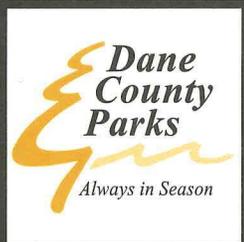




Dane County
Parks and Open Space Plan



2001 - 2005



Dane County Parks & Open Space Plan 2001-2005

**Adopted By
Dane County Board of Supervisors
July 19, 2001**

RES. 61, 2001-02

ADOPTING THE PARKS AND OPEN SPACE PLAN UPDATE FOR DANE COUNTY

The Dane County Parks & Open Space Advisory Committee has completed an update of the County Park and Open Space Plan for the period 2001-2005. The Parks and Open Space Plan was first adopted by the Dane County Board of Supervisors in 1971. The adoption of this plan and subsequent acceptance by the state Department of Natural Resources will also enable the county to participate in state and federal outdoor recreation grant programs. Qualifying guidelines require updating the plan every five years.

The plan update serves as the official park and open space plan for the Dane County region and as a basis for park and open space acquisition and development projects.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Dane County Board of Supervisors approves and adopts in concept the Parks and Open Space Plan update for Dane County, as a part of the comprehensive Park and Open Space Plan for the region, and as the basis for the Park Commission review of proposed projects.

Public Works & Facilities Management Committee and Parks Commission recommend adoption of Res. 61. Motion carried.

Dane County Park Commission

William G. Lunney, Chair
Kay Bongers
Mark Fraire
Elizabeth A. Lewis, Vice Chair
Susan King
Darold Lowe
James Mohrbacher, Secretary

Parks And Open Space Plan Advisory Committee

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Purpose

The primary purpose for this plan is to identify the parks and open space goals for Dane County for the period of 2001-2005 and to identify the process to meet those goals. Dane County plays a special role in the partnership of state, county and local units of government, as well as private groups, that attempt to meet the recreational and resource protection needs for Dane County's citizens. This plan defines that role and also recommends how Dane County can work as a partner with other governmental units and the private sector.

The Parks and Open Space Plan is also intended to partially satisfy state requirements under S. 66.0295, Wis. Stats. for a natural, cultural and historic resources element of a county comprehensive plan. Under this law, by 2010, any land use decisions by Wisconsin towns, villages, cities and counties, including the acquisition of land, must be consistent with an adopted comprehensive plan.

The adoption of this plan and subsequent acceptance by the state Department of Natural Resources will also enable the county to participate in outdoor recreation grant programs. The DNR has adopted requirements for local comprehensive outdoor recreation plans that must be met in order to qualify for participation in state and federal grant programs.

The recommendations put forth in this plan should be examined annually and completely reviewed at the end of the planning period in order to determine how well the county has achieved its goals. Future planning efforts should build on the recommendations made in this plan.

Planning Process

In creating the Parks and Open Space Plan, the Dane County Park Commission sought to broaden the input into the plan to include as many public and private groups as possible.

The Commission's Parks and Open Space Plan Advisory Committee included members from the County Board's Executive, Zoning & Natural Resources and Personnel & Finance committees. Forming and strengthening working relationships with local units of government in Dane County is at the core of this plan. In the summer of 2000, County Parks Department staff invited all of the county's 60 communities to suggest additions or potential new projects for inclusion in the 2001-2005 Parks and Open Space Plan. Forty-one of those communities responded, most of which met with parks staff and committee members to provide input and recommendations on specific proposals before the draft plan was prepared. The committee and its staff also met with representatives from 12 nonprofit resource and recreation groups.

The committee held three public meetings at various places around the county to gather feedback on proposed new initiatives. Over 80 people attended those meetings, including representatives from local governments and nonprofit conservation organizations.

The Dane County Park Commission

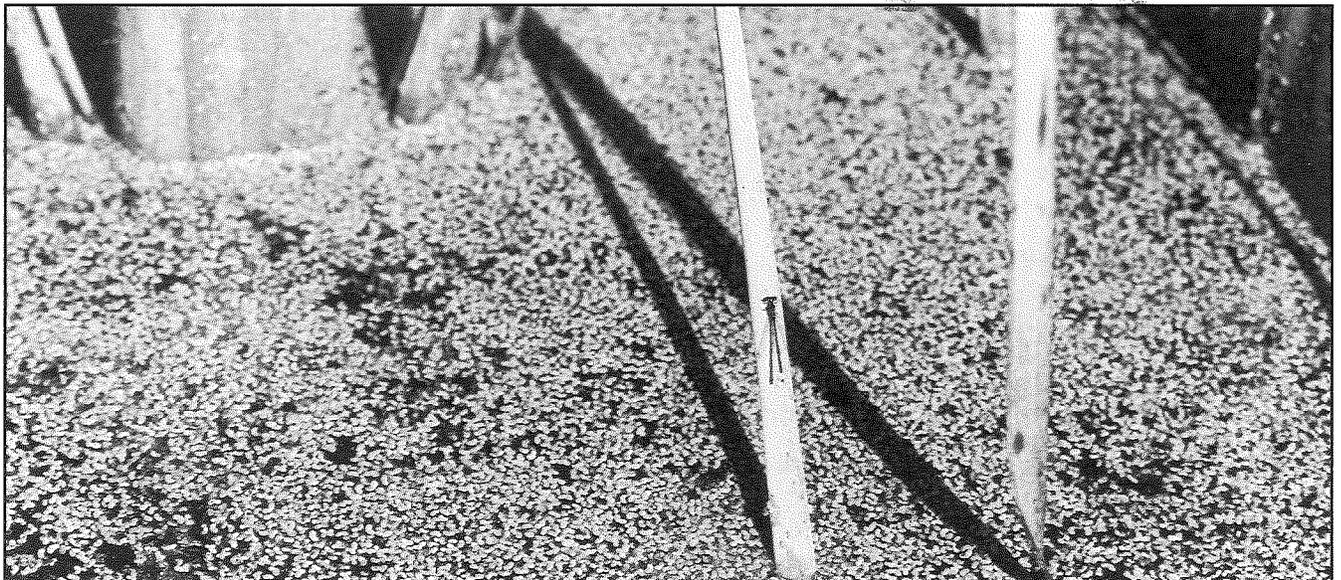
Authorization

The Dane County Park Commission is authorized by State Statute 27.02(2), which states that in any county with a county executive, the county park commission shall consist of seven members appointed by the county executive, subject to confirmation by the county board. State Statute 27.03(2) also indicates that the county executive shall appoint and supervise a general manager of the parks system. In Dane County, this position is the director of the County Parks Department.

Organization

The County Executive appoints the members of the Dane County Park Commission and the County Parks Department Director. The Dane County Board created the Office of the County Executive on July 20, 1972. The County Executive serves a four-year term and is elected in the spring elections.

The County Park Commission and County Parks Department may exercise certain powers delineated in state statutes, subject to the supervision and approval of the County Board. The County Board is made up of 37 elected supervisors who direct the Parks Department to carry out adopted policies and authorizes its actions, such as the acquisition of park lands.



The Dane County Parks Department is comprised of three program areas: operations and maintenance, planning and development, and land acquisition and property management. These program areas and their mission statements are described in greater detail below.

Operations and Maintenance

Mission and Program:

- To operate and maintain a system of 32 parks and resource sites containing more than 6000 acres for the citizens of and visitors to Dane County.
- To provide a park system of diverse resources for quality outdoor recreation opportunities, special activities, resource protection, preservation of natural and cultural heritage and an interconnected recreational resource system through a network of trail corridors.
- Provide quality service to our customers through education, volunteerism, and direct service.

This program represents the foundation from which the park system is based. Managing and maintaining the county's investment in the park system accounts for 80 percent of the Parks Department's responsibilities. Stewarding the land and providing resources the public can use includes a wide variety of tasks including visitor protection, customer service, forestry, grounds, trails, construction, boat launches, equipment maintenance, playgrounds, recreational equipment, water systems, sewer systems, roads, parking lots, winter recreation and education. In addition, the Department provides a reservation system for campsites and shelters, special events and a permit system for a wide variety of recreational activities from launching boats to walking a pet. This program also performs work for other county departments including Human Services, Sheriff, Exposition Center, Facilities Management, Public Works and the Zoo. The Department partners with local, state and regional organizations to accomplish the goals and objectives of the current Dane County Park and Plan.



Planning and Development

Mission and Program:

- To provide long and short range planning for Dane County in the areas of parks, resource protection and historical preservation.
- To provide long- and short-term planning, supervision of development projects for the Dane County Park System.
- Planning and development also includes the naturalist/ ecologist program, which provides upland and wetland restoration and trail development for the park system.

The Dane County Parks Department has had an active role in countywide planning for recreation, open space preservation and resource protection. In addition, this program provides specific park plans, specific facility plans, special funding requests for new and renovation projects, and the supervision of construction and implementation of development projects. The Dane County Park and Open Space Plan for 2001-2005 has comprehensive goals for acquisition and preservation. These efforts need project plans to identify specifically the areas to be preserved. In addition, there are presently 32 separate areas in the park system consisting of 21 recreational parks and 11 natural resource sites that require planning for public use. The naturalist program provides upland prairie restoration, vegetative management of all natural areas, outdoor education programs and assistance with all trail layout and development. This program involves several hundreds of volunteers each year.



Land Acquisition and Property Management

Mission and Program

- Preserve and acquire historical and archaeological resources, and land and water resources for the use, benefit and enjoyment of the citizens of Dane County;
- Manage property use agreements affecting lands under the jurisdiction of the Dane County Park Commission;
- Work with other units of government to facilitate open space goals;
- Maintain grants and agreements for acquisition and administer those agreements, and;
- Administer a County funding grant program that will provide 50% matching funds for the preservation of lands identified in the Parks and Open Space Plan.

The Land Acquisition and Property Management Program focuses on acquiring cultural and natural resources, seeking funding alternatives and building partnerships with the private sector and other levels of government. This work also involves negotiating contracts, writing grants, administering leases, easements and crop rental agreements on all properties within the Park Commission jurisdiction, and purchasing land for Dane County to meet the Park and Open Space goals.

History

The history of Dane County's parks system goes back to 1935 when the county acquired Stewart Park, its first park. Between 1935 and 1969, Dane County acquired a total of 12 parks. These include: Stewart (1935); Babcock (1936); LaFollette (1936); Goodland (1937); Mendota (1951); Brigham (1952); Fish Lake (1959); Riley-Deppe (1962); Festge (1963); Half-Way Prairie (1964); Token Creek (1966); and Lake View Woods (1967).

In 1970, Dane County adopted its first Parks and Open Space Plan. The plan was "...intended to serve as a guide for the acquisition and development of parks and open spaces by the county." The adoption of the plan also enabled Dane County to participate in the Federal Land and Water Conservation (LAWCON) Fund grant program, the Outdoor Recreation Act Program (ORAP), as well as other

state and federal funding programs. Utilizing LAWCON and other funding sources, the county purchased the following parks and natural resource sites between 1970 and 1980: Cam-Rock (1970); Viking (1972); Walking Iron (1972); Lake Farm (1973); McCarthy (1974); Indian Lake (1975); Fish Camp (1976); and Salmo Pond (1980); as well as initiating projects for the Cherokee Marsh (1970) and Nine Springs E-Way (1976); and acquiring or accepting Holtzman natural resource site (1973); Phil's Woods (1974); and Schumacher Farm (1978).

The County adopted a Short-Range Open Space Program in 1975 and completed the first major updating of the 1970 plan with the Parks, Open Space and Outdoor Recreation Plan in 1983.

Beginning in 1990, the Dane County Park Commission has broadened its scope to focus on resource protection and providing connections between communities and the surrounding parks and natural resource sites. These goals were detailed in the Parks and Open Space Plan for Dane County, Wisconsin, 1990-1995 adopted in 1990.

Other County Plans

Land Use Plan (1973)

Adoption of the Dane County Land Use Plan put park and open space policies into the context of overall county development policies. The plan articulated broad objectives and detailed policies in six areas: population growth and distribution, environmental protection, regional development, public services, agricultural land, and open space.

The major open space recommendation of the land use plan was establishment of a countywide open space corridor system. Land with open space characteristics tends to be concentrated in identifiable patterns, which are most often linear because they reflect stream, drainage, steep topography and ridge patterns. The open space corridor concept uses this fact to delineate a continuous linear system whose component parts are interrelated. The Dane County Land Use Plan included a generalized corridor map, detailed in later plans.

Water Quality Plan (1979) and Environmental Corridors (1983)

The Water Quality Plan makes a strong connection between open space land uses and water quality benefits. In particular, the plan recommends aggressive

wetland, shoreland, and floodplain protection programs. The plan recommends that water-related resource protection areas should have priority for acquisition.

Continuing water quality planning provided detailed delineation of the urban component of the countywide open space corridors network (environmental corridors). Beginning in 1983, the specific detailing of the corridors and implementation measures were developed in conjunction with local governmental units, and incorporated into local and regional plans. Detailed environmental corridor delineations have now been developed and adopted in all Dane County urban service areas. The Dane County Regional Planning Commission is completing a digitization project in which the entire environmental corridor mapping will be transferred to a digitized or Geographic Information System consistent with other mapping.

Dane County Farmland Preservation Plan (1981) and component town land use plans

This plan serves as the primary guide to land use in the rural areas of Dane County. The plan includes land use plans developed by each of the county's 34 town governments, and subsequently adopted by the County Board. All 34 towns have adopted guidelines to protect open space corridors as mapped by the Dane County Regional Planning Commission. Several recent town amendments to the Farmland Preservation Plan include policies designed to protect or buffer specific resource or park lands identified in the Parks and Open Space plan. Other towns have identified resources, habitats or areas of local interest or concern for additional protection, or have established design, landscaping or other criteria to minimize the visual or environmental impact of development.

Dane County Greenspace Plan (1991)

The Greenspace Plan was produced by the Greenspace Committee of the Dane County Board of Supervisors and approved by the full board. The plan examines county efforts in natural resource protection, parks and trails, community separation, and urban and rural development controls. The plan makes recommendations for preserving open space in areas of urban expansion, maintaining rural open space, providing recreational open space, financing acquisitions by the county, as well as specific



administrative and legislative recommendations. In 1991, the County Board adopted some of the recommendations of the Greenspace Plan as an amendment to the 1995-2000 Dane County Parks and Open Space Plan.

Dane County Land Use and Transportation Plan (1997)

This plan was developed through the Vision 2020 cooperative planning process coordinated by the Dane County Regional Planning Commission. It serves as a set of general regional guidelines for urban development, environmental protection, land use and transportation. The land use component of the plan makes recommendations about directing development toward urban areas, preservation of lands which provide community separation, protecting open space corridors, preserving rural character and maintenance of scenic views. As a land use plan, it is advisory to county and municipal decision-makers, acting as a guide in their review of development and infrastructure proposals.

The transportation component of the plan seeks to promote a continuous system of bikeways throughout the county, better planning and design for pedestrian transportation and preservation of rail corridors. As a transportation plan, it provides guidance on future transportation investments included in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Open Space Plans Park and Open Space Plan (1970)

The county's first park plan addressed long-term needs for recreational land as well as natural resources. Its policies recognized both the recreational

and non-recreational functions of open space and placed a strong emphasis on environmental protection. In addition, the policies called for open space to help carry out the general development policies of the region.

With generous funding available through the federal Land and Water Conservation (LAWCON) fund and state Outdoor Recreation Act Program (ORAP), the plan recommended an ambitious acquisition program. Recommendations included 2,090 acres of new county parkland, 430 acres of additions to existing parks, and 4,690 acres of resource protection acres to be acquired by various units of government.

The top priorities included: establishment of a large park on the northwest shore of Lake Mendota; a park along Lake Waubesa; a park in the Mount Vernon area; expansion to Brigham, Festge and Stewart Parks; and major resource acquisition along Sixmile Creek, Nine Springs Creek, the Yahara River and Cherokee Marsh, and Token Creek.

Short-Range Open Space Program (1975)

The 1973 Dane County Land Use Plan called for a five-year action plan to place priorities on proposals first laid out in the 1970 long-range park plan. Considerable public support was indicated for open space acquisition and the Short-Range Open Space Program was written in 1975 to meet that need. It recorded substantial progress made toward the acquisition goals of the long-range plan. By 1975, Dane County had acquired 63 percent of the acreage proposed for new parks and 27 percent of the acreage intended for resource protection.

