Glacial Drumlin State Park Trail

MASTER PLAN

CONCEPT ELEMENT

Property Task Force
Leader:

Approved by: Natural Resources Board
Date: February 26, 1987

WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
MADISON, WISCONSIN
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SECTION I - ACTIONS

A. GOAL, OBJECTIVES, AND ADDITIONAL BENEFITS

Goal

To make available a 47.2-mile state park trail for year-round use that provides two-way traffic for bicycling, horseback riding, hiking, snowmobiling, and other non-motorized winter use opportunities, and preserves the corridor for present and future generations.

Annual Objectives

1. Provide a surfaced trail to accommodate 75,000 bicyclists.
2. Provide winter use opportunities for 15,000 snowmobilers.
3. Provide non-motorized winter use opportunities including cross country skiing for 4,000 users.
4. Provide opportunities for 4,000 hikers.
5. Provide ten miles of trail for 2,000 horseback riders.

Additional Benefits

1. Accommodate an estimated 5,000 to 10,000 user days for such activities as berry picking, bird watching, general nature study, and flying in streams crossed by the trail.
2. Provide a connecting link for other trail systems in the region.
3. Benefit wildlife and plant species indigenous to the region.

B. RECOMMENDED DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

It is recommended that the right of way be classified as a state park trail to be complemented with the necessary support facilities to make the property functional for year-round use.

1. Development (Figure 2)

   Development needs of the trail over the next ten-year period have been identified and prioritized.

   Priority 1

   First priority development focuses on preparing the trail for public use and will include decking and railing of trestles, and surfacing. The surfacing, which has been completed, was applied by U.S. Telecom, Inc. in consideration of a communication system easement granted by the Department of Natural Resources for a ten-foot wide strip the entire length of the trail right-of-way.
In addition, the trail will be marked with stop signs to alert trail users of road crossings. Miscellaneous debris left by the railroad company after abandonment will be removed.

Priority 2

Priority two development will make the trail more convenient and enjoyable for public use and will include the following:

Western Terminus

The western terminus facility will be located in Cottage Grove, possibly as a cooperative venture with the community. The facility will include a 25-car parking lot, toilet facilities, drinking water, a few picnic tables and bicycle racks. If the state-owned right-of-way is not wide enough to accommodate a well-designed facility, additional lands should be acquired.

Eastern Terminus

The eastern terminus facility will be located between Waukesha and Wales, just west of Waukesha County Highway TT. Approximately 10-15 acres of private land between the Glacial Drumlin Trail and the Waukesha to Palmyra grade could be acquired with good access off Sunset Drive (C.T.H. "QF"). This level, well-drained site has the potential for a well-designed terminus. If the Waukesha to Palmyra grade is acquired, the proposed terminus would serve both trails.

Facilities will include a small trail entrance visitor station with restrooms, office space, storage, and concession/rental space. Cooperation with the private sector will be sought to provide concession facilities and services.

Lake Mills Depot

If economically feasible, the depot will be refurbished to serve as a trail office and a possible Department sub-area office for Wildlife and Parks. Space may be made available for a concession operation as well. Consideration may also be given to constructing a new building on the site.

Rest Areas

Wherever possible, rest areas will be provided in conjunction with existing community parks. Existing facilities will not be duplicated, however, it may be necessary to expand those facilities to accommodate the community and trail users. The following rest areas are planned:
Deerfield - The Jaycee Community Park on the east side of Deerfield will be available as a trail rest area.

Lake Mills - The depot site in Lake Mills will serve as a rest area with toilets, water, and picnic tables. A site on Rock Lake east of the Rock Lake bridge adjacent to the trail right-of-way has potential as a scenic over-look "mini" rest area. It is on private property, and will require acquisition or trade.

Aztalan State Park - Aztalan is one mile north of the trail via Mound Road. It will provide parking, shade, shelter, toilets, water, possible limited rustic camping, and other interesting diversions to the trail.

Pohlman County Park - This small Jefferson County Park is an existing highway wayside park adjacent to the trail on Duck Creek Road. The park will provide shade, toilets, water, and limited parking. Toilet and well replacement will be cost shared by the Department.

Sullivan - A rest area with a small parking lot, toilets, and water will be constructed at a suitable site.

Dousman - The village park just south of the trail will provide toilets, water shelter, and picnic facilities.

Lapham Peak Unit Kettle Moraine State Forest - Lapham Peak is located one mile north of the trail, accessible via Waukesha County Trunk "C". Serving as the east trail headquarters, it will also provide parking, toilets, water, shade, shelter, and picnicking facilities. In addition, it may provide youth hostel accommodations and a bicyclists' campground.

Wales - As a cooperative effort, the Village of Wales proposes to enter into a joint agreement with the Department to develop a park along the Glacial Drumlin Trail. In exchange for its investment, the Village will be granted a perpetual right to use the park as a Village Park.

The park will provide toilet facilities with running water, picnic facilities, and parking for at least 35 cars.

Campgrounds - A rustic campground will be provided at Lapham Peak for bicyclists and hikers. For the remainder of the trail, it is recommended that the private sector provide camping facilities for trail users. A private campground is presently located about one mile south of the trail near Lake Mills. If the private sector cannot meet the demand, an alternative is Department construction of a rustic campground at Aztalan State Park on the southern edge of the park. A third alternative is state purchase of additional land for a trail campground facility.
Fencing - Boundary fence will be constructed along the right-of-way according to individual acquisition agreements and statutory requirements.

Signage - Mile markers and signs at each road crossing with the name of the highway will be installed on the trail right-of-way for the convenience of the trail user.

Priority 3

There is a 3.6-mile gap in the trail ownership near Jefferson Junction. Whether additional land is eventually purchased from the railroad, or an alternate corridor is acquired, additional trail development will be required.

Contingent on financing, a separate trail for horseback riding will be developed on 10 miles of the right-of-way from Cottage Grove to London in Dane County.

Between communities at selected sites with scenic features or nature interpretive potential, small "mini" rest areas will be developed. These "mini" rest areas will include a small structure serving as a well/handpump shelter with benches, and interpretive signage where appropriate.

Additional boundary fence will be constructed as funds permit.

