

# DNR eDigest

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The Bureau of Education and Information's goal is to publish "The E-Digest" bi-weekly on paydays. The bureau will publish additional issues, as needed. Contact "E-Digest" editor [Diane.Brinson@wisconsin.gov](mailto:Diane.Brinson@wisconsin.gov) or at 608/266-5215 to submit stories, story ideas and photos that communicate internally the department's work, policies and issues that matter to DNR employees.

July 16, 2009

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### **"Making Memories" inspired by Walt Disney World executive**

*By: Nick Meiers, Peninsula State Park.*

I put together "[Making Memories](#)," a customer service training document for Peninsula State Park, inspired by concepts Lee Cockerell created while executive vice president at the Walt Disney World Resort. After first reading these concepts in "The Main Street Diary," the resort's employee newsletter, I began to think about how much a Peninsula State park vacation means to many of our families, and how we--as the "faces" of the park and the DNR--could be as much a memorable part of their vacation as landmarks like our observation tower and swimming beach.

Lee has retired from Disney and is a leadership consultant. He was glad to hear that I'd put his concepts to use to help Peninsula State Park. Go to [Lee Cockerell's](#) website, where you'll find leadership device and information on his new book **Creating Magic**.



Nick Meiers played checkers with a young visitor to the park. -WDNR Photo

I've worked as both an assistant naturalist and visitor services associate at Peninsula, where I wanted to share these concepts with other park staff in hopes that they would be as inspired by them as I am.

**Elevated providing a “service” to providing an “experience”**

“The visitors are the reason you have a job” wasn’t enough to motivate me, but the concept of looking at every interaction as an opportunity to make memories for our visitors and provide them with a remarkable experience suddenly became a challenge worth working through.

There are few things more special than time spent together with friends and family while on vacation, and I liked the idea of being able to make that vacation time a little more memorable by taking my frontline job from the level of simply providing “service” to the level of providing an “experience.” That’s the message I tried to convey through “Making Memories.”

**Park’s superintendent recommended essay to all staff as a tool**

As the park’s staff approached the July 4th weekend, park superintendent **Tom Blackwood** encouraged his employees to take some time to read the essay and “use it as a tool for reflection and self-improvement. The principles are very simple...treating each visitor as someone special...as you would like to be treated.”



Park naturalist Kathleen Harris looked on as park visitors did pole painting during Peninsula’s 100th anniversary celebration. -WDNR Photo

“I think it pretty much ‘says it all,’ and requires little explanation. This is what is expected of all of us, no matter what our job,” wrote Blackwood. “It says what state park work is supposed to be about...and if you do not agree, well, maybe you’re working in the wrong place.”

Other regional managers passed it along, too. Northeast regional land leader Jean Romback-Bartels sent “Making Memories” to an even broader audience, referring to it as a great message for all of us (DNR employees). Regional director **Ron Kazmierczak** called it “an excellent reminder for all of us.”

Both of my jobs in the park were on the “frontlines,” and I know how incredibly difficult it is to remember to smile, treat each visitor as an individual, and do the other things listed in “Making Memories” all day, every day. Most of this document is common sense, but not common practice. I hope that by remembering to do these things, I’ll be able to make each visitor’s experience even better.

**Footnote:** *Nick Meiers is a naturalist and visitor services associate.*

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## Green Tier program becomes permanent with signing of Act 30

*By: Carolyn Hogg, Bureau of Cooperative Environmental Assistance*

On July 8, Governor Jim Doyle signed Wisconsin Act 30 into law, reauthorizing the Green Tier and Compliance Audit programs and making them permanent. The Act also made a number of technical changes to update the law with process and procedure adjustments, expanded authority to the Secretary in acceptance and compliance matters, and expanded the DNR's ability to develop charters with any organization of public and private entities that will result in superior environmental performance.



Gathered around Gov. Doyle at the law signing ceremony are (left-right) John Imes, Wisconsin Environmental Initiative; Carla Wright, program development manager, and Jeffrey Voltz, agriculture sector specialist, both in the Bureau of Cooperative Environmental Assistance; a member of the Governor's staff; Senator Mark Miller; and Kris Euclide, Madison Gas & Electric. Imes and Euclide are members of the department's Green Tier Advisors. - WDNR Photo

The Senate passed the legislation on a 33 to zero roll call vote, and in the Assembly on a voice vote, after unanimous recommendations for passage from committees in both houses.

Currently, the program has 26 Tier 1 participants managing 37 facilities throughout the state, two Tier 2 participants, and five charters. The department is processing many more applications.

