

**AGENDA**  
**Notice of Regular Meeting**  
**Sauk County Board of Supervisors**  
**Tuesday, July 16, 2024 – 6:00 p.m.**  
**County Board Meeting Room 326, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor**  
**West Square Building, Baraboo, WI 53913**

Any person who has a qualifying disability that requires the meeting or materials at the meetings to be in an accessible location or format should contact the Sauk County Clerk's Office at 608-355-3286, between the hours of 8:00 AM and 4:30 PM, Monday through Friday, exclusive of legal holidays, at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting so that reasonable arrangements can be made to accommodate each request.

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**1. CALL TO ORDER AND CERTIFY COMPLIANCE WITH OPEN MEETING LAW**

**2. ROLL CALL**

**3. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**4. ADOPT AGENDA**

**5. ADOPT MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

**6. GENERAL CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS**

**7. SCHEDULED APPEARANCES**

- a. Presentation by Kim Gochanour, CEO of Bethany St. Joseph Corporation re: Management Agreements to Run Nursing Homes.
- b. HKGi and Brian Simmert, L.R.E. Planning & Zoning Manager, re: Presentation on the Great Sauk State Trail Master Plan.

**8. PUBLIC COMMENT**

- a. Registration form located on the table in gallery of County Board Room 326 – turn in to the County Board Vice Chair. During Public Comment, any person who is not a member of the body may comment on a specific item or issue that is on the agenda. Any comments not related to the agenda should be sent to the County Clerk to forward to the County Board.

**9. COMMUNICATIONS *(All communications are attached to Granicus)***

**10. APPOINTMENTS**

**a. Tri County Airport Board of Appeals:**

- i. Supervisor Klitzke, New Appointment  
2-year term: 07/16/2024 - 04/20/2026 (concurrent w. Board of Supervisors)
- ii. Robin Meier, New Appointment, Citizen Member  
3-year term: 06/18/2024 – 06/15/2027
- iii. Jamie Phephles, Re-Appointment, Citizen Member  
3-year term: 06/18/2024 – 04/19/2027

**b. Aging & Disability Resource Center Committee (ADRC) Governing Board:**

- i. Jeff Hanke, New Appointment, Citizen Member  
3-year term: 07/16/2024 – 07/20/2027

**c. Transportation Coordinating Committee: <sup>1</sup>**

- i. Jeff Hanke, New Appointment, Citizen Member  
3-year term: 07/16/2024 – 07/20/2027

**11. BILLS**

**12. CLAIMS**

**13. ELECTIONS**

**14. PROCLAMATIONS**

**15. REPORTS – INFORMATIONAL, NO ACTION REQUIRED**

- a. Rebecca C. Evert, Sauk County Clerk – Rezoning petitions filed with the office of the Sauk County Clerk as a requirement of Wisconsin State Statutes 59.69(5)(e):
  - i. Petition 07-2024, Applicant: Donna Bradley; Project Location: Town of Reedsburg; Current Zoning: Exclusive Agriculture; Proposed Zoning: Agriculture. *(Attached on Granicus)*
  - ii. Petition 08-2024, Applicant: Megan Schumann; Project Location: Town of Winfield; Current Zoning: Agriculture; Proposed Zoning: Commercial. *(Attached on Granicus)*
- b. Brent Miller
  - i. Administrator’s Report.
- c. Tim McCumber, County Board Chair
  - i. Board Chair Update.
- d. Proposed Rule Change: Committee Name Change Land Resources and ~~Environment~~ Extension Committee. *(Attached on Granicus)*

**16. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**17. NEW BUSINESS**

**a. EXECUTIVE & LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE:**

- i. Rule Change Petition: Special Meeting Agenda. (Pages 4-5)
- ii. Rule Change Petition: Chair and Vice-Chair for Executive and Legislative Committee. (Pages 6-7)
- iii. Resolution 58-2024 Authorizing Sauk County To Enter Into The Settlement Agreement With The Kroger Co. And Agree To The Terms Of Addendum Two To The MOU Allocating Settlement Proceeds. (Pages 8-27)

**b. LAND RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE:**

- i. Resolution 59-2024 To Adopt The Sauk County Great Sauk State Trail Master Plan As An Appendix To The 2020-2024 Sauk County Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan. (Pages 28-137)
- ii. Resolution 60-2024 To Authorize An Amendment To An Intergovernmental Agreement Between Sauk County And The Mirror Lake Management District For Disbursement Of American Rescue Plan Act Funds For The Mirror Lake Dredging And Gully Restoration Project. (Pages 138-141)
- iii. Resolution 61-2024 Supporting the Establishment of the Woodland Agricultural Enterprise Area in the Town of Woodland. (Pages 142-170)

**c. PUBLIC WORKS AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE:**

- i. Ordinance 4-2024 Amendment To Ordinance Sections 2.102, 2.106, 2.108, 2.109 & 2.111 To Comply With State Law Regarding Property Tax Foreclosures. (Pages 171-174)

**18. REFERRALS**

**19. NEW AGENDA ITEMS (NO DISCUSSION). SUBMIT IN WRITING OR BY E-MAIL NEW BUSINESS ITEMS TO THE COUN**

**ADMINISTRATOR AS SOON AS POSSIBLE FOR REFERRAL PURSUANT TO THE SAUK COUNTY RULES OF THE BOARD**

**20. ADJOURNMENT**

Respectfully,



Tim McCumber  
County Board Chair

County Board Members, County Staff & The Public – Provide the County Clerk a copy of:

1. Informational handouts distributed to Board Members
2. Original letters and communications presented to the Board.

[www.co.sauk.wi.us](http://www.co.sauk.wi.us)

Agenda mail date via United States Postal Service: July 11, 2024

Agenda Preparation: Tim McCumber, County Board Chair, jointly with the County Clerk and the County Administrator.

PETITION FOR COUNTY BOARD RULE AMENDMENT

Petition for County Board Rule Amendment offered by Supervisor McCumber

BACKGROUND: Special meetings are occasionally called that do not require posting a full agenda. In the past, a special agenda would be adopted but the practice was discontinued as a result of ongoing litigation which alleges the board violated the rules by posting an agenda to meet the purpose of the meeting and not posting an entire agenda as listed in the rules. The proposed amendment to the rules provides an agenda for special meetings.

THEREFORE, IT IS PROPOSED THAT RULE III, Section F BE AMENDED AS FOLLOWS:

[Changes noted by underline for additions and strikethrough for deletions]

F. The format for any Special Meeting of the County Board shall be as follows:

- 1. Call to order.
2. Roll Call.
3. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance.
4. Adoption of the agenda.
5. Public Comment with each speaker limited to no more than three minutes.
6. Communications.
7. New or Unfinished Business.
8. Adjournment

F. G. It is declared to be the policy of Sauk County that the public is entitled to the fullest and most complete information regarding the affairs of County government as is compatible with the conduct of County affairs and the transaction of County business. Wis. Stat. §§ 19.80 to 19.98 are to be complied with by all members at all meetings of public nature. The Board and its committees shall "sit with open doors," and timely notification of all public meetings, time, date, place and subject matter shall be given, including the specifics for any contemplated closed session.

[All other provisions of Rule III remain unchanged]

Approved for presentation to the County Board by the Executive & Legislative Committee, this 16 day of July, 2024

Vote Required: Majority = \_\_\_\_\_ 2/3 Majority = X 3/4 Majority = \_\_\_\_\_

The County Board has the legal authority to adopt: Yes X No \_\_\_\_\_ as reviewed by the Corporation Counsel, [Signature], Date: 07.09.2024.

Offered and passage moved by:

[Signatures on the following page]


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\_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor Tim McCumber       Aye    Nay    Abstain    Absent

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Supervisor Dennis Polivka       Aye    Nay    Abstain    Absent

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Supervisor Smooth Detter       Aye    Nay    Abstain    Absent

  
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Supervisor Lynn Eberle       Aye    Nay    Abstain    Absent

  
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Supervisor Pat Rego       Aye    Nay    Abstain    Absent

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Supervisor Marty Krueger       Aye    Nay    Abstain    Absent

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Supervisor Sheila Carver       Aye    Nay    Abstain    Absent

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Supervisor Brian Peper       Aye    Nay    Abstain    Absent

PETITION FOR COUNTY BOARD RULE AMENDMENT

Petition for County Board Rule Amendment offered by Supervisor McCumber

BACKGROUND: When the Committee on Committees recommended the changes to the committee structure it inadvertently dropped language that states the Chair and Vice Chair of the County Board serve in the same capacity on the Executive and Legislative Committee. To that point, the committee discussed how to avoid a deadlock if the committee had an even number. This language reinstates the original intent of the board and the committees by naming the Chair and Vice Chair as Chair and Vice Chair of the Executive and Legislative Committee.

THEREFORE, IT IS PROPOSED THAT RULE IV, EXECUTIVE AND LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE BE AMENDED AS FOLLOWS:

[Changes are noted by Underline AND Italics]

Comprised of members from: The Executive & Legislative Committee shall be composed of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Board, along with the Chair of the other Standing Committees. The Chair of the Committee shall vote only in the case of a tie. *The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Board shall serve in the same roles on the Executive and Legislative Committee.* The County Clerk shall serve as secretary to this committee. The County Administrator, Corporation Counsel, and County Clerk shall serve as *ex officio* members of this committee without voting privileges. **Members: 9.**

Approved for presentation to the County Board by the Executive & Legislative Committee, this 16 day of July, 2024

Vote Required: Majority = \_\_\_\_\_ 2/3 Majority = X 3/4 Majority = \_\_\_\_\_

The County Board has the legal authority to adopt: Yes X No \_\_\_\_\_ as reviewed by the Corporation Counsel, [Signature], Date: 07.09.2024

Offered and passage moved by:

[Signature]  Aye  Nay  Abstain  Absent  
Supervisor Tim McCumber

\_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor Dennis Polivka  Aye  Nay  Abstain  Absent

\_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor Smooth Dettler  Aye  Nay  Abstain  Absent

[Signature]  
Supervisor Lynn Eberle  Aye  Nay  Abstain  Absent

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Pat Rego  
Supervisor Pat Rego  Aye  Nay  Abstain  Absent

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Supervisor Marty Krueger  Aye  Nay  Abstain  Absent

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Supervisor Sheila Carver  Aye  Nay  Abstain  Absent

\_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor Brian Peper  Aye  Nay  Abstain  Absent

RESOLUTION # 58-2024

**Resolution Authorizing Sauk County to Enter Into the Settlement Agreement with The Kroger Co. and Agree to the Terms of Addendum Two to the MOU Allocating Settlement Proceeds**

**Resolution offered by the Executive and Legislative Committee**

Resolved by the Board of Supervisors of Sauk County, Wisconsin:

**WHEREAS**, the County Board of Supervisors previously authorized the County to enter into an engagement agreement with von Briesen & Roper, s.c., Crueger Dickinson LLC and Simmons Hanly Conroy LLC (the "Law Firms") to pursue litigation against certain manufacturers, distributors, and retailers of opioid pharmaceuticals (the "Opioid Defendants") in an effort to hold the Opioid Defendants financially responsible for the County's expenditure of vast money and resources to combat the opioid epidemic;

**WHEREAS**, on behalf of the County, the Law Firms filed a lawsuit against the Opioid Defendants;

**WHEREAS**, the Law Firms filed similar lawsuits on behalf of 66 other Wisconsin counties and all Wisconsin cases were coordinated with thousands of other lawsuits filed against the same or substantially similar parties as the Opioid Defendants in the Northern District of Ohio, captioned *In re: Opioid Litigation*, MDL 2804 (the "Litigation");

**WHEREAS**, four (4) additional Wisconsin counties (Milwaukee, Dane, Waukesha, and Walworth) hired separate counsel and joined the Litigation;

**WHEREAS**, since the inception of the Litigation, the Law Firms have coordinated with counsel from around the country (including counsel for Milwaukee, Dane, Waukesha, and Walworth Counties) to prepare the County's case for trial and engage in extensive settlement discussions with the Opioid Defendants;

**WHEREAS**, the settlement discussions with The Kroger Co. (the "Settling Defendant") resulted in a tentative agreement as to settlement terms pending agreement from the County and other plaintiffs involved in the Litigation;

**WHEREAS**, copies of the settlement agreement relating to the Settling Defendant ("Settlement Agreement") representing the terms of the tentative settlement agreement with the Settling Defendant has been made available at <https://nationalopioidsettlement.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/Kroger-Multistate-Settlement-Agreement-Circulated-to-States-March-25-2024.pdf>;

**WHEREAS**, the Settlement Agreement provides, among other things, for the payment of certain sums to Participating Subdivisions (as defined in the Settlement Agreement) upon the occurrence of certain events detailed in the Settlement Agreement;

**WHEREAS**, the County is a Participating Subdivision in the Settlement Agreement and has the opportunity to participate in the benefits associated with the Settlement Agreement provided the County (a) approves the Settlement Agreement; (b) approves the Addendum Two



52 to the Memorandum of Understanding allocating proceeds from the Settlement Agreement  
53 (“MOU”) among the various Wisconsin Participating Subdivisions, a copy of which is attached to  
54 this Resolution (“Addendum Two”); and (c) the Legislature’s Joint Committee on Finance  
55 approves the terms of the Settlement Agreement;  
56

57 **WHEREAS**, pursuant to Section 12 of the State-Local MOU entered into between the  
58 Wisconsin Participating Subdivisions and the Attorney General of the State of Wisconsin (“State-  
59 Local MOU”), the Attorney General has provided notice that the terms of the State-Local MOU  
60 shall apply to the Settlement Agreement and all proceeds of such Settlement Agreement;  
61

62 **WHEREAS**, 2021 Wisconsin Act 57 created Section 165.12 of the Wisconsin Statutes  
63 relating to the settlement of all or part of the Litigation;  
64

65 **WHEREAS**, pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 165.12(2), the Legislature’s Joint Committee on  
66 Finance is required to approve the Settlement Agreement;  
67

68 **WHEREAS**, pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 165.12(2), the proceeds from any settlement of all or  
69 part of the Litigation are distributed 70% to local governments in Wisconsin that are parties to the  
70 Litigation and 30% to the State;  
71

72 **WHEREAS**, Wis. Stat. § 165.12(4)(b)2. provides the proceeds from the Settlement  
73 Agreement must be deposited in a segregated account (the “Opioid Abatement Account”) and  
74 may be expended only for approved uses for opioid abatement as provided in the Settlement  
75 Agreement;  
76

77 **WHEREAS**, Wis. Stat. § 165.12(7) bars claims from any Wisconsin local government  
78 against the Opioid Defendants filed after June 1, 2021;  
79

80 **WHEREAS**, the definition of Participating Subdivisions in the Settlement Agreement  
81 recognizes a statutory bar on claims such as that set forth in Wis. Stat. § 165.12(7) and, as a  
82 result, the only Participating Subdivisions in Wisconsin are those counties and municipalities that  
83 were parties to the Litigation (or otherwise actively litigating a claim against one, some, or all of  
84 the Opioid Defendants) as of June 1, 2021;  
85

86 **WHEREAS**, the Legislature’s Joint Committee on Finance is not statutorily authorized or  
87 required to approve the allocation of proceeds of the Settlement Agreement among Wisconsin  
88 Participating Subdivisions;  
89

90 **WHEREAS**, the Wisconsin Participating Subdivisions previously negotiated and approved  
91 the allocation of proceeds among themselves, which allocation is reflected in Exhibit A to the  
92 MOU, which is an agreement between all of the entities identified in the Allocation MOU as to how  
93 the proceeds payable to those entities under the Settlement Agreements will be allocated;  
94

95 **WHEREAS**, the County and all other Wisconsin Participating Subdivisions agreed to and  
96 entered into that certain Addendum to the MOU (“Addendum One”) that provided for allocation of  
97 settlement proceeds from previous settlements with certain pharmacies and manufacturers  
98 according to the same percentages as that provided in the MOU;  
99

100 **WHEREAS**, the County has been informed as to the deadlines related to the effective  
101 dates of the Settlement Agreement, the ramifications associated with the County’s refusal to enter  
102 into the Settlement Agreement, the form of Addendum Two and an overview of the process for

103 finalizing the Settlement Agreements and such information, together with additional resources  
104 related to the settlement can be found at <https://nationalopioidsettlement.com/kroger-co->  
105 [settlement/](https://nationalopioidsettlement.com/kroger-co-settlement/);

106  
107 **WHEREAS**, the County, by this Resolution, shall deposit the proceeds of the Settlement  
108 Agreement consistent with the terms of this Resolution and Wis. Stat. § 165.12(4)(b);  
109

110 **WHEREAS**, pursuant to the County's engagement agreement with the Law Firms, the  
111 County shall pay up to an amount equal to 25% of the proceeds from successful resolution of all  
112 or part of the Litigation, whether through settlement or otherwise, plus the Law Firms' costs and  
113 disbursements, to the Law Firms as compensation for the Law Firms' efforts in the Litigation and  
114 any settlement;

115  
116 **WHEREAS**, the Law Firms anticipate making application to the national fee fund  
117 established in the Settlement Agreement seeking payment, in whole or part, of the fees, costs,  
118 and disbursements owed the Law Firms pursuant to the engagement agreement with the County;  
119

120 **WHEREAS**, it is anticipated the amount of any award from the fee fund established in the  
121 Settlement Agreements will be insufficient to satisfy the County's obligations under the  
122 engagement agreement with the Law Firms;

123  
124 **WHEREAS**, the County, by this Resolution, and pursuant to the authority granted the  
125 County in the applicable Order emanating from the Litigation in relation to the Settlement  
126 Agreement and payment of attorney fees, shall authorize and direct the escrow agent responsible  
127 for the receipt and distribution of the proceeds from the Settlement Agreement to establish an  
128 account for the purpose of segregating funds to pay the fees, costs, and disbursements of the  
129 Law Firms owed by the County (the "Attorney Fees Account") in order to fund a local "backstop"  
130 for payment of the fees, costs, and disbursements of the Law Firms;

131  
132 **WHEREAS**, in no event shall payments to the Law Firms out of the Attorney Fees Account  
133 and the fee fund established in the Settlement Agreement exceed an amount equal to 25% of the  
134 amounts allocated to the County by virtue of the Addendum Two (Exhibit A to the MOU);  
135

136 **WHEREAS**, the intent of this Resolution is to authorize the County to enter into the  
137 Settlement Agreement, the Addendum Two, establish the County's Opioid Abatement Account,  
138 and establish the Attorney Fees Account; and  
139

140 **WHEREAS**, the County, by this Resolution, shall authorize the County's Administrator to  
141 finalize and execute any other document or agreement necessary to effectuate the Settlement  
142 Agreement and the other agreements referenced herein;

143  
144 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:** the County Board of Supervisors hereby  
145 approves:

- 146  
147 1. The execution of the Settlement Agreement and any and all documents ancillary  
148 thereto and authorizes the Administrator or designee to execute same.
- 149  
150 2. The final negotiation and execution of Addendum Two in form substantially similar  
151 to that presented with this Resolution and any and all documents ancillary thereto  
152 and authorizes the Administrator or designee to execute same upon finalization  
153 provided the percentage share identified as allocated to the County is substantially

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similar to that identified in the Addendum Two provided to the Board with this Resolution.

- 3. The execution by the Administrator or designee of any additional documents or agreements for the receipt and disbursement of the proceeds of the Settlement Agreement.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:** all proceeds from the Settlement Agreement not otherwise directed to the Attorney Fees Account shall be deposited in the County's Opioid Abatement Account. The Opioid Abatement Account shall be administered consistent with the terms of this Resolution, Wis. Stat. § 165.12(4), and the Settlement Agreement.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:** the County hereby authorizes the establishment of an account separate and distinct from any account containing funds allocated or allocable to the County which shall be referred to by the County as the "Attorney Fees Account." An escrow agent shall deposit a sum equal to up to, but in no event exceeding, an amount equal to 20% of the County's proceeds from the Settlement Agreement into the Attorney Fees Account. If the payments to the County are not enough to fully fund the Attorney Fees Account as provided herein because such payments are made over time, the Attorney Fees Account shall be funded by placing up to, but in no event exceeding, an amount equal to 20% of the proceeds from the Settlement Agreement attributable to Local Governments (as that term is defined in the MOU) into the Attorney Fees Account for each payment. Funds in the Attorney Fees Account shall be utilized to pay the fees, costs, and disbursements owed to the Law Firms pursuant to the engagement agreement between the County and the Law Firms provided, however, the Law Firms shall receive no more than that to which they are entitled under their fee contract when considering the amounts paid the Law Firms from the fee fund established in the Settlement Agreement and allocable to the County. The Law Firms may make application for payment from the Attorney Fees Account at any time and the County shall cooperate with the Law Firms in executing any documents necessary for the escrow agent to make payments out of the Attorney Fees Account.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that all actions heretofore taken by the Board of Supervisors and other appropriate public officers and agents of the County with respect to the matters contemplated under this Resolution are hereby ratified, confirmed and approved.

Approved for presentation to the County Board by the Executive & Legislative Committee, this 2<sup>nd</sup> day of July, 2024

Consent Agenda Item: [ ] YES [X] NO


Fiscal Impact: [x] None [ ] Budgeted Expenditure [ ] Not Budgeted

Vote Required: Majority = X 2/3 Majority = \_ 3/4 Majority = \_\_\_\_\_

The County Board has the legal authority to adopt: Yes X No \_\_\_\_\_ as reviewed by the Corporation Counsel, [Signature], Date: 07.09.2024

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Offered and passage moved by:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor Tim McCumber

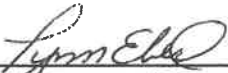
Aye    Nay    Abstain    Absent

\_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor Dennis Polivka

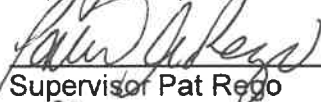
Aye    Nay    Abstain    Absent

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor Smooth Detter


Aye    Nay    Abstain    Absent

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor Lynn Eberle

Aye    Nay    Abstain    Absent

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor Pat Rego

Aye    Nay    Abstain    Absent

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor Marty Krueger

Aye    Nay    Abstain    Absent

\_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor Sheila Garver

Aye    Nay    Abstain    Absent

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor Brian Peper

Aye    Nay    Abstain    Absent

Fiscal Note: The total estimated settlement from the settlement with the Kroger Co. is up to \$1.2 billion overall. Wisconsin is expected to receive 1.8898205597% of the payout from the settlement, which will be made in 11 yearly allocations. Sauk County's share of that settlement is approximately 0.01226%. It is unclear what the actual total amount that Sauk County will receive after 11 years, due in part to legal fees that may be paid to plaintiff's counsel as well as the payment allocation set out in Wis. Stat. §165.12.

*tt*

MIS Note: No direct impact.

**ADDENDUM TWO TO WISCONSIN LOCAL GOVERNMENT  
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**

**WHEREAS**, the undersigned local governments (“Local Governments”) entered into that certain Memorandum of Understanding relating to, among other things, the allocation of the proceeds of the settlements with McKesson Corporation, Cardinal Health, Inc., AmerisourceBergen Corporation, Johnson & Johnson, Janssen Pharmaceuticals, Inc., Ortho-McNeil-Janssen Pharmaceuticals, Inc., and Janssen Pharmaceutica, Inc. (“Original MOU”); and

**WHEREAS**, the undersigned Local Governments entered into that certain Addendum to the MOU relating to, among other things, the allocation of the proceeds of the settlements with Walgreens, Walmart, CVS, Teva, and Allergan (“Addendum 1” and, together with the Original MOU, the “MOU”); and

**WHEREAS**, the settlement discussions with The Kroger Co. has resulted in a tentative agreement as to settlement terms (“Kroger Settlement Agreement”) pending agreement from the State of Wisconsin, the Local Governments and other parties involved in the Litigation; and

**WHEREAS**, the Local Governments intend this Addendum Two to the MOU (“Addendum Two”) to effectuate the terms of the Kroger Settlement Agreement and allocate the proceeds of the Kroger Settlement Agreement to each of the Local Governments in the same manner and same percentages as set forth in the MOU and Exhibit A to the Original MOU, a copy of which is appended to this Addendum Two with the elimination of the dollar amounts attributable to the settlements referenced in the Original MOU.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, the Local Governments enter into this Addendum Two upon the terms described herein.

1. The Local Governments ratify, confirm and agree to in all respects the MOU. By this Addendum Two, the Local Governments agree that any and all proceeds of the Kroger Settlement Agreement shall be distributed, allocated and otherwise disposed of in the same manner and same percentages as set forth in the MOU and Exhibit A to the Original MOU. Terms not defined in this Addendum Two shall be given the definition ascribed to such terms in the MOU and the Kroger Settlement Agreement.
2. Nothing in this Addendum Two is intended to alter or change any Local Government’s right to pursue its own claim. Rather, the intent of this Addendum Two is to provide a mechanism for the receipt and expenditure of Opioid Funds, as that term is defined in the MOU.
3. This MOU may be executed in counterparts. Electronic signatures shall in all respects be considered valid and binding.

*[Signatures on Following Page]*

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, the parties hereby execute this Addendum Two as of the date set forth below.

**ON BEHALF OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENTS:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Adams County  
Printed: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Ashland County  
Printed: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Barron County  
Printed: \_\_\_\_\_

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Bayfield County  
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Brown County  
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Buffalo County  
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Burnett County  
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# EXHIBIT A

## Allocation of Proceeds Among the Local Governments

The following chart is agreed upon by and between the Local Governments identified below as representing the allocation of proceeds from the Settlement Agreements following (a) allocation to the Local Governments; and (b) allocation to the Attorney Fee Fund. The Local Governments shall cooperate with one another and the State in the negotiation and execution of an Escrow Agreement to effectuate the terms of the State-Local Government MOU, the Local Government MOU and the allocation set forth below. **The monetary value associated with the percentages below will be calculated consistent with the Settlement Agreements.**

Local Government Type	Wisconsin Litigating Local Government	Allocation Percentage
County	Adams County	0.327%
County	Ashland County	0.225%
County	Barron County	0.478%
County	Bayfield County	0.124%
County	Brown County	2.900%
County	Buffalo County	0.126%
County	Burnett County	0.224%
County	Calumet County	0.386%
County	Chippewa County	0.696%
County	Clark County	0.261%
County	Columbia County	1.076%
County	Crawford County	0.195%
County	Dane County	8.248%
County	Dodge County	1.302%
County	Door County	0.282%
County	Douglas County	0.554%
City	Superior	0.089%
County	Dunn County	0.442%
County	Eau Claire County	1.177%
County	Florence County	0.053%
County	Fond Du Lac County	1.196%
County	Forest County	0.127%
County	Grant County	0.498%
County	Green County	0.466%
County	Green Lake County	0.280%
County	Iowa County	0.279%
County	Iron County	0.061%

County	Jackson County	0.236%
County	Jefferson County	1.051%
County	Juneau County	0.438%
County	Kenosha County	3.712%
City	Kenosha	0.484%
City	Pleasant Prairie	0.059%
County	Kewaunee County	0.156%
County	La Crosse County	1.649%
County	Lafayette County	0.134%
County	Langlade County	0.312%
County	Lincoln County	0.350%
County	Manitowoc County	1.403%
County	Marathon County	1.259%
County	Marinette County	0.503%
City	Marinette	0.032%
County	Marquette County	0.246%
County	Menominee County	0.080%
County	Milwaukee County	25.220%
City	Cudahy	0.087%
City	Franklin	0.155%
City	Greenfield	0.163%
City	Milwaukee	7.815%
City	Oak Creek	0.166%
City	South Milwaukee	0.096%
City	Wauwatosa	0.309%
City	West Allis	0.378%
County	Monroe County	0.655%
County	Oconto County	0.336%
County	Oneida County	0.526%
County	Outagamie County	1.836%
County	Ozaukee County	1.036%
County	Pepin County	0.055%
County	Pierce County	0.387%
County	Portage County	0.729%
County	Price County	0.149%
County	Racine County	3.208%
City	Mount Pleasant	0.117%
City	Sturtevant	0.018%
City	Union Grove	0.007%

City	Yorkville Town	0.002%
County	Richland County	0.218%
County	Rock County	2.947%
County	Rusk County	0.159%
County	Sauk County	1.226%
County	Sawyer County	0.258%
County	Shawano County	0.418%
County	Sheboygan County	1.410%
County	St Croix County	0.829%
County	Taylor County	0.159%
County	Trempealeau County	0.320%
County	Vernon County	0.322%
County	Vilas County	0.468%
County	Walworth County	1.573%
County	Washburn County	0.185%
County	Washington County	1.991%
County	Waukesha County	6.035%
County	Waupaca County	0.606%
County	Waushara County	0.231%
County	Winnebago County	2.176%
County	Wood County	0.842%

RESOLUTION # 59 - 2024

Resolution to adopt the Sauk County Great Sauk State Trail Master Plan as an Appendix to the 2020-2024 Sauk County Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan.

Resolution offered by the Land Resources and Environment Committee

Resolved by the Board of Supervisors of Sauk County, Wisconsin:

BACKGROUND:

In January 2023 Sauk County contracted with Hoisington Kogler Group, Inc. (HKGi) to assist Land Resources and Environment Department with the creation of the Great Sauk State Trail master plan. Building off the success of the 11.4 mile completed segment of the Great Sauk State Trail, the master plan and planning process was initiated to identify a route and recommendations to extend the multi-use trail north and west to connect to trail users to Devil's Lake State Park, the Baraboo Area, the Villages of North Freedom, and Rock Springs, and terminating at the start of the 400 State Trail in Reedsburg. Once constructed, the trail will provide a world-class trail experience, showcasing the natural landscape and connecting communities in Sauk County. The planning process involved a significant amount of community, stakeholder, agency, and municipal engagement to understand the issues and opportunities that the trail will present. In addition to identifying preferred and alternate trail routes, the plan identifies amenities that best support tourism, community development, and active living for those who live within and around the region. The Land Resources and Environment Department served as the project sponsor and project manager for the planning effort.

Resolution No. 150-2019 adopting the 2020-2024 Sauk County Outdoor Recreation Plan was approved by the Sauk County Board of Supervisors on January 21, 2020. The Great Sauk State Trail Master Plan is intended to be included as part of the Sauk County Outdoor Recreation Plan which will make the design and construction of the trail eligible to the Knowles Nelson Stewardship Grant and which will increase the probability that Sauk County will be successful with obtaining funding from other sources

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Sauk County Board of Supervisors, met in regular session, does hereby adopt the Great Sauk State Trail Master Plan attached hereto as Appendix A as an appendix to the 2020-2024 Sauk County Outdoor Recreation Plan.

Approved for presentation to the County Board by the Land Resources and Environment Committee, this 11<sup>th</sup> day of July 2024

Consent Agenda Item: [ ] YES [ ] NO

Fiscal Impact: [X] None [ ] Budgeted Expenditure [ ] Not Budgeted

Vote Required: Majority = \_\_\_\_\_ 2/3 Majority = \_\_\_\_\_ 3/4 Majority = \_\_\_\_\_

The County Board has the legal authority to adopt: Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ as reviewed by the Corporation Counsel, \_\_\_\_\_, Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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Offered and passage moved by:

Marty F. Krueger  Aye  Nay  Abstain  Absent  
Marty Krueger, Chair

Peter Kinsman  Aye  Nay  Abstain  Absent  
Peter Kinsman

Brandon Lohr  Aye  Nay  Abstain  Absent  
Brandon Lohr

Dennis Foliyka  Aye  Nay  Abstain  Absent  
Dennis Foliyka, Vice Chair

Robert Prosser  Aye  Nay  Abstain  Absent  
Robert Prosser

Robert Spencer  Aye  Nay  Abstain  Absent  
Robert Spencer

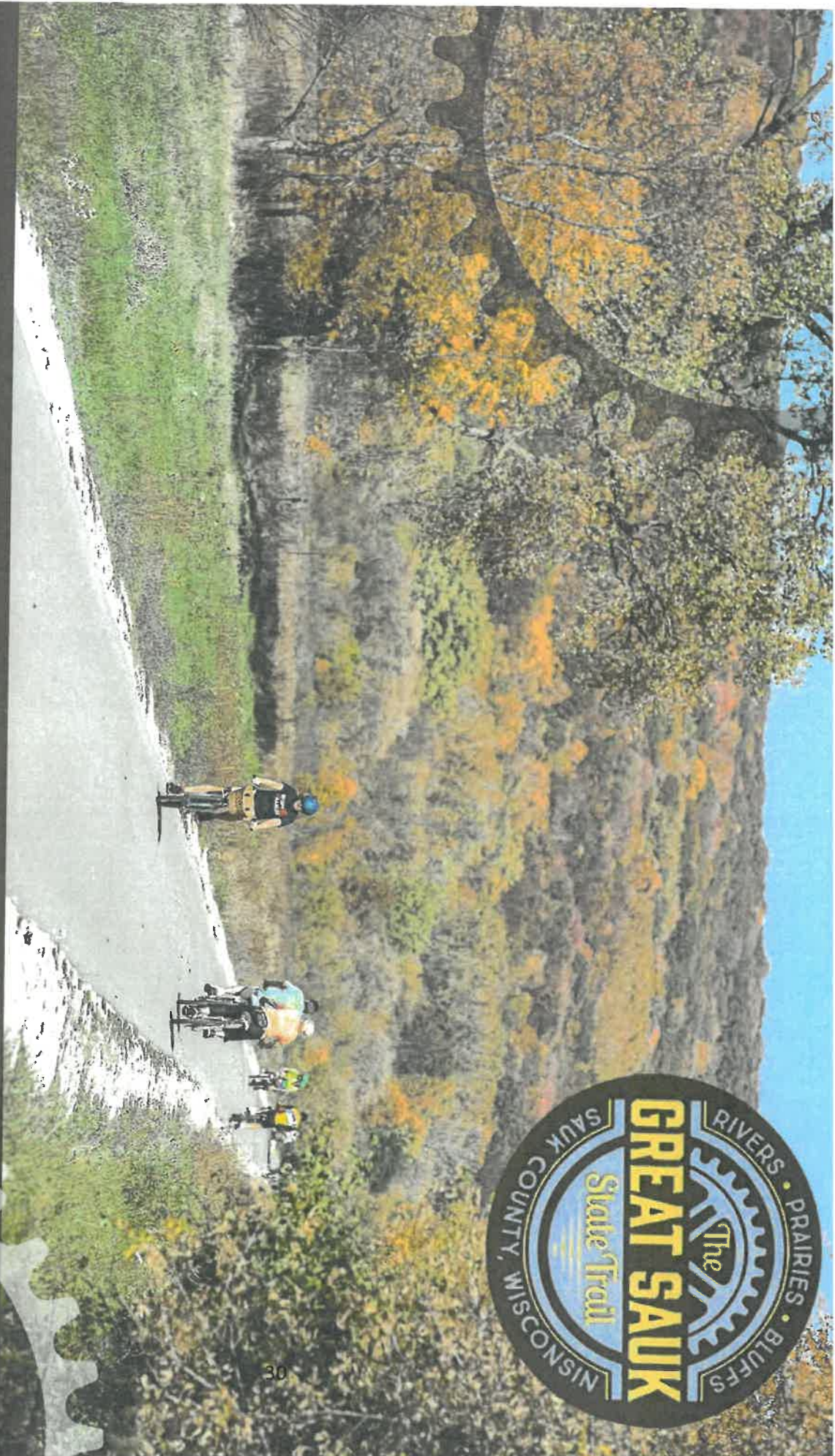
Valerie McAuliffe  Aye  Nay  Abstain  Absent  
Valerie McAuliffe

Lynn Eberl  Aye  Nay  Abstain  Absent  
Lynn Eberl

Randy Puttkamer  Aye  Nay  Abstain  Absent  
Randy Puttkamer

Fiscal Note: Design and construction of the trail will be funded through a combination of grants, county contributions, and local contributions. As funding opportunities become available, and if these opportunities require a percentage match, each opportunity will be evaluated individually and will be considered by the County Board under a resolution unique to that funding source.

MIS Note: No Impact



# GREAT SAUK STATE TRAIL MASTER PLAN SAUK COUNTY, WI JUNE 2024 DRAFT



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Cover Image by Skillet Creek Media

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## SAUK COUNTY LAND RESOURCES & ENVIRONMENT STAFF

- » Brian Simmert, Planning and Zoning Manager
- » Matt Stieve, Parks Manager
- » Cassandra Fowler, Planner
- » Lisa Wilson, Director
- » Tate Hillmann, Land Use / Sanitary Technician
- » Megan Krautramer, Land Use/Sanitary Technician

## LAND RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

- » Lynn Eberl
- » Marty Krueger
- » Peter Kinsman
- » Brandon Lohr
- » Valerie McAuliffe
- » Dennis Polivka
- » Robert Prosser
- » Randy Puttkamer
- » Robert Spenser

## CONSULTANT TEAM

- » HKGI - Project Leads Jody Rader and Natalie Strait
- » Burse Engineering

## MUNICIPAL AND AGENCY INVOLVEMENT

- » City of Reedsburg
- » City of Baraboo
- » Ho-Chunk Nation
- » Town of Baraboo
- » Town of Excelsior
- » Town of Freedom
- » Town of Merrimac
- » Town of Reedsburg
- » Town of Sumpter
- » Village of North Freedom
- » Village of Rock Springs
- » Village of West Baraboo
- » Wisconsin DOT
- » Wisconsin DNR

## STAKEHOLDER GROUP INVOLVEMENT

- » Friends of Great Sauk State Trail
- » Sauk County Snowmobile Association
- » Wisconsin and Southern Railroad
- » Baraboo Bicycle Advisory Committee
- » Wisconsin Bike Federation
- » Baraboo Public Arts Association
- » Reedsburg Chamber of Commerce
- » Baraboo Chamber of Commerce
- » Downtown Baraboo
- » Accessibility Wisconsin





# CHAPTER 1



## INTRODUCTION

### DEVELOPING A WORLD-CLASS TRAIL PLAN AND PURPOSE

Building from the success of the 11.4-mile completed Sauk Prairie Segment of the Great Sauk State Trail, this master plan and planning process was initiated to identify a route and recommendations to extend the multi-use trail north and west to connect trail users to Devil's Lake State Park, the Baraboo Area, the Villages of North Freedom and Rock Springs, and terminating at the start of the 400 State Trail in Reedsburg. The Great Sauk State Trail extension will provide a safe and enjoyable recreational trail for pedestrians and bicyclists to traverse the unique landscape of the Baraboo River, the Baraboo Range, and of the Driftless Area. Once complete, the Great Sauk State Trail (GSST) extension will provide a world-class trail experience, showcasing the natural landscape and connecting communities in Sauk County.

The process for completing this plan intentionally involved a significant amount of community, stakeholder, agency and municipal engagement during the 18-month process. This robust engagement process was key to understanding the issues and opportunities that this trail will present. Questions such as "Who will benefit most?" and "How will the design, route location, and amenities best support tourism, community development, and active living for those who live in and around the region?" were considered along the way.

Sauk County Land Resources and Environment Department served as the project sponsor and project manager for this master plan effort. A consultant firm was hired in early 2023 to assist with the effort. The consultant firm and County staff worked collaboratively throughout the process, and are collectively referred to as the 'project team' in this document.

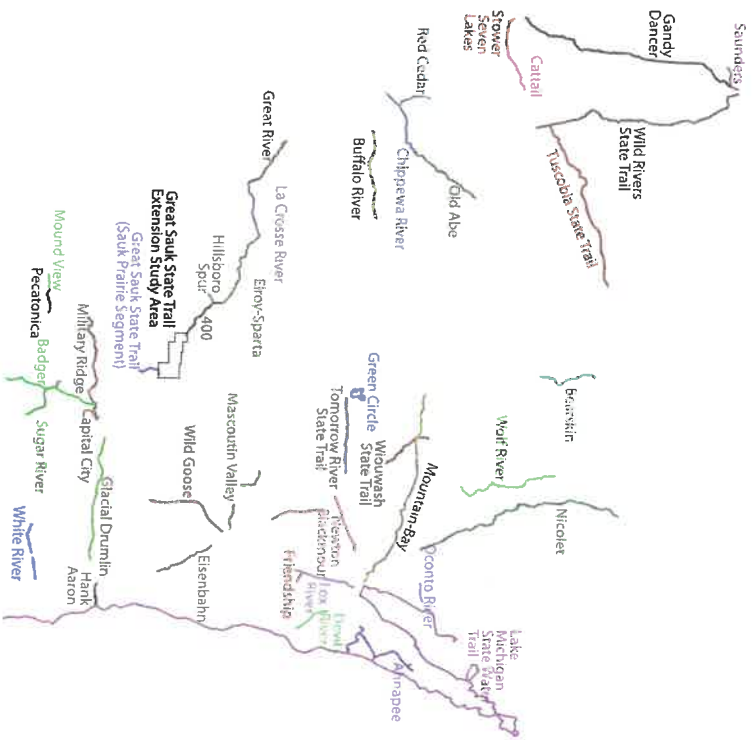


Figure 1.1 Existing State Trail Network in Wisconsin

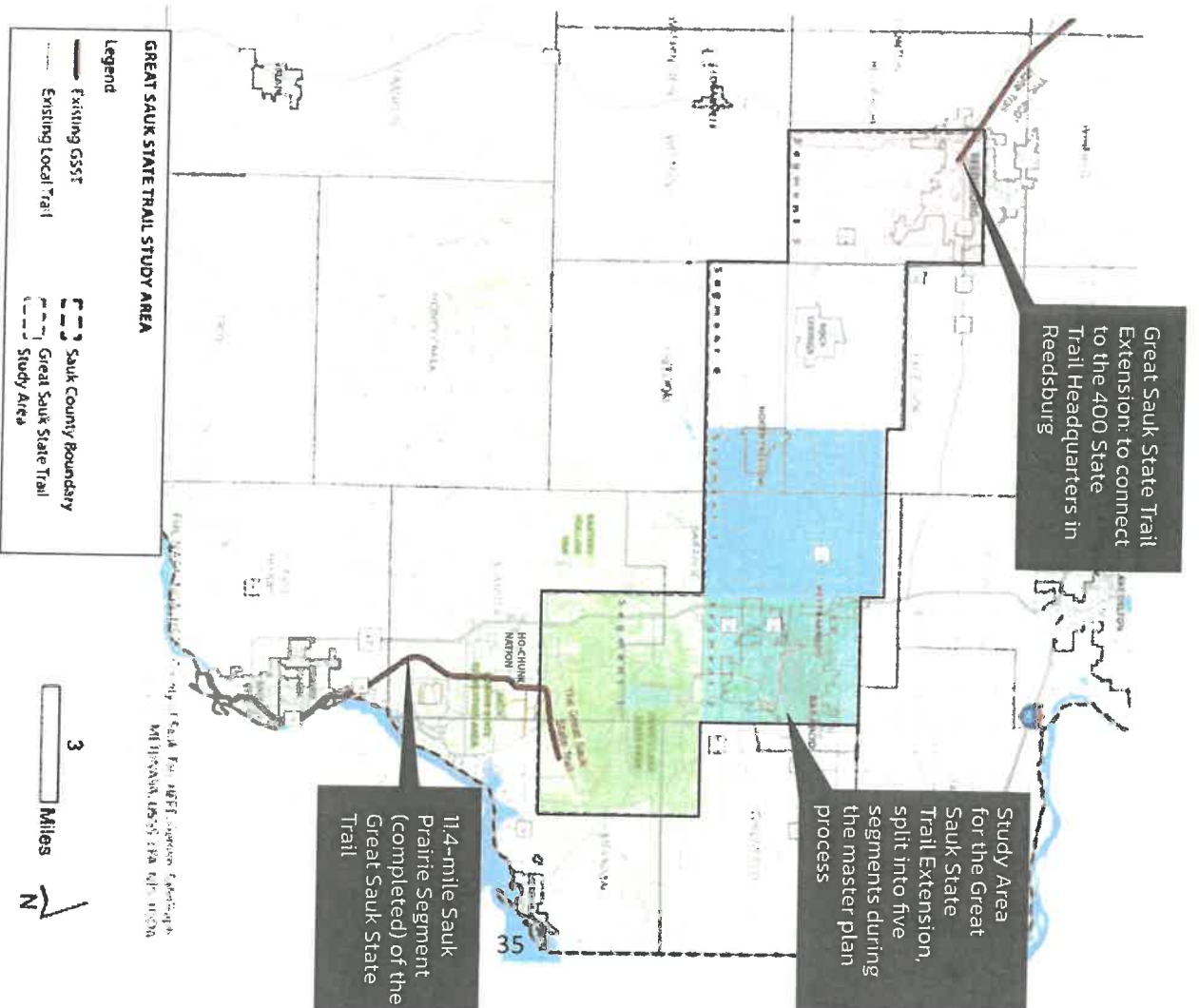


Figure 1.2 Project Study Area

# PROJECT TIMELINE

Planning for the GSST extension kicked off in January 2023 and the **plan will be approved in August 2024**. The project consisted of seven key tasks. The team conducted three rounds of community engagement, starting by gathering ideas and input around the project area, collecting feedback on the route options midway through the project, and seeking input on the final plan document and route.

