

EM 10

STATE OF WISCONSIN
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
Madison, Wisconsin

ITEM RECOMMENDED FOR NATURAL RESOURCES BOARD AGENDA

TO THE SECRETARY:

Date March 1, 1982

FROM: John M. Keener - WM/4

SUBJECT: MASTER PLANNING - Approval of conceptual management plan for the Ten Mile Creek Wildlife Area, Rusk County, with a new acreage goal of 692.53 acres.

1. To be presented at March Board meeting by John M. Keener.

2. Appearances requested by the public:

Name

Representing whom?

3. Reference materials to be used:

Memorandum dated March 1, 1982 from John M. Keener to C. D. Besadny
Ten Mile Creek Wildlife Area Management Plan

4. Summary:

The Concept Element of the Management Plan has been developed for the Ten Mile Creek Wildlife Area, Rusk County. The Department proposes to manage the property for duck and other wetland wildlife production, to provide public hunting, trapping and fishing as well as opportunities for education and compatible recreation.

5. Recommendation:

That the Natural Resources Board approve the Concept Element of the Ten Mile Creek Wildlife Area Management Plan including a new acquisition acreage goal

APPROVED: of 692.53 acres.

J. R. Huntoon 3-5-82
J. R. Huntoon, Administrator Date

A. C. Damon 3-8-82
A. C. Damon, Deputy Secretary Date

C. D. Besadny 3-8-82
Secretary Date

Signed:

J. M. Keener
John M. Keener, Director
Bureau of Wildlife Management

- cc: Judy Scullion - ADM/5
- James R. Huntoon - ADM/5
- Ron Nicotera - ADM/5
- John M. Keener - WM/4
- H. S. Druckenmiller - EI/3
- Carl Evert - OL/4
- David Jacobson - Spooner

CORRESPONDENCE/MEMORANDUM

STATE OF WISCONSIN

Date: March 1, 1982 File Ref: 2300
To: C. D. Besadny - ADM/5
From: John M. Keener - WM/4 *gmk*
Subject: Ten Mile Creek Wildlife Area

The final Concept Element of the subject Plan is presented for your approval. The Plan has been subjected to a 45-day review by the appropriate Department functions, advisory groups and other resource agencies.

Comments received have been reviewed by the Bureau of Wildlife Management and the Northwest District. Agreement was reached on the treatment of comments, the majority of which were incorporated into the final draft. Advisory group and outside agency comments along with Department responses are shown in the Plan Appendix. No public controversy has been brought to our attention during the review process.

