UPPER WOLF RIVER STATE FISHERY AREA

PROPOSED AMENDMENT to the recreation portion of the 1979 MASTER PLAN

August 2018

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
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AMENDMENT TO THE UPPER WOLF RIVER STATE FISHERY AREA MASTER PLAN

Property Name: Upper Wolf River State Fishery Area (UWRSFA)
Date Master Plan was approved: November 1979

A. OVERVIEW

The department is proposing an amendment to the master plan that includes three items:

- Establish an approximately 0.25-mile ATV/UTV trail across the property near the Langlade Ranger Station and the STH 64 bridge. This trail would connect riding opportunities east and west of the property.
- Update the property’s land management classifications and associated map to comply with the master planning administrative code (ch. NR 44, Wis. Admin. Code).
- Expand the Scenic Resources Management Area to include the entire Wolf River and Hunting River corridors in the property.

Aside from the portions addressed in this amendment, the components of the 1979 master plan related to recreation use and management remain unchanged. The department will continue to manage the property to provide high-quality experiences for the activities identified in the master plan, including fishing, hunting, canoeing, tubing and rafting, sightseeing, snowmobiling and cross-country skiing. Further, the department will look to enhance opportunities for these activities in ways that are consistent with the master plan and the resources present. Similarly, no changes to the existing habitat management objectives or strategies are proposed and the existing management techniques (e.g., timber harvest, prescribed fires and mowing) remain in effect.

The UWRSFA is within the ceded territory and this amendment recognizes the opportunity for tribes with off-reservation hunting, fishing and gathering rights to continue to exercise those rights. This amendment does not impair the tribes’ ability to exercise their off-reservation rights.

B. PROPOSED UPDATES AND CHANGES TO THE 1979 MASTER PLAN

AUTHORIZE LIMITED MOTORIZED RECREATION TO PROVIDE A CONNECTION IN A REGIONAL TRAIL NETWORK

This proposed amendment authorizes the construction and designation of a new, fully-developed, approximately 0.25-mile ATV/UTV trail across the UWRSFA near the Langlade Ranger Station. The proposed trail will then cross the Wolf River on either a newly constructed bridge to serve multiple recreation users (ATV/UTV riders, snowmobilers and pedestrians) adjacent to the existing STH 64 bridge or on a reconstructed and expanded STH 64 bridge.¹

¹ The Wisconsin Department of Transportation is planning to reconstruct the STH 64 bridge over the Wolf River and is responsible for setting the timeline.
On the east side of the river, the proposed trail is planned to be routed on private land or road right-of-way for approximately 500 feet until it connects to a local road that is an existing ATV/UTV route (Blue Goose Drive). The department owns a narrow strip of land between the river and the STH 55 right-of-way. This proposed amendment authorizes the trail connection between the bridge and Blue Goose Drive on the east side of the river to cross department land if necessary.

The proposed trail across the UWRSFA would help connect existing ATV/UTV riding opportunities on each side of the property and would be part of a larger route and trail system operated by Langlade County. The trail connection would also help to connect the Langlade County trails with Forest and Oconto County trails.

This amendment does not authorize other ATV/UTV trails on department-owned lands within the UWRSFA. ATV/UTV use may not occur until the trail has been constructed and appropriately signed.

The 1979 master plan identifies this portion of the property where the trail would be located as an existing intensive recreation area (Map F1). Including an ATV and UTV trail here would be consistent with this land management classification.

This location currently includes a popular public access site just south of STH 64 on the west side of the river. Many paddlers begin or end their trip here and use the ranger station parking lot for their vehicles. There are bathroom facilities here, but no drinking water. In addition, this access site has been used for many years by the Wolfman Triathlon, a very popular event that draws participants and visitors from throughout the region. The proposed trail and bridge would be sited to minimize impacts to the put-in/take-out site and use of the trail may be restricted during special events, such as the Wolfman Triathlon, to minimize conflicts.

Two options exist for the proposed trail to cross the Wolf River:

1. On a newly constructed bridge adjacent to the existing STH 64 bridge. This bridge would serve multiple recreation users (ATV/UTV riders, snowmobilers and pedestrians). The bridge would likely be located within or close to the existing STH 64 Department of Transportation right-of-way. Langlade County and the ATV/UTV club are moving forward with grant applications and other necessary documents for approval.

2. On a reconstructed and expanded STH 64 highway bridge over the river. The Wisconsin Department of Transportation anticipates reconstructing the bridge to address structural issues, but the timing and scope of this project are currently unknown. A newly reconstructed bridge could have a separate lane for recreational uses.

To the degree that either of these river-crossing options need to use department land for siting the bridge and necessary entry ways for the trail, that use would be approved in this proposed amendment. If the alignment for the bridge and associated entry would affect the use of the existing put-in/take-out site for canoes, kayaks and rafts, the department may shift the location of the put-in/take-out site a short distance downstream to ensure that paddlers continue to have suitable and safe access to the river here.

Snowmobile riders currently cross the Wolf River on the STH 64 bridge, which has led to safety concerns. The snowmobile trail that passes through the UWRSFA here would be re-routed to this new trail alignment, as well as the new bridge crossing.

The department will enter into a land use agreement with Langlade County for maintenance and management of the trail on department land. The department may restrict or temporarily prohibit ATV/UTV use on this trail if necessary to avoid conflicts with logging operations or other management activities or to address other public safety concerns.

Management of the proposed ATV/UTV trail would involve two phases:
Initial preparation and construction. Construction of the trail would run from Bank Road to a bridge over the Wolf River. The trail would go west of the ranger station up to STH 64 and then generally parallel the highway to a crossing of the river. The existing snowmobile trail across the UWRSFA here would be re-routed to the same alignment. The newly constructed trail would be up to 12 feet wide with vegetation cleared to a width up to 16 feet. The bridge (either a new bridge or a reconstructed STH 64 bridge) would accommodate ATVs, UTVs, snowmobiles, and pedestrians. The trail on the east side of the river is intended to generally follow the existing snowmobile trail.

Construction would follow the department’s design standards for ATV construction. In addition, appropriate signage would be required.

Map G shows a preliminary alignment for the trail; the actual alignment will be determined based on site conditions.

Ongoing monitoring and maintenance. As a designated use area, the department would be required to inspect this alignment twice a year, once before July 1 and once after July 1. These inspections are intended to help the department identify and address recreation, ecological, and environmental issues and concerns in a timely way. As with any recreation facility on any department property, if use of this trail results in unacceptable impacts or issues, the department may close or reconfigure it as necessary to protect the property and its natural resources. In addition, the department may temporarily close the trail and bridge to ATV/UTV use during special events, such as the Wolfman Triathlon, to minimize conflicts.

