

# City of Wisconsin Rapids Outdoor Recreation Plan

2012-2016



Prepared by: North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

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**December 2011**

Photos: NCWRPC

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This plan was prepared at the request of the City of Wisconsin Rapids under the direction of City of Wisconsin Rapids Parks & Recreation Commission by the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission.

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## **ABSTRACT**

**TITLE:** CITY OF WISCONSIN RAPIDS OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN  
2012-2016 Effective January 1, 2012 to December 31, 2016

**SUBJECT:** This report assesses the existing recreation system in the City of Wisconsin Rapids; identifies recreation needs based upon public input, past plans, recreation standards, and the Wisconsin Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP); and establishes recommendations for improving the recreation system over the next five years.

Submission of this report to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources establishes eligibility for the City of Wisconsin Rapids for a variety of Federal and State Aids to purchase land and to add facilities to existing outdoor recreation lands. The City of Wisconsin Rapids Outdoor Recreation Plan is required to apply for Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), and Wisconsin Stewardship Grant funding.

Non-profit groups, foundations, and the general public may also use this document to coordinate their own private efforts for developing outdoor recreation facilities.

**DATE:** December 2011

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# Chapter 1 INTRODUCTION

## A. PURPOSE

The primary purpose of this recreation plan is to provide continued direction toward meeting the current and future recreation needs of the City of Wisconsin Rapids. This is accomplished through an inventory and analysis of outdoor recreational facilities, and the establishment of recommendations to meet identified needs.

Adoption of this plan by the City of Wisconsin Rapids Common Council and subsequent acceptance by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) will continue eligibility of the City for Land and Water Conservation Fund (LAWCON), and Stewardship Fund money.

Non-profit groups, foundations, and the general public may also use this document to coordinate their own private efforts for developing outdoor recreation facilities.

## B. STATUTORY BASE FOR THIS PLAN

This Outdoor Recreation Plan (ORP) was prepared pursuant to Wisconsin Statute §23.30 Outdoor Recreation Program. This section serves "to promote, encourage, coordinate, and implement a comprehensive long-range plan to acquire, maintain, and develop for public use, those areas of the state best adapted to the development of a comprehensive system of state and local outdoor recreation facilities and services..."

Submission of this adopted ORP to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources establishes eligibility for the county and local units of government to apply for a variety of Federal and State Aids for outdoor recreation (Chapter NR 50.06(4), Wisconsin administrative code).

## C. REFERENCE PLANS & LAWS

Each plan and law listed below affects outdoor recreation in the City of Wisconsin Rapids. Any recommendations from the below plans are described below.

### ***State Trails Network Plan***

This 2001 document clarifies the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) role and strategy in the provision of all types of trails. The plan identifies a series of potential trail corridors that would link existing trails, public lands, natural features, and communities. This statewide network of interconnected trails would be owned and maintained by municipalities, private entities, and partnerships of the two. Preserving transportation corridors, such as old rail lines, is specifically discussed as a very important strategy in the creation of recreational and alternative transportation corridors. Two Segments affect the City of Wisconsin Rapids.

#### Segment 4 – Green Bay to Mississippi River

This potential trail corridor begins across the Mississippi River near Winona, MN; parallels the Trempealeau River east to Merrilan; then continues to Wisconsin Rapids. Segment 4 could become a trail on or along the existing rail line from Merrilan to Wisconsin Rapids or along State Highway 54.

#### Segment 18 – Tomahawk to Wisconsin Dells

From the end of the Bearskin/Hiawatha Trail in Tomahawk, this corridor would go south to Wisconsin Dells. From Stevens Point to Wisconsin Dells, a potential trail route should use roadways that generally follow the Wisconsin River and its flowages and may provide access to Roche-A-Cri and Buckhorn state parks for trail users. With the support of the counties, this could become a designated bike route. Paved shoulders should be included with any future road improvements. The Ice Age Trail crosses this potential corridor near the intersection of County Highway Z and State Highway 82

### ***North Central Wisconsin Regional Bicycle Facilities Network Plan***

This 2004 document is intended to guide the development of an interconnected bikeway system for the North Central Wisconsin Region at the county level. Potential trails are identified and an improvement description was created for each county that trails exist in to facilitate implementation.

The system in Wood County is based on the County bike plan, and maps from Wisconsin Rapids and Marshfield. Bike routes in Wisconsin Rapids include using the following highways: 34, 54, 73, F, W, & Z. The off-road path along the east side of Plover Road is also included.

### ***Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) 2005-2010***

Completed in August 2006, this plan attempts to classify, measure, and ultimately provide for the preferences and needs of a statewide recreating public. Many factors, from changing demographic and land use trends, to recreational supply, and conflict with other recreation uses, affect the quality, supply, and demand for outdoor recreation.

Park design criteria from SCORP are described in ATTACHMENT A.

A summary of SCORP as it applies to Wisconsin Rapids is described in ATTACHMENT B.

### ***Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) 2012-2016***

Projected completion in Winter of 2011, SCORP 2012-2016 is an approved compliment to the 2005-2010 plan. A major goal of the 2011-16 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) is to identify essential and contemporary issues that affect the future of outdoor recreation in Wisconsin. This SCORP will build upon President Obama's America's Great Outdoors Initiative for the 21st Century to include appropriate management recommendations that serve as proactive approaches to address critical issues identified in the process.

This Presidential Initiative has three main goals:

1. Reconnect Americans, especially children, to America's rivers and waterways, landscapes of national significance, ranches, farms and forests, great parks, and coasts and beaches by exploring a variety of efforts.
2. Build upon State, local, private, and tribal priorities for the conservation of land, water, wildlife, historic, and cultural resources, creating corridors and connectivity across these outdoor spaces, and for enhancing neighborhood parks....through public private partnerships and locally supported conservation strategies.
3. Use science-based management practices to restore and protect our lands and waters for future generations.

### ***Wisconsin Land Legacy Report 2006-2056***

This report is a comprehensive inventory of the special places that will be critical to meet future conservation and outdoor recreation needs for the next fifty years. There are no Land Legacy areas in Wood County.

### ***Complete Streets Law***

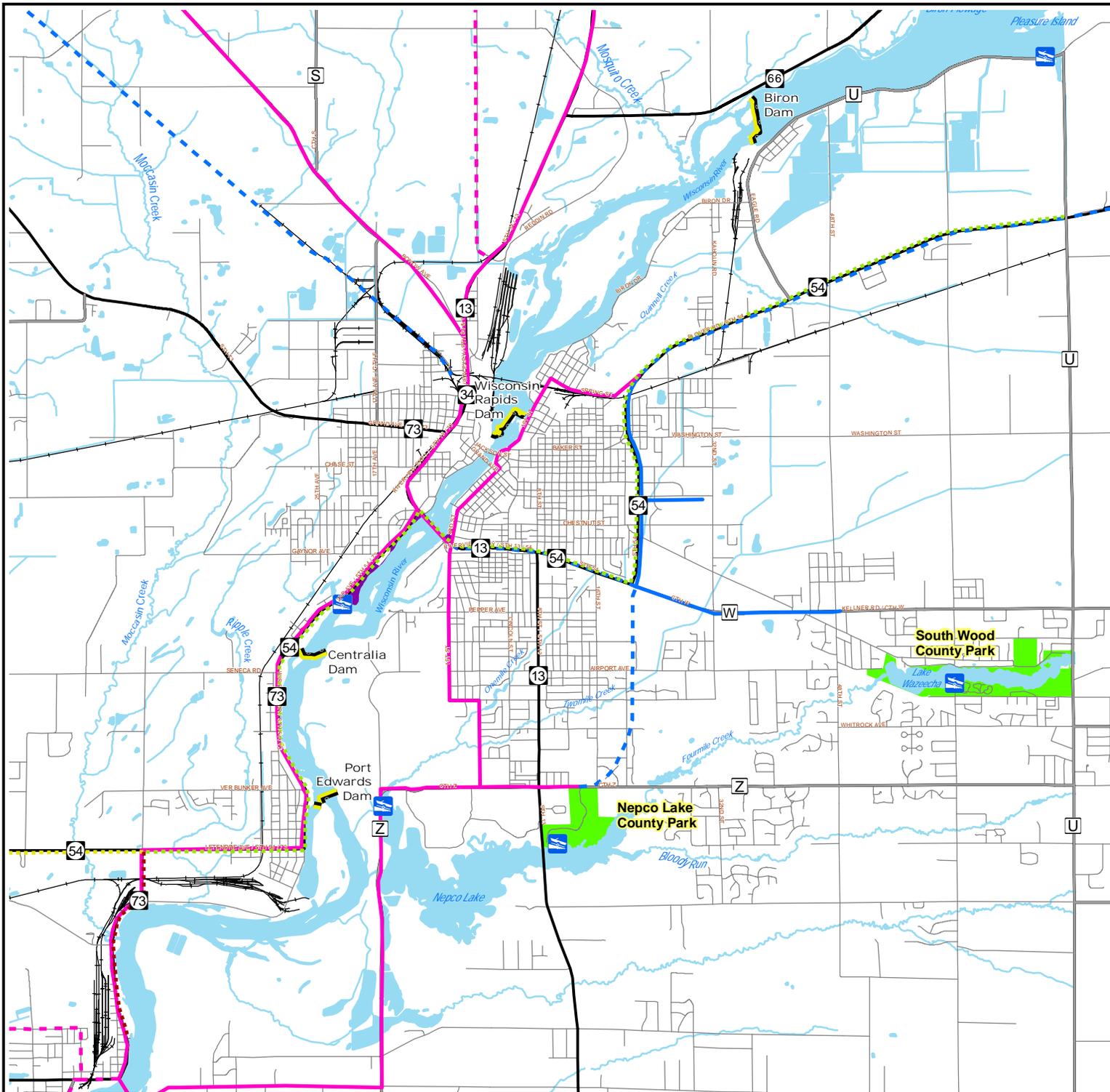
Wisconsin's Pedestrian and Bicycle Accommodations law addressing Complete Streets was codified in 2009. It was incorporated as State statute §84.01(35) and later into administrative rule as Transportation 75.

Complete Streets are roadways designed and operated to enable safe, convenient, and comfortable access and travel for all users. Pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and public transport users of all ages and abilities are able to safely and comfortably move along and across a complete street.

All roads receiving state or federal funding through the Wisconsin Department of Transportation must also accommodate bicycles and pedestrians per this law. Local governments may pass their own Complete Streets ordinances to cover their own road networks. Specific guidelines related to traffic counts, and if the road is urban or rural, are used in these ordinances to determine whether a sidewalk, path, or lane is needed to accommodate bicycles and pedestrians.

# Map 1 Potential Trails & Water Access

City of Wisconsin Rapids  
Wood County, Wisconsin



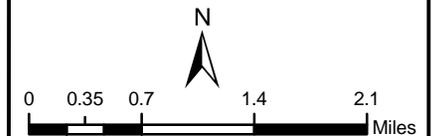
- State Highways
- County Highways
- Local Roads
- Railroad

### Bike Trails

- Existing Off Road
- Existing On Road
- - - Proposed Off Road
- - - Proposed On Road

### DNR Trail Segments

- - - Segment 18
- - - Segment 18 & 4
- - - Segment 4
- Shore Fishing Access
- County Parks
- Dams
- Boat Launches
- Water



Source: WI DNR, NCWRPC  
 This map is neither a legally recorded map nor a survey and is not intended to be used as one. This drawing is a compilation of records, information and data used for reference purposes only. NCWRPC is not responsible for any inaccuracies herein contained.

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## Chapter 2 BACKGROUND OF WISCONSIN RAPIDS

### A. INTRODUCTION

This section describes the natural environment and the demographics that make up the City of Wisconsin Rapids. This information is essential in determining the potential as well as the limitations of an area for recreation development. Recreation planners use this kind of data to determine which resources to develop and which resources to protect or preserve.

The City of Wisconsin Rapids is located in southeastern Wood County with a 2010 U.S. Census population count of 18,367 people.

### B. NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

The city is located along the Wisconsin River, with extensive cranberry bogs in the surrounding countryside. Flat topography and sandy soils exist throughout the City. Irrigation is necessary to keep grass green or crops well watered.

The city is classified in the continental climate type. Winters are cold, and summers are short and fairly warm. The short frost-free period in summer limits the production of crops to forage, small grain, and adapted vegetables. Precipitation is fairly well distributed throughout the year, reaching a peak in summer. Snow covers the ground during much of the period from late fall through early spring. The soils occasionally freeze to a depth of several feet when very cold temperatures occur before the ground is appreciably covered with snow. The soils usually freeze to a depth ranging from the top few inches to about a foot.

The natural environment features are described and mapped in Chapter 2 of the Wisconsin Rapids Comprehensive Plan 2010 (not part of this plan).

### C. DEMOGRAPHICS

Table 1 displays total population for the city, the county, and the state. The purpose of population counts is to show if additional parks are needed because of population, or a change in each age group. Table 1 shows a population decline in the city.

**Table 1: Population**

Minor Civil Division	2000	2010	2000-2010 % Change	2000-2010 Net Change
City of Wisconsin Rapids	18,435	18,367	-0.4	-68
Wood County	75,555	74,749	-1.1	-806
State of Wisconsin	5,363,675	5,686,986	6.0	323,311

Source: U.S. Census

**Table 2: Persons 19 Years of Age and Younger**

Minor Civil Division	2000	2010	2000-2010 % Change	2000-2010 Net Change
City of Wisconsin Rapids	5,020	4,631	-7.7	-389

Source: U.S. Census

**Table 3: Persons 65 Years of Age and Older**

Minor Civil Division	2000	2010	2000-2010 % Change	2000-2010 Net Change
City of Wisconsin Rapids	3,576	3,631	1.5	55

Source: U.S. Census

Results from Tables 1-3 taken together show an aging trend within the city population. This is confirmed by the increase in median age, from 37.6 in 2000 to 41.1 in 2010. Both the county and state experienced an increase over that same period, from 38 to 42.6, and from 36 to 38.5, respectfully.

#### Population Projections

The Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA), Demographic Services Center, prepared population projections for each county and community in the state. DOA projections estimate that the city will increase in population by about 400 persons by 2030. Meanwhile, the NCWRPC prepared straight-line projections based on the 1980 to 2000 trend. The result is an increase of 687 persons over the same period. With either method, the growth is expected to be relatively flat, being somewhere between 2.4 and 3.7 percent respectfully. A summary of the projections are displayed:

**Table 4: Wisconsin Rapids Population Projections**

	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	Change
DOA	18,532	18,652	18,799	18,913	18,947	18,872	437
NCWRPC	18,548	18,661	18,775	18,890	19,005	19,122	687

Source: U.S. Census, WI DOA, &amp; NCWRPC

#### D. LAND USE SUPPLY

There are about 9,400 acres of vacant land within the City. Most of these 9,400 acres of land are currently dedicated for parks and recreational uses, or are sensitive environmental areas, such as wetlands and along the river. Some vacant land, publicly owned woodlands, and the well field lands make up the remaining undeveloped lands within the City.

Land areas immediately adjoining the city are areas for future development. As discussed earlier, annexation is likely to occur as new land areas are added to the City. Recent annexations have been along the eastern edge of the City.

## Chapter 3 EXISTING RECREATION FACILITIES

### A. PARKS and CONSERVANCY AREAS

This section provides a summary of all the local parks' and school grounds' facilities. The following brief descriptions of each park type are from SCORP 2005-2010. Elementary school playgrounds may be categorized as mini parks if only a playground exists. High schools grounds that contain several types of recreation fields would be listed under community parks. School forests are listed as community parks. **Linear Parks** are trails that may have various lengths.

**Mini Parks**—Generally less than 5 acres, these parks are special areas that serve a concentrated or limited population or specific group such as tots or senior citizens. One prominent feature or recreation facility like a playground may be present as the purpose of this park. The service area for this park generally is a ½ mile radius, and a population of 2,000-3,000 people.

**Neighborhood Parks**—An area of 5 to 25 acres that serves as the recreational and social focus of the neighborhood. Active and passive recreational activities in this park include field, court, and ball games; skating; crafts; and picnicking. Facilities may also include a playground, wading pool, ball field, multi-activity field, ball diamond, tennis courts, skatepark, and shelter. Trees, open fields, and undeveloped natural areas are also desirable components of neighborhood parks. The service area for this park generally is a 1 mile radius, and a population of 2,000-5,000 people.

**Community Parks**—Usually more than 25 acres in size, these parks serve entire communities, and are located adjacent to a collector street to provide community-wide vehicular access. The purposes of this park are to meet the recreational needs of several neighborhoods, as well as to preserve unique landscapes and open spaces. These parks allow for group activities not feasible at the neighborhood level. All of the facilities of a neighborhood park may exist, along with nature trails and scenic areas.

**Special Use Areas**—These areas are for single purpose recreational activities that often are designed as revenue generating enterprises such as for baseball, golf, nature centers, arboreta, formal gardens, gun ranges, festivals, ski areas, or areas that preserve and maintain cultural or archeological sites.

**County Parks** – County parks consist of 100 acres or more that are specifically set aside for active and passive recreation uses to accommodate large gatherings, special events, and individual users. These parks have scenic natural features that preserve the character of the region and provide a wide variety of compatible outdoor recreation activities; and may also provide areas for camping, historic preservation, protection of natural areas, and special use areas.

**Conservancy Areas** – Conservancy areas are managed for the flora & fauna resources that exist at a site. Activities like hiking, wildlife watching, hunting, and fishing may be allowed on these lands that may have labels like state natural areas, forests, or wildlife refuges. Each conservancy area has specific rules of use for public enjoyment.

## B. CITY OF WISCONSIN RAPIDS PARK SYSTEM

The City of Wisconsin Rapids park system consists of approximately 160 total acres within the city. This does not include any trails. All parks and park facilities at schools are shown on MAP 2.

### **Linear Parks**

**Water Trails** – A water trail is a network of access points, resting places, and attractions for users of water craft on lakes and rivers. Many of the surface waters in Wisconsin Rapids are available to canoe on. Portages have been established to get around the Biron Dam, Wisconsin Rapids dam, Centralia Dam, and Port Edwards Dam. All navigable water is available to canoe on. There are 5 public water access points within the Wisconsin Rapids area, as shown on MAPS 1 & 2.

**Snowmobile Trails** – Wood County has 258.4 miles of snowmobile trails that are maintained by nine snowmobile clubs. These trails pass through Wisconsin Rapids on non-permanent easements.

**Ahdawagam Bike Trail:** Six color-coded trails make up this bike trail system in Wisconsin Rapids. Each trail is shown on MAP 2.

Blue Trail – This 3.1 mile long trail is paved and follows the route of an old railbed. The trail runs from Seneca Road, which is the border between Rapids and Port Edwards, north to West Grand Avenue. Along the way riders will travel through wetland and forested areas, and pass the City Zoo.

Green Trail – This 6.6 mile long trail is paved and follows the Riverview Expressway.

Orange Trail – This 4.1 mile long trail is a rustic gravel path that forms a loop around Alexander Field airport.

Purple Trail – This 3.8 mile mostly paved trail starts at State Highway 54 & County Highway W. Proceed north two blocks past Washington St to a pedestrian underpass that provides access west to Robinson Park, and north along the west side of the Plover Road railroad overpass to Spring Street.

Red Trail – This 3.8 mile long paved trail begins at Ben Hanson Park and runs along the Wisconsin River through Ben Hanson Park and Lyons Park. Then pass under Riverview Expressway Bridge and follow First Avenue to Grand Avenue. Cross Grand Avenue Bridge into Veterans and Mead Rapids Parks, then continue north along First Street into the Village of Biron.

Yellow Trail – This 4.1 mile on-road trail begins at Demitz Park on Third Street & East Riverview Expressway then travels south. By crossing East Riverview Expressway to the south, Third Street becomes First Street South. The Yellow Trail parallels part of the Orange Trail, but the Yellow Trail is a road route that uses First Street South to Sampson Street, then east on Griffith Avenue/County Highway Z to the City border.

### **Mini Parks**

Each listing with a **bold title** represents a park available to the public. Listings with *italic titles* represent park like facilities at schools that may be available after school hours. See "mini park" definition on page 7.

**Henry Demitz Park (Demitz Park):** This 4.4 acre park is along the east bank of the Wisconsin River at the corner of Third Street South and Riverview Expressway. Hidden from view by steep embankments on the south and east perimeters, Demitz Park is a tranquil enclave that offers a view of the Wisconsin River. Use of this park is steadily increasing each year, particularly during the spring fishing season.

Facilities include: an accessible fishing pier, benches, picnic tables, trash barrels, and a gravel parking lot.

**Gaynor Park:** This 3.5 acre park is located in the east central downtown section of Wisconsin Rapids.

Facilities include: a landscaped oasis for downtown visitors, with walking paths.

**Legion Park:** This 2.53 acre park was the old Eastside Swimming Pool. Now it is a passive park area with a paved multi-purpose trail winding through it. You can get a nice view of the Wisconsin River and dam here. There is a historical mural located in this park.

Facilities include: mowed field for passive recreation, paved trail, and historical mural.

**Mead Rapids View Park:** This 0.8 acre park is located along the Wisconsin River in the downtown area.

Facilities include: a historical marker (Centralia Pulp and Paper Mill), memorial clock tower, and electrical power pedestals.

**Poplar Springs Park:** This 4.8 acre park is located on Spring Street just west of State Highway 54. Almost no trees exist in this primarily flat land. The southern half of this park is not used much during the summer months, but the hill is popular for winter sledding among residents 10 years old and under.

Facilities include: a small sledding hill, play equipment, and an undeveloped ball field.

**Wood's Grove Park:** This 1.8 acre park is located in the central portion of a city block, and is surrounded on all sides by residential property. The towering trees and the virtual quietness from the outside environment emits a sense of serenity.

Unmarked entrances and no drive-in access limit use of this park to nearby neighbors. The park is used as an extension of the neighbors' back yards on a regular basis.

Facilities include: picnic tables, trash barrel, informal ball field, and area light.

*Mead Elementary* – A 2.4-acre play field with playground exists here, 241 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue South. This school yard is available to the public during non-school hours.

*Howe Elementary* – A 3.6-acre play field with playground exists here, 221 8<sup>th</sup> Street North. This school yard is available to the public during non-school hours.

*Pitsch Elementary* – A 4.5-acre play area with a ball field and playground exists here, 501 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue South. This school yard is available to the public during non-school hours.

*Woodside Elementary* – A 3.3-acre play area with a ball field and playground exists here, 611 Two Mile Avenue. This school yard is available to the public during non-school hours.

*Immanuel Lutheran School* – A playground exists here, 111 11<sup>th</sup> Street North. This private school yard is available to the public during non-school hours.

*Our Lady Queen of Heaven* – A ½-acre playground exists here, 750 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue South. This private school yard is available to the public during non-school hours.

*St. Paul's Lutheran School* – A playground exists here, 311 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue South. This private school yard is available to the public during non-school hours.

*St. Vincent de Paul School* – This school has a 1.4-acre play site that includes a playground, two ball fields, and basketball hoops on a hard surface at 831 12<sup>th</sup> Street South. This private school yard is available to the public during non-school hours.

### **Neighborhood Parks**

Each listing with a **bold title** represents a park available to the public. Listings with *italic titles* represent park like facilities at schools that may be available after school hours. See "neighborhood park" definition on page 7.

**Lyon Park:** This 7.5 acre park is connected by a strip of land along the Wisconsin River south to Ben Hanson Park. Large trees exist throughout this park. Traffic and parking is a problem for the park. The entrance and exit are fairly close to a major intersection, so entering or leaving the park during peak hours can be troublesome. Traffic flow on Second Avenue is heavy during the daytime. Traffic also creates a safety hazard for pedestrians crossing the street away from the traffic lights. Parking on Second Avenue is allowed, and is used during heavy use periods at the park.

