

# State of Wisconsin

SENATE CHAIR  
**Howard Marklein**

316 East, State Capitol  
P.O. Box 7882  
Madison, WI 53707-7882  
Phone: (608) 266-0703



ASSEMBLY CHAIR  
**Mark Born**

308 East, State Capitol  
P.O. Box 8592  
Madison, WI 53708-8953  
Phone: (608) 266-2540

## Joint Committee on Finance

### MEMORANDUM

To: Members  
Joint Committee on Finance

From: Senator Howard Marklein  
Representative Mark Born

Date: February 7, 2024

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 February 7, 2024.

Please review the material and notify **Senator Marklein** or **Representative Born** no later than **Monday, February 26, 2024**, 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

HM:MB;jm

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

Tony Evers, Governor  
Adam N. Payne, Secretary  
Telephone 608-266-2621  
Toll Free 1-888-936-7463  
TTY Access via relay - 711



FEB 07 2024  
*St. Finance*

February 7, 2024

The Honorable Howard Marklein Co-Chair  
Committee on Joint Finance  
Room 316 East  
State Capitol  
PO Box 7882  
Madison WI 53707

The Honorable Mark Born, Co-Chair  
Committee on Joint Finance  
Room 308 East  
State Capitol  
PO Box 8952  
Madison, WI 53707

Dear Senator Marklein and Representative Born:

Pursuant to s. 23.0917(6m)(a) and (dr), Wis. Stats., the Department is notifying you as co-chairs of the Committee on Joint Finance of a proposed grant of \$123,030.00 from the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program to Taylor County for the Vosters acquisition. This is a request for approval to award 2024 fiscal year funds.

The Vosters acquisition is in the Town of Rib Lake in Taylor County. The Town of Rib Lake and Taylor County have issued resolutions in support of this acquisition project.

The entire 119.8 acres will be enrolled into the County Forest Program and managed consistently with s. 28.11 Wis. Stats., which ensures that the land will be managed for optimum production of forest products together with recreational opportunities, wildlife, and watershed protection.

The property will be open for all nature-based outdoor activities, as defined in s. 23.0916(1)(b), Wis. Stats. Taylor County Forest is adjacent to the property on three sides. The property is 97% productive forest, will generate significant local revenue, and will expand an existing county forest for public use.

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 submission of this letter, the Department will award this grant.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:  
  
7A5DFE3497144B5...  
Steven Little  
Deputy Secretary

C: Tim Cooke, Administrator, Internal Services Division  
Doug Brown, County Forest & Public Lands Specialist, Bureau of Forestry Field Operations

**CORRESPONDENCE/MEMORANDUM**

**DATE:** February 7, 2024

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

**FROM:** Steven Little, Deputy Secretary

**SUBJECT:** Request for approval of a Knowles Nelson Stewardship grant award for land acquisition north of Highway 64.

Pursuant to s. 23.0917(6m)(a) and (dr), Wis. Stats., the Department of Natural Resources is notifying you of a proposed Knowles-Nelson Stewardship grant in the amount of \$123,030.00 to Taylor County for acquisition of a 119.8-acre property known as the Vosters Acquisition. The Knowles-Nelson Stewardship program is funded under s. 20.866(2)(ta), Wis. Stats. This is a request for approval to award fiscal year 2024 funds.

The Town of Rib Lake and Taylor County have approved resolutions in support of the acquisition project.

**PROJECT DETAILS:**

**Project Sponsor:** Taylor County  
**Grant sub-program:** County Forest acquisition  
**Location:** The land is in the Town of Rib Lake, accessible via existing County Forest

**Project description:** This 119.8-acre property is surrounded on three sides by Taylor County Forest. The property consists of 82 acres of northern hardwood, 34 acres of hemlock/hardwood, 2 acres of swamp hardwoods and 2 acres of openings. The property is 97% productive forests.

This acquisition had been identified by Taylor County as a long-term investment for timber production, recreation and watershed protection.

This tract will be incorporated into the Stewardship and County Forest programs and managed according to the County's Forest Comprehensive Land Use Plan. Project area maps are attached as Appendix A.