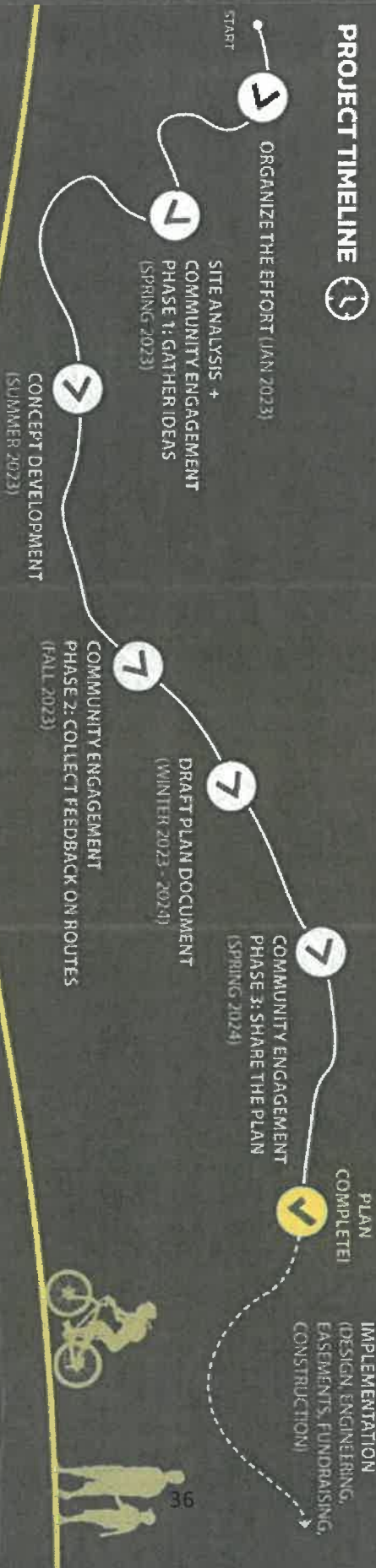


Figure 1.3 Project Schedule/Timeline

# REVIEW OF PREVIOUS PLANS

The following plans were reviewed early in the planning process to provide the project team with a background in what the community has already initiated in previous plans and documents. Overall, the idea for the Great Sauk State Trail, as a long-term vision to connect through Sauk County, has been identified for many years through many previous efforts.

## SAUK COUNTY PLANS



### GREAT SAUK STATE TRAIL: A COOPERATIVE PLAN TO BUILD A WORLD-CLASS RECREATION TRAIL (2015)

Completed by Sauk County staff, the plan provided the framework and guidance to build the first segment of the GSST, known as the Great Sauk State Trail – Sauk Prairie Segment.

This first segment is an 11.4-mile paved trail connecting Sauk City through Prairie du Sac, and continuing through the Sauk Prairie State Recreation Area (formerly the Badger Army Ammunition Plant).

The Sauk Prairie Segment was further split into 3 Units with Tiers based on priority of construction:

- » Dane County Unit – Tier 2
- » Prairie du Sac/Sauk City Unit – Tier 1
- » Badger Unit – Tier 3

This plan projected that future segments of the GSST will be planned in succession: Devil's Lake Segment, Baraboo Segment, and Reedsburg Segment.



### PHASE I: BARABOO RIVER CORRIDOR PLAN (2016)

In 2001, the Baraboo River was restored to a free-flowing river after a series of dam removals, increasing the potential for recreation and spurred plans for improvements. The Baraboo River is the longest restored river east of the Mississippi River. This plan's purpose is to "Protect, restore and enhance the natural environment within the Baraboo River Corridor and focus on opportunities that will spur recreation, tourism, and development to establish the region as THE premier water recreation destination in south central Wisconsin."

Some important points to note from this plan include:

- » North Freedom, West Baraboo, Baraboo and Sauk County would like to make the River a focal point in their communities and make it a true regional amenity.
- » Includes an analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats related to the Baraboo River.

The plan recommends conducting a feasibility study to expand the Baraboo Riverwalk and/or trail throughout the corridor; creating a system of access points throughout the Baraboo River Corridor and associated tributaries for kayakers, canoers and fishers; and providing a host of support facilities and amenities to expand tourism within communities, which it resides.

## SAUK COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN (2009)

The last comprehensive plan update for Sauk County was completed in 2009 with a mission to "Position Sauk County for the Future." This plan does not make direct mention of future trail corridors or planning for trail connections but there is a strong emphasis on sustainability, ties to Aldo Leopold and the Land Ethic. Some notes from this plan relevant to the GSST include:

- » Information provided regarding future plans of the Ho-Chunk Nation to manage a bison ranch on part of the former Badger Army Ammunition Plant (BAAP) site.
- » The plan shows support and focus on Agricultural, Natural Resources, and Civic Tourism.
- » The first goal listed in the Transportation Chapter focuses on "Efficient and Effective Transportation Objectives:
  - Objective 1: Develop and implement a cost-effective Sauk County transportation system that serves pedestrian, bicycle, auto/truck/bus, rail, and air traffic.
  - Objective 3: Promote mix-mode transportation hubs (e.g. rail, roads, pedestrian) in existing cities/villages in Sauk County.

## SAUK COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN

This plan articulates a vision for expanding parks and nature-based outdoor recreation opportunities in Sauk County with a purpose of establishing outdoor recreation priorities. The Vision Statement for this plan is "To connect people to the rich natural, cultural and historical resources of Sauk County, and create outstanding outdoor recreational opportunities now and in the future." Development of the GSST is identified as a priority project for Sauk County and participating communities in this plan. Applicable priorities and objectives identified in the plan include:

- » Priority 1: Further Development of the County Park System
  - Objective: Develop a 5-year capital improvement plan to expand recreation opportunities and improve infrastructure.
- » Priority 4: Economic Development and Tourism. "When parks, trails, and waterways are close to home and accessible, the economic vitality and livability of local communities are uplifted as well."
- Objective: Expansion of the Great Sauk State Trail



**RESILIENT BARABOO: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STUDY (2022)**

This plan recommends a separated multi-use trail along South Boulevard Corridor, or a Bicycle Boulevard along residential streets in addition to strengthening the connections to the Baraboo River in Downtown Baraboo.

- » Key Site Concepts from this study identify a new pedestrian bridge over the Baraboo River, park/public space improvements at south side of future bridge at Vine Street.
- » Goal 2.1: Increase connectivity to/from Devil's Lake State Park (DLSP) through creating comfortable and clear bike access to/from DLSP, clear wayfinding signage.
- » Goal 2.2: Increase connectivity to/from Baraboo River and south of River through the expansion of Ice Age National Scenic Trail and Great Sauk State Trail.



City of Baraboo, Wisconsin  
**COMPREHENSIVE OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN 2022-2026**  
 KEN REY STEPHEN J. JAIN

2022-2026



**CITY OF BARABOO COMPREHENSIVE OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN 2022 – 2026 (2021)**

This plan addresses the task of ensuring that adequate park and recreational resources are available for both present and future residents of the City. Several goals in the plan are relevant to this planning process:

- » Goal 3: Develop a trail system linking schools, bike paths, parks, the Ice Age Trail and other community places of interest.
    - Objectives: Work with Sauk County and other area municipalities to expand the Great Sauk State Trail into the area.
  - » Goal to become a Bicycle Friendly Community.
- The plan also recommends working with Sauk County to extend the GSST into the City of Baraboo. A number of key considerations are noted:
- » A potential grade-separated crossing of the GSST from Oschner Park to the Elementary School is mentioned.
  - » Five properties are identified for future acquisition for expansion of the Riverwalk to connect Lower Oschner Park to Mary Roundtree Evans Park are shown.
  - » Bridge across Baraboo River at Vine Street is also shown.
- In the Community Survey Results the most needed improvements for outdoor recreation were:
- » Expansion of the Riverwalk, more nature trails and areas (92%)
  - » Connection between downtown and the Riverwalk via the Oak Street Overlook (89%)
  - » Access to the Great Sauk State Trail (86%)

# 2042 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



## CITY OF REEDSBURG COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The transportation section of this plan includes some important recommendations relevant to the GSST planning process. These recommendations include:

- » "Continue to develop a comprehensive system of bikeways and/or multi-purpose trails which minimize conflicts between motor vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians"
- » "Continue to develop a comprehensive system of bikeways and/or multi-purpose trails that link neighborhoods, parks, schools, major commercial areas, and other communities while providing the opportunity for recreational activity;"
- » Promote bike and pedestrian network continuity within the region and support connections to regional bike and pedestrian networks (e.g., The '400' State Trail, and The Great Sauk State Trail)"

A survey of Reedsburg residents also found that 68% of respondents supported additional recreational trails.

## TOWN AND VILLAGE PLANS

\* The Town of Sunpter's Comprehensive Plan and the Town of Excelsior's Comprehensive plan both reference the existing Great Sauk State Trail and mention the in progress plans to extend the trail. 40



### TOWN OF BARABOO COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2005 – 2025 (2005)

The Town of Baraboo's comprehensive plan has a stated goal to "improve all modes of transportation access between different parts of the community, including biking and walking opportunities."

The plan also references supporting collaboration with Sauk County and property owners to extend the Ice Age Trail through the Town of Baraboo. This plan also recommends improvements to create a better bike path and sidewalk system.



### TOWN OF MERRIMAC COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Recommendations from this plan relevant to the GSST include

- » Building on the Town's Natural and Cultural Resources to Promote Tourism
- » Support biking, walking, and other modes of transportation.



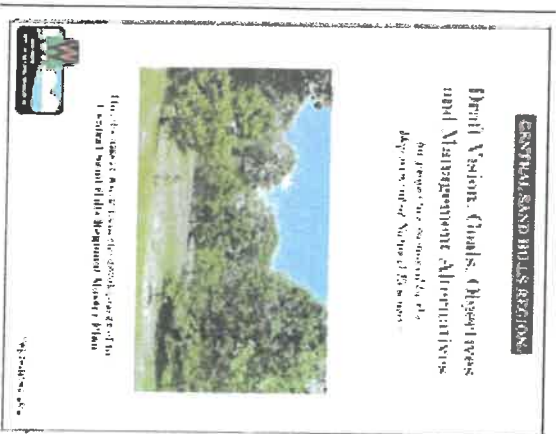
**VILLAGE OF ROCK SPRINGS OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN (2010)**

This plan makes several mentions of plans or goals that could connect to the development of the GSST. These include:

- » Installing a trail on the lower portion of Weidman's Park that connects to Vielhuber addition, the wayside, and the Northern Quarry area.
- » Installing a more permanent footbridge to connect the Fireman's Park, Downtown Area, Jodie Kay Busser Park, and Ableman's Gorge Trail.
- » Improvements to rustic campsites and Pavilion in the expanded Jodie Kay Busser Park to help support increased use.
- » Work with local bike groups to promote the various routes that can begin and end in Rock Springs.

The plan mentions that the Village is on a Bike Trail that winds through Sauk County, and that improvements in the local facilities would help make Rock Springs a preferred base camp for touring groups.

**AGENCY PLANS**

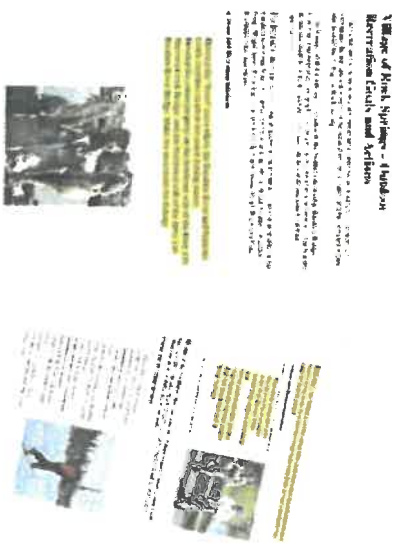


**CENTRAL SAND HILLS REGIONAL MASTER PLAN (2024, DRAFT)**

The Wisconsin DNR is completing plans for their properties based on the ecological landscape designations. The Great Sauk State Trail extension study area falls within the Wisconsin's Central Sand Hills Ecological Landscape. The Wisconsin DNR is in the process of completing the plan for this ecological landscape and anticipates completion in the Fall of 2024. Devils Lake and the surrounding DNR owned lands are an important focus of this draft plan. The plan references the intention of routing the GSST through the park and the collaborative effort underway to find a suitable option. The draft plan document is currently structured with Alternatives, setting up multiple scenarios of different options throughout the plan for various projects. The alternatives listed for the GSST follow:

- Alternative 1:** Status quo. Do not attempt to site the Great Sauk State Trail in DLSP.
- Alternative 2:** Identify a corridor for the Great Sauk State Trail through the park from Sauk Prairie SRA to the north boundary of the park

Input shared by the Wisconsin DNR on this draft seems to indicate strong support for Alternative 2, and there is particular interest in the possibility of the GSST creating a safe bike and pedestrian connection to the Lakes South Shore Day Use Area that would reduce overall vehicle congestion.





**Sauk Prairie  
State Recreation Area**

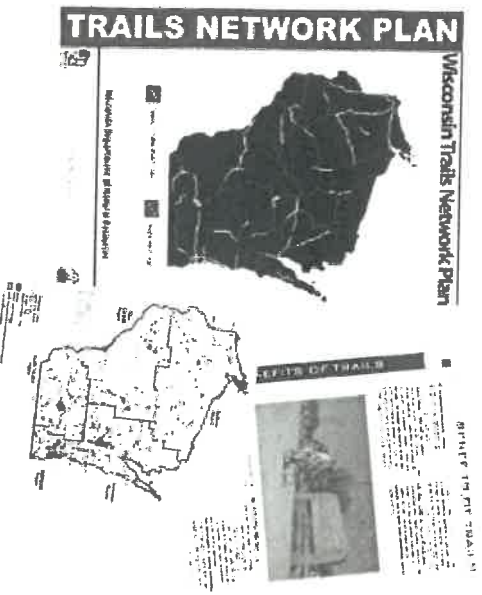
Bluff View Day Use Area  
Trail Network  
Bluff View Day Use Area  
Bluff View Day Use Area  
Bluff View Day Use Area



**SAUK PRAIRIE STATE RECREATION AREA (SPSRA) MASTER PLAN (2016)**

This revised master plan document and final EIS contains descriptions of the proposed use and management of the property, potential impacts, alternatives evaluated, the public's inputs and perspectives on the draft document and the department's responses. This plan references plans to have up to 15 miles of bike trails within the SPSRA.

- » "Two trail connections will be established to Devil's Lake: one for on-road bikes (that will connect via Burma Road) and one for hiking"
- » Creating access points to the Great Sauk State Trail from SPSRA.
- » The proposed Bluff View Day Use Area is mentioned which if constructed could be used as a trailhead location.
- » Concept Plan for the SPSRA shows a few bike/hike trails in the northern section.



**WISCONSIN STATE TRAILS NETWORK PLAN**

Initially approved in 2002 and updated in 2003, the Wisconsin State Trails Network Plan describes a vision of a statewide network of interconnected rail trails into which smaller state, county, municipal, partnership and private trails feed; and provides guidance to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources for land acquisition and development. The Great Sauk State Trail is part of the Network Plan Corridors shown on the Wisconsin Trails Network Plan by the DNR.

★ Other plans which were reviewed but did not include material specifically relevant to the GSST Extension Plan include: City of Baraboo Comprehensive Plan, City of Reedsburg Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, Town of Freedom Comprehensive Plan, and the Town of Reedsburg Comprehensive Plan.



# CHAPTER 2

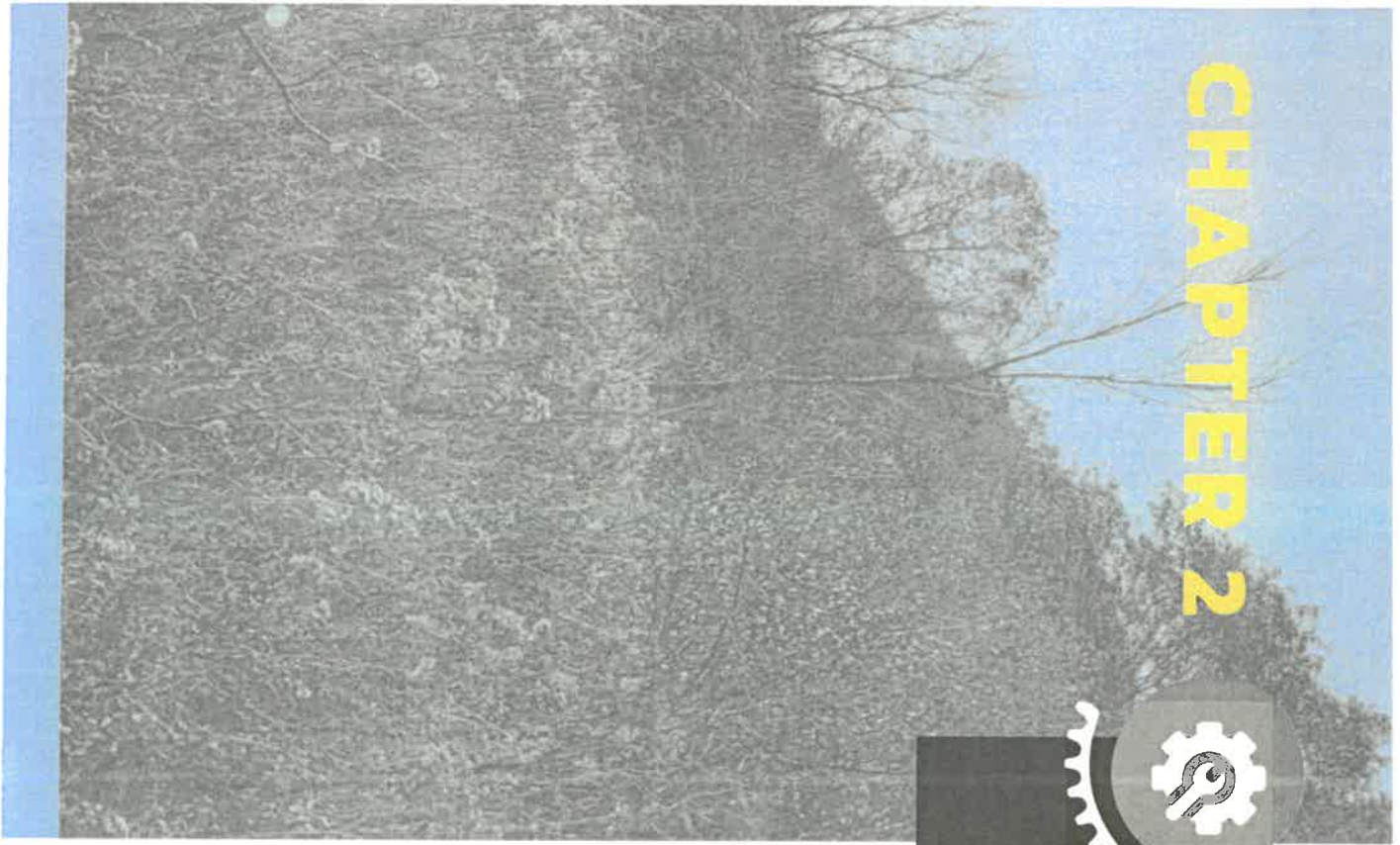


## SITE INVENTORY & ANALYSIS

### EXISTING FACILITIES INTRODUCTION

Sauk County is developing a plan for the future route extension of the Great Sauk State Trail (GSST). Building from the success of the 11.4-mile completed Sauk Prairie Segment of the GSST that connects from Sauk City and terminates at the Sauk Prairie State Recreation Area, this planning process culminated in the identification of a route and route alternatives that extend the multi-use trail north and west to create connections to Devil's Lake State Park, Baraboo, West Baraboo, North Freedom, Rock Springs, terminating at the 400 State Trail in Reedsburg.

This chapter documents the analysis and inventory work completed by the consulting team in the spring of 2023. The information presented in this chapter served as a foundational reference as the project team explored route concepts in the summer and fall of 2023.



## EXISTING TRAILS IN THE STUDY AREA



Van Hise Rock in Rock Springs near the hiking trail



400 State Trail in Reedsburg



Ice Age Trail in Devil's Lake State Park

Within and adjacent to the study area are a

number of state, national, and local trails that are relevant to the future route of the Great Sauk State Trail extension. The following trails within the study area may be considered for connections to the GSST or spur options, as well as routes that may complement the trail for other uses or as round trip opportunities.

See Table 2.1 and Figure 2.1 for more information about existing trails in the GSST study area. The following pages describe specific trail segments within the area.

## THE SAUK PRAIRIE SEGMENT OF THE GSST

The built segment of the Great Sauk State Trail (est. 2017), known as the Sauk Prairie Segment, parallels the Wisconsin River through the communities of Prairie du Sac and Sauk City, and extends through the heart of the Sauk Prairie State Recreation Area. This 1.4-mile trail is paved with asphalt and built on a former Union Pacific rail corridor. This segment was planned in 2015 and completed in 2017 through a collaboration between Sauk County, Wisconsin DNR, Ho-Chunk Nation, WisDOT and the Friends of the Great Sauk State Trail. A rails-with-trails extension and trailhead at Goette Road was completed in 2023.

JURISDICTION	WITHIN THE STUDY AREA				TOTAL
	HIKING & BIKING TRAIL	HIKING TRAIL	RESCUE PATH	RESCUE ROAD	
CITY OF BARABOO	6.5				6.5
CITY OF REEDSBURG		0.9			0.9
OTHER*	1.0	1.5			33.8
SAUK COUNTY	2.0				2.0
TOWN OF BARABOO	1.8				1.8
WISCONSIN DNR	1.4	22.4	1.1	3.2	28.1
<b>TOTAL WITHIN THE STUDY AREA</b>	<b>12.7</b>	<b>24.8</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>33.8</b>
					<b>75.5</b>

\*Other includes snowmobile routes and ice age trail segments which are commonly on easements and cross a combination of public and private land

Table 2.1 Trail Types and Length (in miles)

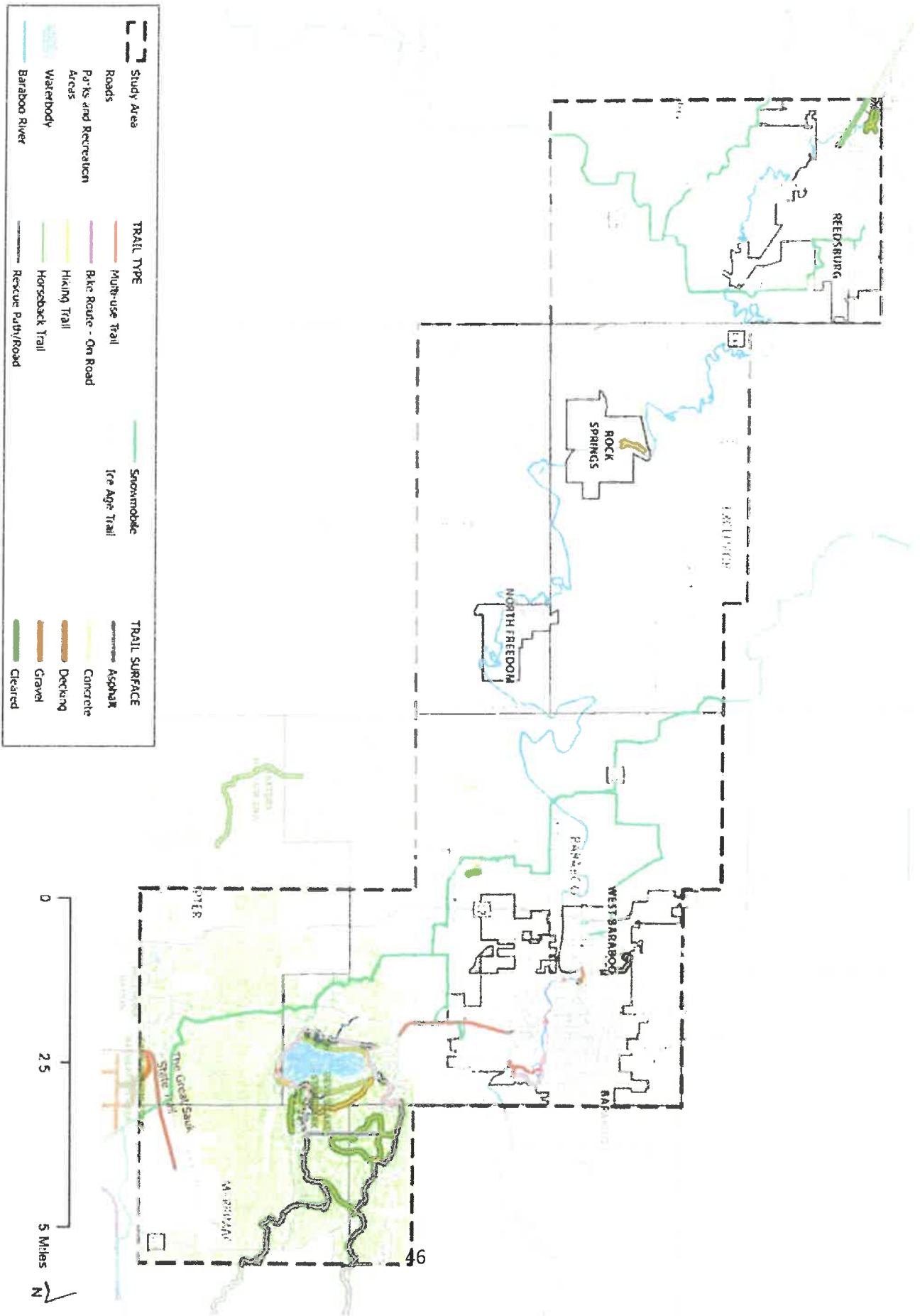


Figure 2.1 Existing Bike, Pedestrian, and Snowmobile Trails



Great Sauk State Trail Source: Trail Link

## ICE AGE TRAIL

One of only 11 National Scenic Trails in the country, the Ice Age Trail is a 1,200-mile footpath contained entirely within the state of Wisconsin. Ancient glaciers carved the path through rocky terrain, open prairies, and peaceful forests. Today, day hikers, backpackers, and outdoor lovers of all ages utilize the Ice Age Trail for a place to unplug, relax, and enjoy nature. The idea for the Ice Age Trail was born in the 1950's as the dream of Milwaukeean Ray Zillmer, who had a vision of a long, linear park winding through Wisconsin along the glacier's terminal moraine. The Ice Age Trail crosses over many ownership types including private land, city parks, state parks, county forests and national forest.

## SNOWMOBILE TRAILS

Snowmobile trails exist widely throughout rural areas of Wisconsin. Within the study area, there may be opportunities to build the GSST alongside existing snowmobile routes. There are around 215-miles of snowmobile trails in Sauk County. Snowmobile trails loop through just about every village and city in Sauk County, with many rest stops along the way including through many sections of the project study area. Snowmobile trails are maintained through public/private agreements.



Snowmobile Trails Source: Channel 3000



Baraboo Riverwalk Source: City of Baraboo

## WALNUT ST/COUNTY RD DL TRAIL

Connecting from the north end of Devil's Lake State Park, through the Township of Baraboo, and into the City of Baraboo via Walnut Street, there is a separated paved trail along the east side of County Rd DL. Today, this trail is less than 8 ft in width. Potential use of this trail for a future GSST spur trail will likely require widening of the trail width to meet state trail standards of 10-12 ft minimum.

## BARABOO RIVERWALK

The 3-mile paved Riverwalk follows the Baraboo River as it winds through the City of Baraboo along the north side of the river. The Riverwalk is a popular place for residents and visitors to walk, jog, bike, and enjoy nature. As part of the Ice Age Trail, the Riverwalk also supports connections to other Wisconsin communities, parks, and natural areas. The Riverwalk starts just west of Ochsenner Park at 8th Street and ends at Maxwell-Potter Conservancy on Hill Street in Baraboo.

## EXISTING LOCAL SIDEWALK AND TRAIL NETWORKS

The municipalities within the study area have varying levels of sidewalk and trail connectivity within their jurisdictions. Some highlights include:

- » The Village of North Freedom installed sidewalks on both sides of the roadways for nearly all streets. This was the result of a multi-year effort to create a well-connected 'Main Street' community.
- » Reedsburg Bike Loops: Building from a growing enthusiasm for bicycling within their community, the City of Reedsburg has implemented a nearly 20-mile network of signed on-street bike route loops and spurs throughout the city.

## ABLEMAN'S GORGE TRAIL

Just North of the Village of Rock Springs is a 1.3-mile trail within the Ableman's Gorge State Natural Area that runs partially alongside River Street.

## MAIN STREET/ REEDSBURG HIGHWAY 23/33

On-street bike lanes are installed on either side of Highway 33/23 (Main Street) east of downtown Reedsburg.

## 400 STATE TRAIL

The trail is named for the Chicago-Northwestern passenger train that ran on this route. The train traveled 400-miles between Chicago and Minneapolis/St. Paul in 400 minutes when operational. The renovated Reedsburg Depot is the State Trail headquarters, a trailhead and the office for the Reedsburg Chamber of Commerce. The Depot has a staffed information center with interpretive displays and public rest area facilities. The entire length of the 22-mile 400 State Trail is routed along the former rail bed within the Baraboo River Valley from Reedsburg to Elroy. Like many Rails-to-Trails routes within Wisconsin, the 400 State Trail is surfaced with compacted crushed limestone, rather than a layer of bituminous asphalt paving. The 4.2-mile Hillsboro State Trail serves as a spur beginning in Hillsboro and joining the 400 State Trail in Union Center.



400 State Trail Trailhead in Wonewoc

## BARABOO WATER TRAIL

At one time the Baraboo River was blocked by a series of (11) dams. Today, the dams have all been removed making the Baraboo River one of the longest (restored through dam removal) stretches of open river in the country. At most times the Baraboo River is a slow, shallow river with areas of shallow rapids. Under normal conditions, the river is easy to paddle by canoe or kayak. There are several access points within the study area that could serve as potential GSST trailhead locations in the future. See Figure 2.5 for Baraboo River access points.

- » Reedsburg: Located off South Walnut St. south of the railroad tracks. This access point has parking.
- » Rock Springs: The landing and parking are located off County Rd DD just south of the State Road 136 bridge in Rock Springs. Restrooms are located in the park across from the landing.
- » North Freedom: Landing and parking are available in North Freedom Park located south off of Walnut Street. Restrooms are located in the park.
- » Giese Park: Located 2 miles west of US Hwy 12 on Hatchery Road. Parking is available at the park. A rustic outhouse is available.
- » Baraboo: City parks along the Riverwalk provide public access, landings, restrooms, parking and picnic facilities.





*Doctor Evermor's Sculpture Park Source: State Trunk Tour*



*Devil's Lake State Park Source: Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*



*Downtown Baraboo Source: Baraboo Chamber of Commerce*

## EXISTING DESTINATIONS

Communities along the trail corridor, especially smaller communities, have the potential to benefit economically from the tourism that a regional trail can provide. Trail users also benefit from connections to community destinations, as they provide places to stop, rest, eat or drink, and showcase local attractions. Finding ways to overlap the future GSST with existing destinations can reduce the capital cost of the trail project and avoid duplication of similar facilities within an area. Parking, drinking water, bathrooms, and maps or wayfinding are all points of interest for potential trail users. The following destinations exist within the study area and serve as potential trailheads or attractions along and around the future GSST route corridor.

### SAUK PRAIRIE STATE RECREATION AREA

In 1997, the US Department of Defense decommissioned the 7,354-acre Badger Army Ammunition Plant (BAAP). The area that formerly housed the BAAP is now called the Sauk Prairie State Recreation Area (SPRA). This area is in the process of being restored and 'rewilded'. The property is divided between the Dairy Forage Research Center, the Ho-Chunk Nation, the Bluffview Sanitary District, and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. About 3,400 acres are currently open to the public. The property also includes a section of the Great Sauk State Trail. The SPRA has become a popular area for bird watching, biking, cross country skiing, hiking and for exploring historical points of interest.

### DOCTOR EVERMOR'S SCULPTURE PARK

A fanciful sculpture park built in the 1980s on Highway 12, in the Town of Sumpter, just west of the Sauk Prairie State Recreation area. Forevertron, the central piece in the park, is the largest scrap metal sculpture in the world, standing 50 ft. high and 120 ft. wide, and weighing 300 tons. Forevertron and other sculptures' castoff parts are largely unmodified; they're just welded and bolted together in a new way. There are pieces of breweries, power plants, steel mills, snowmobile factories, cargo ships, and railroad engines.

### DEVILS' LAKE STATE PARK

Wisconsin's largest and most visited state park, Devil's Lake State Park is situated along the Ice Age National Scenic Trail and offers magnificent views from 500-foot quartzite bluffs overlooking a 360-acre lake. The park has nearly 30 miles of hiking trails, lakeshore picnic areas, swimming beaches, paddling opportunities, and year-round naturalist programs. Nearly 3million people visit Devil's Lake State Park every year.

### DOWNTOWN BARABOO

The largest city in the county, Baraboo, is a picturesque city nestled in a beautiful valley surrounded by majestic bluffs. Downtown Baraboo retains its small town historical charm and has over 160 businesses within the downtown district. The many unique businesses,

historic charm, and surrounding natural area make it a year-round, popular destination for families, art lovers, and recreational enthusiasts.

## FOOD AND DRINK DESTINATIONS

Restaurants, breweries, and wineries dot the landscape around the proposed GSST corridor and are a draw for many trail users. These destinations can serve as welcome rest stops to refuel for trail users on a long ride, or final destinations that encourage people to get out on the trail in the first place. Food and drink destinations in the area showcase Sauk County's agricultural bounty and culinary expertise.

## CIRCUS WORLD

The Circus World Museum is a museum complex in Baraboo, Wisconsin, devoted to circus-related history. Baraboo was home to The Ringling Bros. Circus from 1884 thru 1918, and during those thirty-four years the operation grew to become the largest circus enterprise the world has ever known. The museum features circus artifacts and exhibits and hosts daily live circus performances throughout the summer; it is closed during the winter months. It is owned by the Wisconsin Historical Society and operated by the non-profit Circus World Museum Foundation.

## OCHSNER PARK ZOO

Oschner Park Zoo is a free-entry zoo that has been operational since 1926. Visitors can see lynxes, monkeys, llamas, tortoises and more.

## UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN- PLATTEVILLE BARABOO SAUK COUNTY

The University of Wisconsin-Platteville Baraboo Sauk County is a higher learning institution of the University of Wisconsin System and a branch campus of the University of Wisconsin-Platteville. The school offers associate degrees in Arts and Sciences; Business Administration, Food and Agriculture, Hospitality and Tourism Management or Pre-Engineering, as well as a bachelor's degree in Business Management.

## PEWIT'S NEST

This is a State Natural Area with beautiful hiking trails to the west of Devils Lake State Park. The dominant feature at Pewit's Nest is a 30 to 40 foot deep gorge formed during the retreat of the last glacier. When Glacial Lake Baraboo drained, Skillet Creek cut a narrow canyon through the sandstone, forming a series of potholes and low waterfalls. Pewit's Nest offers walking trails that lead to the mouth of the gorge as well as a lookout area on top of the cliffs.

## MCGILVRA WOODS

McGilvra Woods is a State Natural Area in one of the richest southern mesic forests in southwestern Wisconsin and noted for its display of spring wildflowers. It is located northwest of Devil's Lake State Park. This small 72-acre natural area has a small parking area and no trails.

## BAXTER'S HOLLOW

Baxter's Hollow is The Nature Conservancy's largest preserve in Wisconsin. It has a secluded hiking area with dense trees and a beautiful winding stream that connects to areas within the preserve. The creek is home to a rich collection of aquatic life considered rare in Wisconsin. The unmarked trail is about 5 miles round-trip and is primitive with uneven, rocky areas. The entrance via Stones Pocket Rd or the north lot via Forest Rd provide parking options for visitors.



Baxter's Hollow Source: The Nature Conservancy



Mid-Continent Railway Museum Source: Wisconsin Explorer

## DOWNTOWN NORTH FREEDOM

North Freedom is a village of around 700 people along the Baraboo River. The village's downtown has a number of shops and eateries as well as a park and a public library.

## MID-CONTINENT RAILWAY MUSEUM

Just outside of North Freedom sits the Mid-Continent Railway Museum. It is an indoor/outdoor living history museum and operating railroad recreating, preserving, and interpreting the small town/shortline way of life from the "Golden Age of Railroadng." The museum is filled with award-winning restorations and railroad exhibits. In all, there are over 40 train cars and locomotives on display and even more under restoration. Visitors can also take a memorable, seven-mile, 55-minute round-trip train ride on a former branch line of the Chicago & North Western Railway.



Baraboo Bluff Winery Source: Baraboo Bluff Winery

## DOWNTOWN ROCK SPRINGS

Rock Springs is a railroad and former mill town. There is a park, public library, a meadery, and a pottery studio. There is also an artesian spring on the east side of Highway 136 that is owned and operated by the Village of Rock Springs.

## ABLEMAN'S GORGE STATE NATURAL AREA

Ableman's Gorge is a natural gorge along the Baraboo River and an abandoned quarry which



Ableman's Gorge

create amazing views as you walk on a forested trail along the base of bare, rocky cliffs.

## CADY'S MARSH

Located southeast of Reedsburg, Cady's Marsh is owned by the DNR and was designated a State Natural Area in 1998. This area contains dry sandy prairie grading into loamy mesic and wet-mesic prairie with sedge meadow and shallow emergent aquatic marsh. Deep-soil loamy prairies like this are one of the rarest natural plant communities in Wisconsin as many of these marsh areas have been converted to farmland.

## NORMAN ROCKWELL EXHIBIT

Reedsburg is home to a large, extraordinary collection of Norman Rockwell art. Viewers can delight in every slice of Americana, from the pre-World War I era to 60's and 70's rock stars, all captured by Norman Rockwell's brush. The exhibit is displayed at the Voyageur Inn and Conference Center with free admission.

## DOWNTOWN REEDSBURG

The City of Reedsburg is located along the Baraboo River and is home to around 10,000 people. The 400 State Trail Headquarters is located south of the historic commercial downtown, west of the industrial area, and east of a city-owned nature conservancy. The City of Reedsburg has created a local on-street bicycle network, which will connect to the GSST.





Western Coulees and Ridges Source: Wisconsin DNR



Central Sand Plains Source: Wisconsin DNR



Central Sand Hills Source: Wisconsin DNR

## LAND COVER AND ECOLOGY

### ECOLOGICAL LANDSCAPES

There are (16) Ecological Landscapes designated within the state of Wisconsin, each with unique ecological attributes and management opportunities. They can be used to identify the best areas of the state to manage for different natural communities, key habitats, aquatic features and native plants and animals from an ecosystem management perspective.

National Hierarchical Framework of Ecological Units (NHFEU) is an ecological classification system that divides landscapes into ecologically significant regions at multiple scales. Ecological types are classified and units are mapped based on the associations of biotic and environmental factors which include climate, physiography, water, soils, air, hydrology, and potential natural communities.

The primary ecological landscape type of the study area is Western Coulees and Ridges. This type is characterized by its highly eroded, unglaciated topography with steep sided valleys and ridges, high gradient headwaters, streams, and large rivers with extensive, complex floodplains and terraces.

Two other ecological landscape types make up the remainder. The Central Sand Plains ecological landscape is designated in the area north of West Baraboo. The region includes many notable ecological resources including extensive pine-oak/mixed forests, abundant wetlands and peatlands, mixed oak and pine barrens, surrogate

grassland and unique geological features. An extensive, nearly level expanse of outwash sand that originated from a huge glacial lake characterizes much of the Central Sand Plains. A portion of the study area south of Devil's Nose around the Town of Merrimac is characterized as the Central Sand Hills. The landforms in this ecological landscape include a series of glacial moraines. Most soils formed from deep sand deposits of glacial lacustrine or outwash origin or in materials eroded from sandstone hillslopes and sometimes with a surface of wind-deposited sand.

### LANDSCAPE TYPE ASSOCIATIONS

Landscape Type Association (LTA) represents subregional and landscape ecological units developed according to the classification scheme of the NHFEU. Wisconsin DNR delineates the finer "landscape" scale LTA layer of the NHFEU. The development of this layer of information supplies a spatially oriented, ecological classification tool. The LTA in the project area include:

- » Richland Ridge
- » Baraboo-Dells Terrace and Outwash Plain
- » West Baraboo Ridge
- » East Baraboo Ridge
- » Baraboo Basin Moraines
- » Baraboo Basin Floodplain and Terraces
- » LaFarge Hills and Valleys
- » Moon Valley Plains
- » Mississippi River Valley Train-South



# TOPOGRAPHY AND SLOPE ANALYSIS

## RIDGES, VALLEYS, AND BLUFFS

The Driftless Area is a topographical region in the Midwest that comprises southwestern Wisconsin, southeastern Minnesota, northeastern Iowa, and the extreme northwestern corner of Illinois.

Never covered by ice during the last four ice ages, the area lacks the characteristic glacial deposits known as drift. The overall landscape is characterized by steep hills, forested ridges, deeply carved river valleys, and karst geology with spring-fed waterfalls and cold-water trout streams. The steep riverine landscape of both the Driftless Area proper and the surrounding Driftless-like region are the result of early glacial advances that forced pre-glacial rivers that flowed into the Great Lakes southward, causing them to carve a gorge across bedrock

Steep areas present situations where careful trail location and design is essential. When possible, the future GSST should be routed to avoid areas with steep slopes (greater than 8%) to due to challenges related to accessibility, risk of erosion, and added costs for intensive grading and construction of retaining walls.

## SWITCHBACKS

Switchbacks and climbing turns are used to reverse the direction of travel on hillsides and to gain elevation. A switchback is a reversal in trail direction that has a relatively level constructed landing where the trail turns. Areas with existing sideslopes between 15 to 45 percent are candidate locations for building a trail with switchbacks. A climbing turn is a reversal in direction that maintains the existing grade going through the turn without a constructed landing. Climbing turns have a wider turn radius and are used on gentler slopes, typically 15 percent or less.

## RETAINING WALLS

Retaining walls are used to construct a trail at a lower slope than the existing grade. The retaining wall holds back the existing earth place as a trail is constructed at a steeper or shallower grade than the existing land around it. Retaining walls are commonly built with rock boulders, log cribs, or concrete masonry unit (CMU) blocks. Retaining walls are generally avoided in trail construction, as they can add a significant cost to a project.