Facilities include: picnic tables, parking lot, restrooms (not ADA accessible), bike rack, trash barrels, outdoor grill, benches, a picnic pavilion, and a tot lot playground.

**Sand Lot Park:** This 9.8 acre park is located in the south central portion of the city.

Facilities include: large picnic shelter, picnic tables, restrooms (ADA compliant), contemporary playground equipment, 2 ball diamonds with bleachers, 2 tennis courts, 2 horseshoe courts, benches, bike racks, tot lot playground, and basketball court. Park offers a wide variety of facilities for all ages. The picnic shelter is popular for family gatherings, and popular times fill up fast.

**Ward Johnson Park:** This 3.0 acre park is located in the Reddin Road area. The surrounding wooded area acts as a natural buffer against harsh winds.

Facilities include: contemporary playground, tot lot, half court basketball, ball diamond, sledding hill, tennis court, benches trash barrel, and picnic tables.

*Grove Elementary* – A 9.1-acre area with three ball fields and an **All Children Together (ACT) accessible playground** exists here, 471 Grove Avenue. This school yard is available to the public during non-school hours.

*River Cities High School* has 2 soccer fields and a playground. This school yard is available to the public during non-school hours.

### **Community Parks**

Each listing with a **bold title** represents a park available to the public. Listings with *italic titles* represent park like facilities at schools that may be available after school hours. See "community park" definition on page 7.

**Ben Hanson Park:** This 19.2 acre park is located on the west bank of the Wisconsin River in the southwest corner of the city. Primarily open land exists here with a bike

trail running along the riverbanks. This is a very scenic location, and is also a popular fishing spot.

Facilities include: bike path, boat ramp, benches, restroom, paved parking lot, picnic pavilions, trash barrels, 2 sand volleyball courts, and playground.

**Mead Athletic Field & Mead Pool:** This 17.7 acre park is located next to Mead Elementary School, west of the Wisconsin River. Two lighted softball fields and two little league ball fields are fully developed to accommodate area-wide leagues. A lighted skating rink and warming shelter are well used in winter.

Facilities include: 2 lighted softball diamonds with bleachers, 2 lighted little league ball fields with bleachers, lighted skating rink with warming house, outdoor pool facility, multiple restrooms (ADA accessible), 2 concession stands with picnic pavilions, drinking fountain, 4 tennis courts, and paved parking lots.

**Robinson Park:** This 25.5 acre park is located on the northeast side. The park contains towering evergreens and other trees, and is relatively quiet with only a slight amount of noise from the nearby railroad switching yard and State Highway 54. Plenty of amenities within this park provide extensive weeklong use, and also acts as a day-use park for out-of-town visitors.

Facilities include: band shell, benches, 2 paved parking lots, gravel parking lot, bike rack, lighting, playground, 6 horseshoe courts, basketball court, picnic shelter, drinking fountain, many picnic tables, 2 little league ball diamonds, concession stands, batting cage, skate rink with warming house and restrooms, and low board hockey area.

**Veterans Memorial Park:** This 1.2 acre park is located on the east bank of the Wisconsin River. Dedicated to veterans of Central Wisconsin, this popular facility is used for Independence Day Celebrations, Street Dance activities, and Lunch by the River. Anglers also frequent the park throughout the fishing season.

Facilities include: many picnic tables, trash barrels, flagpole, drinking fountain, benches, and 4 electrical power pedestals.

*Washington Elementary* – 13.2-acres of soccer fields, 13.4-acres of woodlands, and a playground exist here, 2911 Washington Street. This school yard is available to the public during non-school hours.

*Lincoln High School* has 34.5-acres of outdoor recreational facilities located at 1801 16<sup>th</sup> Street South. There is a football and track stadium, a baseball field, 2 softball fields, 4 soccer fields, and 6 tennis courts. These facilities are available for clubs and the general public during non-school hours.

*East Junior School* is next to Witter Field.

*West Junior High School* has 17.2-acres of outdoor recreational facilities located at 1921 27<sup>th</sup> Street South. There is a football field and track, 6 tennis courts, a baseball field, a softball field, and a soccer field.

### **Special Use Areas**

Each listing with a **bold title** represents a park available to the public. See "special use area" definition on page 7.

**Rapids Municipal Zoo:** The 11-acre Wisconsin Rapids Zoo is located in the southwest corner of the city. This site is a popular setting primarily for younger children. A petting zoo area and some animal displays are on the zoo grounds. Facilities on the grounds include a small parking area, restrooms, picnic facilities, and a playground. An enclosed building is available for zoo programs and to rent for private or group parties.

Facilities include: petting zoo, picnic area, children's garden, bike trail, shelter area, and play area.

**Witter Field:** Witter Athletic Field is 17.83 acres in size and serves local school athletic programs throughout the school year, and American Legion baseball during the summer. 2010 is the inaugural year of the Wisconsin Rapids Rafters Baseball Club, which now has its home at Witter Field. A diverse range of athletic recreation facilities are available. Witter Field is also the home of the American Legion Baseball teams. The open field area is used for various recreation programs such as T-Ball, soccer and flag football.

**Skate Park** within Witter Field is a 1/3-acre lighted facility that is open to skateboarding, aggressive skating, and BMX biking.

Facilities include: skate park, passive recreation field, baseball diamond, concession stands, locker rooms, skating rink, 4 tennis courts, football field & track, and warming house.

### **County Parks**

Each listing with a **bold title** represents a park available to the public. See "county park" definition on page 7.

**Nepco Lake County Park:** The 125 acre park is located on the 494 acre Nepco Lake. The county park land was donated in 1977 by Nekoosa Papers, Inc., as a day-use park. Nepco Lake County Park is located 1 mile south of Wisconsin Rapids on STH 13 (enter on Griffith Avenue, CTH Z).

Facilities include: beach area, boat ramp, picnic area, playground, handicapped access boat docks and a small open shelter. An enclosed shelter is available for rent year round.

### **Conservancies**

Each listing with a **bold title** represents a park available to the public. See "conservancy" definition on page 7.

**East and West River Bank Conservancies:** Both of these conservancy areas are linear strips of land stretching along the Wisconsin River, and average about ½ to ¾ miles in length. Each conservancy is more like a linear park, since the grass is maintained just like in any other city park. These lands were dedicated to the City by the Wisconsin Valley Improvement Company. Wild land islands that are kept in a natural state are also part of these conservancies. Regular use of these conservancies occurs every summer.

East River Conservancy	West River Conservancy
2.3 acres, benches, picnic table, and canoe portage.	4.5 acres, benches, picnic table, trash barrel.

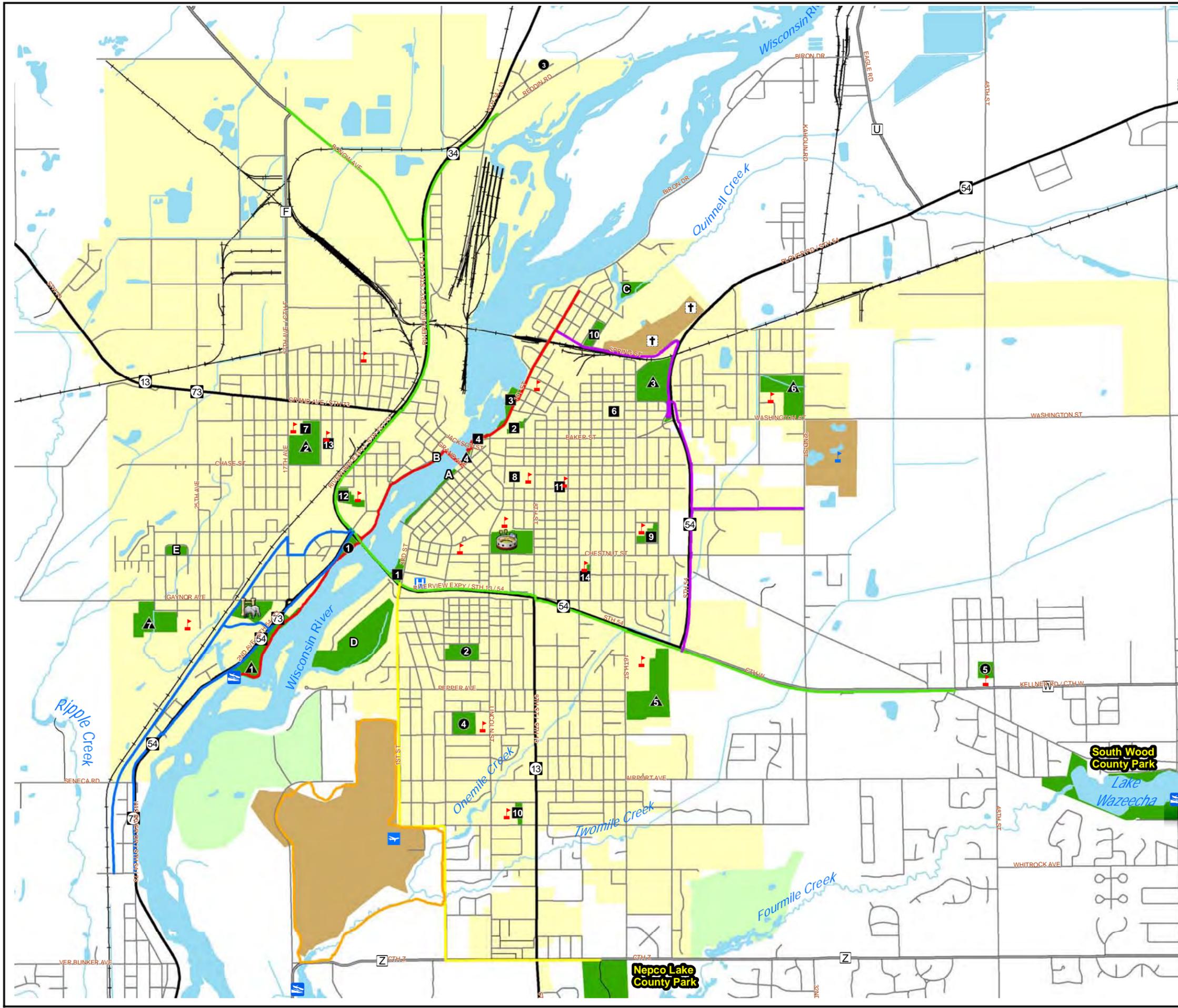
**Quinnel's Creek Conservancy:** This 4.0 acre area remains in its natural condition. Undeveloped trails exist on the property.

**Savaughn Park:** This park area is designated to remain completely in its natural state.

**Additional Conservancy Lands:** There is an un-named conservancy area located between Riverwood Lane and 1<sup>st</sup> Street South in the southwest park of the City. This conservancy area is 20 acres of mainly wetlands.

# Map 2 Parks and Recreation System

City of Wisconsin Rapids, Wood County, Wisconsin



### Legend

- City of Wisconsin Rapids
  - Community Facilities
  - Golf Courses
  - City Parks
  - Water
  - State Highways
  - County Highways
  - Local Roads
  - Private Roads
  - + Railroad
  - f Boat Launches
  - A Alexander Field
  - B School
  - C Mid-State Technical College
  - D Cemeteries
  - E Riverview Hospital
- ### Ahdawagam Bike Trails
- Blue Trail
  - Green Trail
  - Orange Trail
  - Purple Trail
  - Red Trail
  - Yellow Trail

### Mini Parks

1	Henry Demitz
2	Gaynor
3	Legion
4	Mead Rapids View
5	Poplar Springs
6	Wood's Grove
7	Mead Elementary
8	Howe Elementary
9	Pitsch Elementary
10	Woodside Elementary
11	Immanuel Lutheran School
12	Our Lady Queen of Heaven
13	St. Paul's Lutheran School
14	St. Vincent de Paul School

### Neighborhood Park

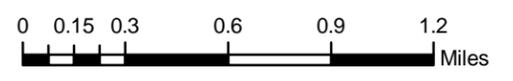
1	Lyon
2	Sand Lot
3	Ward Johnson
4	Grove Elementary
5	River Cities High School

### Community Park

1	Ben Hanson
2	Mead Athletic Field & Pool
3	Robinson
4	Veterans Memorial
5	Lincoln High School
6	Washington Elementary
7	West Junior High School

### Special Use

- A Rapids Municipal Zoo
- B Witter Field
- C East River Conservancy
- D West River Conservancy
- E Quinnell's Creek Conservancy
- F Un-Named Conservancy Land
- G Savaugh Park Conservancy



Source: WI DNR, NCWRPC, Wood Co

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## Chapter 4 OUTDOOR RECREATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT

### A. INTRODUCTION

Recreational needs within the city were identified by collecting public input, reviewing past plans, creating a park level-of-service assessment, and summarizing the Wisconsin SCORP 2005-2010 for active use.

### B. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM 2000-2010 OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN

These projects were listed in the Wisconsin Rapids 2000-2005 Outdoor Recreation Plan, but many of them were not completed, unless otherwise stated. Other completed tasks that were not in the plan are also noted.

#### Demitz Park

- Develop accessible pathway along shoreline
- Install 3 grills and 5 picnic tables (1 ADA)
- Plant screening vegetation around utility building

#### Gaynor Park

- Investigate relocation of potentially hazardous utility poles
- Place warning signs regarding utility poles

#### Lyon Park

- Add handicapped reserved parking stall
- Improve safety at 3 drain covers and concrete bases of play equipment
- Install additional park signs at entrances

#### Mead Field & Pool

- Add handicapped access to shallow end of pool

#### Mead Rapids View Park

- Add handicapped reserved parking stall on First Street
- Install curb cut and sidewalk ramp to provide access to handicapped parking
- Replace fencing along riverbank's north and south ends
- Install additional park sign at north end of park

#### Rapids Municipal Zoo

- Repair play equipment – **Completed**

#### Poplar Springs Park

- Develop small parking lot at north end of park, and plan for expansion;
- Update playground equipment to meet ADA requirements
- Refinish playground equipment that will not be replaced
- Install park sign at main entrance
- Add 5 picnic tables (1 ADA) and 3 outdoor grills
- Fill ditches on 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Streets and by the south end when curb and gutter exist

#### Robinson Park

- Lighting upgrades to park restrooms – **additional improvement completed 2010**
- Develop walking path linking activity area for ADA access
- Add 4 handicapped reserved parking stalls
- Replace drinking fountain with ADA style
- Refurbish fence at north end of park
- Pave 17<sup>th</sup> Street North gravel parking lot, and paint parking stall lines
- Refurbish playground equipment that will not be replaced
- Improve horseshoe area by reconditioning the sand pits and replace missing stakes
- Redevelop volleyball courts with sand and court lines
- Patch and seal concrete basketball court and paint court lines

#### Sand Lot Park

- Recondition and expand picnic pavilion with ADA access improvements
- Provide ADA access to restrooms
- Update playground equipment to meet ADA standards
- Refurbish play equipment that will not be replaced
- Recondition sand play area
- Strip, patch, and re-colorcoat basketball court surface, and refurbish backboards
- Develop parking area between current ball fields

#### Veterans Memorial Park

- Add handicapped reserved parking stall on First Street
- Investigate need for ADA access to rock outcropping at river level

#### Ward Johnson Park

- Convert tennis court to hard surface play area
- Upgrade playground to ADA standards
- Refurbish playground equipment that will not be replaced

#### Witter Field

- Replace press box
- Repaint grandstand
- Remove stored material from under grandstand
- Upgrade warming house to provide ADA access
- Add new lights to skating pond area
- Work with school district to maintain track
- Plant trees and landscape throughout park

#### Woods Grove Park

- Re-establish all four entrances to park, and install entrance signs
- Develop accessible path from at least one entrance into park
- Fence park boundaries, or plant conifer screen around perimeter
- Install 4 anchored picnic tables (1 ADA)
- Renovate ball field

## C. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

### **Informal Public Input**

In the regular course of business, Wisconsin Rapids Parks and Recreation Department staff, and Parks Commission members have received public input about the parks.

### **Visioning Session**

One visioning session was held in the McMillian Library to engage the public.

#### August 24, 2009, Session

About ten Wisconsin Rapids stakeholders met on August 24 to discuss the future of the city's parks and recreation facilities. Members of the city's Parks and Recreation Commission and the department's director were part of the audience and contributed to the discussion. They were facilitated by the UW-Extension, Wood County Community Resource Development educator. This discussion began a planning process that was guided by North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission.

Listed in priority order are the major discussion themes and how they ranked:

- 6 votes – Wisconsin River retaining wall is over 70 years old and needs replacement within Veterans Memorial Park.
- 5 votes – Create Aquatic Center with private or public funding, and possibly create it off of Peach Street.

#### *Additional comments about an aquatic center:*

- Could place facility on YMCA property
- Need a loop bus route for kids from all adjacent municipalities to access pool

- 5 votes – Zoo – Provide master gardeners with an area to demonstrate various gardens.

#### *Additional comments about zoo:*

- Trees in zoo are dying fast
- Buy a tree spade to add more trees to zoo

- 3 votes – Disk golf course could exist just south of the zoo.
- 3 votes – Close 1<sup>st</sup> Ave south to become a park: "Centralla Commons."
- 2 votes – Veterans Memorial Park needs permanent restrooms.
- 1 vote – Create a West Side green space, possibly on the Water & Light Commission property at 16<sup>th</sup> St & Two Mile Ave, or 20<sup>th</sup> St & Two Mile Ave.

## Surveys

### Outdoor Recreation Survey

In Spring 2010, the City placed an outdoor recreation survey on their website, and distributed that same survey to all the community groups that the Parks Department has addresses for on file. Five surveys were returned with the following results:

#### Question:

2. What are the top outdoor recreational issues facing the Wisconsin Rapids area?
  - Lack of parks in the SE section
  - Need a new pool facility
  - Biking and walking trails;
  - More picnic tables, etc. in park by hospital use and promote our city parks more.
  - Lack of outdoor water related facilities (i.e. pool, splash pond, etc.)
  - Water park (pool)
  - Improved baseball diamond and facilities to accommodate American Legion Ramblers, Lincoln High School, Assumption, and other boys in the 14 to 17 year old range.
  - Swimming facility in our area.
  
3. How shall the recreational issues you described above in Question 2 be satisfied?
  - Start a new park there.
  - Start an account for upcoming pool facility.
  - City govt. plus city activists need to work together to promote our parks and then build them into real gems of the community.
  - A public pool on the eastside of town would be nice.
  - Bond/Grants/Private \$
  - Hotel/motel tax dollars should be used to build or improve a diamond and facilities, along with contributions from the local groups that will use it. Perhaps get the S.W.C. 2000 group active again. Any grants that could be obtained too.
  - For a pool or aquatic center, the same sources. Ask Biron, Grand Rapids, Port Edwards, Nekoosa to join the effort; same funding mechanisms, as well as, contributions to a bond from the participating municipalities.
  
4. What outdoor recreation facilities are needed or need improvement in Wisconsin Rapids? Please describe what is needed, and why.
  - Do Disc Golf behind zoo as discussed in the past.
  - A city wide bike path, trail or route. (Green Trail). A hiking path like by the airport, better city boat landings.
  - Landscaping could be nicer (i.e. Robinson Park vs. Firefighters Memorial).
  - Update pool – small water park. We travel out of town to swim with our family.
  
5. How shall Wisconsin Rapids pay for the improvements you suggested? Grants usually require at least a 50% local match, so also think of partnerships and other ways of paying for improvements.

- Use hotel/motel monies, community foundation donations, grants.
- Get the bike dealers to form a club that promotes biking in the (recreational and people going to work) community.
- If a large enough facility was built, smaller nearby communities may partner with WR.
- Bond, grant \$, private donation -- all that apply.

### Comprehensive Plan Survey

In 2009, the City conducted a survey of its residents as part of the comprehensive planning process. One question specifically related to parks:

*28) Do you feel the City of Wisconsin Rapids is in need of more parks? Yes or No  
If yes, please indicate where: \_\_\_\_\_*

The survey indicated that the majority of respondents (nearly 70%) agree or strongly agree that there should be more biking and walking trails throughout the city. Only 13% of respondents stated that there was a need for more parks. No comments were written relating to parks or outdoor recreation.

## D. PAST PLAN SUMMARIES OF PUBLIC COMMENT

### **City of Wisconsin Rapids Comprehensive Plan Issue**

The City of Wisconsin Rapids created a comprehensive plan in 2009. Below are the outdoor recreation issue that were identified:

- ✓ Connect with the riverfront, especially in the downtown area
- ✓ Recreational areas need to be developed

## E. OTHER PLAN REFERENCES

MAP 2 illustrates the location of existing multi-use trails from the Wisconsin Rapids Comprehensive Plan (Transportation Chapter), and identified by color. DNR State Trails, and potential trails from the NCWRPC Regional Bike Plan that are summarized in Chapter 1 of this Plan, under Past Plans, and are shown on MAP 1.

## F. NEEDS DRIVEN PARK PLANNING

Since the 1960's, an accepted practice has been to adopt a uniform national land standard, such as 10 acres per 1000 population, for park planning. A standard amount of land for parks and recreation nationwide is no longer recognized as universal for a park. A standard land measure is still used to determine how much land is needed for a specific use like a baseball diamond; facility standards are used for this purpose. The number of baseball diamonds and other facilities are not the

same among similar sized communities nationally; therefore a Level of Service needs to be created locally.

Besides creating a Level of Service for each park classification, other measures such as geographic distribution and universal accessibility, are also used to determine the adequacy of a community's parks.

Universal accessibility is making facilities (i.e. tables, drinking fountains, and restrooms) accessible to people with limited mobility. Americans with Disabilities (ADA) standards are followed when purchasing or modifying facilities for universal accessibility. Each park description starting on page 7 lists specific park facilities. If changes to park facilities are necessary to make them ADA compliant, then they will be listed as recommended improvements by park in Chapter 6 under "Capital Improvements."

### **1. Level of Service**

The basis of this revised approach to park and recreation standards is to create a Level of Service (LOS) as defined by the customer's needs rather than an arbitrary standard. The LOS is generated locally for each park classification (i.e. mini, neighborhood, or community). Public input is collected, and the needs for a particular park, or whole park classification, are determined. If the public is content with the existing parks within a park classification, then the LOS is applied to the whole population. When the community grows in population, then the LOS is used to calculate if more parkland and facilities within a park are needed.

#### Park Acreage

The size of a park is determined by three criteria:

1. Physical geography. Does the site have steep hills, woodlands, or wetlands? Such natural features are useful for exploration, conservation, aesthetic buffers, and unprogrammed lands.
2. Park facilities. What activities are allowed or will be allowed? How much land is needed for each use? This is determined by applying the park Level of Service (LOS) to lands where the city is growing. If a community is not growing in population, then the LOS does not change, but different uses may become desired over time, so facilities will need replacement.
3. Unprogrammed buffers. How much land within the park is needed to separate different uses or future expansion? Designating future parks on the *Official Wisconsin Rapids Map* [developed under Sec 62.23(6)(b) Wis. Stats.] and on the *Future Land Use Map* in the *2010 Wisconsin Rapids Comprehensive Plan* will guide future parkland purchases.

Park acreage in TABLE 5 shows how Wisconsin Rapids' park system compares with state standards for the size of each park as grouped by classification. The average park sizes for Wisconsin Rapids falls within the State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) recommendations for each classification, except *community* parks. Wisconsin Rapids' *community* parks are smaller than what the DNR suggests. This provides an opportunity for the Parks Commission to review how community-wide needs are being met, and decide if the current parks are adequate, or if additional land is needed. SCORP recommends a mini park size as less than 1.5

acres, which produces a gap in acreage from 1.5 acres and 5 acres that is not classified; therefore any park with less than 5 acres will be a "mini" park.

