

# State of Wisconsin

SENATE CHAIR  
**Alberta Darling**

317 East, State Capitol  
P.O. Box 7882  
Madison, WI 53707-7882  
Phone: (608) 266-5830



ASSEMBLY CHAIR  
**John Nygren**

309 East, State Capitol  
P.O. Box 8593  
Madison, WI 53708-8953  
Phone: (608) 266-2343

## Joint Committee on Finance

### MEMORANDUM

To: Members  
Joint Committee on Finance

From: Senator Alberta Darling  
Representative John Nygren

Date: April 28, 2015

Re: 14-Day Passive Review Approval – DNR

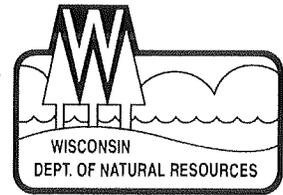
Pursuant to s. 23.0917(6m), Stats., attached is a 14-day passive review request from the Department of Natural Resources, received on April 28, 2015.

Please review the material and notify **Senator Darling** or **Representative Nygren** no later than **Friday, May 15, 2015**, if you have any concerns about the request or if you would like the Committee to meet formally to consider it.

Also, please contact us if you need further information.

Attachments

AD:JN;jm



April 17, 2015

The Honorable Alberta Darling, Co-Chair  
Committee on Joint Finance  
Room 317 East  
State Capitol  
PO Box 7882  
Madison WI 53707-7882

The Honorable John Nygren, Co-Chair  
Committee on Joint Finance  
Room 309 East  
State Capitol  
PO Box 8953  
Madison, WI 53707-53708

Dear Senator Darling and Representative Nygren:

Pursuant to s. 23.0917(6m), Wis. Stats., the Department is notifying you as co-chairs of the Committee on Joint Finance of a proposed Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program grant of \$313,560.00 to the Waukesha County Land Conservancy for the acquisition of property in the Town of Ottawa, Waukesha County. The proposed grant award represents 50 % of the estimated total project costs.

The proposed project will protect 119.21 acres of wildlife habitat adjacent to the DNR's Bark River Unit of the Paradise Valley Wildlife Area. This acquisition will provide much needed new public access to the adjacent DNR property and enhance the integrity of the contiguous habitat by permanently conserving nesting cover near 1,300 acres of wetland waterfowl habitat.

There are no prohibitions of nature-based outdoor activities, as defined in s. 23.0916(1)(b), Wis. Stats.

As provided in s. 23.0917(6m)(a), Wis. Stats., if the Department does not receive notification of the scheduling of a hearing from either of the Joint Committee on Finance co-chairpersons within 14 working days from today, the Department will award this grant.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

*for*  
  
Cathy Stepp  
Secretary

C: Sanjay Olson, Administrator, Lands Division  
Steve Miller, Director, Facilities & Lands Bureau  
Pam Foster Felt – LF/6  
Mary Rothenmaier, CFA Specialist, SCR  
Jim Ritchie, Natural Resources Program Supervisor

**DATE:** April 17, 2015

**TO:** Members of the Joint Committee on Finance

**FROM:** Cathy Stepp, Secretary

**SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF STEWARDSHIP ACQUISITION GRANT FOR FUNDING GREATER THAN \$250,000**

Pursuant to s. 23.0917(6m)(a) and (c), Wis. Stats., the Department of Natural Resources is notifying you of a proposed Knowles-Nelson Stewardship grant in the amount of \$313,560.00 to Waukesha County Land Conservancy for the acquisition of 119.21 acres known as the Paradise Valley addition, adjacent to the to Bark River Unit of DNR's Paradise Valley Wildlife Area project. The Knowles-Nelson Stewardship program is funded under s. 20.866(2)(ta), Wis. Stats.

**I. PROJECT DETAILS:**

**Project Sponsor:** Waukesha County Land Conservancy

**Grant sub-program:** Habitat Areas

**Location:**

The subject property is located in the Town of Ottawa, Waukesha County with frontage on County Highway Z. It is adjacent on two sides to DNR's 1,350-acre Paradise Valley Wildlife Area. The public will be able to access the property and the adjacent Wildlife Area from a future parking lot off Hwy. Z.

**Project Description:**

The eastern 66 acres of this property are rolling upland, including 12 acres of high quality oak savanna and upland grass cover. The western 53 acres of the property are wetland soils contiguous with 1,300 acres of adjacent wetland currently being restored in the State Wildlife Area. Large portions of the subject property are enrolled in federal Wetland Reserve and Conservation Reserve programs, which have funded significant wetland and grassland restoration on the parcel. There are no improvements on the property.

