

SUBJECT: Land Acquisition – Lower Chippewa River State Natural Area – Eau Claire County

FOR: OCTOBER 2014 BOARD MEETING

TO BE PRESENTED BY: Douglas J Haag

SUMMARY: The Department has obtained an option to purchase 299.69 acres of land from Frank and Janet Kopp for \$572,000 for the Lower Chippewa River State Natural Area in Eau Claire County. The item is being submitted because the purchase price exceeds \$150,000.

The proposed acquisition consists of three parcels; approximately 249 acres in the town of Brunswick, Eau Claire County and approximately 50 acres in the Town of Rock Creek, Dunn County. The parcels lie entirely within the Lower Chippewa River State Natural Area (LCRSNA) project boundary and are adjacent to Department owned land. This property lies directly south of the Chippewa River and contains 4,800 feet of river shoreline, along with 3,700 feet of shoreline along Powell Lake. The property consists of dry prairie, upland brush, late-successional barrens, and floodplain forest. The parcel has approximately 3700 feet of frontage along Fuller Road (which contains a recently constructed parking lot on the Dunn County side), providing much needed walk in access to the LCRSNA parcels in Eau Claire County.

The LCRSNA is a continentally important conservation landscape; it contains the highest concentration of rare species in the state of Wisconsin and harbors many rare natural communities such as floodplain savannas, bluff prairies, and southern hardwood forests. The project contains the largest intact floodplain forest in the Midwest. A diversity of special concern bird species have been observed at the parcel including grasshopper sparrow, field sparrow, vesper sparrow, lark sparrow, blue-winged warbler, and American woodcock. The site has a mixture of prairie habitats including degraded yet restorable prairies as well as intact prairie remnants that contain native plant species such as hoary puccoon, flowering spurge, porcupine grass, june grass, and spiderwort. Acquisition of the Kopp property will contribute to the LCRSNA's goal of maintaining, restoring, and connecting blocks of floodplain forest and the continuum of habitats from uplands to lowlands.

The southeast portion of the property includes approximately 3,700 feet of shoreline along Powell Lake, a backwater shallow lake that is hydrologically connected to the Chippewa River. In the 1950's, Powell Lake was drained when its primary tributary was redirected to flow directly into the Chippewa River. Today, Department staff is starting to restore Powell Lake through the construction of two dikes designed to capture floodwater; the project is being financed through the DNR Waterfowl Stamp Program and is being carried out in partnership with Ducks Unlimited.

The northern portion of the parcel contains more than 20 ponds that were created by previous gravel quarrying operations that could be used to provide a diversity of potential fishing or wildlife management opportunities. Reclamation operations will be necessary to bring some of the ponds into compliance with site standards. Some ponds are likely deep enough to manage them as put and take, or put, grow and take trout fisheries. Other ponds are large enough that warmwater fisheries such as largemouth bass and panfish would be a management option. Project reclamation could be undertaken by the Department Habitat Restoration Crew or Regional Field operations at an estimated completion cost of \$28,000.

Since its inception in 2002, the LCRSNA has experienced an outpouring of local support due to the area's recreational assets and ecological significance. Numerous conservation groups, including the Lower Chippewa River Alliance, Dunn County Fish and Game Association, Durand Sportsman's Club, Rock Falls Sportsman's Club, Arkansas Fur, Fish, and Game Club, Downsville Sportsman's Club, and The Prairie Enthusiasts have all provided support through various donations of money, labor, and supplies.

The Kopp parcel offers a variety of unique public use opportunities including hunting, fishing, trapping, birding, and hiking. Acquisition of the Kopp parcel will improve public access opportunities around the core block of Department ownership in the LCRSNA-Powell Lake area, which currently consists of approximately 430 acres. This parcel will fill in an ownership gap and provide continuity with land management efforts on adjacent properties. This parcel may be used as match to help leverage NAWCA grant funding for potential habitat work and/or future acquisitions within the Lower Chippewa River SNA project area.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Board approve the purchase of 299.69 acres of land from Frank and Janet Kopp for \$572,000 for Lower Chippewa River State Natural Area the in Eau Claire County.

LIST OF ATTACHED MATERIALS:

No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Fiscal Estimate Required	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	Attached
No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Environmental Assessment of Impact Statement Required	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	Attached
No <input type="checkbox"/>	Background Memo	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Attached

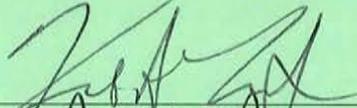
APPROVED:



Deputy Facilities and Lands Bureau Director, Douglas J Haag - LF/6

9-25-14

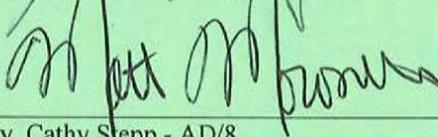
Date



Administrator, Kurt Thiede - AD/8

9-29-14

Date



Secretary, Cathy Stepp - AD/8

10/6/14

Date

cc: S. Miller - LF/6
D. Haag - LF/6
L. Ross - AD/8
D. Schuller - PR/6
C. Thompson - WCR - LA CROSSE