<b>Classification</b>	<b>SCORP Recommendation</b>	<b>Wisconsin Rapids' average park size</b>
Mini	0.5 – 5* acres	3.6 acres
Neighborhood	5 – 25 acres	6.8 acres
Community	25+ acres	20.25 acres
Special Use	Various acres based upon facility	Various acres based upon facility

Source: WDNR, & NCWRPC

\*SCORP states that a mini park is 0.5-1.5 acres, but a gap from 1.5-5 acres exists, so that gap was added to the mini park size.

Parks are listed by classification starting on page 7 of this plan. The total acres for each park classification in TABLE 6 came from totaling all public parks. Undeveloped land and schools were not included. The City of Wisconsin Rapids population was 18,435 in 2000 (U.S. Census), and declined to 18,367 people in 2010 (U.S. Census).

This is the formula used in TABLE 4 to create the acres per 1,000 people, which is the Level of Service:

$$\text{LOS by classification} = \frac{\text{Park acres per classification}}{(\text{City Population} \div 1,000 \text{ population served})}$$

<b>Park Classification</b>	<b>2000</b>		<b>2011</b>	
	<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>Acres per 1,000 people</b>	<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>Acres per 1,000 people</b>
Mini	15.3	0.8	15.3	0.8
Neighborhood	20.3	1.1	20.3	1.1
Community	63.6	3.4	63.6	3.5
Special Use	40.5	2.2	40.5	2.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>139.7</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>139.7</b>	<b>7.6</b>

Source: NCWRPC

TABLE 6 shows that the LOS did not change from 7.5 acres per 1,000 people in 2000 to 7.5 acres per 1,000 people in 2010. The LOS did not change, because the population increase of 35 people was small, and no park acreage was added.

The LOS calculated in TABLE 6 is only adequate if public comment proves that more park land is not needed. Public comment may state that different uses are desired, but that may not affect LOS if the land area for those new uses replaces the old uses, or if unused land is available in parks spaced around the community for the new use. Chapter 6 will show what projects are planned to improve the parks.

## 2. Park Service Areas

Parks must be close to where City residents live for people to consider a park useful. MAP 3 illustrates how well the City of Wisconsin Rapids' parks serve the various areas of the City. The State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) provides the following guidelines for park placement:

- Mini park service area: ½-mile radius, or a population of 2,000-3,000;
- Neighborhood park service area: 1 mile radius, or a population of 2,000-5,000;
- Community park service area: 2-5 mile radius, in a city or outside of city limits (shown with a neighborhood service area on MAP 3, but they also serve the whole community);
- Special Use park service area is a whole community, and is determined by the type of recreation program, special event, or general activities desired at the park (not on MAP 3, because they serve the whole community).
- School parks are classified in this plan as either neighborhood or community parks.

MAP 3 shows the combined service areas for 2 types of park classifications: mini, and neighborhood. All community classified parks are also neighborhood parks. Map 3 shows a ½-mile radius service area for each mini park, and a 1-mile radius service area for each neighborhood or community park. Special use parks, community parks, and conservancies serve all of Wisconsin Rapids; therefore no specific service areas are shown for these parks on MAP 3.

### **Wisconsin Rapids Park & Recreation Commission Note:**

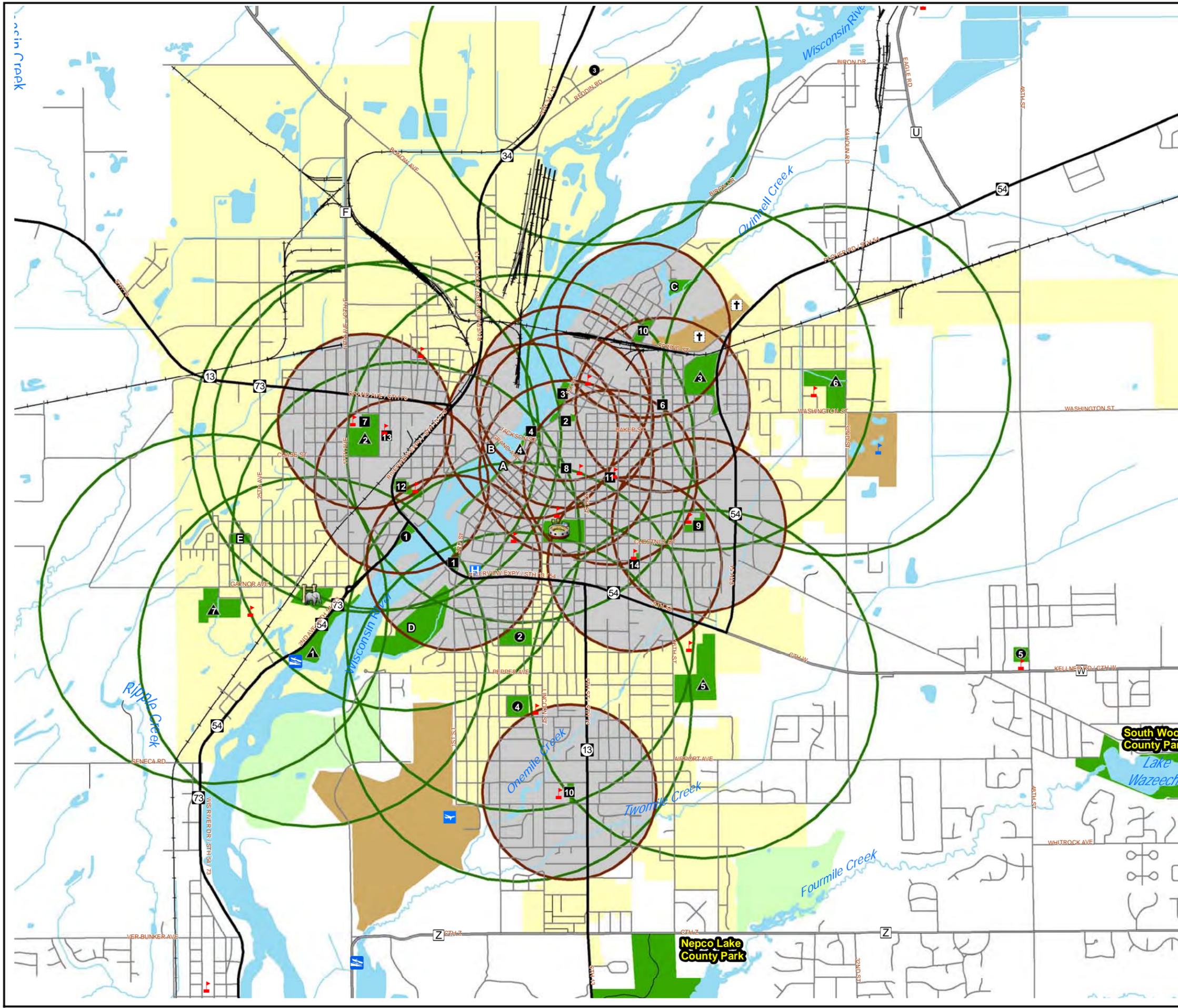
The Wisconsin Rapids Parks Commission is concerned about the City's declining population, so no new parks will be considered. All of the existing parks need modern facilities though.

Park design criteria are described in ATTACHMENT A. Each park classification contains the following:

- Definition,
- Size Objectives;
- Service Area Objectives;
- Location Objectives;
- Space, Design, and Service Ares;
- Orientation; and
- Function.

# Map 3 Park Service Areas

City of Wisconsin Rapids, Wood County, Wisconsin



### Legend

- City of Wisconsin Rapids
- Community Facilities
- Golf Courses
- City Parks
- Water
- State Highways
- County Highways
- Local Roads
- Private Roads
- Railroad
- W Boat Launches
- A Alexander Field
- S School
- T Mid-State Technical College
- + Cemeteries
- H Riverview Hospital
- Mini Park Service Areas
- Neighborhood & Community Park Service Areas

### Mini Parks

1	Henry Demitz
2	Gaynor
3	Legion
4	Mead Rapids View
5	Poplar Springs
6	Wood's Grove
7	Mead Elementary
8	Howe Elementary
9	Pitsch Elementary
10	Woodside Elementary
11	Immanuel Lutheran School
12	Our Lady Queen of Heaven
13	St. Paul's Lutheran School
14	St. Vincent de Paul School

### Neighborhood Park

1	Lyon
2	Sand Lot
3	Ward Johnson
4	Grove Elementary
5	River Cities High School

### Community Park

1	Ben Hanson
2	Mead Athletic Field & Pool
3	Robinson
4	Veterans Memorial
5	Lincoln High School
6	Washington Elementary
7	West Junior High School

### Special Use

- Z Rapids Municipal Zoo
- W Witter Field
- A East River Conservancy
- B West River Conservancy
- C Quinnell's Creek Conservancy
- D Un-Named Conservancy Land
- E Savaugh Park Conservancy



Source: WI DNR, NCWRPC, Wood Co

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## **Chapter 5**

# **OUTDOOR RECREATION GOALS**

The development of an efficient outdoor recreation plan depends upon establishing outdoor recreation goals from public participation. A goal is a general statement of a desirable end or ultimate purpose toward which planning efforts should be directed. Goals are broad and may apply over a long time frame, which is 5 years for this plan.

The Park Commission created these goals on July 28, 2010, with facilitation by the UW-Extension Wood County Community Resource Development educator, after they reviewed public comment as documented on pages 18-20. These goals generally address what direction Wisconsin Rapids will take with outdoor recreation facilities over the next 5 years. Specific actions to satisfy these goals exist in the next chapter of this plan under: Capital Improvements.

Goals are not listed in priority order:

### **Goal 1**

#### **Address Regional Swimming Pool.**

The Wisconsin Rapids region wants to cooperate with other governmental entities to create a regional aquatic center. Location and cost have deterred efforts, but the need continues to surface because existing facilities are deteriorating rapidly.

### **Goal 2**

#### **Upgrade & Maintain Existing Park Facilities.**

**Major Projects: - River wall - Bike Paths - Robinson Park Bldgs.**

Buildings, playgrounds, and other structures all need continuous maintenance to provide usable facilities. Now many of these facilities are at the end of their useful lives and need complete replacement.

### **Goal 3**

#### **Create New Ball Diamond On Existing Site**

Now that Witter Field is home to a private amateur baseball league team, it becomes much more difficult to cooperate to use that field for other local teams. Upgrading another hardball diamond with lights, restrooms, and other facilities will be needed to provide Witter Field with appropriate rest time between uses. Collaboration with the school district on an existing school ball diamond would provide a better facility for the school, and a new facility of the City.

### **Goal 4**

#### **Create Disk Golf Area.**

Locating this course in an existing park would utilize existing parking and restrooms facilities more efficiently.

### **Goal 5**

#### **Become a more bicycle friendly community**

Besides upgrading existing bicycle trails, this goal also suggests integrating bicycling into local road projects where appropriate.

## Chapter 6 RECOMMENDATIONS & CAPITAL IMPROVMENTS

### A. WISCONSIN RAPIDS RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations are strategies for fixing problems identified by the public, the Park Commission, or staff from NCWRPC or the City. Goals and objectives, and the public comment are documented in Chapters 4 and 5. Although it is unlikely that all recommendations presented in this plan will be undertaken in the next five years, they should be recognized as causes for action if the opportunity or need arises.

#### **Regional Swimming Pool/Aquatic Center**

There is a need for a new regional outdoor pool. River Cities Pool Discussion Group is reviewing where to place such a facility, along with the logistics of making a regional facility work for everyone.

#### **Create disk golf course**

Locating this course in an existing park would utilize existing parking and restrooms facilities more efficiently.

#### **Upgrade and maintain existing facilities**

Many facilities city-wide need continuous maintenance, and capital improvement listed in the next section address the various needs.

#### **Trailhead Signs**

Install signs (Figure 1) at major road crossings to identify what uses are allowed on the trail.

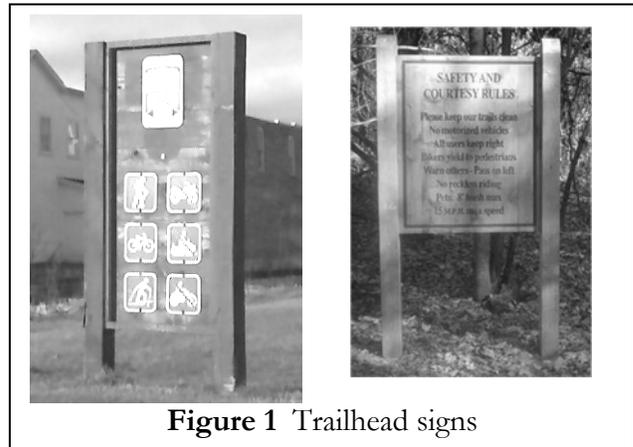


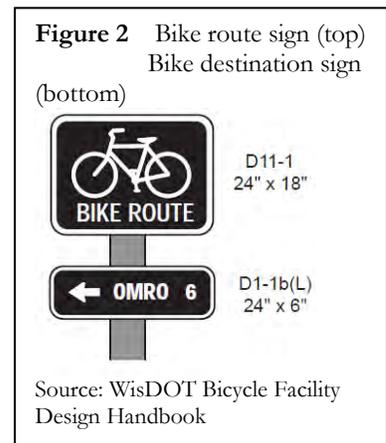
Figure 1 Trailhead signs

#### **Trail Wayfinding Signs**

Review how the Ahdawagam Bike Trails are signed throughout the City. Bike route signs should always be accompanied with supplemental plaques that indicate the route's end point and/or the route's name. Showing mileage to a particular destination is also recommended (Figure 2).

Consider the following criteria before signing a bike route:

- ❖ The route provides through and direct travel from one destination to another;
- ❖ The route connects discontinuous segments of shared use paths, bike lanes, and or bike routes;
- ❖ An effort has been made, if necessary, to adjust traffic control devices to give greater priority to bicyclists on the route, as opposed to other parallel streets. This could include placement of bicycle-sensitive loop detectors where bicyclists stop at signals.



## **Complete Streets**

Complete Streets are roads that are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users: motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists of all ages and abilities. Complete Streets make it easy to cross the street, walk to shops, and bicycle to work. Traffic calming, road diets, sidewalks, and bike lanes are strategies that make a street complete.

Instituting a complete streets policy or ordinance would ensure that roads within Wisconsin Rapids become bicycle and pedestrian friendly as they become refurbished.

### B. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS 2012-2016

Capital improvements to parks are the addition of labor and materials that improve the overall value and usefulness of that park. Capital improvements are designed and funded individually through segregated municipal funds. Routine maintenance is considered the normal cycle of repair and upkeep for existing facilities. Routine maintenance does not increase the value or usefulness of the park, and is traditionally funded through the Park and Recreation Department's operations budget. Non-routine maintenance of park facilities, however, is usually considered a capital improvement item. For example, upgrading an outdoor restroom facility for universal access would qualify as a capital improvement, while repainting an outdoor restroom would be considered routine maintenance.

A capital improvement item was listed for a facility if it met at least one of the following three criteria:

1. Improvements to existing facilities:
  - a. To correct health and safety hazards;
  - b. To update deficient facilities; and
  - c. To modernize adequate but outdated facilities.
2. Installation of facilities as deemed necessary through citizen participation.
3. Development of new facilities as found necessary through public input and from the goals and objectives.

The following Capital Improvement lists are proposed for the City of Wisconsin Rapids recreation system. The projects listed are subject to change. All upgrades and new construction will take into consideration meeting ADA standards. The following projects will be completed as funds become available.

#### Demitz Park

- Develop accessible pathway along shoreline – *low priority*
- Install 3 grills and 5 picnic tables (1 ADA) – *one ADA table is in place, low priority for remaining objects*
- Plant screening vegetation around utility building – *low priority*

#### Gaynor Park

- Investigate relocation of potentially hazardous utility poles – *Looked into relocation, cost prohibitive, in excess of \$60,000.*
- Place warning signs regarding utility poles – *Area is not recognized as a sledding hill by the city*

#### Lyon Park

- Add handicapped reserved parking stall
- Improve safety at 3 drain covers and concrete bases of play equipment
- Install additional park signs at entrances – *low priority*

#### Mead Field & Pool

- Add handicapped access to shallow end of pool – *Pool plan being established for possible replacement in 2014*

#### Mead Rapids View Park

– *All suggestions would be addressed as part of 1<sup>st</sup> St. rebuild project-2013*

- Add handicapped reserved parking stall on First Street
- Install curb cut and sidewalk ramp to provide access to handicapped parking
- Replace fencing along riverbank's north and south ends-
- Install additional park sign at north end of park

#### Rapids Municipal Zoo

- Add a disk golf course – *Course site has been changed to Robinson park*

#### Poplar Springs Park

- Develop small parking lot at north end of park, and plan for expansion;
- Update playground equipment to meet ADA requirements – *Working with Wal-Mart on rehabilitation on playground equip.*
- Refinish playground equipment that will not be replaced
- Install park sign at main entrance
- Add 5 picnic tables (1 ADA) and 3 outdoor grills
- Fill ditches on 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Streets and by the south end when curb and gutter exist

#### Robinson Park

- Site of disc golf course in 2012
- Develop walking path linking activity area for ADA access
- Add 4 handicapped reserved parking stalls
- Replace drinking fountain with ADA style
- Refurbish fence at north end of park
- Pave 17<sup>th</sup> Street North gravel parking lot, and paint parking stall lines
- Refurbish playground equipment that will not be replaced
- Improve horseshoe area by reconditioning the sand pits and replace missing stakes
- Redevelop volleyball courts with sand and court lines
- Removal of basketball court.

#### Sand Lot Park

- Recondition and expand picnic pavilion with ADA access improvements
- Provide ADA access to restrooms
- Update playground equipment to meet ADA standards
- Refurbish play equipment that will not be replaced
- Recondition sand play area – *Some work done in 2010*
- Strip, patch, and re-colorcoat basketball court surface, and refurbish backboards – *Money set aside for project in 2012*
- Develop parking area between current ball fields

#### Veterans Memorial Park

- Add handicapped reserved parking stall on First Street
- Investigate need for ADA access to rock outcropping at river level

#### Ward Johnson Park

– *all projects are a low priority*

- Convert tennis court to hard surface play area
- Upgrade playground to ADA standards
- Refurbish playground equipment that will not be replaced

#### Witter Field

- *Major lighting renovation for grandstands, bathrooms, team rooms, and storage areas – planned for 2012*
- Replace press box
- Repaint grandstand – *Steps repainted in 2010*
- Remove stored material from under grandstand
- Upgrade warming house to provide ADA access
- Add new lights to skating pond area
- Work with school district to maintain track
- Plant trees and landscape throughout park

#### Woods Grove Park

– *all projects are a low priority*

- Re-establish all four entrances to park, and install entrance signs
- Develop accessible path from at least one entrance into park
- Fence park boundaries, or plant conifer screen around perimeter
- Install 4 anchored picnic tables (1 ADA)
- Renovate ball field

**ATTACHMENT A**

**PARK DESIGN AND LOCATION CRITERIA  
From SCORP 2005-2010**

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## Park and Recreation Designs

This section is presented in the interest of assisting park and recreation agencies in the development of a system of parks and recreation areas. A recreation system is composed of many different components, the combination of which provide facilities and landscapes for outdoor recreation. Many entities are involved in the development and management of recreational areas and facilities for a community or region. Facilities provided by these entities should be complementary and serve a particular geographic area or recreational need. For this plan, parks and recreation areas have been classified on the basis of their service areas. They are described as the following:

▪ Mini Park	▪ School Park
▪ Neighborhood Park	▪ County Park
▪ Community Park	▪ State Park
▪ Special Use Park	▪ State Forest

### Mini Park

#### 1. Definition Summary:

A play lot or playground provides space for parental supervised recreation of toddlers and young children within a neighborhood, or as part of a larger neighborhood or community park and urban center, including retail shopping areas.

#### 2. Size Objectives:

0.5 to 1.5 acres.

#### 3. Service Area Objectives:

Generally within a neighborhood of a half mile radius or population of 2,000-3,000. Mini parks may be included in parks that serve a larger population or service area.

#### 4. Location Objectives:

Located in protected areas with separation from street traffic and high visibility; serving local neighborhoods and adjoining schools, libraries, or police and fire facilities.

- Population Ratio to Acreage: 0.25 to 0.5 acre per 1,000 population to achieve a park unit size that serves 2,000 to 3,000 people.

#### 5. Space, Design, and Service Area:

The size of a play lot or playground may range from as small as 2,500 sq. ft. to 1.5 acres.\* Amenities offered by these facilities generally include sand play areas, play apparatus, play equipment, and other special child-oriented features. The service radius for these parks in

terms of distance from population served is limited to less than a quarter mile, or within a super block space, unless the playground is incorporated into a larger park. (\*Stand-alone play lots require more land area than play lots incorporated into larger parks.)

#### 6. Orientation:

Small geographic areas, sub-neighborhoods, or neighborhoods, when combined with a larger park unit, serves youth ranging in age from toddler to 12 years, with adult supervision. Playgrounds also serve important needs in city business districts and inner city areas where a mix of commercial and recreation activity is desired.

#### 7. Function:

Provides outdoor play experiences for youth under parental supervision. Generates neighborhood communication and provides diversion from work and domestic chores. Promotes neighborhood solidarity.

### Neighborhood Park

#### 1. Definition Summary:

A neighborhood park, by size, program, and location, provides space and recreation activities for the immediate neighborhood in which it is located. It is considered an extension of neighborhood residents' "out-of-yard" and outdoor use area.

#### 2. Size Objectives:

5 to 25 acres.

### **3. Service Area Objectives:**

Generally a one mile radius, but actually defined by collector street patterns which form the limits of a neighborhood or recreation service area. Population served may range from 2,000 up to 5,000.

### **4. Location Objectives:**

Centrally located for equitable pedestrian access within a definable neighborhood service area. Adjoining or adjacent to an elementary school, middle school, high school, fire station, or library, if possible.

### **5. Program Objectives:**

Compatible with the neighborhood setting and park site constraints. Generally includes the following facilities, which are determined with public input as to use and activities:

- a. Parking for 10 to 20 vehicles.
  - 1) On-street parking is acceptable if negative impact to residential units can be mitigated. On-site parking is preferable as a planning objective.
  - 2) Bike racks with Class II trail connections where possible.
- b. Restrooms
  - 1) Men's restroom with 2 water closets, 2 urinals, 2 lavatories.
  - 2) Women's restroom with 3 water closets and 2 lavatories.
  - 3) Utility and minimum park janitorial storage space.
- c. Tot lot/children's play area
- d. Family event/group picnic facility
- e. Informal family picnic area with benches and tables
- f. Unstructured turf grass play area/play or practice field for children, young adults, and families.
- g. Sport facilities—compatible with neighborhood setting and park site constraints.
  - 1) Basketball—half court, full court, or tri-court configuration
  - 2) Volleyball area
  - 3) Softball field/soccer practice or game overlay
  - 4) Other features as needs or site conditions allow

### **6. Orientation:**

Serves all age groups, with an emphasis on youth and families in neighborhood settings.

### **7. Function:**

To provide a combination of active recreation and passive activities, both outdoor and indoor facilities and special features as required or needed.

### **8. Space, Design and Service Area:**

A minimum size of 5 to 25 acres with amenities including sports facilities, picnic areas, swim facilities, cultural activities, arts, crafts, and individual passive activities. The park should primarily serve a defined neighborhood area population of 2,000-5,000. Distance from this neighborhood will vary depending on urban development pattern, zoning, and densities in the respective neighborhoods being served. Efforts should be made to allow easy pedestrian access to the park.