This project was initiated by the private landowner to sell to the County to keep the property as a working forest and perpetually open to the public for recreational uses. The project has support from the Taylor County Board and Town of Rib Lake in the form of approved resolutions. The resolutions are attached as Appendix B.

**Project benefits:** County acquisition of this property will:

- Benefit the local township of county ownership compared to the current private open MFL designation, as determined by a 2022 tax evaluation/comparison, which showed:
  - Town received \$195.52 in taxes
  - Town would receive \$546.28 by Taylor County for lands enrolled in the County Forest Law
  - Net Gain to Township of \$350.76
  - Taylor County would have an annual revenue increase of \$4,236.00
- Generate approximately \$65,000 in revenues in the immediate future, per a timber valuation for a proposed 108-acre timber sale on the property.
- Add additional productive forest (97%) to County holdings.
- Eliminate 0.75 miles of private/public boundary.

- Secure permanent sustainable management, as supported by the motivations of the current landowner.
- Protect a historical structure known as the Logging Camp 7 Railroad Grade.

**Public Uses:** The parcel will be open to the public year-round for hunting, fishing, trapping, hiking, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, biking, horseback riding and motorized recreation. The Department’s analysis of the permitted nature-based outdoor activities is attached in Appendix C.

**Property Management:** The property will be enrolled into the County Forest Program and managed consistently with s. 28.11 Wis. Stats., which ensures that the land will be managed for forest products production, recreational opportunities, wildlife, and watershed protection. Management will occur according to the *Taylor County Forest Comprehensive Land Use Plan*, as approved by the Department.

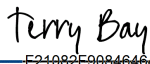
**PROJECT FINANCES:**

**A. Appraisals:** Pursuant to s. 23.0917(7)(e)1., Wis. Stats., land value was determined by a DNR-reviewed and accepted appraisal valuing the subject property at \$240,000.

**B. Grant Calculation**

Land value	\$240,000.00
Grant-eligible associated costs	<u>\$ 6,060.00</u>
Total eligible project costs	<u>\$246,060.00</u>
<b>Proposed grant award (50%)</b>	<b>\$123,030.00</b>

**I. RECOMMENDED:**

DocuSigned by:  
  
F24082F00846464...  
 Terry Bay, Director, Bureau of Facilities and Lands

2/7/2024 | 8:26 AM CST  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date

DocuSigned by:  
  
D792C5F7A747460...  
 Timothy Cooke, Administrator, Division of Internal Services






