



Langlade & Lincoln County Spring Ponds, Public Access Sites & Miscellaneous State Lands Interim Forest Management Plan

Property Identifiers

Property Name: Blue Springs, Clubhouse Lake-Sunshine Springs Fishery Area, Crystal Springs, Daneault Springs Fishery Area, Deer Creek Springs, Demlows Lake Fishery Area, Drab Springs, Elton Springs, Gartzke Flowage, Goto Lake, Hatton Springs, Knoke Springs, Lake Pesabic Statewide Habitat Area, Lambert Springs Fishery Area, Long Lake, Martin Springs, Maxwell Springs, Otter Springs, Parsons Springs, Perch Lake (Steffen) Gift Lands, Rabes Lake Fishery Area, Rice Reservoir Public Access, Rolling Stone Lake Public Access, Sipes Springs, Spring Creek, Trout Springs, Willow Springs, Wisconsin River Public Access Site (Mistwood), and other miscellaneous Statewide Spring Ponds, Public Access Sites, Habitat Areas, State Owned Islands and Department Lands.

County: Langlade and Lincoln

Property Acreage: 2,008.39

Forestry Property Code(s): 3401, 3403, 3404, 3405, 3408, 3415, 3416, 3425, 3525, 3599

Master Plan Date: None

Property Assessment

This property group represents various small and scattered parcels ranging in size from 2 to 327 acres. The majority of properties within this group are identified as Statewide Spring Ponds which were acquired for their exceptional habitat for cold water species. Other properties in this group provide access to waterways or are considered fishery areas, donated lands, habitat areas, State Owned Islands and other miscellaneous state owned lands. These properties were purchased primarily for the aquatic resource or to provide access to public waters. The aquatic resource is a natural spring pond, trout stream, lake, river, or other valuable water feature and Fisheries Management staff have conducted countless projects on these waters to include stream habitat improvements, marl dredging, natural coarse woody debris input, and improvements for public access. Access is maintained by the WDNR to provide year-round recreational opportunities while protecting the natural fishery.

On most properties, the aquatic portion of the parcel is relatively small with a larger terrestrial portion, both forested and non-forested. Protection and use of the aquatic resource is the primary purpose with terrestrial management considered, including forest management.

Non-forest management activities have included wildlife plantings, prairie plantings and grassland maintenance through mowing and prescribed burning. Parking areas and access trails are maintained or constructed where needed, and in stream trout habitat projects have worked to improve cover and habitat quality.

LANDSCAPE AND REGIONAL CONTEXT

The properties lay within the Forest Transition, North Central Forest and Northern Highland Forest Ecological Landscapes. This region in Wisconsin is characterized by a mix of forest, agriculture and swamp. This region is bounded to the north by the end moraine of the Wisconsin glacial period. The region consists of plains bisected by many small rivers and streams creating a dendritic drainage pattern. The major land uses are agriculture and forestry.



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Hydrology:

Langlade and Lincoln County both have an abundance of waterways with diverse fishery resources which include: Muskellunge, Northern Pike, Walleye, Largemouth and Smallmouth bass, Pan fish, Trout and Forage Fish. The majority of the lakes in Langlade County are spring lakes, mostly considered spring ponds since they are fairly small lakes less than 20 acres in size. In Lincoln County the majority of the lakes are seepage lakes, followed by spring lakes, drainage lakes or drained lakes with most of the lakes considered small at less than 20 acres in size.

Historical Vegetation:

The forests in both counties were a mixture of pine, northern hardwoods, hemlock, lowland hardwoods, and swamp conifers. Lumbering began in the early 1800's with the pine being cut first and other lumber later. Logs were floated downstream on the major rivers within the counties (Wolf River and WI River) to sawmills located in Oshkosh and Wausau. Later, the logs were hauled by horses and railroads to local sawmills. Lumbering has remained a major enterprise in both counties. Large areas of forest land are still managed for cordwood, pulpwood (mostly aspen) and saw logs.

