

NOTE TO REVIEWERS: This document is a DNR environmental analysis that evaluates probable environmental effects and decides on the need for an EIS. The attached analysis includes a description of the proposal and the affected environment. The DNR has reviewed the attachments and, upon certification, accepts responsibility for their scope and content to fulfill requirements in s. NR 150.22, Wis. Adm. Code. Your comments should address completeness, accuracy or the EIS decision. For your comments to be considered, they must be received by the contact person before 4:30 p.m., _____ (date)

District or Bureau
Western
Type List Designation
NR 150.03(8)(d)(1)(c)

Contact Person
Robert Bartholomew
Title
Forester-Ranger
Address
310 North Superior Avenue
Tomah, WI 54660
Telephone Number
608-372-2811

Applicant Monroe County by request of Olson Brothers Cranberry Company

Address Route 1, Box 25, Warrens, WI 54666

Title of Proposal Olson Brothers Cranberry - County Forest Withdrawal

Location: County Monroe City/Town/Village Township of Lincoln

Township 19N North, Range 1W Section(s) Part of NWNE Section 2

PROJECT SUMMARY - DNR Review Information Based on:

List documents, plans, studies or memos referred to and provide a brief overview

DNR EVALUATION OF PROJECT SIGNIFICANCE (complete each item)

1. Environmental Effects and Their Significance

Discuss the short-term and long-term environmental effects of the proposed project, including secondary effects, particularly to geographically scarce resources such as historic or cultural resources, scenic and recreational resources, prime agricultural lands, threatened or endangered species or ecologically sensitive areas, and the significance of these effects. (The reversibility of an action affects the extent or degree of impact.)

PROJECT SUMMARY

Monroe County proposes to withdraw 30 acres of the NWNE Section 2, T19N, R1W (Map 1) from the provisions of Chapter 28.11, Wisconsin Statutes (County Forest Law) as per the request of the Olson Brothers Cranberry Company. The land is appraised by DNR at \$16,500. Monroe County proposes to trade this 30 acres with Olson Brothers Cranberry Company for the SESE Section 6, T19N, R1W, containing 39 acres (appraised at \$17,100) and an additional \$4,000.00 (Map 3). Monies received by Monroe County may be used for future county forest purchases, reforestation and other projects on the county forest. The 39 acres received in trade could be entered under the County Forest Law for blocking of the county forest.

Olson Brothers Cranberry Company proposes to use the 30 acres for sanding of beds, dam repair and bed renovation (see Exhibits 1 & 2 as supplied by the Olson Brothers). The 30 acre tract contains a sand ridge which will be used for sand in the cranberry marsh operation. The courser sand and screened rock can be utilized for dike development and maintenance. The fine sands will be utilized for bed development and maintenance. The 30 acre tract is all high land with no classified wetlands.

The 30-acre parcel in Section 2, T19N, R1W is well drained. It includes a ridge traversing the parcel from northwest to southeast. Soils are generally Tarr and Boone sands.

Cover types on the property include low quality ash and aspen and limited volumes of jack pine and white pine. The parcel does not contain a substantial amount of timber value.

The 39-acre parcel offered in trade by the Olson Brothers (SESE Section 6, T19N, R1W) is an entire description except for one acre of railroad right of way in the southwest corner. The parcel is well drained with a low ridge traversing the property from the southwest to the northeast. Soils are generally Tarr and Boone sands. Cover types on the property include low quality oak and aspen with a small amount of jack pine and white pine. The parcel does not contain a substantial amount of timber value.

Both parcels are within the established county forest boundary. Blocking will be maintained with the proposed trade if the 39 acres acquired by the county would be entered under Chapter 28.11 Wis. Statutes (County Forest Law).

This trade proposal would not be affected by NR 103.

DNR EVALUATION OF PROJECT SIGNIFICANCE

1. Environmental Effects and Their Significance

Primary environmental effects from the proposed withdrawal include the loss of public forest area, long term forest management, wildlife habitat, possible surface water contamination (many times

after removing the sand the holes created fill with surface water due to the relatively high ground water table) and loss of the natural ridge which runs through the 30 acres. Sand removal would require the removal of tree and ground vegetation cover. Sand will then be excavated from the ridge to the level of the surrounding land. The ridge is approximately 30 - 50 feet high and runs through the 30 acre tract. After sand removal ground vegetation and tree cover would take approximately 30 - 50 years to return to their present state. Artificial tree planting would speed up this process.

