

SUBJECT: LAND ACQUISITION AND PROJECT BOUNDARY MODIFICATIONI – STATEWIDE NATURAL AREA – CRAWFORD COUNTY

FOR: AUGUST 2010 BOARD MEETING

TO BE PRESENTED BY: Richard Steffes

SUMMARY: The Department has obtained an option to purchase 103.48 acres of land from Kevin Spaight for \$291,000 for the Statewide Natural Area program (Hogback Prairie) in Crawford County. The item is being submitted because the price exceeds \$150,000 and because it is outside the project boundary although included in the proposed Lower Kickapoo Wildlife and Farm Heritage Area, currently in the planning process.

The tract located just outside the project boundary is located west of the Village of Steuben and adjoins state owned lands on three sides. The Hogback Prairie State Natural Area protection was initiated in 1992 by The Nature Conservancy (TNC). In 2009, TNC donated 959 acres for the project and at this time, the Department made a decision not to adjust the project boundary upon acceptance beyond the land donated pending the launch of the Lower Kickapoo Wildlife and Farming Heritage Area. The intent is to include this 103.48 acre parcel within the project area due to its importance for a variety of reasons including habitat viability and management. The parcel has all the core elements that led to the original establishment of this State Natural Area, which are dry prairie, oak savannah and southern dry forest. It includes an old farmhouse that will be razed and a steel-sided machine shed and a cinderblock garage that will be used for department storage or rented to a local farmer. Hogback Prairie State Natural Area is within the Lower Kickapoo River Conservation Opportunity Area (Continental Significance) and is one of Wisconsin's 86 Important Bird Areas. The Department will be proposing a new project area to the Board in the future that would incorporate this parcel into the Lower Kickapoo Wildlife and Farm Heritage Area.

Hogback Prairie was designated a State Natural Area in 2002 and is situated on an impressive geological formation (a narrow, steep-sided, limestone-capped ridge that rises 300 feet above the Citron Valley) a former oxbow of the nearby Kickapoo River. Located in the heart of North America's Driftless Area, the Kickapoo River is the largest river originating wholly within this unique landscape. Cold, spring-fed headwater streams originate in northern Monroe County and eventually coalesce to form the main stem of the river. By the time the river reaches Vernon County, it is best characterized as a low gradient, meandering, warm-water system with a rich mosaic of extensive wet meadows, marsh, and lowland hardwood forest. Upland vegetation in the lower valley consists of bluff prairie, oak forest, oak savanna and mesic forest. A high percentage of forest cover (exceeding 60% in some sub-watersheds) is unusual for southern Wisconsin and offers important habitat for numerous species of forest interior songbirds, many considered conservation priorities.

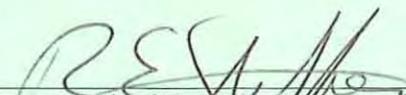
The Spaight parcel is mostly wooded and fits in well with existing state ownership. The owners have decided to sell now and since it is an important parcel, it is before the Board prior to completion of the planning process. The parcel contains the southern portion of the razorback ridge that constitutes the "Hogback".

RECOMMENDATION: That the Board approve the purchase of 103.48 acres of land for \$291,000 for the Statewide Natural Area and a project boundary modification to include the parcel in the project boundary.

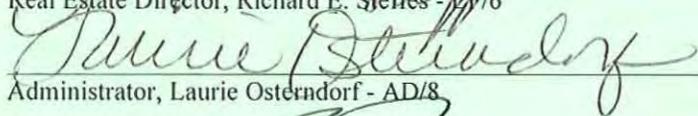
LIST OF ATTACHED MATERIALS:

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|----------|
| 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 |

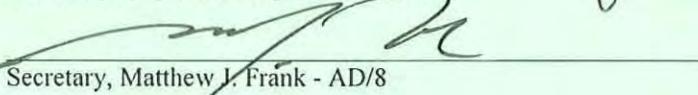
APPROVED:


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

7-20-10
Date


Administrator, Laurie Osterndorf - AD/8

7/20/10
Date


Secretary, Matthew J. Frank - AD/8

7-29-10
Date

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------------------------|
| cc: S. Miller – LF/6 | K. Warnke – ER/6 |
| R. Steffes – LF/6 | S. Humrickhouse – WCR/Eau Claire |
| L. Ross – AD/8 | |

CORRESPONDENCE/MEMORANDUM

DATE: July 20, 2010
 TO: Governor Doyle
 FROM: Matthew J. Frank *MJF*
 SUBJECT: Proposed Land Acquisition, Spaight Tract, File # NA 20049,
 Approval Requested by August 31, 2010

FILE REF: NA 20049

1. PARCEL DESCRIPTION:

Statewide Natural Area Program
 Crawford County

Grantor:

Kevin Spaight
 26110 Deer Ridge Trail
 Waterford, WI 53185

Acres: 103.48Price: \$291,000Appraised Value: \$291,000Interest: Fee Title PurchaseImprovements: The property includes an old 80-year old farmhouse, a steel-sided machine shed and a cinderblock garage.Location: The property is located in Crawford County about one mile west of Steuben in the Town of Eastman.Land Description: The subject land is hilly.

