

Glacial Heritage Area Plan



Conceptual Plan for:

Conservation Parks

COLD SPRING CONSERVATION PARK
DOROTHY CARNES CONSERVATION PARK
DR. J.S. GARMAN NATURE PRESERVE
KORTH CONSERVATION PARK
LAKE RIPLEY MANAGEMENT DISTRICT PRESERVE
CUSHMAN MILL CONSERVATION PARK
HOLZHUETER FARM CONSERVATION PARK
HOPE LAKE CONSERVATION PARK
NORTH SHORE MORAINE CONSERVATION PARK
OAKLAND HIGHLANDS CONSERVATION PARK
RED CEDAR LAKE CONSERVATION PARK
SCUPPERNONG VALLEY CONSERVATION PARK

Linking Trails

River-based Conservation Areas

ALLEN CREEK CONSERVATION AREA
LOWER BARK RIVER CONSERVATION AREA
LOWER KOSHKONONG CREEK CONSERVATION AREA

Master Plan for:

State Wildlife Areas

DEANSVILLE STATE WILDLIFE AREA
GOOSE LAKE STATE WILDLIFE AREA
JEFFERSON MARSH STATE WILDLIFE AREA & STATE
NATURAL AREA
KOSHKONONG STATE WILDLIFE AREA
LAKE MILLS STATE WILDLIFE AREA
LIMA MARSH – STORR’S LAKE STATE WILDLIFE AREA
PRINCE’S POINT STATE WILDLIFE AREA
ROME POND STATE WILDLIFE AREA
WATERLOO – MUD LAKE STATE WILDLIFE AREA

