

**SUBJECT: LAND ACQUISITION AND PROJECT BOUNDARY MODIFICATION – CREX MEADOWS WILDLIFE AREA – BURNETT COUNTY**

**FOR: JUNE 2009 BOARD MEETING**

**TO BE PRESENTED BY: Richard Steffes**

**SUMMARY:** The Department has obtained an option to purchase 80 acres of land from Board of Commissioners of Public Lands (BCPL) for \$85,000.00 for the Crex Meadows Wildlife Area in Burnett County. The item is being submitted because more than 40 acres are outside the project boundary.

Crex Meadows Wildlife Area was created in 1947 and is 28,000 acres in size. The project is located in northwestern Wisconsin, midway between the large population centers of the Twin Cities (70 miles) and Superior/Duluth (75 miles). Crex provides a wealth of recreational opportunities including hunting, trapping, bird watching, hiking, fishing, cross-county skiing, and nature photography. Excellent wetland habitat for waterfowl and furbearers is also found at Crex. Many of the wetland areas on the property have been restored and enhanced via creation of three flowages.

The BCPL property consists of 80 acres of gently rolling woodlands, with a mixture of upland and lowland. The covertype is dominated by younger generation hardwood and softwood trees native to the area. The subject has no direct access by road or utilities, but is accessible by crossing department lands adjacent to the north and west. There is a small, non-navigable stream along the southern end of the property and a developed walking trail that connects to the northwestern corner of the subject property, providing pedestrian access. In addition, the subject will connect an isolated block of recently acquired land to the larger wildlife area. Acquisition and inclusion into the Crex Meadow Wildlife Area will serve well in meeting the project's acquisition goals.

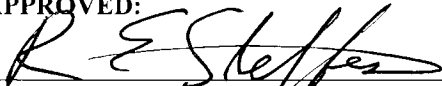
Signed into law on April 19, 2006, Wisconsin Act 352 sets aside \$2,000,000 per year from 2007 through 2010 from the Stewardship fund to acquire land from BCPL. This allows the Department to acquire BCPL parcels and to consolidate department land ownership for conservation projects. Further, the legislation provides for BCPL's use of the sale proceeds to acquire working forestland for timber management and public access. The annual allocation was extended in the recent Stewardship authorization for an additional 10 years. The acquisition will allow for wildlife management and habitat restoration, protect the natural values of the property, and provide opportunities for public recreation on the Crex Meadows Wildlife Area.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the Board approve the purchase of 80 acres of land for \$85,000.00 for the Crex Meadows Wildlife Area in Burnett County; and that the project boundary be expanded to include this 80-acre acquisition.

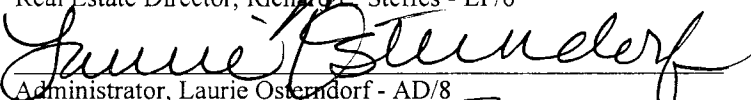
**LIST OF ATTACHED MATERIALS:**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 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:**

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

6-4-09  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Administrator, Laurie Osterndorf - AD/8

6/4/09  
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Date

  
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Secretary, Matthew J. Frank - AD/8

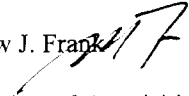
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Date

- cc: S. Miller – LF/6
- R. Steffes – LF/6
- L. Ross – AD/8
- T. Hauge – WM/6
- J. Gozdialski – NOR/Spooner

## CORRESPONDENCE/MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 4, 2009 - FILE REF: WM 60042

TO: Governor Doyle

FROM: Matthew J. Frank 

SUBJECT: Proposed Land Acquisition, Board of Commissioners of Public Lands (BCPL) Tract, File # WM-60042, Requested Closing Date July 27, 2009

1. PARCEL DESCRIPTION:

Crex Meadows Wildlife Area  
Burnett County

Grantor:

Board of Commissioners of Public Lands (BCPL)  
P.O. Box 8943  
Madison, WI 53708-8943

Acres: 80  
Price: \$85,000.00  
Appraised Value: \$85,000.00  
Interest: Fee title purchase  
Improvements: None

Location: The property is located two miles east of the City of Grantsburg.

Land Description: The land is gently rolling.

