlins, eskers, kettle lakes, kames, ground and end moraines, and other glacial features are evident throughout the entire area. A particularly striking area is the long “ridge” (known as a kettle interlobate moraine) that formed between the Green Bay and Lake Michigan lobes during the Wisconsin Glaciation. The area is protected in part by the Kettle Moraine State Forest.

In addition to the many small kettle lakes in this landscape, there are also a number of much larger lakes, such as the Lake Winnebago Pool system, the Yahara Chain of Lakes, Lake Koshkonong, and Geneva Lake. Major rivers include the Rock, upper portion of the Milwaukee, middle portion of the Fox, and the Illinois Fox.

Legacy Places

AP  Arlington Prairie
BK  Bark and Scuppernong Rivers
BG  Bong Grassland
CD  Campbellsport Drumlins
CC  Cedar Creek
CB  Cedarburg Bog
CW  Crawfish River-Waterloo Drumlins
DR  Dunn-Rutland Savanna and Potholes
GH  Glacial Habitat Restoration Area
HM  Horicon Marsh
IF  Illinois Fox River
JM  Jefferson Marsh
LK  Lake Koshkonong to Kettle Moraine Corridor
LP  Lakes of the Winnebago Pool
LR  Lower Rock River
LB  Lower Wolf River Bottomlands
MI  Milwaukee River
MM  Monroe-Muralt Prairie
MJ  Mukwonago River and Jericho Creek
NE  Niagara Escarpment
PT  Patrick Marsh
RC  Raccoon Creek
RL  Rush Lake
SH  Sheboygan County Trout Streams
SY  Sheboygan River Marshes
SL  Shoveler Lakes-Black Earth Trench
SV  Sugar Creek Valley
SG  Sugar River
UR  Upper Rock River
UL  Upper Yahara River and Lakes
WB  White River and Bloomfield Area
WM  White River Marsh and Uplands

Along the Kettle Moraine

KM  Kettle Moraine State Forest
MK  Middle Kettle Moraine
MH  Millhome Woods
SK  Southern Kettle Moraine: Whitewater Lake to Turtle Creek
Although many of the landscape’s natural wetlands have been drained, a large amount still remains. The largest single wetland in this landscape, Horicon Marsh, is a globally significant area.

Soils are mostly silt loams but there are also areas of clay soils and sandy soils. Most of the tillable land is intensively farmed, with dairying and cash-cropping of grains and vegetables being the predominant types of agriculture. The natural vegetation of this landscape was formerly a mix of hardwood forest, prairie, savanna and wetlands. Today, very little of the prairie and savanna habitat remains.

Conservation Needs and Opportunities

The Southeast Glacial Plains is a particularly important region of the state for nesting and migrating waterfowl. The large marshes and shallow lakes that occur throughout the area provide critical feeding, nesting, and resting habitat for ducks and geese and other marsh dwelling birds. Many opportunities exist to restore drained wetlands as these areas are retired from farming. Also occurring here are a number of less common wetland types such as bogs, fens, tamarack fens and wet prairies, many of which harbor rare species. Of particular note are the many, mostly small, calcareous fens that are scattered through this landscape. In fact, more fens occur here than in any other part of North America.

This landscape also offers excellent opportunities to expand and restore prairie and oak savanna. A recent Department study of management opportunities for grassland birds identified nearly forty areas in this landscape with good potential to establish functioning grassland systems.

Historically, many of the state’s richest and most diverse streams and rivers were found in the southeastern part of Wisconsin. Although many have been degraded from a variety of non-point pollution sources, improving management practices and the removal of dams have greatly improved many of these waters. One river in particular that has maintained its quality, the Mukwonago, harbors one of the highest concentrations of fish, mussels, and other aquatic invertebrates in the Midwest. Many of the region’s lakes have extremely productive fisheries that draw anglers from throughout the Midwest. The water quality in many of these lakes would benefit from additional watershed management practices.

Recreation Uses and Opportunities

Almost all types of outdoor recreation occur within the Southeast Glacial Plains. A variety of terrain and cover types and abundant lakes and streams accommodate a broad range of land and water based recreation activities. However, use of public lands and waters is very heavy and demand for recreation is rapidly exceeding the capacity.
Figure 114a: Legacy Places and public conservation lands of the Southeast Glacial Plains

Legacy Places and public conservation lands
Southeast Glacial Plains

Legacy Places
CD Campbellsport Drumlins
GH Glacial Habitat Restoration Area
HM Horicon Marsh
LP Lakes of the Winnebago Pool
LB Lower Wolf River Bottomlands
MI Milwaukee River
NE Niagara Escarpment
RL Rush Lake
SH Sheboygan County Trout Streams
SY Sheboygan River Marshes
WM White River Marsh and Uplands

Along the Kettle Moraine
KM Kettle Moraine State Forest
MH Millhome Woods

Public Conservation Lands
- Green: State
- Blue: Federal
- Purple: County Forest

Scale: 0 2.5 5 10 Miles

Lake Michigan
Two Rivers
Manitowoc
Milwaukee
Lake Winnebago
Lake Michigan
Figure 115a: Legacy Places and land cover of the Southeast Glacial Plains

Legacy Places and land cover
Southeast Glacial Plains
Figure 114b: Legacy Places and public conservation lands of the Southeast Glacial Plains

Legacy Places

AP Arlington Prairie
BK Bark and Scuppernong Rivers
BG Bong Grassland
CC Cedar Creek
CB Cedarburg Bog
CW Crawfish River-Waterloo Drumlins
DR Dunn-Rutland Savanna and Potholes
GH Glacial Habitat Restoration Area
HM Horicon Marsh
IF Illinois Fox River
JM Jefferson Marsh
LK Lake Koshkonong to Kettle Moraine Corridor
LR Lower Rock River
MI Milwaukee River
MM Monroe-Muralt Prairie
MJ Mukwonago River and Jericho Creek
PT Patrick Marsh
RC Raccoon Creek
SL Shoveler Lakes-Black Earth Trench
SV Sugar Creek Valley
SG Sugar River
UR Upper Rock River
UL Upper Yahara River and Lakes
WB White River and Bloomfield Area