**UPDATE LAND MANAGEMENT CLASSIFICATIONS**

This amendment updates the nomenclature of the property’s land management classification map to comply with the master planning administrative code (ch. NR 44, Wis. Admin. Code).

The purpose of the land management classification system is to describe the primary management focus in different areas of a property. The 1979 master plan describes land classifications based on the department’s Uniform Land Use Classification System from the *Master Planning Handbook*, which was the guidance document the department used before the master planning administrative code was adopted in 1996. The department now follows the land management classification system described in sections NR 44.06 and 44.07, Wis. Admin. Code.

This amendment proposes to update the land management classifications to bring their nomenclature into alignment with sections NR 44.06 and 44.07, Wis. Admin. Code. Management of the property within the different management areas will be conducted as stated in the 1979 master plan and as described in the following updates and clarifications.

Over the last four decades since the master plan was approved, the department has managed the land it owns along the entire river corridor to maintain and improve the fishery and to protect the scenic values that draw

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2 Department Design Standards Handbook 8605.1
visitors. To better reflect this historic and current management and the overall intent of the master plan, this amendment proposes to adjust the land classification map as follows:

- Except for the Recreation Management Area at Langlade, lands within the UWRSFA project boundary that are within 300 feet of each bank of the Wolf and Hunting rivers are proposed to be classified as Scenic Resources Management Areas. This will increase the amount of land under the Scenic Management Area (Scenic Area) classification from 3,331 acres to 4,505 acres.

  No changes are proposed to the department’s ability to conduct necessary in-stream and bank habitat work throughout the river corridor to maintain and improve the fishery and fishing access.

- Land within the UWRSFA project boundary outside of this river corridor, along with all lands along Ninemile Creek, are proposed to be classified as Habitat Management Areas. This will decrease the amount of land under the Habitat Management Area classification from 10,709 acres to 9,535 acres.

  No changes are proposed to the department’s ability to manage a range of high-quality habitats to support game and non-game species and to provide opportunities for hunting, hiking, cross-country skiing and other recreation activities.

**EXPAND SCENIC RESOURCES MANAGEMENT AREA**

This amendment also proposes to *expand the Scenic Resources Management Area along the Wolf River and the Hunting River in the UWRSFA*. This proposed expansion of the Scenic Resources Management Areas does not alter the current objectives but rather more accurately reflects the department’s historic and current management practices and formalizes a higher level of protection along the river corridor. The size of the Recreation Management Area (Type 4) at Langlade remains unchanged from the 1979 master plan. Maps F3-A to F3-D show the proposed locations of the land management classifications.

**C. HOW THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT IS CONSISTENT WITH THE 1979 MASTER PLAN AND ADMINISTRATIVE CODES**

The proposed amendment is consistent with the 1979 master plan as follows:

1) No changes to the UWRSFA property goals and objectives are proposed.

2) The amendment updates the land management classifications and associated map using the categories in sections NR 44.06 and NR 44.07 and maintains the management areas’ intent and objectives.

3) The amendment expands the Scenic Resources Management Area to the entire Wolf and Hunting river corridors to align the land management classifications with the department’s historic and current management objectives and actions.

4) The amendment ensures adequate protection of the rivers and provides visitors with high-quality, scenic experiences.

5) The amendment maintains the intent from the 1979 master plan of the intensive recreation area at Langlade and classifies the site as a Recreation Management Area (Type 4).

6) Management of existing recreational uses (e.g., fishing, paddling, hiking, cross-country skiing, hunting) remains unchanged.
7) The master plan and this amendment establish management, development and public use for the property.

8) The proposed ATV/UTV trail provides a connection for existing regional ATV/UTV use and is consistent with a request from local governments to accommodate the use as part of a larger trail network.

9) The proposed change furthers the benefits of the property by improving recreation accessibility for the general public.

10) The Recreation Management Area can support and sustain the proposed additional recreational use.

11) The proposed development of the ATV/UTV trail will not substantively affect the management and use of adjacent areas.

12) The UWRSFA is within the ceded territory and this amendment recognizes the opportunity for tribes with off-reservation hunting, fishing and gathering rights to continue to exercise those rights. This amendment does not impair the tribes’ ability to exercise their off-reservation rights. The department continues to work through our Tribal Liaison to engage and consult with the Tribes on a government to government basis.

D. HOW THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT CHANGES THE 1979 MASTER PLAN

PROPOSED WORDING CHANGES:

The following language is proposed to be added to the end of the section of the 1979 master plan titled, Recommended Management Program (page 18):

A fully-developed ATV/UTV trail and bridge that connects regional riding opportunities may be constructed in the Recreation Management Area at Langlade. The department’s Design Standards Handbook shall be followed in the design and construction of the trail and bridge. This trail shall be sited to minimize impacts to the existing public carry-in boat access site here. If necessary, the carry-in access site may be moved a short distance downstream. Barrier fencing (constructed with natural materials) may be installed at key sections to ensure that riders stay on the trail. The existing snowmobile trail here will be re-routed to this new trail alignment.

The Recreation Management Area will not be used as a trailhead for ATV/UTV use and the parking area at the ranger station will not be used for ATV/UTV trailer parking. The department may temporarily close the trail and bridge to ATV/UTV use during authorized special events to minimize conflicts.

If a new bridge over the Wolf River is constructed here, all required permits must be received before construction is initiated. This new bridge shall be designed and constructed for use by ATVs, UTVs, and snowmobiles and to minimize visual impacts to river users.

If necessary to connect the trail to a local road designated as an ATV/UTV route, the trail may cross department land on the east side of the river using the most direct alignment possible.

PROPOSED WORDING CHANGES:

The following material will replace the section titled, Land Use Potential (page 12):
Land Management Classification

All lands that will potentially be managed by the department in the UWRSFA are classified following sections 44.06 and NR 44.07, Wis. Admin. Code. The purpose of this classification system is to describe the primary management focus for various areas within the UWRSFA. See Maps F3-A to F3-D for the locations of these areas.

Scenic Resources Management Areas (4,505 acres total)

The intent of this classification is to provide and maintain an aesthetic corridor along the Wolf River that enables visitors to experience the solitude and enjoyment of a natural, wild, remote river setting. The department’s management of the river corridor is focused on facilitating old growth forest characteristics and protecting water quality.