There are no known threatened or endangered species on this 30 acre parcel of land. The removal of the sand ridge will change wildlife patterns of movement and to some extent the type of wildlife habitat. There appears to be no adverse long term affects to wildlife or vegetation.

There are no wetlands involved in the proposed trade either on the county owned lands or on the parcel being offered in trade. There are no known rare, threatened or endangered resources on the parcels offered in trade.

The creation of shallow ponds after sand removal would have a beneficial effect for waterfowl.

2. Significance of Cumulative Effects

This is the first withdrawal request for county forest land by the Olson Brothers Cranberry Company. This 30 acre parcel of land would supply sand for at least 33 years and up to possibly 49 years by their estimate. At this time they do not anticipate any further requests in the near future. Areas close by are being requested for withdrawal by the John Rezin Cranberry Company for expansion and sand supply. This request is in the initial stage so impact at this time is not determined.

The Monroe County Forestry Committee's new stand on withdrawing county forest land is that the applicant must trade two acres for one acre received. The land the county receives must be suitable to forestry and fit into the ten year master plan. Any money received is to be used for land purchase or approved forestry practices.

Positive cumulative effects of additional land trades of this nature include increasing the size of the county forest and providing some additional waterfowl habitat. The negative cumulative environmental impacts include some temporary loss of wildlife habitat, possible surface water pollution during the sand removal process and disruption in long term forest management.

3. Significance of Risk

- a. The risk of any detrimental effects on the quality of the environment are minimal. Of the 30 acres proposed for

withdrawal, only 20 acres will probably be suitable for sand removal. On this 20 acres all trees, stumps and ground vegetation would be removed. All sand would be removed from the ridge to the level of the surrounding landscape or a little lower. As a result of this excavation, reforestation on the pure mineral soil will be a slow process. Thus since no other use is anticipated for the land after sand removal, only the loss of vegetative cover on 20 acres would be considered detrimental. The other 10 acres will probably have no land use change thus no environmental consequences.

- b. The sand removal operation would necessitate the use of dump trucks, front end loaders and a backhoe. With these types of vehicles there is the possibility of gasoline, fuel oil, hydraulic oil and motor oil spills. The risk of serious environmental damage is minimal. Any spill greater than five gallons the Olson Brothers Cranberry Company would be responsible to contact the Department of Natural Resources. Disposal of the vegetative cover could present a forest fire danger if burned. The area south of the 30-acre tract is a large unbroken area of forest and marsh. Burning of this material would require a special burning permit from the Tomah Ranger.

4. Significance of Precedent

Granting this withdrawal request would not set a precedent. Similar withdrawals have already been approved in Jackson County. More importantly each request has its own circumstances and is considered on its own merits.

Selling or trading public land to private interests may conflict with the Monroe County Ten Year Plan and Chapter 28.11 particularly when it relates to long term management goals of these lands.

However Monroe County will acquire 39 acres of similar land in the trade. The county forest may actually gain land to manage for long term goals.

5. Significance of Controversy Over Environmental Effects

There are no significant issues of controversy concerning this action. The following list of items could possibly cause controversy:

1. Net wildlife habitat loss.
2. Withdrawal of the 30-acre tract from public use.
3. Monroe County Board approval of the project versus the Department of Natural Resources possible denial of the project.
4. The Monroe County Board resolution does not address the intended use of the land acquired in the trade or the disposition of the monies received in the land exchange.

5. Denial of withdrawal may have an adverse economic impact due to the possibility of not being able to expand the cranberry operation.
6. The Forestry Committee's current stand on the two for one acre trading involving county forest lands compared to this withdrawal request.
7. The parcel offered in trade has a significantly higher risk of fire starts due to the location of the railroad tracks.
8. Other factions in the private sector may also be encouraged to seek withdrawals and acquisition of county forest land.
9. The disposal of county forest land for cranberry operation expansion.