## BOARDWALKS/ELEVATED TRAIL SEGMENTS

A boardwalk is a lower-impact construction method that enables trail routes to traverse wetlands, sensitive vegetation, or unstable soil with minimal disturbance to the ground below. Boardwalks can serve as ramps at select locations to provide access for people using wheelchairs, strollers, walkers, or other mobility aids.

## STAIR/DISMOUNT AREAS

Where there is no other viable alternative to travel across a steep slope, stairs may need to be integrated into the trail. Stair construction renders that section of trail non-compliant with ADA and disrupts the movement of bikers.<sup>5</sup> However, this may be a last resort to provide a trail in areas with steep slopes and little available land for constructing switchbacks and retaining walls. In these cases, thoughtful dismount areas and stairways with channels should be part of the trail design to improve accessibility. Stair channels are very useful for bicyclists to aid in rolling bicycles up the stairs. Also called runnels, these channels are a straight and usually grooved guide next to a stairway so people can go up and down the stairs while guiding their bikes alongside in the groove.

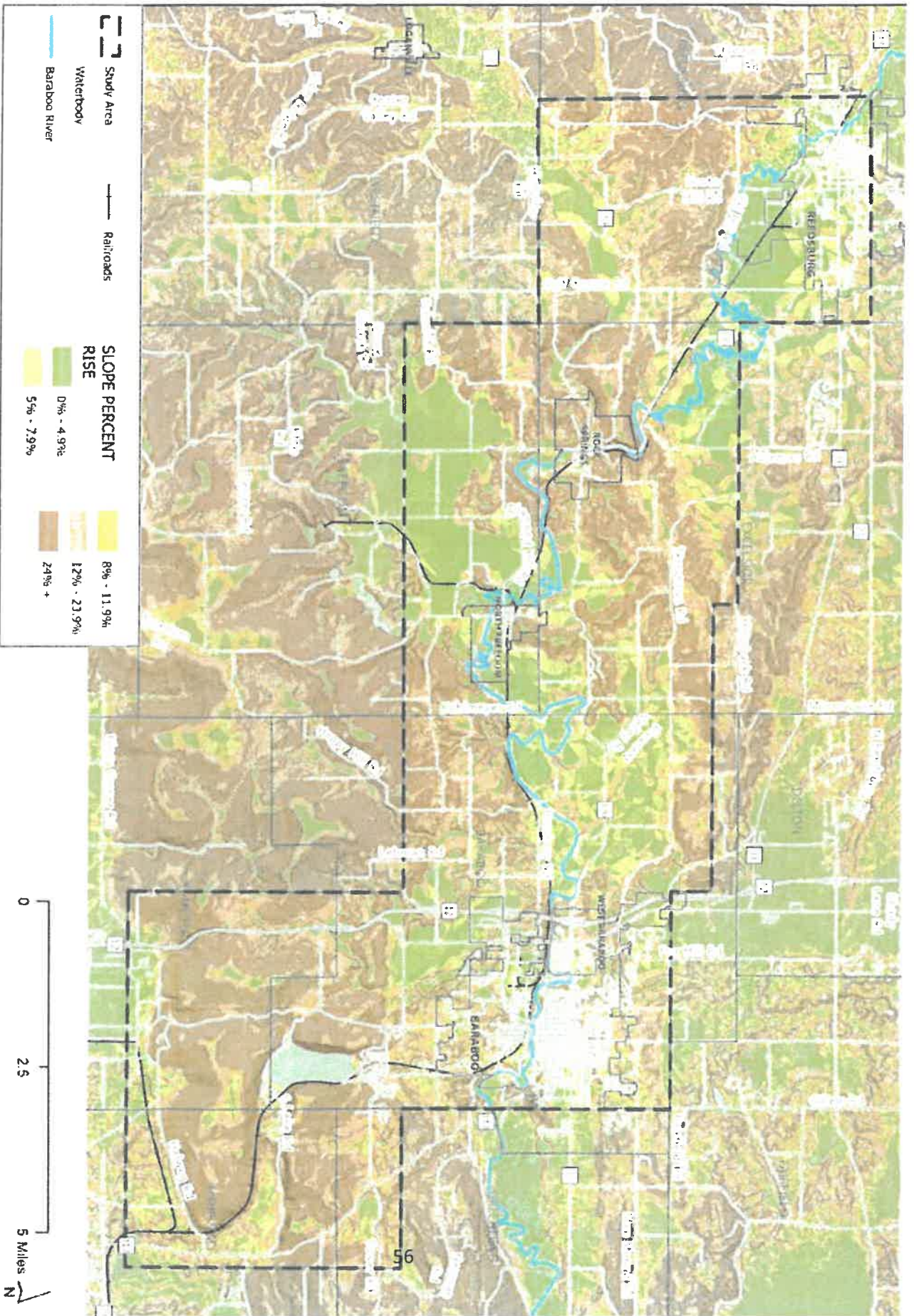


Figure 2.4 Slope Analysis of the Study Area



## WATERWAYS

Dramatic topography, along with the winding Baraboo River contributes to the area characterized by floodplain and wetland, all of which must be considered during trail routing. Figure 2.5 maps water bodies, floodplains, wetlands, flood hazard zones, and water access points along the Baraboo River.

## WETLANDS

Wetlands are an important resource for many of Wisconsin's wildlife species, from providing nesting habitat to providing important food sources. In addition, some of Wisconsin's most cherished recreational pastimes rely on healthy wetlands throughout the landscape to support wildlife populations. They are also an imperiled resource and highly protected, for good reason. The trail route will almost certainly need to pass through some areas of wetland to reach its destination. Where wetlands are unavoidable, crossings should be properly designed and placed at the narrowest wetland location.

Trail design should always ensure that runoff water and drainage from the trail is collected in a stabilized area or sediment basin. Natural drainage patterns should not be disrupted or moved, as the runoff water and surface water may be providing moisture to wetlands downslope or downstream. Elevated boardwalk construction should can be used in areas with wetlands to minimize disturbance and to create a unique and beautiful experience for trail users.

## WATERWAYS BARABOO RIVER

The Baraboo River is a central feature to the trail corridor. The Baraboo River is a tributary of the Wisconsin River, about 70 miles in length, and part of the watershed of the Mississippi River. Several other creeks also connect to the Baraboo River within this area including Pine, Seeley, Narrows, Copper, Hay, and Babb Creeks. Skillet Creek flows through Pewitts Nest State Natural Area and Devils Lake State Park. There are a number of existing and planned Water Trail Landings, as a result of the Baraboo River Corridor Plan.

## DEVIL'S LAKE

Devil's Lake is another defining water feature within the study area. Devil's Lake is 374 acres and has a maximum depth of 47 feet. Visitors have access to the lake from public boat landings and public beaches within Devil's Lake State Park.

## FLOODPLAINS

The study area contains a significant amount of designated floodplain and flood hazard zones. Heavy rains, poor drainage, and even nearby construction projects can put an area at risk for flood damage. Not only is flooding one of the most common and costly disasters, flood risk can also change over time because of new building and development, weather patterns and other factors. The map in Figure 2.5 shows the 100-year floodplain as mapped by FEMA. As the GSST route

is planned, it will be vital to understand potential additional measures that may be required to protect the trail and trail users from flood hazard. It is also important for the trail to be designed to avoid encroachment within the floodplain or floodways.



Wetlands Source: Wisconsin Wetlands Association



Wetlands Source: Wisconsin DNR



Pine River Trail Source: Trail Link

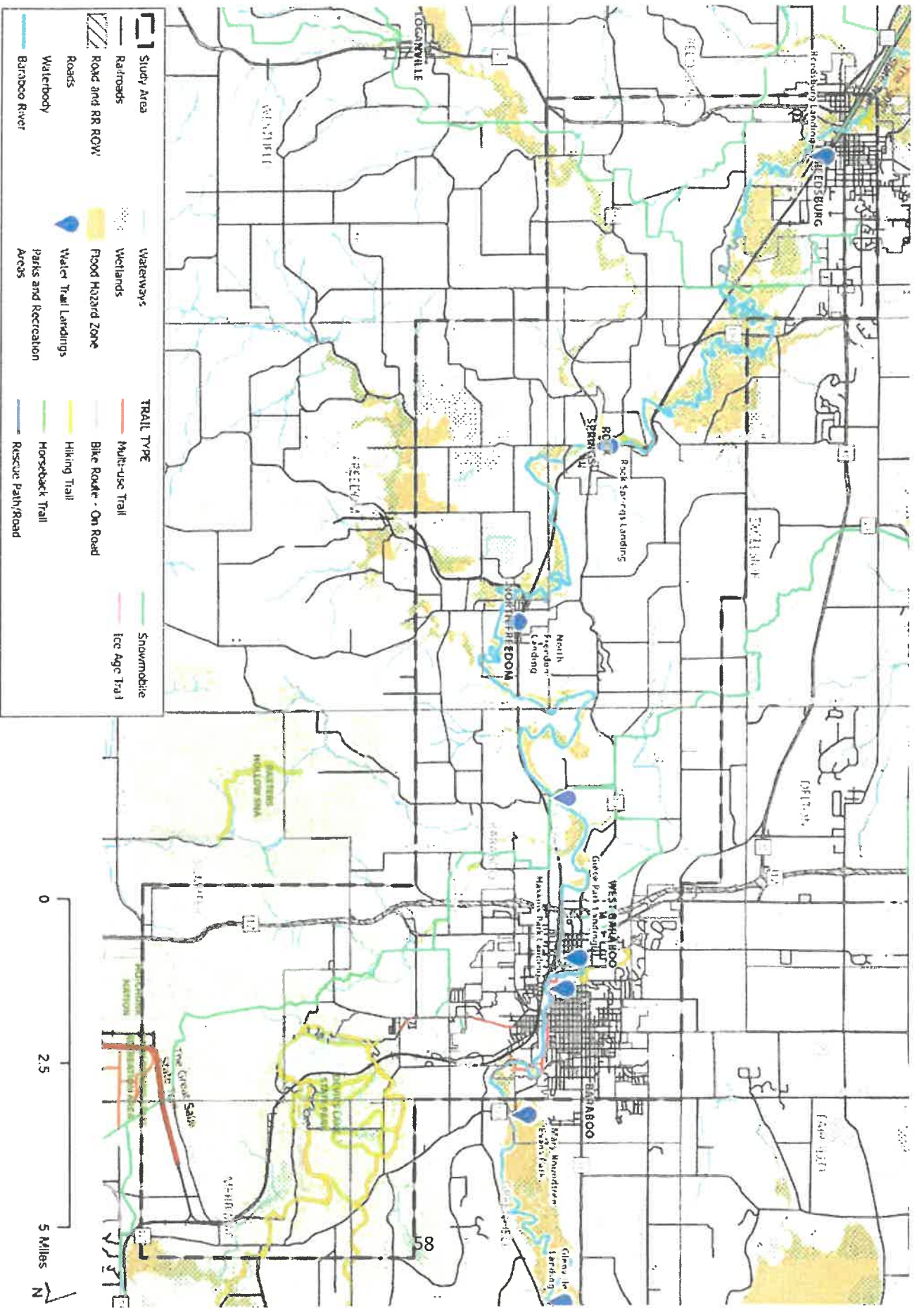


Figure 2.5 Wetlands, Floodplains and Waterways within the Study Area

# TRANSPORTATION ANALYSIS

## FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATIONS

The functional classification of roadways define the role each element of the road network plays in serving people's transportation needs. Functional classification also has additional significance beyond its purpose as a framework for identifying the particular role of a roadway. This designation carries with it expectations about roadway design, including speed, capacity and relationship to existing and future land use development.

Functional classification is also used to determine eligibility for funding under the Federal-aid program. It is also increasingly used as a guideline for setting expectations and measuring outcomes for preservation, mobility and safety.

Functional Classifications fall into the following categories:

- Principal Arterial:** These roads are generally limited access and play a unique role in providing a high degree of mobility and carrying a high proportion of travel for long distance trips.
  - » Interstate
  - » Other Freeways & Expressways (OF&E)
  - » Other (OPA)
- Minor Arterial:** Supplements and provides connections to the principal arterial system



Downtown Baraboo Source: Milwaukee Magazine



State Highway 33 Source: State Trunk Tour



CR 154 through Rock Springs Source: Wikipedia

**Collector:** Mobility and land access are equally important on the collector road system. The collector system provides connections between neighborhoods and from neighborhoods to regional job concentrations and local centers.

- » Major Collector
- » Minor Collector

**Local:** Connects blocks and land parcels, and the primary emphasis is on land access.

In planning for the Great Sauk State Trail, functional class is an important consideration to gauge the suitability of a roadway, from a high level, for compatibility with a bike trail.

## ANNUAL AVERAGE DAILY TRAFFIC (AADT) 95

Annual Average Daily Traffic, or AADT, is a measure of the average volume of vehicle traffic on a section of road or highway over a full year. AADT is used to forecast needs for maintenance, highway and road improvements. It is also a consideration in determining location and funding for infrastructure projects. AADT can be a useful measure when assessing the impact of development on traffic congestion, calculating emissions from road traffic, analyzing crash rates, and much more.

For the purpose of trail planning, AADT helps to determine the level of comfort a trail user would have crossing or being in close proximity to a roadway.



## INTERSECTION CONTROLS

Intersection controls include traffic lights, roundabouts, stop signs, and yield signs. Intersection controls may need to be modified for a future trail route to ensure safety and a comfortable trail experience. Within the study area, there are a few traffic lights and roundabouts (within City boundaries). The majority of existing intersection controls within the rural areas consist of stop and yield controls.

## RAILROADS

Railroads have been an integral part of Wisconsin's transportation system since 1847, when the state's first freight service was introduced. There are currently over 3,300 miles of rail lines in Wisconsin. The majority of the state's rail infrastructure is privately owned and operated.

The total miles of active railroad lines in Wisconsin have fallen from a peak of 7,600 in the 1920s to 3,254 miles operating in 2019. Though track mileage has decreased by about 350 miles in the past decade, abandonments of large sections of railroad corridors have been uncommon in recent decades. While abandonments still occur, they have differed from earlier abandonments of the late 1970s and early 1980s where entire corridors were abandoned. Recent abandonments are often stub-ended spurs only a few miles in length.

In response to the large abandonments of the 1970s, the Wisconsin Legislature created the state's original rail assistance program in 1977.

This led to preservation of railroad corridors through public acquisition, with over 590 miles of rail lines currently in public ownership. Many discontinued rail lines have been preserved through the Rails-to-Trails Program and are used as interim recreational and multi-use trails. These preserved corridors could be put back into service as railroads if future conditions were favorable.

The rail corridor within the study area is primarily owned by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, while the railroad spurs are primarily owned by local companies. The overall railroad infrastructure is privately-owned by railroad companies and operated through agreements with the state. The Wisconsin & Southern Railroad (WSOR) is the primary railroad company that manages the railroad infrastructure in this project's study area. WSOR is a Class II regional railroad in Southern Wisconsin and Northeastern Illinois currently operated by Watco. It operates former Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Pacific Railroad (Milwaukee Road) and Chicago and North Western Railway (C&NW) trackage, mostly acquired by the state of Wisconsin in the 1980s.

### **SPEED AND FREQUENCY**

The maximum allowed speeds for trains passing through the project study area are limited to 25mph. Generally, the maximum speed in areas passing through villages decreases to 5 or 10 mph.

The Rails to Trails Conservancy has published recommendations for buffer widths between active rail lines and trails, although there are no set national standards. WSOR's preferred buffer distance is 33' from the edge of a trail to the centerline of railroad tracks.

### **CROSSINGS**

There are 53 existing roadway crossings of the railroad within the study area. The majority of the crossings have, at most, two trains pass through per day. Three crossings have eight trains scheduled per day; these are associated with the North Freedom Mid-Continent Railway Museum which gives round trip rides to museum visitors during the summer months.

Where roadway crossings exist today, there is a process for adding a trail crossing at the same location that is fairly straight-forward. The costs associated with upgrading an existing crossing to accommodate trail use varies, and can be upwards of \$300,000. New at-grade crossings, at locations where a roadway crossing does not exist today, will be challenging to gain approval by WSOR to complete. New grade-separated crossings (bridges or tunnels) will also be costly to construct, but potentially more welcomed by the railroad company as the conflict between the active rail and trail users is minimized.

# LAND OWNERSHIP

Piecing together land parcels and right-of-way (ROW) areas to be used for a future trail corridor will likely require several strategies. Sauk County will pursue a combination of easements from private property owners, acquisition of property through market-rate compensation, and also will make use of land already owned by public entities –including cities, villages, the County, Wisconsin DOT, and the DNR, in order to create a continuous trail experience.

## PRIVATE PROPERTY

Private property owners whose land falls along the desired trail corridors should be contacted to determine their amenability to an easement or land purchase. Even if there is already some amount of available land in the right of way along the desired path, extending that space will likely be desirable in order to create a safer and more comfortable experience for trail users. In 2017, Act 59 of Wisconsin's budget bill amended Wisconsin's statutes to prohibit the use of eminent domain to establish or extend recreational trails, bicycle ways, bicycle lanes, or pedestrian ways. The implications of this statute for the GSST project is that all land acquisition on private land will need to be entirely voluntary and through either easement or purchase agreements.

## PUBLIC EASEMENTS

A primary way for land to be used for public projects is through public easements. Public easements grant legal rights to cross or otherwise use someone else's land for a specified purpose. The entity acquiring the land pays a negotiated amount of money to the property owner for the use of that land.

Potentially, temporary easements for the construction process will be needed alongside trail easements. Of the various easements available for exploration, there are three that are likely applicable to this project:

- » **Public easements** which grant use of an area of privately-owned property for public use
  - » **Conservation easements** which grant use of privately-owned property for natural resource management and natural-resource based recreation
  - » **Appurtenant easement** which applies to the land in perpetuity; if the landowner sells the land, the easement remains with it.
- Other examples of easements might include:
- » Utility access for water, power lines, septic systems
  - » Right-of-way access to a neighboring property
  - » Public access for hunting, fishing, or other recreational use



North Freedom Source: Weichert



City of Baraboo Source: Stark Company Realtors



Rock Springs Source: Land Watch

## PUBLIC ENTITIES



Sauk Prairie State Recreation Area Source: Devil's Lake



Sauk County Fairgrounds Source: Sauk County Fair



Reedsburg Trail Source: All Trails

Land owned by public or semi-public entities will be considered for planning of the GSST trail route. Much of the land in this category is more open and scenic, which will potentially be easier to obtain easements along, and help connect trail users to important public recreation locations. Roadways with substantial right-of-way are also present throughout the study area and will be considered. Railroad right-of-way corridors as discussed in this report could also be considered (although technically a private entity).

Most of the land in the eastern part of the study area are agency-owned, either as part of the DNR's Sauk Prairie State Recreation Area, Devil's Lake State Park and Baraboo Hills Recreation Area, or as the land owned by the Ho-Chunk Nation. Other properties in the area that are semi-public include Baxter's Hollow State Natural Area to the west, and Merrimac Preserve to the east.

North of Devil's Lake, there are a number of properties owned by the City of Baraboo, as well as properties owned by Sauk County. Most of these properties fall in the central areas of the City and include parks, open space, schools, the Sauk County Fairgrounds, and various public buildings and facilities.

The rural areas within the study area have less publicly-owned areas comparatively. There are a handful of township- and village-owned parks that could provide opportunities for potential trailhead locations.

The Villages of North Freedom and Rock Springs have acquired a significant amount of land located along the Baraboo River in recent years, as a result of flooding. These areas could provide an opportunity for a future trail connection. Publicly-owned areas in the western part of the study area are primarily made up of parcels owned by the City of Reedsburg, including a number of large parks, schools, and a small airport. On the far south side of Segment 5 there are a substantial number of farm acres publicly owned and used by Madison College.

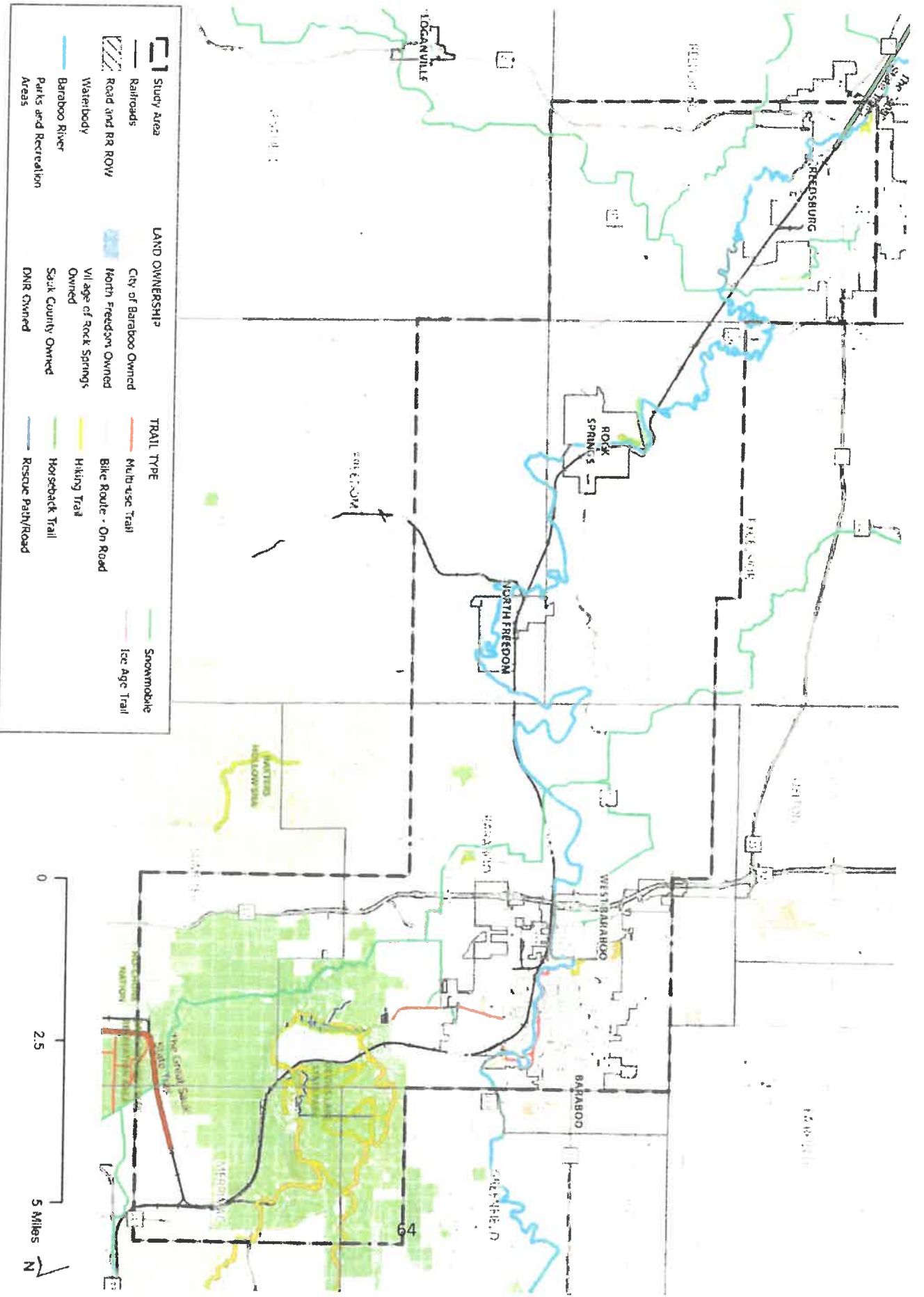
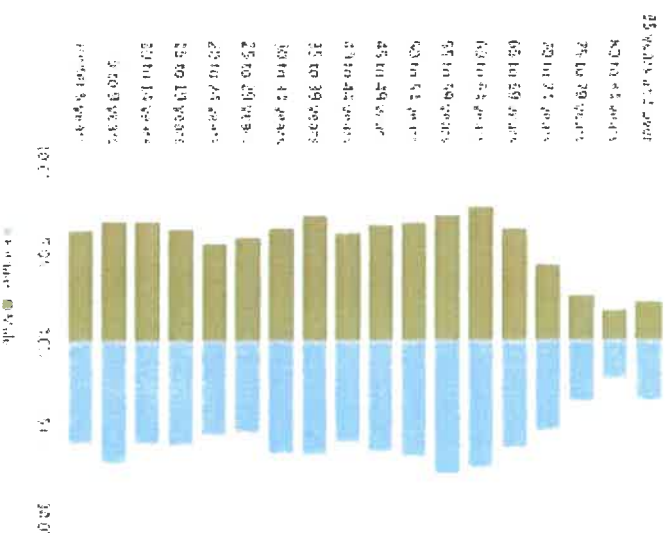


Figure 2.7 Land Ownership in the Study Area



## DEMOGRAPHICS AND PROJECTIONS

Population Pyramid



Population Pyramid Source: US Census Bureau

Data available through the US Census Bureau provides a snapshot of the region's demographics. This trail is expected to serve both the communities that make up Sauk County, as well as the broader surrounding communities, including Wisconsin as a whole. As such, the demographics of the area have been considered at several different scales. Data from Sauk County, and the surrounding region, are provided to give the most complete representation of the neighboring population and likely trail users.

### SAUK COUNTY

Sauk County has a population of 65,763 with 27,094 households, according to the 2020 Census, making it the 25th most populous county in the state. Sauk County has a fairly even population distribution in terms of age and gender, although there is a relatively high proportion of adults between 50 to 74 years. The largest age group by gender in Sauk County is females between 55 to 59 years, followed very closely by males between 60 to 64 years.

The Census Bureau uses a diversity index to measure the probability that two people chosen at random in a given area will be from different race and ethnic groups. This index is a continuum that ranges from 0 (no diversity) to 100 (complete diversity), where an area's index tends toward 100 when the population is more evenly divided across race and ethnic groups. The racial diversity index for Sauk County is 30.2 which indicates a relatively low degree of racial diversity in this area. The majority of the population

(89%) is white, about 1% of the population is Black, 1% is American Indian, and 8% identify as another race or two or more races. Six percent of Sauk County's population is of Hispanic origin. Racial diversity has increased in Sauk County since the last census, as well as in Wisconsin as a whole. In 2010 Wisconsin's diversity index was at 30% and increased to 37% in 2020.

There is also a relatively high (25%) population of households with one or more persons with a disability. This percentage is 23% for the state of Wisconsin as a whole. Census respondents who report any of the following six disability types are considered to have a disability: hearing difficulty, vision difficulty, cognitive difficulty, ambulatory difficulty, self-care difficulty, and independent living difficulty.

Travel to work in Sauk County is reflective of the options available. Most people (81%) drive alone to work, 9% carpool, 6% work from home and 3% walk. Public transportation and biking to work were less than 1% all together. It is also important to note that this data comes from the 2020 census and these percentages likely shifted some in recent years, especially with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting shift to work from home options.

Median household income in Sauk County is around \$72,900 in 2022. This is about on par with the median income for Wisconsin as a whole, but lower than Dane County (around \$84,300 in 2022).

## SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES

Sauk County shares a border with seven other Wisconsin Counties and is at the intersection of four different Regional Planning Commission (RPC) areas: The Mississippi River RPC, the North Central RPC, the Capital Area RPC, and the Southwestern RPC. Many of the expected users for this trail will likely come not just from Sauk County but from surrounding counties as well.

### COLUMBIA COUNTY

Columbia County shares many similarities with Sauk County. It makes up a large portion of Sauk County's eastern border and is in close proximity to much of the study area. The population as of the latest census was around 58,490 which is broken up into 24,177 households.

The population is slightly less racially diverse than Sauk County with a diversity index of 22.3. Most of the population is white (91.5%) and the rest of the population is made up of 1.6% Black, .6% American Indian, 0.7% Asian, and 5.6% another race or two or more races. Around 4% of the population is of Hispanic origin. There are 23% of households that have one or more people with a disability. Median household income for Columbia County is \$76,824.

### DANE COUNTY

Dane County is southeast of Sauk County and home to the capital City of Wisconsin, Madison, which is also the county seat. As of the 2020 census the population was 561,504 which is separated into about 238,417 households. Due to the high population and interest in



*Baraboo community members participating in a public Listening Session for the Great Sauk State Trail planning effort (April 2023)*

outdoor recreation, it is likely that many trail users will come to the area from Dane County. There is also a bridge planned that will span the Wisconsin River and will eventually connect the existing segment of the Great Sauk State Trail in Sauk County to the Walking Iron Trail in Dane County.

Dane County has a diversity index that is significantly higher than its surrounding counties at 47.7. The Population is 77.1% White, 5.5% Black, 0.4% American Indian, 6.5% Asian and 10.5% some other race or more than one race. 7.6% of the population is of Hispanic origin. There are 16% of households that have one or more person with a disability. The median household income for the County is higher than surrounding areas at \$84,579.

### VERNON COUNTY

Located along the northwest corner of Sauk County, Vernon County is home to around 30,714 people in 12,082 households. The diversity index is on the low end at 12.1.



*Sauk County Fair Source: WisNews*

Most of the population is white (95.5%) and the remaining 4.5% is 0.4% Black, 0.2% American Indian, 0.3% Asian, and 3.8% some other race or more than one race. Twenty-two percent of households have one or more people with disabilities. The median household income is \$61,033.

## STATE OF WISCONSIN

As of the 2020 Census Wisconsin's population was 5,893,718 with 2,428,361 households. The average household size is 2.36. The average household size has been shrinking nationwide and Wisconsin and the counties considered here are no exception. Overall Wisconsin has a diversity index of 37 as of 2020.

	2010 US CENSUS DATA	2020 US CENSUS DATA	2010 - 2020 % CHANGE	2030 (PROJECTED FROM 2013)	2040 (PROJECTED FROM 2013)	2020-2040 PROJECTED % CHANGE
<b>SAUK COUNTY</b>	61,976	65,763	+6%	75,660	77,815	18%
COLUMBIA COUNTY	56,830	58,490	+3%	67,455	68,450	17%
DANE COUNTY	488,073	561,504	+15%	577,300	606,620	8%
VERNON COUNTY	29,773	30,714	+3%	35,300	36,520	19%
WISCONSIN	<b>5,686,986</b>	<b>5,893,718</b>	<b>+4%</b>	<b>6,375,910</b>	<b>6,491,635</b>	<b>10%</b>

Table 2.2 Census Population (US Census Data 2020) and Projections (WI Dept of Administration 2010 - 2040; Vintage 2013)



Hillsboro State Trail (spur to the 400 State Trail) in Vernon County

## PROJECTIONS

Sauk County's population has increased at a relatively consistent rate from 1970 through 2020. In the 1970s the population grew at 1.11% per year, 1.08% per year in the 1980s, and 1.17% per year in the 1990s. Similar rates are anticipated in the coming decades. By 2040, the population of Sauk County is anticipated to grow 18% from the 2020 census population. This is on par with the growth rate of nearby Dane County and faster than the state of Wisconsin as a whole (10%). It should be noted that the projections and rates of change are from an earlier year than the current Census data shown (2020).

# CHAPTER 3



## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

### PHASE I COLLECT IDEAS

#### OUTREACH AND EVENTS

The purpose of the first phase of community engagement was to gather information and initial ideas from the broader community, as well as understand specific ideas, issues, and opportunities from community stakeholders. In order to reach as many people in the community as possible, to inform them about the project and how to provide input, the following actions were taken:

#### PROJECT WEBSITE

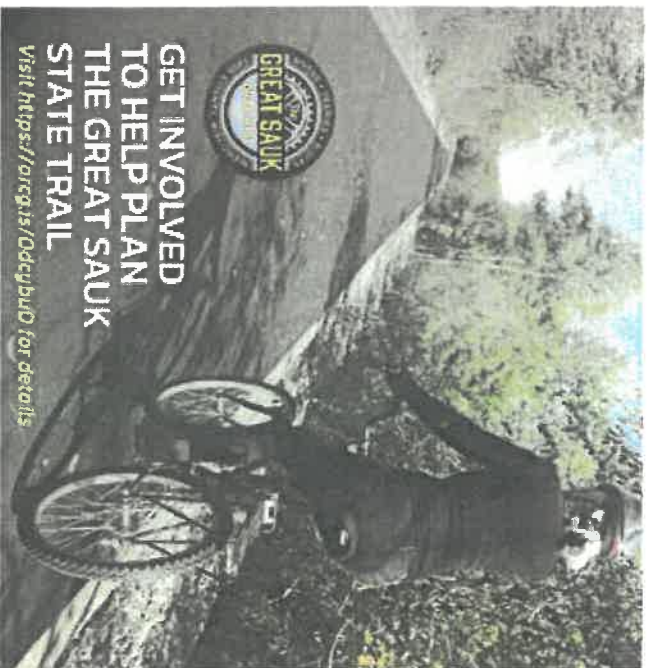
A StoryMap website was created by Sauk County staff to serve as a hub of information for the entire project. The site gives a description of the project, the study area, and directs visitors to participate in online survey tools. The project website will remain throughout the duration of the project as a means to display concepts, draft materials, solicit input and share about events. The StoryMap hosted an interactive map (Social Pinpoint) and Community Survey linked from the site, as well as a form to provide email contacts for those wishing to receive project updates.

Link to project StoryMap: <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/a150ea25965842a0aedda66cac535a0e5>

#### SOCIAL MEDIA

Sauk County staff shared a series of social media posts to promote the StoryMap, and survey tools.





Social Media Posts

## LETTERS TO RESIDENTS AND MUNICIPAL STAKEHOLDERS

Letters explaining the project scope, timeline, ways to participate in community surveys and information about the listening sessions were sent out to all rural property owners within the study area. 4,478 letters were sent out to residents and property owners of the following communities within the identified study area:

- » Town of Baraboo
- » Town of Excelsior
- » Town of Greenfield
- » Town of Merrimac
- » Town of Reedsburg
- » Town of Sumpter
- » Town of Westfield
- » Village of North Freedom
- » Village of Rock Springs
- » Village of West Baraboo

Residents of the City of Baraboo and City of Reedsburg were omitted from the direct letters to property owners, as the number of letters would exceed the capacity of the project team. Social media, print flyers, and email communication was used to supplement communication in the urban communities.

In response to the letters, County staff fielded phone calls to inquire about the project and receive more information.



## LISTENING SESSIONS

Two Listening Sessions were held in April 2023, hosted by the consultant team and Sauk County staff. The Listening Sessions were advertised in the aforementioned methods (flyer, social media, letter to residents, project StoryMap site). The format of the events were open house style. The public was invited to drop in to the advertised locations between 4-7 pm.

Large-scale maps and presentation boards were printed and displayed, and the project team conversed one-on-one with residents and property owners throughout the evening. Participation for the events was successful with high turnout for both evenings. It is estimated 75-100 people attended each night.

- » 4/11/2023 in Reedsburg: 400 State Trail Headquarters / Reedsburg Chamber
- » 4/12/2023 in Baraboo: Sauk County West Square Building

Comment cards were provided and collected during the events. 14 cards were collected in total. Conversations and ideas were documented on large-scale maps. The comments were then transcribed on the online Social Pinpoint site. Business cards that included project branding and instructions to visit the website and participate in the online survey tools were handed out to visitors, boosting traffic to the online suite of tools.

## SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK

### From Listening Sessions

- Need for Ho-Chunk Nation acknowledgment and input on the plan
- Snowmobiling, ATV/UTV use brought up as a question for the future trail
- Concern for potential conflicts with hunting seasons
- Concern about trail conflict with residential areas
- Concern for safety
- General support for a separated trail
- Questions about surfacing, mixed opinions on gravel vs. paved surfaces



Participants discussing trail route options in Reedsburg



Comments provided on presentation board in Reedsburg

**GREAT SAUK STATE TRAIL EXTENSION PLAN**

Visit <https://arcg.is/1d0K-Cybu0>

**LEARN ABOUT THE PROJECT & SHARE YOUR IDEAS.**

**Drop in to a Listening Session**  
Speak with County staff & share your ideas!

**CONTACT SAUK COUNTY STAFF**  
Brian Shimer, AICP  
70

Flyer distributed for event outreach



Listening Session participants in Baraboo

## SURVEY RESULTS COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

An online community survey was launched on March 15th, 2023 and closed May 15, 2023. The survey contained 10 questions to understand ideas and sentiments towards the trail project and biking/walking in the area. An additional 5 questions were included to collect demographic information of survey participants. The survey was designed to take 5-10 minutes to complete.

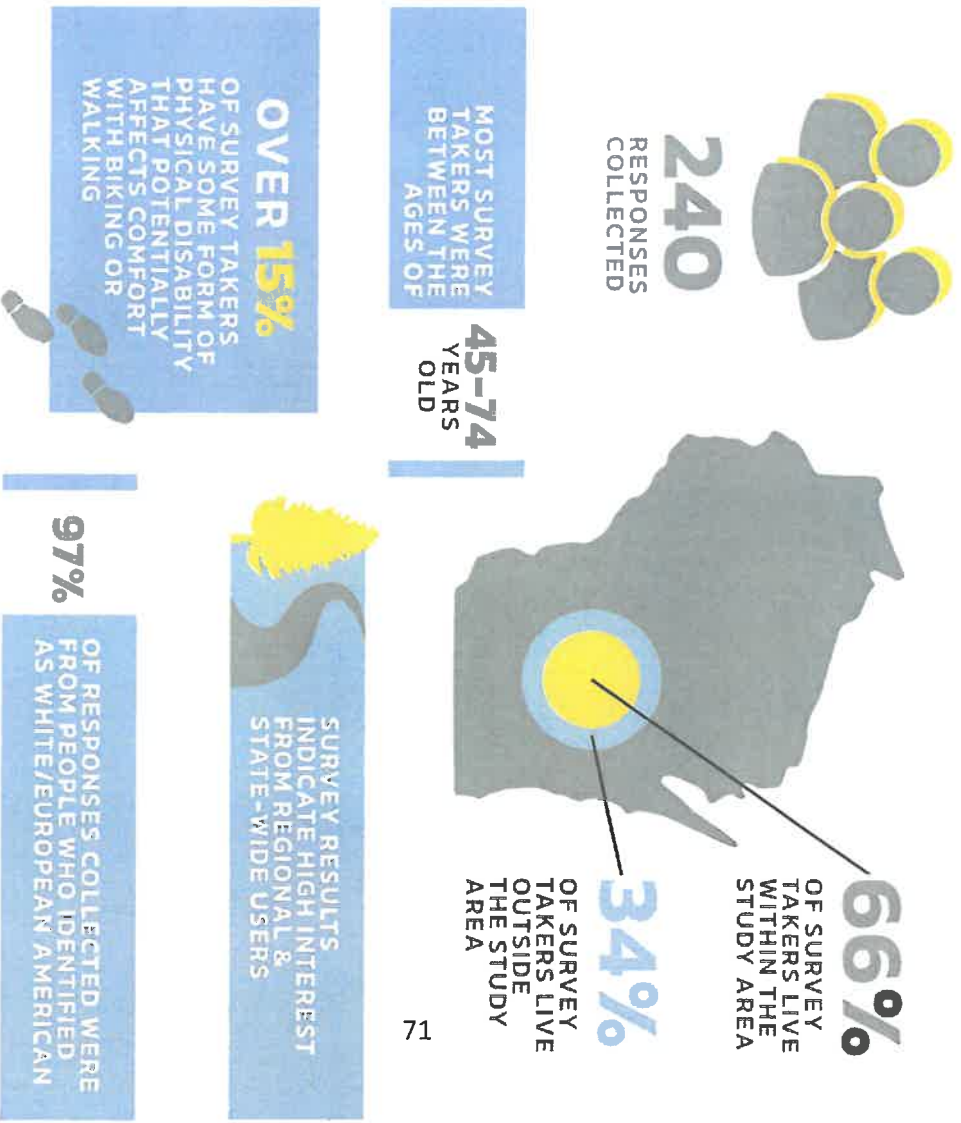
All survey results (names and contact info are withheld) can be viewed here:

[https://www.surveymonkey.com/results/SM-QVXNmjyd1\\_2FUFI64WSi\\_2BA\\_3D\\_3D/](https://www.surveymonkey.com/results/SM-QVXNmjyd1_2FUFI64WSi_2BA_3D_3D/)

### PARTICIPATION

- » 240 responses collected over a 2-month period
- » 34% of responses from people who live outside of the study area, including greater Sauk County, Madison, Waunakee, Dane County, Village of Poynette, Town of Middleton, Town of Delton, Village of La Valle, Town of West Point, Village of Cross Plains, Fitchburg, Town of Delton, Town of Dellona, Town of Roxbury, Town of Honey Creek, Town of Troy, Lodi, Village of Spring Green, Wisconsin Dells, and as far as Oshkosh, Marquette County, Oconomowoc, and one participant from Illinois.
- This is an indicator that a state-level trail is of interest to regional and state-wide users beyond the immediate study area.
  - » 21% of responses from residents of Baraboo
  - » 14% of responses from residents of Prairie du Sac
  - » 6% of responses from residents of Reedsburg

## SURVEY PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS





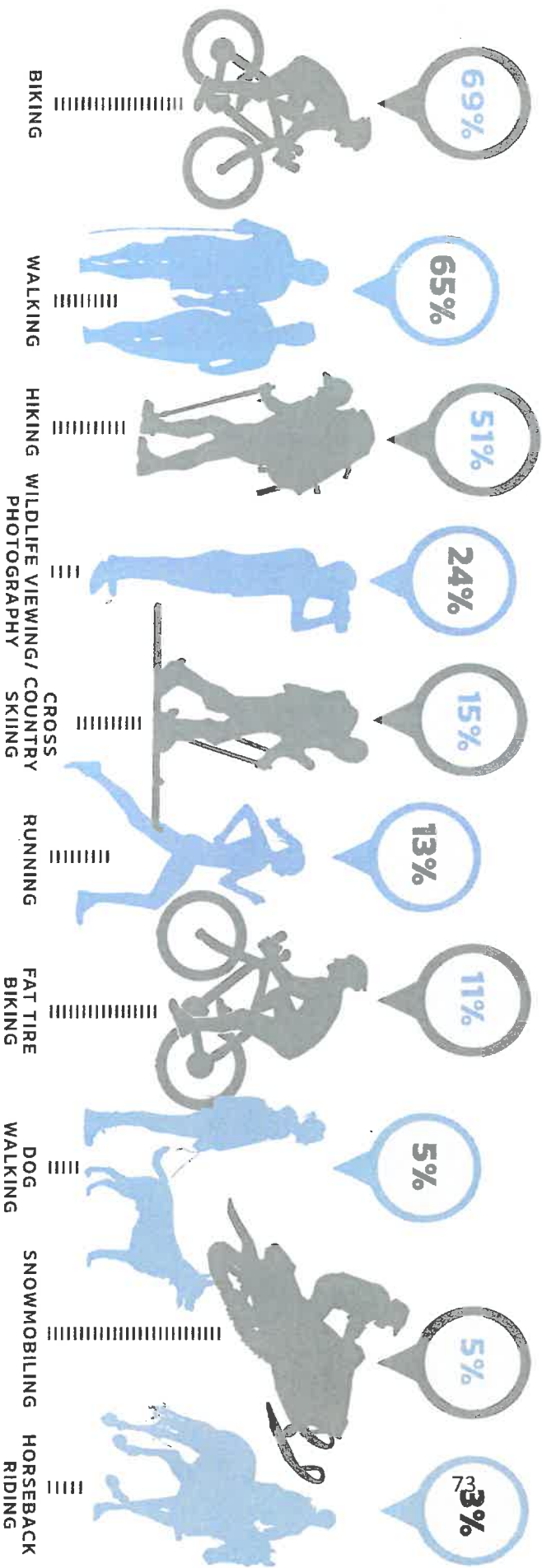


## RESULTS

- » Over 66% of participants bike, walk or utilize a trail at least once a month, with over 25% reporting use of trails, biking or walking nearly every day.
- » The majority (76%) of trail users drive a personal vehicle to a trailhead or parking area to begin their trail experience.
- » Overall, participants indicated strong enthusiasm for the Great Sauk State Trail extension as a priority project, with an average rank of 78 out of 100.
- » The most popular reasons for biking or walking often are for exercise, pleasure and recreation. Few respondents reported biking or walking for utilitarian or daily purposes such as going to work, school, to run errands or visit friends.
- » Notably, many people wrote in dog-walking, snowmobiling, and horseback riding as a non-listed use.

