

Dodge County Parks, Outdoor Recreation and Open Space Plan 2015



DODGE COUNTY, WISCONSIN

Park, Outdoor Recreation and Open Space Plan

2015

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DODGE COUNTY PARKS, OUTDOOR RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE PLAN - 2015

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DODGE COUNTY

PARKS, OUTDOOR RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE PLAN - 2015

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This plan is the updated Park, Outdoor Recreation and Open Space Plan for Dodge County. The last plan update was done in 2004. This updated plan proposes short and long term County outdoor recreation improvements that should cover park improvements for the next 15-20 years.

The purpose of the plan is threefold:

1. To guide the decisions of the County and other providers of open space and recreational lands in the area in order to provide for the increasing demand for recreation facilities;
2. To recommend proposals for recreation improvements within the County and;
3. To maintain Dodge County's eligibility for recreation grant funds: updates should be done about every five years.

The demand for outdoor recreation facilities continues to increase and is expected to continue its strong growth based on lifestyles and an aging population that allows for more leisure time, greater mobility and greater finances to spend on recreational activities. Also, as the resident and tourist population of the area continues to grow and residential development spreads over the County, the need and demand for preservation of natural and recreational resources facilities will continue to increase. It is important for all levels of government to keep pace with these trends to adequately and efficiently provide parks and recreational facilities and preserve open space to protect natural habitats and provide renewal for the human spirit.

The State requires an approved recreation plan to maintain eligibility for grant funding which is often vital to the undertaking and completion of needed projects.

Previous Planning Efforts

In 2004, the Dodge County Planning Staff developed an updated Park, Outdoor Recreation and Open Space Plan that created a vision for the Dodge County Parks system. The Plan provided guidance for the park system with very specific recommendations about how the park system should be developed. This plan updates all elements of the 2004 Plan and incorporates new ideas and recommendations for the Dodge County Park system. Unlike previous plans, this plan does not address recommendations for local municipal owned park facilities, except where they may serve or complement a County facility, function or proposal.

Planning Effort

This plan takes a different approach than the 2004 Dodge County Park, Outdoor Recreation and Open Space Plan. Recognizing that community input is the most valuable piece of the project, this plan focuses on what matters most to the residents of Dodge County. This plan focuses on the needs of Dodge County residents and the processes needed to move forward with implementation.

In order to determine the needs of Dodge County residents, Dodge County staff conducted a community survey, public informational meeting, and a public hearing. The involvement of the public was critical in creating the plan's goals and recommendations. The plan's goals and recommendations were developed through citizen and user input as well as park and planning staff expertise.

2.0 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN PLANNING PROCESS

Public involvement in the planning process is vital to ensure the development of a plan that serves to meet the needs and demands of its citizens and intended users. Development of this plan update involved several levels of public involvement or comment including a public survey, a public informational meeting, input sessions with field park staff and Friends of Dodge County Parks Board. Prior to adoption of the plan a public hearing was held to solicit final comments.

Park Plan Survey

To help shape the Dodge County Park, Outdoor Recreation and Open Space Plan, a public survey was developed. The purpose of the survey was to solicit ideas, gather information about the park system, determine community needs and gain feedback on operational policies. The survey was sent to 1,000 randomly chosen addresses from the Dodge County parcel inventory. Nearly all communities in Dodge County were represented in the survey mailing.

Public Informational Meeting

A public informational meeting was held to review survey results and further identify county citizen and recreation group needs. It was important to invite county recreation groups to the public informational meeting as the park system hosts recreational programs operated by community-based nonprofit organizations. These organizations serve thousands of people. As recreation groups, they can be mobilized to support the funding of the construction of new facilities to fit their needs, it is also clear that their opinions matter. Overall the public informational meeting was well attended and served as a great avenue to hear from multiple groups and citizens about the county park system and future opportunities.

Input sessions

Park staff with daily interactions with park visitors were asked to provide information on the comments they receive about what facilities and recreational opportunities were important, in need of attention or missing. Likewise an opportunity was provided to the Board of Directors of the Friends of Dodge County Parks to share their recommendations for improvements in the parks. As the fundraising organization for many park projects, their input is always valuable.

Public Hearing

A public hearing was held prior to adoption of the plan by the Dodge County Planning, Development and Parks Committee to solicit final comments on the draft plan. The public hearing allows any citizen or group to submit final comments to county staff and elected officials on the draft plan.

The development of the plan was based significantly on the feedback received during these public input opportunities. Dodge County staff continue involvement with and maintain communication links to municipal officials, interested citizens and recreation groups to keep up with changing attitudes and priorities. As needs and demands and priorities within the County change the plan will be updated.

3.0 SETTING

Location

Dodge County is located in the middle of the triangle formed by the metropolitan communities of Madison, Milwaukee and the Fox Cities in the southeastern part of Wisconsin. Counties that border Dodge include Dane, Columbia, Green Lake, Fon du Lac, Washington, Waukesha and Jefferson Counties as shown on Map 1, Appendix 2. The major north-south highway corridors linking these areas to Dodge County include Highway 41, Highway 151 and Highway 26. Highways 33, 49 and 60 provide the main east-west routes through the County. Dodge County's centralized location in a growing region and its proximity to other population centers will likely lead to a demand for recreation and park resources in excess of what the local population itself would demand.

Physical Features

Physical features play a major role in planning, designing and developing recreation and open space areas. The diverse natural and cultural resources and climate of Dodge County affect the type and amount of recreational and open space facilities that can and should be provided. The abundance of wetlands, surface waters, and unique natural resources in the County tend to require more parks and open space areas to help protect and preserve the resources. In turn, more fishing, boating and nature observation should be expected within these areas. In areas of the County with limited wetland, surface water, or unique resources, timing becomes more critical in order to protect and preserve them before they are lost, damaged, or destroyed due to development. Certain outdoor recreation activities are entirely dependent upon these natural resource amenities, such as nature study areas. Others, such as picnic areas and trails rely on the natural resource amenities to the extent of enhancing and creating quality recreational experiences. Still other types of activities (i.e., ball fields) are somewhat independent of the natural resource base and only require land suitable for development of the desired facilities. Dodge County with its mix of natural resource amenities and developable areas provides the ability to accommodate a wide array of outdoor recreation facilities.

Topography

The topography of Dodge County is characterized by several distinct topographic features. The nearly flat marshy areas, including the Horicon Marsh, are among the best known. The Niagara Escarpment, including exposed rock outcroppings in several areas, rises abruptly as much as 190 feet in places in the eastern half of the County. Glacial drumlins create a rolling to hilly topography in the western and southern parts of the County, which constitutes about eight percent of the County's surface.

The highest parts of the County, approximately 1200 feet above sea level, occur in the northeast. The lowest parts of the County are in the southwest. These areas have an elevation of approximately 800 feet above sea level.

Surface Water

A total of 31 lakes can be found in the County however 18 of them were created by dams. The average depth of the lakes is only 7.2 feet and almost half of the county's lakes are less than 10 surface acres in size. Due to the shallow depth, 23 of the 31 lakes tend to experience winter fish kill

problems. There are extensive areas of wetland throughout the County, with the Horicon Marsh being the most significant. The river system of the County, which includes 50 rivers and streams, is rather erratic with many intermittent streams. The county's surface waters and adjacent natural areas generally provide recreational opportunities including hunting and fishing and are often important as wildlife habitat. Map 2, Appendix 2 illustrates the surface water features of Dodge County.

Soil Types

The soils in Dodge County are a result of glacial deposits that consisted of unsorted sand, gravel, clay, limestone fragments, sandstone bedrock and igneous metamorphic rock from outside the region. Much of the soil is an upland silt loam of good agricultural quality. Topsoil depths generally range from 10 to 14 inches. The fertile soil contributes to high production of plant and animal life.

Woodlands

Little of the native prairie grasses and forest cover remain in Dodge County as shown on Map 3, Appendix 2. The vast majority of the land is cultivated. The 2013 Wisconsin Agriculture Statistics Service lists approximately 275,200 acres as cropland, or 49.2 percent of the County's surface area. Approximately, 19,000 acres (3.3 percent) of land are in woodland use. Some woodland areas are held in public trust, but most of the County's wooded areas are on private lands and are widely scattered. The main woodland species in Dodge County include oak, elm, maple, and other hardwoods. Woodlands have both economic and ecological value besides providing an important recreational resource.

Climate

The mean annual temperature in Dodge County is about 47 degrees Fahrenheit. The months of July and August have mean temperatures of about 70 degrees. Conversely, the month of January has the coldest mean temperature of 18 degrees. Historically, the annual average amount of precipitation in Dodge County ranges between 18 and 31 inches, with about one-third of the precipitation coming in the form of snow.

Cultural Features

Cultural features are as important as physical features in the recreation planning process. Archeological sites and historical sites are of interest to many people, and may constitute major tourist attractions, in addition to providing a recreational pursuit for Dodge County residents and visitors. Not all sites can be preserved for public access, nor would they warrant public preservation efforts. In general, care of such culturally significant sites is generally limited by volunteer time and available funding.

With the presence of the Horicon Marsh, the great historic hunting grounds, it is no surprise that Dodge County boasts numerous documented archeological sites that contain archeological evidence of early inhabitation. Unfortunately many of these sites have been destroyed over time or are in danger of being destroyed. An effort is needed to protect significant documented archeological sites. Table 1 lists a few well known significant archeological sites within Dodge County.

TABLE 1
Significant Archeological Sites in Dodge County

Municipality	Site Name	Location
Town of Burnett	Nitschke Mounds County Park	Section 27, CTH "E"
Town of Chester	Horicon Site	Confidential
Town of Fox Lake	Indian Point Site	Confidential
	Elmwood Island Site	Confidential
	North Shore Village Site	Confidential
Town of Leroy	Effigy Mound	Section 17, CTH "Z"
Town of Williamstown	Kekoskee Archeological District	Confidential

Source: State of Wisconsin Historical Society

The State of Wisconsin Historical Society has identified structures of architectural and historic significance, and has an inventory of approximately 800 sites in Dodge County. Furthermore, the National Register of Historic Places includes sites which have been determined eligible for federal recognition or have been nominated by the State of Wisconsin. It should be noted that the State and Federal inventories of historical sites are not updated on a regular basis.

A local inventory of historic structures was performed by Dodge County in 1994. From this inventory a "Dodge County Heritage Tour of Historic Architecture" was created. The driving tour encompasses the whole county and identified over 135 sites with remaining examples of historic architecture. This tour publication is out of print and is in need of updating.

Land Use

Dodge County covers a surface area of approximately 559,333 acres, or 892 square miles. This includes areas classified as rural, urban and water surfaces. Approximately 89 percent is considered agricultural land which includes farm buildings, pasture and cropped lands. The other 11 percent of the County consists of other land uses such as water surfaces, wetlands, roads, residential, commercial and industrial uses.

Economy

Employment and income greatly influence the types of recreation activities demanded by the population. Where unemployment is high and incomes low, there will be greater demand for inexpensive recreation such as picnicking and hiking as well as a large demand for productive recreation like hunting and fishing. Furthermore, there would be a lower demand for expensive recreation such as motorized sports.

TABLE 2
Unemployment Trends, Dodge County 1980 - 2010

Year	1980	1990	2000	2010
Unemployed	2,700	1,793	1,499	4,249
% of Labor Force	7.8%	4.5%	3.1%	9.1%

Source: Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development

Table 2 illustrates the unemployment trends of Dodge County between 1980 and 2010. The unemployment rate of the Dodge County labor force rose six percent from 2000 to 2010, which can be attributed to the economic recession.

Physically demanding forms of employment may leave individuals seeking rest rather than recreation. Conversely, more sedentary types of employment, such as indoor sales and service work, may create strong incentives for physical recreational activity. Table 3 illustrates the breakdown of employment by industrial sector for the employed population of Dodge County.

TABLE 3
Employment by Industrial Sector, Dodge County, 2012

Industry	Number	Percent of Total
Manufacturing	11,333	25.8%
Educational, health, and social services	8,401	19.1%
Retail trade	5,042	11.5%
Construction	3,173	7.2%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, Accommodation, and food services	2,760	6.3%
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	2,368	5.4%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	1,986	4.5%
Other services (except public administration)	1,974	4.5%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	1,909	4.3%
Public administration	1,841	4.2%
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing	1,388	3.1%
Wholesale trade	1,103	2.5%
Information	689	1.5%
Total	43,967	99.9%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2008-2012 American Community Survey.

*Percentages may not add up to 100%, due to rounding.

4.0 POPULATION

Population trends, projections, distributions, age compositions and other population characteristics are important elements in effective park and open space planning. National standards for park and open space developments are based upon population trends and projections. Population distribution helps determine where facilities should be located; and Age Compositions help determine the types of facilities to be developed.

Trends and Projections

Dodge County's population has increased by 41,975 people (89.7 percent) over the last century. The population has increased every decade since 1900, with a fairly consistent growth pattern between 1920 and 1950. The amount of population increase jumped during the 1960's and consistently stayed at a higher level until the 1980's. The growth pattern soared once again during the 2000's. The long term population trends for Dodge County are identified in Table 4.

TABLE 4
Population Trends, Dodge County, 1900 – 2010

Year	Population	% Change
1900	46,784	
1910	47,375	1.26
1920	49,619	4.74
1930	52,173	5.15
1940	54,279	4.04
1950	57,618	6.15
1960	63,169	9.63
1970	69,004	9.24
1980	75,064	8.78
1990	76,559	1.99
2000	85,897	12.19
2010	88,759	3.33
Total Change	41,975	89.7

Source: US Census of Population

To plan for a sufficient amount of recreational land and facilities to meet local needs, but not to exaggerate that demand estimates of current and 20 year projected populations are needed. The determined target population is considered to be the highest population expected within the planning cycle.

The Wisconsin Department of Administration (WDOA) utilized a projection formula that calculates the annual population change over three varying time spans. From this formula, the average annual numerical population change is calculated, which was used to give communities preliminary population projections for a future date. Dodge County is projected to have approximately 95,650 residents in 2040. An increase of 6,891 residents represents a 7.76 percent increase in population from 2010 to 2040. Table 5 illustrates the population projections for Dodge County between the years 2010 – 2040.

Table 5
WDOA Population Projections, Dodge County, 2010-2040

2010 Population	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	% Change 2010-2040	Total New Persons 2010-2040
88,759	88,830	92,035	94,820	97,020	97,190	95,650	7.76	6,891

Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration, Population and Household Projections for 2010-2040

Age Composition and Trends

A review and analysis of the age compositions for the County is helpful in understanding what types of recreational facilities will be most in demand. Generally, older populations require more passive facilities such as picnic areas, trails, and natural areas. A greater emphasis is needed on active recreation facilities such as ball fields and playgrounds for high youth populations. Table 6 identifies the age composition of Dodge County in 2000 and 2010.

TABLE 6
Age Composition: Dodge County 2000 and 2010

Age Group	Year		Change	
	2000	2010	Number	Percent
0-4	5,098	5,020	(78)	(2%)
5-14	12,095	10,986	(1,109)	(9%)
15-24	11,174	10,404	(770)	(7%)
25-34	11,746	11,432	(314)	(3%)
35-44	15,018	12,151	(2,867)	(19%)
45-54	11,341	14,830	3,489	31%
55-64	7,439	10,685	3,246	44%
65+	11,986	13,251	1,265	11%
Median Age	37.0	40.7	3.7	10%

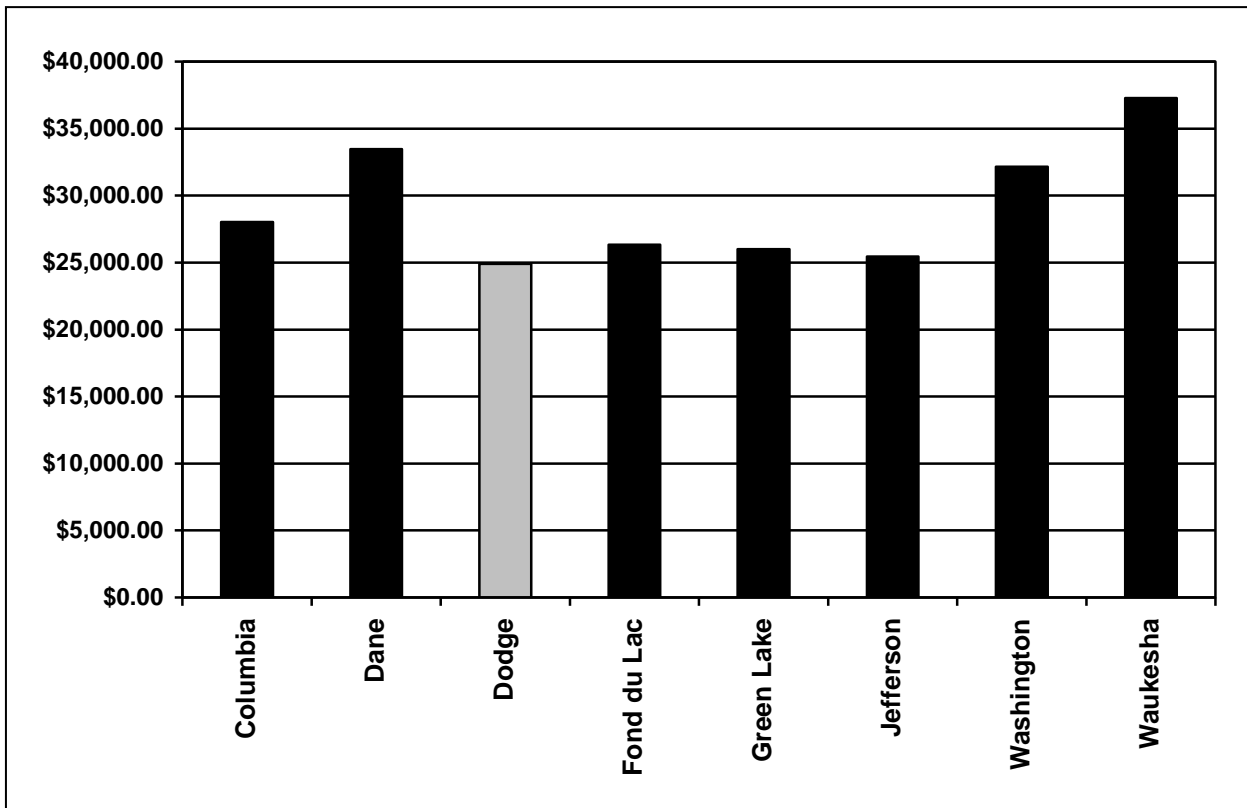
Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000 and 2010

Dodge County's population, as a whole, is getting older. This trend is illustrated by the 10 percent increase in the median age of the county's population between 2000 and 2010. Furthermore, the age groups from 55 through 64 showed the largest growth over the last decade and the number of Dodge County residents ages 0 through 44 decreased from 2000 to 2010. It should be noted that the age group from 35 through 44 represented the second largest portion of the population.

Other Population Characteristics

The 2012 personal per capita income in Dodge County was \$24,907. Comparatively, the per capita income for all the surrounding Counties in 2012 was higher. Waukesha County's 2012 per capita income figure of \$37,282 represents the highest for all of the surrounding Counties. Therefore, Dodge County residents may have less discretionary income for leisure activities that require fees and demand more affordable recreational opportunities. Figure 1 compares the personal per capita income of Dodge County and that of adjacent counties.

FIGURE 1
Personal Per Capita Income by County – 2012



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2008-2012 American Community Survey.

5.0 POLICIES FOR PARK AND OPEN SPACE PLANNING

Listed below are the standard policies that are paramount in obtaining a balanced allocation of land to meet a community's social, physical and economic needs. Most of these policies have been adapted from the National Recreation and Park Association.

- The park and recreation system should provide opportunities for all persons regardless of race, creed, age, sex, economic status or physical abilities.
- Advanced land acquisition based upon this park and open space system plan should begin immediately in order to prevent the loss of high quality sites to other developments.
- Park facilities should be centrally located within the area they are intended to serve and must have safe and adequate access for maximum convenience to persons being served.
- Land acquired for use as parks or recreation areas should be suitable for the specific intended use, and when possible, for multiple uses.
- Land adjacent to recreation or open space areas should be used in ways which will not interfere with the purposes for which the recreation or open space land was intended, and in addition, recreation and open space areas should be compatible with surrounding land uses. Recreation and open space land should be protected in perpetuity against encroachment by other uses that will inhibit the recreation or open space nature of the land.
- The design of individual park and recreation sites should be as flexible as possible to reflect changing patterns of recreation needs in a given service area.
- Every effort should be made to provide easy access all facilities by the elderly, handicapped, very young and other less mobile groups whenever improvements are being made to a facility.
- Park and recreation areas should be used to separate incompatible land use and guide future development.
- Citizen involvement in the recreation and open space decision-making process should be encouraged and expanded.
- Facility development must be done with safety in mind, adhering to accepted installation and maintenance standards.
- Designated open space should form the spine on which other recreational lands and activities are located.
- The need for recreation land and facilities is based upon generally accepted standards. However, modifications to those standards may be necessary to accommodate specific local characteristics, such as significant variations in age distribution, trends and other characteristics which influence needs and demand.
- Where and when possible, park facilities should be linked to other facilities by open space environmental corridors, trails or other means which provide non-vehicular access.

6.0 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goals and objectives establish an end to be achieved and means to achieve the desired end. The outdoor recreation and open space goals and objectives that provide the basis for this plan and represent its purpose are:

Goal 1: A County-wide system of parks, recreation, and open space that provides safe and accessible recreational opportunities to meet the needs and demands of the citizens of Dodge County and its visitors.

Objective 1: Acquire park and recreation sites and develop facilities to meet or exceed recommended standards and community needs.