### Examples of environmental success by Green Tier participants:

- Edgewood College reduced its natural gas usage by 41% in 2007.
- By reformulating a wood finish used in production, Genmar Yacht Group reduced VOC emissions by 74%.
- Under the Mercury Green Tier Charter, fifteen Wisconsin municipalities reported reductions of 40% in the effluent mercury concentrations from their wastewater treatment plants last year.
- 20% of Roundy's Oconomowoc Distribution Facility employees participate in a carpool program.
- Veridian Homes has constructed 2,467 homes since 2004 that meet or exceed Wisconsin's Energy Star efficiency criteria.

"The Green Tier Program is an integral part of my efforts to make Wisconsin a national clean energy leader," said Gov. Doyle. "By renewing this program, the state is committing to streamlining regulation and encouraging innovation and smart management practices. The innovative Green Tier program will continue to serve as a national model for responsible management, collaboration and development."

**Footnote:** *Carolyn Hogg is a Green Tier outreach associate in the Bureau of Cooperative Environmental Assistance.*



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## Department will manage long-sought section of Ice Age Trail

*By: Greg Matthews, South Central Region*

Secretary **Matt Frank**, Dane County executive Kathleen Falk, National Park Service Ice Age Trail superintendent Tom Gilbert and Ice Age Trail Alliance executive director Mike Wollmer joined Congresswoman Tammy Baldwin in announcing \$2 million in federal funds for purchasing a long-sought parcel of land that will close a gap in the Ice Age National Scenic Trail, near Cross Plains in Dane County.

Additional funds for the project will be sought through a variety of sources. Dane County has an accepted Offer to Purchase about 137 acres from Carter Hudson, LLC and an Option to Purchase an additional 175 acres from the Showers family through Hudson.



What this land purchase is all about--future generations.

WDNR Photo

"The Ice Age Trail is one of the great environmental treasures of our state and our nation," said Baldwin. With support from House Appropriations Committee chair Representative Dave Obey and Senate Appropriations Committee member Senator Herb Kohl, more than \$20 million has been secured over the past ten years to help preserve and maintain the trail.

Sec. Frank noted the "strong partnership" with all levels of government and the private sector to acquire the important parcels of land, including hills he scrambled up and down on as a child growing up in the area.

The Ice Age Trail is one of eight National Scenic Trails throughout the country. It winds through 31 Wisconsin counties, tracing the edge of the farthest advance of the last glacier that spread across what now is the Badger State, 14,000 to 16,000 years ago.

The property to be purchased straddles the geologic border between the glaciated region and unglaciated Driftless Area of southwest Wisconsin. It holds immense scientific and cultural value, as well as natural beauty. Most of the property will be restored to native prairie, which will provide habitat for grassland birds.

**Footnote:** *Greg Matthews, public affairs manager for the South Central Region, attended this ceremony and shot the photos.*

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### **National Geographic names Newport State Park "American Idyll"**

*By: Michelle Hefty, Newport State Park*

You've most likely seen or heard about the smash TV show "American Idol." **National Geographic** has dubbed Newport State Park in general and campsite #12 specifically as an ["American Idyll."](#) promoting the park as a weekend getaway adventure.



Many campers seek out campsite #12 at Newport State Park, where they can catch a memorable sunset.

WDNR Photo

[Newport State Park](#) is Wisconsin's only formally-designated wilderness park, at 2,373 acres with 11 miles of Lake Michigan shoreline.

The **National Geographic's Adventure Magazine** conveys the beauty of the view, especially sunrises and sunsets, after backpacking into what the magazine refers to as the perfect campsite.

The story isn't big and there are no pictures, but the park has had at least three campers come specifically for campsite #12, because of the article.

Once you've read the **National Geographic** story, I think that you, too, will be drawn to the park and the wonders of site #12.

**Footnote:** *Michelle Hefty is park manager at Newport State Park*



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### Reeling in a new generation of anglers, natural resource stewards

*By: Lisa Gaumnitz, Office of Communication*

Spring and summer are great times to introduce people to the joys of fishing and help them better understand Wisconsin's lakes and rivers so they can become the next generation of stewards. Fisheries staff has been working hard this spring and summer to do both, as these examples show.