ALTERNATIVES

1. No Action

If no action is taken on this proposal the cranberry grower will exhaust the current sand supply in Section 35 of the Town of Knapp in two years. The Olson Brothers will then need to remove sand from another location. There are two areas presently owned by the Olson Brothers where sand could be removed: the NENE of Section 34, T20N, R1E (40 acres) and the SE $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 27, T20N, R1E (approximately 30 acres). These areas are flat and approximately 4 - 5 feet above the ground water table. These areas would require a larger surface area disturbance compared to excavating from a ridge which is 10 - 30 feet above the ground water table. Excavating sand is much more economical from a ridge than on the level also. Another main concern that the Olson Brothers have is that removing sand from Section 27 and 34 would require hauling the sand an additional 2 - 3 miles on public road. At the present time these trucks could haul sand without using public roads and as such are not licensed. The proposed sand supply area would also allow operation without using public roads and thus no need for licensing of the trucks.

If no action were taken on this proposal, the cranberry grower could get sand from presently owned lands. This alternative would not be as economical to the Olson Brothers and within approximately 25 years those sand supplies would also be exhausted plus a larger surface area would be effected and thus more wildlife habitat lost.

The proposed 30-acre tract desired by the Olson Brothers would remain in county forest ownership and thus remain productive forest land, wildlife habitat and public use area.

The county would not acquire the description offered in trade.

The "no action" alternative is feasible. It is not economically as good for the cranberry grower.

2. Reduce

A smaller parcel of land could be withdrawn and traded to the cranberry grower. For example 15 acres instead of 30 acres. This would supply sand from 16 to 24 years and at the end of that period another 15 acres could be withdrawn. This would require an additional legal survey to establish new property boundaries and for proper recording of deeds. Each transaction would require a separate county board withdrawal resolution, a separate environmental assessment and a separate withdrawal application.

The reduction alternative is feasible but keeping ownership another 16 to 24 years in county forest ownership on 15 additional acres is not very practical.

3. Increase

The current proposal will be sufficient to supply material for bed sanding and dike construction for an estimated 33 to 49 years. It is not practical to project need estimates for the year of 2026 and beyond. Expanding the proposed withdrawal could also isolate the NW $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 2, T19N, R1W from adjoining county forest land therefore limiting access.

SUMMARY OF ISSUE IDENTIFICATION ACTIVITIES

<u>Date</u>		
8/1/90	Norman Culpitt, County Forest Administrator	Resolution to withdraw tract passed county board
12/14/90	Steve Dewald, Area Warden John Olson, Area Wildlife Olson David Pericak, Water Management Specialist Kenneth Wright, Area Fish Manager	Discuss possible meeting with Olson Brothers and initial feelings
2/5/91	Chet Pryga, Area Forester	Discuss meeting with Olsons
2/6/91	Norman Culpitt	Discuss Olson withdrawal
2/12/91	Steve Dewald, John Olson, David Pericak, Kenneth Wright & Alan Olson, Cranberry Operation Owner	Letter sent on February 27 meeting date to discuss withdrawal
2/27/91	Chet Pryga, Alan Olson Kurt Olson, Gene Moseley, County Board member	Held meeting and discussed withdrawal

4/9/91 Ron Olson, Area Land Agent Request by Chet Pryga to
appraise the 30 acre withdrawal
and 40 acre exchange land

4/22/91 Ron Olson Provided Tomah Ranger with
appraisals on withdrawal and
trade parcels

7/18/91 Chet Pryga Submitted first draft of
Environmental Assessment for
review

FC6RB4

Project Name: Olson Brother Cranberry - County Forest Withdrawal County: onroe

DECISION (This decision is not final until certified by the appropriate authority.)

In accordance with s. 1.11, Wis. Stats., and ch. NR 150, Wis. Adm. Code, the Department is authorized and required to determine whether it has complied with s. 1.11 and ch. NR 150.

Complete either A or B below:

A. EIS Process Not Required

The attached analysis of the expected impacts of this proposal is of sufficient scope and detail to conclude that this is not a major action which would significantly affect the quality of the human environment. In my opinion therefore, an environmental impact statement is not required prior to final action by the Department on this project.

B. Major Action Requiring the Full EIS Process

The proposal is of such magnitude and complexity with such considerable and important impacts on the quality of the human environment that it constitutes a major action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment.