Along the Kettle Moraine

KM Kettle Moraine State Forest
MK Middle Kettle Moraine
SK Southern Kettle Moraine: Whitewater Lake to Turtle Creek

Southeast Glacial Plains

Legacy Places and public conservation lands

Public Conservation Lands

- State
- Federal
- County Forest

Scale: 0 2.5 5 10 Miles
Figure 115b: Legacy Places and land cover of the Southeast Glacial Plains

Legacy Places and land cover
Southeast Glacial Plains
**Public Conservation Lands**

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**Federal**
- Horizon Marsh National Wildlife Refuge | 1,470
- Waterford Production Areas | 6,165

**County ¹**
- Sheboygan Marsh County Park | 7,330

**TOTAL** | 226,230¹

**Key characteristics:**
- Excellent examples of a variety of glacial landforms, including drumlins and kettle interlobate moraine
- Agricultural land use
- Large lakes and abundant wetlands
- Easily accessible by majority of state population
- Calcareous fens

**Size:**
- 772 square miles
- 4,943,200 acres (13.8% of Wisconsin)

**Population:**
- 1,559,000
  (28.5% of Wisconsin's population)

**Notable species:**
- Canada goose
- Pheasant
- Hooded warbler
- Lake sturgeon
- Long-eared sunfish
- Black, yellow, and brown bullheads
- Bluegill
- Walleye
- Blanding's turtle
- Poweshiek skipper
- Bar oak
- Cattail
- Kittenteil
- White lady-slipper
- Prairie white-fringed orchid
- Prairie milkweed

**Natural communities:**
- Bog relict
- Calcareous fen
- Dry cliff
- Dry-mesic prairie
- Dry prairie
- Emergent aquatic
- Floodplain forest
- Mesic prairie
- Oak opening
- Oak woodland
- Shrub carr
- Southern dry forest
- Southern dry-mesic forest
- Southern hardwood swamp
- Southern sedge meadow
- Southern tamarack swamp
- Wet-mesic prairie

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*1 This property also falls within adjacent Ecological Landscape(s).
2 This property also falls within adjacent Ecological Landscape(s).
* Excludes public school sites, ski trails, fire towers, charredland, and non-point sources, land owned under state-wide wildlife, fishery, forestry, and natural area programs, small properties under 100 acres, and lands with fewer than 100 acres within the Ecological Landscape.

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Opportunities for expanding recreational facilities in this area are diminishing as residential development expands into the countryside. Providing needed outdoor recreation opportunities may be best accomplished not by focusing on areas with high quality natural values, but rather on areas that are somewhat degraded, but can be restored to provide a wide range of hiking, biking, horseback riding and possibly motorized trails. To the degree practical, buffering, linking, and expanding existing public lands would enable considerably more recreation opportunities. The Ice Age Trail runs nearly the entire length of this ecological landscape, receives tremendous use, and remains a high priority for completion.

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*Jack R. Bartholmai"
Southeast Glacial Plains
ecological landscape

Legacy Places

AP Arlington Prairie

Size: Small
Protection Initiated: Moderate
Protection Remaining: Moderate
Conservation Significance: Substantial
Recreation Potential: Limited

Once encompassing a wide swath of northern Dane County and southern Columbia County, this former deep soil prairie is now intensively farmed due to the highly productive soils in the area. Several scattered high quality prairie and prairie pothole remnants remain. Protected lands here include Grassy Lake, Mud Lake, Schoenerbog, and Otsego Waterfowl Production Areas and Audubon’s Goose Pond Sanctuary, and could form the foundation of further restoration efforts. If additional grasslands are restored and linked to existing protected lands, the area could support significant populations of area-sensitive grassland birds.

BG Bong Grassland

See the Southern Lake Michigan Coastal ecological landscape.

CD Campbellsport Drumlins

Size: Large
Protection Initiated: Limited
Protection Remaining: Substantial
Conservation Significance: Substantial
Recreation Potential: Limited

Centered a few miles northwest of the village of Campbellsport, this is one of the best and most highly concentrated drumlin fields in the state. The Campbellsport Drumlins have been identified as a unit of the Ice Age National Scientific Reserve, but almost no formal protection has been accomplished to date. Maintaining the existing rural agricultural land use would likely afford adequate protection.

CC Cedar Creek

Size: Small
Protection Initiated: Limited
Protection Remaining: Substantial
Conservation Significance: Moderate
Recreation Potential: Limited

A tributary of the Milwaukee River, Cedar Creek originates in the Cedar Lakes of Washington County. Water quality is fairly good and the creek contains several rare or state- Threatened species. At present, there is a recreational fishery primarily for rock bass and northern pike, and it is hoped that smallmouth bass can eventually be restored. The breaching of several dams in recent years and future plans for more dam removal should provide for continued improvements in water quality and temperature.

CB Cedarburg Bog

Size: Small
Protection Initiated: Moderate
Protection Remaining: Substantial
Conservation Significance: Substantial
Recreation Potential: Limited

Cedarburg Bog is the largest and least disturbed northern peatland in southeastern Wisconsin. It covers most of an old glacial lakebed and is roughly 2,000 acres in size. There are six lakes remaining within the wetland and all exhibit a very high degree of water clarity. The peatland

Wisconsin Land Legacy Report

Southeast Glacial Plains

Legacy Places

See the Southern Lake Michigan Coastal ecological landscape.

Adult and juvenile Black-necked Stilt (Himantopus melodus)

Cedarburg Bog

Cedarburg Bog

Cedarburg Bog

Wisconsin Land Legacy Report

Legacy Places by Ecological Landscape

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consists mainly of an extensive conifer forest with some areas of open bog, fen, shrub swamp and islands of moose woods. Swamp hardwood forest is located adjacent to the conifer bog in many places. Surrounding the lakes are areas of emergent aquatic plants, and lying just outside this zone are successional areas of shrub-carr.