The key benefit of this acquisition is additional and improved public access to one of the most heavily visited waterfowl hunting areas in the state. Currently, public access to Paradise Valley Wildlife Area is via a single, mile-long gravel access easement. The 40-car parking lot at that access has filled past capacity during recent water fowl seasons. This acquisition will provide for additional parking and access directly from the County Highway.

This acquisition will also enhance the overall integrity of the Wildlife Area by adding permanently protected upland acres, essential habitat for nesting, food, shelter, hibernation and roosting. The adjacent DNR property includes less than 30 acres of upland in 1,300 acres of wetland. The Land Conservancy's partnership will ensure much needed grassland and woodland habitat for nesting ducks, songbirds, small mammals, snakes, turtles and the invertebrate populations which serve as food resource. The uplands on this property also provide for pheasant stocking and hunting in a region where pheasant hunting opportunities are in high demand.

Project maps are attached as Appendix A.

**Project Goals:**

The acquisition will advance the goals of local and regional conservation plans:

- Per the purposes of the Stewardship Habitat Areas program, this acquisition will provide new land for public, wildlife-based recreation, in particular much-needed new access for waterfowl and pheasant hunting.
- This purchase will add contiguous protected land to a gap in a Primary Environmental Corridor between the Bark and Scuppernong River basins as identified by Southeast Regional Planning Commission and the Waukesha County Comprehensive Plan.
- This purchase will implement recommendations of the Wisconsin Wildlife Action Plan to conserve a “globally significant conservation opportunity area,” the oak opening and savanna cover on this property; the mesic and wet-mesic prairie restoration efforts on the property are cover types identified by that plan as “major conservation opportunities.”
- The restored and restorable wetlands on the property contribute to groundwater recharge area for the City of Waukesha.

**Public uses:**

The property will be open to the public for low-impact recreational activities including hunting, trapping, hiking, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing and wildlife viewing. The Department’s analysis of nature-based outdoor activities is attached in Appendix B.

**Property Management:**

The property will be managed by Waukesha County Land Conservancy in close coordination with DNR’s management of the adjacent state Wildlife Area and per a land management plan approved by the DNR.

**Timetable:**

Pending grant approval the Waukesha County Land Trust plans to close on this property in summer, 2015.

**Partnerships:**

- Ducks Unlimited is the coordinating partner in a North American Wetland Conservation grant application to provide match funding for this acquisition.
- Wisconsin DNR management crews with conservancy volunteers on management of this and the adjacent DNR property; Pheasants Forever has committed management funding for the next five years to restoration efforts on this parcel and the adjacent DNR lands.
- Wisconsin Waterfowl Association has an active nest box program on the DNR wetlands and is expected to expand that onto this parcel.

**II. PROJECT FINANCES**

**A. Appraisals**

As required by s. 23.0917(7)(e)1., Wis. Stats., two appraisals were used to determine the fair market value of the land.

Appraisal 1	\$955,000.00
Appraisal 2	\$625,000.00
Value approved by DNR	\$625,000.00

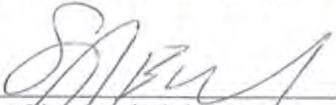
**B: Grant Calculation:**     DNR-approved land value                     \$625,000.00

Eligible related transaction costs	\$ 2,120.00
Total project costs	\$627,120.00
Sponsor contribution	\$313,560.00
<b>Proposed Stewardship grant - 50%</b>	<b>\$313,560.00</b>

**III. RECOMMENDED:**

  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Steve Miller, Director  
 Bureau of Facilities and Lands

4-18-15  
 Date

  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Sanjay Olson, Administrator  
 Lands Division

