

**SUBJECT: LAND TRANSFER – BIG MUSKEGO LAKE WILDLIFE AREA - WAUKESHA COUNTY**

**FOR: DECEMBER 2007 BOARD MEETING**

**TO BE PRESENTED BY:** Richard Steffes

**SUMMARY:** The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WI DOT) has proposed to transfer 137.59 acres of land to the Department for the Big Muskego Lake Wildlife Area in Waukesha County. The property was purchased by WI DOT in 1994 for a wetland mitigation site for its STH 36 reconstruction project. As part of this transfer, WI DOT will place some restrictive covenants on the property to ensure the goals of the Wetland Mitigation Program are recognized in perpetuity.

The Big Muskego Lake Wildlife Area surrounds the 2,073-acre Big Muskego Lake and encompasses wetlands, upland grasslands, woodlands and agricultural areas. The majority of the 3,800-acre project area is located in the City of Muskego in Waukesha County and extends into northern Racine and western Milwaukee counties. Big Muskego Lake and surrounding wetlands comprise a unique shallow lake-wetland complex in the midst of a rapidly developing urban area. The lake receives heavy use by anglers and waterfowl hunters, and wildlife viewing in this area is on the increase. Acquisition of recreational lands in the heavily populated southeast part of the state is a priority for the Department.

The 137.59-acre parcel, will contribute to the Department's goal of creating wildlife habitat and providing public open space around Big Muskego Lake. The WI DOT property lies entirely within the 3,800-acre Big Muskego Lake Wildlife Area project on an associated prairie pothole pond. The property has more than 9.180 feet of water frontage; the entire perimeter of the 2.5-acre prairie pothole and four agriculture ditches through the property. Acquisition will provide about 30 acres of quality restored grassland habitat, 37 acres of woods, 62 acres of wetland, 6 acres of brush, and the 2.5-acre prairie pothole.

Acceptance of this transfer will provide wildlife management, protect the shoreline and water quality, provide opportunities for public recreation in a heavily populated area of the state and protect the natural values of the property from the impacts of development incompatible with the goals of the project

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the Board approves the transfer of 137.59 acres of land for the Big Muskego Lake Wildlife Area in Waukesha County.

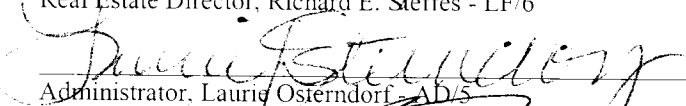
**LIST OF ATTACHED MATERIALS:**

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

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Administrator, Laurie Osterndorf - AD/5

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary, Matthew J. Frank - AD/5

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

- cc: S. Miller - LF/6  
R. Steffes - LF/6  
L. Ross - AD/5  
T. Hauge - WM/6  
G. McCutcheon - SER Waukesha

DATE: October 16, 2007 FILE REF: W-1731

TO: Natural Resources Board

FROM: Matthew J. Frank *MJF*

SUBJECT: Proposed Land Transfer, WI Dept. of Transportation Tract, File # W-1731.

1. PARCEL DESCRIPTION:

Big Muskego Lake Wildlife Area  
Waukesha County

Grantor:

Wisconsin Department of Transportation  
c/o Brett Vreeke  
141 NW Barstow Street  
Waukesha, WI 53187

Acres: 137.59

Price: \$1.00

Appraised Value: None

Interest: Transfer in fee, subject to restrictive covenants protecting it as a wetland mitigation site

Improvements: None

Location: The tract is located in southeastern Waukesha County in the City of Muskego.

Land Description: The subject area is fairly level to gently rolling.

Water: There are 7,580 feet of frontage on several agriculture ditches and 1,600 feet on a prairie pothole.