## **Community Park**

### **1. Definition Summary:**

A community park, by size, program, and location, provides space and recreation activities for a defined service area, the entire city, or significant geographic segment of the city's population.

### **2. Size Objectives:**

Usually more than 25 acres.

### **3. Service Area Objectives:**

Generally a 2 to 5 mile radius within the city and adjacent neighborhoods outside of city limits.

### **4. Location Objectives:**

Centrally located if planned to serve a particular geographic segment of the city. Located adjoining or immediately adjacent to a collector street providing community-wide vehicular access, thereby reducing neighborhood traffic impacts. Connected with Class II on-street and/or off-street community trail and bike lane system. Adjoining or adjacent to an elementary, middle, or high school if possible.

## 5. Program Objectives

Elements that fulfill the service area, park facilities and recreation program demands. The following facilities may be compatible with community setting and park site constraints:

- a. Off-street parking calculated to satisfy demand of park and recreation activities provided. Includes bike racks and a public transit station at the site as well as both on-site and street parking.
- b. Restrooms designed to accommodate the level of park and recreation activities provided and the number of people served. Restrooms should be located within a reasonable walking distance from children's play equipment and other high-use areas.
- c. Community recreation center
- d. Park maintenance and equipment storage building
- e. Tot lot/children's play area
- f. Group picnic shelters
- g. Family picnic facilities
- h. Sport/recreation facility fulfilling the overall city demand

*Appropriate program elements include:*

- 1) Community pool/water feature
- 2) Soccer fields
- 3) Softball, little league baseball, junior pony league baseball
- 4) Football
- 5) Roller hockey/skateboard area
- 6) Tennis courts
- 7) Basketball courts
- 8) Amphitheater/performing arts center
- 9) Volleyball (indoor and outdoor)
- 10) Jogging trails
- 11) Other facilities as desired and as permitted under park site plan
- 12) Concessions (food and beverage)

## 6. Orientation:

Multi-purpose service area or community-wide recreation resource serving most or all of the population.

## 7. Function:

Provides opportunities for a diverse mix of indoor and outdoor recreation, including walking and bicycling, outdoor performances, various programmed and non-programmed field sports, swimming, and special events.

## 8) Space, Design, and Service Area:

The minimum space for a community park is 15 acres. Facilities typically provide for some sports activities, through emphasis is on passive cultural and community centers with recreational programming and organized activities. The community park may serve populations within a 2 to 5 mile radius, a scope that would allow residents of other communities to use the park as well.

## Special Use Park

### 1. Definition Summary:

A special use park is often designed as a revenue-generating enterprise created to satisfy demand for a particular sport, recreational activity, or special event. A special use park may also be a sports park combined with enterprise activities and administered as a community recreation resource.

### 2. Size Objective:

The actual size of a special use park is determined by land availability and facility/market demand for special uses or recreation programs.

### 3. Service Area Objectives:

Community or area-wide and determined by the type of recreation program, special events or use activities.

### 4. Location Objectives:

Determined by the property opportunity, service area and size objectives.

### 5. Program Objectives:

Special use parks require facility programming that is user- or market-driven and based on community needs or economic and service principles for public and private partnerships. The magnitude and type of special use facilities may include:

- a. Water play park
- b. Amphitheater
- c. Festival/swap meet/farmers market
- d. League/individual sports complex
- e. Fitness/entertainment center
- f. Skateboard/in-line hockey park
- g. Recreation programs and classes

- 6. Orientation:**  
Provides recreation programming, sports and special event attractions and activities for all age groups.
- 7. Function:**  
Special events, fairs, festivals, expositions, symposiums, sports, community gatherings, ethnic/cultural celebrations, plays and numerous other recreational programs and activities.
- 8. Space, Design, and Service Area:**  
The minimum size for special parks varies depending on intended use and programming.

## **School Park**

### **1. Definition Summary:**

By combining the resources of two public agencies, the school park classification allows for expanding the recreational, social, and educational opportunities available to the community in an efficient and cost-effective manner.

Depending on the circumstances, school park sites often complement other community recreation or open lands. As an example, an elementary/middle school site could also serve as a neighborhood park. Likewise, middle or high school sports facilities could do double duty as a community park or as youth athletic fields. Depending on its size, one school park site may serve in a number of capacities, such as a neighborhood park, youth athletic fields, and a location for recreation classes. Given the inherent variability of type, size and location, determining how a school park site is integrated into a larger park system will depend on case-by-case circumstances. The important outcome in the joint-use relationship is that both the school district and park system benefit from shared use of facilities and land area.

### **2. Size Objective**

The optimum size of a school park site depends on its intended use. The size criteria established for neighborhood park and community park classifications may apply.

### **3. Service Area Objectives:**

Neighborhood park and community park classifications criteria should be used to determine school park functions and area served. For planning purposes, the degree to which school lands, including building or facilities, meet community needs depends on the specific inter-local agreements formed.

### **4. Location Objectives:**

The location of a school park site will be determined by the school district based on district policy. Coordinated city and school district planning allows for siting, acquisition, and facility development to be responsive to community needs. Service areas for school park sites will depend on the type of use and facilities provided.

### **5. Program Objectives:**

The criteria established for neighborhood parks and community parks should be used to determine how a school park site is developed and programmed. If athletic fields are developed at a school park site, they should, where feasible, be oriented toward youth rather than adult programs. Establishing a clearly defined joint-use agreement between involved agencies is critical to making school park relationships workable. This is particularly important with respect to acquisition, development, maintenance, liability, use, and programming of facility issues.

The orientation of school park projects is typically for neighborhood and community recreation services. The functions may include sports, recreation classes, passive recreation activities, and other recreation programs suitable to an elementary or secondary education school.

## **County Park**

### **1. Definition Summary:**

A county park provides sufficient park and recreation area to meet the needs of county residents. County parks consist of land that is specifically set aside for active and passive recreation uses, and that accommodates large gatherings, special events, and individual users. County parks offer a wide variety of compatible outdoor recreation activities, and

may provide areas that do not primarily serve a recreational purpose such as protected natural areas, historic areas, and special use areas.

## **2. Size Objectives:**

The size of recreation parks varies greatly from park to park, but with the exception of those parks that serve a special use or are trail corridors, a recreation park should consist of a minimum of 100 acres of land. Each park should be of sufficient size to accommodate the estimated use and to allow for the operation and maintenance of planned recreational facilities.

## **3. Service Area Objectives:**

County parks provide for a regional user group and serve primarily county residents. Special facilities like camping and trails are also used by tourists and visitors to the county.

## **4. Location Objectives:**

The land should have high recreational potential and be able to withstand intensive and extensive recreational activities. Land should have potential to accommodate large groups of people. Land for corridors should be located so as to connect to communities, parks, and open spaces. The potential for future land acquisition should be taken into account.

## **5. Program Objectives:**

Development should be appropriate for intended use and should accommodate moderate to high use. Development and planning should consider the physical condition and characteristics of the land and recognize potential environmental or structural limitations that might require intensive maintenance. County parks may include the following facilities:

- a. Camping/group camping
- b. Picnic areas
- c. Recreational trails (hiking, bicycling, mountain biking, equestrian, cross-country ski, snowmobile, etc.)
- d. Play areas
- e. Swimming beaches
- f. Water access
- g. Fishing access
- h. Shelters

- i. Restrooms
- j. Shower facilities
- k. Sport fields (basketball, volleyball, softball, etc.)
- l. Pet exercise area

## **6. Orientation:**

Multi-purpose service area and regional recreation resource serving a significant portion of a county or multi-county population.

## **7. Function:**

To provide sufficient parks and recreation areas to meet the needs of the people of the county.

## **8. Space, Design, and Service Area:**

The size of a county park should be a minimum of 100 acres. Facilities vary by park. Some parks offer active recreation (camping, recreational trails, etc.), while others provide passive recreation (scenic lookouts, picnic areas, beaches, etc.). Most parks provide both active and passive recreation. County parks provide for a regional user group and serve primarily county residents, through special facilities also serve tourists and visitors to the county.

## **State Forest**

### **1. Definition Summary:**

A state forest consists of well blocked areas of state owned lands that are managed to benefit present and future generations of residents, recognizing that forests contribute to local and statewide economics and to a healthy natural environment. State forests practice sustainable forestry. The management of state forests is consistent with the ecological capability of state forest land and with the long-term goal of maintaining sustainable forest communities and ecosystems. Benefits of maintaining these ecosystems include soil protection, public hunting, protection of water quality, production of recurring forest products, outdoor recreation, native biological diversity, aquatic and terrestrial wildlife, and aesthetic value. The range of benefits provided in each state forest reflect its unique

character and position in the regional landscape.

**2. Size Objectives:**

Typically between 1,000 and 250,000 acres, but can be larger or smaller.

**3. Service Area Objectives:**

Generally a 100 mile radius. State forests typically provide close-to-home recreational area. Day users typically travel approximately 50 miles one-way to reach state forests, while overnight users tend to travel further, approximately 100-150 miles one-way. Travel to state forests can, however, exceed 160 miles for longer vacation stays and travel to "destination areas."

**4. Location Objectives:**

Areas with large blocks of land.

**5. Program Objectives:**

State forests must meet ecological, economic, social, and cultural needs. Elements are compatible with the natural resource setting and park site constraints. Facilities may include the following:

**Current Level of Supply:**

Hiking trails	1,256 acres per linear mile of trail
Cross-country ski trails	2,551 acres per linear mile of trail
Snowmobile trails	639 acres per linear mile of trail
Equestrian trails	559 acres per linear mile of trail
ATV trails	1,795 acres per linear mile of trail
Camping sites	1 campsite per 265 acres

**6. Orientation:**

Multi-purpose service area and regional recreation resource serving a significant portion of a state or regional population.

**7. Function:**

To provide for nature conservation, provide income to forest owners, supply raw materials to the wood processing industry, and provide public recreation.

**8. Space, Design, and Service Area:**

The size of a state forest is determined by the extent of the area's natural resources and recreation capabilities. There is no minimum or maximum size for a state forest. Facilities are not universal and vary by forest. The geographic location of the forest and the

natural resources present dictate recreation available at the site. State forests serve large geographic areas of a state or region.

**State Park**

**1. Definition Summary:**

A state park, by size, program, and location, provides space for outdoor recreation and education about nature and conservation. These parks serve a significant geographic segment of a state or regional population. State parks aim to preserve, protect, interpret and enhance the scenic and cultural resources of the state.

**2. Size Objectives:**

Parks must be large enough to accommodate a reasonable mix of outdoor recreational activities. Typically, parks are between 500 and 3000 acres, but can be smaller (<20 acres) or larger (>10,000 acres).

**3. Service Area Objectives:**

Generally a 100-mile radius. State parks typically provide close-to-home recreational areas. Day users generally travel approximately 50 miles one-way to reach state parks, while overnight users tend to travel further, approximately 100-150 miles one-way. Travel distances to state parks can often exceed 160 miles for longer vacation stays and trips to "destination areas."

**4. Location Objectives:**

Siting of Wisconsin State Parks is typically based on five criteria developed by John Nolen. These criteria are: 1) large size to serve a large number of citizens, 2) accessibility to major population areas, 3) a healthful, natural setting, 4) reasonable cost for land acquisition, 5) land possessing "decidedly uncommon charm and beauty." All, or a combination of these criteria are used to determine where to site a state park.

**5. Program Objectives:**

Elements that fulfill the service area, park facilities and recreation program demands. Elements are compatible with the natural resource setting and park site constraints. Developments may include the following facilities:

### **Current Level of Supply:**

Hiking trails	196 acres per linear mile of trail
Surfaced bicycle trails	860 acres per linear mile of trail
Mountain bike trails	549 acres per linear mile of trail
Nature trails	1,871 acres per liner mile of trail
Cross-country ski trails	430 acres per linear mile of trail
Snowmobile trails	426 acres per linear mile of trail
Equestrian trails	400 acres per linear mile of trail
Picnic sites	0.05 acres per picnic table
Camping sites	1 campsite per 29 acres
Parking stalls	Year-Round = 1 stall for every three visitors
Swimming beaches	17 linear feet per 1,000 users

### **5. Orientation:**

Multi-purpose service area and regional recreation resource serving a significant portion of a state or regional population.

### **6. Function:**

To provide for public recreation and education of conservation and nature study.  
To preserve, protect, interpret and enhance the scenic and cultural resources of the state.

### **7. Space, Design, and Service Area:**

The size of a state park is determined by the extent of the area's natural resources and recreation capabilities. There is no minimum or maximum size for a state park. Facilities are not universal and vary by park. Some parks offer active recreation (camping, boating, mountain biking trails, hunting etc.), while others offer passive recreation (scenic lookouts, picnic areas, beaches, etc.). Most provide both active and passive recreation. The geographic area and the natural resources present dictate recreation uses and facilities present in the park. State parks serve large geographic areas of a state or region.

**ATTACHMENT B**

**SCORP 2005-2010 SUMMARY**

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## STATE-WIDE COMPREHENSIVE OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN (SCORP) 2005-2010

This SCORP 2005-2010 summary was created by NCWRPC staff. Parts that relate specifically to Wisconsin Rapids are noted throughout this summary. Generally, this summary was created as if it were written directly for Wisconsin Rapids and the Western Sands Region in reference to the statewide data. See the SCORP Planning Regions Map.

# The 2005–2010 Wisconsin Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

Since passage of the Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Act of 1965, preparation of a Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) has been required for states to be eligible for LWCF acquisition and development assistance. The LWCF is administered by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) and provides grants for outdoor recreation projects by both state and local governments.

The Wisconsin Rapids Outdoor Recreation Plan is required to apply for Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) funding and to apply for Wisconsin Stewardship Grant funding.

The Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) 2005-2010 was developed by the WDNR to assist local units of government with recreation planning. This SCORP examines various trends to assess current and future recreational needs within the state. To aid in this process, Wisconsin was divided into a group of eight planning regions each representing a loose collection of natural resource and tourism based assets. With SCORP's comprehensive statewide and regional focus, it will guide the allocation of limited recreation funds to acquire additional recreation and conservation lands and support the continued development of outdoor recreation opportunities.

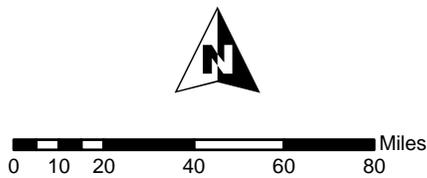
Primary resources in the Western Sands Region are water based, nature based, and developed settings. The SCORP Planning Regions Map shows that Wisconsin Rapids is in the Western Sands Region.

SCORP consists of 7 chapters and five appendixes that are summarized below.

# SCORP Planning Regions



-  Non-Metro Recreation Counties
-  SCORP Planning Boundaries



This map is neither a legally recorded map nor a survey and is not intended to be used as one. This drawing is a compilation of records, information and data used for reference purposes only. NCWRPC is not responsible for any inaccuracies herein contained.



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## **Chapter 1 – Wisconsin Natural Amenities, Population Changes, and Recreation Destinations.**

Chapter 1 explores what natural amenities exist in the Western Sands area, and examines the recreation and population changes that have occurred within Wisconsin over the past 50 years. This chapter investigates the ways in which changing demographic trends have impacted recreation supply and demand in Wisconsin.

Wood County data from SCORP and other sources exists in Chapter 2–Description of Wisconsin Rapids in the "Wisconsin Rapids Outdoor Recreation Plan 2010-2015."

General SCORP conclusions for Chapter 1 include:

- Heavily forested or grassland (Wisconsin Rapids) regions, for example, support activities such as hiking, trail-riding, and cross-country skiing, while regions with many lakes, and rivers (Wisconsin Rapids) support speed boating, water skiing, canoeing, swimming, etc.
- Outside of northern Wisconsin's abundant park and water resources, the Western Sands Region has the largest amount of public lands and water in the state. These areas include the Black River State Forest, Jackson County Forests, the Necedah National Wildlife Refuge, the Wisconsin River (Wisconsin Rapids), the Chippewa River, the Black River, and many smaller state and county parks. Southern Wood County is rich in county forest land and has Sandhill- and Wood County State Wildlife Areas.
- Age – Older residents generally enjoy quieter, lower impact activities such as viewing birds, driving for pleasure, ice fishing, etc. While younger generations will generally participate in more high impact activities such as running, jogging, inline skating, developed camping, disk golf, downhill skiing, kayaking, paintball, mountain biking, and riding ATVs. Wisconsin Rapids median age in 2000 was: 38, placing it in the middle.
- Data from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) indicates that 61% of all Wisconsin adults are overweight or obese, and 24% of Wisconsin high school students are overweight or at risk of becoming so. Physical activity is an important factor in controlling obesity. With their miles of easily accessible trails, rivers, and forest, Wisconsin's parks and recreation areas play an integral role in promoting activity among state citizens.
- Income – Middle income Wisconsinites often participate in developed camping, snowmobiling, fishing, picnicking, driving for pleasure, and ATV riding.

## **Chapter 2 – Wisconsin Outdoor Recreation Demand and Uses.**

Chapter 2 explores user demand for almost 100 popular Wisconsin outdoor recreational activities, and examines which activities are most popular and which environments are the most desirable for outdoor recreation. This plan is the first SCORP to evaluate recreation demand from outside of the state, an evaluation that will prove useful in balancing the demands of in-state and out-of-state residents. In addition, this chapter explores several barriers that prevent people from participating in recreational activities as often as they would like. Finally, this chapter discusses the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the continuing challenge of addressing outdoor recreation conflicts for individuals with mobility disabilities.

This chapter explores several of the factors that influence a person's recreation preferences – recreation settings, recreation experiences, and geographic location – and classifies recreational activities and users according to these groupings. While important, recreation preferences are only one component of recreation participation. Barriers to recreation are another important consideration in determining how often and to what extent people recreate – personal, environmental, and disabled barriers.

Recreation participation rates within Wisconsin are higher than most other regions of the country. This may be attributed to the combination of Wisconsin's abundant recreation resources and the state's four-season climate.

**Wisconsin Demand Use Highlights** describes several activities and projects what their future potential is.

These two following sheets were taken directly from SCORP.

The 2005 – 2010 Wisconsin Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

## Wisconsin Demand Use Highlights

### ATVing

Within Wisconsin, ATVing has been one of the fastest growing recreation activities. What started in the 1970s as a small sport has now grown into a multimillion dollar industry with devoted participants across the country. With its abundance of undeveloped land, Wisconsin has proved an ideal location for ATVing; over 23% of Wisconsinites currently participate in ATV recreation and more are riding every year. For many ATV enthusiasts their sport is a social activity—they ride with their friends and families, stopping to shop and eat at different towns along the way. A number of ATV clubs and their members are active in group outings, performing trail maintenance, and promoting vehicle safety and advocacy. For other riders, ATVing is a nature-based activity. These users value the time they spend outside while on their ATVs, the fresh air and peaceful atmosphere they experience riding on a rural trail.



Though increasingly popular, the rise in ATV usage has not been without growing pains. Those objecting to ATVs have continually raised complaints about the noise and displacement of other recreational uses caused by the vehicles. Though the motorsports industry and a number of ATV clubs have addressed these issues with some limited successes in the state, there is still much work to be done to ensure ATVs interact peacefully with other motorized and non-motorized recreational activities.

### Geocaching

Most Wisconsinites have probably never heard of geocaching. For those that participate in the sport, though, it represents a new and exciting form of ultra-modern, technologically advanced recreation. Geocaching may be described as a modern day treasure hunt. The sport relies on Global

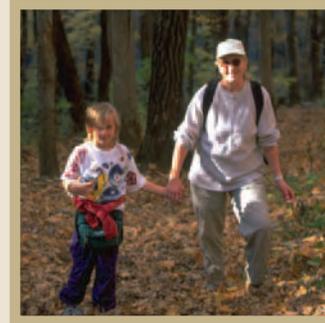


Positioning System (GPS) units, small devices that are able to determine, within 6-20 feet, the location of any spot on the planet. With these devices in hand, geocachers set out to find caches—small treasures set up and maintained by a worldwide network of individuals and organizations. The location of a cache is posted on the internet so geocachers need only record the location (in latitude and longitude) of their treasure and set out to find it. Though the sport sounds simple, it often involves a good deal of trekking and searching as geocachers make their way over hills and rocks, forests and streams to find their treasure. The location of a cache is up to the individual who establishes it, thus they are often placed somewhere the hider deems special—a scenic vista, a rocky cliff-face, even the

bottom of a shallow lake. Upon arriving at a cache—generally a small bag containing trinkets and a logbook—the visitor takes a treasure, leaves a treasure, and records his visit in the book. He then replaces the cache and returns home, ready to start his next quest. Geocaching has become popular not only for its sense of adventure, but also its flexibility. Caches can be hidden anywhere—city streets, remote wilderness areas, suburban front yards. The rules, like the treasures in the caches themselves, are loose and adaptable, allowing geocachers to create traveling caches, group treasure hunts, and many other variations. As the sport gains more exposure from associations like the Wisconsin Geocaching Association (<http://www.wi-geocaching.com/>), it is expected to continue to increase in popularity.

### Walking for Pleasure

Of all recreational activities offered in Wisconsin, walking for pleasure is by far the most popular, with over 85% of state residents (3.5 million people) participating. The reasons are obvious; walking is an easy, accessible activity requiring only your own two feet and a



good pair of shoes (sometimes those are even negotiable!). Walking can be done nearly anywhere, whether in the heart of downtown Milwaukee or in the most remote portion of northern Wisconsin. Walking is also a multitasker's dream, allowing us to sightsee, chat with friends, or simply enjoy the scenery as we stroll. As exercise becomes an increasing concern for the Wisconsin population, walking can provide a good source of activity during a hectic workday just as easily as during a leisurely weekend outing.

### Motorboating

In a state that is nearly surrounded by water—Lake Superior to the north, Lake Michigan to the east, the Mississippi River to the west, and thousands of smaller lakes and rivers in between—it is not surprising that watersports are popular among Wisconsinites. With 1,513,000 people (36% of the population) participating, motorboating is a favorite pastime of many

state residents, and with good reason: Every one of our 72 counties has at least 4 lakes with the most—1,327 lakes—occurring in Vilas County. Our boat-to-resident ratio is the second in the nation with one boat for every nine residents (Minnesota is number one, with one boat for every six residents). Our state ranks 6th in the nation for boat registrations and 7th in the nation for money spent on boating. The many varieties of lakes within Wisconsin accommodate nearly every form of motorboat, from small runabouts to large



## Wisconsin Demand Use Highlights

Great Lake vessels. Because of its tremendous popularity, motorboating has sometimes been associated with issues of overcrowding and safety. In reaction to these concerns, certain lakes have placed restrictions on the sport. As the powerboat industry continues to push for more affordable boating, the sport is expected to become increasingly popular, cementing its status as a favorite outdoor pursuit.

### Outdoor Ice Skating

Although cold and sometimes dreary, Wisconsin's winter does provide state residents with a wide variety of winter recreation. With 16.6% of state residents participating, outdoor ice skating is an especially popular winter activity. Skating is available in nearly all parts of



the state, whether in the highly developed outdoor rinks of urban areas or the crystalline surfaces of frozen northern lakes. While ice skating appeals to all ages, the physical demands involved in the sport tend to attract a younger crowd. Among this demographic skating is done recreationally and competitively, ice skating being a popular activity, especially among girls. The cost of participation for ice skating is generally low, a quality that has made the activity popular among families looking for an economical form of recreation. In recent years there has been a push to develop more outdoor ice skating rinks at the local level, a move that would make the activity accessible and popular to an even wider range of state residents.