#### Hayward "learn to fish" event a musky-sized success

*"Once in a while we think we hit a home run, but we never really know. It might have been a triple or a long double, or even a loud foul ball. Once or twice in a lifetime, God lets us watch the vapor trail as the ball we crushed launches into the stratosphere. I am still standing here watching the last wisps fade into the sunset."* Frank Pratt, fisheries biologist, Hayward



Russ Warwick (right standing) and Frank Pratt (right sitting) showed visitors young and old how to make spinners for fishing.

WDNR Photo

Fish technician **Russ Warwick** and fish biologists **Joe Krahn** and **Frank Pratt** pulled off another fantastic "learn to fish" event and information outreach effort as part of Hayward's "Musky Festival" June 25-28.

The three staffed an information booth during the event, and on two days ran a free fishing event from noon to 5 p.m. that waived license requirements for anglers learning how fish on Shue's Pond, stocked with sunfish.

"Russ Warwick started this effort 20 years ago through various events to teach people to fish, and now all of a sudden it is the rage to sign up to recruit at least one new angler," said Pratt. "At that rate, I calculate Mr. Warwick as all 'paid up' until the year 2409."

The numbers tell the story of their success:

- 292 participants: 90 adults and 202 children, with two-thirds of the participants in both age groups "novice" anglers;
- nearly all fished or watched/helped others fish;
- new anglers caught and released 400 to 600 fish;
- one-third, or 100 people, painted a fish at the park service tent;
- one third, or 103 people, made spinners;

- 50 participants took the Bass ID quiz.



Biologist Joe Krahn helped a new angler proudly display her catch.

WDNR Photo

“Our clients appeared happy. I never have seen so many satisfied smiles in one place at one time before, at least not at any outside event,” said Pratt.

“I can tell you for sure that we did have one first time adult, and his advanced-novice significant other, fish with us. On Friday they took advantage of the license waiver. On Saturday, they bought their first-ever licenses.”

“I can only speculate on how many new youth anglers we recruited with the hands-on activities. It wouldn’t be out of the question to think 20 to 50 “new” anglers. And once they’re in, they tend to stay in--20 to 50 new anglers for life!”

#### **Training teachers to explore the Mississippi**

The department’s La Crosse-based fish management staff is helping to ensure that the next generation of schoolchildren has the chance to explore and understand the history, management and mystery of the Mississippi River. These DNR employees were part of a multi-agency team that provided an “Explore the Mississippi River” teacher workshop on June 22-25.



Fisheries technician Michelle Marron, Alma, and Pat Short lifted a fyke net to demonstrate to teachers how and when they use this type of equipment, as well as safety equipment such as waders during cold weather and gloves at all times. All participants wore inflatable life jackets.

WDNR Photo

Fish biologists **Jeff Janvrin**, La Crosse, and **Pat Short**, Prairie du Chien, led tours and made presentations to the 19 participating educators from three different states. In addition to the DNR, staff from the Corps of Engineers, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Iowa DNR, National Park Service Effigy Mounds National Monument, Brennan Marine and Villa Louis all played a role as either tour guides or guest presenters.

The first workshop was in 1992, with the present format of field trips, guest speakers, etc. starting in 1995. Hundreds of teachers have received this hands-on training since the workshops started nearly 20 years ago.

**Footnote:** *Lisa Gaumnitz is the public affairs manager for the Division of Water.*

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## Legendary Hank Aaron to be on hand at state trail run/walk

*By: Kathleen Wolski, Bureau of Education and Information*

Join the DNR team for the 10th annual Hank Aaron State Trail 5k Run/Walk on Saturday, August 8. Legendary baseball player and Hall of Fame inductee Hank Aaron is scheduled to attend this year's event.



Hank Aaron addressed those gathered for the 2008 Hank Aaron State Trail Run/Walk. -WDNR Photo

Participants can preregister by mail or online until August 3. Race day registration is from 7 a.m. to 8:15 a.m., with the shotgun start at 8:30 a.m. Set in Milwaukee's Menomonee Valley, the runners and walkers will head out from and return to Miller Park, near Klement's Sausage Haus. Parking at the stadium is free.

"The Trail is part of a large-scale environmental revitalization of brownfields and habitat restoration and is considered by Sierra Club to be one of the top ten projects in the nation," said Hank Aaron State Trail manager **Melissa Cook**.

According to Cook, the department recently was notified that the trail will receive \$1.5 million of stimulus funding to develop an additional bridge and connection to a densely developed community on the trail's southern perimeter.

"The project has involved many individuals from many programs at the DNR, and we would like to take this opportunity to celebrate our efforts," said Cook.