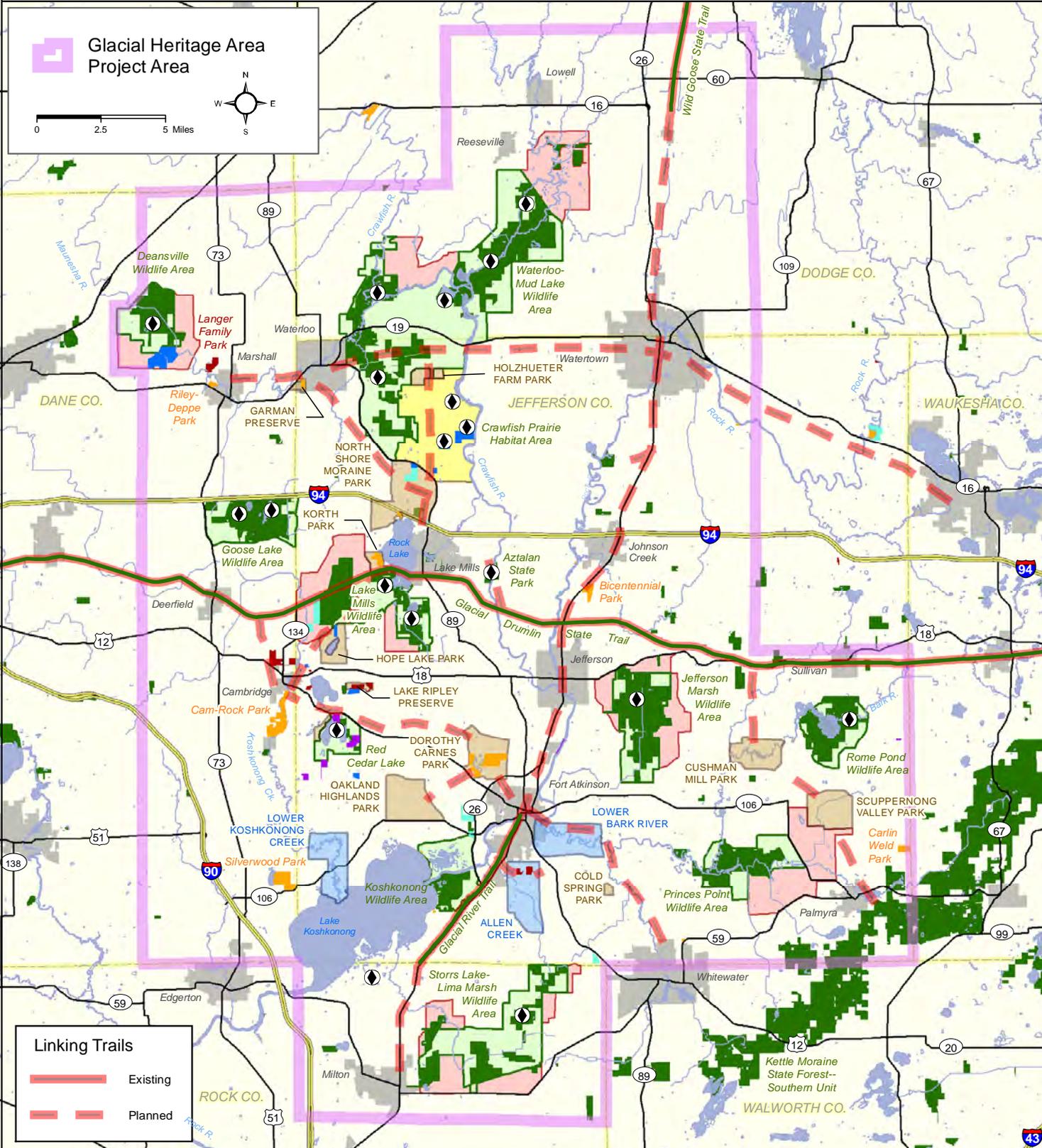
CRAWFISH PRAIRIE STATE HABITAT AREA
RURAL LANDSCAPE PROTECTION AREAS

State Natural Area

RED CEDAR LAKE STATE NATURAL AREA



GLACIAL HERITAGE AREA



Linking Trails

- Existing (solid red line)
- Planned (dashed red line)

Existing Land Ownership

Municipal	State (Non-DNR)	Non-profit Conservation Organization	State Natural Area
County	Federal	Dept of Natural Resources	

Planned Protection Areas

DNR Wildlife, Park or Natural Area	Conservation Park	Rural Landscape Protection Area
River Corridor	Crawfish Prairie Habitat Area	

Glacial Heritage Area Plan

Approved by the Natural Resources Board
October 21, 2009

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Executive Summary.

The Glacial Heritage Area project will be a coordinated series of parks, preserves, wildlife and natural areas, and other conservation lands that are linked together and to nearby cities and villages with different types of trails. This network of “strings and pearls” will provide readily accessible opportunities for residents and visitors to get outdoors to hike, bike, watch wildlife, fish, paddle, hunt, camp, cross country ski, ride horses, and participate in other nature-based activities.

Equally important, the project will protect and restore native grassland, savanna, woodland, and wetland habitats, and improve water quality in lakes, wetlands, and rivers. In addition, the project incorporates the area's significant cultural and historical elements. The Glacial Heritage Area is the result of a cooperative planning effort by a diverse group of people representing local community interests, elected officials, conservation and recreation organizations, and the Department of Natural Resources.

The Department and partners’ will create the Glacial Heritage Area to facilitate the protection and management of four types of landscape resources, while increasing economic development and prosperity of nearby cities and villages. The four types of lands that comprise the network are:

- **Conservation parks.**

The primary purpose of the conservation parks is, collectively, to provide high quality opportunities for residents and visitors alike to engage in a range of outdoor activities, particularly trail-based activities including hiking, biking, horseback riding, and cross-country skiing. Most of the existing parks as well as the new parks have, or are planned to have, an assortment of improvements including picnic areas, drinking water, and toilets. Some will also include shelters, play equipment for children, or observation decks and blinds designed to provide enhanced wildlife-watching opportunities. When an adequate land base can be acquired, limited rustic camping will be possible at some parks.

The various conservation parks will provide a range in outdoor experiences. Some parks will incorporate developed facilities while others will be managed to provide a rustic experience with limited improvements. Similarly, the parks will provide mixes of different recreation activities based on each park's attributes, size, and location. Deer and turkey hunting will be incorporated at times of the year and in portions of the new parks that do not conflict with, the parks' primary

Summary of facility development goals.

Conservation parks.

- 9 new or expanded “central focal points” (e.g., parking lot, picnic area, water (hand pump), vault toilet, interpretive signs, shelters, and informational kiosks).
- 40 miles of primitive to moderately-developed hiking trails (including some trails that are ADA-accessible).
- 20 miles of lightly to moderately-developed equestrian trails.
- 15 miles of moderately to fully-developed recreational biking trails.
- 10 miles of lightly to moderately-developed mountain biking trails.
- 3 rustic campgrounds (2 car campgrounds, 1 horse group campground).

Linking trails.

- 102 miles of moderately to fully-developed trails suitable for biking and walking.
- 30 miles of lightly to moderately-developed equestrian trails adjacent to the biking/walking trails.