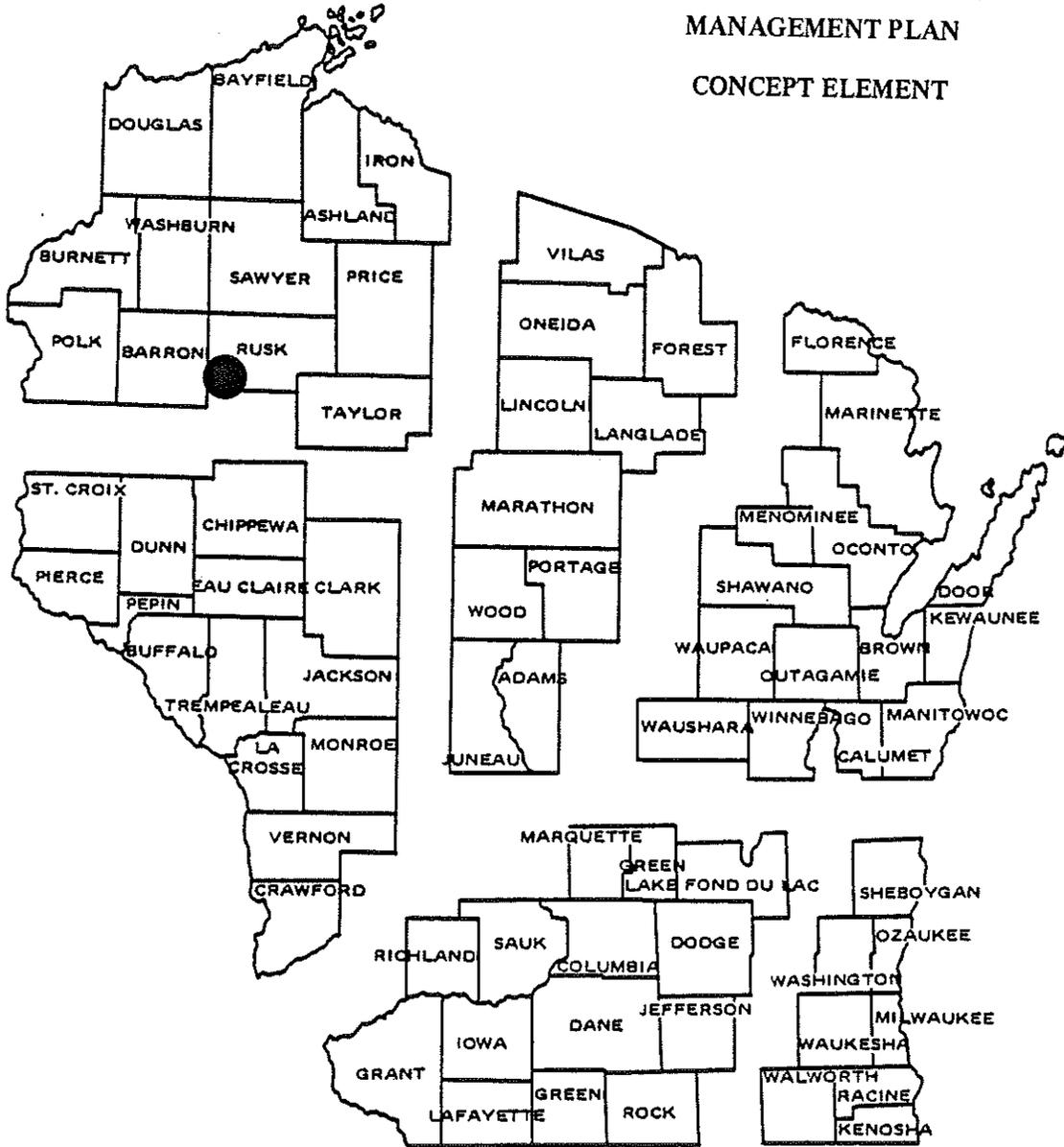
The Plan establishes objectives to produce 300 ducks, provide 150 angler days of fishing, and provide 600 participant days of hunting recreation.

Currently, the state owns 212.53 acres. A change in ownership acreage goal from 1,130 to 692.53 and modification of the boundary is necessary to achieve the proposed goal and objectives for this property.

DLG:df

cc: Judy Scullion - ADM/5
James R. Huntoon - ADM/5
Ron Nicotera - ADM/5
Carl Evert - OL/4
John Keener - WM/4
J. S. Druckenmiller - EI/3
David Jacobson - Spooner

TEN MILE CREEK WILDLIFE AREA
 MANAGEMENT PLAN
 CONCEPT ELEMENT



Property Task Force

Approved By: _____

Leader: FRANK J. VANECEK, WILDLIFE MANAGER
 FRANK PRATT, FISH MANAGER
 TERRY TAPPON, FORESTER
 GERALD CAROW, CONSERVATION WARDEN

Date: _____

Section I. - Actions

GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND OTHER BENEFITS

Goal:

To manage a state-owned wildlife area for ducks and other wetland wildlife production; to provide public hunting, trapping and fishing as well as opportunities for education and compatible recreation.

Annual Objectives:

1. Produce 1.5 ducks per acre on 200 acres of permanent water (300 ducks).
2. Provide opportunities for 600 participant days of hunting recreation as follows:

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Participant Days</u>
a. Ducks	300
b. Deer (bow and gun)	100
c. Ruffed Grouse/Woodcock	100
d. Rabbit/Squirrel/Pheasant	100

3. Provide 150 angler days of trout fishing.

Annual Additional Benefits:

1. Accommodate 100 participant days of other education and recreation including trapping, hiking, snowshoeing, nature observation and study.
2. Provide opportunities for 200 participant days of trapping.
3. Contribute to the habitat of other game and nongame species including migratory, endangered and threatened birds.

RECOMMENDED MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT (Figures 2, 3, and 4)

Consistent with the goal and objectives for managing the Ten Mile Creek Wildlife Area, the following management program will be undertaken:

1. Secure waterfowl nesting cover will be maintained on 150 acres of upland.
2. The gravel access road of 3/8 mile will be maintained in driveable condition to facilitate access for hunting, fishing, and trapping.

