

Master Plan  
Aztalan State Park

PR-693 2003



*Approved by the Natural Resources Board in June of 2003*

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The Aztalan Master Plan Team thanks the Friends of Aztalan, many private citizens, local officials, and tribal members who assisted in the writing of this plan.

This document reflects the work of every individual who attended the meetings or wrote comments. It was apparent from the beginning that Aztalan is a beloved and cherished historical resource to many people. We hope that this plan will be a guide for sharing our affection for this site with others.

*Cover photo by Tom Davies*



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# CHAPTER 1

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Aztalan State Park is a National Landmark as well as a public park.<sup>1</sup> The most prominent features of the site represent a society that archaeologists call Middle Mississippian; this was the most extensive and complex ancient society documented in what is now the United States.<sup>2</sup> Aztalan's archaeological treasures, Native American culture, and pristine appearance must be protected. A critical component of the site's long-term protection is educating and inspiring the public to understand its global significance. Not only is Aztalan the most important archaeological site in Wisconsin, it is also recognized throughout the United States and the world.

Aztalan in Wisconsin is believed to have been the northernmost outpost of the Middle Mississippian cultural phase. Peoples of similar cultures and ways of living built great pyramidal mounds and villages in Cahokia in Illinois, Ocmulgee in Georgia, Moundville in Alabama, Marietta in Ohio, Emerald Mound in Mississippi, and similar sites in northern Louisiana, Arkansas, western Kentucky, western Tennessee, southern Illinois and southern Indiana.<sup>3</sup> The park is currently 187 acres with an approved boundary of 265 acres.

Aztalan State Park will be managed as a nationally recognized archaeological site that will also provide opportunities for archaeological interpretation, picnicking, hiking, and other compatible recreational uses. The intent of this plan is to preserve, protect, and actively interpret Aztalan's archaeological resources, as well protect its scenic, flowing beauty, while offering compatible recreational opportunities. Throughout the property's development, we must respect, explore, and celebrate both the history and mystery of one of Wisconsin's first farming communities. We must inspire an aesthetic and physical connection from the present to this amazing past at the edge of an ancient frontier.

### I. RECENT AZTALAN STATE PARK HISTORY

From 1980 until 2000, the park was owned by the State of Wisconsin and managed by the Town of Aztalan. In 2000, management was returned to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR), and a full-time natural resource educator position was created. This position works out of the Glacial Drumlin State Trail office located in Lake Mills.

The site is currently used for picnicking, hiking, shoreline fishing, canoe launching, dog walking, high school cross-country meets, and historical interpretation. School groups and other tourist groups often visit to learn about and study the archaeological and historical aspects of the site. Archaeologists and historians regularly conduct group tours for visitors. Local residents and tourists are attracted to the wide-open spaces and pursue a wide variety of unstructured activities. Some of these activities have been detrimental to the site's archaeological resources. In addition, the site suffers vandalism due to the lack of routine on-site Department presence.

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<sup>1</sup> Designated a National Landmark by the National Park Service in 1964.

<sup>2</sup> Lynne Goldstein, Aztalan Research: Preparing for Park Interpretation & Planning, 1999

<sup>3</sup> W.C. McKern, "The Stockaded Indian Village"

## II. FUTURE USE AND DEVELOPMENT

The site will be used for education and interpretation of its archaeological resources, as well as limited, compatible recreational pursuits. The plan strikes a balance between visitor access and the protection of the valuable archaeological artifacts the property holds. It calls for the protection of scenic views into and out of the site through the purchase of development rights and scenic easements. Another method of scenic protection is the siting of the visitor center, which is hidden from views within the site by a large hill between the stockades and Highway Q. This site is also the general area of an existing parking lot. Archaeological excavations have been done here, and it is known that the area has fewer archaeological resources than do other parts of the site. The visitor center is highly visible, however, along Highway Q and is one of the first stops upon entering the property. The building will have exhibit spaces, a children's hands-on center, and multi-purpose space for classes and meetings.

Stormwater runoff throughout the property will be dealt with in environmentally sound and advanced manners. For example, the property's parking lots and roads will be paved without curbs and gutters to sheet drain into low depressions alongside the roads for slow recharge back into the area's aquifers. Parking lot islands will be slightly depressed to hold runoff flow as it is absorbed, as well. These islands will be planted with prairie grasses and forbs. And an area in the southern part of the site may also contain a demonstration stormwater recharge area for the visitor center's roof runoff.

Compatible recreational uses that will be provided include picnicking, hiking, fishing, canoeing, cross-country skiing, and interpretive education. Other passive recreation activities such as on-leash dog walking will be allowed in designated areas. Additional improvements include a new park maintenance building/archaeological service center, a restored northeast pyramidal mound, a pedestrian bridge with fishing platforms to access the east side of the park, a boardwalk/bridge over a low ravine to access the southern part of the site, and a variety of passive recreation trails (paved, mown, and boardwalk) throughout the site. Interpretive nodes with signage for small groups will be a significant part of the approximately one total mile of trails throughout the park.

The total estimated cost to acquire all lands, easements and development rights within the project boundary is approximately \$1.25 million. Costs to develop the public use and administrative support facilities recommended in this plan are estimated to be just over \$8.6 million (2003 dollars).

The aesthetic intent is that all development on the property blend into the landscape as unobtrusively as possible so that the magic of Aztalan remains while public knowledge of the site's amazing history increases. See Map A - *Management Plan Map*.

## III. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES

A Public Participation Plan was developed by the WDNR, and the public was given the opportunity to comment on the plan throughout its creation. Community outreach and consensus building have been the cornerstone of the Master Plan Revision. Throughout the planning process there were multiple opportunities for public dialogue and input. The public, the Friends of Aztalan, tribal leaders and tribal staff, local officials, and educators made substantial and valuable

contributions. Informational materials and meeting announcements were regularly sent to a mailing list of approximately 300 interested participants. Local newspapers and radio stations covered meetings and the project's progress.

#### IV. SIGNIFICANT PUBLIC ISSUES

Respect for the site was the most significant issue identified by a wide range of participants during the public input process. Groups with a special interest in Aztalan State Park include Native Americans, many of whom approach the project from a spiritual point of view and as their homeland; the Friends of Aztalan, who have worked for many years to support and promote the park; and the general public, who appreciates many aspects of the site. The Technical Advisory Team has brought archaeological expertise to organizing the many physical and operational issues surrounding this park since 1990.

Several additional issues were of public concern throughout the design process. Three of them were fairly evenly weighted by the public in terms of importance: the recommendation to build a visitor center, significantly more archaeological interpretation, and limitations of some current recreational activities such as on-leash dog walking and cross-country track practices and meets. The team, throughout this process, has done its best to respond to these concerns where possible.

#### V. PROPERTY BOUNDARY EXPANSION

A common theme during public outreach and other planning sessions was the importance of protecting the undeveloped views into and out of the site. The success of preserving and protecting the serenity and character of this ancient site will depend on the character of the surrounding lands. Important views are illustrated on Map B – *Interpretive, Restoration and Preservation Zones*.

Therefore, we have identified an area surrounding the park that, if developed, would severely impact the visual and cultural experience of an Aztalan visitor. The master plan refers to this area as a “Visual Buffer.” This visual buffer extends to roads where possible for clear management boundaries. The buffer includes an additional Native American mound on a feature called Signal Hill by some and Pipestone Hill by others, just west of the park across the highway.<sup>4</sup>

This visual buffer area is predominantly privately owned agricultural fields. And although these three sides of Aztalan have been deemed by the Jefferson County Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan (1999) as an Agricultural Preservation Area, residential lots could still be permitted within viewing distance from the park. On the remaining side and without protection, a variety of developments could occur immediately adjacent to the park. The boundary has been expanded to include this visual buffer of 754 acres. The intent of the buffer is to prevent development immediately adjacent to, or within viewing distance from, the park. Up to 100 acres of this visual buffer could be purchased in fee title to connect the park with a corridor to Signal/Pipestone Hill.<sup>5</sup> The remainder of the buffer would be protected by purchase of development rights. This increases the total project boundary acreage to 1,019. See *Map C – Land Management and Acreages*.

#### I.

<sup>4</sup> Samuel A. Barrett's *Ancient Aztalan*. (pp. 250-252)

<sup>5</sup> Signal/Pipestone Hill is an additional archaeological site that sits on the western side of County Highway Q within sight of Aztalan State Park. See Samuel A. Barrett's *Ancient Aztalan*, Pages 250-252 for additional information.



## CHAPTER 2 MASTER PLAN

Aztalan is an ancient, sacred place. Its archaeological treasures, Native American culture, and pristine appearance must be protected. Throughout the property's development, we must respect, explore, and celebrate both the history and mystery of one of Wisconsin's first farming communities. We must inspire an aesthetic and physical connection from the present to this amazing past at the edge of an ancient frontier.

### I. DESIGNATION AND AUTHORITY

**Property Name and Designation:** Aztalan State Park; s. 27.01(5)(n) Stats.

**Statutory Authority:** The authority to acquire and manage land within Aztalan State Park is from s. 23.09(2)(d), Stats. and s. 27.01(1).

**Acreage Goal:** The acreage goal is 1,019 acres. The approved property boundary is shown on Map C.

**Approval Date:** The master plan and acreage goal were approved by the Natural Resources Board on June 25, 2003.

### II. VISION

Aztalan State Park is managed to preserve, protect, and actively interpret Aztalan's unique archaeological resources as well as its scenic beauty while offering compatible recreational opportunities.

### III. GOALS

- Promote and protect the site as the archaeological treasure it is known to be throughout the world.
- Balance resource protection, site access, interpretive opportunities, and compatible recreational activities with the priority of preserving the site as an archaeological treasure.
- Show and promote respect for the site through careful development and preservation measures that model the ecological sensitivities of Native American cultures and the site.
- Uncover the Native American story that can be told at this site, explaining links between its location, ecological resources, landscape, and archaeological history: what we know, what we have found, and what was it like.

- Facilitate exploration of the site by visitors of all ages through a range of interactive interpretive experiences that illustrate the Middle Mississippian culture and community.
- Maintain the integrity and the aesthetics of the site, while also providing for ongoing archaeological investigation.
- Promote educational and environmental links to the community to foster ongoing partnerships and stewardship activities.

The park will include a range of new visitor amenities. These facilities will allow visitors to fully discover the significance of the Aztalan site to the region and the world through interpretive programs, continuing on-site excavations, and improved facilities. Recreational opportunities for a wider range of visitors will be enhanced with a series of short interpretive trails that encircle the park and its various plant communities. A new visitor center, archaeological lab and service building, and new main entrance will improve access safety and expand the opportunities for education and continuing research. A pedestrian bridge with fishing piers will allow access to and interpretation of the river as well as access to the eastern part of the site, complete with a scenic overlook. Boardwalks will take visitors through restored wetland communities, and a new picnic shelter will accommodate groups visiting the site for the day. A walk-in canoe launch will remain to provide quiet access to the river. As stated in the plan goals, all recreational activities will be designed to be compatible with the primary priority of the site as an archaeological treasure. The planned development within this chapter balances the property's preservation, recreation, environmental, and cultural education goals.

As a result of this plan and in concert with its implementation, the Department will develop outreach programs at these new facilities to coordinate learning opportunities specifically with Native American groups in Wisconsin. In addition, interpretive connections to Cahokia, Dickson Mounds, and other Mississippian/archaeological sites are planned.

#### **IV. AZTALAN STATE PARK MANAGEMENT UNITS**

##### **A. Land Management Classification Overview**

The Land Management Classifications are assigned according to Section NR 44.06(7) of the Wisconsin Administrative Code. As stated in this code, "Special Management Area" is the land management classification for the entire site due its unique focus on its world-renowned archaeological resources. Although not a requirement of NR44, for purposes of this plan, the site has been further divided into separate management units, each with a specific focus and purpose. These units are an Archaeological Protection Unit, a Public Use Unit, an Administrative Unit, and a Visual Buffer Unit.

The specific land management units are based on a *Archeological Suitability Map (See Map D)* developed by the Technical Advisory Team. This map shows ground disturbance suitability zones based on the quantity and quality of archaeological resources that may be found throughout the site as known, documented, and predicted by archaeologists. This map is founded on previous scholarship, investigation, and first-hand knowledge of the site. The map depicts the likelihood of

significant and sensitive archaeological finds; disturbance should be relegated to the least sensitive areas. The *Site Suitability Map* is to be reviewed and revised as additional excavations take place and new research is published and to correct any inaccuracies. The map should be consulted and archaeological surveys conducted prior to any excavation over 2” deep at the park. A survey of the various area limits will be created and made available to future design consultants and the property manager when disruption needs to take place. See *Chapter 3, V. Existing Site Protections* for the legal requirements that must be met prior to any site disturbance.

It should be noted that ongoing and future research may alter current resource distribution within the property. The current plan takes into account all resources we know of at this time. Administrative Code NR44 variance and amendment procedures will allow us to modify the plan if needed.

### **B. Site-wide Management Prescriptions**

Several management measures will be taken throughout the entire park regardless of individual management units. It should be noted that the following provisions refer to the fee title land holdings only.

