



Little Plover River Fishery Area Interim Forest Management Plan

Property Identifiers

Property Name: **Little Plover River Fishery Area**

Counties: **Portage**

Property Acreage: **254 Acres**

Forestry Property Code: **5055 – Little Plover River Fishery Area**

Master Plan Date: **1981 Non-NR44 compliant Management Plan**

Property Assessment

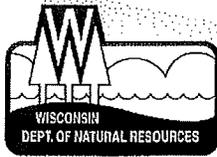
General Property Description

The Little Plover River Fishery Area is a state owned property. It is managed to preserve and enhance the headwaters of this class 1 trout stream, the resident brook trout fishery, the wildlife habitat on the surrounding uplands, and the natural scenic beauty of the area. It is located near the center of Portage County in the Village of Plover. The Little Plover River originates in agricultural croplands in the Town of Stockton and flows west for approximately 6 miles to the Wisconsin River passing through the Village of Plover.

Landscape and regional context

The Little Plover River Fishery Area is located in the Central Sand Plains Ecological Landscape of central Portage County. This ecological landscape is a large, relatively level expanse of lacustrine, outwash sand and material eroded from underlying sandstone bedrock. Organic soils are common in the extensively poorly drained peatlands. This ecological landscape is distinctive from any other part of the state in its origin as an extremely large glacial lake. The sand was deposited in Glacial Lake Wisconsin, along with outwash sand derived from glaciers to the north. The occurrence of such a large glacial lake is an uncommon event in the history of glaciation.

The Little Plover River watershed is highly susceptible to groundwater contamination from nonpoint sources compared to other parts of Wisconsin. In parts of the Central Sand Plains, sandy soils on top of sandy glacial deposits allow water and waterborne contaminants to infiltrate quickly to the groundwater.



Little Plover River Fishery Area Interim Forest Management Plan

The Central Sand Plains Ecological Landscape historically was an area of extensive wetlands of many types including open bogs, shrub swamps, and sedge meadows. Prairies, oak forests, savannas and barrens also were found in the uplands in this landscape. Today half the landscape is non-forested, in agriculture and grassland. The forested portion is mostly oak-dominated forest, followed by aspen and pines. A minor portion is maple-basswood forest and lowland hardwoods.

History of land use and past management

Prior to European settlement fire played a critical role in shaping the cover types. During settlement the majority of these lands were harvested for timber and/or cleared for agricultural purposes. Much of the area agricultural production utilizes irrigation. 70 years of fire suppression has altered the landscape allowing for white pine and shade tolerant hardwoods to replace early successional stage forests of Jack pine, aspen and black oak. Today, management is focused on restoring early successional stages of aspen, jack pine and pine barrens on the property.

Wildlife Action Plan/ Species of Greatest Conservation Need

Although the property is not specifically listed in the Wildlife Action Plan's Implementation document for the Central Sands Plains Ecological Landscape, prairie and barrens type soils and indicator species are found on the property. The oak barrens community is a priority natural community type and some high priority Species of Greatest Conservation Need associated with the barrens community are Red-headed Woodpecker, Western Glass Lizard, Barrens Snaketail, Bina Flower Moth, Frosted Elfin, Persius Duskywing and the Karner Blue Butterfly. Management opportunities for these species are possible.

Conservation Opportunity Area

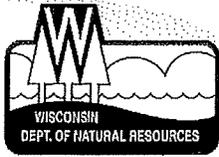
The property does not fall within a Conservation Opportunity Area as identified within the Wisconsin Wildlife Action Plan.

Natural Heritage Inventory (NHI)/Rare Species

Based on a Natural Heritage Inventory (NHI) search and a 2 mile buffer for Little Plover River State Natural Area there are 7 Element Occurrences, of which 4 are labeled as "Community" Groups; 1)Northern dry-mesic forest, 2)alder thicket, 3)stream—fast, hard, cold, and 4)springs and spring runs. The remaining Element Occurrences are one federally endangered insect, one special concern mammal, and one state threatened reptile.

High Value Conservation Forests (HVCF) or other resources/natural community types limited in the landscape

Limited community types in the landscape are pine and oak savannas, Karner Blue butterfly habitat along with a clear, hard water, class 1 trout stream with alder thickets.



Little Plover River Fishery Area Interim Forest Management Plan

Biotic Inventory Status

There has not been a biotic inventory for the property

Cultural and Archeological Sites

The Fishery Area has Archeological sites located within its boundaries. Prior to any management activity consultation shall occur between property management and/or forestry staff and the Department Archeologist.

State Natural Area Designations

There are no designated State Natural Areas located within the boundary of the Little Plover River Fishery Area.

Invasive Species

There are several high-priority species found in isolated pockets. The most common being spotted knapweed. A formal survey has not been conducted.

Soils

Soils along the Little Plover River are mostly well drained loamy sands being derived largely from glacial sediments (Forested Loamy Sands, 222Ra08). Pockets of peat are found randomly along the streambanks.

Recreational Uses

Hunting, fishing, and trapping are the primary recreational uses of this property. Some hunting is limited due to the urban proximity. Other forms of nature based outdoor recreation such as hiking, berry picking, cross country skiing, and bird watching also occur on the property.

