



PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

Northwest Barrens Properties

Overview

This document outlines the public participation plan for soliciting public review and input into the development, evaluation and adoption of a Master Plan for the Northwest Barrens properties of Burnett, Douglas and Washburn counties, which are listed below. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) recognizes that sound planning is a partnership effort with the people it serves and that the end product must have both broad public support and fit the capabilities of the properties.

Wildlife Areas

1. Namekagon Barrens
2. Douglas County

Wild River & Outstanding Resource Water

3. Totogatic Wild River

Master Plan development will be based on and influenced by existing statutes, administrative codes, scientific data, the best capabilities of the resources, judgment of resource management professionals and public experience and opinion. Local and regional recreational opportunities, economy and social conditions will also be considered. The approved Master Plan will represent the best role of this property group in its local, regional and statewide context.

Planning Process

The Master Planning process is divided into three primary phases:

Phase 1

Phase one is preparatory work. Reliable, current information on the properties' resources, public uses, regional demands and opportunities are compiled as a foundation for the planning process. Prior to the announcement that planning is starting, the Department is busy updating natural resource and recreational use data for the properties and collecting regional data in order to better understand and present the properties' current and potential functional role in the region.

Phase 2

Phase two is Plan development. This begins with a formal public announcement that the properties' Master Plan will be revised. The announcement will be followed by a public open house to share information on the process, obtain public feedback on important issues to be addressed in the plan, and to consider a preliminary vision and goals for the properties. The Department will use public input along with other data to evaluate management options in development of a draft master plan and environmental assessment. How the public can give input into these activities is discussed in "Ways to Make Your Voice Heard."

Phase 3

Phase three is presentation of the draft revised Master Plan to the Natural Resources Board for approval.

The Master Plan process is guided by the following state regulations:

- The plan will be developed within the parameters of Administrative Code, Chapter NR 1.60 and NR 44, which governs Master Planning for DNR properties and requirements of the Wisconsin Environmental Policy Act.
- Wildlife Areas are managed under authority of s. 23.09 (2)(d)3 Wis. Statutes; Natural Areas under authority of s. 23.27 Wis. Statutes; and Wild Rivers under s. 30.26 Wis. Statutes.
- Wildlife Areas are managed and developed in accordance with Administrative Code, Chapters NR 1.51 and 1.61; Wild Rivers under ch. NR 302; and State Natural Areas under Administrative Code, Chapter NR 1.32.
- Public use activities on DNR properties are governed by Administrative Code, Chapter NR 45 (Use of Department Properties).
- These wildlife areas have either been purchased, leased or are managed using funding from the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act (also known as the Pittman-Robertson Act). The statutes and applicable regulations prohibit a state fish and wildlife agency from allowing recreational activities and related facilities that would interfere with the purpose for which the State acquired, developed, or is managing the land.

Contact Information:

To give comments or suggestions on the planning process or to learn how to sign up for GovDelivery notices, please contact:

Beth Kienbaum
beth.kienbaum@wisconsin.gov
608/266-3219
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
PO Box 7921
Madison, WI 53707-7921

For Property-specific comments, questions, or documents, please contact:

Nancy Christel (Namekagon Barrens WA)
nancy.christel@wisconsin.gov
717-635-4091

Greg Kessler (Douglas County WA)
greg.kessler@wisconsin.gov
715-372-8539 x221

Jeff Pennucci (Totogatic WR)
jeff.pennucci@wisconsin.gov
715-365-8949

Kathy Bartilson (Totogatic WR)
Kathy.bartilson@wisconsin.gov
715-63504053



Opportunities for Participation in Planning

The Department's goals for public involvement in Master Planning are to offer the public meaningful ways to be involved in shaping the future management and use of their favorite properties, and to provide a means for interested people to stay informed about the property and planning progress. Public review and comment will be formally sought at key milestone points during the plan's development and approval process. However, public comments are welcome at any time. The formal public input points in the process are:

- Prior to plan development at the beginning of master planning (Phase 2 discussed above) to help identify important issues to be considered in the plan, and to consider the preliminary vision and goals for the properties,
- During a review and comment period for the draft plan and its environmental impact assessment, and
- Lastly, when the Natural Resources Board offers the public an opportunity to provide input to them when they consider approval of the proposed Master Plan revision.

Ways You May Make Your Voice Heard

Public meetings: DNR staff will hold informal public meetings at key points of the master planning process to present and discuss information on the property and plan proposals, and to listen to your comments and suggestions. These meetings will be held in the vicinity of the properties.

Other ways to comment: If you are unable to attend a meeting or if you think of comments you want to give after the meeting you may submit comments to the planning team by e-mail, via DNR master planning web page comment forms, postal-mail, or by phone. Contact information is provided at the end of this document.

How Decisions will be Made

To develop an effective property master plan, the Department listens to many voices. Recreation users, commercial interests, neighboring landowners, conservation groups, elected officials, other government agencies, tribal representatives, and other interested persons or groups are all encouraged to participate. Input received at each major step in the planning process will be considered as the plan is developed.

Decisions on which ideas to incorporate into the plan will be made based on the type of property, its capabilities, and the best role of the property in its local, regional and statewide context, and on the professional expertise of DNR staff. Further, the plan must comply with applicable Federal Laws, State Statutes, Administrative and Department Codes, and facility design standards. A broad range of interests will be listened to and considered in developing the proposed Master Plan, with the final decision-making responsibility and authority coming from the DNR's citizen policy-making Natural Resources Board.

How the Department will Provide Planning Information to You

Issue Media Releases

Media releases will be issued at key stages of the project to announce public meetings, provide information updates, solicit public comments and encourage receipt of GovDelivery notices.

Provide GovDelivery direct email notices

An electronic notification list, called GovDelivery, will provide email to the public with links to the DNR property planning web page, and be used to invite them (landowners, user groups, sporting clubs, environmental groups, service groups, local government, state officials, affected Indian Tribes, local and state newspapers, anyone interested) to be kept informed at key points in the planning process.

The GovDelivery email system will inform those interested about upcoming events, discussions and revised documents. To subscribe, visit our web page: dnr.wi.gov and search "Master Planning" then "Northwest Barrens Properties." Subscribe for updates at the red envelope symbol.

Media releases will also be used to invite attendance to public meetings, and to invite viewing of documents at the DNR Property Planning web pages. For additional information or to receive help obtaining documents, contact DNR using the information listed at the end of this document.

Provide a Web Page

The department will set up a special master planning web page where information about the property, the planning process, draft plan documents, notices, planning progress reports and other important planning information may be accessed.

Planning Reports

After each formal public input step the department will provide notification to communicate the results of the review. When needed, a progress report will be prepared to keep you informed on the status of the plan's development. Notice information will be emailed using Gov Delivery, posted on the master planning website, and provided in alternative format as requested.

Conduct Special Meetings if Needed

Additional public meetings may be held, if needed, at various stages of the planning process to discuss specific issues in depth. All meetings will be publicly announced ahead of time. Focus group meetings may be held with selected representatives to work through special management issues or other concerns that may arise.

Consultation with Other Governmental Units

Throughout the planning process, the master planning team will also be consulting with local governments, state and federal agencies, and affected Indian Tribes on a government-to-government basis on mutual planning issues.