Signature of Evaluator <i>Bob Bartholomew Jr</i>	Date Signed <i>8/20/91</i>
Noted: District Staff Specialist or Bureau Director	Date Signed

Number of responses to news release or other notice: _____

CERTIFIED TO BE IN COMPLIANCE WITH WEPA	
District Director or Director of BEAR (or designee)	Date Signed

NOTICE OF APPEAL RIGHTS

If you believe that you have a right to challenge this decision, you should know that Wisconsin statutes and administrative rules establish time periods within which requests to review Department decisions must be filed.

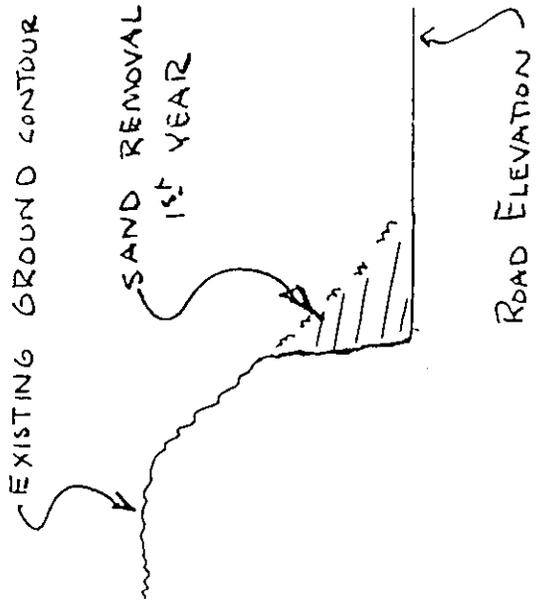
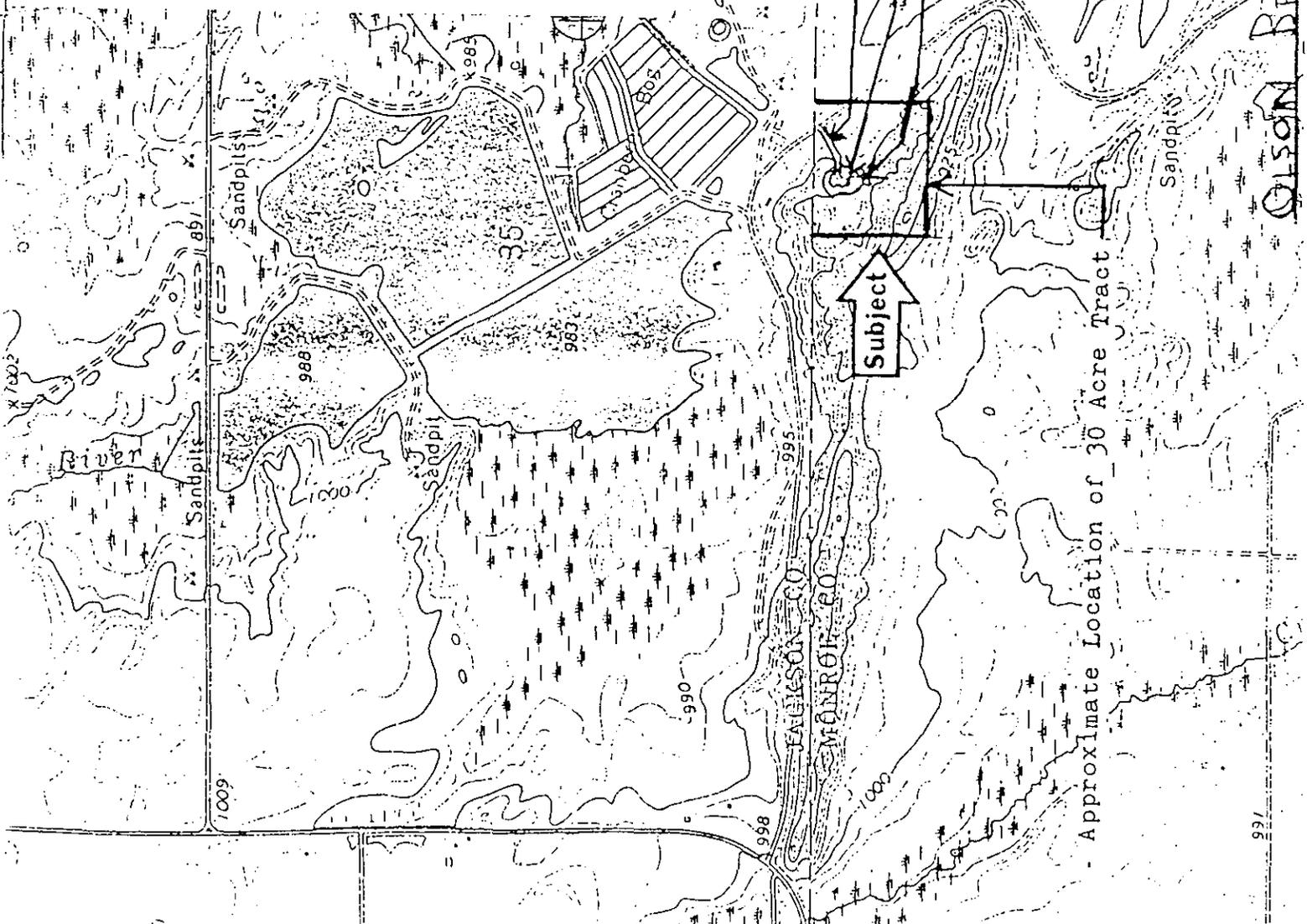
For judicial review of a decision pursuant to sections 227.52 and 227.53, Wis. Stats., you have 30 days after the decision is mailed, or otherwise served by the Department, to file your petition with the appropriate circuit court and serve the petition on the Department. Such a petition for judicial review shall name the Department of Natural Resources as the respondent.

