

SCHEIDEGGER COUNTY FOREST

MASTER PLAN REPORT



Plan adopted by Dane County of Supervisors on December 20, 2008 (Res. 152, 2007 – 2008)



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Dane County Parks Commission

Bill Lunney, Chairperson
Dave Ripp, County Board Supervisor
Jeff Kostelic, County Board Supervisor
Tom Thoresen
John Hutchinson
Tom Dawson
Christine Thisted White

Walter R. Scheidegger

Walter R. Scheidegger was born in Riley in 1915; he attended Verona High School and worked for the Madison Kipp Corporation and the University of Wisconsin-Madison Physical Plant. Mr. Scheidegger died in February of 2001. His obituary stated "Mr. Scheidegger was very proud of his Swiss heritage and enjoyed hunting." Friends of Walter said he enjoyed rides in the country and the beauty of the Dane County, especially the Verona area.

In Article III of Mr. Scheidegger Last Will and Testament it states:

"I give all the rest, residue and remainder of my estate to the Dane County Parks Commission of Dane County, Wisconsin for the use by it in the acquisition and maintenance of park lands in the area of the communities of Riley, Verona and Mt. Vernon where I was born and raised. I state my preference, but do not require, that this gift be so used in the Town of Verona. It is my hope that this bequest will be remembered as a gift from me to succeeding generations of Dane County residents who will be able to enjoy the natural beauty of my native land."

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary

Introduction

History

Planning Process & Public Participation Summary

Site Inventory & Analysis

Plan Recommendations

Vegetation Management

Recreation Resource Management

Park Operation and Maintenance Considerations

Facility Development

Future Acquisition

Action Plan

Summary

Figures

Figure 1: Scheidegger Forest Location Map

Figure 2: Slope and Drainage Analysis

Figure 3: Soils Analysis

Figure 4: Vegetative Inventory

Figure 5: Graphic Master Plan I – Forest Recreation Area

Figure 6: Graphic Master Plan II – Central Gathering Area

Tables

Table 1: Soil Inventory and Suitability Analysis Table

Appendixes

Appendix 1: Summary of Public Comments

Appendix 2: Forest Stewardship Management Plan

Executive Summary

Introduction

Scheidegger County Forest is named in honor of Walter R. Scheidegger who made a generous monetary donation to the Dane County Parks Commission; a portion of the gift was used to purchase the forest lands in 2006. The site was formally known as Abraham's Shooting Range which the Dane County Sheriff's Office used as a training facility. The primary use of the site is as a managed forest, therefore it will be managed according to a DNR Forest Stewardship Management Plan. The plan calls for:

- Demonstration of sustainable forest management and land stewardship
- Management for renewable timber production
- Control of invasive exotic species and management for native plant species
- Management for wildlife
- Recreational opportunities for the general public, primarily hiking, cross country skiing, and hunting.

Planning Process and Public Participation

The purpose of the master planning process is to identify management, development, and recreation uses of the forest based on site analysis and public input. Dane County Parks staff did a site inventory and analysis of the following site conditions: size and location, topography and soils, hydrology, vegetation, geology, wildlife, and archaeological/historical/cultural. This assessment revealed several opportunities and constraints for the management, development, and recreation uses of the property. Three public information meetings were held to gather comments as to the future vision of the forest.

Plan Recommendations

Based on the site analysis and public input, the master plan recommends that the site be a managed forest that offers the following passive recreation uses:

- Hiking/walking
- Snowshoeing/cross Country skiing (no groomed trails)
- Limited archery hunting
- Bird and wildlife viewing
- Picnicking
- Berry picking
- Bicycle rest stop
- Youth group camping by special permit only
- Outdoor and environmental education

The master plan recommends that a partnership between Dane County Parks and the Town of Verona is established for ongoing operations and maintenance of the forest to best allow for the recreation uses listed above. The plan also recommends development for the site to include: roads and parking areas, trails, primitive shelter and vault toilet, youth group camp area, and interpretive nodes. Included is an action plan that lists the park development tasks and cost estimates totaling \$281,000. A variety of funding sources are available to cover these costs.

INTRODUCTION

Scheidegger County Forest is located in the Town of Verona, encompassing a total area of 78.6 acres. The site was originally purchased in 1905 by Dane County and was formerly the Abraham's Shooting Range for the Sheriff's Department. The property came under Dane County Park Commission control in 2003 and was designated as a County Forest with an understanding that its primary use would be as a managed forest with passive recreation as a secondary use.

Scheidegger County Forest was named in honor of Walter R. Scheidegger who willed \$534,000 to the Dane County Park Commission, of which \$150,000 was used to purchase the property and \$100,000 was earmarked for developing it for public access and recreation. Consistent with the wishes of Walter Scheidegger, the remainder of the gift will be used to acquire and maintain parklands in the area of Mt. Vernon, Verona, and Riley where he was born and raised.

The purpose of the Scheidegger County Forest Master Plan is to establish a common vision for the management, development, and recreation use of the forest.

PLANNING PROCESS & PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The recommendations set forth within this Master Plan Report were guided by:

- ❖ Citizen needs as determined by public meetings of the 2005-2007 planning process
- ❖ Inventory of environmental and cultural/historical resources found within the forest, including the opportunities and constraints they present
- ❖ Covenants agreed to upon donation of money by Walter Scheidegger
- ❖ Scheidegger Forest Stewardship Management Plan
- ❖ Scheidegger Forest Goals as identified in the Dane County Parks and Open Space Plan
- ❖ Dane County Parks Staff

The master planning process included three public meetings (February 2005, January 2007, February 2007). Public notice of the meetings was given through local newspapers, direct mailings to all neighbors and City/Town officials, and the Dane County Parks website. The first two public meetings focused on the history of the site, site inventory and analysis, and conceptual plans for proposed uses and development. A draft Master Plan was then presented at the third meeting that included proposed recommendations for recreation and management of the site in addition to a detailed site development plan. All three

of these meetings gave the public an opportunity to share their ideas and establish a common vision for the forest. The majority of the comments heard were in favor of the site being a managed forest with passive recreational uses. Appendix 1 contains a summary of the public comments received at the three public meetings. Continued discussions and cooperation with these groups are essential to achieving the objectives set forth in this plan.

SITE INVENTORY & ANALYSIS

LOCATION

Scheidegger County Forest is located in southwest Dane County, Wisconsin, in the Town of Verona at the intersection of Range Trail Road and Sunset Drive. It is approximately 4 miles from Madison and 1 mile from Verona and Fitchburg. Figure 1 shows the Forest location.

