



Interim Forest Management Plan

Property Identifiers

Property Name: Wyalusing

Property Designation: State Park

DNR Property Code: 8870

Forestry Property Code: 2251

Property Location: Grant County

Property Acreage: 2,674

Master Plan Date: 1985

Property Manager: Chad Breuer

Property Assessment

The following should be considered during the property assessment:

A. Ecological Landscape description and property context:

Wyalusing State Park is located in the Western Coulees and Ridges Ecological Landscape which 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 Wyalusing has a long history of human use. Native Americans began to arrive in the area about 11,000 years ago. One of their legacies is the effigy mounds at the park. Euro-American use has included successive waves of explorers, fur traders, miners, and farmers.

The idea to create a park at the junction of the Mississippi and Wisconsin rivers was both a local movement and statewide initiative. The Robert Glenn family, who owned the land, promoted the concept of a park around the turn of the century. At about the same time, the state Legislature commissioned a report on the subject of state parks for Wisconsin. The report, completed in 1909, recommended four sites in the state for immediate consideration for acquisition. This area was one of four recommended. The purchase was approved by the Legislature in 1912 and the park established in 1917. The park was first named Nelson Dewey State Park and changed to Wyalusing in 1937.

Past management at the park has included the establishment and management of conifer and walnut plantations, prescribed fires, and invasive species control.

Wyalusing State Park is bounded by the Wisconsin River to the north and the Mississippi River to the west. The city of Prairie du Chien is about one mile north of the park. With exception of the level floodplains associated with the big rivers, much of the landscape within about five miles of the park is dissected, consisting of valleys, moderate to steep slopes, and ridgetops of varying width. Much of the park itself is wooded with some grassland/shrub lands and developed areas. Immediately surrounding and to the north of the park, slopes are mainly wooded with land cleared agricultural and other uses on the ridgetops and valley bottoms. As you get further away to the south and east, agriculture becomes the dominant form of land use and woods become less common.

Soils within the park are mostly silt loams with some fine sandy loams, stony silt loams, and rock outcrops. Most of the soils are upland types with bottomland types that are occasionally to frequently flooded. Slopes are gentle to steep, and some soils are classified as moderately eroded.

Vegetation management in the past has included the use of herbicides and prescribed fire.

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

- **Oak:** (43%) 1127 acres; date of origin 1850-1921; almost all large sawlogs with 1 stand of hardwood small sawlogs.
- **Central Hardwoods:** (23%) 612 acres; date of origin 1880-1992; mostly large sawlogs with 2 stands of hardwood small sawlogs and 2 stands of hardwood poles.
- **Northern Hardwoods:** (8%) 209 acres; date of origin 1880-1945; mostly large sawlogs, one stand hardwood poles.
- **Bottomland Hardwoods:** (8%) 205 acres; date of origin early 1900s; large sawlogs
- **White Pine:** (3%) 66 acres; date of origin 1917-1985; mostly large sawlogs, 2 stands of softwood small sawlogs.
- **Aspen:** (2%) 40 acres; date of origin 1940s-1981; hardwood small sawlogs, large sawlogs.



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- **Walnut:** (1%) 27 acres; date of origin 1951-1992; hardwood poles, hardwood small sawlogs, large sawlogs.
- **Red pine:** (<1%) 18 acres; date of origin 1943-1962; softwood small sawlog, large sawlog.
- **European Larch:** (<1%) 5 acres; date of origin 1965; softwood small sawlog.
- **Balsam Fir:** (<1%) 2 acres; date of origin 1973; softwood small sawlog.
- **Non-forest Cover Types:** grasslands (9%, 230 acres), upland brush (2%, 51 acres), campgrounds (2%, 44 acres).

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

Taxon group	<i>Total species</i>	<i>Endangered</i>	<i>Threatened</i>	<i>Special Concern</i>
Bird	11	2	7	2
Butterfly	2	0	0	2
Herptile	8	0	1	7
Plant	18	1	0	17

E. **Wildlife Action Plan Conservation Opportunity Areas (COA), Important Bird Areas (IBA):** Included in the Lower Wisconsin Bluffs and Floodplain COA (about 14 acres of the southwest tip of the park is in the Millville-Sandy Creek COA); bounded by the Lower Wisconsin River and Mississippi River COAs; contained within the Wyalusing to Dewey IBA

F. **Significant cultural or archeological features:** Wyalusing State Park Contains 65 Indian mounds including conical, linear, and effigy.

