



HOWARD MARKLEIN

STATE SENATOR • 17TH SENATE DISTRICT

June 6, 2017

**Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Energy
Testimony on Senate Bill (SB) 276**

Good morning!

Thank you Chair Cowles and members of the committee for the opportunity to testify in favor of Senate Bill 276 (SB 276), which directs the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to sell the land that comprises White Mound County Park back to Sauk County.

Sauk County purchased private parcels in 1965, with the intent to create a county park. However, at the time the county did not have a parks department, and subsequently sold the property to the State of Wisconsin for one dollar.

In 1967, the State Conservation Commission (the predecessor of the Natural Resources Board) granted a perpetual easement to the county for a recreational area open to the general public. The county was also allowed to construct a multiple-use dam on the property.

Over the years, Sauk County has had the financial responsibility to repair and maintain the dam. In addition, the county has made several improvements to the park, and manages the land to enhance the recreational experience for users. Park operations include 1,100 acres with a 104 acre lake, 56 campsites (38 of which are electrical), 10 horse-friendly campsites and horse trails. White Mound has a boat land, a beach, hunting, fishing, and picnic areas, as well as reservable shelters. All of this infrastructure was built and is maintained by Sauk County.

The Sauk County Parks Department plans future improvements to the park, and has requested the DNR sell the land back to the county. SB 276 directs the DNR to sell the land to the county for the one dollar it originally paid, restricts the deed so the land must continue to be used for recreational purposes, and if the land ceases to be used by the county for recreational purposes, it would revert back to the state.

Accompanying my written testimony is a copy of a resolution that the Sauk County Board unanimously passed in support of the land sale.

Thank you again for allowing me the opportunity to testify in support of this bill, and I welcome any questions.

STATE OF WISCONSIN)
)S.S.
COUNTY OF SAUK)
I hereby certify that this resolution/ordinance
is a true & correct copy as passed by the
Sauk County Board of Supervisors.



RESOLUTION NO. 64 - 2017

Rebecca C. Evert
(Seal) Rebecca C. Evert, Sauk County Clerk

**REQUESTING THE SALE OF WHITE MOUND COUNTY PARK TO SAUK COUNTY FROM
THE STATE OF WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES**

Background: In 1965, Sauk County purchased properties with the intent to create White Mound County Park. The County did not have a parks department at the time, so the County sold the property to the State of Wisconsin for one dollar. White Mound County Park is still owned by the State of Wisconsin, and Sauk County has a perpetual easement to operate it as a park and has done so since 1967. The County now has a Parks Department, has successfully proven to have the capability to manage the park and its dam, and has made numerous improvements to the property with plans for many more. Sauk County is requesting that the State of Wisconsin sell White Mound County Park to Sauk County for the total sum of \$1.00, with the understanding that the property remains a public park, offering Nature Based Outdoor Activities.

Fiscal Impact: [x] None [] Budgeted Expenditure [] Not Budgeted

WHEREAS, Sauk County originally owned the property on which White Mound County Park is located, and in 1967 conveyed it to the State of Wisconsin, but has continually operated, maintained, and improved White Mound County Park under a perpetual easement from the State Conservation Commission of Wisconsin since 1967; and,

WHEREAS, Sauk County intends to continue to operate and improve White Mound County Park, and it would be mutually beneficial for Sauk County and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to sell White Mound County Park for the same amount that Sauk County sold it to the State of Wisconsin, which is one dollar with the understanding the property remain a public park.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Sauk County Board of Supervisors, met in special session, that Sauk County formally requests the State of Wisconsin to convey White Mound County Park, more particularly described in the attached Addendum, to Sauk County, and once approved by the State of Wisconsin, the County Board Chairperson and the County Clerk are authorized to sign any documents necessary to effectuate this transaction upon legal review by the Corporation Counsel.

For consideration by the Sauk County Board of Supervisors on May 30, 2017.