The estimated cost for all remaining development, based on 1986 figures, is $380,000. All proposed development will be dependent upon available funds and statewide priorities. Additional and/or up-to-date justification will also be required.

Areas proposed for major development will be examined for the presence of endangered or threatened wild animals and plant species. If any species are found, development will be suspended until the endangered and nongame species coordinator is consulted, the site evaluated, and appropriate protective measures taken. Prior to any major ground disturbing activities within the trail right-of-way, the Department will consult with the State Historical Society to determine whether archaeological and/or historical testing is warranted.

2. Management

a. Facility Management

Until the problem of the 3.6-mile gap at Jefferson Junction can be solved, the Glacial Drumlin Trail is essentially two trails - a 24-mile trail from Haukesha County Trunk "IT" to Switzke Road, and a 23-mile trail from Cottage Grove to Jefferson County Trunk "H".
The trails will be developed and maintained to provide opportunities for hiking, biking, snowmobiling, and limited horseriding. Cross-country skiing will be permitted, but no special effort will be taken to maintain or groom the trail for skiing since former railroad corridors are not recognized by the public as choice ski trails.

Using snowmobile trail aid monies the Department will contract with local snowmobile clubs for winter trail maintenance. Snowmobiling will be permitted on trail segments through communities only if the communities agree.

Hunting will not be allowed on the trail. Signs will be posted to inform the public and the trail will be patrolled.

During times when aerial crop spraying is taking place on farm fields near the trail, it may be necessary to temporarily reroute trail users on to local roads.

The east terminus of the Military Ridge Trail is about 18 miles from the west terminus of the Glacial Drumlin Trail in Cottage Grove. To connect the two trails, it will be necessary for local units of government to designate trail links in Dane County and in the cities of Monona, Madison, and Fitchburg. The corridor may follow existing roadways and bikeways. Planning between the Department and local units of government will continue.

The Department will also work with Waukesha County and the City of Waukesha to make a connection with the Waukesha County bike trail which connects with the Milwaukee 76 bike trail.

About 1.5 miles of the Ice Age National Scenic Trail will be routed on the Glacial Drumlin trail between the communities of Wales and Waterville. Snowmobiling will be permitted on this segment.

The trail is located in the Southern and Southeast DNA administrative districts. In the Southern District, a trail superintendent assigned to the Lake Kegonsa work unit at Lake Kegonsa State Park has responsibility for the trail in Dane and Jefferson Counties. The Waukesha County section in the Southeast District will be managed by the trail superintendent stationed at Lapham Peak.

When Lapham Peak becomes fully operational, one additional 6-month seasonal employee will be needed to assist in managing the trail. Trail staff in both Districts will work closely together to provide continuity of service to the public.

The Department will initiate efforts to form a nonprofit organization, composed of interested citizens from communities along the trail, to provide services for bicycle rental and pickup, refreshments, souvenir sales, lodging, other services, and trail amenities. Two state trails are currently managed by nonprofit trail corporations.
b. Vegetative Management

Vegetative management is needed for enhancement of wildlife habitat and to encourage free growth for shade and aesthetics. Remnant prairies are to be maintained and new prairies established.

The trail's grassland will provide wildlife habitat and vegetative diversity. Prescribed burning may be practiced on the trail to maintain and improve the vegetative cover.

A narrow strip of vegetation on both sides of the surfaced trail tread will be controlled by mowing. Other areas will be cut to maintain scenic vistas.

Where private developments outside the trail boundary threatens the scenic and aesthetic value, native vegetation will be planted on the trail right-of-way to provide screening.

In Waukesha County, an inventory of prairie remnants, bogs, and unusual plant communities has been completed. Some areas will be afforded special management to preserve the distinctive communities. The remainder of the trail's vegetation must be inventoried, and a vegetative management plan prepared.

c. Wildlife Management

Placement of nest boxes on the right-of-way for song birds, owls, hawks and squirrels through a volunteer effort is recommended. Implementation of this program will be coordinated between wildlife management and the trail staff.

3. Land Acquisition

In March 1984, the Natural Resources Board approved acquisition of the Chicago and Northwestern transportation company rail line between Waukesha and Cottage Grove. It is proposed that the Cottage Grove-Waukesha Trail be named the Glacial Drumlin State Park Trail. The Board also approved an acreage goal of 775 acres of which 654.89 acres have been acquired as of June 30, 1986.

An easement ten-feet wide was granted to U.S. Telecom, Inc., for the purpose of installing a fiber optics communications system on the trail right-of-way. The Department will also cooperate wherever possible with municipalities who need to cross the trail with utilities.

The Department will continue leases transferred with the sale of the railroad grade and, on a case-by-case basis, evaluate the potential of selling the leased land where a business or other building is located on such lands.

Cottages in Lake Mills, south of Sandy Beach Road, have improvements such as gardens, garages, storage buildings, and play equipment on the trail right-of-way. A uniform baseline will be established along the base of the grade, and lands north of the baseline will be offered for sale or lease to the adjacent landowners.
Approximately 2.5 acres of state-owned land in the Village of Dousean will be declared surplus and sold or used for trade.

The Department will, by lease or land use agreement, permit the Lad Lake Treatment Center to use the right-of-way that bisects their property east of Douseman in exchange for a trail corridor around the periphery of their property.

There are a number of additional land purchases needed to complete the trail. A small parcel on Rock Lake near Lake Mills should be acquired in fee for a rest area. Additional right-of-way should be acquired from the railroad to close the 3.6 mile gap near Jefferson Junction. If this right-of-way can not be purchased then an alternate corridor may have to be acquired. Additional land will be needed for the eastern terminus between C.T.H. "DE" and the trail right-of-way. It is also possible that additional land will be needed to develop a well-designed terminus facility in Cottage Grove or the west end.

4. Operation Cost and Revenue Potential

It is estimated that approximately $96,000 per year will be needed to operate the trail. This includes salaries, mileage and costs for maintenance vehicles, travel, services and supplies.

Once the grade becomes fully operational in 1987, a user fee for bicyclists 18 years of age and older will be charged as is the case on other state trails. Based on experience gathered at other trails statewide, it is anticipated that the trail will generate less than 50% of its operating costs.