CORRESPONDENCE/MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 25, 2014
 TO: Scott Walker
 FROM: Cathy Stepp
 SUBJECT: Proposed Land Acquisition, Frank Kopp Tract, File # NA 20119,
 Option Expires December 3, 2014

FILE REF: NA 20119

1. PARCEL DESCRIPTION:

Lower Chippewa River State Natural Area
 Eau Claire and Dunn Counties

Grantor:

Frank and Janet Kopp
 3804 London Road
 Eau Claire, WI 54701

Acres: 299.69Price: \$572,000Appraised Value: \$572,000Interest: Fee Title PurchaseImprovements: NoneLocation: The property is located 6 miles West of City of Eau Claire in Eau Claire and Dunn CountiesLand Description: The subject land is level to gently rolling.Covertyping Breakdown:

Type	Acreage
Cropland	26.20
Lowland Woodland	207.88
Grass / Pasture	65.61
Total:	299.69

Zoning: Eau Claire County: Exclusive Agriculture (A-1), Dunn County: Unzoned.Present Use: Recreation and AgricultureProposed Use: RecreationTenure: Owned by Kopp Family for Decades; transferred to Frank and Janet Kopp in 2002.Property Taxes: \$4,333.23Option Date: August 5, 2014

Stewardship Land Access: This property will be open to the public for all nature based outdoor recreational activities to include hunting, fishing, trapping, hiking and cross country skiing. Physical features of the property may not be conducive to all these activities.

2. JUSTIFICATION:

The Department has obtained an option to purchase 299.69 acres for the Lower Chippewa River State Natural Area (LCRSNA) from Frank and Janet Kopp. The parcel lies entirely within the boundary of the LCRSNA project boundary and immediately adjacent to Department owned property. This property lies directly south of the Chippewa River and contains 4,800 feet of shoreline along with 3,700 feet of shoreline on Powell Lake.



The property consists of dry prairie, upland brush, late-successional barrens, and floodplain forest. There is good access to the property along Fuller Road with an existing parking lot on an adjacent parcel.

The LCRSNA is a continentally-important conservation landscape; it contains the highest concentration of rare species in the state of Wisconsin and harbors many rare natural communities such as floodplain savannas, bluff prairies, and southern hardwood forests. The project contains the largest intact floodplain forest in the Midwest. Acquisition of the Kopp property will contribute to the LCRSNA's goal of maintaining, restoring, and connecting blocks of floodplain forest and the continuum of habitats from uplands to lowlands.

The Kopp parcel contains a mosaic of habitat types including floodplain forest, dry prairie, upland brush, late-successional barrens, as well as 4,800 feet of shoreline habitat along the Chippewa River. A diversity of special concern bird species have been observed at the parcel including grasshopper sparrow, field sparrow, vesper sparrow, lark sparrow, blue-winged warbler, and American woodcock. The floodplain forest ecosystems will be maintained through passive management. The site has a mixture of prairie habitats including degraded yet restorable prairies as well as intact prairie remnants that contain native plant species such as hoary puccoon, flowering spurge, porcupine grass, june grass, and spiderwort. Invasive species, such as spotted knapweed, are present on the site. The existing dry prairie, upland brush, and late-successional barrens will be restored and maintained using a combination of habitat management practices including mowing and prescribed burning.

The Kopp parcel offers a variety of unique public use opportunities including hunting, fishing, trapping, birding, and hiking. Acquisition of the Kopp parcel will significantly improve public access opportunities around the core block of DNR ownership in the LCRSNA-Powell Lake area, which currently consists of approximately 430 acres. The Kopp parcel shares a boundary with approximately 3,700 feet of Fuller Road (which contains a recently constructed DNR parking lot on the Dunn County side), providing much needed walk-in access opportunities to the LCRSNA parcels in Eau Claire County.

Purchase of the Kopp property will fill in an ownership gap and provide continuity with land management efforts on adjacent properties. Ownership would increase recreational opportunities by simplifying public access to other existing Department owned properties by allowing additional walk-in opportunities from Fuller Road. Acquisition may allow for the value of the property to be used as match to help leverage NAWCA grant funding for potential habitat work and/or future acquisitions within the LCRSNA project area.

3. LAND MANAGEMENT:

Since its inception in 2002, the LCRSNA has experienced an outpouring of local support due to the area's recreational assets and ecological significance. Numerous conservation groups, including the Lower Chippewa River Alliance, Dunn County Fish and Game Association, Durand Sportsman's Club, Rock Falls Sportsman's Club, Arkansaw Fur, Fish, and Game Club, Downsville Sportsman's Club, and The Prairie Enthusiasts have all provided support through various donations of money, labor, and supplies. Funding for projects throughout the LCRSNA have included Federal grants through the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), State Wildlife Grants (SWG), and the North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA).

