Form 1100-1
Rev. 5-91

NATURAL RESOURCES BOARD AGENDA ITEM

Item No. 3.B.15

SUBJECT: LAND ACQUISITION, CENTRAL WISCONSIN GRASSLANDS CONSERVATION AREA - PORTAGE COUNTY

FOR: DECEMBER BOARD MEETING

TO BE PRESENTED BY: Richard Steffes

SUMMARY: The Department has obtained an option to purchase 78.96 acres of land from the Portage County Solid Waste Department for $150,000 for the Central Wisconsin Grasslands Conservation Area in Portage County. The item is being submitted because the landowner is conveying for $15,800 less than the appraised value of $165,800.

The Department proposed purchase of this parcel to the Natural Resource Board in September of 2005. At the time, the land was valued at $163,800 and the Board deferred the matter, directing the department to re-negotiate a lower price. Since that time, the Portage County Solid Waste Department became a for-profit entity. The price is now at the lower cost of $150,000.

The tract is located in the Township of Carson in northwest Portage County, thirteen miles west of Stevens Point. The subject is all open grassland that has been heavily grazed in the past. This site was purchased by the Portage County Solid Waste Department in 2000 to use as a clay borrow site to excavate landfill-capping materials. The county completed a $50,000 engineering survey, a clay study and secured regulatory permits to develop the site. The county has removed some clay off the site. However, their need for further clay is limited. Department ownership of this land will provide opportunities for public recreation, allow for wildlife management, and protect the site from development incompatible with the goals of the project.

The property's location is ideal for wildlife management, as approximately 200 acres adjacent to the east are owned by the Department. To the north, the Department of Transportation currently owns approximately 120 adjacent acres that may be transferred to the Department in the near future. To the west, there are numerous acres entered into the Wetland Reserve Program. In addition to providing habitat for prairie chicken and various songbirds, this property would provide additional hunting and other recreational opportunities.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Board approve the purchase of 78.96 acres of land for $150,000 for the Central Wisconsin Grasslands Conservation Area.

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:

Real Estate Director, Richard E. Steffes - LF/6 — Date 10-18-07

Administrator, Laurie Osterndorf - AD/5 — Date 10/19/07

Secretary, Matthew J. Frank - AD/5 — Date 11/7/07

cc: S. Miller – LF/6
R. Steffes – LF/6
L. Ross – AD/5
T. Hauge – WM/6
S. Humrickhouse – WCR

CORRESPONDENCE/MEMORANDUM

State of Wisconsin

DATE: October 18, 2007

FILE REF: W-1636

TO: Governor Doyle

FROM: Matthew J. Frank

SUBJECT: Proposed Land Acquisition, Portage County Tract, File # W-1636, Option Expires December 16, 2007

1. PARCEL DESCRIPTION:

Central Wisconsin Grasslands Conservation Area
Portage County

Grantor:

Portage County Solid Waste Department
c/o Meleesa Johnson, Administrator
Solid Waste Department
600 Moore Road
Plover, WI 54467

Acres: 78.96
Price: $150,000
Appraised Value: $165,800
Interest: Purchase in fee.
Improvements: Old silo foundation (to be removed).

Location: The tract is located in the Township of Carson in northwest Portage County, thirteen miles west of Stevens Point, the county seat.

Land Description: The subject area is fairly level to gently sloping to the southeast.

Covertype Breakdown:

Type	Acreage
Grasslands	76.96
Building Site	2.0
TOTAL	78.96

Zoning: Agricultural Transition, minimum lot size of ten acres
Present Use: Clay borrow site/Recreational
Proposed Use: Wildlife Protection and Public Recreation
Tenure: 7 Years
Property Taxes: tax exempt
Option Date: September 17, 2007

2. JUSTIFICATION:

The Solid Waste Department of Portage County, a for-profit entity, has agreed to sell approximately 78.96 acres of their property to the state as an addition to the Central WI Grasslands Conservation Area (CWGCA) in Portage County. The tract is located in the Township of Carson in northwest Portage County, thirteen miles west of Stevens Point. The Department proposed purchase of this parcel to the Natural Resource Board, in September of 2005. At that time, the land was valued at $163,800 and the Board

Printed on Recycled Paper

deferred the matter directing the Department to negotiate a lower price. Since that time, the Portage County Solid Waste Department became a for-profit entity. The valuation is now at a lower cost of $150,000.

