

**SUBJECT: EASEMENT ACQUISITION AND DONATION – STATEWIDE WILDLIFE HABITAT– ROCK COUNTY**

**FOR: MARCH 2010 BOARD MEETING**

**TO BE PRESENTED BY:** Richard Steffes

**SUMMARY:** The Department proposes to purchase a 155.7-acre conservation easement from Porter Survivor’s Trust for Statewide Wildlife Habitat program in Rock County for \$195,000. The item is being submitted because costs exceed \$150,000 and because of a partial donation of value in the amount of \$65,000. The Department secured a USDA Natural Resources Conservation Services Farmland Protection Grant that will cover part of the easement cost.

The Department proposes purchase of an easement with public access under the Farm and Ranchland Protection Program on a 155.7-acre parcel owned by the Porter Survivor’s Trust. This parcel is located two miles southeast of the City of Evansville in northwest Rock County. The intent of the easement is to prevent development of the farmland and preserve wildlife habitat along the edges and in the woodlands. The property includes about 36 acres of lowland woods and 120 acres of cropland. Approximately 77% of the soils are classified as prime agricultural land. This easement will protect farmland from development, provide a buffer to the nearby Evansville Wildlife Area from encroaching development, and provide public access for outdoor recreation and hunting.

Established in 1991, the Statewide Wildlife Habitat Area Program acquires, protects and develops important habitat for pheasants, waterfowl and other species. Additionally, the criteria-based program provides opportunities for public recreation such as hunting, hiking, and bird watching.

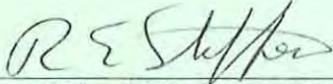
The 155.7-acre Porter property includes a mix of woodland, wetland and prime agricultural land. The property is very level and is bordered by drainage ditches on two sides. Acquisition of an easement on this property will protect the rural scenic character of the area and provide additional hunting opportunities within the Evansville-Footville leased public hunting ground.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the Board approve the acquisition of the farmland protection easement on 155.7 acres of land for the Statewide Wildlife Habitat program in Rock County. Also, that the Board accept the donation \$65,000 in land value, that a certificate of appreciation be sent to the Porter Survivor’s Trust and that an expression of appreciation be made a part of the official records of the Natural Resources Board.

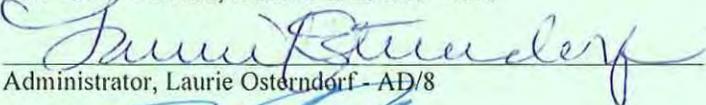
**LIST OF ATTACHED MATERIALS:**

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

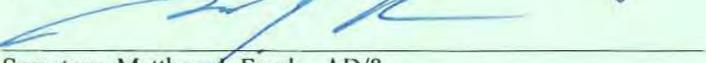
**APPROVED:**



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



Administrator, Laurie Osterndorf - AD/8



Secretary, Matthew J. Frank - AD/8

2-22-10

Date

2/24/10

Date

3-1-10

Date

- cc: S. Miller – LF/6  
R. Steffes – LF/6  
L. Ross – AD/8  
T. Hauge - WM/6  
L. Eagan – SCR/Fitchburg

## CORRESPONDENCE/MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 22, 2010 FILE REF: WM 60075  
 TO: Natural Resources Board  
 FROM: Matthew J. Frank  
 SUBJECT: Proposed Easement on the Porter Survivor's Trust Tract, File # WM 60075

1. PARCEL DESCRIPTION:

Statewide Wildlife Habitat Program  
 Rock County

Grantor:

Porter Survivor's Trust  
 c/o Dr. Douglas Batty  
 P.O. Box 162  
 Evansville, WI 53536

Acres: 155.7Price: \$195,000Appraised Value: \$260,000Interest: Farmland protection easement with public accessImprovements: NoneLocation: The tract is located in northwest Rock County about two miles southeast of Evansville.Land Description: The subject land is level.