Objective 2: Acquire open space recreation corridors where possible to link communities or developed areas with other recreation facilities or communities.

Objective 3: Provide recreational lands and facilities for all County residents within a readily accessible location and distance.

Goal 2: A County-wide system of recreation and open space areas that helps preserve significant natural, cultural or historical resources of the County.

Objective 1: Acquire or encourage other governmental acquisition of environmentally sensitive and unique lands for open space recreation to preserve them from damaging development.

Objective 2: Design park and recreational facilities with the natural environment in mind by considering project impacts to the environment.

Goal 3: Parks and open space area used as a means to guide urban and rural developments and growth.

Objective 1: Proactively acquire lands for recreation and open space use in areas where development is likely to occur, seeking lands not well suited for development such as steep slopes, floodplains, wetlands and wooded areas.

Goal 4: Input and resources from the public, organizations, and other agencies utilized in the planning, development and operation of the County park system.

Objective 1: Coordinate park activities/facilities with municipal, private, state, and federal agencies and organizations to compliment offerings without unnecessary duplication.

Objective 2: Update the County Park, Outdoor Recreation and Open Space Plan every five years and solicit input from residents and visitors.

Objective 3: Encourage the activities of "Friends" and local user groups as a means to obtain valuable comments, recommendations and resources.

Objective 4: Increase communication with the public, local user groups and communities via the Dodge County website and social media platforms as may be appropriate.

Goal 5: The County park system operating in a cost efficient and effective manner.

Objective 1: Utilize this plan following the recommendations and capital improvement program established for facility planning.

Objective 2: Utilize, to the extent possible, state and federal resources and grant programs to offset local expenditures to develop and maintain needed and quality facilities.

Objective 3: Utilize, where practical, a multi-jurisdictional approach to acquiring and developing park and open space areas.

Objective 4: Utilize, to the extent possible, local private resources such as friends groups, organizations and Individuals willing to donate time, labor, money, land and other resources to develop and maintain needed and quality facilities.

Objective 5: Coordinate and utilize the resources and expertise of different County departments, staff, and officials, particularly where projects meet mutual goals and objectives.

Objective 6: Establish and maintain long-term funding programs for the park system.

Objective 7: Promote the growth of the Friends of Dodge County Parks Endowment Fund for long term park funding potential.

7.0 SUMMARY OF PARK MASTER PLANS

The Dodge County Land Resources and Parks Department either “in-house” or with the services of private consultants have prepared master plans for most of the County Park facilities. Table 8 identifies the county park facility and the year the master plan was adopted.

TABLE 7
Park Master Plans and Year of Adoption

COUNTY PARK	YEAR
Astico Park	1997
Derge Park	1998
Harnischfeger Park	2008
Ledge Park	2000
Nitschke Park	*
Wild Goose Trail	1990

The Harnischfeger Master Park Plan was the most recent master plan created. The only county park that does not have an adopted master plan is Nitschke Mounds Parks. The Land Resources and Parks Department staff is planning to start the planning process for the Nitschke Mounds Master Plan in the near future. Park master plans should be considered for review or updating every 15-20 years.

8.0 PARK AND OPEN SPACE CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

Definitions used in this plan are modifications of definitions used by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA). They are used to classify the existing recreation system and to guide plans for its future. They begin with the smallest and most intensely developed and used, and proceed to the largest and least developed. Neighborhood and community facilities are normally provided by municipalities. Larger recreation areas are normally provided by larger units of government or private developers.

Neighborhood Playgrounds

A neighborhood playground mainly serves the active recreational needs of children from 5 to 15 years of age, they are typically developed for intensive recreational activities and usually offer play apparatuses. Neighborhood Playgrounds are usually associated with or are located in close proximity to elementary school sites. A one-quarter mile service area is desirable, particularly for younger children and the elderly with mobility limitations.

Neighborhood Parks

A neighborhood park provides open space for the passive recreation of all age groups in a neighborhood and enhances the overall neighborhood environment. The service area should be within easy walking distance of intended users, not to exceed one-half mile. Neighborhood playgrounds may be included within neighborhood parks.

Community Playfields

The community playfield provides for the active recreational needs of several neighborhoods. Community facilities may include: tennis complex, swimming pool, multi-purpose courts, community center, fields for sporting competition, ice-skating area, sanitary facilities, a playground. A community playfield might adjoin a public junior or senior high school. Community playfields should serve an area with a radius of up to two miles. Neighborhood facilities might be included in a community playfield.

Community Parks

The community park is intended to serve the passive recreational needs of neighborhoods or medium sized municipalities. The area served by a community park should have a radius of about two miles. Community parks also serve as neighborhood facilities for the surrounding neighborhood.

** The type of parks mentioned above are primarily the responsibility of the communities, typically not a county role. Below is a list of park facilities that are more regional in nature and more appropriate for county involvement.*

County and Regional Parks

The county or regional park fills the gap between intensively developed urban facilities and resource protection-oriented state parks and resource areas. County parks should offer a variety of active and passive recreational experiences and be designed for day-long or overnight use by the entire family. Proximity to significant population centers and scenic areas, accessibility from highways, location in relation to existing recreation areas and a maximum travel time of one-half hour must be weighed when considering locations for county parks. In general, a location for a county park should emphasize interesting topography and be characterized by scenic views, wooded areas, lakes or rivers. Generally 100 - 200 acres is a desirable size range.

Special Purpose Parks

Special purpose parks may be created by a municipality or by a larger unit of government. These areas are located to take advantage of natural or unusual features of the landscape or to preserve areas of historic value and provide a variety of outdoor recreation activities. Special purpose parks might be created to provide access to lakes and rivers or to protect ledges and areas with steep slopes. Sites of cultural, archaeological or historical importance and certain recreation facilities such as golf courses, boat launching ramps and marinas might be considered special purpose parks. The size and location of special purpose parks depends upon natural features and the functions they are intended to serve.

Reservations, Preserves and Greenbelts

Reservations and preserves are usually located outside urban concentrations and include large tracts of land, which are undeveloped or have limited development potential. Such areas have the primary function of resource protection. Reservations and preserves may be established to conserve forest lands, marshlands, floodplains, wildlife habitats and other areas having cultural, scenic or natural values. Normally, reservations and preserves include several hundred acres of undeveloped land, although some improvements may be provided which are incidental to the enjoyment of the natural scenery. Recreational uses might include backpacking, camping, hunting, trail use, picnicking, swimming, boating, fishing, and water sports. The greenbelt has basically the same characteristics and function as the reservation or preserve. However, a greenbelt may be used to shape urban development. It may be a buffer between an urban area and surrounding rural areas and may connect parks within an urban area.

Linear Parks

Linear parks are areas developed for one or more varying modes of recreational travel such as hiking, biking, snowmobiling, horseback riding, cross country skiing, canoeing and pleasure driving. Linear parks can be located within communities to link schools, parks, downtown areas, and other community facilities or they can be located within rural areas to link other communities, park systems or significant facilities or sites. There are no particular size standards for linear parks, but they do need to have sufficient width to protect the resource or provide a buffer between adjacent uses. Linear park development has been the most significant growth sector in recreation facilities over the past 20 to 30 years and all indications are that this will continue. Rail-Trails (trails built on abandoned railroad beds) and even Rails-With-Trails (trails built along side active railroad beds) have been the traditional means of rural linear park trails. However, as railroad abandonments have decreased in recent years there has been an exploding trend of developing separated paved bike paths within highway right of ways. These types of trails serve multiple functions as important transportation links for alternative modes of transportation, as well as providing significant recreational opportunities and social and political linkages between communities and their residents. Linear parks also tend to provide economic development opportunities through tourism and trail related business developments due to their popularity.

9.0 RECREATION AND RESOURCE AREAS INVENTORY SUMMARY

The system of parks and playgrounds in Dodge County is comprised of municipality-owned, school-owned and privately-owned properties. The park system provides ample opportunity for citizens to enjoy a wide variety of passive and active recreational opportunities. In addition to its system of parks, Dodge County boasts of many nature and wildlife areas. The most prominent being the Horicon Marsh Federal and State Wildlife Areas located in the north-central part of the County. The County's wildlife areas provide both residents and non-residents with numerous recreational opportunities. However, since the areas are owned by the federal and state governments, they are not included in the inventory. A brief description of the Federal, State and County owned recreation areas is provided in this section of the plan.

FEDERAL RECREATION AND RESOURCE AREAS

The ***Horicon National Wildlife Refuge***, consisting of 21,417 acres (20,482 acres within Dodge County), covers the northern two-thirds of the internationally recognized Horicon Marsh. The refuge is owned by the federal government and is managed and operated by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service. The operation headquarters and visitor center is located on the east side of the refuge just south of State Highway 49. The refuge was originally established to protect and propagate ducks in the "Mississippi flyway". The preservation, restoration and enhancement of endangered and threatened wildlife and their natural ecosystems is one of the primary management goals, as is providing an understanding and appreciation of fish and wildlife ecology to visitors. The balancing of the environmental needs versus the public recreational use and access is an issue to be addressed. The refuge offers a significant resource-based recreational facility with natural resource compatible uses permitted in certain areas of the refuge. These permitted uses include wildlife watching, hiking, cross country skiing, an auto tour, as well as limited fishing, trapping and hunting opportunities. Activities such as canoeing, boating, picnicking, camping and motorized recreation are specifically prohibited due to their conflict with the management goals of the refuge.

The ***Trenton Waterfowl Production Area*** consists of 374 acres located in the Town of Trenton just west of USH 151. The site provides wetland and grassland habitat for waterfowl production and resident wildlife. Hunting, trapping, hiking, and nature observation are opportunities provided for at this site.

The ***Pieper Waterfowl Production Area*** consists of 81 acres located in the Town of Burnett along STH 26, just off the Wild Goose State Trail. The site provides wetland and grassland habitat for waterfowl production and resident wildlife. Hunting, trapping, hiking, and nature observation are opportunities provided for at this site also.

STATE RECREATION AND RESOURCE AREAS

The ***Horicon State Wildlife Area*** makes up the southern one-third of the Horicon Marsh, totaling approximately 11,009 acres. This State owned and Department of Natural Resources operated wildlife area provides a variety of recreational opportunities while still protecting the nesting habitats and critical resource areas. Canoeing, fishing, hunting, wildlife watching, and hiking are the primary recreational activities available in this area. There are four Department of Natural

Resources managed boat landings that provide access to the marsh. There are two landings in the City of Horicon, one each in the Town of Burnett and the Town of Williamstown.

The “Conservation Hill” area near the old Department of Natural Resources field station contains hiking/cross country ski trails and scenic overlooks of the marsh. Hiking trails are also available, on Indermuehle Island and One Mile Island, nearby.

The **Horicon Marsh Education and Visitor Center**, located off STH 28, provides marsh viewing and an information center for visitors. The center provides educational needs of the Horicon Marsh, while housing the Horicon - Department of Natural Resource service center. A world class interpretive exhibit hall highlighting the history and resources of the Horicon Marsh and surrounding area is set to open to the public in summer 2015.

The **Mud Lake Wildlife Area** is a large wildlife production area and public hunting/fishing reserve in the southwestern part of Dodge County. The area extends northeast along the Beaver Dam River covering approximately 3,957 acres, and is managed primarily for waterfowl and upland game species such as pheasants.

The **Shaw Marsh Wildlife Area** located just south of the City of Beaver Dam, serves as a wildlife production area for upland game species and waterfowl. The site covers approximately 906 acres and is available as a public hunting area.

The **Theresa Marsh Wildlife Area** is a 5,000 acre public hunting and wildlife viewing area located along the east branch of the Rock River. The site straddles the Dodge and Washington County border, with just under half of the total acreage located within Dodge County. The marsh is managed intensely for wildlife to provide recreational opportunities for hunting, fishing, sightseeing, hiking and education. Facilities include educational signage, scenic overlooks, and two boat landings.

The **Waterloo Wildlife Area** is a public hunting area covering about 1,505 acres adjacent to the Maunasha and Crawfish Rivers in southwestern Dodge County. The area is managed primarily for upland game and waterfowl.

The **Westford Wildlife Area** is a 682 acre site located adjacent to the southwestern tip of Beaver Dam Lake. The site provides quality hunting opportunities.

The **Beaver Dam Lake Fishery Area** consists of five separate sites throughout the Towns of Fox Lake, Trenton and Westford which are managed to provide public access to Beaver Dam Lake for recreational uses. Furthermore, the sites were established to protect wetlands habitat critical for fish spawning, and to protect spring heads which provide refuge for fish to survive winter. The total area covers 152.7 acres, with 83.2 acres owned by the Department of Natural Resources and 69.5 acres under private ownership with a wetland easement agreement. The five sites include; Fish Camp Public Access, North Access, Puckagee Springs, Hickory Bay Boat Access Parking Lot and Wetland Easement Area.

The **Fox Lake Fishery Area** is part of a wetland complex located on the west end of Fox Lake, and was established primarily to protect critical fish spawning habitat. The state-owned lands covers approximately 464 acres along Fox Lake, with an additional 18.9 acres to the north acquired to protect wintering habitat for deer and pheasants. Wildlife management easements

have also been obtained on an additional 282.8 acres of private lands in the area. The State-owned lands provide opportunities for fishing, hunting, trapping, wildlife watching, canoeing, and nature study.

The **Glacial Habitat Restoration Areas** are scattered areas of restored wetlands, grasslands, and croplands acquired by the State Department of Natural Resources to create conditions more favorable for ducks, pheasants, and non-game grassland birds. Dodge County is one of four counties within a 24 town area included in the project. The parcels of land acquired through easements or fee title acquisition range in size from ten acres to a few hundred. Only the lands purchased by fee title are open to the public for hiking, nature study, hunting and trapping.

The **Sinissippi Public Hunting Area** covers 344 acres on the north end of Lake Sinissippi. The site is characterized by a knoll surrounded by lowland areas. There are no facilities developed on this state-owned property.

Scattered wildlife sites cover nearly 2,200 acres around Dodge County. These state-owned properties typically consist of small tracts of land acquired to provide specific habitat or environmental functions. The sites range from a few acres to a hundred or more.

COUNTY RECREATION AND RESOURCE AREAS

Astico Park *100 Acres* *Town of Elba, Sections 15, 21 & 22*

Astico Park is a mostly wooded park located in southwestern Dodge County along the Crawfish River and on the historic Danville Millpond. The park has 2 miles of river shoreline. Approximately 40 acres of the park were acquired in the late 1990's and are located to the east of the river and connected via the restored and relocated historic Ninabuck & Scofield Road Bridges. Two continually flowing artesian wells in the park have become an attraction for many visitors. The "Point" area and the "Danville" sections of the park experience occasional river flooding every few years affecting usability of the campsites located there. The remainder of the park and facilities are more elevated and less impacted by river flooding. The park is open year round for day use activities. The park is open for camping from April through October. Limited winter camping is available on sites 1-13 when snow is not present. During the winter months only the main park road is plowed up to the shelter #3 parking area. The remainder of the park roads are closed to vehicle traffic in winter.

Accessibility: Most facilities are connected by paved paths however, the varying topography of the park does provide some extra difficulties for those in wheelchairs or with walking issues.

Amenities:

- 69 Campsites (52 electric sites / 17 non-electric sites)
- 3 Open Picnic Shelters
- Restroom / Shower Building and 4 Vault Toilet Buildings
- Sanitary Dump Station
- 2.5 Miles of Hiking Trails
- 1 Horseshoe Pit
- 1 Volleyball Court (grassed)
- 2 Playgrounds
- Picnic Areas
- Canoe/Kayak Put In-Take out dock & Rentals
- Historic Bridge
- Boardwalk/Fishing Pier
- Fishing / Viewing Deck
- Staff Residence – (vacant)
- Registration/Office Building
- 4 wells - 2 are Artesian Wells



Key improvements since 2004

- Developed parking area for Shelter 3
- Reconstructed and reconfigured access road to campsites 1-14 and upgraded campsites
- Established a canoe launch site with parking area and canoe storage racks for rentals
- Reconfigured road entrance and established a pull off registration area with new registration building to improve traffic circulation and visitor service
- Installed handicap accessible fishing docks
- Installed a pedestrian bridge connecting the main park area with land on east side of river
- Developed a hiking trail on the east side of the river with a parking area
- Installed electric pedestals to campsites A-Q (now 41-53 loop)

Derge Park 13 Acres Town of Westford, Section 19

Derge Park is located on the west central shore of Beaver Dam Lake providing access to the 6600 acre lake with good fishing and water sports opportunities. The park is very small for County Park standards but is well developed and attracts a high proportion of older RV campers looking for a more peaceful camping experience. The once heavily wooded park experienced a massive loss of trees during a wind storm in the late 1990's which led to significant redevelopment at the park. The park mostly provides camping, picnic, fishing and boating opportunities. The park is open year round for day use activities. The park is open for camping from April through October. Limited winter camping is available when snow is not present. Park roads are not plowed during the winter months.

Accessibility: A system of paved paths connecting the primary facilities in the park combined with a mostly level topography, makes the park fully accessible for those in wheelchairs or with walking difficulties.

Amenities:

- 25 Campsites (all electric sites)
- 1 Open Picnic Shelter
- 1 Enclosed (Quonset) Picnic Shelter
- Restroom / Shower Building
- Sanitary Dump Station
- 1 Vault Toilet Buildings
- 2 Playgrounds
- Picnic Areas
- Boat Launch with floating dock
- Fishing pier (floating)
- Paved pathways

Key improvements since 2004

- Developed a new playground area near the campsites
- Replaced south boat launch ramp
- Replaced old fixed pier with floating structure
- Upgraded electric pedestals and wiring for sites 14-21

Ledge Park 83 Acres Town of Williamstown, Sections 27, 33 & 34

Ledge Park is situated along the Niagara escarpment, a natural rock ledge, that divides the park into upper and lower areas and provides a breathtaking scenic overlook of the Horicon Marsh. The upper portion of the park is mostly wooded with campsites, hiking trails, scenic overlooks, the Fort Ledge playground, a picnic shelter with limited open field area. The lower portion of the park offers a smaller picnic shelter, picnic areas, unique hiking trails through rock and cave-like formations, a playground, and a wildlife pond with an observation deck. The park is open year round for day use activities, except during regular gun deer hunting season. The park is open for camping from April through October. During the winter months only the main park road past the office/residence is plowed up to the Rocks Trail parking area. The remainder of the park roads are closed to vehicle traffic in winter.

Accessibility: There is minimal development of paved pathways within this park. The shower/restroom is fully accessible however, there are no paved paths or improved parking areas near the upper picnic shelter and playground area.

Amenities / Facility Inventory:

- 45 Campsites (24 electric sites / 21 non-electric sites)
- 2 Open Picnic Shelters
- Restroom / Shower Building
- Sanitary Dump Station
- 3 Vault Toilet Buildings
- 1.5 Miles of Hiking Trails
- 1 Horseshoe Pit
- 1 Volleyball Court (grassed)
- 2 Playgrounds
- Picnic Areas
- Wildlife Pond
- Scenic Overlook
- Staff Residence/Office
- 4 wells – 1 with a hand pump



Key improvements since 2004

- Constructed shower/restroom building with dump station
- Upgraded electric wiring and pedestals for campsites
- Reconfigured electric sites and camp road
- Constructed parking area and access for scenic overlook
- Replaced old well house and drinking fountain
- Widened and repaved entrance road



Nitschke Mounds Park, acquired by the County in 2003, is a 54 acre property located in the Town of Burnett and is home to one of the most famous and best surviving effigy mound groups in the world. Approximately 40 effigy, linear and conical mounds believed to have been constructed around 800AD- 1100AD remain on the site. The mounds represent one of the best surviving examples of the Mound Builders culture that once occupied the Dodge County area and southern Wisconsin. The property borders the Wild Goose State Trail and future developments will also accommodate trail users. An agreement between Dodge County, the Ho-Chunk Nation, National Parks Service, State of Wisconsin and UW-Milwaukee sets some restrictions on activities within the mounds area – classified as an Archeological Preserve Area. Outside of the Archeological Preserve Area, opportunities for parking areas, picnic areas, trails and other sensitive developments can take place. The park is open year round for day use activities. Recent efforts to provide plowing of the entrance road and parking area have been made to encourage winter trail use.

Accessibility: The sacred and sensitive nature of the site limits the ability to have fully accessible facilities in the park. However, there are no major barriers to access on the property.

Amenities:

- Nearly 40 Pre-historic Effigy Mounds
- 1 Open Program/Picnic Shelter
- Portable Toilet (seasonal)
- 1 Mile of Hiking Trails
- Wildlife Pond – spring fed
- Interpretive Signage
- Archeological research area for on-going investigations
- Several acres of restored prairie



Key improvements since 2004

- Developed driveway and parking area
- Constructed Program/Picnic Shelter
- Cleared trees from about ¾ of the mounds area
- Developed trail system with scattered benches
- Installed information kiosk and interpretive signage
- Established Memorandum of Agreement with Ho-Chunk Nation, DNR, Wisconsin Historical Society, National Parks Service and UW-Milwaukee regarding the care of the mounds area



Harnischfeger Park

132 Acres

Town of Lebanon, Sections 25 & 36

Harnischfeger Park, located in the southeast portion of the Town of Lebanon, was acquired by the County in 2004 from Harnischfeger Employees Benefits Association. The park borders the Rock River with nearly 1 mile of shoreline. This park offers a wide variety of facilities and recreational opportunities. The park is a scouting group favorite and several features of the park were done as Eagle Scout projects. The key facility in the park, the Clubhouse, is reserved most Saturday and Sundays throughout the summer months and provides a nice venue for small weddings, company picnics, family reunions, graduations and other group gatherings. The park hosts the annual Winterfest and Fallfest events held by the Friends of Dodge County Parks to promote the parks and raise funds for park improvements.