G. **Invasive species:** Invasive species known to occur at the park include non-native bush honeysuckle, wild parsnip, autumn olive, garlic mustard, and emerald ash borer. This list is 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 two SNA embedded within the park:

1. Wyalusing Hardwood Forest occupies the steep sides and top of a ridge just east of the confluence of the Wisconsin and Mississippi Rivers and contains four major southern forest types illustrating John Curtis' classic concept of a vegetation continuum. The wooded bluffs rise more than 400 feet above the Wisconsin River and provide a variety of exposures over different bedrock types including Prairie du Chien and Platteville-Galena dolomites and St. Peter sandstone. The SNA is managed as a southern forest reserve with a continuum from dry forest to floodplain forest, as an ecological reference area, and as a significant archaeological site. Natural processes will determine the structure of the forest. Exceptions include control of invasive plants and animals.
2. Wyalusing Walnut Forest lies on the north face of a steep, 500 foot-high bluff overlooking the confluence of the Wisconsin and Mississippi Rivers. It features a continuum of forest types from wet, floodplain forest of silver maple and cottonwood at the bluff's base to dry oak woods with white and black oak at its



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summit. The mid-slope and rich soils around the cliff base are forested with southern mesic forest of red oak, sugar maple, hackberry, butternut, and a high number of black walnuts. Two areas contain nearly pure stands of black walnut. The SNA is managed as a reserve for moist cliff, southern mesic forest, and floodplain forest, as well as an ecological reference area. Natural processes will determine the structure of the forest.

The SNAs may be considered to be HCVF. Older forested stands in the park have potential to be HCVF.

- I. **Primary public uses (recreation):** Recreational activities include camping, picnicking, hiking, biking, cross country skiing, snowshoeing, canoeing, kayaking, boating, fishing, nature study, bird watching, hunting and trapping.
- J. **Biotic Inventory Status:** None scheduled.
- K. **Deferral/consultation area designations:** None

IFMP components

Management Objectives: (Outline primary forest management objectives):

1. In accordance with Section I.B.1.a., manage the pine and European Larch plantations to maintain them in a healthy condition. This includes pruning and thinning of the pine plantation.
2. Allow for the removal of hazard trees within designated use areas.
3. Manage invasive species in accordance with the 2014 [statewide conifer and invasive species management variance](#).

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)
Conifer plantations:

1. Manage conifer plantations in accordance with the department's silvicultural handbook; promote large trees and reduce the appearance of a planting as practical. Sell conifer plantation thinnings where age appropriate and markets allow.

Summary of Public Involvement and Comments Received

Maps (Optional)

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



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PREPARED BY:

Charles Brewer 5/24/16
Property Manager Date

APPROVED:

Paul Gundersen 6/13/16
Area Program Supervisor Date

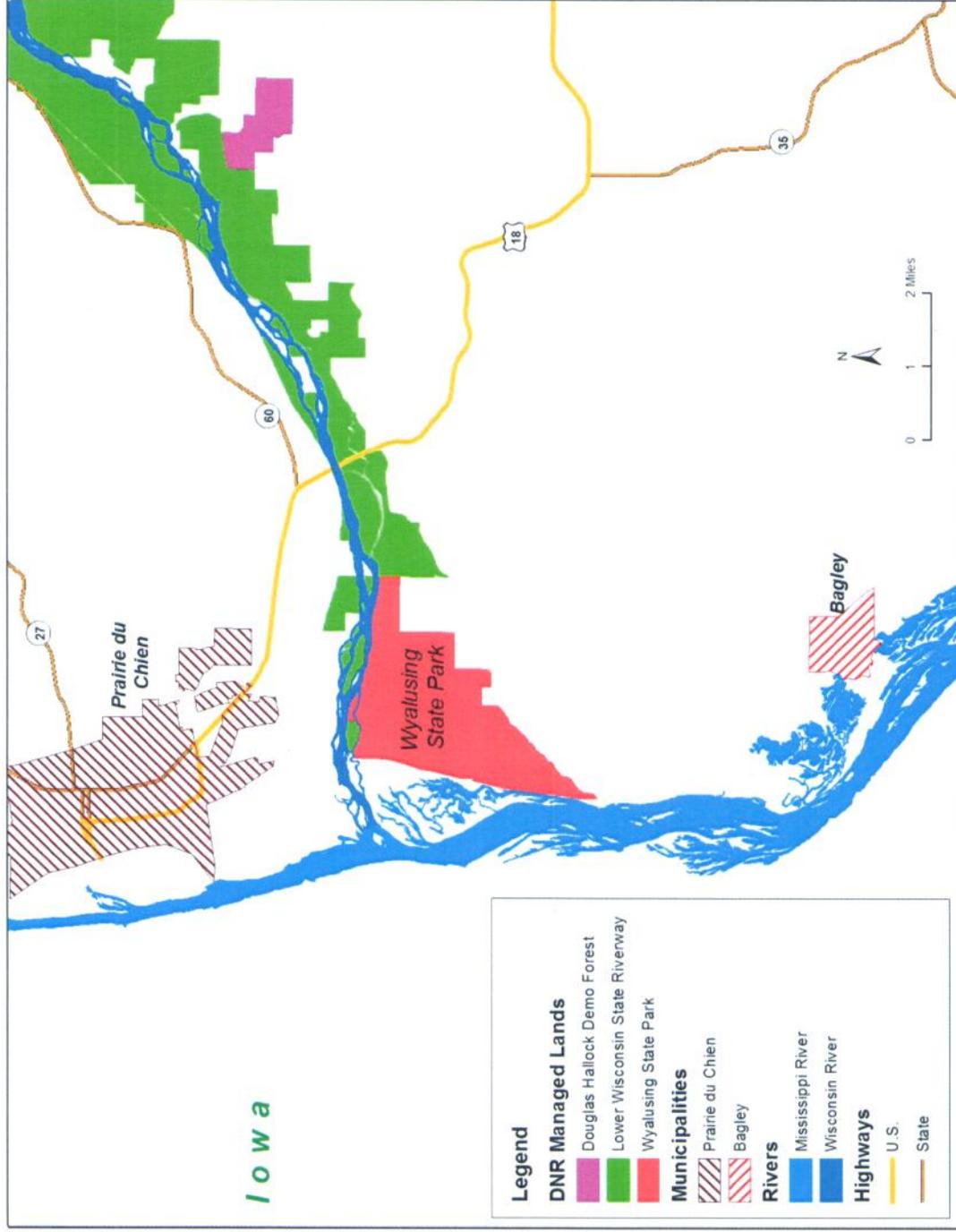
REVIEWED BY:

Alvin King 5/27/16
Forester Date

[Signature] 6/13/16
District Ecologist Date



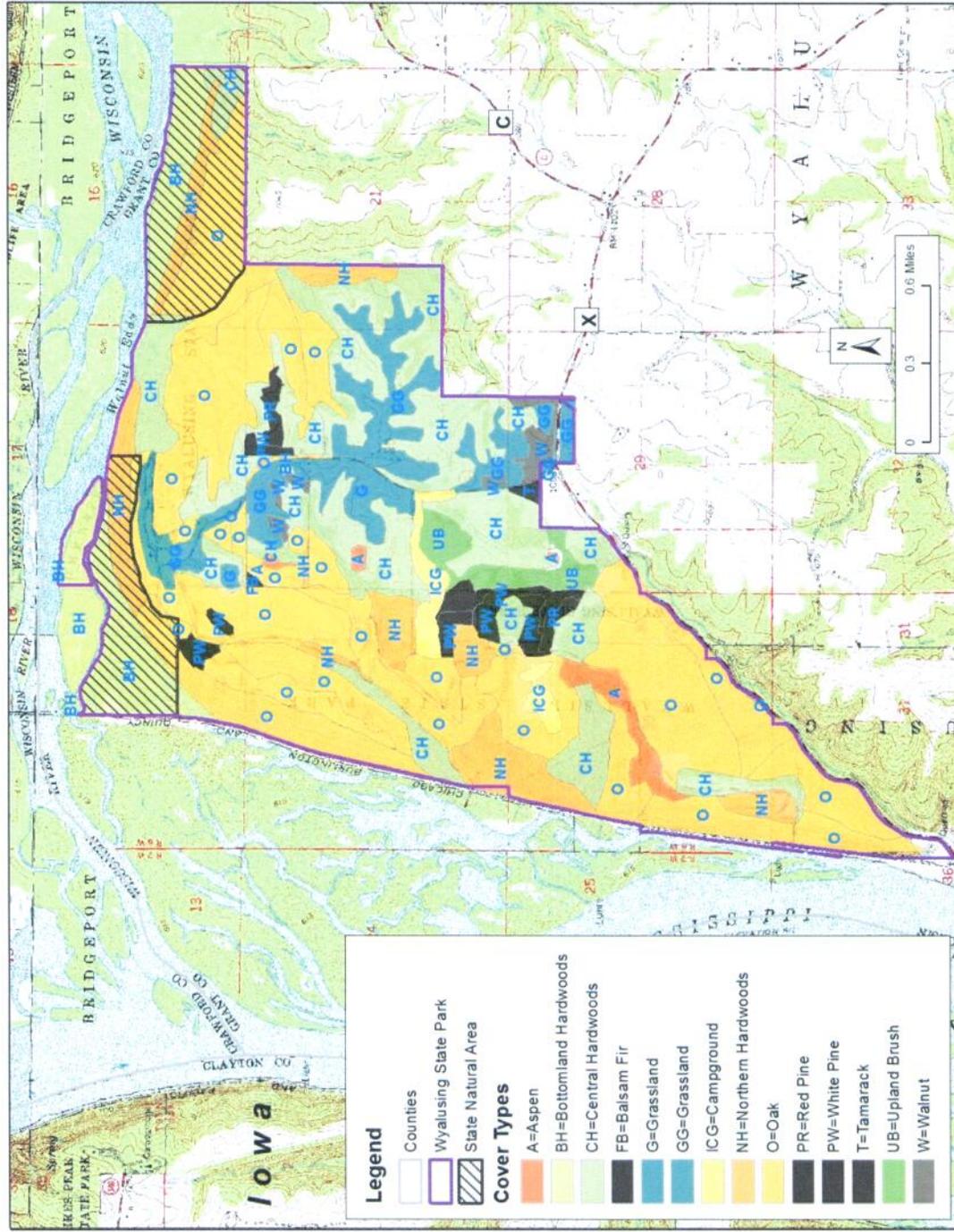
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Wyalusing State Park and surrounding area.



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Wyalusing State Park forest reconnaissance stands. Conifer plantations are solid black.