3. Twenty potholes will be constructed in the dense emergent vegetation surrounding the main body of the marsh. This project is dependent upon future land acquisition.
4. Loafing logs will be maintained on existing potholes and installed on newly constructed potholes.
5. Routine maintenance associated with posting and boundary line control will be carried out.
6. Acquire 480 acres of additional land. This involves a reduction of 437.47 acres from the original property acreage goal. Of this total, a large portion is proposed to be excluded because it is costly agricultural land. An additional area is proposed for exclusion because it is primarily wooded and not necessary for achieving the primary objectives of the wildlife area. Estimated acquisition cost of the 480 acres is approximately \$110,000.00 at 1981 values. The new acreage goal is 692.53.
7. All areas proposed for development will be examined for the presence of endangered and threatened wild animals and wild plants. If listed species are found, development will be suspended until the District Endangered and Nongame Species Coordinator is consulted, the site evaluated, and appropriate protective measures taken.
8. A complete biological inventory of the property will be conducted as funds permit. Additional property objectives may be developed following completion of such an inventory.
9. All areas of future development will also be investigated for the presence or absence of historical or archaeological sites and appropriate measures taken to protect significant sites. Should any sites be found during development, construction will be suspended until the State Historical Preservation Office is consulted.
10. The spring pond is currently stocked with fall fingerling brook trout to sustain a fishery. There is potential for a self-sustaining wild fishery via spawning area enhancement. The north shoreline of the spring pond consists of gravel substrate with significant spring seepage and would provide ample spawning habitat if it were not covered with a fine layer of silt. Some attempted spawning does occur but egg survival is negligible. Efforts will be made to remove the silt layer in order to maximize egg survival. Stocking will be discontinued when and if natural reproduction ever makes a significant contribution to the fishery.
11. Over-harvest can be a general problem in spring pond trout fisheries. So far, the Ten Mile Springs fishery has been self-regulated and harvest has yet to limit the supply of quality size trout. A heavy layer of duckweed often makes fishing extremely

difficult and, as such, harvest is minimized. If over-harvest does limit the supply of large size brook trout, then special regulations, including restrictive bag limits, gear limitations, size limits, etc., will be considered.

12. Northern pike are present in the system and may eventually limit trout production because of excessive predation. If this ever becomes a problem, chemical treatment may be necessary. The beaver dam at the outlet should be maintained as a warmwater fish barrier.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Ten Mile Creek Wildlife Area in Rusk County lies within Planning Region 14* which includes Burnett, Price, Sawyer, Taylor, and Washburn Counties. The 1974 population for the region was 81,298 or 1.8 percent of the state's population. The region is rural in character with 86 percent of population living in rural areas. Major cities include Ladysmith (3,674), Medford (3,454), Park Falls (2,953), and Spooner (2,444). The population density (13.5 people per square mile) and per capita adjusted income (\$2,683) are the lowest in the state. There are 36 public hunting and fishing areas in the region.

The wildlife area was established in the 1949. Originally, 550 acres were scheduled for acquisition, but in 1969, the acreage goal was increased to 1,130 acres to provide additional recreational opportunities. To date, only 212.53 acres have been acquired.

The original intent was to develop the area for waterfowl production and hunting opportunity. The crux of the property is the marsh which is a highly productive wild rice marsh. Pothole and brood water development in the surrounding wetlands and habitat improvement on the uplands will complement the productivity of the marsh. At one time, a structure and dike were planned to raise the water levels in the marsh. Later, this was abandoned as it was thought that this could alter the character of the marsh and actually diminish its productivity.

Land acquisition has been difficult throughout the history of the wildlife area. Much of the problem was caused by frequent acquisition priority changes and a general reluctance of local property owners to sell. The small ownership acreage has permitted some pothole development, spring pond dredging and access to the main body of the marsh.

No endangered or threatened plant or animal species are known to be found on the property. Wildlife using the area includes white-tailed deer, woodcock, ruffed grouse, raccoon, red fox, cottontail rabbit, snowshoe hare, blue-winged teal, mallard, mink, muskrat, and a variety of songbirds. Fish species are limited to brook trout and minnows.