Accessibility: Paved roads and paths to most facilities provide a mostly accessible park. Some steeper grades and graveled areas do provide some accessibility limitations that need to be addressed. Continued upgrades to the clubhouse bathrooms will improve their accessibility, however the men's and women's bathrooms are on separate levels. The park is mostly level in topography providing good access to all parts of the park.

Amenities:

- 9 Campsites (6 electric sites / 3 non-electric sites)
- 1 Clubhouse (enclosed) and 2 Open Picnic Shelters
- Restroom / Shower Building & 1 Portable Toilet
- Sanitary Dump Station
- 2.8 Miles of Hiking Trails (1.2 Miles permit horses)
- Wetland Boardwalk (800')
- Disc Golf Course (9 holes) and Mini Golf Course (9 holes)
- 3 Horseshoe Pits and a Baseball Field
- 3 Volleyball Courts (sand) and a Basketball Court
- 2 Playgrounds
- Picnic Areas
- Canoe/Kayak Put In-Take out dock (Canoe/Kayak Rentals)
- 2 Historic / Preserved Barns and a Historic 1850's House (vacant)



Key improvements since 2004

- Developed a designated camping area
- Replaced outdated play equipment with new playground areas for different age groups
- Paved the clubhouse parking lot and established a gravel parking area for the north pavilion
- Developed paved pathways to connect the major facilities
- Created a canoe launch site with dock, canoe storage racks, parking and restroom
- Developed an 800' boardwalk through the wetland to the river
- Constructed a restroom/shower building and sanitary dump station
- Developed hiking and horse trails on north end along with a gravel parking area
- Numerous interior and exterior clubhouse improvements
- Constructed a 9 hole disc golf course with concrete tee pads
- Constructed wetland pond scrapes along the wetland boardwalk
- Restored and enhanced the 2 historic barns and converted the north barn into a storage and viewing area for antique farm equipment.
- Constructed a Registration/Office building

Wild Goose State Trail

20 Miles

Towns of Clyman, Oak Grove, Burnett & Chester

The **Wild Goose State Trail** is a 34-mile multi-use recreation trail which runs north from STH 60 to the City of Fond du Lac on an abandoned railroad bed along the western edge of the Horicon Marsh. Approximately twenty miles of the trail are within Dodge County. The trail is state-owned, but maintained and operated by Dodge and Fond du Lac Counties. The crushed limestone surfaced trail is primarily used mostly for hiking and biking. Snowmobiles and ATVs are permitted during the winter months. Cross country skiing and snow shoeing are permitted, however not common due to conflicts with snowmobiles and ATVs. A 14 mile natural surface tread for horseback riding is adjacent to the limestone trail from Hwy 60 to Pautsch Road.

Amenities:

- 20 Miles of 10' crushed limestone surfaced trail
- 4 Designated Parking Areas (County Parks maintained)
- Portable Toilet (Hwy 60 trailhead)
- Picnic Areas
- Planet interpretive signs (Juneau to Hwy 60)
- Benches
- Information Kiosks (5)

Key improvements since 2004

- Expanded the HWY 60 trailhead parking lot
- Replaced decking on the Burnett bridge and the bridge near Hwy E
- Opened East Waupun parking lot
- Resurfaced the trail from Hwy 49 to Burnett



Monroe Road Wetland 86 Acres

Town of Lebanon, Sections 14 & 23

The ***Monroe Road Wetland***, located in the East Central portion of the Town of Lebanon, was donated to the County in 2003. The property is about 86 acres located on a bend of the Rock River with about 4,000 feet of frontage. The property is mostly low ground in the seasonal floodplain of the river and consists primarily of open marsh and scrub timber. Public access is only available via the river. The property has value as a public resting stop for river paddlers and may have potential for canoe-in camping and as a hunting area. Boardwalk trails to picnic and camping platforms may be possible on the site.

Amenities:

- Public property along the Rock River

Improvements since 2004

- none

Glacial River Trail

10 Miles

Towns of Clyman & Emmet

The ***Glacial River Trail*** is a developing multi-county non-motorized trail system extending from Rock County through Jefferson County and into Dodge County. The first section of the trail was started in Jefferson County in 1995. The Dodge County section will open in 2015. The entire trail length is about 52 miles. The trail is a mix of off road trails, road routes and separated paths within road right of ways mostly along Hwy 26 and paralleling the Rock River. As part of the Hwy 26 reconstruction project in Dodge County, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation has constructed a 3.5 mile separated asphalt path within the right of way between Second Street and Hwy CJ. Designated road routes will connect the path to the City of Watertown and the Wild Goose Trail at Hwy 60. The paved trail within the Highway 26 right of way permits biking, hiking, jogging, dog walking, rollerblading, cross country skiing and snow shoeing. No motorized recreation or horse riding is permitted. No winter maintenance is planned in order to allow snow shoeing and cross country skiing opportunities.

Accessibility: Fully accessible

Amenities:

- Paved 3.5 mile separated bike path within Highway 26 right of way

Improvements since 2004

- WI DOT completed path in 2015

OTHER FACILITIES OF COUNTYWIDE SIGNIFICANCE

County Snowmobile Trails encompass approximately 320.5 miles, with another 180 miles of privately funded “club-owned” trails available for use within the County. The majority of trails cross private lands, where the seasonal trail use of the land is donated or yearly easement payments are made. The funded trails are under the jurisdiction of Dodge County with actual maintenance, development and grooming contracted out to member clubs of the Dodge County Association of Snowmobile Clubs. Seventeen separate snowmobile clubs work on maintaining and grooming the county trail system each winter. The “club-owned” trails tend to serve more of the local users often connecting the county trails and population areas with food, service and overnight facilities. The county trails should and typically do provide higher capacity trails linking other Counties in a regional network of predominately north-south and east-west trails.

The **Horicon Marsh Parkway** formerly known as the Wild Goose Parkway is a 36 mile auto tour route encircling the Horicon Marsh. The parkway route follows mostly State and County Highways as it passes through or near the communities around the Horicon Marsh and provides access to numerous recreational facilities around the marsh. Brown and white signage with the parkway symbol help keep travelers on track and to signify changes in direction.

MUNICIPAL RECREATION AND RESOURCE AREAS

Municipal recreation sites primarily serve the needs of the population in and around their particular locations. They play an important role in the provision of playgrounds, baseball/softball fields, tennis and basketball courts, swimming pools, and other active recreation facilities. Additionally, exceptional facilities within municipalities tend to complement the recreational sites provided by the higher levels of government and private interests. It is beyond the scope of this plan to inventory or make recommendations for communities in regards to their facilities. Any recommendations for municipalities or communities will be general in nature unless it specifically relates to coordination or enhancement with a County facility. Each Municipality should work to update or develop their own Park, Outdoor Recreation and Open Space Plan and incorporate County Plan components as appropriate.

PRIVATE, COMMERCIAL AND MISCELLANEOUS RESOURCE AREAS

Many recreational facilities around the County are provided by non-governmental interests and often play an important role in both complementing government-owned recreational facilities as well as providing economic benefits to the community and county residents. The following are descriptions of significant recreation facilities that are nature or cultural based facilities; they are privately owned and/or operated.

The **Dodge County Fairgrounds**, located along STH 33, covers 62.5 acres and is owned and operated by the Dodge County Fair Association. The site is best known for the annual Dodge County Fair in August and for stock car racing during the summer months. The site contains a number of large exhibition buildings, a horse show arena, and a race track with grandstands. Other facilities on the site help to accommodate activities such as horse shows, circuses, and outdoor conventions. Parking on the site is unimproved as mostly grass areas are used, but the parking areas appear adequate.

The **Marsh Haven Nature Center** is located along STH 49 on the northwestern edge of the Horicon Marsh in Fond du Lac County. Even though the nature center is not located within Dodge County, its close proximity to the marsh and its unique offerings provide outdoor recreational opportunities to Dodge County Residents and visitors. The center provides hiking trails, an observation tower, picnic shelter and indoor educational facilities. Marsh Haven Nature center is owned and operated by a non-profit organization and serves as an important component of the Horicon Marsh experience.

Historical Museums as well as **Historical Markers** throughout Dodge County have been established by citizens of the county in an attempt to preserve elements of local history. There are 13 historical museums in the County. Additionally, there are eight historical markers established in the County. These sites are listed in Table 9.

TABLE 8
Historical Museums and Markers in Dodge County

MUSEUM	LOCATION
Ashippun History Committee Museum	Ashippun
Dodge County Historical Museum	Beaver Dam
Fox Lake Railroad Depot Museum	Fox Lake
Satterlee Clark House Museum	Horicon
John Hustis House Museum	Hustisford
Dodge Centre Historical Society Museum	Juneau
Lebanon Historical Society Museum	Lebanon
Lost Lake/Randolph Historical Society Museum	Randolph
Hollenstein Wagon & Carriage Museum	Mayville
Mayville Limestone School Museum	Mayville
Old Village Hall Museum	Neosho
Solomon Juneau & John Schiefer Homes	Theresa
Waupun Heritage Museum	Waupun
MARKER	LOCATION
Frederick Douglas	Beaver Dam
Bernard "Bunny" Berrigan	Fox Lake
Adrian "Addie" Joss	Juneau
World War II Memorial	Lomira
Lowell Women Firefighters	Lowell
Wisconsin's First Iron Smelter	Mayville
Soloman Juneau House	Theresa
Auto Race (Green Bay to Madison)	Waupun

Source: Wisconsin State Historical Society

As the population ages, an increased interest in history and geneology research would be expected. Coupled with an increase in desire for shorter trips, local historical attractions should

continue to become more popular and in greater demand as recreational destinations. A present problem with most local museums is the very limited amount of time they are open to the public. This problem is due to the number of available volunteers and low or non-existent staffing budgets. As demand increases, the museums should be made more convenient and accessible as a local recreation facility.

LAND LEGACY PLACES

The Wisconsin Land Legacy Report (2006) provides a statewide assessment and description of places the public and Department of Natural Resources staff identified as most important to meet Wisconsin's conservation and recreation needs over the next 50 years. The report helps to address the question of "what special places will our children and grandchildren wish we had protected". The report can be used to evaluate the County's efforts to protect and utilize these highly valued areas as well as provide recommendations on areas to focus protection and recreation efforts.

The Land Legacy Places identified by the report as being located or partially located in Dodge County include the following:

- **Crawfish River-Waterloo Drumlins:** This area, mostly centered over Jefferson County does extend into the southwest corner of Dodge County covering the Waterloo and Mud Lake Wildlife Areas and much of the Crawfish River. The identification of this Legacy Place, spurred the creation of the Glacial Heritage Area (GHA) as a joint venture that incorporates visions and perspectives of many partners such as county and municipal



officials, non-profit organizations, elected officials, DNR staff and others. The (GHA) is envisioned as a network of parks, wildlife and natural areas, historic and cultural sites connected to each other and nearby cities and villages by trails, waterways and preserves. Several park, conservation and wildlife area expansion and partnership

opportunities are being developed through the GHA. The partners of the GHA were key to the expansion of the Glacial River Trail through Jefferson County and extending into Rock and Dodge Counties. Opportunities exist for Dodge County to further partner with the GHA on park, trail and open space initiatives within the borders of the GHA in Dodge County. This area provides one of the best remaining chances in the southern part of the state to provide much needed recreation opportunities easily accessible to the large urban centers in southern Wisconsin and northern Illinois. Camping, walking, biking, horseback riding, and cross-country skiing trails along with water based recreation along the Crawfish River are the primary recreational focus.

- **Glacial Habitat Restoration Area:** The Glacial Habitat Restoration Area (GHRA) is an existing DNR program that includes portions of Dodge, Fond du Lac, Winnebago and Columbia Counties. The GHRA takes a regional approach to wildlife management by restoring, creating and maintaining habitat for waterfowl, wild pheasants and non-game songbirds. The program's focus is the creation of a patchwork of restored grasslands and wetlands amid the established croplands and thereby maximizing wildlife habitat. In an era

of increasing rural development and disappearing farmland and wetland, these areas are critical to the nesting, feeding and overall survival of birds and other wildlife populations. Through the purchase of land and the establishment of perpetual conservation easements, the GHRA is working towards its goal of restoring and conserving 38,600 acres of permanent grassland nesting cover and 11,000 acres of wetlands in the 24-township area. These restoration activities are made possible through a variety of funding sources including the use of state Stewardship funds which are used primarily for land acquisition activities. In addition, habitat restoration activities are funded through license fees as well as pheasant, turkey and waterfowl stamp accounts. Federal sources of funding are also utilized heavily including Pittman-Robertson Funds and North American Wetland Conservation Act (NAWCA) grants. Besides these public sources of funding, numerous local and state conservation organizations and private donors contribute financially to the success of the GHRA habitat objectives. Properties purchased by the state through the GHRA program are open to the public for hiking, sightseeing, hunting and trapping. Those properties in the conservation easement program remain under the control of the landowner and are open to public use only with the permission of the landowner.

- Horicon Marsh:** Horicon Marsh is the largest freshwater cattail marsh in the United States and is one of only 15 sites in the U.S. that has been recognized by the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance. It provides a rest stop for legendary concentrations of migrating waterfowl and is also an important nesting area for many species of waterfowl and wading birds. The National Wildlife Refuge here was originally created as a nesting area for the redhead duck and today it is still among the largest nesting areas for this bird in the eastern United States. Once drained and nearly destroyed in a failed attempt to convert the marsh to agricultural production, the restoration of Horicon Marsh is one of the great conservation success stories of the twentieth century. Nearly all of the 32,000-acre marsh is in public ownership, with the northern two-thirds a national wildlife refuge, and the southern one-third a state wildlife area. Additional protection is needed to improve and maintain the health of the ecosystem. Tributary streams deposit silt and nutrients in the marsh, causing poor water quality. Buffer strips along streams and improved farming practices on adjacent lands could help this situation.

Being only 50 miles from both Milwaukee and Madison, the marsh attracts large numbers of people each year who come to hunt, hike, bike, canoe, watch the enormous flocks of migrating geese and partake in other nature based recreational pursuits.

- Niagara Escarpment:** Niagara Escarpment is a prominent rock ridge that spans nearly 1,000 miles in an arc across the Great Lakes region, forming the ancient “backbone” of North America. It runs from eastern Wisconsin to the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, through southern Ontario to western New York State, where Niagara Falls cascades over it, giving the escarpment its name.



In Wisconsin, the Niagara Escarpment is a discontinuous ridge that stretches about 250 miles from Waukesha County north to Rock Island at the tip of Door County. Some areas of particular interest on or near this segment of the escarpment within Dodge County include the Neda Mine and Ledge Park. The Neda Mine, an abandoned iron mine in Dodge County, is already protected as a state natural area, and is one of the largest bat hibernacula in Wisconsin. At least three species of bats are found here and it is estimated that over 50,000 bats hibernate in the maze of mine shafts and tunnels. Ledge Park is a popular county park that contains a campground and provides a panoramic view of Horicon Marsh from atop the ledge. Expansion of this park, both above and below the ledge, would increase recreation potential and would also provide more protection to natural features. The Niagara Escarpment Resource Network (NERN) is a regional partnership that functions to provide a common forum for discussion and action which promotes awareness and education about the Niagara Escarpment. The Network also facilitates short and long term planning for the protection and conservation of this resource and helps to promote wise recreational use of the resource .

- **Upper Rock River:** The Upper Rock River, flowing from Horicon Marsh south through Watertown and Jefferson to Fort Atkinson, slowly winds through a mixture of farmland, woods, and marshes. Some large areas of floodplain as well as numerous glacial drumlins characterize the area's topography. The floodplains contain a combination of marsh, grassland, forest and cropland. Widespread flooding is a common occurrence in many areas since the floodplains are extensive and the river has a very slight gradient (the fall of the river from the upper Federal dam in the Horicon National Wildlife Refuge to the upper Watertown dam is just 34 feet over 58 miles). The uplands are mostly farmed and contain scattered woodlots. The river has good scenic qualities along much of its length and provides opportunities for canoeing, boating and fishing. Wildlife are abundant and, although the Upper Rock does not have good water clarity and contains large numbers of carp, most of the river still supports a fair fishery for northern pike and walleye. Protection of adjacent uplands could permit recreational trails to be developed in some areas. Lowland areas have value for waterfowl and these values could be enhanced through wetland restoration. The area provides hunting opportunities for common game species such as deer, turkey, rabbit, squirrel, pheasant, duck, goose, and woodcock. In addition to the cities along its banks, the Upper Rock lies within 50 miles of the major population centers of Madison and Milwaukee and considerably closer to many other small and medium-sized communities. As a result, much of this river corridor is within an hour's drive of over half the state's population. Thus, the Upper Rock River offers a unique opportunity to combine natural resource protection, various outdoor recreation activities, and the protection of productive farmland.

ROCK RIVER NATIONAL WATER TRAIL

The Rock River National Water Trail: 320 miles through 11 counties in Wisconsin and Illinois. The Rock River Trail Initiative began in 2010 to establish and support a Rock River

Water Trail along the 320-mile river course from the headwaters in Fond du Lac County, Wisconsin, to the Mississippi River at Rock Island, Illinois, and a separate Rock River Route on roads and trails within the river corridor to provide access for all to the natural resources, recreational opportunities, scenic beauty and historic and cultural assets of the Rock River Valley.

Efforts of the Rock River Trail Initiative led to designation of the Rock River into the National Water Trails System in April 2013. The National Water Trails System is a distinctive national network of exemplary water trails of local and regional significance that are cooperatively supported and sustained. The trails system has been established to protect and restore America's rivers, shorelines and waterways and to increase access to outdoor recreation on shorelines and waterways. The trail will enhance public use of the river corridor for recreation with amenities such as restrooms, shelters, camping, parking and access points. While the water trail is primarily designed for use by paddle craft, it also provides significant recreational value to those who enjoy swimming, fishing, hunting, wildlife viewing, pleasure boating and river stewardship. The designation will provide a higher profile and publicity for the Rock River and should expand opportunities for funding of recreational improvements along the corridor. Dodge County is effectively situated at the navigable headwaters of the Rock River Trail thus is expected to receive a significant interest from paddle recreationists looking to begin their Rock River journey.

A Rock River Trail Bike Route and a Scenic Road Route have also been developed through the corridor.



10.0 ANALYSIS OF NEEDS AND DEMANDS

As part of the park planning process, public agencies typically analyze their existing parks, open space, trails, and recreation systems and try to determine how the systems are serving the public. Historically, Dodge County has used the old “national standards” approach put forth by the National Recreation and Parks Association. These standards primarily based upon a community’s population, offer guidelines for the minimum size and number of recreation areas and facilities that would be necessary to provide an adequate level of recreational opportunity for the people of a community. Over time, it has been realized that these standards do not work well for most communities, particularly Counties, and are especially troublesome when trying to evaluate special assets like natural areas, trails, historic, and cultural assets.

Therefore, the approach used in this plan will be based on level of service as determined from actual activity levels, the information received from the public opinion survey and data from the Wisconsin Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP): 2011-2016.

Public Input Survey - Summary

In 2009, a public input survey was developed and distributed in order to gather information on public opinions, knowledge and habits regarding recreation and the Dodge County Parks. The survey was distributed by mail to 928 random addresses within the County and was further distributed to 98 email addresses within a County tourism database. Additionally the survey was publicized and made available to anyone through the Dodge County Park’s website. Of the 1026 distributed surveys, 165 were completed and returned (16.1% return rate). Additionally 40 surveys were obtained and completed through the website. A total of 205 completed surveys were received, tabulated and analyzed.

The full results of the survey are documented in Appendix 3 and have been utilized in the development of this plan. A summary and analysis of the key results are listed below.

- 55% of respondents have lived in Dodge County for more than 30 years
- 50% of respondents live in a City; 12% live in a Village; 34% live in a Town; 4% are not residents of Dodge County. The distribution of responses by municipal type closely reflects the general population make up of the County by municipal type.
- 80% of respondents were familiar with the Dodge County Parks system and 64% of respondents originally heard about the Dodge County Parks by Word of Mouth
- 84% of respondents visit the Dodge County Parks at least 1 time per year – nearly 25% visit at least 6 times per year
- The 5 recreational activities most participated in by the respondents are:
 1. Walking/Hiking: 70%
 2. Picnicking: 50%
 3. Fishing: 48%
 4. Camping: 42%
 5. Biking: 40%

- The 3 most visited/used Dodge County Parks by the respondents are:
 1. Ledge Park: 50%
 2. Wild Goose Trail: 48%
 3. Astico Park: 29%

Based on recent vehicle count data, Harnischfeger Park has slightly outpaced Ledge Park in average daily visits in 2014 (July – October) with 50 vehicle counts per day compared with 48 vehicle counts per day at Ledge Park.

- Only 4% were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the recreational facilities available in Dodge County Parks
- Only 2% were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the appearance, maintenance or cleanliness of the Dodge County Parks
- Only 2% felt unsafe while using the Dodge County Parks
- 58% would support a tax increase of \$10 or more per year to acquire more park land or add new amenities to the Dodge County Parks system
- 28% believe park visitors should pay an entrance fee to use the parks
- The top 3 things that would encourage the respondents to visit/use the Dodge County Parks on a more regular basis are:
 1. More Trails (33%)
 2. Closer to Home (29%)
 3. More Park Amenities (28%)

According to the survey results, the development or expansion of hiking trails and picnic areas were the most supported facilities with about two-thirds of the respondents indicating support. Table 9 lists the level of support for park facilities or initiatives.

