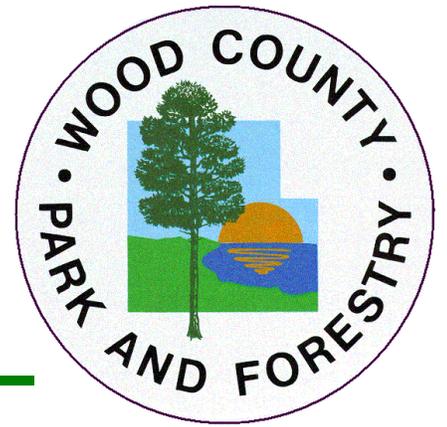


# Wood County, Wisconsin

## Park, Recreation, and Open Spaces Plan



### 2011 Update



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## II. INTRODUCTION

This plan represents a comprehensive study of outdoor recreation in Wood County. Primary emphasis is placed on the role the County is expected to play in meeting demands for outdoor recreation areas and facilities. Several recreation activities that are considered basic to the County's program are discussed at length in terms of supply, demand and need. Following this discussion is a presentation of a program aimed at correcting deficiencies noted during the course of the study, or at making general improvements to existing facilities. Secondary emphasis is placed on those outdoor recreation facilities provided by Wood County's towns, cities and villages, the role of those facilities, and how they might best serve the users.

To properly delineate Wood County's program, it was necessary to consider the roles of others in the provision of outdoor recreation opportunities. Frequent references to quantity of their contributions were considered. By virtue of this plan, Wood County assumes a role of assisting to coordinate outdoor recreation planning and programming within its boundaries.

### A. SCOPE

In the 2011 edition of the Park, Recreation and Open Spaces Plan, forms of outdoor recreation in Wood County, both public and private, are analyzed. Where the impact of indoor facilities is deemed important, those facilities will also be identified. The indoor facilities may be meeting seasonal needs, such as winter jogging facilities, or they may be for those sports that are designed to be played indoors, such as racquetball and curling.

The Park, Recreation, and Open Spaces Plan will document or refer to plans by the cities, villages, towns, and private enterprise that provide outdoor recreation facilities. The planning and construction of these facilities will remain the responsibility of the individual municipalities. The summary of municipal and private facilities is necessary to get an overview of outdoor recreation facilities countywide. Chapter IX recommends specific actions for the Wood County Board of Supervisors for the provision of needed facilities that the County can practically and logically support.

This plan is intended to meet the requirements of state and federal grant programs for recreation acquisition and development. In addition, this plan in its current or updated form, is an integral component of the Wood County Comprehensive Plan. It is the intent to prepare a practical outdoor recreation plan to meet the needs of Wood County residents and visitors. Further, it is the intent of this plan to outline a program that will make wise use of the County's resources, including natural and man-made resources as well as those financial resources available through state, federal and local programs. The recreation program is not designed to exploit the County's natural resources to the point that a natural resource will be exhausted or to the point of endangering the habitat of the County's abundant wildlife. On the

contrary, if properly implemented, the plan should maximize use of these resources while, at the same time preserving their function.

## B. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this section is to compile a list of the conclusions and the recommendations that have been made throughout this plan for the use, acquisition, and development of outdoor recreation facilities. Each of the following statements has been presented elsewhere in this document and justified at that time. For further explanation or clarification, the reader should refer to the chapter, subsection or page which refers to the specific topic of interest to the reader.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Providers of recreation facilities should evaluate the County's recreation planning goals and objectives to see how they might be used or revised.
2. To accentuate the outdoor experience and accessibility of County forestland, a network of less costly multi-use hiking trails could be cleared and maintained, accessible from many existing parking areas.
3. To relieve any pressure on the Wood County ATV Area, a connector trail to the Black River State Forest trails in Jackson County should be considered.
4. In the past 10+ years there has been a decrease in the number of municipal/public swimming pools in the County. Current facilities are considered outdated and are costly to maintain. There has been interest in the Wisconsin Rapids Area and Marshfield Area to develop family aquatic centers. The County can provide some coordination for stakeholders to create a unique funding plan and ongoing maintenance strategy to develop family aquatic centers before the existing municipal/public swimming pools need to be closed due to high maintenance costs.
5. The County Park & Forestry Department should continue to research ways to attract more patrons during the slow weekday periods, and increase lengths-of-stay. Past promotions and incentives have worked well to increase lengths of stay and mid-week occupancy rates.
6. There is a growing population of motor home owners requiring improved sites with electric and water hookups. Campgrounds should continue to improve sites to meet these demands.
7. An increase in demand for seasonal campsites in Wood County in

combination with very few seasonal sites available, should prompt campgrounds to consider the possibility of offering seasonal campsites.

8. In contrast to the improvement of camping sites to accommodate motor homes and camping trailers, many campers prefer a more natural camping experience. There is a desire by many campers to limit the removal of trees from camp areas in parks, and allow plant undergrowth to serve as a background, and buffer from other campsites or park facilities. Campgrounds should consider their ability to offer this type of camping experience.

9. The need for formally developed hiking trails is low because of the availability of forest trails that are used for snowmobiling and cross-country skiing. However, enhancement of some of these trails with summer maintenance and signing of plant species should be considered for educational purposes.

10. The only intensively developed skiing and tubing area in the County is at Powers Bluff Park. Therefore, needs for skiing and tubing will have to be satisfied by Powers Bluff or outside the County. The County should continue to maintain Powers Bluff for winter recreational use and continue to manage, develop and preserve the park according to the 2005 Powers Bluff County Park Long Range Master Plan.

11. Because of the importance of bicycling as a family activity and mode of transportation, efforts should continue to implement the Wood County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan to provide better, safer bicycle routes throughout Wood County. The original plan adopted in March of 1996 by the Wood County Board of Supervisors, is considered outdated, and should be updated to better plan for bicycle and pedestrian trails in the future.

12. Wood County, municipalities in the County, tribal governing bodies, state agencies, federal agencies, and incorporated organizations should work together to identify projects that meet their common goals and are eligible to be funded by State Stewardship grant funds. Grant applications that show cooperative effort are more likely to be funded than efforts of a single municipality or organization.

13. The Wood County Scientific and Natural Areas Inventory is no longer maintained by the DNR. This listing of locally significant scientific and natural areas has not been updated since 1983. Criteria should be established and the County should work with the DNR to compile an updated inventory. It is important that residents of Wood County be made aware of these areas so they can be protected from encroachment and preserved for their cultural, historical and educational values.

14. Many of the cities, villages and towns in Wood County are actively providing recreational facilities for their residents. The Wood County Planning and Zoning Office has encouraged many of these communities to become involved in this planning process. This has helped reduce redundancy of facilities over the years and has kept resources channeled towards necessary goals. Listed in the Acquisition, Development and Improvement Projects section of this plan are a number of projects that are being undertaken by municipalities other than Wood County. Wood County supports the development of these projects as they have been reviewed for their need, duplication of service, and ability for the municipality to absorb additional operation and maintenance costs.

15. Within Wood County there are 163 identified archaeological sites. An effort should be made, utilizing grant funding, to inventory each of these sites, determine their actual importance to Wood County's history and culture, and develop a plan to preserve those of greatest significance.

16. It is important to monitor the quality of Wood County's surface waters to ensure the safety of beach usage. As water quality improves, greater demand will be placed on the beaches.

## CONCLUSIONS

1. In addition to public agencies, private landowners are helping maintain and enhance Wood County's wildlife resources.
2. Winter recreation activities requiring moderate to steep slopes such as skiing, snowboarding, sledding and tubing in Wood County are limited due to the relatively flat terrain, and current facilities cannot adequately meet demand during peak times.
3. In recent years it has become increasingly challenging to budget for park maintenance and improvements that many park users feel are adequate. Parks and recreation activities compete with a variety of government services for funding on an annual basis. To maintain park facilities and provide recreation activities that meet ever changing demands, creative strategies should be considered. Wood County is fortunate to have many park users that are willing to contribute to the long-term maintenance of parks through volunteering their time, monetary donations, and assisting with funding strategies such as applying for grants. A way to initially organize and channel these efforts could be through the creation of "friends groups" for each County park, or recreation activity such as cross-country skiing, or bicycle and pedestrian trails.

4. Wood County saw a decrease in population from 2000 to 2010 that would tend to indicate that usage of parks and recreation facilities will not increase by Wood County residents based on population. However, other demographic shifts and socioeconomic changes, and a general understanding of who uses parks and where they are from, will allow efforts to focus on specific parks and recreation activities that are most in need.
5. Virtually every level of government, as well as private enterprise provides outdoor recreation facilities.
6. Over one half of all camping units are under public ownership, primarily the Wood County Park & Forestry Department.
7. Governmental units provide most picnic facilities. Nearly all picnic sites are provided in conjunction with other active recreation activities.
8. The supply of picnic tables has remained steady, but appears to meet growing demand of this activity.
9. There are six golf courses in Wood County that are adequate for the expected demand during the planning period.
10. The flat terrain, land use diversity, and mix of natural and agricultural rural landscape make Wood County a pleasurable sightseeing experience.
11. There are 257.4 miles of snowmobile trails in Wood County that interconnect with trails in surrounding counties. It is anticipated that this amount will be adequate to meet snowmobiling needs in Wood County.
12. There are no stables in Wood County that rent horses for trail riding. There are also no developed trails, but horseback riding is allowed in county forestlands.
13. Posting of land by private owners is expected to increase the hunting demand on public lands and those lands that are enrolled in the forest crop law or managed forest law.
14. The future availability of large tracts of forest crop law or managed forest law lands that are open to the public for recreation purposes will continue to decline as properties are sold off for private recreational uses or development.
15. Wood County is experiencing a decline in available municipal swimming pools. Current facilities are reaching the end of their

operational life-cycles and there are no solid plans to replace these facilities.

16. The only bodies of water in Wood County which are currently adequate for high speed motor boating and water skiing are the Biron Flowage and the Wisconsin River, south of Nekoosa, although such activities are common on NEPCO Lake and Lake Wazeecha. Relief is being offered to these bodies of water through improvements to flowages in Adams County within a few miles of Wood County. Planned future access improvements to the Biron Flowage will likely alleviate boat traffic on many of the smaller lakes in the County.

### **III. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

The formulation of goals and objectives provides the foundation on which the planning process is built. Goals are general statements aimed at directing the analysis of alternatives and implementation of the final plan. Objectives are more specific statements as to how the goals should be accomplished. Objectives and policies are closely related measures that can be implemented in an effort to achieve the adopted goals.

This chapter lists goals and objectives/policies that were specifically designed for this plan or that have proven successful in other area recreation planning programs and that would provide a consistency between this and related recreation plans. The providers of recreation facilities in Wood County, whether they are public agencies or private providers, should take the opportunity to evaluate the goals and objectives/policies adopted herein by Wood County and how these might impact other recreation facilities, as well as how those specific providers might utilize these goals and objectives/policies in their particular area of interest.

#### **A. GOAL- DETERMINE WHAT FACILITIES ARE CURRENTLY AVAILABLE IN WOOD COUNTY.**

##### **Objectives/Policies**

1. Inventory state, county and local outdoor recreation facilities and develop a summary listing of all public facilities, including location and function.
2. Contact private outdoor recreation facility providers and prepare an inventory of facilities, location and user fee schedule.

#### **B. GOAL- ANALYZE THE CURRENT AND FUTURE OUTDOOR RECREATION NEEDS OF THE COUNTY'S RESIDENTS AND VISITORS.**

##### **Objectives/Policies**

1. Study currently popular recreation activities, compare them to historic activities, and determine changing trends and continuing recreation demand.
2. Survey recreation providers, both public and private, and compare their findings and interpretations as to changing trends and needed facilities.
3. Utilize available resources such as the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), the Wisconsin Park and Recreation Association (WPRA) publications and meetings, and trade journals and

periodicals that help determine trends in recreational needs.

4. Encourage the public to identify park issues and opportunities through open meetings and survey questionnaires.

**C. GOAL- MAINTAIN EXISTING WOOD COUNTY-OWNED FACILITIES SO THAT THEY REMAIN USABLE AND ATTRACTIVE TO THE USER.**

**Objectives/Policies**

1. When necessary or desirable, upgrade facilities to meet or exceed current recommended standards and design. Careful attention should be paid to maintaining equipment and facilities in a manner that addresses the American's with Disabilities Act requirements and the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission guidelines.
2. Offer an ample supply of popular and standard types of facilities for use by County residents and for attracting out-of-county visitors that will aid the economy of Wood County's communities.
3. Identify and preserve sites having scientific, historical or archaeological significance and make use of state and federal funding programs for such purposes whenever possible because these sites will be enjoyed by non-residents as well as residents of Wood County.
4. Preserve the County's open space and recreational resources and protect them from visual blight and loss of environmental quality through the use of signing and maintenance.
5. Support a good wildlife management program and maintain adequate wildlife habitation through the preservation of wetlands and county forests.

**D. GOAL- TO GATHER AND ASSESS INFORMATION CONCERNING THE POTENTIAL OF WOOD COUNTY TO PROVIDE OUTDOOR RECREATION FOR RESIDENTS AND NON-RESIDENTS.**

**Objectives/Policies**

1. Review potential developments with the Highway, Infrastructure and Recreation Committee, and the County Executive Committee on an annual basis.
2. Develop a 5-year capital improvements program (CIP) for the development of the County's outdoor recreation facilities. Update the CIP annually so that budgeting of improvements can be approved well in

advance.

3. Identify and make recommendations to the County Board of Supervisors regarding sites that are potentially suitable and desirable for development of new, or expansion of existing county park facilities, or of sites that should be preserved for their natural amenities in the best interest of Wood County's residents, wildlife, economy, health, safety and general welfare.

**E. GOAL- TO MAKE SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION BY THE WOOD COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS TO FULFILL THE COUNTY'S RESPONSIBILITY IN PROVIDING OUTDOOR RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES.**

Objectives/Policies

1. Reassess the goals and objectives of the County on a continuing basis and include them as part of the County Parks Department annual report to the County Board in an effort to keep the supervisors and public informed and to give them an opportunity to provide suggestions for new or revised goals.
2. Update this plan every 5 years to ensure Wood County's eligibility to apply for state and federal recreation acquisition and development programs.
3. Develop and maintain a 5-year capital improvements program outlining major anticipated expenditures needed as part of a sound outdoor recreation program and apply for state and federal grants whenever possible to assist in continued upgrading of the County park system.

**F. GOAL- TO RECOMMEND WAYS THE COUNTY CAN ENCOURAGE QUALITY RECREATION DEVELOPMENTS BY PRIVATE INTERESTS AND TO HELP LOCATE THESE FACILITIES IN AREAS OF NEED AND BEST SUITED FOR PROPER MANAGEMENT OF THE COUNTY'S NATURAL RESOURCES.**

Objectives/Policies

1. Provide technical assistance to potential recreational developers about the value of the natural resources and the impact their development may have on those resources.
2. Make available demographic data, topographic maps, needs assessments and other materials that may be pertinent to the particular development proposal.

3. When in the best interest of Wood County's residents, provide the developer with a site analysis featuring natural resource, land use, and other information that will assist the developer in designing and building the facility in a manner best suited for the potential user and the available natural resources.

**G. GOAL- THROUGH CONSERVATION AND WISE USE OF RESOURCES, PRESERVE, DEVELOP AND MAKE ACCESSIBLE SUCH QUANTITY AND QUALITY OF OUTDOOR RECREATION AS WILL BE NECESSARY AND DESIRABLE FOR INDIVIDUAL ENJOYMENT.**

**Objectives/Policies**

1. Encourage preservation of scenic areas, natural wonders, primitive areas, wildlife areas and historic areas of significance either through direct or indirect means.
2. Manage County lands for the broadest possible recreation benefit consistent with other essential uses.
3. Cooperate and coordinate with state and local governments on recreation development to reflect a balance between state, county and municipal facilities.
4. Ensure that land devoted to outdoor recreation will be preserved and protected from encroachment by, or conversion to, other uses which might be incompatible with park purposes. When such encroachment or conversion is determined to be in the public interest, replacement of the lost land by an area of equal value for park purposes should be required.
5. Periodically review the ultimate goal in park acreage and development taking into account changes in attitudes and participation. Adjustments to the long-range program should include the attempt to meet the greatest needs first and retain sufficient flexibility to cope with sudden changes or opportunities.
6. Consider the feasibility of developing recreation uses that will serve the needs and desires of Wood County residents, but that may also serve to attract visitors and regional, state or national events to Wood County as part of the County's economic development goals.

## **IV. PLANNING PROCESS**

### **A. Description of Process**

The process of creating a park, recreation and open spaces plan starts with the review of past plans and the recent progress or improvements in the County. Inventories are updated to show a comprehensive and current listing of county recreation facilities and identify any deficiencies. Through public hearings and soliciting the experience of park professionals, issues and opportunities for parks, recreation, and open spaces are identified. Recommendations for outdoor recreation provisions are made and put into action through a capital improvements program. All recommended improvements are recommended to be in compliance with ADA requirements and in line with park and recreation standards.

### **B. Amending the Plan**

Major updates to the County Park, Recreation and Open Spaces Plan are made on a 5-year schedule. This allows Wood County and participating communities to remain eligible for grant funding through state and federal programs. Should the need arise for unforeseen projects to be added to this document within the 5-year time frame, an amendment to the plan will be needed.

Potential amendments should be brought to the attention of the Highway Infrastructure and Recreation Committee and the Wood County Conservation, Education and Economic Development Committee. Staff will review the proposal for conflicts or duplication of services and recommend to the Committee the inclusion, alteration, or rejection of the project. If accepted, the plan will be updated, and notice of the update will be sent to the Department of Natural Resources for inclusion in their copy.

## **V. SUMMARY OF PAST COMPREHENSIVE OUTDOOR RECREATION PLANS**

The County Recreational plan was first developed in 1972 as part of a larger comprehensive planning project. Updates of the plan occurred in 1977, 1984, 1991, 1996 and 2001.

The first comprehensive recreation and open space plan for Wood County was approved by the Wood County Board of Supervisors in July of 1972. This original plan represented a comprehensive study of outdoor recreation in Wood County with major emphasis on the role of the County in meeting the demands for outdoor recreation areas and facilities. A review of this early plan reveals that few recommendations were implemented. Some noted exceptions to this rule include the development of additional snowmobile trails, documentation and preservation of historical sites throughout the County and the acquisition of 360 acres in the town of Richfield.

The 1977 update had a number of recommendations implemented. These included the construction of tennis courts and ball field lighting for the city of Nekoosa, the development of a new county park on NEPCO Lake, south of Wisconsin Rapids, and a number of small communities had continued to make improvements to their park facilities based on recommendations from the planning process.

Beginning with the 1984 plan and continuing through the 1991 update, the plan document became more of an implementation tool for park improvements. This is evident through a quick review of both documents and comparing the action programs to completed projects countywide. However it is important to note that the majority of the recommended projects are at the county level. This lack of municipality involvement can be attributed to a limited amount of public involvement in the planning process. The 1991 plan was the first to include a capital improvements schedule.

A number of recommendations from the 1996 plan have been completed in the last few years. The County Parks Department completed numerous improvement projects listed in their capital improvements program. The department upgraded 109 campsites with 50 amp electrical hookups to meet the increasing demand of motor homes, and improved first impressions of Wood County Parks with new entrance signs. Substantial improvements to park facilities to bring them into ADA compliance took place, even some unrequired improvements including construction of a handicapped fishing pier at NEPCO Lake. Successful implementation of the Wood County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan added another 25 miles of trails to the County. These trails cross municipal boundaries and tie communities together; cooperative grant applications among the communities secured grant dollars to fund much of the trail construction. Significant improvements to parks at the municipal level occurred in the cities of Marshfield, Wisconsin Rapids and Pittsville, the villages of Vesper and Arpin, and also the town of Rock.

<b>FIGURE 1 COUNTY PARK IMPROVEMENTS – SINCE 2001</b>	
<b>County Parks System Wide Improvements</b>	Improvements to Parks and Forestry web page to provide information to park users
	Replacement of many park signs to improve consistency and make them more maintenance free
	The County resource map was updated
	Many facility changes made to improve ADA compliance
	Electrical upgrades to County Campground sites
	Replacement of playground equipment with modern and safer equipment
	Online reservation system for County Campgrounds was developed
<b>North Park</b>	2 open shelters were constructed
	Walking trail was added
	Second shower building was added
	Interpretive signage was added
<b>South Park</b>	Wash down station for boats installed
	Boat landing was enlarged and reconstructed
	Part of trail paved
	Rip rap maintenance of shoreline was completed
	Ski show platform at Red Sands Beach was constructed
<b>Dexter Park</b>	Group camping area was added
	Enclosed shelter was remodeled (cooperative project with Pittsville Lions Club)
	Walking trail was added
	Boat landing was reconstructed
	Interpretive signage was added
	Fish cleaning station was constructed
<b>NEPCO</b>	Closed shelter was constructed for year round use
	Entrance road was realigned
	Beach area improvements were made including handicap beach access
	Cross-country Ski trail expansion and improvement (cooperative effort with the River Cities Nordic Ski Club)
<b>Powers Bluff</b>	Powers Bluff County Park Long Range Master Plan was developed.
	Piston Bully purchased for better snow hill maintenance
	Tubing hill was reshaped
	Tow rope replaced with handle tow lifts
<b>Wood County Rifle Range</b>	New shooting stations were constructed and the number of stations reduced to improve safety.
Source: Wood County Parks and Forestry	

Since the 2001 plan was adopted many improvements have been made to parks and recreation facilities by both public and private recreation providers. Improvements to County Parks are in many cases the result of their inclusion in the 2001 County Parks, Recreation, and Open Spaces Plan, and the improvements are referenced and documented

throughout this plan. In some cases city, village and town improvement projects received State Stewardship Grant Funding due to their inclusion in the plan. Although this plan includes complete up-to-date inventories of the many municipalities, the specific improvements made to municipal parks are not clearly identified. To gain a clearer understanding of extent of progress made by city, village and town parks, the current inventories can be compared to the inventories of the 2001 plan.

In the past 10 years there have been a number of significant improvements to the County campgrounds. Many campsites were improved to better meet changing trends in camping units and system wide facilities were remodeled or replaced to conform to ADA standards. Facility improvements to shelter buildings and restroom facilities are noticeable in almost all of the County Parks. Throughout the County, segments of trail were constructed at varying standards, now prompting the need to refocus efforts of a coordinated countywide bicycle and pedestrian trail system. In general, boat access to water has improved with many boat landings being reconstructed. Although land County acquisition for parks identified in the 2001 plan did not occur, several communities were able to acquire additional property to meet local demand for parks and trails. Figure 1 shows some of the significant improvements made to the County Parks.

## VI. DESCRIPTION OF THE PLANNING REGION

### A. Social Characteristics of Planning Region

#### 1. Current Population

Wood County had a 2010 population of 74,749 according to the U.S. Census of Population. Of that total, 40,039 (54%) lived in cities, 5,820 (8%) called a village home, and 29,445 (39%) were residents in townships. Since 2000 the towns have seen the most significant growth in the county with an increase of 555 (1.9%) while village population decreased by 16 (-.27%) and cities decreased by 235 (-.58%). Appendix A shows a map of municipal population change from the 2000 to 2010.

Wood County has two major population centers. The city of Marshfield in the northwest corner of the county has 18,218, and the city of Wisconsin Rapids in the southeast has 18,367. Together they account for 49 percent of the County's population.

#### 2. Population Trends and Projections

<b>Year</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Percent Change</b>
1910	30,583	NA
1920	34,643	13.3
1930	37,865	9.3
1940	44,465	14.4
1950	50,500	13.6
1960	59,105	17.0
1970	65,362	10.6
1980	72,799	11.4
1990	73,605	1.1
2000	75,555	2.6
2010	74,749	-1.1
Source: U.S. Census		

## Population Trends

The purpose of this section is to analyze the trends in the County's population, and where appropriate, compare those figures to what is happening statewide. The official Census counts for Wood County are listed in Table 1. Between 1910 and 1980, Wood County experienced an average decennial growth rate of 12.8 percent. However the past 20 years have proven difficult to predict and we have seen an average decennial growth rate of 1.5 percent. Explanations for such a change in growth tend to focus on economic factors such as lower relative incomes requiring two incomes per family, and the lack of new employment opportunities developing in the immediate area.