Site Specifics

- **Current forest types, size classes and successional stages:** This property is small (254 acres) covering only 1.25 miles in length east to west. Private inholdings within the project boundary and the very close proximity to an urban population present challenges to management. Two major transportation corridors (County Road R and Interstate I-39) transects the property north to south. Intensive agriculture with related, high capacity irrigation exists immediately adjacent to the property. Fire suppression to protect developed properties nearby is a concern as is protection of the class I fishery.



Little Plover River Fishery Area Interim Forest Management Plan

Little Plover River Fishery Area: Property 5055

Forest Type	# of Stands	Acres	Acres by Age Classes in 2014		
			0-50	50-100	100+
Northern Hardwoods	2	20	N/A	N/A	N/A
Oak	1	36			36
Scrub Oak	6	60	44	16	
Jack Pine	9	68	51	17	
Red Pine	1	15	15		
White Pine	2	32	23	9	
Lowland Grass	1	18			
Right-of-way	1	2			
Upland Brush	1	3			
Total	25	254	133	42	36

Part 2: IFMP Components

Management Objectives:

The Little Plover River Fishery Area forest management objectives include:

- Maintain and enhance, as practicable, oak and Jack pine cover types.
- Even age management of red pine with natural conversion to white pine and/or oak
- Maintain the extent and quality of alder thickets along the stream
- Seek opportunities to maintain and create oak barrens.
- Identify invasive species and implement practices to eliminate/minimize impact to property.
- Protect, maintain, and enhance water quality and flow level of the stream.
- Identify threatened and endangered species and protect/provide habitat for a variety of game and non-game wildlife species, including aquatic species
- Provide opportunities for outdoor recreation to include hunting, fishing, trapping and nature study
- Manage Karner blue butterfly habitat.
- Provide opportunities for research and education on the highest quality native oak openings.

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):

- **Northern hardwoods** – These stands have largely converted to red maple. Efforts should focus on encouraging these stands to a more diverse stand. They will be



Little Plover River Fishery Area Interim Forest Management Plan

managed with the long term goal of the development of old-growth attributes. Harvesting will be applied to enhance and accelerate old-growth compositional, functional, and structural attributes. Traditional single-tree selection stocking guides will not be applied regularly to the management of these stands since these guidelines typically have an upper end maximum diameter limit and are usually entered every 10-15 years. Timber sales that occur will have closer to a 20 year re-entry period and a concerted effort will be in place to develop larger diameter trees sooner.

- **Oak** - Maintain oak stands through management techniques appropriate for the stand and site conditions. Use even age management techniques such as clearcutting and shelterwood harvests to promote natural regeneration. Artificial regeneration from seed or seedlings may be used to establish oak regeneration prior to or after timber harvests when natural regeneration is not adequate. Other management techniques that may be used to help regenerate oak stands include soil scarification, prescribed burning, mowing, or herbicide treatments. Use intermediate treatments such as release or crown thinning to develop young stands and improve composition and timber quality.
- **Red and White pine** - Natural stands will be thinned to promote large diameter trees for both wildlife and aesthetics. Small groups or individuals will be retained as legacy trees or to develop into legacy trees and provide structural and compositional variability within stands dominated by other species. Thin pine plantations using the standard silvicultural order of removal to attain a more natural appearing forest of old pines and to promote development of old-growth characteristics. Rotation age range can vary from 65 – 120 years for red pine and 80 – 180 years for white pine depending on soil type. Most red pine stands will naturally convert to oak or white pine through continuous silvicultural thinning. Eventually the pine will be a component of the newly established stand and may serve as big tree silviculture and provide old growth attributes. With this in mind, the pine stand may never be completely rotated.
- **Jack Pine** – Maintain jack pine cover type by regenerating the stand using a clear-cut silvicultural system. Rotation age is generally 40 - 60 years. Jack pine stands hold the potential to be a pine barrens natural community. Because barrens are globally rare, an inspection should be conducted to determine barrens potential at this site prior to any management that will drastically alter ground layer composition. Harvest generally promotes the rarer open barrens type.

All stands

- Utilize BMP's for Water Quality to protect streams and wetlands hydrology when conducting timber sales.
- Identify invasive plant species and implement control practices such as prescribed fire, hand pulling, chemical and mechanical control to eliminate or reduce negative impacts.
- Utilize BMP's for Invasive Species to help limit the introduction and spread of invasive species when conducting timber sales
- Retain reserve/legacy trees as groups or individuals throughout the property within harvested stands
- Identify threatened and endangered species and protect/provide habitat for a variety of game and non-game wildlife species, including aquatic species.