### Viewing/Photographing Birds

Viewing/photographing birds is an activity popular across all age groups and state regions—over 40% of Wisconsinites (1,700,000 people) participate in the activity. Unlike other forms of more active recreation, birdwatching is a uniquely serene pursuit—quiet, non-destructive, and based in a natural setting. Many birdwatchers value this natural aspect, enjoying the opportunity to be in the fields or woods, away from the noise and sometimes hectic pace of the city. Interestingly, most birdwatchers don't need to go far from home to find this peaceful atmosphere—85% birdwatch within 1 mile of where they live. Other birdwatchers value the educational aspect of the activity, taking the time to search for new species and learn the different behaviors, calls, and appearances of different birds. Birdwatching is often done as a family activity, making the sport a uniquely social way to spend time in nature. As the activity has become more popular, the state has begun to develop birdwatching trails. These trails often feature driving routes with stopping points to observe birds and other wildlife. These new trails are expected to further increase the popularity of birdwatching.



Birdwatching is often done as a family activity, making the sport a uniquely social way to spend time in nature. As the activity has become more popular, the state has begun to develop birdwatching trails. These trails often feature driving routes with stopping points to observe birds and other wildlife. These new trails are expected to further increase the popularity of birdwatching.

### Disc Golf

Begun as a sport in the 1970s, disc golf has exploded in popularity. What started with a single course in Pasadena, California in 1975 has now expanded to a global phenomenon with courses on all continents but Africa, passionate players across the globe, and a professional sporting association, the Professional Disc Golf Association (PDGA). The rules of disc golf are much like traditional golf: get the disc to the target—an above ground, metal, net-like structure—in as few throws



as possible. The course is also very similar, with a fairway, terrain changes, and obstacles (trees, shrubs, water traps) all dotting the landscape of the typically 9 or 18 hole course. 8.8% of Wisconsinites (366,000 people) now participate in disc golf, with more joining these ranks every year. The sport is popular for a variety of reasons, not the least of which is

the ease in which it is played. A beginner at the sport needs only 3 discs (a driver, a mid-range, and a putter) and access to a course. Courses are found in most cities and entrance fees are generally low-cost or free. The sport itself is very friendly towards beginners as all players move from hole to hole at their own pace. Many participants play in groups and the sport provides a moderate amount of exercise and an opportunity to be outside.

### Attending an Outdoor Sporting Event

You need not look further than your nearest cheesehead-stocked general store to know that sports are big in Wisconsin. Although only 20% of Wisconsinites participate in sports themselves, nearly 57% (2,365,000 people) watch or attend outdoor sporting events. Large events such as University of Wisconsin–Madison football games have ranked among the nation's top 20 in game attendance for each of the team's last nine seasons. Other events—football, soccer, and baseball games—are also popular year-round activities. Because they generally require developed facilities and large crowds, sporting events usually take place in larger cities, making them one of the few forms of recreation best suited for urban environments. While some skeptics may frown at the idea of classifying sporting event attendance as outdoor recreation, there are many side benefits from this activity. Those attending these events walk to the stadium and often tailgate—an outdoor activity and a chance to socialize with family, friends, and neighbors.



## Outdoor Resource Type

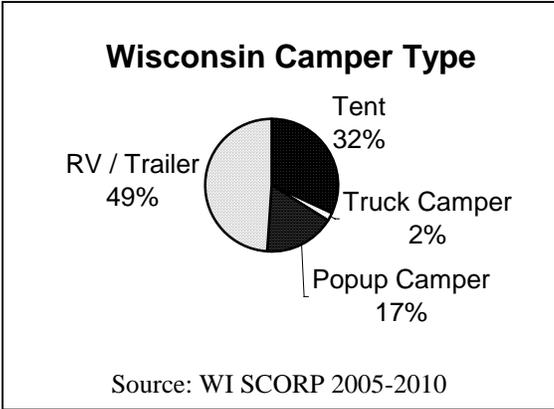
Wisconsin Rapids is part of the Western Sands Region, which supports outdoor recreation uses by the natural resource settings that are: Water Based, Nature Based, and Developed Land.

**Water based** outdoor activities are among the most popular recreational activities in Wisconsin. Abundant water resources across the state offer a wide variety of recreation options from high speed motorboating to lazy lounging at the beach. Just under half of Wisconsin residents participate in motorboating, visiting a beach, or swimming in a lake or stream. Table B-1 shows the percent of state residents participating in Wisconsin water based activities from age 16 on up.

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Percent Participating</b>	<b>Number of Participants (1,000s)</b>
Visit a beach	47.3	1,966
Swimming in lakes, streams, etc.	45.8	1,904
Fishing – freshwater	40.7	1,692
Swimming in an outdoor pool	38.3	1,592
Fishing – warmwater	37.0	1,538
Motorboating	36.4	1,513
Visit other waterside (besides beach)	26.4	1,097
Canoeing	20.5	852
Rafting	14.4	599
Fishing – coldwater	13.9	578
Waterskiing	12.2	507
Fishing – Great Lakes	11.0	457
Rowing	10.1	420
Use personal watercraft	9.7	403
Snorkeling	7.7	320
Sailing	4.9	204
Fishing – fly	4.8	199
Kayaking – recreation/sit-on-top	2.4	99
Kayaking – whitewater	1.8	75
Scuba diving	1.3	54
Windsurfing	0.7	29
Surfing	0.3	12
Kayaking – touring/Sea	0.2	8

Source: WI SCORP 2005-2010

**Nature based** land activities are those outdoor recreation activities that occur in undeveloped settings. While limited developed facilities may be used in conjunction with these activities, the typical nature based land activity participant wants to experience natural surroundings. Visiting wilderness areas is the most popular nature based land activity in Wisconsin with 38.3% of Wisconsinites participating. Hiking and camping are also popular with approximately 1/3 of state residents participating in each. Table B-2 shows the percent of state residents participating in Wisconsin nature based land activities from age 16 on up.



**Table B-2 State Resident Participation in Nature Based Land Activities**

Activity	Percent Participating	Number of Participants (1,000s)
Visit a wilderness or primitive area	38.3	1,592
Day hiking	35.0	1,455
Camping – developed	32.3	1,343
Visit a farm or agricultural setting	31.8	1,322
Off-road driving with an ATV	23.4	973
Mountain biking (off-road)	20.4	848
Hunting – big game	19.2	798
Trail running	18.6	773
Mountain biking (single track)	18.0	748
Off-road 4-wheel driving	17.7	736
Camping – primitive	16.0	665
Hunting – small game	14.5	603
Hunting – upland birds	10.5	436
Horseback riding on trails	8.1	337
Backpacking	6.9	287
Rock climbing	5.9	245
Off-road motorcycling	5.9	245
Hunting – migratory bird	5.0	208
Mountain climbing	3.4	141
Orienteering	2.7	112
Geocaching	2.0	83

Source: WI SCORP 2005-2010

**Developed land** settings includes a wide mix of recreational activities, all of which use some form of manmade development such as roads or sidewalks, or involve a high level of social interaction. Developed land setting outdoor recreation is by far the most popular form of recreation in Wisconsin. More Wisconsin residents participate in two developed land recreation activities – walking for pleasure and outdoor family gatherings – than any other Wisconsin activity. Table B-3 shows the percent of state residents participating in Wisconsin developed land activities from age 16 on up.

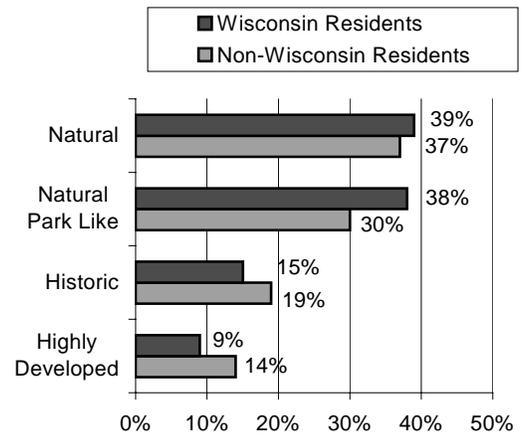
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Percent Participating</b>	<b>Number of Participants (1,000s)</b>
Walking for pleasure	85.8	3,567
Family gathering	78.9	3,280
Gardening or landscaping for pleasure	65.3	2,715
Driving for pleasure	60.3	2,507
Picnicking	56.6	2,353
Bicycling	49.3	2,049
Yard games, e.g. horseshoes	44.8	1,862
Attend outdoor concerts, plays, etc.	38.5	1,600
Visit outdoor theme/water park	37.6	1,563
Target shooting	20.2	840
Visit a dog park to walk a pet	12.4	515
Horseback riding (any type)	9.8	407
Paintball games	6.6	274

Source: WI SCORP 2005-2010

Figure 1: Outdoor Recreation Setting Preferences

## Preferences in Outdoor Recreation Settings

Understanding both setting and activity preferences can help recreation managers and planners provide for a wide range of recreational opportunities within a given setting. Wisconsin and non-Wisconsin residents were asked which of 4 distinct environments they preferred as a recreational setting. Figure 1 shows that natural settings and natural park like settings came out on top.



## Outdoor Recreation Segmentation by Experiences

Another way of understanding recreation activity preferences – the type of experience a person seeks from participating in a given recreational activity. The WDNR and the 1999-2004 National Survey on Recreation and the Environment (NSRE) examined people's preferences and participation in a range of outdoor recreational activities. From this data, several outdoor recreation participation segments were identified:

1. Inactives; 2. Passives; 3. Non-Consumptive Moderate; 4. Nature Lovers; 5. Active Nature Watchers; 6. Water Bugs; 7. Motorized Consumptives (Hunt and Fish); and 8. Enthusiasts.

**Inactives** comprise about 17% of Wisconsinites 16 years and older. This is the largest and also the most sedentary group of all market segments. Members may participate in some hunting and fishing, but do not participate in any water sports.

*Primary Activities:*

- Walk for pleasure.
- Attend family gathering.

**Passives** comprise about 14.5% of Wisconsinites 16 years and older. Unlike most other segments, Passives do not often participate in viewing and photographing activities.

*Primary Activities:*

- Attend family gathering.
- Visit a nature center
- picnicking
- visit a historic center
- visit a beach

**Non Consumptive Moderates** comprise about 14% of Wisconsinites 16 years and older. This group represents the average person that is somewhat more involved in recreation. Some members of this group participate in physically demanding activities such as mountain biking and snorkeling. Activities not favored by this group include hunting, fishing, and off-road driving.

*Primary Activities:*

- Visit a beach
- Swimming
- Downhill skiing
- Visit a nature center
- Mountain biking
- Picnicking
- Day hiking
- Camping

**Nature Lovers** comprise about 16.2% of Wisconsinites 16 years and older. This group enjoys viewing and photographing nature and are almost twice as likely as the average person to participate in these activities. They generally drive for pleasure rather than hike or backpack into a natural setting. Nature Lovers participate in limited amounts of hunting, fishing, active sports, and muscle powered activities, but these activities are not their passion.

*Primary Activities:*

- Viewing/Photographing nature
- Drive for pleasure
- Learning/Viewing a nature center
- Walk for pleasure
- Sightseeing
- Attend a family gathering

**Active Nature Watchers** comprise about 16.5% of Wisconsinites 16 years and older. This group is active when viewing nature as opposed to Nature Lovers. This group hikes or backpacks into natural settings to view wildlife or natural scenery. Members of this group also enjoy water based activities, but prefer to arrive at their viewing destination by human power.

*Primary Activities:*

- Viewing/Photographing nature
- Learning/Viewing a nature center
- Walking
- Day hiking
- Cross-country skiing
- Swimming
- Kayaking
- Visit a historic site

**Water Bug** comprise about 8.2% of Wisconsinites 16 years and older. This group is almost as energetic as the Enthusiasts group. Members of this group participate in water based activities twice as often as the average person.

*Primary Activities:*

- Visit a beach
- Visit a water park
- Swimming
- Boating (all types)
- Drive for pleasure
- Picnicking
- Learning/Visiting a nature center
- Downhill skiing

**Motorized Consumptives (Hunt and Fish)** comprise about 7.8% of Wisconsinites 16 years and older. This group has the highest participation rates for hunting and fishing with members; four times more likely to hunt, and three times more likely to fish than the average person. Rates of physically demanding activities are relatively low among members of this group, with members preferring consumptive activities (hunting and fishing) and motorized activities to human powered activities.

*Primary Activities:*

- Hunting
- Fishing
- Motorboating
- Snowmobiling
- Driving off-road
- Horseback riding
- Camping
- Gathering mushrooms, berries, etc.

**Enthusiasts** comprise about 8.2% of Wisconsinites 16 years and older. This group is the most active of all residents, and they enjoy the broadest array of activities. Members of this group are two to six times more likely to participate in certain activities than most other Americans. Enthusiasts also enjoy activities that are physically challenging and require high levels of skill and endurance.

*Primary Activities:*

- Cross-country skiing
- Kayaking
- Snowboarding
- Mountain biking
- Camping
- Canoeing
- Sailing
- Rowing

### **Recreation Demand from Outside Wisconsin**

Wood County, like most other counties in Wisconsin, is not a "Non-Metro Recreation County," therefore no tourist analysis is available.

### **Status of Health and Barriers to Recreation in Wisconsin**

No matter what recreation experience, setting, or activity people prefer, one thing is clear: physical activity is important to overall health and well-being. Over the course of the past few decades, national overweight and obesity rates have increased dramatically. Today more than 60% of adults over the age of 20 are overweight or at risk of becoming so. In Wisconsin, 61% of adults are overweight or obese, while 24% of Wisconsin high school students are overweight or at risk of becoming so.

In order to encourage increased physical activity among Wisconsinites we must first understand the barriers to becoming active. As part of SCORP 2005-2010 residents were surveyed, and responses were grouped into two categories – personal, and environmental barriers.

Personal barriers to increasing physical activity in order of importance are:

1. Lack of time, 2. Family commitments, 3. Job/work, 4. Crowding, 5. Conflicts with motorized uses, 6. Cost, 7. Age, and 8. Fuel prices.

Environmental barriers to increasing physical activity in order of importance are:

1. Distance/travel time, 2. Lack of access to public lands, 3. Lack of information about where to go, 4. Not enough campsites/electric sites, 5. Noise from ATVs and other motorized uses, 6. Lack of bike trails, 7. Lack of public transportation, and 8. Lack of snow.

### **Accessibility Recreation Considerations**

This SCORP intends to assess and improve recreation for all recreational participants. One often overlooked group in recreational planning has been those with mobility disabilities. Although accessibility to recreational resources has increased for disabled persons there has been little

research exploring the outdoor recreation participation patterns of people with disabilities. To establish a general understanding of the supply and demand of recreation for disabled persons, the WDNR evaluated several studies conducted by the 1999-2004 National Survey on Recreation and the Environment (NSRE).

In the NRSE data, the characteristics of activities that influenced recreation participation rates of disabled people included: (a) the physical nature of activities, (b) the degree of adaptation needed for participation, (c) the social expectations, self perceptions, and social fears associated with certain activities, (d) the financial costs of activities, and (e) the accessibility of sites where activities took place. From this work, 15 recreation uses listed alphabetically below were determined to have average or above average participation rates among mobility disabled individuals. Most of these activities are nature based requiring a more natural/undeveloped setting. Viewing and learning activities are also popular with this population.

- Attend concerts
- Backpacking
- Birdwatching
- Camping
- Canoeing
- Drive off-road
- Fishing
- Horseback riding
- Nature study
- Sightseeing
- Sledding
- View fish
- Visiting historic/archeology sites
- Visit nature centers
- Wildlife viewing

As reported in the 2000 U.S. Census, Wisconsin has about 791,000 disabled persons, which is about 14% of the state population. Among residents 65 and older, 36.5% are classified as disabled. As Wisconsin's large baby boomer population continues to age, the demand for disabled recreation facilities is also expected to increase.

Generally, this groups barriers to increased participation in outdoor recreation include: 1. No companions, 2. Not enough money, 3. Not enough time, 4. Outdoor pests, and 5. Personal health.



The demand for disabled recreation facilities is expected to increase with Wisconsin's aging population.

### **Chapter 3 – The Supply of Outdoor Recreation in Wisconsin.**

Chapter 3 explores the supply of recreation in Wisconsin, both in terms of built facilities and outdoor recreation environments. Since outdoor supply comes in many forms, this chapter examines both landscape scale needs, and local park and recreation needs.

Data from this part of SCORP was incorporated and expanded upon in Chapter 3 of the Wisconsin Rapids Outdoor Recreation Plan.

#### **Public and Private Recreation Providers**

Wisconsin Rapids has a system of public parks and recreation areas in the city. Wood County Parks & Recreation maintains camping, county forest, and additional parkland available to Wisconsin Rapids residents.

Some private recreation providers offer campgrounds or golf courses to the public, and charge a fee for their use.

#### **Elements of Wisconsin Outdoor Recreation Supply**

Data from this part of SCORP was incorporated and expanded upon in Chapter 3 – Existing Recreation System.

#### **Recreation Prioritization of Land Legacy Areas**

Wisconsin Land Legacy Areas in Wood County are identified in Chapter 1 of the Wisconsin Rapids Outdoor Recreation Plan under Past Plans, and is also generally shown on Map 1.

As Wisconsin works to develop and expand recreation, it is important that the state develop a system for evaluating potential sites with an eye towards their recreational value. Initial work done by the Wisconsin Land Legacy Plan has identified an inventory of places believed to be critical in meeting Wisconsin's conservation and recreation needs over the next 50 years.

##### *1. Potential Visitors*

Future recreational areas should be easily accessible to a large number of potential visitors. To determine the number of visitors an area may receive, sites were assessed for the number of people living within an hour's drive of their respective boundaries. Road data was used to create buffer areas which were then placed on a map and compared to the buffer areas of surrounding sites. Areas with the highest amounts of potential visitors were assigned a higher score than those with lower amounts. While these areas certainly receive visitors outside of a one-hour drive, additional work evaluating travel patterns will need to be completed before including this data in Land Legacy designations.

## *2. Population/Development Pressure*

In addition to providing sites that are easily and widely accessible, the WDNR also hopes to preserve Wisconsin's unique and special environments. Sites with especially high development pressures may, therefore, deserve priority in the designation of future protected areas. To determine population and development pressure, projected population growth estimates were assessed for each site. Areas expected to undergo the highest population growth were assigned higher scores than those in which population growth was expected to be minimal.

## *3. Cost of Land Acquisition*

Cost of land acquisition is also an important consideration when evaluating potential Land Legacy sites. Areas in which undeveloped land (land which has not been developed for either urban or agricultural use) is relatively inexpensive were assigned a higher score than those in which land was relatively more expensive.

## *4. Conservation Significance Value*

Though the primary goal of the SCORP is improving and expanding recreation within state-owned lands, the WDNR also hopes to preserve places of special ecological importance. For this reason, sites with significant ecological conservation value were assigned higher scores than those with a lower conservation value.

## *5. Recreational Potential*

Finally, any future site must also facilitate participation in its region's top recreational activities. The top 15 recreational uses in each SCORP region were used as a template against which potential sites were evaluated. Sites that offered the most opportunities for popular recreational opportunities received a higher score than those areas that provided fewer opportunities for these activities.

Data from all five components was then compiled on a site-by-site basis. Sites receiving the highest scores within each region were designated as high recreational potential Land Legacy sites.

Look in the SCORP Chapter 5 summary under **Regional Land Legacy Areas for High Recreation Demand** to view the highest priority Legacy Areas in the Central Sands SCORP Region.

## **Local Park and Recreation Needs**

As another aspect of this planning process, local recreational needs (county, city, village, and town) were also assessed. This process involved a review of 373 local park and recreation plans on file as part of the WDNR recreational grants program.

The top five planning recommendations of each municipality were summarized. These recommendations were then compiled into a larger list, and categorized into three areas – 1. Park and Open Space Acquisition Needs, 2. General Recreation Improvements, 3. New Recreation Developments – and are listed in Table B-4

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**Table B-4                      Summary of Local Outdoor Recreation Plan Recommendations**

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**Park and Open Space Acquisition Needs:**

- Community parks
- Dog parks
- Ice Age Trail
- Mini parks
- Neighborhood parks

**General Recreation Improvements:**

- ADA accessible facilities
- Athletic field upgrades and improvements
- Better signage
- Playground equipment upgrades
- Restroom upgrades

**New Recreation Developments:**

- Bike trails
  - Boat launches
  - Camping
  - Disc golf courses
  - Ice skating rinks
  - Indoor recreation complexes
  - Nature trails
  - Park shelters
  - Picnic areas
  - Scenic drives
  - Skateboard parks
  - Sledding hills
  - Soccer fields
  - Swimming pools
  - Tennis court development
  - Trail connections
  - Volleyball courts
  - Water access
  - Water trails
  - Water spray parks
- 

Source: WI SCORP 2005-2010

**Warren Knowles – Gaylord Nelson Stewardship 2000 Fund**

The Warren Knowles-Gaylord Nelson Stewardship Program (Stewardship 2000) is the state’s primary funding source for the state, local governments (including tribes), and non-profit conservation organizations (NCOs) to acquire land and easements for conservation and outdoor recreation purposes. This program is funded by general obligation bonds.

Stewardship 2000 is administered by the WDNR and provides \$60 million annually through FY 2010. As shown in Table B-5, the program acts as an umbrella organization for several subprograms, each with its own goals and priorities. These subprograms provide funds to improve visitor amenities at state and local parks; restore wetlands and prairies; and acquire land for trails, natural areas, state and county forests, wildlife habitat, urban green space, state and local parks, river and stream corridors, and flowages and wild lakes.

Stewardship 2000 has four major components:

1. *Land Acquisition by WDNR and NCOs:* Acquisition of land and easements for a wide range of conservation and outdoor recreation purposes.

Qualified NCOs are also eligible to acquire lands and conservation easements with Land Acquisition funds for such purposes as the protection of natural areas, habitat areas, streambank protection, and the Ice Age National Scenic Trail.

2. *Local Assistance*: Grants to local governments and NCOs for acquisition of land, conservation easements, and development projects that support nature-based outdoor recreation.

3. *Baraboo Hills*: Land and easement acquisition for the conservation of the hardwood forests of the Baraboo area by the WDNR, local governments and NCOs.

4. *Property Development on State Lands by WDNR, Friends groups, and NCOs*: Development of recreational facilities on state properties includes such projects as campground renovations, construction of park support and interpretive facilities, and improved accessibility to recreation areas.

As the state budget fluctuates and funding for programs statewide becomes increasingly scarce, proposals have been made to severely cut or reduce the scope of Stewardship 2000 funding. Public response to these proposals has been overwhelmingly supportive of the existing Stewardship Program. Editorials in support of the program appeared in more than 25 newspapers statewide, indicating that Wisconsinites recognize and support the key role this program has played and will continue to play in the long-term protection of Wisconsin's special places.

Program Category	Subprogram	Annual Funds (\$)	% of Fund
Land Acquisition	WDNR Conservation and Recreation Land and Trails	\$37,000,000	62%
	Nonprofit Conservation Organization (NCO) Conservation and Recreation Land and Trails	\$8,000,000	13%
Bluff Protection	WDNR and NCO land acquisition in the Great Lakes; \$1 million earmarked through FY 2004		
Baraboo Hills	WDNR, NCOs, local governments; \$5 million		
Property Development and Local Assistance	Earmarked over previous years	\$6,750,000	12%
	NCO State Property Development Grants (e.g. Friends of Wisconsin State Parks)	\$250,000	<1%
	Local Assistance Grants: for acquisition and development; local governments and NCOs	\$8,000,000	13%
Total		\$60,000,000	

Source: WI SCORP 2005-2010

## Summary

The need for an increased supply of recreation land and facilities is evident on a variety of levels. On a landscape scale, there are a number of important areas within the state that deserve increased attention for environmental protection and preservation. At the local level, municipal and county parks are in need of facility upgrades and continued management.

