Form 1100-1
Rev. 5-91

NATURAL RESOURCES BOARD AGENDA ITEM

Item No. 3.C.3

SUBJECT: LAND ACQUISITION – CHIPPEWA RIVER STATE TRAIL – CHIPPEWA COUNTY

FOR: SEPTEMBER 2008 BOARD MEETING

TO BE PRESENTED BY: Richard Steffes

SUMMARY: The Department has obtained an agreement to purchase 42.2 acres of land from the Canadian National Railroad for $381,000 for the Chippewa River State Trail in Chippewa County. The item is being submitted because the purchase price exceeds $150,000.

This abandoned rail corridor is an important proposed purchase because it will mostly complete the state trail between Eau Claire and Chippewa Falls in Chippewa County. The proposed rail corridor segment extends from the northerly right-of-way of the Union Pacific Railroad Company in the Village of Lake Hallie in Chippewa County to the easterly right-of-way of the Wisconsin Highway 124 bridge in the City of Chippewa Falls.

Over the past 20 years, the Department of Natural Resources has been working on establishing a 70-mile long Chippewa Valley State Trail system by combining four existing state rail-trail corridors, namely, the Old Abe State Trail from Cornell to Chippewa Falls, the gap from the northeast corner of Chippewa Falls to Eau Claire, the Chippewa River State Trail, through the City of Eau Claire southwesterly to the Red Cedar Junction, and the Red Cedar State Park Trail, which goes from the Red Cedar Junction north to the City of Menomonie. All four segments were individually authorized for acquisition by the Natural Resources Board over the past 20 years. The proposed acquisition will largely complete the last link in this 70-mile trail system. It is recognized that the cities of Chippewa Falls and Eau Claire and the Village of Hallie contributed to vital connections as well as state purchases.

In addition to an important link for area recreational trails, the purchase contributes to a bicycle commuter link between Chippewa Falls and Eau Claire.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Board approve the purchase of 42.2 acres of land for $381,000 for the Chippewa River State Trail in Chippewa County.

LIST OF ATTACHED MATERIALS:

No ☒	Fiscal Estimate Required	Yes ☐ Attached
No ☒	Environmental Assessment of Impact Statement Required	Yes ☐ Attached
No ☐	Background Memo	Yes ☒ Attached

APPROVED:

R E Steffes — 8-11-08
Real Estate Director, Richard E. Steffes - LF/6 — Date

Administrator, Laurie Osterndorf - AD/8 — Date

Secretary, Matthew J. Frank - AD/8 — 8/08/08 Date

cc: S. Miller – LF/6
R. Steffes – LF/6
L. Ross – AD/8
D. Schuller, PR/6
S. Humrickhouse – WCR/Eau Claire

CORRESPONDENCE/MEMORANDUM

State of Wisconsin

DATE: September 5, 2008 FILE REF: PR 40005 *

TO: Governor Doyle

FROM: Matthew J. Frank

SUBJECT: Proposed Land Acquisition, Canadian National Railroad Tract, File # PR 40005, Approval is Requested by October 30, 2008

1. PARCEL DESCRIPTION:

Chippewa River State Trail
Chippewa County

Grantor:

Canadian National Railroad
c/o Alice O'Donnell
57 Ogden Avenue
Clarendon Hills, IL 60514

Acres: 42.2
Price: $381,000
Appraised Value: $381,000
Interest: Purchase in fee title
Improvements: Land improvements associated with railroad corridor

Location: The property is an abandoned railroad corridor that extends from Eau Claire to Chippewa Falls in Chippewa County.

Land Description: The subject land is an abandoned rail corridor 2.85 miles in length.
Zoning: Combination of commercial/industrial and residential as well as floodplain near the river.
Present Use: Abandoned rail corridor.
Proposed Use: Recreational trail.
Tenure: Acquired in the nineteenth century for rail purposes. Canadian National's ownership dates back about 10 years.
Stewardship Land Access: This land will be developed as a recreational trail and be open for biking, hiking and cross-country skiing. The property is a narrow corridor in an urban setting, not suitable for hunting.