The facilities that had the least support for development or expansion were athletic fields, atv and snowmobile trails, disc golf courses and horse trails. Despite the lack of support for such facilities, it remains important to consider opportunities to develop or expand them. When support for particular facilities is lacking, it is important to try to determine why support is lacking. If there are mostly financial concerns, then development of the facility or initiative should rely mostly or entirely on outside financial resources. Conversely, facilities or initiatives with high levels of support are more appropriately funded through the tax levy or other publicly funded means.

Table 9
Level of Support for Park Facilities or Initiatives

RANK	Facility or Initiative to be Developed or Expanded	Somewhat or Very Important (SUPPORT)	Somewhat or Very Unimportant (DON'T SUPPORT)	No Opinion
1	Hiking Trails	67%	12%	21%
2	Picnic Areas	65%	15%	20%
3	Nature Programs / Education	60%	14%	26%
4	Playgrounds	52%	15%	33%
5	Campgrounds	52%	17%	31%
6	Boat Launches	44%	18%	38%
7	Canoe Launches	40%	16%	44%
8	Off Leash Dog Areas	37%	25%	38%
9	Cross Country Ski Trails	24%	18%	48%
10	Athletic Fields / Courts	31%	33%	46%
11	ATV Trails	31%	35%	34%
12	Snowmobile Trails	29%	34%	37%
13	Disc Golf Courses	20%	32%	48%
14	Horse Trails	19%	31%	50%

A strong majority of respondents support the acquisition of more parkland. There was significant support for acquisition of scenic or natural resource important lands and historically or culturally important lands.

Acquisition for new parks and expansion of existing parks received support from 50% and 55% of respondents, respectively. Conversely only 28% and 23% respectively, did not support the acquisition of new parks and expansion of existing parks. 22% expressed no opinion for both types of acquisition. Table 10 identifies the level of support for the various acquisition types according the public survey.

Table 10
Level of Support for Acquisition of Lands

Type of Acquisition	Somewhat or Very Important (SUPPORT)	Somewhat or Very Unimportant (DON'T SUPPORT)	No Opinion
Scenic or Natural Resource Important Lands	74%	13%	13%
Historically/Culturally Important Lands	61%	17%	22%
Expand Existing Parks	55%	23%	22%
New Parks	50%	28%	22%

Trail Based Recreation Needs

Off-road trail uses are provided for in various public recreational areas within Dodge County. Many of the trails accommodate more than one type of use, either at the same time or during different seasons. In general, motorized and non-motorized trail uses are not compatible on the same trail at the same time. However, it may be appropriate to use the same trail during different times of the year with proper planning and management.

Common trail types within Dodge County include hiking, walking, running, biking, equestrian, cross-country skiing, snowmobile and ATV use. Additionally, some of these trail types include interpretive or fitness facilities. As areas continue to develop and motor vehicle traffic increases, there will be a greater need to provide more off-road trail based recreation. Table 12 list types and identifies trends and needs for each type of trail.

TABLE 11
Trail-Based Facilities – 2015

Trail Type	Present Supply	Comments on Needs
Multi-Use Pedestrian Trails (Biking and Hiking)	23 miles	The need and interest for pedestrian trails continues to increase as the population ages. Trails provide exercise opportunities without the need for costly equipment and is suitable for all ages. Public input survey has identified hiking and biking trails as a high priority and interest. Only the Wild Goose Trail and the new Glacial River Trail provide off road biking opportunities currently. The larger populated communities of the County do not have easy access to these trails.
Equestrian Trail	15 miles	The fact that there are several riding clubs in the county helps reinforce the expectation that additional equestrian miles are needed throughout the county. However the expansion of horse trails did not receive much support in the public input survey.
Snowmobile Trail (Funded & Unfunded)	500 miles (320 funded under State program)	Snowmobile registrations have increased in recent years primarily due to some very good trail riding winters in the last 5 years. However, as the County continues to become less rural, snowmobile riding opportunities will decrease. Trying to establish more permanent land easements to hold onto the existing trails will become a higher need than adding additional miles. Dodge County has one of the highest funded snowmobile mile totals within the State. Expansion of snowmobile trails did not receive much support in the public input survey.
ATV Trail	20 miles (winter only)	There is a critical need Statewide for more ATV riding areas and trails. Some additional touring trail miles for ATV use should be provided. However the greater need seems to be for riding areas with varied terrain and large acreages. Expansion of atv trails did not receive much support in the public input survey, perhaps due to the high perception of noise conflicts or problems.

Source: Dodge County Land Resources & Parks

The Wild Goose State Trail forms a spine of sorts for a north – south hiking and biking trail into Fond du Lac County. Based on trail counts and comparisons with DNR user estimates on similar type

trails, it is estimated that the Wild Goose Trail receives as much as 40,000 – 50,000 visits per year. Seasonal participation is highest in summer and fall with an estimated 40% and 27% usage respectively. Spring usage is estimated at about 20% and winter receives about 13% of the usage.

The trail does not connect directly to any major population centers in Dodge County other than Juneau. Therefore, there is a particular need for residents of the City of Beaver Dam, Horicon and Mayville to have access to off road biking and hiking opportunities from their communities. A trail connection between these communities and connecting to the Wild Goose Trail would be an immense benefit to a majority of the population of Dodge County. Such a trail proposal (The Gold Star Memorial Trail) is identified later in this plan under the New Trail Development Recommendations section.

Service Areas

Service radius reflects normal maximum walking or driving distances to serve intended resident users. Persons living outside the service radius of recreation facilities may seldom use them. Service areas determine the adequacy of the location of recreation sites to serve the intended population. In determining the adequacy of neighborhood recreation facility locations, barriers to access must be considered within the service radius. Barriers to access may exist where children or families normally walk or bike to recreation areas. Major roadways, railroads, and waterways can restrict access.

In determining adequacy of County Park facilities it is important to understand travel habits for recreation. Most people will not travel more than a typical commuting distance for day use recreation. The Statewide average commute time for motor vehicles is generally 15-20 minutes. This travel time translates to roughly 12-15 miles. The quantity and quality of recreational offerings at a given park will increase or decrease the distance people are willing to drive. Harnischfeger Park being the largest Dodge County Park and including a vast array of recreational facilities tends to draw people from further away, thus increasing its service area. Conversely Derge Park is a small park with limited recreational opportunities and therefore generally has a smaller service area. As used in previous plans, a general service radius of 12 miles continues to be a reasonable standard for this plan. A service radius of 4 miles is used for those wanting to bike to the parks.

Map 5, Appendix 5 shows the service areas for the county parks. Only the extreme northeastern corner of the Town of Lomira is not within the standard service area of a Dodge County Park. However as mentioned previously, Derge Park is a small park with limited recreational opportunities and therefore only provides limited service the northwestern corner of the County. Expansion of Derge Park or the acquisition of a larger facility along or near Beaver Dam Lake or Fox Lake with the ability to accommodate trail development would better serve the populated northwestern portion of the County.

Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities

Although parks and recreation areas throughout the County exist in a natural environment with significant topography and vegetation, consideration is given to making as many of these areas as possible accessible to all persons. Hard surface paths, park shelters, restroom facilities, and camping areas should be maintained or developed to provide adequate access. Consideration

should be given to developing various portions of the trail systems in the County as handicapped accessible. Furthermore, all future buildings must be designed to meet or exceed minimum code requirements for accessibility.

State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP): 2011-2016

The 2011-2016 SCORP serves as a blueprint for state and local recreation planning through support of national initiatives, sets the course for recreation within the state by describing current recreation supply and trends, and provides a framework for future recreation development and focus.

Outdoor Recreation is a very broad concept with activities ranging from athletics to hunting, to just relaxing or rock climbing. With many, often competing, interests, it's necessary to assess the needs, plans and issues involving outdoor recreation in the state. In order to achieve this, Wisconsin develops a State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan every 5 years.

The State's objective isn't to create an action plan, but to suggest issues to consider when developing programs, policies and actions that affect outdoor recreation in Wisconsin. The plan will also be used to guide the grant programs associated with the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund and the state Stewardship Program. If this plan fosters further discussion between outdoor recreation providers and recreation enthusiasts, and between private and public organizations that have local or statewide responsibility, it will be a success. Furthermore, the purpose of the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) is to offer a research base and overall guidance for all providers of outdoor recreation throughout Wisconsin—federal, state, county, city, village, and town governments; resorts and other businesses; and a variety of other public and private organizations. Ideally, the SCORP will be used in conjunction with other local planning documents such as property master plans, community park and open space plans, and the State Trails Strategic Plan.

The first Wisconsin State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), written in 1962, focused on only 12 recreational activities. The latest edition of the plan for the years 2011-2016, addressed 74 recreational pursuits participated in by Wisconsinites. Table 12 identifies the participation rates for the identified recreational activities. The participation rates indicated in the County public survey tend to fall in line with the statewide results for participation.

Over 87% of Wisconsinites enjoy some form of outdoor recreation.

- *2011-2016 Wisconsin Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan.*

Table 12
Wisconsin Outdoor Recreation Participants by Participation Rate (Age 16+), 5-year view

Activity	2005–2009 Participation	
	Percent Participating	Number of Participants (1,000s)
Walk for pleasure	87.7	3,947
Gardening or landscaping for pleasure	65.4	2,944
View/photograph natural scenery	65.3	2,939
Attend outdoor sports events	65.0	2,926
Family gathering	63.5	2,858
Visit nature centers, etc.	63.5	2,858
View/photograph other wildlife	57.9	2,606
Driving for pleasure	52.8	2,377
View/photograph wildflowers, trees, etc.	52.4	2,359
Sightseeing	50.6	2,278
Bicycling	48.7	2,192
Boating (any type)	47.3	2,129
Picnicking	47.0	2,115
Visit historic sites	46.7	2,102
Snow/ice activities (any type)	45.9	2,066
Yard games, e.g., horseshoes	44.7	2,012
Gather mushrooms, berries, etc.	42.8	1,926
Visit a beach	42.3	1,904
Golf	41.8	1,881
Swimming in lakes, streams, etc.	41.7	1,877
View/photograph birds	41.7	1,877
Freshwater fishing	37.4	1,683
Day hiking	36.7	1,652
Motorboating	36.0	1,620
Visit a farm or agricultural setting	35.3	1,589
Swimming in an outdoor pool	34.5	1,553
Visit a wilderness or primitive area	33.7	1,517
Warmwater fishing	33.2	1,494
Attend outdoor concerts, plays, etc.	32.8	1,476
Soccer outdoors	32.3	1,460
Running or jogging	32.1	1,445
Mountain biking	30.7	1,382
Sledding	28.2	1,269
View/photograph fish	26.7	1,202
Developed camping	25.4	1,143
Handball or racquetball outdoors	23.5	1,058
Visit other waterside (besides beach)	22.6	1,017
Hunting (any type)	22.2	999

Activity	2005–2009 Participation	
	Percent Participating	Number of Participants (1,000s)
Off-highway vehicle driving	9.81	891
Trail running	18.6	773
Snowmobiling	18.3	824
Big game hunting	18.0	810
Canoeing	17.9	806
Visit prehistoric/archeological sites	15.5	698
Boat tours or excursions	13.9	626
Ice skating outdoors	13.5	608
Ice fishing	13.1	590
Waterskiing	13.0	585
Coldwater fishing	12.8	576
Primitive camping	11.4	513
Small game hunting	11.3	509
Rafting	9.2	414
Cross country skiing	8.8	396
Horseback riding (any type)	8.7	392
Tennis outdoors	8.5	383
Backpacking	7.4	333
Kayaking	7.3	329
Rowing	7.2	324
Downhill skiing	7.0	315
Horseback riding on trails	6.6	297
Use personal watercraft	6.5	293
Snorkeling	6.2	279
Snowshoeing	6.1	275
Migratory bird hunting	4.1	185
Sailing	3.9	176
Rock climbing	3.8	171
Snowboarding	3.7	167
Mountain climbing	2.7	122
Caving	2.6	117
Inline skating	2.5	113
Orienteering	1.6	72
Scuba diving	1.1	50
Windsurfing	1.1	50
Surfing	1.0	45

Wisconsin SCORP 2011-2016

A number of recreational activities have seen exponential growth over the last 15 years. Some of the high growth activities that should be considered for expansion in the county parks include bicycling, day hiking, wildlife/bird viewing and pleasure walking. A newer type facility with large growth in recent years is outdoor racquetball. There may be some opportunities for adding such a facility in one of the county parks. Table 13 shows the top 10 recreational activities by total numbers.

Table 13

**Top Growth Wisconsin Recreation Activities
1994–2009 (Age 16+)**

Recreation Use	Survey of 1994* (1,000s)	Survey of 2009* (1,000s)	Difference (1,000s)
Soccer outdoors	179.1	1,460.0	+ 1,280.9
View/photograph other wildlife	1,582.9	2,605.8	+ 1,022.9
Golf	888.8	1,882.3	+ 993.5
Handball or racquetball outdoors	96.8	1,058.3	+ 961.5
Walk for pleasure	2,988.0	3,946.9	+ 950.9
Attend outdoor sports events	1,995.2	2,923.5	+ 928.3
Bicycling	1,486.8	2,190.8	+ 704.0
Day hiking	949.0	1,652.8	+ 703.8
Running or jogging	803.8	1,446.8	+ 643.0
View/photograph birds	1,261.4	1,877.5	+ 616.1

Wisconsin SCORP 2011-2016

Public Health and Wellness

Access to outdoor recreation is an important predictor of community health and wellness. Time spent outdoors is associated with a number of important health factors, including improved mental health, more connected communities, and more active citizens. In particular there is increasing evidence that improving access to outdoor recreation can lower obesity levels.

Public parks and trails area essential components of Wisconsin’s outdoor recreation infrastructure. Aside from other benefits, parks and trails serve as the setting for many of the state’s most popular outdoor activities. Walking is by far the most popular outdoor activity as it can be enjoyed by all ages and skill levels. The presence of parks and trails plays a significant role in activities like walking. Research has linked the presence of parks, trails, enjoyable scenery, and other people exercising to increased physical activity.

In 2013, Beaver Dam Community Hospitals, Inc. assessed the health of the area and identified the challenges to wellness as part of the Dodge and Jefferson Healthier Community Partnership’s Community Health Assessment. In February 2014, “Healthy Communities, Healthy Lives” kicked off as leaders from public health, health care, local schools, health clubs, businesses, government and the media met and identified four initial projects they will focus on as a team, each aimed at working together to find ways to make it easier for people living in the region to live healthier lives. Running, Walking and Biking Trails (Healthy Activities) has been identified as one of the four initial projects. The County Parks play an important role in this endeavor and are working closely with area leaders to help provide more facilities to increase the health and wellness of our citizens. The Gold Star Memorial Trail proposal is a key initiative receiving support and assistance through this partnership. Additional focus on expanding, improving and publicizing trails throughout the existing parks is another way the Dodge County Parks can work closely with this group on mutual goals.

11.0 PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations contained in this plan are intended to maintain and upgrade the recreation system in Dodge County by providing and distributing a diversity of recreational facilities equitably throughout the County.

The Plan recommendations are divided into General Recommendations, Specific Site Recommendations and New Acquisition and Development Recommendations. General Recommendations primarily reflect administrative functions in carrying out the policies established in this plan or new facility development that should occur in some or all the parks. Specific Site Recommendations and New Acquisition and Development Recommendations address both administrative and facility development functions in order to upgrade or enhance existing facilities and develop new facilities according to the Goals and Objectives of the plan.

General Recommendations

1. Parks and trails facilities should be available to all people, regardless of their personal disabilities. Special attention should be given to the needs of senior citizens and the handicapped in the development of park facilities.
2. An ADA assessment of all parks and facilities must be undertaken along with a transition plan to identify the manner and timetable for correcting accessibility deficiencies.
3. There should be close cooperation among Cities, Villages, schools, the County, the State, and private business officials in providing recreation facilities in order to prevent duplication of facilities and maximize recreational opportunities for both residents, and visitors.
4. Priorities should be established for acquisition, development and maintenance. A five-year capital improvements program for parks and recreation that generally reflects the proposals made in the plan should be developed and reviewed annually.
5. Civic and service organizations should be approached for help in defraying costs and assisting with development and maintenance of facilities.
6. Municipalities within Dodge County should be sensitive to potential acquisition of recreation land inside and outside its present boundaries. This is particularly important where a recreational resource can be preserved for future use, or developmental pressures indicate that a site will eventually serve a neighborhood.
7. Municipalities and school officials should review the surfacing of all playgrounds and parks and make modifications where safety and handicap accessibility may be deficient.
8. Sensitive floodplain and wetland areas should be acquired for public protection where and when it is feasible.
9. In order to be of value in expanding the tourism industry, tourists must be attracted to the parks and be able to find them easily. This requires good informational and directional signs, therefore a signage system is recommended.
10. Encouragement and incentives should be provided for those municipalities with inadequate recreational land and facilities to at least meet minimum standards.

11. Coordinate efforts with local All Terrain Vehicle (ATV) clubs to acquire, develop and operate an ATV riding area of at least 100 acres.
12. Dodge County should remain aware of emerging forms of recreation and be responsive to providing new facilities or opportunities to accommodate.
13. Consideration should be given to the value of any existing or future abandoned railroad beds for multi-purpose recreation trails.
14. Recreation trails should be designed for multiple use whenever possible to enable the largest number of people to use the trail and encourage year-round use.
15. An extensive plan modeled after the Rock River Trail Water Plan should be established for the Crawfish River and Beaver Dam River delineating canoe routes, access points, as well as a maintenance plan for the routes.
16. The Dodge County Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvement Plan should be updated and used as a decision making tool when considering future recreational developments.
17. Establish an advertising program to sell advertising rights on, in or near the bathroom buildings for an additional source of revenue. Care must be taken to not detract from the natural value and aesthetics of the park when establishing the program.
18. Interpretive and educational signage should be developed and installed along all significant trails.
19. Tree, native vegetation and wildflower plantings should be expanded to help reduce mowing areas and costs, improve aesthetics and create buffer areas, especially along property lines, use areas and between campsites to provide better separation.
20. Shoreline stabilization should be implemented with landscaping and native vegetation for improved and safer access to the waterfronts, better aesthetics, goose control, and shoreline erosion protection
21. Establish a night security patrol position to oversee late night activity in the parks and prevent middle of the night problems and unauthorized park entry
22. Review the potential for the establishment of a County Forest property to provide revenue and recreation
23. Coordinate efforts with dog owner groups and volunteers to establish an off-leash dog exercise area either within an existing park facility or new park locations
24. Annual or on-going funding should be allocated for acquisition of high priority open space areas.
25. Expand opportunities for cross country skiing by providing groomed trails within all parks where appropriate
26. Widen and pave two-way roads to a minimum 20' width and one-way roads to a 12' minimum width

Specific Site Recommendations - County Park System

Harnischfeger County Park - Recommendations

Proposed Improvements

- Create areas along the river for shoreline fishing, development of fishing areas may include the construction of fishing platforms, shoreline stabilization, and removal of brush
- Expand the boardwalk along the river to create areas open to fishing and wildlife viewing; areas could include fishing platforms with benches and wildlife signage
- Add more interior loop trails and connector trails to bypass seasonally wet trail sections
- Consider expansion of horse trails developed on adjacent private lands via easements
- Expand the north trails parking area to better accommodate horse trailers
- Develop and install new entrance sign for the north trails / North Barn parking area
- Increase the mini-golf course to 18 holes with at least 9 holes wheelchair accessible. Develop sponsor signage program to help fund course expansion and improvements
- Establish a community garden program in the north end of the park
- Evaluate the house structure for potential reuse and develop cost estimates for restoration. Develop a restoration plan if restoration is deemed feasible
- Design and install interpretive signs for the antique equipment displays at the north barn
- Finish the north barn rehabilitation and restoration project with accessible pathways, silo repairs, flooring and stair work
- Consider installation of permanent outdoor game tables, such as ping pong, chess, etc.
- Future campsite additions should be considered as the need arises and areas become available. Camping areas should be kept in the same general area as the current camping area to avoid the difficulty of operating and monitoring separated facilities.
- Update and replace disc golf hole layout and sponsor signs
- Consider options to expand the disc golf course to 12, 15 or 18 holes toward the north-central area of the park to utilize the wide open spaces and varied topography
- Develop a 2nd and/or 3rd sand volleyball court adjacent to the existing north pavilion volleyball court – consider dual use as an ice skating rink
- Construct a wetland scrape pond in the old rifle range field with a boardwalk or path alongside to connect into the trail system
- Work with Friends of Dodge County Parks and area dog owners / dog clubs to establish an off-leash dog area in the north end of the park. Establishment of a dog owners group to help fund and maintain such a facility is a critical component to creation of an off-leash area
- Enlarge the clubhouse by about 900sf to improve accessibility and better accommodate group rentals and fundraising events
- Finish accessibility upgrades in the clubhouse bathrooms and other areas.
- Remodel the interior and exterior of the clubhouse to create a more rural/rustic feel.
- Improve mechanical room in the clubhouse and restrict public access to it
- Expand paved parking areas for the clubhouse
- Install a drinking fountain on the outside clubhouse wall adjacent to the lower bathroom
- Replace the North Pavilion with a larger building and install power awnings that can be closed as needed for special events and activities
- Pave the north pavilion parking lot and develop a paved path to the north pavilion and clubhouse
- Continue to support and assist the Friends of Dodge County Parks, Inc. in their efforts to organize and run park events

- Rehab the concession stand walls and windows
- Enlarge the campsite parking pads and install electric pedestals on all sites
- Reconstruct the basketball court and consider multi-use of the court (tennis, badminton, pickleball) (CIP: 2016)
- Create a gazebo/shelter below the clubhouse for wedding ceremonies, interpretive programs, events and other activities (CIP: 2017)
- Develop a trail / boardwalk along the river from the canoe launch/camping area to the Green Loop hiking trail (CIP: 2017)

Proposed Acquisition:

- Acquire adjacent vacant land out to Highview Road and along the river as it becomes available
- Acquire land or easements on the east side of the river opposite of the park to preserve park views and provide remote facilities for river paddlers

Nitschke Mounds County Park - Recommendations

Proposed Improvements

- Develop a master plan to guide future development of the park.
- Finalize all provisions of the MOA
- Construct a parking area adjacent to the Wild Goose Trail for better trail use access
- Consider development of primitive bike-in campsites adjacent to the Wild Goose Trail
- Continue development and installation of interpretive signage
- Identify or restore the destroyed mounds – especially Turtle Mound #1 along the road
- Construct replicas of native American structures (village/huts) for educational purposes
- Repair eroded shoreline of pond
- Construct a boardwalk across the pond to connect trails on either side
- Develop displays and educational information that can be posted in the shelter
- Develop compatible recreational facilities in the western portion of the park such as off-leash dog exercise area, disc golf course and trails.
- Improve path from Wild Goose Trail to mound trails and shelter
- Add electric to the shelter for programming opportunities
- Promote development of a Friends group committee for funding and operational assistance
- Consider replacing some existing trails with boardwalk trails for accessible and sustainable viewing trails
- Develop an elevated platform to enhance mound viewing
- Realign existing trails with a minimum 10' buffer from mound borders where able
- Complete and implement a Vegetation Management Plan
- Develop an interpretive plan to enhance educational use of the park for area schools
- Promote professional archeological investigations of the area under the pond
- Continue promotion of professional archeological investigations of the property, especially as part of public events or opportunities

Proposed Acquisition:

- Acquire land to the north of the property and along the Wild Goose Trail as property may become available. Although surfaced damaged, dozens of mounds are suspected to exist in the field north of the mounds precinct. Remaining subsurface mounds should be protected from further destruction.

