SUBJECT: Request approval to initiate a recreation-focused amendment for department-managed properties discussed in the Northwoods Recreation Opportunities Analysis (July 2017).

FOR: September 2017 Board meeting

TO BE PRESENTED BY: Diane Brusoe, Property Planning Section Chief

SUMMARY:
Per Chapter NR 44.04(2) Wis. Admin. Code, the department is requesting NRB approval to initiate an amendment process to address recreation-focused needs on department-managed properties located within the region, including the following: Turtle-Flambeau Scenic Waters Area, Upper Wolf River Fishery Area and Willow Flowage Scenic Waters Area.

One purpose of the Recreation Opportunities Analysis (ROA) is to inform and streamline the department’s master planning process by identifying the existing recreation supply, future recreation needs, and opportunities to meet future recreation needs on department-managed lands in a given region. The department proposes using the ROA for the Northwoods Region (July 2017) as the basis for initiating and evaluating several amendment requests related to improving parking and connecting existing ATV trails. If approved to proceed, the amendment process will include opportunities for public review and comment. After the amendment evaluation, the department will return to the NRB with a recommended action.

RECOMMENDATION: The department recommends board approval to initiate a recreation-focused amendment process for the identified properties.

LIST OF ATTACHED MATERIALS (check all that are applicable):
☒ Background memo
☐ Type name of attachment if applicable
☒ Type name of attachment if applicable

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<tr>
<th>Approved by</th>
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<tr>
<td>Ben Bergey - Director, Bureau of Parks &amp; Recreation Management</td>
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<td>Doug Haag - Administrator, Division of Internal Services</td>
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<td>Kurt A. Thiede, Interim Secretary</td>
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cc: Board Liaison – AD/B
DATE: September 5, 2017

TO: Natural Resources Board Members

FROM: Kurt A. Thiede – Interim Secretary, Department of Natural Resources

SUBJECT: Request approval to initiate a recreation-focused amendment process for department-managed properties discussed in the Northwoods Recreation Opportunities Analysis (July 2017).

Background
In the spring of 2017 the DNR embarked on a study, known as the Recreation Opportunities Analysis (ROA), of existing outdoor-based recreation opportunities and future recreation needs in each region of the state. The study identified future needs for providing high-quality recreation experiences and the role of DNR properties in helping to meet those needs. The department completed the ROA for the Northwoods Region in July 2017 and is proposing using the analysis to initiate and evaluate amending recreation needs on DNR-managed properties located within the region, including the following:

Turtle-Flambeau Scenic Waters Area
The purpose is to amend a 1995 property plan to accommodate a proposed ATV trail that would be located on Iron County Forest lands, private land and Turtle Flambeau Scenic Waters Area lands. The proposed trail would move ATV traffic from Popko Circle Road and relocate the ATV traffic to a new trail corridor consisting of a gravel town road, old logging road and a newly constructed trail.

Upper Wolf River Fishery Area
The purpose is to amend a 1979 property plan to establish a pass-through ATV route across the Upper Wolf River Fishery Area that will be a connector route between White Lake ATV Trails located west and east of the Wolf River, which would ultimately connect to the Oconto and Forest County trails. The connector route will also help with connections to the Langlade County trails.

Willow Flowage Scenic Waters Area
The purpose is to amend the 2016 master plan to designate car parking on the south end of the property to provide a multi-use trail head parking location for snowmobiles, ATVs/UTVs and boaters on the Tomahawk River. The amendment would also evaluate designating handicap parking stalls on department lands along the road near Willow Dam boat landing.

Master Plan Amendment Process
Section NR 44.04(2) Wis. Admin. Code requires NRB notification and authorization before the department may initiate a master plan amendment:

".... a plan amendment or revision may be proposed at any time by the department or any person, and an amendment or revision request shall be filed in writing with the secretary of the department. The secretary shall inform the board of requests as filed under this section, and the department shall notify the person or persons making the request of the board's decision."

Recommendation
The department recommends approval to initiate a recreation-related amendment process for department-managed properties located in the Northwoods Region.