The Scenic Resources Management Areas must have a recreation use setting “sub-classification” (see sidebar). Lands within the Scenic Resources Management Area will have a Type 3 sub-classification.

The Type 3 sub-classification seeks to provide readily accessible areas with modest recreational facilities offering opportunities at different times and places for a variety of dispersed recreational uses and experiences. Due to the relatively high social contact along the river during elevated use periods (particularly stretches used by commercial rafting companies), the river corridor does not fully meet the standards for the Type 2 setting. However, in all other respects, most sections of the river do meet the standards for the Type 2 use setting.

Given the property’s narrow orientation, level of use and its objective of providing a scenic corridor for visitors, the Type 3 recreational use setting is appropriate. However, it is the department’s intent to manage the river corridor to meet the more restrictive Type 2 setting standards (section NR 44.07(5)) to the degree possible.

The Scenic Resources Management Areas will be managed as described in the 1979 master plan. The following language retains the intent and purposes of management in the master plan while clarifying and providing more details regarding how the department will manage the Scenic Resources Management Areas.

MANAGEMENT AREA SHORT-TERM AND LONG-TERM OBJECTIVES:

- Manage the river corridor to meet the Type 2 recreational use setting standards (ch. NR 44.07(5)) to the degree possible.

- Provide opportunities for river users to experience the solitude and enjoyment of a natural, wild-appearing, remote setting, by maintaining the Upper Wolf River in its natural, free-flowing, and unaltered condition.

- Except as needed to address blowdowns, other hazard conditions, and ecological restoration needs, restrict timber harvest within 300 feet on each side of the banks. These buffers may be increased or decreased to address resource concerns on a case-by-case basis (e.g., including lands more than 300 feet...
that are visible from the water, restoring pine plantations to more natural settings, and addressing ecological concerns).

- Protect the wild nature of the Upper Wolf River through bank protection and sound property and watershed management practices. Work with partners and the public to promote sustainable use and “leave no trace” river recreation.

- Manage in ways that contribute to the protection and preservation of the groundwater and surface water quality and quantity for current and future uses.

- Protect and enhance the Wolf River and Wolf River Scenic Areas primary sites (i.e., highly significant ecological sites) identified in the Rapid Ecological Assessment.

**MANAGEMENT PRESCRIPTIONS:**

- Passively manage the area and restrict commercial timber harvests.

- Limited timber salvage may be done following natural disturbances if necessary to significantly improve the visual quality of the area. If timber salvage operations are necessary, conduct them with an emphasis on the maintenance and improvement of the long-term visual quality of the corridor. Re-planting areas following salvage may be done if desired forest composition will not naturally regenerate. Minimize the visual and audible impacts of forest management activities by harvesting during leaf-off periods, unless a faster response is necessary to address public health and safety concerns (e.g., removing hazard trees from designated public use sites). Locate all temporary logging roads, skid trails and decking sites outside of the Scenic Resources Management Area whenever possible.

- Control invasive species as necessary to maintain aesthetic and ecological integrity; use methods that are consistent with the intent of this management area, and apply invasive species control measures at the most advantageous time for successful control.

- As needed, carry out restoration activities necessary to restore the natural appearance of the river corridors or areas previously modified or developed.

- As needed, carry out erosion control measures necessary to protect the land from erosion caused by human disturbance using natural materials consistent with the immediate surroundings.

- Limit the extent and frequency of all management activities to that which will achieve the desired response with the least visible sign of management activity.

- Maintenance of primitive river access trails and sites is allowed. To the degree feasible, locate parking areas outside of the Wolf and Hunting rivers’ viewshed.

- Do not conduct forest management activities that encourage beaver use of the streams. Regularly monitor for beaver activity (i.e. dams and colonies). Conduct beaver control and management within the fishery area to maintain free flowing conditions.

- Meet the standards of ch. NR 44.07(5) (Recreational Use Setting 2) except for ch. NR 44.07(5)(c), which may not be possible during heavy river use periods when social contact levels may be higher than the Type 2 Recreational Use Setting Standard.

**Habitat Management Areas** (9,535 acres total)

The intent of this classification is to manage and preserve a variety of aquatic and terrestrial habitat types to support fish and wildlife. The department’s management of these lands is focused on providing high-quality...
wildlife habitat and provide opportunities for hunting, trapping, hiking, cross-country skiing and other similar activities.

The Habitat Management Areas will be managed as described in the 1979 master plan. The following language retains the intent and purposes of management in the master plan while clarifying and providing more details regarding how the department will manage the Habitat Management Areas.

MANAGEMENT AREA SHORT-TERM AND LONG-TERM OBJECTIVES:

- Manage for quality trout habitat and provide opportunities for fishing.
- Passively manage areas within 300 feet of Ninemile Creek and other streams, creeks, springs, seeps and open water to provide a buffer area to protect water quality and prevent soil compaction. These buffers may be increased or decreased to address resource concerns on a case-by-case basis (e.g., avoiding areas subject to erosion, restoring pine plantations to more natural settings, addressing ecological concerns and timber sale aesthetics and logistics). Locate all temporary logging roads, skid trails and decking sites outside of the 300-foot buffer area whenever possible.
- Provide opportunities for hunting, trapping, and other wildlife and nature-based recreational activities such as hiking, cross-country skiing, and wildlife watching.
- Maintain, restore and enhance wildlife habitat.
- Manage in ways that contribute to the protection and preservation of the groundwater and surface water quality and quantity for current and future uses.
- Minimize impacts to the viewshed from the Wolf River, Hunting River and Ninemile Creek that may be seen from these waters; limit forestry activities as necessary to minimize visual impacts.

MANAGEMENT PRESCRIPTIONS:

- Passively manage lowland cover types where appropriate to maintain and protect hydrology and stream water quality; except appropriate management action may be taken in lowland hardwood stands impacted or projected to be impacted by the emerald ash borer to prevent conversion to an undesirable cover type.
- In areas outside of the stream buffer, follow the department’s standard management prescriptions for each habitat and forest type. Over time, property managers may modify the extent and/or distribution of the various habitats to respond to changing conditions, opportunities and needs.
- Use standard department practices to manage invasive plants and animals.
- Provide an appropriate level of public access to support public use. As needed, maintain, improve, or move visitor access parking areas. Locate new parking areas 150 feet or more from streams.
- Limit the extent and frequency of all management activities that are visible from the Wolf River, Hunting River, and Ninemile Creek to that which will achieve the desired response with the least visible sign of management activity.