Most unusual is a portion of the area that consists of a string or “patterned” bog, unique here because it lies far south of its usual range in North America. The string bog is composed of open, flat sedges mat lying between ridges of stunted cedar and tamarack. The flora and fauna of Cedarburg Bog is very diverse and includes a large number of regionally rare species, several of which are at or near their southern range limit. Nearly 300 species of birds have been documented in the area. Cedarburg Bog is already mostly protected, with over 1,400 acres owned by the DNR and nearly 300 acres owned by the University of Wisconsin. The site is used extensively for research and educational purposes. Opportunities to buffer and expand protection efforts exist, particularly to the north and west.

If additional lands were also protected and some corridors allowing public access were established, a remarkable array of conservation and recreation benefits would be possible. Camping as well as walking, hiking, and cross-country skiing would likely be very popular, given the proximity to large urban centers. The Crawfish River drains much of the area and it, along with Rock Lake and several smaller lakes scattered through the area, provide excellent opportunities for water-based recreation.

Continuing the restoration of wetland and grassland habitats within a mosaic of farmland could establish this area as a regionally important landscape for a variety of game and non-game wildlife. Former musk farming operations that are no longer in operation can be restored through the Wetland Reserve Program. An area lying along the west bank of the Crawfish River, which includes the existing Faville Prairie and Snapper Prairie State Natural Areas, provides an excellent opportunity for restoration of a large expanse of native grassland through cooperation of several partners, both public and private. Abbe Leopold and his graduate students utilized the Faville Prairie for research projects aimed at sustaining wildlife and agriculture in harmony.

This area lies within a short drive of Madison and in relatively close to Janesville and represents a chance to protect and restore an attractive natural setting in close proximity to a densely populated and very rapidly growing part of the state. Besides the traditional recreational activities of hunting and fishing, this area could help meet the growing demand for nature walks, bird watching, horseback riding, cross-country skiing, dog-sledding, and off road biking.

**GH Glacial Habitat Restoration Area**

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The Glacial Habitat Restoration Area is an existing DNR project that includes portions of Fond du Lac, Dodge, Winnebago and Columbia Counties. The project encompasses an area that originally consisted largely of prairie, oak savannas, wetlands, shallow ponds and lakes and has historically been a haven for grassland nesting birds. The original habitat was ideal for duck production. In the past, prairie chickens and sharp-tailed grouse were common; later they were supplanted by pheasants. Unfortunately, the area has lost most of its native grassland and over 50% of its wetlands, which has produced a corresponding decline in wildlife populations.

The Glacial Habitat Restoration Area project is attempting to restore some of the natural cover and the wildlife that it supports by utilizing a landscape scale approach to habitat management throughout the 24 townships that are part of the project. The intent is to scatter suitable habitat throughout the project area to produce a mix of agricultural land, grasslands and wetlands that will be beneficial to wildlife. The objective of the project is to re-establish native grassland cover on ten percent of the available uplands in the area and to restore ten percent of the drained wetlands. The DNR and other partner agencies are using a combination of perpetual easements, fee title purchases, volunteer agreements and cost-share agreements to achieve this goal.
Horicon Marsh is the largest freshwater cattail marsh in the United States and is one of only 15 sites in the U.S. that has been recognized by the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance. It provides a rest stop for legendary concentrations of migrating waterfowl and is also an important nesting area for many species of waterfowl and wading birds. The National Wildlife Refuge here was originally created as a nesting area for the redhead duck and today it is still among the largest nesting areas for this bird in the eastern United States. Once drained and nearly destroyed in a failed attempt to convert the marsh to agricultural production, the restoration of Horicon Marsh is one of the great conservation success stories of the twentieth century. Being only 50 miles from both Milwaukee and Madison, the marsh attracts large numbers of people each year who come to hunt, walk the nature trails, canoe, and watch the enormous flocks of migrating geese.

Nearly all of the 32,000-acre marsh is in public ownership, with the northern two-thirds a national wildlife refuge, and the southern one-third a state wildlife area. However, additional protection is needed to improve and maintain the health of the ecosystem. Tributary streams deposit silt and nutrients in the marsh, causing poor water quality. Buffer strips along streams and improved farming practices on adjacent lands could help this situation. The agricultural lands around the marsh help to buffer the area and provide feeding opportunities, particularly for migrating birds. An increasing amount of farmland is being converted to housing development and maintaining large acreages of farmland would be an important component of an overall protection strategy for the marsh.

The Niagara Escarpment is located just a few miles to the east and connecting this important landform and the marsh with a protected corridor would have multiple recreation and conservation benefits. Conservation easements could also be used to maintain some of the scenic views of the marsh from the escarpment and other prominent uplands.

Jefferson Marsh is one of Wisconsin’s largest and most important waterfowl areas. Originally described by settlers as a “large meadow” because of its extensive wild rice beds, the lake is mostly open water today (in part due to the Indian Ford Dam), but is still surrounded by large backwater marshes containing wild rice, sedges and cattails. Koskonong was once known throughout the nation for its large numbers of waterfowl, particularly canvasbacks. Although it no longer supports the huge populations of ducks of former days, the lake and its environs are still immensely important as waterfowl habitat.

Four state wildlife areas, Storrs Lake, Koskonong, Lima Marsh, and Clover Valley, lie between Lake Koskonong and the Southern Unit of the Kettle Moraine State Forest and could provide the foundation for a larger protected corridor. These properties provide a variety of habitats, including wetlands ranging from large, shallow lakes. Originally described by settlers as a “large meadow” because of its extensive wild rice beds, the lake is mostly open water today (in part due to the Indian Ford Dam), but is still surrounded by large backwater marshes containing wild rice, sedges and cattails. Koskonong was once known throughout the nation for its large numbers of waterfowl, particularly canvasbacks. Although it no longer supports the huge populations of ducks of former days, the lake and its environs are still immensely important as waterfowl habitat.
The Winnebago Pool supports a diverse warm water fishery, with lake sturgeon, white bass being among the most sought after species. The lake sturgeon population is the largest self-sustaining population of its kind in the world and provides a popular winter-sport fishing season. The pool, especially Lake Winnebago, is also notable for its walleye fishery. The majority of walleyes from these lakes have the unique habit of traveling many miles up the upper Fox and Wolf rivers to spawn every spring in flooded marshes along the rivers.