- Conduct approved archaeological investigations before any soil disturbances greater than 2” deep in accordance with the legal protections listed in *Chapter 3, V. Existing Site Protections*.<sup>6</sup>
- Remove and control the spread of invasive plant species by means that do not disturb the soil structure, such as limited chemical methods.

### **C. Archaeological Protection Unit (Approximately 25 acres)**

See *Map C - Land Management Units*.

This fragile region alongside the banks of the Crawfish River is where the Mississippians built their homes, palisades,<sup>7</sup> and mounds. The archaeological protection unit includes:

- The portion adjacent to the river, often referred to as the habitation area,
- The marker mounds on the northwest corner of the site along highway Q, and
- The serpent mound on the east side of the Crawfish River on the southeast corner of the property.

The above areas are collectively designated a State Natural Area, as they contain the most valuable and highest number of archaeological artifacts. These are the areas of highest protection within the property and, with the exception of mown trails, no facilities will be provided for public use. Archaeological materials could be present at any time even on the surface of the ground (as pushed up from each winter’s freeze-thaw cycles) or at any level below the surface of the soil.

### Management Objectives

- Continue to protect archaeological resources as the Department and State Historical Society permit.
- Restore archaeological features such as the northeast pyramidal mound and the existing portion of the stockade walls. Implement a visual method of representing the rest of the stockade structure to facilitate site interpretation.

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<sup>6</sup> The *Site Suitability Map* is to be reviewed and revised as additional excavations take place and new research is published and to correct any inaccuracies.

<sup>7</sup> See Samuel A. Barrett’s *Ancient Aztalan*.

- Restrict landscape maintenance in this management unit to protect archaeological resources.
- Develop a perimeter trail system that encourages on-trail use and interpretation and connects to the rest of the property.
- Provide a trail to connect interpretive nodes (see Map E - *Future Trail & Plant Communities*), the pedestrian bridge, and the canoe launch area.
- Provide archaeological interpretation at each interpretive trail node as noted on Map E.
- Continue shoreline restoration to stabilize riverbank erosion, re-establishing native vegetation.
- Restrict any type of public use that would have negative impacts on the area's archaeological resources.
- Manage burrowing animals to protect archaeological artifacts within this area.

#### Activities

Walking is an acceptable use within these areas, preferably on the future perimeter trails. However, dog walking will not be permitted in this area. Fishing activity along the steep shoreline in this area increases soil erosion into the river, degrading fish habitat and disturbing archaeological resources. However, fishing along this shoreline will continue to be allowed until the completion of the future pedestrian bridge with fishing decks in the Public Use Unit. Over time, the trees within the shoreline area will be removed and restored to native grassy and shrubby vegetation to stabilize the underlying soil structure. Sledding will be prohibited on the archaeological mounds.

#### Future Development

Two trails with interpretive nodes will be within this unit. One trail is on the east side of the river and will skirt archaeological features. On the west side of the river, a mown grass trail will connect the pedestrian bridge on the north to the canoe area on the south (both within the Public Use Unit) along the west side of the river's edge, if deemed feasible given the archaeological resource limitations. These trails may be mown grass, ADA accessible, or boardwalk, depending upon site conditions. No additional development will be permitted within this unit. Trail locations are conceptual on the master plan.

#### Authorized Management Activities & Management Prescriptions

- Continue archaeological investigations as approved by the Department with assistance from the property's technical team and/or the WI State Archaeologist.
- Use periodic mowing (4-5 times per year) to maintain existing bluegrass or low-grow/no-mow grass throughout the unit.
- Restore the northeast mound with methods and techniques directed by the Technical Advisory Team.
- Install secured erosion control matting and conduct revegetation plantings to continue the ongoing shoreline restoration project to stabilize soils on the riverbank.
- Plant bluegrass or low-mow mixture in or on these areas to limit maintenance needs.
- Mow to manage burrowing animals in this area.

#### **D. Public Use Unit** (Approximately 223 acres)

See *Map C - Land Management Units*.

This is the area outside of both the Archaeological Protection and Administration Units but within the current property boundary. This area has been and will continue to be an important recreational

site for local residents as well as for persons visiting the site for archaeological purposes (either research or education). In this area a visitor will find parking areas, a walk-in canoe launch, picnic areas, a picnic shelter/toilets and pedestrian trails. Fishing platforms will be adjacent or connected to a pedestrian bridge that crosses the Crawfish River within the property. *See Map F - Future Facilities Locations.*

The materials, colors, sizes, and shapes of signage and other development within this unit will blend into the rolling landscape. The intent is to minimize visual disruption within the property. This area will be managed to meet all of the project goals in terms of careful, respectful, limited development to foster, encourage, and facilitate the interpretive and recreational experiences of all visitors who come to Aztalan State Park. The Department will endeavor to be culturally sensitive in all interpretive materials.

#### Recreation/Interpretation Management Objectives

- Relocate site entrance to improve sightlines into and out of the park for safe entrance and exit.
- Provide limited recreational opportunities, such as hiking, fishing, and picnicking.
- Provide up to a mile of mown grass, ADA accessible, and boardwalk trails for interpretive teaching nodes, and signage alongside the trails (as shown on Map E). All trails are to be as visually unobtrusive as possible.
- Provide pedestrian access to the east side of the Crawfish River.
- Maintain the existing canoe launch to provide access to the river.
- Continue to provide picnicking opportunities on the west side of the river.
- Allow for existing recreational activities such as cross-country training and events or sledding with restrictions until these activities become incompatible with the property's intended purpose as determined by the Department and the property manager.
- Allow for on-leash dog activity in designated areas. Note: Per administrative code NR45.06(1), off-leash dog activity is prohibited in Aztalan State Park.

#### Existing Facilities/Activities

- **Parking Areas** - The lower, middle, and upper parking areas currently have a capacity of 80 parking spaces. The far south lot will remain, though it will be expanded to 75 spots. The north parking lot will be expanded to 25 spots.
- **Restroom Facilities** - All existing pit toilets will remain, if possible, until the completion of the new flush toilets with the picnic shelter.
- **Canoe Walk-In Area** - This area will remain as is. In the event that archaeological resources are found in the area, the canoe launch will be closed until such time as these resources are documented and the Department in consultation with the Technical Advisory Team approves the site for public use.
- **Dog walking** is allowed on-leash within designated areas.
- The existing metal pole shed currently has a gravel floor with electricity but no heat. This building will be removed for the new Archaeological Lab and Service Building.

#### Additional Development

##### *New Park Road*

A new, safer entrance to the park will be created south of the existing entrance for better entry and exit sight lines. A new, approximately 1/5-mile roadway will be excavated just south of the

existing roadway. Coordination with the Jefferson County Highway Department will be required. An interior road will be located closer to Highway Q and will connect visitors to the new Interpretive Center as well as other site amenities. This roadway will be gutterless, so pavement runoff will sheet drain and filter into adjacent, native-grassed swales. This measure will reduce initial construction and future maintenance costs, be more ecologically healthy to the surrounding ecosystems, and allow for natural groundwater recharging. This area has been previously disturbed with bluegrass lawn, but an archaeological survey and release will still be completed prior to any construction activities. The abandoned roadway will be removed and restored with native prairie vegetation.

#### *Picnic Shelter*

A new shelter will be constructed near the lower parking lot. This is the area already disturbed by the pit toilet buildings. This shelter will be for up to 50 visitors, approximately 53' x 40'. The shelter will contain flush toilets, as well as a serving room with a sink and a bi-fold window/serving counter. It will have the ability to be enclosed for year-round use. It will be served by an expanded, existing parking lot. The design of this shelter will match that of the visitor center in materials and color.

#### *Picnic Areas*

Lower Parking Lot Area - Mown areas for picnicking shall include approximately two acres of picnic tables and grills to extend to the canoe launch and ADA trail. This will also encompass the area immediately surrounding the shelter.

Upper Parking Lot Area - Mown areas for picnicking shall include approximately one acre of picnic tables and grills surrounding the parking lot and the interpretive node up to the ADA trail.

#### *Interpretive Nodes*

These nodes will be present along the site's trails. They are meant to accommodate a small group of visitors or students off-trail, as they read and/or discuss the interpretive material shown on each exhibit/sign. Each node will be a small, mown-grass or paved (as specified by its connecting trail above) area, approximately 10' in diameter. A bench will be placed at an edge of each circle in a floating concrete foundation with a grass edge that extends outside of the bench outline. A large interpretive sign will also be mounted on two posts on the edge of each node—in most cases, furthest away from the trail. Signage at each node will identify a view and interpret a historical, archaeological, or ecological topic of interest. The document *Aztalan Research: Preparing for Park Interpretation and Planning*. 1999 is rich in interpretive ideas and recommendations. No overhead vegetation will be permitted, though a small roof over a bench could provide shade.

#### *Interpretive Signage*

This master plan recommends interpretive signage at "nodes" along trails. Interpretive information specifically researched for this property can be found in the document *Aztalan Research: Preparing for Park Interpretation and Planning*. Goldstein, Lynne, 1999. The design of these signs will match that of the visitor center in materials and color. The signs will be large enough to be legible for both old and young visitors and will be of neutral, prairie-toned colors and materials. The backsides of the signs will be painted with a camouflage pattern in the same, prairie-toned colors or will be of a material that has this type of non-obtrusive character. There will be signs for the following interpretive topics:

History of Archaeological Investigations	Dates of Occupation
Cultural Affiliation	Social Organization
Site Layout	Houses
Platform Mounds	Stockade
General Subsistence	Agriculture
Hunting	Fishing
Collecting of Wild Plants and Mussels	Ceramics
Stone Tools	Other Artifacts
Appearance and Manner of Dress	Religious Beliefs
Recreation	Warfare
Abandonment	

### *Scenic Overlook*

A location on the high point of the east side of the Crawfish River will provide for viewing across the river and into the property's west side. This overlook may be an elevated platform or simply a low deck depending upon site design considerations such as slope, vegetation, and elevation.

### *Trails*

Several trails will provide archaeological, ecological, and interpretive opportunities for a range of visitors. They will also be used for hiking and cross-country skiing and may be groomed for skiing. These trails will be mown or accessible surfaces. A series of short trails will connect the visitor center to nodes with interpretive signage. These trails will go through a variety of ecosystems, e.g., bluegrass, prairie, wetland, forest. A more detailed description of each trail follows. *See Map E – Future Trail & Plant Community Locations.*

#### *West Side Main Trail*

Approximately one mile - This trail will be classified as a moderately developed<sup>8</sup> trail. It will be located primarily in the Public Use Unit but will skirt both the Archaeological Protection and the Administrative Units. An ADA accessible trail section will connect the visitor center to both the south parking lot and the north parking lot, providing ease of access to these two overlook points. The trail will then continue east on the north side of the restored northeast mound (with a spur to the pedestrian bridge) and go south along the Crawfish River shoreline to the south parking lot. *See Map E – Future Trail & Plant Community Locations.* The interpretive nodes will be connected to this trail as shown on Map E.

#### *West Side South Trail*

Approximately one mile – Will be a lightly developed<sup>9</sup> mown trail intersecting the Main Trail at its southern end, west of the canoe launch/picnic shelter parking lot. The trail will continue over a wetland with a boardwalk to the southernmost parts of the property.

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<sup>8</sup> This term refers to Department standards of trail development as referred to in the Basic Road Classification Key. NR 44.07(3). <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/rsb/code/nr/nr044.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> This term refers to Department standards of trail development as referred to in the Basic Road Classification Key. NR 44.07(3). <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/rsb/code/nr/nr044.pdf>

*East Trail*

Approximately two miles – Will be a lightly developed, mown trail coming off of the pedestrian bridge over no fewer than two boardwalk stretches to a loop trail and overlook site.

*Pedestrian Bridge*

A new pedestrian bridge will provide access to a trail and boardwalk system on the east side of the river. The bridge will be designed wide enough to allow for fishing decks or platforms. The bridge will also provide adequate navigation clearance over the river. This will help preserve riverbanks, reducing erosion.

*East Side Elements*

This area has not been open to visitors, and the property manager will retain the right to close the area should vandalism or abuse threaten the area's archaeological resources. A scenic overlook at the high point of this area, provide views of the Crawfish River and the entire Aztalan site. Boardwalks, connect the trail through wet portions. The addition of on-site staff and additional patrols, reduce vandalism.

Vegetation Management Objectives

The general vegetation management objective is to create plant communities that best demonstrate what was historically at the site as well as what will be best environmentally for the park. This will entail restoring or enhancing approximately 190 acres of native plant communities throughout this management unit. They exist now as wetland, prairie, savanna, woodland, and riparian zones as shown on *Map E – Future Trail & Plant Community Locations*. Objectives for specific acreages are listed below:

- Maintain shortgrass, bluegrass, or no-mow turf throughout the picnic areas.
- Enhance approximately 98 acres of mesic, wet mesic, and upland woodland ecosystems.
- Enhance approximately six acres of wetland.
- Enhance approximately ½ mile of shoreline riparian ecosystems.
- Recreate approximately 77 acres of tall and shortgrass prairie/savanna in upland areas.