2. JUSTIFICATION:

The Department proposes to acquire an abandoned railroad corridor 2.85 miles in length and 42.2 acres in size from the Canadian National Railroad Company. This property is very important because it will largely complete the State Trail between Eau Claire and Chippewa Falls in Chippewa County. The proposed rail corridor segment extends from the northerly right-of-way of the Union Pacific Railroad Company in the Village of Lake Hallie in Chippewa County to the easterly right-of-way of the Wisconsin Highway 124 Bridge in the City of Chippewa Falls. The rail corridor travels from an area of commercial use along the south end through areas of residential use, to rural/open areas, then to a commercial/residential mix in the "Frenchtown" area on the north end. The rail corridor is no longer functioning as an active line and the rails and ties have been removed along the entire grade.

Over the past 20 years the Department of Natural Resources has been working on establishing a 70-mile long Chippewa Valley State Recreation Trail System by combining four existing state rail-trail corridors, namely, the Old Abe State Trail from Cornell to Chippewa Falls, the gap from the northeast corner of Chippewa Falls to Eau Claire, the Chippewa River Trail through the City of Eau Claire southwesterly to the Red Cedar Junction, and the Red Cedar State Park Trail, which goes from the Red Cedar Junction north

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to the City of Menomonie. All four segments were individually authorized for acquisition by the Natural Resources Board over the past 20 years. The proposed acquisition will largely complete the last link in this 70-mile trail system. The Village of Hallie and the cities of Eau Claire and Chippewa Falls have contributed to important trail connections as well.

The proposed acquisition will be utilized as an Alternative Mode of Transportation. It will allow bicyclists and hikers to safely make the 70-mile journey from Cornell to Menomonie along some of the most beautiful riverine settings in the nation. Residents of the Chippewa Valley will benefit from this acquisition by allowing them to safely commute to work by bicycle. The finished trail will add to the already great quality of life in the Chippewa Valley.

Acquisition will also enhance tourism in the Chippewa Valley by allowing tourists accessibility to the Chippewa Valley's attractions and services, and to the City of Chippewa Falls whose community is currently in a downtown riverfront renovation project. The Department's master plan encompasses and supports the proposed acquisition corridor. Acquiring this tract will help the Department consolidate, integrate and promote better coordination of the planning, development, budgeting, operations and management of these trail segments by addressing common issues on a regionally significant trail system. Management of the trail corridor will include local partnerships taking the lead role in development, operations and maintenance.

The subject property will be managed via a Memorandum of Understanding between the Department of Natural Resources, Village of Lake Hallie and the City of Chippewa Falls. This is similar to the Old Abe Trail that is operated and managed by Chippewa County. All municipalities are in total support of the proposed trail corridor project. The Department's State Trails Network Plan focuses on abandoned rail corridors such as the proposed acquisition. The plan recognizes the important role that trails developed by local units of government such as the Village of Lake Hallie and the City of Chippewa Falls serve as critical links to places where people live, natural resource features, and public lands.

The Department recommends this acquisition to complete the Chippewa River Trail System, to provide additional recreation opportunities and a commuter link between Chippewa Falls and Eau Claire and to accomplish the objectives of the State Trail Network Plan.

3. FINANCING:

State Stewardship bond funds are anticipated:

Funds allotted to program:	Balance after proposed transaction:
$5,864,642	$968,580

4. ACQUISITION STATUS OF THE CHIPPEWA RIVER STATE TRAIL:

Established: 1990
Acres Purchased to Date: 334.76
Acquisition Goal: 350.00
Percent Complete: 95.65
Cost to Date: $32,689.00

5. APPRAISAL:

Appraiser: Michael Augustyn – (Private Appraiser)
Valuation Date: April 2, 2008
Appraised Value: $381,000.00
Highest and Best Use: Residential/Commercial/Industrial

Allocation of Values:

land: 42.2 acres @ $9,028.44 per acre: $381,000.00

Appraisal Review: Doug Haag

Comment: The appraiser researched local sales and found that the more commercial area near Canal Street influenced market value.