## Population Projections

To properly plan for future services in Wood County, the County Board must be aware of the changing age structure of the population and of the numbers that are expected to live in the County in the future. State agencies study future population expectations for anticipated funding levels of their programs and the County must do the same. Population projections are speculative and no person can forecast a community's future perfectly because of factors such as changing economics, physical

**TABLE 2  
TOTAL POPULATION PROJECTIONS  
WOOD COUNTY & STATE, 1990-2035**

Year	Wood County		State Total	
	Population	Percent Change	Population	Percent Change
1990 Census	73,605	-	4,891,769	-
2000 Census	75,555	2.6	5,363,715	9.6
2010 Census	74,749	-1.1	5,686,986	6
2010 estimate	77,721	2.9	5,751,470	7.2
2015 estimate	78,613	1.1	5,988,420	4.1
2020 estimate	79,359	.9	6,202,810	3.6
2025 estimate	79,773	.5	6,390,900	3
2030 estimate	79,713	-.08	6,541,180	2.4
2035 estimate	79,129	-.7	6,653,970	1.7

Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration and U.S. Census

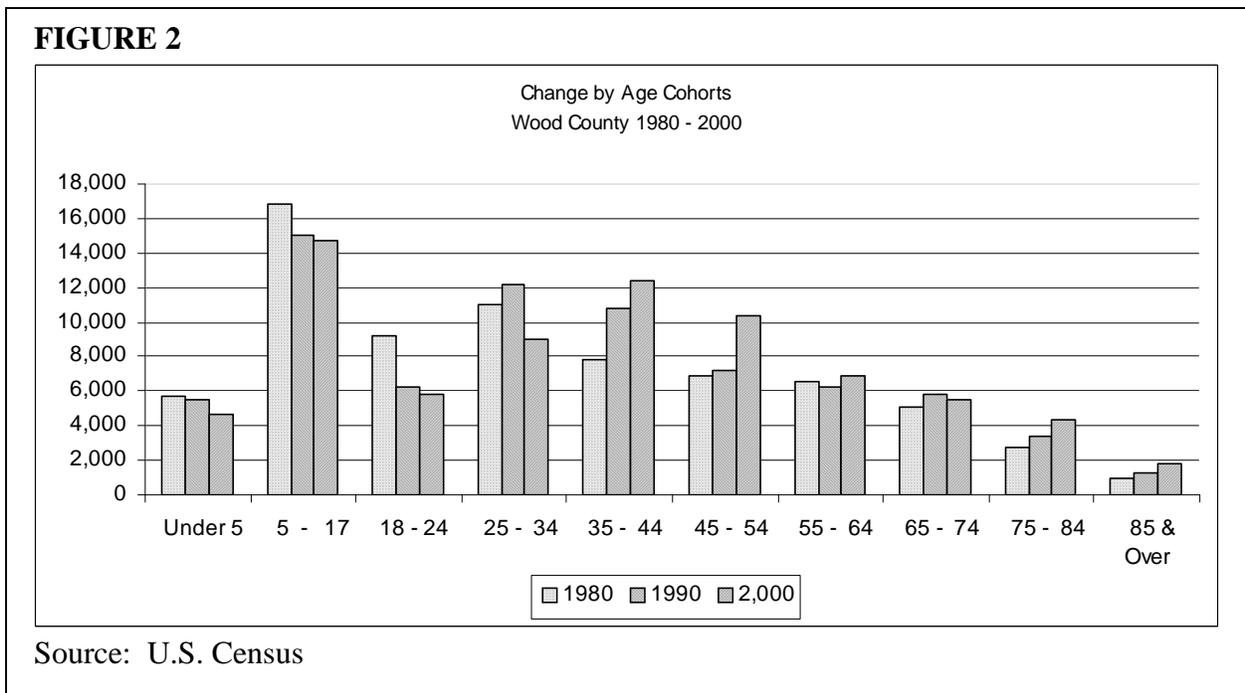
demands on the environment, and changing political climate at all levels. However, by using historic data from the community, one can foresee, with some accuracy, what the near future holds for the county as far as expected populations.

The Wisconsin Department of Administration's Demographic (DOA) Services Center has spent considerable time developing population projections for counties and municipalities for purposes of estimating future state program and budget needs. Table 2 shows U.S. Census population counts for 1990 to 2010, and DOA projections for 2010 to 2035. At the time this plan was updated, DOA projections were not updated to take into account the 2010 Census totals. Census totals for 2010 were almost 3000 people less than what the DOA had projected. With that in mind, all future population estimates will likely be reduced based on this, and projected County growth trends may be changed to population declines in some cases.

### 3. Age

Since 1980 the median age in Wood County has been on the rise. The median age of 38 in 2000 is up 10 years compared to the 1980 median age of 28.9, and is one of the highest median ages of all Wisconsin counties. Contributing factors to the increase includes families having less children, and increased life spans of individuals contributing to the general aging County population.

Figure 2 shows the U.S. Census age group breakdowns for 1980, 1990 and

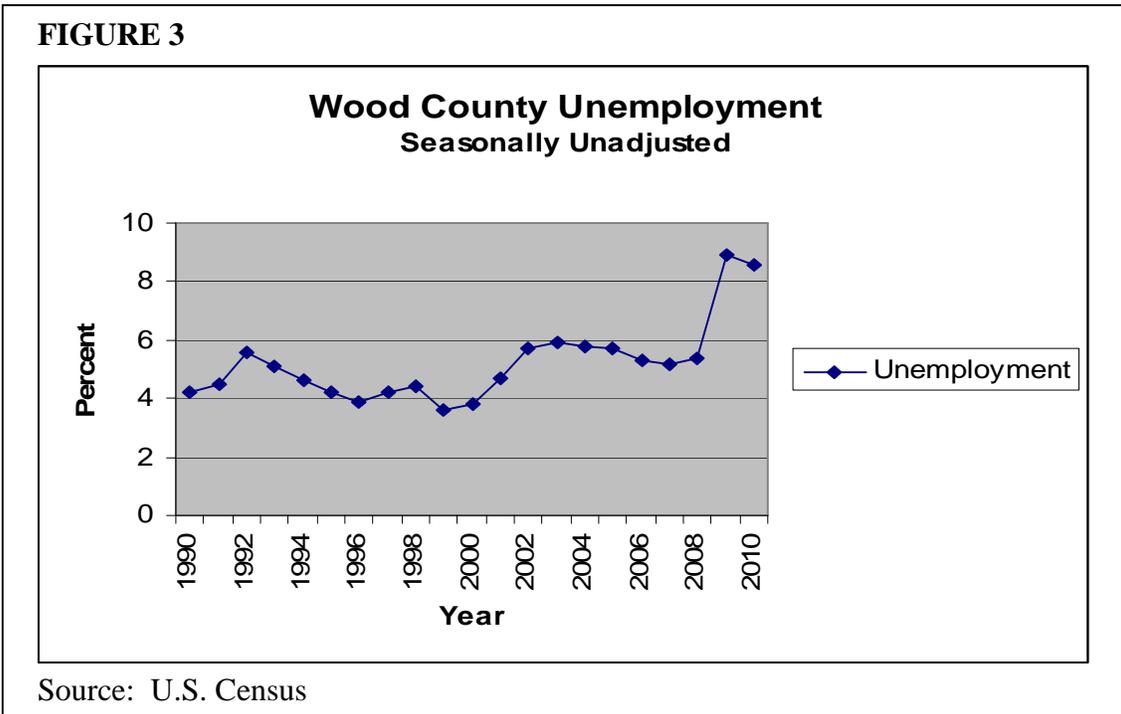


2000. The figure indicates that population groups under 35 are decreasing while groups starting at 35 are increasing in population. The continuation of this trend is expected to be reflected in the 2010 Census numbers when population age group information is released. Some recreation activities tend to be more popular among certain age groups based on a variety of factors, including how physically demanding they are. Demographic trends should continue to be monitored to ensure that recreation supply is aligned to meet demand.

#### 4. Employment/Unemployment

The national Bureau of Economic Research has pegged the beginning of the most recent recession at December 2007. This recession will go down as the longest recession since the Great Depression of the early 1930s. At the time that this plan was written (2011), the economic recovery appears to be underway, but the impacts of job loss are very real to the individuals and families that are directly impacted. Unemployment numbers are commonly considered an indicator of the health of the economy. Although determining the overall health of the economy is more complex than unemployment rates, it is an easy-to-understand indicator that is most often referred to when discussing the overall health of the economy at local, state, and federal levels.

Figure 3 shows how unemployment rates have gradually increased since 1990. Although higher unemployment rates can be linked to the national recession, they are also impacted by the loss of manufacturing jobs. In the



**TABLE 3  
PROMINANT PUBLIC AND PRIVATE EMPLOYERS  
WOOD COUNTY**

<b>Establishment</b>	<b>Service or Product</b>	<b>Number of Employees (December 2008)</b>
Marshfield Clinic	HMO medical centers	1,000+ employees
St. Joseph's Hospital of Marshfield	General medical & surgical hospitals	1,000+ employees
Roehl Transport	General freight trucking, long distance	1,000+ employees
NewPage	Paper, except newsprint, mills	1,000+ employees
Figi's	Mail-order retailers	1,000+ employees
Wisconsin Rapids Public School	Elementary & secondary schools	500-999 employees
County of Wood	Executive & legislative offices, combined	500-999 employees
Wal-Mart Associates	Warehouse clubs 7 supercenters	500-999 employees
Riverview Hospital	General medical & surgical hospitals	500-999 employees
Marshfield Doorsystems	Wood window & door manufacturing	500-999 employees
Source: WI DWD, Bureau of Workforce Training, QCEW, OEA special request, April 2009		

past 10 years Wood County has lost about 3500 jobs, shrinking the sector by one-third. Manufacturing in the County historically has been centered around paper manufacturing, and to a lesser degree, wood products. Job loss in the paper manufacturing and wood products can be attributed to industry becoming more global, excess capacity, and increased automation. Additionally, the recession has triggered job loss throughout the entire manufacturing sector.

The education and health services employment sector make up the largest employment sectors in the County. The education and health super-sector includes 4 subsectors: hospitals; educational services; ambulatory health care services; and nursing and residential care facilities. The average annual wage in this sector is \$55,609 in Wood County, and is 35 percent higher than the state-wide average wage in the same sector of \$41,148. This sector is generally considered to be resilient during tough economic times. The top two and ninth top employers in the County are health care providers as shown in Table 3.

Wood County's other major industries in regards to employment and wages paid are manufacturing; and trade, transportation and utilities. They account for 5,717 and 10,497 jobs respectively in 2008.

## 5. Economy

The previous section focused on employment trends and unemployment rates. In an effort to gain a clearer understanding of rising unemployment numbers, the impact of the national recession was discussed. To better understand where the Wood County labor force is employed, the

**TABLE 4  
ECONOMIC INDICATORS, 2005-2009  
WISCONSIN AND WOOD COUNTY**

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Wood County</b>	<b>Wisconsin</b>
*Population (Source: 2010 U.S. Census)	74,749	5,686,986
Civilian Labor Force	39,236	3,060,803
Civilian employed population 16 years and over	36,933	2,873,396
Mean travel time to work (minutes)	18.3	21.1
Mean family income	\$68,246	\$77,493
Per capita income	\$24,679	\$26,447
Families below poverty level (based on income of past 12 months)	5.2%	7.2%
All people below poverty level (based on income of past 12 months)	7.7%	11.1%
Source: American Community Survey, 2005-2009		
*Source: U.S. Census		

prominent public and private employers in Wood County were identified in Table 3.

The American Community Survey is conducted by the U.S. Census and provides a variety of estimates that are useful in gaining a clearer picture of the overall economy in Wood County. Table 4 provides a summary of 2005 to 2009 Community Survey estimates based off of sample data that was collected over that period of time. When comparing Wood County to the State, we can see that although family and per capita income is lower than that of the State, the County has a lower poverty rate.

Table 5 provides data on occupation of employment of the County and shows how it compares to the State. Overall there is consistency between the County and State when it comes to employment by occupation. The occupation categories are listed in order from most common to least common, with the category of management, professional, and related occupations representing the most common category, and farming, fishing, and forestry occupations representing the least common occupation category. Worth noting are the differences in the category of management, professional, and related occupations where the State has 4.6 percent more employed than the County, and the difference in the category of production, transportation, and material moving occupations, where the County has 3.9 percent more employed than the State.

**TABLE 5  
OCCUPATIONS OF EMPLOYMENT, 2005-2009  
WISCONSIN AND WOOD COUNTY**

	Wood County		Wisconsin	
<b>*Population</b> (Source: 2010 U.S. Census)	74,749		5,686,986	
<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Wood County</b>		<b>Wisconsin</b>	
	estimate	percent	estimate	percent
Civilian employed population 16 years and older	36,933		2,873,396	
Management, professional, and related occupations	10,323	28%	937,433	32.6%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	7,865	21.3%	498,962	17.4%
Sales and office occupations	8,562	23.2%	709,379	24.7%
Service Occupations	6,407	17.3%	456,097	15.9%
Construction, extraction, maintenance, and repair occupations	3,191	8.6%	243,103	8.5%
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	585	1.6%	28,422	1.0%
Source: American Community Survey, 2005-2009				
*Source: U.S. Census				

## B. Physical Characteristics of the Region

### 1. Location & Topography

Wood County is located in the center of Wisconsin, with the city of Pittsville, in western Wood County, often considered to be the geographic center of the State. The County is bordered on the north by Marathon County, on the east by Portage County, on the south by Adams and Juneau Counties, and on the west by Jackson and Clark Counties.

The landform of Wood County is primarily a result of glacial action. A line from Wisconsin Rapids through Pittsville bounds the northern shore of glacial Lake Wisconsin where deposits are sands and sandstone. The southern and east central portion of the County, while not covered by ice during the glacial period, consists of well-sorted deposits of clays, silts and sands left by glacial outwash and lake deposits. The remainder of the County consists of a ground moraine of unsorted, ice-laid deposits of clay, silt, gravel and boulders.

The surface elevation lowers from the 1,250 foot elevation in the north to 960 feet in the south. The slope is interrupted by the Marshfield Moraine (1,360 feet), Powers Bluff (1,481 feet) and Cary Bluff (1,182 feet), as well as a few lower hills.

### 2. Surface Water Resources

Water Resources cover approximately 47.78 square miles or 17<sup>1</sup> percent of Wood County. Although they are an obvious limiting factor to land use and future development, they are critical to the economy, quality of life, and sustainability of living in Wood County.

The quality of water resources is important to sustaining a healthy wildlife population, creating a safe and desirable place for recreation purpose, and is vital for agricultural practices. Clean water provides an environment for aquatic species to thrive and reproduce in. When a water body experiences problems with pollution or lack of oxygen, many other plants and animal species that live on, in or near water bodies suffer as a result. Clean surface water is also important to water recreation activities including swimming, boating and fishing. In Wood County water related recreation activities are very popular and are a contributing factor to the overall quality of life of the area. Clean lakes, rivers and streams also help the economy by drawing tourists to the area to recreate and vacation.

<sup>1</sup>Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, “Wisconsin Lakes Directory – Wood Co. (Alphabetic by County)”  
[<http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/water/fhp/lakes/county/wood.htm>] 16 July 2007.

Water resources are classified for the purpose of enforcing Wisconsin boating restrictions and applying provisions of the shoreland access and zoning laws. A water body must be classified as a lake or river according to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. Additional terminology that is very relevant to the water resources of Wood County are the terms “flowage” or “impoundment”. Both terms are synonymous and are used to describe the pool created by a dam.

<b>TABLE 6 MAJOR RIVERS AND STREAMS WOOD COUNTY</b>		
<b>Rivers</b>	<b>Surface Acres</b>	<b>Miles</b>
Wisconsin River	567.1	8.6
Yellow River	282.4	43.6
East Branch Yellow River	7.13	4.9
South Branch Yellow River	10.91	5.0
East Fork Black River	85.09	18.0
<b>Streams (over 10 miles long)</b>		
Hemlock Creek	167.76	34.6
Mill Creek	55.47	26.3
Rocky Run Creek	41.75	16.4
Rocky Run Creek ( to E. Fork Black River)	31.2	13.9
Moccasin Creek	23.4	13.3
Source: Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources		

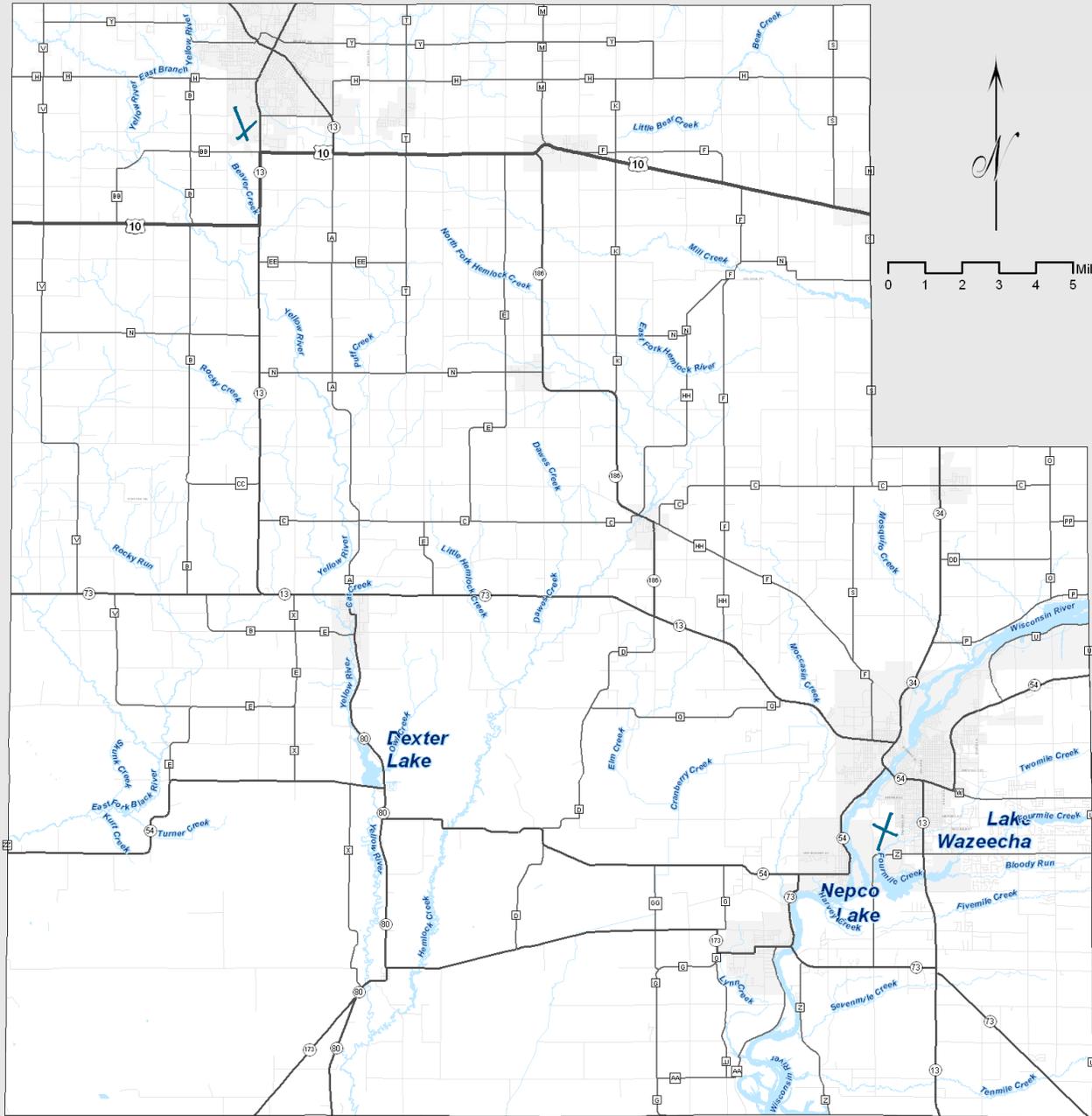
### Rivers and Streams

There are 82 named streams that total 389.7 miles collectively. Although there is no legal distinction made between the terminology usage of river and stream, streams generally flow into or are considered tributary to major rivers. The major rivers and streams of Wood County with their surface area and mileages are listed in Table 6. The major rivers are described in the following paragraphs.

**The Wisconsin River.** The Wisconsin River is the most prominent “river” feature in Wood County flowing southwesterly 8.6 miles through the southeast corner of the County. The portion of the Wisconsin River that runs through the County is divided into 6 flowages, and for this reason included with the lake inventory. Legally the Wisconsin River is considered a river and subject to shoreland access, zoning laws, and boating restrictions of a river.

Map 1

# Lakes and Streams OF **WOOD COUNTY, WISCONSIN**



**The Yellow River.**  
 The Yellow River is second to the Wisconsin River in size. This river flows from the northwest corner to the south-central part of the county. Lakes Kaunewinne and Manakiki are small flowages on the Yellow River located

<b>TABLE 7 EXCEPTIONAL RESOURCE WATERS WOOD COUNTY</b>	
<b>Waterbody Name</b>	<b>Portion within ERW Classification</b>
Bloody Run Creek	All
Fivemile Creek	Hwy 13 down to CTH Z
Lynn Creek	All of stream in S16 T21N R5E upstream of cranberry bog
Rocky Creek	All of stream in S9 T24N R2E
Sevenmile Creek	From Range Line @ E section line of S13 T21N R5E
Source: Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources	

in North Wood County Park and have limited recreation, mainly fishing. Lake Dexter is the main recreation area along this river and is encompassed by Dexter County Park. The city of Pittsville also has a small city park located on the Yellow River.

**East Branch Yellow River and South Branch Yellow River.** The East Branch Yellow River and South Branch Yellow River are located in the far northwest corner of the County. The two tributaries of the Yellow River are undeveloped except for the one campground on the South Branch Yellow River.

**East Fork of the Black River.** The East Fork of the Black River meanders into west central Wood County and then joins the Black River in Clark County. This river is undeveloped in Wood County.

Exceptional and Outstanding Resource Waters. Wisconsin has designated many of the state’s highest quality waters as Outstanding Resource Waters (ORWs) or Exceptional Resource Waters (ERWs). These designations identify water resources that warrant additional protection from the effects of pollution. Wood County does not have any water bodies with the ORW designation, but has the 5 creeks listed in Table 7 that are designated as ERWs.

Impaired Waterways. Every two years the listing of impaired waters, as defined by Section 303(d) of the Federal Clean Water Act, is updated. The state is required to update the list with those waters that do not meet the state’s water quality standards. This list identifies waters that do not meet numeric or narrative criterion, or meet the designated use of the water body. The most recent list was created in 2010 and with the 2-year update requirement will be updated in 2012.

There are 4 impaired water bodies in Wood County according to the WDNR Proposed 2010 Impaired Waters List. The Wisconsin River is

included on the list for PCBs and Mercury pollution, and as a result fish consumption should be limited. Lake Dexter is included because of high bacteria and phosphorous levels. In the past, the beach at Dexter Park has been closed due to high bacteria levels. Mill Creek is included because of low levels of dissolved oxygen due to high amounts of phosphorous. The Hemlock Creek is on the list because of high phosphorous levels.

### 3. Climate

The climate in Wood County is continental, characterized by large seasonal and daily ranges in temperature. Winters are usually cold and snowy and summers are generally warm with periods that are hot and humid. Precipitation on average is adequate for agricultural purposes, although some degree of soil moisture deficiency often occurs during the months of July and August. During the winter months prevailing winds are generally from the west and northwest, and from southerly directions in the summer.

### 4. Soils

The northern two thirds of the County is part of the Northern Highlands. The soils in this area are silty or loamy, are nearly level to sloping, and commonly have restricted permeability in the subsoil. If properly drained and fertilized, they are suitable for such general farm crops as corn, oats, and alfalfa or clover hay. The southern one third of the county is part of the Central Sand Plain. The soils in this area are sandy, nearly level to gently sloping, and commonly have a high water table. They are generally not suited to the commonly grown crops, because of low fertility, low available water capacity, and a severe hazard of soil blowing. They have potential for the production of irrigated specialty crops. There are large areas of organic soils that are well suited for cranberries. Much of the southern one third of the county is in forest and wildlife habitat. (U.S. Soil Conservation Service)

### 5. Flora and Fauna

Wood County enjoys a very diverse vegetative land cover. The northern two thirds of the county is in the Northern Highland region of Wisconsin and is where most of the agricultural land is situated. Scattered hardwood forest woodlots are common in this area with acreages ranging from 1 acre to several hundred. There are a number of low depressions in this region of the county that create large wooded wetlands providing recreational hunting lands where publicly owned. Two examples of such wetlands include the Sherry Flats and the Mead Wildlife Area. The southern one third of the county is situated on the lake plain of Glacial Lake Wisconsin. This low, sandy region is home to very large wetland areas, conifer forest

tracks, and over 5334 acres of cranberry marshes. While the southeast corner of Wood County is somewhat urbanized, the south central and southwestern regions of the county are sparsely populated and relatively undisturbed.

Wood County's diverse landscape is conducive to a wide range of wildlife species inhabiting the area. Game species found throughout the county include deer, coyote, turkey, bear, fox, beaver, squirrel, rabbit, geese, grouse, duck, pheasant and partridge. Non-game species found here are typical to most regions of Wisconsin with the exception of our special populations of sandhill cranes in the Sandhill Wildlife Area, and prairie chicken populations in the grasslands of northern Sigel and southern Sherry Townships.

## VII. OUTDOOR RECREATION SUPPLY INVENTORY

### A. Natural Resources Available for Outdoor Recreation

#### 1. Developed

##### Camping

There are 8 campgrounds in Wood County with a total of 549 established units. The number of campgrounds and campsites has remained unchanged since 2001. Slightly less than one half of the units are under public ownership, specifically the Wood County Park & Forestry Department, with a few units owned by the city of Marshfield. The Wood County Park & Forestry Department operates campgrounds at four of the five county parks; Dexter, Richfield 360, North Wood County Park, and South Wood County Park, with a total of 273 camping units. An inventory of campgrounds appears in Table 8 and locations of the campgrounds are shown on Map 2.

The private campgrounds, by-in-large, offer improved sites (electric service, and water). Other amenities including heated swimming pools, minibike trails, and playgrounds for toddlers are often offered in an effort to attract patrons. Private campgrounds are located primarily in the southern townships of the County, particularly in areas with surface water available for fishing and swimming, or where public hunting lands are abundant. The only seasonal campground offered in the County are through private campgrounds at this time.

Areas that need further exploration include improving the occupancy rates of County campgrounds, also improving campgrounds and campsites to meet the growing population of motor home owners, and customers looking for seasonal campsites. In recent years the County campgrounds have offered a variety of promotional discounts to encourage longer stays and improve mid week occupancy rates. In contrast to improving the campsites to meet the needs of the motor home owners, there is a desire to limit removing trees from camp areas in parks, and allow plant undergrowth to serve as a background and buffer from other campsites or park facilities.

Wood County does have plans to improve and expand camping facilities at a few campgrounds in the future. The improvements are dependant on available tax levy funding, grant funding, and future camping trends. The improvement projects are included in the 2011-2015 Five Year Capital Improvement Plan in Appendix B, and/or the Parks and Forestry Future Projects list found in Appendix C.