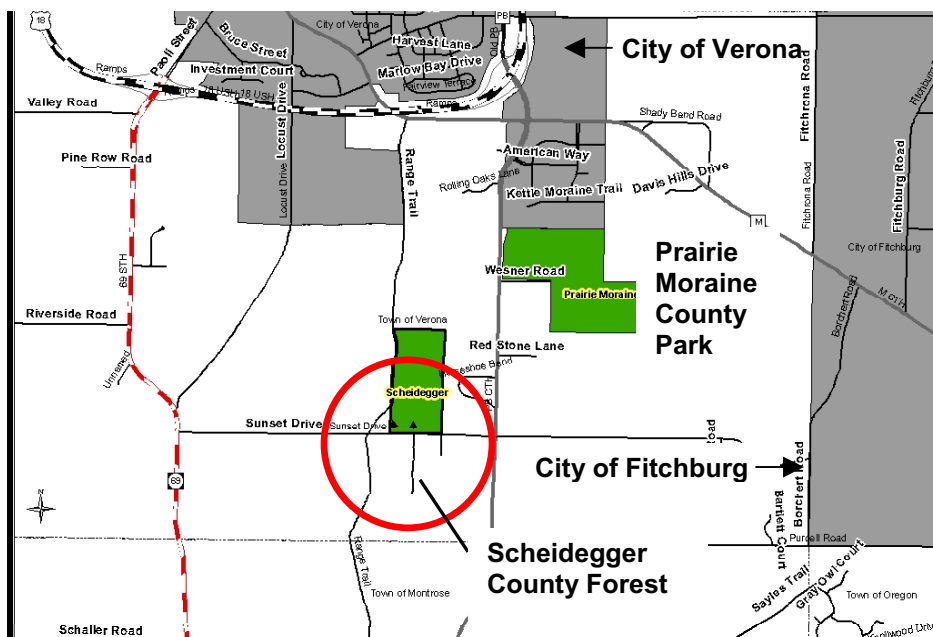
Opportunities

- ✓ Only a few miles from Verona, Fitchburg, and Madison, therefore serving the recreational and environmental educational needs of growing communities.
- ✓ Bounded on the west by Range Trail Road, a popular bicycling route.
- ✓ Provides a refuge for wildlife from surrounding urbanized areas.

Constraints

- ✓ Proximity to rapidly urbanizing area may result in increased traffic on adjacent roads and overuse of the park.
- ✓ Noise from road may detract from enjoyment of nature .

Figure 1: Scheidegger Forest Location Map



TOPOGRAPHY & SOILS

An assessment of existing topography and soils was done to determine the site's suitability for the development of trails, forest access roads, and facility construction. The topography within the Forest is characteristic of the unglaciated Driftless Area in Dane County, which is dominated by rolling hills and steep topography. Figure 2 shows the topography of the site, including steep slopes (slopes > 12%). Table 1 lists all of the soils within the forest and their suitability for paths and trails. Figure 3 presents a soil suitability analysis.

TABLE 1	
Soil	Suitability for Paths and Trails
EhC2	Slight
EmC2	Slight
HbB	Slight
BaB2	Moderate: muddy & slippery when wet
BaC2	Moderate: muddy & slippery when wet
BbB	Moderate: muddy & slippery when wet; erodible
GaB	Moderate: muddy & slippery when wet; erodible
GaC2	Moderate: muddy & slippery when wet; erodible
SmC2	Moderate: muddy & slippery when wet; erodible
EmD2	Moderate: slope; droughty; erodible
TrB	Moderate: subject to occasional flooding during period of use; muddy and slippery when wet
EmE2	Severe: slope; droughty; erodible

Opportunities

- ✓ Majority of soils within site have slight to moderate limitations for paths and trails.
- ✓ Rolling topography provides for scenic viewsheds within and outside of the Forest.
- ✓ Varied terrain has positive influence on trail experience.

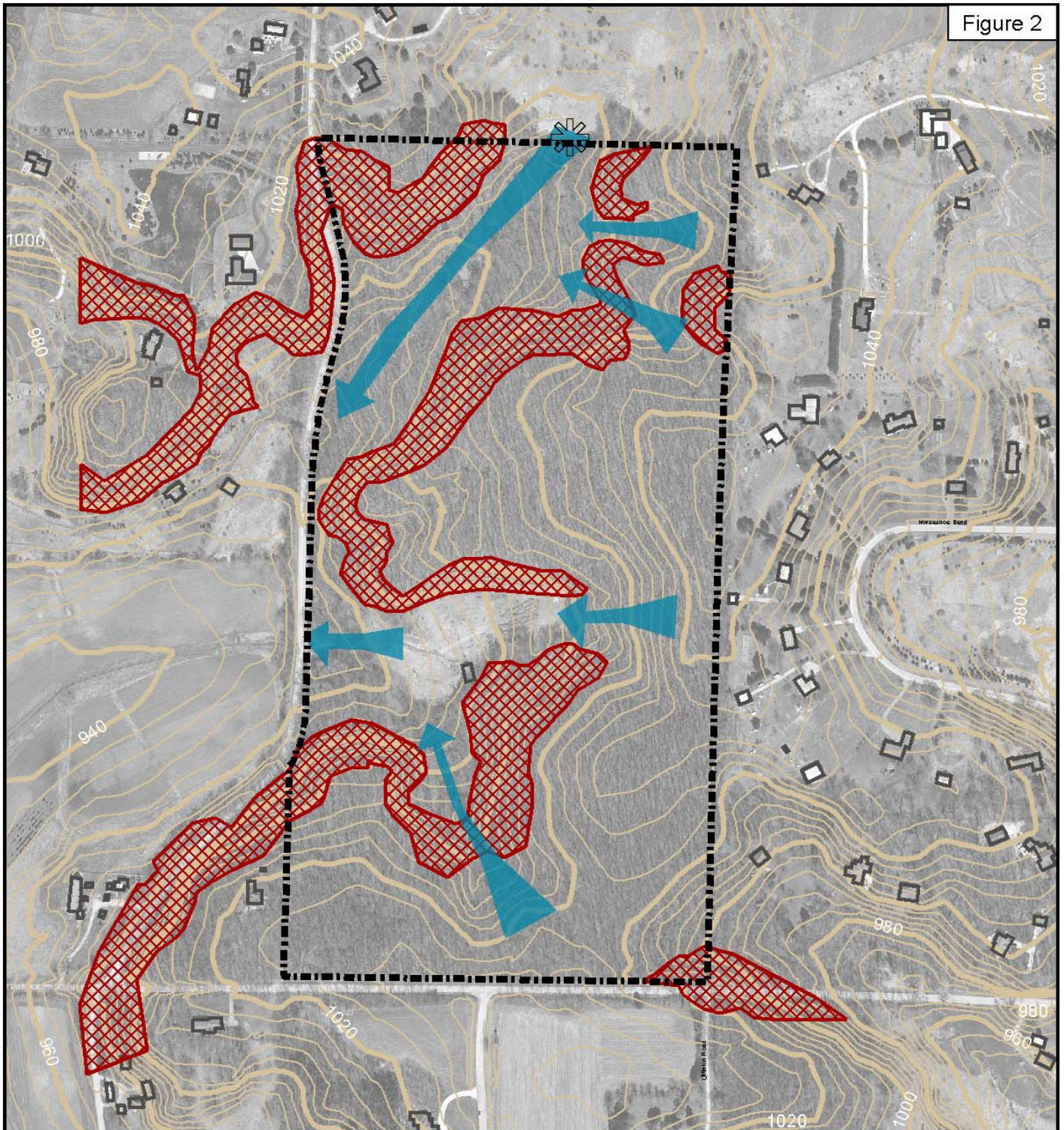
Constraints

- ✓ Areas of steep slopes and presence of soils with severe limitations for paths and trails may need to be avoided for trails, roads, and facilities.
- ✓ Steep slopes at rock outcropping may require steps to transition grade.

HYDROLOGY

Scheidegger Forest is located in the Upper Sugar River Watershed. There are no named bodies of water on the site, but a spring fed stream is located in the northwest corner of the forest that flows throughout the year. Stormwater tends to collect and run through major drainage swales throughout the forest. Figure 2 contains a Slope and Drainage Inventory Map of the site. There also appears to be a number of seepage springs that flow out of the hillside at the old shooting range area. As shown on the map, all of the major drainage swales intersect at the center of the Forest, where the water is then directed off the site. The stream along with the existing drainage swales should be considered for future trail and facility construction.