<u>Covertypes Breakdown:</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Acreage</u>
	Wooded Lowland	7.0
	Wooded Upland	30.0
	Wetland	61.5
	Grassland	30.59
	Brush	6.0
	Water	2.5
	TOTAL	137.59

Zoning: Agriculture/Recreation

Present Use: Wetland Mitigation

Proposed Use: Resource protection and public recreation

Property Taxes: exempt

Option Date: April 26, 2007

Tenure: DOT acquired the land in 1994 at a cost of \$351,500.

2. JUSTIFICATION:

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WI DOT) has proposed to transfer 137.59 acres of land to the Department for the Big Muskego Lake Wildlife Area in Waukesha County. The property was purchased by WI DOT in 1994 for a wetland mitigation site for its STH 36 reconstruction project. As part of this transfer, WI DOT will place some restrictive covenants on the property to ensure the goals of the Wetland Mitigation Program are recognized in perpetuity. The 137.59-acre property has very diverse



habitat ranging from wetlands to high-quality oak woods. WI DOT has completed several restoration projects on the site in addition to management efforts such as prescribed burns.

The Big Muskego Lake Wildlife Area surrounds the 2,073-acre Big Muskego Lake and encompasses wetlands, upland grasslands, woodlands and agricultural areas. The majority of the 3,800-acre project area is located in the City of Muskego in Waukesha County and extends into northern Racine and western Milwaukee counties. Big Muskego Lake and surrounding wetlands comprise a unique shallow lake-wetland complex in the midst of a rapidly developing urban area. The lake receives heavy use by anglers and waterfowl hunters, and wildlife viewing in this area is on the increase. Acquisition of recreational lands in the heavily populated southeast part of the state is a priority for the Department.

The 137.59-acre parcel, located in southeastern Waukesha County in the City of Muskego, will contribute to the Department's goal of creating wildlife habitat and providing public open space around Big Muskego Lake. The WI DOT property lies entirely within the 3,800-acre Big Muskego Lake Wildlife Area project and includes a prairie pothole pond. The property has more than 9,180 feet of water frontage; the entire perimeter of the prairie pothole and four agriculture ditches through the property. Acquisition will provide about 30 acres of quality restored grassland habitat, 37 acres of woods, 62 acres of wetland, 6 acres of brush, and the 2.5-acre prairie pothole. With most of the development work already complete; i.e., gravel access road, surveys, wetland and grassland restorations, only minor enhancements to the habitat and boundary posting are the remaining work activities left to the Department once the transfer is final.

Acceptance of this transfer will provide wildlife management, protect the water quality, provide opportunities for public recreation in a heavily populated, and rapidly urbanizing area of the state and protect the natural values of the property from the impacts of development incompatible with the goals of the project.

3. FINANCING:

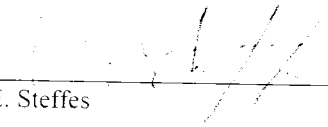
No funding is needed for this transfer.

4. ACQUISITION STATUS OF THE BIG MUSKEGO LAKE WILDLIFE AREA:

Established: 1999  
Acres Purchased to Date: 287.66  
Acquisition Goal: 3,800.0 Acres  
Percent Complete: 7.6%  
Cost to Date: \$1,148,024

5. APPRAISALS: N/A

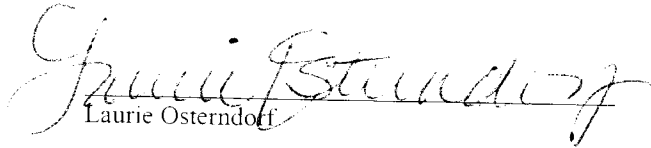
RECOMMENDED:

  
Richard E. Steffes

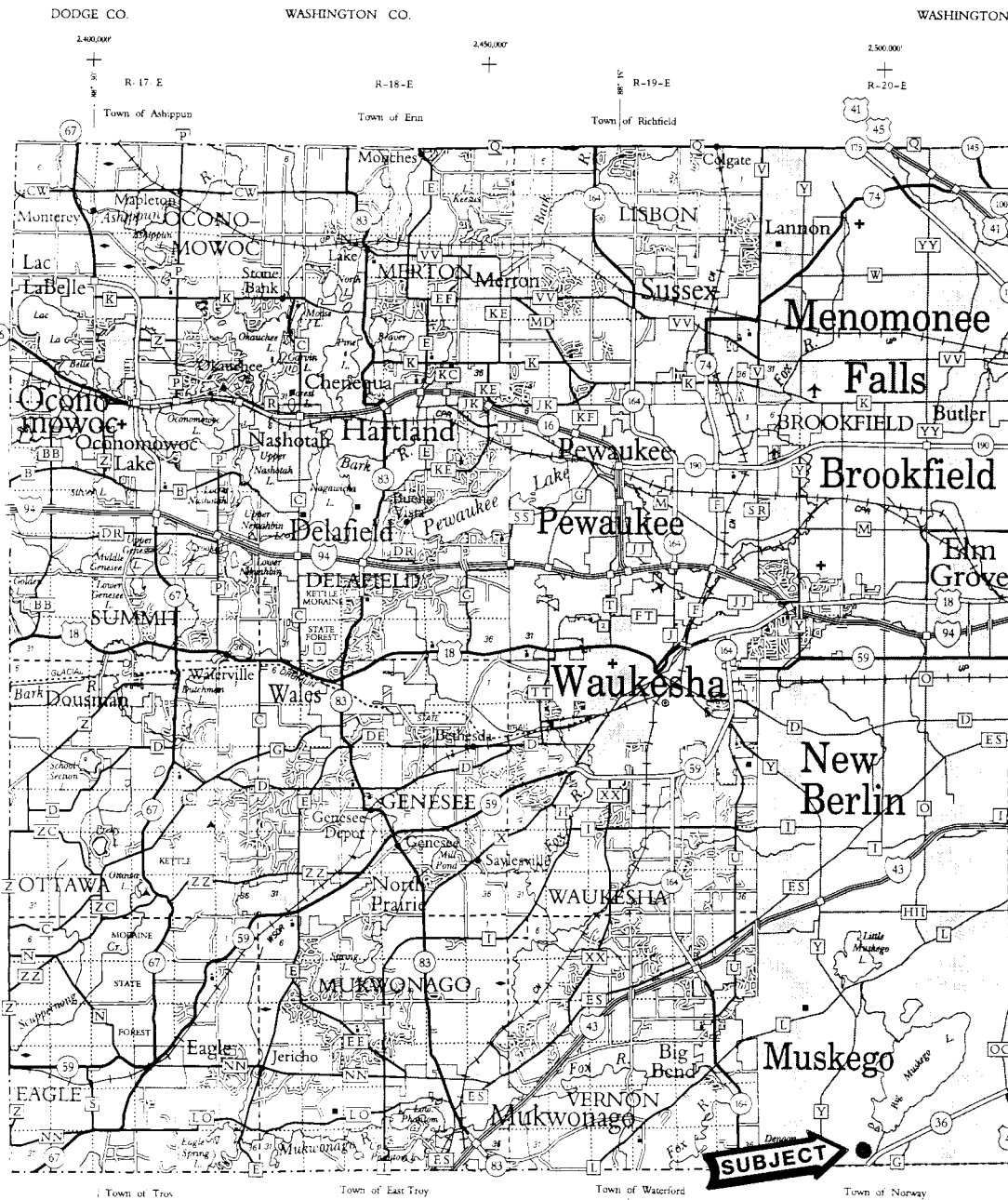
  
Date

  
Bureau of Legal Services

10/18/07  
Date

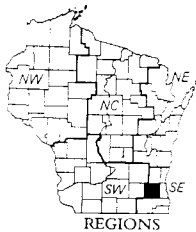
  
Laurie Osterndorf

10/19/07  
Date



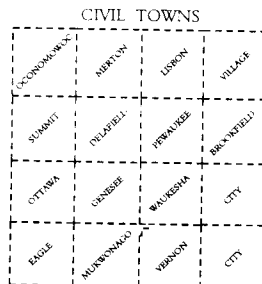
**LEGEND**

- |                        |         |                              |         |
|------------------------|---------|------------------------------|---------|
| Freeway                | —+—+—+— | Dam                          | —+—+—+— |
| Multilane Divided      | —+—+—+— | Hospital                     | +       |
| U.S. or State Hwy      | —+—+—+— | Schools                      | +       |
| County Trunk Hwy       | —+—+—+— | Airport                      | ✈       |
| Town Road              | —+—+—+— | County Seat                  | ⊙       |
| Firelane               | —+—+—+— | Unincorporated Village       | ⊙       |
| Railroad               | —+—+—+— | Fish Hatchery                | ⊙       |
| State Trail            | —+—+—+— | Game Farm                    | ⊙       |
| Interchange            | —+—+—+— | Public Hunt or Fish Grds     | ⊙       |
| Highway Separation     | —+—+—+— | Public Camp & Picnic Grds    | ▲       |
| Interstate Highway No. | 94      | Ranger Station               | ▲       |
| U.S. Highway No.       | 18      | State Park                   | ▲       |
| State Highway No.      | 59      | County Park                  | ▲       |
| County Highway Letter  | T       | Withn Facilities             | □       |
| State Boundary         | —+—+—+— | Rest Area                    | ▲       |
| County Boundary        | —+—+—+— | Wayside                      | ▲       |
| Civil Town Boundary    | —+—+—+— | Edison Allen School          | △       |
| Section Line           | —+—+—+— | City of Wisconsin - Waukesha | □       |



**SECTION NUMBERING OF A TOWNSHIP**

6	5	4	3	2	1
7	8	9	10	11	12
18	17	16	15	14	13
19	20	21	22	23	24
30	29	28	27	26	25
37	36	35	34	33	32



**MILES OF HIGHWAY**

STATE	233
COUNTY	333
LOCAL ROADS	2,526
OTHLA ROADS	...
TOTAL FOR COUNTY	2,885

Land Area (2000 Census) ... 356 sq mi  
Population (2000 Census) ... 349,767  
County Seat ... Waukesha