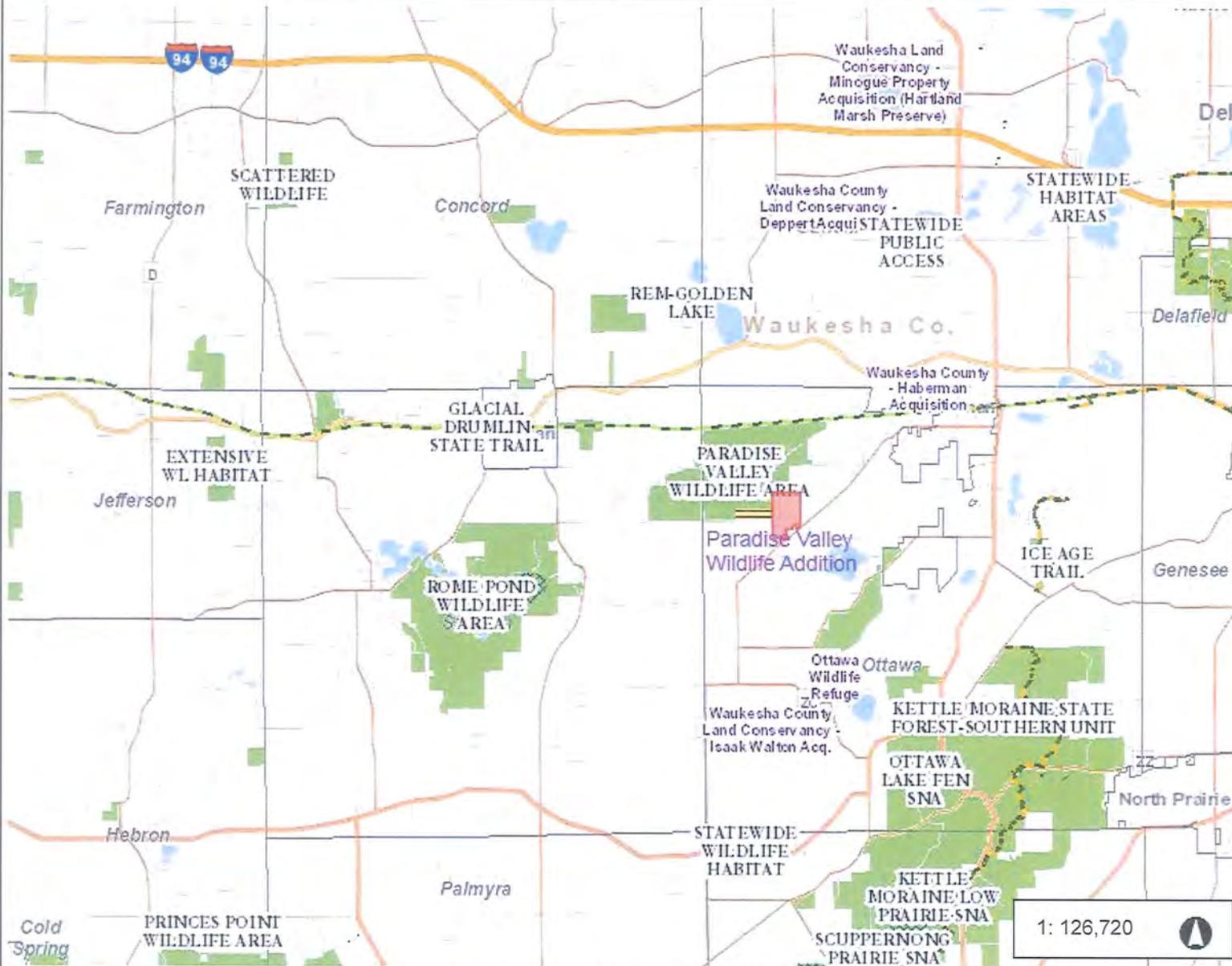
4/23/15  
 Date

**Attachments:**

- Appendix A – Property maps
- Appendix B – Staff analysis of proposed public uses



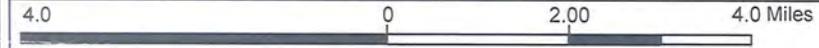
# Pardise Valley Wildlife Area Addition



### Map Features

- Ice Age Trail
- State Trail
- DNR Voluntary Public Access Land
- County Forest
- Stewardship Grant Acquisition: Natural Area Parcel Ownership
  - WI DNR
  - Federal
  - County/City/Town
  - Non-Gov't Conservation Org
  - Education Institution
- US Fish & Wildlife Service
- US Forest Service
- National Park Service
- DNR Property - 100K up
  - Fee
  - Easement
  - Lease
  - Fee Simple
- Easement
  - Open
  - Hike & Fish
  - Hike & Hunt
  - Hike Only
  - Closed
  - Leased