## **Chapter 4 – The Supply of Outdoor Recreation in Wisconsin.**

Chapter 4 investigates the current status of Wisconsin's outdoor recreation conflicts, and states the difficulties in developing permanent solutions to these issues. This chapter also explores several of the current innovative solutions for resolving recreation conflicts.

### **Outdoor Recreation Conflict Reporting in Wisconsin and Surrounding States**

In order to establish a general understanding of which Wisconsin recreational activities experience conflict, researchers performed a LexisNexis search for Wisconsin popular press articles from the past two years (December 2003 – December 2005) that discussed issues of recreation conflict. A total of 75 different news stories were found. The most frequently cited conflicts included concerns over environmental damage (19 citations), trails (18 citations), conflict with landowners (15 citations), the implementation of activity bans (14 citations), management actions by state or local agencies (12 citations) and disputes over the use of local parks (11 citations). Other issues included, in order of frequency: safety, conflict with wildlife, noise, budget allocation or fee disputes, local ordinances, access to recreational lands and facilities, loss of viewscapes, park creation, water levels, and passage of state bills.

LexisNexis is a database of The Associated Press State & Local Wire, The Capitol Times, The Daily Reporter, The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, The Wisconsin Law Journal, and The Wisconsin State Journal. Sources from surrounding states are also included.

The activities most frequently cited as involved in some form of conflict were hunting (31 citations), ATVs (14 citations) and recreational fishing (8 citations). Other activities found to be associated with some form of conflict included, in order of frequency: bicycling, snowmobiling, hiking, boating, cross-country skiing, camping, swimming, boating, kayaking, swimming, wildlife watching, water skiing and horseback riding.

Articles gathered through this search revealed that conflict associated with non-motorized activities is generally associated with trail use. Articles also indicated that conflicts involving hunting are unique in that they rarely involve conflicts with other outdoor recreation activities. Rather, conflicts related to hunting are most often due to conflicts with private landowners over issues of access or trespassing, or conflicts with the state or recreation area over state management actions or use of parks by hunters.

An additional LexisNexis search was completed for articles from the surrounding states of Illinois, Michigan, and Minnesota. Results of this search revealed far fewer articles relating to recreation conflict than the search performed in Wisconsin. For the activities of ATV riding, hunting, and fishing, there were 50 articles found in Wisconsin alone and only 38 articles in all other three states combined. These findings beg the question: What causal effects are contributing to more recreation conflicts in Wisconsin than elsewhere in the upper Midwest?

Past research in the field of recreational compatibility has focused on two principle explanations for why recreation conflict occurs. The first of these explanations suggests that conflict occurs when the goals of one recreation participant interfere with the goals of another recreation participant in the same location. For example, the goal of a mountain biker to ride fast through a forest may

conflict with a horseback rider’s goal of a tranquil ride through the same forest. The actual amount of conflict that occurs when the horseback rider and mountain biker actually encounter one another is dependent on a host of factors including each user’s experience level, previous experience with similar situations, feeling of attachment to the trail they are riding, design of the trail, proximity to one another, duration of their meeting, and tolerance of the other person’s behavior. The second explanation for recreation conflict suggests that conflict may occur simply because of differences in social values. A classic example of this type of clash is the conflict that may occur between hunters and other recreation participants when there are differences in opinion about when and where hunting should occur, or differences in the values held towards live animals. This type of value based conflict is more likely to be an issue during planning processes and public meetings than in recreation settings themselves.

Previous research has also documented a number of important generalizations about recreation conflict. First, recreation conflict is often asymmetrical, meaning that one user group is generally more impacted by the conflict than another. For example, cross-country skiers may be very bothered by snowmobile users, but snowmobile users are not generally bothered by the presence of cross-country skiers. Second, asymmetrical conflict is most likely to occur between motorized and non-motorized recreation activities than between either two motorized or two non-motorized activities. Third, because recreation users employ a variety of coping methods when encountering recreation conflict, increased levels of conflict may not necessarily reduce a person’s satisfaction with their experience. An angler encountering more boaters on a lake than he had expected may, for example, move to another lake or revise his expectations for the trip. In this way, the angler still enjoys his fishing expedition regardless of the fact that it did not meet his initial expectations.

### Spectrum of Interaction Types

Recreation activities interact in a variety of ways. Some activities positively impact one another and are called complementary. Camping facilities, for example, often attract many visitors, thereby increasing the number of people who hike on an adjacent trail network. Other recreation activities are merely compatible, having a neutral impact on the pursuit of another recreation activity. These activities are called supplementary. Most activities, however, experience some form of conflict when encountering other activities. Users from these different groups may experience conflicts over competition for space, trail infrastructure, viewscapes, and soundscapes. In minor cases, these conflicts are called competitive interactions. In more extreme cases, two activities may be completely incompatible and interactions between them are described as antagonistic. Table B-6 outlines the spectrum of recreation interactions.

<b>Interaction Type</b>	<b>Key Characteristic</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Example</b>
Complementary	Increasing compatibility with increased use	No conflict	Canoeing and fishing
Supplementary	Neutral interaction – no impact on compatibility	Minor conflict	Snowmobiling and ATV use
Competitive	Decreasing compatibility with increased use	Conflict	Fishing and personal water craft
Antagonistic	Activities completely incompatible	Strong conflict	Wilderness camping and ATV use

Source: WI SCORP 2005-2010

## Expert Based Focus Groups

To investigate the compatibility of recreation activities in Wisconsin, a series of expert-based focus groups were held with recreation managers, members of the Wisconsin SCORP External Review Panel, and the leadership team from the “Minimizing Recreational Use Conflicts in Wisconsin’s Forests” session of the Governor’s Conference on Forestry.

Using a ten-point scale developed specifically for this study participants were asked to complete a matrix comparing recreation activities to other recreation activities. Given an interaction between two activities, participants were asked to assess their relative level of compatibility. Ten different land-based activities were included for consideration in this matrix, these activities representing the primary recreation groupings relevant to outdoor recreation in Wisconsin. Table B-7 activities included were ATV riding, camping, cross-country skiing, hiking, horseback riding, hunting, linear trail biking, mountain biking, snowmobiling, and wildlife watching. A separate matrix compared six water-based activities, as shown in Table B-8. These activities included canoeing/kayaking, fishing, personal watercraft, motorboating/water skiing, sailing, and swimming. Recognizing the asymmetrical nature of outdoor recreation conflict, respondents were asked to rate the degree of compatibility in both directions of recreational interactions. In this way, conflict was rated for users of the first activity interacting with users of the second activity, and users of the second activity interacting with users of the first activity.

PRIMARY USE:	INTERACTS:										
	ATV Riding	Hunting	Snow-mobiling	Horseback Riding	Mountain Biking	Cross-Country Skiing	Linear Trail Biking	Hiking	Wildlife Watching	Camping	Average Compatibility
ATV Riding	X	5.3	6.5	5.1	5.5	4.9	5.5	6.1	6.9	7.5	6.0
Hunting	3.3	X	3.7	4.7	4.3	5.3	5.7	5.4	6.0	6.3	5.0
Snowmobiling	4.3	4.0	X	4.0	4.8	4.3	5.8	5.3	6.3	7.2	5.1
Horseback Riding	2.2	3.5	3.0	X	3.8	4.9	4.5	6.3	7.3	7.7	4.8
Mountain Biking	3.1	3.6	4.7	4.8	X	5.7	8.1	6.1	7.4	8.0	5.7
Cross-Country Skiing	1.8	3.6	2.6	3.3	4.2	X	5.6	4.9	8.1	8.5	4.7
Linear Trail Biking	2.6	3.9	5.5	5.3	8.2	7.1	X	7.4	8.0	8.7	6.3
Hiking	2.4	3.5	3.5	5.7	4.7	6.1	6.5	X	8.9	9.2	5.6
Wildlife Watching	2.2	3.2	2.9	6.4	5.2	7.6	6.8	8.6	X	8.3	5.7
Camping	3.9	4.1	5.0	7.5	7.8	8.2	8.2	8.9	8.5	X	6.9
Average Compatibility	2.9	3.9	4.2	5.2	5.4	6	6.3	6.6	7.5	7.9	

Ratings below 4.0 are highly competitive or antagonistic.	Ratings between 4.0 and below 7.0 are moderately to mildly competitive.	Ratings 7.0 and above are supplementary or complementary
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Source: WI SCORP 2005

PRIMARY USE	INTERACTS						
	Personal Water Craft	Motorboating/ Water Skiing	Swimming	Fishing	Sailing	Canoeing/ Kayaking	Average Compatibility
Personal Water Craft	X	7.1	5.4	5.9	6.5	6.2	6.2
Motorboating/Water Skiing	6.5	X	4.9	5.6	5.8	5.9	5.7
Swimming	2.9	3.5	X	6.1	6.2	7.4	5.2
Fishing	2.5	3.0	5.4	X	6.5	7.7	5.0
Sailing	3.4	4.3	6.4	7.0	X	7.6	5.7
Canoeing/Kayaking	2.6	3.2	7.6	7.9	7.4	X	5.7
Average Compatibility	3.6	4.2	5.9	6.5	6.5	7.0	

Ratings below 4.0 are highly competitive or antagonistic.	Ratings between 4.0 and below 7.0 are moderately to mildly competitive.	Ratings 7.0 and above are supplementary or complementary
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Source: WI SCORP 2005

How to read Tables B-7 and B-8 – Ratings reflect the perceived level of conflict from the perspective of users listed in the vertical Y axis (labeled as Primary Use). Ratings indicating a user’s level of perceived recreation conflict should therefore be read horizontally across rows. For example, hunting interaction ratings range from a low of 3.33 for interactions with ATV riding to a high of 6.30 for interactions with camping. Light gray shading represents generally complementary recreation interactions, no shading represents generally compatible interactions, and dark gray shading represents generally antagonistic interactions.

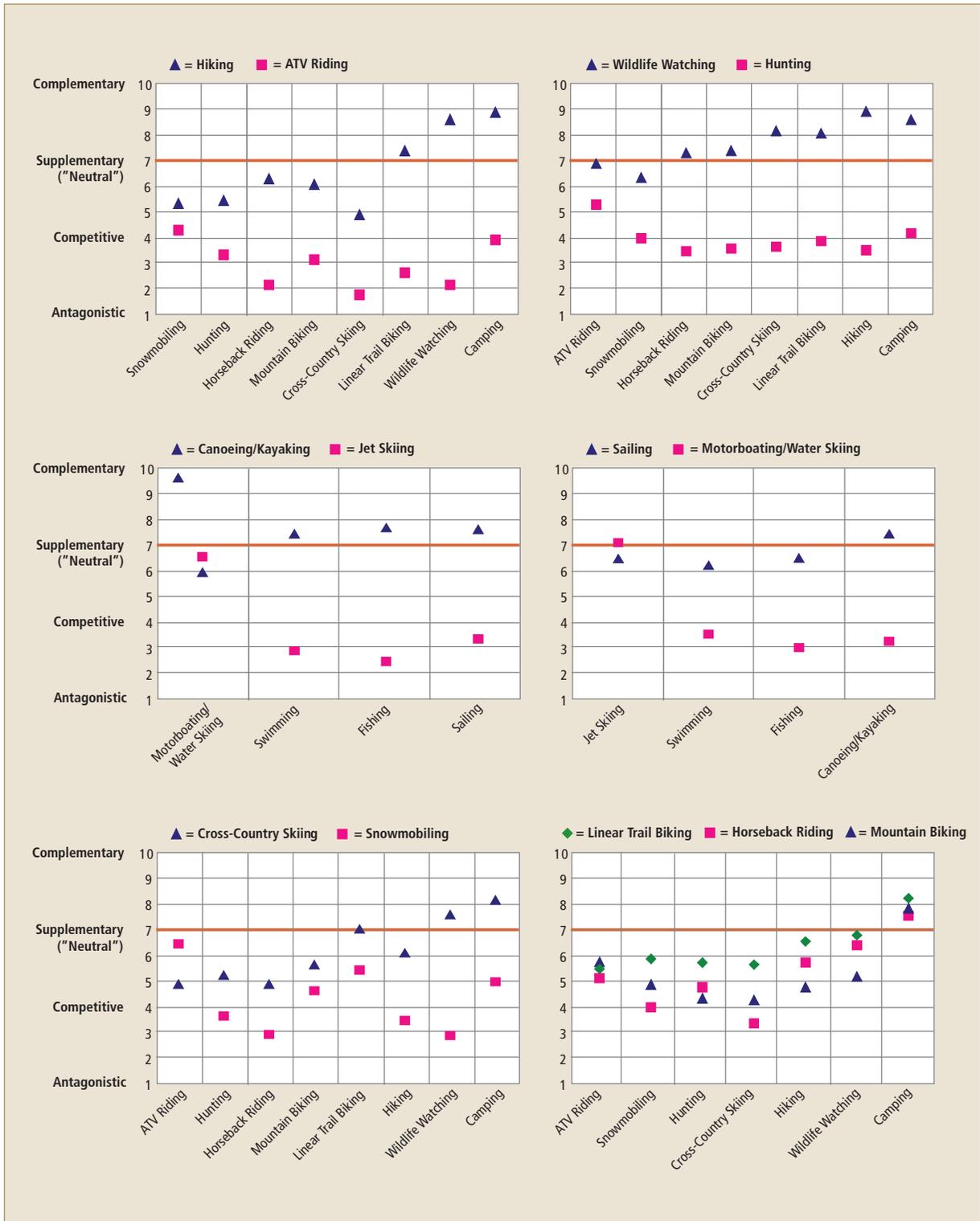
Results of survey of recreation professionals suggest some interesting patterns in recreation compatibility. While there was some variability in responses gathered, there are clearly some activities that recreation managers feel are complementary or supplementary and others that appear to be much more competitive or antagonistic. The average ratings reported for land-based recreation activity interaction ranged from 9.2, a number representing complementary interactions (recorded for hiking with camping), to 1.8, a number representing antagonistic interactions (recorded for cross-country skiing with ATV riding). For water-based activities, average ratings ranged from 7.9 for canoeing/kayaking with fishing to 2.5 for fishing with personal water craft. The average compatibility rating for land- and water-based outdoor recreational activities are summarized in Tables B-7 and B-8.

A second observation from Tables B-7 and B-8 indicates that differences in compatibility between motorized and non-motorized activities becomes less pronounced when more specialized trail based activities such as cross-country skiing, horseback riding, mountain biking and linear trail biking are compared to motorized activities. Because these types of specialized activities need particular kinds of trail infrastructure and have activity styles that are not as compatible with other recreation activities, they are often partially separated from other recreation activities. This may explain the higher levels of compatibility recorded between these activities and motorized uses.

# 4

## Chapter 4: Compatibility and Conflict in Wisconsin Outdoor Recreation

Figure 4-3: Average Outdoor Recreation Compatibility Ratings for Interaction with Highlighted Activities



## Recreation User Perceptions

One research study focused on forest-based recreation in Wisconsin and rated the compatibility of different recreation activities by surveying a large sample of outdoor recreation participants. Respondents in this study were asked whether they agreed with the statement that other recreational users were not bothersome. Results are displayed on the next page in SCORP Figure 4-3 taken directly from SCORP. Most respondents had some level of agreement with this statement.

In general, compatibility ratings in SCORP Figure 4-3 were lowest with motorized vehicle use or hunting and highest with primitive camping or hiking/skiing. These results suggest that recreation participants may hold a more positive view of outdoor recreation compatibility than recreation managers. In order to develop comprehensive management techniques, future research in the field of recreation conflict will need to elicit input from all groups involved in outdoor recreation – managers and participants alike.

## Summary

Both antagonistic and non-antagonistic recreation interactions will best be addressed through proper recreation planning and management, and activities that will maximize positive interactions between non-antagonistic activities and mitigate antagonistic uses.

## **Chapter 5 – Wisconsin SCORP Regional Profiles.**

Chapter 5 divides Wisconsin into eight SCORP planning regions and summarizes the unique characteristics that define each of them. Chapter 5 offers insights into what makes each individual region unique and valuable to statewide recreation, and also summarizes regional recreation needs.

Wisconsin Rapids is in the Western Sands Region shown on the SCORP Planning Regions Map.

The Western Sands Region counties have the second largest amounts of public lands and water in the state. These public lands include the Black River State Forest, Jackson County Forests, the Necedah National Wildlife Refuge, the Wisconsin River, the Chippewa River, the Black River, and many other smaller state and county parks. Although the region remains largely rural, it is influenced by outside tourism demands from the Chicago and Twin Cities metropolitan areas. Easy highway access and relatively cheap land prices within the region have made it a popular location for seasonal home development. The region's Non-Metro Recreation Counties have experienced especially high housing growth, particularly along river flowages.

In an attempt to quantify out-of-state recreation demand, this SCORP also examined the recreation demands of tourists visiting Wisconsin. In 2004, the Wisconsin Department of Tourism conducted a survey of both the Chicago and Minneapolis/St. Paul Designated Market Areas (DMAs). This survey gauged reaction demand by asking residents of each DMA what types of Wisconsin recreation they participated in. Data was separated according to SCORP Region and is listed in Table B-9.

**Table B-9 Out-of-State Recreation Demand  
In Western Sands SCORP Region**

<b>Ranking</b>	<b>Chicago DMA</b>	<b>Minneapolis/St. Paul DMA</b>
1	Canoeing	Birdwatching
2	Birdwatching	Hiking
3	Downhill Skiing	Sightseeing
4	Sightseeing	Picnicking
5	Picnicking	Camping

Source: WI SCORP 2005-2010

### **Regional Public Perspectives on Top Recreation Issues and Needs**

Certain issues are causing impediments to outdoor recreation opportunities within Wisconsin. In order to better understand these issues, the WDNR conducted a series of town meetings across the state. These meetings, conducted in 2005, collected 125 written comments and an additional 1,300 online comments. All survey participants were asked 2 questions:

- “What recreation issues will be growing in significance in the next 5 years?”
- “What barriers are keeping you from recreating outdoors as often as you would like?”

#### Western Sands Region summary of most common responses

The notes in brackets "(note)" after each point state how common the issue or need is throughout the state, by describing if it is unique to the Western Sands Region or not.

#### **Issues**

- Deteriorating facilities (only in this region)
- Increasing ATV usage and associated impacts (an issue in most regions)
- Increasing multiple-use recreation conflicts (only in this region)
- Increasing pressure on parks and recreation areas from the growth of urban areas (only in this region)
- Increasing use of recreation facilities by disabled populations (only in this region)
- Invasive species (an issue in half the regions)
- Lack of educational programs/naturalists/interpreters (only in this region and in the Great Northwest region)
- Loss of sites / properties, i.e., Hoffman Hills, Chippewa Moraine (only in this region)
- Overcrowding (an issue in half of the regions)
- Poor water quality impairing recreation (an issue in half of the regions)

#### **Needs**

- More biking trails (a need in most regions)
- More boating access (a need in a few regions)
- More camping opportunities (a need in half the regions)
- More fishing opportunities (only a need in this region and in the Mississippi region)
- More hiking trails (a need in all regions)
- More horse trails (a need in most regions)
- More trails – all types (only a need in this region)

## **Relative Supply of Recreation by Type Based on Population**

Recreation demand and recreation supply are fundamentally unique elements built on different units of measurement. Recreation supply represents the extent of physical resources present in a given region and gives some indication of user capacity. Various approaches for standardizing supply components have been developed. These approaches can be generalized into two groups; those that focus on relevant market size (population based) and those that focus on aggregate geographic extent (area based).

For the 2005-2010 SCORP process, a metric was developed to present the relative nature of recreation supply in Wisconsin. The recreation location quotient (RLQ) is the metric that provides comparable measures of a region's recreational resources. An RLQ is a measure of the difference in regional recreational characteristics as compared to a given reference region (the whole state).

Results suggest that regions with high demand for outdoor recreation do not provide opportunities for this recreation in proportion to their physical size. For instance, the Lower Lake Michigan Coastal Region (including Milwaukee, Racine, Kenosha, and the northern Chicagoland suburbs) and Southern Gateways Region (including Madison) have overall population based RLQs of less than one (0.52 and 0.92, respectively), which indicate a relative lack of recreation supply within these regions. When comparing these results to those of the less populous northern regions (the Great Northwest and the Northwoods), it is clear that northern regions have comparatively abundant opportunities relative to their low population (population based RLQs of 2.52 and 3.22 respectively).

## **Regional Land Legacy Areas for High Recreation Demand**

Another important consideration for future recreational needs is the preservation and protection of the larger areas that provide space for popular regional activities. As part of the of the recreational Land Legacy process described in Chapter 3, Land Legacy sites were also identified within each region. These sites were chosen to provide recreational opportunities that could serve the recreational needs of an entire region. These sites should be considered the highest priority recreation areas to preserve and protect within the Western Sands Region.

The top five Land Legacy sites in the Western Sands Region are:

1. Black River
2. Upper Chippewa River
3. Central Wisconsin Grasslands
4. Robinson Creek Barrens
5. Yellow (Chippewa) River

## **Summary**

One of the primary purposes of the SCORP is to identify shortfalls in recreation facilities (supplies) across the state. This identification process relies on both primary data gathering techniques such as surveys, as well as anecdotal comments on recreation user perceptions. By making use of both of these techniques, this SCORP has developed a comprehensive summary of recreation needs across the State of Wisconsin.

For this SCORP, targeting was done at the regional level, using regional demand, regional supply, local park and recreation plans, and public comment data to determine which recreation supplies are relatively in short supply. In addition, future trends were also considered through a process discussed in Chapter 3. The combining of these methods and techniques has resulted in a summary presented in Table B-10. To simplify the targeting technique, recreation needs were divided into nature-based and developed setting categories. This division allows for a clear distinction between recreation niches such as state parks and urban trails.

<b>Table B-10 Western Sands Recreation Supply Shortages</b>	
<b>Nature Based</b>	
Beaches	Fishing piers
Parks	
<b>Developed Setting</b>	
Basketball courts – outdoor	Boat launches – trailerable
Dog parks	Golf courses
Marinas	Nature centers
Outdoor theme parks	Soccer fields
Tennis courts	

Source: WI SCORP 2005-2010

## **Chapter 6 – Wisconsin Outdoor Recreation Participation Trends and Observations.**

Chapter 6 describes several key indicators for outdoor recreation trends and offers insights for future recreation participation and demand.

### **Key Indicators and General Trends**

**Demographics** are some of the most important indicators of future recreational demand. The aging of the baby boom generation (born between 1946 – 1964) is a significant trend. Improved health, fitness, and lifestyle changes have assisted many baby boomers with continued participation in outdoor recreation well past previous generations. This group also has relatively high disposable incomes, allowing them to travel and participate in a diverse range of recreational activities. As this group continues to age, the demand for less active outdoor recreational pursuits and facilities – walking, gardening, and birding, for example – has become an increasingly important factor in state recreation demand. As more members of this demographic retire, one would expect a higher level of marginally fit recreation users, and more demand for mid-week recreation programs.

While the baby boom generation is important in predicting future recreation demand, Generation Y is also becoming an important group to watch. Members of this generation, born between 1981 and 1995, make up the largest consumer and recreation group in the nation. As Generation Y begins to enter the workforce and have families of their own, their specific demands will increasingly shape recreation supply and demand. Early indicators suggest that this group demands instant information access, has a high level of multi-tasking, and has low rates of physical activity.

More adults now remain single until their 30s and 40s, with many of those that do marry either postponing having children until later in their lives, or choosing to not have children at all. At the same time, single-parent families have also increased. For all of these groups, free time is perceived as an opportunity to spend time with family and friends and as such, they often seek out recreation activities that allow group participation.