Figure 2



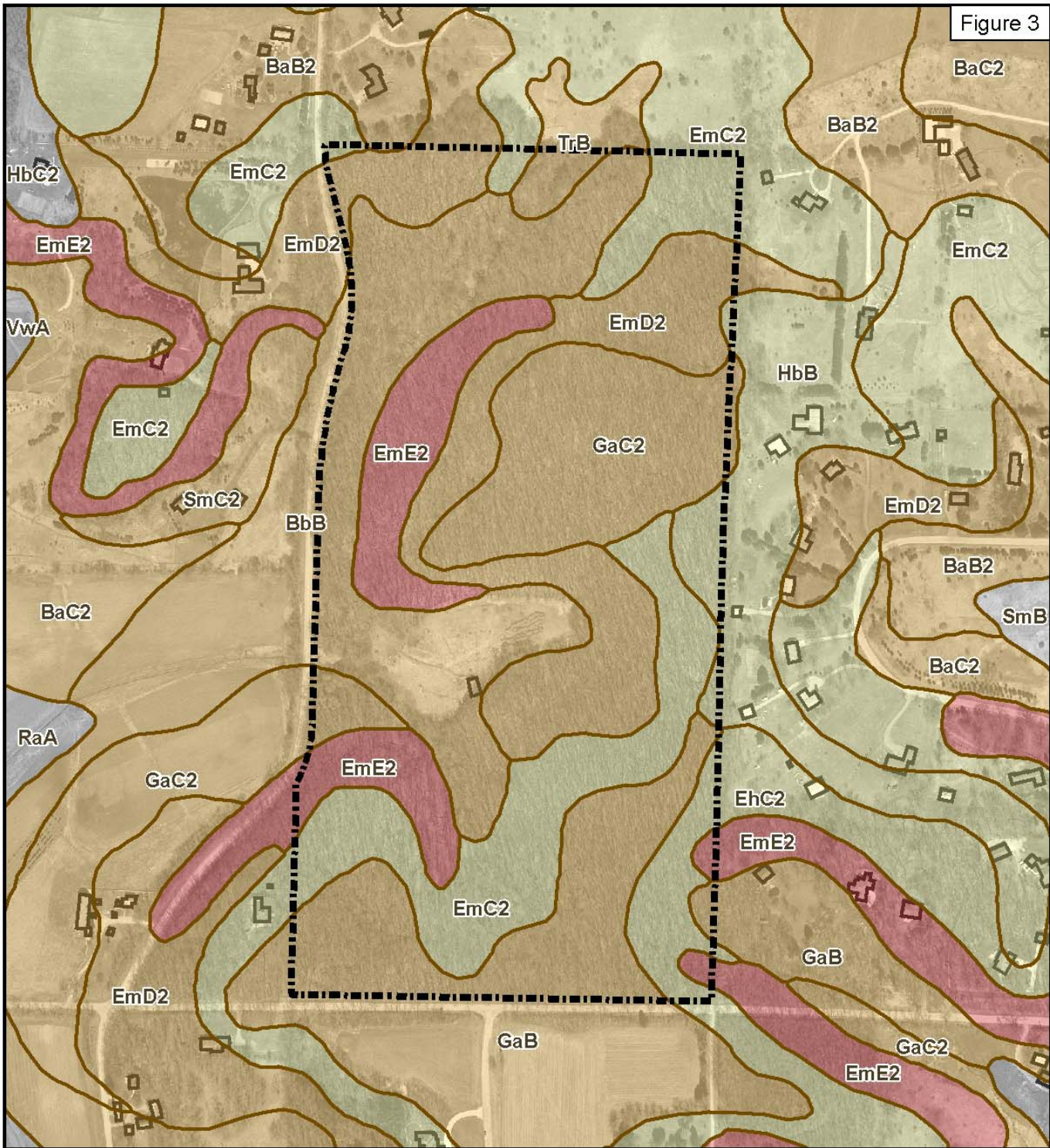
Scheidegger Forest Master Plan Slope and Drainage Analysis



- Legend**
- Forest Boundary
 - Spring
 - Major Drainage
 - Slopes > 12%
 - Building Footprint
 - 100 Foot Interval
 - 20 Foot Interval
 - 4 Foot Interval

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Figure 3



**Scheidegger Forest Master Plan
Soils Analysis**



Legend

- Scheidegger Forest Boundary
- Soils
- Slight Suitability Trail
- Moderate Suitability Trail
- Severe Suitability Trail
- Building Footprint



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HYDROLOGY CONT.

Opportunities

- ✓ Small spring and stream on north end of the site offers visual interest and educational opportunities.

Constraints

- ✓ Major drainage swales and stream may present obstacles to timber harvests and trail design/layout.
- ✓ Existing drainage patterns and stormwater management may present limitations on facility development at central parking/access area.

VEGETATION

In anticipation of the site being a managed forest, a DNR Forest Stewardship Management Plan was developed for the forest in December of 2005. According to the plan, the site is dominated by even-aged Oak tree species including Red Oak, Black Oak, and White Oak. Other species found on the site include black walnut, black cherry, shagbark hickory, aspen, butternut, red maple, and boxelder. In addition, the plan notes a presence of invasive exotic species, including honeysuckle, black locust, buckthorn, and garlic mustard. The complete Forest Stewardship Management Plan can be found in Appendix 2.

During a site visit, Parks staff observed that the area surrounding the spring fed stream is dominated by large, mature oaks that have wide spreading canopies. It was also evident that invasive exotic species are concentrated in disturbed areas of the site such as near roads or boundary fencing. In addition, staff observed large pockets of raspberries throughout the site that often dominated the forest understory. During the spring months, common spring ephemerals such as may apple, trillium, wood anemone, wild geranium, and jack in the pulpit can be found among the forest groundcover.

