



Interim Forest Management Plan

Property Identifiers

Property Name: Fenley

Property Designation: State Recreation Area

DNR Property Code: 9695

Forestry Property Code: 2202

Property Location: Grant County

Property Acreage: 287

Master Plan Date: none

Property Manager: Chad Breuer

Property Assessment

The following should be considered during the property assessment:

A. Ecological Landscape description and property context:

Fenley State Recreation Area is located in the Western Coulees and Ridges Ecological Landscape which is characterized by its highly eroded, unglaciated topography with steep sided valleys and ridges, high gradient headwaters streams, and large rivers with extensive, complex floodplains and terraces. Dendritic drainage patterns are well-developed in this mostly unglaciated Ecological Landscape. Natural lakes are restricted to the floodplains of large rivers. Large warm-water rivers are especially important here, and include the Wisconsin. Numerous spring-fed (cold-water) headwaters streams occur here. Cool-water streams are also common. Current vegetation is a mix of forest (41%), agriculture (36%), and grassland (14%) with wetlands (5%) mostly in the river valleys. The primary forest cover is oak-hickory. Maple-basswood forests that are dominated by sugar maple, basswood and red maple are common in areas that had not burned frequently. Dry rocky bluffs may support xeric stands of native white pine, sometimes mixed with red or even jack pine. Prairies are now restricted to steep south- or west-facing bluffs, unplowed outwash terraces along the large rivers, and a few other sites.

The uplands of the park lie within the Hills and Valleys-Wisconsin River Drainage Land type Association (222Lc18). The characteristic landform is hilly, and most of the sandstone bedrock is found within five feet of the surface. Soils in this land type association are well drained and moderately well drained silts and loams with a silt loam or sandy loam surface over non-calcareous clayey or loamy residuum or over silty loess; most areas over limestone, sandstone, or shale bedrock. The bottomlands of the park are in the Mississippi River Valley Train-South LTA (222Lc17). The characteristic landform pattern is formed from stream deposition and consists of river islands and flood plains. Ecological Landscape description and property context and is nearly level. Soils are excessively drained and poorly drained sandy soils with a loamy fine sand or sand surface over non-calcareous sand alluvium or outwash.



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B. General property description – management, adjacent land uses, topography, soils, etc.

The Fenley Recreation Area has a long history of human use. Native Americans began to arrive in the area about 11,000 years ago. The area was also the location of a community that had a rapid and tragic demise, the town of Sinipee. In 1836 miners formed the Louisiana Company to compete with Galena in the lead trade. The community consisted of a grand hotel, several stores, a bank, church, mill, and post office. It all came to an end in the spring of 1839 when the valley was flooded. Stagnant pools of water remained after the flood receded, and it was only a matter of days an epidemic of malaria, that few survived, spread over the town.

The Last Will and Testament of Alice B. Fenley bequeathed a 287.0 acre tract of land to the Department of Natural Resources in 1985. The tract has scenic overviews of the Mississippi River from high, wooded bluffs.

Past management at the Fenley Recreation Area included two tree plantings: one located near the lower parking lot and the other, a 20 acre high density oak planting in the crop field located on the ridge planting, occurred in 2011. In 2005 Wildlife Management planted 20 acres of prairie grasses on the northern most end of the property in another crop field.

Fenley State Recreation Area is bounded by the Mississippi River to the west and is bisected by Sinnipee Creek on the south end. Kieler and USH 151 are about two miles to the east, and the USH 151 bridge to Dubuque, IA is four miles to the south. A railroad corridor and the federal Upper Mississippi River Wildlife and Fish Refuge lie between the Fenley and the Mississippi. The recreation area is about 2 miles upstream of Lock and Dam No. 11. Within two miles of the property, especially on the Wisconsin side, most of the slopes are forested, and the ridgetops are cleared for agriculture. Beyond two miles, especially where the topography is more gentle land use is mostly agriculture with scattered woodlots. The bottomlands are a mix of forest, shrub-carr, and open wetlands.

Most of the upland soils are silt loams with slopes ranging from level to 45%. Almost all of these soils are considered to be moderately eroded. The soils on the steep to very steep slopes are predominantly rock outcrop complex with some classified as very stony. The bottomlands along the Mississippi River and Sinnipee Creek are frequently flooded silt loams and fine sandy loams.