While group activities are popular among single parent and no-children families, members of these demographics are often also interested in the more active and unusual recreation available in experiential trips and other non-traditional recreation activities. Traditional team sports such as football have reached a plateau in their growth, while more modern activities such as geocaching and disc golf continue to rise in popularity.

Recreation demand has also been affected by changes in work and leisure trends. Data from this SCORP indicates that Wisconsinites consider time to be their scarcest resource. While dual-income households and flexible work schedules create more flexible recreation and travel patterns, the increasing demands of work often prevent people from participating in recreation as often as they would like. Work hours are longer, leisure hours less. Dual-income households in particular have felt the pinch of increased work hours as many American women (over 50%) now work outside the home. With all adults in a household working, free time available for recreating diminishes significantly. Because of these increased demands on limited spare time and the fact that households are generally busier with work and home life responsibilities, discretionary activities (activities that do not require scheduling) are expected to become increasingly popular in the coming years.

Population has a limited impact on recreation demand because recreational activities and interests vary significantly over a person's lifetime. Rather than examine total populations, it is more useful to examine the profile, size and participation rates within actual user groups to determine future recreation needs. Certain population groups representing potential service needs or demands may be divided into specific user categories called market groups. Once these market groups are defined, additional research can reveal the specific needs and demands of each group.

### **Health and wellness**

Outdoor recreation is a component of physical fitness and a major focus of preventative care. Activity done as a part of outdoor recreational activities leads to a better quality of life physically, mentally, and socially. An examination of the current outdoor recreation industry reveals several trends: increased equipment sales, development of new activities, and growth in activities at both ends of the recreation spectrum. These activities include both those that are close to home and require little gear, such as walking, and those that require a large time commitment, a more adventurous attitude, and more technical gear, such as climbing, kayaking, and backpacking. The exact role public lands, recreational facilities, and outdoor activities will have in the future of health and wellness care is uncertain. It is undeniable that recreation can help maintain wellness. Over time, it is expected that the health benefits of recreation will become a constant feature of programming and investment in park facilities.

### **Environment**

As the general public becomes more aware of environmental issues, concern over environmental quality is growing. Citizen expectations are also evolving with regards to the role regional and national environmental agencies play in local recreation and planning. More citizens are seeking an

active role for themselves in environmental protection and conservation, a role that is creating a community-wide revitalization in environmental preservation and the provision of open space. This increased interest in the environment has also affected recreation participation rates as more people visit areas of minimally altered environments and trails. Although environmental awareness is growing, environmental degradation continues. Global warming has begun to impact outdoor recreation, creating longer warm seasons, shorter cold seasons, and unpredictable climatic conditions. In the future, these changes will create an extended season for warm weather activities and a shortened season for cold weather activities. Changes to the landscape resulting from less dependable weather patterns will make seasonal recreation less reliable and planning for this type of recreation more difficult. **NCWRPC Note: Global warming has another trend in Wisconsin that affects recreation professionals. The amount of precipitation falling in each season is now falling during extreme events, some of which are called "100-year floods." Recreation managers may need to consider how erosion and floodwater flow will affect outdoor recreation resources.**<sup>1</sup>

### **Technology**

Electronic communication innovations have created interactive opportunities for recreation through the Internet, computer simulated games and sports, and other electronic sources. Although this new technology has increased and diversified the overall pool of recreational opportunities for users to choose from, it has also detracted from participation in more traditional recreation activities. In order to compete with non-traditional activities, providers of outdoor recreation must continue to provide and maintain high quality service in all their recreational programming and facilities.

### **Economics**

Increasingly, there is a rift between those that have access to recreation and those that do not. While household income is increasing, individual income in real growth terms is expected to decline. The fact that most homes are now two-income households results in two primary challenges. For affluent households with more discretionary income, additional resources from dual incomes are often used for leisure activities including travel and entertainment. This affluent population has a greater ability to participate in a broader spectrum of recreation. At the same time, however, there has been an increase in the percentage of the population that falls within poverty guidelines. This growing gap between the rich and the poor has prompted an interest in developing separate strategies for the provision of leisure services for these two populations.

This disparity in income levels has created new demands for outdoor recreation as affluent families seek out new and exciting forms of recreation and less affluent families seek out high-quality, low-cost forms of recreation. As recreation activities compete for household recreation dollars and available time, there has been an increased emphasis on value and diversity of choices in recreational activities. To remain competitive with other facilities and to appeal to family households, facilities such as swimming pools must now have the most modern equipment and technologies such as water slides and interactive play areas.

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<sup>1</sup> Stephen Wittman. 2008. Climate Change in the Great Lakes Region: Starting a Public Discussion. University of Wisconsin Sea Grant Institute/University of Wisconsin Board of Regents. Publication number WISCU-W-07-001. Summarized in Wisconsin Land Use Megatrends-Climate Change, Summer 2009, page 6, a UW-Ext. publication.

## Government

Whether state or locally owned, a large percentage of recreation lands are government owned and managed. Pressures on government lands— greater scarcity and high cost of land, rising operating costs and revenue limits, and increasing anti-taxation sentiment—will all affect the operation and development of recreational facilities and programs on these lands. Recreation is also becoming more market driven, meaning that activities are increasingly subject to competition between private, public, and non-profit recreation providers. A broad issue of what constitutes public access to public sponsored facilities and programs may challenge the financial feasibility of building new facilities and maintaining existing ones. Subsidized programs and minimal use fees could be difficult to maintain in light of these conditions.

## Changing Land Use

Over time, Wisconsin's population has shifted from a predominantly rural population to a predominantly urban population. Today, roughly two-thirds of the state's population lives in urban areas, with more people migrating to these areas every year. Because of this shift, urban fringe areas are becoming an increasing hotbed for recreation activities. Facilities and spaces such as local dog parks, urban trails, and green space allocations, are all reflections of this increasing urban/suburban demand. Residential development in rural areas has continued as better highway networks provide for easy access to urban services and workplaces. Regional land use planning will continue to be a primary component in the provision of recreational activities within an ever-changing suburban environment.

## Wisconsin Trends

Wisconsin's population grew 7.3% between 1994 and 2004 and is expected to grow another 3.3% by 2010. This growth, along with the state's sizeable population of baby boomers now reaching retirement age, will create a larger demand for passive recreational activities. Land resource-based activities have increased just over 27% in a ten year period. Much of this increase has occurred in the areas of wildlife viewing and off-road driving, both relatively inactive activities. While not generally popular among older participants, the biggest change in recreation participation has been in the area of snow- and ice-based activities. Much of this change may be attributed to recent advancements in equipment technology and an increased interest in snowboarding and ice skating.

In Chapter 2 of SCORP, Wisconsin Rapids is listed as part of the Western Sands Region, which supports outdoor recreation uses by the natural resource settings that are: Water Based, Nature Based, and Developed Settings. Table B-11 shows that the largest increase in participants from 1994 to 2004 was in Land based activities, but the largest percent increase was in snow and ice based activities.

<b>Resource Type</b>	<b># of Participants in Millions</b>		<b>Percent Change</b>
	<b>1994*</b>	<b>2004**</b>	<b>1994-2004***</b>
Snow and ice based activities	1.29	1.84	43.1
Land resource based activities	3.15	4.02	27.3
Water resource based activities	2.77	2.98	7.8

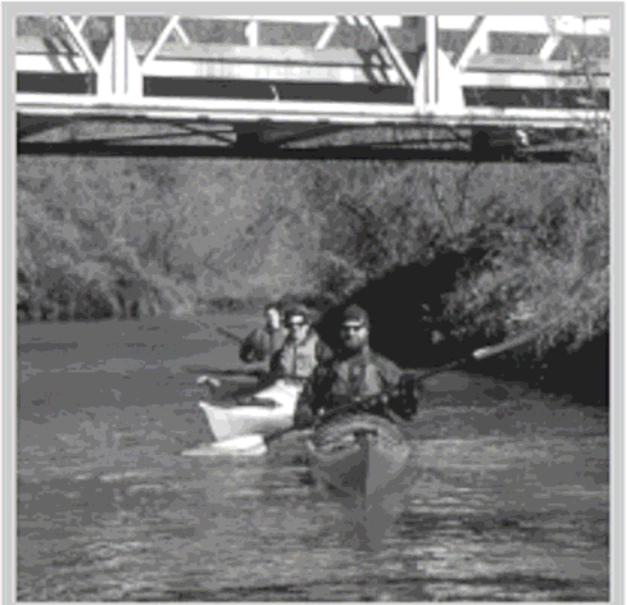
\*1994 population = 5,133,678; \*\*2004 population = 5,509,026; \*\*\*% growth = 7.3%  
Source: WI SCORP 2005-2010

**Table B-12 Wisconsin Participation Trends by Activity**

Activity	Number of Participants in Millions*		Percent Change 1994-2004
	1994	2004	
Kayaking	0.051	0.262	413.7
Horseback riding	0.136	0.407	199.3
Personal water craft	0.136	0.403	196.3
Snowboarding	0.074	0.195	163.5
Rock climbing	0.097	0.245	152.6
Soccer outdoors	0.175	0.407	132.6
Drive off-road	0.513	1.073	109.2
Orienteering	0.054	0.112	107.4

Source: WI SCORP 2005-2010

Recreation projections can be examined in two ways. The first is simply participation as a numerical total. For the vast majority of recreation activities, this number will increase as the state’s population does. To gauge a more accurate view of future participation, it is far more useful to examine a given activity’s participation rate as a percentage of the total population. This number gives a better understanding of population growth vs. participation change in an activity. Table B-12 considers the percentage changes in recreation participation rates, as well as industry forecasts and opinions from recreation professionals, to suggest which activities will be popular in the future. These observations are made for a five year period, and therefore reflect the most pressing demands on recreation in the immediate future. Some of these activities such as ATVing, RV camping, and geocaching are expected to grow in popularity. Other activities such as swimming, day hiking, and fishing, are expected to remain stable in their popularity. Still others such as personal watercraft, skiing, and mountain biking are expected to decrease in popularity.



Kayaking experienced the highest percentage change in participation from 1994 to 2004, growing 413.7%. But 262,000 people participating are only about 4% of the Wisconsin population.

The next three tables – increasing demand (Table B-13), stable demand (Table B-14), and decreasing demand (Table B-15) – show projected trends in Wisconsin outdoor recreation activities from 2005 to 2010. Each table lists an activity and has a comment to assist with projecting the need for a particular activity.

**Table B-13 Projected Trends in Wisconsin Outdoor Recreation Activities Increased Demand 2005-2010**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Comment</b>
ATV	Market saturation may occur by 2010 causing this use to level off.
Bird watching	A popular activity for an aging baby boom population.
Canoeing	Cheap, easy water access for all generations.
Driving for Pleasure	An easy activity for all generations.
Gardening	On the rise with the baby boom population.
Geocaching	Popular both with families and members of the Y Generation.
Kayaking	Better technology has made this an affordable sport for the general public.
Motorboating	Costs have decreased enough to continue to make this a popular activity.
Off-road Motorcycling	Record sales of off-road vehicles continues to fuel this demand.
Paintball Games	Better and cheaper technology attracts the Y Generation.
Picnic	A family activity crossing generation gaps.
Road Biking	Increases will slow do to the retirement of Lance Armstrong and the effect that was felt from his Tour de France wins.
RV Camping	The baby boom population continues to change from tent to RVs, but increasing fuel prices may slow this.
Skateboarding	Popular with urban youth and the Y Generation.
Snowboarding	This may start to level off by 2010 as the next generation looks towards newer technology.
Snowshoeing	Not growing as fast since 2002.
Visit a Dog Park	Urban residents continue to demand more of these areas.
Walking	Popular among all ages, though especially aging baby boomers.
Water Parks	Construction of new water parks continues to fuel the increasing demand for this activity.
Wildlife Viewing/Photography	Often done in conjunction with driving for pleasure, making this activity very popular.

Source: WI SCORP 2005-2010

<b>Table B-14</b>		<b>Projected Trends in Wisconsin Outdoor Recreation Activities Stable Demand 2005-2010</b>	
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Comment</b>		
Cross-Country Skiing	Stable at this time but mainly driven by the baby boom. Declines may start by 2010.		
Day Hiking	An easy, popular activity for all generations.		
Disc Golf	Popular with younger urban generations.		
Fishing	Very popular with all generations.		
Horseback Riding	Continues to be popular with the boomers, but may not be popular with the Y Generation.		
Ice Skating	An easy, cheap activity for the mass public.		
Inline Skating	After a quick rise in the 1990s this activity has leveled.		
Rock Climbing	A small but stable Y Generation niche.		
Rowing	A small niche activity with simple equipment.		
Run/Jog	The baby boomer generation continues to do this, but Y Generation may not.		
Sailing	Equipment demands and skill requirements prevent this from growing.		
Scuba/Snorkel	A niche sport that attracts a younger generation.		
Swimming	Always popular – water quality issues have caused growth in this activity to stagnate.		
Tennis	A recent resurgence has stabilized this activity.		
Tent Camping	Still popular but may start to lose ground to the RV trend.		

Source: WI SCORP 2005-2010

<b>Table B-15</b>		<b>Projected Trends in Wisconsin Outdoor Recreation Activities Decreasing Demand 2005-2010</b>	
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Comment</b>		
Backpacking	A popular baby boomer activity not as popular with the Y Generation.		
Downhill Skiing	Continues to struggle with attracting the Y Generation.		
Golf	Time and expense continue to push players to other recreation.		
Hunting	Continues to struggle with generational loss and access issues.		
Personal Watercraft	Market saturation occurred in the 1990s with the baby boomers who are now replacing their personal watercraft with motorboats.		
Mountain Biking	Baby boomers that made the sport popular in the 1990s have switched to road bikes.		
Snowmobile	The industry struggles with how to attract more people with less snow.		
Team Sports	Except for soccer, all other sports have declined.		

Source: WI SCORP 2005-2010

## **Chapter 7 – Wisconsin SCORP Outdoor Recreation Goals and actions.**

Chapter 7 describes eight goals and actions intended to improve the supply of outdoor recreation within Wisconsin, and encourage state residents to participate in more outdoor recreational activities.

### **Goal 1: Protect, Restore, and Enhance Wisconsin’s Natural Resources for Outdoor Recreation**

Wisconsin’s lands and waters are a natural draw for outdoor recreation. Those who use the state’s environments expect clean waters to paddle on and healthy forests to hike in. Increasingly, however, these natural resources are being menaced by threats such as invasive species, environmental degradation, and the continued fragmentation of forest and other natural areas. Left unmanaged, these threats will contribute to a diminished quality of outdoor recreation within the state. Wisconsinites are aware of the danger in these threats and have identified two issues—control of invasive species and poor water quality—as matters of high importance for state management.

#### **Actions and Recommendations**

1. Continue to provide protection to lakes, rivers and streams to improve aquatic habitat, water quality, and fisheries.
2. Continue to provide programs and funding for access to industrial forestry lands for outdoor recreation activities.
3. Continue to implement an invasive species control program on Wisconsin lands and waters.
4. Increase protection to wetlands, thereby benefiting the ecological and recreational resources of the state.
5. Continue to provide funding and assistance for the restoration of native prairies and grassland ecosystems.
6. Continue to support and fund the Smart Growth Planning process to help stop the fragmentation of open spaces while also allowing for development.

### **Goal 2: Continue to Improve and Develop Wisconsin Outdoor Recreation Facilities**

Upkeep and development of outdoor recreation facilities continues to be a central component of providing a quality outdoor recreation experience. Without proper facilities—an ice rink to skate on or an outdoor pool to swim in, for example—recreating outdoors becomes a challenge. A variety of publicly funded programs such as the Stewardship 2000 Program and the Land and Water Conservation Fund are important partners in the funding and support of these developments. While development helps expand the recreational resources and facilities of an area, maintenance sustains the resources already developed within a region. This efficient use of existing resources allows more money and time to be directed towards development of new facilities. Upkeep can be as simple as painting a building or as complicated as upgrading a water and sewage system within a state park. Because of its important role within any park system, it is important that providers allocate enough resources to support facility maintenance. The State Park system alone has a \$90 million backlog of maintenance projects, all of which are important to the continued health of the system. As this backlog continues to grow, more recreationalists are noticing the effects of limited upkeep: less signage, less restroom monitoring, un-maintained grounds, and earlier seasonal closings.

### **Actions and Recommendations**

1. Continue to maintain and renovate outdoor recreation facilities for future generations.
2. Provide for continued development and enhancements of urban outdoor recreation facilities such as soccer fields and playground equipment.
3. Provide for expansion of the following trail systems: hiking, biking, horse, and water.
4. Enhance and upgrade signage and maps for all outdoor recreational lands and waters.
5. Continue to acquire lands for outdoor recreation at all levels of government.
6. Support publicly funded programs that provide financial assistance for the actions listed above.

### **Goal 3: Understand and Manage the Growing Issue of Wisconsin Outdoor Recreation Conflicts**

As demand for different outdoor recreation activities grows, managing the conflict that develops between these uses will become an increasingly important issue of public policy. Two conflict arenas merit continued creative management from those charged with prioritizing public resources. The most obvious conflict arena is that which develops between different users of Wisconsin's finite land and water base. This conflict has developed as a result of both an increased demand for outdoor recreation activities and the development of new recreation technologies that have facilitated activities such as geocaching and ATVing. The second conflict arena is that which develops between outdoor recreation and other forms of land use. This conflict has impacted the development and maintenance of open space, creating struggles in the development of residential, agricultural, and managed forest areas. These conflicts have not gone unnoticed by state residents who have witnessed a rise in noise pollution, an overcrowding of public lands and waters, and increased development pressures on parks and open spaces.

### **Actions and Recommendations**

1. Proactively plan for increased user conflicts and provide for increased recreation uses consistent with the state's growth in population.
2. Develop public and private management tools for addressing user conflicts.
3. Increase funding for outdoor recreation law enforcement authorities so that they may better enforce outdoor rules and regulations.
4. Examine and understand Wisconsin's capacity for local and state recreation growth according to the state's natural resource base.
5. Designate more public land for recreational use to better meet the increasing demand for outdoor recreation.
6. Examine options such as private landowner incentive programs, which would allow public access to private lands.

### **Goal 4: Continue to Provide Wisconsin Outdoor Recreation Education and Programming**

Outdoor education and programming continue to be in high demand among Wisconsin citizens. These programs are particularly important for urban populations who have lost opportunities to practice outdoor skills on a regular basis. By providing for structured recreational opportunities such as kayaking and outdoor sports, recreation providers will establish a base user population that will

carry the activity into the next generation. Equally important to this programming is the teaching of environmental ethics. As our society continues to use land in ever more intrusive and environmentally degrading ways, there is a real need to instill the “land ethic” philosophy in all outdoor users.

### **Actions and Recommendations**

1. Provide funding and support for joint outdoor recreation programs between schools, government, and communities.
2. Provide funding and support for more outdoor recreation skills courses.
3. Develop programs that begin to address the state’s diversifying urban populations.
4. Develop and support programs that bring nature based experiences close to home for urban, low income youth.
5. Provide more courses in environmental education and ethics.

### **Goal 5: Continue to Provide and Enhance Public Access to Wisconsin Recreational Lands and Waters**

As recreation continues to place demands on public lands and waters, the lack of public access to these areas has become an increasing concern among many state citizens. In some cases this perception is true; more water/boating access is needed in certain areas of the state. In many cases, however, public access to recreational resources does exist, the public is simply not aware of it. Improved and easily accessible maps and signage would aid the public in locating access points.

### **Actions and Recommendations**

1. Develop a statewide interactive mapping system showing all public lands and water access points across the state.
2. Continue to acquire and develop boating access sites to meet public boating needs.
3. Promote awareness of the location of existing recreation lands, facilities, and opportunities available within a given region.
4. Continue to increase public access to Wisconsin waterways.
5. Continue to improve disabled accessibility for outdoor recreation facilities, and promote the development of facilities using universal design standards.

### **Goal 6: Understand the Threats and Opportunities of Wisconsin’s Developing Urban Areas and Areas of Rapid Population Growth**

While most of Wisconsin’s landscape is rural, most people in Wisconsin (68%) live in a relatively small urbanized area of the state. This population is concentrated in the southern and eastern portions of the state, especially in the Lower Lake Michigan Coastal Region (home to Milwaukee and expanding Chicago suburbs). Urbanization has proved to be a double-edged sword for recreation; it provides many opportunities for diverse recreational opportunities, but it also poses a threat to the environmental and recreational resources of the state. Threats from urbanization include the continued loss of agricultural/ outdoor recreation lands, the increasing tension of urban populations recreating in urban/rural fringe areas, and decreasing water quality and habitat availability.

### **Actions and Recommendations**

1. Continue to protect prime recreation lands through the use of publicly funded programs such as the Stewardship 2000 Program.
2. Develop trail networks that offer easy access from urban/suburban areas to rural areas.
3. Encourage communities to develop park and open space plans that allow for balanced growth while also providing land and facilities for outdoor recreation.
4. Continue to develop and provide active outdoor sports facilities such as soccer fields and tennis courts.
5. Continue to provide and expand community and neighborhood parks for multiple forms of outdoor recreation.

### **Goal 7: Maintain and Enhance Funding Opportunities for Wisconsin Outdoor Recreation**

From its early years establishing the original state parks, Wisconsin has had an active program of state land acquisition. The latest iteration of these programs is the Stewardship 2000 Program. Under this program the state may issue bonds in a total not to exceed \$572 million spread over a ten year period. The Stewardship Program is biased towards land acquisition, with lesser amounts provided for property development and local assistance. As Wisconsin receives an increasingly smaller portion of state resources—Wisconsin State Parks rank 49th in the nation for total percentage of state budget—funding programs have provided vital support to outdoor park and recreation lands and facilities.

### **Actions and Recommendations**

1. Renew the State Stewardship 2000 Program.
2. Encourage all local governments to develop park and recreation plans for participation in state and federal cost share programs.
3. Provide more cost share opportunities for local governments to acquire, develop, and maintain recreational lands and facilities.
4. Increase Wisconsin State Parks funding to the nationwide average of 0.2% of state budget, or \$53 million a year.
5. Explore new and innovative funding methods for outdoor park and recreation facilities. These methods may include public/private partnerships or cost sharing among multiple government agencies.
6. Increase revenue generating capabilities for outdoor recreation by continuing to update and improve technologies such as automated fee collection systems.
7. Explore the option of an exercise tax on outdoor recreational equipment to help fund park and recreation developments.

### **Goal 8: Promote Wisconsin Outdoor Recreation as a Means to Better Health and Wellness for State Citizens**

The United States as a whole is in the midst of an overweight and obesity epidemic brought on by increasingly sedate and inactive lifestyles and higher caloric intakes. This epidemic has profound consequences in terms of increased health care costs and shortened life expectancies. Outdoor park and recreation areas can be key partners in reversing this trend as they provide the type of active recreational opportunities that promote physical fitness. Encouraging Wisconsinites to use

recreation lands and facilities will benefit not only park and recreation areas, but also the state citizens themselves who receive the health benefits of increased activity—a true win-win proposal.

### **Actions and Recommendations**

1. Encourage individuals, workplaces, community groups, and schools to become physically active by promoting programs such as the Governor’s Wisconsin Challenge program.
2. Develop a “Get Fit with Wisconsin” campaign for public lands and waters that touts the health benefits of recreation and reaches a wide audience of potential users.
3. Educate the public about the health benefits of moderate and enjoyable physical activities such as walking, biking, nature study, etc.
4. Integrate opportunities and incentives for exercise during the workday—giving employees 30 minutes a day for exercise, providing exercise equipment and changing rooms, etc.
5. Start a dialogue between public outdoor recreation providers and health agencies to identify other (non-traditional) funding sources for recreational facilities and development.