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 Date

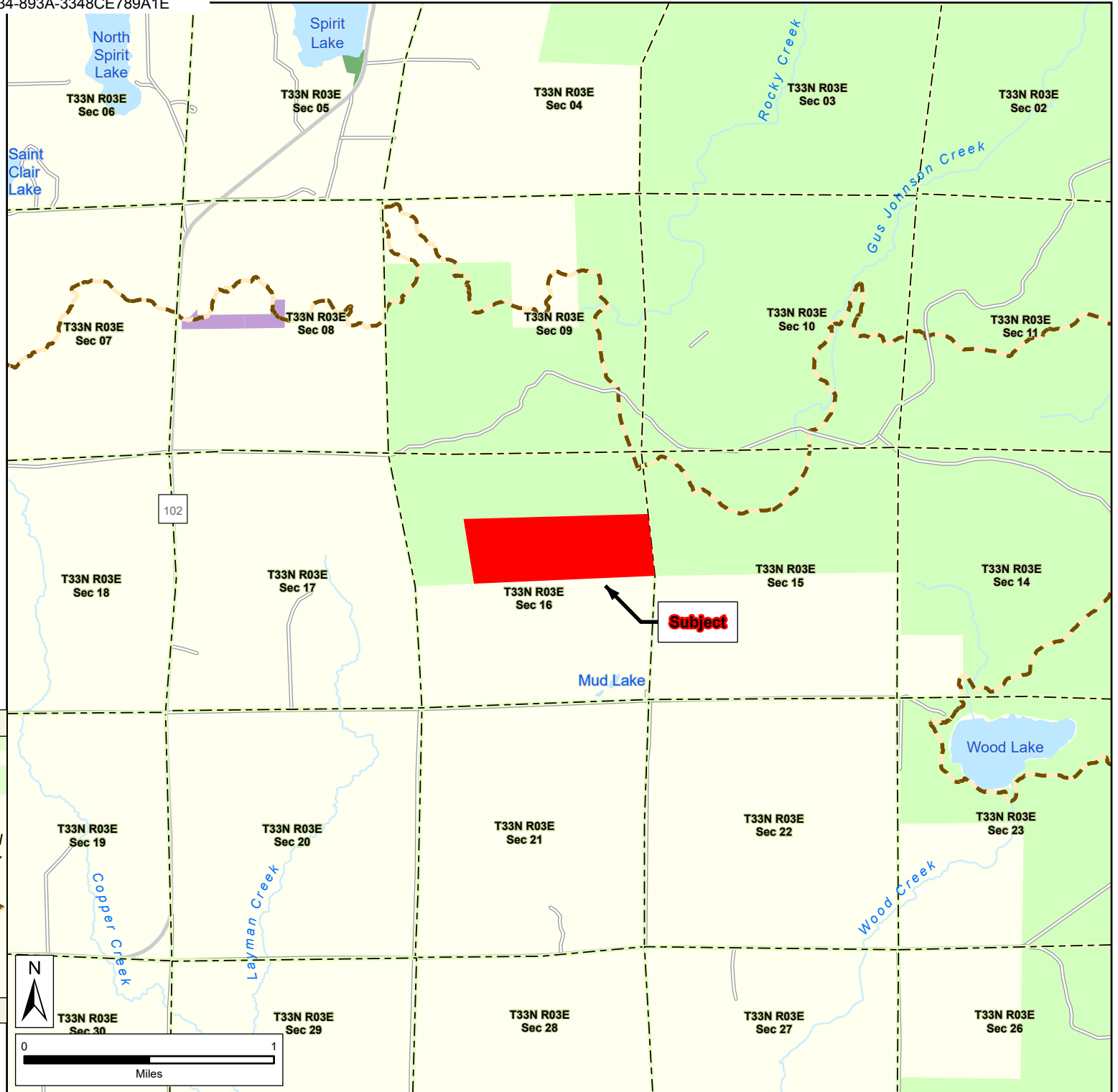
## **Appendix A. Project Maps**

# Vosters Acquisition

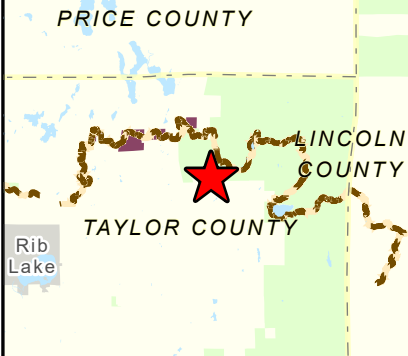
T33N R3E Sec. 16  
Town of Rib Lake  
Taylor County


 Subject

-  DNR Fee Title
-  DNR Easement
-  County Forest Lands
-  Ice Age Trail
-  Section Boundary