Respectfully submitted,

HIGHWAY AND PARKS COMMITTEE

Timothy Meister
TIMOTHY MEISTER, Chair

BRIAN PEPPER

David Riek
DAVID RIEK

Henry Metzinger
HENRY METZINGER

Richard Flint
RICHARD FLINT

Fiscal Note: The county currently funds the infrastructure, operating budget, dam and insurance for White Mound County Park so this action would result in no additional expense. The timber management would be assumed by the county.

MIS Note: No information systems impact.

KPB

ADDENDUM

A parcel of Land located in Sauk County, Wisconsin, Township 10 North, Range 3 East, Section 1, the SW 1/4 SW 1/4, the SE 1/4 SW 1/4, the NE 1/4 SW 1/4, and the SW 1/4 SE 1/4 thereof and in Section 2, the SE 1/4 SE 1/4 and the SW 1/4 SE 1/4 thereof and in Section 11, the NE 1/4 NE 1/4, the SE 1/4 NE 1/4, and all of the NE 1/4 thereof and in Section 12, all of the W 1/2 of said section and also the W 1/2 of the E 1/2 and the SE 1/4 SE 1/4 thereof and in Section 13, the NW 1/4 NE 1/4, the NE 1/4 NW 1/4, the NW 1/4 NW 1/4, the SW 1/4 NW 1/4 thereof and in Section 14, the NE 1/4 SE 1/4 and the SE 1/4 NE 1/4 thereof which is bounded by a line described as follows:

Beginning at a point which is the center of C.T.H. "CG" and 225.55 feet East of the South 1/4 corner of said Section 12; thence North 89 degrees 25 minutes East, 1580.31 feet; thence North 14 degrees 16 minutes West, 228.71 feet; thence North 22 degrees 38 minutes West, 107.63 feet; thence North 37 degrees 17 minutes West, 193.16 feet; thence North 44 degrees 39 minutes West, 356.41 feet; thence North 1 degree 08 minutes East, 4571.56 feet to the Northeast corner of the NW 1/4 NE 1/4 of said Section 12; thence North 0 degrees 47 minutes East, 1325.12 feet to the Northeast corner of

the SW 1/4 SE 1/4 of said Section 1; thence South 89 degrees 40 minutes West, 1320.50 feet to the Northwest corner of the SW 1/4 SE 1/4 of said Section 1; thence North 0 degrees 40 minutes East, 1325.00 feet to the Northeast corner of the NE 1/4 SW 1/4 of said Section 1; thence South 89 degrees 40 minutes West, 1320.50 feet to the Northwest corner of the NE 1/4 SW 1/4 of said Section 1; thence South 0 degrees 40 minutes West, 1325.0 feet to the Southwest corner of the NE 1/4 SW 1/4 of said Section 1; thence South 89 degrees 40 minutes West, 1320.50 feet to the Northwest corner of the SW 1/4 SW 1/4 of said Section 1; thence North 89 degrees 58 minutes West, 2658.10 feet to the Northwest corner of the SW 1/4 SE 1/4 of said Section 2; thence South 0 degrees 40 minutes West, 1333.79 feet to the Southwest corner of the SW 1/4 SE 1/4 of said Section 2; thence South 89 degrees 52 minutes East, 1326.00 feet to the Northwest corner of the NE 1/4 NE 1/4 of said Section 11; thence South 0 degrees 16 minutes West, 2655.00 feet to the Northeast corner of the NW 1/4 SE 1/4 of said Section 11; thence North 89 degrees 37 minutes West, 1330.00 feet to the Northwest corner of the NW 1/4 SE 1/4 of said Section 11; thence South 0 degrees 23 minutes East, 2621.50 feet to the South 1/4 corner of said Section 11; thence South 89 degrees 25 minutes East, 1300.00 feet to the Northwest corner of the NE 1/4 NE 1/4 of said Section 14; thence South 0 degrees 24 minutes West, 1500.84 feet to a point in the center of C.T.H. "CG"; thence South 88 degrees 09 minutes East, 1148 feet along said C.T.H. "CG"; thence North 56 degrees 06 minutes East, 1734.68 feet along said C.T.H. "CG"; thence South 0 degrees 49 minutes East, 759.30 feet to the Southwest corner of NE 1/4 NW 1/4 of said Section 13; thence North 89 degrees 20 minutes East, 1325.94 feet to the Southeast corner of the NE 1/4 NW 1/4 of said Section 13; thence due North, 1248.15 feet to a point in the center of C.T.H. "CG"; thence North 74 degrees 07 minutes East, 235.02 feet along said C.T.H. "CG" to the point of beginning of this description.