"We hope many DNR employees from across regions and programs will join us on the DNR team. It's a good opportunity to come together for a good cause and to have a good time." As a team, the DNR will compete for the largest team, as well as fastest team. Family members and friends also are eligible to run with the DNR team. Cook noted that the **team registration deadline is July 20**. Call her at (414)263-8559 for more information.



Runners in the 2008 walk/run passed through fields of native wildflowers.

WDNR Photo

Entry fees range from \$15 to \$22, depending on the date you register. For your fee, you'll get a T-shirt, music, food and entry into a drawing held immediately after the run to win airline tickets and other great prizes.

You can print a registration form or register online at the "[Hank Aaron State Trail 5K Run/Walk](#)" website or in person on the day of the run/walk.

Whether you walk, run or push the kids in a stroller, this promises to be a great time with family, friends and co-workers in support of the Hank Aaron State Trail.

**Footnote:** *Kathleen Wolski is a public involvement manager in the Bureau of Education and Information.*

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### First-hand account tells of rescue near Rock Island

*By: Adam Hogan, South Central Region*

While vacationing on Washington Island in late June, I witnessed from the vantage point of my kayak a near drowning and the swift response of DNR ranger **Randy Holm** and laborer **Don Chasten** that saved a life.

A fellow, whose associate had dropped him off on an island, decided to commute to the shallow land bridge between Washington and Rock islands by swimming with all of his clothes on. His clothes didn't include a PFD (personal flotation device). Needless to say, the result was disastrous, as he nearly drowned in his attempt.



Don Chasten (left) and Randy Holm, both stationed on Washington Island, stand on the Munson Packman high-speed landing craft that they used to rescue the Rock Island visitor. This craft normally is used for moving freight or vehicles between the islands.

Photo by Melody Walsh, DNR Retiree

The guy was able to reach the shallow land bridge, but he was exhausted and badly cramped up. I believe if he had tried to walk the rest of the way to return to Rock Island, he would have been pulled out in the current. In his weakened state, the near drowning would have been a complete drowning.

Holm and Chastan responded quickly, first assessing the situation and then retrieving this fellow from the land bridge with a specialized boat. According to Holm, this rescue boat floats and operates in shallow water, allowing this kind of rescue. While I was in my kayak near the victim during the response, my wife and family watched from Rock Island. When I rejoined my family that afternoon, my wife said "Wow, that is definitely a case of the right guy in the right job," with respect to the rescue and the professionalism she observed. Others in my vacation group were equally impressed. There is a young fellow with exceptionally poor judgment who owes his life to the fine folks at the Rock Island State Park.  
**Footnote:** Adam Hogan is a hydrogeologist with the SCR's Waste and Materials Management program.

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### Governor signed DNR-related bills into law

*By: Paul Heinen, Office of the Secretary*

Over the past two weeks, Governor Jim Doyle signed the following three bills into law. These laws will impact DNR programs.

- The Governor signed the Green Tier Reauthorization Bill into law as **Wisconsin Act 30**. This action made permanent the Green Tier program, which was created in 2004 and was scheduled to sunset on July 1.
- The Governor signed Senate Bill 12, while traveling in the north, establishing a 100-foot "Slow no wake" zone on lakes under **Wisconsin Act 31**.
- In a recent ceremony on the Totogatic River, Gov. Doyle signed Assembly Bill 43, as **Wisconsin Act 32**, designating the Totogatic River a Wild River.

For a complete status report on Senate and Assembly bills introduced in fiscal years 2009-2011, go to ["2009 Bill Tracker."](#)

**Footnote:** Paul Heinen is a policy initiative advisor for the Secretary's Office.

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### War torn Afghanistan dedicates its first park

*By: Matt Groppi, Bureau of Law Enforcement & U.S. Army Reserves*

On Tuesday June 16, I traveled to the Bamiyan Province once again, this time to attend the dedication ceremony for the first Afghan national park. The government had proclaimed the [Band-e-Amir National Park](#) in April for the protection of its [travertine](#) lakes. At this ceremony, I met with individuals who work on various conservation projects.

The New Zealand Army is responsible for the Bamiyan Province and their main base is in the City of Bamiyan, the largest city in the province. It also is the site of the giant statues of Buddha, which the Taliban destroyed in 2001. The lakes are crystal clear and surrounded by sandstone cliffs. Visiting the historical sites in the city of Bamiyan was nothing short of amazing, but I still had my sites set on getting to the national park.