Astico County Park - Recommendations

Proposed Improvements

- Develop a new trail leading from Shelter 1 / vault toilet area to the river and historic bridge that better follows contours and provides a safer and more desirable route.
- Reconfigure the Point area by eliminating camping areas and redevelop it for day use activities with an open picnic shelter and small playground with parking areas
- Develop and install entrance sign for the Historic Bridge and east side trails access
- Improve landscaping, plantings and signage at entrance
- Improve the accessible parking stall near Shelter 3 with a paved path connecting to the shelter and bathroom building
- Review playground surfacing for improved accessibility
- Install concrete entrance pads to vault toilet buildings with paved pathways to parking areas to improve accessibility
- Install educational and interpretive signs along trails and key use areas
- Develop a natural amphitheater area for naturalist programs and group meetings
- Remove the vacant staff residence and replace with a pad for staff or camp host camping unit. Some mechanicals that exist in the residence need to be moved into an above ground shed for continued operations.
- Install handicap accessible fishing docks at the Point and Danville area by the southern artesian well
- Rehabilitate the Danville area playground with updated equipment and safety surfacing
- Improve the Pfeuhler Memorial Hickory Grove area with additional benches, interpretive and identification signage, plantings and trail access.
- Add an accessible kayak platform to the canoe/kayak launch pier
- Install kiosk / signage near the historic bridges for interpretive and park information
- Improve landscape buffering between campsites, shelters and other use areas
- Finalize the trail system identified in the Master Plan by completing the trail gaps
- Identify and improve a portage route around the Danville Mill in coordination with mill owner
- Expand invasive species management to better control the explosion of garlic mustard, box elder growth and other invasive and nuisance vegetation
- Redevelop the Danville camping area by moving campsites and electrical facilities out of the flood zone and convert the area around the south artesian well to a public access area for water, fishing, canoe put-in/take-out. Develop a small parking area. (CIP 2015-2016)
- Pave 41-53 Camping Loop (CIP 2016)
- Pave upper road & parking area from Shelter 1 to the Point (reconfigure road and parking at vault toilet to improve traffic flow and better accommodate access to the trail leading to the river and historic bridge). Develop small turnout parking areas for picnic sites and trail access (CIP 2017)
- Develop shoreline trails and primitive walk-in or canoe-in campsites to the east of the river with a bathroom facility, hand pump or solar powered well and picnic tables on the east side of the river (CIP 2018)

Proposed Acquisition:

- Acquire the 10 acre property west of the cemetery and bounded by the park and develop the site according to the Master Plan

Derge County Park - Recommendations

Proposed Improvements

- Develop horse shoe pits, and a volleyball court near the shelter
- Expand shoreline path to north portion of property and install fishing platform
- Develop a small loop trail through northern part of park connected to existing paths
- Replace the old Quonset picnic shelter
- Develop an additional parking area on the west side of park adjacent to Quonset shelter
- Construct a detention pond with adjacent picnic shelter, play area and bridge to parking lot
- Expand boat launch parking area (CIP 2019)
- Purchase and install an information / display board

Proposed Acquisition:

- Acquire a 50' minimum buffer strip between campsites and adjacent farm field and acquire approximately 3 acres to square off the park in the northwest portion.
- If camping and other recreational opportunities need to be expanded, as much as 75 acres of open space could be acquired surrounding the park. Transferring the property ownership/operation to the Town of Westford could also be considered.

Glacial River Trail - Recommendations

Proposed Improvements

- Install signage to identify Glacial River Trail and connections to Watertown and Wild Goose Trail
- Identify public parking access points for the trail
- Seek opportunities for off road trail connections to replace the needed road routes where able. The railroad corridor from Clyman Junction to Watertown may hold some opportunities in some sections.
- Encourage the installation of 5' paved shoulders along Hwy CJ to connect the path to the Village of Clyman
- Encourage the widening of Junction Road as able from the village of Clyman to the Wild Goose Trail at Hwy 60
- Encourage bike friendly facilities (signage, pavement markings, etc.) along the road route connections

Proposed Acquisition:

- Acquire lands that may become available and suitable for development of an off-road path development to close the gap between the Wild Goose Trail and the City of Watertown. The railroad corridor from Clyman Junction to Watertown could hold opportunities for trail development upon abandonment or upon consideration of a trail alongside the active line in some areas.

Ledge County Park - Recommendations

Proposed Improvements

- Sparingly clear trees and brush to improve views of the Horicon Marsh
- Continue to improve the park's trail system by closing off unwanted user-created trails, constructing new trail sections along the ledge and installing interpretive signs
- Develop the northeast portion of the park for additional campsites if additional land can be acquired
- Develop a forest management plan to ensure variety of tree types and sizes and provide revenue from periodic timber harvesting
- Develop hard-surfaced pathways between the main facilities and features of the park where needed to improve accessibility for handicapped visitors.
- Protect any identified significant endangered ecosystems and vegetation within the park
- Reconstruct and pave the non-electric campsite road loop
- Develop an access road from County Highway "TW" to the lower portion of the park if the required property can be acquired
- Develop a water management plan to improve the quality and aesthetics of the spring and pond
- Develop a more efficient, less congested registration area
- Expand areas for multi-purpose turf play areas if adjacent lands can be acquired
- Improve overlook picnic area and construct an observation tower to improve accessibility and enhance the experience of the ledge area (CIP 2016)
- Develop hard surfaced parking areas with widened roadways for Shelter #1 and the playground area (CIP 2018)
- Complete a boardwalk/dock over and across the lower pond
- Develop and install an interpretive sign about the significance of the Niagara Escarpment
- Improve the path from the electric campsites to the shower building

Proposed Acquisition:

- Acquire the 14 acre Roll-Hahn property adjoining the park both above and below the ledge
- Seek to acquire the open area to the east of the playground and the adjoining wooded areas along the upper portion of the park

Monroe Road Wetland - Recommendations

Proposed Improvements

- Install signage to identify public property for canoe rest stop
- Consider rustic opportunities to provide bench / seating areas as a canoe rest stop

Proposed Acquisition:

- Acquire adjacent lands as may be available to provide road access to the property

Wild Goose State Trail – Recommendations

Proposed Improvements

- Develop hard surfaced parking areas on existing trail property in Burnett and East Waupun area
- Install bike route signs from the Hwy 60 parking area and the City of Watertown to the paved Glacial River Trail along Hwy 26.
- Promote trail development from the Wild Goose Trail to the Cities of Beaver Dam, Horicon, and Mayville (Gold Star Memorial Trail) and to the City of Waupun.
- Establish a written agreement with the City of Juneau regarding the rights and responsibilities of both the County and the City in regards to the portions of trail owned by the City of Juneau.
- Develop permanent vault toilet buildings at various trail locations
- Asphalt pave the trail within the City of Juneau
- Maintain an annual resurfacing schedule and rotation to reduce overall maintenance costs and keep trail surface safe and in good condition
- Install interpretive signage for historical and environmental information along the trail
- Continue efforts to develop and maintain good drainage along the trail to reduce trail degradation
- Continue efforts to reduce or eliminate box elder trees and replant with more desirable trees to reduce future storm damage along the trail
- Work to identify and control invasive vegetation
- Expand efforts utilizing staff, volunteers, inmate crews and others to eliminate excess brush and debris encroaching the main trail and the horse trail
- Consider the use of controlled burn crews to clean up and control the brush and debris along the trail
- Update the Trail Master Plan
- Install fitness stations along the trail in Juneau cooperatively with the County Employees Fitness Committee, Clearview and City of Juneau organizations and groups
- Complete the final trail segment in Juneau from Oak Street to Center Street
- Replace the Burnett footbridge and install railings
- Encourage Friends group or other organization to develop an interpretive guidebook for the history, natural resources and unique features along the trail
- Consider installation of water stations for trail users
- Improve identification of parking areas suitable for trailer access and parking
- Review existing signage and update as necessary
- Install picnic table and horse hitching post at Minnesota Junction parking / picnic area
- Install a horse hitching post at Hwy 60 and Hwy 33/26 parking areas

Proposed Acquisition:

- Work DNR to acquire clear title to remaining reversionary property in East Waupun area and complete development of that segment

New Acquisition and Development Recommendations

Additional park and recreation facilities should be considered for acquisition and development when the opportunity presents itself and where it is appropriate to serve the needs of Dodge County residents. In particular emphasis should be placed on acquiring important lands adjacent to existing parks to protect them from incompatible or potentially conflicting developments. The goal for each County Park should be to acquire enough land for the total park acreage to exceed 100 acres minimum.

Special consideration is necessary when new subdivisions are proposed, as they substantially increase residential densities of a particular area. Future new parkland acquisitions should generally be at least 100 acres in size unless the property contains a unique natural or recreational feature or has the likely potential for expansion to 100 acres. In particular sites that are State Land Legacy Places should receive the highest priority for acquisition as should sites that provide access to a recreational surface water, especially along the Rock River. Emphasis in development should be placed on passive, nature-based recreation. Park facilities should include a system of paved roads as well as adequate parking areas, camping areas, hiking and cross-country skiing trails, picnic areas with shelters, restroom facilities, and additional facilities to address identified deficiencies or needs. For sites with water frontage, boat/canoe launch facilities and fishing opportunities should be accommodated. Large and expensive park developments should be completed in phases when possible in order to spread costs over a reasonable period of time.

Open Space Recommendations

Dodge County contains an excellent supply of natural, cultural and historical resources and unique features, which enhance the environmental and rural character of the County and are especially attractive to visitors who contribute to the economic vitality of the County. These resources and features should be preserved to the extent possible. Resources that should be protected include surface water, wetlands, floodplains, wood lots, shorelines, steep slopes and archaeological sites. Protection of these natural areas through conservation easements, fee simple acquisition, zoning restrictions or other means is recommended. These areas are generally unsuitable for development and should only be used for open space purposes. Rezoning and/or development of natural areas should be highly discouraged. Long range cooperative land acquisition and development plans by all public bodies should be encouraged. Public support for parkland acquisition is strongest particularly for scenic or natural sites, cultural or historic sites and expansion of existing park properties.

New Trail Development Recommendations

Gold Star Memorial Trail - *Connecting Communities and Remembering*



The proposed Gold Star Memorial Trail (GSMT) is a recent initiative generating a lot of interest in the central Dodge County communities. The proposed trail will provide an important recreational trail facility for the citizens of Dodge County and its visitors and serve as a memorial to fallen service members of Dodge County. The proposed trail will stretch from the City of Beaver Dam to the City of Mayville, traversing approximately 15 miles. The trail will be for non-motorized use, primarily biking and hiking, and will provide opportunities for cross-country skiing and snowshoeing in the winter months. The trail connection between the cities of Beaver Dam and Mayville would provide important non-motorized trail links to the Horicon Marsh State Wildlife Area and its world class Education and Visitor Center (opening in 2015), the City of Horicon, the Wild Goose State Trail and Nitschke Mounds County Park. Most of the trail is projected to be 10' wide, asphalt paved and located within highway right of ways separated from vehicle travel lanes.

Local grass roots efforts started in 2013 to support this project and jump start this long proposed trail development plan. Citizens, business leaders and Gold Star Families from Mayville to Beaver Dam and surrounding areas have formed a project committee and partnered with Dodge County and the Friends of Dodge County Parks, Inc. to lay the foundation for and carry out the funding, planning, development and future maintenance of the proposed trail.

The trail project is generally broken into 5 phases or segments. These phases can be accomplished in any order or concurrently with one another as funding is available and alignments are finalized. Each phase is locally important on their own. However, when combined, they create a significant regional connection between communities and connect them to other communities through the Wild Goose State Trail.

PHASE 1: Mayville to Horicon Marsh Visitor & Education Center (2.1 miles)

This section is proposed to begin at Theiler Park in Mayville along Hwy TW and consist of an asphalt paved path within the right of way of County Road TW and State Road 28 extending to the parking area at the DNR owned Horicon Marsh Visitor and Education Center facility. Design and construction estimates are roughly \$640,000.

PHASE 2: City of Horicon to Wild Goose State Trail (3.5 miles)

This section is proposed to connect the City of Horicon to the Wild Goose State Trail via an asphalt paved path utilizing an alignment to be determined. The right of way of County Road E appears to hold the best potential for development of an asphalt paved path separated from vehicle traffic. The active railroad corridors extending from Horicon may also hold potential for trail development. Feasibility study, design and construction estimates are roughly \$700,000.

PHASE 3: City of Beaver Dam to Wild Goose State Trail (6 miles)

This section is proposed to connect the City of Beaver Dam to the Wild Goose State Trail via an asphalt paved path utilizing an alignment to be determined. The right of way of County Road E appears to hold the best potential for development of an asphalt paved path separated from vehicle traffic. The active railroad corridor extending from Beaver Dam may also hold potential for trail development. Feasibility study, design and construction estimates are roughly \$1,200,000.

PHASE 4: City of Horicon Route (2 miles)

This section is expected to follow existing roads within the City of Horicon to connect from the east side of Horicon to the west side. The actual east side starting location will depend upon the final

route alignment from Phase 5: Horicon Marsh Visitor & Education Center to Horicon. Little in the way of improvements are required, however signage and pavement markings to better identify the biking route are recommended. Additionally there may be some opportunities to provide off street paths through existing park areas or other public lands. Biking Improvements including signage and route marking should not exceed \$10,000.

PHASE 5: Horicon Marsh Visitor & Education Center to City of Horicon (1.5 miles)

This section would provide a biking route from the City of Horicon to the Horicon Marsh Visitor and Education Center and the Phase 1 section. The final route alignment needs to be determined. Currently a 1.5 mile gravel hiking trail exists, however DNR policies prohibit biking on the trail. As the DNR updates its Master Plan in the coming year, evaluation of this bike prohibition should be undertaken. Trail developments in this section can vary from improved signage to some trail surfacing improvements to requiring the construction of new trail segments or boardwalks to make the connection. A least desirable alternative would be to utilize a bike route along the town roads of Old Highway 28 Road and Raasch Hill Road. Costs for this segment could be as little as \$1,000 or as much as \$450,000 or more pending DNR requirements and approvals.

Benefits:

- About 40-50% of Dodge County residents and potentially hundreds of thousands of visitors to the Horicon Marsh area would have easy access to the trail.
- Improved and safer biking and hiking transportation connectivity between Dodge County communities - reducing automobile trips
- Improved access to healthy lifestyle activities and recreational pursuits for current and future generations
- Enhanced economic development as a regional tourism resource
- Opportunity for partnerships, collaborations and cooperation across local, County, State and Federal governments and agencies, organizations, foundations, businesses, individuals, etc.
- Remembering and honoring those local heroes that made the ultimate sacrifice – since 1991, Dodge County has lost 6 service members from the communities which are to be linked by this trail.

Cost: The total estimated cost of the 15 mile trail from Mayville to Beaver Dam is expected to be roughly \$2.5 - \$3 million. No property tax levy dollars are being sought for this project, rather private donations and grants are expected and needed to fund this facility. Sales tax funding of a portion of the project is also a logical funding mechanism as it would assist a multi-community facility that is expected to enhance tourism spending and more sales tax funds.

Timeline: Design work could start on Phase 1 as early as Fall 2015 with construction in 2016, if funding is secured by August 2015. The goal for completion of the entire trail is 2020, however the trail could be completed sooner or later depending on how quickly the necessary funding is obtained.

12.0 GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE SECTOR ROLES IN RECREATION

Federal, State, County and Local governments have complementary roles in providing parks and resource areas for its citizens and visitors. Each level of government has responsibility for a specific scale and type of park facility, ranging from national parks and wildlife refuges to local neighborhood playgrounds. The obligation of various levels of government assumes certain responsibilities for economies of scale, jurisdictional need, statute, interests and tradition. In delivering recreational and open space services to citizens, determining jurisdictional responsibility can result in better coordinated and more effective system of parks and opens space. Population size and geographical area determine the responsibility a particular unit of government has. The governmental unit whose citizens receive the greatest and most direct benefits from a recreational or open space area usually takes responsibility for support or development of the area. Larger and less developed areas are usually managed by higher levels of government because the benefits reach a larger number of people, whereas smaller and more intensely developed areas are managed by lower levels of government because the benefits are more localized.

Dodge County consists of multiple levels of governmental jurisdiction in regards to parks, open space and resource areas. Each level of government needs to be aware of its role in relation to other levels in order to compliment each others efforts and not duplicate other facilities. If this can be accomplished, a broad range of recreational opportunities and benefits can be most efficiently and effectively realized.

Federal Role

The Federal government's role should be to acquire and manage areas with exceptional natural, cultural or historical resources which are of national or international significance. Traditionally, the Federal role in recreation has also been to provide financial assistance to State and local units of government to assist in providing facilities with widespread appeal. With the outside financial assistance, resources can be leveraged to provide facilities that will not only serve the residents of the particular local jurisdiction, but also potentially visitors from the region and beyond.

State Role

The State's role should be to provide large-scale recreation areas for its citizens which may have national or international attraction. Such areas may consist of campground facilities, trails, fishing areas, significant historical or archeological sites and natural resource protection areas. State Parks and recreation or open space areas are typically natural resource oriented. A further role of the State is to provide some aspect of consistency or guidelines in facility standards and operation, as well as financial assistance. Similar to federal financial assistance, resources can be leveraged to provide facilities that could also serve users from outside the local jurisdiction.

County Role

Dodge County's role as defined and adopted by the Dodge County Board has been to "...acquire land for park purposes and provide necessary roads and facilities...". More specifically, a county's role is to provide large recreation areas and facilities and to preserve important natural features of county and regional significance. County recreation areas are designed to serve an area-wide population and generally consist of a greater variety of recreational facilities than State recreation sites. Facilities or trails that cross multiple levels of jurisdiction and will provide service to residents beyond the local communities are appropriate for County involvement with local community support. Dodge County's role has also been to provide low cost park and recreation planning assistance to local communities as requested.

Local Role

The role of local municipalities is to provide recreation areas designed for frequent short term use by local residents. These parks can typically be classified as neighborhood or community recreation areas, and may range from less than one-half acre to over 100 acres in size. These parks should be within walking or short driving distance of the population they are designed to serve. The establishment of recreational programs is also a role of local municipalities to provide some structured and organized use of its park facilities.

Private Sector Role – Individuals

The role of an individual in the private sector should be to provide extra support to the facility or facilities that are most beneficial to that individual. Support can be in many forms. Constructive input to the operator of the site can assist them in developing and improving facilities in order to best meet the needs of its users. Financial support is always appreciated and often times required for a particular project to be completed. There are several types of financial support; direct monetary contributions to a facility or to a group raising funds for a particular project, and the donation or dedication of lands. Land donation or dedication can serve self interests by having the site named in honor or memory of someone special. Donated labor is also in great need for the completion of certain projects, predominantly beautification and landscaping projects that might otherwise be a lower priority. Volunteers willing to work with the facility operator in improving or maintaining a recreation or resource area are always appreciated and needed. Eagle Scouts have been of particular value to the County Parks over the years with building benches, kiosks and canoe shelters and providing other facility improvements.

The multiple levels of recreational providers and the limited resources available require greater coordination of planning, facilities, and funding sources. The need for joint funding of projects between different levels of government will likely increase in the future in order to carry out certain projects which can serve to meet the goals of more than one governmental level.

Private Sector Role – Groups and Organizations

Groups and organizations roles in local recreation are to provide financial and labor resources for those facilities that are locally important or in need of improvement. Private, non-profit conservation oriented groups are of particular importance to the assistance of recreation development now that special grant funding is available to such groups. State of Wisconsin law allows for donated labor to be used as local matching funds for stewardship grants, thereby making the role of these groups more vital to local recreation. Recommendations and assistance in getting input about facilities is also important to the facility operator in planning improvements to better serve the needs of the recreation users. Service organizations and scout groups have played a significant role in park improvements through labor and project sponsorships and donations.

13.0 OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

Regular maintenance of the park system is necessary to keep the parks in good shape, safe to users and less costly in the long run. Inadequate inspections and maintenance can lead to playground injuries and run down facilities making a municipality's park system a liability instead of an asset.