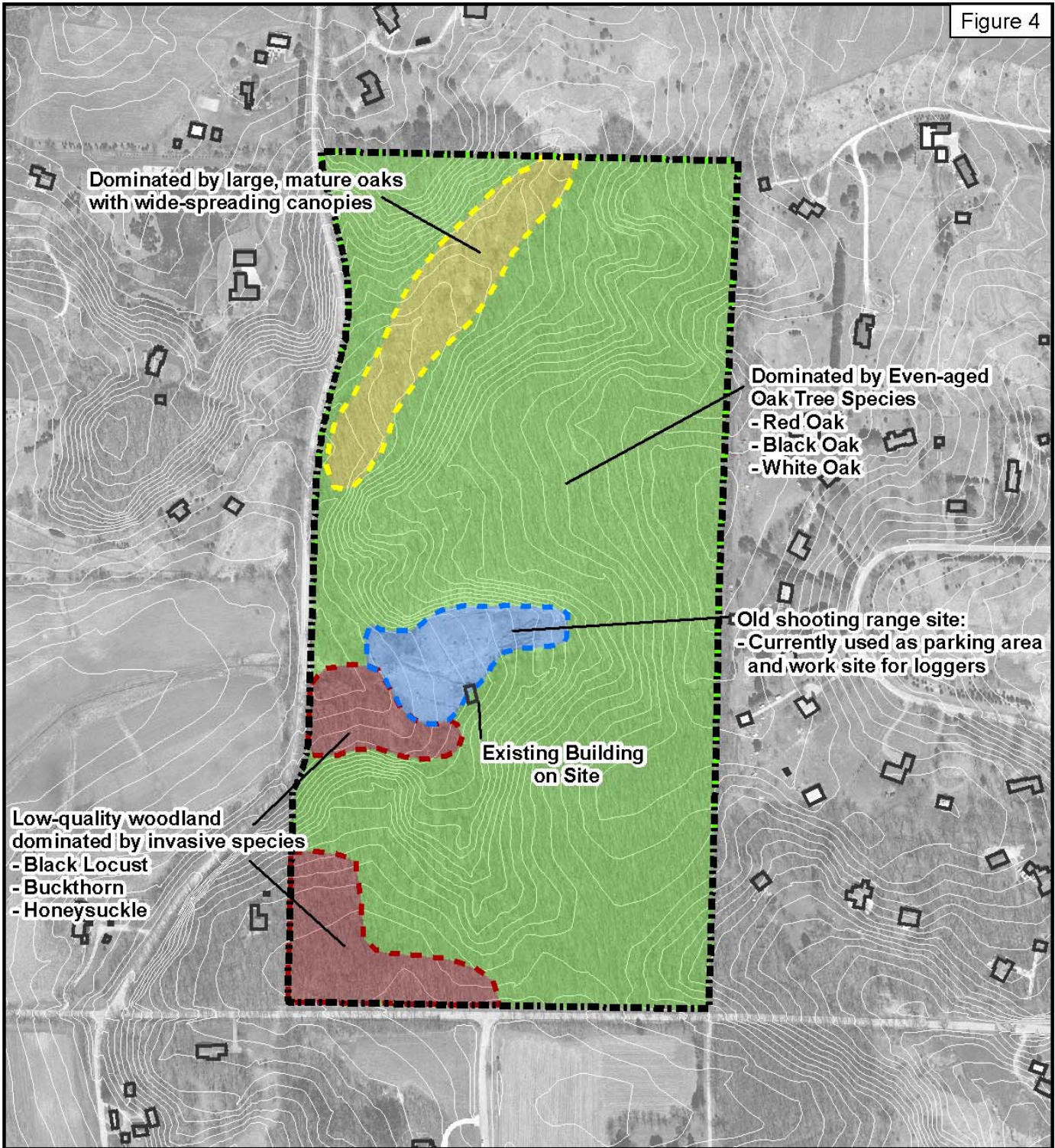
The central area of the forest that was historically used as a parking lot and shooting area. It has a surface that consists primarily of gravel and grass. There are no trees or landscaping within this area, other than some small shrubs near its exterior. A vacant building was located within the central area which was demolished in July 2007 in preparation for future site development.

The vegetative characteristics outlined above are shown on the map in Figure 4.

Opportunities

- ✓ Site is oak dominated and will be properly managed in accordance to a DNR Forest Stewardship Management Plan.
- ✓ Area dominated by large oaks with wide-spreading canopies provides visual interest and offers opportunities for Oak Savanna education and restoration.

Figure 4



**Scheidegger Forest Master Plan
Vegetative Inventory**



- Legend**
- Scheidegger Forest Boundary
 - Building Footprint
 - Invasives
 - Oak
 - Oak Opening
 - Shooting Range



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VEGETATION CONT.

- ✓ Forest managed in accordance with Stewardship Management Plan will provide opportunities for education on sustainable forest management practices.
- ✓ Flat open space is ideal for point of entry to the forest and has the potential to serve as the central public space within the forest.
- ✓ Presence of spring ephemerals offers educational opportunity on common woodland wildflowers.
- ✓ Site is heavily wooded which allows for more flexibility in planning the trail routes.

Constraints

- ✓ Woodlot is even aged, with overcrowded trees and little diversity.
- ✓ Invasive species are prolific in many areas.
- ✓ Trees, understory shrubs prevent visual surveillance from the road.

GEOLOGY

Scheidegger Forest is located just south of the terminal moraine in the driftless area. The terminal moraine marks the extent of the last glacial retreat some 10,000 years ago. Geology of the site is typical of the driftless area with rolling hills and valleys. There is one rock outcropping of St. Peters sandstone located north of the entrance to the forest.

Opportunities

- ✓ Rock outcrop on north side of property provides interpretive node for hiking trail that could include educational information on the geology of the site and surrounding area.

Constraints

- ✓ Steep slopes may limit the location of trails within the site.

WILDLIFE

Although woodlots do not represent the native landscape that historically occurred in this region, they do provide habitat for a number of species. Deer and turkey are common to this property and are regularly seen while hiking. A variety of songbirds and woodpeckers have also been seen on the site, however a detailed inventory is not available.

Opportunities

- ✓ Outstanding bird/wildlife viewing opportunities
- ✓ Public hunting opportunities

Constraints

- ✓ Little to no refuge for wildlife from recreation users due to the small size of the site.

- ✓ Certain wildlife species such as deer and turkeys may need management to prevent overcrowding and possible damage of forest and adjacent lands

VIEWSHEDS

The varied topography of the forest offers numerous views within and outside of the forest boundary. Outstanding views of the rolling terrain—both ridges and swales—are offered at a number of points within the forest. In addition, the surrounding countryside can be viewed from several vantage points atop the forest ridges. Due to the small size of the Forest, adjacent residential areas are often within these same viewsheds.

Opportunities

- ✓ Viewsheds of the forest's varied terrain and surrounding countryside will attract recreation users to the forest.
- ✓ Viewsheds offer opportunities for the placement of interpretive nodes/signage and benches.

Constraints

- ✓ Adjacent residential areas are within viewsheds of proposed hiking trail.
- ✓ Some hiking trails may be within the viewsheds of adjacent residential areas.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL/HISTORICAL/CULTURAL

There are no recorded archeological or historical sites on this property. The site was originally purchased in 1905 by Dane County, and was formerly the Abraham's Shooting Range for the Sheriff's Department from 1941 to 1993. According to a report included in the Dane County Sheriff History 1839-1996 Yearbook, the site was named after Chief Deputy Reynold Abrahams. In 1951, Abrahams recognized a need to improve firearms training for deputies and strongly advocated for a practice and training area, which resulted in the establishment of the Abraham's Shooting Range. Currently, site clean up and removal of lead is being done in accordance with DNR requirements. It is anticipated that the site will be fully remediated by fall of 2007.

Opportunities

- ✓ History of site could be included on interpretive information at parking area.

Constraints

- ✓ Remediated areas may limit areas for park development activities.

PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

Vegetation Management

A Forest Management Plan was completed in December of 2005 for the site that will guide vegetation management efforts. Management activities should begin in 2007 with a major emphasis to control invasive species in conjunction with a stand thinning to remove the poor quality and high risk trees. In addition aspen, elm, red maple, black locust, and cottonwood would be harvested. Forest management plan objectives include:

- Demonstrate sustainable forest management and land stewardship
- Manage for timber production; favoring oak, hickory, and black walnut
- Control invasive exotic species and manage for native plant species
- Manage for wildlife
- Provide recreational opportunities for the general public, primarily hiking, cross country skiing

Vegetation management activities conducted outside of the Forest Management Plan should be completed in partnership with volunteer groups, such as a future friends group for the forest. Exotic/invasive species control would be a possible vegetation management activity for friends groups to participate in.

