



# Interim Forest Management Plan

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## Property Identifiers

Property Name and Designation (multiple small properties can be grouped):  
**Spread Eagle Barrens State Natural Area (SEBSNA)**

County(ies): **Florence**

Property Acreage: 6,436.8

Forestry Property Code(s): 1975 & 1908

Master Plan Date: Management Plan approved October 1, 1995

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## Part 1: Property Assessment (1-2 pages maximum)

The following items should be considered during the property assessment. Not all sections may be relevant for all properties.

### General Property Description

Spread Eagle Barrens SNA protects an extensive landscape of bracken grassland and barrens dominated by scattered jack pine, red pine, scrub oak, and quaking aspen. The sandy soils support an understory of sedges, bracken and sweet fern, slender wheat grass, muhly grass, poverty oats, hazelnut, serviceberry, blueberry, and willows. A mosaic of six different communities, the natural area was established to protect the Pine Barrens and Bracken Grassland communities and associated flora and fauna that require large expanses of open vegetation. Frost pockets, treeless depressions where frost may occur at any time of year, punctuate the landscape. Sedges, lichens, and other plant species have adapted to this harsh microclimate and are able to dominate these low-lying areas. In contrast, bracken fern, Jack pines and other small trees dominate the uplands where they are interspersed with grasses.

- **Landscape and regional context**

The property lies within the Northeast Sands Ecological Landscapes, and is made up of these 2 LTA's: Spread Eagle Barrens (212Tc02) and Florence Moraines (212Xg05). The SEBSNA is a Conservation Opportunity Areas (COA) and is listed as an Important Bird Area (IBA) by the Wisconsin Bird Conservation Initiative.

- **History of land use and past management**

Historically, logging occurred in this area of the state in the late 1800's, with use of the rivers in this area as a transport corridor for the harvested timber. The combination of intensive logging and raging wildfires in this area of the state kept the area in a relatively open condition. There is also a long history of grazing (primarily sheep).

In 1916, the predecessors to Wisconsin Electric Power Company began acquiring land along the Pine and Menominee River for development of power generating plants. In 1927, the original forest tax and fire protection laws were established, transitioning the timber harvest in this area to a more selective cut.

The majority of the current DNR land was in county ownership for many years, though the Department leased the land from the county in an effort to maintain sharp-tail grouse habitat through prescribed burning (1950s through 1980s). Though the specific efforts for



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sharp-tail grouse were ended in the 1980s, there was still a strong interest in continued barrens management. The official DNR project was established in 1995, when much of the land was acquired from the county. Shortly thereafter, WE Energies permanently dedicated approximately 1,710 acres of land within the project boundary as part of the natural area and has worked cooperatively with the DNR on management since that time.

Since a portion of the Pine River also extends through the natural area, this project is also affected by the state wild river designation, as set in law – Section 30.26 Wisconsin Statutes.

## Site Specifics

- **Current forest types, size classes and successional stages**

A total of 3173 acres (54%) of SEBSNA are forested.

- Aspen – A total of 2,150 acres (68%) of recon is typed as aspen. Age distribution: 0-20yr (507ac); 21-40yr. (851ac); 41-60yr. (583 ac); >60yr. (215ac).
- Oak – A total of 563 acres (18%) of recon is typed as oak. Major age classes include 51-55 yr. (105ac); 76-80yr. (159ac) and 96-100yr. (228 ac).
- Conifer—No single species of conifer comprises >3% of forest recon. Collectively, jack pine, red pine, white pine and swamp conifer comprise 383 acres (12%) of forest recon. Most stands (except swamp conifer) are age 46-55yr.

- **State Natural Area designations**

The entire Spread Eagle Barrens property is a designated State Natural Area (SNA).

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

Pine Barrens and associated Bracken Grasslands,

- **Biotic Inventory status**

A Rapid Ecological Assessment was completed in June, 2011. This document is available on the Department's website <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/nhi/nhireports.asp> under DNR Publication PUB-ER-831-2011.