The subject is all open grassland that has been heavily grazed in the past. This site was purchased by the Portage County Solid Waste Department in 2000 to use as a clay borrow site to excavate landfill-capping materials. The county completed a $50,000 engineering survey, a clay study and secured regulatory permits to develop the site. The county has removed some clay off the site. However, their need for further clay is limited. Department ownership of this land will provide opportunities for public recreation, allow for wildlife management, and protect the site from development incompatible with the goals of the project.

The Central Wisconsin Grassland Conservation Area covers portions of six counties. It surrounds several smaller wildlife management projects, the Paul Olson Wildlife Area being one of them, as well as two fishery management project areas. The project area boundary was developed by determining the core range for historic and current prairie chicken populations, and the management goals are primarily for grasslands species such as the prairie chicken and various songbirds.

The Central Wisconsin Grasslands Conservation Area approved by the Natural Resources Board in October of 2004 seeks to protect up to 15,000 acres over the next ten years to meet the habitat needs of many rare and declining grassland species, most notably the Greater Prairie Chicken. The CWGCA represents one of the last opportunities in the state to manage grasslands at a landscape scale. Another goal of the project is to provide low impact outdoor recreation opportunities compatible with grassland management.

Due to changes within the County, it no longer needs this site for clay borrowing. Development of adequate grassland habitat on this property will provide added security for the chicken population in this area. According to a 2004 survey, there are three to four active prairie chicken booming grounds (breeding display sites) within one mile of the subject property. The property's location is ideal for wildlife management as approximately 200 acres adjacent to the east are owned by the Department. To the north, the Department of Transportation currently owns approximately 120 adjacent acres that may be transferred to the Department in the near future. To the west, there are numerous acres entered into the Wetland Reserve Program. In addition to providing habitat for prairie chicken and various songbirds, this property would provide additional hunting and other recreational opportunities.

The Department recommends purchase of the Portage County Solid Waste Department property for the Paul Olson Wildlife Area and surrounding Central Wisconsin Grasslands Conservation area. This purchase will allow for wildlife management, create public hunting and other recreational activities, protect grassland species' habitat, and protect the natural values of the property from the impacts of development incompatible with the goals of the project.

3. FINANCING:

State Stewardship bond funds are anticipated:

Funds allotted to program:	Balance after proposed transaction:
$7,124,000	$169,638

4. ACQUISITION STATUS OF THE CENTRAL WISCONSIN GRASSLAND CONSERVATION AREA:

Established: 2005
Acres Purchased to Date: 759.62
Acquisition Goal: 15,000 Acres
Percent Complete: 5.1%
Cost to Date: $1,118,800

5. APPRAISAL:

Appraiser: Rodney Bush (Private Appraiser)
Valuation Date: July 5, 2007
Appraised Value: $165,800
Highest and Best Use: Clay Borrow Site, Agriculture and Recreation

Allocation of Values:

a. land: 78.96 acres @ $2,100 per acre: $165,800 (Rounded)
b. market data approach used, four comparable sales cited
c. adjusted value range: $2,063 to $3,465 per acre