River-based Conservation Areas.

- 10 small access sites (5 to 10 acres) located along major rivers and streams that provide canoe, kayak, or motorboat access, parking, picnic tables, toilets, and/or drinking water.
- 2 larger parks (100 to 300 acres) that provide shore fishing, primitive or lightly-developed trails, picnic areas, and camping facilities accessible only from the water for paddlers.

Wildlife Areas.

All wildlife areas will have parking areas with informational signs and larger parking areas will have kiosks.

- Zeloski (London) Marsh Unit of the Lake Mills Wildlife Area:
 - 2 wildlife observation platforms, decks, or towers.
 - 2.5 miles of moderately-developed biking and hiking trail along the east side of the marsh.
 - 2 miles of moderately-developed hiking trail.
 - 0.25 mile of ADA Accessible trail from the parking lot on London Road to an observation deck.
 - Interpretive displays and or kiosks.
- Rome Pond Wildlife Area:
 - A carry-in canoe access site from the parking lot on the eastern side of the property.
 - 3 miles of primitive hiking trails.
- Goose Lake Wildlife Area:
 - 3 wildlife observation areas that enable an improved viewing experience.
 - 4 miles of primitive hiking trails.
 - Interpretive displays and or kiosks.
- Prince's Point Wildlife Area:
 - 6 miles of primitive hiking trails.
 - A wildlife observation area that enables an improved viewing experience.

purposes and users. That is, deer and turkey hunting are secondary, supplemental activities that will be incorporated where they will not displace people from participating in the parks' primary activities.

A total of thirteen, small to modestly-sized parks and preserves currently exist in the GHA project area. The GHA plan calls for the expansion of five of these and establishes seven new parks. Most of the conservation parks will eventually range in size from 200 to 700 acres.

• **Linking trails.**

Approximately 100 miles of linking trails are planned to meander through the countryside and connect conservation and recreation destinations to the dozen cities and villages in the area. A coordinated network of biking, horseback riding, cross-country skiing, and hiking opportunities will be served by the trails. The linking trails will be relatively flat, either off-road or separated from vehicle traffic, and suitable for people with a range of abilities, including children and seniors. Most trails will be within narrow corridors (typically 30' to 100') with surfaces of packed gravel, asphalt, grass, or soil. Some will have different "treads" for different trail users (e.g., one for bicycles, and an adjacent one for horses).

A primary factor in locating these trails will be to ensure they have minimal impact on surrounding land use. They will be located based on land-owner preferences, which might include along the edges of fields or woodlots, along the edges of road right-of-ways, on farm roads, or in other areas where existing land uses will not be significantly affected. Initial segments of the linking trails will be located on appropriate, lightly-traveled, rural roads as needed.

• **River corridors.**

Two types of lands along rivers and creeks will be components of the GHA. First, is a series of small sites (5 to 10 acre), and one or two larger sites, that provide recreational access for boaters, paddlers, and shore anglers. These areas are planned to include parking, launches, picnic areas, pit toilets, and other simple facilities. The larger sites are planned to provide a limited number of simple, rustic campsites accessible only from the water.

The second type of river corridor protection will focus on natural resources. High quality open wetlands and floodplain forests along the Lower Bark River, Lower Koshkonong Creek, and Allen Creek will be protected. These landscape features harbor diverse native communities and populations of several rare plant and animal species. In addition, the GHA project will protect narrow bands of permanent riparian vegetation along rivers and streams to improve water quality.

• **Wildlife & Natural Areas.**

Eleven State Wildlife Areas and twelve State Natural Areas are present within the GHA and together encompass over 25,000 acres. Like many

Summary of acquisition goals

Conservation parks (acquisition goal = 3,801 acres)

- Expand 5 existing conservation parks or areas. Acquisition goal = 901 acres.
- Establish 7 new conservation parks. Acquisition goal = 2,900 acres.
- Work with agricultural agencies and organizations to maintain and protect adjacent lands in farming, conservation, or other open space uses.

Linking Trails (acquisition goal = 1,344 acres)

- Establish 102 miles of new corridors between the conservation parks and cities & villages; construct off-road trails with hardened surfaces suitable for recreational biking and natural surface treads for hiking, horseback riding, and mountain biking. Acquisition goal = 1,344 acres.