1: 126,720



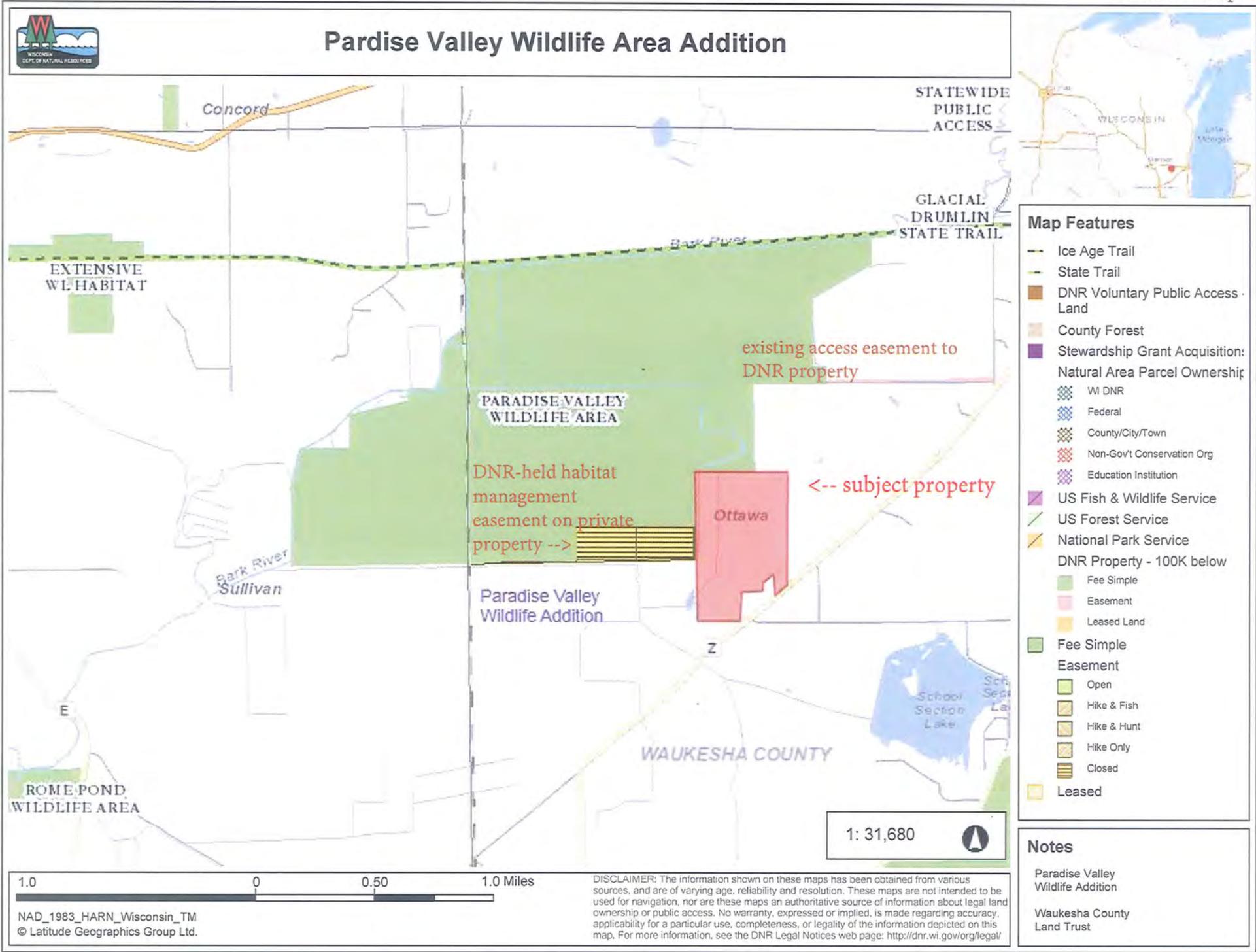
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**Notes**

Paradise Valley Wildlife Addition

Waukesha County Land Trust



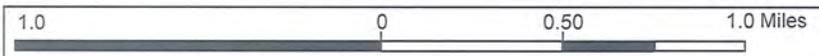
# Pardise Valley Wildlife Area Addition



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- Stewardship Grant Acquisition: Natural Area Parcel Ownership
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  - Federal
  - County/City/Town
  - Non-Gov't Conservation Org
  - Education Institution
  - US Fish & Wildlife Service
  - US Forest Service
  - National Park Service
- DNR Property - 100K below
  - Fee Simple
  - Easement
  - Leased Land
- Fee Simple
  - Open
  - Hike & Fish
  - Hike & Hunt
  - Hike Only
  - Closed
  - Leased