Among the resource protection projects, continued acquisition of the Nine Springs E-Way was given first priority, with an emphasis on the Dunn's Marsh area. Among the park proposals, creation of a park on Lake Mendota received top priority as a state-county cooperative effort. In addition, the short-range program called for purchase, whenever possible, of parcels contributing toward the open space corridors as outlined in the Dane County Land Use Plan.

The short-range program urged an "opportunities approach" to acquisition rather than detailed capital improvement programming. While the county and other units of government were advised to buy the highest priority sites first, buying lower priority parcels was encouraged if they became available.

Park, Open Space and Outdoor Recreation Plan (1983)

This plan included a review of the need for the acquisition of additional lands and a detailed analysis of a range of outdoor recreation activities. The plan also included a long-range acquisition plan and a short-range program.

Listed as first priority areas for resource protection were the Nine Springs E-Way corridor, the Cherokee Marsh-Yahara River, and the Sixmile-Spring Creek corridor. Included as first priority additions to existing parks were Festge and Brigham Parks. Acquisition of a regional park in the Mt. Vernon-Deer Creek area was also recommended.

Short-range recommendations included development of Badger Prairie, Indian Lake, Lake Farm, Stewart and Token Creek Parks, as well as acquisitions in the E-Way. Also recommended was the preparation of master plans for the development of McCarthy Youth and Conservation Park, Viking Park and Walking Iron Park.

Parks and Open Space Plan for Dane County, Wisconsin - 1990-1995 (1990)

This plan established priorities for acquisitions of new parks, additions to existing parks, new trails, as well as additions to existing natural resource sites and acquisition of new natural resource sites. Included within the latter category are projects within the Upper Black Earth Creek, the Door Creek wetlands, the Pheasant Branch Creek, Sixmile and Dorn Creeks, South Waubesa Marsh, and the Sugar River wetlands.

The plan was intended to guide the county's parks and open space actions during the period from 1990-1995 and to enable the county to qualify for matching funds from state and federal programs.

Amendment to the Parks and Open Space Plan for Dane County, Wisconsin, 1990-1995 (1991)

This amendment to the Parks and Open Space Plan incorporated ten recommendations for resource protection projects and trails from the Dane County Greenspace Plan. These ten projects were: (1) Blooming Grove Drumlin Area; (2) Ice Age Trail Junction Area; (3) Lower Mud Lake; (4) Sixmile Creek Area; (5) Extension of the Upper Black Earth Creek Natural resource site to Cross Plains; (6) streambank easements; (7) Westport Parkway; (8) Token Creek Parkway; (9) expansion of Token Creek Park; and (10) assisting state and local governments in completing an inventory of prairies and oak savannas, and working for preservation of same.

Parks and Open Space Plan for Dane County, Wisconsin 1996-2000

This plan built on the 1990-95 Parks and Open Space Plan to plan for acquisitions of new parks, additions to existing parks, new trails, as well as additions to existing natural resource sites and acquisition of new natural resource sites. The 1996-2000 plan recognized the addition of Donald Park, as well as the Lower Mud Lake, Blooming Grove Drumlin, Ice Age Trail Junction, Badger Mill Creek and Pleasant Valley natural resource sites. New land and water based trails were a major focus of the 1996-2000 plan, including the Capital City Trail, sixteen other land based trails and five water-based trails.

The plan was intended to guide the county's parks and open space actions during the period from 1996 to 2000 and to enable the county to qualify for matching funds from state and federal programs. This plan also became the basis for the \$30 million New Conservation Fund, approved by the County Board after a public referendum in 1999.

Project Plans - Natural Resource Sites

A natural resource site consists of land that is specifically set aside for the protection of a valuable natural environment. Project plans are prepared by park planning staff and adopted by the County Board. These plans identify the specific resources to be protected and establish boundaries for acquisition efforts. The date represents the year the plan was adopted.

Nine Springs E-Way (1976)

The Nine Springs E-Way was developed concurrently with the land use plan. It was identified as a first priority acquisition recommendation in the 1970 Park and Open Space Plan.

Philip Lewis and the UW-Madison Environmental Awareness Center staff, who obtained Madison and Dane County endorsement of the concept in 1972, coordinated the project. An immediate goal was set to delineate at least a minimal contiguous linkage through the southern portion of the Nine Springs Creek corridor. An intergovernmental committee assisted by the Madison City Planning Department, the Dane County Regional Planning Commission, and the Dane County Parks Department prepared a detailed plan for acquisition of all lands needed to complete the Nine Springs portion of the E-Way.

Land acquired in the corridor is intended for resource protection and trail-oriented recreation. Because public access is desired, all of the area is scheduled for acquisition instead of regulatory protection.

Cherokee Marsh Long Range Open Space Plan (1981)

Like the Nine Springs E-Way, the Cherokee Marsh Plan is a detailed proposal for one portion of the county open space system. Protection of the marsh, Dane County's largest remaining wetland, has been a public concern since the 1950s. While the City of Madison, Dane County and Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources have all acquired portions of the area, coordination of long-term plans among these units of government was needed.

The City of Madison Parks Commission initiated an intergovernmental planning program in 1977 (as part of its own Park and Open Space Plan, adopted that year). A Cherokee Marsh Advisory Committee was established, representing Madison, Dane

County, Wisconsin DNR, the Towns of Westport, Windsor and Burke, and coordinated by the Dane County RPC.

The Madison Parks Department staff analyzed the marsh area, and produced three types of recommendations. First, a "preservation boundary" was delineated, to identify a clear demarcation of land intended to remain as permanent open space. Second, the plan included proposals regarding public access to and use of land within the open space boundary. The recommendation called for controlled public use, providing limited facilities as needed to meet population pressures, and directing activities to those facilities. Finally, the plan made recommendations to reach the protection goals for the marsh, calling for a combination of land-use controls, easements, and fee simple acquisition. General responsibilities of each unit of government were also outlined.

In the past two decades, over 3,000 acres of land have been acquired for public use in the marsh area. The Long-Range Open Space Plan proposes that 2,700 additional acres be protected in coming decades to preserve Cherokee Marsh as a major open space corridor.



Ice Age Trail Junction Project Plan (1993)

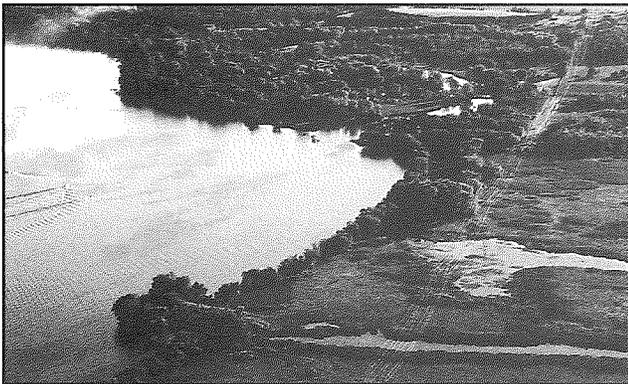
The Ice Age Trail Junction Area project was a result of a partnership between Dane County, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Ice Age Park and Trail Foundation, Town of Verona, and the Cities of Madison and Verona. This site creates a Dane County link in the 1,000-mile long Ice Age National Scenic Trail that loops through Wisconsin. The project plan defines a project boundary and preliminary development plan for the Trail Junction Area between the Cities of Madison and Verona. Officials and residents from the local communities were instrumental in initiating this project.

The project plan was guided by three sets of objectives addressing recreational trail development, resource protection, and community development and identity. The total project area was 1,283 acres in size. It is not intended that all of this acreage be acquired.

Lower Mud Lake Resource Protection Project Plan (1994)

The Lower Mud Lake is a major wetland area along the Yahara River. Residents and local officials from the Town of Dunn and the Village of McFarland suggested making Lower Mud Lake a resource protection project during meetings of the Dane County Greenspace Planning Committee.

The plan consists of a project boundary and recommendations for management of land within the project boundary. The project plan included four key objectives: (1) to create a preserve along the Yahara River and Lower Mud Lake, which has as its primary purpose the preservation and restoration of natural resources; (2) to preserve wetland, floodplain, springs and related features to protect water quality along the Yahara chain of lakes; (3) to provide and protect feeding and breeding habitat for fish, waterfowl and wildlife; and (4) to preserve archeological and historic natural resource sites.



Door Creek Wetland Plan (2000)

This area located on the north shore of Lake Kegonsa includes approximately 1,100 acres of valuable wetland. The project boundary defines wetlands and surrounding upland buffer areas. The County Board adopted a project plan for this area in 2000 that seeks to protect and restore wetlands that provide Northern Pike spawning habitat, and encourages stormwater management to enhance the water quality of Door Creek.

Status of Park Acquisitions — Acres Acquired to Date

Park Site and Original Acquisition	Parks and Open Space Plan (1970)	Short Range Open Space Program (1975)	Park, Open Space and Outdoor Recreation Plan (1983)	Parks and Open Space Plan for Dane County, Wisconsin 1990-1995 (1990)	Parks and Open Space Plan for Dane County, Wisconsin, 1995-2000 (1995)	Parks and Open Space Plan for Dane County, Wisconsin, 2001-2005 (1/1/2001)
Babcock (1936)	40	40	40	40	40	40
Badger Prairie (1976)	--	--	339	339	339	339
Brigham (1952)	56	56	94	112	112	112
Cam-Rock (1970)	197	260	300	300	303	402
Donald (1993)	--	--	--	--	327	480
Festge (1963)	47	70	70	70	126	126
Fish Camp (1976)❖	--	--	19	19	19	19
Goodland (1937)	15	15	15	15	15	15
Half-Way (1964)	--	--	1	1	1	1
Indian Lake (1975)	--	400	442	442	442	483
La Follette (1936)	35	35	35	35	35	35
Lake Farm (1973)	--	135	295	328	328	328
Lussier (2000) (Fish Lake)	3	3	3	3	3	140
McCarthy (1974)	--	--	180	180	180	220
Mendota (1951)	20	20	20	20	20	20
Morton (1999)	--	--	--	--	--	120
Riley-Deppe (1962)	34	34	34	34	34	34
Salmo Pond (1980)❖	--	--	6	6	6	6
Stewart (1935)	50	105	105	125	161	191
Token Creek (1966)	147	387	387	387	427	427
Viking (1972)	--	100	100	100	100	100
Subtotal	644	1,660	2,485	2,556	3,018	3,638*

* - Parkland acreages do not include the following lands, which include easements on private lands, rights of first refusal, development rights, and rights of enforcement:

2000 - 2005: Cam-Rock - 20 acres, Donald - 165 acres

❖ - Property owned by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, but maintained and operated by Dane County Parks

Status of Natural Resource Site Acquisitions — Acres Acquired to Date

Natural Resource Site and Original Acquisition	Parks and Open Space Plan (1970)	Short Range Open Space Program (1975)	Park, Open Space and Outdoor Recreation Plan (1983)	Parks and Open Space Plan for Dane County, Wisconsin, 1990-1995 (1990)	Parks and Open Space Plan for Dane County, Wisconsin, 1995-2000 (1995)	Parks and Open Space Plan for Dane County, Wisconsin, 2000 – 2005 (1/1/2001)
Blooming Grove Drumlin	--	--	--	--	--	42
Holtzman (1973)	--	--	64	64	64	64
Ice Age Trail (1995) ¹	--	--	--	--	--	76
Ice Age Trail Junction (1993)	--	--	--	--	269	387
Lake View Woods (1967)	27	27	27	27	27	27
Lower Mud Lake (1995)	--	--	--	--	221	221
Nine Springs E-Way (1976)	--	20	289	598	629	736
Pheasant Branch Creek –	--	--	--	--	100.5	100.5
Phil's Woods (1974)	--	--	37	37	37	37
Prairie Moraine (1993)	--	--	--	--	160	160
Schumacher Farm (1978)	--	--	38	38	38	117
Token Creek Wetlands ²	--	--	--	--	2	62
Upper Black Earth Creek	--	--	--	--	79	79
Cherokee Marsh (1970)	--	--	65	65	192	385
Streambank Protection	--	--	--	--	--	197
Walking Iron (1972)	--	240	240	240	320	289
Subtotal	27	287	760	1069	2,138.5*	2,979.5*

* Natural Resource Site acreages do not include the following lands, which include easements on private lands, rights of first refusal, rights of enforcement and development rights:

1995 – 2000: Ice Age Trail – 221 acres, Lower Mud Lake – 5 acres, Nine-Springs E-way – 11 acres, Token Creek Wetlands – 3 acres

2000 – 2005: Ice age Trail – 28 acres, Nine-Springs E-Way – 118 acres

Total Park and Natural Resource Site Acquisitions — Acres Acquired to Date

Parks and Resource Areas	Parks and Open Space Plan (1970)	Short Range Open Space Program (1975)	Park, Open Space and Outdoor Recreation Plan (1983)	Parks and Open Space Plan for Dane County, Wisconsin, 1990-1995 (1990)	Parks and Open Space Plan for Dane County, Wisconsin, 1995-2000 (1995)	Parks and Open Space Plan for Dane County, Wisconsin, 2000 – 2005 (1/1/2001)
Parks	644	1,660	2,485	2,556	3,018	3,638*
Natural Resource Site	27	287	760	1,069	2,138.5	2,979.5*
TOTAL	671	1,947	3,245	3,625	5,156.5*	6,617.5*

*Natural Resource site and parkland acreages do not include easements on private lands, rights of first refusal, development rights, and rights of enforcement.

Goals and Policies

A. Overall Goals

The Parks and Open Space Plan has four main goals:

1. Preserve key natural resources of the county in permanent open space.
2. Provide sufficient parks and recreation areas to meet the needs of the residents of Dane County.
3. Preserve for posterity the nature and diversity of the natural and cultural heritage of Dane County.
4. Use open space to achieve separation of communities and help guide urban growth when the land is appropriate for park purposes.

B. Policies for Natural Resource Protection

1. Continue preservation of the physical and biological resources within the countywide open space corridor system as adopted in the 1997 Dane County Land Use and Transportation Guide, (Vision 2020), which includes planning for open space corridors.
2. Support the detailed delineation and implementation of the countywide system of open space corridors, which include two components:
 - a. Environmental Corridors within urban service areas, and;
 - b. Rural Resource Protection Areas in rural areas.
3. Protect natural resources and linkages outside the open space corridors such as scientific areas, glacial features, and other isolated, environmentally sensitive areas.
4. Include any additional green space preservation plans that are adopted by Dane County.
5. Acquire and preserve wetlands and the adjacent uplands and shoreline along lakes, streams, creeks, their headwaters and springs, as well as woodland areas and areas of significant topography.
6. Assist in implementing the Dane County Water Quality Plan.
7. Allow for only low-impact recreational uses of natural resource protection areas.
8. Plan and implement the restoration of upland prairies, woodlands and wetlands.



9. Facilitate and participate in linking public lands and trails of various political jurisdictions to communities and population centers to amplify the availability and recreational use of these lands.
 10. Provide access to lakes and streams and water-based recreation trails. These water-based trails would be designed for use by canoes, kayaks, and similar watercraft.
 11. Where consistent with the natural resource preservation goals of this plan, assist in the protection of drainage ways, wetlands and other resources by promoting prior treatment of and protection from stormwater runoff.
 12. The Parks Department will map areas adjacent to its open space lands that consist of unique habitat areas such as prairie, woodland, wetland and habitat corridors. Mapped areas would include glacial and geological features such as kettle ponds, moraines, drumlins, steep slopes, unique landforms and areas of cultural and historical significance. Also it would define viewsheds and drainage areas that might impact the open space. These mapped areas would provide sound information for future protection by the County as part of the Parks and Open Space Program.
- Are likely to be otherwise lost through urbanization and development
 - Are in delineated open space corridors to provide for high-demand, trail-oriented activities
3. Priorities for facilities and improvements should be given to:
 - Minimal development to control maintenance and operation costs and preserve the natural value of the land
 - Trail-oriented activities
 - Make all reasonable accommodations possible for people with disabilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act
 - Activities which fulfill present and projected demands for recreation where these have been quantified
 5. The county may provide mountain bike trails if a suitable site can be found which will prevent environmental damage and avoid conflict with other users.
 6. The county should consider a role, subject to the priorities for facilities and improvements identified above, in the recreational activities of golf and baseball as part of the recreational and open space needs of the county.