C. Current forest types, size classes and successional stages (% of total recreation area acreage)

- **Central Hardwoods:** (46%) 141 acres; date of origin 1890; large sawlogs.
- **Oak:** (22%) 68 acres; date of origin 1890, 1994, 2011; large sawlogs with 2 stands seedlings and saplings. The younger 2 stands are oaks plantings.
- **Bottomland Hardwoods:** (15%) 47 acres; date of origin 1958, 1973, 1986; 1 stand large sawlogs, 2 stands hardwood poles.
- **Northern Hardwoods:** (1%) 3 acres; date of origin 1888; large sawlogs.
- **Non-forest Cover Types:** grasslands (6%, 20 acres), minor lake (3%, 8 acres), not typed (7%, 22 acres).

D. NHI: Endangered, Threatened, Special Concern, Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN)

Taxon group	Total species	Endangered	Threatened	Special Concern	SGCN
Bird	3	0	2	1	3
Butterfly	1	0	0	1	0



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Herptile	2	1	0	1	2
Plant	3	0	0	3	N/A

- E. **Wildlife Action Plan Conservation Opportunity Areas (COA), Important Bird Areas (IBA):** Included in the Lower Wisconsin Bluffs and Floodplain COA; bounded to the west by the Mississippi River COA; bound to the west by the Upper Mississippi River IBA.
- F. **Significant cultural or archeological features:** Fenley SRA contains at least 14 historical or archaeological sites. Activities with potential to disturb archaeological sites will only be undertaken after consultation with the DNR Archaeologist. Any sites with cultural or historical value will be managed in accordance with guidance and statutory requirements (see ss. 44.40 and DNR Manual Code 1810.10).
- G. **Invasive species:** Invasive species known to occur at the park include non-native bush honeysuckle, multi-flora rose, wild parsnip, and garlic mustard. This list is representative and not all inclusive.
- H. **High Value Conservation Forests (HCVF), existing State Natural Areas (SNA) designations, or other resources/natural community types limited in the landscape:**
There are no SNA at the recreation area. Older forested stands at Fenley are not currently considered HCVF but may be in the future.
- I. **Primary public uses (recreation):** Recreational activities include hiking, nature study, bird watching, hunting, and trapping.
- J. **Biotic Inventory Status:** None scheduled. Fenley SRA is included in a breeding bird survey block.
- K. **Deferral/consultation site designations:** None

IFMP components

Management Objectives: (Outline primary forest management objectives):

1. Expand the amount of forest cover by converting the existing warm season grass planting to a tree planting.
2. Manage and maintain oak cover types wherever feasible. The oak cover type will naturally slowly convert to shade tolerant central and northern hardwood species without active management. Efforts to maintain oak can include natural regeneration and plantings.
3. Allow the central and northern hardwood types to regenerate naturally while encouraging oak and black walnut in these cover types whenever possible
4. Retain an average of 70% canopy closure to maintain suitable habitat for forest interior species, such as birds.
5. Manage woodlands on steep south and west-facing slopes dominated by chinquapin oak as a native community.
6. Maintain standing dead snags and a few scattered large trees (26"+ DBH) per acre for structural complexity for dependent animal species, unless they pose a safety risk.
7. Consider department guidance to manage habitat along Sinnipee Creek to benefit rare amphibian species.
8. Preserve the integrity of known archaeological features by following MC1810.1, the department's Burials, Earthworks, And Mounds Preservation Policy & Plan, and applicable state and federal laws.



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9. Conduct invasive species management where needed to ensure regeneration of adequate numbers of desirable tree species.

Property Prescriptions (Identify specific and pertinent prescriptions by area or forest type, including passive management areas, extended rotation, and other information that will help achieve the objectives)