**TABLE 8  
WOOD COUNTY CAMPGROUND INVENTORY  
2011**

<b>Campground Name</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>Facilities</b>
CERA Park (Lake Biron North Shore Park)	Private	62	Boat ramp/ playground/ shelters/ horseshoe pits/ tennis/ basketball/ volleyball/ softball/ swimming pool/ wading pool. <i>Open only to employees of NewPage Corporation.</i>
Country Aire	Private	39	Heated pool/youth fishing pond/ volleyball/ basketball/ horseshoe pits/ playground/ swimming pool/ recreation room/ dump station/ flush & pit toilets/ showers.
Deer Trail Park	Private	149	Heated pool/ wading pool/ minibike trail/ mini golf/ basketball/ baseball/ fishing/ recreation room.
Dexter County Park	Public	95	Picnicking/ shelters/ boat ramps/ toilets/ horseshoe pits/ playgrounds/ fishing/ accessible fishing pier/ swimming/ trails/ shelters/ tennis/ hiking trails.
Marshfield Fairgrounds	Public	25	Dump station/close proximity to ball fields, picnic areas, and Wildwood Park & Zoo/ large buildings for animals and exposition/ special license allows up to 75 camping units for special events.
North Wood County Park	Public	99	Playgrounds/ shelters/ dump station/ toilets/ softball/ swimming/ playground/ paths/picnic areas/ 18-hole disc golf course.
South Wood County Park	Public	73	Boat ramp/ fishing/ trails/ swimming/ picnicking/ playgrounds/ shelters/ softball/ picnic areas/ 9-hole disc golf course.
Richfield 360	Public	7	Primitive camping/toilets/hiking.
SOURCE: Wood County Parks and Forestry Department, 2011.			

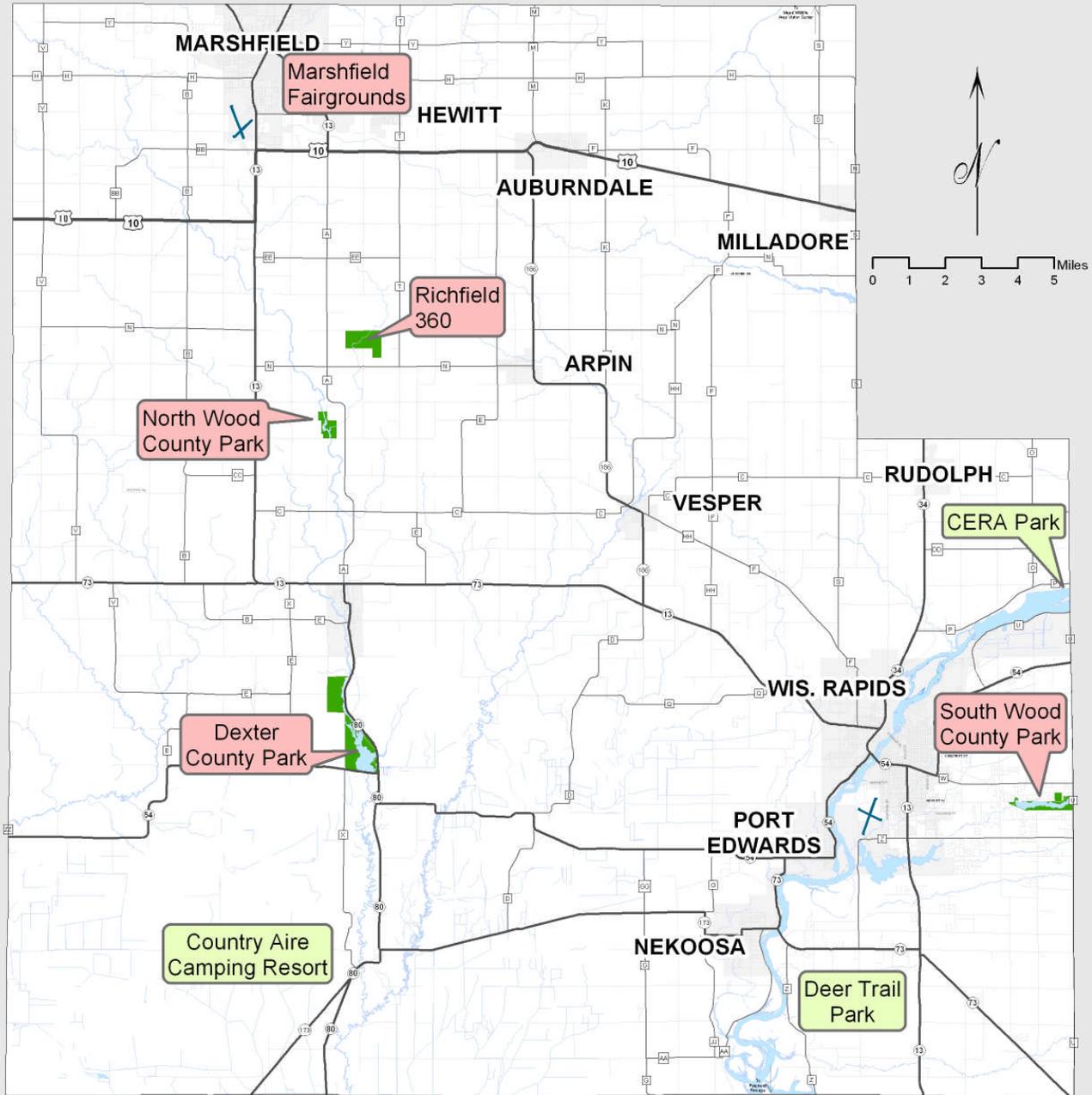
### Picnicking

Picnicking opportunities are difficult to determine because a picnic table does not necessarily depict picnicking as a recreation activity. Nearly all public and private recreation areas in the County provide facilities to accommodate picnicking. Map 2 shows the County Parks that provide picnic tables and some level of support facilities. Nearly all of the picnic sites are resource oriented and offer recreational opportunities other than just picnicking. The supply of picnic tables has remained fairly stable since 2001 due to maintenance and replacement when necessary, and the fact that few new park developments have occurred in recent years. The 2005-2010 State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan identifies picnicking as a recreation activity that is increasing in demand because it is a multigenerational family activity. Recreation providers should make an effort to maintain the number of picnic tables they provide, as well as continue to provide picnic support facilities such as restrooms, running

# CAMPGROUND LOCATIONS



*WOOD COUNTY, WISCONSIN*



Key

- Public Campgrounds
- Private Campgrounds

**TABLE 9  
GOLF COURSE INVENTORY  
WOOD COUNTY 2011**

<b>Name of Course</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>No. of Holes</b>
Marshfield Country Club	T. Lincoln	18
RiverEdge Country Club	T. Lincoln	18
Bull's Eye Country Club*	T. Grand Rapids	18
The Ridges Inn & Country Club	T. Grand Rapids	18
Tri-City Golf Course	T. Grand Rapids	9
Homestead Golf Course	T. Seneca	9
* Play restricted to members and their guests. SOURCE: Wood County Planning Office, 2011.		

water, and parking.

### Golf

There are currently six regulation golf courses in operation in Wood County (Table 9). All are privately-owned and one, Bull's Eye Country Club, restricts play to club members and their guests.

The six courses appear to be adequately meeting demand for this sport, and it appears that they will be able to meet demand over the next 5 years. The State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan identifies golf as a sport that is experiencing a decrease in demand because of the time and expense associated with the sport.

### Snowmobiling

Snowmobiling continues to be an important winter outdoor recreation activity in Wood County. The County coordinates the efforts of 8 clubs to provide an interconnected network of snowmobile trails, and connect to trail systems of surrounding Counties. Funding for trails is made possible through snowmobile registration, non-resident trail pass fees, and the Wisconsin State Gas Tax. The County annually applies for State funding and distributes funds to participating snowmobile clubs to be used for trail grooming and maintenance, signage, and other trail related activities and costs.

At this time, 257.4 miles of developed snowmobile trails exist in Wood County. The trail network is effectively meeting the needs of users, and as a result there are no major plans to realign existing trails or add additional mileage. Wood County is supportive of snowmobiling because of the recreation opportunity that it provides not only for residents, but for visitors who make Wood County a snowmobiling destination.

In the 2005-2010 State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, snowmobiling is identified as an activity that is decreasing in demand because the industry is struggling to attract more people with less snow. However, the favorable winter weather in the past few years has helped the participation rate in this recreation activity. The Parks and Forestry Department should continue to coordinate the efforts of the local snowmobile clubs to maintain and improve the network of trails.

#### All Terrain Vehicles (ATVs)

Wood County has developed one intensive use area for ATVs. The Wood County ATV Area formerly known as the Seneca ATV Area, is located approximately 4 miles west of the village of Port Edwards on Highway 54 West. This area of approximately 400 acres of county forestland contains 10 miles of developed trails that are open to the public year-round at no cost. The only time this area is closed to all terrain vehicle use is during the gun deer season or if posted as closed by the Park and Forestry Department during high fire danger periods. This area has been developed with monies from the all terrain vehicle registration fund, and offers many amenities including a large parking lot, restrooms, loading ramp, well, a 28' by 40' enclosed shelter, children's playground, and a roofed charcoal grill. All these facilities are handicap accessible.

ATV riding is an activity that has been increasing in demand the past 10 years, however, market saturation is expected to cause it to level off during the planning period.<sup>2</sup> To relieve any pressure on the Wood County ATV Area, a connector trail to the Black River State Forest trails in Jackson County has been considered. A connector trail would increase the mileage available to ATV riders in Wood County, and improve accessibility to the more developed Jackson County trail system. Making this connection does however prove to be challenging.

In the County some villages and towns have designated ATV routes. In some cases the routes are clearly marked and coordinated among municipalities, however, the routes are not promoted by the County. As conditions of approval, municipalities have rules of use that are deemed necessary and appropriate, but generally inconsistent with other municipalities in the County.

#### Horseback Riding

Wood County has no publicly-owned trails designated for horseback riding. However, there are no restrictions prohibiting non-organized riding

<sup>2</sup> The 2005-2010 Wisconsin Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

activity on any of the roads in the Wood County Forest. Designated snowmobile trails are closed to horse traffic on County land. The State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan identifies horseback riding as a stable recreation activity that continues to be popular with baby boomers, but may not be popular with the Y Generation.

### Target Sports

Bow and gun target shooting and trap shooting are popular outdoor recreation activities in Wood County. The County owns and maintains a public shooting range located approximately 3 ½ miles west of the city of Wisconsin Rapids at the intersection of Ridge Rd. and Marsh Rd. in the town of Seneca name There are 8 shooting stations available at distances of 25-, 50- and 100-yards. The range is open year round from sunrise to sunset, free-of-charge. There is no range master and users are responsible for bringing their own targets and properly disposing of any waste. The range meets the demand for users most of the year, with the exception of the weeks leading up to the gun deer hunting season. Smoothing of the yearly rush to the rifle range could be managed by public service notices or general education to hunters that they should get their rifles sited early.

In addition to the Wood County shooting range, which receives most of its use in the weeks just prior to deer hunting season, there are public sportsman's clubs that provide target sports opportunities. Archery and/or Gun clubs in Wood County include the Central Wisconsin Sportsmen's Club, Nekoosa Conservation League, Lost Arrows Archers, Wisconsin Valley Gun Club Range, Inc., the Heart of Wisconsin Sportsman's Club and the Wood County Rifle and Pistol Club, Inc.

### Downhill Skiing, Snowboarding, Tubing and Sledding

The only intensively developed ski area in Wood County is at Powers Bluff County Park, located in the central part of the County, 2 ½ miles southwest of the village of Arpin. Powers Bluff is the 13th highest point of elevation in Wisconsin at 1,472 feet above sea level. Downhill skiing and snowboarding facilities at Powers Bluff include three runs ranging from 1,320 feet to 1,500 feet in length, with an estimated vertical drop of 250 feet. The three runs are serviced by one handle tow ski lift. There are currently four tubing runs serviced by two wire rope tows. Other services offered include a ski EMT and first aid, concessions sold at the two-story shelter building, and equipment rental.

A requisite for skiing is a slope suitable for providing an enjoyable skiing experience. Except for Powers Bluff which is already a developed ski area, there are no slopes in Wood County capable of providing this type of activity. Therefore, needs for skiing will have to be satisfied by Powers

Bluff or outside the County.

Days of operation for Power's Bluff includes weekends, and the Christmas vacation time weather permitting. Hours of operation are from 10:00am to 4:30pm, due to there not being any lighting on the hill. The Highway Infrastructure and Recreation Committee is considering adding lights so that hours of operation can be extended beyond daylight. The Committee is also considering the purchase of snowmaking equipment to extend the season and to improve conditions throughout the season. Improving snow conditions will enable the facility to better meet the demand for winter recreation activities in the County, while improving safety of the current facilities by spreading out use.

Winter sledding hills are also available at several community parks in nearly all parts of Wood County. Most are relatively small hills, but adequate for small children.

### Cross-Country Skiing

A very popular family winter outdoor activity in Wisconsin is cross-country skiing. This sport is praised for the numerous benefits it provides to the participant. Noteworthy about this sport is the fact that the entire family can participate together; it is physically healthy and mentally relaxing. Cross-country skiers enjoy the quiet solitude of nature and abundant wildlife watching that are common to this sport. The 2005-2010 Wisconsin Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan lists cross-country skiing as a stable activity at this time that is mainly driven by baby boomers, but predicts that declines in participation may start in 2010.

The Sandhill Wildlife Area, just 1 mile west of Babcock, has a 14-mile trail that is called the Trumpeter Trail. This year round trail serves as a cross-country ski trail in the winter, and as a hiking trail the rest of the year. This is a nature interpretive trail that offers opportunities to learn about the unique landscape and abundant wildlife.

Since 1981 there have been cross-country ski trails at NEPCO Lake Park. In 2010 the Wood County Park and Forestry Department with the assistance of the River Cities Nordic Ski Club completed an expansion of the trail network. The ski club grooms and maintains the 4.4 miles of trails throughout the season. The trail offers a variety of terrain for all skill levels.

The Richfield 360 Area has a 5-mile, 2-mile, and 1-mile trail that goes through open fields, forested areas, and along Puff Creek. They were originally constructed in 1975 and 1976, and in 1996 a new bridge to cross Puff Creek was completed on the southwest corner of the property. The

trail is marked and groomed during the season.

In 1984 the Wisconsin Conservation Corp and the Wood County Parks and Forestry Department constructed a 1.3 mile trail at Powers Bluff County Park. Most of the trail is rated moderately difficult, however, some short portions are rated advanced due to challenging terrain. The scenic trail is marked and groomed during the season.

#### Historical Sites

Presently there are 956 Wood County entries on the Architecture and History Inventory (AHI). Most of the properties included in the inventory are the result of systematic architectural and historical surveys that have been completed in the past. Of the 956 Wood County entries, the 20 properties listed in Table 10 are on the National Register of Historic Places. The AHI is housed by the Wisconsin Historical Society and this collection contains over 120,000 historic buildings, structures, sites, objects, and historic districts throughout Wisconsin. Detailed information about each Wood County entry can be found at the State Historical Society of Wisconsin web page ([www.wisconsinhistory.org/ahi/](http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/ahi/)).

**TABLE 10  
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
WOOD COUNTY LISTINGS**

<b>Name of Property</b>	<b>Municipality</b>
Central Wisconsin State Fair Round Barn	C. Marshfield
Columbia Park Band Shelter	C. Marshfield
Elizabeth Daly House	C. Wisconsin Rapids
Marshfield Central Avenue Historic District	C. Marshfield
Marshfield Post Office	C. Marshfield
Marshfield Senior High School	C. Marshfield
Parkin Ice Cream Company	C. Marshfield
Pleasant Hill Residential Historic District	C. Marshfield
Willard D. Purdy Junior High and Vocational School	C. Marshfield
Hamilton and Catherine Roddis House	C. Marshfield
Skunk Hill (Tah-qua-kik) Ceremonial Community	T. Arpin
Soo Line Steam Locomotive 2442	C. Marshfield
Upham House Historic District	C. Marshfield
Gov. William H. Upham House	C. Marshfield
Wahle-Laird House	C. Marshfield
Wakely's Tavern	T. Saratoga
Wakely Road Bridge	T. Saratoga
Weinbrenner Shoe Factory	C. Marshfield
West Fifth Street- West Sixth Street Historic District	C. Marshfield
West Park Street Historic District	C. Marshfield

SOURCE: The National Parks Service, National Register of Historic Places, 2011.

Other historic sites denoted by roadside signage in Wood County include the Centralia Paper Mill site, Indian cemeteries, a memorial to Ed "Strangler" Lewis (a former world champion wrestler from Nekoosa), Swallow Rock, Grand Rapids, cranberry culture, Babcock passenger pigeons and the site of a Campbell Brothers Circus train wreck near Babcock.

### Historical Museums

Wood County is home to two museums that are both located in stately historic homes that have been restored. Items and displays at the museum are of local historical significance.

**Upham Mansion.** The Upham Mansion is located at 212 West Third Street in the historic district of the city of Marshfield. The restored mansion is the former home of Wisconsin Governor William Henry Upham, and represents mid-Victorian architecture. Victorian furniture is on display and many of the pieces were made at the Upham Manufacturing Company. Another unique feature of the museum is the rose garden with 32 varieties of beautiful roses.

**South Wood County Historical Museum.** The South Wood County Museum is located at 540 Third Street in Wisconsin Rapids. The building was erected in 1907 by architect Anton Billmeyer for Issac P. Witter. The property was given to the city in 1947 and served as the T.B. Scott Library for a number of years. In 1970, it became The South Wood County Historical Museum under the direction of the South Wood County Historical Corporation. Some of the museum exhibits include: schoolhouse, country kitchen, store, antique cranberry harvest equipment, and Grim Natwick exhibit (creator of the Betty Boop character).

The South Wood County Historical Museum contains many displays that tell the story of how people lived in Wood County starting in the early 1800's. The North Wood County Historical Society in Marshfield has identified several historically significant aspects of that area as well.

### Historic Attractions and Memorials

**Rudolph Grotto Shrine.** The Rudolph Grotto Shrine is located in the village of Rudolph. The Grotto was started in 1920 by Father Philip Wagner and consists of over five acres of lush gardens, numerous shrines, museum, and a gift shop. It is constructed using rock and broken glass and is set among meandering paths and crooked bridges, with shady, intimate areas for meditation as well as more formal memorials and open picnic grounds.

Historic Point Basse. One of Wood County's most historically significant areas is located on the east side of the Wisconsin River just south of the city of Nekoosa. Point Basse, as the site is called, is the French term for "low point" or "shallows." Prior to development by Robert and Mary Wakely on June 2, 1837, as a trading post, warehouse, inn, and home for themselves, the site marked the crossing point for Native Americans as they made their way on an east and west trail that ran from Lake Poygan to Black River.

Many of the original buildings at Point Basse have been moved, burned or razed. The only original building is the Wakely home, and other structures have been donated or reconstructed.

Over the years Point Basse has hosted many events that focus on the history of the area and interpretation of the lives of the eleven Wakely family members that resided there. The site also offers nature education through events and a nature walk and prairie garden. More information on Point Basse and scheduled events can be found at [www.historicpointbasse.com](http://www.historicpointbasse.com).

Wisconsin River Papermaking Museum. The Wisconsin River Papermaking Museum is located at 730 First Ave. South in the city of Wisconsin Rapids. The museum is open to the public and features changing exhibits that focus on paper making over the years. Some exhibits include antique papermaking tools and large wooden papermaking vats from China and Japan.

The Alexander House. The Alexander House is located at 1131 Wisconsin River Drive in the village of Port Edwards. It was founded by the Alexander Charitable Foundation of Port Edwards in 1990. It is named for the late John E. Alexander, who was instrumental in establishing the lumbering and paper industry.

Since opening in 1991 tens of thousands of people have visited the art and history displays. The art display changes throughout the year and features many local and Midwestern artists. The second floor of the house contains many historic items from the Nekoosa-Edwards Paper Company.

Wisconsin State Firefighter Memorial. The Wisconsin State Firefighters Memorial is located on the southwest side of Wisconsin Rapids, in Ben Hansen Park. The memorial at this scenic location along the Wisconsin River was constructed to pay tribute to the firefighters from the State of Wisconsin who have made the ultimate sacrifice while in service to their communities.

Wood County Veteran's Memorial. The Wood County Veteran's

Memorial is located near the courthouse entrance at 400 Market Street. The memorial pays tribute to the veterans that paid the ultimate price in defending the principles and freedoms of the United States of America. Veterans listed by name on the monument served in the following wars: Spanish American; Civil War; World War I; World War II; Vietnam War; Korean War; Gulf War; and Iraq War.

The memorial was established by a volunteer committee that wanted to make sure that all Wood County service men and women who died as a result of combat-related wounds, injuries or causes are not forgotten. Inspiration for the monument comes from the Vietnam Memorial in Washington, D.C., and the Highground in Neillsville, Wisconsin.

### Fishing Resources

Northern pike, largemouth bass, walleye, brook trout, brown trout, miscellaneous panfish and musky are the most common sport fish in Wood County. Many of the water bodies are stocked annually or as needed to maintain healthy fisheries. Stocking information can be obtained through the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources web site. Bullhead and forage fish are present in nearly all lakes and streams due to their ability to withstand winter-kill conditions.

When non-native plants, animals, and diseases are introduced to lakes and rivers, they can potentially impact the health of the fishery, as well as the overall recreational use of the water body. In the past few years awareness of invasive species has been heightened. The future health of fishing resources will be dependant on the ability to control invasive species, manage fish populations, and maintain water quality of water bodies.

## 2. Undeveloped

### Wildlife Resources

State Wildlife Areas are managed to sustain a wide variety of wildlife and natural communities found on the properties, and to provide traditional outdoor recreational uses such as hunting, fishing, trapping, hiking, nature study, and berry picking. Between state- and county-owned land, there are about 34,105.71 acres that are part of four State Wildlife Areas in Wood County. Each of the areas is shown on Map 3, and following is a brief description of the properties and the management objective.

The Paul J. Olson Wildlife Area is a 2,995 acre property comprised of scattered, state-owned, parcels ranging in size from 40 to 860 contiguous acres. The property consists of non-native, cool-season grassland and shrub-carr and is managed as a habitat for Greater Prairie Chickens and

<b>TABLE 11 STATE WILDLIFE AREAS WOOD COUNTY</b>			
<b>Wildlife Area</b>	<b>Acres in Wood County</b>	<b>Total Acreage</b>	<b>Ownership</b>
Paul J. Olson Wildlife Area	1,065.41	2,995	State
Mead Wildlife Area	2,890.3	33,000	State
Sandhill Wildlife Area	9,150	9,150	State
Wood County Wildlife Area	21,000	21,000	County
<b>Total</b>	<b>34,105.71</b>		
<b>SOURCE: Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and Wood County.</b>			

other grassland-dependant species.

The state-owned Mead Wildlife Area, encompasses over 33,000 acres of open marshes, hardwood and aspen forests, and grasslands. It is one of the largest wildlife areas in Wisconsin, and is home to an abundance of wildlife species and over 267 bird species have been documented on the property. The Mead is an important resting, feeding, and nesting site for migrating waterfowl, shorebirds, and songbirds.

The Sandhill Wildlife Area, 9,150 acres of state-owned land in southwest Wood County, features low, sandy upland of oak, aspen and jack pine forests, large marshes, and many flowages. The property is located in the bed of old Glacial Lake Wisconsin and is home to a diverse wildlife habitat and even a small herd of American Bison. It is intensively managed for wildlife habitat and master plan is currently being developed for the property.

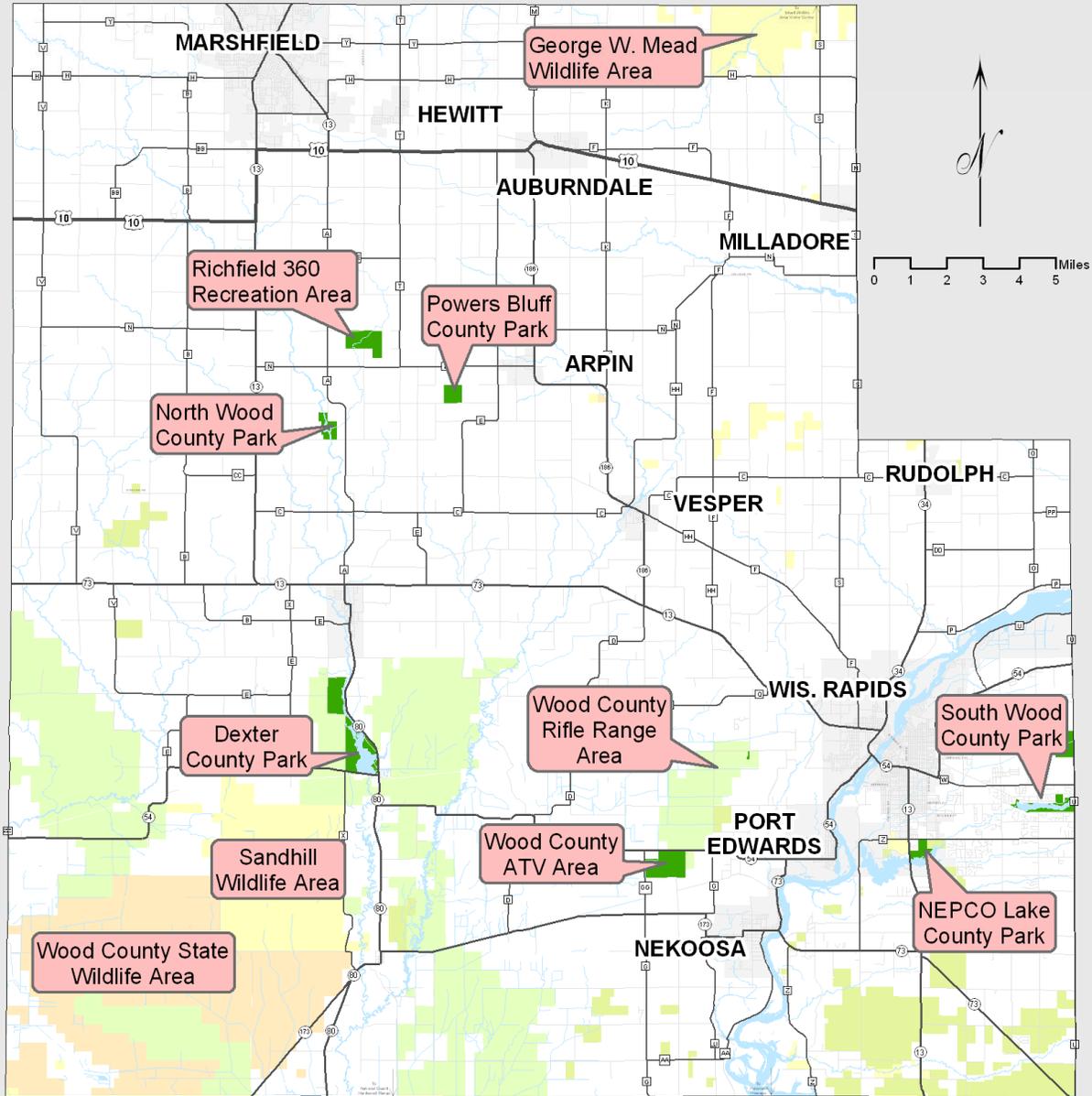
The Wood County Wildlife Area is 21,000 acre property that lies within the bed of the old Glacial Lake Wisconsin. The wildlife area is owned by Wood County and leased to the State on a long-term basis. The area is characterized by large expanses of wetlands interspersed with forested uplands and islands. Aspen, oak lowland brush and sedges are the predominant vegetation types, and red, white and jack pine are also found on the area. The natural habitat diversity of the property is conducive to a wide variety of wildlife, including numerous protected species that are attracted to the area. Management of the area will continue to encourage a wide variety of wildlife species, and timber management practices will focus on maximizing habitat diversity for forest wildlife.