Outlets for the bicyclists trail card will be in communities along or near the trail.
SECTION II - SUPPORT DATA

A. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Location (Figure 1)

The trail is situated on an east-west axis in southeastern Wisconsin within Dane, Jefferson, and Waukesha Counties. Beginning at County Trunk Highway "M" in the City of Cottage Grove (pop. 888), the grade proceeds easterly through the communities of Deerfield (pop. 1,466), London (unincorporated), Lake Mills (pop. 3,570), Jefferson Junction (unincorporated), Sullivan (pop. 434), Dousman (pop. 1,153), and Wales (pop. 1,992). The grade ends near the west city limits of Waukesha (pop. 50,319).

Primary access to the west end of the grade at Cottage Grove is provided by County Trunk Highway "M" which intersects U.S. Highway 12-18, 3 miles to the south of the grade or interchanges with Interstate Highway 94, 2 miles to the north of the grade. Highways 94 and 12-18 both parallel the grade its entire length. The Waukesha terminus is served by a number of state and county highways.

2. History of the Area

Land was first purchased by the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad the summer of 1881 to construct a rail line that would serve the trade, factory, and agricultural needs of the region. Freight and passenger service began shortly after in early 1882. The line was officially abandoned in 1983.

3. Chronology of Property's Establishment and Development


May 5, 1983 ICC approved the abandonment.

December 19-20, 1983 Public meetings held in Lake Mills and Waukesha on the proposal to acquire the right-of-way.

January 6, 1984 An environmental assessment for the acquisition and development of the grade was approved.

March 19, 1984 Natural Resources Board approves establishment of the trail project and acquisition of the right-of-way.

November 27, 1984 Easement granted to U.S. Telecom, Inc. for installing a communications system on the right-of-way in exchange for the application of a limestone trail surface along the entire state-owned length.

March, 1985 and November, 1986 Public informational meetings held in Deerfield, Lake Mills, Jefferson, Dousman, and Cottage Grove to solicit ideas and comments for the trail master plan.
4. Past and Present Management Activities
   After it was purchased, the Department closed the grade to public use. Sections of the trail were opened during the summer of 1986 as surfacing and grading was completed. The Lake Kegonsa Unit leader, stationed at Lake Kegonsa State Park, is responsible for the management of the trail in Dane and Jefferson Counties. In Waushara County the trail is managed by the superintendent of the Lapham Peak Unit, Kettle Moraine State Forest.

8. RESOURCE CAPABILITIES AND INVENTORY

1. Geology

   The trail lies in the glaciated area of the state near the southern limit of the Green Bay lobe and extends into the Lake Michigan lobe of the Wisconsinan glacier. The landscape is dominated by interrupted drainage patterns, many small, short streams, and wetlands. Uniformly oriented drumlin swells are obvious glacial features. Where the Green Bay and Lake Michigan lobes merge near Devil's Lake the trail intersects Kettle Moraine topography characterized by rounded hills, ridges, and kettle holes.

   Underlying the glacial topography are limestones and dolomites of Ordovician age. They are exposed at some of the deep cuts on the grade.

2. Soils

   In eastern Dane County the trail encounters soils of the Batavia-Houghton-Dresden association which are deep to moderately deep silt loams and rocks well to poorly drained. Soils of this series are formed in glacial outwash material and underlain by silt, sand, and gravel.

   Other soils along the grade in eastern Dane County are well drained to moderately well drained, deep silt loams of the Dodge-St. Charles-McHenry association. These soils are underlain by sandy loam glacial till.

   In Jefferson County, soils encountered vary from poorly drained silt loams of the Fox-Casco-Matheron association to well drained soils of the Kidder-McHenry-Rotamer association. Very poorly drained organic soils of the Houghton-Adrian series are also present.

   In Waushara County the trail passes through an extensive area of Hochheim-Theresa soils. These soils are formed in thin loess and loam glacial till and are well drained. Also encountered are very poorly drained organic soils in depressions of old lake beds and on flood plains classified as Houghton-Palms-Adrian, as well as, well drained soils with a clay loam subsoil in the Fox-Casco association.
3. Climate

The climate is continental, with long, cold winters of moderate snowfall. Summers may be warm with hot and humid days. The average yearly precipitation is slightly over 30 inches with 60% falling as rain between May and September. The long-term average annual snowfall ranges from 41 inches in Madison to 46 inches in Milwaukee, but it varies considerably from season to season. In an average winter the ground is covered with an inch or more of snow about 60% of the time from December 10 to February 25 (Madison).

The percentage of possible sunshine has averaged about 40% for November and December, 60% or greater for May through October, and between 50 and 60% for the remaining months.

The average date of the last 32-degree freeze in the spring is about May 2 and the first in the fall most probable from October 5 to 25.

Prevailing winds are westerly in winter and southerly in summer. March, April, and November are the windiest months with averages of 12 miles per hour. July and August are the least windy with averages of 9 miles per hour.

4. Water Resources

The following water features are crossed beginning at the trail's west terminus in Cottage Grove and proceeding eastward.

Koshkonong Creek - 5 crossings

A major drainage stream in eastern Dane County which is managed for panfish but also has abundant populations of rough fishes. Over 4,300 acres of wetland adjoin the stream in small plots along its entire length.

Mud Creek - 1 crossing

A 7.6 mile tributary of Koshkonong Creek, with over 687 acres of wetland contiguous with its banks. Fish population consists primarily of forage species.

Rock Lake - 1 crossing

Rock Lake is 1,371 acres in size with a maximum depth of 56 feet. The fishery consists of northern pike, walleye, yellow perch, largemouth and smallmouth bass, and most panfishes. The lake is quite fertile and generally clear. About 1,700 acres of wetland lie within its watershed and encompass Mud Lake and Bean Lake to the south. The west shore is somewhat marshy and has been the object of some dredging and shore alteration in the past. The City of Lake Mills borders more than one-third of the shoreline.
Crawfish River - 1 crossing

A large, shallow stream of moderate gradient which empties into the Rock River in Jefferson. The water is generally turbid, may be slightly stained, and is quite fertile. Northern pike, walleye, channel catfish, largemouth bass, and rough fish make up the fishery. The river receives some boating and canoeing use.