## The 2005–2010 Wisconsin Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

# SCORP

**ATTACHMENT C**

**FACILITY DESIGN STANDARDS**

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<b>SUGGESTED OUTDOOR FACILITY DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS</b>				
<b>Activity Format</b>	<b>Recommended Size and Dimensions</b>	<b>Recommended Space Requirements</b>	<b>Recommended Orientation</b>	<b>Service Radius and Location Notes</b>
<b>Badminton</b>	Singles--17' x 44' Doubles--20' x 44' with 5' unobstructed area on both sides	1622 sq. ft.	Long axis north - south	¼ - ½ mile. Usually in school recreation center or church facility. Safe walking or biking or biking access.
<b>Basketball</b> <b>1. Youth</b> <b>2. High School</b> <b>3. Collegiate</b>	46' - 50' x 84' 50' x 84' 50' x 94' with 5' unobstructed space all sides.	2400-3036 sq. ft. 5040-7280 sq. ft. 5600-7980 sq. ft.	Long axis north - south	¼ - ½ mile. Same as badminton. Outdoor courts in neighborhood/community parks, plus active recreation areas in other park settings.
<b>Handball (3-4 wall)</b>	20' x 40' with a minimum of 10' to rear of 3-wall court. Minimum 20' overhead clearance.	800 sq. ft. for 4-wall, 1000 sq. ft. for 3-wall.	Long axis is north - south. Front wall at north end.	15 - 30 min. travel time, 4-wall usually indoor as part of multi-purpose building. 3-2 all usually in park or school setting.
<b>Ice Hockey</b>	Rink 85' x 200' (Min. 85' x 185') Additional 5000 22,000 sq. ft. including support area.	22,000 sq. ft. including support area.	Long axis is north - south if outdoors.	½ - 1 hour travel time. Climate important consideration affecting no. of units. Best as part of multipurpose facility.
<b>Tennis</b>	36' x 78'. 12 ft. clearance on both ends.	Min. of 7,200 sq. ft. single court area (2 acres per complex)	Long axis north - south	¼ - ½ mile. Best in batteries of 2 - 4. Located in neighborhood/community park or near school site.
<b>Volleyball</b>	30' x 60'. Minimum of 6' clearance on all sides.	Minimum 4,000 sq. ft.	Long axis north - south	½ - 1 mile.
<b>Baseball</b> <b>1. Official</b>  <b>2. Little League</b>	Baselines - 90' Pitching distance--60.5' Foul lines - min. 320' Center field - 400'+  Baselines - 60' Pitching distance - 46' Foul lines - 200' Center field - 200' - 250'	3.0 - 3.85 A min.  1.2 A min.	Locate home plate so pitcher is not throwing across sun, and batter not facing it. Line from home plate through pitchers mound to run east-northeast.	¼ - ½ mile. Part of neighborhood complex. Lighted fields part of community complex.
<b>Field Hockey</b>	180' x 300' with a minimum of 10' clearance on all sides.	Minimum 1.5 A	Fall season - Long axis northwest or southeast. For longer periods, north/south	15 - 30 minute travel time. Usually part of baseball, football, soccer complex in community park or adjacent to high school.
<b>Football</b>	160' x 360' with a minimum of 6' clearance on all sides.	Minimum 1.5 A	Same as field hockey.	15 - 30 min. travel time. Same as field hockey.
<b>Soccer</b>	195' to 225' x 330' to 360' with 10' minimum clearance on all sides.	1.7 - 2.1 A	Same as field hockey.	1 - 2 miles. Number of units depends on popularity. Youth popularity. Youth soccer on smaller fields adjacent to fields or neighborhood parks.
<b>Golf - Driving Range</b>	900' x 690' wide. Add 12' width each additional tee.	13.5 A for min. of 25 tees.	Long axis is southwest - northeast with golfer driving northeast.	30 minute travel time. Park of golf course complex. As separate unit may be privately operated.

<b>SUGGESTED OUTDOOR FACILITY DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS (continued)</b>				
<b>Activity Format</b>	<b>Recommended Size and Dimensions</b>	<b>Recommended Space Requirements</b>	<b>Recommended Orientation</b>	<b>Service Radius and Location Notes</b>
<b>¼ mile running track</b>	Over-all width - 276' length - 600'. Track width for 8 - 4 lanes is 32'.	4.3 A	Long axis in sector from north to south to northwest - southeast, with finish line at north end.	15 - 30 minute travel time. Usually part of a high school or community park complex in combination with football, soccer, etc.
<b>Softball</b>	Baselines - 60' pitching distance - 45' men. 40' women Fast pitch field radius from plate - 225' Slow pitch - 275' (men) 250' (women)	1.5 - 2.0 A	Same as baseball. indimensions for 16".	¼ - ½ mile. Slight difference. May also be used for youth baseball.
<b>Multiple use court (basketball, tennis, etc.)</b>	120' x 80'	9,840 sq. ft.	Long axis of court with primary use north and south.	1 - 2 miles, in neighborhood or community parks.
<b>Archery range</b>	300' length x minimum 10' between targets. Roped, clear area on side of range minimum 30', clear space behind targets minimum of 90' x 45' with bunker.	Minimum 0.65 A	Archer facing north + or - 45 degrees.	30 minutes travel time. Part of a regional/metro complex.
<b>Golf</b> <b>1. Par 3 (18 hole)</b> <b>2. 9-hole standard</b> <b>3. 18-hole standard</b>	Average length varies -600 - 2700 yards.  Average length 2250 yards  Average length 6500 yards.	50 - 60 A  Minimum of 50 A  Minimum 110 yards	Majority of holes on north/south axis	½ - 1 hour travel time  9-hole course can accommodate 350 people/day  500 - 550 people/day.  Course may be located in community, district or regional/metro park.
<b>Swimming pools</b>	Teaching - min. 25 yards x 45' even depth of 3-4 ft.  Competitive - min. 25 m x 16 m. Min. of 25 sq. ft. water surface per swimmer. Ration of 2 to 1 deck to water.	Varies on size of pool and amenities. Usually 1 - 2 A sites.	None, but care must be taken in siting life stations in relation to afternoon sun.	15 to 30 minutes travel time. Pools for general community use should be planned for teaching competitive and recreational purposes with enough to accommodate 1m and 3m diving boards. Located in community park or school site.
<b>Beach areas</b>	Beach area should have 50 sq. ft. of land and 50 sa. ft. of water per user. Turnover rate is 3. There should be a 3-4 A supporting area per A of beach.	N/A	N/A	½ to 1 hour travel time. Should have a sand bottom with a maximum slope of 5%. Boating areas completely segregated from swimming areas. In regional/metro parks.

**ATTACHMENT D**

**SURVEY**

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# CITY OF WISCONSIN RAPIDS OUTDOOR RECREATION SURVEY



The City of Wisconsin Rapids is updating its Outdoor Recreation Plan for 2010-2015 and we would like your input. The new five-year outdoor recreation plan will be used to identify new projects for development as well as which parks to upgrade (i.e.: adding trails, buildings, or playgrounds). The plan enables the City of Wisconsin Rapids to be eligible for competitive federal and state outdoor recreation grant money, along with determining how best to allocate your tax money.

Please mail this survey and your answers on a separate sheet to be **postmarked by: March 27, 2010, to:** Fred Heider, NCWRPC  
210 McClellan St STE 210  
Wausau WI 54403-4820

***Please complete this survey with other members of your group or family.***

1. List your group's name & email \_\_\_\_\_  
or list your family's zip code and email: \_\_\_\_\_

*We would like to notify you of every future meeting that relates to this plan.  
Please provide your mailing address if you do not have email.*

2. What are the top outdoor recreational issues facing the Wisconsin Rapids area?
3. How shall the recreational issues you described above in Question 2 be satisfied?
4. What outdoor recreation facilities are needed or need improvement in Wisconsin Rapids?  
*Please describe what is needed, and why.*
5. How shall Wisconsin Rapids pay for the improvements you suggested?  
*Grants usually require at least a 50% local match, so also think of partnerships and other ways of paying for improvements.*

***Thank You For Your Participation!***

Additional comments may be directed to members of the City of Wisconsin Rapids Park and Recreation Commission at any time.

**ATTACHMENT E**

**FEDERAL AND STATE OUTDOOR RECREATION  
FUNDING PROGRAMS**

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## **Wisconsin DNR Administered Programs**

Community Service Specialist  
Eau Claire Office  
PO Box 4001  
1300 W Clairemont Ave  
Eau Claire WI 54702

### **Acquisition Of Development Rights Grants (ADR)**

Helps to buy development rights (easements) for the protection of natural, agricultural, or forestry values, that would enhance nature-based outdoor recreation. Applicants compete for funds on a statewide basis.

### **Aids For The Acquisition And Development Of Local Parks (ADLP)**

Helps to buy land or easements and develop or renovate local park and recreation area facilities for nature-based outdoor recreation purposes (e.g., trails, fishing access, and park support facilities). Applicants compete for funds on a regional basis.

### **All Terrain Vehicles (ATV)**

Funds are available to provide funds to accommodate all-terrain vehicles through the acquiring, insuring, developing and maintaining of all-terrain vehicle trails and areas, including routes as per s. 23.33, Wis. Stats. Counties, towns, cities and villages are eligible to apply by April 15 on forms provided by the Department. Eligible levels of reimbursement are:

- ATV trails available for spring, summer, and fall riding may be reimbursed up to 100 percent of eligible maintenance costs (up to \$450 per mile).
- ATV trails available for winter riding may be reimbursed up to 100 percent of eligible maintenance costs (up to \$100 per mile).
- Development of ATV trails and areas may be reimbursed up to 100 percent of eligible costs.
- Major rehabilitation of bridge structures or trails may be reimbursed up to 100 percent of eligible costs.
- Maintenance of ATV intensive use areas may be reimbursed up to 50 percent of eligible costs

Assistance is provided for the following, in priority order: 1) maintenance of existing approved trails and areas, including routes; 2) purchase of liability insurance; 3) acquisition of easements; 4) major rehabilitation of bridge structures or trails; and 5) acquisition of land in fee and development of new trails and areas.

### **All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV) Enforcement Patrol**

Funds are available as per s.23.22(9), Wis. Stats. and NR 64.15, Wis. Adm. Code. A county must file a Notice of Intent to Patrol form with the Department on or before July 1 of each year. Claim forms shall be filed with the Department on or before September 1 of the year following the 12-month period for which the claim is made. Notice of Intent to Patrol and Claim forms are provided by the Department Bureau of Law Enforcement. Counties may receive up to 100% of their net costs for the enforcement of ch. 23.33, Wis. Adm. Code, at a rate no more than the regular straight-time rate. Fringe benefits cannot exceed 29% of the gross salary. Salaries of officers engaged in the enforcement of Chapter NR 23.33, Wis. Adm. Code, at a rate no more than the regular straight-time rate. Fringe benefits cannot exceed 29% of the gross salary. Travel, materials and supplies are reimbursable. Depreciation is calculated at a rate of 12% annually on all equipment over \$100 except ATV's, which is figured at the rate of 20% annually.

### **Brownfields Green Space and Public Facilities Grant Program**

Funds are available per s.292.79, Wis. Stats. to promote the cleanup of brownfields where the end-use has a long-term public benefit, including preservation of green space, development of recreational areas or use by a local government.

### **Lake Protection Grant**

Funds are available to protect and improve the water quality of lakes and their ecosystems as per s. 281.69, Wis. Stats. Grants are available for purchasing land or easements, restoration of wetlands, development of local regulations to protect water quality, lake improvement activities called for in a Department approved plan, and countywide lake classification. Counties, towns, cities, villages, public authorities and qualified lake associations as defined in s. 30.92(1)(br), Wis. Stats., public inland lake districts, non-profit groups, and other local governmental units established for lake management are eligible to apply on forms provided by the Department. The state cost shares up to 75% of project costs not to exceed \$200,000. Applications are due in the Regional offices by May 1 of each year.

Priorities are set on a statewide basis (see ch. NR 191.08, Wis. Adm. Code) and consider the following factors: 1) lakes which have not previously received a lake protection grant; 2) the degree to which the project provides for the protection or improvement of water quality; 3) the degree to which the project provides for protection or improvement of other aspects of the natural ecosystem such as fish, wildlife or natural beauty; 4) the availability of public access to, and public use of the lakes; 5) the degree to which the proposed project complements other lake and watershed management efforts; 6) the level of support for the project from other affected management units; and 7) the level of financial support provided by the sponsor.

### **Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)**

Money is available to encourage nationwide creation and interpretation of high quality outdoor recreational opportunities. The program funds both state and local outdoor recreation projects per Public Law 88-578, ch. NR 50.06, Wis. Adm. Code. Counties, cities, villages, towns, school districts, and Indian tribes are eligible for funding with an approved Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plans. Up to 50% matching grants from the fund are available to state and local units of government. Priorities include acquisition of land where a scarcity of outdoor recreational land exists. Also, projects that provide access for the greatest number of potential users and provide the greatest opportunities for outdoor recreation are also desirable.

Eligible projects include acquisition of land for public outdoor recreational areas and preservation of water frontage and open space. Development of public outdoor park and recreational areas and their support facilities. Applications are available from the DNR regional Community Service Specialist. Completed applications are due to the appropriate DNR regional office by May 1 of each year.

### **Recreational Boating Facilities**

Funds are available for the construction of capital improvements to provide safe recreational boating facilities and for feasibility studies related to the development of safe recreational facilities as per s. 30.92, Wis. Statutes. Counties, towns, cities, villages, sanitary districts, public inland lake protection and rehabilitation districts, and qualified lake associations are eligible to apply. Cost sharing is provided up to 50% for feasibility studies, construction costs, and certain types of acquisition costs. An additional 10% may be available if a municipality conducts a boating safety enforcement and education program approved by the Department.

Eligible projects include: 1) Facilities such as ramps and service docks required to gain access to the water; 2) structures such as bulkheads and breakwaters necessary to provide safe water conditions for boaters; 3) activities such as dredging to provide safe water depths for recreational boating. (Dredging is an eligible project only when it is associated with project development at the project site; maintenance dredging is not eligible.); 4) support facilities limited to parking lots, sanitary facilities and security lighting; 5) acquisition of equipment to cut and remove aquatic plants; 6) acquisition of equipment to collect and remove floating trash and debris from a waterway; 7) dredging of channels in waterways for recreational boating purposes (not more than once in ten years)(inland waters); and 8) acquisition of aids to navigation and regulatory markers. These factors are considered in establishing priorities - distance of proposed project from other recreational boating facilities, demand for safe boating facilities, existing facilities, projects underway, commitment of funds, location of proposed project within the region identified in s. 25.29(7), Wis. Stats.

### **River Management Grants**

River Protection Management grants provide state cost sharing assistance to eligible sponsors for implementing a specific activity or set of activities, other than planning activities, to protect or improve a river ecosystem as per s. 181.70 Wis. Stats. Counties, towns, cities, villages, non-profit groups and qualified river management organizations, and other local governmental units as defined in s. 66.0131, Wis. Stats., are eligible to apply on forms provided by the Department. The state cost shares up to 75% of project costs not to exceed \$50,000. Activities eligible for funding include: 1) purchase of land or of an easement subject to certain requirements, 2) development of local ordinances, and 3) restoration of in-stream or shoreland habitat. Applications are due in the Regional offices by May 1 of each year.

### **Recreational Trails Act (RTA)**

The Recreational Trails Act (RTA) provides funds to local units of government through the transfer of federal gas excise taxes paid on fuel used in off-highway vehicles. These funds are used to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail-related facilities for motorized (30% of RTA funds), non-motorized (30% of RTA funds), and both (40% of RTA funds) types of recreational trail uses. This federal program was reauthorized in 2005 under SAFETEA-LU.

Eligible projects in order of priority are: maintenance and restoration of existing trails, development and rehabilitation of trailside and trailhead facilities and trail linkages, construction of new trails with certain restrictions on federal lands, and acquisition of easement or property for trails.

## **Snowmobile Club Signs**

Funds are available to provide free cardboard trail signs and reflective material to snowmobile clubs agreeing to open their trails to public use as per s. 23.09(26) and Chapter 350, Wis. Stats. Funds are limited to no more than \$15,000 per year for the purchase of signs and reflective material. Applications are due in the Region offices by April 15 of each year for the following season.

## **Snowmobile Route Signs**

Funds are available to provide costs for initial signing of snowmobile routes and trail crossing warning signs as per s. 23.09(26) and Chapter 350, Wis. Stats. Towns, cities, and villages are eligible to apply on forms provided by the Department. No local match is required, but state funding is limited to no more than \$30,000 per year for the route sign program. Applications are due in the Region offices by April 15 of each year for the following season.

## **Snowmobile Enforcement Patrols**

Funds are available to encourage county snowmobile patrols to function as a law enforcement unit for the enforcement of State Statute 350 as per s. 350.12(4)(a)(4), Wis. Stats. and NR 50.12, 20.370(4)(ft), Wis. Adm. Code. Counties are eligible to apply on forms provided by the Bureau of Law Enforcement. A county must file a Notice of Intent to Patrol form with the Department on or before July 1 of each year. Claim forms shall be filed with the Department on or before June 1 of the year following the 12-month period for which the claim is made. Salaries of officers engaged in the enforcement of ch. 350, Wis. Stats., at a rate no more than the regular straight-time rate are eligible. Fringe benefits cannot exceed 29% of the gross salary. Travel, materials and supplies are reimbursable. Depreciation is calculated at a rate of 20% annually on all equipment over \$1,000.

## **Snowmobile Trail Aids**

Funds are available to provide a statewide system of well-signed and well-groomed snowmobile trails for public use and enjoyment as per s. 23.09(26), and Chapter 350, Wis. Stats. Counties are eligible to apply on forms provided by the Department. 100% cost sharing is provided with limits on maintenance costs of \$250, and development costs of \$500 per mile. Applications are due in the appropriate Region Office by April 15 of each year. Eligible projects include maintenance of trails, which includes signing, brushing, and grooming of snowmobile trails, purchase of liability insurance and acquisition of short term easements, development of trails which may include general trail construction, bridges, gates and signs, major rehabilitation of existing snowmobile bridges and rehabilitation of existing trail segments

## **Stewardship Grants for Nonprofit Conservation Organizations**

Funds are available for the acquisition of land or easements for conservation purposes, and restoration of wildlife habitat as per s. 23.096, 23.092, 23.094, 23.17, 23.175, and 23.27, Wis. Stats. and NR 51, Wis. Adm. Code. Nonprofit conservation organizations are eligible to apply on forms provided by the Department. There is a 50% local match required. Priorities include acquisition of wildlife habitat, acquisition of lands with special scientific or ecological value, rare and endangered habitats and species, acquisition of stream corridors, acquisition of land for state trails including the Ice Age Trail and North Country Trail and restoration of wetlands and grasslands. Eligible types of projects include fee simple and easement acquisitions and habitat restoration projects.

## **Urban Green Space**

Funds are available to provide open natural space in proximity to urban development, to protect from development land with scenic, ecological or natural values in urban areas, and to provide land for noncommercial gardening in urban areas as per s. 23.09(19) Wis. Stats. Counties, Towns, Cities, Villages, lake districts, Indian tribes and nonprofit conservation organizations under s. 23.096 Wis. Stats. are eligible to apply on forms provided by the Department. There is a 50% local match required. Applications are due in the appropriate Region office by May 1 of each year.

## **Urban Rivers Grant**

Funds are available to improve outdoor recreation opportunities by increasing access to urban rivers for a variety of public uses, economic revitalization through the improvement of the environmental quality in urban river corridors, and preserving and revitalizing historical, cultural, or natural areas as per s. 30.277, Wis. Stats. Counties, Towns, Cities, Villages, and Tribal units of government are eligible to apply on forms provided by the Department. There is a 50% local match required. Applications are due in the Region office by May 1 of each year. Eligible projects include acquisition of urban riverfront land that is part of an outdoor recreation plan adopted by the local unit of government. Land that is specifically identified in a river corridor plan for economic revitalization and outdoor recreation.

## **Wisconsin DOT Administered Programs**

Bike & Ped Coordinator  
Wisconsin Department of Transportation  
1681 Second Avenue South  
Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54495

### **Local Transportation Enhancement (TE) Program**

*Objective:* To promote activities which enhance the surface transportation system. Program funds are intended to accomplish something "above and beyond" what is normally done on highway projects. Eligible federal categories include bicycle and pedestrian facilities, historic transportation structures and landscaping/streetscaping projects.

### **Surface Transportation Program – Discretionary (STP-D)**

*Objective:* To encourage projects that foster alternatives to single-occupancy vehicle (SOV) trips, such as facilities for pedestrians and bicycles, development of bicycle/pedestrian plans, purchase of replacement vehicles for transit systems, and other transportation demand management (TDM) projects. Funding is 80% federal; 20% local.

### **Transportation Enhancement Program**

(Part of the Statewide Multi-modal Improvement Program (SMIP))

*Program Description:* Transportation enhancements (TE) are transportation-related activities that are designed to strengthen the cultural, aesthetic, and environmental aspects of transportation systems. The transportation enhancements program provides for the implementation of a variety of non-traditional projects, with examples ranging from the restoration of historic transportation facilities, to bike and pedestrian facilities, to landscaping and scenic beautification, and to the mitigation of water pollution from highway runoff. Most of the requests and projects awarded in Wisconsin have been for bicycle facilities. Examples of bicycle projects include multi-use trails (in greenways, former rail trails, etc.), paved shoulders, bike lanes, bicycle route signage, bicycle parking, overpasses/underpasses/bridges, and sidewalks. Transportation enhancement activities must relate to surface transportation. Federal regulations restrict the use of funds on trails that allow motorized users, except snowmobiles. TEA 21 expanded the definition of transportation enhancements eligibility to specifically include the provision of safety and educational activities for pedestrians and bicyclists, which had not been clearly eligible under ISTEA.

### **Other Wisconsin DOT Funding Sources**

**Hazard Elimination Program** - Bicycle and pedestrian projects are now eligible for this program. This program focuses on projects intended for locations that should have a documented history of previous crashes.

Contact WisDOT District coordinators first for more details. Chuck Thiede at 608-266-3341 is the statewide coordinator.

**Incidental Improvements** - Bicycle and pedestrian projects are broadly eligible for funding from most of the major federal-aid programs. One of the most cost-effective ways of accommodating bicycle and pedestrian accommodations is to incorporate them as part of larger

reconstruction, new construction and some repaving projects. Generally, the same source of funding can be used for the bicycle and pedestrian accommodation as is used for the larger highway improvement, if the bike/ped accommodation is “incidental” in scope and cost to the overall project. Overall, most bicycle and pedestrian accommodations within the state are made as incidental improvements.

### **Federal Assistance Programs**

All other federal programs are listed under Wisconsin DNR Administered Programs.

#### **Challenge Cost Share Program (CCSP) – National Park Service**

The purpose of the Challenge Cost Share Program (CCSP) is intended to increase participation by qualified partners in the preservation and improvement of National Park Service natural, cultural, and recreational resources; in all authorized Service programs and activities; and on national trails. NPS and partners should work together on projects with mutually beneficial, shared outcomes.

The CCSP is a matching fund program. An equal amount of eligible and matching share (minimum 50%) of cash, goods, or services from non-federal sources is required. The maximum CCSP award is \$30,000. Projects selected should generally be able to be completed within one year.

One-third of the CCSP pot is earmarked for National Trails System Projects. Thus supporting work under the National Trails System Act (16 U.S.C. 1241-51), such as: National Scenic and Historic trails, National Scenic and Historic Trails in parks, National Recreation Trails, and rail-trail projects.

For additional information about this program and the application process, please contact the CCSP Program Coordinators for Wisconsin:

National Park Service  
700 Rayovac Dr., Suite 100  
Madison, WI 53711