**WAUKESHA CO.**

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
STATE OFFICE BUILDING  
Madison, Wisconsin

SCALE 0 1 2 MILES

Corrected by  
JAN 2006









Base compiled from U.S.G.S. Quadrangles  
120,000 Series

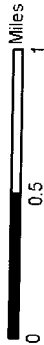
- For boundaries of public hunting and fishing grounds please contact the Department of Natural Resources
- Public hunting and fishing grounds not shown within Kettle Moraine State Forest

+ Grid based on the state plane coordinate system south zone and the NAD 27

# WDOT Purchase

## Big Muskego Lake WA

-  Subject Property
-  Access Easement
-  WDNR Owned
-  WNDR Eased
-  WNDR Leased
-  Ice Age Trail
-  Project Boundary
-  Open Water



The DNR Managed Lands Inventory is the database of lands managed by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. The Wisconsin DNR manages these lands through various programs and projects. This data set is a spatial representation of the parcels and polygons managed by the DNR, based on Facilities and Lands (FL) and other data maintained by the DNR. The data should not be interpreted as a legal representation of legal ownership boundaries.

This data set does not differentiate between lands that are open or closed to the public for hunting and/or general public access. Some lands represented in this data set may not be open to the general public, or may have specific limitations or restrictions on public use. This data set is not intended for use as a land management tool. It is a listing of all DNR real estate transactions that have occurred on these lands over time.

For information about the actual management, including public use and public access, of the lands, contact the nearest DNR Regional Office. Contact information for DNR Regional Offices and Service Centers is provided on the following internet site:

<http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/ownership/index.htm>

Updates to this data set are ongoing, and will be incorporated into future versions when available.

### STATE OF WISCONSIN DEPT. OF NATURAL RESOURCES



Bureau of Facilities and Lands

October 1<sup>st</sup> 2007