Rock River - 1 crossing

A major river system within Jefferson County. The water course has a low gradient and is buffered by wetlands above Lake Koshkonong, and in the Ixonia area where it enters the county. Floods are periodic but severe on occasion. The fishery is comprised of northern pike, walleye, channel catfish, bluegills, crappies, white bass, bullheads, carp, buffalo, and the American eel.

Johnson Creek - 2 crossings

A long (17.5 miles), low gradient stream with an extensive system of ditched tributaries. It joins the Rock River near Johnson Creek. The fishery is limited to forage species. Over 1,325 acres of wetland adjoin the stream.

Duck Creek - 3 crossings

A low gradient, slightly stained, sometimes intermittent, lowland stream tributary to the Bark River. There is no fishery other than forage fishes.

Bark River - 1 crossing

A prominent stream of northwestern Waukesha County with moderate gradient and a varied fish population. The fishery consists of northern pike, walleye, channel catfish, panfish, and forage fish. Over 2,000 acres of wetland adjoin the stream and provide suitable habitat for waterfowl and upland game birds. Deer are found in some of the larger wooded wetland areas. Much of the stream is traversable by boat or canoe. About 2 miles of the Bark River east of Sullivan in Waukesha County is immediately adjacent to the railroad road grade.

Koshkonong Creek - 4 crossings

A major tributary of the Bark River. The stream is impounded south of Dousman and at Hunters Lake, but flows unimpeded from Dutchman Lake. Northern pike, panfish, and largemouth bass provide a fishery near the lakes. Further downstream rough fish are common.

Pebble Creek - 1 crossing

A small stream tributary to the Fox River west of Waukesha. The headwaters are ditched and straightened. Downstream the gradient increases and the bottom is gravel. Forage fish are common.
5. Vegetative Cover

The railroad right-of-way supports a relatively large variety of vegetative species. Many sections contain dense shrub growth of sumac, gray dogwood, hazelnut, wild plum, and wild crab. Red osier dogwood is present in some of the wetter areas. Of the tree species there are notable groups of oaks, black cherry, soft maple, willow, and some aspen at various points on the right-of-way.

Most prairie remnants on the right-of-way are of low to medium quality. Prairie species include big and little bluestem, cordgrass, switchgrass, Indian grass, prairie bush clover, bergamot,coneflower, prairie dock, whorled milkweed, spiderwort, and mountain mint.

A good quality prairie remnant associated with the J.W.-Waukesha Field Station prairie restoration project is located east of Dousman.

The 87-acre Yunker’s Woods Natural Area, containing a southern dry-mesic forest, borders the trail in Jefferson County, 6N18E, Section 1.

Wilcox panic grass (Panicum wilcockianum), a watch-listed plant species, is known to occur on a gravel ridge in Dousman (6N17E, Section 3, Waukesha County).

6. Wildlife

The trail encounters three major types of wildlife habitat including farmlands, woodlots, and wetlands. Wildlife present in farmland areas include ring-necked pheasants, bobwhite quail, white-tailed deer, cottontail rabbits, red and gray fox, badgers, raccoons, opossums, skunks, and woodchucks. A variety of songbirds, including bobolinks and meadowlarks, use the grasslands for nesting.

Woodlots are also used by several farmland species along with fox and gray squirrels, red-tailed hawks, kestrels, great horned owls, and barred owls. Other raptors which may be present include sharp-shinned hawks, Cooper’s hawks (threatened), red-shouldered hawks (threatened) and broadwing hawks. Songbirds utilizing woodlots include indigo buntings, northern orioles, and species of vireos, warblers, thrushes, and woodpeckers.

Wetlands are inhabited by a variety of wildlife. Waterfowl nesting in areas along the trail include mallards, blue-winged teal, wood ducks, Canada geese and sandhill cranes. Other species of waterfowl migrate through southeastern Wisconsin. Great blue herons, red-ringed blackbirds, bitterns, and sora rails are summer residents in the wetlands. Residents fur bearers include mink, muskrats, and beaver.

The Lake Mills Wetland Natural Area in Jefferson County, 7N13E, Sections 15, 22 and 23, borders the trail and state-endangered cricket frogs are present in the area of these wetlands.
7. Site Inventory

Lands within the corridor are classed as upland brush, lowland brush, grass, remnant prairie, and marsh. There are no commercial timber types on the right-of-way.

8. Land Use Inventory

An area of about 95 acres to be utilized by the surfaced trail tread, rest areas, and terminus development, is classified intensive recreational development (IRD). The remaining 560 acres of trail right-of-way is classified extensive recreation area (ERA).

9. Historical and Archaeological Features

The State Historical Society has indicated that there are no historical and/or archaeological features on the existing abandoned railroad right-of-way because of the disturbed nature of the grade. However, for the lands to be acquired off the railroad right-of-way for the terminus and rest area development, the State Historical Society advises that the historical or architectural significance of any structures present must be evaluated and the need for an archaeological survey determined.

C. MANAGEMENT PROBLEMS

1. Commercial/Industrial Development

The commercial and industrial development in close proximity of the grade such as a chemical plant in Cottage Grove, Industrial park in Deerfield, and an extensive gravel pit operation between Souseman and Wales may present visual intrusions and trail user conflicts. Special fencing and vegetative screening may be necessary.

2. Residential Areas

The grade passes through several sizeable residential areas which may restrict the use of snowmobiles. Ready access to the trail for unauthorized uses such as horseback riding, motorbikes, etc., could cause potential problems as might the private use of the right-of-way for gardens, storage, etc.

3. Road Crossings

Approximately 40 road crossings may create some conflicts between vehicular traffic and trail users. All crossings will be carefully signed.

4. Jefferson Junction Gap

A 3.6-mile section of right-of-way at Jefferson Junction was not abandoned by the railroad company in order to provide continued rail service for a local industry. The Department will attempt to bypass the gap by acquiring or use of local roadways.
5. Lad Lake Treatment Center

Near Doussman the trail right-of-way comes within 100-feet of the buildings and living quarters of the privately owned Lad Lake Treatment Center for emotionally disturbed boys. The Department has agreed to make a reasonable effort to relocate the trail away from the treatment center facilities.

6. Aerial Spraying

Aerial spraying takes place on certain farm fields adjacent to the trail during the summer growing season. This creates a situation where there is a low flying airplane near the trail, as well as the unpleasant effects of the spray being used.