» **Biking is the most popular way that participants use trails (69%), with walking as a close second (65%). Hiking through natural areas (51%) and wildlife viewing/photography (24%) are the next most popular uses. Snowshoeing, cross country skiing, running/jogging and fat tire biking were significant reports as well (between 10 – 15% for each).**

## POPULAR TRAIL USAGE



» When asked about attitudes towards biking and walking, participants generally align with trends seen in other areas of the country



## RESPONDENTS ATTITUDES TOWARDS BIKING & WALKING:

» Biggest barriers to biking or walking from participants:

- Destinations are too far apart (42%)
  - No trails or sidewalks in areas where people want to go (37%)
  - Trails and sidewalks are too icy or snowy in the winter months (35%)
  - Concerns for safety walking or biking near motorized traffic (34%)
  - Uncomfortable weather (30%)
  - Concern for safety crossing busy intersections (21%)
  - “Not enough time” was a popular response provided in the ‘other’ category
- » The results from the barriers question point to a need/prioritization for separated, paved trails that are cleared in the winter months for biking and walking. However, this may conflict with potential trail use for snowmobiling, fat tire biking, and cross-country skiing unless the trail corridor can accommodate both a paved/cleared section and a natural surface/uncleared section.

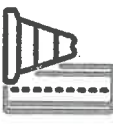



**Most important goals for the future trail connection:**




*Creating routes with scenic views and connections to parks and natural features*

*Feeling safe and comfortable crossing major roadways*

*Ensuring that there is a separated trail or other protection between user and roadway traffic*

*Feeling safe and comfortable along the route*



**SUMMARY OF OTHER IDEAS/ CONCERNS THAT WERE PROVIDED:**

- » Desire for a paved trail, physically separated from vehicle traffic
- » General excitement and support for the project; would like to see the project implemented ASAP
- » Concern for costs to build, maintain the trail
- » Would like to see the trail accessible for people with disabilities
- » Would like to see trail amenities such as restrooms, bike parking, trash receptacles
- » Idea for user-activated crosswalk lights
- » Desire to connect to nearby trails and destinations
- » Mixed support/opposition to motorized vehicle use of the future trail (ATVs/golf carts/snowmobiles)
- » Idea to connect to Merrimac as a future spur trail
- » Concern for steep slopes along the future trail route
- » Do not want to see lighting along the trail (dark sky, wildlife concerns)
- » Being able to connect to other trails throughout the region

- » **According to Survey Takers, the most important destinations for walking and biking are Natural or Open Spaces and Parks and Trails**



**Natural or Open Spaces**



**Parks and Trails**

## SOCIAL PINPOINT INTERACTIVE MAPPING

Social Pinpoint is an interactive mapping tool that allows participants to provide comments directly on a map, as well as view, comment, and like/dislike comments left by others to the site. Participants are encouraged to use color-coded markers to indicate what type of comment they are leaving (idea related, area of concern, and/or a route suggestion) and leave their feedback. The tool was launched alongside the Community Survey on March 18, 2023 and was open through the summer of 2023.

URL for Social Pinpoint Site:

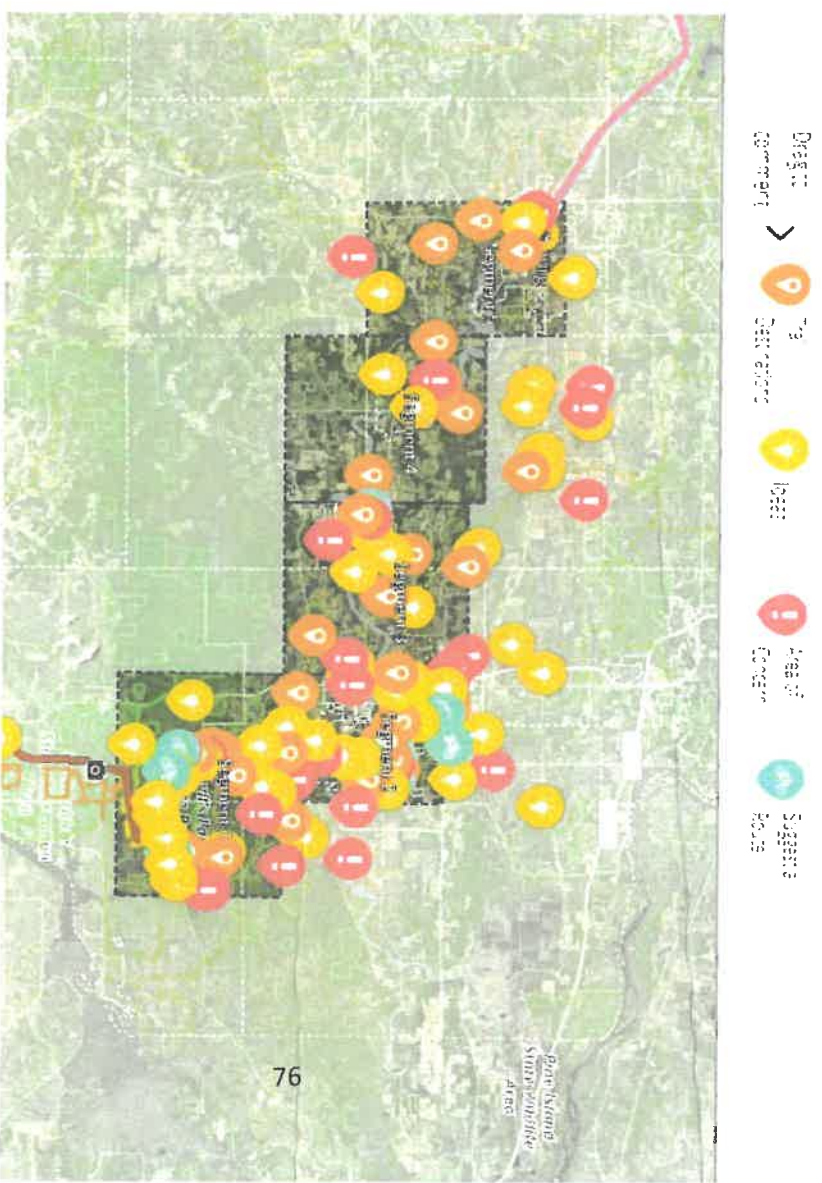
<https://hkai.mysocialpinpoint.com/great-sauk-state-trail/map>

## PARTICIPATION

As of 5/18/2023, 787 people have visited the site, providing 66 comments. Additionally, more 'upvotes' and 'downvotes' were subsequently collected in response to comments left. Comments left on printed maps during the in-person Listening Session were transcribed and added to the Social Pinpoint site to allow visitors to further comment on ideas provided at the events. Overall, 43% of the comments left so far are ideas; 21% are concerns, 27% are pinpointing destinations, and 9% are comments suggesting specific routes.

Overall, there is a higher concentration of comments left in Segment 2 (Baraboo and West Baraboo), followed by comments left in Segment 1 (Devil's Lake State Park).

## SOCIAL PINPOINT COMMENTS



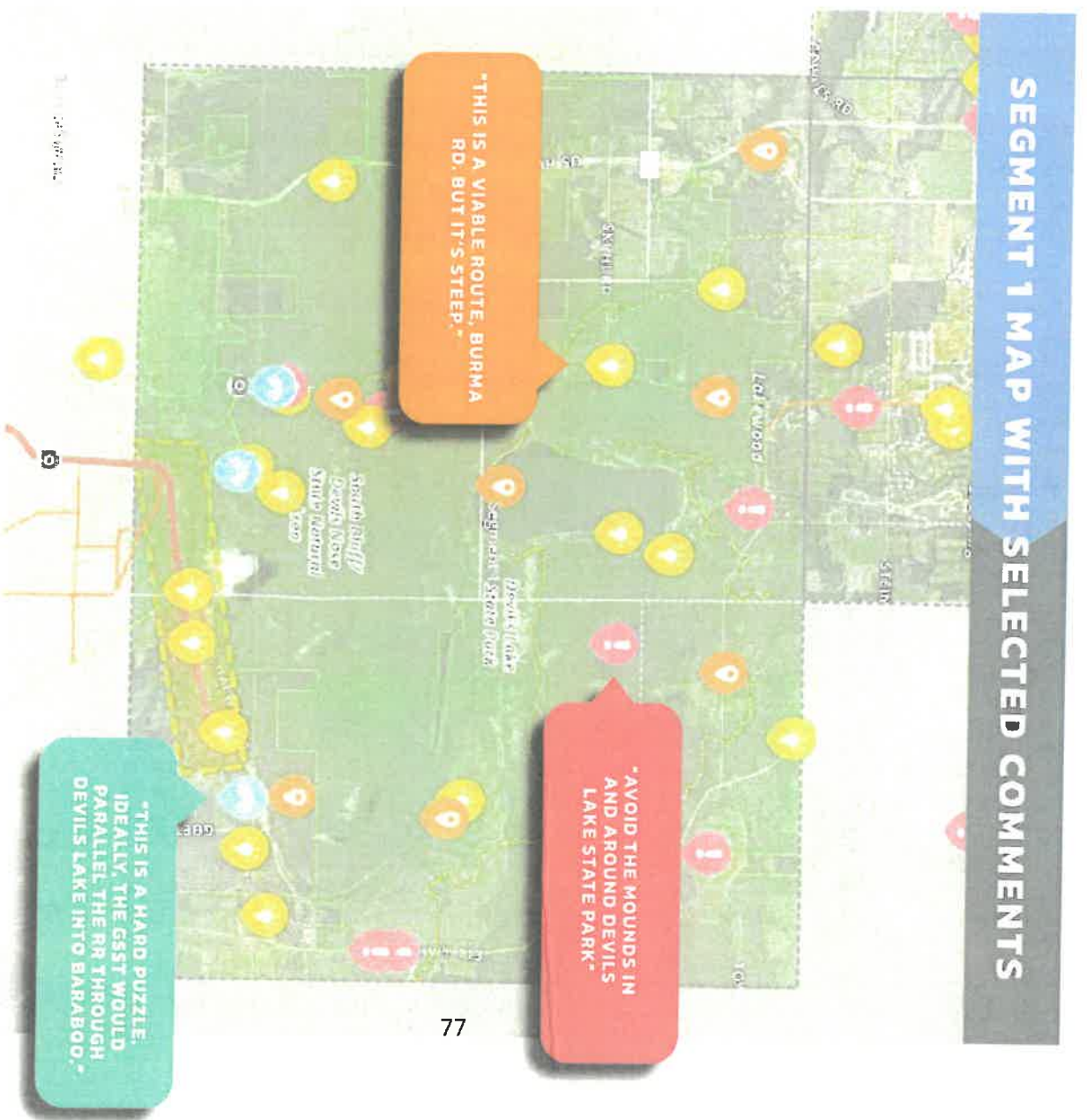
Screenshot of Social Pinpoint Website for Great Sauk State Trail



## SEGMENT 1 COMMENT SUMMARY

### Segment 1: Devil's Lake State Park

- » Support for a route utilizing Burma Road through Devil's Lake State Park, but concern for the steep slope in this area
- » Idea for a boardwalk segment alongside Devil's Lake utilizing the railroad corridor
- » Concern that trail will impact Native burial mounds
- » Dislike of Highway 113 as a potential route
- » Support for trailhead, parking at existing northern terminal point of the GSST
- » Concern for traffic congestion, especially during the weekends, at Devil's Lake State Park
- » Idea to use Old Highway 12 for a potential route

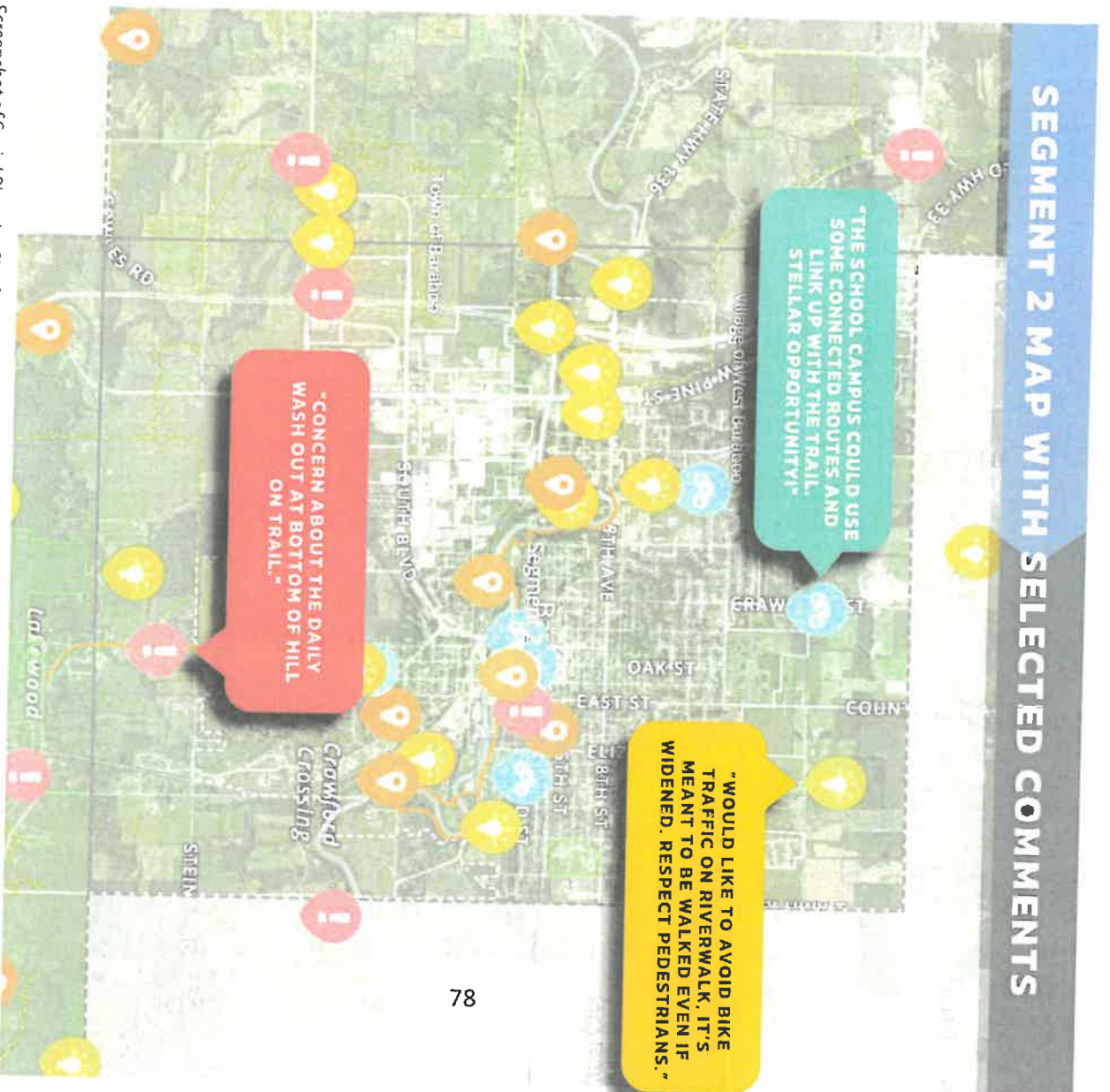


Screenshot of Social Pinpoint Site for Segment 1 with selected comments

**SEGMENT 2 COMMENT SUMMARY**

**Segment 2: Baraboo Area**

- » Support for utilizing the Walnut Street / co Rd DL trail north into Baraboo for the route
- » Ideas for trail to route through the east side of Baraboo along the river, connecting to Circus World and Downtown
- » Concern that the state trail will have lots of conflict with pedestrians, intersections, traffic within the City of Baraboo
- » Ideas to use the south shore of the Baraboo River and railroad corridor through the City for the trail route
- » Concern/dislike for idea of widening Riverwalk for the GSST route
- » Ideas to use the Ice Age Trail connecting through the UW-Baraboo/Sauk County Extension campus
- » Ideas for connecting to the new improvements to be built at Terrytown Road and Pine St. (Hwy BD)
- » Idea for a crossing of Hwy 12 at Hatchery Road

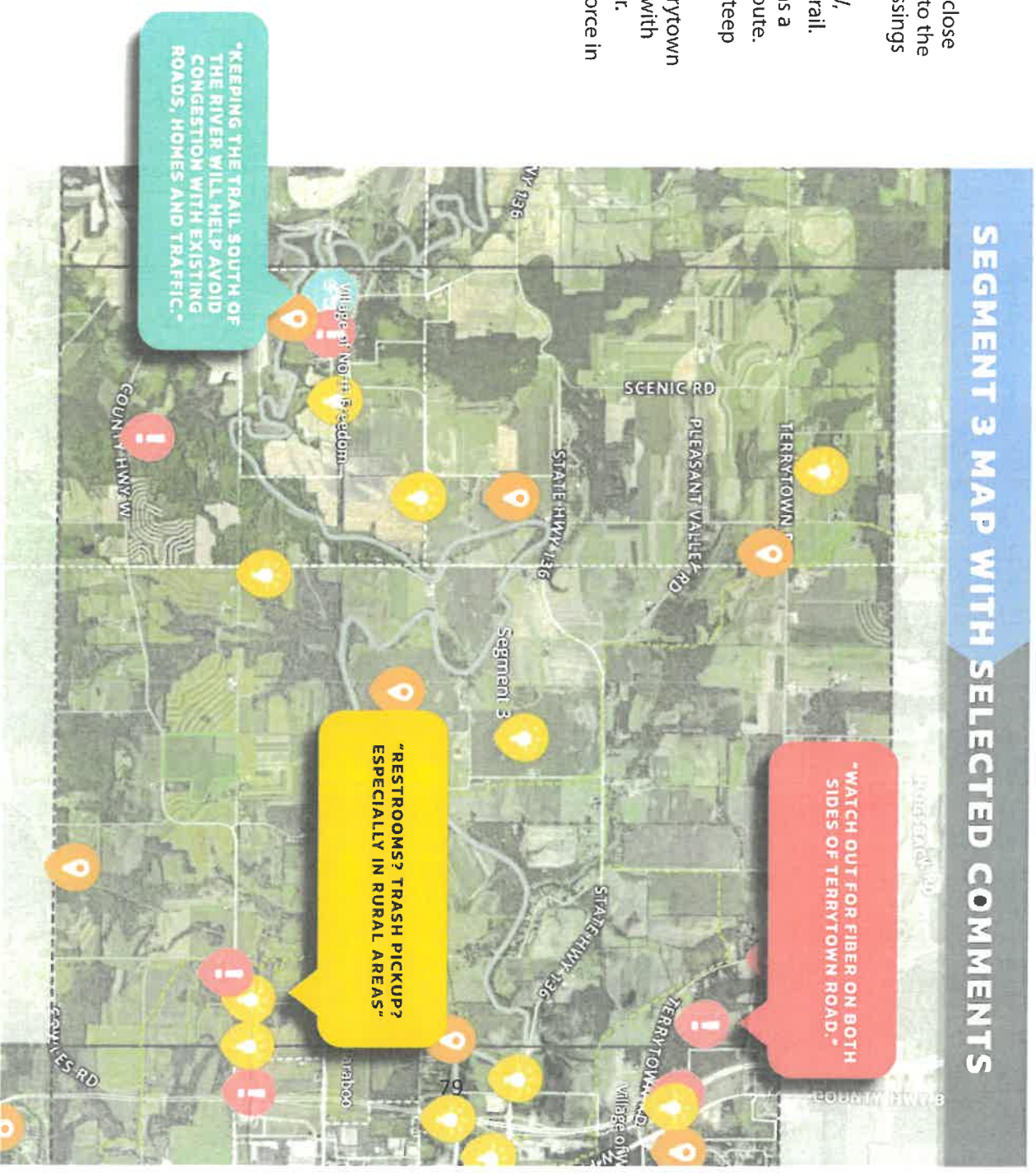


Screenshot of Social Pinpoint Site for Segment 2 with selected comments

**SEGMENT 3 COMMENT SUMMARY**

**Segment 3: North Freedom**

- » Ideas shared for keeping the trail close to the Baraboo River, connecting to the River, or ideas for new bridge crossings of the River.
- » Ideas for routing utilizing Co Rd W, Diamond Hill, Koch Road for the trail.
- » Ideas for improving Pewit's Nest as a trailhead, destination along the route.
- » Concern that Hwy W has a lot of steep grade.
- » Ideas/support for a trail along Terrytown Road; some concern for conflicts with existing homes along this corridor.
- » Concern for crime/lack of police force in North Freedom



Screenshot of Social Pinpoint Site for Segment 3 with selected comments

**SEGMENT 4 COMMENT SUMMARY**

**Segment 4: Rock Springs**

- » Support for connection to Rock Springs, connection between Rock Springs and North Freedom.
- » Ableman's Gorge and Van Hise Rock identified as destinations for the route.
- » Idea for Co Rd 154 as a potential route
- » Concern for steep slopes throughout area
- » Idea to revitalize the Old Creamery on Terrytown Road as a trailhead or destination.
- » Winery identified as a destination.



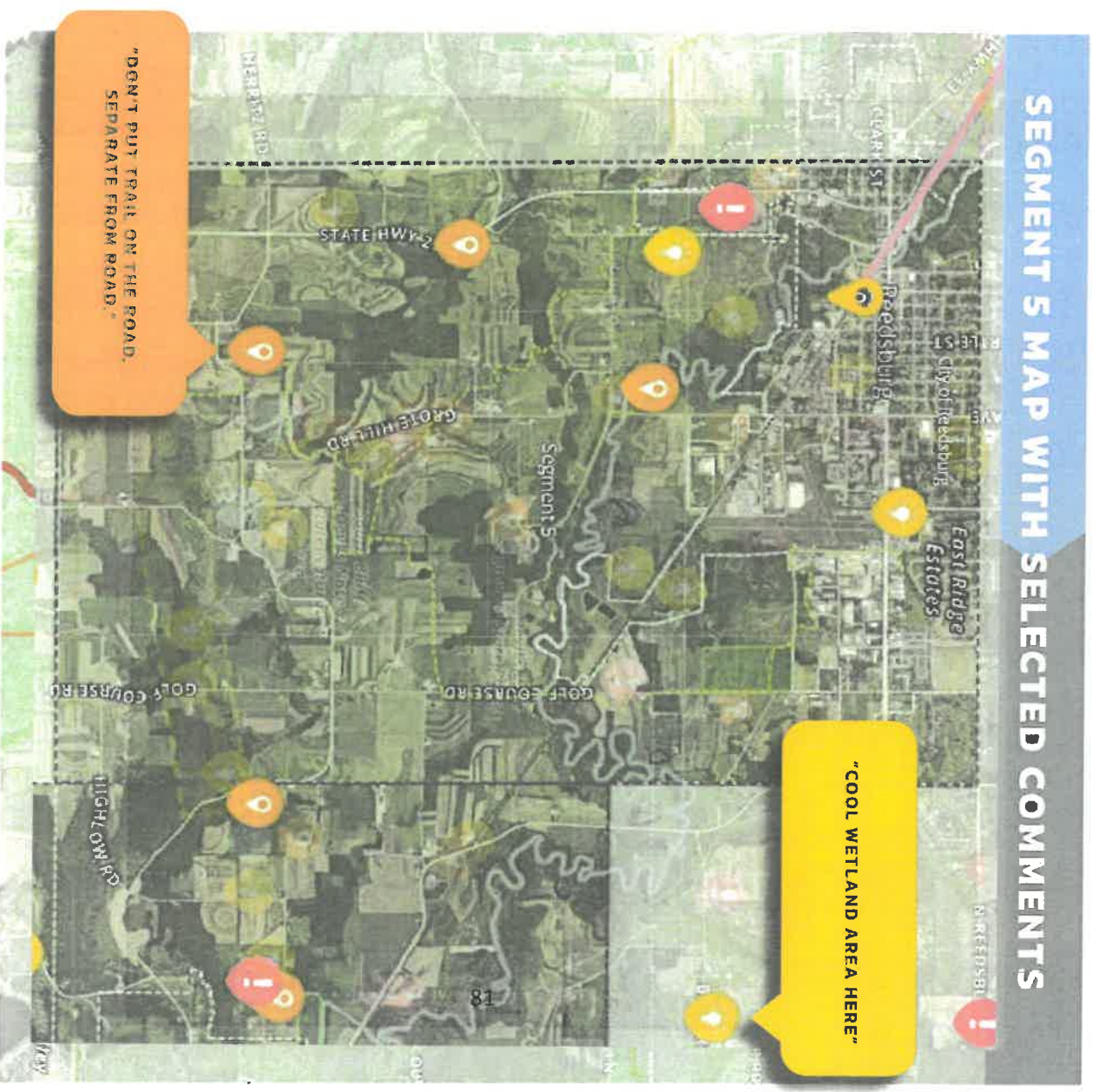
*Screenshot of Social Pinpoint Site for Segment 4 with selected comments*



SEGMENT 5 COMMENT SUMMARY

**Segment 5: Reedsburg**

- » Ideas for connecting to the wetland areas for interpretive elements.
- » Support for a trail to connect to the industrial part of the City (southeast area).



Screenshot of Social Pinpoint Site for Segment 5 with selected comments

# PHASE 2

## GATHER FEEDBACK

The purpose of Phase 2 of Community Engagement was to collect feedback on draft route options as presented to the broad community, as well as to understand ideas about phasing, priorities, and additional trail amenities desired. Similar to Phase 1, Phase 2 involved a variety of in-person and web-based activities, to target feedback from residents, property owners, trail advocates and other stakeholders throughout Sauk County and beyond. The following is a summary of the events that took place between October 1st and November 30th, 2023.

### OVERALL PARTICIPATION



- » **651 unique visitors** to the Social Pinpoint site between October 1st – November 30th
- » **428 comments provided** through the website (additional comments were added by the project team to reflect feedback collected at the Open Houses).
- » **17 people participated** in the Stakeholder Group Meeting 10/10/2023
- » **104 people signed in** at the Baraboo Open House 10/23/2023
- » **51 people signed in** at the Reedsburg Open House 10/24/2023
- » **946 letters sent** to property owners adjacent to draft route options

### OUTREACH AND COMMUNICATION

Events and opportunities to participate in Phase 2 were advertised in the following ways throughout the Fall of 2023:

- » **Social media** (Facebook and Instagram) posts by Sauk County
- » Flyer distributed throughout the project area (businesses and civic destinations) with QR code to project website
- » **Email notification** to anyone who has provided an email contact through previous events
- » **Project website** information about Open Houses and links to the Social Pinpoint site
- » **Yard signs (30)** were placed in visible locations throughout the project area with a QR code and URL for the project website
- » **Letters** sent directly to owners of property within 100 ft of trail route options, letting them know how to get involved and provide feedback.
  - A total of 946 letters were sent
- » Village of North Freedom posted information on their **digital marquee**
- » **Radio and local newspapers** picked up information and shared (independent of project team's effort)



Baraboo Open House (12/23/2023)



Baraboo Open House (12/23/2023)



Reedsburg Open House (10/24/2023)

## STAKEHOLDER GROUP MEETING

A Stakeholder Group Meeting was hosted on October 10th, 2024 at the Baraboo Civic Center. This meeting was intended to convene representatives for park and trail organizations, advocates for people with disabilities, arts organizations, recreational organizations, local community organizations, business organizations, and natural resource/conservation agencies, with the purpose of gathering feedback on the route options and planning process.

The meeting began with an overview presentation on the project, route options, goals and route criteria, with a brief discussion to cover questions. Following this, the group split into (3) groups and discussed each of the project areas in a round-robin, small group discussion format.



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PEOPLE INVITED FROM ORGANIZATIONS

17

PEOPLE ATTENDED THE MEETING

## TAKEAWAYS

- » The future trail should be seen as a driver for economic development within the communities where it will pass through.
  - Wayfinding to direct to business areas is key.
  - Bike parking throughout downtown areas is needed.
- » Consider places to camp for long-distance riders.
- » Idea to add spurs or additional connections to more picturesque/natural areas.
- » Biking along highways is not scenic or preferable.
- » Prefer "off-road" routes as much as possible
- » Concern for steep climbs out of Rock Springs, area near winery along Terrytown Road.
- » Bring more awareness to the US Bike Routes (USBR 30, for example).
- » The trail will serve as a "front door" to Devil's Lake State Park.
  - Burma Road vs. 'Lakewalk' route is somewhat of a toss-up for preference.
  - Lakewalk could be a great way to provide access to the lake for people with disabilities.
  - Burma Road is already a bike route, less disturbance to the park
  - South Spur Option 1 is preferred over Option 2.
- » Strong preference for the trail to be routed through Baraboo.
- » Trail etiquette, posted speed limits, potential marked separation between pedestrians and bicyclists are all ideas that seem relevant to
  - » the Riverwalk area in Baraboo.
  - » Trailheads:
    - Would like to see dedicated restroom facilities throughout the corridor.
    - Avid trail users may be able to go 10 miles between stops.
    - Other trail users would like to see more frequent stops between trailheads.
    - Benches should be placed very frequently for people who need to rest (suggested of every 1000 yards)
    - Idea for 10-volt/Level 2 EV Charging Stations
    - Parking for a few vehicles
  - » Other Ideas for Amenities:
    - Benches should be placed very frequently for people who need to rest (suggested of every 1000 yards)
    - Mile markers (continue)
    - Bench and public art design
    - Bike Repair Stations
    - Interpretive Signage
    - Signs for trail etiquette, posted speed limits, potential marked separation between pedestrians and bicyclists are all ideas that seem relevant to the Riverwalk area in Baraboo.
    - » Need for evaluation of usage (counts) of the trail over time as segments are constructed.
    - » Connection to the Baraboo River is important.
      - Idea for a route to canoe down, bike back route.



## OPEN HOUSES

Two open house events were hosted to collect feedback on the route options. The first open house was held at the Baraboo Civic Center on October 23rd, 2023. A second open house was held at the 400 State Trail Headquarters in Reedsburg on October 24th, 2023. Over 150 people attended the events (combined); the consultant team and county staff, along with DNR staff were available throughout the events for one-on-one conversations. Comments were collected on presentation boards and on large printed aerial maps that were set up throughout the spaces. Comment cards were also provided, collected and cataloged after the events (16 total were collected).



Baraboo Open House (10/23/2023)



Reedsburg Open House (10/24/2023)



Baraboo Open House (10/23/2023)



Reedsburg Open House (10/24/2023)



Baraboo Open House (10/23/2023)



Reedsburg Open House (10/24/2023)

## SOCIAL PINPOINT

Building from the successful rate of participation of Social Pinpoint during Phase 1, the project team created a new Social Pinpoint map for release to the public for Phase 2. The revised map included all of the route options being proposed, as well as text narrative for each of the route option segments and concept sections to describe specific trail conditions proposed at various points along the way.



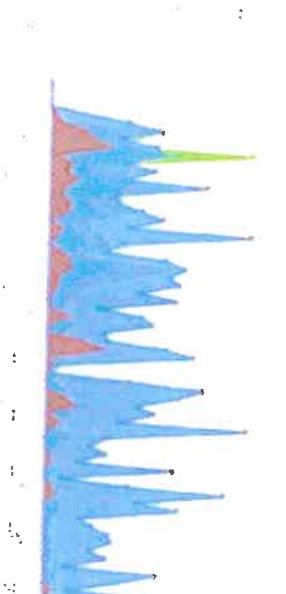
Example of the Information Provided for Each Route Segment



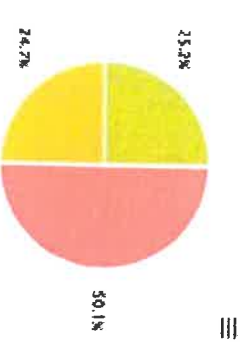
Screenshot of All Comments Collected in Phase 2

**1617** Total Visits **651** Unique Users **8:26** Avg Time (min) **120** Unique Stakeholders **510** Comments

Engagement by Day



Comments by Topic



● Total Visits  
● Comments  
● Unique Users  
● Avg Time  
● Survey Respondents  
● Budget Respondents

● Area of Concern  
● Ideas  
● I like this!

Social Pinpoint Dashboard

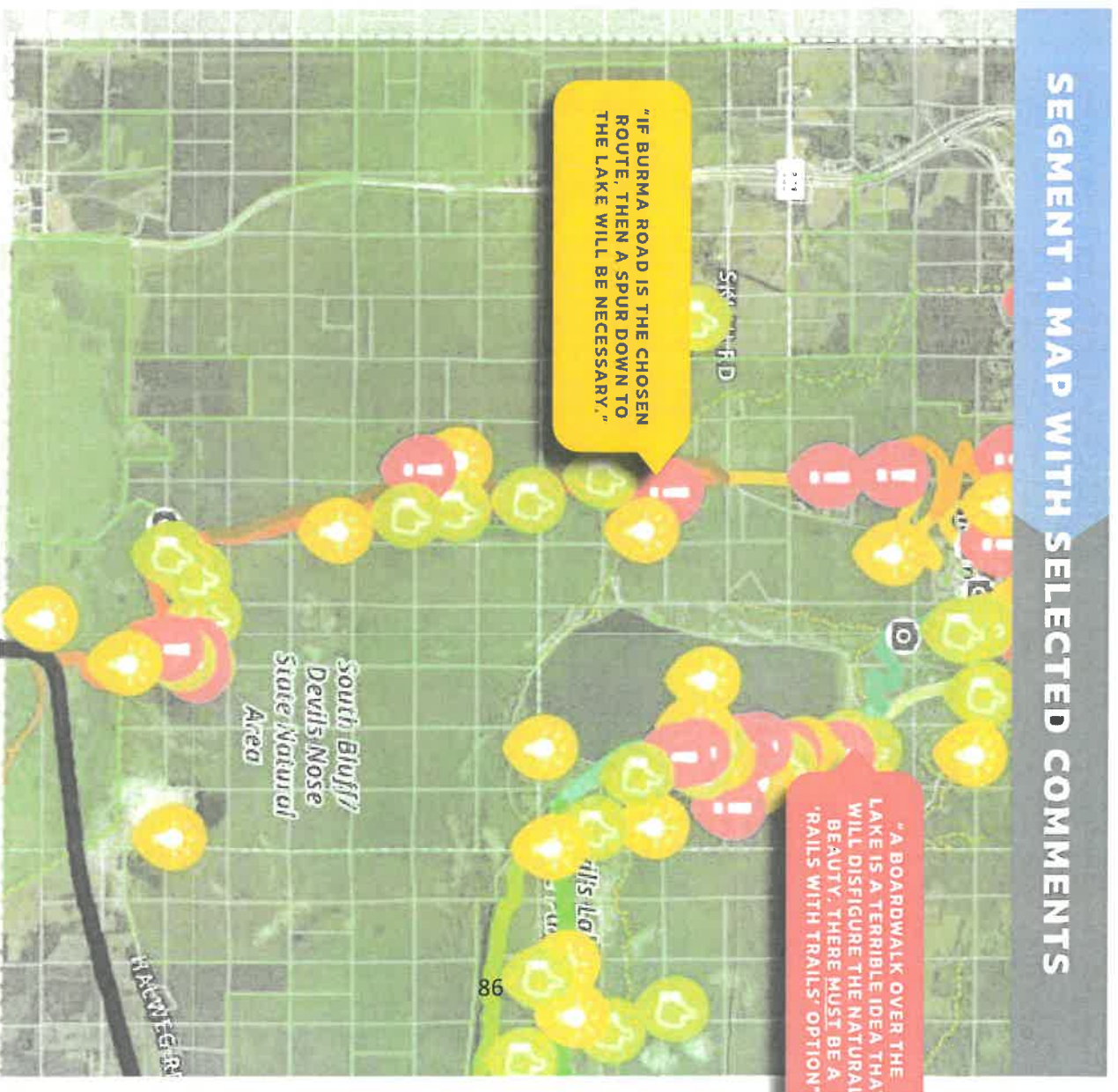
## SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

The following summarizes comments collected over the months of October and November through Social Pinpoint, as well as integrated comments collected at the Open Houses hosted in Baraboo (10/23/23) and in Reedsburg (10/24/23).

### SEGMENT 1 COMMENT SUMMARY

#### SEGMENT 1: DEVILS LAKE STATE PARK

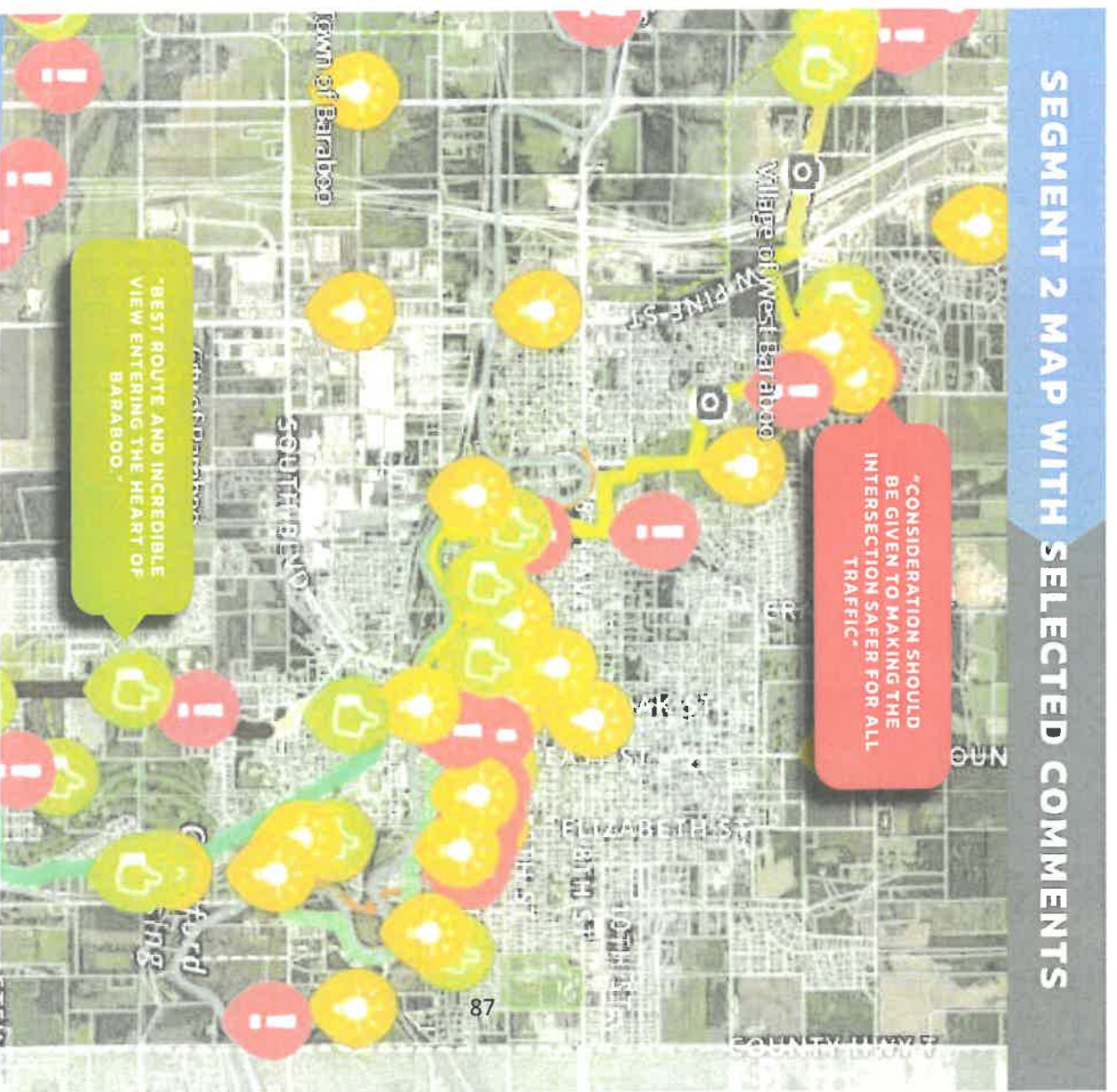
- » Mixed reactions regarding the boardwalk trail idea over Devil's Lake:
  - Interest in exploring further as a way to alleviate traffic from the existing Tumbled Rock Trail, as well as provide a safe way for pedestrians/bicyclists to travel north/south and have an alternative to the railroad tracks.
  - See McFarland Boardwalk over Lake Waubesa
  - Many concerns about ecological impact.
  - Concerns about increased traffic to Devil's Lake (already very busy today)
  - » Ideas for improved signage, wayfinding as the GSST enters into Devil's Lake State Park.
  - » Many people like the idea of connecting to the South Shore entry at Devil's Lake from the existing GSST termination point to the south.
  - » Mixed but general support for the Burma Road Option
- Opposition to the routes as shown to the West of South Shore Road.



Feedback Collected in Segment 1

**SEGMENT 2 COMMENT SUMMARY**  
 SEGMENT 2: BARABOO / WEST BARABOO / TOWN  
 OF BARABOO

- » Strong desire for the trail to connect with Baraboo, downtown businesses in Baraboo.
- » A number of comments provided near Circus World with concerns about conflicts with a trail along Water Street
  - It should be noted that there is already a local trail along the route as shown.
- » Some concern for increased bike/pedestrian traffic along the Riverwalk in Baraboo.
- » Safety concerns for trail crossings at 2nd Ave, 8th Ave near the High School.



Feedback Collected in Segment 2

**SEGMENTS 3-4 COMMENT SUMMARY**

**SEGMENTS 3-4 WILL AFFECT MIRROR LAKE REGION AND ROCK SPRINGS**

- » Terrytown Road:
  - Many concerns about localized conflicts between bicyclists and adjacent agricultural land uses.
  - Concerns about steep grade on Terrytown Rd west of Mirror Lake Road.
- » County Rd. W:
  - General dislike of this route for reasons related to grades, visibility, loss of land for trails.

**SEGMENT 5 MAP WITH SELECTED COMMENTS**



- » General opposition to additional bicycle traffic in the area, however a few comments that show openness to ideas that include ATV/UTV and snowmobiles.
- » General concern for loss of agricultural land, agricultural lifestyle if bicycle traffic increases throughout rural areas.
- Concerns that tourism will ruin the rural landscape
- Concerns about littering, trespassing
- Concerns that the trail will be forced upon landowners who do not want it

- » Concerns about conflicts with hunters
- » Strong opposition to nearly any trail route as shown by local property owners.
- » Support for rails-with-trails along the full length of the route.
- Question as to why WSOR can dictate what is built along WDOT/State ROW
- Many suggestions to build trail along existing rail line, build a fence to separate trail from tracks.
- Rails-with-trails approach would meet many of the stated goals of the project

- Paved trail
- Low grade change
- Minimal impact to existing properties
- » Many people agree that a connection to Ableman's Gorge and Van Hise Rock are good ideas
- Concern with Hwy 136, tight curves and safety.

