

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

Monitoring the Implementation of Property Master Plans

Property: Lower Chippewa River Properties

Master Plan Year: 2013

Land Management – general management objectives

MASTER PLAN OBJECTIVES

- Where possible, manage for larger blocks of habitat and a continuum of habitats from lowland to upland.
- Establish and maintain linkages between habitat blocks to create travel corridors for the movement of species over time.
- Maintain, restore, and enhance grasslands and oak savannas at a landscape scale with an emphasis on native communities.
- Maintain and enhance the quality and extent of open wetlands, with particular emphasis placed on wet and wet-mesic prairie, sedge meadow, emergent marsh.
- Maintain existing shrub-carr wetland in areas that do not have high potential for management as sedge meadow, wet prairie, or wet mesic prairie.
- Maintain the extent and quality of bottomland hardwood, swamp hardwood stands, and southern tamarack swamp.
- Maintain the health, vigor and diversity of central hardwood stands to provide wildlife habitat and aesthetic values.
- For wildlife habitat value, maintain, enhance, and expand oak stands and retain aspen stands wherever practicable and consistent with management objectives for the management.
- Maintain the limited native jack and white pine cover type on these properties.
- Gradually phase out conifer plantations over time.
- Convert most cropped land to native cover types.
- Where feasible, identify and eradicate populations of invasive species by cutting, pulling, burning, herbicide treatment and/or bio-control.

Accomplishments 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For detailed descriptions of accomplishments, see the property specific sections of this report. <p>General accomplishments across the range of properties include management of large blocks of habitat on the Tiffany and Dunnville Wildlife Areas as well as Nine Mile Island State Natural Area. Extensive timber harvests took place on the Tiffany and Dunnville Wildlife Areas to create travel corridors and open landscapes, promoting native community development. These harvests enhanced existing oak openings and savannas while also preserving and enhancing existing jack and white pine remnants.</p>
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Recreation Management – general use objectives

MASTER PLAN OBJECTIVES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide high quality hunting, trapping, and fishing opportunities. ▪ Provide opportunities for non-hunting related recreational activities, such as hiking, un-tracked cross country skiing, wildlife viewing, nature study, berry picking, canoeing, and canoe/camping when compatible with the property's capabilities and the primary management objective.
Accomplishments 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For detailed descriptions of accomplishments, see the property specific sections of this report. <p>Generally, this assemblage of properties remains open to all types of public recreation as described in the Master Plan. The addition of allowed camping on the sand bars associated with State owned lands along the Chippewa River has been popular with canoeists, with numerous questions and requests responded to in the past year.</p>

Property: Dunnville Wildlife Area

Resource management, development and protection

MASTER PLAN OBJECTIVES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maintain and enhance grasslands/savanna and increase block size to benefit grassland dependent species. ▪ Convert agricultural lands to appropriate natural cover types.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Wild Rice management may occur in some wetlands including the planting of harvested seed. ▪ Maintain floodplain forest to improve the age class distribution for long term sustainability of floodplain forest species.
<p style="text-align: center;">Accomplishments 2013</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maintaining and enhancing grasslands and savannas with a focus on increasing block size continued to be the primary management activity that took place on Dunnville in 2013. Whole-tree chipping timber management cleared approximately 200 acres of woods to connect areas of similar habitat while converting the affected areas to oak savanna. This management technique will require extensive follow-up maintenance to minimize brushy regrowth, but with diligent maintenance, the area will be successfully converted. This process began in December, 2013, and was not completed until early 2014. - Prescribed burning took place on 3 units totaling 1050 acres. These burns successfully invigorated prairie stands while also stunting brush growth. Prescribed fire will continue to be a primary management tool in managing existing prairies and savannas as well as in the conversion of the aforementioned savanna restoration areas. - A great deal of spot chemical treatment was completed on the areas which had previously been involved in timber sales in an attempt to minimize regrowth of woody species. This process included utilizing a WisCorps crew for one week. Their treatment was spotty, and they have agreed to return for a couple of days in 2014 to re-treat some areas. - Treatment of various invasive plants, including buckthorn, garlic mustard, and crown vetch, took place at various locations throughout the property.