<u>Covertypes Breakdown:</u>	Type:	Acreage:
	Lowland Woodland	30
	Upland Woodland	50
	TOTAL:	80

Zoning: Unzoned  
Present Use: Timber Production and Recreation  
Proposed Use: Public Recreation and Wildlife Resource Protection  
Tenure: More than 10 years  
Property Taxes: Exempt  
Agreement Date: April 13, 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 has obtained an agreement to purchase 80 acres of land from Board of Commissioners of Public Lands (BCPL) for \$85,000 for the Crex Meadows Wildlife Area in Burnett County. The parcel is outside of the project boundary, however, if approved, the boundary will be expanded to include these 80 acres. Signed into law on April 19, 2006, Wisconsin Act 352 sets aside \$2,000,000 per year from 2007 through 2010 from the Stewardship fund to acquire land from BCPL. This allows the Department to acquire BCPL parcels and to consolidate department land ownership for conservation projects. Further, the legislation provides for BCPL's use of the sale proceeds to acquire working forestland for timber management and public access. The annual allocation was extended in the recent Stewardship authorization for an additional 10 years. The Department recommends the acquisition to allow for wildlife

management and habitat restoration, to protect the natural values of the property, and to provide opportunities for public recreation on the Crex Meadows Wildlife Area.

Crex Meadows Wildlife Area was created in 1947 and is 30,098 acres in size. The project is located in northwestern Wisconsin, midway between the large population centers of the Twin Cities (70 miles) and Superior/Duluth (75 miles). Crex provides a wealth of recreational opportunities including hunting, trapping, bird watching, hiking, fishing, cross-county skiing, and nature photography. Excellent wetland habitat for waterfowl and furbearers is also found at Crex. Many of the wetland areas on the property have been restored and enhanced via creation of three flowages.

The BCPL property consists of 80 acres of gently rolling woodlands, with a mixture of upland and lowland. The covertype is dominated by younger generation hardwood and softwood trees native to the area. The subject has no direct access by road or utilities, but is accessible by crossing department lands adjacent to the north and west. There is a small, non-navigable stream along the southern end of the property and a developed walking trail that connects to the northwestern corner of the property, providing pedestrian access. In addition, the subject will connect an isolated block of recently acquired land to the larger wildlife area. Acquisition and inclusion into the Crex Meadow Wildlife area will serve well in meeting the project's acquisition goals.

The Department recommends acquisition of the subject parcel and expansion of the project boundary to include these 80 acres. Acquiring the property will allow the Department to provide additional opportunities for public recreation and to continue to protect the natural and scenic resources of this site by promoting natural resource management and by preventing uses incompatible with the goals of the project.

3. FINANCING:

State Stewardship bond funds are anticipated:

Funds allotted to program:	Balance after proposed transaction:
\$2,000,000	\$111,706

4. ACQUISITION STATUS OF THE CREX MEADOWS WILDLIFE AREA:

Established: 1946  
Acres Purchased to Date: 28,018.92  
Acquisition Goal: 31,093.58  
Percent Complete: 90.11%  
Cost to Date: \$1,068,621.29

5. APPRAISAL:

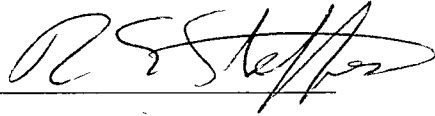
Appraiser: Jon Gargulak  
Valuation Date: February 9, 2009  
Appraised Value: \$85,000.00  
Highest and Best Use: Timber Production and Recreation

Allocation of Values:

- a. land: 80 acres @ \$1,062.50 per acre: \$85,000.00
- b. market data approach used, three comparable sales cited
- c. adjusted value range: \$1,031 to \$1,057 per acre

Appraisal Review: Jeff Pennucci – April 9, 2009

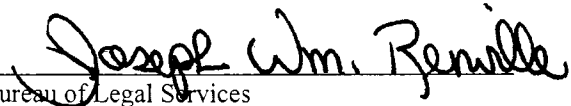
RECOMMENDED:



Richard E. Steffes

5-29-09


Date



Bureau of Legal Services

5/29/09

Date



Laurie Osterndorf

6/1/09

Date

RES:ch