## Regional View



 Location of Property



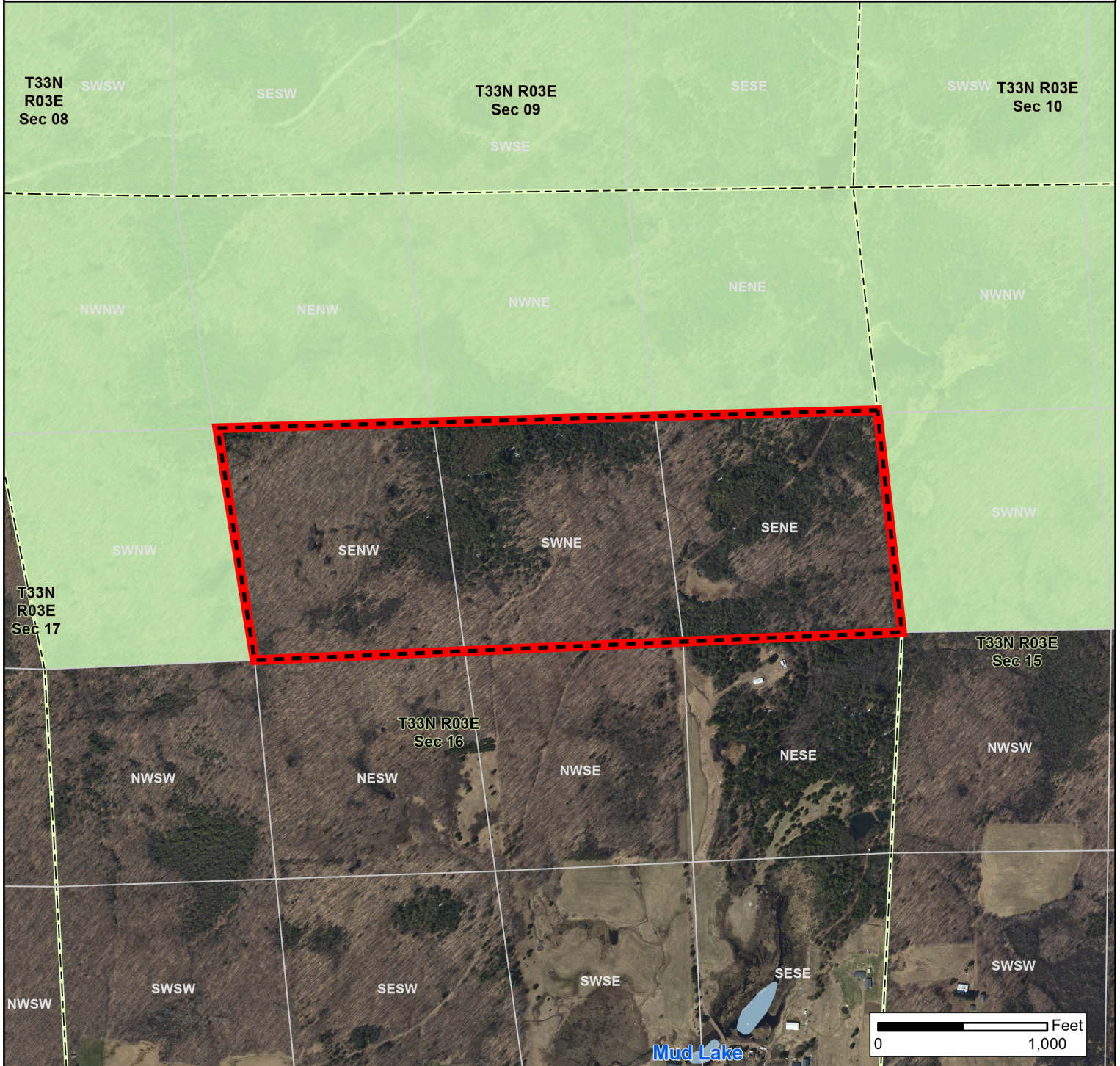
WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT  
OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
Bureau of Facilities of Lands  
Map Created: Jan 31, 2024 lec






# Vosters Acquisition

Proposed Stewardship Grant  
Sponsor: Taylor County  
Approximate Total Acreage: 119.80