Native Community Management Area – Floodplain Terrace Prairies and Wetlands

<p style="text-align: center;">MASTER PLAN OBJECTIVES</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Monitor for oak wilt and promote conversion to oak barrens in affected areas. ▪ Maintain and increase jack pine/barrens for native plants and animals where soil conditions and cover type deem appropriate. ▪ Phase out red pine plantations. ▪ Maintain the mosaic of prairie, seepage lakes, floodplain forest and oak savanna for habitat for rare and special concern species such to provide opportunities for research, education, and ecological interpretation. ▪ Maintain and expand prairie and open oak woodland within the management area to provide habitat for native plant and animal species. ▪ Designate and restore a prairie and barrens State Natural Area
<p style="text-align: center;">Accomplishments 2013</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Little management occurred on this portion of Dunnville Wildlife Area in 2013.

Native Community Management Area –Red Cedar River Cliffs and Forest

<p>MASTER PLAN OBJECTIVES</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop and maintain an older, closed canopy forest with emphasis on long lived tree species where those species comprise the primary cover type. ▪ Enhance forest structural diversity and development of old growth characteristics such as large diameter trees, standing dead snags, and coarse woody debris. ▪ Protect water quality through protection and maintenance of wetland habitats and seeps. ▪ Protect the scenic and aesthetic qualities of the site. ▪ Support scientific research that is compatible with the ecological and aesthetic attributes of the site. ▪ Protect the archeological features from further disturbance and degradation.
<p>Accomplishments 2013</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Little management occurred on this portion of the Dunnville Wildlife Area in 2013

Public use management and development

<p>MASTER PLAN OBJECTIVES</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Stock pheasants on sites with suitable cover to provide increased opportunity for harvest during the pheasant hunting season. ▪ Maintain 20 existing parking areas throughout the property. ▪ Maintain primitive roads to provide foot access throughout the property. ▪ Monitor the erosive actions of the Chippewa River at the end of Dunnville Road and consider closing/abandoning the parking area at the end of the road. ▪ Establish a primitive road to provide access to Nine Mile Island.
<p>Accomplishments 2013</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1000 pheasants were stocked throughout the Dunnville Wildlife Area; 840 from the State Game Farm in Poynette and 160 from the Dunn County Fish and Game Association Day-old-chick program. The pheasant stocking program continues to provide a great deal of hunting opportunity on the Dunnville Wildlife Area. - 20 parking areas were maintained through a variety of methods, including mowing, grading, adding fill, maintaining existing fence, and replacing dilapidated fence with boulders. - A primitive road system was again maintained throughout the Dunnville Wildlife Area. The primary objective for this activity is to facilitate pheasant stocking and, in some cases, help establish fire breaks. The road system is also used extensively by recreationalists to access various parts of the property. - Following extensive flooding events on the Chippewa River in 2011, a decision has been made to abandon the existing parking area at the end of Dunnville Road. Conservation Infrastructure funding secured in 2012 was used to construct a new parking area approximately 100 yards north of the

historical lot. The road has been blocked off at the location of the new lot; the new lot will hold at least 30 vehicles, designed to meet the summer day-use needs.

- The establishment of a primitive road to provide access to Nine Mile Island has been explored. At this point there is not enough clarity on the riparian ownership rights to move ahead with an access at the intended location. This endeavor may be on hold until additional potential access points are acquired.

Property: Tiffany Wildlife Area

Resource management, development and protection

<p>MASTER PLAN OBJECTIVES</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Manage and maintain aspen and native shrub species. ▪ Regenerate oak (along with other mid-successional tree species) in order to maintain the species within oak-dominated or mixed cover types. Improve the oak age class distribution for long-term sustainability of the species. ▪ Manage for a diversity of age class and forest structure. ▪ Maintain aesthetic buffers along the river corridor.
<p>Accomplishments 2013</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 5 acres of Garlic Mustard were treated with herbicide on Tiffany WA to prevent the spread of this aggressive forest invasive species. - Identified areas with invasive species and initiated control by cutting and herbicide treatment. - Several timber harvest took place on Tiffany Wildlife Area to create travel corridors an open landscapes, promoting native community development. These harvests enhanced existing oak openings and savannas, while also preserving and enhancing bottomland/swamp hardwood stands.