Recreation Management Area (37 acres total)

The intent of this classification is to provide developed recreational use, such as parking lots and river access sites, where active and intensive recreation developments are needed. The department’s focus at this site is to provide adequate access to the river and the property.
The proposed ATV/UTV trail would pass through the Recreation Management Area, which includes a ranger station, snowmobile trail, public toilet facility, parking and a carry-in boat access site.

Recreation Management Areas must have a recreation use setting “sub-classification.” Lands within the Recreation Management Area at Langlade will have a Type 4 sub-classification. Type 4 areas provide a relatively high level of user comfort and the sights and sounds of human activity are typically common.

The Recreation Management Area will be managed as described in the 1979 master plan with the addition of an approximately 0.25-mile, fully-developed ATV/UTV trail. The following language retains the intent and purposes of management in the master plan while clarifying and providing more details regarding how the department will manage the Recreation Management Area, including the proposed new trail.

**MANAGEMENT AREA SHORT-TERM AND LONG-TERM OBJECTIVES:**

- Provide a public carry-in boat access site to the river to accommodate rafters, canoers and kayakers. Provide adequate parking and toilets.
- Provide a “pass-through” motorized trail for snowmobile and ATV/UTV use that links broader trail networks in the region. Given the current use level of the parking lot at the ranger station, no ATV/UTV trailer parking would be allowed here. Parking for ATV/UTV trailers is currently available nearby in White Lake and near Hwy 64 along Wallrich Road.
- Support special events that use the Wolf River corridor, including the ability to temporarily close the motorized connecting trail as needed to reduce conflicts and address public safety needs.
- Provide shore fishing opportunities.

**MANAGEMENT PRESCRIPTIONS:**

- Maintain a carry-in boat access site.
- Following the department’s Design Standards Handbook, establish a fully-developed ATV/UTV and snowmobile trail and associated crossing of the Wolf River that connects the regional trail systems east and west of the UWRSFA. The trail will have a tread width up to 12 feet and a cleared width not exceeding 16 feet. The surface will be crushed gravel. Where the trail nears the ranger station and parking lot, adequate barriers will be developed to ensure riders stay on the trail and avoid the parking lot and utility box. Appropriate signage, including stop signs where the trail would cross the entrance road to the ranger station, will be installed.
- Provide toilet facilities and parking for river users.
- Follow the standards in section NR 44.07(7).

**E. CONSISTENCY IN OPERATIONS**

This amendment does not make any changes to the structure or process in the department’s interactions with partner groups and local governments. The department may continue to engage in collaborative projects with various partners and to enter into agreements as necessary to seek mutually beneficial outcomes.

The department would continue to use and require best management practices (BMP) for erosion, noise and dust control for all construction activities, including proper erosion/siltation control during construction of the proposed recreation facilities. All facilities would continue to be constructed according to department facilities design standards and subject to necessary permits.
SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The Wolf River has long been recognized as one of the state’s premier fishing designations and has drawn anglers in search of a wide variety of game fish since the earliest days of settlement. The upper quarter is warmwater and the fishery is mainly walleye, pike, muskellunge, bass, and panfish. The lower roughly three-quarters is cool and cold water and the fishery is mainly trout and smallmouth bass. The river is wide and strewn with boulders in many sections; rapid gradients and whitewater are common. The Wolf River in Langlade County is classified as an Outstanding Resource Water.

The department began purchasing land along the river in 1967 to protect habitat and provide public fishing opportunities. Today, the Upper Wolf River State Fishery Area is comprised of 9,482 acres in a long, narrow corridor running from near Post Lake to the Menominee County border (Maps B-1 to B-4). About 85% of the river in this stretch is in state ownership.

In addition to the river’s popularity for fishing, this reach of the river has become a major Midwest destination for whitewater sports. Several commercial outfitters and guide companies offer whitewater rafting and kayaking on the river. A popular put-in/take-out for canoes, kayaks and rafts is on department land along the west bank of the river, just south of the STH 64 bridge.

The Wolf River is annually the site of privately sponsored events for rafts, canoes, and kayaks. Most notably is the very popular Wolfman Triathlon, which uses the STH 64 put-in/take-out site as part of the race.

The UWRSFA is located in Langlade County (Map A). Although a variety of recreation opportunities exist, only a limited number of facilities are currently provided (Maps C-1A to C-4A). A small number of department-managed roads exist, most of which are closed to public vehicle use (Maps C-1B to C-4B). The property is a mix of woodlands, grasslands and wetlands (Maps D-1 to D-4).

In addition to the material presented in Chapter 3 and Chapter 4 of the 1979 master plan and the Rapid Ecological Assessment (2012)3, the following background information provides context for this amendment.

A. MASTER PLAN REVISIONS, AMENDMENTS, AND VARIANCES

The Department of Natural Resources (department) owns over 500 properties encompassing more than 1.6 million acres on behalf of Wisconsin residents. With multiple opportunities for the public to provide input, the department develops management plans (what are known as master plans) to guide the use and operation of these properties. At heart, master plans are “instruction manuals” that describe the property’s vision, goals and objectives, the recreational uses and habitats that will be provided, and the management strategies and techniques that will be used.

In some situations, conditions or opportunities change at properties that result in a need to modify master plans. Chapter NR 44, Wis. Admin. Code, provides three methods to change master plans: (1) a master plan revision, (2) a master plan amendment, or (3) a master plan variance. The Natural Resources Board must approve the initiation of master plan revision or amendment processes as well as the resulting revision or amendment document. The department is authorized to initiate a variance process and approve a variance document. All three processes require public involvement.

3 See https://dnr.wi.gov/files/PDF/pubs/er/ER0835_ext.pdf
Over the last several years, the department received requests from the local ATV club and Langlade County to provide access for motorized recreational vehicles (specifically ATVs and UTVs) across the Upper Wolf River to create a linkage in the larger regional trail networks. The department’s initial assessment was that the potential project, or other changes to the use and management of the property that the public may have requested during the initial scoping phase of the planning process, might have required a change to the management objectives of some parts of the property or to property’s land management classifications. As such, the department sought and received authorization from the Natural Resources Board to initiate a master plan amendment process.

As the department evaluated the potential trail connection and considered public input from the initial comment period, it concluded that the only modification to the use of the property that warranted evaluation was a potential new 0.25-mile ATV/UTV trail (that would also serve as a new alignment for the existing snowmobile trail) across the property near the existing department ranger station in Langlade. This ATV/UTV trail is allowable under the land management classifications in the existing master plan and would not require an amendment to that plan, but rather could be addressed using a variance.