The remaining county forestland is managed for "multiple use" (i.e. timber harvest, fisheries, wildlife, recreation, and watershed protection). There

# PARK AND RECREATION AREAS



*WOOD COUNTY, WISCONSIN*



are large wetland areas in the southwest that are maintained by and for the cranberry industry that also provide excellent wildlife areas. Many of these wetlands are private property and are not open or accessible to the public for hunting or fishing.

Industrial landowners, as well as the forenamed public agencies, are helping maintain or enhance Wood County's wildlife resources by managing woodlots, meadows, fence lines and marginal areas. County, State and Federal agencies, as well as private wildlife clubs, provide information on what the individual can do to provide or improve wildlife habitat. Among the most common practices are tree, shrub, and food plot planting; logging practices which leave cull trees and brush piles; agricultural practices which promote habitat in fence row and odd shaped areas; pond building; and general, proper land use practices.

### Woodlands

Forests occupy a major portion of the land area in Wood County. Forestland encompasses approximately 215,400 acres, or 42 percent of the County (USDA, 1996). The predominant species are aspen, white birch, conifers and oak. In 1932, Wood County established a county forest by entering 13,270 acres under the forest crop law. Additional acreage obtained through the years has increased the size of the county forest to 37,606.42 acres. Most of the county forestland is formed on the southern portion of the County and consists of flat, sandy, lake plain topography.

In addition to county- and state-owned forestland, there are 12,740 acres of privately-owned forestlands that are under the forest crop law or the managed forest law. The total of county-owned, state-owned, and land under forest crop law or managed forest law land is 70,444 acres or approximately 110 square miles of land. This land can be used by the public for fishing, hunting, hiking, cross country skiing, sightseeing and many other outdoor activities.

### Sightseeing

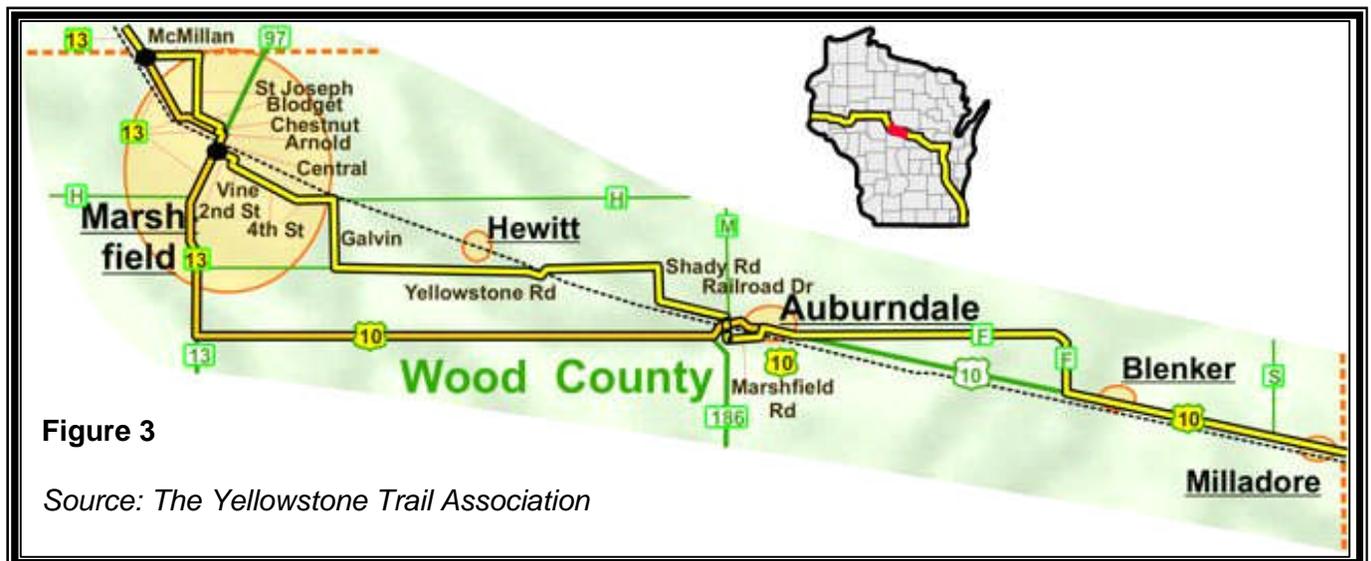
The flat terrain, land use diversity, and mix of natural and agricultural rural landscape make Wood County a pleasurable sightseeing experience. In general, the visual attractions most likely to be of importance to this activity are the large blocks of forested lands, pastoral landscape of agricultural areas and major watercourses. There are countless options when it comes to viewing the scenic County landscape even though there are few designated routes. The low traffic volume of many of the County Highways and local roads provides sightseers with the opportunity to take in beautiful scenery in all parts of the County.

For sightseers looking for routes that are clearly mapped or marked by signage, there is the Yellowstone Trail and the Cranberry Highway Tour. Both vehicle tours offer scenic views of the Wood County landscape that can be taken any time during the year. Both tours provide a glimpse of Wood County landscape, history and culture.

Yellowstone Trail. Before there were numbered highways in the United States there were names attached to roads to help the motorist navigate from town to town or from county to county. In 1912 before the vision of the interstate highway was conceived, a small group of men envisioned a road from Plymouth Rock to Puget Sound and called it the Yellowstone Trail (Figure 3).

In Wisconsin the Yellowstone trail ran from Kenosha to Hudson through 18 counties spanning 406 miles. This transcontinental road, one of the first, carrying Tin Lizzies in the early 1900s and Chevys in the 1930s finally faded into a growing network of roads and the interstate system. Although there are many more route choices when traveling today, much of the Yellowstone Trail can still be traveled. More information on the Yellowstone trail can be found at [www.yellowstonetrailwi.org](http://www.yellowstonetrailwi.org)

Cranberry Highway. The Cranberry Highway and Cranberry biking trail was started in the late 1990s to promote tourism in South Wood County associated with cranberry culture. What first started as a promotional tour, has evolved into a cultural experience where participants can take a self-guided auto drive or bicycle ride on a 50 mile route. Although the tour can be taken any time during the year, the cranberry harvest and changing colors make the fall season the optimum time of the year to experience it. On the tour there are opportunities to tour cranberry marshes, dine at local



establishments, and shop at unique specialty stores that sell items unique to the area. A map of the Cranberry Highway and Cranberry Biking Trail, along with featured stops along the way can be found at the Wisconsin Rapids Area Convention and Visitors Bureau at [www.visitwisrapids.com](http://www.visitwisrapids.com)

### Hiking and Nature Study

One common definition of hiking, is walking for recreational purposes. When it comes to hiking, the journey is usually more important than the destination. In Wood County there are many opportunities to hike. Shorter trails have been developed, perhaps not as much for hiking as for nature study in the County Parks. Wood County has five developed hiking trails, all located at existing county parks. The trails range in length from 1.5 miles at Powers Bluff to 7.0 miles at the Richfield 360 (see Table 16, Wood County Park Inventory).

The need for formally developed hiking trails in Wood County is considered low. With the thousands of acres of forestland and public hunting grounds that exist in Wood County, miles of fire lanes have been provided as well as trails left by hunting and logging vehicles. Enjoyable hiking and nature study experiences are available in several areas in addition to the joint use of ski trails and snowmobile trails. Enhancement of some of these areas should be considered, including signing of plant species for educational purposes. Another consideration is the locating of trails closer to the population centers of the county. Most of the trails, while adequate in length, are inaccessible to persons in the urbanized areas without reliable transportation. Consideration should be made toward the development of trails closer to Wisconsin Rapids and Marshfield.

As mentioned, County forestland in most cases is accessible using old logging trails and fire lanes. Many of these trails are expensive to maintain and suffer repeated abuse from off-road vehicles. To accentuate the outdoor experience and accessibility of County forestland, a network of less costly multi-use hiking trails could be cleared and maintained, accessible from many existing parking areas. A practical network of trails could be built by simply clearing brush and fallen trees. Improved mobility in many areas would allow people to experience more remote public land, and more easily disperse hunters during the peak times of game seasons.

### Hunting

Publicly-owned lands in Wood County offer many hunting opportunities. The largest single landowner is the County with 37,606.42 acres entered under the County Forest Law. In addition there are 21,000 acres of county-owned and 13,105.71 acres of state-owned land that are included in

**FIGURE 4  
POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NONMOTORIZED  
TRANSPORTATION  
WOOD COUNTY**

- Set guidelines for bike parking in new developments.
- Set guidelines for the development of sidewalk and pedestrian facilities in new developments.
- Mitigate isolated development patterns by encouraging developers to provide connections between cul-de-sacs.
- Park land dedication activities should include linear open spaces when those linear spaces are considered good bicycle or pedestrian connections.
- Include bicycle and pedestrian transportation issues in the county's future "land-use plans" and "park and open space plans".
- All plats and CSM's should be reviewed by the appropriate planning agencies to ensure proper connections to planned bicycle and pedestrian systems.
- Require County engineering guidelines to meet AASHTO Guidelines for Bicycle Facilities, 1991 for all new arterial and collector street widths.
- Strictly enforce vehicle operating rules and regulations for bicyclists and motorists.
- Institute a pedestrian safety program such as "Walk Alert".
- Encourage the development of school based bicycle and pedestrian safety programs.
- Promote annual "Bike Rodeos" and "Safety Fairs".
- Support local law enforcement methods like Wisconsin Rapids Cops-on-Bikes law enforcement program.

SOURCE: Wood County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, 1996.

four State Wildlife Areas (TABLE 11). Wildlife Areas provide outstanding opportunities for hunting, however, there may be additional restrictions on all or parts of the areas.

The largest contributor of hunting lands is the private landowner. However, due to an increasing reluctance of the private landowner to open their lands to hunting, there is no assurance that these lands will be available in the future. The 12,740 acres of woodland open to the public under the managed forest law represent the only private lands having any assurance of future availability. Plum Creek Timber Company, Inc., with 8,340 acres entered under the law is the most important single private contributor of hunting opportunities in Wood County. Plum Creek is a timberland management company that actively manages over 197,000 acres in Wisconsin, and a total of 6,771,000 acres in 19 states.

Species of wildlife most often sought by hunters in Wood County are ruffed grouse, deer, waterfowl, turkey, squirrels and rabbits. It should also be noted that these species, as well as other wildlife species of Wood County's forests, fields, marshes and waters, are sought after for observation and study purposes as well.

### Bicycling

In March of 1996, the Wood County Board of Supervisors adopted the *Wood County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan*. This plan was created with the assistance of an outside consulting firm and is intended to guide the development of bicycle and pedestrian facilities and policies in Wood County within the framework of the County's overall transportation system. The vision of the plan is to increase the mobility of people within the county by making bicycling and walking viable and attractive as transportation choices.

The County Bicycle Plan also recommends policies that will help guide the County and its communities to improve nonmotorized transportation. Figure 4 summarizes policy recommendations for Wood County.

Since the adoption of the plan over 30 miles of paths included in the plan have been successfully implemented countywide. Significant improvements to the connectivity of the networks in both the Marshfield and Wisconsin Rapids Areas has led to a noticeable increase in path usage.

Cooperation among municipalities has led to State funding for the construction of many of these paths. The Wood County Conservation, Education, and Economic Development Committee should continue its role in coordinating path construction and improvements by updating the *1996 Wood County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan*. A continued effort should also be made to fund these projects with State and Federal transportation grant funding.

### Scientific and Natural Areas

In 1983 the Department of Natural Resource's, Scientific Areas Section completed a scientific and natural area inventory of Wood County. The inventory notes scientific and natural areas that are of local, county or state significance, or unranked, but of scientific or natural importance. Of the 31 areas listed in the inventory, only one, the 70 acres known as Powers Bluff Maple Woods, has been designated as a scientific area of statewide significance. The scientific and natural areas in Wood County are listed in Table 12.

**TABLE 12  
SCIENTIFIC AND NATURAL AREAS  
WOOD COUNTY - 1983**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Class.</b>	<b>Significance</b>
Powers Bluff	160	T. Arpin	Natural	State
Big Bull Falls	20	T. Richfield	Geological	County
Cary Mound	80	T. Cary	Geological	Local
NEPCO Lake Pines	80	V. Port Edw.	Natural	County
Biron Woods	50	V. Biron	Natural	County
Nekoosa Bog	200	T. Port Edw.	Natural	County
Marathon Corner Maples	40	T. Lincoln	Natural	Local
Rattlesnake Bog	880	T. Hiles	Natural	County
Dexterville Bottoms	130	T. Dexter	Natural	County
Seneca Bog & Pines	900	T. Cranmoor	Natural	County
North Wood Co. Park	100	T. Richfield	Natural	County
Bethel Woodlot	80	T. Richfield	Natural	Local
Lindsey Bluff	200	T. Rock	Natural	Local
Cary Wetlands	110	T. Cary	Natural	Local
Salix Sedge Meadows	120	T. Hiles	Natural	County
Blk. River Floodplain Sedges	180	T. Hiles	Natural	Local
Remington Pines	1,800	T. Remington	Natural	County
Ten Mile Creek	190	T. Saratoga	Natural	County
Five Mile Creek	300	T. Saratoga	Natural	Local
Blueberry Hill	80	T. Rudolph	Geological	Local
Little Bear Hemlocks	75	T. Milladore	Natural	State
Haffenbredl Hemlocks	40	T. Milladore	Natural	County
Hemlock Hill	20	T. Milladore	Natural	Local
Sherry Woods	20	T. Sherry	Natural	Local
Nekoosa Sedge Meadow	160	T. Cary	Natural	Local
Red Oak Bottoms	160	T. Seneca & Cranmoor	Natural	State
Big Island	400	C. Wis. Rapids	Natural	State
Port Edwards Pines	340	V. Port Edw.	Natural	State
Heron Bottoms	100	T. Saratoga	Natural	State
Mead Spruce Bog	600	T. Milladore	Natural	County
Hewitt Maple Woods	70	T. Auburndale	Natural	County

SOURCE: Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Scientific Areas Section, 1983.

The 1983 Scientific and Natural Areas list unfortunately is outdated and the DNR Scientific Areas Section no longer updates or maintains this listing. After briefly reviewing the 1983 listing the DNR has indicated that one half to two thirds of the listed sites probably would not qualify as scientific or natural areas due to changes in criteria that define what is necessary to be eligible, or depletion of the resources. It is important that

Wood County establish criteria to determine what areas should be considered scientific and natural areas, and update the inventory. In a cooperative effort between the County and landowners, state conservation grant funding can be captured to protect these areas from encroachment and ensure that they are preserved for their educational values.

The Land Legacy Planning initiative in many ways fills a void that is left by not having an updated Scientific and Natural Areas listing, but is not detailed enough to be considered a comprehensive inventory. The goal of this study is to identify places that will effectively meet the needs of conservation and recreation patrons in Wisconsin. In addition to identifying these sites the highest priority sites to protect will be identified with an explanation of why. Sites can be recommended to be considered for this listing by the general public. Although the initial submittal period has expired, the Land Legacy Plan will be updated periodically and will continue to consider sites for inclusion in the plan. At least three Wood County areas have been submitted for consideration in the plan including the following; the Yellow River Central Sands Corridor, the Central Wisconsin Grasslands covering parts of the Mead Wildlife Area, and large blocks of industrial forest for their conservation and public recreation opportunities.

In an effort independent from the Land Legacy Planning initiative, the United States Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service has identified 19,000 acres of land along the Yellow River between the Dexterville Dam and the Necedah Dam as “the Yellow River Focus Area.” This quiet, undeveloped area is unique for the rare and declining wildlife species that reside in one of Wisconsin’s last high-quality floodplain forests. The purpose of this ongoing effort is to maintain the natural character and quality of the fish and wildlife populations in this unique area. This is being done by creating inventories of plants and animals, land use patterns, and water quality and quantity, offering stewardship assistance to landowners and residents, and purchasing conservation easements or land from willing sellers.

Powers Bluff County Park is a 160 acre park located in the town of Arpin. Seventy acres of the park is a Scientific Preservation Area, and the park is also on the National Park Service National Register of Historic Places. In 2005 a Long Range Master Plan for Powers Bluff was completed. The plan was developed to guide its management, development and preservation over the next 10 to 15 years. Powers Bluff is of special historical significance and a unique natural, cultural and recreational resource. The mature southern mesic forest is perched on the 13<sup>th</sup> highest elevation point in Wisconsin, and is of cultural importance given its history of being a settlement for landless Prairie Band Potawatomi, Ho Chunk, Ojibway and Menominee from 1905 to 1930. The park also

provides winter tubing and skiing opportunities not found anywhere else in the County.

The plan should be referenced on a regular basis to ensure that management practices and future improvements are in agreement with the plan. The Highway Infrastructure and Recreation Committee should consider updating the plan before 2020. The plan was developed by a Long Range Planning Committee, with significant contributions made by County staff members and the following groups; Wood County Parks and Forestry Committee, Friends of Powers Bluff, Ho-Chunk Nation, and the Prairie Band Potawatomi.

In addition to identifying the scientific and natural areas in Wood County, the DNR Bureau of Endangered Resources has compiled a list of rare, threatened and endangered species and natural communities in Wood County. This list is part of the National Heritage Inventory (NHI) and can be found in Appendix D.

#### State Wildlife Areas

Since 1876, the State of Wisconsin has been acquiring land to meet conservation and recreation needs. Many of the lands that have been acquired by the State are considered State Wildlife Areas and managed according to a detailed management plan. State Wildlife areas are open to a wide variety of outdoor recreational activities including hunting, fishing, trapping, hiking, canoeing, nature study, and berry picking. There are four Wildlife Areas in Wood County that together make up 34,105.71 acres (Table 11).

#### Archaeological Sites

According to records at the State Historical Society (Office of the State Archaeologist) there are presently 163 archaeological sites in the County. Eight of these sites have been determined to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, and all 8 sites are located along the Wisconsin River. The archaeological sites are typically sites relating to early Indian villages or burial grounds, such as those at Ross Lake or Powers Bluff, or sites showing signs of an undetermined prehistoric life. The majority of the archaeological sites that have not been considered for application to the National Register of Historic Places, have not been evaluated in enough detail to warrant such application.

Most of the 163 identified sites were found while completing archaeological surveys for proposed highway corridors, or for the relicensing of impoundments on the Wisconsin River. The Historical Society has emphasized that "these sites probably represent only a fraction of the sites actually present within Wood County as little systematic

**TABLE 13  
TROUT STREAMS IN WOOD COUNTY  
2002**

Name	Species	Reproduction	Approximate Miles
Rocky Creek	Brown	Natural	.3
Bloody Run Creek	Brook	Natural	3.2
Five Mile Creek	Brook	Stocked	8.9
Lynn Creek	Brook	Natural	1
Moccasin Creek			5
Ten Mile Creek	Brown	Stocked	9
Seven Mile Creek	Brown	Natural	3
SOURCE: Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, 2002.			

archaeological survey work has been undertaken.” Wood County should pursue an archaeological investigation to identify important sites. Such an investigation would be educational for area residents and may uncover archaeological areas of statewide or national significance. Without an archaeological investigation, important sites stand the chance of being inadvertently destroyed by unknowing developers.

In 2002 Powers Bluff was included in the National Register of Historic Places. The historic name of the site is the Skunk Hill (Tah-qua-kik) Ceremonial Community. The period of significance is from 1905 to 1930 when it served as a Native American settlement.

#### Fishing

Wood County has good fishing opportunities for both the warm weather fisherman and ice-fisherman. Seven streams in Wood County have been classified by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources as trout streams and provide about 30 miles of trout fishing opportunities (Table 13).

Other sport fish are found in Wood County's streams, lakes and flowages. Species of greatest importance are smallmouth bass, northern pike, walleye, largemouth bass and panfish, such as perch, bluegills, rock bass and crappies. The musky is beginning to show prominence in Wood County as a game fish. The Department of Natural Resources and a local club (Muskie Today, Ltd.) have been stocking the Wisconsin River with Muskies.

Wood County's surface water supply is adequate to meet the fishing demand, although pressure will increase as a result of the efforts to build the fish population and the introduction of more sport fish into the

County's waters. Factors that have inhibited fishing in Wood County in the past include water pollution, poor access, and poor fishing success. Each of these factors is being addressed and improved. Continued improvements will impact fishing as word spreads about the better fishing opportunities. The State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan categorizes fishing as a stable activity that is popular with all generations.

#### Boating, Water Skiing, and Personal Water Craft

The only body of water in Wood County which is suited to high-speed motorized boating and water skiing is the 2,100 acre Biron Flowage. Currently public shore access on the south side of the flowage in Wood County is limited to a narrow strip of land between North Biron Drive and CTH U. Boat landing facilities are limited to one launch on the south side of the Biron Flowage. There are safety concerns with this launch given the small separation distance between CTH U that runs along the water, and potential for vehicles launching boats to interfere with traffic on CTH U. A proposed residential development in the Village of Biron called the Bridgewater Development, will realign CTH U to the south of its current location, and provide safer public access to the Biron Flowage by creating a 40+ acre public park. A safer boat launch with more parking is also a part of this development that will make it easier to launch a boat on the flowage and likely increase its recreation use.

NEPCO Lake is used for these purposes, even though the lake is relatively small and overcrowded, and has had several accidents associated with boats pulling skiers. NEPCO Lake has little room to safely maneuver a boat at high speeds, especially if water skiing during a busy weekend day. In recent year the water quality has been impacted by weed growth, bacteria affecting beach usage, and invasive species including the zebra mussel.

Water skiing also takes place on Lake Wazeecha, although this lake, like NEPCO, is too small to accommodate more than a few high-speed boats at any one time. Water ski shows and tournaments are held on both Lake Wazeecha and Biron Flowage, but other boat traffic has to be minimized to make the water calm and safe enough for these activities. The Wisconsin State Water Ski Show Tournament is the largest event of its kind in the world, and it is held every year on Lake Wazeecha. Annually an estimated 25,000 people attend the tournament. A good ski show site must be free of boat traffic, be held on a small body of water for wind protection, have ample parking, and have excellent viewing for spectators. Lake Wazeecha meets all of the basic requirements for a good ski show lake making it one of the premiere sites in the country. In 2008 a concrete beach platform was installed to be used for the annual tournament.

Personal watercraft (PWC) experienced an increase in usage in the 1990's however a 2000 state law restricts operation of personal watercraft within 200 feet of shoreline and 100 feet from any other watercraft, unless operating at no-wake speed. The law has all but closed the doors to PWC at Lake Wazeecha due to the minimal amount of area to operate in this narrow lake, once 200-foot shoreline buffers are drawn. The most suited body of water in Wood County is the Biron Flowage that covers approximately 2100 acres and contains adequate area for PWC even after excluding the 200 feet from shoreline buffer required by law. Lake NEPCO also provides sufficient area for PWC use, but during busy summer days when watercraft traffic is high, PWC operators will have to be sure that they can safely operate while maintaining a 100-foot buffer from other watercraft and a 200-foot shoreline buffer.

Boating without the use of motors or at slow speeds is possible and enjoyable on most of the County's lakes and flowages, as well as on the major rivers. Canoeing is a popular activity throughout Wood County. The Wisconsin River is featured as a canoe trail in the *Wisconsin State Atlas*, but canoeists are warned about the large number of portages required as a result of the numerous dams. Overall there are many options for canoeing in the County, but lack of established routes known as "blue ways" may be a contributing factor to underutilization of many water bodies for this activity. The use of some "blue ways" may require annual maintenance of trees and other debris, a minimal amount of signage, and be subject to use limitations due to seasonal runoff or low water levels.

Canoeing is also enjoyed on the Black River and Yellow River during certain times of the year. Unfortunately, low water conditions during most of the summer months and a multitude of navigational hazards have hampered canoeing participation.

Participation in boating and water skiing will be largely controlled by the availability of suitable surface water and the degree of over-crowding that will be tolerated by both boaters and local officials. In some cases improved access to bodies of water will be enough to encourage boaters to shift to underutilized water bodies. Supply can only be increased by manmade impoundments. The supply within the area has been increased through these means with the creation of Lakes Sherwood, Camelot and Arrowhead in Adams County, about 15 miles south of Wisconsin Rapids and about 2 miles south of the Wood County line. These lakes were created in the 1970s followed by high density residential development. The Petenwell Flowage of the Wisconsin River is also man-made and is desirable for power boating and water skiing. The Petenwell Flowage begins in Wood County, but is located predominantly in Adams and Juneau Counties. All four of these water bodies have eased the demand on the limited surface waters in Wood County.

## Swimming

There are four beach areas in the County actively satisfying a substantial amount of swimming demand. Table 14 details the ownership, location and size of the beaches. Their locations are shown on Map 4. All of the beaches are owned by Wood County and have no restrictions on use by the public other than those related to personal safety.