Vegetation Management Prescriptions and Authorized Management Activities

- Remove invasive plants from the areas listed above and revegetate them with native plants.
- Implement erosion control practices on the shoreline riparian ecosystems.
- Implement prescribed burns or twice-yearly brush mowing (18" height) to recreate tall and shortgrass prairie savanna.

Authorized vegetation management activities include the use of chemicals and prescribed fire if deemed acceptable by the Technical Advisory Team and the property manager. Picnic turf areas will be maintained per Department standards.

**E. Administrative Unit (Approximately 17 acres)**

See *Map C - Land Management Units*.

This area will contain the most developed facilities in the park and have the most intensive uses. In this area a park visitor will find parking lots, a visitor center, an entrance plaza, a rear patio

with a seating wall overlooking the site, open space for ceremonies and reenactments, a council ring, and an archaeological service center/maintenance building that will provide for ongoing site maintenance and archaeological research.

The materials, colors, and shapes of signage or other development within this area will blend into the rolling landscape. The intent is to minimize visual disruption from the views within the property. This area will be managed to meet all of the project goals in terms of careful, respectful, limited development to foster, encourage, and facilitate the interpretive and recreational experiences of all visitors who come to the Aztalan State Park.

### Objectives

- Improve understanding of the importance and sacredness of this site by building appropriate facilities and exhibits.
- Provide opportunities for wider knowledge of the site to the surrounding area, region, and nation.
- Allow recreation that is respectful of the site's international importance and does not disturb potential archaeological resources.
- Create a landscape plan for the building and its surrounding area to mitigate building impacts and showcase native plant materials.
- Site the visitor center as shown on Map F – *Future Facilities* to best utilize the site's topography to screen the building from view within the site.

### Existing Facilities

The existing picnic area and shelter in this management unit will remain in their current locations. The pit toilets, however, will be removed upon construction of the visitor center, and flush toilets will be added to the new picnic shelter in the Public Use Unit at the south parking area.

### Additional Development

All new structures will blend into the site with color, materials, scale, and style. They will not dominate views into or out of the site and will be appropriately located with respect to the physical considerations such as soil type and slope. Development has been sited in areas of previous disturbance and archaeological study.

### *Visitor Center*

This structure will be located approximately where the middle shelter/parking lot and picnic area are now, to take advantage of these already-disturbed areas. It will be made of indigenous materials and designed to blend into the hill as much as possible, in order to be visually unobtrusive. It will be of colors similar to those of the surrounding landscape. Innovative energy efficiency and “green” building techniques for energy systems, waste water, stormwater, and other items, as described in “LEED Green Building Rating System,<sup>10</sup>” will be considered when designing the building.

An archaeological survey and release will be completed prior to any construction activities. Underground electric and water service will be added to the project site. After construction is complete, the disturbed area—approximately two acres of bluegrass turf—will be replanted with native plant material.

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<sup>10</sup> [http://www.usgbc.org/LEED/LEED\\_main.asp](http://www.usgbc.org/LEED/LEED_main.asp)

The front of the building will contain design elements tying it to the site visually and interpretively. Sample dwellings of simulated materials will be part of the center, entered from inside the building. A view from the entry plaza will make visual access to the site's stockade wall possible. A simulated stockade wall at an appropriate height to the site's will visually tie to the site's restored stockade wall on the far side of the front façade. Parking will be to the north and south of the building, with bus parking beyond the south car parking lot.

On the east side of the visitor center, a small plaza or patio with a long seatwall will connect the building to an ADA-accessible trail. These elements will facilitate a representative experience of the site for those visitors who, for reasons of age or disabilities, will not be able to visit the site beyond the building. Outside of this area will be an open space potentially screened with large vegetation from the road for ceremonies and reenactments as well as a council ring.

Landscaping around the building proper will be composed of massed and labeled native perennial forb and grass plants, with prairie plant communities just outside of the closest area. A shortgrass turf or bluegrass will be closer to the building.

The building will have a multipurpose room for classes and meetings, an exhibit space, a children's hands-on center, a small theater / lecture room, a gift shop, restrooms, and staff offices. It will meet energy efficiency standards, e.g., natural daylighting when possible or full spectrum light, on-site building runoff management with planted swales and rain gardens,<sup>11</sup> less toxic building materials, renewable materials, and recycled materials. The following square footages of the visitor center and parking areas are subject to revision based on need and budget at the time of construction.

a. Lobby	330
b. Coatroom	112
c. Multifunctional Room (80 - person capacity)	1,600
d. Exhibit Space	6,400
e. Children's Hands - on Center	1,200
f. Small theater or lecture hall (99 - person capacity)	1,000
g. Gift Shop	750
h. Restrooms	700
i. Staff offices	1,200
j. Food Service	500
k. Research Facility Visible to visitors	750
l. Mechanical	300
m. Plaza area	1,600
m. Circulation/Gross Factor	4,500
n. Parking Areas	Approximately 26,000 sq. ft.

*Archaeological Lab and Service Building*

This structure will mirror the visitor center in style, color, and building materials. It is separated from the visitor center due to the amount of equipment and vehicles that will use the facility. It will

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<sup>11</sup> A rain garden is an attractive native plant garden with a special purpose: to reduce the amount of stormwater entering local streams, rivers, and lakes.

contain secure storage, indoor vehicle storage, outdoor parking, a simple kitchen, showers and toilets, and archaeological lab space on one side. The other side will have overhead doors and a concrete slab floor for vehicle storage. A small parking lot of 10 spaces will serve both purposes. Underground electric and water service will be added to the project site.

The following are components of the Lab/Service Building:

a. Field Lab	400
b. Showers & Toilets	700
c. Secure storage	200
d. Outdoor Parking	5000
e. Vehicle storage	1,200
f. Concrete floors	
g. Overhead doors	
h. Simple kitchen	
i. Circulation / Gross Factor	750

*Parking*

- Three new landscaped and screened parking lots will accommodate up to 100 vehicles at the visitor center.
- An additional new lot will accommodate up to five buses.
- The islands within these parking lots will be contoured as swales to catch and filter parking lot runoff in a sheeting fashion, reducing the velocity and amount of parking lot runoff contaminated with automobile drippings. In addition, these parking lot islands will be planted with native prairie grass. The parking lot will be sheet drained with no curb and gutter into shallow rain gardens planted with native perennials and grasses. Once again, this measure will encourage a less dramatic and more ecologically sound way of handling contaminated parking lot runoff. These measures will reduce initial construction and future maintenance costs, help minimize water quality impacts from stormwater runoff, and allow for groundwater recharging.

Vegetation Management Objectives

- Create a landscape plan that allows for picnicking uses closer to the building on non-native or native, short-grass turf that then transitions to tall grass prairie/savanna away from the building out to the restored or recreated native plant communities and recreational areas.
- Manage native grass areas for this unit.

Management Prescriptions and Authorized Management Activities

- Conduct low mowing, 12-18”-high brush mowing, and/or prescribed burning to manage native grass areas for this unit.
- Continue to remove stumps, with archaeological investigation before removal when deemed necessary by the Technical Advisory Team or property manager.
- Continue to mow turf immediately adjacent to the building if deemed necessary.

Authorized management activities include stump removal and prescribed burning if deemed acceptable.

## **F. Visual Buffer Unit (Approximately 745 acres)**

See *Map C - Land Management Units*.

This area is immediately surrounding the current state park boundary. An additional Native American mound located on a feature called Signal Hill by some and Pipestone Hill by others exists in this area, as well.<sup>12</sup> The entire area has been added to the park boundary.

The area is currently (2003) agricultural fields and is privately owned by several different parties. While the surrounding property on three sides of Aztalan has been deemed by the Jefferson County Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan (1999) as an Agricultural Preservation Area, residential lots could still be permitted within viewing distance from the park. The property manager will work with local governments to include this area in their Open Space plans.

Based on the recommendations of many stakeholders and the Technical Advisory Team as well as the referenced maps, this Visual Buffer Management Unit property is valuable to the site in that it is within the viewshed of the current park. This area has been approved for protection by conservation/ scenic easements or purchase of development rights. Purchase of lands by fee title will be used only to purchase the lands, place appropriate restrictions on the deed, and resell the property. It is the intent of this plan to keep this area in rural agricultural use. In the event of a willing seller, however, one particular parcel will be purchased and retained in fee title: a 150-foot-wide corridor from Highway Q to Signal/Pipestone Hill in conjunction with a 150-foot buffer around Signal/Pipestone. (*See Map C - Land Management Units*). Collectively, the above measures will protect the views from the park and maintain the integrity of the Aztalan experience while respecting the existing agricultural use of the land.

### Management Objectives

- Preserve and enhance the scenic view from the park.
- Maintain the present rural/agricultural landscape by acquiring development rights or scenic easements for the majority of the development buffer area.
- Protect archaeological resources that may be present within the Signal/Pipestone Hill area by purchasing this area in fee title.
- Provide an accessible trail corridor to the Signal/Pipestone Hill property by purchasing this corridor in fee title.
- Recreate a native ecosystem, such as open savanna, within the Signal/Pipestone Hill area to complement the park vistas.
- Recreate/restore and maintain a savanna/grassland prairie plant community on Department property.
- Allow for continuing archaeological investigations on the Signal/Pipestone Hill property.

### Existing Facilities

There are no facilities within this currently privately owned area.

### Additional Development

This plan permits the construction of an accessible trail on a trail corridor to allow access to Signal/Pipestone Hill by park visitors.

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<sup>12</sup> Samuel A. Barrett's *Ancient Aztalan*. (pp. 250-252)

Authorized Management Activities within the Signal/Pipestone Hill Area

Possible management actions may include mechanical means, chemical means, or prescribed fire.

Sledding and cross-country training or meets will not be allowed on this state property due to the priority of protecting the area's archaeological resources.

**V. TECHNICAL ADVISORY TEAM**

In contrast to most other state parks, Aztalan has had a Technical Advisory Team in place for over a decade to guide archaeological interpretation, education, and research, as well as park development. Currently, this team includes the State Archaeologist, members of the UW-Milwaukee and Michigan State University Anthropology Departments, and members of the local government. It is anticipated that this group will continue to provide guidance to the Department and the property manager in negotiating the site's various legal archaeological protections while implementing the master plan's recommendations.

**VI. REAL ESTATE MANAGEMENT**

It is the policy of the Natural Resources Board to purchase land within the approved boundary only as it becomes available from willing sellers.

Land will be acquired through normal DNR procedures where DNR buys land or easements from willing sellers at a fair market value. Fair market value is determined through an appraisal process that evaluates land based on its physical characteristics and recent sales of comparable land in the vicinity. The park manager will be the WDNR representative responsible for contacting landowners periodically to see if there are any concerns or questions about any phase of management, development or acquisition. The DNR Land Acquisition Handbook will be consulted for procedures for contacting and documenting landowner contacts.

The Department can only acquire land by condemnation if the Natural Resources Board, two standing committees of the Legislature, and the Governor approve the action. The DNR has not acquired any land by condemnation in the last 30 years. There have been only two such cases since 1969, and in each case the owners agreed that condemnation was necessary.

**VII. PUBLIC COMMUNICATION PLAN**

The park manager will be the Department representative responsible for answering public inquiries on property development, operations, law enforcement and maintenance.

The site's property manager communicates development, maintenance, and approved archaeological excavations to the public. The property manager will maintain a mailing list of persons or groups interested in receiving information about important management or use issues. Mailings and news releases may be used to notify the public of significant developments on the

property. Current interpretive and educational programming as well as communication of onsite events will continue into the future.

## VIII. PROJECT PHASING

This following phasing plan considers the mechanisms by which the Department funds development projects. This phasing plan also considers public comment throughout the master plan project. Members of the public who participated in the master planning process found having to pay a park entrance fee acceptable only if additional site facilities were added. This is a separate administrative procedure that requires public input.

To acknowledge these two constraints, initial phases of work are focused on smaller, very visible projects that would impact every visitor's experience of the site. Larger and more expensive projects are phased directly afterward in hopes of capitalizing on the interest and momentum generated by initial improvements. Later phases include site aspects that will complete the full range of visitor experiences. Nothing should prevent this phasing from being adjusted to accommodate changing needs and/or opportunities.

### A. Phase One

1. A GPS survey of the *Site Suitability Map* boundaries in a format that can be used by the property manager as well as design and construction contractors
2. New entrance signs on both entrances to the park and on the highway
3. Base course/gravel entry road to the South parking lot
4. Site electric and water services
5. Maintenance building/Archaeological Service building w/ gravel parking lot<sup>13</sup>
6. West side trails with interpretive nodes & sign panels
7. Shoreline vegetation development w/exotics control
8. Associated archaeological investigations and infrastructure improvements
9. Property brochures and a poster-sized illustration of the future visitor center for fundraising purposes

### B. Phase Two

1. Visitor center w/Department entrance booth
2. Plaza
3. Parking lots & asphalt binder course for new entry road
4. Signage
5. Lighting
6. Building landscaping<sup>14</sup>
7. Native plant community development
8. Associated archaeological investigations & construction management – 3%
9. Construction management – 3%

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<sup>13</sup> No curb & gutter

<sup>14</sup> No curb & gutter.