Current Park staffing consists of 2 seasonal workers for each of the main parks and 1 seasonal, part-time caretaker to maintain the Wild Goose Trail, Nitschke Mounds Park and the Glacial River Trail. Full-time park staff consist of the Parks and Trails Manager, Parks Foreman and Parks Support Specialist. The Parks Foreman carries out park projects and monitors the operation and maintenance of the parks. The Parks Support Specialist primarily handles the reservations process and is the primary customer service representative for the parks.

As parks use continues to peak and equipment and facilities age, more demands on the facilities and increased maintenance and repair needs are being realized. To address these changes and increased pressures, new operational structures need to be explored with potential increase in staff hours and potential new full time positions.

Upon purchase and development of new park facilities, it should be expected that more part time seasonal worker(s) will need to be hired to mow the grass, clean the facilities, to make routine inspections and repairs and to perform other maintenance functions as necessary. Although the distance between parks does pose some challenges, combining tasks or creating maintenance teams that work together for safety and move between the parks should be considered to improve efficiency, safety and effectiveness.

14.0 FUNDING

The net 2015 Parks operation and development budget is \$446,585. Of this total, \$82,000 is funded by the County ½% sales tax program. Thus \$364,585 is funded through the tax levy. This amount represents only 1.1% of the entire 2015 County Tax levy and equates to a \$4.10 cost per County resident (based on 2015 population estimate of 88,830). As indicated in the survey, 58% of the respondents would support a tax increase of \$10 or more per year to acquire more parkland or add new park amenities. The parks continue to represent an excellent value to its taxpayers, however, obtaining necessary funds to improve the parks and add or update infrastructure through tax levy is an increasing challenge. New sources of funding for park improvements are needed as is more use of the ½% sales tax program. The parks play a major role in bringing tourism dollars to the area which helps to fuel the sales tax fund.

Funding assistance for acquiring and developing parks and recreation facilities can also be obtained through a variety of grants and programs. Additionally, many communities have good success with local fund-raising campaigns for large specific projects and local service organizations can be an excellent source of manpower and funding for smaller projects. Local business and corporate funding and support should also be encouraged.

With limited staffing resources, seeking grants for County facilities is typically limited to the higher dollar amount programs which are usually found through State and Federal sources. However, some local grant options need to be considered where the likelihood of receiving the funds is high based on the amount of time needed to develop the grant application. The public Park grant programs are primarily administered by the State of Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. The Wisconsin Department of Transportation administers funding for bike paths. Federal funds are typically passed to the State agencies to administer and pass on to the local governmental units.

Friends of Dodge County Parks, Inc.

The Friends of Dodge County Parks is a 501c3 non-profit organization working closely with the Dodge County Land Resources and Parks Department. The groups mission is to encourage and assist Dodge County in providing sufficient park land and a variety of recreational and cultural facilities to meet the needs and demands of the County's residents and visitors into the future.

The Friends of Dodge County Parks, Inc. originally incorporated in 1987 as Friends of The Recreational Trail, Inc. (F.O.R.T.). The group was formed specifically to raise funds and support the development of the Wild Goose State Trail in Dodge County. The group was charged with raising 100% of the trail development costs through donations and grants. After successfully accomplishing this task, the group expanded its scope to encompass fundraising and support for all the Dodge County Parks. The name was officially changed to the Friends of Dodge County Parks, Inc. in 2001.

The most visible aspect of the Friends group is in fundraising to provide a source of funds to the County to supplement public funds for park projects. The primary sources of funds for the group comes from the annual Winterfest and Fallfest events at Harnischfeger Park, as well as memberships and general donations. The group has strong connections with the business community throughout Dodge County and have been very successful in encouraging and receiving their donations for the Dodge County Parks. The Friends group 2014 year end fund balance was \$40,886. These funds are designated for various Parks and projects. Typically the Friends group provides about \$15,000 to Dodge County for park improvements.

In an effort to provide a means of perpetual park funding, a permanent Endowment Fund was created in 2010. Eventually the fund will provide a substantial annual income to the Friends group for a future Dodge County Parks need. The 2014 year end account balance was \$18,631.

15.0 CHANGES AND AMENDMENT PROCEDURES

This plan should be scheduled for a review, update or complete revision at least every five years. However, various circumstances and certain opportunities may warrant changes to the plan prior to the next scheduled update or revision. Changes or amendments to this plan require a petition to or by the Dodge County Planning, Development and Parks Committee. The petition shall specify the change requested and reasons for the change. Dodge County Land Resources and Parks Department staff will prepare an analysis for the Committee to assist their action.

The Dodge County Planning, Development and Parks Committee shall hold a public hearing upon publishing a Class I notice. When deemed appropriate by the Dodge County Land Resources and Parks Department, written notification of the public hearing may be sent to user groups, organizations, municipalities or individuals believed to be directly or adversely affected by the proposed change.

After the public hearing, the Dodge County Planning, Development and Parks Committee shall make a recommendation to the Dodge County Board of Supervisors for action. Upon consideration of the Committee's recommendation the County Board shall vote on passage of the proposed change or amendment. The change or amendment shall be effective upon passage.

Appendix 1

Inventory of Existing Recreational Facilities – County

DODGE COUNTY PARK SYSTEM		HARNISCHFEGER PARK	ASTICO PARK	LEDGE PARK	NITSCHKE MOUNDS PARK	DERGE PARK	WILD GOOSE STATE TRAIL
ACREAGE		132	100	132	54	13	20 Miles
ACTIVE RECREATION FACILITIES	Soccer Field						
	Softball Field						
	Baseball Field	X					
	Tennis Court						
	Basketball Goal	2					
	Volleyball Court	3 sand	1 grass	1 grass			
	Football Field						
	Open Playfield	X	X				
	Disc Golf Course	9 hole					
	Mini Golf Course	9 hole					
	Horseshoe Pits	3	1	1			
PASSIVE RECREATION FACILITIES	Picnic Acres						
	Picnic Tables	62	118	84	11	44	
	Cooking Grills	2	4	11		6	
	Open Shelter Buildings	2	3	2	1	1	
	Enclosed Shelter Bldgs	Clubhouse				Quonset	
	Shore Fishing Piers	2	2				
	Benches	15	13	15	8	5	
	Boat/Canoe Launch	Canoe	Canoe			Boat Ramp	
PLAYGROUND D FACILITIES	Play System	2	1	2		1	
	Swings - Senior/Tots	4 / 2	8 / 2	4 / 2		4	
	Teeter Totter	2	2			2	
	Slide	4	5	6		2	
	Sandbox	1	2	1		1	
	Climbing Equipment	14	6	8		2	
	Spring Rider	2		1			
RECREATION SUPPORT FACILITIES	Parking Spaces - paved	52	37	35		38	7
	Handicap Parking Spaces	4	6	4	1	4	1
	Gravel Parking Spaces	48	6	2	16		52
	Restroom Buildings	1	1	1		1	
	Drinking Fountains	3	3	3			
	Bike Racks	2		3			
	Trash Cans	15	33	19		11	2
	Recycle Cans	13	30	11		1	2
	Vault/Portable Toilets	1 portable	4 vaults	3 vaults	1 portable	1 vault	1 portable

Appendix 2

Maps

Map #1 – Dodge County Area Map

Map #2 – Surface Water

Map #3 – Woodlots

Map #4 – Federal, State, and County Recreational Areas

Map #5 – Service Area for County Parks

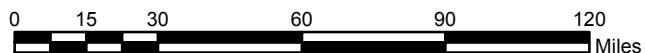
Map #6 – Wetland and Floodplain Boundaries

Map #7 – Public Boat Launches

Map #8 - Biking / Hiking Trail System

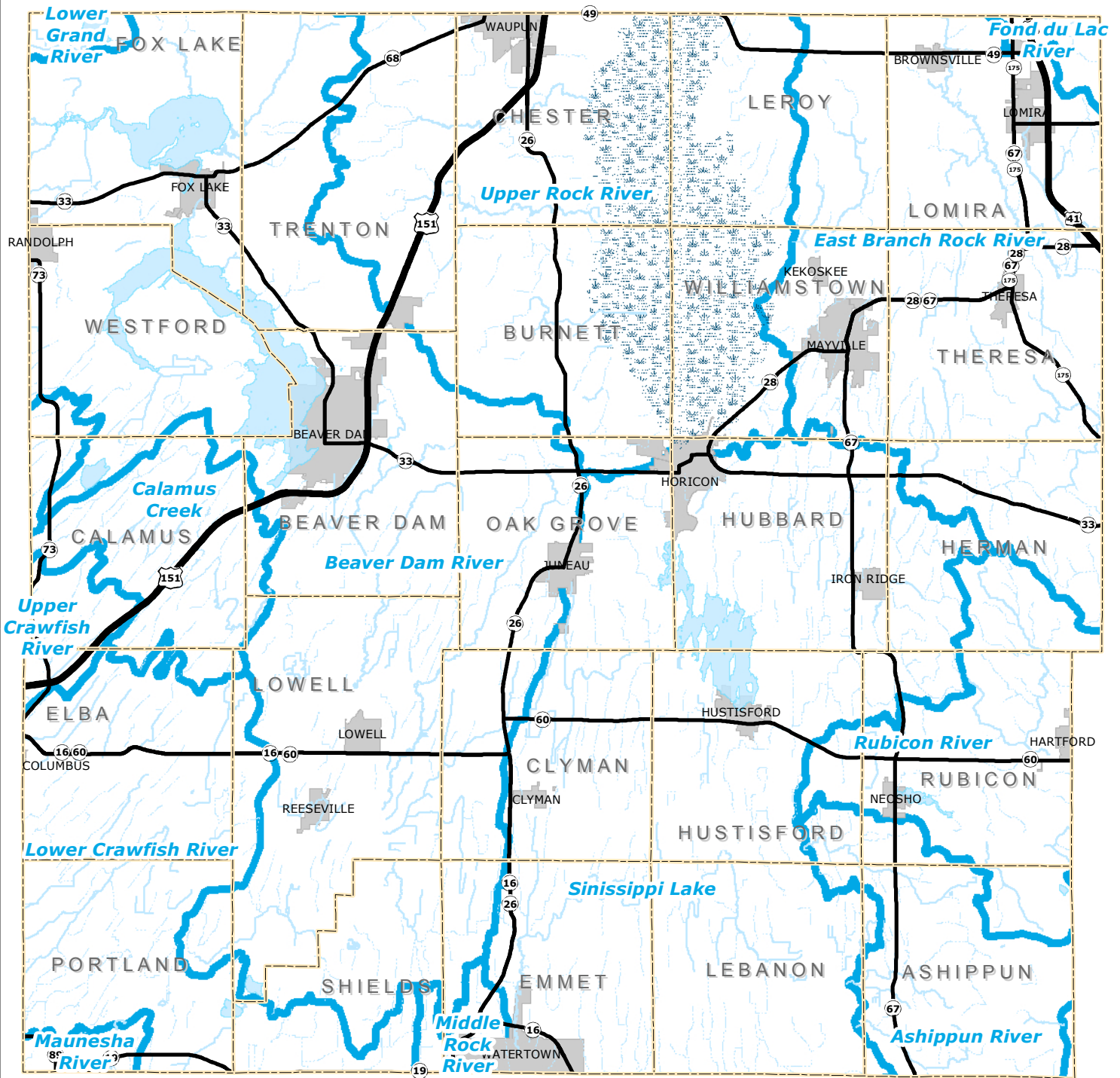
Map #1, Dodge County Area Map

Dodge County, Wisconsin



Source: Dodge County Land Resources & Parks Department, March 2015

Map #2 , Surface Water Dodge County, Wisconsin

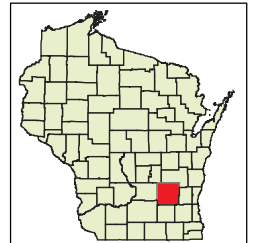
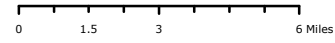


LEGEND

- U.S. Highway
- State Highway
- Town Boundaries
- Cities & Villages
- Watersheds
- Horicon Marsh
- Lake
- Streams
- Intermittent Streams

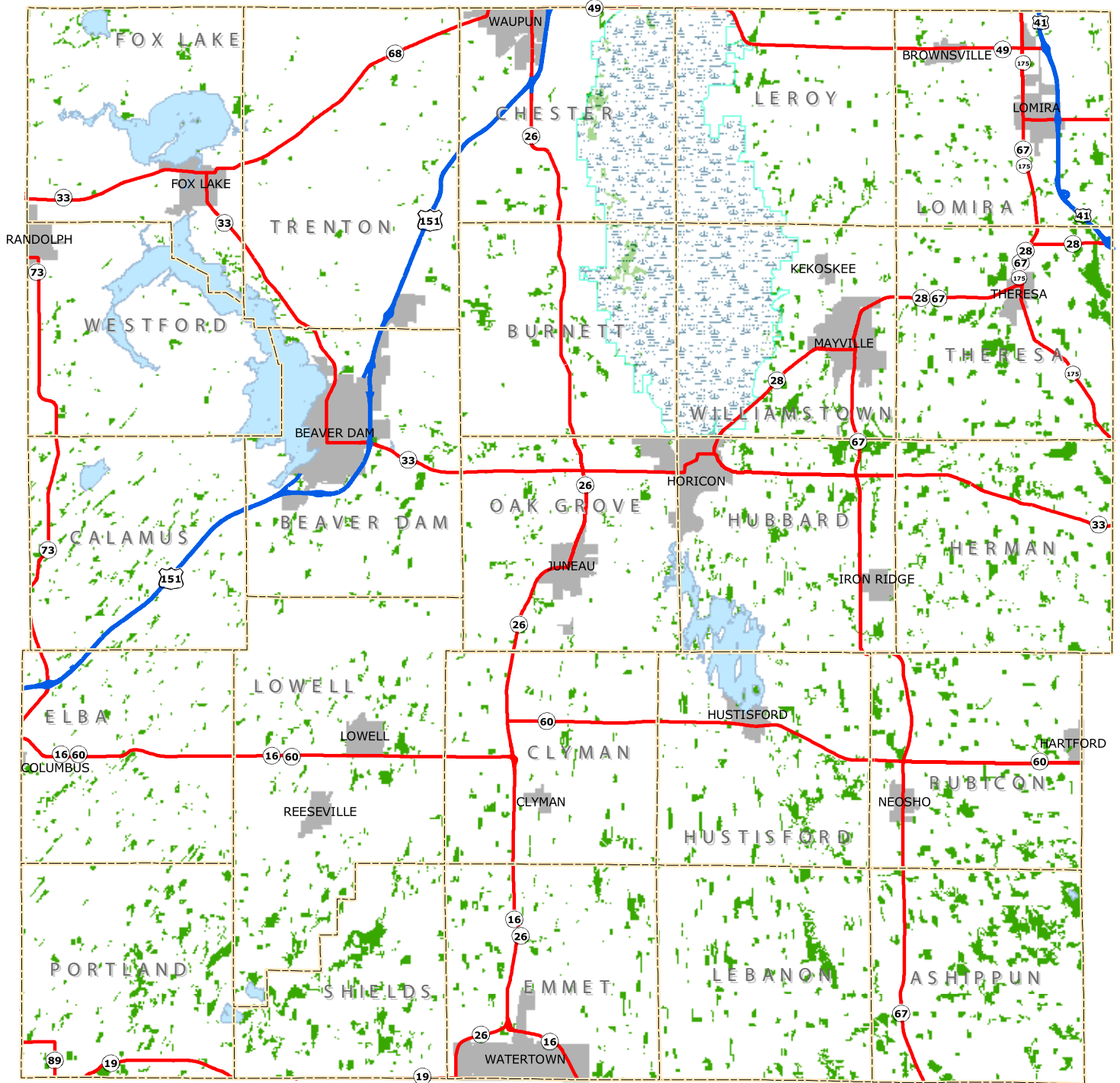


Dodge County
Land Resources and Parks
Department



Source: Dodge County Land Resources & Parks Department, March 2015
Derived from WI DNR Watershed data

Map #3, Woodlots Dodge County, Wisconsin



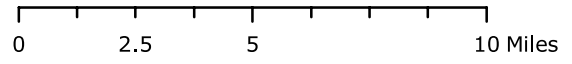
Legend

- U.S. Highway
- State Highway
- Municipalities
- Town Boundaries
- Woodlots
- Horicon Marsh
- Lake

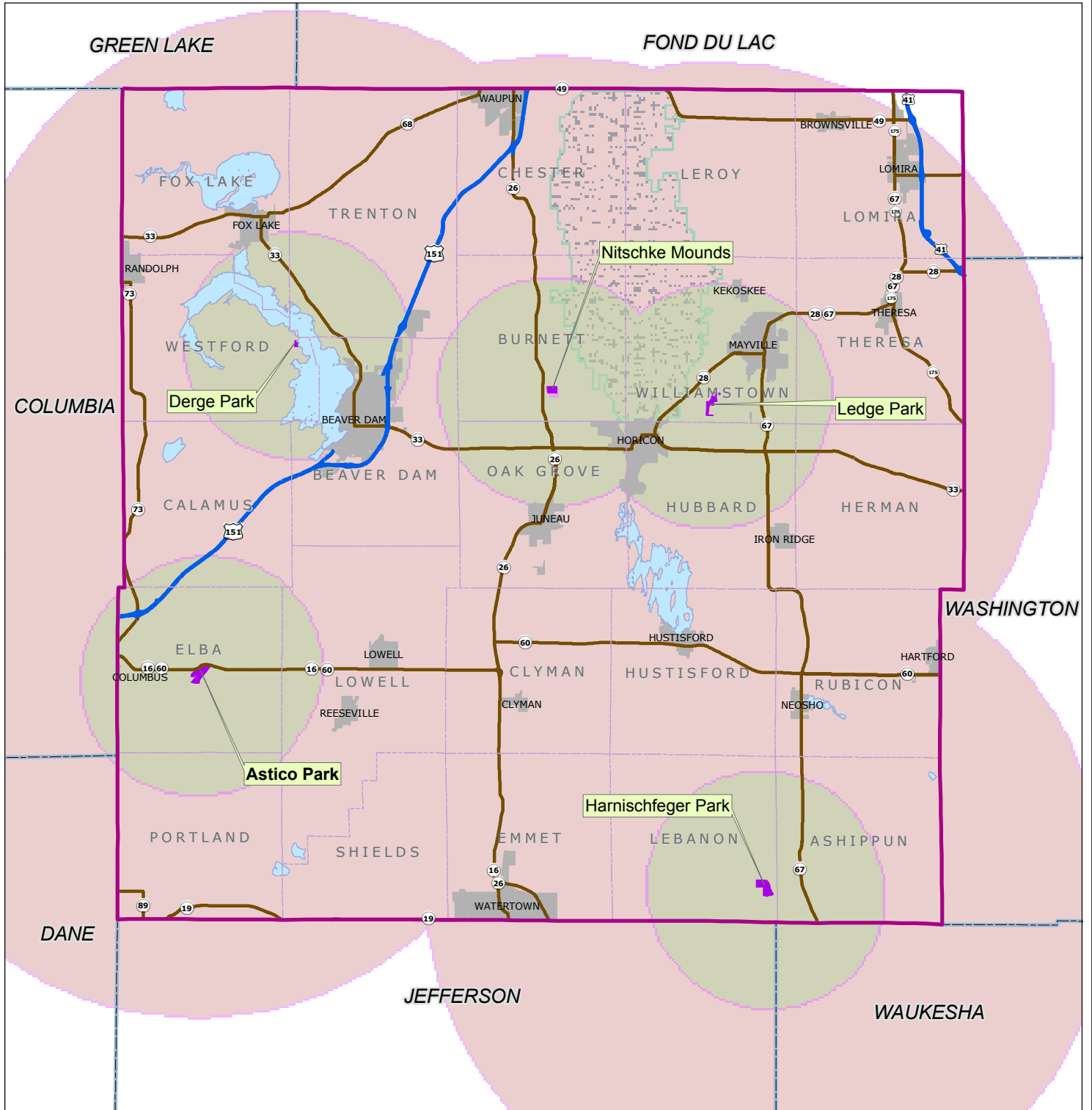


Dodge County
Land Resources & Parks
Department

Source: Dodge County Land Resources & Parks Department, March 2015



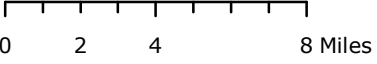
Map #5, Service Areas of County Parks Dodge County, Wisconsin