In addition to the beaches mentioned, three municipalities provide outdoor swimming pools. Pools are located in Port Edwards, Wisconsin Rapids (West Side Pool), and Marshfield. In the past 15 years municipal pools have closed in the village of Biron, the city of Nekoosa, and the city of Wisconsin Rapids (East Side Pool). Reasons for facility closure was generally age and excessive ongoing maintenance costs.

The city of Wisconsin Rapids and neighboring communities have been discussing options to partner and cost-share the construction and ongoing operation/maintenance of an aquatic center to serve the area. The only 2 outdoor pools in the area, the Wisconsin Rapids East Side Pool and the village of Port Edwards pool, are costly to maintain and will only be operational for a few more years. The design of the existing pools is considered outdated and does not include many of the features of a typical family aquatic center that are being constructed to replace outdated rectangular municipal pools surrounded by concrete. Some of the features of a family aquatic center include zero depth entry, entertaining water features, waterslides, shade areas, sand play areas, lap swimming and concessions. The park and recreation survey that was sent out in the fall of 2010, indicates that there is a need for an updated aquatic facility in the city of Marshfield or Marshfield Area. The city of Marshfield municipal pool, Hefko Pool, is considered outdated and does not include features of a typical family aquatic center.

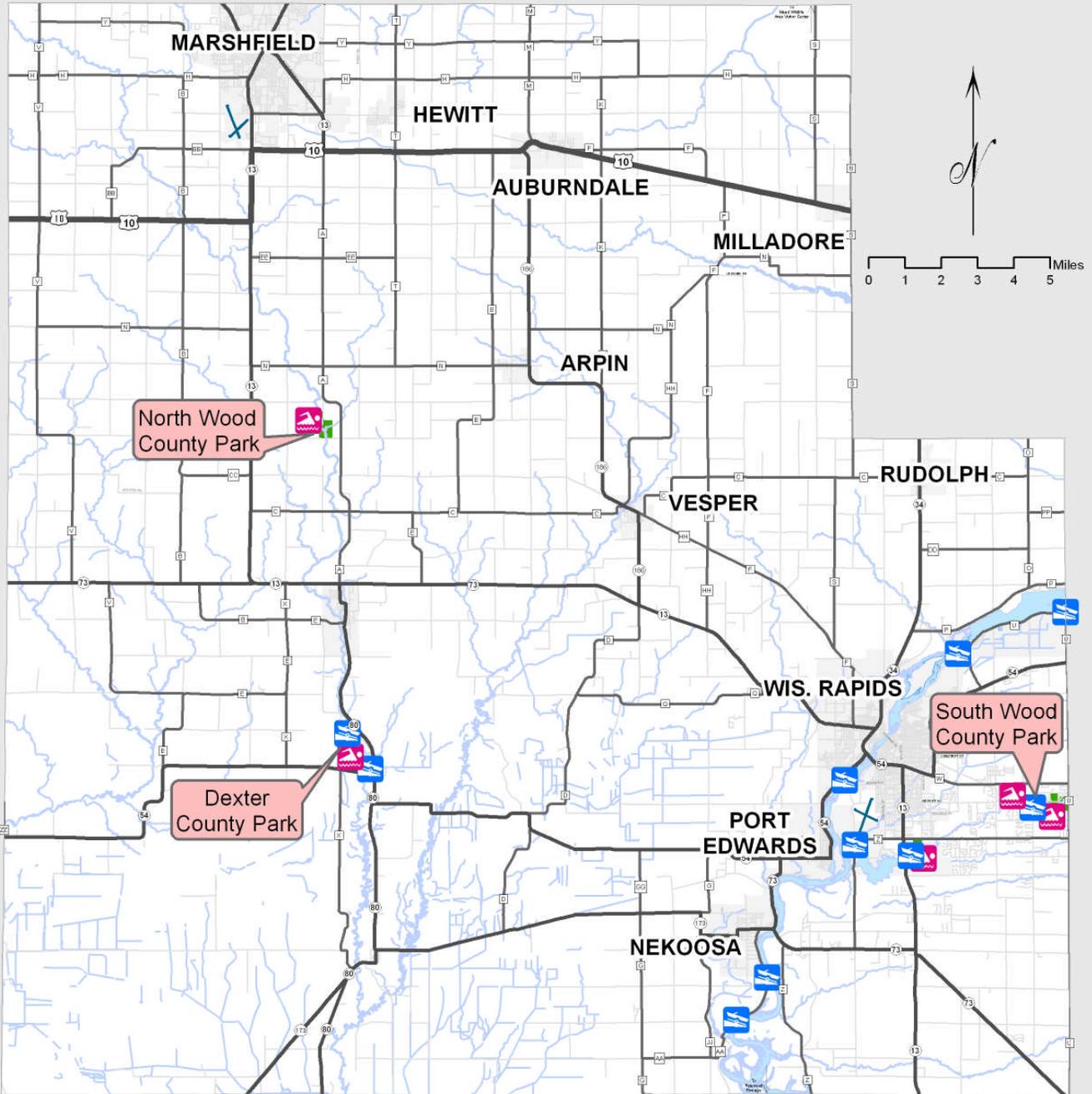
The Consolidated Water Power Company has a swimming pool and wading pool for use by employees and their guests at CERA Park. Indoor pools are available either for a fee or on a limited basis at the Port Edwards YMCA, Marshfield YMCA, Lincoln High School in Wisconsin Rapids, and Marshfield High School. Pools play an important role in meeting the County's swimming demand. They offer a more controlled swimming environment and greater health protection than beaches.

The North Wood County Park Beach was once a very popular swimming area. In recent years poor water quality contributed to declining use of the swimming area. In 2011, the County made improvements to the swimming area to improve the water flow and improve the overall water

# Boat Access and Swim Beaches



**WOOD COUNTY, WISCONSIN**



Legend



Beach



Boat Access

quality. The recent changes have increased the use of the beach area, have improved the overall appeal of the campground in the park, and provide a swimming option in the central area of the County

The amount of beach acreage is currently meeting demand even on peak days in the summer months. In some cases, poor water quality may be deterring use of some beaches. Although current demand for beaches in the County is being met, it is important to assure continued use of existing sites by making certain water quality does not deteriorate, but continues to improve. If water quality does improve, the demand on the beaches can be expected to increase. If the trend of municipal pool closures in the County continues, this could cause increased use of swimming beaches, or initiate a decline in swimming as a recreation activity.

The State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan has identified swimming as a stable recreation element that is always popular, but due to water quality issues this activity has failed to grow. In Wood County water quality issues and a gradual decrease in municipal swimming pools will likely contribute to a diminishing interest in swimming as a recreation activity.

<b>TABLE 14</b>		
<b>WOOD COUNTY SWIMMING BEACH AREAS</b>		
<b>2011</b>		
<b>Name of Beach Area</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Acreage</b>
South Wood County Park*	County	6.5
Dexter County Park	County	0.9
North Wood County Park	County	0.6
NEPCO Lake County Park	County	2.0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>10</b>
SOURCE: Wood County Planning Office 2011.		
*Includes two beaches.		

B. Outdoor Recreation Facility Inventory

1. County Park & Recreation Facilities

Table 16 provides the reader with a quick reference of facilities offered at each of the Wood County Parks and recreation areas. Appendix E also includes an inventory of County recreation facilities

2. Municipal Park & Recreation Facilities

Appendix E includes a complete listing of village and township park & recreation facilities within Wood County.

C. Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities

Within the Wood County Park System, improvements that target facility compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) have been identified in a thorough, countywide, planning process initiated in 1993. The "Americans with Disabilities Act Transition Plan, Wood County, Wisconsin" was created to address all facilities owned by Wood County, including the park system. Since 1993 all new park facilities have been constructed to meet ADA requirements, and many existing facilities have been modified to conform to ADA standards. Over time many non compliant facilities and structures have been replaced with those that are compliant. Overall, the implementation of the plan has been successful throughout the County park system, with the exception of Powers Bluff

<b>TABLE 15 NON ADA COMPLIANT COUNTY FACILITIES 2011</b>	
<b>South Park</b>	Beach House at Red Sands Beach
	Willow Run Vault Restroom
	Shady Rest Vault
	Buena Vista Vault
	White Beach – Beach House
<b>North Park</b>	Vault at the Beach
	Vault at the Disc Golf Course
<b>Dexter Park</b>	Smitty’s Vault
	Overflow 2 Vault
	Overflow 1 Vault
	Loop 2 Vault
	Loop 3 vault
<b>Powers Bluff</b>	Vault toilet
SOURCE: Wood County Parks and Forestry Department, 2011.	

Recreation Area. Given the age of the facilities at Powers Bluff, combined with the sensitive nature of the site and future land acquisition plans, most of the facilities are not ADA compliant. Projects to make facilities at Powers Bluff ADA compliant, and, future improvements in general are pending possible future land acquisition to the north of the park. Table 15 includes a list of County park

**TABLE 16  
WOOD COUNTY PARK INVENTORY  
2011**

Facility	North Park	South Park	Dexter	NEPCO	Bluff	Richfield	Wood County ATV
Camping Units	105	73	95	-	-	7	-
Handicap Sites	2	1	2	-	-	-	-
Electrical Sites	78	53	83	-	-	-	-
Picnic Tables	257	191	293	21	25	8	9
Cooking Grills - Large	1	1	1	-	-	-	1
Cooking Grills - Small	12	18	22	3	2	-	1
Closed Shelters	1	1	1	1	1	-	1
Open Shelters	2	4	1	1	-	-	-
Shower Building	2	1	1	-	-	-	-
Beaches (acres)	1.0	6.5*	2.0	1.5	-	-	-
Wells / Drinking Water	12	12	14	1	2	-	1
Restrooms	16	22	17	5	2	1	2
Dump Station	1	1	1	-	-	-	-
Disc Golf (9 hole course)	2	1	-	-	-	-	-
Horseshoe Pits	-	3	2	-	-	-	-
Tennis Courts	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Volleyball Courts	2	2	2	-	-	-	-
Basketball Courts	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Ball Fields	2	-	1	-	-	-	-
Fireplaces	2	1	-	-	2	-	-
Snowmobile Trails (mi.)**	1.0	1.0	1.0	-	0.5	1.0	-
Designated Snowmobile Trailhead	-	1	2	-	-	-	1
X-C Skiing (mi.)	-	-	-	4.4	2.9	5.0	-
ATV Trails (mi.)	-	-	-	-	-	-	10.0
Hiking Trails (mi.)	-	4.0	6.0	1.3	2.9	5.0	-
Nature Trails (mi.)	-	-	-	-	1.5	-	-
Ski Runs	-	-	-	-	3	-	-
Tubing Runs	-	-	-	-	4	-	-
Tow Lines	-	-	-	-	3	-	-
Playground	2	2	2	1	1	-	1
Scientific Areas	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Natural Areas	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Boat Landings	-	1	2	1	-	-	-
Lakes (acres)	5	148	298	494	-	-	-

\* Includes two beaches.

\*\* 257.4 miles of public trails countywide.

SOURCE: WOOD COUNTY PARKS AND FORESTRY DEPARTMENT, 2011.

facilities that do not conform to ADA standards.

## **VIII. OUTDOOR RECREATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

### **A. Public Input Assessment**

#### **1. Informal**

The Wood County Park and Forestry Department has taken advantage of many opportunities to acquire public input on the park system. Park and Forestry staff is available on request to speak at schools and with any interested groups about what the County Parks have to offer. In these forums staff collects comments from the public through informal surveys, displays, and one-on-one discussions. The department also relies heavily on staff at each park facility to listen to concerns, questions and comments of park patrons. This process proves to be one of the least expensive to implement and the most genuine in quality of response. The capital improvements schedule for Wood County Parks in Appendix B, and the Parks and Forestry Future Projects List found in Appendix C were based for the most part on the input process described above.

#### **2. Public Meetings and Workshops**

The Wood County Park and Forestry Department held two formal public input sessions regarding the updating of this plan. The meetings were held at two locations, NEPCO Park on May 24, 2010 and North Park on May 27, 2010. The meetings were well publicized by local newspapers, 16 people attended the NEPCO Park meeting and 10 attended the North Park meeting. The main focus of the meetings was to identify issues and opportunities for parks, recreation, and open spaces in the County. County Planning Department staff talked about the purpose of the Park, Recreation and Open Spaces Plan and the process that would be used to update the plan. Parks and Forestry staff talked about the County Park System in general, and highlighted some of the recent improvements, as well as planned projects. The meeting attendees were encouraged to participate by sharing their thoughts on issues and opportunities with parks and recreation. Public input from the meetings is Appendix F.

On May 25 and 26, 2011 a draft of the Park, Recreation, and Open Spaces Plan was presented to the public at NEPCO Park and North Park. The meetings were structured as open houses where attendees could talk to County Staff about the draft plan and offer any changes or additions to the draft.

#### **3. Park and Recreation Survey**

In 2010 the Wood County Parks Department sent out a survey to 250 randomly selected households in the County. Of the 250 surveys that were sent out, 83 surveys or 33% were completed and returned. The survey was divided into two sections. Section I contained 4 questions pertaining to park use, quality of parks, value and importance of parks, trails and recreation programs, and recreation facilities or activities that respondents would like to see. Section II of the survey contained 6 questions where respondents could select the most important issues and opportunities on selected topics. A summary of survey results is included in Appendix I.

## B. Need Standards

### 1. Development Standards

Development standards have been designed for park and recreation facilities. Although this plan has been developed for Wood County, the following standards include facilities that are normally provided by cities, towns and villages. Table 17 lists standards provided as a service to the local units of government in Wood County in an effort to promote a uniform set of standards for all communities to follow.

### 2. Space Standards

Wood County has used, and will continue to use the space standards as published in the *Recreation, Park and Open Space Standards and Guidelines*, edited by Roger A. Lancaster for the National Recreation and Park Association.

## C. State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan 2005-2010 (SCORP)

The purpose of SCORP is to provide guidance and information for providers of outdoor recreation providers in Wisconsin. It is to be used in conjunction with other local, state and regional recreation plans. SCORP is not a recreation plan but rather a resource that suggests issues to consider when developing programs, policies and actions that affect outdoor recreation in the state. It is resource that identifies recreation trends and demands, and can be used by recreation providers to align recreation resources and funding with current and future recreation needs.

When recreation providers plan for the future, it is important to consider recreation trends so that they can meet the ever changing recreation needs. By reviewing changes in participation rates, and examining industry forecasts and opinions of recreation professionals, projections on what recreation demands the immediate future holds are developed. This section contains lists of recreation activities in the categories of increasing

demand, stable demand, and decreasing demand for the years 2005 to 2010. Ideally, this plan should consider what the trends for 2010 to 2015 are, however they were not available at the time this plan was updated.

## **Projected Trends in Wisconsin Outdoor Recreation Activities - 2005 to 2010**

### **Increasing Demand**

ATV	Market saturation may occur by 2010, causing this use to level off.
Birdwatching	A popular activity for an aging baby boom population.
Canoeing	Cheap, easy water access for all generations
Driving for Pleasure	An easy activity for all generations
Gardening	On the rise with the baby boom population
Geocaching	Popular both with families and members of the Y Generation
Kayaking	Better technology has made this an affordable sport for the general public
Motorboating	Cost have decreased enough to continue to make this a popular activity
Off-road Motorcycling	Record sales of off-road vehicles continues to fuel this demand
Paintball Games	Better and cheaper technology attracts the Y Generation.
Picnic	A family activity crossing generation gaps.
Road Biking	Increases will slow due to the retirement of Lance Armstrong and the effect that was felt from his Tour de France wins.
RV Camping	The baby boom population continues to change from tent to RVs, but increasing fuel prices may slow this.
Skateboarding	Popular with urban youth and the Y Generation.
Snowboarding	This may start to level off by 2010 as the next generation looks towards newer technology.
Snowshoeing	Not growing as fast since 2002.
Visit a Dog Park	Urban residents continue to demand more of these areas.
Walking	Popular among all ages, though especially aging baby boomers.
Water Parks	Construction of new water parks continues to fuel the increasing demand for this activity.
Wildlife	Often done in conjunction with driving for pleasure, making this activity very popular.
Viewing/Photography	

### **Stable Element**

Cross-Country Skiing	Stable at this time but mainly driven by baby boomers. Declines may start by 2010
Day Hiking	An easy, popular activity for all generations.
Disc Golf	Popular with younger urban generations.
Fishing	Very popular with all generations.
Horseback Riding	Continues to be popular with baby boomers, but may not be popular with the Y generation.
Ice Skating	An easy, cheap activity for the mass public.
Inline Skating	After a quick rise in the 1990s activity has leveled.

Personal Watercraft	Market saturation occurred in the 1990s with this use leveling off.
Rock Climbing	A small but stable Y Generation niche.
Rowing	A small niche activity with simple equipment.
Run/Jog	The baby boomer generation continues to run/jog, but the Y Generation may not.
Sailing	Equipment demands and skill requirements prevent this from growing.
Scuba/Snorkel	A niche sport that attracts a younger generation.
Swimming	Always popular - water quality issues have caused growth in this activity to stagnate.
Tennis	A recent resurgence has stabilized this activity.
Tent Camping	Still popular but may start to lose ground to the RV trend.

**Decreasing Demand**

Backpacking	A popular baby boomer activity not as popular with the Y Generation.
Downhill Skiing	Continues to struggle with attracting the Y Generation.
Golf	Time and expense continue to push players to other recreation.
Hunting	Continues to struggle with generational loss and access issues.
Mountain Biking	Baby boomers that made the sport popular in the 1990s have switched to road bikes.
Snowmobile	The industry struggles with how to attract more people with less snow.
Team Sports	Except for soccer, all other sports have declined.

Source: State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan 2005-2010 (SCORP)

**TABLE 17  
DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS FOR PARK AND RECREATION FACILITIES**

<b>Type:</b>	<b>Service:</b>	<b>Size:</b>	<b>Service Area:</b>	<b>Population Served:</b>	<b>Location:</b>	<b>Typical Facilities:</b>
Playground	Local neighborhood	1.5 acres preferred	1/4 mile or less	500 - 1,000 persons	High-density neighborhood where typical private yards are small.	Play apparatus with complete fencing, basketball courts, junior softball diamond, ice rink, craft area, hard surface play area, drinking fountain, totlots facilities, gra
Neighborhood Parks	Local neighborhood	10-15 acres or 3.0 acres/1000 pop.	1/2 mile or as limited by geographic barriers.	3,500 - 5,000 persons	Preferably adjacent to elementary schools or near the center of the neighborhood.	In addition to the playground facilities listed above, a neighborhood park should include a softball diamond (lighting optional), baseball diamond (optional), lighted skating rink, lighted hockey rink, two tennis courts, picnic area, service building and parking.
Community Park	Local Community	25 acres or more or 4.0 acres/1000 pop.	1 1/2 - 2 miles	8,000 - 10,000 persons	Preferably near the center of 3 to 5 neighborhoods or selected because of notable natural features, such as topography, trees or water.	Included are all neighborhood park facilities plus two softball diamonds, one baseball diamond, four tennis courts, two horseshoe pits, two hard surfaced play areas, one multi-purpose shelter building, parking and special facilities as site and programs dictate, including archery, boat ramp, swimming, bandshell and large picnic shelter.
Special Purpose Park	Whole Community	Varies depending of size of the community and land available.	Whole community.	No specific standard.	Wherever appropriate sites can be acquired.	Golf courses, athletic fields, swimming pools, greenways, historic sites, archaeological sites, conservancy areas and floodplains.
County Park	Whole County	200 acres or more 5 - 10 acres/1000 pop.	Whole county	No specific standard.	Wherever appropriate sites can be acquired.	Playgrounds, sports fields, paved courts, multiple-use court, picnic areas, open area for special events, amphitheater, natural area, off-street parking, camping, clubhouse/recreation center, and maintenance building.

## IX. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OUTDOOR RECREATION PROVISION

### A. Action Program

Previous sections of this plan have addressed recreation supply and trends in Wood County. This section details a plan of action that will, to a large extent, address future needs of the County.

The private outdoor recreation sector has total responsibility in providing specific types of activities and lesser responsibility for others. The recommendations that follow assign responsibility to both public and private enterprise. In addition, private enterprise must be constantly aware of its impacts on the natural resources it depends upon. Frequently, the necessity of making a profit makes this a difficult assignment. Nevertheless, it is important for continued business success to safeguard resources against degradation.

The action program for Wood County consists of two parts: (1) public policy measures and (2) acquisition, development and improvement projects and associated programs.

#### 1. Public Policy Measures

The following general public policy statements apply to Wood County and the towns, villages and cities within the County.

- a. *Community Parks.* Upgrade community park facilities in terms of quality and variety of facilities provided, and improve attractiveness of natural settings through landscaping where needed.
- b. *Neighborhood Parks.* Develop centrally located neighborhood parks in residential areas.
- c. *Use of Easements.* Utilize purchase of easements in order to limit land acquisition costs for neighborhood parks. Communities are encouraged to procure easements for the use of presently vacant property in locations appropriate for neighborhood park development.
- d. *Park Dedication.* Require residential subdividers to dedicate a portion of subdivided land for permanent park and open space use in communities which are experiencing significant residential growth. Neighborhood parks may be acquired in this manner in newly developing residential areas. Local landowners should also be encouraged to dedicate land to their communities for recreational uses. Small town memorial parks have been acquired through the generosity of local citizens. If citizens are made aware of community needs, this form of private action may continue to enrich the public

resources of small communities.

e. *Snowmobile Routes.* Integrate local snowmobile route plans with that of the Wood County Park and Forestry Department in an effort to provide a continuous route for snowmobilers to follow on streets and rights-of-way in areas of the community where snowmobile noise and travel will cause the least amount of nuisance to community residents.

Such action will not only increase the compatibility of snowmobiles and community residents, but the provision of a continuous route will encourage economic gains to Wood County's communities. Continue to maintain the connectivity of the Wood County trail network to the statewide network of 18,706 miles of funded trails.

f. *Specialized Facilities.* Encourage development of specialized facilities by the private sector. Specialized facilities, such as golf clubs and marinas, can be an important asset to public recreational facilities. Quality and availability for public use should be emphasized.

g. *Municipal-School District Cooperation.* Promote continued and increased cooperation between municipalities and school districts in meeting recreational needs. With good planning, cooperation may take the form of joint land acquisition and/or facility development cost-sharing. Increased municipal use of existing school facilities during non-school hours should be encouraged.

h. *Senior Citizen Involvement.* Involve senior citizens in community park development and beautification, and provide recreational facilities for their use. Senior citizens constitute a growing proportion of the County's population and can contribute many ideas, as well as their labor, in providing a well-balanced park and recreation system.

i. *Service Group Involvement.* Involve organized service groups in needed park and recreation development, including development of competitive sports areas and neighborhood parks. Traditionally, service groups have played an active part in the development of park facilities in Wood County. Several local Lions Clubs have provided the impetus behind local park development. Continued activity of this type should be encouraged.

j. *Grant Programs.* Take advantage of state and federal financial and technical assistance programs that are designed to aid communities in meeting recreational needs. Maintain community eligibility for such programs by having an approved outdoor recreation program updated at least once every 5 years.

k. *Community Beautification.* All communities should recognize that community appearance is an important component of a recreation program. Maintained streets and sidewalks, attractive trees and shrubs, well cared for homes and commercial buildings, public open space, and parks are principle contributors to community beautification. Such a program is most rewarding to persons engaged in passive recreation.

l. *Youth Programs.* Few summer recreational opportunities have been planned for the high school age youth. School activities provide most recreational outlets during winter months, but during the summer, there is a distinct void. Local units of government and the County Parks Department should combine efforts to study what recreation activities would be best received by this age-group and what opportunities there is to provide for them at public parks.

m. *Program Costs.* Communities should carefully monitor operations and maintenance (O&M) costs when developing or expanding a parks program. A too ambitious acquisition and/or development program can easily lead to annual O & M costs larger than the community can afford to meet. Communities should pool their resources to provide those activities that require large annual capital investments.

n. *Winter Activities.* All communities should provide winter outdoor recreation facilities. Skating and sliding sports sledding, tobogganing and skiing, can generally be provided without large investments if the resources are available, specifically hills.

o. *Future Planning.* At a minimum, all communities should reassess their recreational needs near the end of the 5-year period covered by this plan (2016). More frequent appraisals of needs may be called for under certain conditions, such as extreme variations in funding capability, rapid population changes, actions of other units of government and private enterprise, as well as the recognition of new legislation and public programs.

p. *Capital Improvements Programs.* Municipal officials should develop 5-year capital improvements programs for recreation that reflect implementation of proposals made in their plans and the priorities they place on them. To be functional, the programs must be flexible and be subjected to annual review. Capital Improvement Programs for a number of Wood County communities are found in Appendix G.

In developing a recreation program, care should be taken that the

annual cost of maintenance does not exceed an amount the community can afford to pay. Too often, an ambitious program loses community support as a result of prohibitive maintenance costs.

q. *Historic, Scientific & Archaeological Sites.* Preservation and restoration of sites with historic, scientific and archaeological significance can be rewarding additions to any community's recreation program. This is especially true in areas oriented to serving a significant tourist trade. A study of potential areas is recommended.

r. *Friends Groups.* Friends groups are made up of volunteers and could be utilized to maintain parks and trails through efforts such as garbage pickup and fund raising. The creation of friends groups should be encouraged to help with park and trail maintenance and improvements, and other projects that will improve the overall recreation opportunities in the County.

s. *Conflicting Uses.* In an effort to meet the diverse recreation demands of park and trail users, the County many times inadvertently creates an environment of conflicting recreation uses. The County should remain responsive to conflicting uses and try to remedy them if at all possible.

## 2. Acquisition, Development and Improvement Projects

Wood County is not assigned the responsibility to implement all the recommendations contained in this document. On the contrary, some are specifically intended for implementation by other units of government or by private enterprise. Also, a strong possibility exists that recreation interests other than the County may be willing to implement portions of the program assigned to the County. There should be few objections to implementation of the County program by others, as long as implementation meets the criteria established by the County.

The following recommendations are not listed in any order of priority.

a. Providers of recreation, both public and private, are presently left largely to their own devices in developing their programs. Sustained and effective coordination of their endeavors is necessary to assure maximum satisfaction of recreation desires. Wood County appears to be the most logical authority to exert leadership in this area, with this plan as a key phase in the County's leadership role.