Appraisal Review: Phil Lepinski — July 26, 2007

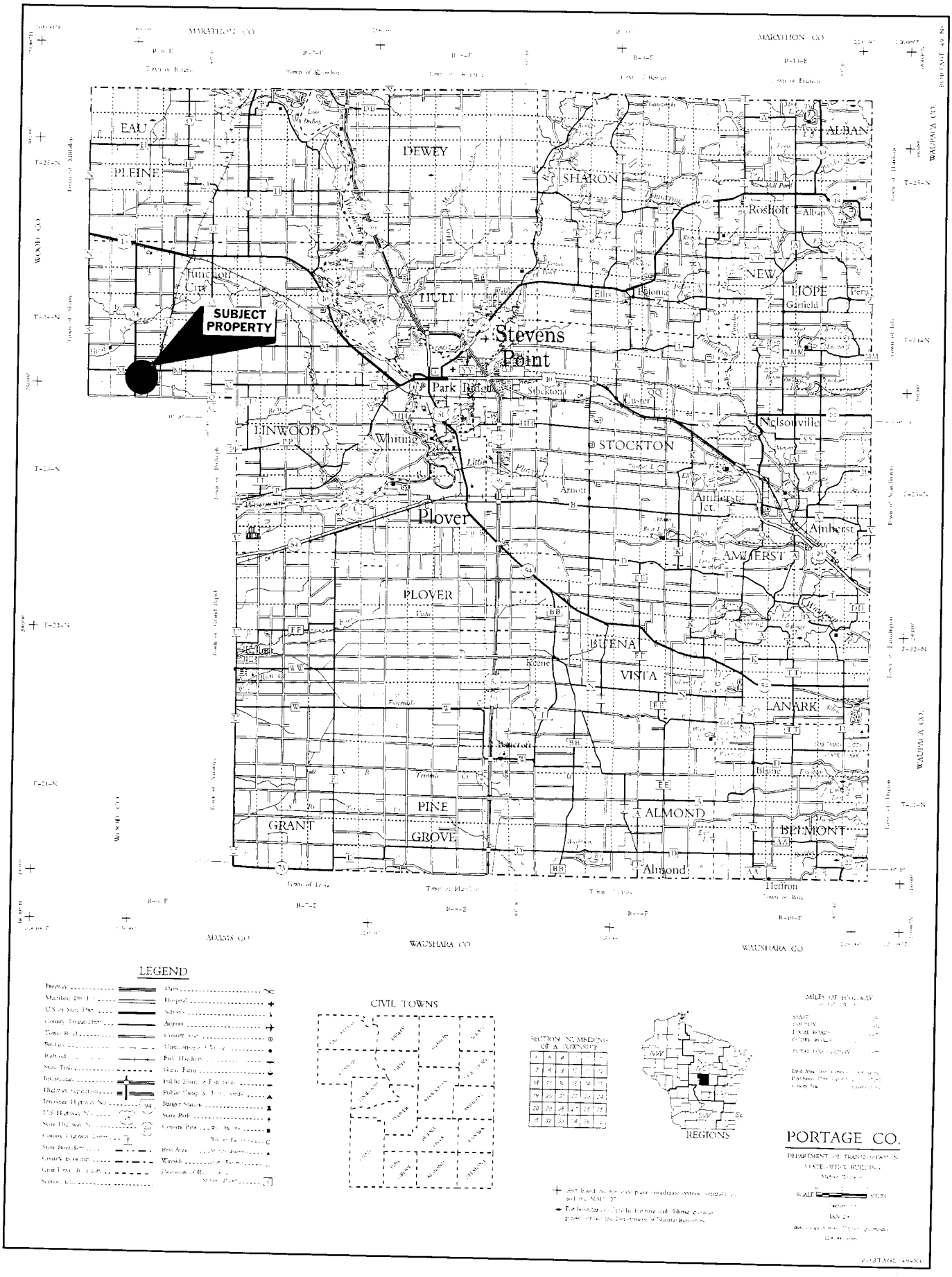
RECOMMENDED:

Richard E. Steffes — Date

Joseph Wm. Renville
Bureau of Legal Services — Date 10/19/07

Laurie Osterndorf — Date 10/19/07

RES:dv


SUBJECT PROPERTY
Stevens Point
Plover
EAU PLEINE
DEWEY
SHARON
ALBAN
Rosholt
NEW HOPE
Junction City
HULL
Park Ridge
Stockton
Custer
Nelsonville
LINWOOD
Whiting
STOCKTON
Amherst Jct.
Amherst
AMHERST
PLOVER
BUENA VISTA
Keene
LANARK
Bancroft
Blaine
PINE GROVE
GRANT
ALMOND
BELMONT
Almond
Heffron
MARATHON CO
WAUPACA CO
WOOD CO
ADAMS CO
WAUSHARA CO
LEGEND
CIVIL TOWNS
SECTION NUMBERING OF A TOWNSHIP
REGIONS
MILES OF HIGHWAY
PORTAGE CO.
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
STATE OFFICE BUILDING

Due to copyright laws, this page is not available online.

Please contact laurie.ross@wisconsin.gov for a hard copy of this document.

Portage County Property

Paul Olson Wildlife Area

Subject Property

WDNR Owned

WNDR Eased

WDNR Leased

Ice Age Trail

Project Boundary

Open Water

Miles

0 0.375 0.75

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 lease rights. 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/or omissions. The data should not be interpreted as a legal representation of legal ownership boundaries.

