

**SUBJECT: LAND ACQUISITION – MUD LAKE WILDLIFE AREA – DODGE COUNTY**

**FOR: DECEMBER 2007 BOARD MEETING**

**TO BE PRESENTED BY:** Richard Steffes

**SUMMARY:** The Department has obtained an option to purchase 101.84 acres of land from Dennis Leja, etal for \$325,000 for the Mud Lake Wildlife Area. The item requires Board action since the purchase price is over \$150,000.

The property is located in the southwest corner of Dodge County in the Town of Lowell about 10 miles to the southeast of Columbus. The 101.84 acres of Leja, etal property will link department ownership to the north and south of the parcel. The parcel contains 51 acres of wetland along the Beaver Dam River and 1,300 feet of frontage along each bank. The Beaver Dam River connects to the Crawfish River four miles south of the property. There are 50 acres of uplands with 1/2-mile of road frontage offering improved access to the wildlife area. The ability of department staff to manage this area and restore grasslands and acquiring additional wetlands will create more favorable habitat conditions for populations of blue-winged teal, mallards, pheasants, turkeys and non-game grassland songbirds. Also, by converting cropland to a mixture of grasses and forbs a natural buffer adjacent to the river will contribute to water quality protection.

The Department recommends acquisition of the Leja, etal property to allow management of the area, to protect and enhance wildlife habitat, to consolidate state ownership, provide additional opportunities for public recreation and to provide adequate access to the wildlife area.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the Board approve the purchase of 101.84 acres of land for \$325,000 for the Mud Lake Wildlife Area.

**LIST OF ATTACHED MATERIALS:**

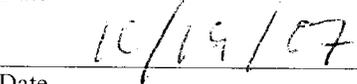
- |  |   |   |          |
|--|---|---|----------|
| No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Fiscal Estimate Required                              | Yes <input type="checkbox"/>            | Attached |
| No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Environmental Assessment of Impact Statement Required |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

**APPROVED:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Real Estate Director, Richard E. Steffes - LF/6

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
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  
L. Eagan – SCR/Fitchburg

# CORRESPONDENCE/MEMORANDUM

State of Wisconsin

DATE: October 18, 2007  
TO: Governor Doyle  
FROM: Matthew J. Frank  
SUBJECT: Proposed Land Acquisition, Dennis Leja, etal tract, File # W-1729,  
Option Expires January 26, 2008

FILE REF: W-1729

1. PARCEL DESCRIPTION:

Mud Lake Wildlife Area  
Dodge County

Grantor:

Dennis Leja, etal  
N2197 STH 26  
Watertown, WI 53098

Acres: 101.84

Price: \$325,000

Appraised Value: \$316,000; \$367,900

Interest: Purchase in fee.

Improvements: Small metal shed

Location: The tract is located in southwest corner of Dodge County in the Town of Lowell about 10 miles to the southeast of Columbus.

Land Description: The subject area is level to gently sloping down to its river frontage.

Water Resources: There are 1,300 feet of frontage along each bank of the Beaver Dam River.

<u>Covertypes Breakdown:</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Acreage</u>
	Cropland	50.00
	Wetland	<u>51.84</u>
	TOTAL	101.84

Zoning: Agriculture

Present Use: Recreation

Proposed Use: Wildlife habitat management and public recreation

Tenure: 5 years

Property Taxes: \$928

Option Date: September 26, 2007

2. JUSTIFICATION:

The 101.84 acre Leja, etal property is proposed for acquisition for the Mud Lake Wildlife Area, which is located in the southwest corner of Dodge County in the Town of Lowell about 10 miles to the southeast of Columbus. Department ownership will provide opportunities for public recreation, including, but not limited to hunting, fishing, birding and hiking, allow wildlife management by departmental staff and consolidate two areas of the wildlife area into one contiguous block.