T33N R3E Sec. 16  
Town of Rib Lake  
County: Taylor



 Subject

-  Section Boundary
-  QQ Section Boundary
-  County Forest Lands

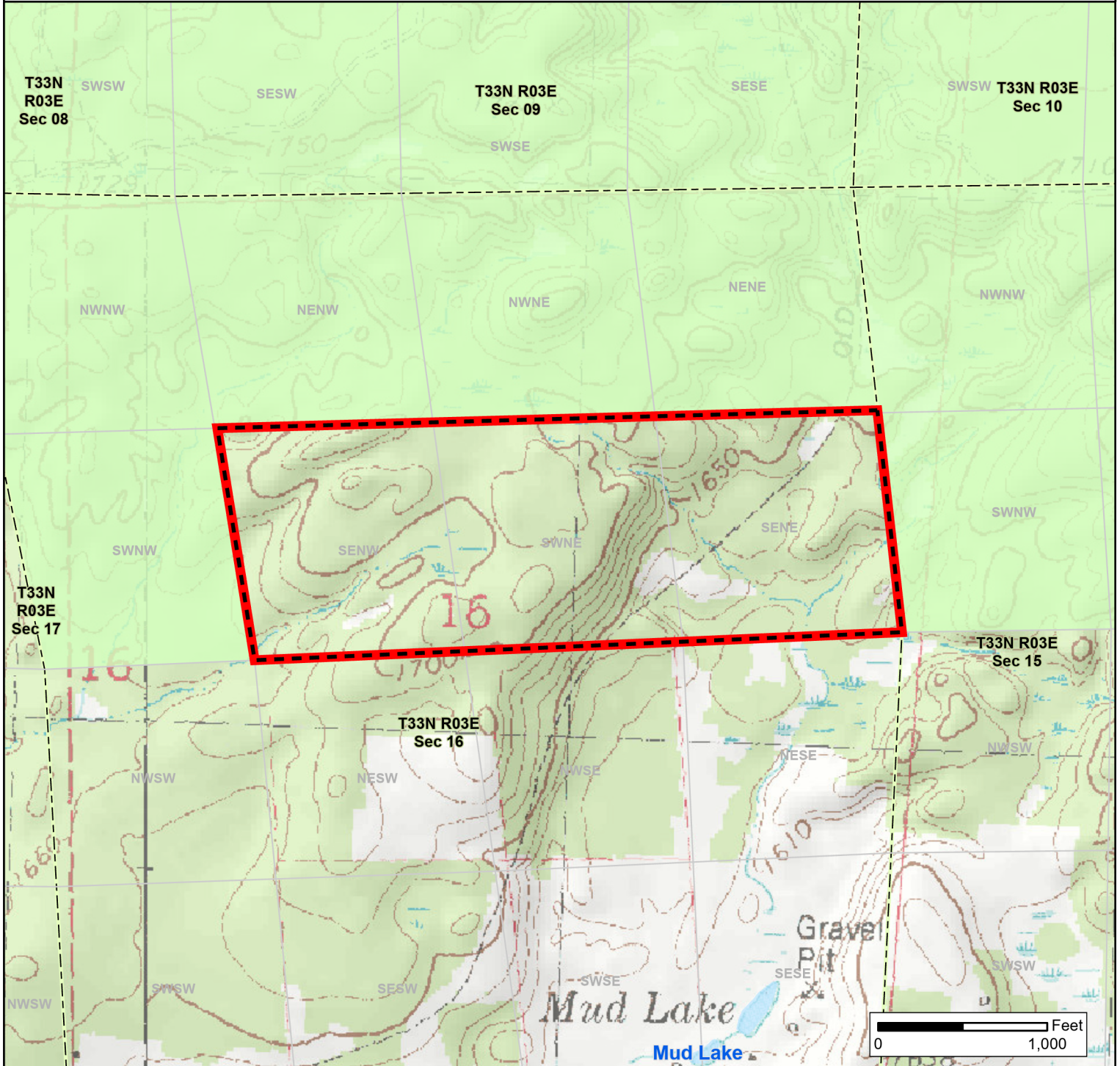


Jan 29, 2024 *lec*  
Real Estate Section  
Bureau of Facilities and Lands




# Vosters Acquisition

Proposed Stewardship Grant  
Sponsor: Taylor County  
Approximate Total Acreage: 119.80

T33N R3E Sec. 16  
Town of Rib Lake  
County: Taylor



 Subject

-  Section Boundary
-  QQ Section Boundary
-  County Forest Lands



Jan 29, 2024 *lec*  
Real Estate Section  
Bureau of Facilities and Lands



## **Appendix B. Local Resolutions**

**Docket No.** 2023-2-21

**RESOLUTION NO.** 56

**A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE PURCHASE OF 119.8 ACRES OF LAND FOR ENTRY INTO THE TAYLOR COUNTY FOREST PROGRAM.**