*Wisconsin Outdoor Recreation Plan (1977)

Hunting use of the property is the dominant activity and follows the pattern of other state areas with the greatest participation opening weekends and light use thereafter. Non-hunting users can find a rich variety of flora and fauna for study in both upland and marsh habitat.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Status Quo:

This alternative would provide no change in management including obtaining a land acquisition goal of 1,130 acres. Agricultural and forested lands would enhance hunting opportunities for small game as well as forest game. Land acquisition of the remaining 917.47 acres would cost about \$300,000. Since a large percentage (35%) of the planning region is open to public hunting, primarily for forest game, providing additional opportunities at significant cost is not warranted.

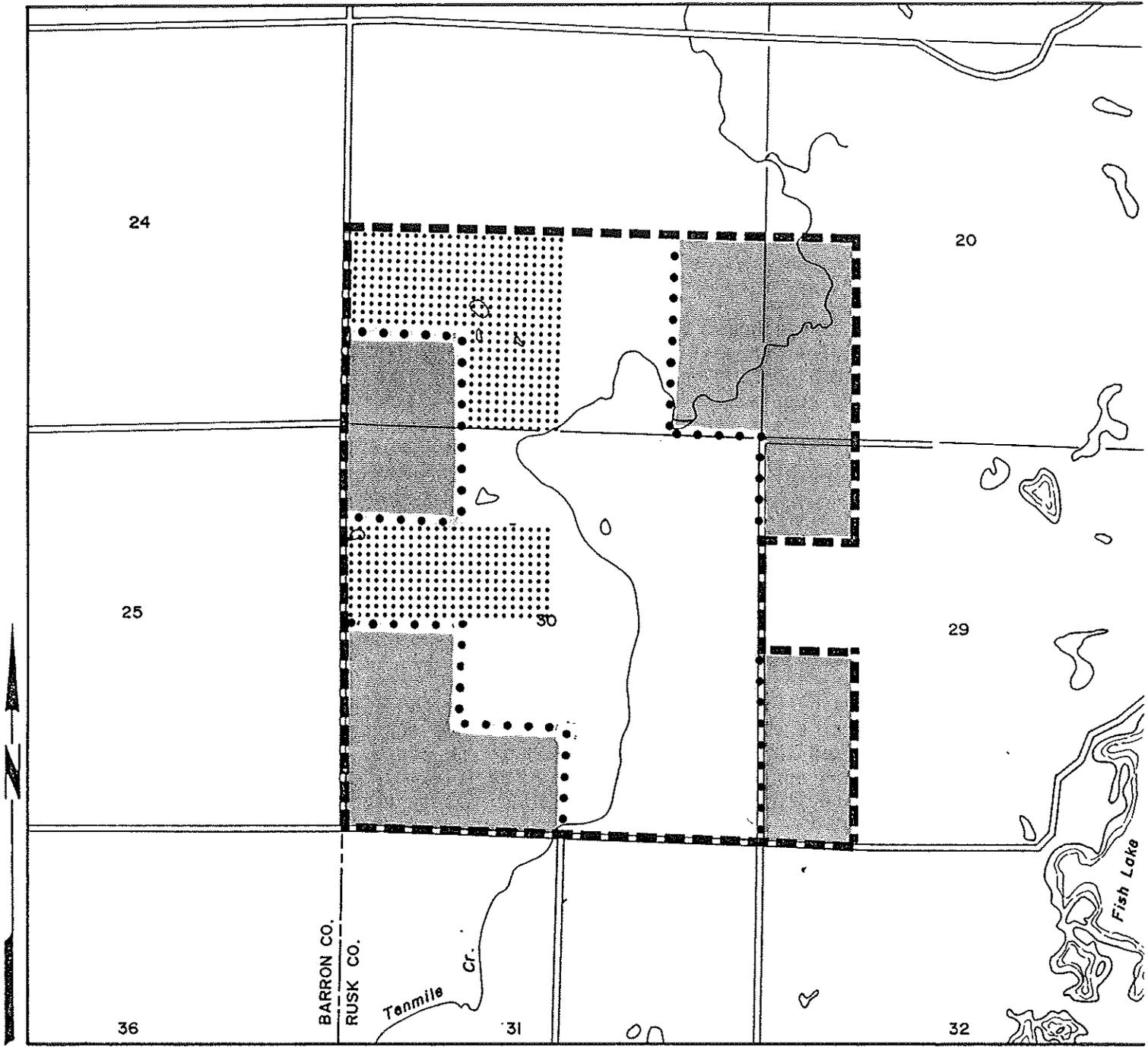
2. Expand:

While opportunities exist to expand the current boundary to provide additional public recreational opportunities, this alternative was rejected because of the same rationale expressed in alternative 1.