7. Bridge Ownership

Ownership and maintenance responsibility must be determined for 3 highway bridges over the trail. The bridges will require expensive maintenance in the near future.

D. RECREATIONAL NEEDS AND JUSTIFICATION

Wisconsin's 1986-91 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCOR) Needs Assessment section sets priority ratings on various outdoor recreation activities to serve as an indicator of needs. In the Madison Area, which includes Dane and Jefferson Counties, bicycling, hiking/backpacking, walking/jogging, and cross-country skiing are high priority activities. The same activities are also given a high priority for the Southeast District which includes Waukesha County.

E. ANALYSIS OF ALTERNATIVES

1. Management

   a. Designate as a state park trail.

      Under the recommended alternative the entire corridor would be managed as a state park trail to allow for a variety of recreational activity including hiking, biking, horseback riding, snowmobiling, and other non-motorized winter use activities. Hunting and trapping would not be permitted in conformance with Section 29.074 of the Wisconsin State Statutes.

   b. Designate as a state recreational trail.

      The alternative of managing the trail as a state recreation area under the authorization of statute 23.091 to permit hunting and trapping is not recommended because this type of use would not be compatible on a high-use trail in a populated area.
2. Development and Acquisition
   
   a. Leave the trail in an undeveloped condition
      
      Although the right-of-way has been acquired, this alternative would provide for no further acquisition and no development. The Department would merely retain the right-of-way for future use. This alternative is not desirable since the grade was acquired for recreational purposes.
      
      No further acquisition or development could lead to safety, trespass, and encroachment problems, as well as degeneration of the resource.
      
   b. Limited trail development
      
      The Department could provide a 47-mile corridor for limited recreational use with minimal development. Such activities as hiking, and snowmobiling in the winter, could be enjoyed without trail surfacing.
      
      Parking, toilets, wells and other facilities would be provided at a few major access points. Railing and decking of trestles would also occur.
      
      This alternative is not recommended since state, regional, and outdoor recreation plans indicate a need for additional biking trails.
      
   c. Full trail development
      
      This recommended alternative would provide for a full complement of trail facilities for use by bicyclists, hikers, horseback riders, snowmobilers, and cross-country skiers. The trail would be surfaced, the bridges railed and decked, and rest areas would be provided at major access points. Toilets, water, and picnic tables would be provided at all major rest stops. The use of local facilities would be utilized where offered. A separate trail for horses would be developed on ten miles of right-of-way in Dane County.
      
3. Campground development
   
   Southern Unit-Kettle Moraine State Forest campground facilities will be made available to trail users. If use and demand warrant, state forest campground facilities could be enlarged to meet that increased need.
   
4. Other development and use
   
   Recreational vehicles such as motorcycles, mini-bikes, four-wheel drives, all-terrain vehicles, etc., are incompatible with bicycling and hiking during the snow-free seasons for safety reasons. Furthermore, constant use of some off-the-road vehicles could cause
plant damage and destruction of the trail tread. Since the trail crosses waterways, it is of concern that erosion of the trail tread could cause siltation and turbidity of adjacent water bodies.

During the winter season all-terrain vehicles will not be permitted.
David L. Weizenicker
Director, Parks and Recreation
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P. O. Box 7921
Madison, WI 53707

Dear Dave:

This letter, transmits my comments on the Glacial Drumlin State Park Trail Master Plan (concept element). I apologize for my delayed reply. Overall, this Master Plan documents an important opportunity with potential benefit for many Wisconsin citizens. My comments are possible suggestions for strengthening the plan.

The alternative chosen, i.e., designation as a State Park trail, appears most appropriate. The alternative under development, proposing trail development, also appears appropriate, perhaps with certain changes.

The trail may well provide as much recreation for those residents in the neighboring area, as for those in the cities at either end of the trail. At least such use should be noted. It might be helpful to include a statement to substantiate suggested numbers of potential users, including bikers, snowmobilers, hikers, skiers and others. Of course, this may not be possible.

Would it be appropriate to suggest some interpretive activity at the trail entrances and at the Lake Mills point. Brief notes on the fish in streams, plant communities, potential mammal and bird-sightings, etc., would surely be of interest.

One of the obvious concerns noted in the plan is control of motorized vehicles. This will probably require fencing and suitable protection at entry points and road crossings, perhaps with the use of a maze to eliminate motorbikes and three- and four-wheelers. Use by such "macho" vehicles is clearly a major potential problem for the aesthetic value and the safety of trail users. This type of vehicle is most likely to bring in the type of users responsible for vandalism.

The plan suggests connecting this trail with the Military Ridge State Trail through Monona and Madison. Are there better alternatives, such as moving south around Madison, near Oregon and toward Verona. This also would provide an additional useful trail for those living in the Madison area.

In the section on vegetation management, the use of prairie, wetland, and patches of trees are suggested to promote aesthetic values and provide trees and shade. Reduction of vegetation management costs are highly desirable. A technique developed for powerline rights-of-way might be valuable for certain stretches of the trail. This is the use of semi-permanent shrub communities, established initially by a selective spray, but then essentially self-perpetuating. This would be an interesting approach to test and could also be a way to protect areas where vistas are desired.
A brief introduction is needed to orient the reader—i.e. something on the origin of the corridor and when it was obtained. This is present, but well into the text. Also missing are specifics on the three highway bridges that will require replacement. Are they on town or county roads? This should be an exciting opportunity.

Cordially,

Forest Stearns, Chairman
Wisconsin Natural Areas Preservation Council
Note: (This revision combines Form 1600-1 and 1600-9 into one form.)

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
Bureau of Parks and Recreation
DISTRICT OR BUREAU

DOCKET NUMBER
1370

TYPE LIST DESIGNATION[S]
1

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
(Reference Information Sources Utilized)

Applicant: Department of Natural Resources

Title of Proposal: Acquisition and development of the Chicago and Northwestern Transportation Company railroad grade between Cottage Grove and Waukesha for state trail purposes.