WHEREAS, the County has the opportunity to purchase 119.8 acres of forest land further described as SENE, SWNE, SENW, Section 16, T33N – R3E, Town of Rib Lake, owned by Susan Vosters et al, offered for sale to the Taylor County Forestry Department for a sale price of \$263,560.00; and,

WHEREAS, said property is located within the Taylor County Forest Land Acquisition Boundary and will be entered into County Forest Law, per Wisconsin State Statute 28.11 (4)(b); and,

WHEREAS, the County would be eligible to receive 50% of the appraised land value plus appraisal and closing costs through the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) administered Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Fund; and,

WHEREAS, the land is currently enrolled in a 50-year, DNR-Managed Forest Law agreement, through the year 2066; and,

WHEREAS, the land is comprised of 82 acres of northern hardwoods, which would provide the opportunity for summer ground logging, as well as 34 acres of hemlock/swamp conifer, two acres of swamp hardwoods and two acres of openings; and,

WHEREAS, there is an opportunity for an initial timber harvest which would net the County approximately \$65,000.00 in revenue; and,

WHEREAS, the land would be purchased from the Land Acquisition Account, which is capped at \$500,000.00 and has a current balance of \$500,000.00; and,

WHEREAS, Land Acquisition Account funds are derived from 20% of County Forest timber sale revenues and not from tax levy dollars. The purchase can be executed without impacting Taylor County's tax levy and is a reinvestment of revenues back into the County Forest.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that this Board of Supervisors, duly assembled on this 15th day of August, 2023, recognizes the tremendous importance of the Taylor County Forest to the County's economic, social and environmental vitality and hereby approves as follows:

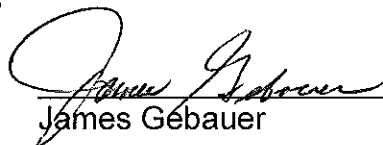
1. The purchase of the Vosters property for a purchase price of \$263,560.00 plus appraisal and closing costs, contingent on the award of 50% of the appraised land value from the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Fund.
2. Acquisition funding is to come from the Land Acquisition Account line item 101-57120-0000-5821.
3. Immediate application shall be filed with the Wisconsin DNR for entry into the County Forest Law, per Wisconsin State Statutes 28.11(4)(b), with the application forms to be signed by the County Board Chairman and County Clerk.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

FORESTRY & RECREATION COMMITTEE:



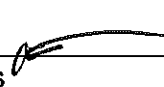
Scott Mildbrand



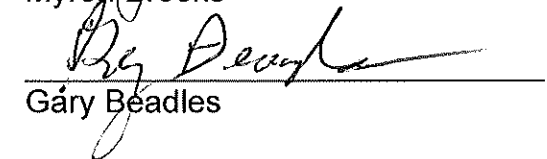
James Gebauer



Myron Brooks

NO 

Rollie Thums



Gary Beadles

**RESOLUTION NO. 2023-11-8**

**A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE PURCHASE OF 119.8 ACRES OF LAND FOR ENTRY INTO THE TAYLOR COUNTY FOREST PROGRAM.**

WHEREAS, the County has the opportunity to purchase 119.8 acres of forest land further described as SENE, SWNE, SENW, Section 16, T33N – R3E, Town of Rib Lake, owned by Susan Vosters et al, offered for sale to the Taylor County Forestry Department for a sale price of \$252,000.00; and,

WHEREAS, said property is located within the Taylor County Forest Land Acquisition Boundary and will be entered into County Forest Law, per Wisconsin State Statute 28.11 (4)(b); and,

WHEREAS, the County would be eligible to receive 50% of the appraised land value plus appraisal through the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) administered Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Fund; and,

WHEREAS, the land is currently enrolled in a 50-year, DNR-Managed Forest Law agreement, through the year 2066; and,

WHEREAS, there is an opportunity for an initial timber harvest which would net the County approximately \$65,000.00 in revenue; and,

WHEREAS, the Town of Rib Lake will received increased revenues from the County through Acreage Share Payments and Timber Sale Severance to Towns; and,