However, the department is using the evaluation of the requested change as an opportunity to update the land management classifications and associated map to comply with the master planning code (ch. NR 44, Wis. Admin. Code). This mapping update does not change the goals, objectives or management techniques for the property, but does constitute an amendment to the master plan.

In addition, the department proposes to expand the Scenic Resources Management Area to include the entire Wolf and Hunting rivers within the UWRSA. This modification would provide additional protection and bring the land management classification into alignment with the department’s current and historical management practices along the rivers.

**B. ACCOMPLISHMENTS SINCE THE MASTER PLAN WAS APPROVED IN 1979**

Given the long linear nature of the UWRSA, the following list of recreation-related projects is presented by the different river reaches.

**Markton to Lily**

- Langlade Ranger Station was identified as an existing access in the plan and is a maintained access site with parking and a restroom, but no drinking water.
- STH 55 wayside at Markton was identified in the master plan as an existing access site but also as an undesirable one. It was closed, and a new site was developed on the west side of the river (across from the wayside site) located off CTH M on Sunny Waters Lane. This site is a maintained access site with parking and access trails to the river.
- Rocky Ripps (east side of river) was identified as an existing access in the plan. This site is state-owned and parking is available on the town road. However, the access site is no longer maintained as an improved or developed designated use area. A small parking area farther south on Rocky Ripps Road does provide parking and an access trail to the river.
- Irrigation Hole Access was identified as an existing access in the plan and is a maintained access site with parking.
- Hollister Road Access was identified in the plan as a proposed access site. This site is maintained as an access site, but parking is only provided along the Town Road. No designated parking lot or parking area exists.
• Lily site was identified in the plan as an existing access site but no longer exists as a designated use area or access site. This site was replaced by a site on the west side of the river off STH 52.

**Lily to Pearson**

• Turtle Lake – shown as an existing site in the plan. This is a Town property and they maintain the access. Parking, picnic site, boat landing and a restroom are available.
• River Road – shown as an existing access site in the plan. Access to the river from the ROW of River Road exists, but the site is not a designated use area. Parking is allowed on the road shoulder.
• CTH A Park – shown as an existing site in the plan. County owned and maintained. Parking and picnic area are available.
• Military Park is along this stretch and was mentioned in the plan. This is a Town park with parking, shelter, picnic tables, restroom, and water (hand pump).

In addition to the sites identified above, other sites that were constructed or maintained since the plan was created include:

• Boy Scout Access off CTH M (Former Buettner site) – includes a parking area and trail to river.
• Conn’s Lane parking area.
• Wolf Road and Wolf River Landing Road parking areas.
• STH 55 Access across from Sylvan Acres West Road – includes parking areas and trails to river.
• CTH A access located just east of CTH T – includes parking area and trail to river.
• Goose Island parking area and access.
• CTH T parking areas and access points.
• Pearson, old bridge site off CTH T – includes limited parking area and access trail to the river.
• Whitetail Lane – includes parking area and access.

In addition, the following habitat-related work has been accomplished:

• Spring Pond dredging: Weix, Willow, Polar, and Blue (Hunting River part of the UWRSA).
• Intensive Stream habitat work on the Wolf River:
  o Downstream from Wolf Landing Road
  o At the end of South Wolf Road
  o Upstream from East Wolf Road
  o Upstream from Schnecks Landing
• Stream habitat work on Spring Creek.
• Stream habitat work on Ninemile Creek:
  o Downstream from STH 55
  o Upstream from STH 55
  o Upstream from East Hollister Road
• Maintenance brushing on habitat projects.
• Beaver dam removals for trout habitat throughout the UWRSA.

**C. PURPOSE AND NEED FOR THE MASTER PLAN AMENDMENT**

Since the adoption of the 1979 master plan, changing recreation demands and opportunities at the property and in the region necessitated the department evaluate changes to the master plan. One trend has been the number of local governments that now allow motorized recreational vehicles, such as ATVs and UTVs, on local roads. The
Town of Wolf River, in which this portion of the UWRSA is located, has designated all but one Town road as ATV/UTV routes.

The White Lake ATV/UTV trail network exists in the Langlade County Forest to the west of the UWRSA and in the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest to the east. The ATV/UTV riding community has worked with the department for several years to assess options to connect these two trail networks. This has been a challenging task given the limited number of existing crossings over the Wolf River (which to potentially use or to parallel the crossing) and the natural resources in the river corridor. Since the existing master plan does not address ATV or UTV use on the property, a modification is needed to allow this use.

The department routinely adjusts snowmobile routes and trails on department properties to respond to changing needs, opportunities and conditions. Adjusting or realigning snowmobile routes typically does not require an amendment to a master plan. However, this amendment describes the change to the snowmobile trail since it would be the same alignment as the proposed ATV/UTV trail.

The proposed amendment process provides the opportunity to update the land management classification map and nomenclature. Further, the plan amendment process enables the department to expand the Scenic Resources Management Area, and thus the protection zone, along the river to be consistent with the department’s current and historical management approach for the Upper Wolf River.

**D. ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES IF THE PROPOSED ATV/UTV TRAIL AND BRIDGE ARE IMPLEMENTED**

**IMPACTS TO PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT**

**Land and geologic resources**

No significant land or geological resources are known to exist at the ranger station site. The construction of a short stretch of new snowmobile and ATV/UTV trail near the ranger station and the STH 64 bridge is not expected to result in any substantive impacts to land or geologic resources.

**Air resources**

Providing a short stretch of ATV/UTV trail that links other existing trails and routes is likely to result in more motorized recreation vehicles passing through this area, although the extent of this potential increase is unknown. This increase in ATV/UTV use would likely result in increased air emissions in this area. However, according to Wisconsin Department of Transportation data, on average between 1,100 and 2,000 vehicles a day currently pass over the STH 64 bridge at the Wolf River.\(^4\) Any impacts to air quality resulting from increased ATV/UTV use because of this connecting trail is expected to be minimal in comparison to the existing motor vehicle use on STH 64.

**Water and wetland resources**

No wetlands exist in this portion of the UWRSA. Because best management practices would be used during construction and management, no impacts to the Wolf River are expected. No substantive impacts to wetlands or waterbodies are expected due to ATV/UTV or snowmobile use of the trail.

\(^4\) See [https://trust.dot.state.wi.us/roadrunner/](https://trust.dot.state.wi.us/roadrunner/)
IMPACTS TO BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

In 2012 the department completed a Rapid Ecological Assessment for the Upper Wolf River Fishery Area that focused on rare plants and animals and high-quality natural communities. This assessment identified many important resources on the property and in the Wolf River.