In addition, The Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin has supported management on the Lower Chippewa River by administering the Lower Chippewa River Basin Conservation Endowment, a fund established by the Dunn County Fish and Game Association for conservation and protection of public lands lying within the Lower Chippewa River Basin, with a focus on the LCRSNA. The Foundation has also administered grants for LCRSNA management through the Xcel Energy Foundation and has conducted numerous fund-raisers dedicated specifically to the LCRSNA. Additional sources of support have come through the WI DNR's Turkey Stamp program, as well as revenue generated from sharecrop activity and timber harvest on the SNA itself. The diverse funding opportunities, along with a very enthusiastic group of local conservation organizations have been critical to the successful management of the LCRSNA.

This past support has made it possible to maintain the LTE staffing level necessary to restore, manage, and maintain the scattered properties that have been acquired within the SNA boundary. Additional volunteer work-days from partner groups have also occurred and will be critical to the long term control of the growing problem with invasive vegetation on these properties. Continued financial support through State and Federal grants will also be necessary to maintain the staffing levels necessary to manage these sites. With this type of support, the LCRSNA will remain an ecological gem for generations to come.

The floodplain forest ecosystems will be maintained through passive management. Invasive species, such as spotted knapweed, are present on the site. The existing dry prairie, upland brush, and late-successional barrens will be restored and maintained using a combination of habitat management practices including mowing and prescribed burning.

The Kopp property is slated to be used a match for an upcoming large NAWCA grant that will provide up to \$1 million for further acquisition and additional habitat management activities on the LCRSNA.

4. AGRICULTURAL LAND MANAGEMENT:

The parcel includes approximately 47.2 acres of land classified as G4 tillable crop production land; however, of that total acreage, 26.2 acres of agricultural land is currently being farmed under a rental agreement with a tenant operator. The lease is a year to year agreement and the Department will continue the leasing arrangement through 2015.

According to the original landowner, the site has never contained additional cropland production areas beyond the current acreage. However, the landowner has indicated that the gravel quarry area was formerly cattle pasture prior to mineral extraction.

No irrigation is present on any of the cropland. Many of the agricultural fields are impacted by spring floodwater which limits timely cultivating and planting. According to the Eau Claire County Comprehensive Plan, the entire acreage of the Kopp parcel's cropland is classified as "Natural Resource Protection." According to the Dunn County Comprehensive Plan, the entire acreage of the Kopp parcel's cropland is classified as "Public" for Preferred Land Use.

Of the 26.2 acres that are currently being cropped, soil types range from loam to sandy loam to alluvial sand. All of the cropland soils are classified as well-drained with a high capacity to transmit water. Land capability classifications for these soil types are summarized in Table 1 below.

Class	Soil	Acres	Description
2w	Dunbot fine sandy loam	8.5	Some limitations that reduce the choice of plants or require moderate conservation practices.
3w	Caryville loam	13.6	Severe limitations that reduce the choice of plants or require special conservation practices.
4w	Scotah loamy fine sand	0.8	Very severe limitations that restrict the choice of plants or require very careful management.
7s	Alluvial land, sandy	3.3	Very sever limitations that make them unsuited for cultivation
Total acres		26.2	

Table 1. Land capability classifications for the Kopp Property.

5. FINANCING:

State Stewardship bond funds are anticipated:

Funds allotted to program:

\$700,000

Balance after proposed transaction:

\$0

6. ACQUISITION STATUS OF THE LOWER Chippewa River STATE NATURAL AREA:

Established: 2000

Acres Purchased to Date: 1,867.59

Acquisition Goal: 15,470.00

Percent Complete: 12.07 %

Cost to Date: \$3,259,621.14

7. APPRAISAL I:

Appraiser: Gary Holt, JC Norby & Associates

Valuation Date: April 01, 2014

Appraised Value: \$535,000

Highest and Best Use: Recreation with possible future gravel mining

Allocation of Values:

a. land: 299.69 acres @ \$1,870.00 per acre: \$560,000 less \$25,000 for site remediation = \$535,000

b. market data approach used, 4 comparable sales cited

c. adjusted value range: \$1,822.00 - \$2,027.00

Appraisal Review:

Peter Wolter

Date: 6/24/2014

APPRAISAL II:

Appraiser: William Steigerwaldt, Compass Land Consultants

Valuation Date: April 6, 2014

Appraised Value: \$603,000

Highest and Best Use: Recreation and investment

Allocation of Values:

a. land: 299.69 acres @ \$2,100.00 per acre: \$628,000 less \$25,000 for site remediation = \$603,000

b. market data approach used, 6 comparable sales cited

c. adjusted value range: \$1,860.00 - \$2,327.00 per acre

Appraisal Review:

Peter Wolter

Date: 6/24/2014

REVIEWER'S OPINION OF VALUE:

Due to some issues/deficiencies found in the reports, the Review Appraiser used the best four sales from both reports and formed an Opinion of Value.