Lying between Janesville, Fort Atkinson and Whitewater, the area is under increasing land use pressure from new home construction. The land is becoming more fragmented with a resulting loss of farmland and wildlife habitat. Protecting an open space corridor along the Lower Rock and Turtle Creek, major tributaries to the Upper Rock, would provide a diversity of resources and benefits. It would help reduce conflicts between new residential development and the traditional hunting uses of the state wildlife areas. The land is heavily developed with homes and cottages. Maintaining farming as a viable enterprise in this area could be an integral part of the long-term protection of the corridor.

The Winnebago Pool is comprised of Lakes Winnebago, Butte des Morts, Winneconne and Poygan. The lakes are among Wisconsin’s greatest water resources. They provide a highly productive fishery located within 75 miles of over 2 million people. The lakes and their associated wetlands, particularly the extensive wetlands that border the upper lakes, are very important to migratory and breeding waterfowl. The pool receives heavy recreational use by boaters, anglers, swimmers, hunters and trappers. Its waters are also used for industrial and domestic water supply and hydroelectric power. Lakefront property is in high demand and most of the buildable shoreline is heavily developed with homes and cottages.

The Winnebago Pool supports a diverse warm water fishery, with lake sturgeon, walleyes, northern pike, perch, catfish, and white bass being among the most sought after species. The lake sturgeon population is the largest self-sustaining population of its kind in the world and provides a popular winter-sport fishing season. The pool, especially Lake Winnebago, is also notable for its walleye fishery. The majority of walleyes from these lakes have the unique habit of traveling many miles up the upper Fox and Wolf rivers to spawn every spring in flooded marshes along the rivers.

Management of the Winnebago Pool is complicated, given the sheer size and complexity of the lakes and their watershed, and the often competing and conflicting interests of various users. The pool and its watershed are managed on an ecosystem basis guided by the Winnebago Comprehensive Management Plan. The Plan was developed in the late 1980’s with substantial public input and support. It identifies resource use and management needs for the lakes and watershed, sets clear objectives to address those needs, and lists options for management activities. Projects are developed from management options, and implementation is carried out on a continuing basis. Protection and restoration of the extensive wetlands of the upper pool lakes are critical components of the management plan.

In addition, a project along the Lower Rock could integrate the urban river front projects in Beloit and Janesville, which would allow easy access by these population centers.
natural qualities of this river corridor would provide both an ecological corridor of great value to aquatic and terrestrial species, as well as a recreational corridor that could serve large numbers of people. These already are a substantial number of open space ownerships along the river in the form of county and local parks, golf courses, an airport, a private nature preserve, and the City of Milwaukee’s Riverview project in the downtown area. These types of facilities could be expanded and linked together to form a more continuous corridor.

The Milwaukee River drains into Lake Michigan near the drinking water intakes for the City of Milwaukee, Milwaukee and North Shore municipal water systems and may affect the raw water quality of these systems. These systems supply drinking water to over 700,000 customers.

**MM Monroe - Muralt Prairie**

Lying in central Green County, west of the Sugar River, this area is among rolling hills created by an old glacial moraine. The area is primarily an open agricultural landscape with some pastures and fallow farm fields, but is experiencing rapid rural development. Some high quality prairie remnants occur on the rocky hilltops and slopes that are not tillable and a small number of prairie pastures and oak savannas still exist. Wet-mesic prairies exist along the valley floors. Many rare prairie plants and insects occur in pockets throughout the area.

This area presents a very good opportunity to combine the protection of significant amounts of farmland with large-scale prairie restoration. Connecting scattered prairie remnants with restored prairie fields enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program, or prairie pastures would provide substantial ecological benefits. Working with the farming community to find ways to keep an open, agricultural-based landscape would also be beneficial. Linking this area to the Albany Wildlife Area and the Sugar River Corridor would offer many recreational and educational opportunities within 40 miles of Madison.

**MJ Mukwonago River and Jericho Creek**

Lying in central Green County, west of the Sugar River, this area lies among rolling hills created by an old glacial moraine. The area is primarily an open agricultural landscape with some pastures and fallow farm fields, but is experiencing rapid rural development. Some high quality prairie remnants occur on the rocky hilltops and slopes that are not tillable and a small number of prairie pastures and oak savannas still exist. Wet-mesic prairies exist along the valley floors. Many rare prairie plants and insects occur in pockets throughout the area.

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**NE Niagara Escarpment**

This ecological landscape contains the portion of the Niagara Escarpment running from eastern Dodge County to High Cliff State Park in Calumet County. Some areas of particular interest on or near this segment of the escarpment include the Neda Mine, Horicon Ledge Park, Oakfield Lodge, Ledgeview Nature Center and High Cliff State Park. The Neda Mine, an abandoned iron mine in Dodge County, is already protected as a state natural area, and is one of the largest bat hibernacula in Wisconsin. At least three species of bats are found here and it is estimated that over 50,000 bats hibernate in the maze of mine shafts and tunnels. Horicon Ledge Park is a popular county park that contains a campground and provides a panoramic view of Horicon Marsh from atop the ledge. Expansion of this park, both above and below the ledge, would increase recreation potential and would also provide more protection to natural features. Oakfield Lodge, in Fond du Lac County, is a very prominent exposure of the escarpment with 40-foot sheer cliffs and numerous deep crevices. This section of the ledge is mostly wooded and contains a number of plant species that are...
Southeast Glacial Plains

ecological landscape

Patrick Marsh

is a Calumet County Park that contains a substantial cave. High Cliff State Park is located at the northeast corner of Lake Winnebago and includes both lake shore and a segment of the escarpment. The undisturbed forest on the slope beneath the ledge contains a very rich herbaceous layer, while outstanding examples of conical and effigy mounds are found in the woodlands above the ledge. The park offers a full range of recreational facilities including campgrounds, trails and a beach, and could be expanded to better serve the needs of the growing Fox River Valley.