Terrestrial resources

The proposed new ATV/UTV and snowmobile trail alignment passes through a northern hardwood forest. The proposed trail is not expected to conflict with habitat management of this forest. No rare species or species of conservation need are known to occur in the block of land that the proposed trail would pass through.

Aquatic and wetland resources

Rare aquatic invertebrates are known to occur in the reach of the Wolf River that includes the STH 64 bridge area. If an adjacent, recreation-only bridge is placed parallel to STH 64, it would most likely be a single-span bridge and thus not affect in-stream habitat. If a footing in the river for a recreation-only bridge was needed, then additional work to identify and avoid rare aquatic species would be needed. All construction work for the trail and bridge would follow best management practices and thus any impacts to the river and its water quality are expected to be minor.

IMPACTS TO CULTURAL, HISTORIC OR ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

No cultural, historic or archaeological resources are known in the proposed project area.

IMPACTS TO RECREATION PARTICIPATION

The proposed establishment of the ATV/UTV trail across the UWRSFA is expected to provide a key connection between existing riding opportunities east and west of the property. As a result, this short segment is expected to be popular with riders, to improve riders’ ability to access trails and to improve their riding experiences. This trail is not expected to substantively increase overall ATV/UTV riding levels in the region and is not likely to increase participation in the activity among nearby residents.

The proposed establishment of the ATV/UTV trail may adversely impact other visitors to this short stretch of the property. In particular, paddlers may be affected if the proposed bridge and entry impede the use of the existing put-in/take-out site for canoes, kayaks and rafts. However, as stated earlier, if the proposed bridge and entry conflict with this access site, the site may be shifted downstream an adequate distance to ensure canoers, kayakers and rafters have adequate and satisfactory access to the river here. Also, the ATV/UTV trail may be temporarily closed to ensure public safety during special events that use the access site.

The use of this proposed connecting trail by ATVs and UTVs is not expected to substantively affect overall visitation to the UWRSFA or participation rates in other recreation activities at the property.

IMPACTS TO LOCAL AND STATE ECONOMY

Given the limited change in overall visitation and participation in outdoor activities that is expected from the proposed ATV/UTV trail, any changes to the region’s or state’s economy are expected to be minimal. Local

Available at: [http://dnr.wi.gov](http://dnr.wi.gov) and search for “Upper Wolf River ecological assessment”
establishments that provide services to ATV/UTV riders in the immediate vicinity of the trail may experience increases in use.

**SOCIAL IMPACTS**

Many people that provided comments during the public input periods expressed concerns about sound generated from ATVs and UTVs and that this would detract from their enjoyment of the river corridor. However, since the proposed trail and river crossing is in a high traffic area (an intersection of two state highways, a loading/unloading site for rafters, kayakers and canoers), these types of impacts already exist at this location. Visitors seeking remote, quiet experiences would not find them at this location now. Indeed, locating the ATV/UTV crossing at the proposed location (within the Recreation Management Area) provides the ability to manage the rest of the Wolf River corridor as a more remote recreation use setting.

The use of local roads is determined by local governments and many local roads in Langlade County have been designated as ATV/UTV routes. The proposed trail on department land would connect existing routes that are currently designated by local governments and would thus provide benefits to those members of the public that recreationally ride ATVs and UTVs. If a connection between the trail networks east and west of the property is provided, ATV/UTV traffic on local roads leading to the connection across the UWRSFA is likely to increase, particularly on roads closest to the UWRSFA. Some nearby residents have expressed strong opposition to this possibility and the impact that increased ATV/UTV traffic on local roads near the UWRSFA will have on the use and enjoyment of their properties.

**E. COMPATIBILITY WITH STATUTES, CODES AND DEPARTMENT POLICIES**

The proposed amendment to the 1979 master plan complies with ch. NR 44, Wis. Admin. Code and other applicable department polices. The proposed construction of an ATV/UTV trail is allowable in the Recreation Management Area.

**F. FEDERAL INTERESTS AND LIMITATIONS**

The department has acquired about 9,500 acres within the boundary of the UWRSFA. Just over 8,200 acres have federal interest due to federal aid money being used, in part, for acquisition (Map E). Federal interest requires that the department obtain federal approval prior to granting any permanent real estate interests or building permanent structures that impact public outdoor recreation opportunities.

**G. SUMMARY OF ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED**

Several other options to connect the ATV/UTV trail networks east and west of the UWRSFA as well as to update the land management classifications were evaluated including:
• Other road crossings over the Wolf River (e.g., CTH A, CTH M and STH 52).

These alternatives were not selected because they would require riders to travel long distances from the existing trails to cross the river, including along several miles of state or county highways to make connections. Also, the areas for potential connections between the existing trail networks using these other highways posed several challenges. Several locations are wet and in some cases siting a trail along these roads would cause as much disturbance as building a stand-alone trail through the middle of the UWRSFA property. Ultimately, the department concluded that the most practical location for routing an ATV/UTV trail across the UWRSFA was at STH 64. This location also minimizes impacts to natural resources and river users by locating the trail very near the existing highway crossing.

• Use the Wolf River State Trail to provide an ATV/UTV crossing of the Wolf River.

This alternative was not selected because of potential impacts to the UWRSFA. The segment of the Wolf River State Trail that crosses the Wolf River parallels the river and is contained in the UWRSFA property for several miles between STH 64 and Lily. This area is particularly scenic and sensitive. The department consulted with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service regarding potential impacts to the existing uses of the UWRSFA. It was determined that adding ATV/UTV use during the summer (non-winter) season would impact the federally-approved uses for the property and thus was not a viable alternative.

• Use a different trail alignment from Bank Road to the river crossing at STH 64.

Several different potential trail alignments were evaluated at the ranger station area, including using the existing snowmobile trail. All the options evaluated resulted in more impacts to the river access site, were more expensive, did not address the need to better separate snowmobiles from the paved parking lot, or created another river crossing further downstream of the STH 64 bridge. For these reasons, these alternatives were not selected.

• Not pursuing a connection of regional trails.

The department considered not allowing ATVs or UTVs on land it manages along the Wolf River. However, the department believes that a short ATV/UTV crossing of the UWRSFA can be constructed and managed in a manner that would meet the goal of providing recreational opportunities, in addition to fishing, in ways that maintain the overall scenic and aesthetic qualities of the river. As such, the department does not believe that having the UWRSFA continue to be an obstacle to connections to the broader regional ATV/UTV trail networks is acceptable. For these reasons, this alternative was not selected.