WHEREAS, the land would be purchased from the County Land Acquisition Account; and,


WHEREAS, Land Acquisition Account funds are derived from 20% of County Forest timber sale revenues and not from tax levy dollars. The purchase can be executed without impacting Taylor County's tax levy and is a reinvestment of revenues back into the County Forest; and,


WHEREAS, the Taylor County Forestry Department shall, upon acquisition, immediately file an application with the Wisconsin DNR for entry into the County Forest Law, per Wisconsin State Statute 28.11(4)(b); and,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that this Board of Supervisors, duly assembled on this 8<sup>th</sup> day of November 2023, recognizes the tremendous importance of the Taylor County Forest to the County's economic, social and environmental vitality and hereby support the purchase of the Voster's 119.8 acres by Taylor County.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

**RIB LAKE TOWN BOARD:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Joe Knorr

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Kyle Thums

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Doug Polacek

## **Appendix C. Public Use Analysis**

Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Grant Program



**DNR Staff Analysis of Nature Based Outdoor Activities on Projects Purchased with Stewardship Grant Funds**

Rev. August 2012

**NOTE TO DNR STAFF:** This completed form will be attached to the NBOA notice that the DNR will publish when considering a request for Stewardship grant funding. Do not list location information for the subject property or the seller's name because WI courts have held that this information is confidential until land ownership has changed hands. In "Staff Narrative" sections below each NBOA, summarize sponsor's reason for prohibition.

<b>Applicant/ Sponsor</b> TAYLOR COUNTY FOREST	<b>Year of application:</b> 2023
<b>Project name and primary purpose</b> (after acquisition): "Vosters" tract acquisition – adding critical property for core recreation and productive timber for contiguous public lands for nature-based recreation.	
<b>Parcel size, shape and topography:</b> ~120 acres of timber lands. Generally flat, contiguous to county forest property on three sides.	
<b>Plan(s) or reports identifying project area as priority:</b> Taylor County Forestry Comprehensive plan.	

**Proposed NBOA – Applicant Narrative and Checklist**

HUNTING			
<b>DNR Staff Narrative:</b> Property will be open to hunting.			
<p><b>X No prohibitions being proposed</b>  <b>If a prohibition is proposed:</b>  <b>Public safety factors considered, check all that apply.</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The sponsor is within its own municipality boundary  <input type="checkbox"/> Parcel is within 100 yards of building devoted to human occupancy  <input type="checkbox"/> Parcel is within 50 feet of the center line of highways &amp; roads  <input type="checkbox"/> Parcel is within 1700 feet of school grounds, hospital, or sanatorium  <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinance exists –  <input type="checkbox"/> Discharge or carrying a weapon <input type="checkbox"/> Hunting within park <input type="checkbox"/> Throwing or shooting missiles, arrows, spears, etc.  <input type="checkbox"/> Visitor's expectations of safety at the site which include user conflicts that may create public safety issues and impact one or more NBOA's activities.  <input type="checkbox"/> Parcel is adjacent to a parcel where the NBOA's to be prohibited already exists.  <input type="checkbox"/> Parcel is adjacent to a public waterway.  <input type="checkbox"/> Parcel is subjected to a non-sponsor ordinance  <input type="checkbox"/> Project will be transferred to an eligible partner sponsor with ordinance prohibiting activity.</p> <p><b>Unique plant and animal communities factors considered, check all that apply.</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Federal listed endangered species <input type="checkbox"/> State listed endangered species  <input type="checkbox"/> Federal listed threatened species <input type="checkbox"/> State listed threatened species  <input type="checkbox"/> Federal listed species of special concern <input type="checkbox"/> State listed species of special concern</p>			
	Allowable species (Gun)	Allowable species (bow)	List Dates/Seasons (opening and closing)
Waterfowl	Per state regulations	Per state regulations	Per state regulations
Small Game	Per state regulations	Per state regulations	Per state regulations
Turkey	Per state regulations	Per state regulations	Per state regulations
Large Game	Per state regulations	Per state regulations	Per state regulations

**TRAPPING****DNR Staff Narrative:** Property will be open to trapping.**X No prohibitions being proposed****If a prohibition is proposed:****Public safety factors considered,** check all that apply.