River-based Conservation Areas (acquisition goal = 2,475 acres)

- Establish up to 10 small (5 to 10 acres) access sites along major rivers and streams in the area that provide canoe, kayak, or motorboat access, parking, picnic tables, toilets, and/or drinking water. Acquisition goal = 75 acres.
- Establish one or two larger access areas (100 to 300 acres) that provide shore fishing, primitive or lightly developed trails, picnic areas, and camping facilities. Acquisition goal = 400 acres.
- Protect three very high quality habitat blocks in riparian zones. Acquisition goal = 1,500 acres.
- Protect and manage narrow bands of permanent riparian habitat along the Rock, Crawfish, Bark, and Maunasha Rivers and Koshkonong, Whitewater, and Allen Creeks and their major tributaries. Acquisition goal = 500 acres.
- Work with agricultural agencies and organizations to maintain and protect adjacent lands in farming, conservation, or other open space uses.

Wildlife & Natural Areas (acquisition goal = 27,425 acres)

- Expand eleven State Wildlife Areas and two State Natural Areas. Acquisition goal = 21,925 acres.
- Establish the Crawfish Prairie Habitat Area. Acquisition goal = 2,500 acres.
- Protect land adjacent to the Wildlife Areas in undeveloped, open space uses including row crops, pasture, and native grassland, wetland and savanna habitats. Acquisition goal = 3,000 acres.
- Work with agricultural agencies and organizations to maintain and protect adjacent lands in farming, conservation, or other open space uses.

Total acquisition goal = 35,045 acres

wildlife properties elsewhere in the state, several of the Wildlife Areas were originally established in the 1940s to 1960s as Public Hunting Grounds and were managed for different game animals. Over the ensuing decades, recognition of their value as habitat for many non-game species (including many rare plants and animals) has increased. Similarly, the recreation uses of many of these areas have expanded beyond hunting, trapping, and fishing and now include activities such as rustic hiking, snowshoeing, and wildlife watching. In recognition of their multi-purpose functions, these areas were re-named “State Wildlife Areas.”

The GHA plan expands the eleven State Wildlife Areas to protect and restore additional native habitats, improve public use and access to the properties by having easily recognizable boundaries, enhance the efficiency of land management actions, increase public hunting and trapping opportunities, and provide additional opportunities for minimally developed nature-based recreation. In addition, the plan designates five new State Natural Areas on existing DNR lands and expands the Red Cedar Lake and Allen Creek State Natural Areas. Most of these expansions relocate existing project boundaries out to the nearest roadway.

In addition, the GHA plan establishes one new property, the Crawfish Prairie Habitat Area, which will provide critically needed habitat for grassland birds and other related species. This area is designed to contain one large core area of grassland surrounded by a mix of cropland, pastures, and restored prairies. Finally, the GHA plan establishes Rural Landscape Protection Areas to buffer many of the Wildlife Areas. These landscapes will be large undeveloped areas of protected farmlands interspersed with some small scattered conservation lands.

The lands the GHA project encompasses.

Some of the lands within the GHA network are already protected as state, county, and local parks, state wildlife areas, natural areas, and other properties owned by non-profit groups. These properties, such as the Glacial Drumlin Trail, Goose Lake Wildlife Area, and Dorothy Carnes Park, are some of the most popular and scenic sites in the area. Other parts of the network, in particular the linking trails between the parks and the villages and cities, require additional acquisitions by the DNR or other partner groups. The long-term acquisition goals are outlined below.

	<u>Acres in the GHA <i>currently owned</i> by the DNR, counties, non-profit conservation groups, or other entity.</u>	<u>Acres <i>to be acquired</i> by the DNR, counties, non-profit conservation groups, or other similar entity as part of the GHA.</u>
Conservation Parks	626 acres	3,801 acres
Linking Trails	300 acres	1,344 acres
River Corridors	400 acres	2,475 acres
Wildlife & Natural Areas	29,476 acres	27,425 acres
<i>Total</i>	<i>30,802 acres</i>	<i>35,045 acres</i>

Acquiring and managing lands and funding sources.

The GHA project is a joint effort of many partner groups. Some of these groups have the ability to purchase and manage lands while others have expertise and capacity in other areas including education, outreach, construction and operation of various facilities and trails, and habitat restoration. The funding for DNR land acquisitions will come primarily from the state Stewardship program. The Stewardship program also provides matching funds to non-profit organizations and local governments to partner with those entities to purchase lands. County and local governments have acquired several key parcels in the area through donation and purchase in recent years, as have local conservation groups.