Location: Counties - Dane, Jefferson, and Waukesha (see attached plat maps for townships, ranges, sections and political towns)

PROJECT SUMMARY

1. General Description (brief overview)

The project proposes the acquisition of a 40.2-mile segment of the abandoned Chicago and Northwestern Transportation Company railroad line between the communities of Cottage Grove and Waukesha. Approximately 700 acres consisting of the rail corridor right-of-way and land needed for terminus and rest area development will be acquired. The 663 acres of right-of-way includes a 1-mile spur in Lake Mills. The right-of-way will provide a public recreational trail which would accommodate year-round use with two-way traffic for biking, hiking, and snowmobiling.

Small (5-10 acres) privately-owned parcels may also be purchased at Cottage Grove and near Waukesha for terminus development including several other parcels of about the same size needed for rest areas along the trail. Such acquisition would be contingent on purchase of the grade.

Primary access to the grade is provided by either Interstate Highway 94 or U.S. Highway 12-18. Access is also provided by numerous County Trunk highways.

Geographically, the right-of-way is located in the heavily populated south central and southeastern region of the state. Total population of the three counties traversed by the grade is 670,023 (1980 census).

There is a potential tie-in for bikers with the existing Military Ridge State trail by using the designated Dane County bike route from Cottage Grove along County Trunk Highway "BB" (Cottage Grove Road), the Monona bike path, and the Madison bikeway system. From the Madison bikeway south of the beltline, bikers would be required to follow Highway 18-151 for several miles to the east terminus of the Military Ridge trail near County Trunk Highway "P2."
There is also link-up potential on the east end of the proposed Cottage Grove-Waukesha trail with Waukesha County's soon to be completed bike trail and Milwaukee County's 76-mile bike route system.

At this time no other nearby rail abandonments are pending or are anticipated they may have tie-in potential.

If acquired and developed, approximately 100,000 users are expected to use the trail annually. It is estimated that between 30 and 40 percent of the trail users will be nonresident.

2. Purpose and Need (include history and background as appropriate)

In the mid-1960's, Wisconsin pioneered a new national concept in outdoor recreation by acquiring abandoned railroad rights-of-way and establishing the trails as state parks or recreation areas for public trail purposes. The trails are established under the provisions of Chapter 27 of the Wisconsin Statutes that refers to state parks or 23.091 that pertains to state recreation areas.

Abandoned railroad right-of-ways provide an excellent corridor for trail use and supply much needed recreational facilities for hiking, bicycling, horseback riding, snowmobiling, and cross country skiing. Public use of the trails has exceeded expectations and bolstered area economies. Local citizens are promoting the trails as an asset to their communities.

The Department currently owns ten state trails over 280 miles in total length.

The Cottage Grove-Waukesha rail corridor is located in Regions 9 and 10 of the State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). Acquisition and future development would meet local and statewide needs for trail facilities as indicated by the following projected recreational need figures for those two regions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>1979 Supply (miles)</th>
<th>1984 Needs (miles)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hiking</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>1,053</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horseback Riding</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-Country Skiing</td>
<td>336</td>
<td>4,225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snowmobiling</td>
<td>471</td>
<td>1,898</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicycling</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>1,820</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Authorities and Approvals (list statutory authority and other relevant local, state, and federal permits or approvals required).

For state park trails Section 27.01 of the Wisconsin Statutes. Authority for establishing as a state recreation area is through Section 23.091. First right to acquire by the Department of Transportation is authorized by Section 85.09 of the Wisconsin Statutes. This statute also authorizes acquisition for recreational or scenic purposes.

Building designs must meet state and local requirements for public buildings and zoning regulations. Acquisition of the railroad right-of-way must be approved by the Natural Resources Board.
4. Estimated Cost and Funding Source

Purchase price for the 48.2-mile railroad right-of-way is expected to approach $1,000,000. Additional land needed for the trail terminuses and rest stops could add another $40,000 for a total acquisition cost of $1,040,000. Funding source is Outdoor Recreation Action Program (ORAP) bonding and formula funds. LAMCON federal cost-sharing funds may also be available.

Development costs are estimated at $10,000 per mile of grade for a total of $482,000 (1983 dollars). ORAP and LAMCON (if available) funds will be used.

PROPOSED PHYSICAL CHANGES

5. Manipulation of Terrestrial Resources (include relevant quantities - sq. ft., cu. yard., etc.)

The ultimate goal is to acquire and convert the 48.2-mile grade into a recreational trail which is safe and enjoyable for public use. Once acquired, possible development would include planting and raling trestles, surfaced the trail with a seven-foot wide layer of finely crushed limestone, connecting terminus facilities at Cottage Grove and Waukesha and providing rest areas at Deerfield, Lake Mills, Sullivan, Dousman, and Wales. Facilities for both terminuses and the rest areas would consist of parking lots for 20-100 cars, toilet facilities, drinking water, picnic tables, bike racks, grills, signing, etc. Where possible, municipal utilities would be used for sewer and water hook-ups. As an alternative the east terminus may be moved westward because of the proximity of the Kettle Moraine State Forest and the existence of camping and other recreational facilities for the trail user. A connector route using lesser traveled highways would be investigated. Trail access to Waukesha would be maintained.

6. Manipulation of Aquatic Resources (include relevant quantities - cfs., acre, feet, MGD, etc.)

According to USGS quads there are 20 river, stream, and lake crossings over the 48-mile length of grade. There are also numerous intermittent stream crossings. Upon acquisition, and/or development, if any drainage problems are evident they will be studied by the Engineering Section for corrective action. The requirements of Chapter 30 and 31 of Wisconsin Statutes and Manual Code 3565.1 will be followed in the event of bridge or culvert replacement.

7. Buildings, Treatment Units, Roads, and Other Structures

A number of culverts and bridges are located on the grade and will be retained if the grade is developed for trail purposes. They will require inspection by the engineering staff to determine their size and condition.

A brick depot in fair condition is located in Lake Mills, but it is not known if it remains under ownership by the railroad. If purchased with the grade it would be considered for renovation and use as a trail office.
8. Emissions and Discharges

Some local noise and air pollution might be expected during construction due to equipment operation and disruption of surface conditions. Vehicular traffic generated by trail users can be expected to increase slightly in the area and add some to the noise and potential air pollution. These emissions, however, are not expected to significantly affect the ambient air quality. Fossil fuels and lubricants consumed by construction equipment and that used for labor and materials will be consumed and will result in some pollutants.

9. Other Changes

None.

