

**SUBJECT: LAND ACQUISITION – BARABOO HILLS RECREATION AREA – SAUK COUNTY**

**FOR: DECEMBER 2010 BOARD MEETING**

**TO BE PRESENTED BY:** Richard Steffes

**SUMMARY:** The Department has obtained an option to purchase 40 acres of land from James Altemus for \$212,000 for the Baraboo Hills Recreation Area in Sauk County. The item is being submitted because the purchase price exceeds \$150,000.

The parcel is adjacent to and west of Devil's Lake State Park ownership. It is a dense, closed canopy of mixed hardwoods. This acquisition will compliment over 1,000 acres of protected land east of Highway 12 and along the western boundary of Devil's Lake State Park. Department ownership will provide opportunities for public recreation, will consolidate department ownership, and prevent incompatible development in the area. State park land borders to the south and a Sauk County easement to the east.

Devil's Lake State Park is located in south-central Wisconsin, about three miles south of Baraboo and forty miles north of Madison. The project was established in 1911 as one of Wisconsin's original state parks. Since that time, it has become the most heavily used park in the state with more than 1,400,000 visitors each year. Located in the eastern part of the Baraboo Hills, which forms the largest block of continuous forest canopy in southern Wisconsin on Baraboo quartzite, the park contains highly significant geological and natural history value. It is part of the nine-unit National Ice Age Scientific Reserve. Devil's Lake is managed to protect the scenic, geologic, and natural values of the Devil's Lake area and for a variety of recreational, educational, and scientific purposes. The property is used for picnicking, swimming, rock climbing, hiking, nature and geological study, natural history and geologic research, fishing, hunting, camping, educational meetings, cross-country skiing, and other outdoor recreational activities.

Devil's Lake State Park is located in the Baraboo Range, which has been designated a National Natural Landmark by the National Park Service. Covering more than 50,000 acres, the range contains the largest block of non-fragmented deciduous forest remaining in the upper Midwest. The differences in elevation, exposure and soils within the range create an astounding variety of ecological habitats. At least 28 different natural communities have been identified within the range. These communities harbor 23 species that are federal or state listed as threatened or endangered species. About half of the more than 2,200 species of vascular plants found in Wisconsin exist within the range. The range is also extremely important habitat for the preservation of neotropical migratory birds. Many of these birds are dependent on the continued existence of large tracts of deciduous forest for suitable nesting habitat. Preservation of the forest of the Baraboo Range is critical to the future health of these bird species.

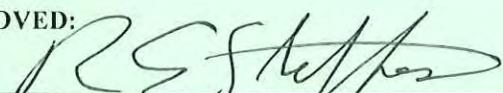
Purchase of this 40-acre property would help meet the goals of the Baraboo Hills State Recreation Area and protect the scenic resources of Devil's Lake State Park as well as providing additional land for outdoor recreation.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the Board approve the purchase of 40 acres for \$212,000 for the Baraboo Hills Recreation Area.

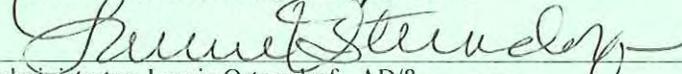
**LIST OF ATTACHED MATERIALS:**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fiscal Estimate Required                              | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Attached            |
| No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Environmental Assessment of Impact Statement Required | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Attached            |
| No <input type="checkbox"/> Background Memo  | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Attached |

**APPROVED:**

  
Real Estate Director, Richard E. Steffes - LF/6

11-4-10  
Date

  
Administrator, Laurie Osterndorf - AD/8

11/9/10  
Date

  
Secretary, Matthew J. Frank - AD/8

11-12-10  
Date

- cc: S. Miller – LF/6
- R. Steffes – LF/6
- L. Ross – AD/8
- D. Schuller – PR/6
- L. Eagan – SCR/Fitchburg

## CORRESPONDENCE/MEMORANDUM

DATE: November 4, 2010  
 TO: Natural Resources Board  
 FROM: Matthew J. Frank *MJF*  
 SUBJECT: Proposed Land Acquisition, James Altemus Tract, File # PR 40097,  
 Option Expires February 18, 2011

FILE REF: PR 40097

1. PARCEL DESCRIPTION:

Baraboo Hills Recreation Area  
 Sauk County

Grantor:

James Altemus  
 c/o Bradley Sollinger  
 Baraboo Realty  
 323 Linn Street  
 Baraboo, WI 53913

Acres: 40.0Price: \$212,000Appraised Value: \$212,000Interest: Fee Title AcquisitionImprovements: None

Location: The property is located in Sauk County about four miles southwest of Baraboo in the Town of Sumpter.

Land Description: The subject land slopes gently to moderately from west to east increasing about 120 feet in elevation.