Native Community Management Area – Five Mile Bluff Prairie/Wood

<p>MASTER PLAN OBJECTIVES</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maintain and expand prairie and open oak woodland within the management area to provide habitat for native plant and animal species. ▪ Begin to develop structural and functional attributes of old forests including biologically mature trees, large diameter trees and large snags and course woody debris. ▪ Provide closed canopy or near closed canopy to benefit area sensitive species. ▪ Develop aesthetic qualities of old forest habitat. ▪ Protect scenic and aesthetic qualities of the Chippewa River. ▪ Consider habitat requirements for bird Species of Greatest Conservation Need, which are found in these uplands, when conducting management prescriptions.
<p>Accomplishments 2013</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fire breaks have been installed for a prescribed burn in the spring of 2013. This burn includes the bluff prairie and woodland on the adjacent southwest slope. The prescribed burn is projected to benefit numerous bird, reptile, invertebrate, and plant species.

Native Community Management Areas – Floodplain Prairie and Savanna, and Floodplain Forests and Wetlands

<p>MASTER PLAN OBJECTIVES</p>	<p>Floodplain Prairie and Savanna Management Area</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Expand and maintain the floodplain savanna and prairie habitat for rare, special concern and common species. ▪ Maintain floodplain forest. ▪ Maintain a continuum of habitats from lowland to upland wherever possible. ▪ Maintain the river corridor as an important travel corridor for various species. ▪ Control invasive species. ▪ Provide opportunities for research, education, and ecological interpretation. ▪ Protect scenic and aesthetic qualities of the Chippewa River.
<p>Accomplishments 2013</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identified areas with invasive species and initiated control by cutting and herbicide treatment. - Installed fire breaks within area to allow for continued management of the prairie and savannah habitats present through prescribed fire. - No prescribed burning took place in 2013 due to poor weather and high water present throughout the spring burning season.

Native Community Management Areas – Floodplain Prairie and Savanna, and Floodplain Forests and Wetlands

<p>MASTER PLAN OBJECTIVES</p>	<p>Floodplain Forest and Wetlands Management Area (passive)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maintain and develop structural and functional attributes of old forests including biologically mature trees, large diameter trees, large snags and coarse woody debris. ▪ Provide closed canopy or near closed canopy to benefit area sensitive species. ▪ Develop aesthetic qualities of old forest habitat. ▪ Protect scenic and aesthetic qualities of the Chippewa River.
<p>Accomplishments 2013</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Passive management was practiced.

Native Community Management Areas – Floodplain Prairie and Savanna, and Floodplain Forests and Wetlands

<p>MASTER PLAN OBJECTIVES</p>	<p>Floodplain Forest and Wetlands Management Area (active)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maintain at least 50 % in mature forest with closed canopy or near closed canopy in large blocks to minimize habitat fragmentation. ▪ Maintain floodplain forest to improve the age class distribution for long term sustainability of floodplain forest species. ▪ Develop old forest attributes through natural processes and active management that mimics natural disturbance. ▪ Silvicultural and other management activities must attempt to avoid the introduction and/or spread of invasives (especially reed canary grass) in the understory of this community.
<p>Accomplishments 2013</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Passive management of forests was used to minimize habitat fragmentation. - Several timber sale areas were examined for active management that would enhance Floodplain forest habitat. Access issues to these potential timber sale areas pose a significant barrier to implementing these actions.

Public use management and development

<p>MASTER PLAN OBJECTIVES</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maintain 12 existing parking areas and 4 boat landing/parking areas on the property's periphery. ▪ Maintain a gated primitive service road from the Hwy 35 Landing to Thibodeau Road parking lot. ▪ Maintain the gated primitive service roads within the Pepin County portion of the Tiffany WA. ▪ Develop a 1.5 mile gated primitive service road entering the property near Misha Mokwa. ▪ Maintain an existing scenic overlook along County Road N near Dead Lake. ▪ Continue inland camping using the permit system.
<p>Accomplishments 2013</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 14 parking areas and 4 boat landings were maintained through mowing and litter removal. - Maintained primitive road system. The road system is used extensively by a variety of user groups to access various portion of the property. - Camping permits were issued to various recreation user groups. - Generally, this assemblage of properties remains open to all types of public recreation as described in the Master Plan. The addition of allowed camping on the sand bars associated with State owned lands along the Chippewa River has been popular with canoeists, with numerous questions and requests responded to in the past year.

Property: Big Swamp Wildlife Area

Resource management, development and protection

MASTER PLAN OBJECTIVES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Restore the hydrological function and ecological integrity of a larger block.
Accomplishments 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Little management occurred at Big Swamp WA in 2013.