10. Attach Maps, Plans, and Other Descriptive Material as Appropriate (list)

a. Location map
b. Plat maps

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

Information Based On (check all that apply):

- [x] Literature/correspondence
- [ ] Personal Contacts (list in item 31)
- [ ] Field Analysis By: X Author, X Other (list in item 31)
- Past Experience With Site By: X Author, X Other (list in item 31)

11. Physical (topography - soils - water - air - wetland amounts and types)

Surface features of the area traversed by the railroad grade are characteristic of a glaciated region with level to rolling and hilly land. Uniformly oriented drumlin swells are the most obvious glacial feature. Lands adjoining the grade are primarily agricultural, although wetlands and small woodlands are encountered in some areas. The west end of the grade is located in the Rock River watershed. Proceeding eastward the grade crosses three major rivers, the Crawfish, Rock, and Bark. The Fox River is the major watershed on the east end in Waukesha County. Soils are predominantly calcareous drift soils classified as silt loams with scattered peat and lacustrine soils.

All bridges and culverts will be retained if the grade is acquired as a state trail. The exact number and condition of these structures would be determined pending an inspection by the Department’s Engineering Section. Railroad ties not salvaged by the railroad company would be disposed of according to Department regulations. Fencing along the right-of-way in need of replacement would be constructed by the Department depending on priority and available funding. This is in accordance with Manual Code 2254.5.
12. Biological
   a. Flora

   The railroad right-of-way supports a relatively large variety of different vegetative species. Many sections contain dense shrub growth of sumac, gray dogwood, hazelnut, wild plum, and wild crab. Red osier dogwood is present in some of the wetter areas. Of the tree species there are notable groups of oaks, black cherry, soft maple, willow, and some aspen at various points on the right-of-way.

   According to the Bureau of Endangered Resources, there are no prairie remnants on the right-of-way worthy of protection.

   b. Fauna

   Wildlife commonly found along the railroad corridor are cottontail rabbit, fox, skunk, raccoon, woodchuck, hawks, owls, pheasant, and song birds. White-tailed deer would probably be found wherever there are sizable wooded areas adjacent to the grade.

13. Social/Economic (include ethnic and cultural groups, and zoning if applicable)

   The grade connects the communities of Cottage Grove (pop. 888), Deerfield (pop. 1,466), London (unincorporated), Lake Hills (pop. 3,670), Jefferson Junction (unincorporated), Sullivan (pop. 434), Doussman (pop. 1,153), Wales (pop. 1,992), and Waukesha (pop. 50,319). If acquired and developed as a state trail it is expected that many of the trail users, which may number 100,000 per year, will contribute to the economy of the local communities. Projects such as planking and railing, surfacing, toilet construction, wells, etc., may also have a beneficial impact on the local economy.

   All revenue collected from the sale of trail user permits are remitted to a segregated fund from which trail operation and maintenance is partially subsidized.

   This action will not affect or displace any ethnic group or native American. The trail facilities will be designed to accommodate the handicapped.

14. Other Special Resources (e.g., archaeological, historical, endangered/threatened species, scientific areas, natural areas)

   The State Historical Society (SHS) will be contacted to determine if any historical or archaeological features exist on the abandoned right-of-way or on the proposed terminus or rest area sites. Depending on the response from the SHS, archaeological surveys may be required.

   It is not known if any depots will be acquired with the grade.
15. Physical (Include visual if applicable)

Acquisition and development of the grade should have minor impact on the resource. Management practices would include implementing the Department's trail fencing policy, maintaining the trail facilities, controlling weed growth, and managing the vegetation according to a specific plan. Unsalvageable railroad ties will be disposed of in accordance with Department regulations.

Some increase in vehicular traffic into and through the area will add to noise and potential air pollution although it is not expected to significantly affect Wisconsin's air quality. Increased traffic will increase energy use. Although short term, construction activities will cause some local noise and air pollution.

The proposed development will have a negligible effect on drainage.

16. Biological

If the grade is acquired and developed, it will be maintained as a public recreational trail. The land will not be lost to urban sprawl and agricultural fields. Surface and ground water quality are not expected to be adversely affected by the proposal. Existing vegetation will be managed to control weeds, and promote woody growth for wildlife habitat with some control to maintain scenic vistas. Human use may be somewhat detrimental to the behavior pattern of some wildlife although it should be negligible in comparison to the existing trail traffic.

17. Social/Economic (Include ethnic and cultural groups and zoning if applicable)

This grade has the potential of being a very popular state trail for hiking, biking, and snowmobiling. It is located in a heavily populated area of the state within several miles of Aztalan State Park, Southern Unit of the Kettle Moraine State Forest, Lapham Peak Recreation Area, and several state wildlife areas. If the right-of-way is sold to adjacent landowners, it will be lost as an outdoor recreation area. If acquired and developed, approximately 100,000 users are expected to use the trail annually. See Item #19.

Studies indicate that state-owned land is not an economic burden to local governmental units due to state payments in lieu of taxes and increased school aids in many cases.

18. Other Special Resources (e.g., archaeological, historical, endangered/threatened species, scientific areas, natural areas)

No archaeological or historical sites should be affected by the proposal since the 100-foot right-of-way is already a disturbed zone within the rail corridor. Lands purchased outside the right-of-way for terminus and rest stop development may require archaeological survey. No rare or endangered plant or animal species are known to be present along the grade.
19. Probable Adverse Impacts That Cannot Be Avoided

State acquisition of the grade should have minimal adverse impact on the existing environment. Individuals may desire to purchase the grade for industrial, commercial, residential, agricultural, and other uses.

If development occurs, there will be some air pollution caused by auto and snowmobile emissions as well as minimal increase in noise from auto, snowmobiles, bikers, hikers, and other trail users. Some noise, air, and water pollution may occur during the development of the facility.

Some minor grading will take place around the terminus and rest area parking lots and toilet facilities; however, this will only minimally alter existing topography and drainage patterns. Some soil erosion could occur at construction sites, but this would be minimized through the use of appropriate erosion control techniques.

Public services such as police and fire protection, as well as medical attention will be needed if the grade is developed as a state recreational trail and used by the public.

Traffic will increase on the highway systems leading to the trail; however, this increase is not expected to have a significant effect on the traffic volume.