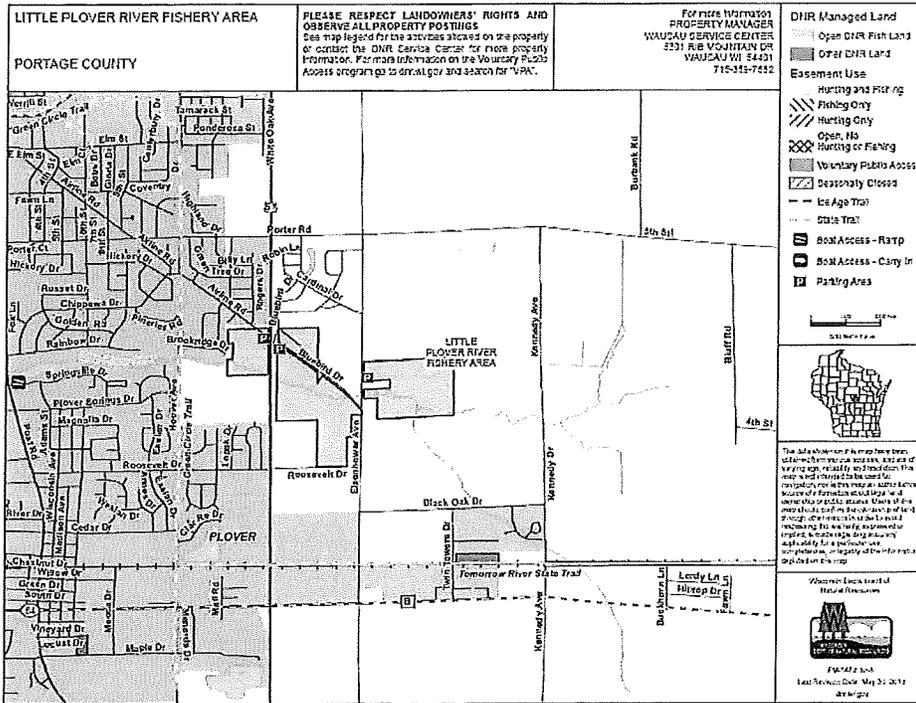


Little Plover River Fishery Area Interim Forest Management Plan

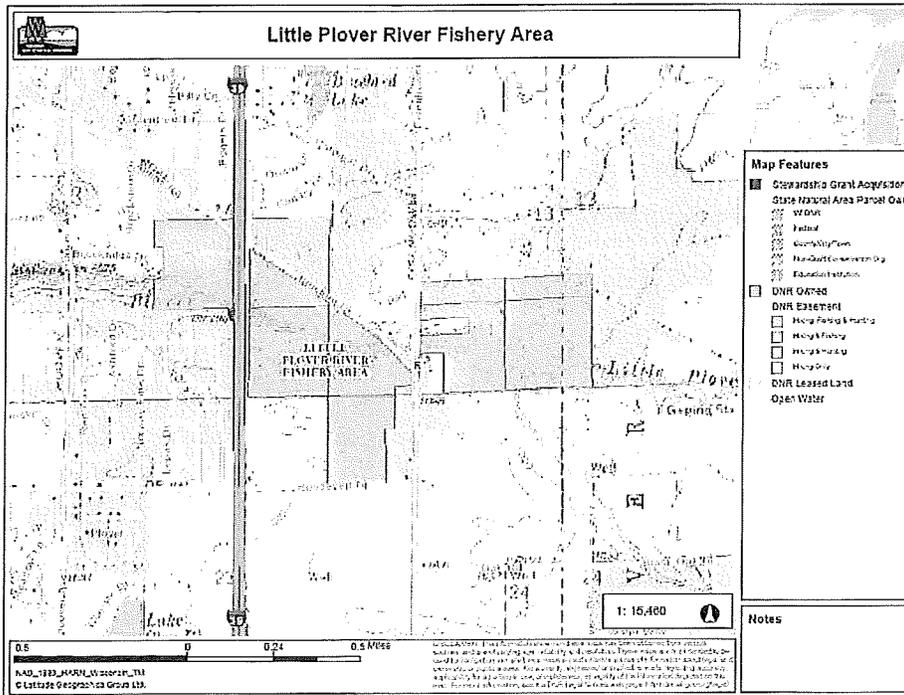
- Endangered Resources Species Guidance documents (those that are complete) will be consulted (ERCOMMON\Species_Guidance\Species_Docs) and the management guidance and avoidance sections will be used to determine how and if timber management can occur. In cases where species guidance documents haven't yet been developed, avoidance of rare species will occur via practices such as time of year restrictions, modified harvest boundaries, and/or consultation with rare species experts.
- Stand specific objectives and prescriptions will be discussed and determined at the Annual Integrated Property Management meetings. Typically these meetings occur in January and several resource professionals associated with the property attend the meeting, including the forester, district ecologist, fish manager, wildlife biologist / property manager, and Facilities and Lands technicians. Long term objectives and prescriptions may be modified at the Integrated Property Management meetings in the case of catastrophic events such as wild fires, insect invasions, or disease that cause safety concerns or create significant stand modifications.



Little Plover River Fishery Area Interim Forest Management Plan



Property Map



Topo Map



Little Plover River Fishery Area Interim Forest Management Plan

Approvals:

Jan F. Radeck 8-5-15
Regional Ecologist Date

Lyle T. Eider 8/27/15
Forester Date

Tom Murr 8/27/15
Property Manager Date

Denise 8-10-15
Area/Team Supervisor Date