**C. Phase Three**

1. Northeast mound & stockade reconstruction
2. Park shelter w/flush toilets
3. Native prairie, oak savanna, lowland plant community development
4. Associated archaeological investigations and infrastructure improvements
5. Construction management – 3%
6. Archaeological construction observation – 3%

**D. Phase Four**

1. Pedestrian bridge
2. Fishing pier
3. Boardwalks
4. East trails & overlook
5. Native community development
6. Associated archaeological investigations & construction observation – 3%
7. Construction management – 3%



## **CHAPTER 3**

### **SUPPORTING OR BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

#### **I. EXISTING PARK FACILITIES**

The park is mostly open prairie with 38 of its 187 acres in oak woods. Northern pike, catfish, and walleye are caught in the Crawfish River, which is also used for boating and canoeing. The park contains a picnic shelter, three parking lots, two sets of pit toilets, a walk-in canoe launch, a small storage building, two wells, a picnic area, a single entrance with roadway, two restored mounds, marker mounds, and two sections of restored stockade walls.

#### **II. ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES SUMMARY AND SIGNIFICANCE**

##### **A. History of Aztalan**

An isolated village with no associated outlying sites, Aztalan is located on the Crawfish River in south central Wisconsin. Aztalan is viewed as the northernmost outpost of Mississippian society. It was occupied primarily between AD 1000 and 1300. Although the name "Aztalan" derives from Aztec legend, there is no Aztec relationship or link; the name postdates the occupation and results from a historical misunderstanding on the part of a chronicler in 1836.

Site areas in the village include:

- (1) A 21-acre palisaded precinct within which most activity occurred. Watchtowers were located at regular intervals along palisade walls, which were made of heavy timbers and clay. Several less massive inner walls further separated site activities. Within this palisaded precinct is a midden concentration where garbage was dumped, a habitation and house area, a plaza area that functioned as a public or ceremonial open space, and a pyramidal mound area. The flat-topped mounds were constructed in stages, with a ceremonial building built on top of each stage.
- (2) A conical mound precinct located along a ridge at the western edge of the site. Each of about 50 conical mounds in this precinct had a large post set in its center. These posts marked the site or particular events; the mounds were generally not for burial.
- (3) An agricultural area to the north and south of the palisade. Only household gardens were located in the palisade.

Both late Woodland and Middle Mississippian people occupied the site. The first settlers—Woodland people practicing maize horticulture—came up the Rock and Crawfish rivers from northern or central Illinois, or both, in AD 800-900. These people also settled elsewhere in southeastern Wisconsin. The more intensive Middle Mississippian presence represents the second movement of people from the south, which occurred 100 years or so later. It reflects perhaps the need to find land for an expanding population. For trade, the Crawfish River would have provided transportation to locations to the south, north, and west. Aztalan's location also would have allowed easy access to all regional vegetation and resource zones. For farmers, the land is level, and its soils are well drained, easily cleared, and most suitable for maize agriculture.

On the basis of earlier reports, people invariably ask if the site's inhabitants were cannibals. Evidence for cannibalism includes some broken and split human bones in refuse pits. However,

societies treat the bodies of their dead in different ways. Some parts may be curated for years, while other parts are discarded. Sometimes burial is immediate, and at other times it is not. Stages of treatment of the dead are well documented in Mississippian and Late Woodland societies. The cannibalism interpretation persists because no cemetery has been documented, few burials have been recovered, and the range of mortuary behavior is unknown. While it is possible that there was some ritual cannibalism at Aztalan, it is more likely that the mortuary ritual included extensive processing of the deceased, with subsequent burial of some bones and discard of others. As at other Mississippian sites, the fate of Aztalan's residents is unknown; there is no evidence that they were forcibly removed or evicted, but there is also no evidence that they moved elsewhere for purely internal reasons (Goldstein).

Aztalan State Park is a Nationally Registered Landmark and on the Register of National Historic Places.

## **B. Historical Timeline**

1000 - 1300	Major occupation of the site. Please see the above brief history.
1835	First European discovery of the site by Timothy Johnson.
1837	Hyer publishes first account of the site.
1838	Site sold by government for 22 dollars.
1850	Increase A. Lapham maps entire site.
1919, 1920, 1932	First scientific excavations, conducted by Barrett.
1948 -1962	The Wisconsin Archaeological Survey does further excavations.
1952	Aztalan becomes a State Park.
1964	The site of Aztalan granted National Landmark Status.
1964, 1967, 1968	State Historical Society Excavations - Freeman.
1984	University of Wisconsin Milwaukee Excavations – Goldstein.
1980	The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources contracted the management of Aztalan State Park to the Town of Aztalan while retaining ownership.
2000	Management of Aztalan State Park returned to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.
2001 to present	Michigan State University Excavations – Goldstein.

## **III. CULTURAL HISTORY AND RESOURCES**

### **Lake Mills-Aztalan Historical Society**

The Lake Mills-Aztalan Historical Society museum is located just north of Aztalan State Park. It comprises a reconstructed village, including the original Aztalan Baptist Church built in 1852, and is a Registered Wisconsin Landmark. The Church holds a large collection of Native American and pioneer artifacts from the area. Three original area log cabins—the Aztalan schoolhouse, a granary, and a log admission house—and the 1861 Mamre Moravian Church have also been relocated to the museum grounds. The marker mounds along Highway Q extend onto the Museum grounds. One, known as the Princess Mound, held the remains of Native American woman covered with strings of shells. The Historical Society is very active in the Lake Mills-Aztalan area. The museum is open for limited hours during the summer months.

## IV. LAND CAPABILITIES AND NATURAL RESOURCES INVENTORIES

### A. Soil Suitability

Twenty-one soil types occur in Aztalan State Park, ranging from sandy loams to muck, with silt loam being the predominant soil texture. This great variety has led to a diverse vegetation pattern and habitat. Soils were analyzed for their suitability for recreation, roads, building foundations, and septic tanks. Development of areas with severe soil limitations would be more expensive and detrimental to the environment than development of areas with slight or moderate limitation.

### B. Topographic Analysis

The rounded, gentle topography of Southeastern Wisconsin is evident at Aztalan State Park. Visitors enter the park at its high point along Highway Q. To the east, the land slopes gently downward to the Crawfish River. A drainage swale bisects the southwest corner of the park, creating a more diverse topography and separation between the archaeological protection unit and a field to the south. The river bank on the west side of the Crawfish ranges from water level at the flood-prone canoe landing to steeper banks to the north that exhibit erosion. A native vegetation restoration project is currently underway on the west riverbanks. The bank on the east side of the Crawfish rises to 20 feet above the river directly across from the canoe launch, creating an interesting overlook of the archaeological protection unit. The land on the east side of the Crawfish is very gently rolling and cut by two drainage swales that empty into the river.

### C. Vegetation and Wildlife Habitat

The major portion of Aztalan State Park is currently mown turf to reduce the potential for bioturbation (digging by rodents and other wildlife and invasion by strong roots), that could damage artifacts underground. The short turf reveals the structure of the reconstructed mounds. A diversity of plant and animal communities exists along the banks and on the east side of the Crawfish River. A list is given in the next section.

#### Southern Mesic Forest

A deciduous forest dominated by the dense shade of sugar maple with a spring ephemeral ground layer and few shrubs, except along the riverbank where light intensities are higher. Other tree species include white oak, eastern hop hornbeam, poplar, cherry, basswood, and shagbark hickory. Mesic forests occur on rich soils with uniform moisture.

#### Southern Wet Forest

A deciduous forest found in wet soils, in floodplains, and along drainage ways with fluctuating water levels. The dominant species include silver maple, black willow, American elm, green ash, and cottonwood. Box elder, buckthorn, and honeysuckle heavily invade the wet forests at Aztalan State Park.

#### Southern Sedge Meadow

An open plant community on wet soils just above the water table and dominated by sedges rather than grasses. The meadows also contain wetland grass species, cattails, and forbs such as asters and goldenrod. Dogwood and other shrubs often ring sedge meadows.

Shrub Carr

A tall shrub community in the intermediate stage between wet prairie and wet forest. The dominant shrubs are red osier dogwood, gray dogwood, and a variety of willows. Other shrubs include raspberry, currant, elderberry, and nannyberry. The understory here is composed of cool season grasses such as brome, orchard, quack, and canarygrass. Virginia creeper, poison ivy, wild cucumber, and pioneering prairie forbs such as goldenrod and aster are evident.

Aquatic

Plant communities in unimpeded rivers are generally limited to the immediate shoreline areas. The shores of the Crawfish River are infested by reed canarygrass. Historically, wild rice and aquatic emergent native plant species may have been present.

Old Field

The old agricultural fields on poorly drained soils are dominated by European grasses such as quackgrass and bromegrass. These open fields are slowly becoming shrub communities as red-osier dogwood, gray dogwood, box elder, buckthorn, and honeysuckle become established. Pioneering prairie species, such as goldenrod, are also becoming established.

New Growth Woodland

The new growth woodland zone is a wooded area of even-aged trees with many invasive species in the understory. The predominant trees include shagbark hickory, cherry, red oak, and box elder, with buckthorn and honeysuckle in the shrub layer. Old fence rows and field edges are also in this category.

River Bank Restoration Area

A bank stabilization and re-vegetation project area for erosion control and nesting habitat is taking place on the west banks. The steep, eroding banks of the Crawfish are stabilized with straw blankets, and native prairie species are seeded. Invasive species such as buckthorn and honeysuckle are prevalent on the oldest sections of the restoration.

Mowed Turf

Much of the site is mowed turf. Most of the trees have been removed from this area; however, black locust, green ash, and white oak are present and have been planted along the park drive.

Wildlife

Wildlife at Aztalan State Park is typical of Jefferson County. Deer, fox, coyotes, and a variety of rodents frequent the park. The Crawfish River attracts waterfowl and provides a water source for many species. Common fish species include walleye, northern pike, white bass, black crappie, sauger, bullhead, and channel catfish.

## **D. Wetlands, Fish Habitat, and Aquatic Resources**

### Wetlands

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Wetland Inventory identifies wetlands that are two acres or larger in size. The inventory classifies wetlands according to aquatic and wetland plant communities, hydrology, human influence such as farming practices, and other wetland characteristics such as soil type. Development within wetlands may require permits from the WDNR and/or Army Corps of Engineers, and no buildings should be constructed within 75 feet of WDNR-designated wetlands.

### Floodplain

The Floodplain delineation represents the inundation line of a 100-year flood as determined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Certain types of development are not allowed within the floodplain zone.

### Crawfish River

Aztalan is located in the Lower Crawfish River watershed. A major tributary of the Rock River, the Crawfish has a rock and gravel bottom in this area, providing better fish habitat than other stretches of the river. In general, fish habitat has deteriorated due to non-point runoff and lack of erosion control. Most of the fish species are highly migratory, moving up the Crawfish River from Lake Koshkonong. Primary species include walleye, northern pike, white bass, black crappie, sauger, bullhead, and channel catfish. The Crawfish River is 49.5 miles long and is considered a warm water sport fish community. The environmental problems and impacts on this river include heavy metal toxicity, carp disturbance, nonpoint source pollution, turbidity, sedimentation, dissolved oxygen, and destruction of habitat through scouring and sedimentation.

## **E. Endangered Resources-Natural Heritage Inventory**

No endangered species have been identified within Aztalan State Park.

## **V. EXISTING SITE PROTECTIONS**

### **A. State Statutes**

- Ss. 44.47 - Historic Field Archaeological Act - Requires state agencies to consult with Historical Society regarding excavations, development, etc. The contact agency is the Historical Preservation office in the State Historical Society, Office of the State Archaeologist  
Phone: 608-264-6495 ; Web: <http://www.shsw.wisc.edu/arch/osa/index.html>
- 157.70 - Burial Sites Act

### **B. National Register of Historic Places**

The site is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. This places it also under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 as amended. The contact agency is the Department of the

Interior - National Park Service: 202-208-3100. This agency is responsible for making sure the states are protecting the historic place.

## **VI. REGIONAL ANALYSIS**

### **A. Site Qualities**

Aztalan State Park contains significant archaeological resources associated with the Woodland and Mississippian cultures. It is the most important archaeological site in Wisconsin and known worldwide. Artifacts and earth forms, such as the platform mounds, indicate that it could have been the northern outpost of the great Mississippian culture whose capitol was Cahokia, near St. Louis. A connection can also be made with Dickson Mounds in central Illinois.

Aztalan's location on the Crawfish River and abundant natural resources may have lead to the settlement of this location. The open aspect of the site and easy access appeals to local and regional visitors. Park management estimates that 75% of current visitors live within 50 miles of the park. The educational, archaeological preservation, cultural, and recreational potential of this park draws a worldwide audience.

