

**SUBJECT: LAND ACQUISITION – NORTH BRANCH MILWAUKEE RIVER WILDLIFE AND FARM HERITAGE
AREA – OZAUKEE COUNTY**

FOR: AUGUST 2009 BOARD MEETING

TO BE PRESENTED BY: Richard Steffes

SUMMARY: The Department has obtained an option to purchase 75.59 acres of land from the Doyle Estate for \$440,000 for the North Branch Milwaukee River Wildlife and Farm Heritage Area in Ozaukee County. The item is being submitted because the purchase price exceeds \$150,000.

The estate will retain a six-acre homesite. The deed for this homesite includes language that alerts owners to the fact that it is adjacent to lands that are under public ownership and are open to public recreation to include hunting, trapping, fishing, hiking and cross country skiing. Additionally, the deed also states that only one single-family residential dwelling is permitted anywhere on the property. The parcel is located in the Town of Fredonia in the northwest corner of Ozaukee County about one mile south of Sheboygan County and about ½-mile east of Washington County. The Milwaukee metro area is about 25 miles south. It consists of 65 acres of upland most of it being cropland and about 10 acres of woods including some cedar. An unnamed stream flows through the west end of the property, which eventually flows into the North Branch of the Milwaukee River.

Created in 2002, the name of the North Branch Milwaukee River Wildlife and Farming Heritage Area reflects the opportunity this project presents to maintain the strong farming tradition in the area, as well as to maintain and enhance wildlife habitat and meet other natural resource protection objectives in the southeast part of the state. This is one of the largest undeveloped areas remaining in southeastern Wisconsin, yet it is only 35 miles from the City of Milwaukee. The 19,500-acre, predominantly rural project area includes 9,000 acres of agricultural lands on both small and large farms intermixed with 6,000 acres of existing wetlands that are associated with the nine miles of the North Branch of the Milwaukee River and its five tributary streams that are within the proposed project boundary. Also identified within the project boundary are 20 potential natural areas, including one of statewide significance, habitat for threatened and endangered species and many important historical, cultural and archeological features.

Wisconsin is fortunate and somewhat unique in that the agricultural land base is integrated into a rich natural resource environment. The Wisconsin landscape has complex patterns of agricultural and natural resource features interspersed across the land that are not found in other states. Combinations of forested and non-forested wetlands, coniferous and broadleaf forests, grasslands and agriculture are found throughout most of Wisconsin. The NBMR Wildlife and Farming Heritage Area project uses a landscape scale approach to natural resource management that incorporates a patchwork of wetlands and grasslands with cropland to create habitat conditions favorable for self-sustaining wildlife populations in the Milwaukee River watershed of southeast Wisconsin. The intent is to secure suitable habitat throughout the area, create a mix of agricultural land, grasslands, and wetlands, which is key to sustainable wildlife populations.

The Doyle Estate parcel will protect the water quality of the North Branch of the Milwaukee River and its watershed, maintain the rural character of the landscape and provide area for public use and wildlife habitat management.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Board approve the purchase of 75.59 acres of land for \$440,000 for the North Branch Milwaukee River Wildlife and Farm Heritage Area in Ozaukee County.

LIST OF ATTACHED MATERIALS:

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|----------|
| No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Fiscal Estimate Required | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | Attached |
| No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Environmental Assessment of Impact Statement Required | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | Attached |
| No <input type="checkbox"/> | Background Memo | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Attached |

APPROVED:

Richard E. Steffes
Real Estate Director, Richard E. Steffes - LF/6

7-8-09
Date

Laurie Osterndorf
Administrator, Laurie Osterndorf - AD/8

7/10/09
Date

Matthew J. Frank
Secretary, Matthew J. Frank - AD/8

7-22-09
Date

CORRESPONDENCE/MEMORANDUM

DATE: July 8, 2009
 TO: Governor Doyle
 FROM: Matthew J. Frank *MF*
 SUBJECT: Proposed Land Acquisition, Doyle Estate Tract, File # WM 60049,
 Approval Requested by September 4, 2009

FILE REF: WM 60049

1. PARCEL DESCRIPTION:

North Branch Milwaukee River Wildlife and Farm Heritage Area
 Ozaukee County

Grantor:

Doyle Estate
 c/o Alice Husar
 1850 Jeffery Lane
 Waukesha, WI 53186

Acres: 75.59Price: \$440,000Appraised Value: \$340,000; \$514,000Interest: Fee title purchaseImprovements: None

Location: The property is located in the town of Fredonia in the northwest corner of Ozaukee County about one mile south of Sheboygan County and about half a mile east of Washington County. The Milwaukee metro area is about 25 miles south.

Land Description: The land is generally fairly level to gently rolling along the west and rolling to hilly along the east.

<u>Covertypes Breakdown:</u>	<u>Type:</u>	<u>Acreage:</u>
	Lowland Woodland	4.90
	Wetland	5.30
	Cropland	53.00
	Brush	7.00
	Upland Woodland	<u>5.39</u>
	TOTAL:	75.59

Zoning: AgriculturePresent Use: VacantProposed Use: resource protection and public recreationTenure: 19 yearsProperty Taxes: \$274Option Date: May 11, 2009

Stewardship Land Access: This property will be open to the public for all nature-based outdoor recreational activities to include hunting, fishing, trapping, hiking and cross-country skiing.

2. JUSTIFICATION:

The Department proposes the purchase of the 75.59-acre parcel from the Doyle Estate for the North Branch Milwaukee River Wildlife and Farming Heritage Area. The estate will retain a six-acre homesite. The