Native Community Management Area – Bear Creek Tamarack Relict

MASTER PLAN OBJECTIVES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Maintain tamarack swamp and bog relict habitat following the general prescriptions found later in this section.
Accomplishments 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Little management occurred at Big Swamp WA in 2013.

Public use management and development

MASTER PLAN OBJECTIVES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Develop public parking areas when suitable lands are acquired.
Accomplishments 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- No suitable land to develop a parking area was acquired at Big Swamp WA in 2013.

Property: Lower Chippewa River State Natural Area (Eau Claire County)

Master Plan Year: 2013

Land Management – general management objectives

<p>MASTER PLAN OBJECTIVES</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Where possible, manage for larger blocks of habitat and a continuum of habitats from lowland to upland.▪ Establish and maintain linkages between habitat blocks to create travel corridors for the movement of species over time.▪ Maintain, restore, and enhance grasslands and oak savannas at a landscape scale with an emphasis on native communities.▪ Maintain and enhance the quality and extent of open wetlands, with particular emphasis placed on wet and wet-mesic prairie, sedge meadow, emergent marsh.▪ Maintain existing shrub-carr wetland in areas that do not have high potential for management as sedge meadow, wet prairie, or wet mesic prairie.▪ Maintain the extent and quality of bottomland hardwood, swamp hardwood stands, and southern tamarack swamp.▪ Maintain the health, vigor and diversity of central hardwood stands to provide wildlife habitat and aesthetic values.▪ For wildlife habitat value, maintain, enhance, and expand oak stands and retain aspen stands wherever practicable and consistent with management objectives for the management.▪ Maintain the limited native jack and white pine cover type on these properties.▪ Gradually phase out conifer plantations over time.▪ Convert most cropped land to native cover types.▪ Where feasible, identify and eradicate populations of invasive species by cutting, pulling, burning, herbicide treatment and/or bio-control.
<p>Accomplishments 2013</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Prescribed burn on 38 acres at the Bryce East parcel to maintain reconstructed grassland.▪ Removal of encroaching eastern red cedar from the newly acquired Huntsinger-Powell Lake property to maintain and enhance conditions on a high-quality remnant dry prairie.▪ Cut and herbicide treatment of black locust on the Huntsinger-Silvermine parcel to prevent further invasion.▪ Initiate planning stages of Powell Lake restoration. Discussion with DNR water permitting staff, floodplain engineers, and wetland engineers, as well as working with Eau Claire County floodplain zoning staff.

Recreation Management – general use objectives

MASTER PLAN OBJECTIVES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Provide high quality hunting, trapping, and fishing opportunities.▪ Provide opportunities for non-hunting related recreational activities, such as hiking, un-tracked cross country skiing, wildlife viewing, nature study, berry picking, canoeing, and canoe/camping when compatible with the property's capabilities and the primary management objective.
Accomplishments 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Maintain parking lot at Bryce East parcel to support access into the project.▪ Post signage to help users identify property boundaries.▪ Cooperate with disabled users to provide drive-in access to shoreline for fishing opportunities.

Property: Lower Chippewa River State Natural Area (Dunn County)

Resource management, development and protection

<p>MASTER PLAN OBJECTIVES</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maintain the floodplain forest, floodplain savanna and prairie habitat for rare and special concern species and to provide opportunities for research, education, and ecological interpretation. Keep block size as large as possible. ▪ Restore agricultural lands to floodplain forest, savanna, prairie, or wetlands as soil type, elevation, surrounding cover-type, current conditions and historical records indicate. ▪ Protect the Chippewa and Red Cedar Rivers. ▪ Maintain a continuum of habitats from lowland to upland wherever possible. ▪ Maintain the river corridor as an important travel corridor for various species. ▪ Control invasive species. ▪ Continue to acquire lands to reach the acreage goal.
<p>Accomplishments 2013</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mowing took place on 2 sites in Dunn County as part of the emergency haying and grazing act. These sites totaled 18 acres. - Invasive plants (primarily buckthorn) were spot treated throughout the property as well.

Public use management and development

<p>MASTER PLAN OBJECTIVES</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maintain 6 parking areas. ▪ Develop parking areas on new acquisitions as needed. ▪ Maintain primitive service roads. ▪ Consider partial closure of Fuller road (1010th street) as lands are acquired.
<p>Accomplishments 2013</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Six parking lots have been maintained through a combination of mowing, grading, fence maintenance, and posting. - Construction of 2 new parking lots was completed in the fall of 2013, with funding provided by the conservation infrastructure fund. These lots are located off of County Hwy H and 1010th St., both in Dunn County. - A wooden kiosk and metal sign were constructed at the intersection of Highway 85 and County Road H.