<u>Covertime Breakdown:</u>	Type:	Acreage:
	Grass	30.00
	Upland Woodland	<u>73.48</u>
	TOTAL:	103.48

Zoning: NonePresent Use: Recreation; Investment PropertyProposed Use: Resource Protection and Public RecreationTenure: 19 yearsProperty Taxes: \$3,251Option Date: May 6, 2010Stewardship 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.2. JUSTIFICATION:

The Department proposes to purchase the 103.48 acre Spaight tract that is located about one mile west of the Village of Stuben. The tract, located just outside the project boundary, adjoins state-owned lands on three sides. The Hogback Prairie State Natural Area protection was initiated in 1992 by The Nature Conservancy (TNC). In 2009, TNC donated 959 acres for the project and at this time, the Department made a decision not to adjust the project boundary upon acceptance pending the launch of the Lower Kickapoo Wildlife and Farming Heritage Area. The intent is to include this 103.48-acre parcel within the project area due to its importance for a variety of reasons including habitat viability and management. The

parcel has all the core elements that led to the original establishment of this State Natural Area, which are dry prairie, oak savannah and southern dry forest. It includes an old farmhouse that will be razed and a steel-sided machine shed and a cinderblock garage that will be used for department storage or rented to a local farmer. Hogback Prairie State Natural Area is within the Lower Kickapoo River Conservation Opportunity Area (Continental Significance) and is one of Wisconsin's 86 Important Bird Areas. The acquisition of this parcel will also eliminate a trespass issues that the Spaight's have experienced due to the fact that they border land on all three sides. The parcel contains the southern portion of the razorback ridge that constitutes the "Hogback".

Hogback Prairie was designated a State Natural Area in 2002 and is situated on an impressive geological formation (a narrow, steep-sided, limestone-capped ridge that rises 300 feet above the Citron Valley) a former oxbow of the nearby Kickapoo River. Located in the heart of North America's Driftless Area, the Kickapoo River is the largest river originating wholly within this unique landscape. Cold, spring-fed headwater streams originate in northern Monroe County and eventually coalesce to form the main stem of the river. By the time the river reaches Vernon County, it is best characterized as a low gradient, meandering, warm-water system with a rich mosaic of extensive wet meadows, marsh, and lowland hardwood forest. Upland vegetation in the lower valley consists of bluff prairie, oak forest, oak savanna and mesic forest. A high percentage of forest cover (exceeding 60% in some sub-watersheds) is unusual for southern Wisconsin and offers important habitat for numerous species of forest interior songbirds, many considered conservation priorities.

The Department recommends the acquisition of the Kevin Spaight parcel to protect and restore natural values of this site, and provide access for management, scientific, educational, and non-intensive recreational use. If approved, the Department will incorporate the parcel into the project boundary although as mentioned above the Department will be proposing a new project area to the Board in the near future that would incorporate this parcel into the Lower Kickapoo Wildlife and Farm Heritage Area.

3. FINANCING:

State Stewardship (FY11) bond funds are anticipated:

Funds allotted to program:	Balance after proposed transaction:
\$50,000,000	\$22,813,113

4. ACQUISITION STATUS OF THE STATEWIDE NATURAL AREA:

Established: 1972
Acres Purchased to Date: 44,519.19
Acquisition Goal: 41,000.0 Acres
Percent Complete: 108.58%
Cost to Date: \$24,127,687.30

5. APPRAISAL:

Appraiser: Ron Olson
Valuation Date: February 13, 2010
Appraised Value: \$291,000
Highest and Best Use: Recreation with large parcel rural residential as a secondary use.

Allocation of Values:

- a. land: 103.48 acres @ \$2,520 per acre: \$260,800
- b. improvements: 30,000
- c. total: \$291,000 (Rounded)
- d. market data approach used, four comparable sales cited
- e. adjusted value range: \$2,200 to \$2,860 per acre

Appraisal Review: Peter Wolter - March 12, 2010

RECOMMENDED:

Richard E. Steffes 

7-20-10
Date

Bureau of Legal Services 

7-20-10
Date

Laurie Osterndorf 

7/20/10
Date

RES:dv

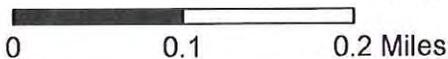
Kevin Spaight Parcel

T8N R4W Section 5, Township of Eastman, Crawford County, WI (103.48 Acres)



Legend

- - - PLSS Section Line
- PLSS Quarter-Quarter
- ▤ State Natural Area
- ▨ DNR Project Boundary
- ▩ County Boundary
- ▧ DNR Eased
- ▦ DNR Owned