C. Policies for Parks and Recreation

1. Provide recreational opportunities that are consistent with the county's role in the overall system of parks for the region.
 - The state provides regionally significant parks and open spaces.
 - The county provides intermediate, recreational resource-based parks that serve a regional population.
 - Cities, villages and towns provide parks and playgrounds to meet local community needs, including intensive recreational uses.
2. Priority in siting parks should be given to areas which:
 - Provide prime environmental and recreational based qualities
 - Provide for year-round multiple uses, particularly trail-oriented activities
 - Are close to large concentrations of people
7. The Park Commission should study lands under its jurisdiction for the purpose of evaluating controlled hunting as outlined by ss. 53.03(2) & 53.03(6), Dane County Code.
8. The Park Commission should examine the feasibility of providing additional trails for equestrian use both within existing parks as well as providing connections to trails outside of parks.
9. Explore the possibility of assisting private non-profit sport and recreation organizations. An example would be assisting private non-profit soccer organizations in their efforts to develop additional soccer facilities.
10. The county may charge fees in order to provide funding for operations, land acquisition and development of the county park system.
11. The County may provide disc golf facilities within parklands that it finds suitable for such activity.

D. Policies for Cultural and Historic Resources

1. Acquire areas to protect the historic, aesthetic, and cultural heritage of Dane County.
2. Plan for the greatest protection and appreciation of the resources of each site, including archaeological studies prior to development of parkland.
3. Interpret the significance of sites to add greater interest, preserve area history, and educate visitors about the significance of various sites.
4. Require the preservation of Indian mounds on public and private lands.
5. Consider acquisition of above-mentioned sites, which can be included in existing parks and natural resource sites.
6. Support planning efforts aimed at preserving Indian mounds, as well as other cultural artifacts of Native Americans and later settlers, including:
 - Identification and classification of mounds and historic sites in accordance with the Dane County Ordinance
 - Assist in preparing a cultural overview for Dane County
 - Assist in updating a specific cultural context for the Dane County archaeological region
 - Assist in developing and implementing a cultural resource management plan for the county
7. Establish a working relationship with the performing arts community to further performing arts in Dane County. Where consistent with the other goals of this plan, land in county-owned recreational parks may be set aside for the future construction of an outdoor performing arts facility.

E. Policies for Urban Green Spaces

1. Implement the policies of 1997 Dane County Land use and Transportation Plan (Vision 2020) with regard to preserving a countywide system of environmental corridors.
2. Achieve separation of communities to preserve individual community identities.
3. Cooperate with other units of government in establishing a permanent network of open space around the central urban area of the county.

4. Implement other green space initiatives assigned to the Park Commission by the County Board.
5. Encourage the establishment of local municipal programs such as Trees U.S.A. and urban forestry efforts.
6. Support cities, villages and towns in their efforts to conserve lands that address local and regional economies, broader social development goals and landscape-scale regional environmental concerns.
7. Support cities, villages and towns in their efforts to help create parks, open spaces and natural areas in the Dane County neighborhoods most blighted in character or deficient in park space.
8. Where consistent with other goals of this plan, the Parks Commission may identify or set aside lands in the Park System for permanent or temporary use as community gardens. Design, operation and maintenance of such areas will be coordinated among project partners under the guidance of Parks Department staff.

F. Policies for Implementation

1. Develop a full range of programs for the preservation of open space corridors, including purchase, dedication, zoning, acquisition of easements and other rights, and other equitable means.
2. Encourage greater state and federal allocation of financial resources for parks and open space to metropolitan areas such as Dane County.
3. Encourage greater private sector participation in the preservation of park and open space lands.
4. Seek new and innovative methods of using private sources of funding such as land donation, donation of easements and other rights, labor donation, and in-kind goods and services.
5. Develop a policy that ensures adequate compensation to the county when granting exclusive use of county park and resource lands to non-county agencies, groups or individuals, or granting easements or other permanent rights to park and resource lands.
6. Maintain a volunteer program that identifies tasks for volunteers and provides supervision, support, and recognition.
7. Relinquishment of county-owned parkland for purposes other than preservation or recreation shall be dependent upon:

- The long-term impacts on park and recreational use throughout Dane County
 - An equal exchange of land
 - Dedication of revenues to additional park lands or improvements
 - Action being consistent with local and regional plans
 - Determination that the land is not needed for county park and open space purposes, both at the present and in the future
 - Consideration of the total costs and benefits of ownership of the land
 - Protective deed restrictions placed on title of property
8. Donations of land to the county parks system should be evaluated in terms of:
- Consistency with needs identified in the Parks and Open Space Plan
 - Proximity to existing parks
 - Maintenance and development costs
 - Any special environmental or cultural qualities
 - Allowing the county to accept land donations for resale with the proceeds used for purchasing other park and resource land
9. The county should pursue assuming responsibility for areas and facilities that are regional in nature and consider turning over to local governments those parks and facilities which serve only local needs and which do not meet county standards. Lands that are turned over shall be kept as parks open to all and not changed in use to the detriment of the land or the public interest.
10. The county should prepare project plans and goals for specific parks or natural resource sites prior to acquisition. Project plans should include the following elements:
- Proposed project boundaries, based on extent of resources to be protected, existing land uses and provision of buffer areas as necessary;
 - Identification of potential project partners, including roles of other units of government, nonprofit conservation agencies and private entities in land acquisition, protection and development, and;
 - A long-term management strategy for upkeep, maintenance and administration of acquired lands.
11. The Regional Transportation Plan for Dane County should continue to plan for safe trail crossings across county roads and highways as well as provide connections to and from population centers to major activity areas such as county and state parks and multi-county bikeway routes.
12. When constructing trails, shelters, parking lots, visitor centers or any other improvements to county-owned land, the county will seek to use the most environmentally sound construction practices available. At a minimum, county park projects will comply with all current county, state and local zoning, stormwater, erosion control and all other relevant regulations, including obtaining all appropriate permits.
13. The county proposes to establish a matching grant program to support efforts by local government, nonprofit agencies, senior citizen organizations, community centers, disabled services and advocacy groups and other interested groups to provide transportation to and from County Parklands for those unable to drive or without access to a private automobile. Such transportation programs may be coordinated with existing volunteer or other program activities, and with existing transportation programs such as the Ride Share program administered by the Metropolitan Planning Organization.
14. The county should work with local communities and landowners to establish a regional site in the northeast and southeast portions of Dane County. These two areas of Dane County lack county-owned parks and open space of regional significance.

G. Policies for Intergovernmental Cooperation

1. The Dane County Conservation Fund Grant Program will provide funding assistance to local municipalities for acquisition of land that meets the goals and objectives of the Dane County Parks & Open Space Plan. (See the section on “Land Acquisition” for further explanation on how the Conservation Fund Grant Program works.)
2. The county cooperates with State of Wisconsin, Federal agencies, private groups and with all other units of government in financing and in sharing management of recreation resources where appropriate.

3. The county encourages local town governments to provide for the park and recreational needs of the citizens of unincorporated communities within their boundaries. These traditional population centers may be lacking in recreational opportunities and the towns in which they are located often are unable to fully meet their needs. The towns may assist in implementing Dane County's plan by coordinating their plans with Dane County's plan, and enhance the value of the parks, open space and recreational facilities of both the towns and the county.
 4. The Parks Department and Parks Commission will encourage and cooperate with cities, villages, towns and other units of County government interested in implementing design standards for development near county open space lands, within designated viewsheds or on lands ecologically connected to county open space lands.
 5. The county endorses the projects of other units of government that meet regional objectives and provide regional use. Examples include community parks over 100 acres in size, the UW Arboretum and special facilities such as Olbrich Botanical Gardens and the Elver Park lighted ski trails.
 6. The county should cooperate with local, county regional and state agencies and nonprofit conservation organizations to promote consistent, effective planning, acquisition and management of natural resource and park lands that extend beyond the territorial limits of Dane County.
4. Consider corporate sponsorship of county park and recreation facilities.
 5. Form partnerships with private non-profit groups in acquiring properties of mutual interest. The Dane County Conservation Fund Grant Program will provide funding assistance to private, non-profit conservation groups for the acquisition of land that meets the goals and objectives of the Dane County Parks & Open Space Plan.
 6. Work with private developers to develop voluntary restrictive covenants to implement design standards for development near county open space lands, within designated viewsheds or on lands ecologically connected to county open space lands.
 7. The County should provide landowners with advice on how to accomplish vegetative buffering and where to locate such plantings to create desirable views to and from the private land. Landowners should be made aware of available advice on how to achieve optimal effects and of opportunities to purchase young trees and shrubs through Dane County Parks. The County should also offer technical assistance to foster biodiversity through the use of native plant communities and through advice on how to avoid creating isolated plant communities.

H. Policies for the Role of the Private Sector

The private sector, both non-profit conservation groups and for-profit companies can assist Dane County in its efforts to acquire and manage its parks and open spaces. In its partnership with the private sector, the county should:

1. Cooperate with private groups and with all other units of government in acquiring land and in sharing management of parks and natural resource sites.
2. Expand support systems, such as the Adult Conservation Team or friends groups, for all county park and recreational facilities. These groups will assist in management of these facilities.
3. Expand adopt-a-use groups, similar to adopt-a-park groups, to help maintain or develop specific facilities. Examples of successful partnerships have in-

cluded cross-country ski groups, fishing enthusiasts, mountain bike riders, disc golfers, equestrians and dog owners.

I. Policy for Removing Lands from Tax Rolls

All of Dane County's citizens benefit when the county acquires lands for recreational use and resource protection. Providing for public amenities could enhance the value of an area to those who live there and use the public lands and facilities. There is a concern, however, that the local municipalities in which these lands are located face a disproportionate burden because these lands are removed from the tax rolls and because the local unit of government is responsible for maintaining roads leading to these areas. Studies have shown that removing lands from the tax base usually produces little or no change in overall tax rates, primarily because the state's school aid formula will offset most of the school tax revenue lost. Impacts on infrastructure vary depending upon the park or natural resource site, the level of traffic generated by the park or natural resource site compared to the overall traffic levels, and other factors.

Property Tax Impacts

In the public meetings held on this plan there continues to be concerns with the loss in property taxes to the local governments, especially town government. This concern has been present for decades and continues to trouble local officials and can be an obstacle to park and open space planning as well as key park and resource protection acquisitions. Dane County attempted to address these concerns as part of the memorandum of understanding related to the Conservation Fund Referendum. The agreement called for a study to evaluate the property tax impact of Dane County Conservation Fund land purchases. The study report, "Property Tax Impacts of the Dane County Conservation Fund Program and Policy Options" was presented to the County Executive in July of 1999.

The report offered three options, which were consistent with the findings of the study:

1. Provide no compensation to affected towns, recognizing that the impact is likely to be small and the administrative cost of a compensation program, at both the county and town level might be greater than the tax impact of the land purchased;
2. Provide full compensation for any town tax impact in the first year after the purchase but decrease the compensation amount over time recognizing that over time, the public land will have a positive impact on local land values;
3. Provide compensation but variations: (a) provide compensation only if the tax impact is above some threshold level, and decrease the compensation over time to recognize the appreciation in the value of nearby properties; (b) provide compensation, declining over time, with funds dedicated to town government land purchase.

In no case is it necessary to consider compensation for the county or school district revenue losses because the magnitude of those losses will be extremely small. The consequences of each policy option will be discussed in detail.

After an analysis of the options consideration was given to the payment of property taxes to the towns, however, the county corporation counsel indicated that in order to pay property taxes state law would need to be changed. Legislative changes were initiated by the County Executives Office, which would enable counties to pay property taxes to the towns.

Although there were some supportive legislators there were differences of opinions and direct opposition and the necessary changes were not accomplished and the new legislation needed not achieved.

It is the goal of this Park and Open Space Plan to again address the issue and to develop either legislation to accomplish the property tax option or to develop a fourth option to compensate the towns for services provided.

Option 4 - Municipal Service Fee

Dane County has paid what is referred to as municipal service fees to local governments. This payment of a municipal service fee could be another option of reimbursement to the towns. This fee would cover services provided to the county by the town where the county is the owner of park and resource protection land. It is the intent of this Park and Open Space Plan to investigate this option.

A formula based upon a previous ten-year history of property tax losses to towns could be the foundation for this service fee program. The formula is based upon town taxes only (excluding the vocational school district, county taxes, special assessments and school taxes). The eventual result is a per acre payment to the towns for each acre of land owned by the county in the respective town based upon the averaged tax losses to the towns county wide per acre based upon the previous 10 year loss calculation. It is the intent of the 2001 - 2005 Park and Open Space Plan to have such a formula developed and policy written and presented to the County Board and Executive for their approval by the end of the year 2002.

This calculation would not include properties where the county owns certain lands rights or has leased out the property with the taxes being paid by the lessee. Example: this would not apply where lands have been donated and the donor continues to use the land for an agreed upon number of years or for a life tenancy. In this case the donor continues to pay the taxes.

Needs Analysis

In planning for future park and open space acquisitions and capital improvements, the demand for specific types of recreational activities must be gauged. This demand is determined in different ways, depending upon the type of recreational activity. This plan uses two separate approaches to determining the needs of parks and open space users: the demand based approach and the resource based approach.

Demand-based approach

Building on the very positive track record of park and open space acquisition in Dane County, an advisory referendum was presented to voters on April 4, 1999 to significantly accelerate and increase the commitment of resources for the purchase of land or land rights for park and open space. Through the campaign efforts of a broad-based coalition of Dane County realtors, builders, environmental and non-profit land trust organizations, this measure to triple the historic levels for land acquisition passed in every Dane County supervisory district and exceeded a 75% approval by voters County-wide. The \$30 million measure earmarked these "New Conservation Fund" dollars over a 10-year period specifically for the purchase of lands or easements for the estimated 9,000 acres identified in the 1996-2000 Dane County Parks and Open Space Plan, including easements in buffer lands immediately adjacent to park or resource areas. These funds are also annually appropriated through the County's budgeting process.

Resource-based approach

The resource-based approach entails identifying specific areas in which parks and natural resource sites would be appropriate, based upon physical and natural resources. A number of these areas were previously identified in the 1990-1995 and the 1996-2000 Parks and Open Space Plan, as well as the Amendment to the Parks and Open Space Plan, and these recommendations are brought forward to this plan. These areas were identified because of their unique resource values and their importance to the citizens of Dane County. The 2001-2005 plan also identifies areas for resource protection based on local community, private non-profit and citizen participation in the planning process.

2001-2005 Parks and Open Space Plan Recommendations

Park Classification System

In 2000, the Parks Commission adopted a park classification system that divides lands managed by the Dane County Parks into four broad categories: Recreation Parks, Natural Resource Sites, County Forest Sites, and Historic Sites. This system is designed to meet the following goals:

- To provide the Dane County Parks with a methodology to develop criteria for classifying, selecting, developing, and managing different public lands.
- To allow the Dane County Parks to inventory existing parks and sites and to identify current and future needs.
- To establish a basic outline that aides the public in comprehending the purpose and use of Dane County lands. This will be accomplished by providing both broad category and detailed area information stating the purpose, features, and available recreational possibilities of a particular park or site.

A. Recreation Parks

A recreation park consists of land that is specifically set aside for active and passive recreational uses. Its use is often extensive and intensive. A recreation park serves users who are attracted to outdoor recreation. It may provide facilities that offer a wide range of outdoor recreation opportunities, cater to only one predominant activity (special use), or consist of a trail corridor that offers continuous, protected and safe routes for outdoor recreation. Recreation parks may contain smaller areas devoted to resource protection or historic preservation. Individual recreation areas may be found within the boundaries of lands in different categories.

New Recreation Parks in the 2005 Plan

Capital Springs Centennial State Park and Recreation Area

750 acres (City of Madison; Town of Blooming Grove)

In 2000, Dane County submitted a successful application to a proposal by the State of Wisconsin to establish a new Centennial State Park to commemorate the 100 year anniversary of the Wisconsin State Park System. This site includes over 3/4 of a mile of

undeveloped shoreline along Lake Waubesa and will provide linkages to the Nine Springs E-Way, the Nevin Fish Hatchery and Lake Farm County Park. Under a memorandum of understanding, the State Department of Natural Resources and the Dane County Parks Department would jointly manage the park grounds. Development of the park may begin in 2004.