Legend

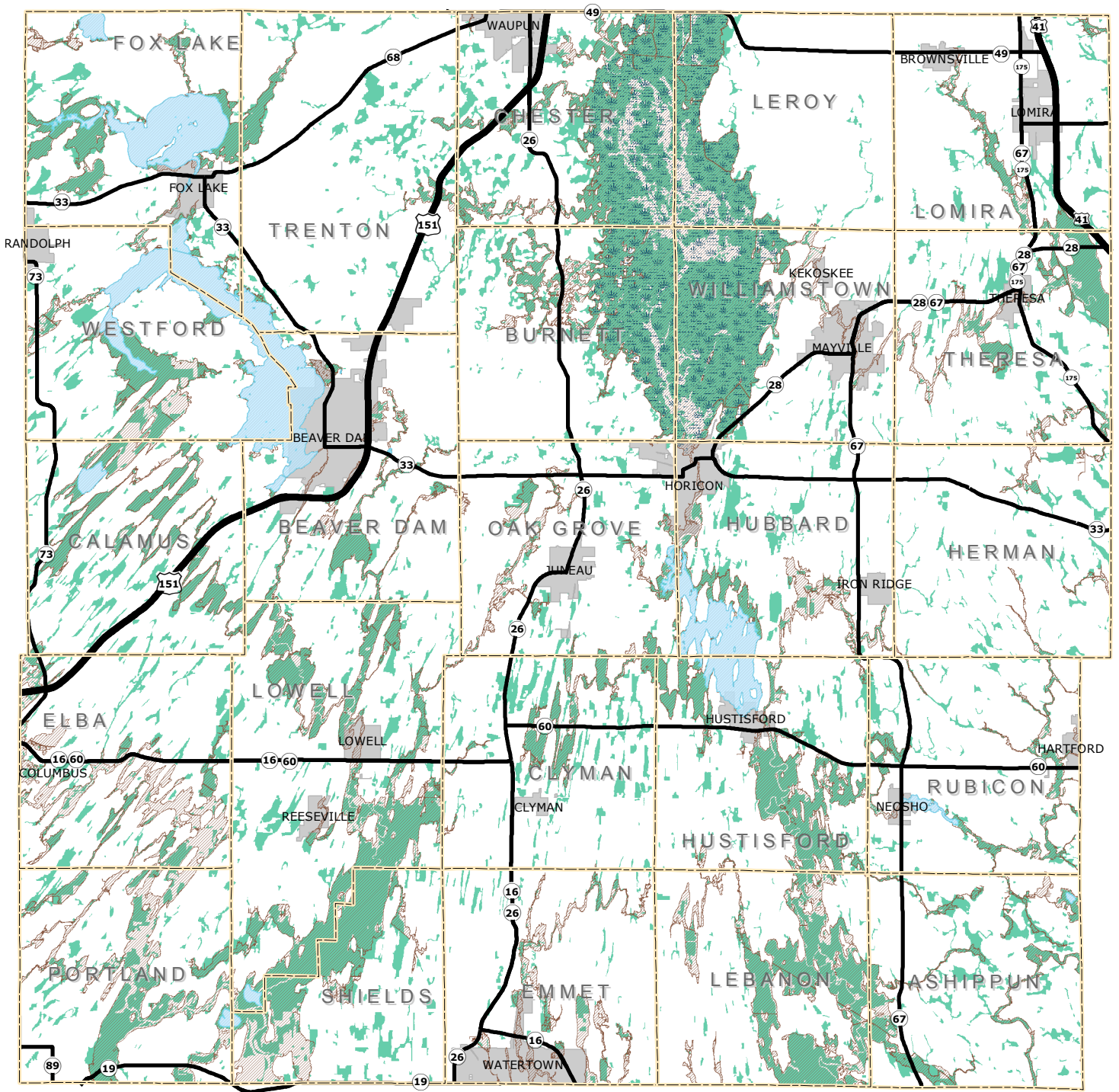
	U.S. Highway		County Park
	State Highway		Parks 4 Mile Service Area
	County Boundaries		Parks 12 Mile Service Area
	Dodge County Boundary		Horicon Marsh
	Dodge Town Boundaries		Lake
	Cities and Villages		

Dodge County
Land Resources and Parks
Department



Source: Dodge County Land Resources and Parks Department, March 2015

Map #6, Wetland and Floodplain Boundaries Dodge County, Wisconsin

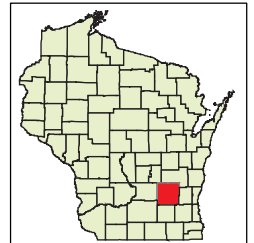
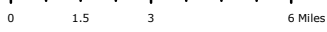


LEGEND

- U.S. Highway
- State Highway
- Town Boundaries
- Cities & Villages
- Wetlands
- Floodplain
- Horicon Marsh
- Lake

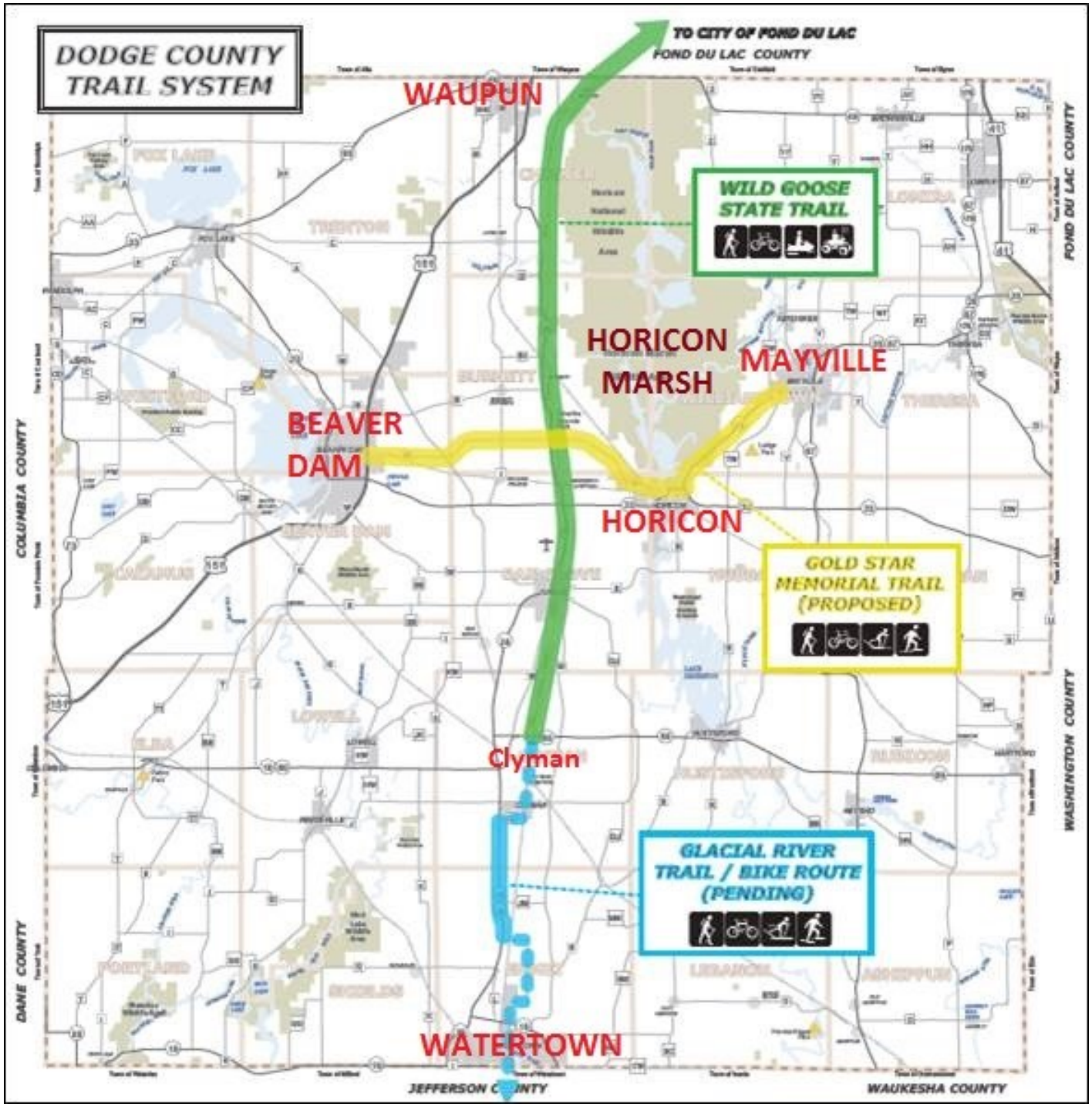


Dodge County
Land Resources and Parks
Department



Source: Dodge County Planning, Development, and Parks Department, March 2015

Map #8, Dodge County Biking / Hiking Trail System
Existing - Pending - Proposed



Appendix 3

Public Input Survey Results

Question 1.

If you received this survey directly from the Dodge County Land Resources and Parks Office by mail or email, then enter the survey code (letter and number) located in the upper left corner of the survey. Leave this question blank if there is no survey code.

Answer Options	Response Count
	196
<i>answered question</i>	196
<i>skipped question</i>	9

Survey codes were used to distinguish how/where the respondent received the survey.

Responses: **143** from Random Mail Survey (15.4% Return Rate)
22 from Emailed Survey (22.4% Return Rate)
40 from Website (*those that skipped the question were assumed to be from the website*)
205 **Total Respondents to the Survey**

Question 2.

In which city, village or rural town do you reside?

Answer Options				
City, Village or Town of Residence				
Outside Dodge County	9		Ashippun Town	2
Unsure	1		Beaver Dam Town	10
Beaver Dam City	42		Burnett Town	2
Fox Lake City	5		Calamus Town	3
Hartford City	0		Chester Town	1
Horicon City	4		Clyman Town	5
Juneau City	6		Elba Town	1
Mayville City	16		Emmet Town	3
Watertown City	17		Fox Lake Town	4
Waupun City	12		Herman Town	1
Brownsville Village	1		Hubbard Town	2
Clyman Village	0		Hustisford Town	1
Hustisford Village	3		Lebanon Town	2
Iron Ridge Village	3		LeRoy Town	3
Kekoskee Village	3		Lomira Town	1
Lomira Village	5		Lowell Town	1
Lowell Village	0		Oak Grove Town	1
Neosho Village	2		Portland Town	4
Randolph Village	3		Rubicon Town	3
Reeseville Village	1		Shields Town	1
Theresa Village	3		Theresa Town	4
			Trenton Town	3
			Westford Town	3
			Williamstown Town	6

Geographical

Distribution of Responses:

50.3% from City Residents
11.8% from Village Residents
33.5% from Town Residents
4.4% from Outside Dodge County
100%

Actual Population Distribution of County

(50.4% of County Population)
(11.4% of County Population)
(38.2% of County Population)

Question 3.

Are you familiar with the Dodge County Parks System?

Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
Yes	80.0%	156
No	20.0%	39
<i>answered question</i>		195
<i>skipped question</i>		10

Question 4.

**How have you heard about the Dodge County Park System?
(Please mark all that apply)**

Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
Word of Mouth	64.2%	120
Newspaper	36.9%	69
Website	22.5%	42
Radio	17.1%	32
Television	1.6%	3
Other (please specify)	25.1%	47
<i>answered question</i>		187
<i>skipped question</i>		18
Other (please specify)		
atv club	family	
Work with Parks	personal experience	
traveling the county	this survey	
My in-laws caretake for Ledge Park so I hear from them.	county map	
Lived in Dodge Co. for 30 years - Brochures probably	living here	
grew up enjoying it .. lived down the road from Horicon Ledge Park	trucks with sign	
I've used them	visits	
Living in area for 30 years	school trips	
Live in the area and walk the parks year around	Drive by Siting	
lifelong resident	personal visits	
FLYERS	Driving By	
I have camped in them many times	live next to it	
dodge county park flyers	MAPS	
Husband went camping at Astico when younger	Maps	
Through Friends of Dodge County Parks publications	TRAVELING	
Waupun Park & Rec Dept	Visited a park	
YOUR BROCHURE OF DODGE COUNTY	just know	
Used park for many years	Active in Parks	
Dodge County publications	Relatives	
Always lived in Dodge County	Visit the Parks	
moved here recently - haven't used any parks	Visiting sites	

Question 5.

Which of the following recreational activities do you and/or your family participate: (Please mark all that apply.)

Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
Walking/Hiking	69.7%	138
Picnics	49.5%	98
Fishing	47.5%	94
Camping	42.4%	84
Biking	40.4%	80
Walking Pets	33.3%	66
Bird/Nature Watching	33.3%	66
Kayaking/Canoeing	20.2%	40
Sledding	18.7%	37
Snowmobiling	17.2%	34
ATV Riding	16.2%	32
Other (please specify)	12.6%	25
Power Boating	12.1%	24
Cross-Country Skiing	10.1%	20
Frisbee/Disc Golf	9.6%	19
Jogging	5.6%	11
Horseback Riding	5.1%	10
Geocaching	5.1%	10
<i>answered question</i>		198
<i>skipped question</i>		7
Other (please specify)		
snow shoeing (4 responses)		
Motorcycling		
do not participate		
dogsledding		
Motorcycle riding		
Badminton, Baseball,& just relaxing to enjoy nature		
playing with the kids		
Historical - Nitschke Mounds & Ledge		
Working Events		
We need a dog park.		
Walking		
gardening, natural history		
Motorcycle		
Golfing		
catch and release of frogs		
kids to play		
Just being out in nature enjoying quiet & peace!		

Question 6.

**Which of the Dodge County parks or trails do you and/or your family visit or use?
(Please mark all that apply.)**

Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
Ledge Park	49.5%	94
Wild Goose State Trail	47.9%	91
Astico Park	28.9%	55
Derge Park	23.7%	45
Harnischfeger Park	17.9%	34
Other (please specify)	16.8%	32
Nitschke Mounds Park	15.8%	30
Snowmobile Trail	14.7%	28
<i>answered question</i>		190
<i>skipped question</i>		15
Other (please specify)		
various fox lake, beaver dam and waupun parks		
none-used to go to the Ledge when I was younger		
Beaver Dam City Parks		
It depends on where we are coming from.		
Crystal Lake		
Horicon Marsh Area		
Swan, Roller, and most parks in Beaver Dam		
JUST MOVED HERE		
None - we go North, South or leave state		
Tahoe - Lakeview		
Don't use		
Don't know where these parks are		
Dog Park Hwy 26		
I have no idea where any of these parks or trails are.		
Swan Park		
due to physical limitations I am unable to visit or use		
none yet		
If I was at one of these, I didn't know what it was called		

Question 7.

**How often do you or your family visit these parks or trails?
(Please mark the best answer)**

Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
Never	15.9%	32
Once a Year	20.9%	42
2-5 times/year	38.3%	77
6-10 times/year	13.9%	28
More than 10 times/year	10.9%	22
<i>answered question</i>		201
<i>skipped question</i>		4

Question 8.

How satisfied are you with the recreational facilities available at the Dodge County Parks? (Please mark the best answer)

Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
Very Satisfied	16.2%	32
Satisfied	52.3%	103
No Opinion	27.9%	55
Dissatisfied	3.0%	6
Very Dissatisfied	0.5%	1
<i>answered question</i>		197
<i>skipped question</i>		8

Question 9.

How satisfied are you with the appearance, maintenance, and cleanliness of Dodge County's parks and trails? (Please mark the best answer)

Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
Very Satisfied	21.6%	43
Satisfied	56.3%	112
No Opinion	20.1%	40
Dissatisfied	2.0%	4
Very Dissatisfied	0.0%	0
<i>answered question</i>		199
<i>skipped question</i>		6

Question 10.

Do you feel safe while using Dodge County's parks and trails? (Please mark the best answer)

Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
Very Safe	26.6%	53
Safe	51.8%	103
No Opinion	20.1%	40
Unsafe	1.5%	3
Very Unsafe	0.0%	0
<i>answered question</i>		199
<i>skipped question</i>		6

Question 11.

How would you rate the importance of the following initiatives that the Dodge County Land Resources and Parks Department could pursue?

Answer Options	Very Important	Somewhat Important	No Opinion	Somewhat Unimportant	Very Unimportant	Resp. Count
Acquire Land For New Parks	30	65	41	33	20	189
Acquire Land To Expand Current Parks	27	79	42	26	18	192
Acquire Land With Historical/Cultural Importance	49	70	42	20	13	194
Acquire Land With Scenic or Natural Resource Importance	74	72	26	12	13	197
Add or Expand Campgrounds	34	61	57	17	13	182
Add or Expand Boat Launches	27	55	72	21	12	187
Add or Expand Canoe Launches	23	50	80	17	11	181
Add or Expand Hiking Trails	51	74	39	16	6	186
Add or Expand Cross Country Ski Trails	19	43	87	20	12	181
Add or Expand Snowmobile Trails	14	38	66	29	31	178
Add or Expand ATV Trails	20	36	61	30	34	181
Add / Expand Equestrian (Horse) Trails	8	26	89	29	27	179
Add or Expand Picnic Areas	33	85	37	19	9	183
Add or Expand Athletic Fields/Courts	13	42	80	22	19	176
Add/Expand Off Leash Dog Park/Areas	27	40	69	19	25	180
Add or Expand Disc Golf Courses	6	29	86	31	25	177
Add or Expand Playgrounds	22	71	60	14	13	180
Add or Expand Nature Programs/Education	51	59	47	12	13	182
Other (please specify)						16
				answered question		199
				skipped question		6
Other (please specify)						
snow shoeing!						
Save our TAX money						
I feel that we have enough for our area. We're a rural area.						
Nature programs are very important for the health of a community. Please make this a priority.						
During this time when the cost living is a priority, it does not seem very important to expand anything						
Walk trail from Waupun to the Goose Trail						
Dumping Station at Harnischfeger-would go camping at this park if there was a Dumping Station						
Off leash dog parks/areas - YES!						
Golf Courses (somewhat important)						
bathroom facilities - very important						
hunting						
for off leash dog parks/areas - DOGS ON LEASH						
when land is developed it is too late						
Toilet Facility						
wetland						
Campgrounds at Harnischfeger						

Question 12.

What amenities or facilities not listed in question #11 would you like to see added to the Dodge County Parks System? (Please list them in the space provided.)

Answer Options	Response Count
	71
<i>answered question</i>	71
<i>skipped question</i>	134
Response Text	
more off leash dog areas	
more flush toilets and showers in camping parks	
Emergency Phones to 911 or police departments only	
ATV and/or multi-use park	
Boardwalk at Harnischfeger Park	
naturalist led programs/hikes at the parks would be nice - Jr ranger type programs for kids would be nice.	
question 10 was about safety.	
We need swimming beaches on Beaver Dam and Fox Lakes.	
swimming area or beach-river side picnicking	
Enclosed Shelter Building	
More shower space for campgrounds	
resting and informational signage areas along the wild goose trail system providing cultural/environmental information and history for the Horicon Marsh ecosystem	
working showers	
Snow shoeing trails	
Please expand the Wild Goose trail to the south.	
Just Protecting wildlife & their Habitat ALREADY There OR Perhaps MORE "INFO" on What kind of wildlife or habitat is currently in the parks--& HOW "IMPORTANT" it IS to "Preserve/Protect" IT!?!?/--THANK YOU!!!	
trail access to and from cities	
a trail from waupun to the horicon marsh	
atv park or trail system	
Dumping station at Harnischfeger Park	
bike riding trails	
Fine the way it is	
ATV/Motorcycle Park	
Toilets, showers, dump station @ Harnischfeger	
Can't think of anything else at this time - perhaps update Clubhouse kitchen in Harnischfeger (future)	
WILDLIFE VIEWING AREAS	
In this lovely economy, maintain or expand what you have, not a good time to add more.	
Another shower & restroom at Ledge Park	
AVAILABILITY OF BALL FIELDS	
BATHROOMS NEAR WILD GOOSE TRAIL	
more nature space, habitat preservation, more trees in all parks	
more programs like Kettle Moraine N. Unit	
More showers & bathrooms	
Off road ATV Motorcycle; Hunting; Horse Trails	

Geocaching
Something where parks are and what they have to offer there.
bathroom facilities, water & rest stations
Equipment rentals such as canoe, sports equipment
Dump station for Harnischfeger Park
swimming at the Ledge Park
Beach?
In these economic times Parks should be at the bottom of the list.
Good - clean sanitation & H2O
Community Activities & Education
paved bicycle trail
nothing, money can be spent better areas
Toilet Facilities - Flush toilets & easily accessible
more fishing areas for the disable people
more restrooms - more access to firewood
ice skating rink
wetland
I do not feel qualified to answer this.
"Unimproved" nature areas with just walking/hiking trail; a prairie area and a woodland area
none really - would like ATV trails
restrooms, park rangers overseeing / patrolling Ledge

Question 13.

**How much of a tax increase would you be willing to pay to acquire more park land or add new amenities to the Dodge County Park System?
(Please mark the best answer)**

Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
\$0	25.5%	51
\$10/year	37.5%	75
\$30/year	16.5%	33
Over \$50/year	3.5%	7
Unsure	17.0%	34
<i>answered question</i>		200
<i>skipped question</i>		5

Question 14.

What would encourage you and/or your family to visit or use the Dodge County Parks on a more regular basis? (Please mark all that apply.)

Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
More Trails	33.1%	54
Closer to Home	29.4%	48
More Park Amenities	28.2%	46
Lower Fees	16.0%	26
Better Maintenance/Appearance	10.4%	17
More Athletic Fields/Courts	6.1%	10
Other (please specify)	35.0%	57
answered question		163
skipped question		42

Other (please specify)
use the (sunsetted) 1/2% sales tax to pay for park items. Oh that's right, the 1/2% tax was for ADA items
more atv trails
more public awareness of available activities
more time
finding the time is the most difficult aspect of getting away.
More time... :)
less partying at the campgrounds
Just need more time, which the parks cannot provide
showers/bathrooms
More time to use them
Just that in question #15--about "FEES"!!!---"IF" fees WERE "imposed"---I believe they would HAVE to be QUITE "MINIMAL"!!!--otherwise a GOOD NUMBER of people would be UNABLE to "USE" THEM!!!! & THAT would be a SHAME!!!!
lower fees for local people using the facilities
More Electrical Campsites and Water
access and safety getting to trail systems
a walking/bicycling trail from waupun to the horicon marsh
I do not know of any Cross Country Ski trails that are maintained in any county park. We need better maintained and longer trails. I like to hike at a good pace for a couple of hours and there is nowhere in any of the parks I visit where I am able to do that. I walk at ledge park, but it is just that a short hike or walk. I can't even find enough of a trail system for skiing, hiking or snowshowing to keep me busy for an hour. I would like to see lege park expanded and more trail established. I also wonder if it is not possible to walk near Iron Rige near the old Neda Mines. I know that bats winter there, but I wonder if it would not be possible to make hiking trails on that ledge that would not disrupt the bats.
more natural areas such as the Niagara Escarpment, Horicon Marsh area,

Horse Trail
better weather
Happy the way they are
MORE INFORMATION ON PARKS
available time
NICE WEATHER
LESS HOMELESS PEOPLE
NEED MORE FREE TIME TO DO IT
DON'T CAMP AT HOME
NOTHING DUE TO OUR AGE
AWARENESS OF WHAT IS AVAILABLE
more free time
Motorcycle; Horse Trails; ATV
more time together
more natural areas
Don't know where they are all located.
having more spending \$ and free time for recreation
animal areas
running trails for cross country runners to stay in shape during summer
to know where they are!!
Public awareness of existing activities
more hours in a day - less work / less O.T.
dog friendly
I'm happy just as is!
Need to know where they are at
more time
fishing areas
better economy
just do not take the time to take advantage of the parks in Dodge County!
more advertisement
will let you know when we use them!
ATV trails

Question 15.