<u>Covertypes Breakdown:</u>	Type:	Acreage:
	Upland Woodland	40.0

Zoning: AgriculturePresent Use: VacantProposed Use: Resource protection and public outdoor recreationTenure: 15 yearsProperty Taxes: \$1,889Option Date: October 22, 2010

Stewardship Land Access: This property will be open to the public for all nature-based outdoor recreational activities to include hunting, fishing, trapping, hiking, and cross-country skiing.

2. JUSTIFICATION:

The Department is proposing to acquire 40.0 acres from James Altemus in Sauk County in the Town of Sumpter. The property is within the Baraboo Hills State Recreation Area and adjacent to Devil's Lake State Park ownership along its southerly boundary. It is a dense, closed canopy of mixed hardwoods. This acquisition will compliment over 1000 acres of protected land east of Highway 12 and along the western boundary of Devil's Lake State Park. Department ownership will provide opportunities for public recreation, will consolidate department ownership, and prevent incompatible development in the area. Sauk County holds a development easement on the Ski-Hi Fruit Farm on the subject's east side.

Devil's Lake State Park is located in south-central Wisconsin, about three miles south of Baraboo and forty miles north of Madison. The project was established in 1911 as one of Wisconsin's original state parks. Since that time, it has become the most heavily used park in the state with more than 1,400,000 visitors each year. Located in the eastern part of the Baraboo Hills, which forms the largest block of continuous forest canopy in southern Wisconsin on Baraboo quartzite, the park contains highly significant geological and natural history value. It is part of the nine-unit National Ice Age Scientific Reserve. Devil's Lake is managed to protect the scenic, geologic, and natural values of the Devil's Lake area and for a variety of recreational, educational, and scientific purposes. The property is used for picnicking, swimming, rock climbing, hiking, nature and geological study, natural history and geologic research, fishing, hunting, camping, educational meetings, cross-country skiing, and other outdoor recreational activities.

Devil's Lake State Park is located in the Baraboo Range, which has been designated a National Natural Landmark by the National Park Service. Covering more than 50,000 acres, the range contains the largest block of non-fragmented, deciduous forest remaining in the upper Midwest. The differences in elevation, exposure and soils within the range create an astounding variety of ecological habitats. At least 28 different natural communities have been identified within the range. These communities harbor 23 species that are federal or state listed as threatened or endangered species. About half of the more than 2,200 species of vascular plants found in Wisconsin exist within the range. The range is also extremely important habitat for the preservation of neotropical migratory birds. Many of these birds are dependent on the continued existence of large tracts of deciduous forest for suitable nesting habitat. Preservation of the forest of the Baraboo Range is critical to the future health of these bird species.

Purchase of this 40-acre property is recommended to meet the goals of Baraboo Hills State Recreation Area and protect the scenic resources within Devil's Lake State Park as well as providing additional land for outdoor recreation.

3. FINANCING:

State Stewardship bond funds are anticipated:

Funds allotted to program:	Balance after proposed transaction:
\$50,685,000	\$11,717,498

4. ACQUISITION STATUS OF THE BARABOO HILLS RECREATION AREA:

Established: 2000  
Acres Purchased to Date: 3,152.95  
Acquisition Goal: 950.0 Acres  
Percent Complete: 331.89%  
Cost to Date: \$5,929,738.40

5. APPRAISAL:

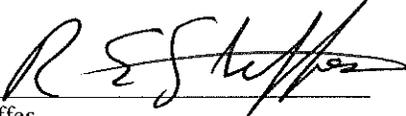
Appraiser: Paul Stone  
Valuation Date: July 27, 2010  
Appraised Value: \$212,000.00  
Highest and Best Use: Rural residential

Allocation of Values:

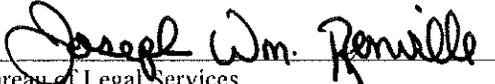
- a. land: 40.0 acres @ \$5,300.00 per acre: \$212,000.00
- b. market data approach used, three comparable sales cited
- c. adjusted value range: \$5,171.00 to \$5,550.00 per acre

Appraisal Review: Greg Delwiche - August 17, 2010

RECOMMENDED:

  
Richard E. Steffes

11-4-10  
Date

  
Bureau of Legal Services

11-4-10  
Date

  
Laurie Osterndorf

11/9/10  
Date

RES:dv



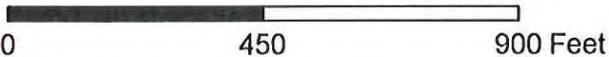
# James Altemus Parcel

T11N R6E Section 22, Town of Sumpter, Sauk County, WI (40.00 Acres)



### Legend

- - - PLSS Section Line
- PLSS Quarter-Quarter
- DNR Project Boundary
- County Boundary
- DNR Eased
- DNR Owned



### Subject Property

**PR 40097**

Baraboo Hills Recreation Area

- Fee Simple
- Easement
- Ingress/Egress

State of Wisconsin

Nov. 1, 2010  
Real Estate Section  
Bureau of Facilities and Lands

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