Recreation Parks in the 2000 Plan

Babcock

40 acres (Village of McFarland; Town of Dunn)

This park is located on the eastside of Lake Waubesa where the Yahara River flows from the lake. Although it is 40 acres in size, only 26 acres are developed with recreational facilities. Included are a small shelter facility, 25-unit campground with electrical hookups and trailer dumping station, a boat launch with a fish cleaning facility, and a boat mooring lagoon.

Recommendations: There are only small additions and improvements projected for Babcock Park within the next five years.

Badger Prairie

339 acres (Town of Verona)

The park, located just east of the City of Verona, is one of Dane County's largest and includes a portion of the Ice Age Trail Junction area. The park provides parking and access to the Military Ridge State Trail, and to a segment of the Ice Age National Scenic Trail. A hill within the park offers a splendid view of surrounding areas. The park has shelter facilities, softball fields, play equipment, an aero modeling field and a mountain bike trail. The entrance to the park is at the intersection of CTH PB and USH 151.

Recommendations: Complete the trail connector between Badger Prairie Park and the City of Madison's Elver Park as part of the Ice Age Trail Junction Area. Construct a separate toilet and shelter complex to meet the increased demand for shelter reservations. Work with the City of Verona on establishing a new entrance for the park off Enterprise Drive. Lease approximately 20 acres of Badger Prairie Park along Cross Country Road to the Madison Area Youth Soccer Association.

Brigham

112 acres (Town of Blue Mounds)

This 112-acre park, with a panoramic view toward the Wisconsin River Valley, is just northeast of the

Village of Blue Mounds on County Highway F. Named after Ebenezer Brigham, one of the first white settlers in this area, the park offers both the cultural and natural heritage of Dane County. Facilities include two shelter houses, picnic areas, a self-guiding nature trail, play equipment, a 25-unit campground and a group camp area.

Recommendations: There are no major additions or improvements projected for Brigham Park within the next five years.

Cam-Rock

402 acres (Town of Christiana)

The original park site was purchased through the initial efforts of the Cambridge Foundation and Dane County Park Commission. Cam-Rock Park is located in eastern Dane County along two miles of Koshkonong Creek between the Village of Cambridge and the Village of Rockdale. At the present time, facilities include three shelter houses, picnic areas, play equipment, a softball field, mountain bike, bike and nature trails, canoe launch, group camp area, and cross-country ski trails.

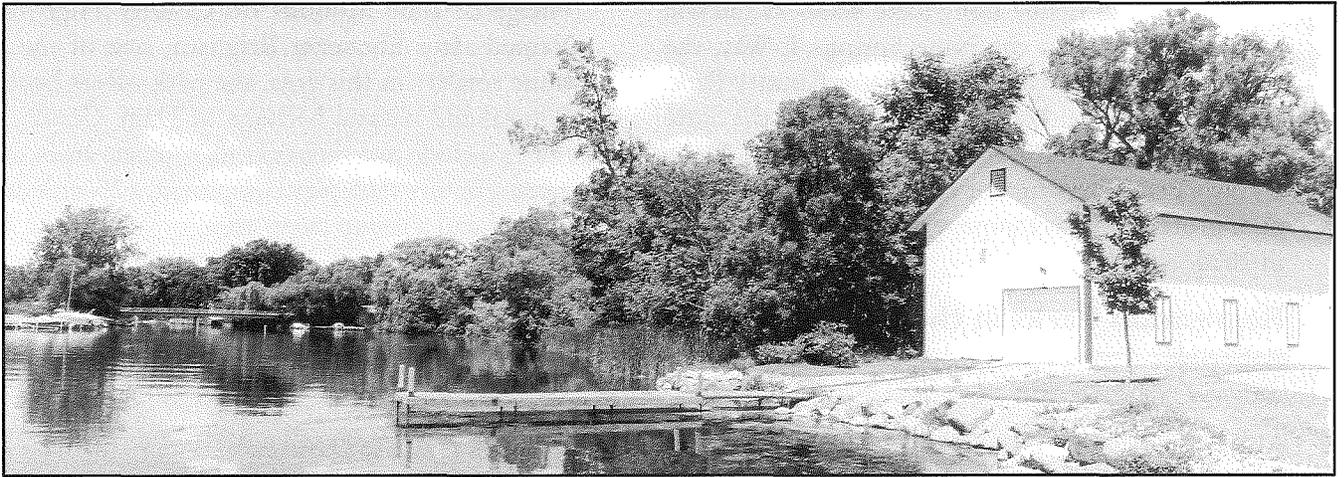
Recommendations: In the fall of 2000 the Rockdale Dam was breached and will be removed through a cooperative effort with DNR, the local communities and the landowners within the area. A new master plan for Cam-Rock Park is in the process of completion that calls for a continued cooperative effort between the above mentioned parties for the restoration of the Koshkonong Creek and acquisition and development of the Park. Construct a bridge across the Koshkonong Creek connecting an existing trail from Shelter 1 to Shelter 3. It will be necessary to obtain property for the bridge crossing and trail extension. This trail will be 8 to 10 feet wide for hiking, biking and skiing. The bridge might be shared by snowmobiles in the winter. The trail will also connect the Villages of Cambridge and Rockdale.

Donald

480 acres (Town of Springdale)

Donald Park is located along Mt. Vernon Creek near the hamlet of Mt. Vernon. The original donation of 105 acres came from the Woodburn family in 1993 and 375 acres have been subsequently acquired.

Recommendations: A master plan for Donald Park has been completed and a "Friends Group" formed that will assist with the development and operation of the park over the next several years. Dane County



will continue to acquire property to meet the parks department acquisition goals of up to 600 acres.

Festge/Salmo Pond

126 acres (Town of Berry)

Festge Park, located in the driftless area, provides a commanding view of the Black Earth Creek Valley. This 126-acre park contains a mature stand of hickory, oak, and cedar woods with some exceptional burr oaks on the edges. Salmo Pond and land adjacent to Black Earth Creek, approximately six acres in size, are extensions of Festge Park. Recreational facilities include three shelter houses, picnic areas, play equipment, nature trails, softball field and group camp areas. The entrance to the park is located on Scherbel Road one and one-half miles west of the Village of Cross Plains on USH 14.

Recommendations: Acquisition of a trail connector between Festge and Indian Lake County Parks as part of the Ice Age Trail. Cooperate with the Village of Cross Plains and the Department of Natural Resources to implement that connection and a possible connection to Cross Plains. Also, protect the viewshed from the overlook, and complete shoreline repairs at Salmo Pond.

Fish Camp Launch

19 acres (Town of Dunn)

The park is located at the end of Fish Camp Road off CTH B, approximately one mile northeast of intersection USH 51 and CTH AB. Fish Camp Launch is located on the north end of Lake Kegonsa at the inlet of the Yahara River. It offers one of the best boat-launching facilities on Lake Kegonsa with its protected landing area and large car-trailer parking lot.

Recommendations: Acquire property for a land-based trail between Fish Camp Launch and Lake Kegonsa State Park through the Door Creek Natural Resource Site. (see Land Based Trails and Door Creek Wetland Natural Resource Site recommendations) Investigate development of interpretive signage pertaining to past rough fish removal activities that took place at the park.

Fish Lake

3 acres (Town of Roxbury)

The park is located on the northwest shore of Fish Lake. Recreational facilities at this small park include a shelter, picnic areas, boat launch and a new accessible restroom. The lake itself is 252 acres in size with a depth of 62 feet and contains a variety of game and panfish. Gas boat motors are prohibited.

Recommendations: See fish Lake/Lussier Park under "Resource Sites" for recommendations related to this area.

Goodland

15 acres (Town of Dunn)

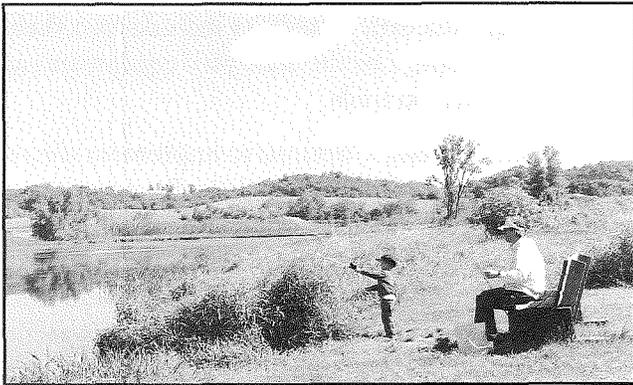
Located on the west shore of Lake Waubesa, Goodland is a partially wooded park containing 600 feet of shoreline. Since the 15-acre park is situated near large urban populations, the demand for the use of its recreational facilities is great. The park offers two shelter houses, picnic areas, tennis, basketball and volleyball courts, softball field, play equipment, an unsupervised swimming beach and a boat launch.

Recommendations: Emphasis should be placed on maintenance of existing facilities and long-range planned improvements relating to parking, shelter facilities and play areas. Consider transfer of this park to the Town of Dunn.

Indian Lake

483 acres (Town of Berry)

Indian Lake Park is one of Dane County's regional parks. The park has outstanding natural and historic resources. A winding trail leads to a historic chapel built in 1857 on a hilltop, which commands a beautiful view of the lake and surrounding valley. Miles of cross-country ski and natural trails in the wooded hills provide, among other recreational opportunities, access to a log cabin warming house. A launch for small, non-motorized boats is located off STH 19 at the west end of the park. A trail has been developed around the entire lake.



Recommendations: Add approximately 250 acres to this park. Lands are needed to buffer the lake, especially on the north shore. Also included in this recommendation are wetlands to the east, which are the headwaters of Indian Lake, and the wooded areas to the south. The land northeast of the existing park containing much of the wetland and springs draining into Indian Lake should be acquired or protected. Acquire a trail connector between Indian Lake and Festge Parks as part of the Ice Age Trail.

LaFollette

35 acres (Town of Pleasant Springs)

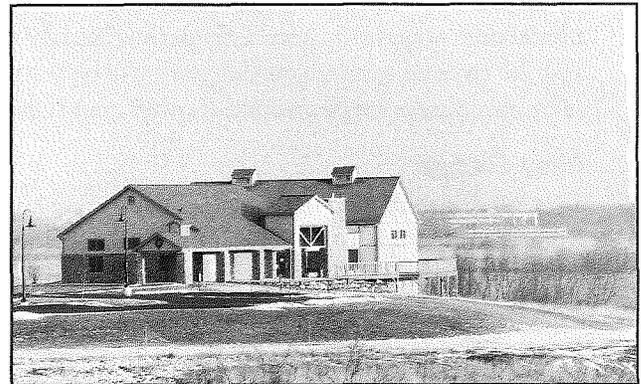
This 35-acre park is a narrow strip of land along the eastern shore of Lake Kegonsa adjacent to Kegonsa State Park. A high voltage line and a railroad traverse the park. Recreational facilities include a shelter house, picnic area, and play equipment. The unsupervised swimming area on the west side of the railroad tracks is not part of the park. The land is low and during the rainy season tends to be very wet. The land is not attractive for intensive recreation, and its potential usefulness is extremely limited, especially since it is adjacent to a large and well-planned state park.

Recommendation: Consider transfer of this park to the local unit of government or the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources as an addition onto Kegonsa State Park.

Lake Farm

328 acres (City of Madison; Town of Blooming Grove)

Lake Farm Park is located on the northwest shore of Lake Waubesa. At the present time the 328-acre park is under improvement. Recreational facilities currently available include three shelter houses, a boat launch, an overlook tower, group camp area, wildlife pond, nature and interpretive trails, and ski trails.



Recommendations: Lake Farm Park will be managed as part of the new Capital Springs Centennial Park as outlined within the "New Recreational Parks" section of this plan. The Lussier Family Heritage Center and campground will be open in 2001. A cooperative effort with the state to develop a new master plan for the entire area should begin in 2001. Dane County should continue with its plans to renovate the existing barn for public use.

McCarthy Youth and Conservation Park

220 acres (Town of Sun Prairie)

This park is a proposed recreational conservancy park for the young people of Dane County. Eventual construction could include a shelter, group camping areas, a day camp, hiking and nature trails, council rings, and activity areas. The 220-acre parcel is located approximately six miles east of the City of Madison on CTH TT.

Recommendations: Acquire additional lands for the expansion of this park. Implement the recommendations of the master plan for McCarthy Park. Develop the main entrance road, parking facilities and play area. Initial development will in-

clude some tree planting, prairie restoration, trail construction, fencing and play area development.

Mendota

20 acres (Town of Westport)

This 20-acre park with approximately 300 feet of lake frontage is located on the northwest shore of Lake Mendota. Due to its close proximity to the City of Middleton, the recreational facilities receive very intense usage. Facilities include three shelter houses, picnic areas, unsupervised swimming beach and canoe launch area, tennis and basketball courts, softball field, boat mooring lagoon and a 30-unit campground with showers, electricity, and trailer dumping station.

Recommendations: Consider transfer of this park to a local unit of government. This park is heavily used and the issue of camping at this park will be resolved as camping areas are developed at other county parks.

Riley-Deppe

34 acres (Town of Medina)

Riley-Deppe Park is 34 acres in size and is located just west of the Village of Marshall on STH 19. The park fronts on a millpond formed by the impoundment of the Maunasha River. Some fishing is done along the shore. Facilities include one shelter house, picnic area, play equipment, and a boat launch.

Recommendations: Consider transfer of this park to the Village of Marshall.

Silverwood

Approximately 300 acres (Town of Albion)

* Irene Silverwood donated approximately 300 acres of land located in the town of Albion to be used for park, recreation, conservation, research, education and agricultural purposes. The property contains approximately 1/2 mile of unimproved shoreline on Rice Lake surrounded by 60 acres of oak woods and 240 acres of rolling farmland. This property is highly desirable for public land, as this area of the County currently offers no County park resources. (See item 14 under Section F "Policies for Implementation") The 60 acres of oak woods and 1/2 mile of shoreline offers great potential for a County recreational park. The farmland portion of the property offers an opportunity to preserve a significant agricultural resource as a farm preservation/education/demonstration area for school groups, research, and the general public. Mrs. Silverwood retained life estate, which gives her exclusive use of the property during

her lifetime, or such time as she may choose to surrender that right. This area is not open for public use until the above mentioned conditions are met.

*This property was added to the 2005 Parks and Open Space Plan by means of County Board Adoption of Resolution 96, 2001-2002 on September 6, 2001.

Stewart

191 acres (Town of Blue Mounds)

Stewart Park is a 191-acre site located north of the Village of Mount Horeb. It includes a 7-acre, spring-fed lake that offers bank fishing opportunities. The park is known for its scenic beauty and quiet surroundings. Recreation facilities include two shelter houses, pavilion, a picnic area, play equipment, and cross-country ski trails.

Recommendations: Continue to implement the recommendations of the Stewart Lake Restoration and Watershed Plan (Dane County Regional Planning Commission), adopted by the County Board in 1996. Work with the state, the village and landowners to construct the three remaining stormwater retention basins, and eventually begin the process to dredge Stewart Lake. Acquire lands north of the park to improve access from Highway 78 and to the south to link with Mt. Horeb's village park.

Token Creek

427 acres (Town of Burke)

This 427-acre park is located northeast of the City of Madison adjacent to I-90 and is well known for its shelter facilities and ample open spaces for large group picnics and outings. Although not fully developed, the park offers a variety of recreational facilities including five shelter houses, picnic areas, softball fields, play equipment, 38-unit campground with showers and electricity, trailer dumping station, group camp area, snowmobile and nature trails, cross-country ski trails, a dog exercise area and disc golf course. Many of the facilities are accessible to the handicapped; including paved pathways, campsites, and a specially designed boardwalk through a marsh.

Recommendations: Land northeast of the park along Token Creek should be acquired or protected. Dane County and the City of Sun Prairie should pursue a connector between the City of Sun Prairie and Token Creek Park over the next several years through a cooperative effort. Explore the feasibility of ex-

tending the equestrian trails within the park south to McCarthy Park and potentially to the Village of Cottage Grove.