To request a contested case hearing pursuant to section 227.42, Wis. Stats., you have 30 days after the decision is mailed, or otherwise served by the Department, to serve a petition for hearing on the Secretary of the Department of Natural Resources. The filing of a request for a contested case hearing is not a prerequisite for judicial review and does not extend the 30-day period for filing a petition for judicial review.

Note: Not all Department decisions respecting environmental impact, such as those involving solid waste or hazardous waste facilities under sections 144.43 to 144.47 and 144.60 to 144.74, Wis. Stats., are subject to the contested case hearing provisions of section 227.42, Wis. Stats.

This notice is provided pursuant to section 227.48(2), Wis. Stats.

Exhibit 1



CROSS-SECTION SAND PIT

NO SCALE

Subject

New Road
First Year Sand Removal
Second Year Sand Removal

Approximate Location of 30 Acre Tract

OLSON BROTHERS SAND PIT

Olson Brothers - Exhibit 2
Sand Requirements & Supply

① Bed Sand (1/2" ON 45 ACRES/YR.)

$$\frac{45A.}{YR.} \times \frac{4840 SY.}{A.} \times \left(\frac{1}{2} IN \times \frac{FT}{12 IN} \times \frac{YD}{3 FT} \right) = 3,025 \frac{CY.}{YR.}$$

② Dam Repair/Increase Height (1 FT. ON 1 mile)

$$\frac{\text{Length}}{1 \text{ mile} \times \frac{1760 YD.}{\text{mile}}} \times \frac{\text{height}}{1 FT. \times \frac{YD.}{3 FT.}} \times \frac{\text{width}}{7 YDS.} = 4,106 \frac{CY.}{YR.}$$

③ Bed Renovation (6" ON 2A./YR.)

$$\frac{2A.}{YR.} \times \frac{4840 SY.}{A.} \times \left(6 IN. \times \frac{FT}{12 IN} \times \frac{YD}{3 FT} \right) = 1,613 \frac{CY.}{YR.}$$

Total SAND Requirements = $8,744 \frac{CY.}{YR.}$

Sand Supply : 3 YD. Bank, 30 A.

① $30A \times \frac{4840 SY.}{A.} \times 3 YD. = 435,600 CY. \text{ OR } \underline{\underline{49 YR.}}$

② If only 20A. of the 30A tract could be used:

$$20A \times \frac{4840 SY.}{A.} \times 3 YD. = 290,400 CY \text{ OR } \underline{\underline{33 YRS}}$$

ALO 2/28/91