Should Dodge County require park visitors to pay an entrance fee to use the parks? (Please mark the best answer)

Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
No	48.5%	97
Yes	27.5%	55
Unsure	24.0%	48
<i>answered question</i>		200
<i>skipped question</i>		5

Question 16.

Do you think the Dodge County Park System has a role in bringing visitors/tourists to Dodge County? (Please mark the best answer)

Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
Yes	65.7%	132
No	15.9%	32
Unsure	18.4%	37
<i>answered question</i>		201
<i>skipped question</i>		4

Question 17.

How long have you lived in Dodge County? (Please mark the best answer)

Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
0-5 years	11.8%	24
6-15 years	15.8%	32
16-30 years	17.7%	36
more than 30 years	54.7%	111
<i>answered question</i>		203
<i>skipped question</i>		2

22	24						
49	44	20	17				
34	34	2					
49	50						
43	36						
63	50						
75	72						
40	37	11	7				
51	22						
61	60						
48							
66	62						
49	50	19					
45	45						
57	57						
47	44	18	15	15			
55	50	17	13				
50	50						
51	50	19	17	15			
58	87						
40	35						
41	54						
50	50	20	20				
30	48						
67	66						
50	40	10	10	1			
48	46	18	13				
37	17	10	7				
28	27	3	1				
48							
60	65						
40	36	5	2				
52	50	19	16	15			
45							
43	32	21	18				
35	37	2					
35	41	15	13				
35	59						
38	36	3					
61	62						
61	58						
49	42	6					
42	45	6					
53	53						
77	76	51					
52	54						
66	66						
43	51	17					
50	23						
44	26	8	2				
52	82						
67	67	37					
82							
45	18	15					
46	43	18	10				
65	60						
32	31	3	1				
43	43						
60							
64	70						

70	50						
44	38	16	15				
50							
39	35	16	11	0			
60	58						
28	33						
55							
57	55	18					
59	58						
53	80	82					
59	57						
65	66						
27	4	1					
50	46						
73	65						
27	29	6	3				
40	40	5	8				
69	67						
79							
59	62	35					
45	40	23	27				
49	38						
71	46						
48	51	13					
52	51	24	23				
50	54	23	20	11			
47	46	18	14				
50	49						
36	27	6	4				
44	43	9					
47	49						
28	25						
44	42	13	10				
37	36	17	9	1			
35	17	16	14	13	11	6	4
48	48	22	21				
75	69						
39	40	8	11				
42	42						
42	43	18	23				
45	41	18	8	6			
60							
80							
64	63						
67							
30	33	76	2				
56							
55	47						
65	65						
61							
51	50	21	18				
38	42	14	15				
61	59						
64	54						
63							
78							
49	47						
68	72						
78							
66	66						

37	35	7					
60	61	31					
49	49						
36	40	16	14				
50	50						
38	35	5	1				
46							
65	59						
51	47	20					
29	26	2					
37	43	6					
59	63						
38	37	10					
37	27	5					
31	38	5					
64	60						

Average Age of Respondents: 50 years old

Oldest Respondent: 82 years old

Youngest Respondent: 22 years old

Question 19.

Which of the following recreational organizations are you or anyone living in your household members of (if any)? (Please check all that apply.)

Answer Options	Response Frequency	Response Count
Fishing	35.1%	39
Hiking	28.8%	32
Bicycling	26.1%	29
Snowmobile	24.3%	27
Archeology/Historical	17.1%	19
Birding	17.1%	19
ATV	15.3%	17
Cross-Country Skiing	9.9%	11
Horseback Riding	9.9%	11
Other (please specify)	31.5%	35
<i>answered question</i>		111
<i>skipped question</i>		94

“Other” responses

Boy Scout Program
waterfowl/hunting
archery/gun club/sportsmen
Snow shoeing
dogsledding / carting
West Bend Kettle Kampers
Harnischfeger Friends of Dodge Cty Park
DOG TRAINING
WE LIKE LONE ACTIVITIES
camping
Motorcycle
Golf Club
hunting
hunting
Bird Watching
Canoeing
Disc Golf
sportsman's club

Question 20.

Please feel free to add any comments you might have about the Dodge County Park System or parks and recreation in Dodge County.

<p>use the 1/2% sales tax to pay for park items. Oh that's right, the 1/2% tax was for ADA items only, or am I wrong. As it never ended like County Supervisor Mr Gundersen said it would, I think the best use is for enriching life of county people like parks and walking trails.</p>
<p>Dodge County could benefit great from tourism dollars generated from an ATV park and/or a multi-use park along with expansion of the ATV trail system.</p>
<p>There is an increasing numbers of atv riders. Go to any atv area up north such as black River Falls during any summer holiday or almost any weekend, and you will see just how big this type of recreation is. These small towns that have an atv trail or atv activity in really boost their economy and keep them alive. Since there is not much of any kind of trail system or park area in this part of the state it would be a very welcomed thing. The large numbers of atvers in this part of the state could use an area (atv park) here, instead of always having to travel up north. That would also help keep those funds in this area of the state, and bring more money into the community that would host a park like this it can also have safety classes, camping etc.. Closer to home for the people in this part of the state means more money to spend here and not in fuel for traveling up north.</p>
<p>As an innkeeper, we know how important it is to the tourism business of this county to update and maintain our county parks and recreation areas... many of our visitors use these facilities and ask about them. They are a big draw to our county.</p>
<p>Please do not widen the road in Ledge Park's campground. Less road makes you feel more out in the wild. Also, please do not cut down the large cottonwood tree on the east side of the park entrance road at Ledge park. Could you include that tree in the park entrance design? It would have a unique feel to it. Trees that big are hard to regrow quickly....Do you consult with naturalists when making expansion decisions for the county parks? I hope you do. I want to commend Joe and Sue Schaefer of Ledge Park for all the countless extra hours of work they put in!</p>
<p>If you have money for this you should give it back to the people!!!!</p>
<p>We have a good park system but being a rural area, I don't think we need any expansion, other than adding swimming beaches at Beaver Dam and Fox Lakes.</p>
<p>Whatever you do-don't charge to get into parks where a person has to charge for entrance. There also should be a mandatory permit for children under 16 to fish. I live by the river and the most abusive and unsafe river and fishing practice is seen by the young unsupervised children. The fee could be \$3 and obtained just like a regular license. Anyone who doesn't have a permit should not be allowed to have a fishing pole. It is unsafe and all they do is torture the fish. Or else put others in danger. I would like to see more attractive camping areas in Dodge county</p>
<p>I think our Dodge County parks are great. Though we do not utilize Dodge County parks frequently, we do use state parks.</p>
<p>Dodge County has a unique feature found within its boundaries, namely the Horicon Marsh, which provides a unique educational opportunity for tourism. I am amazed by the number of people that live within Dodge County that no very little about the Marsh and its history. The DNR has been expanding its educational system for providing more in depth information on the site. I believe the Dodge County Park System could enhance some of its parks and hiking trails to capitalize on this same unique feature by providing informational signage with history and facts for people to enjoy.</p>
<p>It would be nice if there were more options like small playgrounds at some of the parks we go to along with areas to swim.</p>
<p>paying for entrance to parks is something I struggle with. I know it takes money to run and expand the parks but I also don't want any one turned back because you have to pay. I think if half the people in Dodge Co went to a park they would like it.</p>
<p>would like to see more boat launch sites on all county lakes and rivers. could also combine with overnight facilities(camping).</p>
<p>Of the parks we use, I feel Nitschke Mounds is in need of the most development. We take our Cub Scout group there several times a year. The tremendous historical significance makes it worth the investment. Most needed improvements are for graded and paved parking and access walk, at least to</p>

the shelter building. My family loves the camping at Ledge, Astico, and Harnischfeger parks. We know folks who have camped at Derge, but we feel the facilities need improving there. The playground is very old. We have talked to many families who travel from out of the county to enjoy the camping facilities we have. The camping appears to do a great job of attracting tourism to Dodge County. If looking for land, a good area for new camping and park space might be right at the Wild Goose Trail and Hwy 49. Lots of access to nature with the federal land off Hwy 49, if land is available. Otherwise, consider making Derge Park bigger and adding more facilities.

We mostly frequent Ledge Park and would prefer that it be maintained as a more rustic park without a lot of camp sites and modern conveniences. It's hiking trails and wooded scenery loses something when there are too many campsites with all the modern conveniences.

If you change the campsites at Ledge Park, please keep some that are very large like they are now. Can you add some canoe and kayak landings along the Crawfish river so that there would be more opportunity to explore other sections of the river?

Can more bike trails be added, perhaps linking communities?

Please work with the WDNR and Federal Refuge to expand nature programs.

some groomed trails that ATV's and snowmobiles aren't on would be nice

I think we have a GREAT parks system!!! I wish MORE people would take Advantage of it!!!! Perhaps if SOME parks were available for One kind of "Activity";---& Other parks were available for OTHER kinds of "Activity"!!!! It Seems that a lot of people---are only looking for "quiet, hiking--reflection type of activities, while others want the more, "noisy, active---such as "ATV's" & such!!! It SEEMS that not ALL these activities "Mesh" well---in the Same "Area"!!???---THANK YOU!!!

I think if you had a volunteer program for local residents to help with park related projects such as trail maintenance, brush clearing, tree and downfall cutting, campground upkeep such as cleaning campsites, painting and fixing benches, tables and signs ,etc. For those people who volunteered maybe some free vouchers for camping, or you could get some local business's to donate door prizes. I know I would be more than willing to give up a couple of weekends to help out, some of my fondest camping memories are from Ledge Park

Price of wood is too expensive

I'd love to see more trails.

An access trail from Waupun to the Wild Goose Trail for bicycles, hikers, walkers and joggers in the spring, summer and fall seasons. Possibly snowmobiling, skiing and ATV usage in the winter.

need dog park

Because of the Horicon Marsh being so close I go there for many Nature Programs and I am not sure that Dodge County Parks needs to duplicate their efforts. I also do some hiking in the Marsh but the trails there are also quite short. I do have to go long distances to get in any good hiking, cross country skiing or snow shoeing. I frequently bike to Ledge Park and take short hikes. "Short" hikes being the problem and the trails there are really not kept up very well. I have to drive to the North Kettle or Pike Lake to get in any hiking. snow shoeing or cross country skiing of quality. I wish we could expand our park system to include some lengthy hikes or if there is a place close to me I would like to become aware of it. Good Luck with the survey. I wish you much success.

I have been going camping at Astico and Derge Parks for the past nine years, if not longer and just love the peace & quiet. We would go to Harnischfeger Park if there was a dumping station. A couple of years ago, the bridge was put across the Crawfish River by Astico to expand camping--i think this project should be finished before any new projects begin.

The park system is fine the way it is and should be maintained. Money is tight in everyone's budget and should not be used to buy more land. Money should be spent to maintain and plan for the future. What if a tornado comes through this summer? Are the resources there to plant new trees, build new restrooms, provide clean-up, etc? Dodge County doesn't have the Grand Canyon to draw people in just for visiting a national landmark, but while visiting family and friends I know a lot of people use the parks for reunions and places to meet. Keeping the picnic areas clean and maintained should be encouraged.

When we had children living at home we were more likely to use the parks.

The only state park I've been to in the past 2 years is the Kettle Moraine Equestrian Park, riding horse on the trails.

We pay to enter the park with vehicle and pay to use the trails. I believe that is fair.

<p>Beautiful well maintained facility, more people should use it "best kept secret" in Waukesha County Lived there (neighbor to park) when I was a child/teenager. Beautiful, peaceful park. How can we get more families to come and enjoy it? Surrounding towns especially. Thank You for taking such good care of this property. As a teenager, I babysat for Paul & Carol Braatz children (prior owners of Harnischfeger Park farm).</p>
<p>We need a Dog Park!</p>
<p>It is a quiet, special place. Hope it can stay that way. Maintain what we have.</p>
<p>KEEP DEVELOPMENT TO A MINIMUM. RESTORE INDIGENOUS FAUNA & FLORA.</p>
<p>In this economy, do not spend money on NEW parks.</p>
<p>THE PARKS ARE WELL MAINTAINED.</p>
<p>It is important to horse owners to have places to ride their horses. It would be nice to have many more trails to access in Dodge County so I wouldn't need to trailer my horse to further away trails. Also horse clubs are usually eager to help make trails and help maintain them.</p>
<p>KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK.</p>
<p>My mother, who is 84 years old, enjoys camping at the park. We have our family reunion at the Ledge Park the second weekend in Sept. We arrive on Wednesday and leave the following Tuesday. We camp in the electric loop. It would be nice to have a modern bathroom and shower around by the vending machine and water around sights 14-17 area. My mother lives on W2512 Farmersville Road. I am filling this out for her.</p>
<p>At the Ledge Park, the 5 acres or so below the ledge where the pond is which you wanted to add to trails is still available after we get done using it for garden. (if you are still interested?)</p>
<p>10. OCCASIONALLY WE'VE SEEN WHAT APPEAR TO BE HOMELESS PEOPLE STAYING OVERNITE IN THE PARKS, ESP. ASTICO.</p>
<p>I AM NOT IN FAVOR OF ANY TAX INCREASES FOR OUR PARKS AT THIS TIME.</p>
<p>AS A NEW RESIDENT I LOOK FORWARD TO UTILIZING HIKING TRAILS. IN OUR PREVIOUS LOCATION WE FREQUENTLY USED OUR LOCAL COUNTY PARK FOR EXERCISE, PLAYING WITH OUT DOG AND ENJOYING NATURE.</p>
<p>8. IT'S GREAT TO HAVE THE BIKE TRAIL. IT'S NOT MAINTAINED VERY WELL.</p>
<p>ONLY USE WILD GOOSE TRAIL</p>
<p>We'd like more natural habitat They are nice, but there is ALWAYS too much garbage on the playgrounds at Swan Park</p>
<p>We think Dodge County has a very good park system. Keep up the good work.</p>
<p>WE DON'T NEED OUR TAXES ANY HIGHER WITH THE ECONOMY THE WAY IT IS.</p>
<p>The trails on Ledge Park aren't clearly marked. I visited Wyalusing State Park a few years ago and really enjoyed their trails because they had many historic markers laid out. I think that would be a neat addition. I would also like to receive a mailing that tells me where parks are and what they offer.</p>
<p>Don't use the system at all.</p>
<p>Dodge County does a much better job of maintaining and keeping our parks clean then many others we have visited. I think parks are very important to attract visitors to the area and boost the economy.</p>
<p>It is very important to provide parks and continue to acquire or designate land for this. Upkeep is very important and should not be compromised.</p>
<p>Lived in Dodge County all my life and have used parks many times. Picnic tables & fire pits could be replaced. Also the grills in the shelter areas could use some replacing. For the most part, the parks are very nice. I would like to see more camping parks and to see better grills, fire pits and picnic tables. I have been at the Horicon Ledge Park more than any other. It's nice to see all the improvements there over the last 30 years. I would like to see other county parks make upgrades as well.</p>
<p>We own 2 dogs, a dog park/area would be very nice.</p>
<p>Don't use parks. Familiar with just Astico.</p>

<p>Everything for tree hugging bird wildlife watchers. Not really for people who enjoy recreation! Zero trails for Motorcycle ATV Zero trails for Horses</p>
<p>Advertise</p>
<p>Involve, scouting and other school activity group for help with our Seniors Citizens.</p>
<p>Trail system ok</p>
<p>Keeping up and improving the Parks we have is more important then adding more to the park system. We have lovely local parks to use and we should not add more cost to the tax payer.</p>
<p>Very satisfied with the trails.</p>
<p>#3 - somewhat familiar We have only been to Ledge Park and love it. We hope to discover the other parks in the future. We have ample literature on what the other parks offer, so that is not the problem. The workers at Ledge Park are very friendly and helpful.</p>
<p>No new taxes to pay for parks. The fees charged to users don't need to be high... \$1.00 to \$3.00? No money needed to advertise the parks. People who use them will find them. Leave No Trace policy should be used. Carry out what you carry in. \$0 save on costs.</p>
<p>#13 - would depend on how closely new amenities would fit my needs. #15 - maybe if from other counties or reduce fee for residents #16 - yes somewhat I would like to see some kind of advertising or brochure that shows what our county has to offer as well as directions to locations. Having resided in Dodge County my whole life, I've not heard of all the parks listed. I would love to see more outdoor activities offered.</p>
<p>Did not know about 3/4 of the parks around Dodge County. You send me this and I have to pay for a stamp???</p>
<p>#8 - excellent facilities #15 - would be more for serious naturists. Does eliminate some problems. I have enjoyed the park since I was a child and my children now enjoy it also. It would be exciting to see new positive changes! Thank you for the showers at the Ledge Park. Great addition!!</p>
<p>Don't really use parks any more. We visited on a regular basis 15 years ago when our children were young.</p>
<p>If you close the parks for deer hunting, one would think you should also close it for duck hunting for any park that is bordered by the river. Otherwise you are prejudice against one group and not the other.</p>
<p>We really like the fact that the Ledge Park now has shower & flush toilet facilities!</p>
<p>#7 - parks/once a year, snowmobile trails/6-10 times a year</p>
<p>In this economic climate adding/expanding park land or facilities should not even be a budget priority. Maintain what we have.</p>
<p>I emphasize my answer to #12</p>
<p>#8 - Don't know where parks are and what they offer. Do like Astico however. #9 - Only know the Astico Where are they and what do they offer?</p>
<p>#8 - would like more info on park amenities</p>
<p>In regards to question 15, possibly instituting an entrance fee for boats brought into parks. State parks do and people seem to not have a problem with it. Possibly a concession stand at parks especially on weekend would be nice. I would love to have a place my dog could run. Also, West Bend and Cedarburg have wonderful paved biking trails and they're great. No riding on sidewalks and stopping every block.</p>
<p>#7 - in summer every day #8 - smoother trails</p>
<p>I enjoy going to the Ledge Park. Because of my age, I cannot do all the things I sued to do. I'm limited</p>

only because of arthritis but it does not stop me from getting in the car and going out in the beautiful area of Ledge Park. I just sometime just drive thru especially spring and fall. It's so uplifting. I grew up on a farm and lived most of my life in the country - it's still all part of me. I find great peace in nature. I will always love it and if only a picnic or a drive thru a park. Keep them beautiful!!

Snowmobile trails are nice. Hot line updates on trail conditions and status works well.
I don't think we have groomed ski trails. Or snowshoe trails would be nice too. Those of us in Northern Dodge County have to drive an hour or more for useful ski trails.

#8 - need a map to where they are at
#16 - visitors/tourists bring money to the county
Need a map - cost if there are

I think in these times this survey is a waste of time and money. We need to use our tax dollars to a better advantage.
Another waste of tax payer money!!!

I don't think there should be a charge to go to a boat landing and have to pay a fee to launch a boat in Dodge County if that's where you live.
I don't feel I should have to pay to park at a park to go swimming if I'm a tax payer in that county. The people that are not tax payers in the county should have to pay a fee!!
I think there could be more ATV trails in Dodge County.

Maintain what we have.
If need, add tax so young families do not have to pay for use of parks.

#15 - Camping YES, Hiking/Walking NO

My dad uses the parks for fishing. He is disabled. He would like to see more bathrooms at the parks.
More garbage cans also. Thank You!

#8 - very well kept and clean
#10 - need more rangers or police patrols
The parks are great place to visit and enjoy the wildlife.

#7 - about once every 4 or 5 years

I live here and used the county park system my whole life. I feel the facilities are adequate.

#9 - ditches need to be cleaned of litter
Need to get more ATV trails.

I feel the park system is important - particularly so to families with children. I also believe such areas attract others to consider living in Dodge County. I do feel that the Astico property is historically important.

Get as much land as you can as soon as you can!!! There's no such thing as too much land for parks. Parks of all kinds add SO much to everyone's quality of life. Nature preserves should be included in this - "unimproved" parks, or areas with just a walking trail through them, as at the Bong Recreation area in Kenosha County.

#8 - bathrooms could be nicer
#15 - no - use your hunting sticker
Wild Goose Trail and create other trails for horse riding and ATV riding
There are ATV groups in our area that may be able to assist in this.
The Horicon Marsh is very nice, clean and fun for all ages.
The Hunt by the Horicon Marsh is wonderful for disabled people - please keep that program

#10 - One visit to Ledge Park had a rowdy party crowd.

I don't know much about the Dodge County Parks. The flyer sent with this sounded interesting, but I don't know where that park is. There isn't a city or address listed to tell you where to go.

#15 - No - you would discourage locals

The new Nitschke Mounds Park is great. The history of the native Americans is fascinating and important for all of us immigrants to this area.
The Wild Goose Bike Trail is perfect. I'd like to see more bike trails/hiking trails in the state. I'm against noisy smelly ATV and snowmobile trails.
I'm willing and in favor of paying fees for use/upkeep of trails.