Subject Property

NA 20049

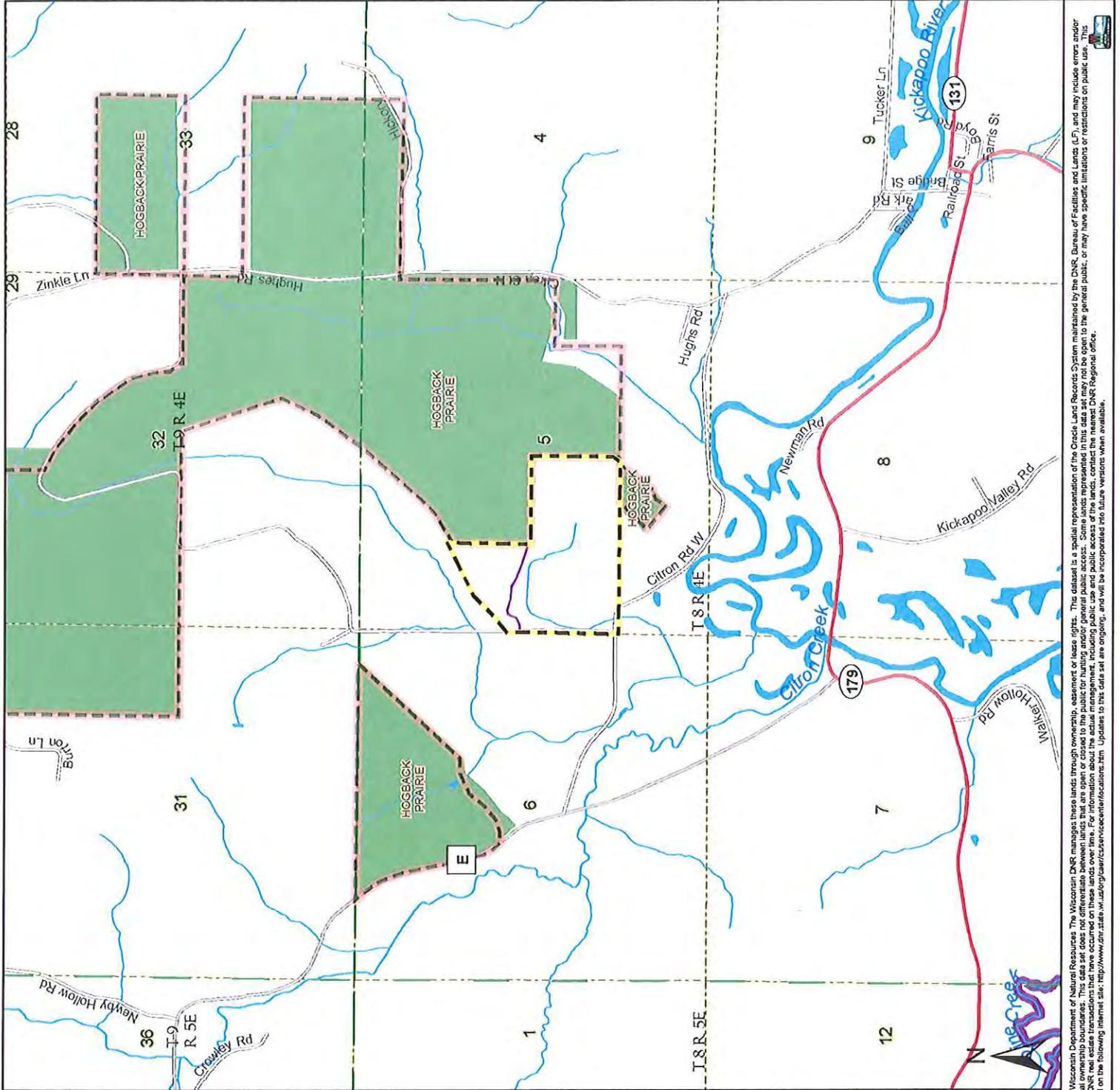
Statewide Natural Area

- ▨ Fee Simple
- ▩ Easement
- ▧ Ingress/Egress

State of Wisconsin

June 9, 2010
Real Estate Section
Bureau of Facilities and Lands

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Kevin Spaight Parcel
 NA 20049

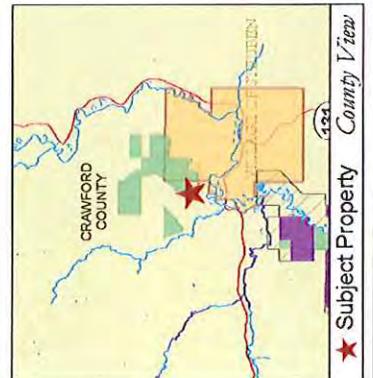
Statewide
 Natural Area

 T8N R4W Section 5
 Township of Eastman
 Crawford County, WI
 (103.48 Acres)

Subject Property
 Fee Simple
 Easement
 Ingress/Egress

Legend

- PLSS Section Line
- DNR Project Boundary
- DNR Owned
- DNR Easement
- County Boundary
- State Natural Area



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 dataset 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 information is for informational purposes only. For more information on land ownership, contact the nearest DNR Regional Office. Confirmed information for DNR Regional Offices and Service Centers is provided on the following internet site: <http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/oweb/office/index.htm>. Updates to this data set are ongoing, and will be incorporated into future versions when available.