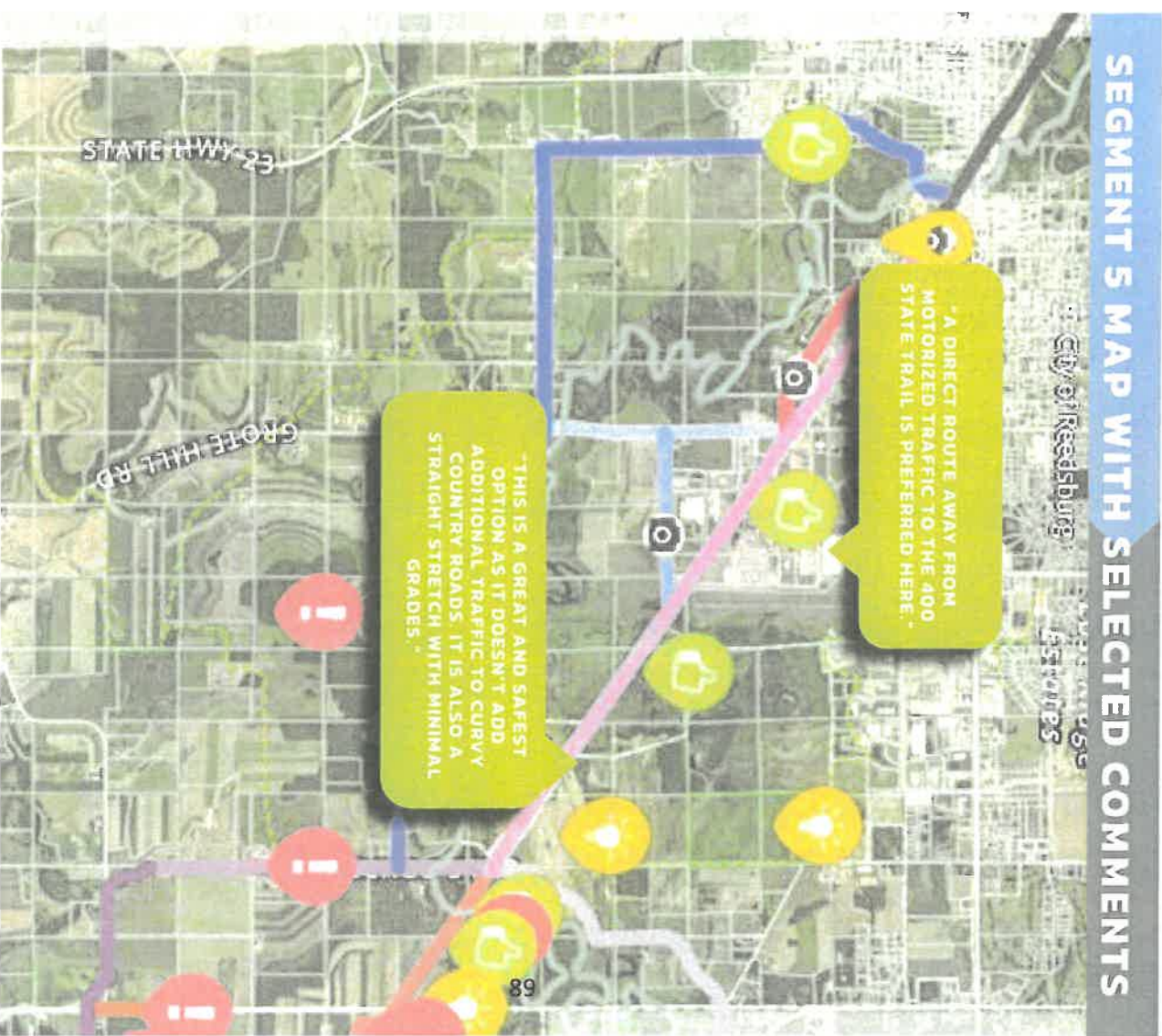
Feedback Collected in Segments 3 and 4



SEGMENT 5 COMMENT SUMMARY

Segment 5: Reedsburg

- » Mild support for Ski Hill Rd/Old Loganville Rd route.
- » Support for rails-with-trails route.
- » In general, less feedback collected throughout this area.



Feedback Collected in Segment 5

The purpose of Phase 3 of Community

Engagement was to coordinate specific plan elements with agencies and municipalities during the draft plan document development, as well as to provide a means for review, refinement, and approval of the plan document with agencies and the public as represented by elected officials.

The following is a list of activities that occurred in Phase 3 of Community Engagement (Spring and Summer of 2024):

- » Coordination meetings with agency and municipal representatives to refine plan elements.
  - » Sauk County staff review of initial draft plan document.
  - » Agency and Municipal Draft Plan Review - representatives were provided a 2-week review window to provide feedback on the draft plan through an interactive web platform.
  - » Post of draft plan to County's website (Storymap).
  - » Letters were sent to property owners including a map of the route and a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document and directions for viewing the draft plan through the County's website.
  - *A total of 496 letters were sent to property owners who live within 100' of the preferred and alternate segments shown in Ch 5.*
- » Email announcement to project contact list to notify of draft plan public release.
  - » Social media postings to announce the draft plan release.
  - » Presentation of the draft plan to the Land, Resources, and Environment Committee of Sauk County.
  - » Presentation of the draft plan to the Sauk County Board for approval.



# CHAPTER 4

## TRAIL CONSIDERATIONS

### PROJECT GOALS

The following set of goals were created at the onset of the planning process, and revised and refined along the way. These goals served as a guide for route planning, and will continue to guide Sauk County through implementation of the plan.

- 1** Identify a route that will accommodate a 10-12' bituminous paved shared use trail, with a consistent trail experience along the full route.
  - » 14-16' min. trail corridor width includes a 10-12' paved trail with 2' min. clear space on either side of the trail. Some rural sections may include gravel or limestone screening surface.
- 2** Create a route that will be physically separated from vehicular traffic as much as possible.
  - » Limit roadway crossings where possible.
  - » Build from existing grade separated crossings of major highways.
- 3** Create a route that is supported and celebrated by the local municipalities and state agencies.
  - » Consult and involve stakeholders along the way to understand priorities, concerns and ideas.
- 4** Create a route that is safe and comfortable for a wide variety of users, including young people, seniors, and people with disabilities.
  - » Limit segments with slopes higher than 8%.
  - » Consider rest areas, shade, access points approximately every 2 miles along the route.
  - » Consider safety around active rail lines.





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- » Create a route that is sustainably constructed, avoiding impact to sensitive natural areas and/or sacred sites. Avoid excessive tree removal or land disturbance, while connecting trail users to scenic and natural areas.
- » Consult stakeholders and major land owners along the way to understand sensitive lands and areas to avoid.
- » Construct elevated boardwalk segments where necessary through wetland or floodplain areas.
- » Adhere to local/state/national restrictions for permeable surfaces, drainage.
- » Build in areas that are already cleared.
- » Restore areas with native vegetation to support habitat where construction of the trail disturbs the landscape.

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- » Provide a regional recreational trail experience, with amenities and trail design to accommodate long-distance trail users, with consideration for local, shorter-distance users.
- » Keep in mind the long-standing goal of creating a 'world-class' trail experience.
- » Consider interpretive elements, public art, trailheads.
- » Consider connections to other trails.
- » Consider primary trail users (bicyclists and pedestrians), as well as others, such as wildlife photographers, snowmobilers, dog walkers, etc.

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- » Create a route that is feasible to complete.
- » Consider cost, available land/right-of-way and public support.

## ROUTE CRITERIA


### HOW TO DETERMINE A TRAIL ROUTE?


Many factors influence the decision of where and how to build a trail. The following route criteria were developed to provide the project team with a means to compare a wide variety of route options in the concept development phase of the master plan.

 **Length:** How long is this segment? How well does this directly connect trail users?

 **On/Off Road Experience:** Is a separated trail (off-road) or on-road facility (bike lane or paved shoulder) feasible here?


 **Views + Experience:** How well does the route provide access to natural areas, scenic views, cultural or historic destinations?

 **Trailheads:** Where are there opportunities for trailheads, either building new or utilizing existing facilities for parking and access to the trail?

 **ROW/Land Acquisition:** How much land will need to be acquired or where will easements need to be obtained to build the trail? Where can we construct the route within an existing right-of-way (ROW)?

 **Speed/Volume:** How fast are vehicles driving on roadways adjacent to the route? How busy is the adjacent roadway?

 **Intersections and Crossings:** How many road and railroad crossings will be necessary for the route?

 **Wetlands/Floodplains:** How much of the route will require elevated segments or construction within a 100-year floodplain?

 **Tree Removal:** What is the impact to existing tree canopy?

 **Baraboo River Connection:** How well does the route connect to the Baraboo River or to future access points?



**Topography:** How much of the route will be steeper than 8%? How much of the route can accommodate slopes that meet ADA requirements and are comfortable for most trail users?



**Existing Trail Facilities:** How much of the route can be built upon an existing bicycle, pedestrian or snowmobile route? How would a paved trail impact these existing facilities?



**Cost impacts:** What will impact the cost to build this route?



**Local/Community Support:** Based on input gathered so far, what can we anticipate for community support of this route?



**Agency/Municipal Coordination:** Which agencies and municipalities will need to provide direct approval of this route option?



**Alignment with other plans:** How well does this route support previous planning efforts?



**Improvements or Design Considerations:** What types of improvements, design considerations, or other land use modifications will make this trail a success?



*Lighting, seating, and rest areas*



*Existing trail facilities in Prairie du Sac*



*Surface width and slope*



*Scenic views and natural areas*



*Intersections and crossings*



*Art and interpretation*



*Wayfinding*





Accessible trail wayfinding/marker



Forest boardwalk



Accessible natural surface trail

## ACCESSIBILITY

Goal 4 clearly prioritizes creating a route that is safe and comfortable for a wide variety of users. Young people, seniors, new bicycle riders, people with disabilities (especially those with limited stamina, or those that use wheelchairs or other mobility devices) may have difficulty negotiating difficult grades and tough terrains.

In order to address accessibility, the route and alternates have been carefully evaluated and selected to limit areas with steep slopes. A slope greater than 5% is considered to be too steep to be compliant with ADA (Americans with Disabilities). The United States Accessibility Board has created guidelines for outdoor recreation spaces for accessibility; with these guidelines in mind, short stretches of trail can be designed for steeper slopes (up to 8%) if there are areas for passing and resting to accommodate a variety of users.

Selection of a surface material that is smooth, such as concrete or bituminous (asphalt) paving, is another factor for trail accessibility. Where possible, the Great Sauk State Trail should be constructed with a paved surface. Where gravel or limestone screening is used, additional care for seasonal maintenance and design for drainage should be considered to avoid rutted or damaged areas that are difficult to traverse in a wheelchair or bicycle.

See <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/OpenOutdoors/Recreation> for more information on how to find accessible recreation opportunities at state facilities.

## TRAILS FOR ALL

- The maximum grade recommended for shared-use trails is 5%, with a preference for sustained grades of 2 - 3%.
- Where existing topography constrains the ability to construct a trail at the slopes mentioned above, at a minimum, the trail needs to be equal to the adjacent roadway where built.
- Provide rest areas at a minimum of every 2 miles. Provide seating, shade, water, and charging stations for mobility devices, and handicap parking stalls to increase accessibility for a broad range of trail users. Direct trail users to the nearest public restrooms if restrooms are not available at trailhead locations.
- Consider signage in multiple languages or signage that uses universal iconography to direct trail users to trailheads and access points.
- Make the trail welcoming and inviting. This includes utilizing interpretive elements and art to share the stories of the area. This also means prompt removal of graffiti and maintaining signage and trail amenities as they are worn over time.

## TRAIL BENEFITS

The Great Sauk State Trail will provide benefit for people walking, bicyclists, wildlife enthusiasts, photographers, and anyone with an interest in experiencing the unique landscape of Sauk County's Baraboo Hills Area. The benefit provided to residents and visitors is difficult to measure. The following pages outline two metrics for measuring community benefit: economic growth and quality of life.

### ECONOMY OF TRAILS

Consumer spending on outdoor recreation includes purchases by trail users passing through town, tourism-centered purchases while visiting natural resources and recreating, and purchases related to gear and equipment etc. Wisconsin's outdoor recreation industry contributed \$9.8 billion to the state's GDP in 2022 and surpassed the state's previous record set in 2021 by 6.8%.<sup>1</sup> According to the Wisconsin Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP 2019), Sauk County had the third highest amount of direct visitor spending at \$1,087 million in 2017, topped only by Milwaukee and Dane Counties. This is an eight percent increase from 2015.

Top priority recreation needs identified by Wisconsin residents in the SCORP 2019 include the need for more places near urban centers to support a variety of nature-based recreation. Of particular note is the demand for more trails (both non-motorized and motorized) and

<sup>1</sup> Wisconsin Office of Outdoor Recreation, *Outdoor Recreation Satellite Account of the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis*.

## \$152 MILLION DOLLARS


FOR BICYCLING CONTRIBUTED TO WISCONSIN'S GDP IN 2022

water and shore access for fishing, boating and swimming. By nearly every measure, the largest recreation need throughout the state is for more trails that enable people to experience natural settings, visit the vibrant centers of our cities and villages, commute to work, and access their favorite places.

According to the Wisconsin Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, **95%** of Wisconsin residents participate in some form of outdoor recreation, **68%** of Wisconsin residents participated in hiking and **35%** of Wisconsin residents participated in bicycling at least once in the last 12 months (SCORP 2019).

The question of how trails affect property value came up frequently in discussions with local residents during the trail planning process. The property values of privately-owned lands near federal, state, county and local parks, trails, fish and wildlife areas, forests, natural areas and other

 94,042 jobs support Wisconsin's outdoor recreation industry (2022)

 \$4.7 billion in wages and salaries (2022)

 \$1.537 billion collected in state and local tax revenue (2017)

protected places are typically higher and more stable than other private properties. Recent studies by the National Association of Realtors confirm that living near trails and greenways are likely to raise property values an average of 3-5%, and sometimes even as high as 15%. There are no indications that trails increase crime in surrounding areas as well.<sup>2</sup>

A study for the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service found that, all else being equal, homes within a half-mile of wildlife refuges are valued on average 3% to 9% higher than houses further away.<sup>3</sup>

Another study found that lots adjacent to the Mountain-Bay State Trail in Brown County Wisconsin sold for an average of 9% more than similar property not located next to the trail. The benefits and economic impact of trails tends to get passed along to even those who are not trail users.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.nar.realtor/trails-and-greenways>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.doi.gov/sites/doi.gov/files/uploads/NWRSAmenityReportApril2012withCovers8.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> Brown County Regional Plan Commission, 1998. *Recreational Trails, Crime, and Property Values: Brown County Mountain-Bay Trail and the proposed Fox River Trail*.



## QUALITY OF LIFE

Trails can have meaningful long-term impacts on individuals and communities health and well-being. Trails and greenways create healthy recreation and transportation opportunities by providing people of all ages with attractive, safe, accessible and low- or no-cost places to cycle, walk, hike, jog or skate. Trails help people of all ages incorporate exercise into their daily routines by connecting them with places they want or need to go. Communities that encourage physical activity by making use of the linear corridors can see a significant effect on public health and wellness.

In addition to providing a safe place for people to enjoy recreational activities, greenways and trails often function as viable transportation corridors. Trails can be a crucial element to a seamless urban or regional multi-modal transportation system. Many areas of the country incorporate trails and similar facilities into their transit plans, relying upon trail facilities to “feed” people in to and out of transit stations in a safe and efficient manner. The ability to avoid congested streets and highways, and travel through natural areas on foot or by non-motorized means, is a large factor in a community’s “livability.”

Linear greenspaces, including trails and greenways, have all the traditional conservation benefits of preserving green space, but also have additional benefits by way of their linear nature. As tools for ecology and conservation, greenways and trails help preserve important natural landscapes, provide needed links between fragmented habitats and offer tremendous opportunities for protecting plant and animal species. They also can be useful tools for wetland preservation and the improvement of air and water quality. In addition, they can allow humans to experience nature with minimal environmental impact.

» In addition to providing a safe place for people to enjoy recreational activities, **greenways and trails often function as viable transportation corridors.** Trails can be a crucial element to a seamless urban or regional multi-modal transportation system.

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# CONTINUED ENGAGEMENT

Implementation of the full vision of the completed Great Sauk State Trail will take many years. During this time, it is likely that land will change hands, policy conditions can change, and trends will evolve. It is vital that residents and future trail users continue to be involved and engaged during subsequent phases of engineering, design, and construction, in order to continue to build stewards and sustain support for the trail. Sauk County is committed to building and maintaining relationships with residents, property owners, business owners, and local decision-makers throughout implementation of the trail and beyond.

## PROGRAMMING / EVENTS

Trails can serve as a valuable community resource for gathering and events. Sauk County has many opportunities to collaborate with community partners to maximize the value of the trail for the community in a variety of ways. Activities like fun runs, group bike rides and foot or bike races using the trail corridor are encouraged.

Developing programming that encourages stewardship and activities that bring people together to maintain the trail can provide educational components and assist the County in maintenance or operations. Volunteer groups could be organized to help plant native plant species or remove noxious and invasive plants. Educational programming like citizen science or school field trips/visits can help to promote the trail and encourage understanding and stewardship of the natural environment.

- » Potential partnerships
- » Worm Farm Institute Art Farm DTour
- » Scenic Shore Bike Tour Bike Ride
- » Bike MS: Best Dam Bike Tour WI (150mile Bike Ride)
- » Citizen Science programs organized with the Wisconsin DNR



*Provide opportunities to weigh-in on specific trail components*



*Meet on-site to discuss ideas*



*Provide a variety of ways for people to share their ideas.*

# ELEMENTS TO REPEAT



## TRAIL AMENITIES

The Friends of the Great Sauk State Trail group has established a bold and recognizable brand for the Great Sauk State Trail. The branding elements, including the logo, wayfinding, mile markers, and benches were designed during the planning of the Sauk Prairie Segment. This branding effort has been successful in creating a recognizable amenity throughout the County. Mile markers and benches in the Sauk Prairie Segment honor donors and were custom designed and manufactured by a Wisconsin furnishings company from Wausau. Mile-markers are located every half mile (per the crane insignia) and mile (per the eagle insignia). Continuing this branding along the full trail extension will help to create a consistent trail experience, while also paying homage to the local culture and donors of the trail.



## INTERPRETATION

The Sauk Prairie Segment of the trail showcases specific features and history of the areas along and around the trail through interpretive signage. This type of interpretive signage should continue throughout the trail corridor to pair with benches and rest areas or trailhead locations. Effort should be taken to work with the Ho-Chunk Nation, historic preservation groups, and other local experts to thoughtfully develop interpretive signage that is meaningful and specific to each area the trail passes through.



## ART

The Sauk Prairie Segment is also graced with art that helps to tell the story of the trail and the land around it. Art in the landscape can illustrate the identity of the trail itself, and the identity of the community through which it winds. It can stimulate the mind and the senses, allow for rest or contemplation. Public art can also cultivate vision and inspire change in the surrounding community. Future segments of the Great Sauk State Trail should follow the lead of the Sauk Prairie segment, to build from the successful example of art that brings character and identity to the trail, and adds value to the communities where it is placed.



# ALTERNATIVE TRAIL USERS



## E-BIKES

Electric bikes (e-bikes) are growing in popularity and acceptance nationwide. Today, e-bikes are allowed on the Sauk Prairie Segment of the GSST, with assisted speeds limited to 15 miles per hour. Note that any electric bicycle capable of travelling

above 30 miles per hour is, under state law, a motorcycle and not a bicycle, and may not be ridden on state trails with the motor engaged. Electric bicycles used without the motor engaged are allowed on all bicycle trails. E-bike riders must follow all the usual cycling rules of trail etiquette: remain aware, be considerate, slow down and ride single-file when passing or meeting others. Three classes of E-bikes are defined by Wisconsin State Statute 340.01. Note that the Wisconsin DNR does not permit use of Class 2 electric bicycles with the motor engaged on state trails.

### ELECTRIC BICYCLE TYPES:

- » Class 1: Bicycle equipped with a motor that provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling, and that ceases to provide assistance when the e-bike reaches 20 mph.
- » Class 2: Bicycle equipped with a throttle-actuated motor, that ceases to provide assistance when the e-bike reaches 20 mph.
- » Class 3 (not permitted on state trails): Bicycle equipped with a motor that provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling, and that ceases to provide assistance when the e-bike reaches 28 mph.



## SNOWMOBILES

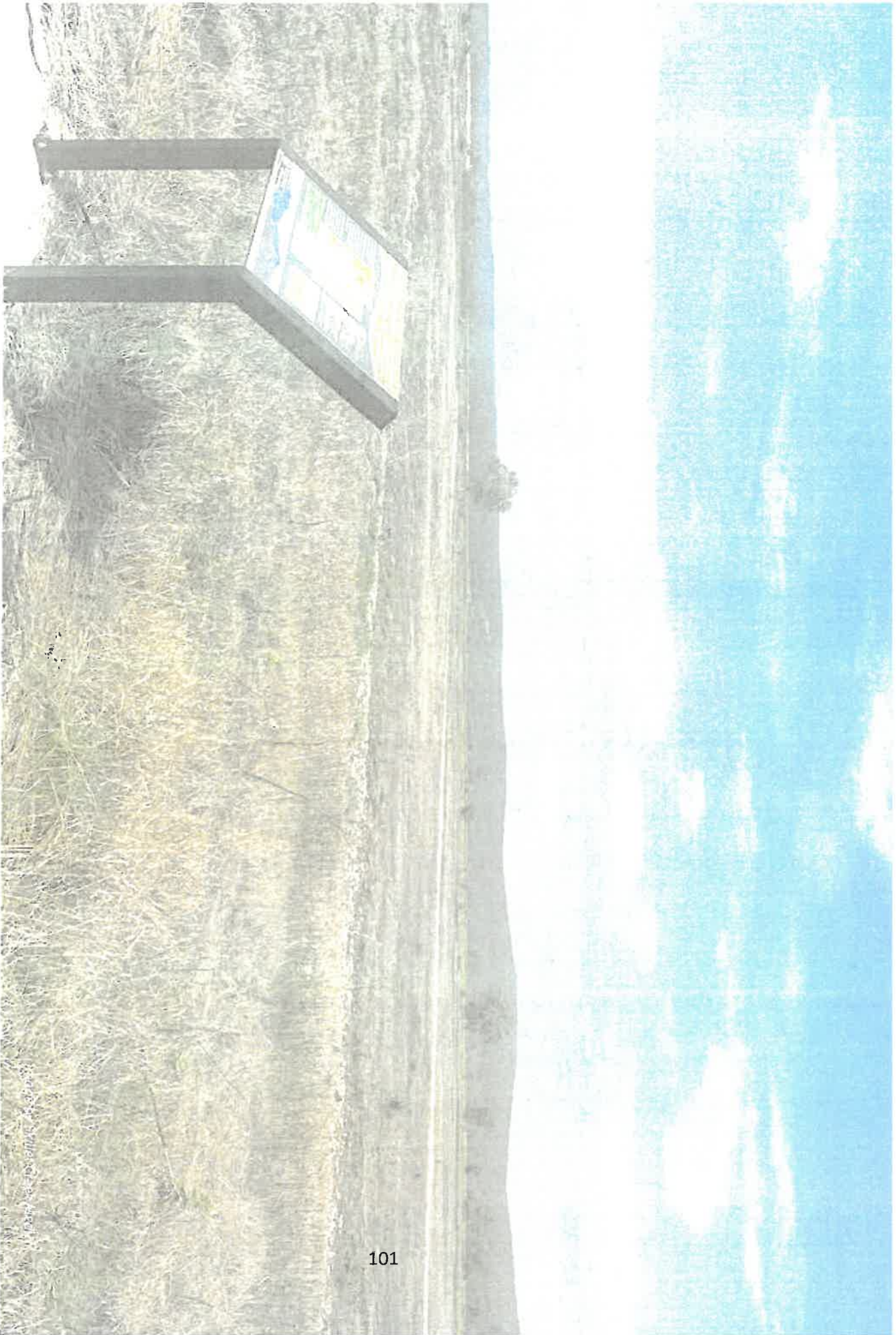
Future trail construction for the Great Sauk State Trail may accommodate for snowmobile use, either through trail surfacing or by building the GSST adjacent to existing snowmobile routes. Snowmobiles are not permitted on the paved surface of the Sauk Prairie Segment of the GSST, but are permitted along the 400 State Trail. Trail segments that accommodate snowmobile use (in addition to bicycle and pedestrian use) should be constructed with limestone screenings in lieu of a bituminous surface. Areas intended for shared use with snowmobiles should be well marked to clearly delineate, even in snowy conditions, where the trail surface changes that snowmobile activity may be permitted.

Safety, etiquette, maintenance, and shared understanding of trail use are all serious considerations when constructing a trail that will be shared by motorized and non-motorized users to keep the trail safe for all.



## ATVS AND UTVS

There is no plan to allow for all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) and utility task vehicles (UTVs) on the Great Sauk State Trail. These vehicles are acceptable on a wide variety of roadways and on private land throughout the area.



# CHAPTER 5



## ROUTE PLAN & RECOMMENDATIONS

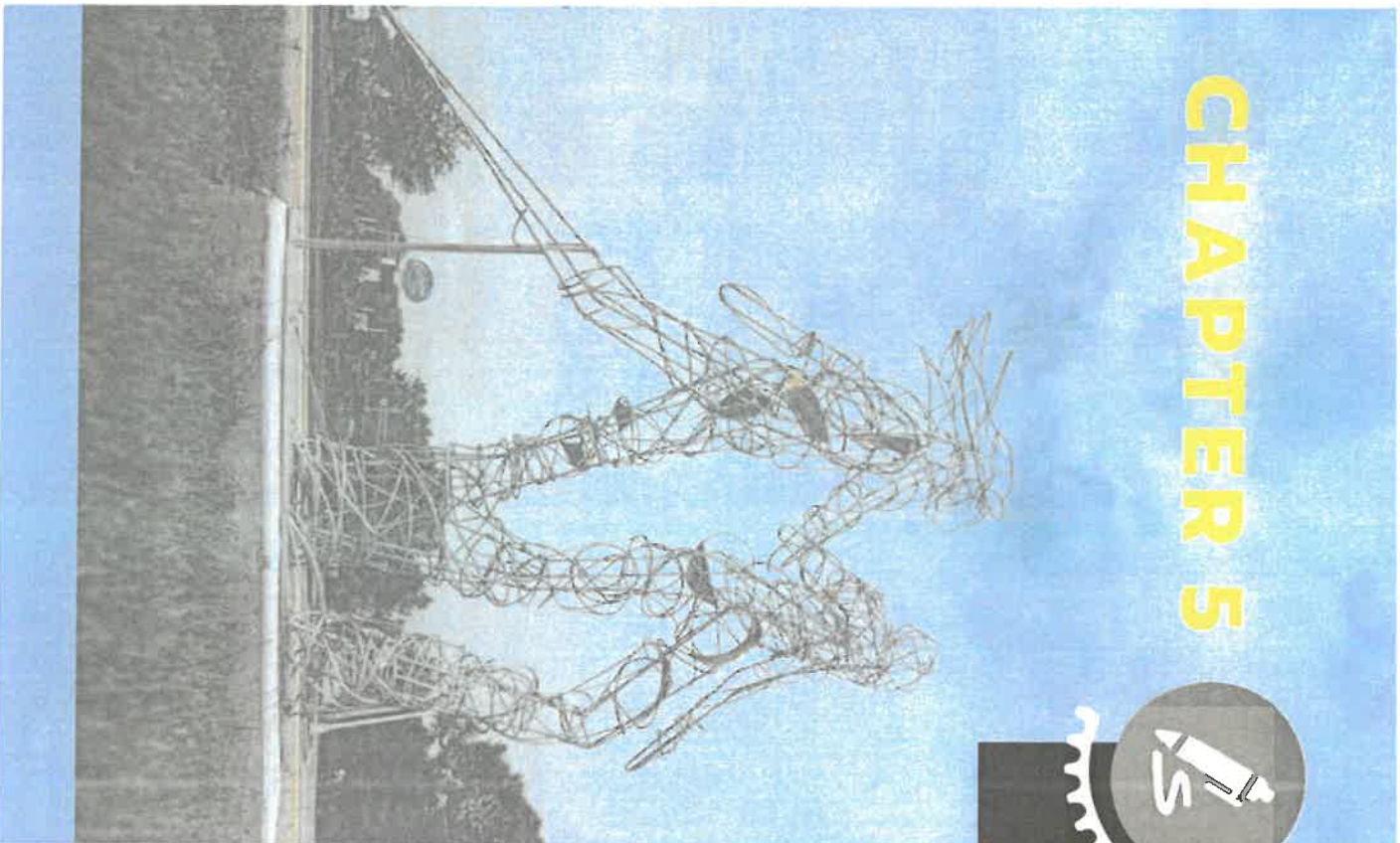
### ROUTE AND RECOMMENDATIONS

After gathering a significant amount of public feedback and continuing to consult with local municipal leaders and agency representatives; Sauk County has prepared a route plan for the Great Sauk State Trail that will guide phasing and construction to make a world-class trail. The route has been split into segments (modified from the earlier segments identified at the onset of the planning process) to define potential project termination points as phases are completed.

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Along with the preferred routes, a number of alternate routes have been identified. These alternates are routes that will be considered alongside the preferred. In subsequent engineering feasibility studies if it is determined that the preferred route will be too costly from a financial or sustainability standpoint. Spur routes have also been identified; these are intended to provide access to and from the primary trail to local destinations.

The overall route map is depicted on the following page and more detailed descriptions of each segment area follow on subsequent pages.





## TRAIL SURFACES

Ideally, the Great Sauk State Trail (GSSST) should be constructed to provide a consistent trail experience along the entirety of the route, building from the Sauk Prairie Segment's precedent of a bituminous-surfaced (paved) trail. However, challenging site constraints such as steep slopes, wetlands, and developed areas will require some portions of the trail to deviate from this standard.



Several stretches of the trail will need to be built as elevated boardwalks. Wetlands and other floodplains can especially benefit from the use of boardwalks as a trail surface. Elevated boardwalks help to avoid disturbance of sensitive water bodies by allowing for drainage as well as plant growth and decomposition beneath them, along with making interesting trail features



In areas such as North Freedom, where existing sidewalks with curb and gutter urbanized street sections exist, the trail may need to be built as an on-road facility, such as a protected bikeway or marked bike lane. Additionally, there are a number of areas where the trail is routed across existing bridges of narrow widths that cannot accommodate the 8 – 12' width for the trail alongside two-way vehicle traffic. With an understanding that new dedicated bridge crossings are large undertakings, interim solutions such as signage and roadway markings are suggested in subsequent sections to allow for more expedient implementation and use of the trail. The long-term vision in these cases would be to construct dedicated infrastructure in the future.



Finally, there may be opportunities to collaborate on funding or trail maintenance in rural areas if the Great Sauk State Trail expands use as a snowmobile route. In these areas, the Great Sauk State Trail will either be designed as a paved trail alongside a cleared (mowed) or with a stone screening surface (similar to the limestone screening surfaces found on other state trails throughout Wisconsin).

### ROUTE NOTES

#### SOME ITEMS TO NOTE REGARDING THE DEPICTION OF THE ROUTE:

- Where possible, the trail route is shown alongside a road or highway right-of-way. If willing landowners come forward to offer alternatives that will allow the trail to be built on property further away from roadways, the County will consider route modifications to support the goal of separating the trail from vehicular traffic as much as possible. This type of modification can also contribute to creating a trail experience that showcases local destinations, views, or provides an option that avoids areas with steep slopes.

- At of the creation of this master plan, the routing is generally shown located on one side of a roadway; future feasibility analysis may determine that the alternate side of the road is a better option due to site constraints related to culverts, slopes, drainage, utility lines, and available right-of-way.



# TRAILHEADS AND AMENITIES

Trailheads are designated public access points for a trail, located at key locations along the way. Input gathered through stakeholder engagement in the planning process suggests that there is a wide variety of expectations for preferred distances between trailheads. Longer-distance or more experienced bicyclists may prefer a trailhead location every 10-miles, while a preference for closer intervals of 2-miles (or less) were expressed by shorter-distance trail users. This plan recommends approximately 15 potential locations for trailheads to serve as primary access points for the Great Sauk State Trail extension. Most of the identified locations correspond with areas that already have existing amenities that could support a trailhead. Available amenities include a small parking area, covered shelter (pavilion), and access to the Baraboo River or other waterway.

The following trailhead amenities are recommended for trailheads along the GSSST where feasible. Note that not every amenity listed below is required at every potential location. More detailed design and engagement with local stakeholders will inform the level of fit and finish at each location. At a minimum, the trailhead should be marked with signage and provide access to the Great Sauk State Trail for bicyclists and pedestrians.

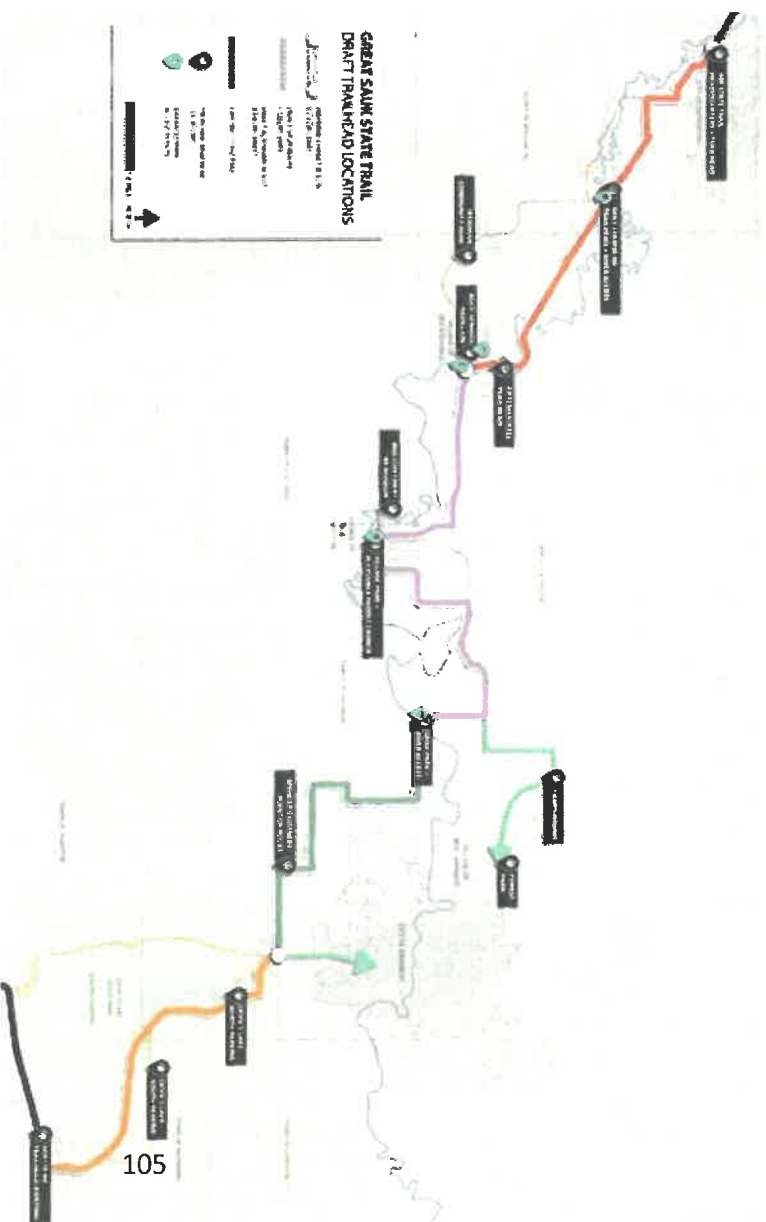


Figure 5.2 Great Sauk State Trail Proposed Trailhead Locations and Baraboo River Access Points



**Bike Racks and Bike Repair Stations:** Bike racks are useful to allow bicyclists a means to dismount and walk to a nearby destination or use trailhead facilities. Bike Repair Stations (sometimes called Fix-It Stations) can be handy for trail users to pump up their tires or to make minor repairs and adjustments to their bicycle along the way.

**Parking:** Parking stalls provide a means for people traveling from longer distances (regional or state visitors) to easily access the trail. Additionally, people who rely on mobility devices or who have disabilities may wish to have parking available to make it easier to access portions of the trail. Where possible, one or two parking stalls should be provided at a trailhead location, with at least one of the spaces designed as ADA-accessible.



Image by Staffin  
Forest Wildlife

**Seating and Shade:** Placing benches and other seating at key locations along longer trail corridors is a great way to ensure that people of many ages and abilities can comfortably use a trail. Seating that is durable and shielded from the sun and adjacent traffic is generally preferred. Picnic tables and places to gather and rest are also sometimes found at trailheads. Shade trees near trails are vital to providing a cool and comfortable trail experience, as well as a host of other benefits to trail user comfort and to the environment. Where applicable, shade trees should be planted along the south side of trails and at rest locations.



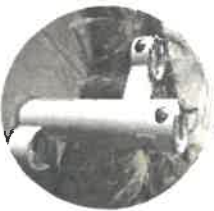
**Trash/Recycling Receptacles:** Since trailheads are potentially a gathering spot, trash and recycling receptacles are useful. A schedule for regular pick-up of receptacles will need to be coordinated with local jurisdictions.



**Restrooms:** At heavily-used trailheads, or in combination with other recreational facilities, restrooms are a great amenity along a trail. Restrooms provide individuals and families an option for making a day out of biking, hiking, or rolling along a trail. Long-term, regular maintenance, and security are important considerations with any restroom facilities.



**Lighting:** Lighting at a trailhead can provide much needed visibility to read maps and locate parking. In the rural setting of the GSST, dark sky lighting is preferred at trailheads. Generally, the GSST trail segments will not have dedicated trail lighting.



**Drinking Fountains:** Staying hydrated is an important part of a healthy and comfortable trail user experience. Drinking fountains should be considered at trailhead locations with utility access.



Image by Staffin  
Great Placids

**Landscaping and Public Art:** Beyond serving a primary function of providing access to a trail, a trailhead can also serve as a means of placemaking -celebrating the local character and identity of a place. Small planted areas, often with hardy, native plants, or integrated public art showcasing local artists, can activate these small, public spaces.



**Charging Stations:** Electrical receptacles, either as part of a lighting fixture, or as a stand-alone solar-powered station, can provide a place for people to charge cell phones, as well as charge batteries for power-assisted mobility devices. This amenity can make it possible for people who use mobility devices to take longer trips via the trail. Charging stations for electric vehicles at trailhead parking should also be considered.



**Wayfinding and Interpretation:** Directional signage and route maps are all commonly found at trailheads. Other signage or displays are encouraged to share information on the history, culture, flora/fauna or natural systems found in the area. Small directional signs along roadways directing people to the trailhead are also recommended. Another consideration with wayfinding is to provide signage in multiple languages spoken by residents in the area and to provide native language names for destinations (in collaboration with the Ho-Chunk Nation).

# DEVIL'S LAKE SEGMENT

## DEVIL'S LAKE SEGMENT – DNR PREFERRED ROUTE

Beginning at the Goette Road Trailhead - which serves as the north/eastern terminus for the Sauk Prairie Segment of the GSST - the Devil's Lake Segment will travel east along the existing rail corridor to an existing yard waste recovery site for the Town of Merrimac. The Town of Merrimac will be constructing a new access road to this site in the near future, so trail alignment will need to coordinate with this effort.

Following grade, the trail route would then cross under the Reedsburg Line railroad with a proposed new tunnel, connecting to DNR-owned land on the east side of the rail right-of-way. This new tunnel and route adjacent to railroad right-of-way will require negotiation, approval, and coordination with WSOR and the Town of Merrimac.

The trail route would then cross Halweg Road and continue north into Devil's Lake State Park, following alongside the rail corridor through the area commonly known as the Devil's Nose. Avoiding steep slopes and rock outcroppings, as well as maintaining a safe distance from the active rail line will be a challenge. This route will require significant clearing and grading to accomplish outside of the rail corridor. However, if a rails-with-trails project can be negotiated with WSOR, there is a possibility of avoiding excessive land disturbance to

accomplish it. At South Lake Road, the Devil's Lake Segment would intersect with a popular activity area, and connect with other internal state park trails and access roads.

Entering Devil's Lake from the north at CR DL, the Devil's Lake Segment connect to the North Parking area. Further study will determine the best route from CR DL. The North Parking Area is the most popular entry point for State Park visitors. At CR DL, the trail will connect north with a spur route along the existing Town of Baraboo's shared use trail, as well as following ST RD 136 west to begin the Baraboo Segment. As a future state trail route, the existing paved trail on CR DL is proposed to be widened to accommodate heavier bi-directional trail use.

The DNR-preferred route links the north and south park entries with a trail running alongside the east side of Devil's Lake. This section will require an ambitious study to determine the best construction method for a trail that will both provide separation from the active rail line and avoid negative environmental, aesthetic, cultural resource and access impacts to Devil's Lake. Maintaining the preferred distance from the rail line will likely require building an elevated structure over open water at various locations, which would provide a unique opportunity to include areas for seating and wildlife viewing, along with interpretive elements. Further design and engineering will need to consider how a structure like this will impact wildlife and lake ecology. Safety, cost, structural longevity and impacts related to a potential increase in visitor activity due to this amenity will also need to be considered.



## BURMA ROAD ALTERNATE

Beginning from the south, the Burma Road Alternate route starts from where the Sauk Prairie State Recreation Area (SPSRA) access road and Sauk Prairie Segment of the GSST meet and heads north. Following the SPSRA access road into the State Park, the route then aligns with Burma Road. Today, Burma Road is an unpaved park maintenance road that is used by snowmobilers and provides access to two private properties within the State Park's boundaries. The current grade of Burma Road has a short section with a steep grade (greater than 8% slope). Options were reviewed during the planning process to route this trail option to better follow the existing grade and avoid steep slopes. However, it was deemed preferable to stay aligned with the current road to minimize additional land disturbance, excessive tree removal, and to respect an area with known sacred and cultural significance to the Ho-Chunk Nation. The DNR plans to develop Burma Road to provide access to the future shelter and day use areas within SPSRA. As an alternate route for the Great Sauk State Trail, this would be a future on-road bicycle facility.

The Burma Road Alternate continues north after crossing Ski Hi Road, following along South Shore Road. At CR DL, there would be a roadway crossing to connect to the existing trail. This alternate route has some steep elevation and will likely require construction outside of the Township's road right-of-way.

## HALWEG ROAD ALTERNATE

This alternate route would extend north from the existing Goette Road Trailhead, travel alongside Halweg Road, and utilize the existing railway tunnel to connect to the Devil's Lake Segment. The alternate route avoids the need for a new railroad crossing tunnel as shown in the preferred route. With adjacencies to a campground just east of the Halweg Road tunnel, it is anticipated that this alternate route will be used informally by bicyclists, and therefore it is encouraged to include this area as part of feasibility analysis for next steps of implementation in order to identify the best safety measures for shared roadway use at the passage of the narrow tunnel. Additional safety measures should address the visibility of trail users for drivers through signage, or warning lights.

## SOUTH LAKE ROAD ALTERNATE

The South Lake Road Alternate was included in the master plan as an alternate route to consider if feasibility analysis deems the rails-with-trails effort through Devil's Nose unachievable. The alternate route veers north to utilize an old railroad spur right-of-way (now part of DNR land) and travels north, crossing the Ice Age Trail at two locations: At South Lake Road, the trail route would continue west along the south side of the State Park's access road to connect to the South Entry, parking and activity areas. It should be noted that the Ice Age Trail is not intended to be included as part of the Great Sauk State Trail, and therefore wayfinding and signage will need to clearly define the two trails at their crossing.