The Mud Lake Wildlife Area encompasses approximately 4,500 acres of state-owned land. The 101.84 acres of Leja, etal property will link department ownership to the north and south of the parcel. The parcel contains 51 acres of wetland along the Beaver Dam River and 1,300 feet of frontage along each bank. The Beaver Dam River connects to the Crawfish River four miles south of the property. There are 50 acres of



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uplands with ½-mile of road frontage offering improved access to the wildlife area. The ability of department staff to manage this area and restore grasslands and acquiring additional wetlands will create more favorable habitat conditions for populations of blue-winged teal, mallards, pheasants, turkeys and non-game grassland songbirds. Also, by converting cropland to a mixture of grasses and forbs a natural buffer adjacent to the river will contribute to water quality protection. Lastly, the small shed on the property will likely be razed or sold for salvage.

The Department recommends acquisition of the Leja, etal property to allow management of the area, to protect and enhance wildlife habitat, to consolidate state ownership, provide additional opportunities for public recreation and to provide adequate access to the wildlife area.

3. FINANCING:

State Stewardship bond funds

Funds allotted to program:	Balance after proposed transaction:
\$7,124,000	\$515,638

4. ACQUISITION STATUS OF THE MUD LAKE WILDLIFE AREA - DODGE COUNTY:

Established: 1956  
Acres Purchased to Date: 4,618  
Acquisition Goal: 6,916Acres  
Percent Complete: 67%  
Cost to Date: \$616,660

5a. APPRAISALS:

Appraiser: Otis B. Thomas (Private Appraiser)  
Valuation Date: March 26, 2007  
Appraised Value: \$367,900  
Highest and Best Use: Recreation and rural residential

Allocation of Values:

- a. land: 101.84 acres @ \$3,600 per acre: \$366,700 (Rounded)
- b. improvements: \$1,200 (metal shed)
- b. market data approach used, four comparable sales cited
- c. adjusted value range: \$2,422 to \$3,679 per acre

Appraisal Review: Paul Scott – May 18, 2007

5b. Appraiser: Michael Augustyn (Private Appraiser)

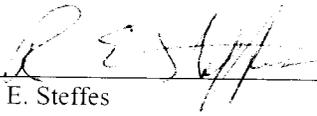
Valuation Date: March 19, 2007  
Appraised Value: \$316,000  
Highest and Best Use: Rural residential/recreational

Allocation of Values:

- a. land: 101.84 acres @ \$3,100 per acre: \$316,000 (Rounded)
- b. market data approach used, five comparable sales cited
- c. adjusted value range: \$2,750 to \$3,385 per acre

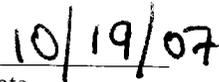
Appraisal Review: Paul Scott - May 7, 2007

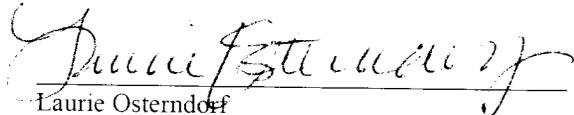
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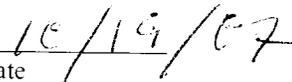
  