Land may be added to the park in conjunction with the Dane County Regional Airport noise reduction program.

Viking

100 acres (Towns of Dunkirk & Pleasant Springs)

Viking Park is located on the Yahara River north of Stoughton on CTH N. The 100-acre park is undeveloped; however, it is currently used for fishing, picnicking during the summer, and as a dog exercise area.

Recommendations: Enter into a partnership with the City of Stoughton and the Town of Pleasant Springs to acquire a property that would connect Stoughton to Viking Park across the Yahara River. This connection would allow an urban pedestrian river trail to go through Viking Park.

B. Natural Resource Sites

A natural resource site consists of land that is specifically set aside for the protection of a valuable natural environment. This can include habitat protection and open space preservation. Recreation at natural resource sites is a secondary objective, and users are encouraged to enjoy the resource as is. Passive recreation activities dominate the site use. If at all, active recreation only takes place on the fringes or in small pockets (areas) of a natural resource site. Natural resource areas may be found within lands belonging to another category.

The plan includes existing natural resource sites in which a project plan has been prepared and/or acquisitions have occurred, as well as study areas for proposed new natural resource sites. These study areas are generalized and conceptual and are not intended to reflect final project boundaries. The Parks Commission and the County Board must approve specific project plans that describe the site's boundaries, special management areas, operation and administration before any land acquisition takes place.

Study Areas for New Natural Resource Sites in the 2005 Plan

Black Earth Creek Valley

1,700 acres (Villages of Cross Plains, Black Earth & Mazomanie; Towns of Cross Plains, Berry, Black Earth & Mazomanie)

This proposed natural resource study area is estimated at 1700 acres and includes a mix of public and privately owned land between U.S. Highway 14 and County Trunk Highway KP from the Village of Cross Plains to the Village of Mazomanie in western Dane County. This project would seek to provide an environmental and scenic buffer to Black Earth Creek, a regionally significant trout stream. Targeted land acquisitions and conservation easements would seek to fill in gaps and expand DNR landholdings in the immediate stream corridor. The county will seek partnerships with the affected village and town governments, the DNR, the Black Earth Creek Conservation Organization, American Farmland Trust and individual landowners for acquisition, stewardship and management. Since environmentally sound agriculture practices on privately owned land are expected to continue within the site boundaries, this project may also benefit from other county initiatives, such as the Farms and Neighborhoods Initiative and Land Conservation Department agricultural programs.

Ice Age Trail - Springfield Hill

470 acres (Town of Springfield)

This resource site located in the area of Springfield Hill where the proposed Ice Age Trail will cross the new U.S. Highway 12 in the Town of Roxbury. The study area is approximately 470 acres and contains a number of geologic features, including two kettle ponds and a historic log cabin and provides a scenic view atop Springfield Hill, one of the highest points in the area. The site will be connected to the Ice Age Trail corridor to the south by a pedestrian overpass to be constructed as part of the Highway 12 project.

Leopold - Riley Game Cooperative

600 acres (Towns of Springdale, Verona & Cross Plains)

In 1931 Aldo Leopold formed a cooperative for the purpose of providing a place to hunt for its members. The area encompassed all or part of 11 farms, about 1800 acres, mostly in the Town of Springdale but extending into the towns of Verona and Cross Plains. Within the Reserve boundary were croplands, pastures oak savanna, woods, cattail marsh, sedge meadows, springs and spring ponds and the Sugar

River. The Chicago and Northwestern railroad track ran through Riley on the way between Madison and Mt. Horeb. Today, the natural features remain although the quality may vary from what it was in the 1930's. The railroad right-of-way is now the Military Ridge State Trail.

Areas that should be looked at for protection within this study area should include the wetlands woodlands and savannas along the Sugar River and the Military Ridge Trail. The actual protection area is estimated at 500 to 600 acres. With restoration the area could provide demonstration site for the Leopold Land Ethic.

Military Ridge Prairie Heritage Area

2,500 acres (Town of Blue Mounds)

This study area is located in the southwestern Dane County and extends into eastern Iowa County. Historically, the prairie that formerly covered this area and the area to the west was called the Military Ridge prairie. The ridge was named for the Military Road, which was built in 1835 and served as a highway of immigration for settlers to the area, in part because the area was treeless. This study area of approximately 2500 acres is of regional significance due to its amount of high quality prairie remnants and open grassland landscape, providing habitat for many rare and declining bird species as well as game birds such as ring-necked pheasants and wild turkeys. The Nature Conservancy is helping to coordinate efforts with other organizations and agencies, individuals, private landowners and local governments to maintain this open grassy landscape and conserve the best remaining prairie and oak savanna areas. The Nature Conservancy has been working in the area since the 1960s on a 180-acre parcel known as Thomson Prairie.

Dane County's role in this area will be to assist The Nature Conservancy and other partners who qualify for Conservation Fund Grants for the acquisition and preservation of those areas which coincide with objectives of the Dane County Parks and Open Space Plan.

Patrick Marsh

575 acres (Towns of Bristol & Sun Prairie)

Patrick Marsh located just northeast of the City of Sun Prairie lies in part within the City, the Town of Bristol and the Town of Sun Prairie. Historically the marsh was first noticed in the landscape in 1834. Since then the Marsh has been given many names and drained for agricultural purposes. More recently

the expansion of State Highway 151 from Sun Prairie to Columbus in the early 1990s set the stage for the cooperative restoration of the marsh as part of a wetland mitigation agreement between the Wisconsin Department of Transportation and the Department of Natural Resources. This area has now become a favorite place for many people to go to birdwatch and take a walk. It now provides habitat for abundant wildlife such as ducks, swans and upland birds. The proposed study area, estimated at 575 acres, includes lands around the existing DNR owned Patrick Marsh and wetlands to the east. This study area acreage includes 160 acres of public owned marsh and an approximately 50-acre school site.

Patrick Marsh would benefit greatly from an expanded boundary that would protect the viewshed and watershed of the marsh and restore the wetland complex to the southwest. Inclusion in the Parks & Open Space Plan would call for a cooperative effort between the Department of Natural Resources, Dane County, the City of Sun Prairie and the Towns of Bristol and Sun Prairie to work together for the protection of Patrick Marsh.

Upper Sugar River Waterway Corridor

400 acres (Town of Verona)

This 400-acre proposed natural resource site would include the wetlands and 100-year floodplain associated with the Upper Sugar River. Over half this area is currently in Wisconsin DNR ownership, and most of the privately held land is regulated through county and state wetland and floodplain rules. Additional acquisitions or easements would complement DNR holdings and allow for better protection of water resources and scenic views through the area.

Upper Yahara River

450 acres (Village of DeForest; Town of Vienna)

This resource study area includes approximately 450 acres of undeveloped shoreline on either side of the Upper Yahara River and associated wetlands and floodplain. There is a major heron rookery on the site, as well as large areas of floodplain forest and a number of scenic vistas. The area falls within the proposed ABS Global development area, and is shown as an environmental corridor in ABS development plans and adopted plans of the Village of DeForest. The Dane County Natural Heritage Foundation has supported protection of this area. The Town of Windsor has also indicated support for the protection of open space in the resource area.

Natural Resource Sites in the 2000 Plan

Badger Mill Creek

300 acres (Town of Verona)

This site includes the wetlands and adjacent uplands along Badger Mill Creek from City of Verona south to the confluence of the Sugar River. Estimated acreage for this area is approximately 300 acres.

Recommendations: A project plan needs to be completed for this site. There are no additions or changes recommended for this study area.

Blooming Grove Drumlins

700 acres (Towns of Blooming Grove & Cottage Grove)

This natural resource site includes a number of drumlins and adjacent wetlands along the Door Creek drainage system. Historically, wetlands comprised the majority of the area within the Blooming Grove Drumlin Resource Site and are part of the Door Creek drainage system which runs through the area. Management recommendations would include the restoration of wetlands, open land prairie and vegetative management of the drumlins. In 2000 the Dane County Parks Department acquired an easement on 42 acres purchased by the City of Madison. This land will be open to the public as a city park.

Recommendations: A draft project plan has been prepared and a proposed project boundary for this resource area established. This plan recommends the proposed project boundary for the Blooming Grove Drumlin Resource Site as outlined on the Parks & Open Space Plan Map.

Cherokee Marsh/Yahara Heights

850 acres (City of Madison; Towns of Burke, Windsor & Westport)

The Cherokee Marsh Long Range Open Space Plan outlines joint responsibilities for the City of Madison, Dane County and the State of Wisconsin to acquire and protect land within the planning area. The County Parks Commission has an area of responsibility along the marsh encompassing 850 acres. At present, county ownership consists of the Yahara Heights Park at 192 acres and Token Creek Park at 427 acres. In 2000, Dane County purchased 185 acres of uplands along River Road in the Town of Westport to expand the northwestern boundary of the Cherokee Marsh site.

Recommendations: This plan proposes to recognize additional lands acquired within the County responsibility area and recommends changes to the Cherokee Marsh Boundary to reflect those additions.

Cherokee Marsh

850 acres (City of Madison; Towns of Burke, Windsor & Westport)

The Cherokee Marsh Long Range Open Space Plan outlines joint responsibilities for the City of Madison, Dane County and the State of Wisconsin to acquire and protect land within the planning area. The County Parks Commission has an area of responsibility along the marsh encompassing 850 acres. At present, county ownership consists of the Yahara Heights Park at 192 acres and Token Creek Park at 427 acres. In 2000, Dane County purchased 185 acres of uplands along River Road in the Town of Westport to expand the northwestern boundary of the Cherokee Marsh site.

Recommendations: This plan proposes to recognize additional lands acquired within the County responsibility area and recommends changes to the Cherokee Marsh Boundary to reflect those additions.

Door Creek Wetlands

1,572 acres (Village of McFarland; Towns of Dunn & Pleasant Springs)

This area includes wetlands and surrounding upland buffer areas of Door Creek on the north shore of Lake Kegonsa. The County Board adopted a project plan for this area in 2000 that seeks to protect and restore wetlands and associated upland buffers, provide Northern Pike spawning habitat, and enhance the water quality of Door Creek.

Recommendations: The project plan calls for Dane County to focus on protecting upland buffer areas, while the DNR will focus on wetland acquisition, protection and restoration. Other recommendations included providing for controlled public access to Door Creek and Lake Kegonsa, protection of archaeological sites, and enhance Northern Pike habitat.

Holtzman

64 acres (Town of Dunn)

This 64-acre area in the Town of Dunn was donated to Dane County as a nature preserve. Access can only be obtained by receiving permission from one of the surrounding private landowners.

Recommendations: Acquisition of a small addition for public access and parking. Consideration should be given to turning this site over to the Town of Dunn.

Ice Age Trail Junction

1,300 acres (Town of Verona)

This project area is approximately 1,300 acres in size and is located within the Town of Verona and includes Badger Prairie Park. The County Board adopted a project plan for this area on November 4, 1993. This area will complement the existing public acquisitions and plans for the Ice Age Trail, provide a trail link between Madison, Verona and the Military Ridge State Trail and provide an area of community separation between the two cities. Approximately 387 acres have been acquired so far in this area.

Recommendations: Expand boundaries to include Elver Park and connecting trail corridor in the City of Madison.

Lake View Woods

27 acres (City of Madison)

This area is 27 acres in size and is located on Northport Drive in the City of Madison.

Recommendations: Consider transfer of this natural resource site to a local unit of government or other governmental agency or a private non-profit organization. A study is presently underway to establish a good vegetative management program for this site.

Lower Mud Lake

1,700 acres (Town of Dunn)

Located in the Town of Dunn, this project area is 1,700 acres in size and includes wetlands between Lakes Waubesa and Kegonsa. The County Board adopted a project plan for this area on February 17, 1994. Approximately 229 acres have been acquired in this area.

Recommendations: There are no additions of changes recommended for the study area.

Fish Lake / Lussier

140 acres (Town of Roxbury)

Lussier can be reached via USH 12, north to CTH KP, right onto CTH Y, left on Mack Road and right on Fish Lake Road. It is located in the far north-western corner of Dane County. This 140-acre area named Lussier Park is located on the east side of

Fish Lake and was made possible from a significant donation by John H. Lussier with assistance from the Dane County Natural Heritage Foundation and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. It includes approximately 3,000 feet of shoreline on a lake that is 252 acres in size with a depth of 62 feet and is reported to contain northern pike, cisco, largemouth bass and pan fish. Gas powered boat motors are prohibited.

Recommendations: This plan includes a Fish Lake study area encompassing the entire lakeshore of Fish Lake. The County should review this area and develop a specific project plan to identify areas for future acquisition to better protect the resources and define the public use of the area. The Town of Roxbury, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the Dane County Natural Heritage Foundation and the Federal Emergency Management Agency are potential partners. The Town of Roxbury has indicated an interest in the development and management of a swimming beach within Lussier Park.



Nine Springs E-Way

3,593 acres (Cities of Madison & Fitchburg, Town of Dunn)

The E-Way Corridor extends from Dunn's Marsh near Seminole Highway east to Lake Farm Park on Lake Waubesa. Land within the corridor is held by a number of public jurisdictions. The total planning area for the E-Way includes 3,593 acres, of which approximately 2,785 acres are in public ownership. Dane County has acquired 736 acres of land within the E-Way. The eastern half of the Nine Springs E-Way is projected to be included in the new Capital Springs Centennial Park.

Recommendations: Amend the E-Way boundary to reflect open space recommendations by DNR's Nevin Master Plan.

Pheasant Branch Creek Conservancy (Northern Unit)

100 acres (City of Middleton, Town of Westport)

This 100.5-acre site owned by Dane County is the northern part of the Pheasant Branch Creek Conservancy and combined with 60 acres of DNR owned land contains numerous springs, remnant oak savannas and is a major supplier of spring water to Lake Mendota. Public use and restoration of this resource site is described in detail in the Northern Lake Mendota Regional Plan completed in 1999. This plan was done in partnership with Dane County, the City of Middleton and the Town of Westport.

Recommendations: This plan proposes to adopt the recommendations within the Northern Lake Mendota Regional Plan pertaining to the Pheasant Branch Creek Conservancy.

Phil's Woods

37 acres (Town of Roxbury)

This 37-acre area located in the Town of Roxbury is named for Philip LaFollette, three-time governor of Wisconsin. The undisturbed site contains natural woods and meadows with intact flora and fauna populations and offers a view of the Baraboo Bluffs and Sauk Prairie area.

Recommendations: Consider transfer of this natural resource site to a local unit of government or other governmental agency or a private non-profit organization. Construct a small parking lot.

Pleasure Valley

700 – 1,000 acres (Towns of Blue Mounds & Vermont)

This area is located in western Dane County within Blue Mounds and Vermont townships north of Brigham Park. This wooded and oak savanna valley stretches from CTH F on the east to Blue Mound State Park on the west. The area comprises approximately 700 to 1,000 acres. The DNR has also included this area in its draft Five-Year Land Acquisition Plan. The County would form a partnership with DNR to acquire conservation easements. The DNR would be the lead agency in this resource protection effort.

Recommendations: DNR will be completing a project plan for this area. Possible connection with the proposed Military Ridge Prairie Heritage Area to the south should be part of the study.

Prairie Moraine

160 acres (Town of Verona)

This 160-acre site located south of Verona was part of Dane County's Hospital & Home operation until it was transferred to Park's jurisdiction in 1993. The area is within the Ice Age Trail corridor and is said to be one of the best examples of a terminal moraine in southern Wisconsin. This Johnstown Moraine runs through the northern portion of the site and is an important element of the Ice Age National Scenic Trail, which runs along its narrow crest. This site has an oak savanna ridge top that offers a beautiful view of the surrounding countryside to the south. A portion of this site is also one of Dane County's dog exercise areas.

Recommendations: Dane County Parks has just completed a master plan for this area. The plan calls for the improvement of the existing parking lot and the establishment of a new trailhead and interpretive signing for the Ice Age Trail. Protection of the viewshed to the south through acquisition is a priority. Also the expansion of the area to the north is essential for Ice Age Trail access and eventual parking for the users of this site.