Appraiser: Peter Wolter

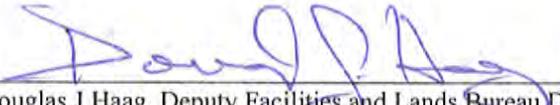
Valuation Date: April 6, 2014

Appraised Value: \$572,000

Highest and Best Use: Recreation/investment

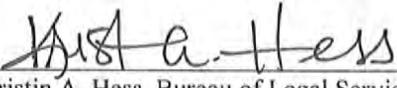
Reviewer's Comments: I have constructed a reviewer's opinion of value for the subject property and am predominantly relying on the Steigerwaldt report. I have selected what I consider to be the best four sales out of both appraisals to form my reviewer's opinion of value. These four sales were all out of the Compass Land Consultants' appraisal; however, two of these sales were also used in the Gary Holt appraisal. The sales that were dropped from the Holt appraisal were dropped because one of them did not have much water associated with it, except for two ponds. The second sale was dropped because it was a Government purchase. The sale that was dropped from the Steigerwaldt report was dropped because it was not local (Adams County) and it was located on a superior water body.

RECOMMENDED:



Douglas J Haag, Deputy Facilities and Lands Bureau Director

9-25-14
Date



Kristin A. Hess, Bureau of Legal Services

9/25/14
Date

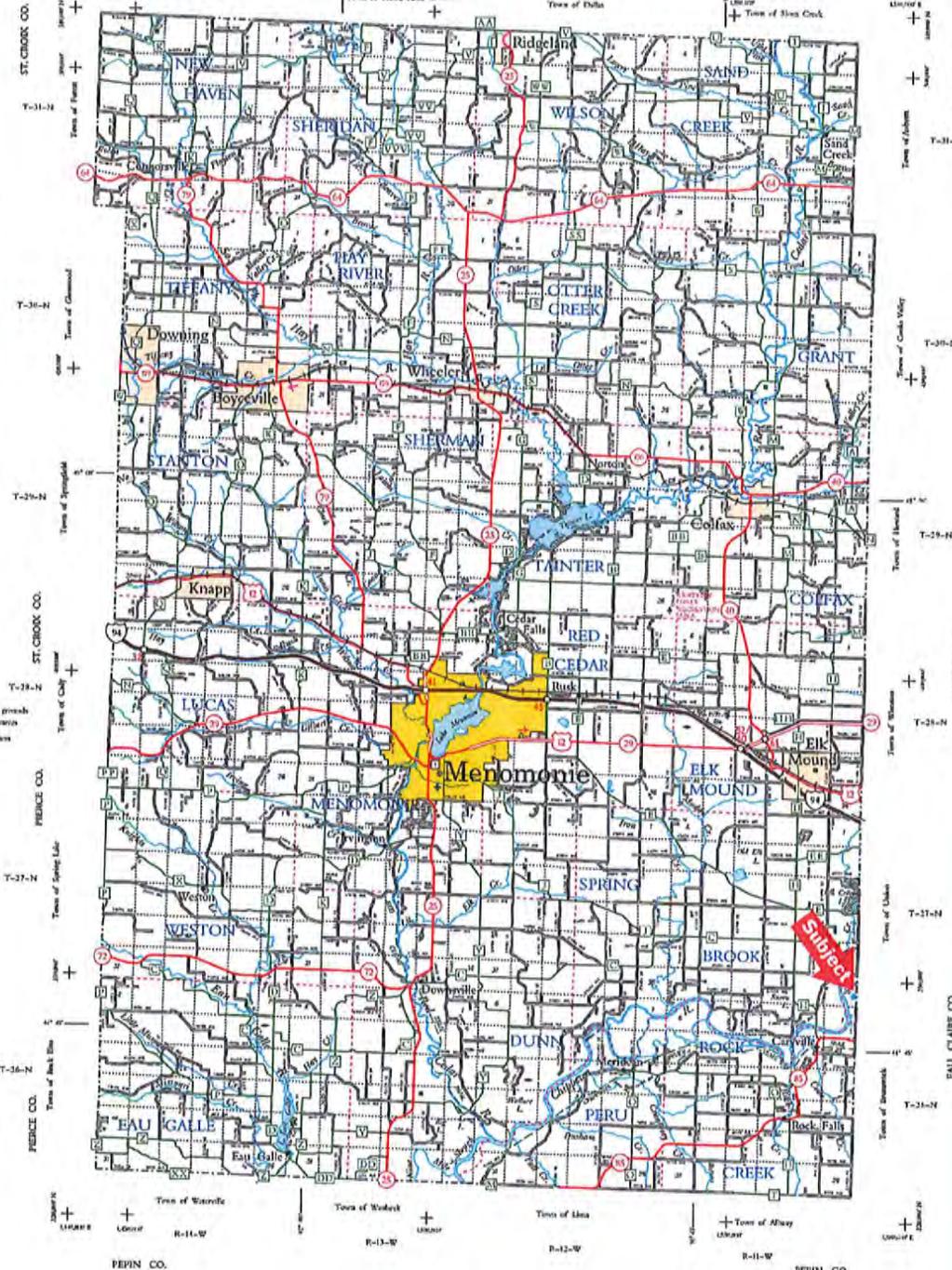


Kurt Thiede, Land Division Administrator

9/29/14
Date

- LEGEND**
- Feetway
 - Highway District
 - U.S. or State Hwy
 - County Trunk Hwy
 - Town Road
 - Fence
 - Railroad
 - State Trail
 - Interchange
 - Highway Square
 - Interstate Highway No.
 - U.S. Highway No.
 - State Highway No.
 - County Highway Letter
 - State Boundary
 - County Boundary
 - Old Town Boundary
 - Section Line
 - Dun
 - Hospital
 - School
 - Airport
 - County Seat
 - Unincorporated Village
 - Fish Hatchery
 - Game Farm
 - Public House or Pub. Gdn.
 - Public Camp & Pleas. Gdn.
 - Ranger Station
 - State Park
 - County Park with Facilities
 - Whites Park
 - Red Area - Modern Facilities
 - Way - Public Facilities
 - University of Wisconsin - Area

For boundaries of public hearing and filing process please contact the Department of Natural Resources
 † Grid based on the true plane coordinate system used here and the NAD 27



DUNN CO.
 DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
 STATE OFFICE BUILDING
 Madison, Wisconsin
 SCALE 1" = 1 MILE
 Created by
 JAN 2014
 Not exempt from USAGIS Quablog
 1830th Series

SECTION NUMBERING OF A TOWNSHIP

6	3	4	3	2	1
7	2	3	2	1	0
8	1	2	1	0	0
9	0	1	0	0	0
10	0	0	0	0	0
11	0	0	0	0	0
12	0	0	0	0	0
13	0	0	0	0	0
14	0	0	0	0	0
15	0	0	0	0	0
16	0	0	0	0	0
17	0	0	0	0	0
18	0	0	0	0	0
19	0	0	0	0	0
20	0	0	0	0	0

MILES OF HIGHWAY as of Dec. 31, 2013

STATE 26
 COUNTY 58
 TOWN ROADS 101
 OTHER ROADS 8
 TOTAL TOWN COUNTY 193

Grid Area (2013 count) - 617 sq. mi.
 Population (2010 Census) - 18,539
 County Seat - Menomonee