Richard E. Steffes

  
Date

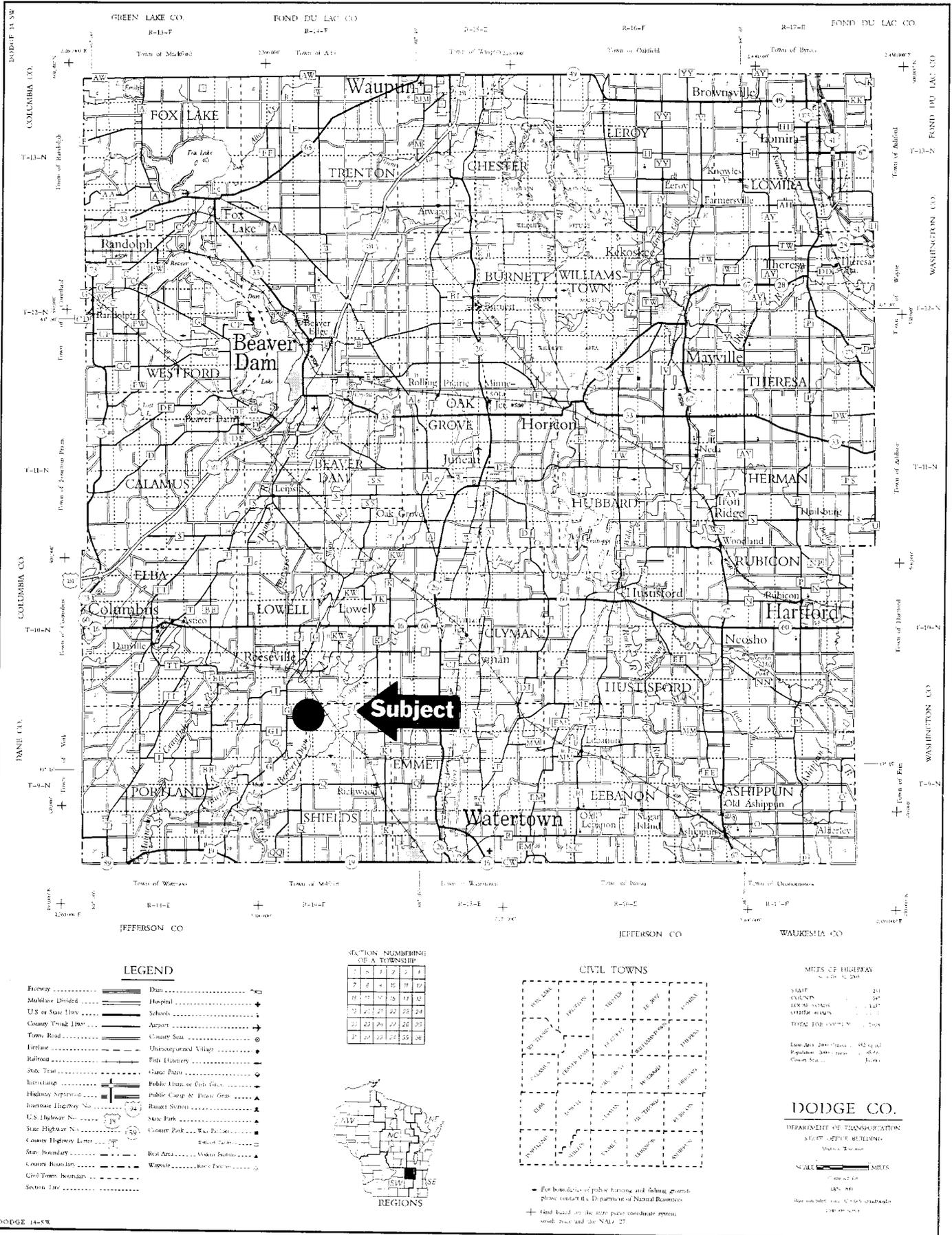
  
Bureau of Legal Services

  
Date

  
Laurie Osterdorf

  
Date

RES:dv



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**Leja et al Property**  
**Mud Lake Wildlife Area**  
**Dodge County**

-  Subject Property
-  WDNR Owned
-  WNDR Eased
-  WDNR Leased

-  Ice Age Trail
-  Project Boundary
-  Open Water



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 is a spatial representation of the Graceland Records System maintained by the DNR, Bureau of Facilities and Lands (FL), 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 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 for locations 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 Information Center for information for DNR Regional Offices and County Centers is provided on the following internet site:

<http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/office/region/central.htm>