Property: Nine Mile Island State Natural Area

Resource management, development and protection

<p>MASTER PLAN OBJECTIVES</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maintain the bottomland hardwoods, prairies, and oak savanna/woodland to provide habitat for rare and special concern species. ▪ Provide opportunities for research, education, and ecological interpretation. ▪ Maintain and develop structural and functional attributes of old forests including biologically mature trees, large diameter trees, large snags and coarse woody debris. ▪ Provide closed canopy or near closed canopy to benefit area sensitive species. ▪ Develop aesthetic qualities of old forest habitat. ▪ Protect scenic and aesthetic qualities of the Chippewa River.
<p>Accomplishments 2013</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - On the mainland portion of the SNA, some brush cutting occurred along the Chippewa River trail in an area which has open prairie on each side of the trail. This brush removal will open this area up creating a more open landscape between County Hwy M and the escarpment overlooking the Chippewa River.

Public use management and development

<p>MASTER PLAN OBJECTIVES</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establish a primitive access road for SNA management purposes across Dunnville WA. ▪ Maintain 3 parking lots. ▪ Maintain a carry-in boat access site.
<p>Accomplishments 2013</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The opportunity to establish and access from Dunnville to Nine Mile Island was explored in 2012. At this point there is not enough clarity of riparian ownership and associated rights to move forward with the access. We may have to acquire additional acreage in order to develop an access between the mainland and the island. - Maintenance has occurred on 3 parking areas, primarily through mowing and grading as well as occasional trash cleanup. In addition, Conservation Infrastructure funding secured in 2012 was utilized for the construction of 2 additional parking lots, which will be located off of County Hwy M. These lots were completed in the fall of 2013. - A carry-in boat located on County Hwy M has been maintained through signage and occasional trash cleanup.

Property: Caryville Savanna State Natural Area

Resource management, development and protection

MASTER PLAN OBJECTIVES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Maintain the savanna to provide habitat for rare and special concern species and to provide opportunities for research, education, and ecological interpretation.
Accomplishments 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Passage of motorized equipment onto Brush Island is not possible. Management has consisted of prescribed burning on a 2-year rotation and occasional work days by volunteer groups to cut and treat invasive species such as buckthorn.- Very little management occurred on this site in 2013. This site will be on the burn list again in 2014.

Property: Rock Falls Wildlife Area

Resource management, development and protection

MASTER PLAN OBJECTIVES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Create and maintain a large block of grassland to support grassland SCGN species and protect associated ecological values.▪ Protect the water quality of Rock Creek.▪ Manage for mature oaks and white pines where each is the primary cover type.▪ Manage water levels in the impoundments for waterfowl, marshbirds and shorebirds.▪ Provide winter food plots for wildlife.
Accomplishments 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- For management purposes, the property is divided into east and west halves, with Rock Creek being the dividing line. In 2013, a 27 acre block on the east side of the property was mowed as part of the emergency haying and grazing act. While the intention was to burn this site in 2013, mowing was a viable alternative management considering the burn did not happen.- A small amount of brush was cut along the ditch on the west side of the property.- Drought conditions once again lead to lower than normal water conditions in the impoundment on the west side of the property and the pond on the east side.

Public use management and development

MASTER PLAN OBJECTIVES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Maintain 2 parking areas on the periphery of the property.▪ Primitive trails provide foot access throughout the property.▪ Develop new parking areas as public lands are acquired.
Accomplishments 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Two parking areas were maintained, one at each end of the property, primarily through mowing and grading.

Property: Waterville Extensive Wildlife Habitat Area

Resource management, development and protection

MASTER PLAN OBJECTIVES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Prevent woody succession in the grasslands.▪ Prevent reed canary grass encroachment.
Accomplishments 2013	- A timber sale was established on this property focusing on regeneration of bottomland species, including swamp white oak. The sale will be completed in 2014 or 2015.

Public use management and development

MASTER PLAN OBJECTIVES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Maintain 1 parking area on the periphery of the property.▪ Primitive trails provide foot access on the property.
Accomplishments 2013	- One parking area was maintained on this site, providing a public access point on this isolated property.