Frank Kopp - Fee

Lower Chippewa River State Natural Area

NA 20119

T27N, R11W, Sec 36 & T27N, R10W, Sec 31 & T26N, R10W, Sec 6

Town of Rock Creek & Brunswick

Dunn & Eau Claire County

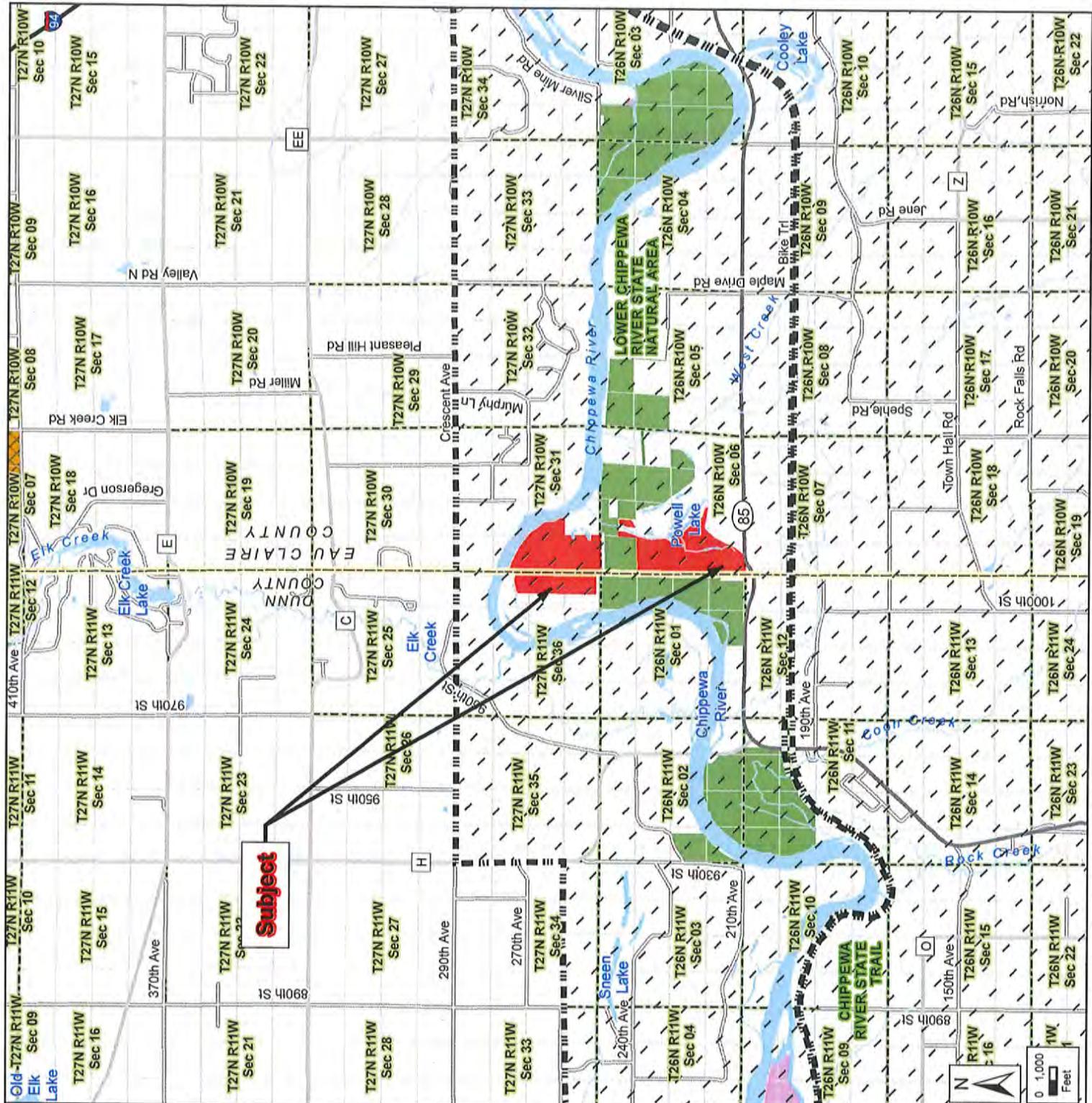
Subject

- DNR Fee Title
- DNR Easement
- DNR Project Boundary
- Public Hunting Grounds/ Voluntary Public Access
- Recreation Trail