One reason for recommending coordination of recreation efforts lies within the framework of state and federal financial aid and

loan programs to public and private recreation sponsors. Requirements for participation in these programs often include an evaluation of need and the establishment of priorities. These requirements cannot be fulfilled unless there is a program of continuous planning supplemented by active coordination of all recreation interests.

To achieve such a program, it is recommended that the County Board continue its support of the Planning and Zoning Committee as the County's recreation coordinating body. The Committee's function would be to:

- Act as a liaison between public agencies and private enterprise.
- Keep recreation plans updated.
- Coordinate the County recreation program with town, village, city and state park programs through the regular update of the countywide Park, Recreation, and Open Spaces Plan so that wasteful duplication of facilities does not occur.
- Support local communities when they desire to provide recreational facilities of regional significance that will benefit all of Wood County and its economy.

b. It is recommended that all communities in Wood County adopt uniform standards for recreational development. Such standards should include common park definitions, acreage per thousand population guides, service area adaptations and a uniform philosophy in regard to the use of school-owned recreation areas, roles of units of government in the overall recreation program, use of state and federal grants and the role of private enterprise. An example of standards for parks is presented in Chapter VIII.

c. Construct, Maintain, and/or improve park shelters to accommodate seasonal and year round use by County residents for private or community events.

d. Currently the County parks are open from May 1 to October 30. Consider keeping entrance gates open and allowing some parks to remain open throughout the year to accommodate year round use.

e. Small communities in Wood County should make an effort to provide at least one park each within reasonable walking distance of all community residents. These parks should provide playground equipment, picnic tables, cooking grills, a shelter with

attached sanitary facilities, a playfield for baseball/softball and soccer, and benches and tables for passive activities. Future municipal park projects are included in Appendix H.

f. A detailed park plan for Powers Bluff County Park was adopted in 2005. This plan is a 10 to 15 year plan that should be updated as needed.

g. The Powers Bluff County Park Long Range Master Plan identifies acquisition of 40 to 225 acres of land to the north. The acquisition would make it possible to construct a lodge and maintenance area at the bottom of the hill, making maintenance of an access road and parking lots much easier and less expensive. Access to the acquired land would be off of CTH N. The improvements at the base of the hill would also be ADA compliant, and reduce traffic on top of the hill and promote long term preservation of historical, cultural, and environmentally sensitive areas of Powers Bluff.

h. All providers of recreation facilities should make a determined effort to provide both service and recreation activities for physically and mentally handicapped persons. Guidance and recommendations are available from public and quasi-public organizations who directly serve this segment of the County's population.

Federal and state grant programs require consideration of the handicapped as part of the funding process. Projects submitted for funding assistance must recognize the needs of handicapped individuals and provide the necessary accommodations.

i. For many years Wood County has been a destination for campers and outdoor enthusiasts. Efforts should be pursued to promote the parks, trails and campgrounds to increase campground occupancy rates and promote economic development through tourism in the County.

j. The County and/or local municipalities can adopt some measures to benefit private recreation enterprise. The most common measures include zoning and resource protection. Zoning can regulate things such as billboards, use of surface waters and land use. It is apparent that there is a close relationship between zoning and resource protection, but the latter depends on other regulatory and management devices.

k. All public school sites in the County should continue to have

associated outdoor recreation facilities open for public use when school is not in session. Facilities in need of extra care, such as a football field or track, are exceptions to this recommendation. Restricted use of school recreation sites can only result in added costs to the taxpayers by dictating duplication of recreational facilities. It is further recommended that municipalities in Wood County attempt to provide recreation areas in conjunction with school facilities wherever possible. An agreement between school and municipal officials assuring public use of school facilities and providing a means by which maintenance and replacement costs can be shared would be helpful.

l. In the 1985 update of this plan, it was mentioned that Wood County should consider developing an area for off-road riding of motorized recreational vehicles, possibly on the County-owned land in the township of Richfield. This has been accomplished, however the ATV area was developed in Seneca Township, closer to Wisconsin Rapids. The site was opened in June 1989 and includes 10 miles of trails. While this facility will help to meet the demand for ATV riding areas, future consideration should be given to additional facilities if the opportunity arises for development of suitable sites.

m. Except for Powers Bluff which is already a developed area, there are no slopes in Wood County capable of providing this type of activity. Therefore, needs for skiing and tubing will have to be satisfied by Powers Bluff or outside the County. To continue to meet the need of skiing and tubing, the County should install lights to lengthen hours of operation that will help meet demand of this recreation activity, and improve safety by spreading peak use out over longer hours of operation. To improve the snow conditions and extend the winter recreation season at Powers Bluff, the County should consider purchasing snow making equipment.

n. In recent years awareness of the impacts of invasive species has increased. Invasive species in many instances have the potential of impacting the recreational use of land and water in Wood County. Wood County should develop strategies as needed to control invasive species that impact the use of all County-owned property. Strategies and action plans should leverage the expertise of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and volunteer efforts of concerned citizens.

o. Walking and bicycling continue to be very popular recreation activities for people of all ages. The existing walking/biking trails in County Parks should continue to be

maintained, additional trails should be considered where appropriate and practical, and plans to connect County parks with trails developed.

p. The County Parks provide approximately 10.7 miles of cross-country ski trails. The County should continue to provide ski trails by working with ski clubs and other groups that provide the volunteers necessary to maintain the trails.

q. Wood County has become a destination for snowmobilers based on the efforts of 8 clubs to provide 257.4 miles of snowmobile trails. The County Parks and Forestry Department plays a role in coordinating the efforts of these clubs. The County should continue its role in coordination of the clubs.

r. The County should continue to develop camp areas where camp sites are buffered by plant undergrowth and trees to create a “State Park” atmosphere.

s. Development of camp sites at NEPCO County Park should be pursued as an option to provide campers with additional camping options, and to accommodate demand during peak camping times.

t. The possibility of providing seasonal camping at Wood County campgrounds should be explored in reaction to increases in demand for seasonal camping sites and a low supply available in Wood County.

u. The County should consider offering full hook up sites with water and sewer to accommodate demand for this type of campsite.

v. The County should continue to monitor shoreline erosion, lake depths, and overall water quality to ensure continued long-term recreational use and water quality of lakes in County Parks.

w. Overall there are many options for canoeing/kayaking in the County, but lack of established routes known as “blue ways” may be a contributing factor to underutilization of many water bodies for this activity. The use of some “blue ways” may require annual clearing of trees and removal of other debris, a minimal amount of signage, and be subject to use limitations due to seasonal runoff or low water levels. The County along with the assistance of “friends groups” should look into the possibility of establishing “blue way” routes to promote the recreational use of waterways for canoeing/kayaking.

## B. Operation and Maintenance

### 1. Existing Operation and Maintenance Responsibilities

The Wood County Park and Forestry Department operates from their main office located in the Courthouse in Wisconsin Rapids. Four maintenance shops are used in the Park and Forestry system to maintain five major parks, three areas, and 37,606.42 acres of County Forest. Thirteen full-time employees and 12 part-time seasonal employees are employed to maintain these areas. Department budgets are approximately \$1,500,000 total annually to operate and maintain outdoor recreation facilities and areas. Revenues received are approximately \$350,000 in park revenues, and \$300,000 in forestry timber sale revenues.

### 2. Implications of Capital Improvements on Operation and Maintenance Capabilities

The Wood County Highway Infrastructure and Recreation Committee has been very careful in the past to ensure that renovations, improvements and additions to park facilities are within the maintenance capabilities and budget of the Park and Forestry Department. This policy has limited acquisition proposals in the past but has helped to ensure that the park properties that are currently managed will remain in excellent condition.

## C. Funding Programs

### 1. Local Funds

There are a wide variety of organizations in Wood County and Central Wisconsin ranging from snowmobile clubs and gun clubs to conservation organizations. Although the interests of many of these nonprofit organizations vary, many of the clubs have a common interest in working to improve the quality of parks, recreation, and open spaces in Wood County. The projects these organizations focus on include preservation of natural areas, development of recreation facilities and trails, and education on natural resources or outdoor activities. These groups not only are effective at fund-raising to cover project costs, but include many members who contribute by volunteering their time and expertise.

Wood County is also encouraging the formation of friends groups to assist with park and trail maintenance and improvement projects. The County will work to match up the resources of friends groups with necessary park projects. These groups also may be effective at raising funds for improvement projects. Should the opportunity present itself for a cooperative project between private and public entities, these groups

would be an appropriate contact point for beginning the funding process.

## 2. Available Grant Funding Programs

The Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program is administered by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and sets out to meet a variety of conservation and recreation goals that protect and restore wildlife habitat and natural areas, and the quality of water resources and fish habitat. Chapter NR 51, Wis. Adm. Code guides the administration of grant funding through the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program. Funding levels for grants are based on biennial budgeting of the state and there is \$60 million appropriated annually for fiscal years 2011 to 2013. Local units of government, and nonprofit conservation organizations are eligible to apply for funding to be applied towards “nature based” projects and include the following programs: acquisition and development of local parks, urban rivers and urban green space, and acquisition of development rights. Projects that are eligible for funding are identified in NR 51.

There are a variety of other funding opportunities that focus on parks and recreation facilities and activities. Some grant programs have funds available on a recurring basis while some are available on a one-time basis. Parks staff monitors grant funding opportunities on regular basis.

## **X. APPENDIX**

Appendix A: Municipal Population Change 2000 to 2010 US Census

Appendix B: 2011-2015 Wood County Park and Forestry Capital Improvement Plan

Appendix C: Wood County Parks and Forestry Future Projects

Appendix D: Rare, Threatened and Endangered Species and Natural Communities - National Heritage Inventory (NHI)

Appendix E: Park and Recreation Inventory for Wood County, Villages and Towns.

Appendix F: Public Input - May 2010

Appendix G: Capital Improvements Schedules - Municipalities

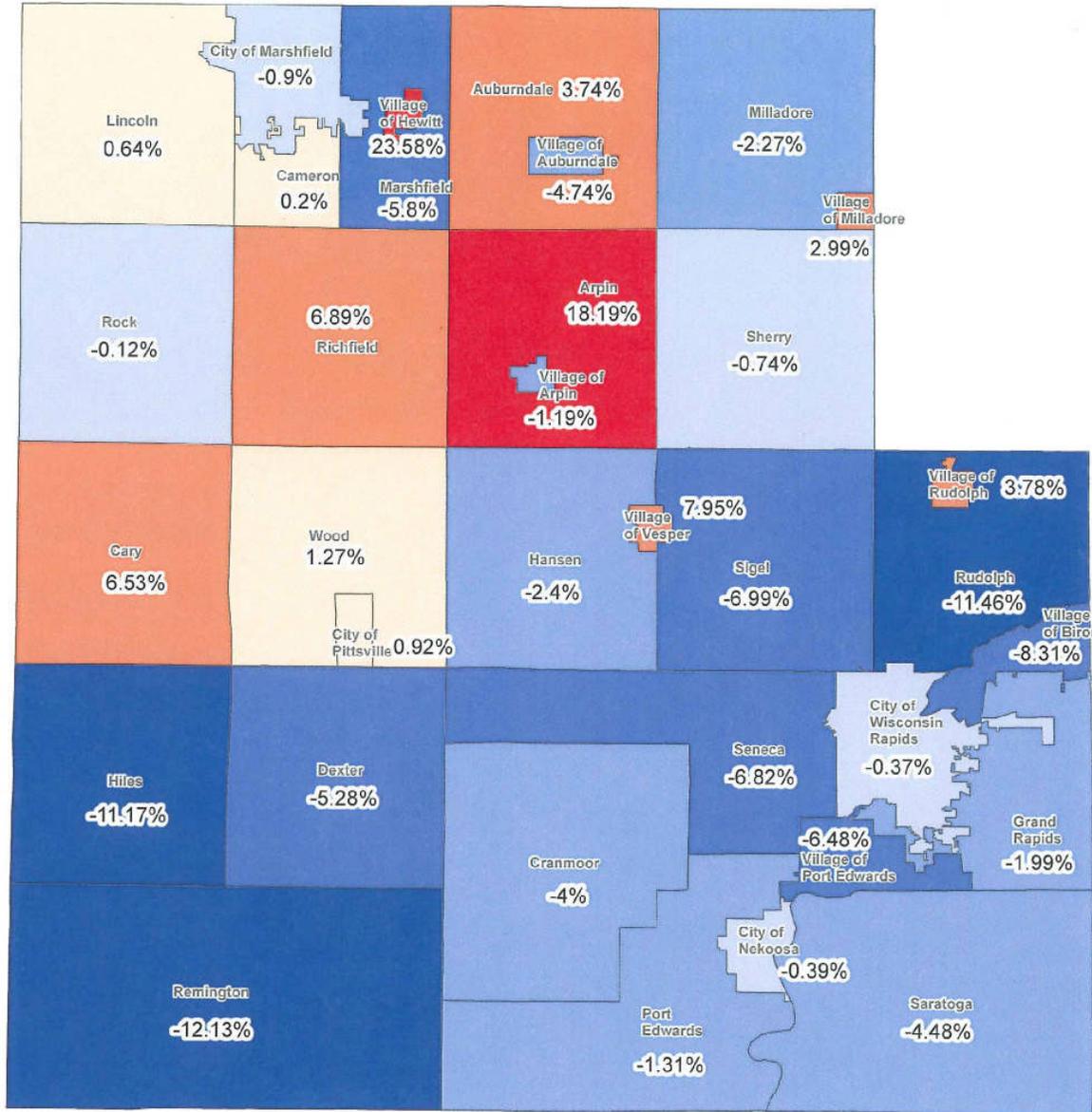
Appendix H: Future Municipal Park Projects

Appendix I: Park and Recreation Survey Results

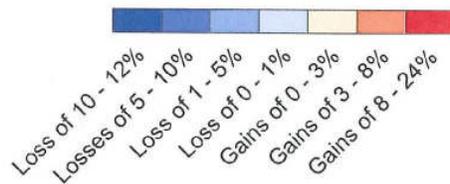
## Appendix A: Municipal Population Change 2000 to 2010 US Census

# WOOD COUNTY, WISCONSIN

Population Change: 2000 to 2010 Census



Wood County Total Population: 75,555 (2000) to 74,749 (2010)



1 inch = 4 miles

# Population Change: 2000 to 2010 Census

Municipality	2010 Population	2000 Population	Change	Percent
HEWITT	828	670	158	23.58%
ARPIN	929	786	143	18.19%
VESPER	584	541	43	7.95%
RICHFIELD	1628	1523	105	6.89%
CARY	424	398	26	6.53%
RUDOLPH	439	423	16	3.78%
AUBURNDALE	860	829	31	3.74%
MILLADORE	276	268	8	2.99%
WOOD	796	786	10	1.27%
PITTSVILLE	874	866	8	0.92%
LINCOLN	1564	1554	10	0.64%
CAMERON	511	510	1	0.2%
ROCK	855	856	-1	-0.12%
WISCONSIN RAPIDS	18367	18435	-68	-0.37%
NEKOOSA	2580	2590	-10	-0.39%
SHERRY	803	809	-6	-0.74%
MARSHFIELD	18218	18383	-165	-0.9%
ARPIN	333	337	-4	-1.19%
PORT EDWARDS	1427	1446	-19	-1.31%
GRAND RAPIDS	7646	7801	-155	-1.99%
MILLADORE	690	706	-16	-2.27%
HANSEN	690	707	-17	-2.4%
CRANMOOR	168	175	-7	-4%
SARATOGA	5142	5383	-241	-4.48%
AUBURNDALE	703	738	-35	-4.74%
DEXTER	359	379	-20	-5.28%
MARSHFIELD	764	811	-47	-5.8%
PORT EDWARDS	1818	1944	-126	-6.48%
SENECA	1120	1202	-82	-6.82%
SIGEL	1051	1130	-79	-6.99%
BIRON	839	915	-76	-8.31%
HILES	167	188	-21	-11.17%
RUDOLPH	1028	1161	-133	-11.46%
REMINGTON	268	305	-37	-12.13%

## Appendix B: 2011-2015 Wood County Park and Forestry Capital Improvement Plan

**2011-2015 5 YEAR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN  
WOOD COUNTY PARK & FORESTRY DEPARTMENT**

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
21-11-001 FLEET VEHICLE REPLACEMENT	\$ 45,000.00				
21-11-002 UPGRADE CAMPGROUND ELECTRICAL	\$ 18,000.00				
21-11-003 ROAD IMPROVEMENTS	\$ 30,000.00				
21-11-004 IMPROVEMENTS TO BUILDINGS	\$ 20,000.00				
21-11-006 REPLACE PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT	\$ 10,000.00				
21-11-007 <b>DEXTER PARK 2ND SHOWER BUILDING**</b>	<b>\$200,000.00</b>				
21-11-009 REPLACE 4x4 TRACTOR	\$ 35,000.00				
21-11-010 REPLACE MOWER	\$ 10,000.00				
21-11-011 FORESTRY ATV	\$ 8,000.00				
21-11-012 RED BEACH BEACH HOUSE	\$ 40,000.00				
21-12-001 FLEET VEHICLE REPLACEMENT		\$ 45,000.00			
21-12-002 UPGRADE CAMPGROUND ELECTRICAL		\$ 18,000.00			
21-12-003 ROAD IMPROVEMENTS		\$ 30,000.00			
21-12-004 IMPROVEMENTS TO BUILDINGS		\$ 25,000.00			
21-12-007 POWERS BLUFF LIGHTING		\$ 25,000.00			
21-12-008 POWERS BLUFF PAVE EXIT ROAD		\$ 26,000.00			
21-12-009 REPLACE WIDE AREA MOWER		\$ 35,000.00			
21-12-010 REPLACE 6' MOWER		\$ 20,000.00			
21-12-011 PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT		\$ 12,000.00			
21-12-012 REPLACE SNOWMOBILE		\$ 6,500.00			
21-12-013 <b>SOUTH PARK/NEPCO CAMPGROUND EXPANSION**</b>		<b>\$150,000.00</b>			
21-13-001 FLEET VEHICLE REPLACEMENT			\$ 50,000.00		
21-13-002 ROAD IMPROVEMENTS			\$ 30,000.00		
21-13-003 IMPROVEMENTS TO BUILDINGS			\$ 20,000.00		
21-13-005 POWERS BLUFF SNOW MAKING EQUIPMENT			\$100,000.00		
21-13-006 TREE PLANTER			\$ 15,000.00		
21-13-009 DEXTER SHOP RENOVATION			\$150,000.00		
21-14-001 FLEET VEHICLE REPLACEMENT				\$ 50,000.00	
21-14-002 UPGRADE CAMPGROUND ELECTRICAL				\$ 25,000.00	
21-14-003 REPLACE 6' MOWER				\$ 22,000.00	
21-14-005 IMPROVEMENTS TO BUILDINGS				\$ 50,000.00	
21-14-006 <b>SP 2ND SHOWER BUILDING**</b>				<b>\$200,000.00</b>	
21-14-007 ROAD IMPROVEMENTS				\$ 30,000.00	
21-15-001 FLEET VEHICLE REPLACEMENT					\$ 50,000.00
21-15-002 REPLACE TRACTOR					\$ 35,000.00
21-15-003 DEXTER TRAIL UPGRADES					\$ 30,000.00
21-15-004 <b>POWERS BLUFF SHELTER UPGRADES**</b>					<b>\$100,000.00</b>
21-15-005 IMPROVEMENTS TO BUILDINGS					\$ 50,000.00
21-15-006 ROAD IMPROVEMENTS					\$ 30,000.00
	<b>\$416,000.00</b>	<b>\$392,500.00</b>	<b>\$365,000.00</b>	<b>\$377,000.00</b>	<b>\$295,000.00</b>
(-) STATE AID FUNDING**	\$100,000.00	\$ 75,000.00	\$ -	\$100,000.00	\$ 50,000.00
<b>NET TAX LEVY</b>	<b>\$316,000.00</b>	<b>\$317,500.00</b>	<b>\$365,000.00</b>	<b>\$277,000.00</b>	<b>\$245,000.00</b>

## Appendix C: Wood County Parks and Forestry Future Projects

## **Future Park and Forestry Projects**

### South Wood County Park

- Red Beach Improvement Plan
  1. Replace outdated restroom
  2. Construct open shelter
  3. Harden Parking Lot for beach users
  4. Grade and harden path to access beach walkway and water access
- Replace outdated playground equipment
- Upgrade campground site electric to 50 Amp
- Expand campground and construct support facilities
- Dredge east end of lake “catch basin” to prevent further sedimentation in lake
- Remodel White Beach Restroom
- Pave walk trail on north side of lake
- Continue inspection schedule of dam and make necessary repairs
- Install automated software for dam gate operation
- Construct Shelter building on north side of lake

### NEPCO

- Create campground and construct support facilities
- Work with adjoining landowners for possible land acquisitions in the future
- Sign and designate different trails in park to reduce user conflicts
- Replace outdated playground equipment
- Support creation of Lake Association to improve water quality in NEPCO Lake

### Dexterville

- Construct 2<sup>nd</sup> shower building
- Upgrade campground site electric to 50 amp
- Convert tennis courts into sand volleyball courts
- Improve walk trails throughout park
- Construction of new maintenance building
- Replace outdated playground equipment
- Expand campground
- Continue inspection schedule of dam and make necessary changes
- Install automated software for dam gate operation
- Remodel beach restroom
- Construct shelter building on West side of lake

### North Park

- Replace outdated playground equipment
- Continue inspection schedule for dam and make necessary changes
- Upgrade and expand electrical sites to 50 amp
- Improve walk trails throughout park
- Dredge river between dams to increase recreational opportunities in park

### Powers Bluff

- Acquire property north of Powers Bluff and follow through on Powers Bluff Long Range Plan. Some items include:
  1. New shelter at base of hill
  2. Entrance drive and parking area
  3. Walk trail development
  4. Prairie and tree planting
  5. Snow tube and ski hill improvements
  6. Lighting and snowmaking equipment
- Improve existing trails throughout park
- Shelter building remodeling
- New signage throughout park

### ATV Trails

- Work with area clubs to expand and improve trails in Wood County

### Snowmobile Trails

- Work with area clubs to maintain and improve existing trail system in Wood County

Appendix D: Rare, Threatened and Endangered Species and Natural Communities -  
National Heritage Inventory (NHI)



Appendix E: Park and Recreation Inventory for Wood County, Villages and Towns

**WOOD COUNTY PARKS SYSTEM**

Wood County Rifle Range	Intersection Marsh & Ridge Roads, Town of Seneca	County Park (special use)	5.0	8 shooting stations for rifle, shotgun and pistol. Yardage to target varies from 25 yds (4 stations) to 50 yds (2 stations) to 100 yds (2 stations). Parking is available for 20 cars.	Excellent condition with many recent improvements.	Parking lot and walking path are gravel surfaced.
North Wood County Park	CTH A, Town of Richfield	County Park (regional facility)	172.4	105 campsites (2 handicap; one 50 amp electric, one 30 amp electric), 257 picnic tables, 12 small cooking grills, 1 large cooking grill, 1 closed shelter with kitchen, 2 bathhouses, 1 beach, 10 wells, 16 restrooms, 1 dump station, 2 nine-pole disc golf, 2 volleyball courts, 2 ball fields, 4 fireplaces, 1-mi snowmobile trails, 2 playgrounds, 5-acre lake, walking path, wood sales, ice sales, fishing, open field sports.	Excellent condition with many recent improvements.	Park facilities are ADA compliant with the exception of some restroom facilities.
NEPCO County Park	Hwy 13 South, Village of Port Edwards	County Park (regional facility)	125.0	21 picnic tables, 3 small cooking grills, 1 large cooking grill, 1 enclosed shelter, 1.3-mi X-C ski/hiking trail, 1 playground, 1 boat landings, 494-acre lake.	Excellent condition with many recent improvements.	Park facilities are ADA compliant.
Powers Bluff Winter Recreation Area	Bluff Dr., Town of Arpin	County Park (regional facility)	160.0	23 picnic tables, 1 closed shelter, 2 wells, 2 restrooms, 2 fireplaces, .5-mi snowmobile trail, 2.9 mi X-C ski/hiking trail, 1.5-mile nature trail, 3 ski runs, 4 tubing runs, 3 tow lines, 1 playground, 1 scientific area, 1 natural area, concession stand.	There are a number of improvements that are needed at this facility. Many improvements are pending possible future acquisition of adjacent property.	Improvements are necessary to improve accessibility.
Richfield 360	Heggelund La., Town of Richfield	County Park, wilderness area (regional facility)	360.0	7 primitive campsites, 8 picnic tables, 1 restroom, 1-mile snowmobile trail, 5-mile X-C ski/hiking trail.	Entire 360 acres is in an undeveloped natural state. Parking area at trailhead has 1 restroom and is the only cleared land at the facility.	Restroom is handicapped accessible. Trails are dirt and have had minimal leveling.