3. Reduce:

Because a significant portion of the current boundary includes agricultural and forested lands common to the abundant public hunting lands located throughout this portion of the state, elimination of this type of land on the wildlife area is feasible. In addition, because wetlands and its associated wildlife are widely recognized as important features of the environment, focusing land acquisition efforts on this type is highly desirable.

This Plan has identified this alternative as the most desirable, the details of which are presented under the Recommended Management and Development Section.

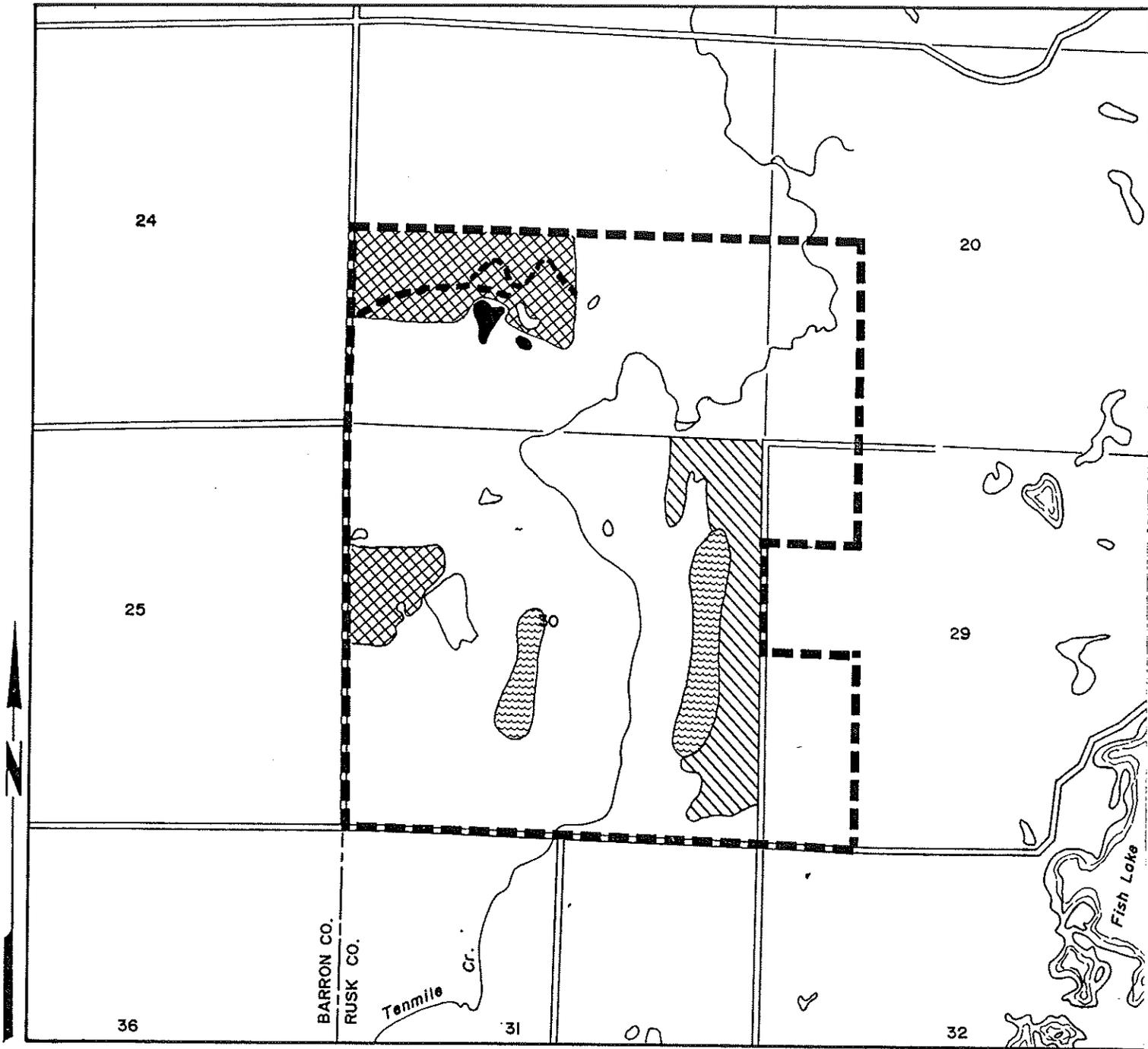


LEGEND

- PROJECT BOUNDARY
- ▣ STATE OWNED
- PROPOSED BOUNDARY REVISION
- ▨ PROPOSED PROPERTY REDUCTION
- PRIVATE LANDS

TENMILE CREEK
WILDLIFE AREA

FIGURE 2 OWNERSHIP AND PROPOSED ALTERNATIVES

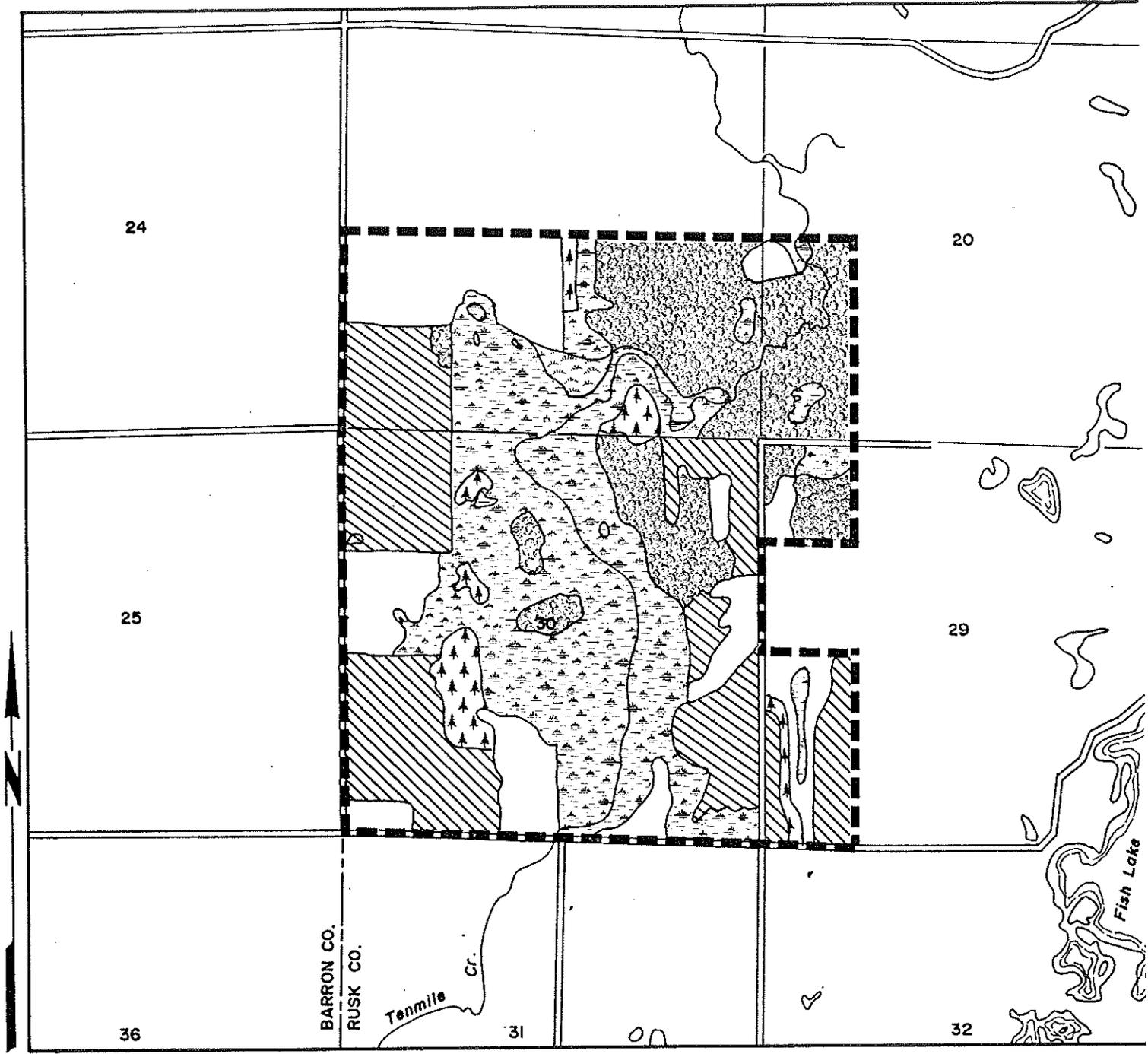


LEGEND

- PROJECT BOUNDARY
- FISH MANAGEMENT SPRING POND AREA
- ◊ EXISTING POT HOLE AREA
- ◻ EXISTING DENSE NESTING COVER
- ◻ PROPOSED WETLAND DEVELOPMENT AREA
- ◻ PROPOSED DENSE NESTING COVER
- ACCESS ROAD

TENMILE CREEK
WILDLIFE AREA

FIGURE 3 EXISTING AND PROPOSED DEVELOPMENTS



LEGEND

-  PROJECT BOUNDARY
-  GRASSLAND
-  MARSH
-  CROPLAND
-  TIMBER
-  PINE
-  LOWLAND BRUSH MARSH

TENMILE CREEK
WILDLIFE AREA

FIGURE 4 VEGETATION

APPENDIX A

Master Plan Comments

By: Henry W. Kolka
Representing: Wild Resources Advisory Council
Date: August 27, 1981

The Task Force of Frank Vanacek, Frank Pratt, Terry Tappon, and Gerald Carow have put together quite a feasible and realistic proposal in their Ten Mile Creek Wildlife Management Plan Concept Element. In fact, the managers have performed exceptionally well on the small property that the state owns.