PT  Patrick Marsh

Size ................................. Small
Protection Initiated ................. Substantial
Protection Remaining ............... Limited
Conservation Significance .......... Recreation Potential ..............★★★★

Patrick Marsh is located in the rapidly urbanizing landscape surrounding Sun Prairie. It was the first wetland mitigation bank site in Wisconsin and has a half-century history of study and data collection. The area is utilized for fishing, birdwatching, walking and nature study and is used as an outdoor classroom for students at Patrick Marsh Middle School. The site would benefit from expanded protection, in particular the wetland complex to the southwest of the marsh, which could serve as an excellent complement to the deep-water nature of Patrick Marsh. Additional uplands could be restored to prairie to enhance the grassland nesting cover around the marsh. Nearby effigy mounds and other artifacts are worthy of protection as well.

RC  Raccoon Creek

Size ................................. Small
Protection Initiated ................. Limited
Protection Remaining ............... Substantial
Conservation Significance .......... Recreation Potential ..............★★★★

Raccoon Creek is comprised of two spring fed branches totaling about 15 miles long in Wisconsin. The two branches flow southerly from Rock County unusual in southern Wisconsin, as well as petroglyphs and other cultural artifacts of ancient human inhabitants. Two portions of Oakfield Ledge are presently in state ownership, but quarrying is prevalent in this area and additional protection would be beneficial. Ledgeview Nature Center, near Chilton, is a Calumet County Park that contains a substantial cave. High Cliff State Park is located at the northeast corner of Lake Winnebago and includes both lake shore and a segment of the escarpment. The undisturbed forest on the slope beneath the ledge contains a very rich herbaceous layer, while outstanding examples of conical and effigy mounds are found in the woodlands above the ledge. The park offers a full range of recreational facilities including campgrounds, trails and a beach, and could be expanded to better serve the needs of the growing Fox River Valley.

Lulu Lake State Natural Area in Walworth County

The two branches flow southerly from Rock County
branches totaling about 15 miles long in Wisconsin.

The two branches flow southerly from Rock County

into Illinois, where they join and then flow into the Pecatonica River. The watershed is largely agricultural and, despite some degradation of water quality, the creek still has many good natural qualities. Brook trout are being reintroduced into the East Branch of Raccoon Creek.

RL  Rush Lake

Size ................................. Medium
Protection Initiated ................. Substantial
Protection Remaining ............... Limited
Conservation Significance .......... Recreation Potential ..............★★★★

Locate mostly in Winnebago County, Rush Lake is a 3,000-acre shallow, marshy lake that has a fairly undeveloped shoreline. It is the largest prairie pothole lake in the state and is significant for its large migratory and breeding populations of waterfowl and other birds. Forster’s terns and red-necked grebes are two rare birds that nest here. Surrounding lands include marsh, sedge meadow, prairie and oak savanna. The lake is located within the DNR’s Glacial Habitat Restoration Area, and both the DNR and The Nature Conservancy have protected some lands around the lake.

SH  Sheboygan County

Trout Streams

Size ................................. Medium
Protection Initiated ................. Moderate
Protection Remaining ............... Moderate
Conservation Significance .......... Recreation Potential ..............★★★★

This collection of good quality trout streams is located just east of the Kettle Moraine State Forest in Sheboygan County. The streams include the Upper Onion River, Ben Nutt Creek, Mill Creek, Nichols Creek, Chambers Creek and Melius Creek. Portions of some of these streams are already protected in existing DNR projects, but expansion of protection efforts to include all portions of these creeks that support trout would be beneficial. Linking parts of these stream corridors to the state forest could provide additional conservation benefits. Most of the streams would also benefit from improved control of erosion and run-off in their watersheds.
Above the city of Kiel, the Sheboygan River winds through some of the largest wetlands in east-central Wisconsin. The Sheboygan Marsh and its adjacent wetlands are diverse, containing a very large amount of tamarack and cedar swamp, lowland hardwood, open marsh, and open water. These wetlands provide habitat for waterfowl, cranes, herons, terns, furbearers, turtles and frogs. Northern pike and panfish are present in the waterways. The area provides significant outdoor recreation, particularly hunting and fishing, for a large number of people.

The Sheboygan River provides the common thread for linking three major wetland areas together. At the headwaters of the river is the St. Cloud Marsh, almost entirely in private ownership. A few miles downstream is the Sheboygan Marsh County Park and a small, adjacent state wildlife area, which together provide over 8,000 acres of publicly owned land. Further downstream is the Kiel Marsh State Wildlife Area, which is about 800 acres in size. The uplands bordering the wetlands are primarily devoted to agriculture. Protecting the open space around and between these three wetlands would buffer them from conflicting land uses and would link them together in an ecologically valuable corridor. An additional opportunity for linkage exists by protecting the open space that lies between the Sheboygan Marsh and the Northern Unit of the Kettle Moraine State Forest. The Sheboygan River Marshes drain into the Sheboygan River, which discharges into Lake Michigan. The STH 14 follows part of one of these channels, but a narrower, more-dramatic, parallel channel remains in a natural state. This channel, or trench, is a mile long, 150’ deep and only about 300’ wide at its narrowest point. The Shoveler Lakes, which were much larger “pro-glacial” lakes in front of the terminal moraine, once also drained to Black Earth Trench but today drain into sinkholes. Almost 700 acres are currently in state and federal ownership in the area. Most of this Legacy Place is within the project boundaries of either the Ice Age Trail, Black Earth Creek Fishery Area, or the Cross Plains Reserve, but the most-dramatic part of the trench and a scenic man-made lake are not (although they are within a county resource protection area). Additional protected acreage is likely needed to handle heavy recreational use, particularly hiking, this place is expected to receive in the future. Residential developments and quarries threaten the integrity of the glacial features here.
A variety of low impact recreation activities, including hiking, canoeing, and wildlife watching, could be supported here. The DNR recently purchased about 3600 acres of restored wetland at the headwaters of the creek.

**SG Sugar River**

**Size:** Large

**Protection Initiated:** Limited

**Protection Remaining:** Substantial

**Conservation Significance:**

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**Recreation Potential:**

Draining off the south side of the Military Ridge, the Sugar River links several large, heavily-used public properties before flowing into the Rock River just south of the Illinois state line. The high quality waters of the Sugar and its many tributaries support excellent warm and cool water fisheries. The river corridor mostly flows through highly productive agricultural land that is under pressure from increasing changes in land use.