Six Mile and Dorn Creek

400 acres (Town of Westport)

This study area is approximately 400 acres in size and is located in the Town of Westport. It contains primarily wetland areas, with some associated upland areas and serves as a protection area in the Lake Mendota Watershed.

Recommendations: There are no additions or changes recommended for this study area.

South Waubesa Marsh

700 acres (Town of Dunn)

This study area is located within the Town of Dunn and contains approximately 700 acres. This marsh is a deep peat deposit with major springs and see pages contributing water to Lake Waubesa.

Recommendations: There are no additions or changes recommended for this study area.

Sugar River Wetlands

640 acres (Town of Verona)

Located within the Town of Verona, this study area is approximately 640 acres in size and is one of the largest wetlands along the border of the driftless area in western Dane County.

Recommendations: The site boundary change reflects the inclusion of property owned by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation located to the south.

Upper Black Earth Creek

9,400 acres

(City of Middleton; Village of Cross Plains; Towns of Middleton & Cross Plains)

The upper portion of Black Earth Creek flows from the headwaters of the creek within the City of Middleton west through the towns of Middleton and Cross Plains until it reaches the Village of Cross Plains. This is an extremely critical portion of the watershed in that it is under extreme development pressure from the expanding Madison metropolitan area. Preservation of the area has crucial water quality and quantity related benefits for the entire length of the creek. The area is also important for the significant aesthetic, habitat and vegetative values present as well as the opportunities for passive recreational activities. Approximately 79 acres have been acquired in the Town of Middleton.

Recommendations: Prepare a project plan for this study area which extends from the City of Middleton across the Towns of Middleton and Cross Plains and on to the Village of Cross Plains. It includes features of ridgetops, steep slopes, floodplains and wetlands.

Walking Iron

289 acres (Town of Mazomanie)

Walking Iron Natural Resource Site is in northwestern Dane County adjacent to the Village of Mazomanie. The northwestern portion of this park's 240 acres contains a native sand prairie and nature trail along Marsh Creek. Black Earth Creek flows through the southeastern portion of the park and contains an access road and parking area for the village park.

Recommendations: Acquire an additional 80 acres to the northeast for resource protection, trail development. Coordinate with the Village of Mazomanie in the planning for this park and the Village's Lions Park as well as for future acquisitions.

C. County Forest Sites

A county forest consists of land specifically purchased for the protection and management of forests and woodlots. In protecting these lands a variety of forestry practices will be implemented. The purpose of the county forests is to grow healthy forests and provide timber using the most environmentally sensitive practices available. Dane County Parks is responsible for managing the county forests and woodlots for multiple use, such as recreation, education, wildlife habitat and watershed protection.

County Range Forest

74 acres (Town of Verona)

This 74-acre parcel in the southeast corner of the Town of Verona formerly served as a rifle range for the County Sheriff's Department. The land remains in county ownership and has been identified by the Town of Verona as a significant natural resource. The site is very hilly, with a significant stand of continuous woodland, one of the largest such remnants in the town. The oak forest is overgrown and would benefit from environmentally sound forestry practices.

Madison School Forest

310 acres (Towns of Montrose & Verona)

This 310 acres of the oak and hickory woodlands are under the jurisdiction of the Madison Metropolitan School Forest. The purpose of the inclusion of the Madison School Forest into the Parks & Open Space Plan is to make it eligible for State Stewardship and County Conservation Fund Grants for the purpose of acquisition of contiguous parcels of land to the forest as the become available. The intent is

to work with the Madison School District, the Friends of the Madison School Forest, the Department of Natural Resources and the Nature Conservancy in a collaborative effort to expand the area of the Madison School Forest.

Morton Forest

120 acres (Town of Mazomanie)

This 120-acre forest is located two miles south of the Village of Mazomanie in the Town of Black Earth. Stephen Morton donated the property to Dane County for park purposes in 1999. Mr. Morton retained life estate, which give him exclusive use of the property during his lifetime, or such time as he may choose to surrender that right. This area is not open for public use until the above mentioned condition is met. The property consist of high, mostly wooded, rolling ridges that offer scenic views of the surrounding area.



D. Historic Sites

An historic site consists of land specifically purchased for the preservation, restoration or reconstruction of features significant to the history or cultural heritage of an area. This can include historic buildings, reconstructions of historic buildings and archeological sites. Activities at a historic site may be limited to sightseeing and the study of historic or cultural features. Many of the lands in other categories also contain historic areas.

Halfway Prairie School

.75 Acre (Town of Mazomanie)

On this three-quarter acre site is located the oldest existing rural elementary school in Dane County. The one-room school was operated from 1844 until it closed as a result of consolidation in 1961. Visitors may view the inside of the school in its original restored condition on holidays and Sunday afternoons, 1:00 to 5:00 p.m., from Memorial Day through Labor Day. Halfway Prairie School is lo-

cated at the junction of CTH F and STH 19, two and one-half miles north of the Village of Black Earth.

Schumacher Farm

117 acres (Town of Westport)

This 117-acres site in the Town of Westport was donated to the public for development of a prairie and open-air museum. Future plans include demonstrations of farming practices of the early 1900s.

Recommendations: Long-range plans include prairie restoration and nature trail construction and reconstruction of the old farmstead and new parking area.

E. Trails

A major emphasis of this plan is the recommendation of new trails to connect existing and proposed parks and natural resource sites

This plan includes recommendations for water-based trails. Dane County can boast of an abundance of creeks, streams and rivers. Past efforts by the county have focused on preserving and protecting the natural functions of these watercourses as well as their associated wetlands. This plan also recognizes the recreational value of some of these streams and for the first time proposes a number of water-based trails. Dane County wishes to cooperate with local municipalities, other units of government, conservation groups and the private sector in implementing these water-based trails. All local municipalities should assume the responsibility of protecting these watercourses within their boundaries.

A comprehensive study of the present snowmobile system in Dane County should be done with the Dane County Snowmobile Council. This study should identify the snowmobile trail needs for the future and designate permanent corridor goals.

The Park Commission will establish criteria for equestrian use of all trails. Potential sites for equestrian trails include Donald Park and a trail connecting the existing equestrian trails in Token Creek County Park south to McCarthy Park and on to the Village of Cottage Grove.

The Park Commission should also study the designation of county scenic roads, similar to the state's Rustic Roads programs, that could also link local, county or state park facilities. Safety determinations would have to be made prior to the designation of



any road. These roads could be designated on a map and pull-off areas could be provided. Recreational use of the scenic roads needs to be further defined in the planning process.

New land-based trails in the 2005 Plan Prairie Moraine - Mount Horeb Trail

(Towns of Verona & Springdale) [#1 on map]

This trail would connect Prairie Moraine Park, the proposed County Range Forest, the Madison School Forest, Donald Park and the Village of Mt. Horeb. Further definition of a precise trail corridor is needed.

Door Creek Trail

*(Towns of Dunn, Pleasant Springs & Cottage Grove)
[#2 on map]*

This trail would follow the Open Space Corridor associated with Door Creek to connect the Village of Cottage Grove to Lake Kegonsa State Park.

Token Creek Trail

(Towns of Burke & Bristol) [#3 on map]

This trail would run along Token Creek from the Token Creek Mill Pond to link with the City of Sun Prairie's trail system.

Madison Lakes Loop

(Cities of Madison, Middleton & Monona) [#4 on map]

Much of this proposed trail network around Lake Mendota and Lake Monona is already in place. This project would focus on filling gaps in trail connectors and providing better signage and identification.

Starkweather Trail

(City of Madison) [#5 on map]

This trail would link the Capital City Trail with Token Creek/ Sun Prairie Trail along Starkweather Creek.

Madison-McCarthy Trail

(City of Madison, Towns of Sun Prairie, Burke & Blooming Grove) [#6 on map]

This trail would connect the City of Madison to McCarthy Park along CTH T and TT within the existing DOT right-of-way.

Badger Mill Creek Trail

(Town of Verona) [#7 on map]

This trail would run along Badger Mill Creek from the City of Verona to Riverside Road.

Upper Sugar River Waterway Corridor Trail

(Town of Verona) [#8 on map]

This trail would run from the Military Ridge Trail south along the Sugar River to the Montrose town line.

Middleton Spur

(Town of Middleton) [#9 on map]

This trail would connect the proposed Black Earth Creek trail with the Ice Age Trail to the south in the Town of Middleton.

Highway 12 Corridor Trail

*(City of Middleton; Towns of Springdale & Roxbury)
[#10 on map]*

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation will construct this bicycle trail from the City of Middleton to the Wisconsin River as part of the reconstruction of U.S. Highway 12. The County will

maintain and operate the facility. Most of the trail will be off-road, within the expanded highway right-of-way, and will intersect the Ice Age Trail at the proposed Springfield Hill natural resource site.

Indian Lake Spur Trail

(Towns of Berry & Springdale) [#11 on map]

This trail would follow the Highway 19 corridor to connect Indian Lake Park with the proposed Highway 12 Corridor Trail.

Deansville Marsh Trail

(Town of Bristol) [#12 on map]

This trail would connect Patrick Marsh and the Deansville State Wildlife Area. This project is in the concept stage and a route has not yet been identified.

Land-Based Trails in the 2000 Plan

Ice Age National Scenic Trail

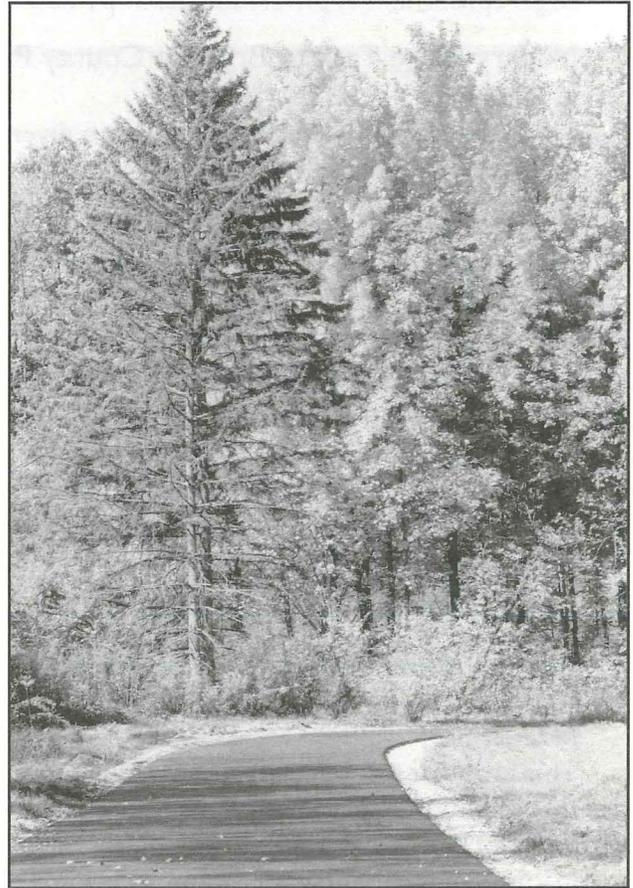
(Cities of Fitchburg, Verona & Madison; Village of Cross Plains; Towns of Montrose, Oregon, Verona, Middleton, Cross Plains, Berry, Roxbury & Dane)

The Ice Age National Scenic Trail is designed to showcase the glacial features of Wisconsin. When completed the trail will extend more than 1,000 miles from Interstate Park on the St. Croix River in Polk County to Potawatomi State Park in Door County. The 55-mile Dane County portion of the trail would follow the terminal moraine of the Wisconsin ice sheet. Approximately nine miles of completed trail exists within Dane County.

In 1992, the Wisconsin State Resources Board adopted a planned and mapped corridor within which lands for the trail may be acquired, developed, managed and protected. This adoption permits the Department of Natural Resources to provide Stewardship grants for acquisition of lands for the trail, as well as accept gifts of land and acquire lands for the trail. Dane County will continue to work cooperatively with the National Park Service, DNR and the Ice Age Park and Trail Foundation in acquiring land within this corridor.

The adopted trail corridor is shown on the overall Parks and Open Space Plan 2001-2005 exhibit. In Dane County, the trail will pass through the Prairie Moraine Resource Site, Badger Prairie Park, Ice Age Trail Junction Area, Upper Black Earth Creek Resource Site, Indian Lake Park and the proposed Springfield Hill Resource Site. This corridor only provides the acquiring agency enough alternatives to purchase and place a trail right-of-way within the

corridor. Therefore, only a portion of the lands within the corridor will be considered for acquisition. In areas where development has closed off portions of the trail corridor, additional lands may need to be added to the corridor to enable the placement of the trail. Trail development has not yet been completed for the entire Dane County segment.



Capital City State Trail

[#13 on map]

The Capital City State Trail opened for traffic in the summer of 2000. Better links to Madison City trails and to the Glacial Drumlin State Trail are still needed. Dane County currently owns approximately 27 acres of land associated with the Capital City trail right-of-way. The Urban Open Space Foundation has proposed a 35-acre park on the near east side of the Madison isthmus. The County should work with the Urban Open Space Foundation, the City of Madison and others to provide an off-road facility for the section of the Capital City Trail that crosses the proposed city park.

Badger State Trail

[#19 on map]

If and when rail service is no longer considered viable and with the concurrence of the owners of the line, the South Central Wisconsin Rail Transit Commission, the county would assist in operating and managing the segment of the trail within Dane County. The county's participation will only be a part of a larger consortium of private and public parties.

Military Ridge Trail to Brigham County Park

[#20 on map]

This connector would allow bicyclists to divert off the trail for a short side trip to Brigham Park.

Mazomanie to Black Earth, possible continuation on to Cross Plains and Middleton

[#21 on map]

This proposal would use the proposed wastewater distribution right-of-way from Mazomanie to Black Earth. Connections could be made to Walking Iron, Festge and Salmo Pond parks, and possibly to the DNR's Mazomanie Wildlife Area. Dane County's participation will only be a part of a larger consortium of private and public groups.

Ice Age Trail/Festge to Indian Lake County Parks

[#22 on map]

This proposal recommends that Dane County play the primary role in acquiring the trail right-of-way between Festge and Indian Lake County Parks. The majority of the funding for this project would come from the state trail match grant-funding program.

North Lake Mendota Trail Network

(City of Middleton, Town of Westport) [#23 on map]

This would incorporate the trail corridor mapping recommended by the Northern Lake Mendota Regional Plan.

DeForest to Windsor

[#24 on map]

This trail has been proposed jointly by these two communities. It is included in the County's plan to illustrate a possible connection to a larger series of trails (see recommendation 13).

Cambridge to the Glacial Drumlin Trail

[#25 on map]

This trail would run from the hamlet of London south to the Village of Cambridge. The Village of Deerfield has also suggested steps to connect Deerfield, London and Cambridge as part of a coordinated day-trip for bicyclists among the three communities. Events and promotions could be jointly coordinated.

Cambridge to Rockdale

[#26 on map]

This land-based trail would finish the trail through Cam-Rock County Park to connect the two villages.

Capital City Trail to Aldo Leopold Center in Monona

[#27 on map]

Trail connection and from the Capital City Trail to East Broadway and the Aldo Leopold Center. Linkages may also be provided to the City of Monona's Woodland and Edna Taylor Parks. There is also potential for an entranceway/parking area for access to the Capital City Trail.

City of Sun Prairie to the Village of Cottage Grove

[#28 on map]

Trail connection between Sun Prairie and Cottage Grove with McCarthy Park as the mid-point.

Token Creek Parkway

[#29 on map]

Trail corridor to connect Token Creek Park with the Blooming Grove Drumlin Area.

New Water-based Trails in the 2005 Plan

Black Earth Creek Trail

[A on map]

This trail follows Black Earth Creek from Walking Iron Park west to Morrill Road in the Town of Mazomanie.

Pheasant Branch Creek Trail

[B on map]

This trail would run from Lake Mendota north to the proposed overlook on the southeast side of the Pheasant Branch Conservancy.

Six Mile Creek Trail

[C on map]

This trail would run from Lake Mendota north to Woodland Drive.

Token Creek/Yahara River Trail

[D on map]

This trail would follow the Yahara River and Token Creek from Lake Mendota north to Token Creek Park.

Wingra Creek Trail

[E on map]

This trail would follow Wingra Creek from the dam at Lake Wingra to Lake Monona.