<u>Covertypes Breakdown:</u>	Type:	Acreage:
	Lowland Woodland	36.0
	Cropland	119.7
	TOTAL:	155.7

Zoning: AgriculturalPresent Use: AgriculturalProposed Use: Agriculture, Resource Protection and Public RecreationTenure: Property has been in the family for about 100 years.Stewardship Land Access: This property will be open to the public for all nature-based outdoor recreational activities to include hunting, trapping, hiking and cross-country skiing.2. JUSTIFICATION:

The Department proposes purchase of an easement with public access under the Farm and Ranchland Protection Program on a 155.7-acre parcel owned by the Porter Survivor's Trust. This parcel is located two miles southeast of the City of Evansville in northwest Rock County and falls approximately 1.5 miles east of the Evansville Wildlife Area. The Department has secured a USDA Natural Resources Conservation Services Farmland Protection Grant that will cover \$96,250, about 50% of the easement cost. The intent of the easement is to prevent development of the farmland and preserve wildlife habitat along the edges and in the woodlands. The property includes about 36 acres of lowland woods and 120 acres of cropland. Approximately 77% of the soils are classified as prime agricultural land. This easement will protect farmland from development, provide a buffer to the nearby Evansville Wildlife Area from encroaching development, and provide public access for outdoor recreation and hunting.

Established in 1991, the Statewide Wildlife Habitat Area program acquires, protects and develops important habitat for pheasants, waterfowl and other species. Additionally, the criteria-based program provides opportunities for public recreation such as hunting, trapping, hiking, and bird watching.

The 155.7-acre Porter property includes a mix of woodland, wetland and prime agricultural land. The property is very level and is bordered by drainage ditches on two sides. Acquisition of this property will protect the rural scenic character of the area and provide additional hunting opportunities within the Evansville-Footville leased public hunting ground.

The Department recommends the purchase of this easement to protect farmland from development near important wildlife habitat, protect the rural landscape and increase public recreational opportunities.

3. FINANCING:

Farmland Protection and State Stewardship Wildlife (FY10) bond funds are anticipated:

Stewardship Funds allotted:	Balance after proposed transaction:
\$5,600,000	\$265,976
Farm Land Protection Funds allotted	Balance after proposed transaction:
\$96,250	\$0

Comments: The appraised value of \$260,000 is accounted for as follows:

Partial donation of value from landowner:	\$ 65,000
Federal grant funds:	\$ 96,250
State Stewardship:	\$ 98,750
TOTAL:	\$260,000

4. ACQUISITION STATUS OF THE STATEWIDE WILDLIFE HABITAT:

Established: 1991  
Acres Purchased to Date: 3,849.04  
Acquisition Goal: 6,000.00 acres  
Percent Complete: 64.15%  
Cost to Date: \$2,488,385.00

5. APPRAISAL:

Appraiser: Linn Duesterbeck  
Valuation Date: July 17, 2009  
Appraised Value: \$260,000  
Highest and Best Use: Agricultural and Recreational Use

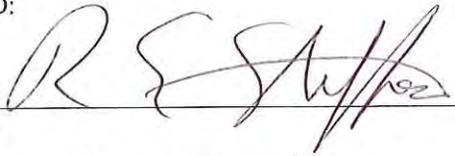
Allocation of Values:

Before Value:	\$605,000
After Value:	<u>\$345,000</u>
Easement:	\$260,000

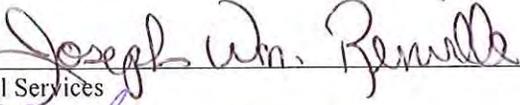
Appraisal Review: Paul Scott - September 28, 2009

Comments: Please note that \$45,000 is for the public hunting and recreation easement. The federal program will not cost share on this portion of the easement.

RECOMMENDED:

Richard E. Steffes 

2-22-10  
Date

Legal Services 

2/23/10  
Date

Laurie Osterndorf 

2/24/10  
Date

RES:dv

## *Acknowledgment of Gift*

This is to certify that at its March 2010 meeting, the Natural Resources Board gratefully accepted a gift of \$65,000 in land value from

### **PORTER SURVIVOR'S TRUST DR. DOUGLAS BATTY**

This donation will be used to acquire a farmland protection easement for the Statewide Wildlife Habitat program in Rock County. It is significant that the Department work with conservation-minded individuals such as yourself who are interested in helping protect Wisconsin's natural heritage and contribute toward this end.

An expression of our appreciation is a part of the official records of the Natural Resources Board. We present this certificate of sincere appreciation on behalf of present and future generations to thank you for your thoughtfulness and generosity.