Recreation Resource Management

The recreation uses allowed in the forest should be compatible with the Forest Stewardship Management Plan and reflect the community's recreation needs and interests that were identified during the public input process. This master plan recommends the following for the recreation uses for the forest:

- Hiking/Walking
- Snowshoeing/cross country skiing (no groomed trails)
- Limited archery hunting
- Bird and wildlife viewing
- Picnicking
- Berry picking
- Bicycle rest stop
- Youth group camping by special permit
- Outdoor and environmental education

An overview of the primary recommended passive recreation uses in the forest follows:

Hiking Trails & Environmental Education

Public input and involvement indicated a strong interest in having trails for taking walks or hikes through the forest. Given the size and conditions of the site, trail loops ranging from 1 – 3 miles could be established, allowing visitors to easily walk and experience the forest. The trail system should be designed to support both recreation and forest management uses of the site.

Scheidegger County Forest offers a variety of educational opportunities. Its relatively small size also makes it an ideal place for children to explore and learn about nature. Interpretive nodes throughout the site should highlight noteworthy natural, geological, historical, hydrological, and forest management aspects of the forest. Interpretive signage and benches should be placed at these nodes providing for a place to rest and learn about the forest.

Figure 5 presents proposed hiking trails and interpretive nodes.

Cross Country Skiing and Snowshoeing

Due to the forest's rolling terrain, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing are fitting recreational uses for the site. Both of these uses should be allowed on designated trails however, due to the costs of grooming and maintaining, it is recommended that the trails are not maintained in the winter months for cross-country skiing or snowshoeing. All of the trails should be built in a manner that supports this use.

Archery Hunting

Limited archery hunting for deer is currently allowed in the forest and should continue to be allowed as a wildlife management tool and recreation use. Allowing deer hunting at this site will appropriately manage for the deer population and minimize the negative impacts of overpopulation on the forest ecosystem. Studies have shown that forests with lower deer densities have much greater species diversity than those in areas with high deer densities.

Picnicking

Picnicking with friends and family is a popular pastime. The flat open area in the center of the forest should offer several places for groups to gather. Picnic tables in addition to a primitive shelter should be available for groups to use on a first come first serve basis. The forest is along a popular bicycle route, therefore would be apt to being used by bicyclists as a rest stop.

Berry Picking

An abundance of raspberries can be found on the site, offering excellent berry picking opportunities in the summer months. Easy access to the raspberries should be provided to the visitors through the planned hiking/walking trail system.

Figure 5



**Scheidegger Forest
Graphic Master Plan I
Forest Recreation Area**



- Legend**
- Forest Boundary
 - Trail Access Points
 - Gathering Area
 - Stream Corridor
 - Seepage Spring
 - Boardwalk
 - Main Trail
 - Stairs
 - Interpretive Sign

Be sure to Season

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Youth Group Camping

Outdoor classrooms are often sought out by schools and youth groups as places to teach children about the outdoors and to develop outdoor leadership skills. Scheidegger County Forest should have an area designated for youth group camping that will accommodate 20 – 30 people for this purpose. As a secondary use, this area could be used for retreats and other special events. The area should be reserved through the County's special events reservation process.

Park Operation and Maintenance Considerations

Dane County Parks should explore various options and partnerships for ongoing operations and maintenance needed to support the recreation uses described above. A possible partnership could be established with the Town of Verona through a Memorandum of Understanding indicating agreed upon roles and responsibilities on certain items such as snow removal, trash pick-up, and mowing. Dane County Parks should also consider a "Carry It In, Carry It Out" trash policy as a cost saving initiative to properly dispose of trash and litter generated by recreation users. Ongoing operation of the forest may require a gate keeper system to open and close the entrance gate and to check building and grounds.

The public input process indicated a concern about allowing dogs in the forest. Due to the small size of the forest, the presence of dogs would likely discourage wildlife from the site and conflict with the plan recommendations in support of bird/wildlife viewing and limited archery hunting. The allowance of dogs also requires significant staff oversight and enforcement. Furthermore, Prairie Moraine County Park is less than a mile away from the forest and supports an 80-acre dog exercise area. Based on these considerations, dogs should not be allowed within the forest.

Facility Development

Roads and Parking areas

Entry to the forest will be off of Range Trail Road where vehicular access is currently located. There will be three small parking lots, each with 7 stalls, and a bus parking area and turn-around. Parking areas should be visible from the roadway.

Structures

The picnic shelter and vault toilet should be built at a location that minimizes visual impact to forest users, yet visible from the roadway. All facility development within the forest must be reviewed and approved by Dane County Parks prior to construction. A kiosk placed in a centralized area will provide forest information.

Trails

Construction of the hiking trail should take into account site-specific conditions. Before construction begins, Dane County Parks staff must walk and approve all trail development within the forest. Trails should have opportunities for informational nodes and will also serve as possible future logging roads. Trails built for timber harvests should be based on the most suitable areas for heavy equipment vehicles.

Figure 6 presents the development that is proposed for the central gathering area.

Future Acquisition

Since the lands surrounding the forest are primarily unforested with little forestry value or management opportunities, no future acquisition of lands for the forest is recommended.

Scheidegger Forest
Graphic Master Plan II
Central Gathering Area

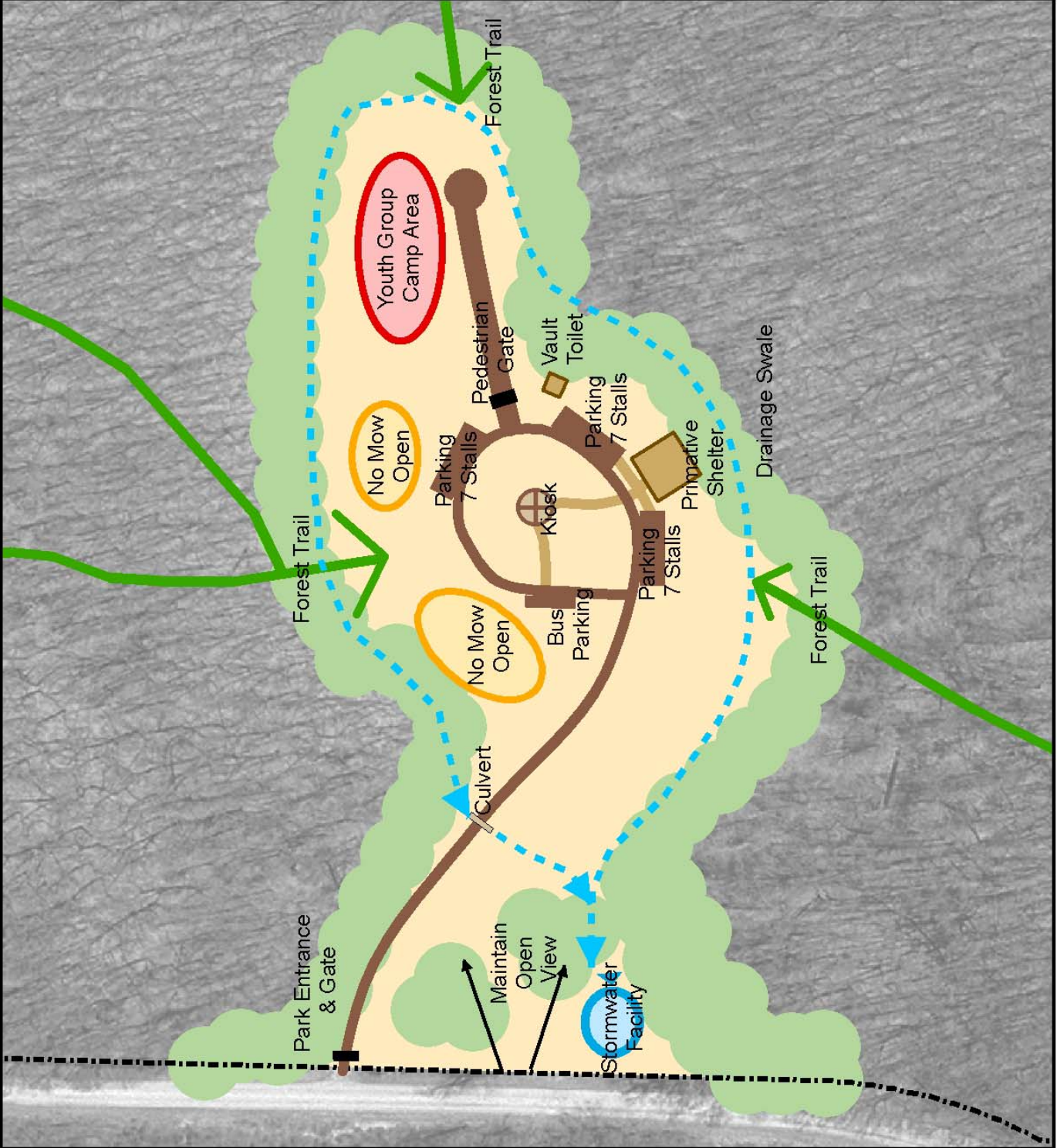
- Legend**
- Forest Boundary
 - Managed Forest
 - Gathering Area
 - No Mow Area
 - Group Camp Area
 - Stormwater/Drainage Swale
 - Main Trail
 - Kiosk
 - Shelter/Vault Toilet