- PLS Section Line
- QQ Section Boundary
- NRCS - WRP (Wetland Reserve Program - Closed to public access)

Regional View

Location of Property

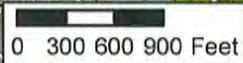
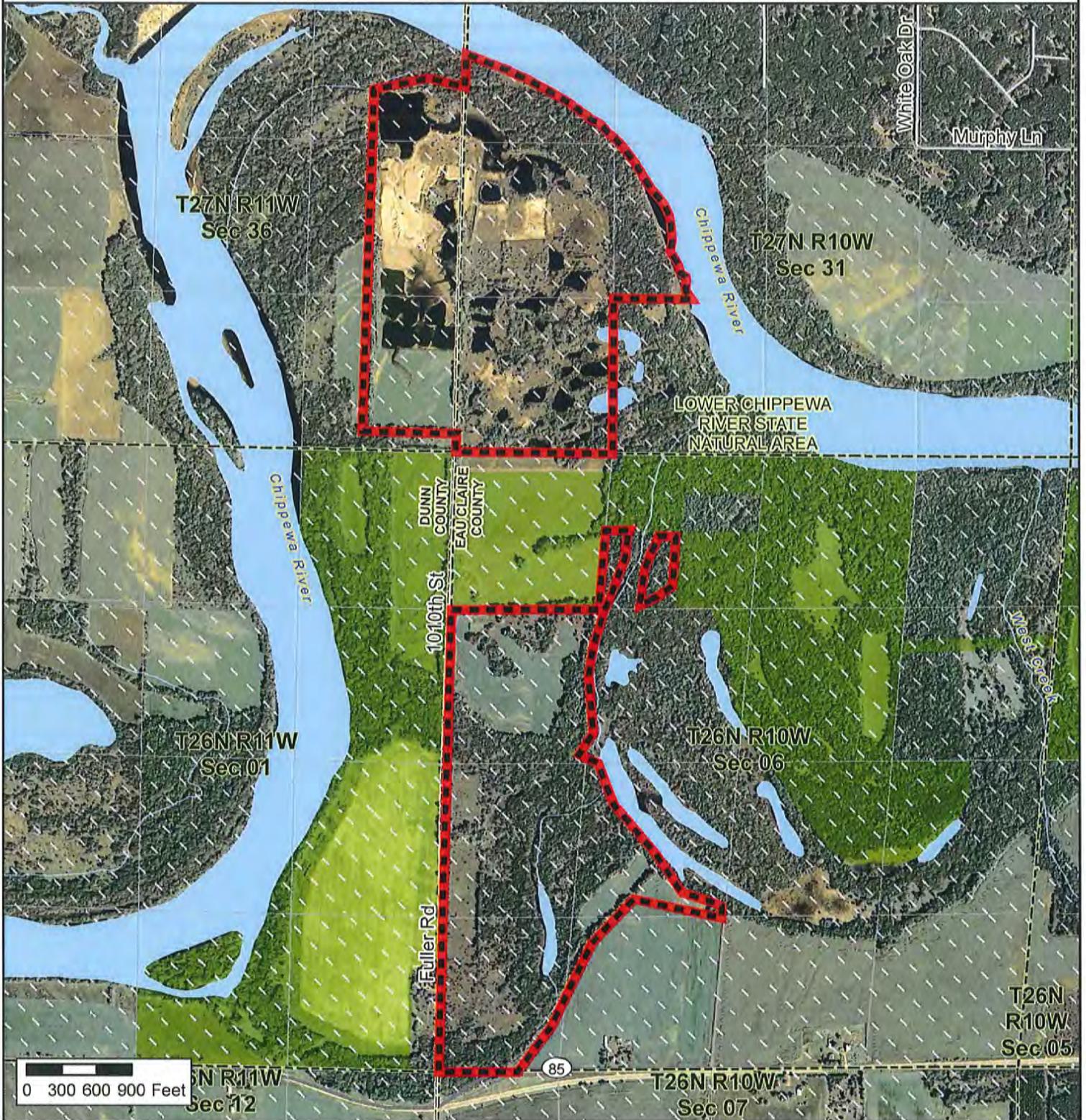
WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
Bureau of Facilities of Lands
Map Created: Sep 18, 2014 Km