### **B. Geographic Location and Transportation**

Aztalan State Park is located in southeastern Wisconsin in the Town of Aztalan in northwestern Jefferson County, just south of the intersection of County Roads B and Q. The rural hamlet of Aztalan borders the park on the north and northwest. The City of Lake Mills is less than one mile to the west. Interstate 94 travels east and west about one mile north of the Park. Many visitors to the site are expected to exit I-94 at Lake Mills or Johnson Creek and follow County Road B to the Park. I-94 connects the major population centers west of Aztalan, such as Madison, La Crosse, and Eau Claire, Wisconsin and Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minnesota, with cities to the east including Milwaukee and Chicago.

The Glacial Drumlin State Trail stretches along an abandoned railway line from Waukesha on the east to Cottage Grove on the west and will eventually connect with trails in Madison and the Military Ridge Trail to southwestern Wisconsin. The trail provides for bicyclists, hikers, and snowmobiles. It passes just south of the park and intersects County Road Q, which provides access to the park. Signage provides direction between the two properties.

### **C. Geological and Ecological Significance**

Cambrian sandstone forms the bedrock of the Aztalan area and controls the movement and storage of groundwater in Jefferson County. Ten-to-twelve thousand years ago, the Green Bay Glacier of the continental ice sheet retreated from southeastern Wisconsin, leaving behind a cold, desolate landscape of rolling hills, glacial till, sand, gravel, and boulders. The soils of the area around Aztalan evolved from particles that were deposited as the glacier melted. This geological feature is known as ground moraine (Borman, et al, 1976).

The effects of time and weather on this juxtaposition of landforms have created an ecologically diverse region know as the Eastern Ridges and Lowlands geographic province. This eco-region

extends from northeastern to southern Wisconsin, extending as far west as Madison, roughly paralleling Lake Michigan. As the name suggests, rolling hills and drumlins alternate with low marshy areas. Physical movement is easy through this gently rolling area, and it is the most densely populated part of the state (Lawrence, 1965).

West of the Crawfish River, which passes through the park, the warm, east-facing slopes may have supported savanna and prairie plant communities prior to European settlement. Decaying tall vegetation helped form the fertile soils of this area. Prairie fires set by lightning or Native Americans swept eastward on the prevailing westerly winds up to the Crawfish River. On the fire-free east bank, maple-basswood forests developed over time. Numerous lowlands and marshes are interspersed between the moraine and drumlin ridges. Decaying vegetation has formed peat and muck in these areas (Curtis, 1959). Artesian springs are found along the edge of the Crawfish River at the base of the hills, providing yet another habitat. The variety of topography, plant communities and wildlife species in the vicinity of Aztalan State Park is immense and perhaps one of the reasons the Mississippians chose this location to build a village (Goldstein).

#### **D. Population and Basis for Local Economy**

Aztalan State Park is located between the Village of Johnson Creek and the City of Lake Mills. Both municipalities have strong but different tourism attractions. The state park has the potential to draw visitors who stop to visit the nearby outlet malls and visitors and summer residents on Rock Lake in Lake Mills. The Chambers of Commerce along the Rock River from Beloit to Horicon have joined forces to attract bus tours to area attractions that would likely stop at Aztalan. The development of a visitor center and more interpretive opportunities is expected to have a positive influence on the local tourism industry and associated businesses such as restaurants, hotels, and shops.

#### **E. Population Trends**

The proximity of Madison, Waukesha, and Milwaukee and easy access via I-94 contribute to steady population growth in the general vicinity of Aztalan State Park.

The *Jefferson County Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan* (Jefferson County Board of Supervisors, 1999) was used to provide a population analysis of the County, Cities, Villages, and Towns. The 2000 population of Jefferson County was 75,784. By 2020, mid-range population projects expect the county's population to reach 85,980, an increase of 13.45%. The population of the Town of Aztalan is expected to increase from 1,447 to 1,525, or by 5.3%. The City of Lake Mills is expected to grow from a population of 4,843 in 2000 to 5,679 in 2020, or by 17.26% (*Jefferson County Directory 2000-2001*).

Local residents visit Aztalan State Park for many recreational activities on a daily basis. Demand for these activities is expected to increase based on increasing population in Jefferson County and the City of Lake Mills.

## F. Land Use/Classifications

Countywide 1996 land uses in Jefferson County are as follows: Agriculture and Woodlands - 68.3%, Wetlands - 14.8%, Urban Development - 4.9%, and Open Water - 4.5% (Jefferson County Board of Supervisors, 1999). The following land use classifications mapped in the *Jefferson County Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan* (Jefferson County Board of Supervisors, 1999) currently guide and impact future development at Aztalan State Park and the immediate vicinity. The *Jefferson County Zoning Ordinance No. 11*, effective March 20, 2000, and State and County shoreline zoning ordinances should be consulted prior to any new construction. The following land use classifications affect either potential construction activities at Aztalan or the character of the surrounding view shed.

### Agricultural Preservation Areas

The agricultural preservation area surrounds Aztalan State Park on all sides except the north. The county-wide goals adopted for this designation, which may influence Aztalan State Park, include preserving the rural character and aesthetic quality of Jefferson County, minimizing nonagricultural development on prime agricultural soils, and maintaining the integrity of agricultural districts allowing for accepted agricultural practices. A few residential lots may be allowed adjacent to Aztalan State Park in the agricultural preservation areas, subject to re-zoning requirements.

### Environmental Corridor

The environmental corridor designation includes land that meets one or more of the following conditions.

- Public-owned park, recreation, and conservancy lands, including Aztalan State Park
- Water bodies and wetlands mapped as part of the WDNR Wetland Inventory – such lands exist within the Park.
- 100-year Floodplains based on Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA)
- Contiguous woodland over 10 acres in size
- Additionally, any land with a slope in excess of 20 percent should be considered as an environmental corridor.

### Rural Hamlet

Rural hamlets are designated unincorporated areas of development in the rural area, traditionally consisting of a cluster of homes and perhaps a few businesses. The Jefferson County Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan lists the following goals for rural hamlets:

- Design and locate housing in rural areas in a manner that minimizes adverse impacts on agriculture and maintains the rural character in Jefferson County.
- Provide sites in the rural parts of Jefferson County that are suitable for limited rural residential development.
- Provide areas for limited growth and development in rural towns.

The rural hamlet of Aztalan is located immediately north of Aztalan State Park. It is possible that additional dense development of this area will occur to the west of the park along County Road B.

### Urban Service Area

The City of Lake Mills 20-year urban service area boundary is located less than one mile west of Aztalan State Park. Goals for this designation encourage higher density residential development and non agriculture-related businesses and industries to locate in areas where public utilities will be available. Higher density development just to the west of Aztalan State Park may eventually influence the ease of access to the park and the views out the park.

### **G. Adjacent Public Lands**

In the Town of Aztalan, 1,061 acres of land are used for transportation, utilities, communication, government institutional, and public recreation. This is 6.5% of the total 16,228 acres in the Township (Jefferson County Board of Supervisors, 1999).

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources manages extensive public lands and trails in the area around Aztalan State Park. The Glacial Drumlin Trail is a 50-mile trail on an abandoned railroad grade that runs from Waukesha in Waukesha County to Cottage Grove in Dane County. The trail passes about one mile south of Aztalan State Park. It is open to bicycles, rollerblades, hikers, and joggers during the summer and to snowmobiles and skiers during the winter. Signage directing trail users to Aztalan State Park is recommended. The Glacial Drumlin Trail Office is located in a historic railway depot at 1213 South Main Street in Lake Mills.

Just southwest of the City of Lake Mills in the Town of Lake Mills, the Department of Natural Resources manages the Lake Mills Wildlife Area. The Wildlife Area encompasses nearly 1,300 acres of wetlands, prairie, oak savanna, and lakes—including Bean Lake, Mud Lake, and the backwaters of Rock Lake. Sandhill Station Campground is a primitive walk-in or bike-in campground within the Wildlife Area that is accessible from Mud Lake Road. The campground provides 15 rustic tent camping sites.

Korth County Park is located just west of Lake Mills on Korth Lane and overlooks Rock Lake. The new 89-acre park will feature hiking and cross-country skiing, picnicking, adaptive reuse of a dairy barn, and native plant community restoration. Rock Lake County Park on Highway B in Lake Mills features a boat landing and picnic facility. The City of Lake Mills maintains boat landings, beaches, and parks on Rock Lake.

Aztalan State Park provides archaeological and educational opportunities to learn about the Mississippian and Woodland Cultures not found elsewhere in the immediate area or even Wisconsin. Local residents are attracted to the wide-open views and large unprogrammed spaces of the park. Hiking trails and lake fishing are available in other local parks, but the cultural and historical character of Aztalan is unique.

### **H. Adjacent Private Lands**

In the Town of Aztalan, 14,810 acres, or 91%, are privately owned, with the greatest percentage, 72%, in agriculture (Jefferson County Board of Supervisors, 1999).

Private lands surround Aztalan State Park. Land on the west and east is agricultural and provides a scenic buffer around the park. Land to the north is predominantly residential in the rural hamlet of Aztalan. The hamlet of Aztalan has the potential to expand on the west side of the park. The Lake

Mills-Aztalan Historical Society is located immediately north of Aztalan State Park on Highway Q. The Aztalan Museum is open from May 15 through September 30.

The management of Aztalan State Park should consider the effect of park activities on residential neighbors. Continued population growth and associated development would also change the character, aesthetics, and ecology of the land surrounding the park, including the park experience for visitors.

### **I. Local Scenic Resources**

Participants at the public input meetings often mentioned the views of Aztalan State Park and the views out from the park as one of their favorite things. The gently rolling agricultural landscape, interspersed with woods and wetlands, seems to be universally appealing. In accordance with this management plan, the long views from the park and into the park will be protected through the use of scenic easements.

A high point, called Signal Hill by some, is located just west of the park. It is a landmark in the area, and Indian mounds are located on the hill (Barrett, 1933), though the area is currently being farmed. Views of this hill from the park should remain unobstructed. A new water tower near this landform can now be seen from the park. The land east of the park is agricultural, and farm buildings can be seen in the distance, placing the park in its agricultural context. Visitors coming to the park from the east experience a lush river valley and a first glimpse of the marker mounds as they cross the Crawfish River on Highway B. Selective tree pruning may enhance this view.

### **J. Special Concerns, Threats and Opportunities**

Aztalan State Park is a special place—a Mississippian and Woodland cultural and historic site with worldwide significance and also a favorite local park. The balance between these two different, and sometimes competing, uses brings up several issues of special concern.

#### Promotion

Promotion of the site and education of the tourism industry to its existence is lacking at this time. The feasibility of building an informative and sensitive visitor center and archaeological service building will hinge on increased visitation and entrance fee collection to offset at least part of the construction and staffing cost. In accordance with this master plan, there will be a commitment to and emphasis on promotion of the site.

#### Local Use and Neighborhood Concerns

A related concern is the reaction of local users and neighbors to changes at the park. A change in the focus from primarily a recreational facility to an educational and archaeological site with an emphasis on respect of the history and culture of the Mississippians will bring changes to the allowed activities and an increase in traffic and visitors to the site. Changes should be initiated gradually, with an emphasis on communication with local residents and neighbors before changes are implemented. The Lake Mills-Aztalan Museum and adjacent homes have special concerns about potential trespassing and vandalism from increased visitation. Neighbors need to be alerted to changes in traffic volume, traffic patterns, and allowable activities.

Access to the Property on the East Side of the Crawfish River

To date, access to the east side of the Crawfish River has not been encouraged. Native American mounds of the Woodland Culture are found here, and park management is concerned about the potential for mound vandalism in this remote area. Beautiful maple woods and high overlooks of the archaeological protection unit make these east side trails desirable. A pedestrian bridge to this area is shown in the master plan. The bridge will also provide additional fishing platforms. The bridge and trails should be wide enough to accommodate park maintenance and patrolling vehicles the size of a four-wheeler. Access to the bridge will be only from within the park so that those visitors to the eastern portion can be more easily monitored.

Entrance Fees

No entrance fee has been collected at Aztalan State Park to date. Participants at the public input meetings indicated that institution of an entrance fee or annual park sticker requirement in conjunction with site improvements and, in particular, a visitor center would be acceptable. The master plan provides for only one entrance to the park to facilitate fee collection.

Friends of Aztalan

The Friends of Aztalan is a non-profit support group for Aztalan State Park. Members offer guided tours of the park and raise funds for special projects. The Friends expect an expanded role with the development of a visitor center, including fund raising, volunteer opportunities in the center, and office space.



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## APPENDIX

### ASSESSMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AND ALTERNATIVES TO THE MASTER PLAN

An Environmental Assessment (EA) is a document the Department prepares to inform decision-makers of the environmental effects of proposed actions. It serves as the primary Department document for assessing relevant areas of environmental concern and allowing for a reasonably informed prediction of a proposal's effect on the environment.<sup>12</sup>

#### I. ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE

##### A. Capital Development Physical Impacts

This master plan details a variety of future capital developments on the Aztalan State Park property. Archaeological surveys will be completed upon siting of projects and prior to any earthmoving. The projects and a brief summary of their physical impacts include:

###### New Entrance & Roadway System

Excavation for the approximately 1/5-mile roadway will occur on an area that was previously disturbed bluegrass lawn, and an archaeological survey and release will be completed prior to any construction activities. The abandoned roadway will be removed and restored with native prairie vegetation. Additionally, since the roadway will be gutterless, pavement runoff will sheet drain and filter into adjacent native-grassed swales. This will be more ecologically healthy for the surrounding ecosystems and will allow for natural groundwater recharging.