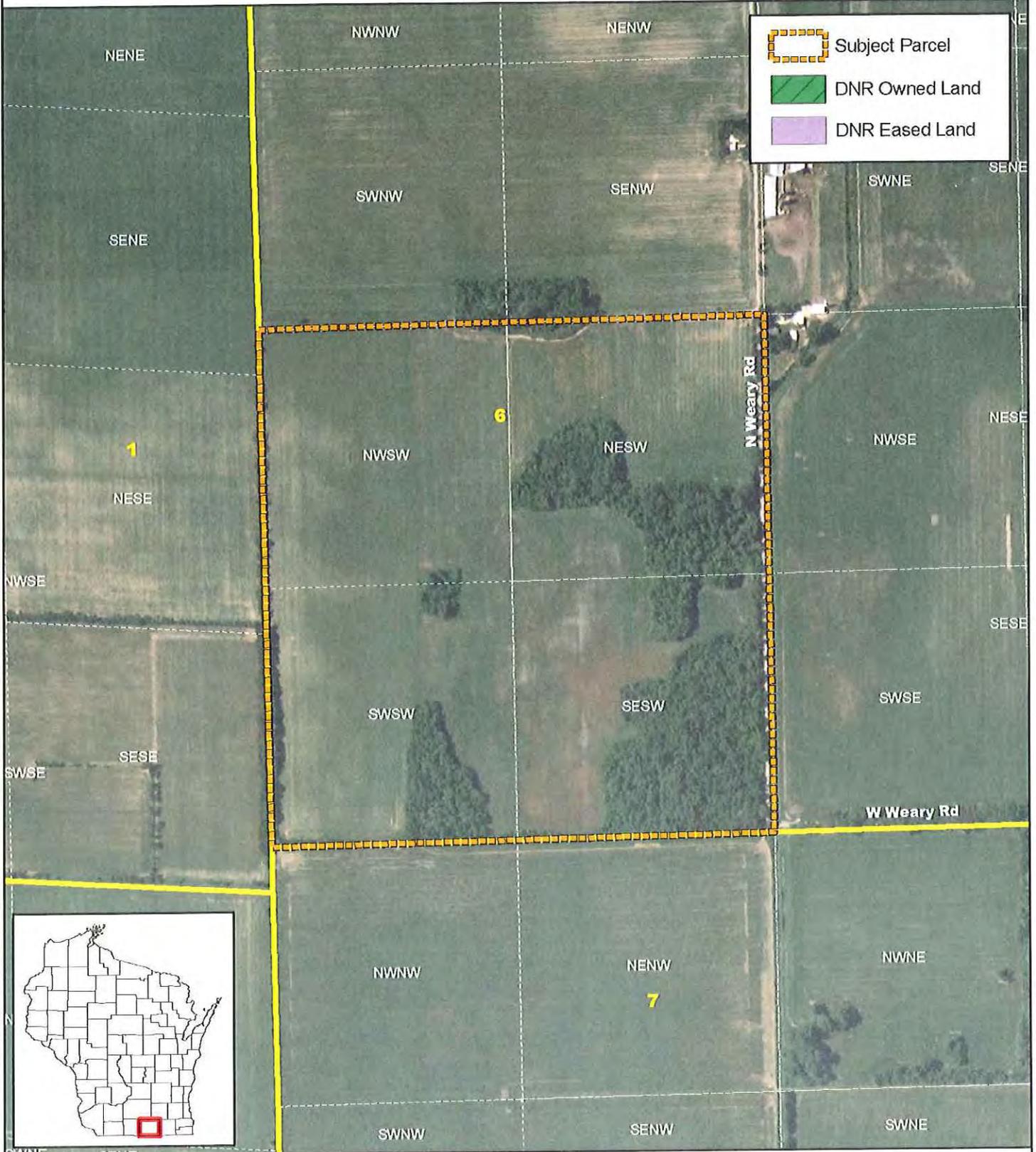
*Natural Resources Board*

Jonathan P. Ela, CHAIR



# Porter Trust Property

T 3N R 11E Section 6 , Town of Center, Rock County



-  Subject Parcel
-  DNR Owned Land
-  DNR Eased Land



Created by Bureau of Facilities and Lands  
Real Estate Section  
January 24, 2008