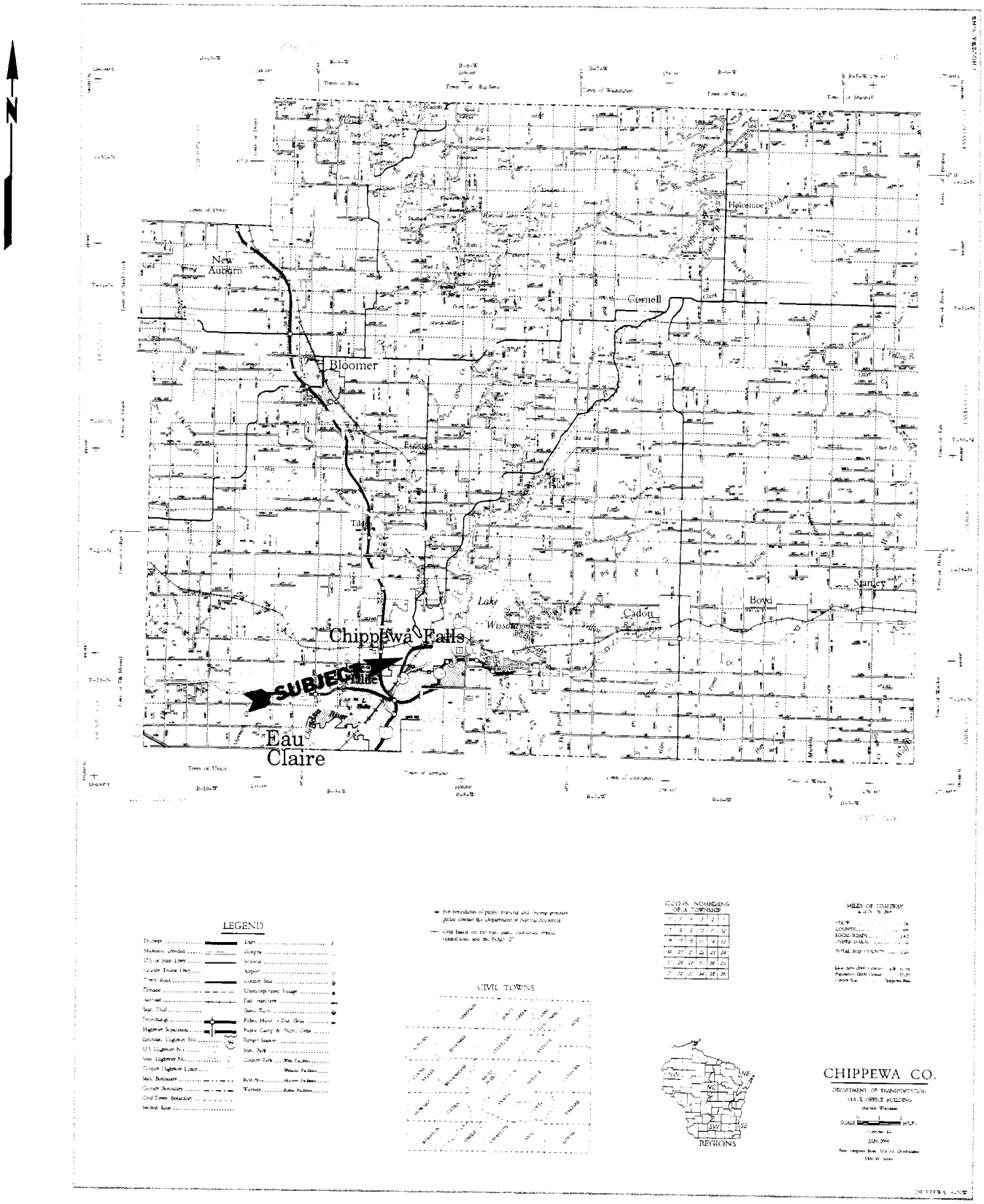
RECOMMENDED:

Richard E. Steffes — Date

Joseph Wm. Renville
Bureau of Legal Services — Date 8/27/08

Laurie Osterndorf (SOA)
Laurie Osterndorf — Date 9/5/08

RES: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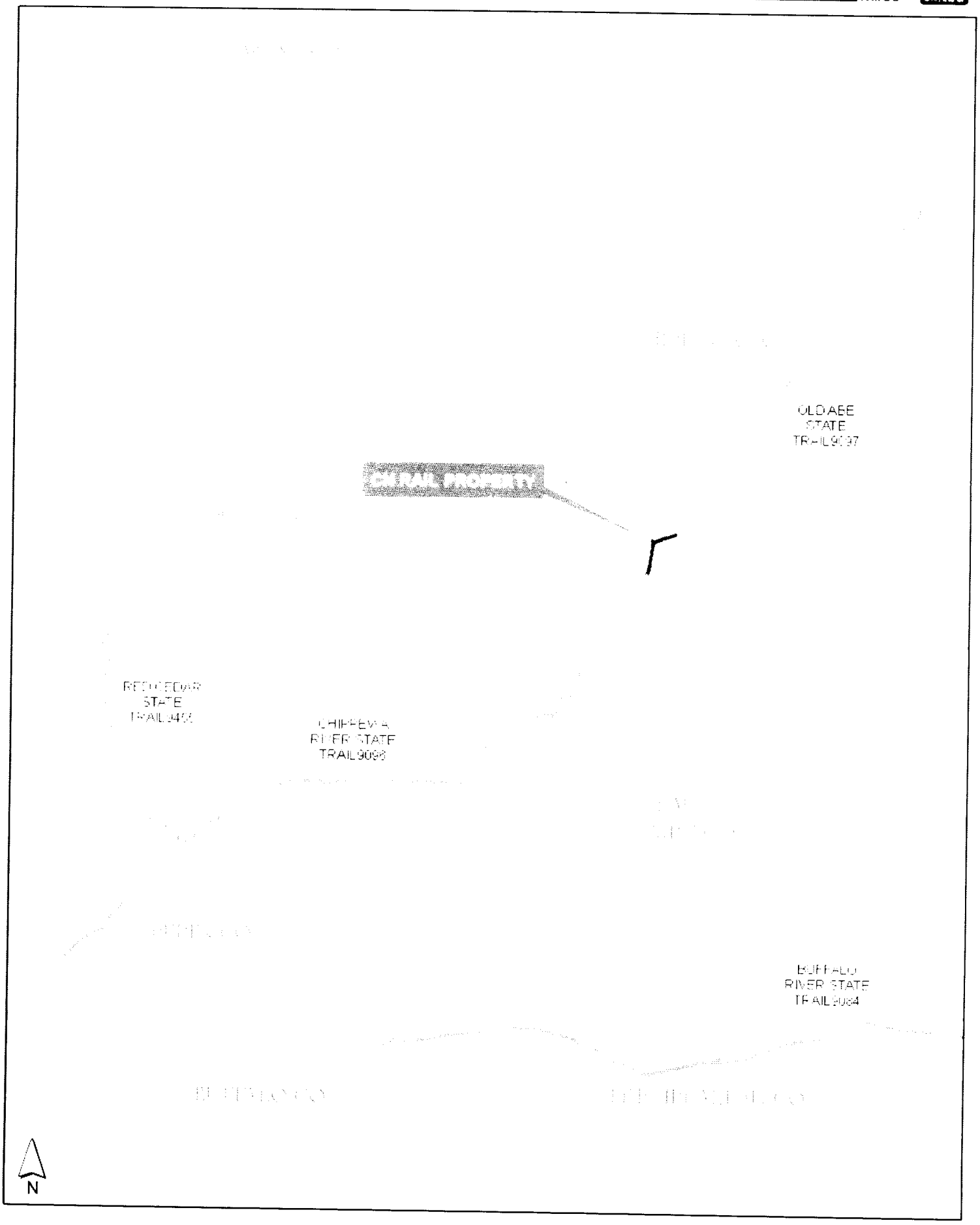

Canadian National RR Property

Chippewa River State Trail

- Subject Property
- WDNR Owned
- WNDR Eased
- WDNR Leased
- Ice Age Trail
- Project Boundary

0 1 2 Miles

The DNR Managed Lands represent the boundaries of lands managed by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. The Wisconsin DNR manages these lands through ownership, easement or leasemnt. This data set is a spatial representation of the Oracle Land Records System maintained by the DNR Bureau of Facilities and Lands (LF) and may include errors and omissions. This data should not be interpreted as a legal representation of legal ownership boundaries.

This data set does not differentiate between lands that are open or closed to the public for hunting and/or general public access. Some lands represented in this data set may not be open to the general public, or may have specific limitations or restrictions on public use. This data set is not intended for use as a land management tool, this a listing of all DNR real estate transactions that have occurred on these lands over time.

