



Lake Wissota State Park Interim Forest Management Plan

Property Identifiers

Property Name and Designation: **Lake Wissota State Park**

County: **Chippewa**

Property Acreage: **1062** (1052 in Division of Forestry database)

DNR Property Code: **9290**

Forestry Property Code(s): **0936**

Master Plan Date: **1986**

Property Manager: **Dave Hladilek**

PART 1: Property Assessment

LANDSCAPE AND REGIONAL CONTEXT

The property lies in the western third of the Forest Transition Ecological Landscape and is associated with the Chippewa River basin. The Forest Transition was entirely glaciated. The western portion is covered by deposits of the Wisconsin glaciation. Glacial till is the major type of material deposited throughout, and the prevalent landforms are till plains or moraines. Throughout the area, post-glacial erosion, stream cutting, and deposition formed floodplains, terraces, and swamps along major rivers. Wind-deposited silt material formed a layer 6 to 24 inches thick. Maintaining intact river corridors, such as the Chippewa River, is a major opportunity in the Forest Transition. The Chippewa River supports high aquatic biodiversity and many rare species. Wetlands and forests forming the corridors of these rivers are used heavily by migratory birds and may be important for other species traveling between northern and southern Wisconsin.

Lake Wissota State Park lies within the Chetek Plains Land type Association (212Qb04). The characteristic landform pattern of this LTA is nearly level outwash plain with terraces, fans, and sandstone hills common. Soils are predominantly well drained sandy loam over outwash.

The landscape within about five miles of the park is mostly in agriculture or development. The city of Chippewa Falls is southwest across Lake Wissota less than five miles away resulting in heavy development pressure. The area is influenced by agriculture and heavy development pressure. Forested acreage is primarily limited to stream corridors and areas of steep topography.

GENERAL PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

Based on land survey records, the vegetation at time of Euro-American settlement was jack pine and scrub oak barrens and forests. Beginning in the mid 1800's and continuing through the late 1800's, the original vegetation had been greatly altered by logging, wildfires, and land clearing for agricultural purposes. As time passed and lands previously cleared for agriculture were abandoned, species such as jack pine and oak became established and were left to grow.

Lake Wissota is located on the northeastern shores of the namesake Lake Wissota. Access to the park is on County Highway O which divides the property with 80 acres north of the highway and 982 acres south. Before the state acquired the property in 1961, an American Legion park of about 25 acres existed in the southern area of the park bordering the Yellow River. The Legion park contained facilities for picnicking and a boat landing. Development of Lake Wissota State Park began in the early 1970's. Old farm fences were removed and abandoned fields were planted with over 40,000 trees. In years to follow, other recreational facilities were developed. Since establishment in 1961 the property has been managed for camping, boating, picnicking, swimming, fishing, hiking, skiing, snowmobiling, and general environmental education and interpretive study.



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Soils of the park are predominantly two soil series, Menahga loamy sand and Burkhardt sandy loam. These are somewhat excessively drained to excessively drained soils in plane areas on terraces and outwash plains of the Chippewa River basin. Topography is level with the exception of the steep bank adjacent to the lake.

Natural resources management has included thinning the pine plantations noted above, the establishment of dry-mesic prairie, and some invasive species control. Prescribed fire is used to help manage the prairie plantings.

CURRENT COVER TYPES

Lake Wissota State Park consists of 958 acres of wetlands, pines, oak, aspen, mixed hardwoods, and grass vegetative cover types. Upland grass cover occupies 101 acres (10%). Forested acreage covers over 80% of the property, including pine (64%), oak (8%), aspen (4%), mixed hardwoods (4%), and low, wet areas adjacent to stream corridors occupy (1%) of the acreage.