Nine Springs Creek Trail

[F on map]

This trail would follow Nine Springs Creek from the Yahara River to Moorland Road and the Lussier Family Heritage Center.

Yahara River Trail

[G on map]

This trail would follow the Yahara River from the City of Stoughton to CTH N near Brickson Road.

Koshkonong Creek Trail

[H on map]

This trail would follow the Koshkonong Creek from Cam-Rock Park to Lake Koshkonong.

Lake Mendota Pedestrian/Bicycle Ferry

[I on map]

This project would involve regular runs of a small powerboat, such as a pontoon boat, that would carry pedestrians and bicyclists from the University of Wisconsin across Lake Mendota to either Mendota Park or Governor Nelson State Park.

Water-Based Trails in the 2000 Plan

Babcock/Fish Camp Park

[J on map]

This trail would be water-based along the Yahara River from Babcock Park to Fish Camp Park on Lake Kegonsa.

LaFollette County Park to Viking County Park

[K on map]

This trail would also be water-based on the Yahara River

Upper Sugar River to Belleville

[L on map]

This trail would be water-based from the confluence of the Sugar River and Badger Mill Creeks south to the Village of Belleville. The Town of Verona has expressed support for developing a put-in site.

Deansville State Wildlife Area to the Village of Marshall

[M on map]

This water-based trail would be centered on the Maunsha River.

Cambridge to Rockdale

[N on map]

This trail would be water-based, centering on the Koshkonong Creek, connecting the two villages.

F. Streambank Protection Easement Program

The Dane County Board initially approved the Dane County Stream Bank Protection Program in 1991 to allow the county, local municipalities and qualified nonprofit conservation organizations to acquire, with county aid, conservation easements along stream banks. The Board in 1992 voted to expand the program to include acquisitions of land. The program is designed to maintain and improve water quality by protecting critical stream corridors. Additional potential benefits include improved fish and wildlife habitat, better flood control and provision of open space.

Dane County prefers to work with streams that have some protection plans approved and in place. The Land Conservation Department, Lakes and Watershed and the Park Commission are the interdepartmental clearinghouse for the Stream Bank Protection Program. Their review is necessary prior to any financial resource commitments being made. Opportunities can come up from time to time for stream or river protection and there is not an approved plan. In these cases the evaluation will be based upon the resource being protected, resources available, both fiscal and for implementation and the potential the opportunity has for future protection. Those streams and rivers within an acquisition boundary of a Park, Natural Resource Site, County Forest Site, Land or Water Based Trail are the review responsibility of the Dane County Park Commission.



Two types of streams in Dane County would be eligible for stream bank protection plans under this program:

1) DNR designated “priority streams”

- Sugar River East
- Sugar River West
- Primrose Brook
- Deer Creek
- Fries Feeder Creek
- Story Creek
- Flynn Creek
- Upper Yahara River
- Six Mile Creek
- Token Creek
- Bohn (Elvers) Creek
- Upper Black Earth Creek

2) Dane County designated “priority streams”

- Badger Mill Creek (added to Sugar River)
- Koshkonong Creek (north Cam-Rock)
- Schlapbach Creek (added to Sugar River)
- Starkweather Creek

- Gordon Creek
- Pheasant Branch
- Kittleson Valley Creek
- Halfway Prairie Creek
- Door Creek
- Wendt Creek
- Dunlap Creek
- Brewery Creek
- Yahara River (entire length)

G. Prairie and Oak Savanna Sites

The amended *Parks and Open Space Plan for Dane County, 1990-1995*, recommended that the county: support and assist in completing an inventory of prairie and oak savanna sites; notify landowners and local governments of site locations; and consider these sites during urban service area, rezoning and subdivision decisions.

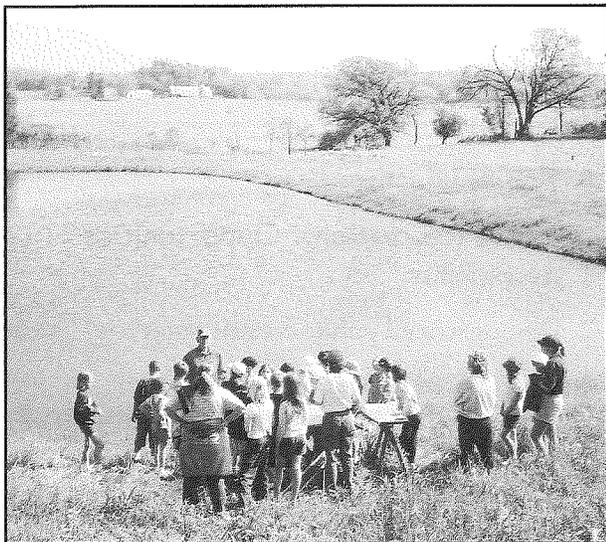
Subsequent to the adoption of that plan, The Nature Conservancy has initiated the Wisconsin Prairie and Oak Savanna Initiative. This initiative is a cooperative project to enlist the support of individuals, private landowners, conservation and civic organizations and all levels of government. The goal is to protect the best of the remaining prairie and savanna remnants and, where possible, to restore some examples of the early prairie landscape.

Dane County’s role in this initiative will be to cooperate with the Nature Conservancy in funding the acquisition and preservation of those areas that coincide with other objectives of the *Parks and Open Space Plan*. These objectives relate to the parks, resource areas, project areas and trailways recommended in this plan.

The plan shows the seven “best” potential grassland/prairie landscape-scale management areas, as well as the top 23 locations for native prairie remnants and oak savannas in Dane County. These areas and their rankings have been compiled by the Southwest Wisconsin Prairie Enthusiasts. These are study areas only and are not to be considered defined project areas.

Recommendations For Management Of Parks And Natural Resource Sites

Some county parks and natural resource sites do not meet the criteria for size and facilities generally considered for large regional parks or natural resource sites. However, they continue to be important areas for recreation and resource protection. Therefore, the following list of county parks and natural resource sites should be given consideration for the establishment of an agreement with a local unit of government or other governmental agency or private non-profit organization for their operation and management. The county would maintain involvement as far as developing a management agreement in partnership with the governmental or private entity.



- Fish Lake Park
- Goodland Park
- Halfway Prairie School
- La Follette Park
- Lakeview Park
- Mendota Park
- Phil's Wood
- Riley-Deppe Park
- Holtzman

Operational And Funding Recommendations

- Maintain a nucleus of Parks Department staff and review, update and implement the Parks Department's five-year staffing plan. There will be needs for additional staff for an ever growing parks and open space system, and a population noticeably larger every year, with constantly increasing use per person of the system.
- Develop some form of community assistance center, perhaps jointly with the Regional Planning Commission, to provide information and contacts to local communities who wish to participate in grant programs, develop community parks, and so on (local municipality recommendation).
- Examine a number of options to supplement county staffing, such as volunteer management of facilities by private non-profit groups, development and maintenance of certain facilities by specific users groups, corporate sponsorship of county park and recreational efforts and joint operations with local municipalities.
- Examine alternatives to fee simple acquisition of lands, such as purchase of easements, resale of excess lands and others.

The Adult Conservation Team - "Volunteers In Partnership With Dane County Parks"

The Adult Conservation Team was created in 1992 to bring together the Dane County Parks Department and the community, educate the public about natural resources and about departmental goals, improve quality of life and raise the level of service delivery. While the Adult Conservation Team extends and enriches the work done by the park staff, volunteers are also a source of advocacy and financial support, an informed part of the public, a public relations resource and an avenue to gauge public opinion and elicit feedback. Adult Conservation Team volunteers' efforts have accelerated the development of parks and natural areas, increased open space and food supply for wildlife and enhanced recreational opportunities. Volunteers and employees gain a better understanding of each other as they work in partnership.

The Adult Conservation Team has formed relationships with individuals, groups and Friends of the Parks groups that have a long-term investment in

the parks, to deliver better services by combining community involvement with education. These groups work independently under our supervision, scheduling their own workdays and recruiting their own volunteers. Our partners include form Friends of the Park groups, non-profit and recreational user groups, neighborhood associations, businesses and service clubs.

Currently our Friends of the Park groups include the Friends of Schumacher Farm, Friends of Donald Park, Friends of Old Halfway Prairie School, Friends of Pheasant Branch, Friends of Lakeview Woods and the newly forming Friends of McCarthy Youth & Conservation Park.

Priorities

Land Evaluation Program

The County Parks Department and Parks Commission have recently developed a Land Evaluation Program to assist the Park Commission in potential land acquisition. Parks Department staff will utilize this program and the results will be reviewed and analyzed by the Commission, County Board, County Executive and other interested participants.

This evaluation program represents the most recent discussions with both the Park Commission and Parks staff on how to best evaluate properties for potential real estate acquisition in Dane County. As Dane County grows, it is imperative that the Dane County Parks Department continues to offer quality recreational and open space opportunities that meet the demand. In addition, this program will offer a more quantitative review of criteria, (consistent with the most recent parks and open space plan) for each potential acquisition. By analyzing various criteria and gathering baseline data, we will be able to determine the value of acquiring specific parcels.

This system is intended to be evolving, that is, as the parks and open space plan and/or the needs of the community change, various criteria may be weighted differently, modified, deleted and/or new criteria may emerge to better evaluate community needs. This system will also require updates corresponding with future parks and open space plans.

Description of Evaluation Criteria

Natural Resources Protection

1. Habitat protection/improvement
2. Rare plant/animal life
3. Diverse ecosystem
4. Geologic/Glacial features
5. Restorative potential
6. Shoreline protection
7. Groundwater recharge zone
8. Riparian buffer
9. Water quality improvement benefit
10. Eco-regional linkage/animal corridor

Passive Recreational Opportunities

1. Education
2. Interpretation
3. Aesthetic satisfaction
4. Non-traditional user population
5. Public participation
6. Year round activities

Active Recreational Opportunities

1. Accessibility
2. Demonstrated public constituency
3. Water based recreation
4. Incorporates/creates trail(s)
5. Meets new recreational need

Economic Factors

1. Overall funding availability
2. Opportunity for partnering
3. Volunteer base/support
4. Donation/bargain sale
5. Less than full fee acquisition
6. Cost of site clean-up

Cultural Historic Amenities

1. Uniqueness
2. Significant archaeology
3. Historic significance

4. Historic/cultural education/interpretation
5. Documented Indian mounds and/or artifacts

Physical Qualities, Site Specific

1. Open space value
2. Community separation value
3. Parcel can guide urban growth
4. Parcel size
5. Natural resource values

Physical Qualities, Supports Public Use

1. Topography
2. Vistas/viewsheds
3. Safety
4. Connectivity to other public land
5. Incorporates agricultural perspective

Availability

1. Willing seller(s)
2. Complexity of transaction
3. Political support
4. Time sensitivity

Land Management Factors

1. Consistent with staff workload
2. Cost estimate(s) of development, operations and maintenance costs
3. Available equipment/capital
4. Compatibility with surrounding land use

Prioritization Of 2001-2005 Parks And Open Space Plan Recommendations

Parks—Acquisitions for Additions to Existing Parks

First Priority

- Donald
- Indian Lake
- Viking
- McCarthy
- Token Creek
- Lussier

Second Priority

- Festge
- Stewart
- Walking Iron

Natural Resource Sites — Acquisitions for Additional Lands and Preparation of Project Plans

First Priority

- Blooming Grove Drumlins
- Black Earth Creek Watershed
- Ice Age Trail Junction
- Lower Mud Lake
- Dorn and Six Mile Creek
- Door Creek Wetlands

Second Priority

- Nine Springs E-Way
- Cherokee Marsh
- Sugar River Wetlands
- Upper Yahara River

County Forest

First Priority

- Madison School Forest

Second Priority

- Morton Forest

Trails

- Link from Token Creek Park to Sun Prairie
- Capital City Trail
- Cambridge to Glacial Drumlin Trail
- Aldo Leopold Center to Capital City Trail/Heritage Center
- Lower Mud Lake/Babcock Park to Fish Camp launch — water-based
- Upper Sugar River to Belleville
- Deansville State Wildlife Area to Marshall along the Maunesha River
- Cambridge to Rockdale along the Koshkonong Creek

- Cambridge to Rockdale land-based trail
- Ice Age Trail
- Link from Indian Lake to Festge County Parks as part of Ice Age Trail
- Village of Oregon to Madison-Freeport rail line or Capital City Trail

Second Priority

- Fish Camp to Lake Kegonsa State Park
- LaFollette Park to Stoughton with extension to Viking County Park
- Madison to Freeport, Illinois, Rail Corridor
- North Lake Mendota Trail System
- Town of Dunn and Capital City Trail
- Village of McFarland and Capital City Trail
- Military Ridge to Brigham
- Mazomanie to Cross Plains, possible continuation to Middleton
- DeForest to Windsor

Land Acquisition

Eminent Domain

Dane County's parkland acquisition procedures have been established to comply with Chapter 32, Wis. Stats. These statutes provide the legal framework for public agencies utilizing the powers of eminent domain to acquire land. Dane County has established a general policy of acquiring park and open space lands only from willing sellers. The county has deviated from that policy infrequently during the past 60 years.

In 1949 Dane County utilized its powers of eminent domain to acquire land for LaFollette County Park. The county also considered condemning lands for Lake Farm County Park in 1989. In that situation, Resolution 331, 1988-89, "Preliminary Authorization of Condemnation of Lands to be Included in Lake Farm Park," was passed by the County Board; however, the landowner ultimately conveyed the deed to the county voluntarily. More recently, in 1995, the County Board of Supervisors passed a "Resolution of Necessity," thereby initiating the condemnation process to acquire a parcel of land for the Ice Age Junction Resource Protection Area. The Board of Supervisors took this action at the re-

quest of the landowner. In this case, once the "Resolution of Necessity" was passed, the deed to the property was turned over voluntarily and the formal proceedings of condemnation were not pursued. This action, commonly known as "friendly condemnation," may provide the landowner certain options to defer capital gain tax liability.

Types of Transactions

There are many different tools available to effect the county's overall land acquisition objectives. The most commonly used transaction is transfer of title by warranty deed. In this situation, the county, pursuant to the various laws, ordinances and codes established, pays fair market value for the fee simple ownership of the desired real estate.

The county may also acquire easements to accomplish certain resource protection or public access needs. Easements allow a landowner to transfer some of the rights to their land while retaining other rights. For instance, a landowner may give up the right to plant row crops or graze cattle on a parcel of land while still retaining the right to control access to that land. The price paid for easements varies from case to case, but generally the more rights the landowner transfers, the greater the compensation for the easement.

A "Right of First Refusal" may be purchased by Dane County to secure an opportunity to purchase a parcel of land at some unspecified point in the future. Compensation for a "Right of First Refusal" is generally minimal and will be negotiated on a case-by-case basis. A Right of First Refusal provides no specific terms for the future transaction but provides guidance as to how the terms of the transaction will be established when it occurs.

Options also give the county the right to purchase land at some future point. Options differ from right of first refusals in that the options specify the terms by which transactions must occur. The county, however, may elect not to exercise its purchase option, in which case the option would expire and the property owner would retain title to the land. Compensation for options is generally minimal and often the compensation paid for the option is deducted from the purchase price at the time the option is exercised.

The county may enter into short- or long-term lease arrangements when the county's goals can be accomplished by such arrangements. Compensation for

leases is generally based on prevailing market rates for the type of land being leased. The county frequently leases land it owns for specified periods of time at specified prices.

Deed restrictions may also facilitate the county's land acquisition objectives. Deed restrictions may prevent building at certain locations on a property or they may restrict the size and style of a building, or prevent tree cutting. Deed restrictions are most often used in conjunction with the subdivision of land and are placed on title to property at the request of the municipality approving the land division.

The county will continue to explore innovative alternatives to full fee ownership of land when the county's park and open space objectives can be accomplished by less than full fee ownership.

Partnerships

Partnerships have been an invaluable component of Dane County's land acquisition program during the period 1996-2000. During this period, the Dane County Board of Supervisors authorized land purchases valued at \$14,241,100. The net cost to Dane County for these same transactions is \$8,949,629. Partnerships in the form of state grants, local government contributions, non-profit conservation organization involvement and private sector donations account for the large disparity between the market value of the real estate and the net cost to the county.

