

File# FI 2600 - Rusk County – 59.9 acres

The Department acquired this property for \$46,500 in 1998. It was purchased from Rusk County to preserve sturgeon spawning grounds.

The property has approximately 1,640 feet of frontage along the Thornapple River. The stream attracts 300-500 adult Lake Sturgeon for spawning each spring. The spawning event is popular with the public with several hundred people gathering each year to observe the sturgeon. The Rusk County conservation warden uses the area as an outdoor classroom for school groups and others. This education focuses on teaching children and adults about fish reproduction, habitat value, resource & water quality protection, and overall aesthetic value of nature & its resources.

The north half of the parcel is park-like in appearance with excellent quality stream frontage. The property is predominated with a mix of oak, birch and pine woods and contains over a half mile of frontage on the Thornapple River, a popular sturgeon spawning refuge. There may also be a snowmobile trail on the property. There is an interim Forestry Management plan for the property and may be timber of value that could be harvested prior to sale.

An approximate 0.6 acre area located in the SE corner of Section 33 is used as a trash and recycling drop-off station by the Town of Thornapple. This recycling area was established and in use at time DNR acquired the property from Rusk County. A land use agreement authorizes this property use to the Town of Thornapple until May 2017, with said land use agreement providing for renewal under same terms.

The Department recommends that the Natural Resources Board offer this land for sale under the authority granted by s. 23.145 Wis. Stats., and the land be only offered to Rusk County or the Town of Thornapple. The deed conveying the property will be subject to a deed restriction requiring that the land be open to all 5 NBOA's, that the town recycling facility can remain on the site, any snowmobile trails located on the property may remain, and no commercial or residential development occur on the property.