Dexter Park	STH 54, Town of Dexter	County Park (regional facility)	1,235.0	83 campsites (2 handicap sites, 76 electric), 293 picnic tables, 22 small cooking grills, 1 large cooking grill, 1 closed shelter, 1 open shelter, 1 bathhouse, 1 beach, 14 wells, 17 restrooms, 1 dump station, 2 horseshoe pits, 2 volleyball courts, 1 basketball court, 1 ball field, 1-mile snowmobile trail, 2 snowmobile trailheads, 6-mile hiking trails, 2 playgrounds, 2 boat landings, 298-ac lake, 2 fishing piers, 1 handicap fishing pier, 6-mile hiking trail, fish cleaning house.	The entire park is in excellent condition.	Most of the park facilities are ADA compliant with the exception of some of the restroom facilities
South Wood County Park	Lake Wazeecha, Town of Grand Rapids	County Park (regional facility)	332.0	73 campsites (1 handicap site, 53 electric), 191 picnic tables, 18 small cooking grills, 1 large cooking grill, 1 closed shelter, 4 open shelters, 1 bathhouse, 2 beaches, 12 wells, 22 restrooms, 1 dump station, 1 nine-pole disc golf course, 3 horseshoe pits, 2 volleyball courts, 1 mile snowmobile trail, 1 snowmobile trailhead, 4-mile hiking trail, 2 playgrounds, 1 boat landing, 148-acre lake.	All facilities are well-maintained. The Red Sands Beach house will be rebuilt in 2012. Overall the park is in excellent condition with many recent improvements.	Some restrooms in the park are not accessible at this time but are signed as such.
Wood County ATV Area	STH 54 West, Town of Port Edwards	County Park (special use)	400.0	9 picnic tables, 1 cooking grill, 1 closed shelter, 1 well, 2 restroom, 10-mile ATV trails, 10-mile hiking trails, 1 playground, snowmobile trail head.	All facilities are well-maintained.	All facilities at the trailhead are accessible to the handicapped.
Marshfield Area Fish Pond	Trout Rd., Town of Marshfield	County Park (special use)	5.0	Fishing pond, parking lot.	No facilities at this park area.	Parking area is gravel and trails to the pond are unimproved.
Lake Wazeecha Disposal Site Area	CTH U, Town of Grand Rapids	County Park (special use)	81.0	None. This is undeveloped park land that is used to stockpile the dredge spoils from Lake Wazeecha. However, less than 1/2 the acreage has been cleared for spoil storage.	This is a new facility with no improvements.	No improvements have been made.

**TOWN OF GRAND RAPIDS**

Weslan Park	Grassmere Dr.	Community Park	2.5	1 developed play area, 2 picnic tables, softball field, tennis court, volleyball court, basketball court, horseshoe pit.	Fair, except for one merry-go-round that is old. Merry-go-round will be removed in the summer of 2011 and will not be replaced.	Accessible.
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**TOWN OF SENECA**

Town of Seneca Park	CTH Q	Community Park	4.0	Baseball field, volleyball court, 6 picnic tables, open shelter, restrooms.	Baseball infield was redone in 2000. Volleyball court was installed in 1998. Bathrooms are pit toilets. The shelter house has electricity.	All facilities conform with ADA regulations.
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**VILLAGE OF PORT EDWARDS**

Edward-Alexander Memorial Park	2nd St. and Morrill Ave.	Community Park	2.6	Developed play area, tennis court, 12 picnic tables, 2 cooking grills, open shelter, enclosed shelter w/ kitchen, restrooms, swimming pool, toddler pool, 1 bathhouse, horseshoe pits. Existing playground equipment includes adult and tot swings, teeter-totter, horizontal ladder and hobby horse swings.	Enclosed shelter with kitchen facilities and restrooms was constructed in 1995. Some play equipment was removed and the remaining playground equipment was all altered to meet U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission guidelines in 1995.	The open and enclosed shelter houses with kitchen and restroom facilities conform with ADA regulations. Not all the playground equipment is handicapped accessible at this time.
North Park	4th Street	Community Park	1.4	Developed play area, softball field, basketball court, 6 picnic tables, 2 cooking grills, and horseshoe pits. Existing playground equipment includes adult and tot swings, horizontal ladder, hobby horse swings and small slide.	Some playground equipment was removed and the remaining playground equipment was altered to meet U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission guidelines in 1995.	Not all playground equipment is handicapped accessible at this time.
Ripple Creek Park	Verbunker Ave & 7th St.	Community Park	28.5	Developed play area, tot lot, 2 softball fields, 2 tennis courts, volleyball court, basketball court, walking path, 12 picnic tables, 4 cooking grills, open shelter, restrooms, ice rink, warming house, toboggan/sledding hill, horseshoe pits. Developed play area consists of adult and tot swings, hobby horse swings and a variety of wood play equipment.	The wooden play structures are in poor condition.	The warming house with restrooms and the open shelter conform with ADA regulations. All playground equipment will be handicapped accessible as part of the park expansion project.

Park Court Lane Park	Jefferson St. & Park Court lane	Community Park	0.65	Developed play area, 2 picnic tables. Existing playground equipment includes adult and tot swings, hobby horse swings, teeter-totter, arch climber and merry-go-round.	Some playground equipment was removed for safety reasons and the remaining playground equipment was altered to meet U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission guidelines in 1995.	Not all the play equipment is handicapped accessible at this time.
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#### TOWN OF MARSHFIELD

Old Township Landfill	Abandoned landfill - West of Stadt Rd.	Special Purpose Park	16	Site is in natural state.	Site is in natural state.	Accessibility limited due to natural state of property.
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#### TOWN OF REMINGTON

Community Park	STH 80, Babcock	Community Park	3.0	Developed play area, 3 picnic tables, restrooms, cooking grill.	Good Condition. A new play station was installed in 2000, as well as tires in the play area.	Completely accessible for the handicapped.
Babcock Park and Playground	1596 STH 80, Babcock	Community Park		Play equipment, basketball court, 2 picnic tables, 1 open shelter, 1 restroom	Excellent condition. Playground equipment new in 2009 and 2010.	Currently have a handicap picnic table on a concrete slab. In future would like to pave an approach to the picnic table and a ramp to the open shelter.
Babcock Ball Diamond	STH 80, Babcock	Ball Field		1 baseball field, 1 picnic table, 2 open shelters (dugouts), 2 sets of bleachers, 2 benches, 1 restroom.	Excellent. All new in 2000.	All facilities are accessible.

#### TOWN OF ROCK

Lindsey Park	8413 County Rd V.	Community Park	1.5	Play equipment, 1 picnic table, 1 cooking grill, 1 open shelter, restroom facilities, and a veterans memorial	Very good condition	No data provided.
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#### TOWN OF RUDOLPH

Rudolph Boat Landing	River Rd.	Boat Landing		No data provided.	No data provided.	No data provided.
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**VILLAGE OF ARPIN**

Kandy Kane Park	Main St.	Community Park	6.0	Play Equipment, lighted softball field, tennis court, volleyball court, basketball court, 8 picnic tables, 6 cooking grills, 1 open shelter, 1 enclosed shelter, restroom facilities, concession stand, horseshoe pits, sand box, PVC pipe climber.	Excellent.	Shelter house and restrooms are handicapped accessible.
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**VILLAGE OF AUBURNDALE**

Village of Auburndale Park	Park Ave.	Community Park	19.0	Developed play area, 2 softball fields (one lighted), tennis court, volleyball court, basketball court, picnic tables, open shelter, enclosed shelter, kitchen facilities, restroom facilities, concession stand.	The park is well kept and in good condition.	Park area is generally accessible to persons with disabilities. Parking lot is gravel.
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**VILLAGE OF BIRON**

Biron Park	S. Biron Dr.	Community Park	2.5	Developed play area, baseball field, tennis court, volleyball court, 2 ½ basketball courts, 2 picnic tables, drinking fountain, ice rink.	The park is in good condition. Playground equipment needs a little work but will be fixed in the fall of 2011.	Conforms to ADA except some playground equipment is probably not accessible.
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**VILLAGE OF HEWITT**

Hewitt Village Park	7688 McLean Dr.	Community Park	2.45	1 small ball diamond, 2 basketball courts, 2 enclosed shelters, play equipment, volleyball court, kitchen facilities, restrooms, parking for 40 vehicles.	Park is well maintained.	All buildings currently meet accessibility requirements.
Yellowstone Recreation Park	Yellowstone Dr.	Community Park	17.85	2 ball diamonds, 2 volleyball courts, play equipment, enclosed concession building (includes kitchen, restrooms, storage area), picnic shelter, parking for 200, bicycle/pedestrian trails, trail head for Hewitt-Marsh Trail.	Park facilities are very new, and well-maintained.	All buildings currently meet accessibility requirements.

Draxler Land (privately owned)	Northeast of Wastewater Treatment Facility	Special Purpose Park	16.00	Portions of property are designated for Hewitt-Marsh Trail and unpaved recreational trail.	Trails are maintained as needed.	Accessibility limited due to non-paved trail surfaces.
Hewitt Lagoons	Southeast of Wastewater Treatment Facility	Special Purpose Park	10.43	Site is in natural state with unpaved recreational trails.	Trails are cleared as necessary.	Accessibility limited due to non-paved trail surfaces.
Hewitt Natural Area	East of Wastewater Treatment Facility	Special Purpose Park	19.42	Site is in natural state with unpaved recreational trails.	Trails are cleared as necessary.	Accessibility limited due to non-paved trail surfaces.

**VILLAGE OF MILLADORE**

Village of Milladore Park	722 Bradley Ave.	Community Park	13.94	Developed play area, lighted softball field, tennis court, 2 volleyball courts, basketball court, band shell, 24 picnic tables, 6 cooking grills, 2 open shelters, 1 enclosed shelter with kitchen facilities, restrooms, concession stand, horseshoe pits	The softball field and volleyball courts are in good condition.	The restroom facilities at the park are ADA compliant.
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**VILLAGE OF RUDOLPH**

Rudolph Community Park	1557 Park St.	Community Park	13.0	Developed play area, 2 softball fields, baseball field, 1 lighted ball field, 2 tennis courts, 3 volleyball courts, walking path, 25 picnic tables, open shelter, restrooms, concession stand	The facilities are in excellent condition, very clean.	No data provided.
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**VILLAGE OF VESPER**

Cameron Park	5032 Benson Av.	Community Park	2.0	Developed play area, 6 picnic tables, 1 cooking grill, enclosed shelter, restrooms.	Excellent. Well maintained.	Buildings conform with ADA regulations.
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Vesper Recreation Area	CTH HH	Community Park	17.0	Developed play area, 2 softball fields (1 lighted), 2 tennis courts, 3 volleyball courts, 1 basketball court, 1 walking path, 12 picnic tables, 1 open shelter, 2 restroom facilities, concession stand, gazebo, Master Gardener Gardens.	Excellent. Well maintained.	Building and facilities conform with ADA regulations.
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**CITY OF NEKOOSA**

Riverside Park	STH 73	Community Park		Play equipment, 2 softball fields, volleyball court, band shell, 36 picnic tables, 4 cooking grills, 2 open shelters, 2 restroom facilities, fishing pier, 2 horseshoe pits boat landing. Fishing is also allowed along the riverbank.	Excellent. Municipal crews responsible for grass cutting and park maintenance.	Park shelters are fully accessible.
Market Street Recreation Area	Market St.	Community Park		Developed play area, 3 baseball fields, 2 tennis courts, 1 volleyball court, 2 basketball courts, 2 restroom facilities, 2 swimming pools, bathhouse, ice rink, warming house, water slide, batting cage, pitching machine.	Excellent. City crews keep the grass cut continuously on baseball diamonds. Swimming pool operations are closely monitored by a recreation director and city crews.	Ice-skating warming house and swimming pool bathhouse are both accessible.
Boat landing	Point Basse. Av.	Special Purpose		4 picnic tables, 2 restrooms, fishing pier, boat landing.	Excellent. Park area maintained by city crews.	Boat landing accessible.

**CITY OF PITTSVILLE**

Riverside Park	5359 Forest Av.	Community Park	26.0	Developed play area, baseball/softball field, tennis court, volleyball court, basketball court, picnic tables, cooking grills, open shelters, restroom facilities, concession stand.	Park is well maintained.	No data provided.
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Appendix F: Public Information Meeting Input from May 2010

# **Wood County Parks Department Outdoor Recreation Plan**

Public Input Session

May 24, 2010

NEPCO County Park

## **Comments by Topic Area:**

### **CAMPING**

Consider adding camping sites at NEPCO County Park.

49 acres of land may become county land near Biron, could be used for a park or camping.

The online reservation system is good.

Stores, vending added to campgrounds.

### **TRAILS**

Acquire land for more trails. Use is becoming too intense in some areas, especially NEPCO County Park.

Snowshoeing is expanding, causing some trail conflicts.

Conflicting uses on trails causes safety concerns.

Examples: bikers/walkers, walkers, handicapped, roller bladders, etc.

Concern with too many trails: what is maximum use in a park, when do trails harm a park, what are trail limits?

Connect existing trails. Many communities have small trail systems.

Trails along county roads - good use of money.

Plow trails at parks in winter.

Dog waste: people need to follow rules, add bag dispensers.

Increase signage - especially for new users.

### **WINTER SPORTS**

### **WATER RESOURCES**

Need for a south Wood County pool/aqua center. Other area pools are declining. County park could be a good neutral location.

Zebra mussel concern - NEPCO Lake.

Question on Lake Wazeecha and state "no wake" law. It is up to town to whether to grant an exemption for skiing.

NEPCO Lake water quality, concern with weeds.

NEPCO Lake - erosion near boat landing.

### **DAY USE**

Concern with use conflicts and effect on safety and enjoyment of parks. Example: conflict of frisbee golfers and picnickers.

### **LAND NEEDS**

Concern with commercial development near NEPCO County Park. Related topics: Parks Department involvement in allowing this development, dam management, Parks Department acquiring some of this land for access, Parks Department acquiring nearby parcels.

Powers Bluff - purchasing land to the north would help rest of park.

## **OTHER**

Promote scenic drives, rustic roads.

South Wood County Park with multiple uses is needed (basketball, trails, shelters, etc.) (Baraboo example)

Powers Bluff - water bubbler was beneficial to bikers.

Additional activities for 10-24 year olds. Problem with kids swinging from trees over lake and getting hurt.

Provide alternate activities.

Start a volunteers/friends group. Could help to remove invasive plants, animals.

Promotion of County Parks. Promote existing great things in parks.

Social networking promotion.

Garbage concern. Fewer containers are available. (Parks Department is moving toward carry in / carry out philosophy.)

## **Public Input Session**

**May 27, 2010**

### **North County Park**

#### **Comments by Topic Area:**

##### **CAMPING:**

Have a "clean-up" day for campers early in season & offer a free night. Try at Dexter Park early in season, "Park Friends" concept.

Add a second shower building at Dexter Park. (planned for 2011)

Add primitive camping on east side of Dexter Park.

Add primitive camping at North Park on other side of river.

Add primitive camping at Powers Bluff.

Gates at North Park have hurt attendance. Open gates could increase picnicking on east side.

Reservation fee has increased (but can reserve online now).

##### **TRAILS:**

Increase ATV trail access at parks. Also increase ATV access in winter. (ATV club involvement would help.)

Increase bicycle trails.

- Dexter Park to Sandhill on County X would be very attractive and relatively easy to do.

- North Park to Sandhill would be a good route. (connect Pittsville & Dexter)

##### **WINTER SPORTS:**

Richfield Park

- recent problems: pipeline, snow not good

- horses: don't allow when snow is on ground, post it

##### **WATER RESOURCES:**

Algae in swimming pool at North Park

- pool is not swimmable, use would increase if pool was swimmable

- plan is in place to clean up weeds in near future

North Park streams and ponds

- problem with silting, opening dams in spring might help

**DAY USE:**

Open parks earlier in season for disc golf.

North Park, be able to drive next to picnic tables, easier access.

Should big events need port-a-potties? (limit is 300 people before port-a-potties are needed)

Additional activities would attract kids to North Park. (minigolf, concrete swimming pool)

**LAND NEEDS:**

Consider buying land near Powers Bluff.

**OTHER:**

Gates at North Park discourage use, especially on east side of river.

Consider an earlier opening date. Or do not close park at all.

Increase money, help for Parks Department.

- Friends Group could raise funds.
- Friends Group could complete park projects. Would need to coordinate with union.
- Contact businesses and organizations for interest in helping with money or volunteers.
- Segregate funds and non-lapsing funds for Parks Department
- Work at starting a Friends Group for each park.
- Nearby community/organizations could "adopt" a park.

Appendix G: Capital Improvements Schedules - Municipalities

City of Marshfield, Wisconsin  
*Capital Improvement Program*  
 2011 thru 2015

**PROJECTS & FUNDING SOURCES BY DEPARTMENT**

Department	Project#	Priority	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Total
<b>Parks &amp; Recreation</b>								
Indoor Tennis & Racquetball Center Improvements	PR-K-2859	2					20,000	20,000
Room Tax							20,000	20,000
Wildwood Station-McMillan Connector Trail	PR-L-1647	1	500,000	275,000				775,000
Non-Local Revenue			400,000	220,000				620,000
Operating Funds				25,000				25,000
Room Tax			100,000	30,000				130,000
Wildwood Park Pond Improvements	PR-L-2800	2					15,000	15,000
Room Tax							15,000	15,000
Wildwood Park parking lots	PR-L-2802	2	80,000					80,000
Operating Funds			80,000					80,000
Playground Development/Renovation	PR-L-2804	2					30,000	30,000
Room Tax							30,000	30,000
Wildwood Zoo - new bear exhibit building	PR-L-2805	1		50,000	550,000			600,000
Donations/Private Funds				20,000	500,000			520,000
Room Tax				30,000	50,000			80,000
Griese Park Development	PR-L-2809	3	10,000					10,000
Room Tax			10,000					10,000
Hefkn Pool	PR-L-2811	2	10,000					10,000
Operating Funds			10,000					10,000
Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan Update	PR-L-2819	1		20,000				20,000
Room Tax				20,000				20,000
Wildwood Zoo Storage/Maintenance Building	PR-L-2824	3			90,000			90,000
Donations/Private Funds					40,000			40,000
Room Tax					50,000			50,000
Zoo Restrooms and Zoo Store	PR-L-2847	2				130,000	25,000	155,000
Room Tax						130,000	25,000	155,000
Parks and Recreation Asphalt Surface Maintenance	PR-L-2854	2	15,000	20,000	15,000	20,000	25,000	95,000
Operating Funds			15,000			20,000		35,000
Room Tax				20,000	15,000		25,000	60,000
Park Forestry Improvement Program	PR-L-2855	2	15,000	30,000	15,000			60,000
Operating Funds			15,000					15,000
Room Tax				30,000	15,000			45,000
Jack Hackman Field Material Storage Building	PR-L-2856	2					15,000	15,000
Room Tax							15,000	15,000
<b>Parks &amp; Recreation Total</b>			<b>630,000</b>	<b>395,000</b>	<b>670,000</b>	<b>150,000</b>	<b>130,000</b>	<b>1,975,000</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>			<b>630,000</b>	<b>395,000</b>	<b>670,000</b>	<b>150,000</b>	<b>130,000</b>	<b>1,975,000</b>

## City of Wisconsin Rapids Capital Improvements and Recommendations

*Note: The following Capital Improvements and Recommendations are from a draft of the Wisconsin Rapids Park and Recreation Plan. A final adopted version of the plan was not yet available for inclusion in this plan.*

## Chapter 6 RECOMMENDATIONS & CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

### A. WISCONSIN RAPIDS RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations are strategies for fixing problems identified at multiple park facilities. The following recommendations affect multiple sites and were based on the goals and objectives, and the public comment documented in Chapter 4. Although it is unlikely that all recommendations presented in this plan will be undertaken in the next five years, they should be recognized as causes for action if the opportunity or need arises.

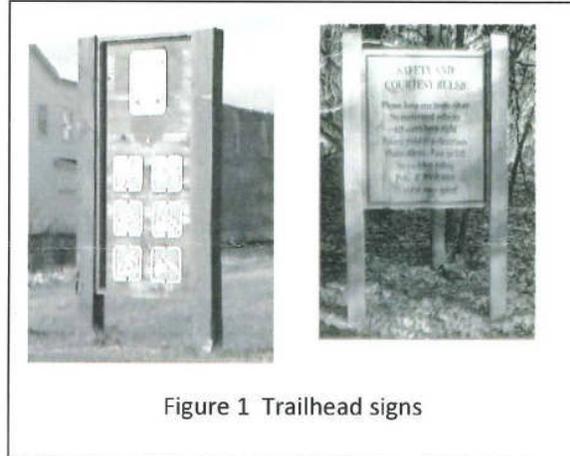


Figure 1 Trailhead signs

#### Trailhead Signs

Install signs (figure 1) at major road crossings to identify what uses are allowed on the trail.

#### Trail Wayfinding Signs

Review how the Ahdawagam Bike Trails are signed throughout the City. Bike route signs should always be accompanied with supplemental plaques that indicate the route's end point and/or the route's name. Showing mileage to a particular destination is also recommended (Figure 2).

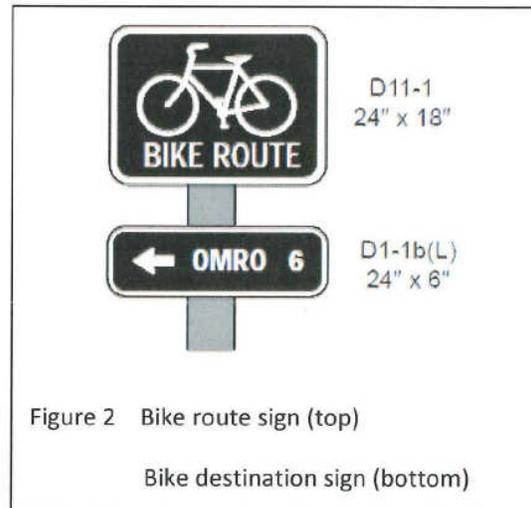


Figure 2 Bike route sign (top)

Bike destination sign (bottom)

Consider the following criteria before signing a bike route:

- ❖ The route provides through and direct travel from one destination to another;
- ❖ The route connects discontinuous segments of shared use paths, bike lanes, and or bike routes;
- ❖ An effort has been made, if necessary, to adjust traffic control devices to give greater priority to bicyclists on the route, as opposed to other parallel streets. This could include placement of bicycle-sensitive loop detectors where bicyclists stop at signals.

### Bicycle Parking

Bike racks throughout the park system are in constant need of annual maintenance, and many racks are damaged too. Installing new bike racks will provide two points of contact to support bicycles from falling over and to lock both the front tire and bike frame with a U-lock.

### Other

*Add more overall improvement ideas that affect multiple parks here...*

## B. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS 2010-2015

Capital improvements to parks are the addition of labor and materials that improve the overall value and usefulness of that park. Capital improvements are designed and funded individually through segregated municipal funds. Routine maintenance is considered the normal cycle of repair and upkeep for existing facilities. Routine maintenance does not increase the value or usefulness of the park, and is traditionally funded through the Park and Recreation Department's operations budget. Non-routine maintenance of park facilities, however, is usually considered a capital improvement item. For example, upgrading an outdoor restroom facility for universal access would qualify as a capital improvement, while repainting an outdoor restroom would be considered routine maintenance.

A capital improvement item was listed for a facility if it met at least one of the following three criteria:

1. Improvements to existing facilities:
  - a. To correct health and safety hazards;
  - b. To update deficient facilities; and
  - c. To modernize adequate but outdated facilities.
2. Installation of facilities as deemed necessary through citizen participation.
3. Development of new facilities as found necessary through public input and from the goals and objectives.

The following Capital Improvement lists are proposed for the City of Wisconsin Rapids recreation system. The projects listed are subject to change. All

upgrades and new construction will take into consideration meeting ADA standards. The following projects will be completed as funds become available.

*Review and revise all of the following capital improvement items listed below...*

Demitz Park

- Develop accessible pathway along shoreline
- Install 3 grills and 5 picnic tables (1 ADA)
- Plant screening vegetation around utility building

Gaynor Park

- Investigate relocation of potentially hazardous utility poles
- Place warning signs regarding utility poles

Lyon Park

- Add handicapped reserved parking stall
- Improve safety at 3 drain covers and concrete bases of play equipment
- Install additional park signs at entrances

Mead Field & Pool

- Add handicapped access to shallow end of pool

Mead Rapids View Park

- Add handicapped reserved parking stall on First Street
- Install curb cut and sidewalk ramp to provide access to handicapped parking
- Replace fencing along riverbank's north and south ends
- Install additional park sign at north end of park

Rapids Municipal Zoo

- Add a disk golf course

Poplar Springs Park

- Develop small parking lot at north end of park, and plan for expansion;
- Update playground equipment to meet ADA requirements
- Refinish playground equipment that will not be replaced
- Install park sign at main entrance
- Add 5 picnic tables (1 ADA) and 3 outdoor grills
- Fill ditches on 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Streets and by the south end when curb and gutter exist

Robinson Park

- Develop walking path linking activity area for ADA access
- Add 4 handicapped reserved parking stalls
- Replace drinking fountain with ADA style

- Refurbish fence at north end of park
- Pave 17<sup>th</sup> Street North gravel parking lot, and paint parking stall lines
- Refurbish playground equipment that will not be replaced
- Improve horseshoe area by reconditioning the sand pits and replace missing stakes
- Redevelop volleyball courts with sand and court lines
- Patch and seal concrete basketball court and paint court lines

#### Sand Lot Park

- Recondition and expand picnic pavilion with ADA access improvements
- Provide ADA access to restrooms
- Update playground equipment to meet ADA standards
- Refurbish play equipment that will not be replaced
- Recondition sand play area
- Strip, patch, and re-colorcoat basketball court surface, and refurbish backboards
- Develop parking area between current ball fields

#### Veterans Memorial Park

- Add handicapped reserved parking stall on First Street
- Investigate need for ADA access to rock outcropping at river level

#### Ward Johnson Park

- Convert tennis court to hard surface play area
- Upgrade playground to ADA standards
- Refurbish playground equipment that will not be replaced

#### Witter Field

- Replace press box
- Repaint grandstand
- Remove stored material from under grandstand
- Upgrade warming house to provide ADA access
- Add new lights to skating pond area
- Work with school district to maintain track
- Plant trees and landscape throughout park

#### Woods Grove Park

- Re-establish all four entrances to park, and install entrance signs
- Develop accessible path from at least one entrance into park
- Fence park boundaries, or plant conifer screen around perimeter
- Install 4 anchored picnic tables (1 ADA)
- Renovate ball field

Appendix H: Future Municipal Park Projects

### **City of Pittsville - Riverside Park**

The city of Pittsville has one community park offering a wide variety of recreation opportunities. The park has a number of buildings including restrooms, open shelters, and a concession stand. Overall the park is well-maintained, however, the buildings in the park need to be reroofed as soon as possible.

### **Town of Grand Rapids - Dog Park**

The town of Grand Rapids is planning to develop a dog park. The location of the dog park has not been officially determined, but it will likely be developed at the site of the town garage and the abandoned land fill located at 2811 Two Mile Avenue. Improvements necessary for the park include fencing around the perimeter and a fenced area for small dogs. Other possible improvements include an open shelter, benches, walking paths, and signage.