###### Visitor Center

This building will be located in an already-disturbed area that consists of primarily bluegrass turf. To mitigate construction impacts, the disturbed area will be replanted with native material after construction is complete. An archaeological survey and release will be completed prior to any construction activities.

###### Trails

Approximately four miles of trails will be created on the property for interpretive use, hiking, and ungroomed cross-country skiing. These trails will be cleared to a 5' width through existing forest, scrub, and grassy areas. The actual tread width of the trails will be mown to 30-36" with the eventual tread width wearing in at 24" +/- wide.

###### Interpretive Nodes and Signage

An archaeological survey and release will be completed prior to any foundation digging activities.

###### Scenic Overlook

Site disturbance can be expected in a previously undisturbed, forested area for no more than 1/4 acre for the actual overlook and potentially more if trees have to be removed to open up the view.

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<sup>12</sup> Chapter NR 150, Environmental Analysis and Review Procedures for Department Actions, establishes the Department's requirement for preparing this document.

Picnic Shelter with Flush Toilets and Picnic Areas

Approximately ½ acre of existing bluegrass lawn will be disturbed to construct this building. An archaeological survey and release will be completed prior to any construction activities. After construction is complete, the disturbed area will be re-seeded.

New Park Maintenance Building and Archaeological Service Building

Approximately ¼ acre of existing bluegrass will be disturbed to construct this building. After construction is complete, the disturbed area will be re-seeded.

Pedestrian Bridge with Fishing Platforms

Approximately ¼ acre of existing grassy area and streambank will be disturbed to construct this bridge. An archaeological survey and release will be completed prior to any construction activities.

Restoration of the Northeast Pyramidal Mound

Approximately ½ acre of existing grassy area will be disturbed to restore this mound. An archaeological survey and release will be completed prior to any construction activities. After construction is complete, the disturbed area will be re-seeded.

**B. Potential Impacts to Biotic Resources/Biodiversity**

Note: Chapter 3 contains a description of the various existing natural resources on the property.

Upland/Prairie/Savanna Areas

Approximately 77 acres of this native plant community will be developed, replacing the bluegrass turf outside of the Archaeological Protection Unit, dramatically improving the property's biodiversity and providing habitat for several rare grassland bird species. Short-term negative impacts on development areas will include the effects of various resource management techniques. Prescribed burns will temporarily reduce populations of insects within the burn areas. The effects of the brushing and exotics removal will protect the open view throughout the site. The public may be moderately sensitive to the establishment of the prairie over a period of five or more years, due to differing public perceptions regarding the aesthetic appearance of newly establishing prairies/savannas. Clearing necessary for trail construction will remove understory and shrubby growth along the trail's centerline.

Forested Areas

Approximately 98 acres of mesic, wet mesic, and dry-mesic forest acres will be developed to improve the site's biodiversity, provide habitat for a wider range of biotic species and represent plant communities native to this region. The effects of the brushing and exotics removal may create a moderate amount of public concern due to moderate, short-term disruption of the forest area. The long-term result will be a more open understory in the oak areas. This more open understory will facilitate the growth of a wide range of understory plant species and a wider range of native songbird habitat, increasing biodiversity. Clearing necessary for trail construction will remove understory and shrubby growth along the trail's centerline. The trail will wind around existing mature trees.

Wildlife - Habitat Area – Undeveloped Land

Wildlife management efforts directed toward natural community enhancement and development will benefit a variety of wildlife species. Songbirds and other species that thrive in grassland or

savanna habitats will benefit and are likely to increase in areas that will be restored to these types. Correspondingly, invertebrate and fish species may benefit in the possible event of wetland restoration. On the other hand, the more common species that prefer disturbed woodlands, e.g., cardinals, robins, bluejays, etc. will find reduced habitat and will decline over time as these actions proceed and the more diverse habitats mature. Activities such as burning, mowing, herbicide treatment, and cutting of trees and shrubs may bring about moderate public concern but will also bring about great long-term ecological benefits. The capital improvement recommendations of this master plan will reduce the square footage of available habitat. As a general rule, the land required for the recommended capital improvements will reduce the area available for native plant and animal habitat. However, the new facilities are being built on former bluegrass turf areas, which currently provide minimal habitat benefit to wildlife species. Clearing necessary for trail construction will create small wildlife corridors through the property, along the trail's centerline.

#### Endangered & Threatened Species

A Department review of Jefferson County – Aztalan South Milford & West Part Farmington T.7N.-R.14E. sections 16, 17, 20 and 21 showed no known occurrences of rare species and natural communities recorded in the WI Natural Heritage Inventory (NHI). If rare species or communities are discovered on the property, they will be managed for long-term protection and enhancement through the property manager's consultation with Department Endangered Resources staff.

#### Wetland, Aquatic Resources, and Fish Habitat

A wetland is present in the upper middle part of the southern third of the property. Only mown trails and a boardwalk are to be developed within this area. Short term construction impacts such as erosion will be controlled during the construction with Best Management Practices. Potential future restoration of approximately six acres of this wetland community and current restoration of ½ mile of shoreline plant communities along the Crawfish River will have long-term beneficial impacts to aquatic resources and fish habitat. Connecting trail sections through wet areas with floating boardwalks will cause moderate short-term disturbance during construction but have substantial long-term benefits for the initial investment. All Department projects that may impact wetlands must comply with Chapter NR 103, Wisconsin Administrative Code. These Water Quality Standards for wetlands require a rigorous consideration of alternatives that avoid or minimize impacts to wetlands.

#### Agricultural Areas

It is the Department's intent to avoid fee title purchase of Class I agricultural land to the extent possible and to use conservation easements as its preferred approach for that category of land. Class I lands may be purchased in fee situations where they occur as small inclusions within parcels of less productive land, where it is clear that the land in question would otherwise be converted to non-agricultural use, or where the property is considered essential to the purpose of the project. If a viable piece of Class I agricultural land is purchased, the Department will, if possible, sell back the land with restrictions that would allow agricultural use but preclude incompatible, non-agricultural development.

Nearly the entire "Visual Buffer Management Area" is in agricultural production and will remain in agricultural production if the Department is able to purchase scenic easements. An exception to this is a trail corridor to the Signal Hill Area and the Hill itself, which will be planted with grasses instead of crops to better manage the area and communicate its archaeological significance. These measures will have minimal short-and long-term effects, but the public may be moderately sensitive to the replacement of agricultural lands with grass cover.

### **C. Potential Impacts on Historical and Archaeological Features**

The vast majority of this site holds unique and sensitive historical and archaeological features. Archaeologists from the Wisconsin State Historical Society, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Michigan State, and other institutions currently conduct field research here. Their expertise has been made available to the property manager in protecting this valuable resource. Their expertise and information have also been taken into account throughout the entire master plan process. *Map D—the Site Suitability Map*—prioritizes the areas of highest archaeological significance and the relative amount of disruption the various parts of the site could withstand. Appropriate surveys will be done prior to any construction activities to assure that no known or unknown sites are adversely impacted or that impacts are mitigated as allowed by law.

### **D. Potential Impacts on Air Quality Resources**

In the event of dry weather during construction periods, dirt and gravel dust may be present in the air surrounding the project areas for short periods. If necessary, such areas will be watered down to reduce dust. In general, the improvements at Aztalan State Park will not threaten air quality. Currently, air management only regulates indirect sources (parking lots) when the total number of parking spaces exceeds 1,500. For road or highway projects, air management will regulate a new or modified project if the vehicle traffic peak volume will be greater than 1,800 vehicles per hour. This (master plan) project ('s projected development) is well below these levels. Therefore, the project is excluded from the requirements of NR 411, Wisconsin Administrative Code, and the projected increase in emissions will fall below the level of impact on air quality.<sup>15</sup>

### **E. Potential Impacts on Land Use**

Current land use in the project area is primarily agricultural. Land use in the surrounding area is a mix of agricultural, residential, and commercial and is slowly shifting more toward residential and commercial. The construction of the visitor center will likely spur some commercial development near the park to serve the expected dramatic increase in park visitor numbers. State holding of conservation easements and purchase of development rights will prevent likely residential and commercial development from occurring on the parcels immediately surrounding the park in the future.

### **F. Potential Impacts on Groundwater and Surface Water Resources**

There are currently two wells for hand pumps on the Aztalan property. It is likely that a new well will need to be drilled for each of the two new buildings. However, it is not anticipated that these actions will have more than a minor impact to local groundwater resources. The park is not considered a high capacity property because the combined pumping capacity would not exceed 70 gallons per minute and so approval from the Bureau of Drinking and Groundwater will not be required. Due to the property's proximity to the creek, water quantity is not anticipated to be a problem and additional water supply wells are not expected to impact the nearby Lake Mills Municipal supply. All proposed structures will be outside of the 100-year floodplain of the

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<sup>15</sup> Per 2-20-03 email communication with Michael Sloat, WDNR-SCR Air Management Specialist, Dodgeville, WI. Additional information can be obtained from the US EPA, Air and Radiation Division, Office of Transportation and Air Quality web site ([www.epa.gov/ofaq/consumer/f98014.htm](http://www.epa.gov/ofaq/consumer/f98014.htm)).

Crawfish River. Stormwater management techniques including vegetated buffers and retention and infiltration areas are Best Management Practices (BMPs) that will be included in infrastructure improvements along with construction site erosion control practices.

Impermeable surface area will increase, potentially increasing stormwater run-off. However, swales and shallow detention ponds planted with native perennials and grasses (as Rain Gardens) and other more ecologically sound stormwater management techniques will mitigate stormwater run-off. Restoration of native prairie grass/oak openings throughout the site will also help to manage storm water runoff by providing substantially higher rates of infiltration than that of standard bluegrass. The Department will adhere to the runoff performance standards of NR 216<sup>16</sup> during and following construction.

Restoration of natural plant communities along the shores of the Crawfish River and elsewhere on the site will be beneficial to water quality. Short-term visual impacts can be expected from the construction of the pedestrian bridge with a fishing pier and from shoreline restoration activities. These may include straw bales, filter fabric, and other methods associated with siltation protection measures. De-watering procedures may also be needed to construct the bridge foundations.

### **G. Potential Impacts of Noise**

Construction noise resulting from capital improvements may have a moderate-to-severe impact on the park's visitors (depending on the season), the park's immediate neighbors, and wildlife. It is anticipated, however, that this noise will be of high level and short duration, rather than continuous. Operational increases in noise as a result of these improvements and once construction is complete will be minimal.

### **H. Potential Impacts on Infrastructure and Transportation**

Aztalan State Park is located approximately three miles from Interstate I-94 and halfway between the two largest metropolitan areas in Wisconsin—Madison and Milwaukee. The attraction of a visitor center will increase traffic in both in the park and in the surrounding communities providing services. Current visitation is approximately 80,000 per year. Anticipated increases may be up to 340,000 additional visitors per year in the event that all recommended capital improvements are constructed. The entrance road to the park will be relocated for increased sight lines and safety on entering and exiting County Highway Q. Signage will be improved at the entrance and exit to Aztalan State Park for safety and fluid flow of traffic. The interior road will direct the majority of the traffic to the visitor center parking lots. Bus parking will be available just past the visitor center. Parking will continue to be available in the existing far northern and southern parking areas. A short-term impact to be expected is a potential influx of new visitors traveling both by car and by bus upon the dedication and operation of the visitor center. Increases in water and electricity use will be significant compared to the past levels of use by the park but will be small in comparison to average use in the county.

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<sup>16</sup> The goal of this chapter is to eliminate to the maximum extent practicable the discharge of pollutants carried by storm water runoff into waters of the state from certain industrial facilities, construction sites over 5 acres and municipal storm water runoff.

## **I. Potential Impacts on Visual/Scenic Resources**

Proposed actions within the master plan will have a range of impacts to the visual and scenic resources of Aztalan State Park. Native plant community development efforts will have short-term, moderate impacts to these resources due to clearing of exotic and invasive plant and tree species, prescribed burning, and prairie seeding operations. However, the long-term impacts of restoration efforts will result in an improvement to the visual and scenic resources.

Capital developments such as the visitor center will be moderately disruptive to these resources in both the short- and long-term due to the new building. The visitor center is tucked into the base of a large hill adjacent to Highway Q. This not only “hides” the building from visitor views out of the site from the Archaeological Protection Unit but also places the building in an area that has already been disturbed and investigated. The building’s materials, scale, color and size will be designed to blend into the landscape. Innovative energy efficiency and “green” building techniques for energy systems, waste water, stormwater and other items, as described in the “LEED Green Building Rating System,” will also help minimize the impact of the new development.

