



## State of Wisconsin \ DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

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It is our pleasure to present you with the Black River State Forest Draft Master Plan and Environmental Analysis. This document outlines the future direction for land, recreation, and real estate management for the property. This proposal was developed by an interdisciplinary team of land managers, resource specialists, property staff, and state forest planners. In addition, the Regional and Property Analysis, along with comments received at the March 2007 and March 2008 public meetings, were important factors in developing this document.

Under this plan future land management will allow for the continued production of raw materials for Wisconsin's forest industry while providing a model of sustainable forest management. Select areas of the forest have been designated to protect unique biological values including older white pine and oak communities, peatlands with minimally disturbed hydrology, and other rare community types. The Dike 17 Wildlife Area, which has been managed primarily for wildlife since the forest's inception in 1957, will be expanded to meet the needs of area sensitive species. A newly created Jack Pine Habitat Area will allow the steady production of timber while also providing habitat for species dependent on the globally imperiled barrens habitat type including the Karner Blue Butterfly, a federally endangered species.

Recreation management will meet the needs of a changing clientele, improve management efficiencies, and enhance protection of natural resources. The most significant sections of the draft master plan direct for motorized recreational trails to be brought up to maintainable standards, to comply with all state and federal wetland requirements, and to improve connectivity to the regional system in the Millston area.

The plan allows for expansion of the state forest property boundary by nearly 20,000 acres which provides an opportunity to further protect important water and land resources in the area. Acquisition is pursued on a willing seller basis and as funding is available.

A public meeting will be held on May 28, 2009 at the Holiday Inn Express in Black River Falls, where the Draft Plan will be presented and discussed. The public comment period for the draft master plan will start at the date of this mailing and end June 20, 2009. Once the public comment period is closed we will compile comments, consider any changes, and then submit the master plan to the Natural Resources Board for approval. Once adopted, the plan is the guiding document for the property's management for approximately 15 years after which a new plan is written if appropriate.

I encourage you to read this document completely, attend the public meeting if possible, and provide us with your comments. We look forward to your feedback. You may provide your comments at the meeting, online at [http://dnr.wi.gov/master\\_planning/BlackRiver/](http://dnr.wi.gov/master_planning/BlackRiver/) or mail them by June 20 to:

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Sincerely,

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