0 30 60 120 Feet



Figure 6
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ACTION PLAN

The majority of the project tasks listed in the action plan below are contingent on the timber harvest and lead remediation. Dane County Parks anticipates that the majority of facility construction will begin in the spring of 2008. Activities identified as “high” would be implemented over the next 1 – 2 years and “medium” activities would occur in the next 2 – 4 years.

Project Task	Priority	Project Scope	Cost Estimate
Building demolition	High (Completed in July 2007)	Remove asbestos from existing building and demolish and bury onsite	\$4,000 (May change based on actual costs)
Timber harvest	High	Coordinate with forester to determine time of harvest & preferred access routes	
Lead remediation	High	Coordinate with Dane Co. Public Works Dept. and DNR to remove lead in identified areas	\$120,000
Road and Parking Areas	High	Design and construct road and parking lots	\$15,000
Fencing	High	Remove old fencing and install new fencing around entire forest boundary	\$25,000
Trails	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clear and grade trails - Construct benches for along trails - Construct foot bridge - Construct stairs 	\$5,000 \$2,000 \$10,000 \$2,000

Stormwater Management	High	Erosion control permit; Design and construct stormwater management structures	\$10,000
Vault toilet	Medium	Design and construct toilet	\$20,000
Picnic shelter	Medium	Design and construct primitive picnic shelter	\$50,000
Drinking fountain	Medium	- Construct drinking fountain on or near shelter - Install new drinking water well	\$5,000 \$15,000
Main kiosk structure	Medium	Design and construct kiosk structure	\$3,000
Master sign	Medium	Fabricate and install sign	\$4,000
Interpretive Signage	Medium	Construct interpretive signs and design informational displays	\$6,000
		Total:	\$296,000

Funding Sources

Several funding sources are available to cover the costs listed in the action plan. The Scheidegger Trust Fund was established in 2001 upon receiving a significant monetary gift from Walter R. Scheidegger to the Parks Commission. It was agreed upon that the trust fund would cover \$100,000 of the development costs with a condition that it's matched 1:1 (\$100,000) with the Dane County Parks, Park Improvement Fund along with other outside funding sources. All of the lead remediation costs will be covered by the Dane County Public Works Department and Department of Administration. As opportunities arise, Dane County Parks should seek grants to better leverage funds and further offset development costs. Reservation fees for the group camp should also generate revenue and help offset park operations and maintenance costs.

SUMMARY

The Scheidegger County Forest with a primary objective of demonstrating sustainable forest management combined with its wooded, hilly terrain, and scenic qualities truly makes it unique addition to the Dane County Parks system. Recommendations found within this plan are intended to serve as a guide, and should be revisited in the future if necessary. Implementation of this Master Plan should provide for the encouragement and education of sustainable forest management practices and compatible passive recreation uses.

Summary of Public Comments

February 17, 2005 Public Information Meeting

Overall, the public comments revealed the following major themes:

- Low-impact/passive recreation uses
- Site clean up and fencing
- Properly managed forest
- Safe, quiet place
- Trail development done in conjunction with timber harvest hauling roads
- No connection needed to Prairie Moraine or Badger Prairie County Parks

January 18, 2007 Public Information Meeting

Overall, the following comments, concerns, issue themes were revealed by the end of the meeting:

- Quiet area/use.
- Trails: Walking / Jogging, No Biking on Trails, Cross Country Skiing, Snowshoeing
- No dogs, even on leash
- Shelter: Primitive, Bathroom
- Access: gate at night, fence property.
- Concern of vandalism.
- Keep wildlife in area for nature watching/ bird watching.
- Educational nodes for field trips by school groups.
- Benches along trail at viewpoints, place to rest.

February 22, 2007 Public Information Meeting

Eight individuals attended the meeting, with five providing comments on the proposed master plan. Below is a summary of the comments heard at the meeting.

Recreation Uses

- In favor of all recreation uses proposed by staff.
- Understood concerns about dogs, bikes, and disc-golf and were in agreement that these uses are not suitable for the site.
- Complemented staff on staying true to the intentions of Walter R. Scheidegger's gift.
- One individual recommended that staff consider interpretive opportunities of oak savanna or other ecological communities on site.

Site Development

- All were in favor of proposed site development plan, noting importance to consider lighting and other electrical needs.
- One individual raised a question about the location of the entrance gate, who would be responsible for opening/closing, and hours of operation. Staff indicated that the existing gate will remain in the same location, yet will be replaced with a tubular steel gate and a neighbor will likely be hired by the County to open/close gate in accordance with normal park hours, 5:00 AM – 10:00 PM.

FOREST STEWARDSHIP MANAGEMENT PLAN



Name(s) and Address of Landowner(s):

Scheidegger Community Forest
Dane County Parks Department
1 Fen Oak Court #234
Madison, WI 53178

County: Dane

Town Name: Verona

Town: 6N; Range 8E; Section(s): 35

Total Plan Acreage: 78.6

Attached maps show the location of stewardship forest lands.

The purpose of the Forest Stewardship Program is to encourage the growth of future commercial crops through sound forestry practices which recognize the objectives of individual property owners for aesthetics, wildlife habitat, erosion control, protection of endangered or threatened plants and animals, compatible recreational activities, economic returns, etc. By state law, "forestry" means managing forest lands and their related resources, including trees and other plants, animals, soil, water and air. To guide the Department in developing a management plan to help fulfill this stewardship objective, a statement of the owner's forest management objectives is required in the plan. The following statement has been provided either by the landowner or developed with the help of the Department. By signing this plan, the landowner(s) agree to comply with it.