1. Commercial timber sales may be used to achieve management objectives.
2. Natural origin oak and other hardwood stands: manage in accordance with the department's silvicultural handbook. Maintain an oak component in hardwood stands as long as possible. Manage the oak resource present on the property where feasible. In the stands where central or northern hardwood conversion is chosen, efforts will be made to plant oak into gaps and patch clear cuts to keep an oak component in these stands. Individual patch clear cuts will not exceed 1 acre in size while maintaining 70% canopy closure overall for forest interior birds. On the sites where oak regeneration can be accomplished without significant investment, use management techniques to maintain a large component of oak on site.
3. Maintain 50% canopy or less within 75 feet along Sinnipee Creek to benefit rare amphibians
4. Hardwood plantations: Manage hardwood plantations in accordance with the department's silvicultural handbook. Improve health and vigor of planted trees via periodic timber stand improvement work and thinning. Although natural self-pruning is the goal, prune crop trees if needed to encourage production of high value hardwood logs. Favor oak species where practical.
5. Chinquapin oak woodlands: On steep west and south facing slopes, passively manage chinquapin oak, white oak, and burr oak. Use prescribed fire to restore native community structure, composition, and function. Non-commercial canopy and understory manipulation, and potential limited timber harvests, will improve conditions for existing oaks, and will focus on removal of shade tolerant central hardwood, northern hardwood, and bottomland hardwood species (such as maple, walnut, ironwood, and hackberry).
6. All Stands: Retain reserve/legacy trees as groups or individuals (26"+ DBH) throughout the property within harvested stands. Adhere to Best Management Practices for Water Quality ([PUB FR-093 2010](#)) manual in all management activities. Skid trail grades on slopes greater than 15 percent will be avoided. This will be limited in project layout design and further controlled during project administration.
7. Grasses: Expand the amount of forest cover by converting the existing warm season grass area to a hardwood planting. Plant and maintain primarily oak species, as well as lesser numbers of central hardwood species such as black walnut, black cherry, and shagbark hickory.
8. Invasive Species: identify invasive plant species and implement control practices such as hand pulling and biological, chemical, and mechanical control to eliminate or reduce negative impacts. Invasive species control efforts should be focused on tree regeneration areas where these species may negatively impact regeneration of desirable tree species.

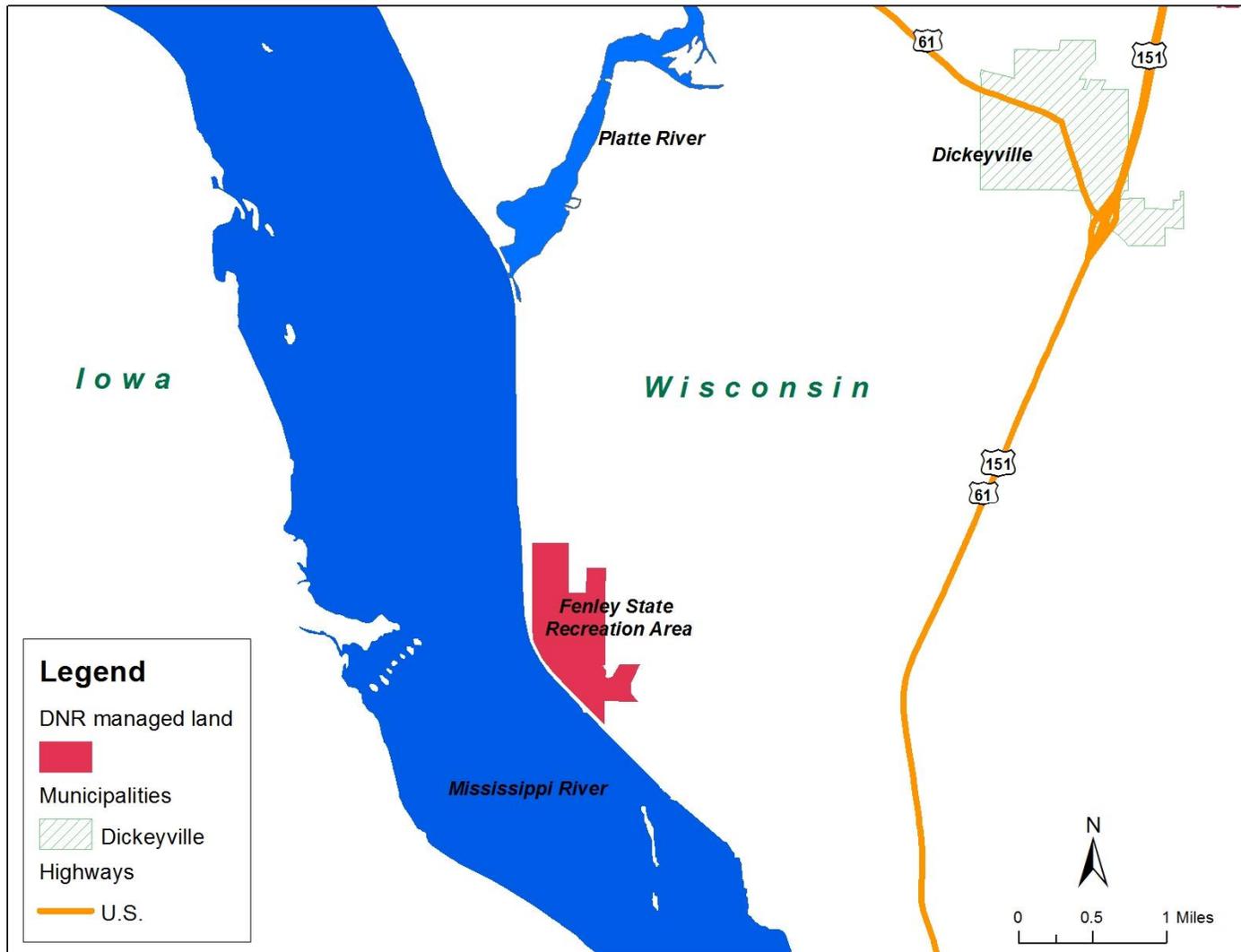
Summary of Public Involvement and Comments Received