- **Pine** (671 acres total):
 - White pine: 96 acres (9%) in 9 stands, 20 acres in plantations; dates of origin 1953-2008; seedlings/saplings to large saw logs.
 - Red pine: 316 acres (30%) in 17 stands, 176 acres in plantations; dates of origin 1953-1998; seedlings/saplings to small saw logs. An understory of white pine saplings has established itself in many red pine plantations on the property.
 - Jack pine: 259 acres (24%) in 13 stands; dates of origin 1960-2007; seedlings/saplings to softwood poles.
- **Oak**: 84 acres (8%) in 6 stands; dates of origin 1912-1948; hardwood poles to large saw logs; mostly red, white, and black oak in canopy, red maple in understory.
- **Aspen**: 40 acres (4%) in 3 stands; dates of origin 1967-1989; hardwood poles.
- **Central Hardwoods**: 46 acres (4%) in 3 stands; dates of origin 1984-1990; hardwood poles; oak, shagbark hickory, bitternut hickory, elm, basswood, black cherry, hackberry, white ash, green ash, red and sugar maple, and white birch.
- **Other**: 211 acres, including upland grass (101 acres), developed areas (95 acres), marsh (6 acres), and right-of-way (9 acres).

NATURAL HERITAGE INVENTORY - RARE SPECIES

At the time of this plan (2013) one Threatened species and 3 Special Concern species have been documented on or adjacent to Lake Wissota State Park.

CONSERVATION OPPORTUNITY AREA

The park is not within a Conservation Opportunity Areas.

CULTURAL AND ARCHEOLOGICAL SITES (including tribal sites):

According to Wisconsin Historical Society records there are archaeological and historical sites associated with Lake Wissota State Park.

INVASIVE SPECIES

Invasive species inventory has not been taken, but buckthorn, spotted knapweed, garlic mustard, and prickly ash are known to be common in some of the area. There is high potential for invasive establishment



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due to development in the area and access by recreationists. Early detection and control is a challenge on this property because of adjacent development pressure and high visitor use.

EXISTING STATE NATURAL AREAS

None

HIGH VALUE CONSERVATION FOREST (HCVF) or other resources/ natural community types limited in the landscape

There are approximately 60 acres of managed old growth hardwoods and pine that provides habitat for species associated with older forests.

There are 3 reconstructed dry-mesic prairies (105 acres total) which benefit grassland species.

PRIMARY PUBLIC USES (RECREATION)

This property is open to a wide variety of recreational opportunities including hiking, biking, swimming, boating via the boat landing, camping (116 individual family campsites, 2 group camps), picnicking (reservable shelters, picnic areas), fishing, horseback riding, skiing, snowmobiling, and wildlife viewing. The Park has had a limited antlerless deer hunt since 2008. With the passage of Act 168, the hunting opportunities have increased to more than deer hunting. Please consult the DNR website or the Park office to get details on season dates and restrictions.

BIOTIC INVENTORY STATUS:

There are no known biotic inventories for this property.

DEFERRAL/CONSULTATION DESIGNATIONS

None

PART 2: IFMP Components

Lake Wissota State Park is managed primarily to provide recreational and educational opportunities and to promote a natural outdoor experience to over 150,000 park visitors annually, while preserving and protecting the resource for present and future generations.

MASTER PLAN OBJECTIVES:

1. Provide the recreational opportunities identified above.
2. Maintain the health, vigor, and diversity of the vegetation in and adjacent to the park's intensive use areas, including pine plantations, prairie plantings, and planting of trees in specified areas. Pine plantations will be managed to break up the managed "row effect."
3. Identify invasive species and implement practices to eliminate/minimize impact to property.
4. The lake shore will be stabilized using a variety of techniques.

PROPERTY PRESCRIPTIONS (Identify specific and pertinent prescriptions by area or forest type, including passive management areas, extended rotation, and other information that will help achieve the objectives.)

1. Pine plantations: thin per department silvicultural handbook. Stands will be thinned at 5 to 10 year intervals beginning in 2014.
2. Maintain prairie plantings through the use of prescribed fires at approximately 3 year intervals.