General Review

The Wild Resources Advisory Council wishes to congratulate the Task Force for doing so well with so little. In fact, the heart of the project, the Ten Mile Creek marsh, is still out of bounds. The Council admires the spirit and the resolve of the planners as well as their realism in looking into the future. We do, however, feel that even the 212.53 acres in state ownership owes the public more than just good fishing and good hunting items that are recognized by the Task Force under the heading Annual Additional Benefits.

Comments and Recommendations

1. Page 1 - Goal

WRAC recommends that and education be added to the Goal sentence after the word recreation.

DNR RESPONSE: Concur.

2. Page 1 - Annual Additional Benefits

Item 1 - Our Council recommends that and study be added to end the sentence after the word observation.

DNR RESPONSE: Concur.

3. Page 1 - First paragraph under Recommended Management and Development Program.

WRAC recommends the inserting of and education between words recreation and the.

DNR RESPONSE: Concur.

4. Item 6 under the above heading Page 1.

The WRAC considers the proposal to reduce the 1969 acreage by 478.47 acres as very appropriate and realistic. This focuses the 480 acre acquisition to the heart of the wildlife area - the marsh and the creek. The Council applauds this objective.

5. Page 2 - continuation of the heading under analysis.

WRAC admires the 9 items listed and considers them well done. However, we feel that the Task Force owes some consideration for the items under Annual Additional Benefits. How about indicating how other compatible recreational and educational users can benefit from the area? How about people that want to hunt for other game species beside waterfowl? Another dimension of wildlife in wildlife areas that is generally ignored by wildlife managers. The Council expresses concern about the absence of adequate listing of nongame wild species and the condition of their habitat. Also frequently needed are listings of flora species and patterns for those increasing numbers of people interested in the ecology of the wildlife areas.

DNR RESPONSE: Additional text incorporated.

6. Page 2 - last paragraph.

Public use ends up again on the sports syndrome, WRAC recommends the insertion of compatible recreational and educational uses.

DNR RESPONSE: Text eliminated because it was redundant.

By: R. W. Baker
Representing: Department of Transportation
Bureau of Environmental Analysis
Date: September 4, 1981

We have reviewed the above noted document and consulted with the Rusk County Highway Commissioner and do not foresee any conflict with future plans to improve CTH "D" and your proposal.

We would suggest that the County Highway Department or commissioner be routinely included in your mailings of similar documents.

We thank you for the opportunity to review this document.

By: Bernie Rydlund
Representing: Conservation Congress
Date: September 9, 1981

After checking with local game managers and other people, I can find no opposition to this management plan.

0602L