The state of Wisconsin has been the county's primary partner. The state stewardship program was re-authorized for 10 years in 2000. The Stewardship program is managed by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, and has been the major source of outside revenue for Dane County resulting in approximately \$1,245,109 in state funds committed to Dane County during the period. These funds are made available on a reimbursement basis and are only recognized as revenue by the county after the transaction has closed.

Non-profit Conservation Organizations (NCOs) have actively assisted Dane County with several real estate transactions. NCOs are able, at times, to react more quickly to opportunities than are governmental agencies; they provide a direct fund-raising link to the private sector, and they may be eligible for certain state cost-share programs that are not available to Dane County. Various NCOs have brought over \$1,836,479 in State Stewardship funds

into county transactions from programs not directly available to Dane County. In addition to their fund raising and technical support, NCOs have accepted certain operation and maintenance responsibilities for land identified in county-approved plans.

Other governmental agencies have entered into partnership agreements with Dane County. The county strives to involve a local unit of government when a project falls within or adjacent to its municipal boundary.

Outright donations of land have also been an important component of the county's land preservation efforts. Individuals have donated land at Donald Park, at Cam-Rock Park, Stewart Park and Morton Park, and other public agencies have donated land in the Nine Springs E-Way and the Ice Age Junction Resource Protection Area. Individuals and businesses have also chosen to sell land to Dane County at less than fair market value (bargain sales).

Dane County Conservation Fund

The Dane County Conservation Fund was established in 1990 to annually earmark monies from the Dane County Parks budget to preserve natural, recreational, and cultural resource lands in Dane County. This fund, referred to as the "Old Conservation Fund," began with \$500,000 in 1990 and in recent years has averaged \$1 million annually.

Building on the very positive track record of park and open space acquisition in Dane County, an advisory referendum was presented to voters on April 4, 1999 to significantly accelerate and increase the commitment of resources for the purchase of land or land rights for park and open space. Through the campaign efforts of a broad-based coalition of Dane County realtors, builders, environmental and non-profit land trust organizations, this measure to triple the historic levels for land acquisition passed in every Dane County supervisory district and exceeded a 75% approval by voters County-wide. The \$30 million measure earmarked these "New Conservation Fund" dollars over a 10-year period specifically for the purchase of lands or easements for the estimated 9,000 acres identified in the 1996-2000 Dane County Parks and Open Space Plan, including easements in buffer lands immediately adjacent to park or resource areas. These funds are also annually appropriated through the County's budgeting process.

Conservation Fund Grant Program

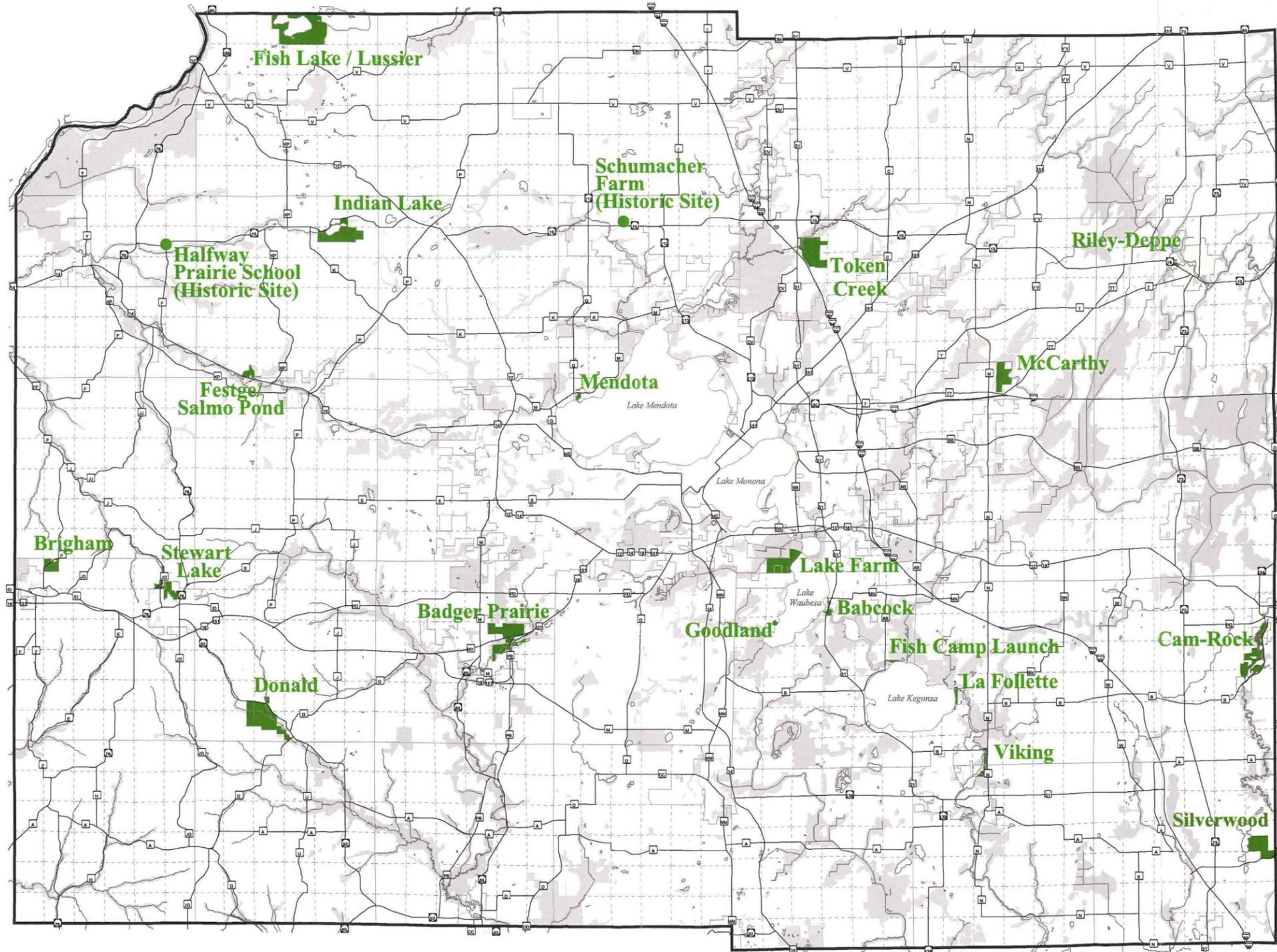
Beginning in 2000, a new component of both the "Old" and "New" Conservation Funds established a competitive 50% Conservation Fund Grant Program for local governmental units and non-profit organizations. This new grant program recognizes the power of partnerships in leveraging County dollars and accelerating the purchase of properties identified through the County's Park and Open Space Plan. The program earmarks 20% of total land protection dollars appropriated annually from both the "Old" and "New" Conservation Funds for grants - 10% for towns, village and cities and 10% for non-profit organizations. Grants made with "New Conservation Fund" dollars will be used by these community partners to buy land or land interests identified in the 1996-2000 Park and Open Space Plan. Lands eligible for grants from "Old Conservation Fund" dollars are those identified in either the 1996-2000 Plan or in project areas added in amended or updated plans such as the 2005 Dane County Park and Open Space Plan.

Lands and Land Interests Identified for Acquisition

The Dane County Park and Open Space Plan provides the vision and framework for the Conservation Fund and the County's land acquisition program. This Plan is updated every five years through the interactive community process described in the "Planning Process" section of this document. The Plan identifies and prioritizes those natural, recreational, and cultural resources that are determined to warrant investment of Dane County funds for current and future citizens to enjoy and appreciate in the categories of recreational parks, natural resource sites, land and water based trails and priority streams.



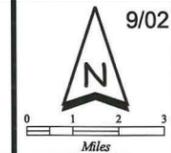
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e-mail: dane-parks@co.dane.wi.us
website: www.co.dane.wi.us/parks/parkhome.htm

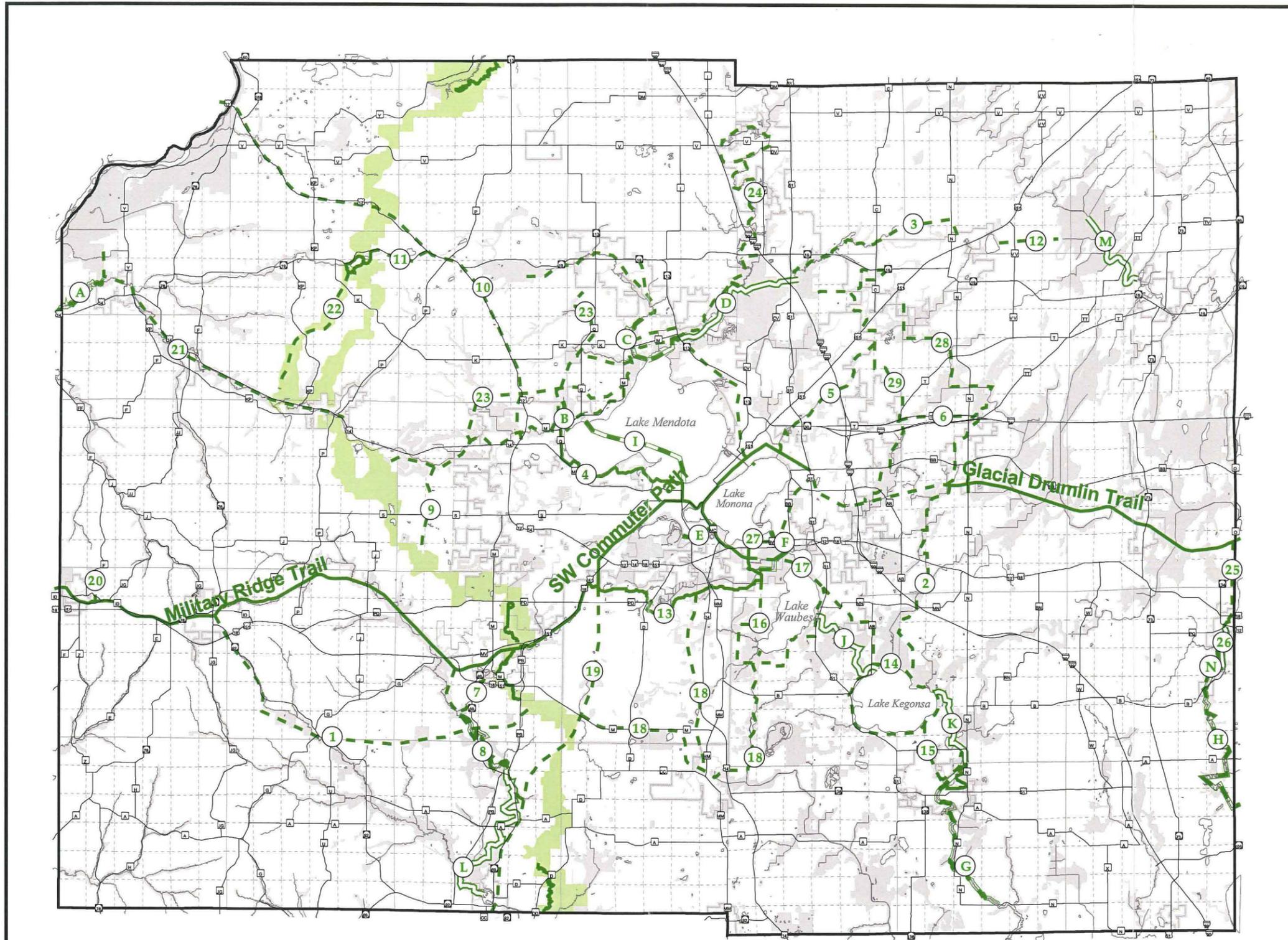


Prepared by: THE DANE COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION.

County Parks

DANE COUNTY, WISCONSIN





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Trails

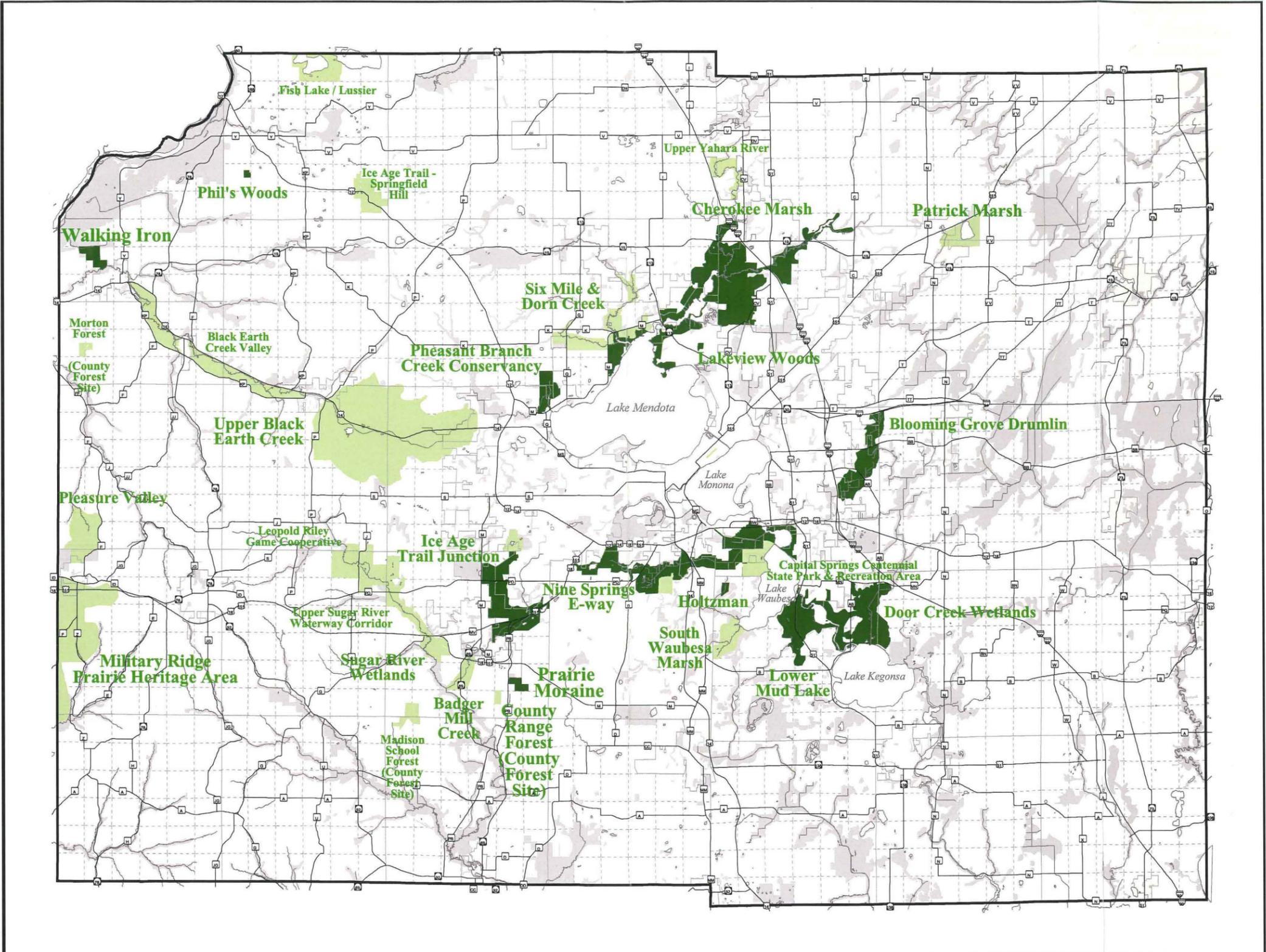
DANE COUNTY, WISCONSIN

Existing Trails		Proposed Trails	
	Land		Land
	Water		Water

Ice Age Trail Corridor*

The Ice Age Trail Corridor has been adopted by the Wisconsin DNR as the designated corridor in which to place the Ice Age Trail. Only portions of this corridor are proposed for acquisition and eventual construction of the trail. Final delineation of the trail is dependent upon voluntary decisions to sell or donate land by individual land owners.



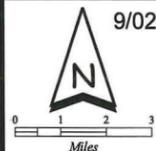


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Natural Resource Sites

DANE COUNTY, WISCONSIN

- Proposed Natural Resource Sites
- Existing Natural Resource Sites



9/02