Matt Groppi posed in front of one of the Band-e-Amir National Park's six sky blue lakes. -WDNR Photo  
My plane took off on time from Bagram on June 16, and I was able to get to Bamiyan early. At approximately 9,000 feet, I was caught off guard by the temperature difference. My post at Bagram is at approximately 4,500 feet, and I was getting used to the thermometer hitting the 90s during the day. When I got to Bamiyan, it was about 30 degrees.

#### **Getting there no easy task**

Later on that day, we received our mission brief for the following day and learned that even though Band-e-Amir is only about 60 miles away, it would be a three hour drive. I was looking forward to the drive because it was an opportunity to see some of the country. I also learned that we would assist with clearing a large area and setting up checkpoints because of all the VIPs that would arrive on Thursday for the ceremony. On Thursday, I was free to meet with those attending who would promote conservation.

After the mission brief, I touched base with a number of contacts. I learned the Wildlife Conservation Society, the Agha Khan Foundation and the UN would be represented at the ceremony. The UN recently had hired a protected area specialist to work in Afghanistan and assist the government with protecting historic sites and ecologically sensitive areas. The following morning, we departed Bamiyan at approximately 7 a.m. After getting out of the city, I soon realized why the trip of 60 miles was going to take three hours. The roads were in poor shape, and the terrain was rugged. It was really fascinating how much the terrain looked like the western United States, with steep mountains, rivers, plains and remote villages.

The dedication of this first national park was going to be a great success story, which perhaps would provide a sense of political progress. Political problems facing the country are significant. Many historians refer to Afghanistan as the "graveyard of empires." We saw evidence of this as we passed damaged tanks abandoned after the Soviet occupation during the 1980s.

My first sight of the national park's lakes was absolutely breathtaking. As we traveled along a cliff side, we saw the bright blue water off in the distance. I immediately wished I was a tourist, who could just go off and take pictures.

The picture taking would have to wait, though. Several of us started to clear two to three miles of rugged terrain along the roads of anything that looked suspicious. At the northern entrance to the park, we set up our checkpoint.

#### **Locals bring game of Buskashi to the festivities**

Upon setting up our checkpoint, we noticed a gathering of locals nearby. A number of them were on horseback, so we went to check it out. It turned out that they were gathered for a game of Buskashi, which you may have seen played in "Rambo 3," practicing for an upcoming tournament. This game involves a goat carcass, with the horseback riders fighting for control of it. Once someone has control of the goat, they ride three laps around the group. The winner then keeps the goat. It was entertaining to see the game up close, because those fighting for the goat pay no attention to how close they come to the crowd. I had to jump out of the way a few times.



Players on horseback practiced the game of Buskashi, preparing for a tournament.

WDNR Photo

We ate at a small restaurant in the village serving large amounts of mutton in stew, with baked bread and rice. It was my first taste of delicious local food, a pleasant change from the base food I'd been eating for the whole deployment. They served the stew in a five gallon bucket, giving us plates and silverware to take up to the checkpoint, where I ate my first Afghan meal on the tailgate of the truck.

#### **Sleep was short, then the celebration began**

The temperature was beginning to drop significantly as the sun set. Fortunately it would be dark soon and the sleeping bag in the backseat of the truck was beginning to look comfortable. The 4 a.m. wake up time came quickly.

The crowds began arriving around 8 a.m., and I soon met with members of the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS). The

country director for WCS, Dr. Peter Smallwood, had trained my unit on fur identification for our customs enforcement, but was unable to attend. His staff was encouraged by the progress I'd made on writing a policy for exporting furs and other wildlife products from Afghanistan.

I also met with the director for the Agha Khan Foundation. I delivered a presentation to this group on the previous mission. I had emailed them a copy of the last "DNR Digest" article, with which they were pleased. The director thought it was great that the article created awareness of the region and some of the unique historical sites and natural resources. We discussed further the critical role of community involvement if the Afghan government seeks to achieve political and economic stability.

The U.S. ambassador to Afghanistan, Karl Eikenberry, was present and assisted with the ribbon cutting ceremony. He had nothing but positive comments about the park and what it meant for the young government. In addition, he said how much it reminded him of a great national park in the U.S., as he compared Band-e-Amir to the Grand Canyon. Also present was Habiba Sarabi, governor of the Bamiyan Province and the only female governor in Afghanistan.

During the day, I walked around a good portion of the central lake, taking many pictures. The whole experience was pretty surreal. After almost nine months of anticipation and hope that I'd get to go to the park, I was finally there. I was struck by the irony of the situation. It was probably the most beautiful sight I've ever seen, and I felt at peace there. Being at peace in a country that's lived with constant war for 30 years was a little strange. Had I been able to, I would have hiked around all the lakes. Maybe one day I will.