SUMMARY OF PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AND COMMENTS RECEIVED

No Comments Received



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Approvals:

Armund Bartz

12/09/2013

Regional Ecologist

Date

Anthony Marinello

12/09/2013

Forester

Date

Dave Hladilek

12/16/13

Property Manager

Date

Ben Bergey

12/16/13

Area/Team Supervisor

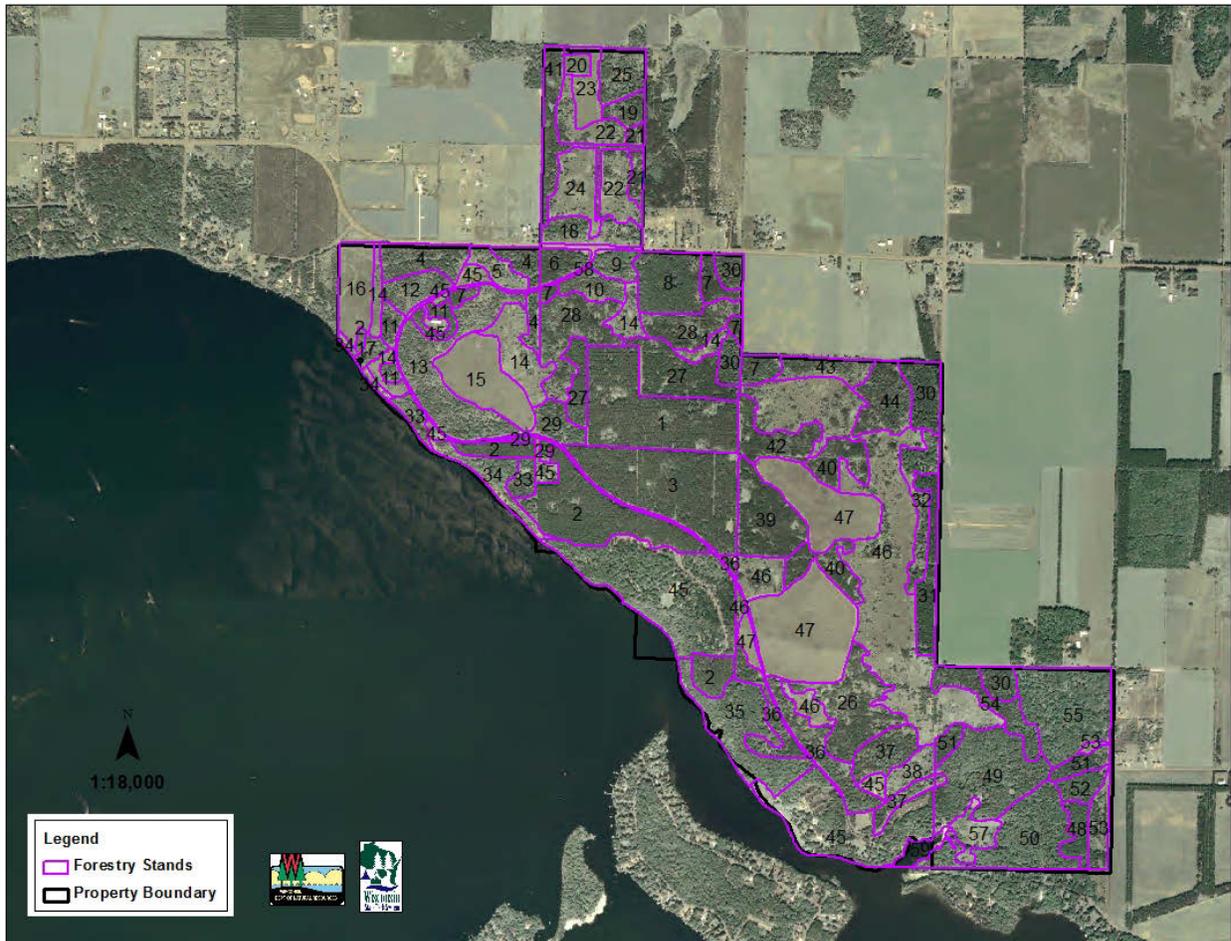
Date



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The following link is for the DNR website and Lake Wissota State Park Map:

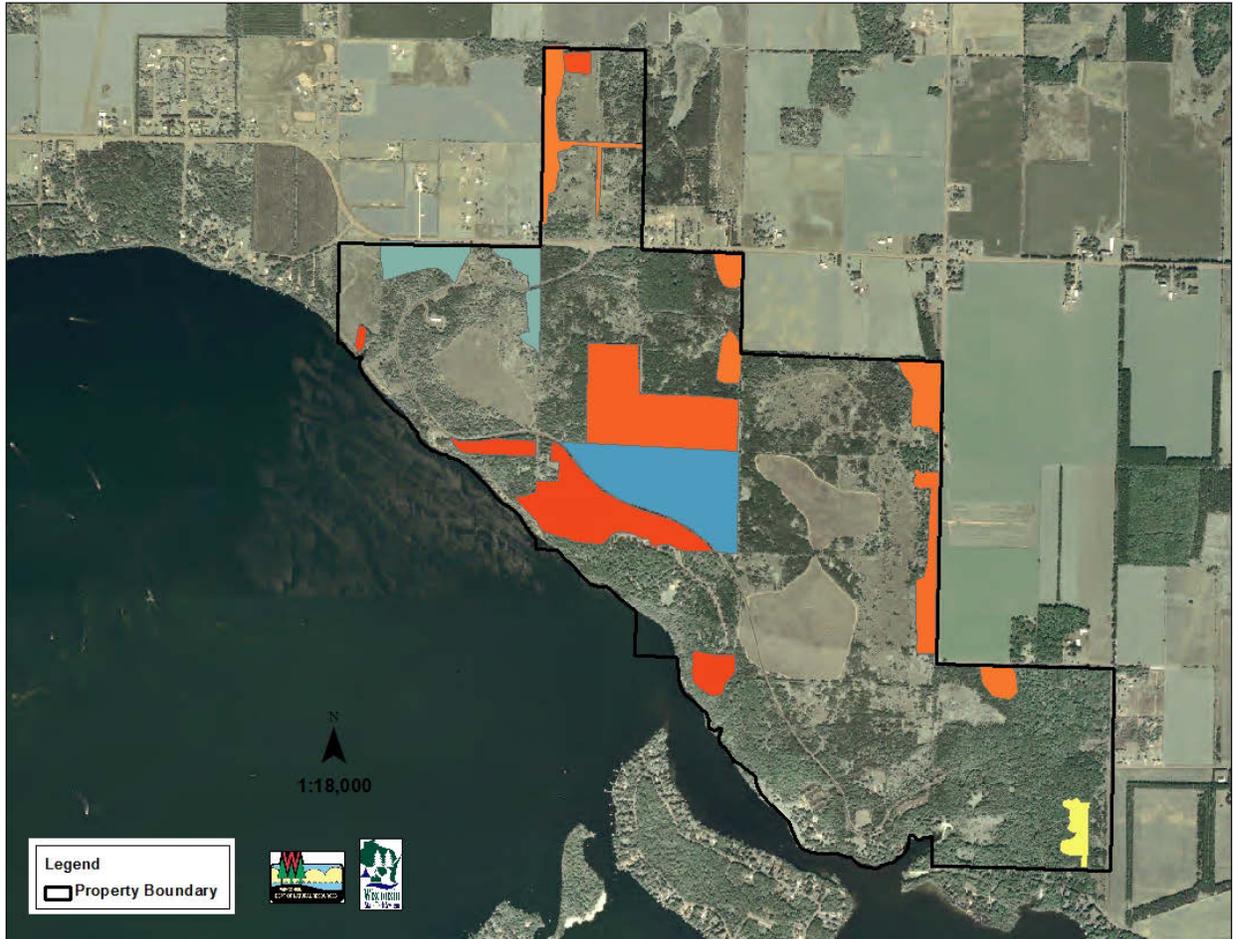
<http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/parks/name/lakewissota/pdfs/lwissotaparkmap.pdf>



Lake Wissota State Park property boundary and forestry stands



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Lake Wissota State Park pine plantations.