For information about the actual management, including public use and public access of the lands, contact the nearest DNR Regional office. Contact information for DNR Regional Offices and Service Centers is provided on the following internet site:

http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/caer/cs/sen_decenter/locations.htm

Updates to this data set are ongoing, and will be incorporated into future versions when available.

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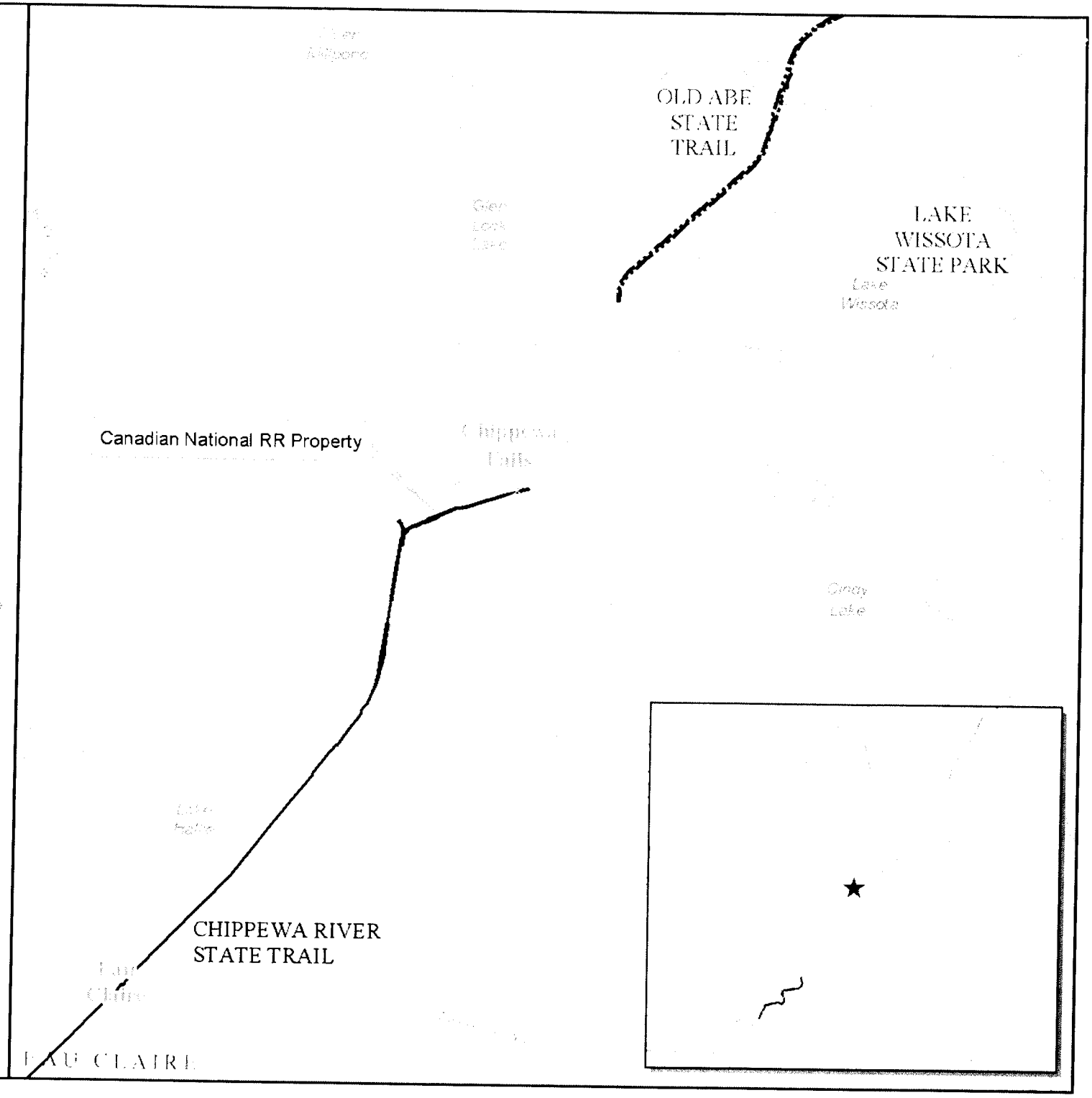
DEPT. OF NATURAL RESOURCES

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