Finally, I met with two of the park rangers, who were passionate about the park and their work. They told me about the problems they face at the park, ranging from illegal hunting to litter and vandalism. I explained that we face many of the same issues at our state properties. It was nice meeting people from the opposite side of the earth who also share a passion for conservation. They were eager to meet with me again. I'm working on it, and I hope to share my presentation with them.



Matt Groppi was joined by two park rangers who told him that they face many of the same problems found in Wisconsin state parks. -WDNR Photo

### **Optimism resonated throughout the celebration**

The common theme throughout the day was a sense of optimism. I heard numerous times the desire that this national park be the first of many.

There are several areas with great potential for wildlife, and many more with historic sites in need of preservation. For example, in the northern mountains there are areas with Persian leopard, Marco Polo sheep, Snow leopard and Urial (subspecies group of wild sheep). In the eastern forests there are black bear, markhor (goat antelope), crested porcupines, and leopard cats. In the [southern desert and steppe ecosystems](#) there are Blanford's fox, wild cat, striped hyena and sand cat.

In Afghanistan, 80 percent of the economy is based on agriculture. As a result of the dependence on their natural resources, it will be critical that those resources be managed in a sustainable manner. The declaration of Band-e-Amir as a national park is a great step in that direction and will hopefully serve as a model for the rest of the country on how to protect and conserve resources for their aesthetic, ecological or agricultural values.

**Footnote:** *Read warden Matt Groppi's second "journal" entry in the June 4 story ["Afghanistan's natural resources managers learn role of public involvement."](#) His first entry was published in the May 7 "DNR Digest" story ["Conservation warden Matt Groppi is 'ambassador' to Afghanistan."](#)*



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### **Become a steward of the land, beginning in your own backyard**

*By: Becky Roth, South Central Region*

*“One of the penalties of an ecological education is that one lives alone in a world of wounds. Much of the damage inflicted on land is quite invisible to laymen. An ecologist must either harden his shell and make believe that the consequences of science are none of his business, or he must be the doctor who sees the mark of death in a community that believes itself well and does not want to be told otherwise.”* Aldo Leopold in **A Sand County Almanac**

Leopold’s words about Wisconsin’s wildlife habitat still ring true today.



Preventing the spread of knapweed is the best management tool. Spotted knapweed “hitches a ride” in hay and on vehicle undercarriages.

WDNR Photo

I remember driving along Wisconsin’s roads many years ago and remarking how pretty the hillsides were, all covered with purple flowers. Then I learned about those purple flowers and other beautiful vegetation. Dames Rocket, honeysuckle, spotted knapweed, purple loosestrife, crown vetch are plants that can smell great and look good, but are detrimental to native Wisconsin flora and fauna.

I learned that the pretty purple flower that I had admired on my drives was spotted knapweed. Once I identified it, I no longer viewed it as aesthetically pleasing and set out to conquer it.

I recall on a vacation along the shores of Lake Superior, I started pulling the weed from the sand until a friend reminded me that I was there to relax. Spotted knapweed releases a toxin into the soil that prevents other plant species from growing there, thereby becoming dominant and limiting diversity.

In the western states, studies show that spotted knapweed reduces winter food for elk by 50 to 90 percent. Here in Wisconsin, spotted knapweed out competes nectaring and host flowers for the federally-listed endangered Karner Blue Butterfly. But, you can have pretty native flowers. Great Lakes native Karner Blue Butterfly caterpillars feed on native lupine and the butterflies feed on flowers such as butterfly weed.



Seeding and rapid spread by creeping roots make crown vetch is a real threat to natural areas. Look for flowers May to August.

WDNR Photo

After reading this article, I hope you don't become hardened like me and only see the invasives in a native prairie. Become a steward of the land and your own backyard. Enjoy the native plants that are so important to Wisconsin. Become aware and don't judge a flower by the beauty of its petals.

DNR wildlife management staff will be focusing their efforts this summer and fall on combating such invasive species as spotted knapweed, Dame's Rocket and Black Locust.

If you have any questions about invasive species, call me at (608)588-3432 or email me, [Rebecca Roth](#). You also can visit DNR's "[Invasive Species](#)" website to view pictures of and learn more about these invasives.

**Footnote:** *Becky Roth is a wildlife biologist stationed in Spring Green.*



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Produced by: Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Bureau of Communication and Education

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Last updated:  07/16/2009 12:46:03