Current Land Cover:

The current land cover is dominated by deciduous forest, with scattered inclusions of conifers and forested wetlands along with smaller areas of agricultural land or open grass areas. The properties contain a broad variety of timber types including: Northern Hardwoods, Aspen, White Cedar, Tamarack, Black Spruce, Red and White Pine, Balsam Fir, Black Ash, and Hemlock.

CURRENT FOREST TYPES, SIZE CLASSES AND SUCCESSIONAL STAGES

Parcels are dominated by the following forested communities:

Northern Hardwoods – Generally dominated by sugar maple, basswood, white ash, and yellow birch in that order of representation. Other common species include red maple, balsam fir, aspen, white birch, ironwood and white spruce. Understory species vary depending on the degree of past management and habitat type.

Aspen: Typically, these stands are the result of a past regeneration harvest, as early as the 1930's. The aspen type is dominated by either quaking or bigtooth aspen with red maple, balsam fir, and scattered northern hardwood as associated species. Understory species include hardwoods and fir but also heavier concentrations of hazel. Aspen is economically important in Wisconsin and provides critical wildlife habitat. On a landscape scale, biological conditions of aspen range from old-growth remnant stands to pure aspen coppice.

Pine: These stands include plantations that were established 20-60 years ago.

Bottom Land Hardwood or Wetland Forests: These lowland stands are dominated by white cedar with fir and spruce as associated species.



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RARE SPECIES

Currently, NHI does list rare species and/or communities occurring on numerous properties within this group although formal surveys have not taken place. Most, if not all of the rare species exist in the aquatic portion of the parcel. NHI screenings and reviews will be conducted prior to any future management activities occurring on any parcel.

HIGH CONSERVATION VALUE FORESTS (HCVF) OR OTHER RESOURCES/ NATURAL COMMUNITY TYPES LIMITED IN THE LANDSCAPE

High Conservation Value Forests or other resources/natural community types limited in the landscape have not been identified on the properties.

BIOTIC INVENTORY STATUS:

A Rapid Ecological Assessment focusing on rare plants, selected rare animals, and high-quality natural communities has not been completed for any of the properties.

DEFERRAL/CONSULTATION AREA DESIGNATIONS

There are no Deferral or Consultation sites present on the properties.

CULTURAL AND ARCHEOLOGICAL SITES (INCLUDING TRIBAL SITES)

County Archeological and other Cultural Resources maps identify certain properties containing cultural or archeological sites within the property boundaries. Projects located on properties that contain any cultural or archaeological site will follow manual code procedures to avoid impacts to such sites.

RECREATIONAL USES

The properties are extensively used by a wide variety of recreationalists. Fishermen, canoeists, kayakers, hunters, trappers, sightseers, skiers and berry pickers are common visitors to the properties.

INVASIVE SPECIES

A number of invasive plants (both terrestrial and aquatic) are present in and around the properties with honeysuckle and buckthorn being the most common. Exotic earthworms infest most upland stands on the properties. No known infestations of Emerald Ash Borer are present, but at some point, this invasive insect will kill most of the ash.

SOILS

The physiography, relief and drainage of both Langlade County and Lincoln County are primarily the result of glaciation. The landscape is characterized mostly by moraines and outwash plains and partly by drumlins, eskers, kames, lake plains, bogs and other depressional areas where organic solids have formed and alluvial deposited into drainage ways. Both Counties are in the Northern Highland physiographic region of Wisconsin. This region has some of the highest elevations in the state with the most prominent physiographic feature being the broad belt of dominantly end moraine that contains some of the highest elevations and roughest terrain within the counties.



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FUTURE MANAGEMENT

General Management Objectives:

The overall management objective is protection of the aquatic resource. Forest management activities will be conducted in a manner so as not to jeopardize this aquatic resource and will be completed following the guidance outlined in the Silviculture Handbook, unless this plan makes an exception, and after consulting with an integrated team, including staff from Forestry, Fisheries Management, Facilities and Lands, Wildlife Management and Endangered Resources and after considering comments from the public and other interest groups.