DEVIL'S LAKE SEGMENT DNR PREFERRED ROUTE					
LENGTH	TRAILHEADS	POINTS OF INTEREST	ROAD CROSSINGS	RR CROSSINGS	BRIDGES/TUNNELS/ BOARDWALKS
6.1 MILES	Goette Road Trailhead	Halweg Road Tunnel			
		Devil's Nose			
	South Entry, Devil's Lake State Park	Ice Age Trail	4	4	2 - Proposed RR tunnel south of Halweg Road
	North Entry, Devil's Lake State Park	South Beach North Beach			

BURMA ROAD ALTERNATE					
LENGTH	TRAILHEADS	POINTS OF INTEREST	ROAD CROSSINGS	RR CROSSINGS	BRIDGES/TUNNELS/ BOARDWALKS
4.6 MILES		Day Use Area / Future Shelter in SPSRA			
		Burma Road	2	0	0
		Ski Hi Fruit Farm			
		Point of Rocks			

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HALWEG ROAD ALTERNATE					
LENGTH	TRAILHEADS	POINTS OF INTEREST	ROAD CROSSINGS	RR CROSSINGS	BRIDGES/TUNNELS/ BOARDWALKS
0.6 MILES		Halweg Road Tunnel			
	Goette Road Trailhead	Merry Macs Campground	2	0	1 - Existing RR tunnel

SOUTH LAKE ROAD ALTERNATE					
LENGTH	TRAILHEADS	POINTS OF INTEREST	ROAD CROSSINGS	RR CROSSINGS	BRIDGES/TUNNELS/ BOARDWALKS
2.8 MILES		Devil's Nose			
	South Entry, Devil's Lake State Park	Ice Age Trail Crossing	0	0	0
		South Beach			

Table 5.3 Devil's Lake Segment Table

# BARABOO SEGMENT

## BARABOO SEGMENT PREFERRED ROUTE

Beginning at the north terminus of the Devil's Lake Segment, the Baraboo Segment crosses CR DL and SR 136 and continues along the north side of SR 136 until the intersection of Point of Rocks Road. There is an existing bridge on SR 136 that crosses Skillet Creek just east of the intersection with Point of Rocks and Skillet Creek Roads. The existing clear bridge width is 36', which does not provide enough room for a

shoulder to accommodate striped bi-directional trail use to separate trail users from vehicle traffic. There is potential for future widening of the existing bridge, or construction of a dedicated trail bridge at this short crossing, however it is unlikely that either of these options will be a priority investment in the near-term. Visibility for trail users at this location should not be an issue. Signage to direct east-bound trail users to yield to vehicles and west-bound trail users may be an interim solution at this crossing until widening or separate structure can be built.

At Point of Rocks Road, the route crosses SR 136 and travels north along the west side of the roadway and then turns east crossing SR 136 at Gasser Road. From here, the route continues west, crossing US Hwy 12 with an existing bridge that has been modified to accommodate snowmobile traffic. This bridge is wide enough to also accommodate bi-directional trail use for bicyclists and pedestrians. At Lehman Road, the route continues north to CR W, then crosses to align with Lovers Lane (north) and follows Hatchery Road to the West.



Figure 5.4 Trail concept as constructed alongside existing roadway (additional ROW needed)





Geise Park is a small, Baraboo Township park that provides access to the Baraboo River. This location could be a potential trailhead location with seating, parking, and water access.

## BARABOO SPUR

The Baraboo Spur route builds from an existing shared use trail that is constructed alongside the east side of CR DL. This 5'-0" width paved trail connects into the City of Baraboo, terminating at Walnut Street, where the urbanized street

section has standard sidewalks. The Baraboo Spur will require trail widening to a minimum of 8'-0" to meet State Trail standards, as well as accompanying wayfinding signage and crosswalk treatments. Today, this trail is maintained by the Town of Baraboo and mutual collaboration between Sauk County and the Township will need to be agreed upon for future maintenance. The existing trail connects to Pierce Park, existing and future housing, Baraboo Country Club, and Al Behrman Elementary School.

Through the planning and engagement process, there was clear feedback from residents of the City of Baraboo that there is a strong desire for the GSST to connect into the City. Future planning of the full city-wide network to connect to the Baraboo Spur with local routes is the recommended path forward, in addition to planning for future connection to the West Baraboo Spur at Forest Park.



Figure 5.6 Trail concept as constructed directly adjacent to existing roadway

## WEST BARABOO SPUR

The West Baraboo Spur is intended to connect the primary route at SR 136 and Hatchery Road to the Village of West Baraboo. Beginning from this intersection, the spur route continues east along SR 136 to Cornfield Drive. Just west of this intersection, there is an existing bridge that crosses a small creek. The existing clear width of this bridge and the structure age need to be verified. There are striped shoulders wide enough to accommodate bicycle use, however there is not enough room to accommodate bi-directional trail use on the same side of the roadway. There is potential for future widening of the existing bridge, or construction of a dedicated trail bridge, however it is unlikely that either of these options will be a priority investment in the near-term. Visibility for trail users at this location is decent, so signage to direct east-bound trail users to yield to vehicles and east-bound trail users may be an interim solution at this crossing until widening or a separate structure can be built.

The West Baraboo Spur continues north along the east side of Cornfield Drive to Terrytown Road, then turns east to connect to the existing built trail. This built trail segment, maintained by the Village of West Baraboo, travels under US Hwy12 for a short segment. Future improvement plans of Forest Park will include a trail to connect to Terrytown Road, as well as an underpass of CR BD (Pine Street), and will also provide trailhead amenities at the Village-owned park's parking facilities.

BARABOO SEGMENT PREFERRED ROUTE						
LENGTH	TRAILHEADS	POINTS OF INTEREST	ROAD CROSSINGS	RR CROSSINGS	BRIDGES/TUNNELS/ BOARDWALKS	
5.8 MILES	Geise Park Spencer's Corner / Point of Rocks	Geise Park Pewit's Nest SNA Skilllet Creek Point of Rocks Baraboo River Crossing	5	0	2 - Existing Bridges on SR 136, and Gasser Road	
BARABOO SPUR						
LENGTH	TRAILHEADS	POINTS OF INTEREST	ROAD CROSSINGS	RR CROSSINGS	BRIDGES/TUNNELS/ BOARDWALKS	
1.5 MILES		Pierce Park Connection to future housing Baraboo Country Club Al Behrman Elementary School	4	0	3 - Existing Bridges on SR 136, Gasser Road, and Hatchery Road 11	
WEST BARABOO SPUR						
LENGTH	TRAILHEADS	POINTS OF INTEREST	ROAD CROSSINGS	RR CROSSINGS	BRIDGES/TUNNELS/ BOARDWALKS	
3.7 MILES	Baraboo RV Resort Campground Forest Park	Baraboo RV Resort Campground Forest Park	1	0	4 - Existing Bridges on SR 136, Terrytown Road, Existing underpass of US 12, future tunnel at CR BD / Pine St	

Table 5.4 Baraboo Segment Table

## NORTH FREEDOM SEGMENT PREFERRED ROUTE

Beginning at the Hatchery Road bridge crossing of the Baraboo River, the North Freedom Segment continues north and then west to connect into North Freedom.

The Hatchery Road bridge crossing of the Baraboo River poses a challenge for this trail route. The age of the structure and the existing clear width need to be verified. It does not appear to provide enough room to accommodate bi-directional trail use with separation from vehicle traffic. There is potential for future widening of the existing bridge, or construction of a dedicated trail bridge, however it is unlikely that either of these options will be a priority investment in the near-term. Visibility for trail users at this location is somewhat of a concern, so signage to direct east-bound trail users to yield to vehicles and west-bound trail users may be an interim solution at this crossing until widening or separate structure can be built. Selective tree or brush clearing to aid in visibility may also be needed here.

The trail route continues to follow Hatchery Road north to connect to ST RD 136. There is an area of steep slopes and a nearby homestead where Hatchery Road and Harmon Road meet; this may warrant adding a roadway crossing per future feasibility analysis.



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Figure 5.7 Trail concepts along Walnut Street in North Freedom showing on- and off-street options





"Trail crossing ahead" signage precedent image



Trail switchback precedent image



ADA compliant kayak/canoe launch

This route may require construction of the trail directly adjacent to the roadway. Alternatively, additional right-of-way may be necessary, as the typical Township road right-of-way of 66'-0" will likely not be able to sufficiently accommodate the paved trail section.

At the intersection of Hatchery Road and SR 136, the North Freedom Segment follows SR 136 west towards CR PF. The higher elevation overlooking the Baraboo River along this stretch of roadway provides excellent views of the river corridor, as well as long-distance vistas towards the Baraboo Range. At CR PF, the trail route turns south to bring trail users into the Village of North Freedom. Just north of Walnut Street, the trail will cross railroad tracks at an existing roadway crossing. At Walnut Street, the trail turns west along the urbanized street. The trail design along Walnut Street will likely need to integrate an on-road facility, such as a two-way bike lane in combination with the existing sidewalk. This option would likely result in loss of on-street parking along this stretch of trail. Alternatively, converting the existing sidewalk to an 8'-0" wide shared use trail could be an option, if space permits to route around existing trees.

At Maple Street, the preferred trail route turns north, crossing the rail line again, and passes by North Freedom Elementary School. This area has some steep grades, as well as a tight roadway section, which will require additional feasibility analysis to determine the best location in relation to the roadway. The trail route then connects again with SR 136, turning west to head towards the Village of Rock Springs. Assuming the route

continues along the north side of SR 136, there will be three roadway crossings (Smythe Street, Spencer Street and Hill Street) as trail users enter into Rock Springs. Additional signage to alert drivers southbound on these roads that a trail crossing is ahead is recommended, as visibility of the crossing is of some concern due to steeper slopes on these roads.

Finally, this segment ends at an active rail crossing, just east of the bridge crossing the Baraboo River in the heart of Rock Springs.

## SHALES' CORNER LOOP

An alternate loop route is proposed in this area. The Shales' Corner Loop will potentially be constructed along SR 136 between CR PF and Maple Street (CR I). This alternate loop route should be included in future feasibility analysis to provide a route option for longer-distance trail users who may not be interested in traveling through the Village of North Freedom. Views of the Baraboo River corridor and surrounding Baraboo Range are a unique feature from this route as well. The terrain at Shales' Corner is very steep, with rock outcroppings very close to the existing roadway. Trail routing will require additional easement or land acquisition and perhaps multiple switchbacks to provide safe and enjoyable pedestrian and bicycling experiences for trail users.

## RAILWAY MUSEUM AND VILLAGE PARK SPURS

Two proposed trailhead locations and spur routes are shown within North Freedom, building off of existing public amenities and attractions. The recently improved North Freedom Village Park could serve as a future trailhead for trail users, as well as provide connection and water access to the Baraboo River with a recently-installed ADA-compliant kayak/canoe launch.

Further west, the Mid-Continent Railway Museum could also serve as a trailhead location, building off of the pavilion, water access, and parking facilities that exist today. Connection to the GSST will be mutually beneficial from a trail destination and tourism perspective. The route crosses a small existing bridge over the Baraboo River. The existing clear width of this bridge and the age need to be verified. There is potential for future widening of the existing bridge, or construction of a dedicated trail bridge. However it is unlikely that either of these options will be a priority investment in the near-term. Visibility for trail users at this location is of concern, so signage to direct east-bound trail users to yield to vehicles and east-bound trail users may be an interim solution at this crossing until widening or a separate structure can be built.

NORTH FREEDOM SEGMENT PREFERRED ROUTE						
LENGTH	TRAILHEADS	POINTS OF INTEREST	ROAD CROSSINGS	RR CROSSINGS	BRIDGES/TUNNELS/ BOARDWALKS	
8.5 MILES	Giесе Park	North Freedom Village Park Mid-Continent Railway Museum Great views from SR 136	12	3	1 - Existing bridge on Hatchery Road	
SHALES CORNER LOOP						
LENGTH	TRAILHEADS	POINTS OF INTEREST	ROAD CROSSINGS	RR CROSSINGS	BRIDGES/TUNNELS/ BOARDWALKS	
1.3 MILES		Shales Corner	0	0	0	
VILLAGE PARK SPUR						
LENGTH	TRAILHEADS	POINTS OF INTEREST	ROAD CROSSINGS	RR CROSSINGS	BRIDGES/TUNNELS/ BOARDWALKS	
0.3 MILES	North Freedom Village Park	Kayak Launch / Baraboo River Access Parking Playground Ballfields	0	0	0	
RAILWAY MUSEUM SPUR						
LENGTH	TRAILHEADS	POINTS OF INTEREST	ROAD CROSSINGS	RR CROSSINGS	BRIDGES/TUNNELS/ BOARDWALKS	
0.4 MILES	Mid-Continent Railway Museum	Museum Pavilion Water Access Parking	2	0	1 - Existing bridge over the Baraboo River	

Table 5.5 North Freedom Segment Table

## REEDSBURG - ROCK SPRINGS SEGMENT

### REEDSBURG - ROCK SPRINGS SEGMENT PREFERRED ROUTE

Finding a suitable trail route to connect the Village of Rock Springs to the City of Reedsburg and ultimately to the western terminus of the 400 State Trail Headquarters is perhaps the most challenging and ambitious segment of the Great Sauk State Trail extension. Extremely steep areas, exposed rock outcroppings paired with low areas, along the winding Baraboo River floodplain pose unique opportunities for great views and trail experience. Conversely, these same landforms pose harsh challenges for trail routing to meet the goals outlined in the planning process. The preferred route in this area is dependent on long-term negotiation and collaboration between WSOR, Wisconsin DOT, Sauk County, the Village of Rock Springs, the Town of Reedsburg, the City of Reedsburg and the Town of Excelsior.

Beginning at SR 136 just east of the Rock Springs bridge over the Baraboo River, the route shown follows north as a rails-to-trails project. At this time, there are two sets of railroad tracks alongside the upper bluff of the Baraboo River, however the western track is not currently in-use. Initial study of the area shows that it would be possible to route a trail in the location of the unused section of track and still maintain the preferred 33'-0" distance from the trail to the centerline of the active rail line. Protective

fencing, signage, and other security measures would need to be installed in this segment. The unique trail experience it would afford however, would provide a new asset for tourism and strengthen the GSST as a world-class state trail. The route shows a new proposed dedicated trail bridge crossing the Baraboo River near the location of the spring-fed well on River Street / SR 136. This, along with the monument to Van Hise Rock could serve as a potential trailhead location, as it is a natural stop for visitors to the area, affording amazing views of Ableman's Gorge.

From here, the trail would continue along SR 136 along the outside edge (north and east) of the roadway, with the trail section built on the

outside of the guard rails. There are two existing roadway bridges over the Baraboo River north of Ableman's Gorge; both of these bridges will require evaluation for feasibility and striping for bi-directional trail use. Future investment into the trail should consider construction of separate, dedicated trail bridges or widening of the existing structures to allow for physical separation between trail users and vehicle traffic.

From here, the preferred trail route continues to head northwest along the south side of SR 136, and continuing along the outside edge of the railroad right-of-way where SR 136 curves. After crossing SR 136, the trail route continues



Figure 5.9 Trail concept as elevated boardwalk alongside the rail corridor

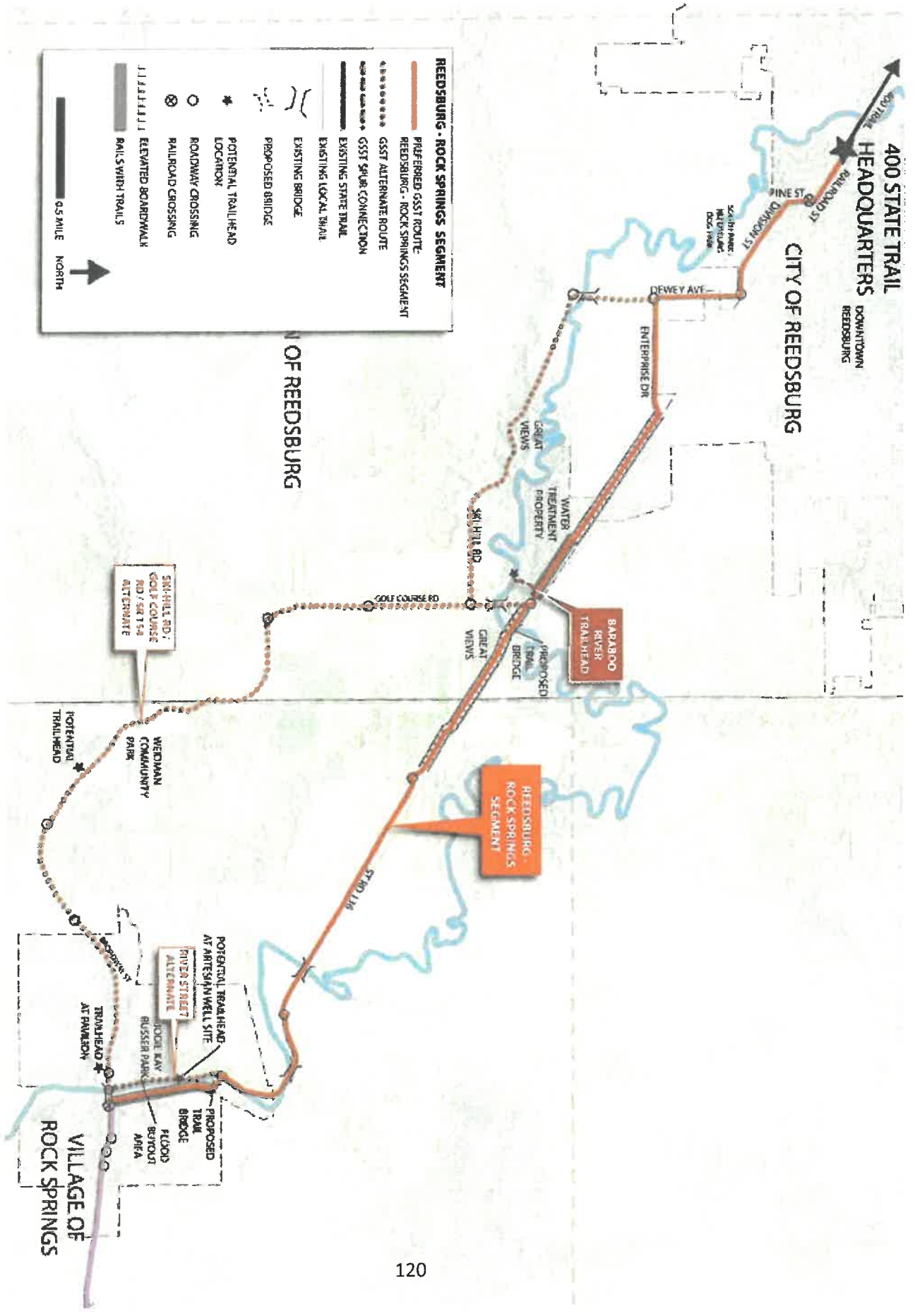


Figure 5.10 Reedsburg - Rock Springs Segment Map



northwest as a rails-with-trails project, either constructed within or adjacent to the rail right-of-way. Large stretches of this portion of the route will likely need to be built as elevated boardwalk or elevated platform sections to avoid disturbance of sensitive wetland areas and to avoid obstructions within the floodplain. Opportunities for wildlife viewing and interpretation exist along this stretch, as it is a location that is generally inaccessible due to the character of the landscape.

A new trail bridge will need to be constructed to cross the Baraboo River just east of Golf Course Road. Just west of the crossing of Golf Course Road, there is an opportunity to provide a spur trail and trailhead for access to the Baraboo River, as well as continue the trail routing along an existing field road that formerly served the water treatment facility site.

At Enterprise Drive on the edge of the City of Reedsburg, the trail route turns west to Dewey Avenue, and then turns north to Division Street. At Division Street, the trail would continue west and northwest. This section would potentially require a curb extension of the existing roadway to provide enough room between existing industrial buildings and utility lines. This route would also connect to the City of Reedsburg Dog Park and South Park. At Pine Street, the trail will turn north, crossing the railroad tracks at an existing crossing just south of Railroad Street. At Railroad Street, the trail will turn west / northwest to terminate at the 400 State Trail Headquarters and Reedsburg Chamber of Commerce building.

From here, trail users can continue west along the 400 Trail and beyond to the Eroy-Sparta State Trail, thus filling a long-standing gap in the statewide network.

### SKI-HILL RD / GOLF COURSE RD / SR 154 ALTERNATE

With the understanding that the preferred route faces a number of challenges regarding land availability, costs and construction feasibility, an alternate route has been identified that could potentially serve as an interim trail solution that would provide a future trail loop in the area if the preferred route is also built.

From the center of the Village in Rock Springs, the alternate route begins along Broadway Street, and travels west, likely along the south side of the roadway. At the Village limits, Broadway turns into SR 154 and soon meets Weidman Community Park. This parkland was gifted to the Village of Rock Springs in the 1930s and the current Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan for Rock Springs indicates a plan for future hiking trails through the property. Currently, a small parking area exists, which could serve as a potential trailhead. Construction of a trail through this area will be challenging with narrow widths available between the roadway and exposed rock outcroppings.

At Golf Course Road, the trail turns north and runs along the east side of the roadway to Ski-Hill Road. Here, the trail continues west along Ski-Hill Road to connect to Dewey Avenue, turning north to connect to the preferred trail route at Dewey Avenue and Enterprise Drive.

### RIVER STREET ALTERNATE

The River Street Alternate route provides another option or interim option to support the preferred trail route in the event that the rails-to-trails conversion project along the east side of the Baraboo River is not feasible to complete. The alternate route travels along the west side of River Street in Rock Springs, through a flood buyout area (now owned by the Village of Rock Springs). An existing sidewalk network could serve as the basis for most of the future trail alignment. The alternate would require a crossing of River Street / SR 136 near the spring water fill site, south of Van Hise Rock.

**REEDSBURG - ROCK SPRINGS SEGMENT PREFERRED ROUTE**

LENGTH	TRAILHEADS	POINTS OF INTEREST	ROAD CROSSINGS	RR CROSSINGS	BRIDGES/TUNNELS/ BOARDWALKS
6.8 MILES	Village of Rock Springs Community Pavilion City-Owned Artesian Well Site	Baraboo River in Rock Springs Artesian Well			
	Water Treatment Property Access	Van Hise Rock / Ableman's Gorge SNA			4 Bridges (2 existing and 2 proposed); elevated boardwalk through floodplain
6.8 MILES	400 State Trail Headquarters	Baraboo River wildlife corridor	4	1 - Existing at Pine St	
		Baraboo River at Golf Course Rd			
		Reedsburg Dog Park South Park 400 State Trail			

**SKIP HILL RD / GOLF COURSE RD / SR 154 ALTERNATE**

LENGTH	TRAILHEADS	POINTS OF INTEREST	ROAD CROSSINGS	RR CROSSINGS	BRIDGES/TUNNELS/ BOARDWALKS
6.7 MILES	Village of Rock Springs Community Pavilion	Broadway Street in Rock Springs			3 - Existing bridge over the Baraboo River in Rock Springs, existing bridge over Baraboo River on Golf Course Road, existing bridge over Baraboo River on Dewey Avenue
	Weidman Community Park	Weidman Community Park	9	0	
		Baraboo River Wildlife Corridor			

**RIVER STREET ALTERNATE**

LENGTH	TRAILHEADS	POINTS OF INTEREST	ROAD CROSSINGS	RR CROSSINGS	BRIDGES/TUNNELS/ BOARDWALKS
0.7 MILES	Jodie Kay Busser Park City-Owned Artesian Well Site	Jodie Kay Busser Park Narrow's Creek Water Access Artesian Well	1	0	1 - Existing bridge over the Baraboo River in Rock Springs



River Street near Ableman's Gorge

Table 5.6 North Freedom Segment Table



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# CHAPTER 6



## IMPLEMENTATION

### INTRODUCTION

Implementation for the Great Sauk State Trail extension will occur in phases, over multiple years, requiring agency and municipal coordination. Local and regional multi-modal advocates, residents, and community stakeholders will contribute insight to implementation of amenities and support facilities for the trail.

The planning process for this study expressly included a significant amount of involvement from municipalities, agencies, and other stakeholder groups to develop, review, and refine the plan. Sauk County has served as the primary project sponsor for this planning study; Sauk County will continue to serve as the primary project sponsor and will initiate coordination through implementation.

The following list are steps that will need to be completed before construction of the trail will begin. Likely, the trail will be constructed in phases per segment.

- » Feasibility and engineering analysis, including analysis of economic impact and detailed review of archaeological, historical and cultural resource impact with agency collaboration.
- » Funding sources will need to be identified and secured.
- » Land surveying and negotiation with property owners (as necessary) for easements or acquisition will need to occur. *Note that Sauk County will not acquire any land unless a landowner is willing to negotiate. In 2017, Act 59 of Wisconsin's budget bill amended Wisconsin's statutes to prohibit the use of eminent domain to establish or extend recreational trails, bicycle ways, bicycle lanes, or pedestrian ways.*
- » Detailed design and engineering of new facilities.
- » Coordination with other roadway, trail or capital improvements.



## GRANT PROGRAMS

The table below summarizes eligibility and grant-funded activities for federal and state trail grant opportunities.

ELIGIBILITY	STATE				FEDERAL		
	KNOWLES-NEELSON STEWARDSHIP GRANT SUBPROGRAMS				Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)	Recreational Trails Program (RTP)	Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE)
	Aids for the Acquisition and Development of Local Parks (ADLP)	Acquisition of Development Rights (ADR)	Urban Green Space (UGS) Grants	Urban Rivers (UR) Grants			
Local Governments (Towns, Villages, Cities, Counties)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Tribal Governments	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Lake sanitary districts and public inland lake protection and rehabilitation districts			X				X
Nonprofit conservation organizations (Primary purpose – acquisition of property for conservation)	X	X	X	X			
Nonprofit Organizations (Primary purpose – promoting encouraging or engaging in trail activities)					X	X	
Incorporated Trail Organizations					X	X	
School Districts					X	X	
Regional Transportation Authorities							X
Transit agencies							X
Natural resource or public land agencies							X
Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) serving less than 200,000							X

Table 6.1 State and Federal Grants Matrix

Content provided by Wisconsin DNR

## FUNDING SOURCES

Identifying appropriate funding sources to construct the Great Sauk State Trail extension will require combining together traditional, state, and federal grant sources, local contributions, private donations and potentially fundraising efforts. Future roadway and bridge improvement projects can be combined with trail construction or may include potential site preparation for future trail construction. Grant writing and fundraising efforts will likely be most successful through collaboration between Sauk County and local partners, demonstrating wide support and commitment across the region. The following is a list of federal and state grant programs that are applicable to implementing the Great Sauk State Trail extension.

### KNOWLES-NELSON STEWARDSHIP GRANT PROGRAMS

The Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Grant is an umbrella program that supports several DNR-administered grant programs. A key component of the Stewardship Fund is cooperation and partnership between the Wisconsin DNR and the agency applying for funds. These grant programs require that all land acquisition and development projects provide public access for outdoor recreation purposes. There are four Stewardship local assistance grant programs that local units of government are eligible to apply for that support nature-based outdoor recreation activities.

The following Stewardship Grant opportunities are potential sources for funding components of the trail construction:

### ACQUISITION AND DEVELOPMENT OF LOCAL PARKS (ADLP)

ADLP funding may be used for both land acquisition and development of projects for nature-based recreation, including outdoor recreation trails. ADLP funds up to a 50% match for eligible projects which include:

- » Land acquisition for property with frontage on rivers, streams, lakes, estuaries, and reservoirs
- » Development of picnic areas, recreational trails, and natural or scenic areas

### URBAN GREEN SPACE (UGS) GRANTS

UGS grants may be used for the purchase of land or easements in urban/urbanizing areas to preserve the scenic and ecological values of natural open spaces for nature-based outdoor recreation. UGS grants match 50% of funding for selected projects.

### URBAN RIVERS (UR) GRANTS

The Urban Rivers Program provides for economic restoration through the restoration or preservation of urban river fronts, increasing access to rivers, and preserving natural areas along the river. Eligible projects include purchase of land on or adjacent to rivers flowing through urban/urbanizing areas to preserve or restore the scenic and environmental value of rivers for nature-based outdoor recreation. UR matches 50% of funding for selected projects.

### ACQUISITION OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS (ADR)

The ADR grant program is intended for aiding in the purchase of development rights (easements)

for the protection of natural, agricultural or forestry values that would enhance nature-based outdoor recreation.

### TAP FUNDING

The Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) is a legislative program that was authorized in Infrastructure Investments and Jobs Act Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) in 2021. Projects that meet eligibility criteria for the Safe Routes to School Program, Transportation Enhancements, and/or the Bicycle & Pedestrian Facilities Program are generally eligible TAP projects.

TAP provides reimbursement funding for programs and projects defined as transportation alternatives, including on- and off- road pedestrian and bicycle facilities such as the Great Sauk State Trail. TAP projects require project sponsors to pay 20% of project costs and must begin within four years of the date the funding is awarded.

» ADLP funding may be used for both land acquisition and development of projects for nature-based recreation, including outdoor recreation trails. **ADLP funds up to a 50% match for eligible projects**

## FEDERAL PROGRAMS

Additionally, there are many federal grant programs that support a wide variety of outdoor recreation projects throughout the state.

### RECREATIONAL TRAILS PROGRAM (RTP)

This program exists to encourage the maintenance and development of motorized, non-motorized, and diversified trails by providing funding assistance. Eligible projects include maintenance and restoration of existing trails; development and rehabilitation of trails and trailhead facilities and trail links; purchase and lease of trail construction and maintenance equipment; construction of new; acquisition of easements or property for trails; state administrative costs; and operation of educational programs to promote safety and environmental protection related to trails. This is a reimbursement program and a 25% cash or in-kind match for eligible elements of the project proposal is required.

### LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND (LWCF)

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) was established by Congress in 1964 to fulfill a bipartisan commitment to safeguard natural areas, water resources and cultural heritage, and to provide recreation opportunities to all Americans. LWCF supports increased public access to and protection for federal public lands and waters — including national parks, forests, wildlife refuges and recreation areas — and

provides matching grants to state governments for the acquisition and development of public parks and other outdoor recreation sites.

### RAISE FUNDING

Under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (or RAISE) program provides funding for capital investments in surface transportation that will have a significant local or regional impact. The Merit Criteria are safety, environmental sustainability, quality of life, mobility and community connectivity, economic competitiveness and opportunity, state of good repair, innovation, and partnership and collaboration.

### LOCAL COST-SHARE, GRANT MATCH

The support of local communities both politically and financial are needed for the success of the trail. There are a number of ways that municipalities within the planned route may choose to financially support the segments of the trail within their jurisdictions.

### CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT

Local municipalities that may benefit from the construction of the GSST may want to consider a capital improvement budget allocation to contribute to the initial trail construction costs for parts of the trail within the municipality. This allocation should be used as a match for other funding sources whenever possible.

### PUBLIC WORKS ASSISTANCE

Local municipalities may consider leveraging trail construction assistance from their public works department to provide at-cost or in-kind services.

### GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS

General obligation bonds can provide local municipalities an opportunity to raise funds for projects that benefit the entire community.

## TRAIL MAINTENANCE

Regular maintenance of the trail will extend the life of the surfacing and reduce the overall long-term costs of total reconstruction. Regular trail maintenance also keeps trail users safe from hazards, allows the trail to be used by people with a wide variety of abilities, and provides a welcoming trail experience. People are more likely to use a trail that is in good physical condition, and having a maintenance plan in place is generally a requirement to receive federally funded grants.

A typical asphalt trail has a life expectancy of 20 years before reconstruction, if constructed correctly with an adequate depth of aggregate base. Seasonal or annual maintenance, weather, exposure to ultra violet light, trail usage by heavy vehicles, poor soils, and drainage can all affect the life cycle of a trail. Yearly condition inventory and budgeting for maintenance will stretch the life of the trail surface.

According to the Local Roadway Research Board, deferred maintenance can lead to a shorter

» service life and result in major rehabilitation or replacement needs quicker than planned (see Figure 4.2). Preventative techniques are typically applied to trails in “excellent” to “fair” condition to prevent them from falling in disrepair, resulting in a shorter life span, and requiring higher cost to rehabilitate or reconstruct the trail.

» **Crack Filling:** Crack filling is a common practice applied to asphalt trails when cracks are wider than 3/8 inches. Crack sealing is a flexible latex product that is pumped into large cracks to help prevent water intrusion and damage to the sub-grade. Crack filling provides safety benefits for all users (e.g., pedestrians, bicyclists, inline skaters and skateboards), but does not fully address pavement quality or distress issues. Crack filling should be viewed as a short-term preventative maintenance technique.

» **Thin Overlay:** An overlay consists of a thin layer of asphalt that is applied to the top of the surface. Thin overlays can be a costly technique, but are used to extend the service life of the pavement by 5 to 10 years and improve ride quality.

» **Mill & Overlay:** A mill and overlay is also a common technique for major rehabilitation/reconstruction projects. This technique helps build structural capacity by milling the existing pavement and adding a new layer of asphalt. A mill and overlay can help extend the life of the trail by 10 to 15 years or restart its surface life, depending on the trail’s structural base and the depth of the mill and overlay.

» **Mastic Products:** Mastic products are a form of seal coating that is applied to larger cracks that cannot be addressed with traditional crack filling treatments. In essence, mastic products serve as a joint sealer without jeopardizing the trails ride quality. These products are designed to dry fast (1 hour) and can extend the life of a trail by 3 to 5 years. This technique may be viewed as both a preventative maintenance and minor rehabilitation practice.

» **Slurry Seal:** A slurry seal is a preventative maintenance procedure that provides a protective surface to the existing asphalt trail. More advanced applications are known as micro surfacing. This treatment includes a blend of oil and small aggregate that is applied to the trail (1/8 inch). By sealing the trail, the base of the trail is protected from water damage and the surface is protected from weather and wear. This treatment can last approximately 3 to 5 years, while a micro surfacing treatment can last more than 7 years. This type of application requires longer periods of time (6 to 8 hours) to dry before someone can use the trail.

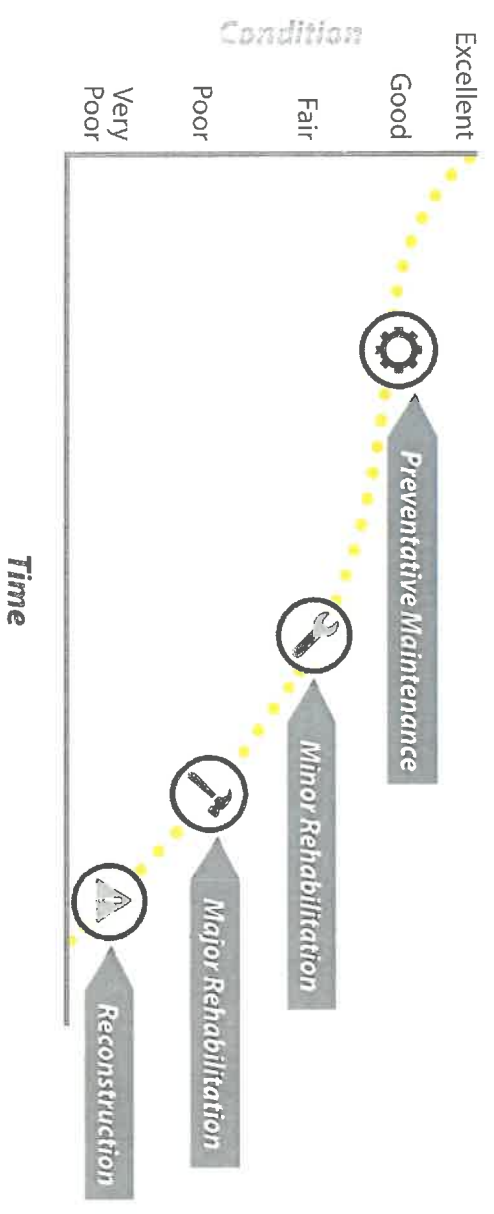


Figure 6.1 State and Federal Grants Matrix



Maintenance Activity	OPTIMAL FREQUENCY						Notes		
	Weekly	Monthly	Quarterly	Annually	Spring/Fall	After Storm		Other	
General Maintenance									
1	Safety inspection	X					X		
2	General debris and trash pickup	X						X	
3	Vandalism inspection		X						
4	Encroachments								Ongoing
Pavement									
1	Pavement survey					X			Conduct Spring and Fall surveys
2	Crack sealing								Reactionary
3	Fog seal								As Needed
4	Sealcoat								As Needed
5	Slurry seal								Lifespan approximately 4-6 years
6	Overlay								Lifespan approximately 6-10 years
7	Reconstruct								Lifespan approximately 8-10 years
8	Inspect pavement markings				X				Lifespan approximately 20 years
9	Repaint pavement markings								As Needed
Vegetation									
1	Mowing-clear zones, trailhead areas	X	X						Spring activity
2	Brush trimming/ overhead trimming				X				As Needed
3	Clear zone week control								Noxious weed removal
4	Sight line trimming at intersections		X						Roads, other trails, driveways, etc.
5	Tree removal						X		As Needed
6	Rain garden maintenance		X				X		Storm cleanup
7	Trail sweeping/blowing					X		X	As Needed
8	Seeding				X		X		Up to weekly frequency in Fall
9	Root cutting					X			Spring activity
									Monitor root activity along trail

Maintenance Activity	OPTIMAL FREQUENCY							Notes
	Weekly	Monthly	Quarterly	Annually	Spring/Fall	After Storm	Other	
1 Erosion repair			X		X	X		After spring snowmelt, storm cleanup
2 Culvert/ catch basin clearing			X			X		Storm cleanup
3 Ditch maintenance (clear of debris, trash, branches)				X		X		Spring activity
4 Standing water repair				X		X		
Structures								
1 Bridge inspection (non-structural inspection)				X				
2 Tunnel inspection (non-structural inspection)				X				
3 Boardwalk inspection				X				
4 Railroad crossing inspection				X				Notify owner (railroad) of problems
5 Retaining walls				X				

Table 6.2 Maintenance Activity Table for Trails

## LIMESTONE SCREENING SURFACE MAINTENANCE

Some sections of the trail may be constructed with a limestone screening surface rather than asphalt. Limestone screening can provide a trail surface that can be used by nearly every type of trail user including snowmobiles.

If the surface of a limestone trail becomes loose and un-compacted over time, it can be wetted, reshaped and re-compacted, provided the finer screenings have not sifted to the bottom and the larger particles floated to the top. The limestone should be regraded on a yearly basis at a minimum; seasonally to maintain an evenly graded surface.

## SNOW/ICE REMOVAL

Sauk County does not plan to clear ice and snow from the Great Sauk State Trail. However individual municipalities may choose to conduct snow and ice removal to allow for trail use year-round in areas where the GSST passes through their jurisdiction. In many communities, residents are required to shovel the sidewalk in front of their homes. In communities where the recommended route will replace a sidewalk, the municipality will need to address local snow removal policies to either provide clearing for residents or enact policy adjustments that address this requirement with regards to trails.

## TRAIL PASS REQUIREMENTS

Currently all bicyclists are required to obtain a State Trail Pass prior to using any state trail, including the Great Sauk State Trail. Trail passes can be purchased on at self-serve stations along trails or at business locations throughout the state. Today, the Sauk Prairie Chamber of Commerce, Prairie du Sac Village Hall, Sauk County Clerk's Office and the Sauk County Parks and Recreation Office all sell passes. Funds from trail pass fees are used for ongoing trail maintenance. Pedestrians are not required to obtain a trail pass.

Where the Great Sauk State Trail overlaps an existing local sidewalk or trail, it is recommended that the County suspends enforcement of the trail pass requirement for bicyclists. This policy change will require County Board approval, and should be studied further to understand specific outcomes for impacted communities.

## EVALUATION AND MONITORING

Information gathered on trail users and trail use can help to inform planning and marketing efforts for the trail, as well as provide guidance for future trail expansions and the development of other trail systems. Having access to this information can also help to make the case for additional funding for trail improvements and expansion.

Ideally, depending on funding and staff availability, a combination of occasional user intercept surveys paired with manual counts and longer term strategically placed automated user counting methods should be used to create the most complete picture of trail use. Data from either Streetlight, Replica, or similar programs can be used to reaffirm data collected and to elaborate more broadly about who users are and where they are coming from, in addition to trail use patterns and statistics.

## SURVEYS

» **Visitor intercept:** Visitor intercept surveys collect in-the-moment feedback as someone is leaving an event, attraction, or destination. This is a form of quantitative research that involves short on-the-spot interviews of trail users to gather information about their trail use and experience. The survey could be conducted at trailhead parking lots or at common roadway intersection exit points of the trail. This type of data collection ensures that the responses are coming from current

trail users and avoids some of the potential issues with misremembering that may come from later follow up. Drawbacks of this type of data gathering are that it can be time and resource intensive and as a result does not lend itself well to a large-scale sample size.

- » **Self-selecting:** These are surveys that require trail users to take initiative to participate in the survey. These can be useful to gather information on specific user experiences with lower effort. Self-selecting surveys do not result in a random sample and will generally yield a relatively small number of responses from people with stronger positive or negative experiences. Providing a drop box for survey forms at a trailhead will yield higher results than requesting participants mail surveys back. Providing a QR code or web address directing to a digital survey is likely going to yield the best results, granted there is wifi or cell service near trailhead locations.









Technology Type	Common Manufacturers	User Type	Duration	Typical Uses
<b>Infrared (Active and Passive)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I-RAILx</li> <li>• Etek Counter</li> <li>• TrailStation</li> </ul>	 Single and multi-use trails, shared-use paths, and e-bike trails	Short or long	Sidepath or shared-use path 13
<b>Pneumatic Tubes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Etek Counter</li> <li>• Etek Counter</li> <li>• I-RAILx</li> <li>• Road Sys</li> </ul>		Short	On-road
<b>Inductive Loop</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Etek Counter</li> <li>• Road Sys</li> </ul>		Long	On road or paved shared-use path
<b>Magnetometer</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I-RAILx</li> </ul>		Long	Shared-use path
<b>Piezoelectric</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Metrolab</li> </ul>		Long	On-road
<b>Radar Sensors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sensors Solutions</li> </ul>		Long	On-road
<b>Thermal Imaging</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flir</li> </ul>		Long	On-road
<b>Video Imaging</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Motion Cam</li> </ul>		Short or long	On-road

Table 6.3 Trail Count Methods (<https://altago.com/wp-content/uploads/Innovative-Ped-and-Bike-Counts-White-Paper-Altgo.pdf>)

## TRAIL USER COUNTS

Visits to trails can be difficult to count, as people who visit trails travel different distances on trails and may begin and end their trail visit at any number of access points. To address this variation, counts should be taken at various points along a trail. Manual and automated counting and extrapolations provide a measure of traffic and gauge overall trail activity. These methods have been adapted from how transportation agencies monitor motor vehicle use.

- » **Manual User Counts** are done by an individual can provide a snapshot of data at a particular moment in time.
- » **Automated User Counts** are generally collected through electronic devices that detect the number of users passing by a location. Each type of automated counting device provides different levels and types of information. These allow for user counts over longer periods compared to manual counts, but can vary significantly in cost, accuracy, and effort.
- **Tube Counters** can be placed on paths and use air pulses when the tube is passed over to detect activity.
- **Infrared Sensing Counters** create an invisible ribbon across a pathway that can detect activity that passes across it.
- **Cameras** that automatically take photos and/or videos when activated by motion or a heat source can provide details in each photo that could be used to detect users' activity type and physical characteristics. This count method still requires some amount of either programming or physical counting based on the photos and videos taken.
- **Induction or inductive loop** sensors use an electromagnetic communication or detection system built in to a pathway which uses a moving magnet or an alternating current to induce an electric current in a nearby wire to count users.

## PARTNERSHIPS

Sauk County has served as the primary point of contact for this planning study, and will likely remain as the primary sponsor of the project. However, they cannot complete this ambitious trail without continued coordination with the many affected municipalities and agencies acting within the Great Sauk State Trail corridor. The planning process for this study expressly included a significant amount of involvement from relevant municipalities, agencies and organizations to develop, review, and refine the plan, with the intention of creating a foundation for future collaboration.