Historically, this valley consisted of prairie and oak savanna with some wetlands and bottomland woods. A fair amount of floodplain forest still exists and there is significant potential to restore many of the other natural communities. The Sugar River valley supports many rare terrestrial and aquatic plants, insects, and grassland birds and there is significant potential to restore many of the other natural communities. The Sugar River and several tributaries are classified as Exceptional Resource Waters.

A protected network of corridors in the valley could link Brooklyn, Evensville, Liberty Creek, and Avon Bottoms State Wildlife Areas with the Sugar River State Trail, New Glarus Woods State Park, the Ice Age Trail, the Monroe-Muralt Grasslands, Military Ridge Trail, and the Cheese Country Trail. Given its proximity to other trails, long distance trail recreation could be accommodated here. Recreation activities could also include hunting, fishing, trapping, canoeing, hiking, and camping. Some stream segments have already been protected by easements. The Sugar River has potential for meeting the recreational needs of many people, being within 2 hours drive of Milwaukee, Madison, Janesville, Beloit, Rockford, the Quad Cities, and Dubuque.

**UR Upper Rock River**

**Size:** Large

**Protection Initiated:** Limited

**Protection Remaining:** Substantial

**Conservation Significance:**

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**Recreation Potential:**

The Upper Rock River, flowing from Horicon Marsh south through Watertown and Jefferson to Fort Atkinson, slowly winds through a mixture of farmland, woods, and marshes. Some large areas of floodplain as well as numerous glacial drumlins characterize the area's topography. The floodplains contain a combination of marsh, grassland, forest and cropland. Widespread flooding is a common occurrence in many areas since the floodplains are extensive and the river has a very slight gradient (the fall of the river from the upper Federal dam in the Horicon National Wildlife Refuge to the upper Watertown dam is just 34 feet over 58 miles). The uplands are mostly farmed and contain scattered woodlots.

The river has good scenic qualities along much of its length and provides opportunities for canoeing, boating and fishing. Wildlife are abundant and, although the Upper Rock does not have good water clarity and contains large numbers of carp, most of the river still supports a fair fishery for northern pike and walleye. Protection of adjacent uplands could possibly permit recreational trails to be developed in some areas. Lowland areas have value for waterfowl and these values could be enhanced through wetland restoration. The area provides hunting opportunities for common game species such as deer, turkey, rabbit, squirrel, pheasant, duck, goose, and woodcock.

In addition to the cities along its banks, the Upper Rock lies within 50 miles of the major population centers of Madison and Milwaukee and considerably closer to many other small and medium-sized communities. As a result, much of this river corridor is within an hour's drive of over half the state's population. Thus, the Upper Rock River offers a unique opportunity to combine natural resource protection, various outdoor recreation activities, and the protection of productive farmland.

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**Southeast Glacial Plains**
Southeast Glacial Plains

ecological landscape

**UL  Upper Yahara River and Lakes**

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<th>Protection Initiated</th>
<th>Substantial Protection Remaining</th>
<th>Limited Conservation Significance</th>
<th>Recreation Potential</th>
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This complex includes the Yahara River and numerous tributaries, from the Yahara’s origins in southern Columbia County through Lakes Mendota, Monona, Waubesa, and Kegonsa. Portions of the Upper Yahara River support cool to cold water fisheries. Token Creek is currently a Class II brown trout fishery but ongoing restoration efforts are likely to establish this stream as a brook trout stream as well. The origin of trout waters on Token Creek are the Culver Springs, which supply 4,000 gallons per minute of cold spring water.

Fishing and boating on the Yahara Chain of Lakes draws recreationists from throughout Wisconsin, Illinois, and Iowa. The wetlands and other natural areas that exist within the stream corridors of this system provide wildlife habitat and recreational opportunities in this rapidly growing urban area. Critical ground water recharge areas have been identified which are important for both spring flow and protection of drinking water wells. There is currently a mix of local, county and state-owned lands along the Yahara River system that provide numerous outdoor recreation opportunities and conservation benefits. Those include Cherokee Marsh (a combination of City, County and State lands), the Upper Waubesa, Lower Mud Lake, and Door Creek Fishery Areas, three state parks (Governor Nelson, Lake Kegonsa, and the newly-created Capital Springs), the Nine Springs E-Way, Lake Farm County Park, the old lagoon system of the Madison Metropolitan Sewerage District, and other local holdings. These existing efforts provide an excellent foundation for additional protection strategies.

**WB  White River and Bloomfield Area**

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<th>Substantial Protection Remaining</th>
<th>Limited Conservation Significance</th>
<th>Recreation Potential</th>
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Located in Walworth County, this area has diverse upland and wetland habitat and contains several lakes. There are fens, sedge meadows, tamarack relicts and bogs. Three existing state wildlife areas could be incorporated into protection efforts, which could extend from the White River southward to the Ixonia Marsh and the extensive wetland north of Pell Lake. The White River is scenic in spots and is suitable for canoeing. It contains largemouth and smallmouth bass, northern pike and panfish.