Forest management activities are restricted in any designated scenic areas. On all properties, a 300-foot minimum timber harvest buffer will be observed along all waterways, including creeks, springs, seeps, ponds, and lakes. Buffers may be increased or decreased to address resource concerns on a case-by-case basis. All timber harvests will follow the guidelines established in the Best Management Practices for Water Quality Manual at a minimum to generally address invasive species, erosion, water quality, and fish and wildlife resource concerns. Recreational land uses will also be considered when applying specific management prescriptions.

As mentioned earlier, the parcels are found within the Forest Transition, North Central Forest or Northern Highland Forest Ecological Landscape. Within these broad landscapes, there are many forested and non-forested communities, each playing host to a variety of wildlife and plant species, some categorized as species of greatest conservation need (SGCN) that are significantly associated with one or more communities. Any management activities will have some effect on these forested communities and the plants and animals that inhabit them. Management that is beneficial to one species may even be detrimental to another. With the understanding that forest communities are under constant natural evolution, it is important that management activities be conducted in a manner causing the least overall negative impact.

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)

Aspen – For all properties excluding the Rice Reservoir Public Access Property, the primary objective is promoting the conversion of this timber type where practical to longer lived species within the timber harvest buffer. This will be accomplished by retaining longer lived tree species after harvest to create conditions that are more conducive to the regeneration of more shade tolerant species. It is recognized that several aspen stands will not have sufficient quantities of longer lived species to promote conversion and it may take several rotations of aspen harvesting to accumulate enough shade tolerant trees to convert the stand. Additional objectives include increasing age class diversity while facilitating the conversion process where opportunities exist.

Aspen – For the Rice Reservoir Public Access Property, aspen regeneration is achieved through coppice harvesting. On some sites an extended rotation of up to 50 years could be implemented. Large aspen stands should be divided and harvested years apart to increase age-class diversity. As appropriate, snags, high quality cavity, mast and conifer trees along with green tree retention areas will not be harvested.



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Northern Hardwoods – The primary objective for this type is to maintain and /or regenerate stands to enhance aesthetic values and wildlife habitat with timber production as a secondary objective. Depending on quality and species composition, objectives may include uneven-aged management with selection harvests that will improve stand quality by removing poor quality trees and releasing crop trees. Canopy gaps will be included to attempt to increase the regeneration of species such as birch, oak and basswood. Big tree silviculture and increasing some old growth characteristics can be implemented throughout this type. All of these stands will be managed to promote hardwood growth to a large diameter for the production of various wood products and to promote wildlife habitat diversity when applicable.

Bottom Land Hardwood or Wetland Forests – These types are not currently scheduled for harvesting. Many of these sites are associated with sensitive areas such as springs, ponds and streams, and thus should be considered as non-harvest locations. When necessary for management of aesthetic or wildlife values, "old growth" potential, salvage & sanitation or improvement cuttings, selection of the most appropriate silvicultural method for management of this forest type will be site specific and will follow the general management objectives identified above.

Pine – Even-aged management with periodic thinnings and an extended rotation age with an ultimate goal to convert coniferous plantations to native forest types or non-forest types. Forest restoration will be done with native species and mimic natural structure associated with the property ecological landscape.

Hemlock – These types are not currently scheduled for harvesting. Many of these sites are associated with sensitive areas such as springs, ponds and streams, and thus should be considered as non-harvest locations. When necessary for management of aesthetic or wildlife values, "old growth" potential, salvage & sanitation or improvement cuttings, selection of the most appropriate silvicultural method for management of this forest type will be site specific and will follow the general management objectives identified above.

Maintain and/or create open fields and grasslands by controlling woody encroachment with mowing, prescribed burning or other control methods.



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Approvals:

Cory Bantz 7-1-14
Property Manager Date

[Signature] 5-23-14
Regional Ecologist Date

Richard R LaValley 7-2-14
Forester Date

Kee D [Signature] 7-3-14
Forester Date

Michael J Lietz 7-21-2014
Area Forestry Team Supervisor Date