Said parcel contains 1091.57 acres, more or less, and is subject to the existing right-of-way of C.T.H. "CG".

State of Wisconsin
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
101 S. Webster Street
Box 7921
Madison WI 53707-7921

Scott Walker, Governor
Cathy Stepp, Secretary
Telephone 608-266-2621
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Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Energy
2017 SB 276
White Mounds County Park Land Transfer

Good morning Chairman Cowles and committee members. My name is Jim Lemke and I am the Department of Natural Resources' Real Estate Bureau Director. Thank you for the opportunity to testify for informational purposes on Senate Bill 276.

In the 1960s, the Wisconsin Conservation Commission acquired White Mounds County Park from Sauk County for \$25,000. Since that time, the park has been managed for the State of Wisconsin by Sauk County under a formal management agreement.

Recently the Sauk County Board of Supervisors approved a resolution seeking the return of the land to the county. The department believes the county has invested far more than the original \$25,000 in the maintenance of this property over the past 50 years.

Given Sauk County's management of the property in compliance with the terms of the management agreement; and given the restrictions included into the proposed legislation to ensure the property remains available for public recreation; the department has no concerns for the committee to be aware.

There is a registered dam on the property that is already owned and operated by Sauk County. Therefore, there is no risk to the State regarding the ongoing maintenance and ownership of the dam.

I hope you find this information helpful, and would be happy to address any questions you may have.



SAUK COUNTY
parks & recreation

Senate Bill 276

Relating to: the sale of White Mound County Park to Sauk County

By Senators Marklein and Erpenbach; cosponsored by Representative Novak, E. Brooks and Considine

Testimony supporting Senate Bill 276

June 6, 2017

Dear Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Energy,

I would like to thank the committee for considering Senate Bill 276. I will keep this as brief as I can.

I am the Sauk County Parks Director and have been employed by the parks department since March of 1996. I have been intimately involved in the management of White Mound for those years and actually lived in the park for some of them.

White Mound County Park is 1,090 acres, the crown jewel of the Sauk County Parks Department, and is the headquarters of the department. White Mound County Park is cherished by those who use the park and I want more people to experience and utilize the property, perhaps drawing more people from outside of Sauk County. The county has recently committed to investing in placemaking. The development of White Mound Park is in line with the placemaking initiative. I hope to create a greater awareness of White Mound Park to help showcase Sauk County's rural landscape. One way I hope to accomplish this, is by constructing a building that will attract people to the park. The building will include a community room with free Wi-Fi, a full kitchen and be available for rent. This room will provide a spectacular view overlooking White Mound Lake. This project is ready to be bid out for construction, but, I have been met with some resistance by people who don't want to commit to building on "someone else's" property. In addition, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources has recently notified us that we would need to have the building plans approved by the Wisconsin State Building Commission. If Sauk County were to own the property, we would not need approval and we could move full steam ahead with this project.

The county appreciates the amicable relationship that the state and county have had since 1967. The county has proven it is willing and able to manage and invest in the property. This willingness will benefit both the county and state.

I support Senate Bill 276 and the sale of White Mound County Park to Sauk County.

Thanks again for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Matt Stieve