Maps (Optional)

- a. Property Boundary and Ownership Maps
- b. Forest Cover Type Maps

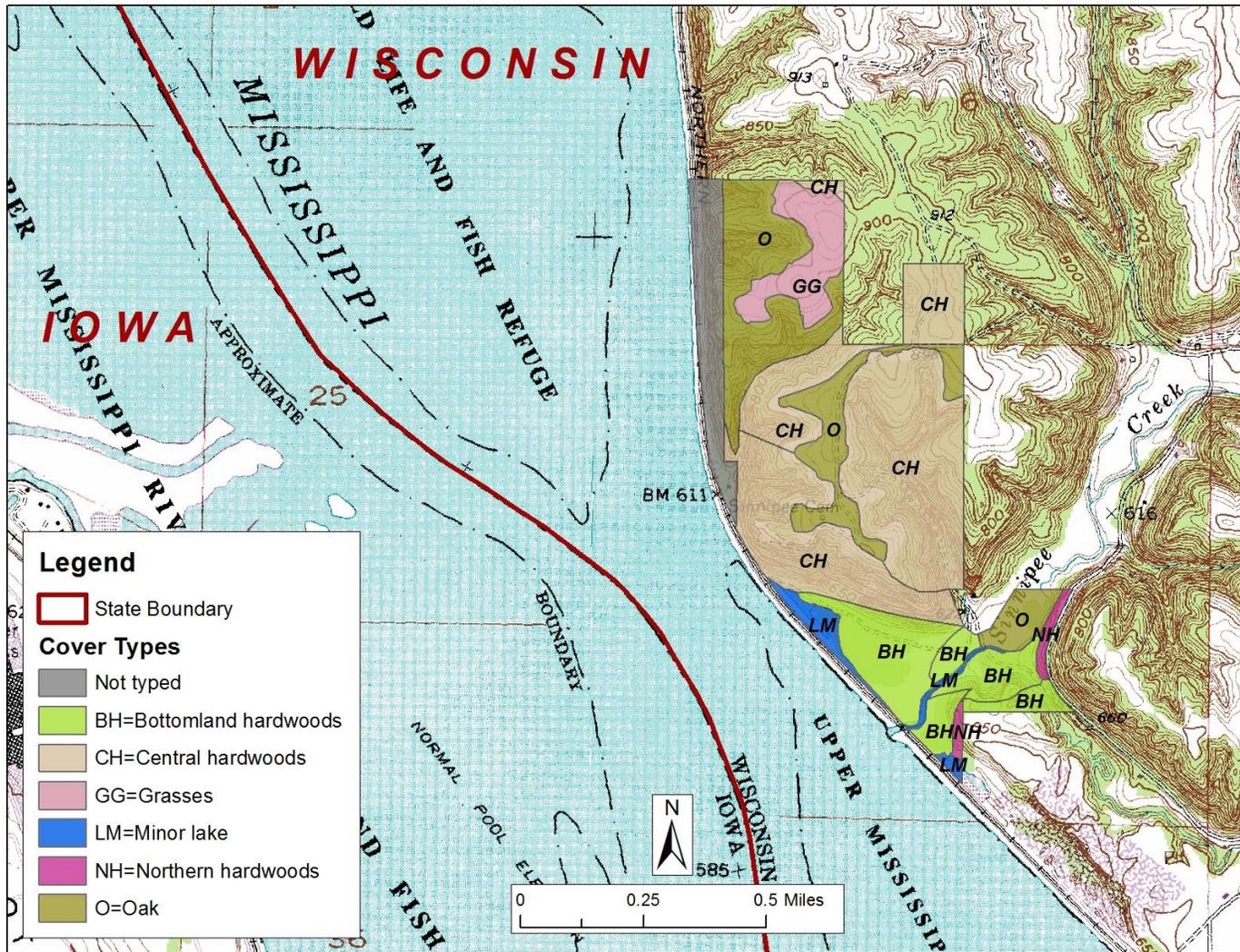


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Fenley State Recreation Area and surrounding area.

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Fenley State Recreation Area forest reconnaissance stands.