The data shown on this map have been obtained from various sources, and are of varying age, reliability and resolution. This map is not intended to be used for navigation, nor is this map an authoritative source of information about legal land ownership or public access. Users of this map should confirm the ownership of land through other means in order to avoid trespassing. No warranty, expressed or implied, is made regarding accuracy, completeness, or legality of the information depicted on this map.

Frank Kopp - Fee

T27N, R11W, Sec 36 & T27N, R10W, Sec 31 & T26N, R10W, Sec 6
 Town of Rock Creek & Brunswick, Dunn & Eau Claire County



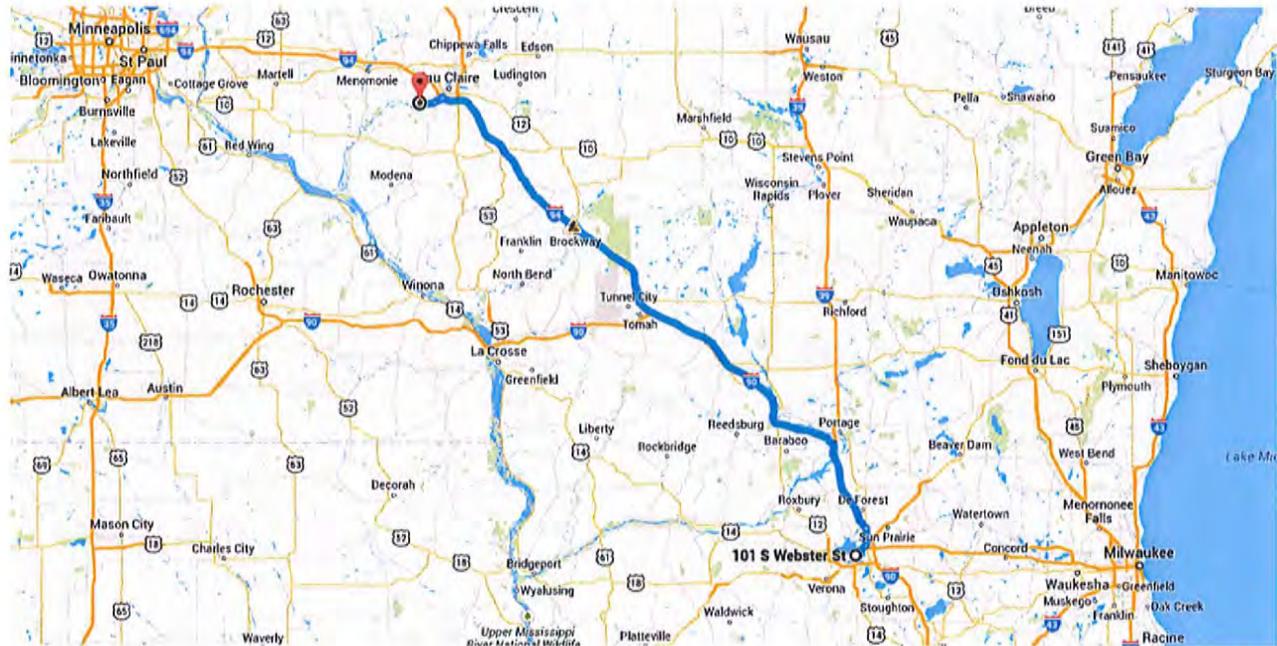
<p>Lower Chippewa River State Natural Area</p>  Subject	 DNR Fee Title Land	 QQ Section Lines	  <p>Sep 18, 2014 kmh Real Estate Section Bureau of Facilities and Lands</p>
	 DNR Project Boundary		
	 Section Line		