• Maintain the Scenic Resources Management Areas as disjunct sections along the river.

The department considered maintaining the 1979 land management classifications that has Scenic Areas (Scenic Resources Management Areas) as separate reaches along the river corridor. However, the overall intent of the master plan is to maintain the naturalness of the entire river. As such, the proposed expansion of the Scenic Resources Management Area in consistent with the master plan’s intent.

H. PUBLIC REVIEW AND INPUT

This section describes the ways that the department gathered public input, the comments and perspectives received, and how this input was used in the development of this draft amendment to the master plan.
METHODS OF GATHERING PUBLIC COMMENTS

The department recognizes that sound planning related to the use and stewardship of lands it manages on behalf of the public is a partnership effort with the people it serves and that the end product, the master plan, is most successful when it reflects the desires of the public and includes goals and objectives that fit the capabilities of the property. The department encourages and provides opportunities for citizen involvement throughout the property planning process.

From January 20 through February 4, 2018, the department gathered public input through both an online and hardcopy questionnaire designed to better understand people’s use of the property, changes they would like to see in the recreation opportunities provided, initial reactions to the proposed concept of an ATV/UTV connecting trail, and any other issues they would like the department to address. The intent of this initial scoping phase of public input was to gather general perspectives and to identify issues to consider in developing an amendment.

The department also used input gathered as part of the recently completed work on a Recreation Opportunities Analysis (ROA) for the Northwoods Region. The results of that effort, particularly the identification of recreation needs throughout the region, were helpful in developing the amendment.

A second public input opportunity - from June 11 to July 10, 2018 - was provided following the release of the initial draft master plan amendment. The department hosted two open house meetings during this time: June 19 (Springstead) and June 20 (Antigo). The department gathered public input through both an online and hardcopy questionnaire designed to understand people’s reactions to the proposed master plan amendment. In addition, the department received a number of emails.

INPUT RECEIVED

The department is thankful for all the input received and the time and effort people took to reflect on the potential changes to the master plan. The department considers all public input, but is particularly appreciative of people that submitted comments going beyond a simple statement of support for, or opposition to, a specific issue. Comments that explained the reasoning behind a stance or the nature of concerns were most useful.

It is clear from the large number of comments received that the future use and management of the UWRSFA is meaningful to many Wisconsin residents. The department seeks public input to better understand the overall range of perspectives and the reasoning behind these viewpoints. Public input on the content of master plans (and changes to these plans) is not a “vote” where the greatest number of respondents advocating a particular position necessarily drives what is or isn’t ultimately included. Rather, the department’s approach is to carefully read through all the comments and material presented to find common themes and issues and the underlying beliefs that drive different perspectives.

Initial public outreach (January 20 to February 4, 2018)

During the initial public comment period, the department received nearly 1,000 responses to the public input form (combined hard copy and online submittals). The department also received some comments following the end of the formal initial comment period. The following topics emerged in public comments about the Upper Wolf River Fishery Area:

Visitation and use of the property

Most of the people submitting comments had visited the UWRSFA and had spent time on the property in the last 12 months. Popular activities were fishing, hiking, boating and canoeing.

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6 See dnr.wi.gov, keyword “ROA.”
Needs at the Upper Wolf River State Fishery Area

- Access for ATV/UTVs across the property - The most commonly expressed need is for the department to provide access for ATVs and UTVs to cross the property and thus enable a connection between trails and routes east and west of the river corridor. Many people noted opposition to motorized uses at the property, in particular ATVs and UTVs.
- Other types of trails - Some people commented on the need for more hiking and bicycling trails.
- Need to keep the property in natural conditions to protect fish and wildlife habitat - Related to opposition to motorized recreational uses, many people mentioned a desire to maintain the property’s quiet conditions and to ensure the property’s natural amenities are maintained.

Thoughts on the potential for an ATV/UTV trail crossing of the property to connect trails and routes to the east and west.

- Many people either strongly supported or strongly opposed the potential of an ATV/UTV crossing at the property. Supporters noted the need to connect existing riding opportunities that are available east and west of the property and the value this would provide to their riding experiences.
- Concerns were raised about potential impacts to wildlife, habitats, and the quietness of the property if more motorized uses occur in the area. Concerns were also expressed that a second bridge (to accommodate ATVs, UTVs, and snowmobiles) adjacent to the STH 64 bridge would impede the existing carry-in access site that serves canoers, kayakers, and rafters here.
- This popular access site is used by the Wolfman Triathlon event. Concerns were raised about the potential conflicts with this event that could arise if an ATV/UTV trail is not appropriately sited and use of the parking area is not addressed. In addition, concerns were expressed that a motorized recreational trail and river crossing would negatively affect wildlife in the river corridor.

Issues or concerns to address in planning process

- Environmental concerns: damage to water and air quality resulting from increased motorized use
- Access concerns: need to provide better access, including for motorized uses
- Safety issues: speed limit, signage, design to keep riders on trail, enforcement needs
- Noise concerns: conflicts with other visitors and wildlife
- Habitat concerns: invasive species, impacts to habitats (especially wetlands), wildlife and sensitive species
- Tourism issues: potential impacts to tourism

Public input received in this first phase, along with information from property management staff, regional trends, existing recreational use of the property, data from the Recreation Opportunities Analysis and the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, were used to develop the initial draft amendment.

Public input in response to the initial proposed amendment document (June 11 to July 10, 2018)

The department received the following input related to the proposed changes to the Upper Wolf River State Fishery Area master plan:

- 443 people provided comments in the online input form.
- 36 people filled out a hardcopy version of the input form and either turned it in at the open house meetings or mailed it in.
- 7 people sent emails with comments
What follows are summaries of the issues and perspectives that were most commonly raised, not necessarily a restatement of every comment received. All the input received during the public comment period has been posted on the department website.

**Bridge crossing**

Many people commented that the proposed new crossing of the Wolf River, whether on an adjacent separate bridge or on a reconstructed and wider STH 64 bridge, would provide a much-needed safer means to cross the river. Currently the STH 64 bridge has a very narrow “shoulder” for pedestrians, bicyclists, and snowmobilers that is a safety concern for many. Of the two options for crossing the river, most respondents advocated for a new, separate “recreational use” bridge. Some people commented that although adding a “recreation lane” to a reconstructed STH 64 bridge may be more cost effective, the timing of such work is unknown and dependent on a number of transportation-related budgetary factors that could delay the project.