### LOCAL MUNICIPAL COLLABORATION

Sauk County will continue to coordinate with local municipalities to implement the trail and will also ask for local municipal coordination to seek grant funding. Sauk County will provide planning, engineering and construction support for the trail implementation, as well as lead the effort to apply for grant funding. Local municipalities should incorporate the Great Sauk State Trail into future Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Planning, as well as recognize the trail in future bicycle, pedestrian, or other multi-modal planning efforts done at a local level. Projects to complete spur trails will be lead by the local municipality with jurisdiction of the area.

### JOINT MAINTENANCE AGREEMENTS

Sauk County will initiate joint maintenance agreements or memorandums of understanding with the municipalities and agencies that the trail passes through to define ownership, maintenance, and policies regarding the trail corridor.

### FRIENDS OF THE GREAT SAUK STATE TRAIL

The Friends of the Great Sauk State Trail was established in 2015 as a non-profit with a mission to enhance, promote, manage, and advocate for the development of the GSST, with oversight provided for the Friends' group by Sauk County. The Friends of the Great Sauk State Trail was integral during the first phase of planning for the Sauk Prairie Segment, as well as played a vital

role in fundraising and branding for this segment. The Friend's group will continue to play a very important role in the implementation of the GSST extension, however new community members within the geography of the extension area will be engaged to lead the effort.

## ASSOCIATION OF SAUK COUNTY SNOWMOBILE CLUBS

The Association of Sauk County Snowmobile Clubs was engaged as part of the GSST planning process. After active discussions and participation at the Phase 2 open house events, the project team met with the Snowmobile Association to discuss how to work collaboratively to accomplish some overlapping goals of snowmobilers and future trail users. The Snowmobile Association expressed interest in finding ways to collaborate with Sauk County to find ways to access the Villages of Rock Springs and North Freedom for routes. The Association is very active in snowmobile trail management in the county. Club volunteers have the responsibility of securing trail easements, placing necessary signage on the trails, and maintaining trail equipment. It was acknowledged that there could be benefit to working together to create shared use (snowmobile, bicycle and pedestrian) trail segments for funding, maintenance, and stewardship efforts.

A barrier to creating a shared trail network for snowmobile, bicycle and pedestrian use relates to surface treatments. Snowmobile routes require a cleared, vegetated or gravel surface path in winter months for optimal use. Early on

in the process of planning the GSST extension, a goal was set to build a fully paved path, in the interest of creating a trail that is accessible to bicyclist, pedestrians and people with disabilities or who use mobility devices. Creating a trail corridor with two adjacent surfaces is a challenge, as it will require more width to build and will be even more challenging to find areas with sufficient grade that can serve both purposes. After discussion with the Snowmobile Association, the GSST project team decided to expand the possibilities of future trail surface selection through rural areas to include limestone screening (similar to other nearby state trails such as the 400 State Trail or Military Ridge State Trail). Sauk County is committed to continued collaboration with the Association of Sauk County Snowmobile Clubs to find ways to pool resources and ensure that user groups are not in conflict.

## BARABOO BICYCLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The City of Baraboo formed the Baraboo Bicycle Advisory Committee in 2021 in response to preliminary route proposals by Sauk County. The committee consists of ten avid bicyclists from the Baraboo community who met a number of times to develop a potential route for the GSST through the City of Baraboo. The Committee expressed strong support during engagement activities for the trail to be routed through the City to connect to local businesses.

Ultimately, the project team determined that the preferred route for the Great Sauk State Trail will not be planned to pass completely through

Baraboo, but will connect to the City through two spur trails (the Baraboo Spur and the West Baraboo Spur). It is strongly recommended that the Baraboo Bicycle Advisory Committee and the City of Baraboo continue to work together to develop a city-wide bicycle and pedestrian plan that will best connect residents and visitors to the Great Sauk State Trail from within the city, and also support a city-wide vision for pedestrian and bicycle connectivity overall.



## HO-CHUNK NATION

The Ho-Chunk Nation has continued to serve as a key stakeholder in the planning and development of the GSST. The Sauk Prairie Segment of the GSST is located at the border of land that was recently rematriated to the Nation and the state-owned Sauk Prairie State Recreation Area. Historically, the area south of Devils Lake (Day-wa-kun-chuck, or Spirit Lake) provided an area for growing traditional crops, gathering medicinal plants and harvesting seasonal game. This area is also the site of ancestral burial, effigy mounds, and other intact earthen sites recognized by the Ho-Chunk.

The Ho-Chunk Nation was integral to the planning of the Sauk Prairie Segment of the GSST and made substantial financial contributions to the construction of the Sauk Prairie Segment. During trail planning for the GSST extension, the project team met with Ho-Chunk Nation representatives and presented draft route options to the Ho-Chunk legislative body. A collaborative study between Ho-Chunk Nation, the Wisconsin DNR and Sauk County resulted in high-resolution LIDAR imaging to inventory potential sacred sites within Devils' Lake State Park and the surrounding area.

Moving forward, Sauk County is committed to continued collaboration with the Ho-Chunk Nation to ensure that trail routing and decision-making for the future trail design aligns with Ho-Chunk Nation values and goals for sharing or interpreting cultural sites, minimizing land disturbance, restoring and managing the land with native plants and methods.

## WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Several miles of the proposed GSST trail route passes through, or is adjacent to WI DNR-owned land. WI DNR staff were engaged and consulted throughout the planning process and provided key direction for trail routing preferences through Devils' Lake State Park, as well as coordinated feedback with the Ice Age Trail Alliance.

In parallel to the GSST extension master plan effort, the WI DNR has initiated a regional planning approach based on Ecological Landscapes. Ecological Landscapes (ELs) are regions of the state that are distinguished by unique ecological characteristics and management opportunities. There are 16 identified ELs in Wisconsin. Portions of the GSST, notably the Devils Lake / Sacred Earth Segment falls within the Central Sand Hills Region. The DNR is currently drafting the regional master plan for the Central Sand Hills Region. Devils Lake State Park was included in this planning process, and draft documents of the master plan refer to the desire to continue the GSST through the park and/or surrounding DNR properties. The routes proposed in this plan through Devils Lake State Park were determined through collaboration with WI DNR staff, and the final preferred route was chosen by the DNR. While Sauk County will work with the DNR to support the overall planning of the trail through the park and DNR lands, the DNR will be the final decision maker for the trail location in the park and will serve as the project sponsor for construction activities within the State Park boundaries.

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION / WISCONSIN AND SOUTHERN RAILROAD COMPANY

Several Bureaus of the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) were engaged as part of the stakeholder team during the planning process to provide guidance for areas where potential trail routing will intersect or be located adjacent to active rail lines. These were Transit, Local Roads, Railroads & Harbors Bureau and Systems Planning and Operations Division.

The planning team also connected with the Wisconsin and Southern Railroad (WSOR). WSOR is a Class II regional railroad operated by Watco (headquartered in Madison) that spans Southern Wisconsin and Northeastern Illinois. WSOR is an economic engine for Sauk County; public safety and industrial development are key priorities for future growth.

The Sauk Prairie Segment of the GSST was a Rails-to-Trails project constructed entirely along a formerly active Union Pacific rail line. WSOR operates the Reedsburg Subdivision, which stretches around 55-miles between Madison and Reedsburg. The Reedsburg line is currently in operation with 1-2 freight trains per day transporting food products, grain, fertilizer, limestone, lumber, steel, plastic, aggregates, salt, pulpboard, paper and chemicals.

Railroad right-of-way is under public ownership and managed by the WisDOT Transit, Local Roads, Railroads & Harbors Bureau. The WSOR has an exclusive lease to the Reedsburg Subdivision to

operate it for freight rail purposes only. The WSOR is the operator, maintainer, and responsible party for incidents and liability. Any shared uses must be approved by WisDOT, WSOR and Wisconsin River Rail Transit Commission (WRRTC).

Due to concerns related to trespassing and safety, WSOR has communicated preference for future routing of the GSST to be on land away from the rail corridor (outside of the rail right-of-way). In discussions and in comments provided to the project team, WSOR has also encouraged the use of existing at-grade or existing grade-separated railroad crossings where the GSST will need to cross railroad tracks. Where the GSST is located near the active rail line, efforts should be made to install fencing and signage to deter trespassing on railroad tracks by trail users.

Segments of the preferred routes for the GSST extension will require construction of trail segments within or adjacent to rail right-of-way. Rails-with-Trails route segments are shown through Devil's Lake State Park, as well as in the segments from the Village of Rock Springs to Reedsburg. Routes identified in the master plan process will require further negotiation with WSOR, Wisconsin DOT, and WisDNR to determine feasibility, safety measures, and maintenance agreements for these segments as they are built. The preferred and alternate routes shown in this master plan also identify nine total locations where the GSST could cross the active rail line. At these locations, Sauk County will work with WSOR and WisDOT to identify appropriate upgrades and improvements for safety.

As progress continues on making the GSST a reality, conversations between Sauk County, WisDOT, and WSOR should continue.

## RAILS-TO-TRAILS AND RAILS-WITH-TRAILS

Rails-trails or Rails-to-Trails are multi-use trails developed on former railroad corridors. Wisconsin is a leader in Rails-to-Trails projects, with the Elroy Sparta State Trail serving as the first rails-to-trails project in the nation. Today, Wisconsin has 111 total rails-trails spanning around 1,948 miles.

An emerging alternative is rails-with-trails, which are trails adjacent to or within an active railroad corridor. The rail-with-trail concept provides even more opportunities for the creation of trail systems that enhance local transportation systems, offering safe and attractive community connections. Again, Wisconsin is a leader in rails-with-trails projects: as of September 2023, there are 24 completed rails-with-trails projects in the state, with 65.41 miles of trail constructed alongside or within rail right-of-way.

Constructing a trail near an active rail line requires additional safety measures to ensure adequate distance between moving railcars and trail users, as well as fencing to deter trespassing on railroad tracks. For more information about rails-to-trails and rails-with-trails, see the following links:

- » [Rails to Trails Conservancy](#)
- » [US Department of Transportation Rails with Trails Report](#)

### RAIL TRAILS IN WISCONSIN

- Wisconsin alone has 111 total rail trails totaling approximately 1,948 miles of trail.
- Wisconsin has 24 completed rails-with-trails projects, with 65.41 miles of trail completed alongside or within rail right-of-way.
- The first rails-to-trails project was constructed in the State of Wisconsin with the Elroy-Sparta State Trail in 1967.

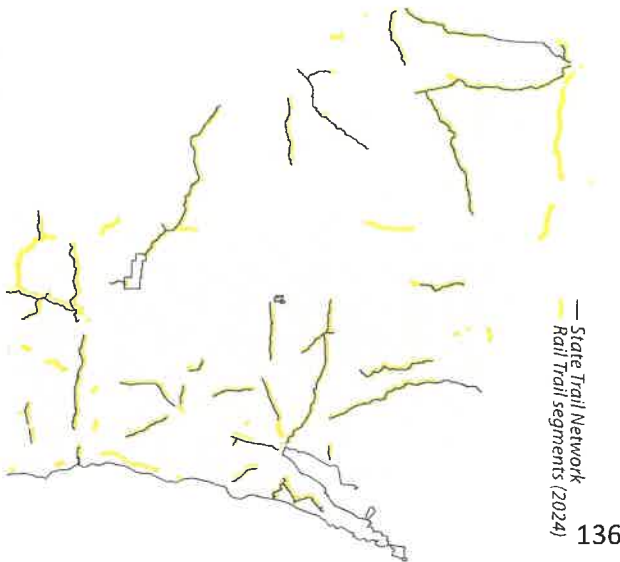
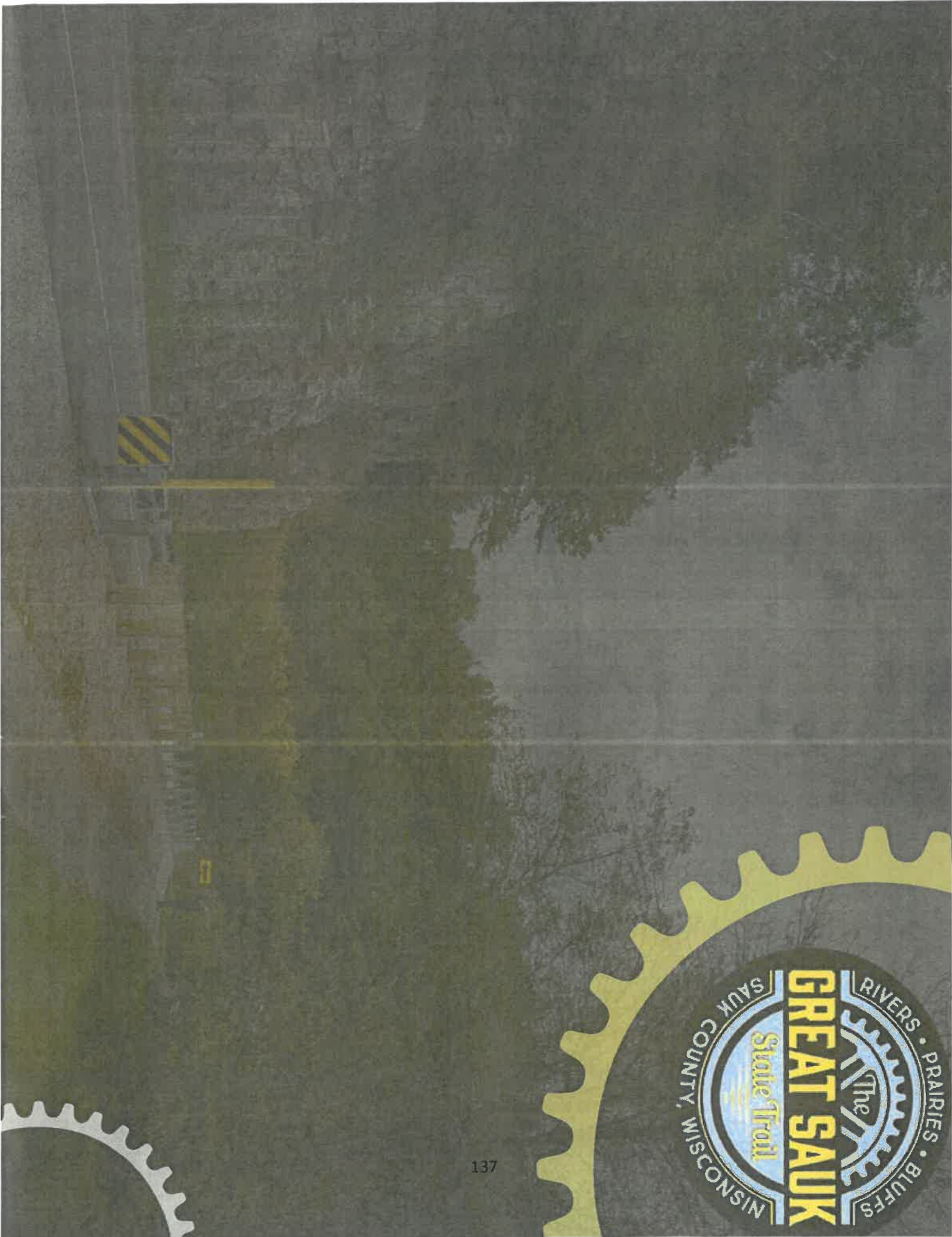


Figure 6.2 Rail trails in Wisconsin (Rails to Trails Conservancy, 2024)





RESOLUTION # 60 - 2024

Resolution to Authorize an Amendment to an Intergovernmental Agreement between Sauk County and the Mirror Lake Management District for Disbursement of American Rescue Plan Act Funds for the Mirror Lake Dredging and Gully Restoration Project

Resolution offered by the Land Resources and Environment Committee

Resolved by the Board of Supervisors of Sauk County, Wisconsin:

BACKGROUND: The County entered into an Intergovernmental Agreement with the Mirror Lake Management District to outline how the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds contained within the 2024 Land Resources and Environment (LRE) Budget would be provided to the Mirror Lake Management District for payment of the dredging and gully restoration project. The first pay request was received; however, due to the other funding sources involved in paying for this project the agreement needs to be modified. Grant funds provided by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) require the Mirror Lake Management District to make payments directly to the vendor. As part our initial agreement, the LRE Department opted to pay the vendor directly. Since these terms do not meet the grant requirements, LRE Department staff has worked with Administration and Finance to find an acceptable solution. The First Amendment to the agreement has been included as Exhibit A. As per the original agreement, any amendments need to be approved by the Sauk County Board.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Sauk County Board of Supervisors, met in regular session, the First Amendment to the Intergovernmental Agreement between Sauk County and the Mirror Lake Management District for Disbursement of American Rescue Plan Act Funds for the Mirror Lake Dredging and Gully Restoration Project be approved.

Approved for presentation to the County Board by the Land Resources and Environment Committee, this 16th day of July 2024.

Consent Agenda Item: [ ] YES [ ] NO

Fiscal Impact: [ ] None [X] Budgeted Expenditure [ ] Not Budgeted

Vote Required: Majority = X 2/3 Majority = \_\_\_\_\_ 3/4 Majority = \_\_\_\_\_

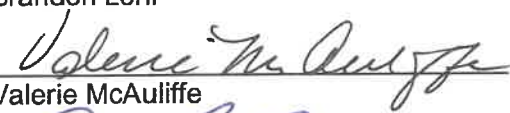

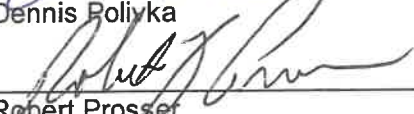

The County Board has the legal authority to adopt: Yes X No \_\_\_\_\_ as reviewed by the Corporation Counsel, [Signature], Date: 07.09.2024.

Offered and passage moved by: Land Resources and Environment Committee

[Signature] Aye [ ] Nay [ ] Abstain [ ] Absent
Lynn Eberl

[Signature] Aye [ ] Nay [ ] Abstain [ ] Absent
Peter Kinsman

[Signature] Aye [ ] Nay [ ] Abstain [ ] Absent
Marty Krueger

54		<input type="checkbox"/> Aye	<input type="checkbox"/> Nay	<input type="checkbox"/> Abstain	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Absent
55	Brandon Lohr				
56		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Aye	<input type="checkbox"/> Nay	<input type="checkbox"/> Abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> Absent
57	Valerie McAuliffe				
58		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Aye	<input type="checkbox"/> Nay	<input type="checkbox"/> Abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> Absent
59	Dennis Poliyka				
60		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Aye	<input type="checkbox"/> Nay	<input type="checkbox"/> Abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> Absent
61	Robert Prosser				
62		<input type="checkbox"/> Aye	<input type="checkbox"/> Nay	<input type="checkbox"/> Abstain	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Absent
63	Robert Spencer				
64		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Aye	<input type="checkbox"/> Nay	<input type="checkbox"/> Abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> Absent
65	Randy Puttkamer				

72  
73 Fiscal Note: The Land Resources and Environment 2024 Budget has \$650,000 of ARPA funds  
74 designated for this project. *tk*

75  
76 MIS Note: No information systems impact.

**INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN SAUK COUNTY AND THE MIRROR  
LAKE MANAGEMENT DISTRICT FOR DISBURSEMENT OF  
AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT FUNDS  
FOR THE MIRROR LAKE DREDGING AND GULLY RESTORATION PROJECT  
FIRST AMENDMENT**

THIS AGREEMENT is made by and between Sauk County, a political subdivision of the State of Wisconsin (“County”), and the Mirror Lake Management District (“MLMD”).

**RECITALS:**

WHEREAS the County and MLMD wish to enter into an agreement for the disbursement of ARPA Funds for the Mirror Lake Dredging and Gully Restoration Projects; and,

WHEREAS the MLMD hired Vierbicher Associates, Inc. to prepare plans and specifications; and to bid out the project on April 11, 2023; and,

WHEREAS Viet & Company, Inc was determined to be the successful and qualified bidder to be awarded the contract for services in the amount of \$1,267,406.50; and,

WHEREAS the Sauk County Land Resources and Environment Department 2022 Budget allocated \$650,000 of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds, which have been carryforward to the 2023 and 2024 Budgets to be used towards the dredging and gully restoration project; and,

WHEREAS MLMD has the remaining funds in the amount of \$617,406.50 from other funding sources to pay for the remainder of the contract.

**NOW, THEREFORE, THE PARTIES COVENANT AND AGREE AS FOLLOWS:**

Section I. Authority. This Agreement is authorized pursuant to the authority contained in Wis. Stat. ch. 23, Wis. Stat. §§ 66.0301, 59.03, and 59.56 and other applicable legal authorities. This Agreement constitutes the entire agreement and understanding between the parties, and supersedes all offers, negotiations and other agreements concerning the subject matter contained herein.

Section II. Parties to this Agreement. The parties to this Agreement are the County and MLMD, working in conjunction to disburse funds for the Mirror Lake Dredging and Gully Restoration Projects.

Section III. General Purposes. The County and the MLMD have entered into this Agreement to create a framework whereby they shall work cooperatively and in good faith to disburse ARPA funds for the projects identified in an amount not to exceed \$650,000. The purpose of the agreement is to define how those funds will be disbursed.

Section V. Definitions.

- A. ARPA means American Rescue Plan Act.
- B. County means Sauk County.
- C. MLMD means Mirror Lake Management District.
- D. Parties mean Sauk County and the Mirror Lake Management District.
- E. Projects mean the Mirror Lake Dredging and Gully Restoration Projects.

Section VI. Fiscal Responsibilities

- A. The County shall be responsible for costs associated with the projects for an amount not to exceed \$650,000.
- B. The MLMD shall be responsible for the remaining costs of \$617,406.50 associated with the Viet & Company, Inc. contract, to include any cost overruns and fees that may be incurred.
- C. The MLMD shall be financially responsible for any contract costs or additional fees that may be incurred by Vierbicher Associates, Inc. for their work on the projects.
- D. The County will issue ARPA funds in the amount of \$650,000 from the 2024 LRE Budget to the MLMD to be used towards the payment of invoices associated with the Viet & Company, Inc. contract. The MLMD will provide documentation to include:
  - 1. Signed pay request by the contractor, engineer, and MLMD.
  - 2. Documentation showing the distribution of funds between the funding sources for each pay request.
  - 3. Documentation to show that the vendor was paid by the MLMD, which may include copy of the bank cleared check, bank statement, or any other format as approved by the Finance Director.

Section VII. Amendments

- A. Amendments to this Agreement shall be in writing and shall be approved by the Sauk County Board of Supervisors and the MLMD Board.

Section VIII. Duration of Agreement and Withdrawal.

- A. The duration of this Agreement shall be for such time as ARPA funding is available

Section IX. Administration.

- A. Each party shall be responsible for the actions of its own employees or officers while such employees or officers are engaged in work associated with the Projects.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the County and MLMD have caused this Agreement to be executed by their respective names and duly authorized representatives as authorized by a resolution duly passed by the governing body of the party.

FOR SAUK COUNTY

FOR MIRROR LAKE MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

  
 Brent Miller, County Administrator

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Mark Blakeslee, Chair of MLMD

Date: 7/2/2024

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

RESOLUTION # 61-2024

Resolution Supporting the Establishment of the Woodland Agricultural Enterprise Area in the Town of Woodland

Resolution offered by the Land Resources and Environment Committee

Resolved by the Board of Supervisors of Sauk County, Wisconsin:

BACKGROUND: An Agricultural Enterprise Area (AEA) is an area of contiguous land, devoted primarily to agricultural use, as designated by the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection (DATCP) through the Wisconsin's Working Lands Initiative in response to a local petition. The designation of an AEA identifies an area as valuable for current and future agricultural uses and may help to promote the development of agricultural businesses.

An AEA designation enables eligible farmers to enter into voluntary Farmland Preservation Agreements with the Wisconsin DATCP for a 10-year period and to receive income tax credits in return for preserving their land in agricultural use and meeting state agricultural performance standards. The petition for establishment of an AEA must be jointly filed by at least five eligible farmers within the boundaries of the proposed AEA, and by each county, town, or municipality in which any part of the proposed AEA is located.

In February 2024, Sauk County staff were approached by landowners in the Town of Woodland seeking assistance with establishing an AEA. Establishing an AEA in the Town of Woodland is the only opportunity for these landowners to enter into new voluntary agreements and be eligible for the Farmland Preservation tax credit. The completed AEA petition application is attached as Appendix A. On May 13, 2024, the Woodland Town Board approved a resolution supporting the establishment of the Woodland AEA.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Sauk County Board of Supervisors, met in regular session, that the County of Sauk supports the establishment of the Woodland Agriculture Enterprise Area within Sauk County, Wisconsin.

Approved for presentation to the County Board by the Land Resources and Environment Committee, this 16th day of July 2024.

Consent Agenda Item: [ ] YES [ ] NO

Fiscal Impact: [ ] None [X] Budgeted Expenditure [ ] Not Budgeted


Vote Required: Majority = \_\_\_\_\_ 2/3 Majority = \_\_\_\_\_ 3/4 Majority = \_\_\_\_\_

The County Board has the legal authority to adopt: Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ as reviewed by the Corporation Counsel, \_\_\_\_\_, Date: \_\_\_\_\_


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Offered and passage moved by: **Land Resources and Environment Committee**

  
Lynn Eberl  Aye  Nay  Abstain  Absent

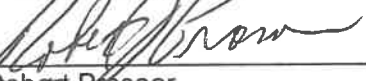
  
Peter Kinsman  Aye  Nay  Abstain  Absent

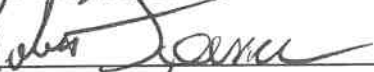
  
Marty Krueger  Aye  Nay  Abstain  Absent


  
Brandon Lohr  Aye  Nay  Abstain  Absent


  
Valerie McAuliffe  Aye  Nay  Abstain  Absent

  
Dennis Polivka  Aye  Nay  Abstain  Absent

  
Robert Prosser  Aye  Nay  Abstain  Absent

  
Robert Spencer  Aye  Nay  Abstain  Absent

  
Randall Puttkamer  Aye  Nay  Abstain  Absent

Fiscal Note: No impact. 

MIS Note: No information systems impact.



Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection  
Division of Agricultural Resource Management  
P.O. Box 8911  
Madison, WI 53708-8911  
Phone: (608) 224-4611

## 2024 Agricultural Enterprise Area Petition

The undersigned persons hereby petition the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP), pursuant to s. 91.86, Wis. Stats., to create an Agricultural Enterprise Area (AEA) under s. 91.84, Wis. Stats. We have read the guidance<sup>1</sup> provided and submit the following information in support of the petition:<sup>2</sup>

### PETITION CHECK LIST

Petitions are due to DATCP by August 2, 2024. Submit an electronic copy to [DATCPWorkingLands@Wisconsin.gov](mailto:DATCPWorkingLands@Wisconsin.gov) of the following:

- This completed petition form (including any supporting pages and documentation)
- A map of the proposed AEA (PDF format)
- Spatial location/GIS shapefile data used to create map (emailed ZIP file)
- A signed signature page for each owner of an eligible farm who is signing the petition
- A political subdivision signature page signed by an authorized officer or representative of every political subdivision (county, town, city or village) in which any part of the proposed AEA is located
- A signature page for the county conservationist
- Non-petitioner cooperator signature pages or letters of support

### PETITION INSTRUCTIONS

#### Who Can Complete the Application:

A petition application can be completed by one or multiple individuals interested in creating an AEA for their community, however, we highly recommend that the petition is split up among multiple individuals and one person assigned as the petition lead contact. The lead contact will be in charge of putting together all the portions of the petition filled out by the other contributors and submitting the full application to DATCP. Contributors can include any combination of community members, petitioning landowners, local officials, community organizations, municipality staff, and county staff.

#### Proposed AEA Petition Interview Process:

In order to accurately capture the community voice of each petition, a recorded interview will be conducted during the petition process. This recorded interview will be between 15 and 20 minutes and will be shared with the petition evaluation committee during the petition review process. To schedule your interview, please contact DATCP staff at [DATCPWorkingLands@wisconsin.gov](mailto:DATCPWorkingLands@wisconsin.gov).

#### Filling out the Petition Application:

At the beginning of each section and subsection of the petition there will be instructions to follow when filling out the necessary information. If you have any questions about the instructions or the questions in any section, please contact DATCP staff at [DATCPWorkingLands@wisconsin.gov](mailto:DATCPWorkingLands@wisconsin.gov).

#### Petition Application Timeline:

The Petition application process includes public outreach, petitioner education, community involvement, map making process, and an evaluation. It can take a few months to fully complete a petition application. A sample timeline for submitting an AEA petition can be found in Appendix A at the back of this application.

Both DATCP and County staff may be able to offer support in the petition application process. If you are interested in petitioning for a new AEA for your community, please contact DATCP staff at [DATCPWorkingLands@wisconsin.gov](mailto:DATCPWorkingLands@wisconsin.gov) and your county Conservation Department (county contact information found within the [WI Land + Water Directory](#)).

**Application continued on the next page.**

<sup>1</sup> Guidance available at: [https://datcp.wi.gov/Pages/Programs\\_Services/AEAPetitionInfo.aspx](https://datcp.wi.gov/Pages/Programs_Services/AEAPetitionInfo.aspx)

<sup>2</sup> Personal information you provide may be used for purposes other than that for which it was collected, s. 15.04(1)(m), Wis. Stats.



## 1. GENERAL INFORMATION

### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Choose a name for the AEA that is relevant to the petitioners or agricultural resources in the area.
2. Indicate where the proposed AEA will be located.
3. Record the number of acres in the proposed AEA boundary. There are no size restrictions for new AEAs, however DATCP must give preference to proposed AEAs 1,000 acres or more. DATCP may only designate 2 million AEA acres statewide, therefore DATCP may require the proposed boundary be adjusted for designation.
4. The petition must be jointly filed by at least 5 eligible farm owners within the boundaries of the proposed AEA, and by each county, town or municipality in which any part of the proposed AEA is located. They must sign a signature page attached to the back of this application. Digital signature pages are available at [Petitioning for Agricultural Enterprise Area \(AEA\) Designation](#).

PROPOSED NAME OF AEA

**Woodland AEA**

COUNTY/COUNTIES IN WHICH PROPOSED AEA IS LOCATED

**Sauk**

TOWNS, CITIES OR VILLAGES IN WHICH PROPOSED AEA IS LOCATED

**Woodland Township**

TOTAL ACRES IN PROPOSED AEA

**20,410**

TOTAL NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE PETITIONERS

**8**

## 2. PETITION CONTACT INFORMATION

### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Fill out the County Staff contact information. This person will serve as DATCP's main county contact during the petition and evaluation process.
2. Fill out the Landowner Representative. This person should be one the petitioners and will serve as DATCP's main landowner contact during the petition and evaluation process. This person should be ready and willing to answer questions and provide additional information for the petition if needed.
3. Indicate the names and contact information of any individual, not already indicated above, who also contributed to the petition application process. If no other contributors, please leave blank.

COUNTY STAFF CONTACT <b>Brian Sadler</b>	EMAIL <b>brian.sadler@saukcountywi.gov</b>	PHONE NUMBER <b>608-355-4841</b>	
MAILING ADDRESS STREET <b>505 Broadway St</b>	CITY <b>Baraboo</b>	STATE <b>WI</b>	ZIP <b>53913</b>
LANDOWNER REPRESENTATIVE <b>Andrew Ennis</b>	EMAIL <b>ennisar@msn.com</b>	PHONE NUMBER	
MAILING ADDRESS STREET <b>S125 Ennis Rd</b>	CITY <b>Wonewoc</b>	STATE <b>WI</b>	ZIP <b>53968</b>
PETITION CONTRIBUTOR <b>Amos Vande Hei</b>	EMAIL <b>avandehei@gmail.com</b>	PHONE NUMBER	
PETITION CONTRIBUTOR <b>Lynn Sonnenberg</b>	EMAIL <b>sonnenberg.lynn@gmail.com</b>	PHONE NUMBER	
PETITION CONTRIBUTOR <b>Craig Schroeder</b>	EMAIL <b>cadooharley@gmail.com</b>	PHONE NUMBER	

**Application continued on the next page.**

### 3. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

INSTRUCTIONS:

Answer the following questions. If "No" is selected for any question, this application is currently ineligible. Questions resulting in "No" should be addressed prior to submitting the application. DATCP is willing assist you in resolving any issues in order to facilitate an AEA petition.

- A. All parcels in the proposed AEA are located within a farmland preservation area designated in the certified county farmland preservation plan.  Yes  No
- B. All parcels in the proposed AEA are contiguous\*.  Yes  No
- C. The proposed AEA is primarily in agricultural use.  Yes  No
- D. At least 5 eligible farm owners signed the "Petitioning Landowner Signature Page(s)"  Yes  No

*\*Contiguous means "adjacent to or sharing a common boundary." For the purpose of AEA designation under s. 91.84, Wis. Stats. Parcels that are only separated by a lake, stream, transportation or utility right-of-way are contiguous. Parcel boundaries that meet at a single point are not contiguous.*

***Application continued on the next page.***

## 4. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### INSTRUCTIONS:

Fill in the following background information of the proposed AEA. Provide as much detail as possible in order to create a clear picture of the area where the AEA is proposed. Assume everyone on the evaluation committee is unfamiliar with the community and local culture of your proposed AEA. You may include maps and photos to support your narrative. Additional instructions are included under each subsection.

### A. PROPOSED AEA AREA INTRODUCTION

#### INSTRUCTIONS:

Write a clear, detailed narrative describing the local agricultural community. As part of the narrative, discuss the local agricultural culture, history, and general importance of this area. You can also include challenges faced by the local agricultural community. Use this introduction to tell the evaluation committee the importance of the agricultural or rural identity within the proposed AEA boundaries.

Woodland Township is in the heart of the Driftless Area. I like to call it the panhandle of Sauk County. The area consists of rolling hills and deep valleys interspersed with cold water streams and scenic bluffs.

The Plum Valley watershed covers a large portion of Woodland Township and has a long history of soil conservation efforts. On Feb. 4, 1946, the Plum Valley Conservation Cooperative was formed when 46 farmers met at the first meeting.

Due to outdated farming practices and highly erodible lands, severe soil erosion had taken place. After many years of hands-on efforts, conditions improved. This Driftless area had been a hidden gem in SW Wisconsin for many years. Over the last 10-20 years this has changed as many people have discovered the scenic beauty of this area. Land prices have risen very quickly in the last few years, putting a financial pinch on farmers.

I'm all for programs that can help preserve what we have here. (Andrew Ennis)

### B. CURRENT LAND USE AND LAND USE TRENDS

#### INSTRUCTIONS:

While filling out the following information, consider citing existing information or maps from the county's farmland preservation plan or local comprehensive plans.

1. Describe ALL current land uses (both agricultural and non-agricultural) within the proposed AEA OR attach a current land use map with a table or short narrative that explains what the map depicts. For assistance in creating a land use map, please contact DATCP staff at (608) 224-4611 or [DATCPWorkingLands@Wisconsin.gov](mailto:DATCPWorkingLands@Wisconsin.gov).
2. Provide information about land use trends in and around the AEA. This can include, but not limited to, information about development trends, number of new septic systems, population growth, infrastructural changes, agricultural trends, local zoning, protected natural areas, and external pressures to agriculture.
3. Select ALL of the main types of agricultural production and agricultural activities within the proposed AEA. Provide a short description where applicable.

#### CURRENT LAND USE WITHIN THE AEA

The area within the proposed Woodland AEA is primarily rolling agricultural lands with the steepest ridges covered in hardwoods, typical of the driftless region of southwest Wisconsin. There is one small unincorporated hamlet located within the proposed area and a single-family residential area surrounding Dutch Hollow Lake. These two areas will be excluded from the proposed AEA. Land use in the area is almost entirely agriculturally based, specifically hay land, perennial pastures and row crops. Several dairy farms are still milking in this area and beef production is continuing to grow. Small forestry-based manufacturing facilities, such as milling raw timber and pallet manufacturing are dotted throughout the area. Several on farm greenhouses retail flowers, shrubs, trees and produce reside in and near the proposed AEA. There is at least one seed and

chemical company based within the proposed area, as well as a 20 acre gravel mine. The two main tributaries flowing through this area are Plum Creek in the north and Little Baraboo River in the south.

#### LAND USE TRENDS IN AND AROUND THE AEA

Much like other parts of the Sauk county, the adoption of rotational grazing has been steadily increasing in this region. With some stream corridors still being over grazed by cattle and horses, progress is being made to better manage permanent cover in those sensitive areas.

#### TYPES OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION *(Select all that apply)*

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Row Crops <i>(specify)</i><br>hay/corn/beans                    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grazing                                       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Federal Conservation Programs <i>(specify)</i> CRP                  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Specialty Crops <i>(specify)</i> mums,<br>flowers, green houses | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dairy   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State Conservation Programs <i>(specify)</i><br>streambank projects |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Vegetable <i>(specify)</i>   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Beef  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Local Conservation Efforts <i>(specify)</i>                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Organic <i>(specify)</i>   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other Livestock <i>(specify)</i><br>horse/pig | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other <i>(specify)</i> tree, plant nursery                          |

#### C. LAND USE CONTROLS AND PLANS IN PROPOSED AEA

##### INSTRUCTIONS:

Select ALL of the land use controls and plans in the proposed AEA. Provide a short description, map or additional information where applicable.

- Farmland preservation zoning ordinance
- Subdivision ordinances
- Other zoning ordinances (Manure Storage, Livestock Facility Siting, Wellhead protection, etc.) *(specify)* County wide manure storage ordinance
- Purchase of development rights and/or easements (donated or purchased)
- Transfer of development rights
- Farmland preservation agreements
- Cooperative boundary agreements/inter-municipal agreements
- Natural area protections or conservation program activities (state and/or federal) *(specify)*
- Comprehensive plan *(specify)* Town of Woodland Comprehensive Plan (2024)/Sauk County Comprehensive Plan (2009)
- Other programs or activities showing a commitment to water quality and/or soil health *(specify)*

#### E. CONSERVATION COMPLIANCE

Agricultural performance standards used help to reduce agricultural non-point source pollution of surface water resources, to protect agricultural resources including farmland soils, surface waters, and groundwater, protect air quality, and keep applied nutrients in the soil for plant growth. Conservation compliance is monitored by the county conservation department. Your local county conservation department should be your main point of contact when filling out this section.

##### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Indicate the approximate level of petitioner conservation compliance within the proposed AEA.
2. Provide a brief rationale describing the factors contributing to this level of conservation compliance (or lack thereof).

LEVEL OF PETITIONER CONSERVATION COMPLIANCE

- Nearly all petitioners are in compliance
- More than half of the petitioners are in compliance
- Half or less than half of the petitioners are in compliance
- Few or no petitioners are in compliance
- Compliance status of petitioners is unknown

FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO LEVEL OF CONSERVATION COMPLIANCE

Several petitioners have land enrolled in CRP, or well managed rotationally grazed pastures that meet state conservation standards. Two other cropland farmers already have nutrient management plans already in place.

***Application continued on the next page.***

## 5. PURPOSE AND RATIONALE

### INSTRUCTIONS:

Fill in the following information for the purpose and rationale for the proposed AEA. Provide as much detail as possible to justify the creation of this proposed AEA. Since DATCP may only designate 2 million AEA acres statewide, use this section to justify to the evaluation committee why this proposed AEA should be a part of this 2 million AEA acres. You may include maps and photos to support your narrative. Additional instructions are included under each subsection.

### A. MAIN JUSTIFICATION FOR PROPOSED AEA

#### INSTRUCTIONS:

State the main justification for creating the proposed AEA and preserving the agricultural land use in the area. Consider including information about land use conflicts, development pressures, promotion of conservation practices, interest in preserving farmland or rural character of proposed AEA, interest in tax credit and conservation compliance, and other external pressures contributing to the desire to preserve farmland.

**The interest in establishing an AEA in this area originated from two different perspectives. Some of the petitioners are looking to help buffer the advancement of more mechanically intensive farming practices that are not as conducive to the slopes and highly erodible soils found in the area. With the designation of an AEA they hope there will be more of an incentive for landowners to improve upon their soil conserving practices. Practices such as well managed perennial pastures and enrollment of sensitive land in programs like CRP. Justification for establishing an AEA also comes from landowners who themselves, or their renters, are already following a nutrient management plan and feel they are managing the land in a way that is meeting the state conservation standards. They would like the opportunity to receive the tax credit that their neighbors in the EA zoned townships are able to.**

### B. GOALS FOR AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION AND AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

#### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. State the specific goals for agricultural preservation, development, and/or innovation. Include goals, plans, and agreements planned to promote economic sustainability, resilience and/or growth within the proposed AEA.
2. Explain how you plan to enact the goals identified for the proposed AEA. Briefly described ALL activities including in person or virtual meetings with landowners, planned investments, grants, development incentives, cooperative agreements, land or easement purchases, public outreach activities, and any other activity that supports the proposed AEA's goals.

#### GOALS FOR AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Preserve and maintain existing land uses as well as to provide for future land use considerations that will promote the balance among quality of life, property values, environmental protection, and economic opportunities.

#### PLANS TO MEET AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Grow the mindset of regenerative farming practices. Continue educating producers on financially stable grazing practices that and increase the number of acres covered in well managed perennial pastures.

### C. PROPOSED AEA BOUNDARY

#### INSTRUCTIONS:

Describe the decision making process and the information used to draw the boundary of the proposed AEA. Factors used to determine the proposed AEA Boundary should not be limited to subjective criteria (i.e. landowner personal interests). You should consider and include objective criteria such as watershed boundary, soil types, historical land use, future land use plans, and proximity to agricultural infrastructure. Please note that the AEA boundary MUST follow parcel lines and be

contiguous. This means that the boundary contains parcels that are connected and are not otherwise separated except by roads, utility right-of-ways or bodies of water.

*See Appendix B for additional information on creating an AEA boundary.*

In 2023 when petitioning for a different AEA (Dellona AEA), Sauk County reached out through mailings across the four northern townships in Sauk county that do not have Exclusive Ag zoning. The response received was too scattered across too large an area to qualify for an AEA. The final petition remained close to the original area the support originated from in Dellona but some interest remained, three townships over, in Woodland township. After the outreach efforts (see 6A) were completed specifically in Woodland, and letters of support were received, a preliminary map was made. The interested participants were well spread throughout the township with the only other interested parties outside of the township, located too far to be included. Being that Woodland township borders 3 other counties, we decided that the best chance of receiving a designation this year would be to stick within the township and not reach out to surrounding counties. We would be open to future modification if neighboring counties brought interest. The township line on the north, west, and south sides offer a clean, clear boundary and will be clear to future landowners interested in signing an agreement. On the east-central side of the township, straddling the town line, lies Dutch Hollow Lake. The land directly surrounding the lake is zoned single family residential. Land extending beyond the SFR zoning, for roughly one-third of a mile is a planned transition zone. One other excluded area to note is a 473 acre unincorporated hamlet in the south center portion of Woodland which is also a planned transition area and would be excluded from the AEA.

***Application continued on the next page.***

## 6. PETITION PUBLIC PROCESS AND OUTREACH

### INTRODUCTION:

Provide information about the public outreach strategy that was used during the petition development process as well as the future process to encourage landowner participation within the AEA if designated. You may include any flyers, advertisements informational/educational materials or photos from your public process to support the narrative. Additional instructions are included under each subsection.

### A. AEA PETITION PUBLIC PROCESS

#### INSTRUCTIONS:

Describe the process used to involve the public within the petition process and publicly share information about the proposed AEA, establish the boundary, identify farm owner petitioners, identify non-petitioning co-operators, and notify non-petitioners within the proposed boundary. Provide details on the number and dates of public meetings held (both virtual and in person), number of mailings, door-to-door outreach efforts, newspaper advertisements or articles, and/or any other efforts made to connect with the community.