- Size/shape of parcel
- The sponsor is within its own municipality boundary
- Parcel is within 100 yards of building devoted to human occupancy and per s. NR 13.(1)(b)(12), the following traps are prohibited: conibear body gripping traps (with jaws wider than 60 sq. inches) and cable restraints.
- Ordinance exists that prohibits trapping or some type of trapping.
- Visitor's expectations of safety at the site which include user conflicts that may create public safety issues and impact one or more NBOA's activities.
- Parcel is adjacent to a parcel where the NBOA's to be prohibited already exists.
- Parcel is adjacent to a public waterway.
- Parcel is subjected to a non-sponsor ordinance
- Project will be transferred to an eligible partner sponsor with ordinance prohibiting activity.

**Unique plant and animal communities factors considered,** check all that apply.

- Federal listed endangered species                       State listed endangered species
- Federal listed threatened species                       State listed threatened species
- Federal listed species of special concern                       State listed species of special concern

Location	Allowable Species	List Dates/Seasons (opening and closing)
Upland	Per state regulations	Per state regulations
Water	Per state regulations	Per state regulations

**FISHING****DNR Staff Narrative:** no fishable water on the property**X No prohibitions being proposed****If a prohibition is proposed:****Public safety factors considered,** check all that apply.

- Ordinance exists –  \_\_\_\_\_.
- Visitor's expectations of safety at the site which include user conflicts that may create public safety issues and impact one or more NBOA's activities.
- Parcel is adjacent to a parcel where the NBOA's to be prohibited already exists.
- Parcel is adjacent to a public waterway.
- Parcel is subjected to a non-sponsor ordinance
- Project will be transferred to an eligible partner sponsor with ordinance prohibiting activity.

**Unique plant and animal communities factors considered,** check all that apply.

- Federal listed endangered species                       State listed endangered species
- Federal listed threatened species                       State listed threatened species
- Federal listed species of special concern                       State listed species of special concern

Method	Allowable Activities	List Dates/Seasons (opening and closing)
Shore	NA	NA
Boat	NA	NA



**HIKING**

**DNR Staff Narrative:** Property will be open to hiking.

**X No prohibitions being proposed**

**If a prohibition is proposed:**

**Public safety factors considered,** check all that apply.

- Visitor's expectations of safety at the site which include user conflicts that may create public safety issues and impact one or more NBOA's activities.
- Parcel is adjacent to a parcel where the NBOA's to be prohibited already exists.
- Parcel is adjacent to a public waterway.
- Parcel is subjected to a non-sponsor ordinance
- Project will be transferred to an eligible partner sponsor with ordinance prohibiting activity.

**Unique plant and animal communities factors considered,** check all that apply..

- Federal listed endangered species
- State listed endangered species
- Federal listed threatened species
- State listed threatened species
- Federal listed species of special concern
- State listed species of special concern

Location	Allowable Activities	List Dates (opening and closing)
On-Trail	Yes	Year-round
Off-Trail	Yes	Year-round

**CROSS COUNTRY SKIING**

**DNR Staff Narrative:** Property will be open to cross country skiing.

**X No prohibitions being proposed**

**If a prohibition is proposed:**

**Public safety factors considered,** check all that apply.  Visitor's expectations of safety at the site which include user conflicts that may create public safety issues and impact one or more NBOA's activities.

- Parcel is adjacent to a parcel where the NBOA's to be prohibited already exists.
- Parcel is adjacent to a public waterway.
- Parcel is subjected to a non-sponsor ordinance
- Project will be transferred to an eligible partner sponsor with ordinance prohibiting activity.

**Unique plant and animal communities factors considered,** check all that apply.

- Federal listed endangered species
- State listed endangered species
- Federal listed threatened species
- State listed threatened species
- Federal listed species of special concern
- State listed species of special concern

Type of Trail	Allowable Activities	List Dates (opening and closing)
Off-Trail (un-groomed)	Yes	Snow cover
On-Trail (un-groomed)	Yes	Snow cover