The development and management of facilities to support different types of outdoor recreation in the GHA network will also be a cooperative effort among many partners. In particular, for lands it acquires for the conservation parks and linking trails, the DNR will engage county and local governments as well as conservation and recreation groups to develop and operate different recreation facilities such as biking, hiking, and horseback riding trails, picnic areas, observation platforms, and other features.

Lands for the GHA project will only be acquired from landowners who wish to sell or donate land or land rights.

Vision, goals, objectives of Glacial Heritage Area.

The following vision, goals, and objectives for the Glacial Heritage Area were developed by DNR staff and the GHA External Advisory Team.

Vision.

Create a coordinated network of places and corridors that: enables and encourages a variety of compatible and sustainable outdoor recreation uses; preserves, restores, and protects significant habitats; benefits and integrates with local economic growth and farmland protection efforts; enhances the quality of life by maintaining and improving the land and water resources that underpin the economy; and helps residents and visitors maintain a strong connection to the natural world.

GOAL 1: Create exceptional outdoor recreation opportunities for residents and visitors — work with willing landowners to protect and link conservation lands in a network that collectively provides a wide variety of readily accessible, nature-based recreation opportunities that are compatible with and foster natural resource sustainability.

- OBJECTIVE 1A: Complete already approved conservation and recreation projects and establish new publicly-accessible areas to address outdoor, nature-based recreation needs in the region.
- OBJECTIVE 1B: Establish corridors and buffers that link public properties and increase recreation opportunities and maintain traditional uses.
- OBJECTIVE 1C: Establish connections between nearby cities and villages and the Glacial Heritage Area's network of properties.
- OBJECTIVE 1D: Provide facilities that encourage participation in a wide variety of compatible land-and water-based, non-motorized recreation activities.
- OBJECTIVE 1E: Incorporate educational opportunities, including environmental, cultural, and historical components, into outdoor recreational activities.
- OBJECTIVE 1F: Provide opportunities for people with diverse interests and abilities to engage in outdoor recreation activities that will facilitate their appreciation for, and connection to, the environment.

GOAL 2: Preserve wildlife and water resources — work with willing landowners to create a network of conservation lands and habitat corridors that help preserve and improve the quality and viability of wildlife and water resources.

- OBJECTIVE 2A: Protect, restore, and manage critical native prairie, savanna, woodland, and wetland habitats and other sensitive and unique areas and the wildlife that inhabit them.
- OBJECTIVE 2B: Help improve and preserve water quality and quantity in lakes, wetlands, rivers, and groundwater through various means, including protecting and restoring blocks of undeveloped shoreline habitat and groundwater recharge areas, and encouraging urban and rural landowners to utilize various conservation practices.

GOAL 3: Complement the voluntary protection of working farms — assist in maintaining the area's agricultural economy and rural character by coordinating with farmers on compatible land uses and work with local, state, and federal initiatives that seek to voluntarily preserve working farmlands.

- OBJECTIVE 3A: Encourage and help facilitate the protection of farms throughout the Glacial Heritage Area to maintain the area's open and rural landscape.
- OBJECTIVE 3B: Emphasize through educational materials the importance of farming to the quality of life in the Glacial Heritage Area and as an integral component of the "strings and pearls" network.
- OBJECTIVE 3C: Minimize conflicts to farm operations from adjacent land uses by helping to protect lands that buffer key farmlands.

GOAL 4: Combine ecology and economics to improve resident's quality of life — using existing protected lands as its foundation, create and integrate the Glacial Heritage Area with growth planning of local communities to maximize land use efficiency as well as provide financial, recreation, and conservation "returns."

- OBJECTIVE 4A: Coordinate and integrate the network of conservation and recreation lands with growth planning in the area, including local parks planning, to maintain and enhance the quality of life for future generations.
- OBJECTIVE 4B: Leverage the Glacial Heritage Area to help promote, expand, and diversify local economic development goals.

GOAL 5: Work collaboratively across jurisdictions — with input from a broad range of interests, create a coordinated project across political boundaries that turns the vision of the future of the Glacial Heritage Area into reality for future generations.

- OBJECTIVE 5A: Bring together rural and urban residents, landowners, local units of government, conservation groups, recreation users, businesses, elected officials, agencies, and others to develop and implement the Glacial Heritage Area project.
- OBJECTIVE 5B: Encourage and support local communities and organizations to collaboratively and collectively embrace a significant role in planning and implementing the Glacial Heritage Area.
- OBJECTIVE 5C: Develop one recognizable identity where the entire network of areas and corridors, regardless of ownership, is viewed by the public as one unified, seamless project.

