



Clark County Owen Wildlife Area Interim Forest Management Plan

Property Identifiers

Property Name and Designation: Owen Wildlife Area

DNR Property Code: 1002

Property Location: Clark County

Total Property Acreage: 160

Master Plan Date: No Master Plan on File

Property Manager: Scott Roepke

Property Assessment

Owen Wildlife Area is a state owned property located just south of the city of Owen in northern Clark County. The property is located in the Forest Transition Ecological Landscape. The primary management objectives of this property are to provide public hunting and fishing opportunities as well as to protect and restore stream, riparian, and upland habitat conditions. Common game species found on the property include: deer, ruffed grouse, snowshoe hare, and woodcock. Secondary objectives of the property include providing public lands for trapping, hiking and other non-consumptive outdoor recreation opportunities as well as for timber production.

LANDSCAPE AND REGIONAL CONTEXT

This property lies in the Forest Transition Ecological Landscape and is associated with the Black River watershed. The Owen Wildlife Area is located on a landscape dominated by intensive agricultural practices. State owned Wildlife Lands such as the Owen Wildlife Area provide scattered parcels of public land that provide hunting and fishing opportunities in a predominantly privately owned landscape. Opportunities for management include regenerating and maintaining aspen and bottomland hardwood ecosystems, protecting floodplains, watersheds, and headwater areas, and increasing ecological connectivity. Invasive species are a large concern in the area. Early detection and control is a challenge on these lands because of adjacent development pressure.

Hydrology: This part of the state has a number of generally low-gradient warm water streams. The streams in the Owen Wildlife Area flow to the Popple River and eventually to the Black River.

Current Land Cover: Once largely forested, this area is now a mix of agricultural uses on the upland and forests on the sites not suitable for agriculture. Forested acreage occurs along stream corridors, on wet and nutrient-poor soils, and in areas of steep topography.

HISTORY OF LAND USE AND PAST MANAGEMENT

The entire western unit of this property was in agricultural production through the first half of the 20th century. The southernmost parcel was historically forested. When purchased by the state, the property was converted to a more native habitat to accommodate recreational land uses.

WILDLIFE ACTION PLAN/SPECIES OF GREATEST CONSERVATION NEED



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Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SCGN's) associated with these stream corridors are many, and in particular include aquatic species, reptiles, amphibians, migrant birds and insects. Small scale forestry practices that promote diversity of forested types will benefit a variety of the upland species, while riparian buffers, reserve areas and BMPs will protect the stream corridors. Riparian buffers and reserve areas will also provide ecological "legacies" such as large diameter trees, snags, and course woody debris within this small property.

CONSERVATION OPPORTUNITY AREA

This property is not listed in the Wildlife Action Plan's Implementation document for the Forest Transition Ecological Landscape as potentially within any Conservation Opportunity Area (COA).

NATURAL HERITAGE INVENTORY - RARE SPECIES

Three rare species are listed for the general area in the Natural Heritage Inventory database at the time of this writing. They include a state threatened bird, state threatened reptile, and a special concern mussel. Two of these species are associated with the aquatic habitat provided by the stream corridors; one is associated with the adjacent uplands. Forest management activities will maintain riparian buffers to avoid impacts to these aquatic associates. In addition, forest management activities are usually limited to frozen ground or dry conditions to minimize impacts to other species. Turtle species are of primary concern on this property. To help protect turtles, management activities should avoid growing season time periods when possible. A NHI screening will be conducted prior to all future management activities.

HIGH VALUE CONSERVATION FOREST (HCVF) or other resources/ natural community types limited in the landscape

There are no identified HVCF on this property.

BIOTIC INVENTORY STATUS:

There are no known biotic inventories for this property.

CULTURAL AND ARCHEOLOGICAL SITES: (including tribal sites)

No archaeological or historical sites have been identified by the Wisconsin Historical Society on this property.

RECREATIONAL USES

This property is open to foot use only. Hunting and fishing are the primary recreation use of this property. Occasional use for hiking, geo-caching, wildlife viewing and other non-consumptive recreation is present.