Additional capital developments such as the new picnic shelter with flush toilets and the bridge with fishing platforms will have major short-term impacts on the property’s visual and scenic resources. These impacts will be highly noticeable during construction, and the public may be very sensitive to them. The long-term effects of these developments will be less noticeable, since the materials, colors, and shapes used will be as compatible with the surrounding natural environment as is possible.

Lightly developed trails will be minimally disruptive to these resources in both the short- and long-term because grading will be minimal and only the accessible trail section will be paved. In general, new facilities, roads, and trails are designed to minimize archaeological impact, earth-moving, and vegetation removal. New trails will be paved near the visitor center and elsewhere will be mown-grass or surfaced to minimize visual impact.

## **J. Potential Impacts on Recreational Resources**

Public use of the site is expected to increase greatly with the construction of the visitor center, the archaeological service building/park maintenance building, and substantial interpretive opportunities. However, these uses will be a change from the current uses such as track meets, track training and off-leash dog walking (which is not currently a legal activity). A moderate-to-severe, short-term, local public reaction may occur as a result of these changes. The beneficial long-term impacts of these changes will be a higher level of protection of the site’s archaeological resources and a higher level of respect paid toward the global significance of the property as an archaeological site. Conversely, there is an inherent risk that this increased number of visitors will have long-term, negative impacts on the site because of increased littering, vandalism, potential overuse of picnic areas and trails, and potential illegal activities. Increasing on-site staff and patrols will alleviate some detrimental effects. In addition, a policy will be implemented so that no additional visitors will be allowed to enter the park when the parking lots are full. Reasonable limits will also be considered when taking reservations for the picnic shelter and/or school group visits. Also, the park manager, along with the Regional Park Supervisor and the Technical Advisory Group, will evaluate impacts of overuse and close particular park areas when needed for restoration.

Trail length and variety will expand to both sides of the river over a pedestrian bridge and through a variety of plant communities. These trails will have long-term beneficial recreational impacts to the community and visitors. Fishing spots will shift to fishing platforms associated with the pedestrian bridge. Picnic facilities will shift in some locations but will generally be expanded to serve the increased number of visitors. Negative impacts such as vandalism and littering are possible due to new trails on the east side of the river. This area also contains Native American mounds that will be exposed to greater risk of disruption. These issues will need to be monitored and managed.

## **K. Potential Impacts on Socioeconomic Resources**

### Economic

Following is the economic impact assessment performed by the University of Wisconsin-Extension:

The University of Wisconsin-Extension was asked by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to perform an economic impact assessment associated with some recently master planned improvements at Aztalan State Park near Lake Mills, Wisconsin.<sup>17</sup>

**Assumptions** - The Department of Natural Resources indicated that major new attractions at the park would include a new visitor center and archaeological research center. The visitor center and other enhancements are expected to add 420,000 visitors annually to the park. UW-Extension researchers were told to use this number of visitors (420,000 visitors per year) in the economic impact projections. Department of Natural Resources staff also indicated that one-half to three-fourths of the visitors would be coming by school bus or tour bus, and would likely be day-trippers. The visitor center will have a small snack shop and a gift shop, but no major restaurant. These were the major assumptions used to guide the assessment.

**Methodology** - The University of Wisconsin-Extension researchers used the assumptions provided by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources staff. The methodology identified an average daily expenditure estimate per visitor based on research by Professor Dave Marcouiller on visitors to State Parks in southern Wisconsin.<sup>18</sup> Application of this research identified an expenditure pattern of \$11.00 per visitor per day, which included estimates for eating and drinking, gas and car expenses and miscellaneous gift and retail expenses. The methodology also used an input/output model called "IMPLAN", which inputted 1999 data to calculate the number of jobs and local income in Jefferson County from wages, salaries and other income that is associated with the projected spending. The IMPLAN model is a standard methodology for doing economic impact assessments in the United States.

**Results** - Given an estimate of 420,000 annual visitors to Aztalan Park with an average daily expenditure per visitor of \$11.00, the total expenditures in the local economy are projected to be

### **I.**

<sup>17</sup>Economic Assessment of Proposed Aztalan State Park Improvements. Prepared by: Steve Grabow, Community Development Agent/Associate Professor, University of Wisconsin-Extension, Jefferson County Office. Supporting Research by: Steve Deller, Professor, UW-Madison/UW-Extension, Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics and Dave Marcouiller, Associate Professor, UW-Madison/UW-Extension, Department of Urban and Regional Planning.

<sup>18</sup> Three Survey results that formed the basis for these estimates are found in: Marcouiller, David and Eric Olson. "State Owned Recreation Sites and Their Surrounding Communities: An Assessment of Rural Development Impacts." University of Wisconsin-Madison, Department of Urban and Regional Planning Staff Paper. Final Draft, August 2001.

\$4.62 million annually. Since many of the visitors are school groups and day-trippers, the analysis did not include several expenditure categories usually factored into State Park visitor spending such as lodging, groceries, fishing equipment, etc. The amount of expenditures typically attributed to automobile usage was significantly lowered given the assumption that school groups and bus tours will comprise a majority of the visitors.

Running the expenditure numbers through the IMPLAN model provides an additional way to look at the economic impacts of implemented improvements at Aztalan Park. It is estimated that 112 new jobs would be created in Jefferson County as a result of the proposed activity at Aztalan State Park. In addition, the wages, salaries and other income supported by the jobs would yield additional income earnings of \$2.3 million in Jefferson County.

It should be pointed out that a big “driver” of the economic impacts of the Aztalan State Park project is the projections for the annual visitors per year. The large expenditures correspond directly with the significant number of visitors expected annually at the park.

#### Social

Potential beneficial long-term impacts to the local public will be gained as their ability to learn about the resources of the site improve through the visitor center and interpretive signage. In addition, social benefit will be gained by the increased profile of the park regionally and nationally. The aforementioned range of improved economic results will also have a beneficial long-term impact on the local public’s value of the park.

#### **L. Potential Fiscal Impacts to the Department**

Currently, park stickers are not required to enter the park. The state park sticker entrance fee will be implemented; however, this is a separate Department process. Public input throughout this master plan process supported a state park sticker entrance fee as development, interpretive programming, and services increased. With regard to the recommended development, budget constraints are always a consideration with long-term facility planning, and there is considerable uncertainty that may affect implementation of the preferred management plan. Once the visitor center is built, however, an anticipated fivefold increase in visitation will significantly increase park and recreation program revenue to offset increased levels of staffing, supplies, services, maintenance activities, and utility costs that will be incurred. This was noted in the Governor’s Historic Sites Task Force Report, dated 1990, and may include:

- One natural resources property supervisor,
- One natural resources educator with an archaeological background, and
- Two park rangers.

These positions may result in an increased staffing cost of up to \$140,000 per year.

The total estimated cost to acquire all lands, easements and development rights within the project boundary is approximately \$1.25 million. Costs to develop the public use and administrative support facilities detailed in this plan are estimated to be just over \$8.6 million (2003 dollars).

## Estimated Development Costs (2003 Dollars)

<b>Phase One</b>	
1. GPS survey of the Site Suitability Map boundaries in a format that can be used by the property manager and future design and construction contractors	\$45,000
2. New entrance signs on both entrances to the park and on the highway	\$16,000 plus contingency
3. Base course/gravel entry road to the South parking lot	\$62,505 plus contingency
4. Site electric and water services	\$486,000
5. Maintenance Bldg/Archaeological Service Bldg w/gravel parking lot <sup>17</sup>	\$475,000
6. West side trails with interpretive nodes and sign panels	\$123,400 plus contingency
7. Shoreline vegetation development with control of exotic plants	\$33,600 plus contingency
8. Associated archaeological investigations and infrastructure improvements	\$57,500
9. Property brochures and a poster-sized illustration of the future visitor center for fundraising purposes	\$15,000
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$1,314,005</b>
<b>Phase Two</b>	
1. Visitor center with Department entrance booth	\$5,017,658
2. Plaza	\$212,520
3. Parking lots & asphalt binder course for new entry road	\$36,521
4. Signage	\$11,000
5. Lighting	\$86,250
6. Building landscaping <sup>18</sup>	\$71,875
7. Native plant community development	\$168,000
8. Associated archaeological investigations & construction management – 3%	\$168,115
9. Construction management – 3%	\$168,115
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$5,940,054</b>
<b>Phase Three</b>	
1. Northeast mound and stockade reconstruction	\$ 177,790
2. Park shelter with flush toilets	\$305,900
3. Native prairie, oak savanna, lowland plant community development	\$33,000
4. Associated archaeological investigations and infrastructure improvements	\$50,000
5. Construction management – 3%	\$11,570
6. Archaeological construction observation – 3%	\$11,570
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$589,830</b>
<b>Phase Four</b>	
1. Pedestrian bridge	\$609,500
2. Fishing pier	\$71,645
3. Boardwalks	\$443,900
4. East trails and overlook	\$27,000
5. Native community development	\$33,000
6. Associated archaeological investigations and construction observation – 3%	\$35,191
7. Construction management – 3%	\$35,191

I.

<sup>17</sup> No curb and gutter<sup>18</sup> No curb and gutter

<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$1,255,427</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$9,099,316</b>

## II. SIGNIFICANCE OF CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

The plan has placed significant restrictions on current recreational uses and has anticipated increases in visitation by creating a formal trail system where none currently exists. Increased levels of use will be monitored by the property manager to assure protection of the site's resources.

It is expected that biological diversity within the savanna and wetland systems will be increased through natural community restorations over time. Permeable surface areas currently planted with bluegrass turf will be replaced by a visitor center, an archaeological lab and service building, a new main entrance, an accessible trail, a picnic shelter, and increased parking. However, progressive stormwater management methods such as rain gardens for rooftop runoff and sheet draining of paved surfaces (no curb and gutter) into grassy swales and vegetated parking lot islands will minimize the ecological effects of less permeable surface area. These treatments will also provide visual examples of such measures to visitors and enhance adherence to Department environmental protections. In addition, other areas will be restored to native plant communities that perform infiltration at vastly higher rates than that of bluegrass.

A benefit to the local community will be gained by the increased regional and national awareness of the park's archaeological significance. Development of the park will increase visitation to the Lake Mills Historical Society site and potentially Lake Mills. This may increase demand for additional parking for both areas. Nearby residents—two immediately adjacent landowners in particular—may feel negative impacts, in both the short- and long-term, due to increased road traffic. In general, the plan is expected to have beneficial cumulative effects to the surrounding community in terms of short-term construction contracts and long-term increased local revenue.

## III. SIGNIFICANCE OF RISK AND UNCERTAINTY IN PREDICTING IMPACTS

There are low physical risks associated with the future development and management of Aztalan State Park. Prescribed fire to maintain healthy prairie plant communities will be used only under highly controlled circumstances by trained and experienced technicians. All structures, restrooms and other facilities will meet current codes and building standards. There is, however, uncertainty in the estimation of the various levels of archaeological significance throughout the site. Locations for the various capital improvements in the master plan were based on available archaeological information to date. However, every archaeological survey conducted on the site may unearth significant resources that may significantly alter siting considerations for these developments. In this instance, a master plan amendment or variance will be enacted.

## IV. SIGNIFICANCE OF PRECEDENT

Approval of this management plan may set a precedent for how significant cultural resources within a Department property are developed and/or managed in the future.

## **V. SIGNIFICANCE OF CONTROVERSY OVER ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS**

Many resource management actions of this master plan are expected to create little or no controversy. The public helped develop and select the preferred alternative and was given opportunities for review and comment throughout the entire process. Please refer to Chapter 1 for a summary of public involvement. There is a moderate likelihood that a portion of the local public will be concerned during the savanna/prairie development process. Because the park has been mown bluegrass turf since its inception, there may be a perception that the park is not being maintained properly because new prairie plantings can look “weedy” to many for several years before they become firmly established. In addition, it is likely that there will be concern and curiosity during any of the future construction processes. The public will need to be reassured with explanatory signage and other public information that the construction areas had been cleared for disturbance.

## **VI. ALTERNATIVES TO THE MASTER PLAN AND THEIR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS**

### **A. Development of Alternatives**

A master plan alternative is a grouping of several compatible options for resource management, recreational development, and public use of a Department property. The content of an alternative should be compatible with the property designation, the draft vision and goals, and the property capabilities.

The archaeological scholarship and research that has taken place on and about this site is formidable and has been consulted in the preparation all of the alternatives. A thorough inventory was conducted of the plant communities, soils, water resources, archaeological resources, and land use and transportation. Maps were used throughout the public process to help the public understand the physical constraints and the opportunities of the site. An extensive public involvement process included The Great Lakes Intertribal Council, local government and civic organizations, neighboring landowners, and the general public. Community outreach and consensus building were a cornerstone of this project. A list of meetings is included in Section VII—Public Involvement Process—of this appendix. Archaeologists determined which portions of the site were most suitable for structures and other improvements, and the Technical Advisory Team developed a *Site Suitability Plan* to serve as a framework for all the master plan options. From here, this same group developed a program from the above input, an inventory draft vision statement, goals, and eventually a specific list of development and management recommendations.