**WM  White River Marsh and Uplands**

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<th>Limited Conservation Significance</th>
<th>Recreation Potential</th>
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Occupying much of northwestern Green Lake County, this vast wetland complex harbors a diversity of wetland types surrounded by uplands of forest and farmland. The White and Puchyan Rivers join the Fox River here and all three rivers slowly wind through mostly open wetlands. Of particular note are the many high quality sedge meadows, emergent marshes, and wet prairies that occur throughout this system. These wetlands, along with the nearby Germania and Grand River Marshes, provide important waterfowl nesting habitat and draw hundreds of thousands of migratory birds, especially sandhill cranes, during the spring and fall. The surrounding uplands are only slightly higher than the wetlands in this relatively flat landscape. Wet mesic prairie covers a significant portion of the transition zone between the sedge meadows and oak-dominated upland forest. A few very resistant bedrock outcrops are found near the marsh that harbor plants and animals specialized to live on bare rock.
Legacy Places
along the Kettle Moraine

During the most recent period of gla-
ciation, several lobes of the Laurentide
Ice Sheet covered much of what is now
Wisconsin (see Figure 10). As it moved
south, the ice sheet plowed over much
of the state with massive walls of ice
hundreds to thousands of feet thick.
Over time, as the earth began to warm
again and the ice sheet began to melt,
countless streams and rivers flowed
off the glacier. Since the ice was
thinnest between the lobes, these low
areas became channels of flowing water
in which rocks and dirt were deposited.
Billions of tons of rock, gravel and
sand (which had been picked up earlier
by the ice sheet) were deposited into the
channel between the Lake Michigan and
Green Bay lobes. When the lobes finally
melted away, these former “channels”
were exposed and formed a 120-mile
long, 300-foot high series of ridges —
what geologists refer to as an “inter-
lobate moraine.” The steep-sided pits
found in the area were formed when
huge chunks of ice in the moraine melted
and the earth above caved in. These pits
reminded early settlers of cooking pots
and they named them “kettles.”

Extending from Manitowoc County
southward to Walworth County, this
area, now referred to as the “Kettle
Moraine,” contains some of the country’s
most impressive glacial features. A number
of very distinct Ice Age landforms were
created, including eskers, kettles, crevasse
fills, kames, and glacial spillways. Some
of the deeper kettle holes contain ponds
and lakes. The unique topography and
geology of the Kettle Moraine creates great
variations in site characteristics such as
soils, slope, sun exposure and drainage.
This results in a very diverse collection
of plant and animal communities,
including numerous rare species.
Lying in close proximity to the Milwaukee metropolitan area, the State Forest is very heavily used for hunting, fishing, camping, swimming, hiking, cross-country skiing, horseback riding, snowmobiling, and off road hiking. In some cases, recreation demand has exceeded the desired level of use and conflicts between users, as well as degradation of some natural communities, has occurred. The Ice Age Trail corridor runs the full length of the Kettle Moraines, although many segments are not completed. Completing the Trail and finding ways to disperse and alleviate the demand for recreation opportunities in the Kettle Moraine remains a priority.

The entire area is under some of the state’s most intense development pressure. Expanding and buffering existing public properties is important in maintaining the ecological integrity of the Kettle Moraine State Forest and sustaining appropriate levels of recreational use.

MK Middle Kettle Moraine Size: Large Protection Initiated: Substantial Protection Remaining: Substantial Conservation Significance: Recreation Potential: Moderate There are presently five separate units of the Kettle Moraine State Forest. The large Northern and Southern Units together total about 50,000 acres and comprise the majority of the State Forest. In between these large areas are the much smaller Lapham Peak, Lovew Lake, and Pike Lake Units, which total less than 3,000 acres. Maple, basswood, ash and hickory prevail in the Northern Unit with oak dominating in the Southern Unit. Oak savanna and prairie were once common in the southern part of the Kettles and efforts are being made to restore some of these communities. Several different types of wetlands are found in the Units of the Kettle Moraine State Forest, including hardwood swamp, tamarack swamp, bog, fen, and wet prairie.

One area within the Middle Kettle Moraine that might offer some possibility of protecting a larger block of land is the area centered around Holy Hill and extending from Lucas Lake, near West Bend, south to the vicinity of North Lake. This area contains interdiate moraine and a variety of upland and lowland communities including mesic forest, wet forest, marsh, tamarack swamp, sedge meadow, and bog. A few of the lakes here still retain stretches of undeveloped shoreline (often wetland) that harbor good quality natural communities. Cedar Creek, a Priority Watershed Area, and the Oconomowoc and Little Oconomowoc Rivers, both of which have good water quality, drain the area. Two small units of the Kettle Moraine State Forest, Lovew Lake and Pike Lake, occur here and are described in the adjacent narrative. In addition, the recently acquired Polk Kames Ice Age Trail property, a 140-acre county park, and several scattered parcels protected by various private conservation organizations are located in this area. Together, these properties could form a nucleus for future protection efforts.

MH Millhome Woods Size: Small Protection Initiated: Limited Protection Remaining: Moderate Conservation Significance: Recreation Potential: Moderate Located east of Kiel in southern Manitowoc County, Millhome Woods consists of over 2,000 acres of high quality southern mesic forest. The area is a northern portion of the Kettle Moraine and is characterized by gravelly soils and hilly topography. This block of woods is important to forest-interior birds: cerulean warbler, hooded warbler, and acadian flycatcher have all been recorded here. Millhome Creek, which flows through the woods, hosts impressive trout populations.
Southeast Glacial Plains

Other Areas of Interest

Allenton-Theresa
Marsh Connection
(Washington County)
These two existing state wildlife areas lie along the East Branch of the Rock River. Establishing a connecting link would permit wildlife to move freely along a riverside and wetland corridor.

Burlington Hills Woods
(Racine County)
A large area of glacial ridges forested with oak woods and patches of dry hill prairie, this is the largest remaining upland woods in Racine County. It is threatened by sand and gravel mining.

Caledonia Wetlands
(Racine County)
This open wetland contains some seasonal ponds that attract a large number of migratory waterfowl and shorebirds. The area is partially owned by the Town of Caledonia.

CamRock Park Area
(Dane County)
This area is located along Koshkonong Creek and includes the popular CamRock County Park. Branching of a former dam in the park has improved water quality in the creek and makes expansion of a protection corridor along the creek desirable.

Central Waukesha County
Drumlinss and Creeks
(Waukesha County)
Between Waukesha and Delafield lies a large drumlin field that is undergoing rapid land use change. Further south, Pebble Creek and Genesee Creek are two good quality steam corridors that support diverse habitats, as well as some trout, adjacent to large urban centers.

Dyer Lake Area
(Kenosha County)
This 66-acre lake hosts a good fishery for northern pike, bass and panfish. Nearby wetlands and drained wetlands could be protected and restored to provide hunting, fishing and wildlife watching opportunities.