The Land Resources and Environment was approached by 2 different landowners in the township of Woodland. One was a former Farmland Preservation agreement holder, the other inquired about the Farmland Preservation program after hearing about the increase tax credit. These initial landowners were on opposite ends of the township. We provided AEA information to the landowners and they circulated that information to neighboring landowners and family members. The landowner representative even spoke at a townhall meeting to drum up more interest. Our department reached out to other landowner who also had agreements in the past or people we've worked with over the last few years. The main proponents of the petition, along with county staff, called or visited several of their neighboring landowners and encouraged them to attend an informational meeting or to contact the Land Resources and Environment Department for more information on establishing a AEA. Mailers were sent out to previous agreement holders as well as news releases in the local paper. Sauk county staff presented at the Woodland township board meeting and in doing so received additional signed letters of support, as well as overwhelming support by the town representatives. The locations of the supporting parties were then mapped out. The support was spread across the entire township with no major impediments of continuity. A few additional landowners in nearby townships did contact our office about the possibility of establishing an AEA but their parcels were too far removed from the main congregation of interested landowners.

### B. FUTURE OUTREACH STRATEGY

#### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Describe a future outreach strategy to encourage landowners to participate in the proposed AEA, sign Farmland Preservation Agreements, and achieve conservation compliance. Include details about any virtual or in person future informational meetings, mailings, one-on-one meetings, nutrient management planning classes, and/or any other future efforts made to promote the proposed AEA.
2. Establish a reasonable Farmland Preservation Agreement sign-up goal for the AEA if designated. This could be a number of agreements or a percentage of AEA covered by agreements.

#### OUTREACH PLANS TO MEET AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Future outreach strategies will include newspaper, Facebook and MailChimp advertising of an informational meeting for landowners within the AEA to come and ask questions and learn about conservation compliance. Phone calls will be made to any individuals who had initially responded or shown interest in establishing the AEA. We will host at least one pasture walk during the 2025 grazing season at an AEA participant's farm.

#### FARMLAND PRESERVATION AGREEMENT SIGN-UP GOAL

Our goal for sign-ups would be 25% of the landowners located <sup>152</sup> in the AEA.



### C. CURRENT AND FUTURE OUTREACH ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE PROPOSED AEA

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

Provide specific examples of current and future outreach activities within the proposed AEA that will be used to promote the proposed AEA, promote investment, economic development, partner collaboration, conservation education, and farmland preservation. Include activities conducted by any key collaborators (such as UW Extension, NRCS, local land trusts, citizen groups, and producer-led groups), dates and locations associated with each activity. Attach an additional page if more room is required.

<b>Current Activities:</b>	
<u>Type of Activity</u>	<u>Brief Description of Activity</u>
<i>Ex: Joint community marketing</i>	<i>Ex: Producers in the area have formed a producer cooperative to market their products directly to consumers.</i>
<i>Mailer</i>	Letter sent out to prior agreement holders in the general area to gauge interest in new AEA
<i>Mailer</i>	Letter sent out to every landowner (>10ac) within the preliminary boundary, inviting them to informational meeting at town hall
<i>Township meeting</i>	Presented at township meeting promoting the establishment of the AEA.
<i>County FPP informational meeting</i>	The county held 3 informational meetings throughout the county to gather input on the entire FP plan. One of which was in the Woodland township region, which was attended by several of the petitioners.
<b>Future Activities:</b>	
<u>Type of Activity</u>	<u>Brief Description of Activity</u>
<i>Ex: Field Day - Summer 2025</i>	<i>Ex: Farmer Bob is planning to host a field day with the local LCD at his farm for eligible AEA farms to showcase conservation on the farm and talk about the value of Farmland Preservation Program.</i>
<i>Rainfall simulator field day - 2024</i>	Hold a field day at an AEA participant's farm, using the LRE rainfall simulator to demonstrate how a healthier soil is a more resilient and productive soil.
<i>Pasture walk - grazing season 2024</i>	Plan to showcase landowner's rotationally grazing setup, why it works for him and how it meets all of the farmland preservation standards.
<i>Mailing for NMFE grant opportunity-fall 2024</i>	Send out mailers to producers within the AEA boundary advertising the funding available for NMP cost-share.

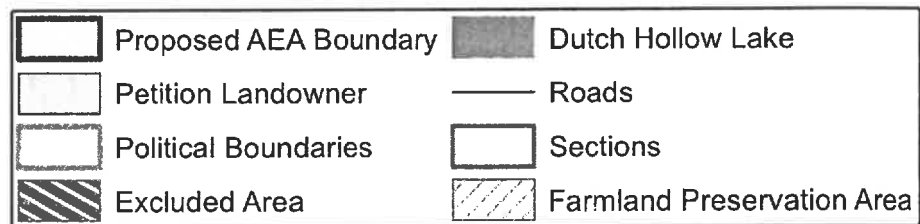
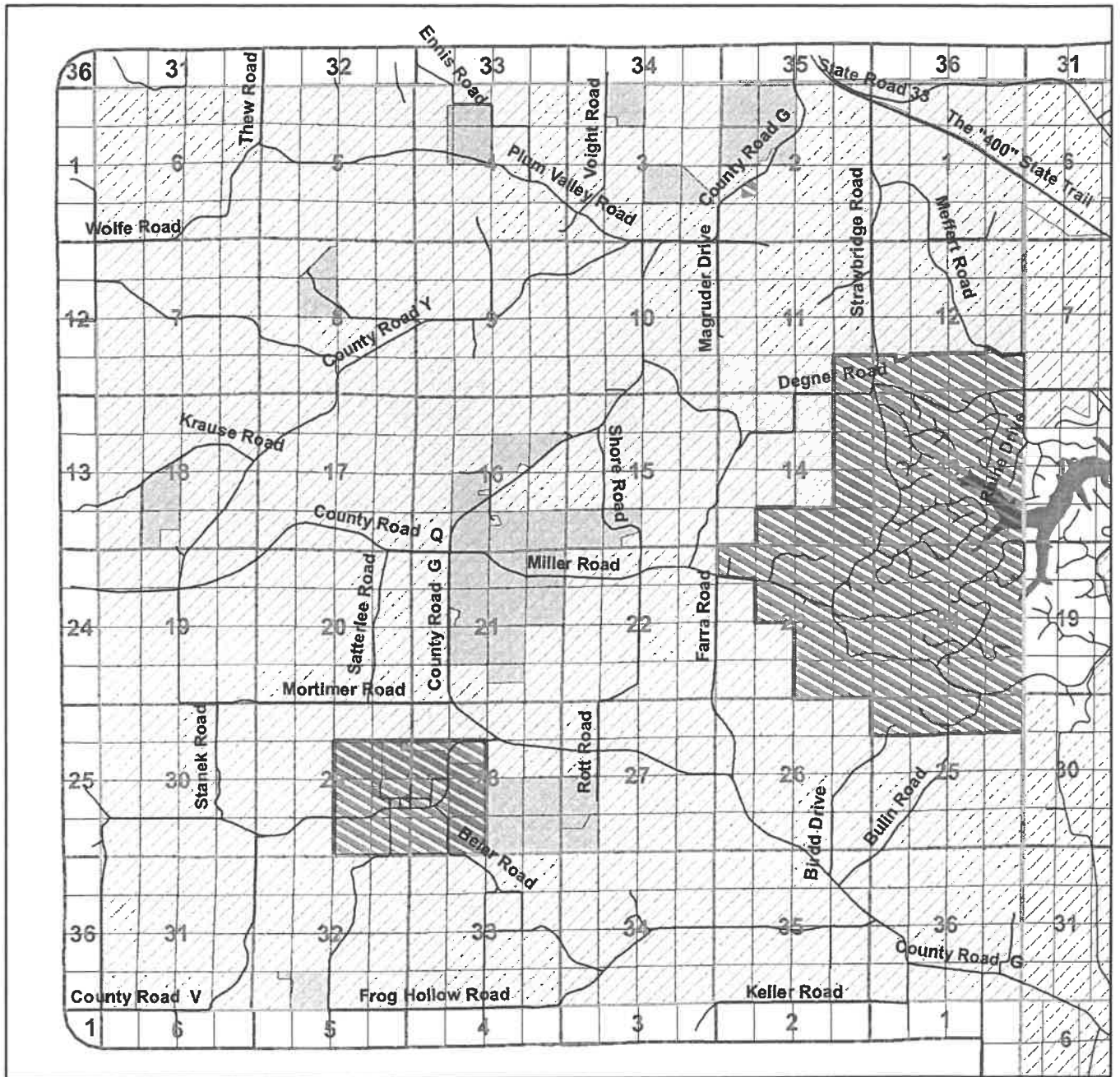
### D. DATCP SUPPORT FOR ACTIVITIES AND OUTREACH

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

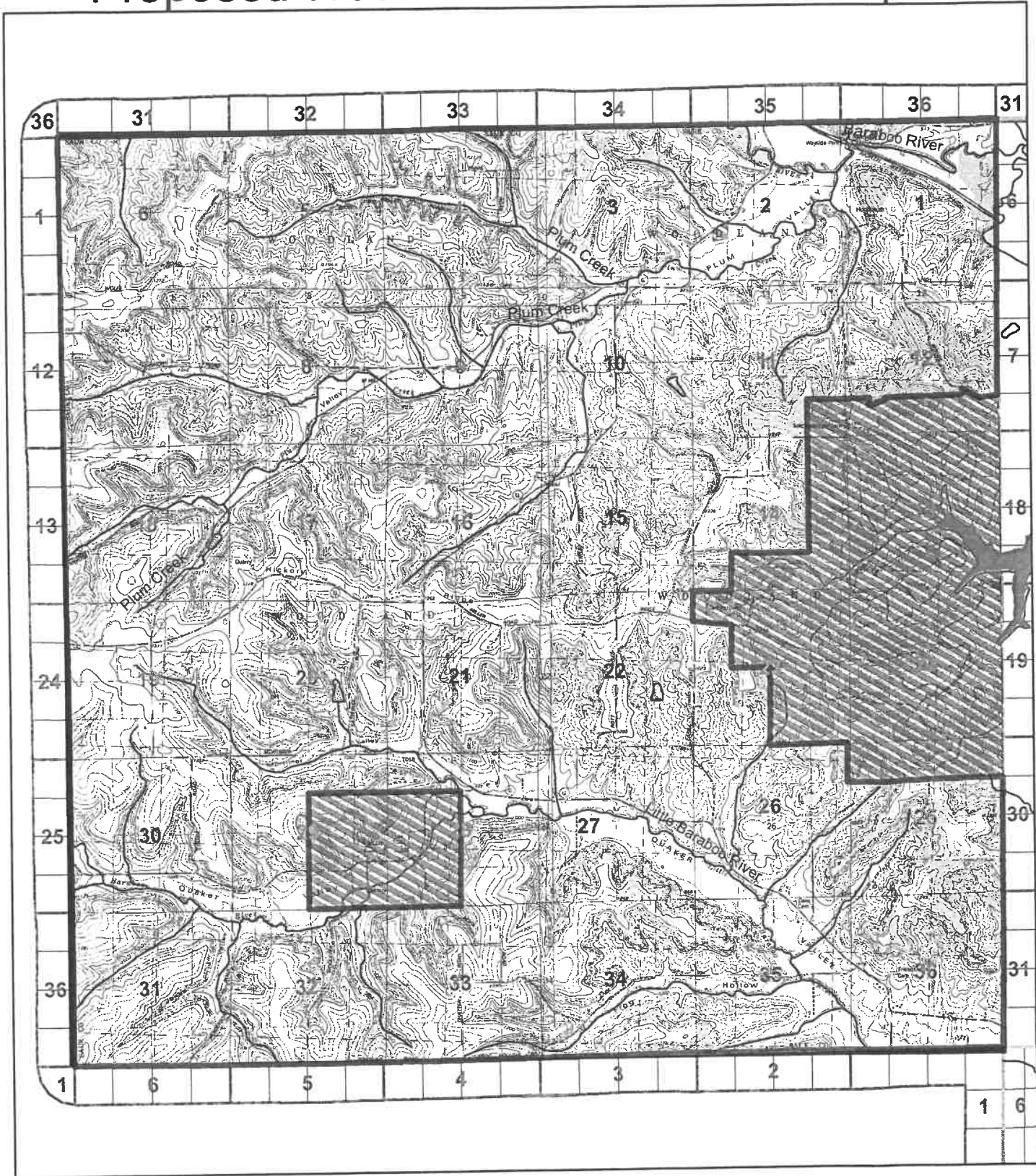
Describe any type of assistance DATCP can provide to aid future activity and outreach efforts within the proposed AEA if designated. DATCP can assist with informational mailers, educational materials, speaking presentations, innovative projects, grant proposals and many other activities done to promote the AEA or provide educational opportunities.




DATCP can continue to provide expert assistance at our NMFE trainings held each winter. Mailers promoting NMFE online trainings to current and prospective NMFE participants. Speaking presentation at future crop consultant meetings discussing the expectations of nutrient management.

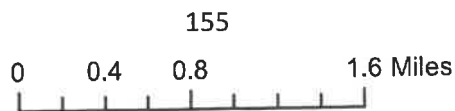
# Proposed Woodland AEA Boundary Map



# Proposed Woodland AEA Landuse Map



	Proposed AEA Boundary
	Political Boundaries
	Excluded Area



## Plum Valley Soil Conservation Ass'n Held 20th Anniversary Banquet Saturday

About 77 members and guests of the Plum Valley Soil Conservation Ass'n. enjoyed a banquet at Dreamland Saturday evening, Feb. 5, commemorating the Association's 20th anniversary.

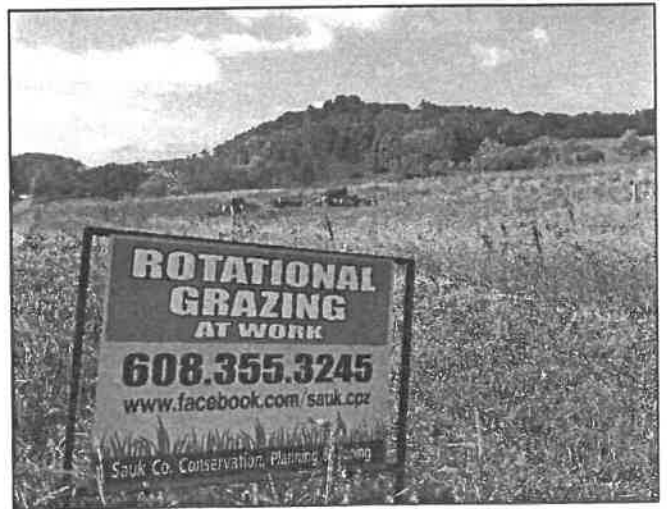
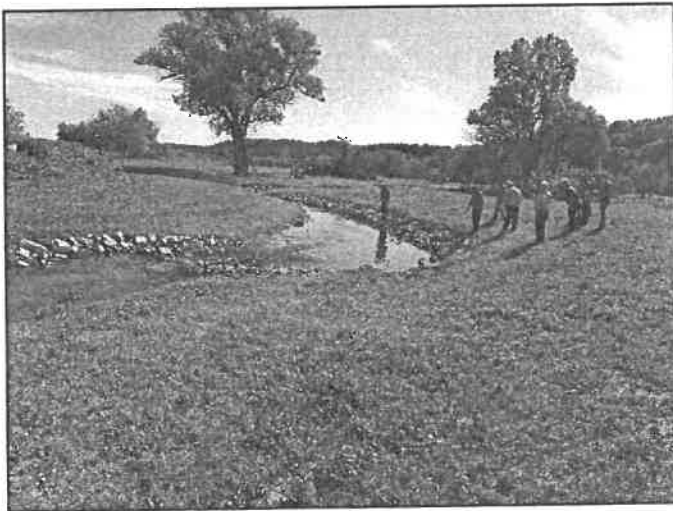
The group was served a delicious swiss steak dinner; joined in group singing, accompanied by Cheryl Thorsen; heard a reading by Carol Rae Reineke; enjoyed a complete review of 20 years by Mrs. Emil Backeberg; and heard a short talk from a guest speaker, Jim Stevenson of the Sauk County Soil Conservation Service. The group's president, Walter Larson, was master of ceremonies for the event.

Other officers of the Association at the present time are: Vice-president, Don Gross; Secretary, Dale Crandall; and Treasurer, Art Hellpap.

The Association was organized on Feb. 4, 1946 and was the first of its kind in the United States. Perry Carroll, a soil conservation and farm planner was instrumental in helping to organize the group. Forty six farmers met at this first meeting. Today membership is at 20.

The group's activities have been numerous during their 20 years, including: soil testing, strip and contour farming, more grasslands, improved waterways, built terraces, pasture renovation, tree planting, wildlife protection, park development, experimental test plant plots, sponsored a baseball team, dances and several other money raising events, kept a rain gauge record, erected "Welcome to Plum Valley" signs and held numerous picnics at the park and shelter, as well as an annual banquet and Christmas party.

The following won door prizes following the banquet: Mrs. Ervin Schultz, Ivan Hellpap, Arnold Degner and Orval Haas.



The caption for this photo read: THE RAIN GAUGE, supplied by the soil Conservation Service is boarded with a different family each year. After each rain this year John Dreischmier and his wife (Dorothy) carefully record the amount of rain and the period of time in which it fell.

Petitioning Landowner Signature Page

A separate signature page, in the following form, must be signed by the owner of each farm. An authorized individual may sign on behalf of a legal entity. If a farm is jointly owned by a legally married couple, both individuals must sign. Please fill out the information in the gray boxes.

Farm owner (correct legal name(s) or legal name of business entity):

Hearth Ridge Farms

Type of business entity, if applicable (check one):

Individual or married couple

LLC

Corporation

Other (describe)

Partnership

[Redacted]

Please check box if you are signing electronically:



I understand that by checking this box, I am indicating that I am an eligible owner of farmland within the proposed Agricultural Enterprise Area (AEA), and that I am offering my support in request for designation of the proposed AEA. This signature page does not mean that I am required to participate in the farmland preservation program, it represents my support of agriculture in this community and the goals of this petition. My electronic (typed) signature has the effect of meeting the signature requirement under s. 91.86(2), Wis. Stats.

Authorized signature: [Signature] Date 4-8-2024

Authorized signature: [Signature] Date 4-8-24

Farm owner address (street, city, zip): P.O. Box 81 Hillsboro WI 54634

E-mail OR Phone Number: [Redacted]

I (we) currently claim a farmland preservation tax credit (either under farmland preservation zoning or through a farmland preservation agreement).  Yes  No  Don't Know

I (we) are interested in maintaining our existing farmland preservation agreement or entering into a new farmland preservation agreement. (Note: To claim the farmland preservation tax credit under a farmland preservation agreement, the farm must meet state soil and water conservation standards.)  Yes  No  Maybe

Petitioning Landowner Signature Page

A separate signature page, in the following form, must be signed by the owner of each farm. An authorized individual may sign on behalf of a legal entity. If a farm is jointly owned by a legally married couple, both individuals must sign. Please fill out the information in the gray boxes.

Farm owner (correct legal name(s) or legal name of business entity):

Caleb and Tasha Vandellor

Type of business entity, if applicable (check one):

Individual or married couple

LLC

Corporation

Other (describe)

Partnership

Please check box if you are signing electronically:



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Authorized signature:

Caleb Vandellor

Date

4/8/24

Authorized signature:

Tasha Vandellor

Date

4/8/24

Farm owner address (street, city, zip):

E1005 County Rd E, Waunakee WI 53198

E-mail OR Phone Number:

[Redacted]

I (we) currently claim a farmland preservation tax credit (either under farmland preservation zoning or through a farmland preservation agreement).

Yes

No

Don't Know

I (we) are interested in maintaining our existing farmland preservation agreement or entering into a new farmland preservation agreement. (Note: To claim the farmland preservation tax credit under a farmland preservation agreement, the farm must meet state soil and water conservation standards.)

Yes

No

Maybe

Petitioning Landowner Signature Page

A separate signature page, in the following form, must be signed by the owner of each farm. An authorized individual may sign on behalf of a legal entity. If a farm is jointly owned by a legally married couple, both individuals must sign. Please fill out the information in the gray boxes.

Farm owner (correct legal name(s) or legal name of business entity):

James O. West

Type of business entity, if applicable (check one):

- Individual or married couple
- Corporation
- Partnership

- LLC
- Other (describe)

Partnership

Please check box if you are signing electronically:

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Authorized signature:

James O. West

Date

4/23/14

Authorized signature:

[Redacted]

Date

[Redacted]

Farm owner address (street, city, zip):

5103 Ennis Rd Wauwesa, WI 53966

E-mail OR Phone Number:

[Redacted]

I (we) currently claim a farmland preservation tax credit (either under farmland preservation zoning or through a farmland preservation agreement).

Yes

No

Don't Know

I (we) are interested in maintaining our existing farmland preservation agreement or entering into a new farmland preservation agreement. (Note: To claim the farmland preservation tax credit under a farmland preservation agreement, the farm must meet state soil and water conservation standards.)

Yes

No

Maybe



Petitioning Landowner Signature Page

A separate signature page, in the following form, must be signed by the owner of each farm. An authorized individual may sign on behalf of a legal entity. If a farm is jointly owned by a legally married couple, both individuals must sign. Please fill out the information in the gray boxes.

Farm owner (correct legal name(s) or legal name of business entity):

Leslie Degeer Degeer W LLC

Type of business entity, if applicable (check one):

Individual or married couple

LLC

Corporation

Other (describe)

Partnership

[Redacted]

Please check box if you are signing electronically:

I understand that by checking this box, I am indicating that I am an eligible owner of farmland within the proposed Agricultural Enterprise Area (AEA), and that I am offering my support in request for designation of the proposed AEA. This signature page does not mean that I am required to participate in the farmland preservation program, it represents my support of agriculture in this community and the goals of this petition. My electronic (typed) signature has the effect of meeting the signature requirement under s. 91.86(2), Wis. Stats.

Authorized signature: [Redacted] Date

Authorized signature: Leslie Degeer Date 9/3/24

Farm owner address (street, city, zip): 5 167 Cty Rd G Duncannon WI 53968

E-mail OR Phone Number: [Redacted]

I (we) currently claim a farmland preservation tax credit (either under farmland preservation zoning or through a farmland preservation agreement).  Yes  No  Don't Know

I (we) are interested in maintaining our existing farmland preservation agreement or entering into a new farmland preservation agreement. (Note: To claim the farmland preservation tax credit under a farmland preservation agreement, the farm must meet state soil and water conservation standards.)  Yes  No  Maybe

Petitioning Landowner Signature Page

A separate signature page, in the following form, must be signed by the owner of each farm. An authorized individual may sign on behalf of a legal entity. If a farm is jointly owned by a legally married couple, both individuals must sign. Please fill out the information in the gray boxes.

Farm owner (correct legal name(s) or legal name of business entity):

Anderson B. Enns

Type of business entity, if applicable (check one):

Individual or married couple

LLC

Corporation

Other (describe)

Partnership

Please check box if you are signing electronically:



I understand that by checking this box, I am indicating that I am an eligible owner of farmland within the proposed Agricultural Enterprise Area (AEA), and that I am offering my support in request for designation of the proposed AEA. This signature page does not mean that I am required to participate in the farmland preservation program, it represents my support of agriculture in this community and the goals of this petition. My electronic (typed) signature has the effect of meeting the signature requirement under s. 91.86(2), Wis. Stats.

Authorized signature:

A. Enns

Date

9/8/24

Authorized signature:

Date

Farm owner address (street, city, zip):

5225 Enns Rd. Monroeville WI 53968

E-mail OR Phone Number:

ennsb95@msn.com

I (we) currently claim a farmland preservation tax credit (either under farmland preservation zoning or through a farmland preservation agreement).

Yes

No

Don't Know

I (we) are interested in maintaining our existing farmland preservation agreement or entering into a new farmland preservation agreement. (Note: To claim the farmland preservation tax credit under a farmland preservation agreement, the farm must meet state soil and water conservation standards.)

Yes

No

Maybe

Petitioning Landowner Signature Page

A separate signature page, in the following form, must be signed by the owner of each farm. An authorized individual may sign on behalf of a legal entity. If a farm is jointly owned by a legally married couple, both individuals must sign. Please fill out the information in the gray boxes.

Farm owner (correct legal name(s) or legal name of business entity):

Robert J. Berg & Judith A. Berg

Type of business entity, if applicable (check one):

Individual or married couple

LLC

Corporation

Other (describe)

Partnership

[Redacted]

Please check box if you are signing electronically:



I understand that by checking this box, I am indicating that I am an eligible owner of farmland within the proposed Agricultural Enterprise Area (AEA), and that I am offering my support in request for designation of the proposed AEA. This signature page does not mean that I am required to participate in the farmland preservation program, it represents my support of agriculture in this community and the goals of this petition. My electronic (typed) signature has the effect of meeting the signature requirement under s. 91.86(2), Wis. Stats.

Authorized signature: [Redacted] Date [Redacted]

Authorized signature: [Redacted] Date [Redacted]

Farm owner address (street, city, zip): 8644 Lankford Dr., Wauwatosa, WI 53968

E-mail OR Phone Number: wjbergness@wi.gov

I (we) currently claim a farmland preservation tax credit (either under farmland preservation zoning or through a farmland preservation agreement).  Yes  No  Don't Know

I (we) are interested in maintaining our existing farmland preservation agreement or entering into a new farmland preservation agreement. (Note: To claim the farmland preservation tax credit under a farmland preservation agreement, the farm must meet state soil and water conservation standards.)  Yes  No  Maybe

Petitioning Landowner Signature Page

A separate signature page, in the following form, must be signed by the owner of each farm. An authorized individual may sign on behalf of a legal entity. If a farm is jointly owned by a legally married couple, both individuals must sign. Please fill out the information in the gray boxes.

Farm owner (correct legal name(s) or legal name of business entity):

Craig & Ardith L Schroeder Revocable Trust

Type of business entity, if applicable (check one):

Individual or married couple

LLC

Corporation

Other (describe)

Partnership

Please check box if you are signing electronically:

I understand that by checking this box, I am indicating that I am an eligible owner of farmland within the proposed Agricultural Enterprise Area (AEA), and that I am offering my support in request for designation of the proposed AEA. This signature page does not mean that I am required to participate in the farmland preservation program, it represents my support of agriculture in this community and the goals of this petition. My electronic (typed) signature has the effect of meeting the signature requirement under s. 91.86(2), Wis. Stats.

Authorized signature: Craig L. Schroeder Date 4-18-24

Authorized signature: Ardith L. Schroeder Date 4-18-24

Farm owner address (street, city, zip): E 1197 Miller Rd Wobesa, WI 53968

E-mail OR Phone Number: cadooharley@gmail.com

I (we) currently claim a farmland preservation tax credit (either under farmland preservation zoning or through a farmland preservation agreement).

Yes

No

Don't Know

I (we) are interested in maintaining our existing farmland preservation agreement or entering into a new farmland preservation agreement. (Note: To claim the farmland preservation tax credit under a farmland preservation agreement, the farm must meet state soil and water conservation standards.)

Yes

No

Maybe

Petitioning Landowner Signature Page

A separate signature page, in the following form, must be signed by the owner of each farm. An authorized individual may sign on behalf of a legal entity. If a farm is jointly owned by a legally married couple, both individuals must sign. Please fill out the information in the gray boxes.

Farm owner (correct legal name(s) or legal name of business entity):

mark.weihing@gmail.com

Type of business entity, if applicable (check one):

Individual or married couple

LLC

Corporation

Other (describe)

Partnership

Please check box if you are signing electronically:

I understand that by checking this box, I am indicating that I am an eligible owner of farmland within the proposed Agricultural Enterprise Area (AEA), and that I am offering my support in request for designation of the proposed AEA. This signature page does not mean that I am required to participate in the farmland preservation program, it represents my support of agriculture in this community and the goals of this petition. My electronic (typed) signature has the effect of meeting the signature requirement under s. 91.86(2), Wis. Stats.

Authorized signature: Mark Weihing Date 04/06/2

Authorized signature: Date

Farm owner address (street, city, zip): 2928 East Princeton Ave., Eau Claire, WI 54703

E-mail OR Phone Number: sonnenberg.lynn@gmail.com

I (we) currently claim a farmland preservation tax credit (either under farmland preservation zoning or through a farmland preservation agreement).  Yes  No  Don't Know

I (we) are interested in maintaining our existing farmland preservation agreement or entering into a new farmland preservation agreement. (Note: To claim the farmland preservation tax credit under a farmland preservation agreement, the farm must meet state soil and water conservation standards.)  Yes  No  Maybe

Petitioning Landowner Signature Page

A separate signature page, in the following form, must be signed by the owner of each farm. An authorized individual may sign on behalf of a legal entity. If a farm is jointly owned by a legally married couple, both individuals must sign. Please fill out the information in the gray boxes.

Farm owner (correct legal name(s) or legal name of business entity):

Walter Farm LLC

Type of business entity, if applicable (check one):

Individual or married couple

LLC

Corporation

Other (describe)

Partnership

Please check box if you are signing electronically:

I understand that by checking this box, I am indicating that I am an eligible owner of farmland within the proposed Agricultural Enterprise Area (AEA), and that I am offering my support in request for designation of the proposed AEA. This signature page does not mean that I am required to participate in the farmland preservation program, it represents my support of agriculture in this community and the goals of this petition. My electronic (typed) signature has the effect of meeting the signature requirement under s. 91.86(2), Wis. Stats.

Authorized signature:

Walter Farm LLC

Date

7/20/2024

Authorized signature:

Wayne W. Moore

Date

7/20/2024

Farm owner address (street, city, zip):

5177 W. 1st Rd Waukesha WI 53186

E-mail OR Phone Number:

608 283 2856

I (we) currently claim a farmland preservation tax credit (either under farmland preservation zoning or through a farmland preservation agreement).

Yes

No

Don't Know

I (we) are interested in maintaining our existing farmland preservation agreement or entering into a new farmland preservation agreement. (Note: To claim the farmland preservation tax credit under a farmland preservation agreement, the farm must meet state soil and water conservation standards.)

Yes

No

Maybe

TOWN OF WOODLAND

RESOLUTION 2024-3

WHEREAS, an Agricultural Enterprise Area (AEA) is an area of contiguous land devoted primarily to agricultural use, as designated by the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) through the Wisconsin's Working Lands Initiative in response to a local petition; and

WHEREAS, the designation of an AEA enables farmers to enter into voluntary Farmland Preservation Agreements with the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection for a minimum of 10 years and enables farmers to receive income tax credits in return for preserving their land in agricultural use; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Woodland seeks to preserve the agricultural diversity of the area. Dairy, beef, sheep, goats, cash grain crops, maple syrup, honey; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Woodland seeks to maintain a high level of conservation, water quality, fish and wildlife habitat; and

WHEREAS, a group of local landowners approached Sauk County Land Resources and Environment Department to assist with the development of a petition to establish an AEA in the Town of Woodland; and

WHEREAS, participating farmers would be eligible for a tax credit provided they meet compliance with runoff rules established by the ATCP 50; and

WHEREAS, each interested landowner has submitted a signature page in support of establishing an AEA; and

WHEREAS, in order to fully prepare an AEA petition that can be submitted to the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection, each political subdivision that has land within the boundary of the proposed AEA must sign a letter of support; and

WHEREAS, the land identified to be part of the Woodland AEA is located within the Town of Woodland and therefore requires the support of the Town Board; and

WHEREAS, be it hereby resolved that the Town of Woodland supports the petition requesting the designation of the Woodland AEA.

Ed Woolever

John Shaker

Tim Novy

Chairperson

Supervisor

Supervisor







5-13-24

5-13-24

5-13-24

Political Subdivision Signature Page

This signature page must be signed by an authorized officer or representative of every political subdivision (county, town, city or village) in which any part of the proposed AEA is included.

Political subdivision name: WOODLAND

Type (check one): County  Town  City  Village

I understand that by checking this box, I am indicating that I am an authorized officer or representative for a  town  city  village or  county within the proposed Agricultural Enterprise Area (AEA), and that we offer our support in request for designation of the proposed AEA. This signature page does not mean that landowners in this political subdivision are required to participate in the farmland preservation program. This signature page reflects support of the agricultural community and the goals of this petition. My electronic (typed) signature has the effect of meeting the signature requirement under s. 91.86(2), Wis. Stats

Authorized Signature: EDWIN J. WOOLEVER Date 5/13/2024

Title of authorized officer or representative: TOWN CHAIRMAN

Principal mailing address: EDWIN J. WOOLEVER  
S614 STRAWBRIDGE RD WC

Phone number: 608-464-3367

E-mail address: jmejfarm@centurylink.net



**County Conservationist Signature Page**

*All county conservationists for the county or counties in which the proposed AEA is located must sign a signature page. If a single AEA is located across multiple counties, a separate signature page is required for the county conservationist in each county.*

County Conservationist name: Melissa Schlupp \_\_\_\_\_

Authorized signature: Melissa Schlupp Date: 6/29/2024

Principal mailing address: 505 Broadway \_\_\_\_\_

Baraboo, WI 53913 \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: 608-355-4838 \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address: melissa.schlupp@saukcountywi.gov \_\_\_\_\_

**Non-Petitioner Cooperator Signature Page**

*Persons other than the petitioners may sign in support of the petition. A separate signature page, or letter of support, may be submitted for each cooperator. An authorized individual may sign on behalf of a legal entity.*

Legal name of cooperator: Mark Weihing (certified crop advisor)

Relevant interest (farm owner, business, nonprofit or community organization, government entity, other):

Principal mailing address: S4139 State Rd 136, Rock Springs

E-mail OR Phone Number: mark.weihing@gmail.com

*Briefly describe your interest in signing this petition requesting designation of an agricultural enterprise area:*

Non-landowner, but work with growers in area. I support.

Print name: Mark Weihing

**Please check box if you are signing electronically:**



I understand that by checking this box, I am indicating that I am an eligible owner of farmland within the proposed Agricultural Enterprise Area (AEA), and that I am offering my support in request for designation of the proposed AEA. This signature page does not mean that I am required to participate in the farmland preservation program, it represents my support of agriculture in this community and the goals of this petition. My electronic (typed) signature has the effect of meeting the signature requirement under s. 91.86(2), Wis. Stats.

Authorized signature: Mark Weihing

Date 04/06/2024

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**GENERAL CODE OF SAUK COUNTY, WISCONSIN  
ORDINANCE AMENDMENT # 4-2024**

**Ordinance Amendment to ordinance sections 2.102, 2.106, 2.108, 2.109 & 2.111.**

**Ordinance Amendment offered by the Public Works and Infrastructure Committee**

**BACKGROUND:** In the case of *Tyler v. Hennepin County* the United States Supreme Court found that the County may only retain the amount of unpaid taxes owed to the County and shall return any excess to the former property owner. After this ruling, the Wisconsin Legislature made changes the tax foreclosure laws to come into conformity with the United States Supreme Court ruling. The changes include, returning any amounts greater than the taxes owed on the property to the former owner, removing the ability of the County to keep a tax foreclosed property or to transfer property to a municipality or the DNR, amongst other changes. The Sauk County ordinances need to be amended to reflect the changes in the law.

**NOW, THEREFORE, THE SAUK COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS DOES ORDAIN AS FOLLOWS:**

Section 1. Any existing ordinances, codes, resolutions, or portions thereof in conflict with this ordinance shall be and hereby are repealed as far as any conflict exists.

Section 2. This ordinance shall take effect the day after passage and publication as required by law.

Section 3. If any claims, provisions or portions of this ordinance are adjudged unconstitutional or invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, the remainder of this ordinance shall not be affected thereby.

Section 4. Section 2.102, 2.106, 2.108, 2.109 & 2.111 of the General Code of Sauk County, Wisconsin, is amended as follows [additions noted by underline, deletions noted by strikethrough]:

**Sec. 2.102. - Definitions.**

The following terms as used in this section shall have the meanings indicated as follows:

Beneficiaries shall have the meaning given in Wis. stats. s. 851.03, as amended from time to time.

...

Committee means the ~~Property and Insurance~~ Public Works & Infrastructure Committee of the Sauk County Board of Supervisors.

Former owner means any person, persons, ~~or business entity~~ last holding title to lands which have been taken by tax deed and includes that person's Beneficiaries and Heirs, ~~successors, assigns, and personal representative of the estate of any such person or entity.~~

Heirs shall have the meaning given in Wis. stats. s. 851.09, as amended from time to time.

...

52  
53 **Sec. 2.106. - Authority to manage and sell tax dedeed lands.**  
54

- 55 (1) Under the authority of Wis. Stats. §§ 75.35 and 75.69, the Treasurer under  
56 the general oversight of the Committee is hereby empowered to manage  
57 and sell tax dedeed lands, ~~except as provided in subsections (2) and (3),~~  
58 pursuant to policies established by the County Treasurer.  
59 (2) ~~It shall be the responsibility of the Committee to review any and all~~  
60 ~~proposed sales or exchanges of lands to or between municipalities or to~~  
61 ~~the state of tax dedeed land, pursuant to Wis. Stats. § 75.69(2), and to~~  
62 ~~make recommendations to the County Board, by resolution, before such~~  
63 ~~conveyances are acted upon.~~  
64 (3) ~~It shall be the responsibility of this Committee to review any and all~~  
65 ~~proposed exchanges of tax dedeed land pursuant to Wis. Stats. § 59.69(8)~~  
66 ~~for the purpose of promoting the regulation and restriction of agricultural~~  
67 ~~and forestry lands and for the purpose of creating a park or recreational~~  
68 ~~area and to make recommendations to the County Board, by resolution,~~  
69 ~~before such exchanges are acted upon.~~  
70

71 **Sec. 2.108. - Preference to former owner.**  
72

- 73 (1) Pursuant to Wis. Stats. § 75.35(3), the Treasurer is hereby empowered to  
74 sell single-family, owner-occupied property tax dedeed lands to the former  
75 owner. In so doing, the Treasurer is authorized to give such former owner  
76 preference over others in the purchase of said lands. This section shall in  
77 no manner create any right of first refusal in any former owner. The former  
78 owner of property that is not single-family, owner-occupied, shall have no  
79 right to repurchase said property.  
80 (2) Sales made pursuant to this section shall be exempt from the requirements  
81 of Wis. Stats. § 75.69.  
82 (3) The Treasurer shall give notice of the privilege to redeem tax dedeed lands  
83 to the former owner by sending a letter by certified mail, return receipt  
84 requested, addressed to the former owner at his or her last known address.  
85 The notice shall be deemed delivered as of the earlier of:(a)The date the  
86 letter is actually received by the former owner;(b)The date a receipt is given  
87 for the letter by or on behalf of the former owner; or(c)The date the United  
88 States Postal Service indicates service by certified mailing cannot be  
89 completed.  
90 (4) The privilege of repurchasing tax dedeed lands under this section shall  
91 expire if the former owner does not exercise the privilege within 45 days of  
92 delivery of the notice from the Treasurer under subsection (3) hereof.  
93 Exercise of the privilege means full payment to the County of the amounts  
94 listed in subsection (5).  
95 (5) The Treasurer shall not sell any tax dedeed lands to the former owner  
96 unless the former owner pays all real estate taxes (including those due for  
97 the year in which the foreclosure occurred), including special assessments,  
98 special charges and special taxes, then due and owing together with the  
99 interest and penalty thereon, including In Rem foreclosure service charge,  
100 all fees incurred by the County as part of the foreclosure and sale process,  
101 plus purchase fee on said lands equal to one percent of the equalized value  
102 of the tax dedeed lands. In addition, the former owner shall provide the

103 County with a current title report and evidence that all liens existing prior to  
104 foreclosure have been satisfied. In any event, the service fee shall not be  
105 less than \$50.00.

106 (6) Failure to give notice to the proper party as former owner shall not create  
107 a right in any person or persons to redeem tax deeded lands.

108 (7) ~~This section shall not apply to tax deeded lands which have been improved~~  
109 ~~for or dedicated to a public use by Sauk County, subsequent to acquisition.~~  
110 ~~No sale to the former owner or any other person shall be made of such~~  
111 ~~lands without the express authorization of the Committee.~~

112 (8)(7) If the former owner fails to exercise the privilege to purchase as required in  
113 this subsection, the Treasurer may, at his or her option, proceed to sell the  
114 land involved in accordance with Wis. Stats. § 75.69, to the highest or most  
115 advantageous bidder thereon.  
116

117 **Sec. 2.109. [Reserved] - Sale of tax deeded lands to the state or a municipality.**

118 (1) ~~In the event a parcel of tax deeded lands is not purchased by the former~~  
119 ~~owner, the Treasurer may offer it to the municipality within which the parcel~~  
120 ~~is located or to the State of Wisconsin before offering the same to the~~  
121 ~~public.~~

122 (2) ~~The sale price of a parcel of tax deeded lands on sale to a municipality or~~  
123 ~~state shall be in an amount at least equal to the sum of all real estate taxes,~~  
124 ~~including special assessments, then due and owing, including the interest~~  
125 ~~and penalty thereon, the In Rem foreclosure service charge, together with~~  
126 ~~a service fee equal to ten percent of the assessed value of the tax deeded~~  
127 ~~land. In any event, the service fee shall not be less than \$500.00.~~

128 (3) ~~The sale of tax deeded lands to a municipality under this section shall be~~  
129 ~~approved by the Committee before a deed is issued by the County Clerk.~~  
130

131 **Sec. 2.111. - Public advertisement and sale of tax deeded land.**

132  
133 The procedure for sale of tax deeded properties by the County, pursuant to Wis. Stats. §§  
134 75.35 and 75.69, shall be as follows:

135  
136 (1) The Treasurer shall advertise the sale of all such real estate to be offered  
137 by publishing a class 3 1 notice, under Wis. Stats. ch. 985. Such notice  
138 shall include a date certain by which sealed bids for the purchase of such  
139 property must be submitted to the Treasurer for Sauk County. No more  
140 than one bid may be submitted per parcel by any bidder. The appraised  
141 value as set pursuant to Section 2.110 of this ordinance shall constitute the  
142 minimum bid necessary to sell such property.  
143

144  
145 [All other sections of Chapter 2 remain unchanged]

146  
147 Approved for presentation to the County Board by the Public Works and Infrastructure  
148 Committee, this 8th day of July, 2024.

149  
150 Consent Agenda Item: [ ] YES [ X ] NO

151  
152 Fiscal Impact: [ X ] None [ ] Budgeted Expenditure [ ] Not Budgeted  
153

154 Vote Required: Majority =  X  2/3 Majority = \_\_\_\_\_ 3/4 Majority = \_\_\_\_\_

155  
156 The County Board has the legal authority to adopt: Yes  X  No \_\_\_\_\_ as  
157 reviewed by the Corporation Counsel,  [Signature] , Date:  
158  07.09.2024 .

159  
160  
161 Offered and passage moved by:

162  
163  
164 Offered and passage moved by:

165  [Signature]   Aye  Nay  Abstain  Absent

166 Brian Peper

167  [Signature]   Aye  Nay  Abstain  Absent

168 Kevin Sebelt

169  [Signature]   Aye  Nay  Abstain  Absent

170 Tom Dorner

171  [Signature]   Aye  Nay  Abstain  Absent

172 Terry Spencer

173  [Signature]   Aye  Nay  Abstain  Absent

174 James Astle

175  [Signature]   Aye  Nay  Abstain  Absent

176 Bryant Hazard

177  [Signature]   Aye  Nay  Abstain  Absent

178 Robert Spencer

179  [Signature]   Aye  Nay  Abstain  Absent

180 Smooth Detter

181  [Signature]   Aye  Nay  Abstain  Absent

182 Bill Stehling

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195 Fiscal Note: The county treasurer is responsible for determining the net proceeds of the  
196 sale. The County Treasurer must send the remaining net proceeds to former owner  
197 minus any delinquent taxes, interest, penalties and expenses.  [Signature]

198  
199 MIS Note: No direct impact.