INVASIVE SPECIES

An invasive species inventory has not been completed. There is high potential for invasive establishment due to proximity to railroad tracks and access by recreationists. Buckthorn is locally common on private woodland properties near the railroad right-of-way.



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SOILS

The Owen Wildlife Area silt soils are very deep, nearly level to sloping, and poorly to moderately well drained. These soils were formed from a parent material of loess. Post-glacial erosion, stream cutting, and deposition formed floodplains, terraces, and swamps along streams.

CURRENT FOREST TYPES, SIZE CLASSES AND SUCCESSIONAL STAGES

FORESTED COMMUNITIES

The forested cover types are made up of a variety of size classes (regeneration, sapling-pole, and saw timber) and structure (canopy, layers, ground vegetation, dead and downed material, and inclusions). Forested communities within this property cover approximately 65% of the total acreage, including mixed aspen (37%), and lowland hardwoods (28%).

The primary habitat type on this property is ATAtOn (Sugar Maple, Eastern Hemlock, Lady Fern-Sensitive Fern): This habitat type is associated with erosional surfaces and ground moraines in this landscape. The soils are typically poorly drained loams and silt loams overlying till, residuum, or bedrock. The moisture regime is mesic to wet-mesic and the nutrient regime is medium. All mesic species can be managed on this type, however red maple and black ash productivity is optimal.

Aspen:

There are currently 58 acres of aspen timber type. Aspen is a short lived, shade intolerant species that is an important component of upland habitat. No other forest plant community provides more habitat requirements to as many forest wildlife species – both game and non-game – than does the aspen type. Aspen, throughout all its growth stages, provides critical habitat elements for a variety of species, with some like the ruffed grouse finding their entire life requirements in this community. Although this type is common on this property, its percentage throughout the lake states has been steadily declining for the last 25 years. This decline is primarily due to lack of harvest of over-mature stands, especially on private lands. Regeneration is primarily achieved through coppice harvesting (clearcut). Management will be geared toward maintaining the aspen timber type acreage on this property using a rotation age of 40 years. The objective will be to provide dense wildlife cover in relatively small patches. Much of the aspen is currently young to middle-aged. There is one aspen harvest scheduled in the next 15-year period.

Lowland Hardwoods:

There are 45 acres of swamp and bottomland hardwood timber types. Tree species in these areas include ash, elm, aspen, red maple, silver maple and oak. These trees typically grow on poorly drained soils. Mortality from insects and disease has naturally thinned these stands over the past decades. Elm have died and it is anticipated that ash will be affected in the future. Most areas have slow growth and light stocking density. Access is difficult on this low ground. There are two lowland hardwood harvests scheduled in the next 15-year period. These include a 21 acre bottomland hardwood all-aged harvest and a 22 acre swamp hardwood strip cut-harvest.

NON-FORESTED COMMUNITIES

Non-forested communities within the property cover approximately 35% of the forest. In broad categories, they are: upland (3%), and wetland (32%).

Non-forested habitats are important components of management within the property. Upland and wetland non-forest types provide important habitat for distinct groups of species.



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The following provides a general description of the non-forested communities:

Upland Non-Forest (3%)

Upland Non-Forest areas on the property include:

Grass openings – consists of upland grasses, such as brome, quack, bluegrass, timothy, big and little bluestem, and switchgrass.

Wetland Non-Forest (32%)

Wisconsin State Statutes define a wetland as “an area where water is at, near, or above the land surface long enough to be capable of supporting aquatic or hydrophytic vegetation, and which has soils indicative of wet conditions.” Wetland communities are recognized to be a complex association of plants and animals, soils and water levels having special natural values. They are fragile systems that undergo rapid degradation when affected by incompatible uses and unskilled management. Wetlands provide many functional values including shoreline and flood protection, water quality protection, groundwater recharge, and animal and plant habitat.

Wetlands are the transitional habitats between upland and aquatic systems where the water table is usually at or near the surface, or where the land is covered by shallow water. Wetlands habitats found on the property include:

Alder thicket – wetlands dominated by speckled alder. It can also include other shrub species like high bush cranberry and sweet gale.