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Drive 185 miles, 2 h 52 min

Directions from 101 S Webster St to 1010th Street, Eau Claire, WI

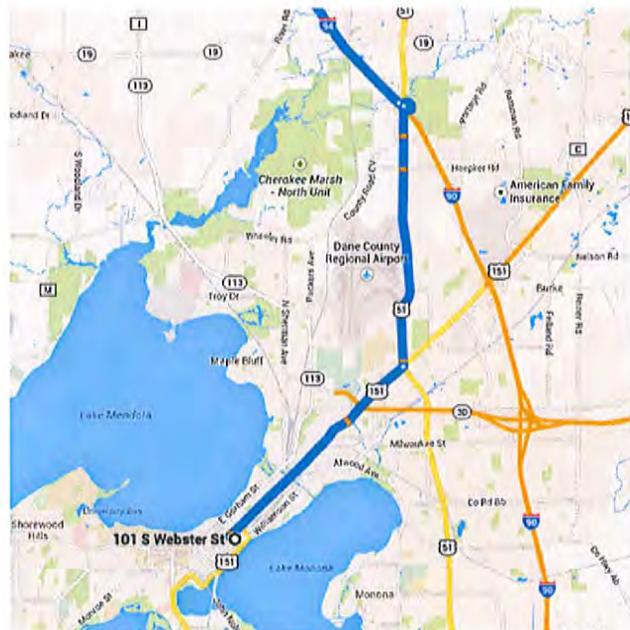


○ 101 S Webster St
Madison, WI 53703

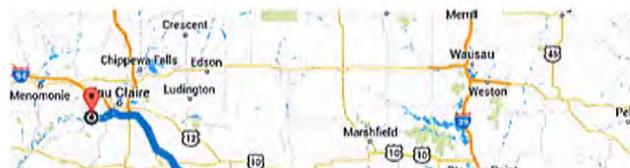
Get on I-39 N/I-90 W/I-94 W in Burke from E Washington Ave and US-51 N

9.1 mi / 15 min

- ↑** 1. Head northwest on S Webster St toward E Main St
0.1 mi
- ↗** 2. Take the 2nd right onto E Washington Ave
4.1 mi
- ↶** 3. Turn left onto US-51 N/N Stoughton Rd
Continue to follow US-51 N
4.4 mi
- ⬆** 4. Take the ramp onto I-39 N/I-90 W/I-94 W
0.5 mi



Follow I-94 W to WI-37 S/Wisconsin Trunk 37 S in Eau Claire. Take exit 65 from I-94 W



169 mi / 2 h 28 min

- 5. Merge onto I-39 N/I-90 W/I-94 W
- Continue to follow I-94 W

168 mi

- 6. Take exit 65 for Wisconsin 37 S

0.3 mi



Follow WI-37 S/Wisconsin Trunk 37 S and Wisconsin Trunk 85 W to Fuller Rd in Brunswick

6.9 mi / 8 min

- 7. Turn left onto WI-37 S/Wisconsin Trunk 37 S

2.6 mi

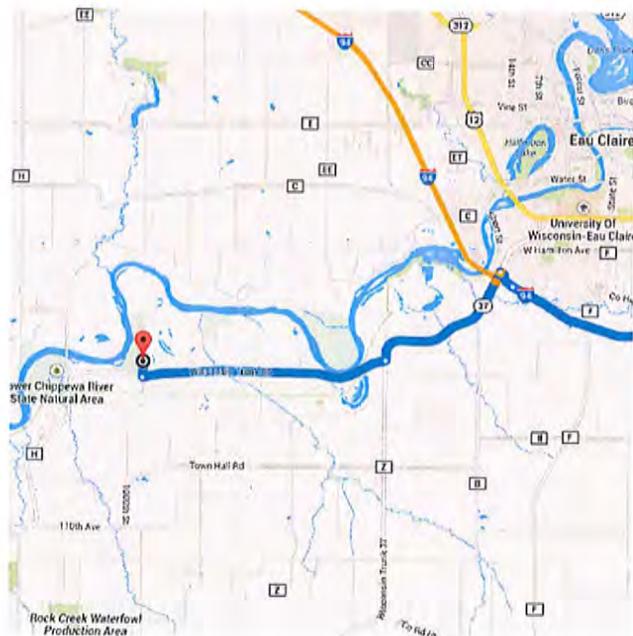
- 8. Turn right onto Wisconsin Trunk 85 W

4.0 mi

- 9. Turn right onto Fuller Rd

Destination will be on the right

0.3 mi



1010th Street, Eau Claire, WI

These directions are for planning purposes only. You may find that construction projects, traffic, weather, or other events may cause conditions to differ from the map results, and you should plan your route accordingly. You must obey all signs or notices regarding your route.

Map data ©2014 Google