There will be an increase in bike traffic on the bike route connecting the proposed Grove-Waukesha trail and the existing Military Ridge State Trail. This may cause increased conflict with motorists especially where the bike route utilizes county highways and city streets. The same situation may occur at the Waukesha end.

ALTERNATIVES (no action - enlarge - reduce - modify - other locations and/or methods)

20. Identify, describe, and discuss feasible alternatives to the proposed action and their impacts. Give particular attention to alternatives which might avoid some or all adverse environmental effects.

There are three alternatives. The first is DNR acquisition, development, maintenance, and management of the grade as a state trail. Such action would assure retention of the resource for recreational purposes. This alternative would provide for a full complement of trail facilities for biking, hiking, and snowmobiling. The trail would be surfaced, and the bridges planked and railed. Parking areas, toilets, and drinking water would be provided at the two terminuses and rest areas. Where possible, local facilities would be utilized if not available.

The second alternative would provide the same basic facilities as the first alternative but would be the responsibility of county and local units of government. This action would retain the resource for recreational trail purposes. The role of the DNR would include encouraging local leadership to plan and develop the trail based on uniform trail development guidelines.
A third alternative would provide for no acquisition and development of the right-of-way for recreational trail use. The right-of-way could be purchased by adjacent property owners and other interested individuals. Such action would cause the grade to be lost for recreational trail use.

EVALUATION (Discuss each category. Attach additional sheets and other pertinent information if necessary.)

21. Secondary Effects: As a result of this action, is it likely that other events or actions will happen that may significantly affect the environment? If so, list here and reference their discussion in items 15-18 as appropriate.

Based on experience gained from other state trails, it is unlikely that other events or actions will occur which may significantly alter the environment. Traffic volumes on roads adjacent to the proposed trail should not increase significantly. Police and fire protection will be provided by the DNR. If supplementary protection is needed, it should be limited and, therefore, should not cause an increase in local agency manpower and equipment needs.

22. New Environmental Effect: Does the action alter the environment so as to affect a physical, biological, or socio-economic environment that would exist? If so, list here and reference their discussion in items 9-10 or 15-18 as appropriate.

The abandoned grade will provide a safe off-road trail for bikers, hikers, and snowmobilers. Development will generate revenue for local contractors and local businesses should realize increased sales due to trail user purchases. Aids in lieu of taxes will be paid by the state to local government units and thereby increase tax revenue. Development will slightly alter the railroad grade, tresilies, and land used for terminuses and rest areas. Vegetation will be allowed to grow in the margins of the right-of-way, except weeds will be controlled.

23. Geographically Scarce: Are the existing environmental features that would be affected by the proposed action scarce, either locally or statewide? If so, list here and reference their discussion in items 15-16 as appropriate.

No. According to the Bureau of Endangered Resources, there are no prairie remnants on the right-of-way worthy of protection.

24. Precedent: Does the action and its effect(s) require a decision which would influence future decisions? Describe.

No. The proposed trail project is similar to the DNR's other ten which are present being used or are in early stages of development.

25. Controversy: Discuss and describe concerns which indicate a serious controversy or unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources.

Acquisition and eventual development of the grade as a recreational trail does not appear to be controversial. However, controversy may arise if adjoining land owners claim that the right-of-way reverts back to them.
26. Consistency With Plans: Does the action conflict with local or agency zoning or with official agency plans or policy of local, state or federal government (e.g., NR 1.95)? If so, how? Refer to applicable comments in item 31.

No. The Department of Transportation and our Department are closely coordinating their planning efforts so that there will be no conflict over intended use of the abandoned right-of-way. The Department will utilize input from local governmental officials, interested citizens, and organizations during the master planning process.

27. Cumulative Impacts: While the action by itself may be limited in scope, would repeated actions of this type result in major or significant impacts to the environment?

Based on other state trails which utilize existing railroad right-of-ways, converting the railroad grade into a recreational trail will have very slight impact on the existing corridor. Conversion to trail use will be beneficial to wildlife habitat, as trees and shrubs are allowed to grow in the right-of-way.

28. Foreclose Future Options: Is the action irreversible? Will it commit a resource (e.g., energy, habitat, historical features) for the foreseeable future?

If acquired, the grade will be used for trail purposes. However, the land utilized for trail facilities could be reclaimed by obliterating the constructed item such as parking lots, toilets, etc., reggrading and revegetating the site.

29. Socio-cultural Impacts: Will action result in direct or indirect impacts on ethnic or cultural groups or alter social patterns?

X No
______ Yes, refer to item 17.
30. Other:

None.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LIST OF AGENCIES, GROUPS AND INDIVIDUALS CONTACTED REGARDING THE PROJECT (INCLUDE DNR personnel and title)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Date</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6/83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
RECOMMENDATION

EIS Not Required........................................ X

Analysis of the expected impacts of this proposal is of sufficient scope and detail to conclude that this is not a major action which would significantly affect the quality of the human environment. In my opinion, therefore, an environmental impact statement is not required prior to final action by the Department on this project.

Refer to Office of the Secretary...........................................

Major and Significant Action: Prepare EIS............................

Request EIR........................................................................

Additional factors, if any, affecting the evaluator's recommendation:

None.

SIGNATURE OF EVALUATOR: ________________________________ DATE: 7-22-83
NOTEED AREA SUPERVISOR OR BUREAU DIRECTOR: J. W. G. MARSH, 9/12/83

Number of responses to public notice: 19

Public response log attached?

CERTIFIED TO BE IN COMPLIANCE WITH WERA
DISTRICT DIRECTOR OR DIRECTOR OF BEI (OR DESIGNEE) DATE: 11-6-83

This decision is not final until certified by the appropriate District Director or the Director of BEI. If you believe that you have a right to challenge this decision, you should know that Wisconsin Statutes and Administrative Codes establish time periods within which requests to review Department decisions must be filed. For judicial review of a decision pursuant to ss. 227.15 and 227.16, Stats., you have 30 days after service of the decision to file your petition for review. The respondent in an action for judicial review is the Department of Natural Resources. You may wish to seek legal counsel to determine your specific legal rights to challenge a decision. This notice is provided pursuant to s. 227.11(5), Stats.

1949N

-10-