Seasonally flooded basin – wetlands in poorly drained, shallow depressions that may have standing water for several weeks of each year, but are usually dry for much of the growing season. Typical species include smartweeds, beggarsticks, and wild millet. These basins often support an abundance of plant seeds and invertebrates, which make them ideal feeding and resting areas for migrating waterfowl and shorebirds.

FUTURE MANAGEMENT

This property is managed primarily to protect and restore habitat conditions within the stream corridor and provide quality wildlife habitat. Future forest management will include small scale timber harvests that will avoid disturbance to the streams and increase diverse wildlife habitat. Because this is a small scattered property the annual allowable figure is only a guide and actual forest management practices will be based on logical grouping of stands to harvest. Long term allowable harvest level averages around four acres per year. Sale size of at least 20 acres is desirable to attract buyers to these isolated parcels.

Scheduled harvests are as follows:

Owen Wildlife Area (Property 1002)

Compartment 1

2040: Aspen harvest on 48 acres (Stand #1).

2040: Swamp hardwood harvest on 2 acres (Stand #5).

Compartment 2

2017: Aspen harvest on 10 acres (Stand #1).

2017: Bottomland hardwood harvest on 21 acres (Stand #2).



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Compartment 3

2017: Swamp hardwood harvest on 22 acres (Stand #1).

Forest Management Objectives:

1. Protect the stream corridor by maintaining proper BMP buffers.
2. Maintain a variety of timber types through forest management practices with the primary focus on aspen, and hardwoods.
3. Conduct small scale timber sales to provide a variety of successional habitat stages to benefit wildlife.
4. Identify invasive species and implement practices to eliminate/minimize the impact to the property.
5. Identify rare/endangered species and protect/provide habitat for those species.

Property Prescriptions (Identify specific and pertinent prescriptions by area or forest type, including passive management areas, extended rotation, and other information that will help achieve the objectives.)

Actual sale establishment will vary slightly to spread out the work load and is outlined here:

2017: Owen WA aspen and bottomland hardwood harvest on 31 acres (Comp. 2 Stand #1 and #2).

2017: Owen WA swamp hardwood harvest on 22 acres (Comp. 3 Stand #1).

2040: Owen WS aspen and swamp hardwood harvest on 50 acres (Comp. 1 Stand #1 and #5).

Passive management is planned for most forested wetland acreage and harvest schedules have been removed from WisFirs. Small isolated patches that are landlocked by private ownership or extensive wetlands have also been removed from management schedules and will serve as reserve areas. Approximately 35% of the property acreage will be managed passively.

All stands:

- Utilize BMP's for Water Quality to protect streams and wetlands when conducting timber sales.
- Identify invasive plant species and implement control practices such as prescribed fire, hand pulling, chemical and mechanical control to eliminate or reduce negative impacts.
- Utilize BMP's for Invasive Species to help limit the introduction and spread of invasive species when conducting timber sales
- Retain reserve/legacy trees as groups or individuals throughout the property within harvested stands
- Follow DNR's Species Guidance Documents:
<http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/EndangeredResources/guidance.asp>. to protect rare species. In cases where species guidance documents haven't yet been developed, avoidance to rare species will occur via practices such as time of year restrictions, modified harvest boundaries, and/or consultation with rare species experts.
- Identify and protect any Archeological or Historical sites prior to management activities and plan.



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Approvals:

Devin Selvin 5-13-15

Regional Ecologist

Date

Andrew Jorenson April 2, 2015

Forester

Date

Sean Kuyper 4-20-2015

Property Manager

Date

Steve Eds - Forestry Team Leader 4-16-15

Area/Team Supervisor

Date



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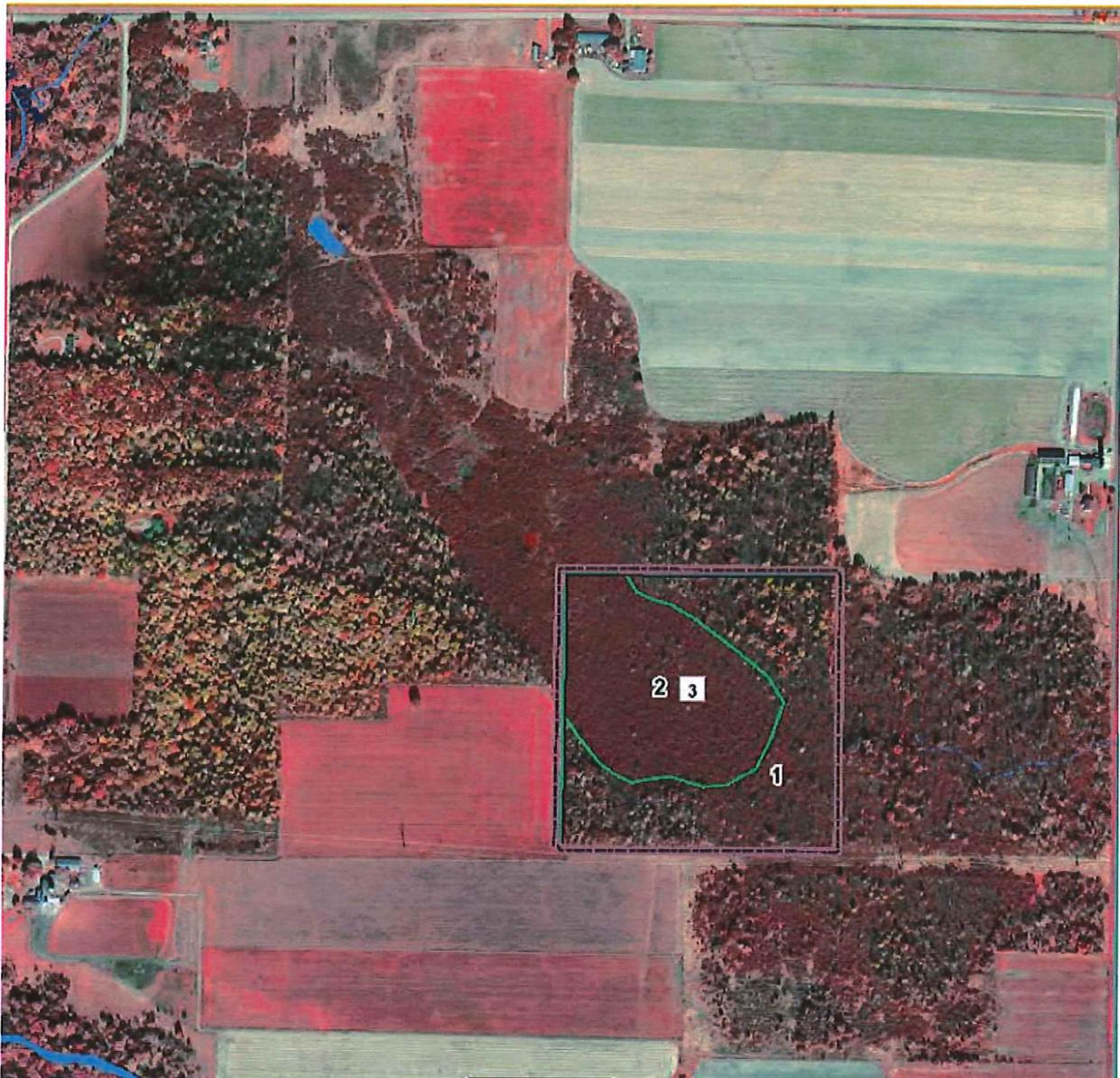
Owen Wildlife Area
Compartments 1 and 2
NWNW, SWNW, W1/2NW1/4, Section 6
T28N R1W





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Owen Wildlife Area
Compartment 3
NWSE, Section 9
T28N R1W





Stand Information by Compartment

Print Date: 4/2/2015
Report 110

Harvest Status

A - Active
X - Tract # assigned, contract not signed

T - Thinning, commercial
RE - Regeneration even-aged harvest
RA - Regeneration all-aged harvest