Elizabeth Lake Wetlands
(Kenosha County)
This area contains a good quality wetland of sedge meadow, shallow marsh and shrub-carr at the southwest end of Elizabeth Lake.

Genesee Creek and Spring Brook
(Waukesha County)
These coldwater streamside harbor trout as well as several endangered and threatened species in a rapidly growing area of the state. Spring Brook flows through two relatively lightly-developed lakes that support good panfish and bass populations.

Honey Creek
(Racine County)
Several biologically rich, high quality fens, sedge meadows, emergent marshes, and tamarack swamps occur along a string of small lakes. Adjacent wooded uplands provide important habitat and help buffer the wetlands. Some state owned land exists.

Hurias Lake Woods and Bog
(Ozaukee County)
Hurias Lake is a shallow, hardwater seepage lake. The surrounding wetlands provide valuable waterfowl and wildlife habitat and support several species typically found much further north. Farm fields surround the wetlands. Land uses in the area are changing rapidly.

Lake Beulah Bog and Pickerel Lake Fen
(Walworth County)
This high quality bog lies adjacent to Lake Beulah and hosts a wide diversity of plants. The nearby Pickerel Lake Fen harbors several rare plants, some in great abundance. One of the state’s largest populations of beaked spike-cush occurs in the fen and on the adjacent uplands are large colonies of northern kitkiteatlas, a state- Threatened plant. Pickerel Lake, a 30-acre undeveloped spring lake surrounded by wetlands, receive heavy waterfowl use and also hosts a fishery of panfish, northern pike and bass.

Mill and Mud Creeks
(Calumet County)
These steep-gradient streamside rise from springs at the base of the Niagara Escarpment and flow into Lake Winne- bags. Both contain good forage fish and macroinvertebrate communities. Mill Creek also contains brook trout.

Mullet Lake and Mole Creek
(Walworth County)
These two small streams are fed by springs at the base of the Niagara Escarpment and flow into Lake Winne- bags. Both contain good forage fish and macroinvertebrate communities. Mill Creek also contains brook trout.

Paradise Lake Fen
(Washington County)
Lying along Paradise Lake just outside of West Bend, this fen contains a good quality sedge mat and deep and shallow marsh.

Poplar Creek
(Calumet County)
Poplar Creek is a relatively natural stream corridor in an urbanized area and harbors a diversity of plant and animal species. This site is an area of former extensive wetlands, prairie and oak savanna.

Southeast Prairie
(Fond du Lac and Winnebago Counties)
This is an area of former extensive wetlands, prairie and oak savanna. There are many good opportunities for restoration of wetlands and waterfowl habitat on selected parcels.

Stony Brook
(Calumet County)
The County’s only trout water. Stony Brook is fed by springs along its path to the South Branch of the Manistee River. Farming dominates the small watershed. Maintaining and restoring water quality and base flows and providing improved public access could enable many nearby residents to enjoy fishing in these waters.

Toland Swamp
(Washington County)
This area contains about 200 acres of wetland in the Town of Erin. Good quality occurrence of swamp hardwood, tamarack, and shrub-carr are present.

Troy Wildlife Area
(Walworth County)
This existing state wildlife area consists of four separate parcels containing grassland, marsh and farmland. These parcels provide valuable habitat for phoebas, ducks, woodcock and furnished. The conservation and recreation values of these parcels would be enhanced if open space buffers were established between them.

Wacousta Tamaracks
(Fond du Lac County)
This large, good quality tamarack swamp is located about one mile west of the Kettle Moraine State Forest boundary.

Wind Lake Swamp and Eagle Lake Wetlands
(Kenosha County)
Wind Lake Swamp is a large block of tamarack that is converting to hard-woods due to agricultural drainage on adjacent lands. Eagle Lake wetlands consist of shallow marsh and shrub-carr.

Mullet Lake and Upper Mullet River
(Fond du Lac and Sheboygan Counties)
This shallow, 200-acre lake is bordered by a large expanse of tamarack swamp and cattails. Considerable numbers of ducks use the lake and bordering wetlands throughout the year. The Mullet River flows from the lake, through Mullet Creek Wildlife Area and very close to the Kettle Moraine State Forest, providing a connecting corridor for these areas. A short segment of the Mullet River is a trout stream.

Paradise Lake Fen
(Washington County)
Lying along Paradise Lake just outside of West Bend, this fen contains a good quality sedge mat and deep and shallow marsh.

Poplar Creek
(Calumet County)
Poplar Creek is a relatively natural stream corridor in an urbanized area and harbors a diversity of plant and animal species. This site is an area of former extensive wetlands, prairie and oak savanna.

Southeast Prairie
(Fond du Lac and Winnebago Counties)
This is an area of former extensive wetlands, prairie and oak savanna. There are many good opportunities for restoration of wetlands and waterfowl habitat on selected parcels.

St. Peters and Westport Prairies
(Dane County)
A series of dry to mesic prairies, that are an extension of the Arlington prairie lobe, located north and east of Middleton.

Stony Brook
(Calumet County)
The County’s only trout water. Stony Brook is fed by springs along its path to the South Branch of the Manistee River. Farming dominates the small watershed. Maintaining and restoring water quality and base flows and providing improved public access could enable many nearby residents to enjoy fishing in these waters.

Toland Swamp
(Washington County)
This area contains about 200 acres of wetland in the Town of Erin. Good quality occurrence of swamp hardwood, tamarack, and shrub-carr are present.

Troy Wildlife Area
(Walworth County)
This existing state wildlife area consists of four separate parcels containing grassland, marsh and farmland. These parcels provide valuable habitat for phoebas, ducks, woodcock and fur. The conservation and recreation values of these parcels would be enhanced if open space buffers were established between them.

Wacousta Tamaracks
(Fond du Lac County)
This large, good quality tamarack swamp is located about one mile west of the Kettle Moraine State Forest boundary.

Wind Lake Swamp and Eagle Lake Wetlands
(Kenosha County)
Wind Lake Swamp is a large block of tamarack that is converting to hard-woods due to agricultural drainage on adjacent lands. Eagle Lake wetlands consist of shallow marsh and shrub-carr.