A suggestion was made to construct a new recreational-use bridge a short distance downstream from the existing STH 64 bridge to minimize impacts to canoers, kayakers, and rafters using the boat launch. This location could also be separated from the parking lot at the ranger station.

**Use and economic outcomes**

Many people commented that the proposed amendment, which would enable regional ATV/UTV trails to be connected, would expand opportunities to ride ATVs and UTVs and thus draw more visitors to the area. As a consequence, many respondents believed that this would provide economic benefits to the economy of northern Wisconsin, and the Langlade area in particular. Several supporters also stated a belief that motorized and non-motorized users of this part of the property could collaborate and provide benefits for all users.

Others expressed an opposing view. They believed that the expansion of motorized recreation in the area would drive away visitors that come to the Wolf River for relaxing, quiet experiences. To these respondents, adding an ATV/UTV trail across the property would negatively affect the experiences that current users enjoy.

In particular, concern was expressed that the linking ATV/UTV trail and associated crossing of the Wolf River would have a negative impact to the canoers, kayakers, and rafters using the river access site just downstream of STH 64. This put-in and take-out site receives heavy use in the summer and is an important site in the annual Wolfman Triathlon.

**Impacts to neighboring landowners**

Concerns were also raised that making the short ATV/UTV linkage across the UWRSFA would result in large increases in ATV/UTV traffic on nearby local roads that have been designated as ATV/UTV routes. Currently, these roads receive some ATV/UTV use and are also used by people walking and bicycle riding. As stated earlier in this document, the department believes that the creation of the proposed connection across the UWRSFA is likely to increase ATV/UTV traffic near the property where the ATV/UTV traffic will be concentrated as riders near the river crossing. Some people commented that this increase in ATV/UTV use is likely to be substantial and will most affect the residents closest to the UWRSFA. As such, they very much opposed the creation of the linkage across the UWRSFA.

**Impacts to the environment**

Concerns were also raised about environmental damages related to the spread of invasive species, erosion and loud noises impacting visitors, nearby residences and wildlife. People commented that they enjoyed the quiet, wilderness setting of the property and that the proposed trail across the UWRSFA would seriously impact their experiences.

**Public notice**
Some respondents raised concerns that they and their friends and neighbors did not receive adequate notification of the proposed changes to the use and management of properties or the public meetings that were held.

**Amendment versus revision**

The issue of whether the potential modifications of the master plans should follow an amendment process or a revision process was raised. In addition, some people stated that they believed the proposed amendment was attempting to re-write the property planning administrative code (ch. NR 44, Wis. Admin. Code).

**Enforcement concerns**

The issue of illegal motorized use was raised. People were concerned that illegal ATV and UTV use would occur and that, given the department’s limited enforcement resources, problems would not be addressed adequately or timely. In addition, several people commented that illegal, off-trail ATV/UTV riding can cause severe damage that can be very costly to repair.

**Additional assessment**

Concerns were raised that the department did not adequately evaluate the range of potential impacts and outcomes that the proposed changes to the master plans would entail. Some stated that further analysis was warranted given the significance in the changes in uses being proposed and the substantial affect they would have on the use and nature of the properties. The result of additional study and assessment, some believed, would show the department and the public that the proposed changes would have serious negative consequences and should not be approved.

**HOW THE INITIAL DRAFT AMENDMENT WAS AND WAS NOT REVISED BASED ON INPUT RECEIVED.**

The initial draft amendment was not substantively changed based on public input. The proposed ATV/UTV trail and associated bridge remain in the amendment. The document was edited to clarify several portions.

The department’s response to the issues raised during the public comment period are as follows:

- As described in ch. NR 44, the planning and approval processes for both master plan amendments and revisions are identical. What differs is simply the scope of the potential change(s) to the use and management of the property. The initial draft amendment included language to help explain the differences in all three types of changes to master plans: revision, amendment and variance. Some people found these descriptions confusing and believed that the department was attempting to change administrative code in these descriptions. No such attempt was being made; changing administrative codes follows an established process unrelated to master planning.

- People that illegally participate in recreational activities, both motorized and non-motorized uses, can have serious impacts to habitats, other recreationists, and neighboring landowners. In some cases, environmental damages can be substantial and require considerable cost and effort to address. The department recognizes this issue and monitors its properties and enforces regulations with the resources it is allocated by the legislature. In addition, the department works closely with local law enforcement to address illegal recreational uses. Despite these efforts, the department is aware that illegal recreational uses continue and have adverse consequences.

- The department is required to assess potential impacts of proposed actions, such as the proposed amendments, so that department decisionmakers, other decisionmakers, and the interested public have information to be able to consider the short- and long-term effects on the quality of the environment. The analysis is intended to provide information; the results of the analysis do not compel a particular decision.
That is, the department or Natural Resources Board may conclude that a proposed action, even one that causes considerable negative outcomes, is appropriate because other values outweigh the likely environmental consequences.

The department’s analysis of potential impacts is required to address issues relevant to the evaluation of the action and to provide a level of detail commensurate with the complexity of the action. In evaluating potential impacts and alternatives, the department uses the best available information regarding the pertinent issues in conjunction with staff expertise and experience. Typically, available information comes from inventories, evaluations, monitoring and research conducted by department staff and others.

Given the nature of the proposed projects and their level of complexity and the range of likely impacts and outcomes, the department believes that additional research studies on sounds from motorized vehicles, erosion potential, impacts to wildlife, visitor patterns and other topics are unnecessary.

The department uses a variety of techniques to provide the public with information about the property planning process, specific proposals at properties and public comment opportunities. The department does not have the resources to attempt to contact all the landowners, nearby residents, groups or organizations that may have an interest in a specific property, recreation activity or habitat. Rather it relies on a multi-pronged approach for distributing information. At each of the three phases of the planning process, the department issues press releases, distributes information to all local and regional media outlets (newspapers and radio and television stations), sends out emails to people that sign up to receive notifications, and posts information on its website.
MAPS

Map A: Regional locator
Map B: DNR and other lands
Map C1: Existing recreation infrastructure
Map C2: Road infrastructure
Map D: Existing land cover
Map E: Federal interest
Map F1: Land management classifications from the 1979 master plan with an inset map showing the area at Langlade
Map F2: Land management classifications from the 1979 master plan with updated management classifications (ch. NR 44, Wis. Admin. Code) and current project boundary
Map F3: Proposed land management classifications, based on ch. NR 44, Wis. Admin. Code
Map G: Proposed ATV/UTV and snowmobile trail at Langlade