1: 31,680



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### Notes

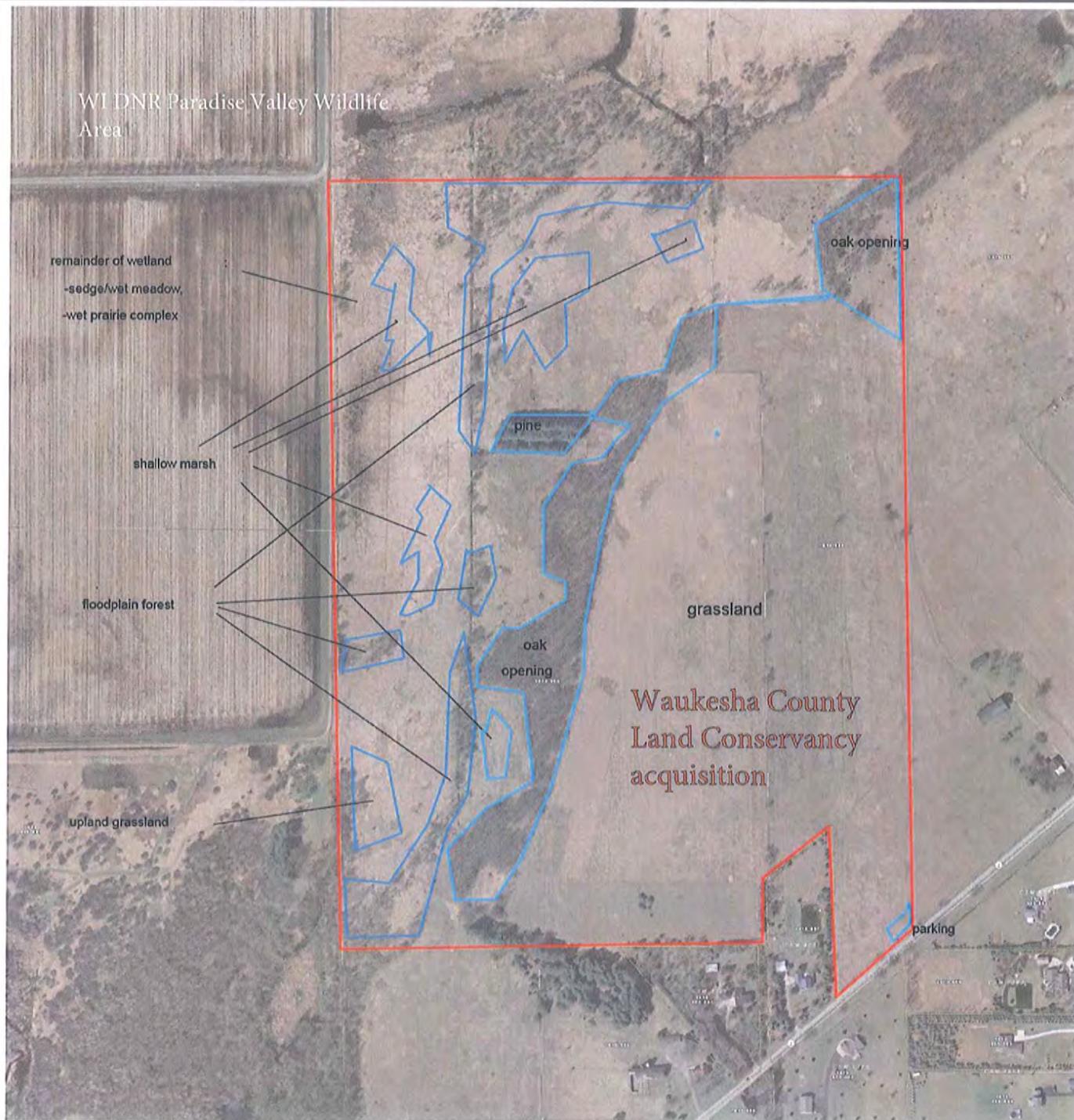
Paradise Valley Wildlife Addition

Waukesha County Land Trust



LAND INFORMATION SYSTEMS DIVISION

# Paradise Valley WA addition - site plan



0 481.18 Feet

Notes:

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Printed: 7/24/2014