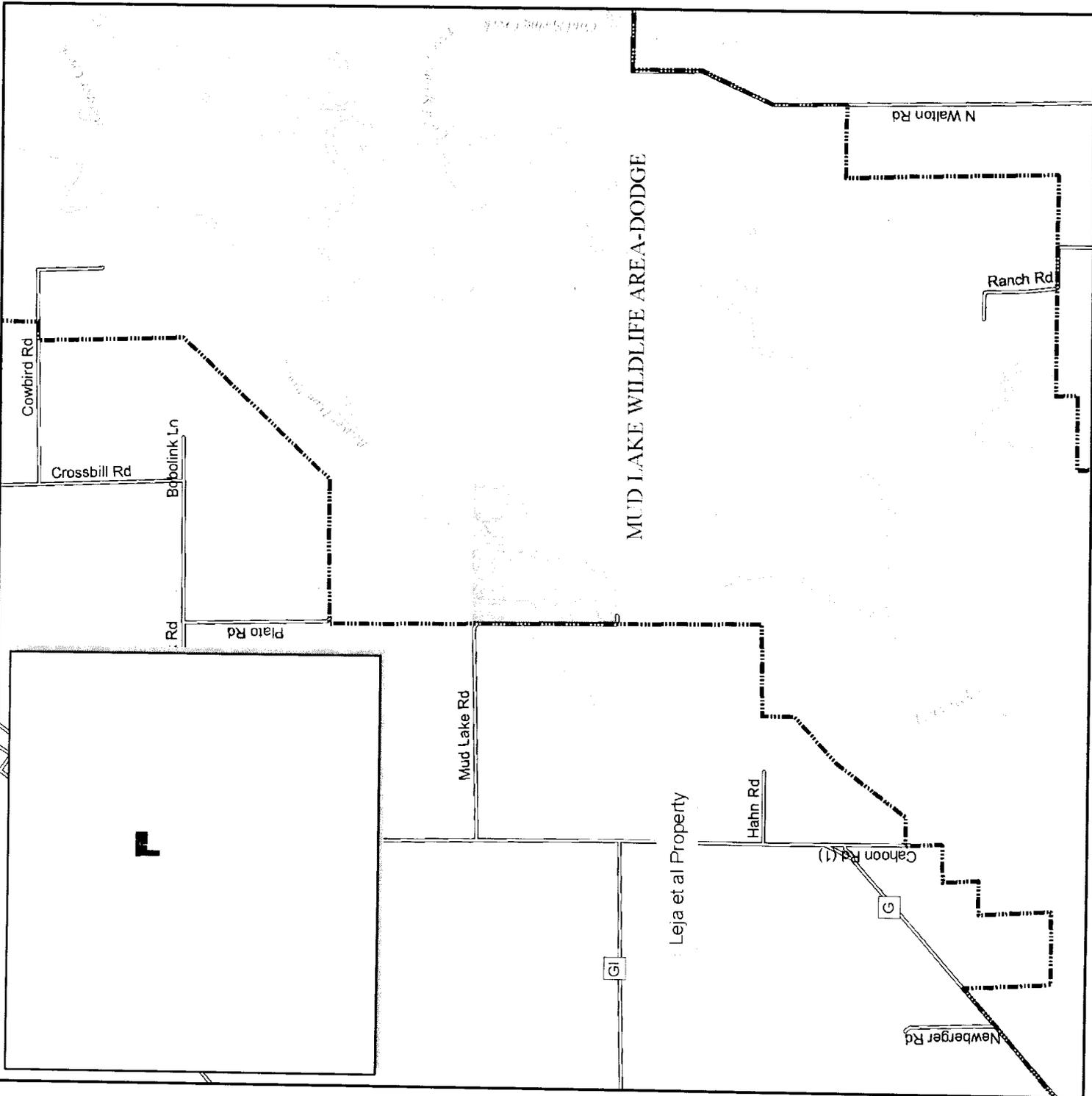
Updates to this data set are ongoing, and will be incorporated into future versions when available.

**STATE OF WISCONSIN**  
**DEPT. OF NATURAL RESOURCES**



**Bureau of Facilities and Lands**

October 15, 2007



MUD LAKE WILDLIFE AREA-DODGE