Landowner Objectives for Management of the Enrolled Lands:

- 1) **Demonstrate sustainable forest management and land stewardship.**
- 2) **Manage for timber production; favoring oak, hickory and black walnut.**
- 3) **Control invasive exotic species and manage for native plant species.**
- 4) **Manage for wildlife.**
- 5) **Provide recreational opportunities for the general public, primarily hiking, cross country skiing, and hunting.**

The following pages include descriptions of related vegetative or physical areas called "stands." Recommended forestry practices are listed. Landowners are encouraged to actively complete the practices recommended. The plan may be revised with consent of both the landowner and the Department.

"Forest Stewardship" means managing the forest environment for all of it's resources. Good forest stewardship begins with YOU, the owner. YOU

can realize your forest land as a source of personal enjoyment, invest in your forest as a source of potential income and leave a legacy for future generations. This management plan is a first step toward meeting your objectives for your land.

Key to Forest Cover Type Symbols:

Productive

A Aspen
 BH Bottomland Hardwoods
 BW White Birch
 C Cedar
 CH Central Hardwoods, Locust
 FS Fir-Spruce, White Spruce
 HH Hemlock Hardwood
 NH Northern Hardwood
 O Oak
 OX Scrub Oak
 PJ Jack Pine
 PR Red Pine, Scotch Pine
 PW White Pine
 SB Black Spruce
 SC Swamp Conifer
 SH Swamp Hardwood
 SW White Spruce
 T Tamarack, European Larch
 W Black Walnut

Non-Productive or Non-Forest

AX Off-Site Aspen
 F Farmland
 FG Grazed Pasture
 G Grass
 GH Herbaceous Vegetation
 GLS Low Growing Shrubs
 I Residential or Commercial
 IA Parking Area
 ICG Campground
 K Keg
 KB Muskeg Bog
 KEV Emergent Vegetation
 KG Noncommercial Lowland Grass
 KH Noncommercial Herbaceous Vegetation
 L Lake
 LB Lowland Brush
 LBA Tag Alder
 LBB Bog Birch
 LBD Dogwood
 LBW Shrub Willow
 LM Minor Lake
 LMS Minor Stream
 ROW Right of Way
 SX Noncommercial Swamp
 SXC Noncommercial Cedar
 SXSXSB Noncommercial Black Spruce
 SXT Noncommercial Tamarack
 UB Upland Brush
 Z Rock Outcrop

Key to Size Classes (DBH - Diameter in inches):

0-5 Seedlings & Saplings
 5-9 / 5-11 Pole-Timber (Conifers/Hardwoods)
 9-15 / 11-15 Small Sawtimber (Conifers/Hardwoods)
 15+ Large Sawtimber

Key to Stocking Levels (shown by superscript number after the size class):

Density of Stocking	Seedlings	Saplings	Pole timber (Cords)	Small Saw timber (M. Bd. Ft. Scribner)	Large Saw timber (M. Bd. Ft. Scribner)
1 Poor	1-300	1-300	1-7	.001--1.0	1.0--2.5
2 Medium	301-1500	301-900	8-13	1.001--2.0	2.501--4.0
3 Good	1500+	901+	14-20	2.001--3.5	4.001--7.0
4 Very Good			21-30	3.501-5.0	7.001-8.5
5 Excellent			31+	5.001+	8.501+

Landscape Overview: This property is located in central Dane County approximately 1 mile south of Verona. Prior to European settlement of this area the landscape was comprised of a mixture of oak dominated forests, oak savanna, and native prairie. These ecosystems were maintained over several thousands of years as a result of the regular occurrence of fire. Today, obviously, the landscape is much different than it was during presettlement time. Much of the areas that were wooded have been converted to agriculture or development or have been severely degraded as a result of pasturing or poor forest management practices. Today the landscape in this area is dominated by agriculture mixed with relatively small, fragmented woodlands. A mixture of oak/hickory forests and pine plantations account for the majority of the forested acres in this portion of the county. Because of the lack of fire as a natural disturbance and historical forest management practices on the landscape it is important to note that most of the oak dominated forests throughout southern Wisconsin are converting to a combination of trees known as central hardwoods. The oak is not being regenerated for the most part, but is being replaced by other species. Central hardwoods are made up primarily of hickory, cherry, and elm. There are also small patches of aspen and black locust in the area, typically located along the edges of other forest types. Invasive exotic species are also common amongst area woodlots. The most common invasive exotic species include buckthorn, honeysuckle, black locust, and garlic mustard. Another native species that tends to be quite invasive is boxelder, which is also very common throughout this area. Invasive species have the ability to take over woodlots and become so dense that they interfere with the ability of the more desirable native plants to successfully regenerate.

Stand #1 **O 15+³/O 5-11²** **Oak** **76 acres**

Stand Description: This stand covers the majority of the Scheidegger property. The dominant species throughout the property is oak; red oak, black oak, and white oak. Other species noted throughout the property include black walnut, black cherry, shagbark hickory, black locust, aspen, butternut, red maple, and boxelder. There are aspen, black locust and black walnut inclusions throughout the property, but all of the inclusions are less than 2 acres in size. This is an even aged stand that was established in or around 1945. The current basal area of the stand is 119 sq. ft. per acre. Basal area is a forestry term that refers to the relative density or closeness of trees within a given stand. Invasive exotic species that were noted throughout include black locust, honeysuckle, buckthorn, and garlic mustard.

Stand Objective: The objective in this stand is to manage for even aged oak/hickory forest while at the same time maintaining some level of species and age class diversity.

Recommended Practices: 2007 – **Control invasive exotic species.** Honeysuckle, black locust, buckthorn, and garlic mustard are all present throughout this stand. In addition to these exotic species, control of boxelder is also strongly recommended. It will be extremely important to control these species in order to allow desirable native tree species to successfully regenerate. Literature is included that discusses control measures for various species in detail. Best control will be obtained through a combination of mechanical removal and chemical application. Mechanical removal alone will do nothing to control invasive exotic species. Appropriate herbicides will be absolutely necessary for effective control. All invasives will require constant monitoring and control after the initial control measures because it is very likely that there is a considerable amount of viable seed in the ground that will germinate after all of the existing plants have been successfully controlled.

2007 – **Thin this stand to a residual basal area of 80 to 90 sq. ft. per acre by thinning primarily from below.** In addition to control of invasive exotic species, it is strongly recommended that this stand be thinned to a residual basal area of 80 to 90 sq. ft. per acre. Thin by removing poor quality and high risk trees first. Also harvest all of the aspen, elm, red maple, black locust, and cottonwood. In those areas where black locust is dominant, stumps must be treated in combination with the harvest and those areas shall be planted in the spring immediately following the harvest to a combination of black walnut, red oak, white oak, black cherry, and shagbark hickory. In aspen inclusions it is recommended that patch clearcuts be created so as to regenerate the aspen. Patch clearcuts should

be a minimum of ½ acre in size, but may be increased to 2 acres or more in size in order to maximize regeneration potential of the aspen. Within the patch clearcuts all trees shall be removed down to 2 inches in diameter. These patches shall be allowed to regenerate naturally. Creating these patches will help to begin creating structural and age class diversity throughout the forest. In addition to removing the previously mentioned trees it is also advisable that at least some of the black walnut trees greater than 24 inches in diameter at breast height be removed. It is noted in the "Silviculture and Forest Aesthetics Handbook" that "leaving (black walnut) trees to grow larger than 24 inches DBH (diameter at breast height) does not appear to be economically feasible for a reasonable return on a landowner's investment." Removing these larger trees will create significant gaps in the canopy in most instances and surrounding trees will need to be removed in order for these larger trees to be felled without resulting in excessive damage to the residual stand. Some of these larger trees may be left for aesthetics or to reduce damage to other surrounding trees. It will be extremely important to leave the best quality oak and hickory trees for future parent trees, simply because of the significant genetic variability of the oak. It is also recommended that at least some of the hollow den trees be left for cavity nesting birds and small mammals.