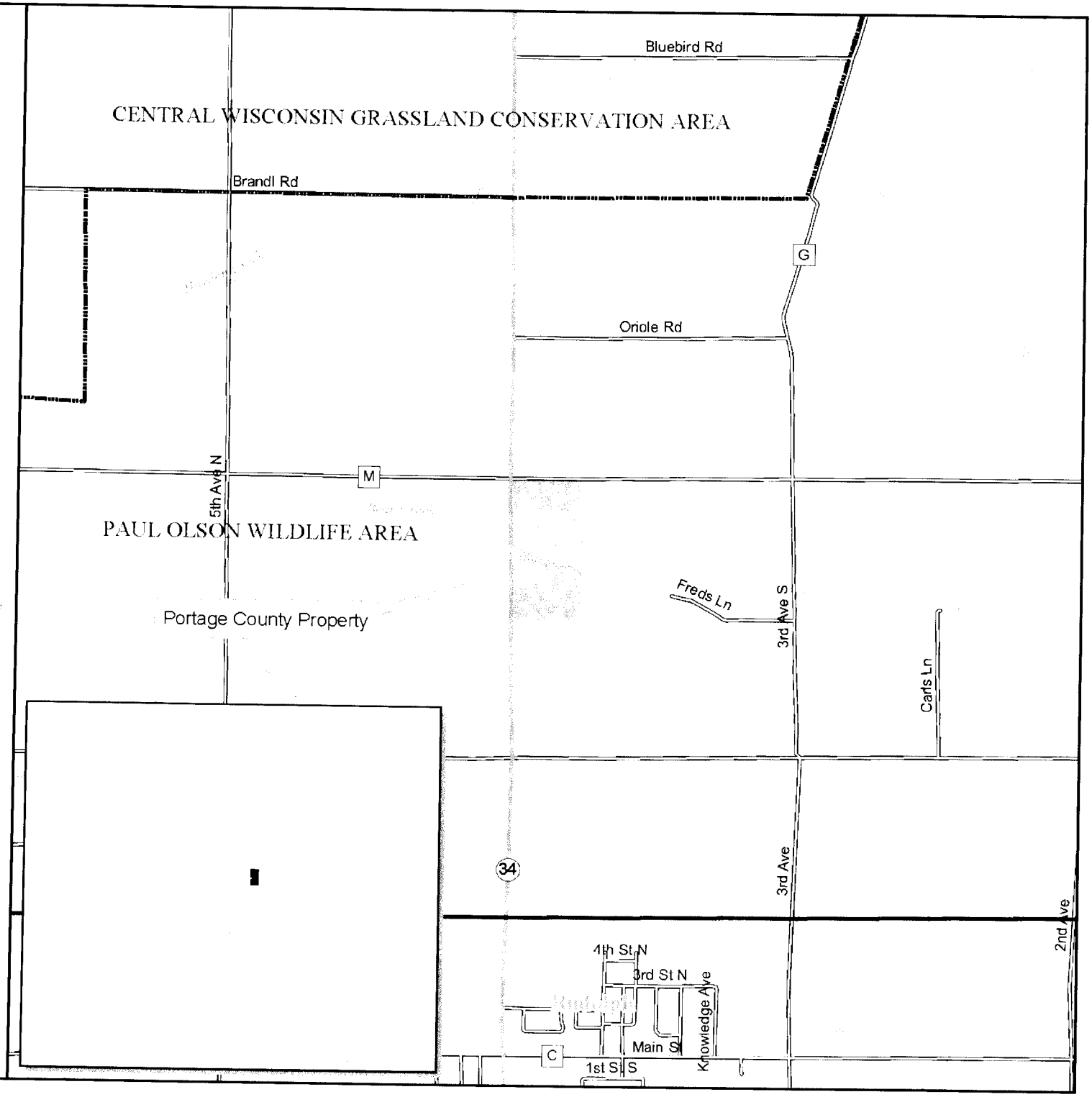
This data set does not differentiate between lands that are open or closed to the public for hunting and/or general public access. Some lands represented in this data set may not be open to the general public, or may have specific limitations or restrictions on public use. This data set is not intended for use as a land management tool; it is 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/servicecenter/locations.htm

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

STATE OF WISCONSIN
DEPT. OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Bureau of Facilities and Lands

October 11, 2007