A public design charrette summarized all the preceding information and laid the groundwork for the preliminary plans for Aztalan State Park, which were then refined by the Department with assistance from the Technical Advisory Team. The most important element common to all plans is a commitment to respect, protect, and preserve the archaeological resources on the site. The options were shown to the Ho-Chunk, the Town of Aztalan, the Lake Mills Aztalan Historical Society, local officials, and the general public at an open house in Lake Mills. Comments from each meeting were recorded, reviewed, and analyzed.

Common Elements in all Plans

- Protect and preserve the archaeological resources on the site.
- Protect the pristine views into and out of the site. The success of preserving and protecting this ancient site will depend on how undeveloped the adjacent land remains.
- Visitor Center
- Un-programmed open space
- Interpretive trails
- Hiking trails
- Access to the east side of the Crawfish River
- New picnic shelters
- Flush toilets
- Plaza for ceremonies and activities
- Boardwalks

The following sections identify the key differences between the options, the impacts of each option, and the basis for creating the preferred alternative.

**B. Management Alternative One**

Plan Summary

Option One has the least disturbance to what park users would call the current Aztalan State Park. The visitor center and parking are in the southwest corner of the site and screened from the archaeological protection unit by woods. This alternative features uninterrupted views of the site and trails that skirt the edges of the archaeological protection unit. Visitors are encouraged to stay on the trails; however they are allowed to leave the trail system and wander through the archaeological protection unit in this option.

Site Circulation

*Entry Sequence*

Signs along Highway B direct visitors to the site. To create a sense of arrival, directional signs are located on both sides of Highway Q at the north end of the marker mounds. Low-key but informative signs direct the visitors onto the site and guide them to the visitor center.

*Vehicle Access*

The park entry remains at the current site; however, the park road is changed to wrap around the back of the visitor center and continues on to the existing lower parking lot.

*Pedestrian Access*

A trail connects a number of interpretive nodes around the site. These nodes include educational signs and, perhaps, seating. The pedestrian arrives at the visitor center across a paved plaza. From the main building, a rustic covered boardwalk bridges the ravine and takes the visitor to a trailhead and event space. The event space includes a complete map of the site, archaeological resources, and trails.

Potential Environmental Impacts

Minimal visual impacts would be the major benefit of this plan due to the southern location of major developments. This area is separated visually from the center of the site by mesic forest. Major construction disturbance could be expected from facility development here, but public concern and interest would be minimal due to the remote/southern location of the construction. A moderate amount of short-term impact could be expected from trail creation throughout the rest of the site and the bridge construction. After construction, a minor amount of long-term disturbance would occur due to trail use. Pedestrians would have the ability to walk across the site much as they do now, so a minor amount of site disturbance to even the archaeological protection unit would have to be considered. This plan would have a major impact on Department staff due to an additional entrance at the northeast corner of the site, which would open the entire east side of the property to public use requiring additional supervision, patrolling, and management (opening and closing) of the entrance.

**C. Management Alternative Two**

Plan Summary

Good access and a central location are the hallmarks of Option Two. Highway Q is rerouted around the visitor center, which is located just southwest of the existing entrance. The long, organically-shaped visitor center is placed parallel to the natural repose of the land. Visitors would be able to experience sweeping views of the site from inside the building and enjoy educational signs and displays on the plaza. Trails radiate out from the visitor center.

Site Circulation

*Entry Sequence*

Signs along Highway B direct visitors to the site. To create a sense of arrival, way finding signs are added on both sides of Highway Q at the north end of the marker mounds. Low-key but informative signs direct visitors onto the site and guide them to the visitor center.

*Vehicle Access*

The park entry is located along the newly routed Highway Q. Cars enter the parking lot on the west side of the building. Visitors either park and enter the visitor center or continue on to the lower parking lot. A new service center is located at the south end of the site with a separate gated entrance.

*Pedestrian Access*

A trail connects a number of interpretive nodes around the site. These nodes include educational signs and, perhaps, seating. The pedestrian arrives at the visitor center across a paved and grassed plaza, which includes a sculpture of a Mississippian at a fish weir. The water and sculpture element combines with event space and the trailhead to make this a very exciting part of the site.

Potential Environmental Impacts

This plan would have major financial impacts to the county due to the re-routing of the highway. Much of the visitor center is located on top of what is now Highway Q, minimizing disruption to previously undisturbed land. Locating the road and building here requires a willing seller of private land and coordination, approval by the County Highway Department, and rerouting and reconstruction of the highway. The major benefit of this plan is that it has the best views and ready access to many of the site's strongest features while being physically removed from sensitive areas.

Therefore, both the physical impacts and the visual impacts would be reduced in comparison to the other two plans. While the building can be seen from throughout the site, visitors in turn have visual access to nearly the whole site from the building. This would have a major positive impact on all visitors who are physically challenged. This plan would have a moderate impact on Department staff as an additional entrance at the southwest corner of the site would require additional supervision, patrolling and management (opening and closing) of the entrance.

#### **D. Management Alternative Three**

##### Plan Summary

This option is all about partnerships, opportunities, and a heightened respect for the site. It connects ancient history, Native American history, and European settlement. The visitor center is physically woven into the layout of the current Lake Mills-Aztalan Historical Society grounds. The steps on the southwest mound are removed, and access to the habitation portion of the site is limited to guided tours.

##### Site Circulation

###### *Entry Sequence*

Visitors enter one special historic district encompassing the Lake Mills-Aztalan Historical Society and ancient Aztalan. Signs along Highways Q and B inform visitors that they are entering a place rich in culture and history.

###### *Vehicle Access*

Parking for the visitor center is shared with the Lake Mills-Aztalan Historical Society. Cars enter the parking lot from Highway Q between the north end of the marker mounds and the caretaker's house. A recreated marker mound could be the focus of the main entrance. A second entrance for access to the lower parking and river access is located at the south end of the site.

###### *Pedestrian Access*

While all plans may include guided tours, this plan would do the most to encourage visitors to join the tours. Access to the main mounds and most of the archaeological protection unit would be during the guided tours only. During all other times, visitors would be asked to remain on the interpretive trails.

##### Potential Environmental Impacts

The physical location of the visitor center in this plan would have major interpretive and access benefits for visitors. Extensive views and close connections to the popular marker mounds, the Princess Mound, and the Historical Society would make this plan an attractive, one-stop tourism destination. The potential for partnerships and increased volunteerism between the park and the Historical Society could have many positive, long-term benefits for the park, staff, and visitors. However, there would be increased risk of major negative impacts on the immediately adjacent landowners due to increased vehicle and visitor congestion. This plan would also have a moderate impact on Department staff, as an additional entrance at the southwest corner of the site would require additional supervision, patrolling, and management (opening and closing) of the entrance.

## **E. Management Alternative Four**

### Plan Summary

No Action. The entire site would remain as is with no additional development.

### Site Circulation

#### *Entry Sequence*

The entry would remain where it is currently located.

#### *Vehicle Access*

Vehicles would proceed through the site as they do now with several current options for parking.

#### *Pedestrian Access*

Pedestrians would continue to have access as they do now for the range of recreational activities that currently take place.

### Potential Environmental Impacts

There could be several perceived benefits to a no action plan. There would be negligible additional maintenance costs over the next decade. The site would remain a lightly visited facility. The primary use of the site would continue to be for dog walking, picnicking, cross-country track practice, and occasional track meets. However, impacts of these uses would continue to be deleterious to the site's archaeological resources; current vandalism would continue; and most of the general public would remain basically unaware of the site, its history, and its global reputation.

## **VII. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS**

The Department of Natural Resources developed a Public Involvement Plan (PIP) to guide the public input portion of the master planning process. Opportunities for public involvement, development of mailing lists, media contacts, calling lists, stakeholder lists, and invitation procedures were included in the plan, as well as a timeline for implementation.

### **Public Participation Events**

The public was encouraged to participate in the Aztalan State Park Master Plan Revision through numerous public meeting and workshops. Opportunities ranged from informal open houses at the Park to structured focus groups and even an interactive design workshop and scrapbook session. The Technical Advisory Team also met frequently to develop a vision and goals and impart technical assistance to the consultants. A listing of the events, dates, and locations appears below:

## Appendix

Technical Advisory Team Start-up	May 24, 2000	Aztalan Town Hall
Technical Advisory Team Meeting	June 29, 2000	Glacial Drumlin Trail Headquarters
Aztalan Days	July 2, 2000	Aztalan Museum
Public Involvement Kick-Off	July 22, 2000	Aztalan State Park
Technical Advisory Team Meeting	July 28, 2000	Lake Mills
Local Government, Preservation and Heritage Focus Group	August 25, 2000	Lake Mills Community Center
Public Input Meeting	August 30, 2000	Lake Mills Community Center
Meeting with Suzette LaMere HoChunk Cultural Resources Division Manager	September 6, 2000	Milwaukee
Technical Advisory Team Meeting	September 7, 2000	Glacial Drumlin Trail Headquarters
Great Lakes Intertribal Council	September 28, 2000	Green Bay
Indian Education Round Table	September 30, 2000	Green Bay
Technical Advisory Team Meeting	October 20, 2000	Glacial Drumlin Trail Headquarters
Public Design Workshop	November 2, 2000	Lake Mills Community Center
Technical Advisory Team Meeting	December 28, 2000	Glacial Drumlin Trail Headquarters
Public Open House – Plan Options	February 15, 2001	Lake Mills Community Center
Lake Mills/Aztalan Historical Society	March 15, 2001	Fargo Library, Lake Mills
HoChunk Historical Preservation and Cultural Resources Board	March 19, 2001	Black River Falls
Technical Advisory Team Meeting	March 23, 2001	Jennings & Assoc., Wauwatosa
Written Response to Public Comments	April 30, 2003	Entire mailing list

## VIII. COMPLIANCE WITH WISCONSIN ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT

Project Name: Aztalan State Park Master Plan Update Project County: Jefferson

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DECISION (This decision is not final until certified by the appropriate authority)

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List agencies, citizen groups and individuals contacted throughout the project by (include DNR personnel and title) and summarize public contacts, completed or proposed.

The mailing list was composed of 147 persons and organizations. Please see above for a list of the public contacts and meetings by Department staff—in particular, Dana White-Quam and Michele Chalice, project Team leaders. A list of the organizations follows:

Aztalan Town Chairman  
Jefferson County Board Members  
Jefferson County Chamber of Commerce  
Jefferson County Parks  
Lake Mills Council President  
Lake Mills Park Director  
Lake Mills School Athletic Directors  
Lake Mills School Board Members  
Lake Mills Village Administrator  
Tribal Historian  
University of WI – Extension  
Daily Jefferson County Union

Jefferson County School Board  
Jefferson County Zoning Administrator  
Lake Mills Chamber of Commerce  
Lake Mills City Manager  
Freeman Newspapers  
Janesville Gazette  
Madison Newspapers  
Milwaukee Journal Sentinel  
Watertown Daily Times  
WI State Historical Society  
WI Trust for Historic Preservation

In accordance with s. 1.11, Stats., and Ch. NR 150, Adm. Code, the Department is authorized and required to determine whether it has complied with s.1.11, Stats., and Ch. NR 150, Wis. Adm. Code.

Complete either A or B below:

A. EIS Process Not Required

The attached analysis of the expected impacts of this proposal is of sufficient scope and detail to conclude that this is not a major action which would significantly affect the quality of the human environment. In my opinion, therefore, an environmental impact statement is not required prior to final action by the Department.

B. Major Action Requiring the Full EIS Process

The proposal is of such magnitude and complexity with such considerable and important impacts on the quality of the human environment that it constitutes a major action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment.

Signature of Evaluator <i>Michael C.</i>	Date Signed 9.17.02
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Number of responses to news release or other notice: 34

Certified to be in compliance with WEPA	
Environmental Analysis and Liaison Program Staff <i>Cathy A. Bleser</i>	Date Signed 5-27-03

**NOTICE OF APPEAL RIGHTS**

If you believe that you have a right to challenge this decision, you should know that Wisconsin statutes and administrative rules establish time periods within which requests to review Department decisions must be filed.

For judicial review of a decision pursuant to sections 227.52 and 227.53, Stats., you have 30 days after the decision is mailed, or otherwise served by the Department, to file your petition with the appropriate circuit court and serve the petition on the Department. Such a petition for judicial review shall name the Department of Natural Resources as the respondent.

To request a contested case hearing pursuant to section 227.42, Stats., you have 30 days after the decision is mailed, or otherwise served by the Department, to serve a petition for hearing on the Secretary of the Department of Natural Resources. The filing of a request for a contested case hearing is not a prerequisite for judicial review and does not extend the 30-day period for filing a petition for judicial review.

## Appendix

Note: Not all Department decisions respecting environmental impact, such as those involving solid waste or hazardous waste facilities under sections 144.43 to 144.47 and 144.60 to 144.74, Stats., are subject to the contested case hearing provisions of section 227.42, Stats.

This notice is provided pursuant to section 227.48(2), Stats.