Treatment Description

TN - Thinning, non-commercial
PR - Pruning
RL - Planting
HM - Habitat maintenance, non-commercial
SP - Site Prep
PL - Planting

Release

Property : 1002 - SCATTERED WILDLIFE - CLARK CTY. (OWEN)

Pre	Exam	Year	T	S	D	T	S	D	T	S	D	Habitat	Acres	Origin	Yr.	Ht.	MSD	Spp.	SI#	BA	CD	BDF	Lvl	Inv.	Mgt.	Obj	Treat	Codes	Year	Harvest Status																									
Compartment No : 1																																																							
SCATTERED LG O (05/07)																																																							
1	2007	A	0005	3	O	0511	1	LBA	48	2000	14	2	A	60	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	D	A	SP	3,5,	2041																										
2	2007	G	LBA	BW	0005	2	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	D	A	RE	1,,	2040																											
BW, MR, A SEEDING IN (05/07)																																																							
3	2007	LBA	BW	0005	2	13	0	D	A																																														
BW, MR, A SEEDING IN (05/07)																																																							
4	2007	KG	LBA	2	0	G	A																																																
WET. NOT CUT IN 2000-SIZE/LOCATION (05/07)																																																							
5	2007	SH	0511	1	A	0511	1	2	1957	56	8	AB	56	50	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	D	A	RE	8,,	2040																											
																												SubTotal :		69																									



Stand Information by Compartment

Print Date: 4/2/2015
Report 110

Treatment Description

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Property : 1002 - SCATTERED WILDLIFE - CLARK CTY. (OWEN)

.....Stand.....	ExamPrimary.....Secondary...Understory..	Origin	Acres	Yr.	Ht.	MSD	Spp.	SI#	BA	CD	BDFT	Inv.	Soil	Mgt. ObjForester Pres....	Harvest Year	Status		
Pre #	Year	T	S	D	T	S	D	T	S	D	Habitat	Habitat	Habitat	Habitat	Habitat	Lvl	Obj	Treat	Codes	Year	Status	
1	2007	A	0511	3	MR	0511	1	10	1971	52	8	A	65	77	19	0	0	D	A	SP	3,5,	2013
2	2007	BH	1500	2	BH	0511	1	21	1926	72	18	MR	70	82	7	4,777	0	D	A	RE	1,,	2012
O IN ALL SIZE CLASSES. WET/BRUSHY. HARVEST W/STND #1 (05/07)																						
3	2007	LBA			KG			17	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	G	A			
RR IN NE CRNR. OXBOWS.BEAVER PONDS. SCATTERED ASH (05/07)																						
																			SubTotal :	48		



Stand Information by Compartment

Print Date: 4/2/2015
Report 110

Treatment Description

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 RL - Release
 HM - Habitat maintenance, non-commercial
 SP - Site Prep
 PL - Planting
 T - Thinning, commercial
 RE - Regeneration even-aged harvest
 RA - Regeneration all-aged harvest
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Property : 1002 - SCATTERED WILDLIFE - CLARK CTY. (OWEN)

.....Stand.....	ExamPrimary.....	...Secondary...	..Understory..	Origin	Yr.	Ht.	MSD	Spp.	SI #	BA	CD	BDFT	Inv.	Lvl	Soil	Obj	Mgt.Forester Pres....	Harvest				
Pre #	Year	T	S	D	T	S	D	Habitat	Acres	Yr.	Ht.	MSD	Spp.	SI #	BA	CD	BDFT	Inv.	Lvl	Soil	Obj	Mgt.Forester Pres....	Harvest
1	2007	BH	0511	2	A	0511	1		22	1973	44	7	AS	59	44	9	283	0	D	A	SP	3,5,	2014	
2	2007	LBA	KG	BH	0005	18												0	G	A	RE	1,,	2013	
WET SITE. EVEN-AGE MGMT- ASPEN FOR WILDLIFE, KEEP ASH (05/07)																								
WET SITE SCATTERED AB/E (05/07)																								
SubTotal : 40																								
Total : 157																								

Compartment No : 3