2022 - If the basal area is at or near 120 sq. ft. per acre a second thinning will be recommended to reduce the basal area to approximately 90 sq. ft. per acre. In the year 2022 it is recommended that this stand be reevaluated by the DNR Forester to determine if another thinning is necessary. If the basal area has reached 120 sq. ft. per acre a second thinning will be recommended. Thin this stand from below by removing poor quality and high risk trees. In addition, black walnut trees greater than 24 inches DBH shall be removed so as to create canopy gaps. Canopy gaps may be allowed to regenerate naturally or they may be planted to a mixture of desirable hardwood seedlings such as black walnut, red oak, white oak, black cherry, or shagbark hickory.

Stand #3 G Grass 3 acres

Stand Description: This stand is located centrally in respect to the remainder of the property. This stand is located on the site of the former rifle/pistol range. This site has a couple of abandoned buildings that were in use when the rifle/pistol range was in operation.

Stand Objective: Maintain this opening to be utilized as a landing for future forest management activities.

Recommended Practices: 2006 - At some point in time, prior to the scheduled harvest for stand 1, it is recommended that the berms and slopes surrounding this area be leveled off so as to allow this area to be utilized as a landing site. Access points should be located in all directions on relatively level slopes to allow ease of use for heavy equipment and placed so as to minimize the potential for erosion.

Periodic mowing may be necessary to maintain the grassland appearance of the site over time. With financing and planning the county may wish to consider fixing the abandoned buildings so as to provide a warming area for cross country skiers or potentially renovating the building to be used as an environmental educational center for use by schools or other groups.

Property Characteristics

Wildlife: This property provides excellent habitat for a variety of woodland wildlife species. You must be aware that regardless of what you do on your property you are going to affect wildlife habitat. Habitat changes constantly over time. Some changes will benefit various wildlife species while other changes will result in negative effects for other species. On this property, allowing deer hunting at some level is strongly recommended, whether it be by permit with bow only or whatever method deemed appropriate, limiting deer numbers will help to allow native plants to successfully regenerate and reduce damage to planted trees if any are planted on the site. Deer at high numbers can have a significant negative impact on the plant life within a given forest. Studies have shown that forests with lower deer densities have much greater plant diversity than those in areas with high deer densities.

Threatened and Endangered Species: A check of the NHI records was conducted and one record was found for a state endangered plant located within the section where your property is located. The common name of the plant is purple milkweed and it was identified in 1962. It is said to be found along open oak woodland edges and roadside ditches. If it is identified on the property it should be protected as best as possible. No other threatened or endangered species were noted for the property. If any threatened or endangered species are identified on the property they should be protected as best as possible and reported to the DNR in a timely manner.

Aesthetics: Because of the proximity of the woods to local residences the county may want to consider creating aesthetic buffers in areas visible from nearby residences. These buffers should be developed in a way that does not limit the ability of the county to control invasive or exotic species. It could simply be that cutting will leave no less than 60 sq. ft. of basal area of desirable native tree species within 100 feet of any occupied residence. If less than 60 ft. of basal area is left after harvesting within 100 feet of a residence the site shall be planted to trees within two years after the harvest if sufficient natural regeneration has not already been established. At this point in time the area to be most affected by this is the locust inclusion located in the southwest corner of the property.

Soils: The soils on this property range from well drained silt loam to somewhat excessively drained sandy loam with slopes ranging from 2 to 30 percent. Because of the relatively steep slopes skid trails and logging roads should be planned for in advance of the harvest so as to minimize the risk of erosion. A copy of "Wisconsin's Forestry Best Management Practices for Water Quality" is being included. It provides excellent information on logging road and skid trail construction and protection measures that can be implemented to minimize erosion. After logging has been completed main logging roads and skid trails should be seeded with the recommended seed mixture on page 34 of the BMP manual.

Wetlands and Riparian Zones: It does appear that there is an intermittent stream or drainage area located in the northwest portion of the property. Care must be taken so as not to cause rutting in the area of the intermittent stream. Avoid this area with heavy equipment when moist soil conditions are present.

Forest Health: It should be noted that stands having oak should not be cut between April 15 and July 1 because of the potential risk of spreading oak wilt during this time. It did appear as though there may be oak wilt present on the property. Because oak wilt affects primarily the oaks in the red oak family it will be important to maintain a mixture of red oak and white oak throughout the property. Another thing to mention is the potential for defoliation by the gypsy moth. The property does have several tree species that are preferred by the gypsy moth, including oak and aspen. Maintaining the health of these tree species by conducting the recommended practices included in this management plan will help to minimize the risk of mortality due to defoliation by the gypsy moth. Over the next ten years defoliation of your woods by the gypsy moth will be likely. If defoliation is evident in your woods please contact the local DNR forester to notify them of a potential gypsy moth infestation.

Property Characteristics (Continued)

Historic, Cultural and Archaeological Significance: Dane County records of historic, cultural and archaeological sites was referenced and no data was recorded for this property. This does not definitively mean that there is nothing there of significance. If artifacts or anything of historic or cultural significance is found on the property in the future it shall be protected as best as possible and reported to the State Historical Society as soon as possible.

Firewood Utilization: To improve the appearance of the property following the scheduled timber harvest the county may wish to consider issuing firewood permits to allow individuals to clean up some of the tops and other debris. Please keep in mind, however, that firewood operations do have the potential to spread garlic mustard.

Chronological Summary of Recommended Practices

Year	Stand	Activity
2006	2	Prepare site to serve as a decking area for harvest.
2007	1	Control invasive exotic species.
2007	1	Thin to a residual basal area of 80 to 90 sq. ft. per acre.
2022	1	Thin to a residual basal area of 90 sq. ft. per acre.
	All	Follow BMP's for Water Quality.

Provide the name, address, and telephone number of the preparer of this plan:

Randy Stampfl
Department of Natural Resources
N7725 State Road 28
Horicon, WI 53032
(920) 387-7884

The owner hereby agrees to this Forest Stewardship management plan. The landowner further agrees to proceed diligently to accomplish his/her stated objectives.

To be signed by the individual landowners (or legal agent, if any) as listed on the deed or other instrument of title. If a corporation, must be signed by the President and Secretary.

Signature

Date Signed

Signature

Date Signed

Signature

Date Signed

Signature

Date Signed

(Attach additional signature pages, if needed.)

Approved for the Department of Natural Resources by:

Randy Stampfl
Signature of DNR Forester

12/22/05
Date Signed

State of Wisconsin Dept. of Natural Resources
FOREST STEWARDSHIP MAP
 Form 2450-133 Rev. 11/02

Owner's Name Dane County Parks Dept. - Scheidegger Community Forest		Town or Village Name Verona		County Dane
Township # 6N	Range # 8	X East <input type="checkbox"/> West	Section 35	Acres 78.6



Prepared By:
Randy Stampfl

Date:
12/15/05

Section Diagram 8" = 1 Mile