### **Town of Remington - Babcock Park and Playground**

The Babcock Park and Playground is the newest park located in Babcock in the town of Remington. In the future the park committee would like to purchase a 2 seated regular swing and also an extreme cyclone spinner. Other improvements include additional landscaping, seating in the open shelter, and installation of electricity and lighting fixtures.

### **Village of Biron - Community Park**

The village of Biron has a 2 ½ acre community park that is centrally located in relation to much of the residential population. The park provides year round recreation opportunities. The village would like to add a shelter house to the park in the next few years.

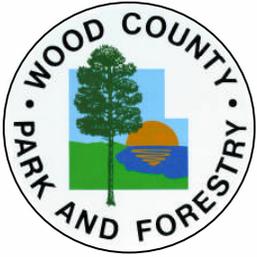
### **Village of Milladore - Community Park**

The village of Milladore has one community park that serves the recreation needs of residents in and around the village. Overall the park is in good condition due to ongoing maintenance that is performed. In the next few years the Village would like to resurface the tennis court in the park.

### **Village of Hewitt/Town of Marshfield - Parks and Trails**

The village of Hewitt and town of Marshfield have seen a great deal of progress in the past 10 years. In 2003 they adopted a Parks and Trails Plan and many of the projects in the plan have been successfully implemented. At the time of adoption of the County Park, Recreation and Open Spaces Plan in 2011, Hewitt and Marshfield were in the process of updating their park and trail plan. Future projects in the Hewitt and Marshfield area include improvements to existing trails, and establishing additional trails. Their highest priority trail improvement consists of connecting the Hewitt-Marsh Trail to the trail network of the city of Marshfield. Improvements are also planned for the existing park properties. A detailed listing of future projects can be found in the updated version of the Hewitt Area Parks and Trails Plan.

## Appendix I: Park and Recreation Survey Results



# Park and Recreation Survey

2010

Wood County Parks Department

## Summary of Survey Results

### Survey Results

In 2010 the Wood County Parks Department began updating the County Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces Plan. The plan incorporates public participation through a variety of means including public informational meetings and a park and recreation survey.

The survey was sent out to 250 randomly selected households. Of the 250 surveys that were sent out, 83 surveys or 33% were completed and returned. The return rate of 33% is considered to be good for a survey that was distributed in this manner, with no reminder calls encouraging participants to complete it.

The survey was divided into 2 sections. Section I contained 4 questions pertaining to park use, quality of parks, value and importance of parks, trails and recreation programs, and recreation facilities or activities that respondents would like to see. Section II of the survey contained 6 questions where respondents could select the most important issues and opportunities on specific topics.

The purpose of this survey summary is to provide a brief analysis of the responses and identify common responses. To get a clearer picture of unique responses that may not be included in the summary, please reference the compilation of results found in Attachment A. Unique comments for each of the park and recreation issue and opportunities questions in Section II of the survey provide some valuable feedback on what currently is being offered, and what should be considered in the future.

### Survey Participation

250 surveys mailed

83 surveys returned

33% completion/return rate

## Section I

### Question 1-3

Question 1 of the survey asked respondents how often they visit County Parks each month on average. Of the 82 responses, 65% indicated that they visit the parks 1 to 6 times per month, 11% visit them more than 6 times, and 24% don't visit the parks at all. In question 2 respondents were asked how they feel about the overall quality of the County Parks. The responses to this question were encouraging and generally indicate that the County is doing a good job maintaining the parks and offering a variety of recreation opportunities for park users. Of the 80 responses, 40% indicated that the quality of the County Parks is very good, 44% indicated that the quality is about average, only 4% rated the quality as poor, and 13% did not answer this question.

### Quality of County Parks

#### Question 2

84% of survey responses indicated that the quality of Wood County Parks was "about average" or "very good".

### Question 4

The purpose of questions 4 and 5 of the survey was to gain some insight on the value that parks, trails and recreation programs hold for residents, and how they impact the quality of life, property values and decisions to move to or remain in Wood County. The responses overwhelmingly indicated that parks, trails and recreation programs are important to residents of the County. Parks, trails and recreation programs provide:

- Q. 3a. Wholesome and fun family activities. (56%)
- Q. 3b. Physical exercise, social and emotional development (53%)
- Q. 3c. Protect environmental resources and public open spaces (65%)
- Q. 3d. Stimulates the local economy (48%)

### Quality of Life in Wood County

#### Question 4a

93% of survey responses indicated that park areas and facilities improve the quality of life in the County.

Quality of life is difficult to quantify and is dependant on a wide variety of factors and influences. The role that parks, trails, and recreation facilities play on the quality of life is seen in question 4a where 93% of responses indicate that they improve the quality of life in the County. Seventy three percent of property owners in the County believe that parks, trails, and recreation programs have the potential to increase the value of property, and 60% (Q. 4c) recognize that they are a contributing factor in the decision of families to move or stay here.

## Question 5

Question 5 asked respondents to indicate any seasonal or year-round recreation activities that the County should consider in the future. There were a total of 94 responses to this question. Given the open ended nature of this question there were a wide variety of responses, and they were grouped into the 3 general categories shown in Table 1. There were 17 responses in the category of bicycle/pedestrian trails, with most responses indicating the need for a variety of trails. The 14 responses for winter activities focused primarily on the need for more cross country skiing, downhill skiing and tubing opportunities. The 12 responses in the swimming/aquatic recreation category focused on the need for more swimming facilities, or upgrades and improvements to existing facilities.

Other responses shown in Table 2 that were common enough to merit mention include 5 that identify the need for more All Terrain Vehicle trails, and 4 that specifically mention accommodating kayaks. There are many unique responses to question 5 that are worth considering even though they may not be as popular as the responses that were included in Table 1 and Table 2.

### Most Requested Recreation Activities

#### Question 5

45% of survey responses for requested recreation activities fell in the following categories.

- **Bicycle/Pedestrian Trails**
- **Winter Recreation**
- **Swimming/Aquatic recreation**

**Table 1**

<b>Question 5 – Top 3 Categorized Responses - Seasonal or Year-Round Recreation Activities</b>		
<b>Bicycle/Pedestrian Trails (17 responses)</b>	<b>Winter Recreation (14 responses)</b>	<b>Swimming/Aquatic recreation (12 responses)</b>
bike trails	Expand ski hill (north)	aquatic center
hiking	Cross country trails (skiing)	better swimming
a bike path system	downhill alpine snow skiing	more swimming areas
bike road trails	snowshoeing	paddle boats or tubing (summer)
hiking	cross country ski trails	put a water park here
hiking/biking trails	Improve/expand Powers Bluff winter sports activities	Upgrades swimming areas with water activities
more trails like the one around Lake Wazeecha	snowmobile trails	like WI Dells park for everyone here in Marshfield
more bike trails	snowshoe trails	swimming
mountain bike trails	outdoor sledding, tubing, ski hills	indoor water park
biking trails and/or running trails	more tubing hills	more swimming pools with play equipment for little kids
more walking trails	snowshoeing trails	more swimming pools
marked mountain bike trails	ski trails	outdoor water park near Marshfield
more bike trails	x country skiing	
more bike trails	X-C snow skiing	
more bike/walk trails (paved)		
walking trails		
walking trails		

**Table 2**

<b>Question 5 - Other Common Categorized Responses - Seasonal or Year-Round Recreation Activities</b>	
<b>All Terrain Vehicles (5 responses)</b>	<b>Kayaks (4 responses)</b>
4 wheeler trails	a kayak course
ATV trails	have wayside areas for kayaks on Dexterville Lake
ATV Trails	have someone have classes for safety and how to se kayaks on the Yellow River and Dexterville and charge a small fee
ATVing	Have waysides for kayaks along the Yellow River
more ATV opportunities	

## **Section II**

### **Question 6**

The purpose of question 6 in Section II of the survey was to see what respondents feel are the top 3 camping issues and opportunities. In this question there were 7 possible issues and opportunities that could be selected, and the respondent was asked to select 3. Responses were distributed relatively evenly ranging from 8% to 20%. The top 3 responses were:

- 20% - Develop camp areas where camp sites are buffered by plant undergrowth and trees to create a “State Park” atmosphere
- 18% - Allow seasonal camping in Wood County campgrounds
- 17% - Develop camp sites at Nepco County Park

### **Question 7**

Question 7 focused on issues and opportunities that pertain to water activities in the County. There were 7 possible responses ranging from 10% to 23%. The top 3 responses were:

- 23% - Improve water quality at North Park swimming area
- 20% - Monitor shoreline erosion and lake depths to ensure continued long-term recreational use and water quality of lakes in County Parks
- 14% - Work to improve the water quality of Nepco Lake

### **Question 8**

In question 8 respondents were asked to select the top 3 issues and opportunities pertaining to trails. There were 7 possible responses ranging from 3% to 23%. The top 3 responses were:

- 23% - Create more walking/biking trails in County Parks
- 22% - Connect County Parks with walking/biking trails
- 17% - Improve existing walking/biking trails

## Question 9

Question 9 was focused on winter sports issues and opportunities. There were 7 possible responses ranging from 7% to 21%. There was a tie with 2 of the top selected responses. The top 4 responses were:

- 21% - Install lights at Powers Bluff for night use
- 18% - Continue to provide cross county ski trails in County Parks
- 15% - Develop skiing, tubing and sledding facilities at other places in addition to Powers Bluff
- 15% - Continue to coordinate and support the efforts of local snowmobile clubs to provide 258.4 miles of trails in Wood County

## Question 10

Day use issues and opportunities were addressed in question 10. There were 5 possible responses ranging from 15% to 27%. The top 3 responses were:

- 27% - Construct, maintain, and/or improve park shelters to accommodate seasonal and year round use by County residents for private or community events
- 21% - Look at options to open some of the parks earlier in spring
- 20% - Consider additional activities at North Park to attract kids to the park. Some ideas include mini golf or a swimming pool

## Question 11

Question 11 covers general issues and opportunities that are not easily classified into the 5 categories identified in question 6 through 10. Also because there were 11 options to choose from in this question, the respondent was asked to select 5 issues and opportunities rather than just 3. The top 5 responses were:

- 13% - Promote the Wood County Parks as a tourism destination to increase campground reservations and promote economic development in the County
- 12% - Encourage creation of “friends” groups to maintain parks (friends groups are made up of volunteers and could be utilized to maintain parks and trails through efforts such as garbage pickup and fund raising)
- 12% - Implement strategy to control invasive species on both the land and water in County Parks
- 11% - Promote scenic drive routes in Wood County
- 10% - Develop detailed plans for each of the parks based on public input and participation

### **Top parks and recreation issues and opportunities in Wood County**

- Develop camp areas where camp sites are buffered by plant undergrowth and trees to create a “State Park” atmosphere (Q. 6)
- Improve water quality at North Park swimming area (Q. 7)
- Create more walking/biking trails in County Parks (Q. 8)
- Install lights at Powers Bluff for night use (Q. 9)
- Construct, maintain, and/or improve park shelters to accommodate seasonal and year round use by County residents for private or community events (Q.10)
- Promote the Wood County Parks as a tourism destination to increase campground reservations and promote economic development in the county (Q. 11)

Above responses include the top selected issue and opportunity from each question in Section II of the survey. They are arranged in order by survey question number. Please refer to Appendix A for complete survey responses.



## Section II

**Instructions:** The following questions identify park and recreation issues and opportunities in Wood County. Please select up to 3 issues and opportunities for questions 6 through 10, and 5 for question 11. Please use the comment section after each question to identify other issues and opportunities that you feel are most important to Wood County.

207) 6) Please select up to 3 **Camping Issues and Opportunities** that you feel are most important to Wood County.

- 37, 18% Allow seasonal camping in Wood County campgrounds
- 41, 20% Develop camp areas where camp sites are buffered by plant undergrowth and trees to create a “State Park” atmosphere
- 16, 8% Add more primitive camping options at camp grounds (primitive camp sites would not have access to restroom/shower facilities or electrical hookups)
- 17, 8% Create camp sites that can accommodate larger motor homes
- 28, 14% Develop overflow areas for peak camping weekends such as Labor Day and Memorial Day weekends
- 33, 16% Develop full hookup camp sites with water and sewer
- 35, 17% Develop camp sites at Nepco County Park

Comments: [See Attachment A](#)

210) 7) Please select up to 3 **Water Activity Issues and Opportunities** that you feel are most important to Wood County.

- 25, 12% Partner with municipalities to develop an aquatic center in South Wood County as a replacement for declining pool facilities
- 26, 12% Establish “blue ways” or mapped routes for canoes kayaks and other water craft
- 49, 23% Improve water quality at North Park swimming area
- 30, 14% Work to improve the water quality of Nepco Lake
- 20, 10% Work with townships to create “no wake” times on select lakes in Wood County
- 20, 10% Improve access to areas of Wisconsin River to reduce boat traffic on small lakes in the County
- 40, 20% Monitor shoreline erosion and lake depths to ensure continued long-term recreational use and water quality of lakes in County Parks

Comments: [See Attachment A](#)

203 8) Please **select up to 3 Trail Issues and Opportunities** that you feel are most important to Wood County.

- 34 , 17% Improve existing walking/biking trails
- 47 , 23% Create more walking/biking trails in County Parks
- 44 , 22% Connect County parks with walking/biking trails
- 18 , 9% Pursue solutions to conflicting uses of trail, such as conflicts between bicyclists and dog walkers
- 21 , 10% Create more ATV trails and routes in the County
- 33 , 16% Create more nature trails with educational signage
- 6 , 3% Create horseback riding trails

Comments: [See Attachment A](#)

184 9) Please **select up to 3 Winter Sports Issues and Opportunities** that you feel are most important to Wood County.

- 39 , 21% Install lights at Powers Bluff for night use
- 24 , 13% Purchase a snow making machine for Powers Bluff to lengthen the winter recreation season
- 27 , 15% Develop skiing, tubing and sledding facilities at other places in addition to Powers Bluff
- 27 , 15% Continue to coordinate and support the efforts of local snowmobile clubs to provide 258.4 miles of trails in Wood County
- 33 , 18% Continue to provide cross country ski trails in County parks
- 13 , 7% Reserve areas of parks for snowshoeing
- 21 , 11% Clear snow on South Park walking trail in the winter months

Comments: [See Attachment A](#)

184 10) Please **select up to 3 Day Use Issues and Opportunities** that you feel are most important to Wood County.

- 31 , 17% Place higher priority on park improvements to accommodate individuals with disabilities
- 49 , 27% Construct, maintain, and/or improve park shelters to accommodate seasonal and year round use by County residents for private or community events
- 39 , 21% Look at options to open some of the parks earlier in spring
- 37 , 20% Consider additional activities at North Park to attract kids to the park. Some ideas include mini golf or a swimming pool
- 28 , 15% Keep park gates open year-round to allow vehicular access to parks, and encourage year-round park use

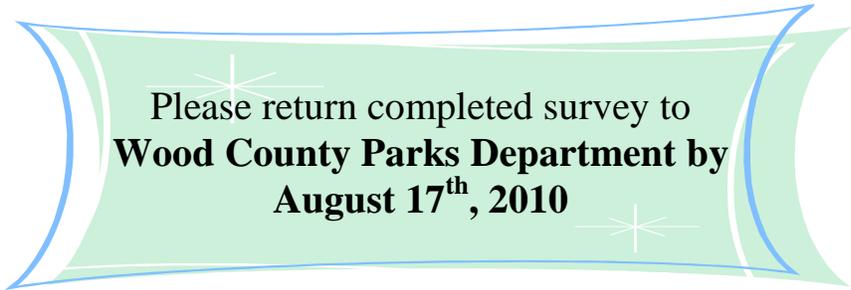
Comments: [See Attachment A](#)

302 11) Please **select up to 5 Issues and Opportunities** that you feel are most important to Wood County.

- 25 , 8% Consider purchasing additional land adjacent to Nepco Park
- 26 , 9% Consider purchasing land adjacent to Powers Bluff
- 13 , 4% Develop a dog park on County property
- 40 , 13% Promote the Wood County Parks as a tourism destination to increase campground reservations and promote economic development in the County
- 15 , 5% Keep park users informed about the Wood County Parks through social networking like Twitter and Facebook
- 34 , 11% Promote scenic drive routes in Wood County
- 27 , 9% Provide more activities for teenagers in the County parks
- 37 , 12% Encourage creation of “friends” groups to maintain parks (friends groups are made up of volunteers and could be utilized to maintain parks and trails through efforts such as garbage pickup and fund raising)
- 30 , 10% Develop detailed plans for each of the parks based on public input and participation
- 18 , 6% Monitor the land use changes and development of property adjacent to County Parks to determine the impact on park resources and use
- 37 , 12% Implement strategy to control invasive species on both the land and water in County Parks

Comments: [See Attachment A](#)

Thank you for helping to plan the future of Wood County Parks by completing this survey!



**Section I**  
**Question 5**

4 wheeler trails	a bike path system	bigger, better zoo	Campground at Nepco Park
a kayak course	At Dexterville a new volleyball court where the old tennis court is now	biking trails and/or running trails	Children's camp
x country skiing	bike road trails	boat rentals	hunting
aquatic center	Cross country trails (skiing)	cross country ski trails	more trails like the one around Lake Wazeecha
ATV trails	dog sledding	Dredge Lake Dexter	more walking trails
ATV Trails	downhill alpine snow skiing	formal dog walking area	outdoor sledding, tubing, ski hills
ATVing	fun summer activities for kids who love outdoors	Have waysides for kayaks along the Yellow River	more campsites with showers and electricity
ball diamonds	swing sets	Learn to fish	swimming
Better snow removal at the rifle range	hiking	Improve/expand Powers Bluff winter sports activities	Upgrades swimming areas with water activities
better swimming	hiking/biking trails	you are doing good	X-C snow skiing
Big park for kids playground, like Points	paddle boats or tubing (summer)	motor less lake @ North Wood County Park	horse trails with truck and trailer parking
bike trails	Learn to hunt	more private campsites	walking trails
candle light trail walks	marked mountain bike trails	more swimming pools	walking trails
Clear walking trails during the snow months	more bike trails	Open parks for vehicles to drive through	winter use of the trail at south park
educational nature	more swimming areas	outdoor stage	more bike trails
outdoor water park near Marshfield	Powers Bluff, all buildings are maintained for	planting more trees in between campsites!!!	more bike/walk trails (paved)
Expand ski hill (north)	mountain bike trails	snowmobile trails	more bike trails
golf course		snowshoe trails	more tubing hills
snowshoeing	Post info regarding wildlife	indoor water park	none at this time
hiking	put a water park here	more ATV opportunities	the use of ATV's on trails
seasonal	ski trails	snowshoeing trails	water park
more swimming pools with play equipment for little kids	have someone have classes for safety and how to se kayaks on the Yellow River and Dexterville and charge a small fee	more family parks for planned parties and shelter houses, play areas, play grounds, volleyball, etc.	Paint Ball dress up and areas and areas for swimming equipment (beach volleyball in water, water slides)
Improve roads open to public on county forest. i.e. gravel and parking areas/widen	Dexter Park tennis court replaced with sand volleyball area	an additional hall such as Nepco enclosed or Wazeecha open that seats more people	like WI Dells park for everyone here in Marshfield
New baseball field in Dexter Park	have wayside areas for kayaks on Dexterville Lake	water safety, atv and farm safety, and snowmobile classes	warming and concessions at Nepco Park for cross country skiing

**Section II**

**Question 6 Comments**

Continue to upgrade electrical service to campsites
Develop Lake Wazeecha campground possibly across the boat landing road
establish campsite that are non-reservable, so people can go camping at last minute decision
Feel that what is currently provided meets most needs
I think improving the camping facilities we have is more important than adding to the existing parks. For example: better lighting in pit toilets, garbage cans in beach areas, baby changing stations in bathrooms, etc. (referring to Dexter Park)
improve pads with black top pads. Add playground equipment to existing sites and campgrounds.
Install expanded playground structures/equipment in southern area of campground at North Park
It would be nice to camp at NEPCO
Moe like WI Dells Parks in Marshfield
never use
No campsites to accommodate larger motor homes and no full hook up sites with water and sewer
rates should be lower for tent campers, than electric users. Would also like more buffering between camp sites.
Richfield and Dexter Park we love, but it's hard for big campers to get into the older sites. Also more 30 to 50 amp. More water sites (electric) for primitive area. (to make more money for campground)
setting up a campground for larger motor homes along a lake for extended stays may provide economic stimulus to the area
These would all cost money. It would be very difficult to find money for these projects in the annual budget. Would have to look for grant money.
We have drove around Richfield and Dexterville campgrounds to consider camp there, but was turned off to the lack of undergrowth plant and trees between sites, so went some where else...

**Section II**

**Question 7 Comments**

An aerator for North Park swimming area. Also widen road by the primitive area when coming in the back when rivers overflow.
Blue ways idea great - we should showcase our waters to attract tourists and increase use
Boating traffic on Wazeecha Lake has really gotten busy. Erosion is doing well on the shore line
Don't have opinion. I don't use any of the above
Dredge Lake Dexter
have a paddle boat/tubing lake at North Parks for leisure activities. Two small lakes should be dredged out to make this happen. Improves fishing conditions and water quality.
Keep clean water
No development of aquatic center
provide boat/canoe/kayak/personal watercraft rentals perhaps with a local merchant to accomplish this
swimming has always been a favorite activity for our family and we would definitely like the North Wood County swimming area made more useable for all summer.
the swimming area is non operational because of algae - seriously need to be cleaned
The weeds are terrible at Nepco Lake
There is nothing here in Marshfield
What about an aquatic center/improved pool facilities at North Wood County Park? It would be a big draw from people in all of Wood County - It is more centrally located
Wood Co. has really nice beaches/lakes - we need more swimming areas!
Wood is a beautiful county. Offer a free weekend camping for families who will help with clean-up.

**Section II**

**Question 8 Comments**

a connected bike system of paths would be much appreciated
Any ATV trails and routes should only be undertaken with help/assistance of and established and active ATV club. This effort should not solely rest on the county's shoulders
ATV trails bring in revenue. ATV's leave the area, such as Black River Falls and spend their money at hotels, restaurants, taverns, grocery stores and on and on. All that revenue leaves the area.
Better signage e.x. Power's Bluff. ATV trails need to connect to something.
Don't have opinion. I don't use any of the above
Frisbee golf sours is very busy, there are a lot of walkers, bikers, and picnic people in the area.
Hiking/biking trails are assets which bring in tourists and \$
horseback riding would be nice - liability and clean up issues?
ice skating rink at Powers Bluff
living in a rural area having a park near by is a great asset. Improve walking trails especially in winter/snow months.
Nepco currently has 3-4 miles off hiking trails and 4-5 miles of ski trails. Currently there is a perfect balance of trails. Do not want to see more trails there. Friends group is a good idea for picking up trash and protecting from invasive species.
nice walking trails
One type of trail should not be developed at the expense of others
Swimming, spas - exercise places in Marshfield
Would like to expand the cross country ski trails enough to hold a high school race

**Section II**

**Question 9 Comments**

Am not a winter sports enthusiast!
ATV trails. Snow is not reliable like it used to be. ATV's don't need snow
Don't use any of the above
Feel what is currently provided meets most needs
Further use of Powers Bluff would be a great asset to County for all year family fun.
Lights would bring more income, also snow machine for County, also bathrooms indoors. Redo building so you can use year round. (beautiful park)
More lights, modern rest areas - in WI in Marshfield
Nepco Lake has all the trails it can stand without sacrificing quality for quantity!
Not enough money used to develop Powers Bluff to its potential. Put money into current use instead of going into new areas. Need flush toilets and updated shelter, electrical and heat (winter). Roads need attention.
Not necessary to reserve areas for snowshoeing because they can go where they want. Small signs would help people feel more comfortable in woods or on hiking trails.
Open at least portions of winter trials to ATV's
Strongly support acquiring additional land next to Powers Bluff to enhance and protect unique natural features while providing an opportunity for increased use and possible expansion of winter sports opportunities
Wildlife is wonderful during winter months. Having a walking trail free of ice and snow would make it much safer.

<b>Section II</b>
<b>Question 10 Comments</b>
(referring to last Keeping gates open above) Would be nice but...This is not realistic unless roads will be plowed. Winter use would increase, but is this feasible?
Don't let current levels of maintenance slip/get worse. Please continue to maintain current infrastructure at a high level. Who wants a shelter or bathroom that is dilapidated and falling apart?
Feel what is currently provided meets most needs
Maintaining the original stone buildings, bathrooms, shelters is very important. Beautiful and superior craftsmanship.
More handicap area. Maintain building so it is for seasonal use. More income for County.
No opinion
North Wood County Park is in sad shape. I've been going to North Park for 50 years plus and haven't seen it maintained so poorly. Are you taking money from North Park to maintain other parks?
Open (gates) earlier in spring for campers and - camping for Turkey hunters
Rest areas up to date in Marshfield
The White sands beach on Wazeecha are, seems to have alot of sledding and they cannot get into the parking lot, so they park on the road, the weekends are busy especially during winter vacation, when kids are off
These suggestions are all great - wanted to check them all

<b>Section II</b>
<b>Question 11 Comments</b>
Encourage a work to camp program. Free camping in exchange for work done at campgrounds.
I want to see more in Marshfield
It would be really nice if Wood County purchased the land adjacent to Nepco Park. It has the potential to be a nice swimming, park, and recreational area.
No opinion
Please consider purchasing the land east of Nepco Park and to the south of Griffith Ave.
Purchase land adjacent to Nepco Park. Beautiful piece of land.
the campground sites are always too crowded for the area they have available and this is no undergrowth for a little privacy. We would be interested in being friend with local camp ground and volunteering to help plant undergrowth and facebook would be a
the teenagers definitely make use of the parks, we have enough dogs walking (South Wood County Park trail)
We don't have car
We have a beautiful parks system in Wood Co. The disk golf course at North Wood County park is an excellent and inexpensive draw for many. An upgraded swimming area there would also be a draw for campers and day users. You could charge a small fee.
We have been to 3 events at Nepco Park Shelter House and have been impressed by the facility