



4. The Kettle Moraines Forest Legacy Area. Although this area is largely developed and populated compared to other parts of the state's proposed FLAs, it is the only contiguous forested area of any size in the area. It still meets the criteria for consideration plus had the most vocal local support of the proposed FLAs. This area is under tremendous pressure for both recreation and development, it has regional significance, and there are a number of land trust organizations active in the area.

The glacial features of this area are internationally significant. It is a band of ice-disintegration topography formed as an interlobe area between the Green Bay and Lake Michigan lobes of the Wisconsin Glaciation. The landform features numerous kettle lakes on steep ridges of fluvial sand and gravel.

There are currently over 50,000 acres of state, county and municipal owned land in the Kettle Moraine. These acres of forest contains over 20 state natural areas and a Nature Conservancy Preserve. Within these areas fens, prairies, and oak dominated uplands are the objects of protection.

This block of forest is important habitat to rare and endangered neotropical song birds. The area is considered critical landscape for many uncommon or rare species characteristic of southern Wisconsin, especially vertebrates, but also invertebrates, plants and aquatic organisms. This is the most intact landscape remaining in SE Wisconsin (Albert, 1995).

The Wisconsin DNR is attempting to form a partnership/coalition of municipalities and non profit conservation organizations to work together to protect the Kettle Moraine area in Washington and Waukesha County. The public input from this area underscored the political support for including this area as one of Wisconsin's FLAs.

The Wisconsin Assembly passed Joint Resolution 48 in 1997 which states "that the Wisconsin Legislature recognizes the importance of the Kettle Moraine State Forest in protecting the features of our glacial landscape, providing open space and recreational opportunity and maintain and enhancing natural communities; and, be it further resolved the Wisconsin Legislature encourages the efforts of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, in cooperation with private citizens, conservation organizations and local governments, to protect the Kettle Moraine lands linking the Northern and Southern Units of the Kettle Moraine State Forest and provide a route for the Ice Age Trail". The Ice Age trail, an important recreational feature, runs through the heart of the forest.

Additionally, the Wisconsin Academy of Science Arts and Letters: "Report of the Kettle Moraine Task Force" urges that this forest area of Wisconsin receive special protection.

Values to be emphasized for protection include rare or unique habitat and communities, cultural resources, rare species, wildlife habitat, water quality and non-developed recreational opportunities.