- **Deferral/consultation area designations.**

The Spread Eagle Barrens SNA is a Consultation Area.

- **Rare species**

Rare species and high-quality examples of native communities have been documented within the SEBSNA. Refer to the Rapid Ecological Assessment for the project (DNR Publication PUB-ER-831-2011) on the Department's website <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/nhi/nhireports.asp> for more detailed information. NHI screening will be conducted prior to all future management activities.

- **Invasive species**

A report including an inventory of invasive species and recommendations for control was completed for SEBSNA in 2012. This document is available for review upon request.

- **Soils**

An excerpt from the Rapid Ecological Assessment for the SEBSNA (PUB-ER-831-2011): The soils of the two projects are mostly the result of weathering of glacial deposits. A line runs roughly through the center of the two projects that divides the planning group, as well as the county, between grayish loams and sandy loams in the west and sands in the east (Carlson et al. 1971). The grayish loams of the west were formed from glacial deposits which were derived from bedrock. The sands of the east were formed from sandy parent materials which were derived from the Cambrian and Lake Superior sandstone formations.

## Cultural and Recreational Considerations



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- Cultural and archeological sites (including tribal sites)  
The Archeological and other Cultural Resources map for Florence County (WI DNR, May 2012) identifies several historical and archeological sites within the SEBSNA. This map is compiled from data provided by the Division of Historic Preservation, Wisconsin Historical Society. Projects located within the SEBSNA will follow manual code procedures to avoid impacts to cultural and archeological sites.

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## Part 2: IFMP Components (1-2 pages maximum)

**Management Objectives** (Outline primary forest management objectives):

1. Provide a range of forested and unforested uplands with emphasis on early seral-stage pine-oak barrens. Preferred cover ratio shall be 80% open to 20% forested.
2. Convert forested stands to a more open condition, and maintain select forest stands.

**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):

### General Property Prescriptions:

1. Per Wild Rivers law (s. Ch. 30, Stats.) and Administrative Code (Ch. NR 302), no vegetative management will occur within a 150-foot buffer zone along the Pine River corridor, other than invasive species control or restoration activities. Further, land beyond the 150-foot zone shall be managed in accordance with the DNR's Silviculture and Forest Aesthetics Handbook (HB 2431.5).
2. Convert landscape to early seral-stage barrens or maintain existing barrens through a variety of management tools including but not limited to commercial timber harvest, prescribed fire, selective herbicide application and other mechanical treatments.
3. When planning harvest activities within 900 ft of the Pine River, consult with Endangered Resources District Ecologist (wood turtle considerations).

### Type Specific Prescriptions:

1. Forest Cover: 3,173 Acres
  - a. Upland
    - i. Type:
      1. Aspen: 2,150 acres
      2. Oak: 563 acres
      3. Red Pine: 85 acres
      4. White Pine: 69 acres
      5. Jack Pine: 67 acres
      6. Northern Hardwood: 53 acres
      7. White Birch: 23 acres
    - ii. Forest management activities on the property will be soil, habitat type, and Forest cover based. Little traditional sustainable forest management will be considered and only on the best dry mesic sites currently occupied by Red Oak and large continuous blocks of Aspen.



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- iii. On all maintenance and restoration project sites the following criteria need consideration:
  - 1. Protection of all Legacy White Pine, Red Pine and Red Oak
  - 2. White Birch and Jack Pine are declining in occurrence and given priority in retention designation
  - 3. Snag (standing dead) stem retention is very important to structural diversity
  - 4. Recruitment of future super canopy or legacy stems by protecting seedlings or sapling stage Red Pine and White pine stems.
- b. Lowland
  - i. Black Spruce, Swamp Conifer and Swamp Hardwoods: 163 acres. Reserved Designation. No Management

Approvals:

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Regional Ecologist Date

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Forester Date

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Property Manager Date

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Area/Team Supervisor Date