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Wisconsin is participating in Youth Ambassador Program

By: Dan Schuller, Bureau of Parks and Recreation

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With the New Year, the Wisconsin State Park System (WSPS) is collaborating with America's State Parks and Outdoor Nation in the [Youth Ambassador Program](#) to offer young people an opportunity to explore their state parks and promote our country's state park system.

Ambassadors, ages 16-28, will partner with nationwide media and marketing programs, while working with their state parks' staffs and their own social networks to document their outdoor adventures with articles, blogs and photo/video essays. Read more about this program in the "Journal/Sentinel Online" story ["Youth ambassador wanted for Wisconsin State Parks."](#)

Help DNR get the word out about this great chance for young adults to enjoy their state parks while letting others their age know what awaits them in Wisconsin's outdoors. If someone you know would make a great WSPS ambassador, they can find application information at the department's ["Youth Ambassador Program"](#) webpage. For more information, email [Jenna Assmus](#), WSPS friends/outreach coordinator, or call her at (608)264-8994.

Footnote: *Dan Schuller is director of the Bureau of Parks and Recreation.*



Wildlife Management recognizes outstanding employees from 2010

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At its statewide meeting in Sheboygan on January 11-13, the Bureau of Wildlife Management presented its annual peer-recognition and special service awards to wildlife staff and partners. Their wildlife colleagues selected the following recipients to receive honors for their outstanding achievements during calendar year 2010.



Wildlife Management Bureau director Tom Hauge (left), Sec. **Cathy Stepp** and Executive Asst. **Scott (Gundy) Gunderson** (joined wildlife area supervisor **Don Bates**, Dodgeville, who received the 2010 Leadership Award.
WDNR Photo



Tom Watkins accepted a special service award from Tom Hauge for his leadership in developing wilflife master plans.
WDNR Photo



Kay Brockman-Mederas, Shawano, (second from right) received the Wildlife Biologist of the Year Award.
WDNR Photo



West Central Region wildlife management supervisor **Kris Belling** presented **Joseph Stecker-Kochanski**, Buckhorn and Roche-a-Cri State Parks supervisor, a Special Service award for his support of wildlife resources.

WDNR Photo



Stationed at Horicon Marsh, **Deb Weidert** (second from right) was named the 2010 Wildlife Technician of the Year.

WDNR Photo



Karl Martin (right), Forestry and Wildlife Research Section chief, presented furbearer biologist **John Olson**, Ashland, with the Bureau of Science Service's Special Service Award for 2010.

WDNR Photo

Editor's Note: Read "Wildlife's Marty Johnson received Endangered Resources Excellence Award" elsewhere in this issue of the "Digest."



Warden Falstad receives Shikar Safari Wildlife Officer of the Year

Award

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Warden team supervisor Randy Falstad, Wisconsin Rapids, has received the 2010 Shikar Safari Wildlife Officer of the Year Award in recognition of "his selfless work ethic on behalf of the department and the people of the State of Wisconsin," said chief warden **Randy Stark**.



Secretary Cathy Stepp, Shikar Safari International's John Pearson and chief warden Randy Starks (far right) joined Randy Falstad upon receiving the "Wildlife Officer of the Year Award."

WDNR Photo

Falstad received his award at the January Natural Resources Board meeting.

"Randy is an excellent team supervisor and leads by example in many ways. Randy works diligently to meet both the needs of his staff, as well as the needs of the public we serve," said Stark. "He coaches and mentors his staff, as well as making a point to recognize good performance. He's earned the respect of department staff, external agencies and organizations, as well as the citizens he has served over the years."

Falstad is noted for his ability to focus his team's efforts on priority and strategic issues such as wildlife disease prevention, preventing the spread of invasive species and waterborne disease, and apprehending poachers.

He also counts among his priorities safety education, preserving our hunting heritage, and passing on the conservation ethic to the young. Falstad and his team place an emphasis on attending local safety education courses in his area of responsibility in Wood, Portage and Marathon counties.

In 2010, Falstad developed and organized the fifth annual Sporting Heritage Youth Day in Marathon County. It's grown every year, bringing in 221 attendees and 123 volunteer instructors in 2010.

"Randy also has been involved in the effort to increase human diversity in the conservation community," said Stark. "Randy has been active in our bureau's work to get members of the Hmong culture more involved in conservation, including encouraging their interest in natural resources careers."

Falstad has served as a conservation warden for 27 years, the last nine as warden supervisor. "Over this time, Randy has continued to be a dedicated public servant, which has gone a long way in maintaining our public support and ultimately our success in conservation work," added chief Stark.



Resolve to better manage email and public records in New Year

By: Laurel Steffes, Office of Communication; Mike Lutz, Bureau of Legal Services

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The start of a new year is a good time to review some responsibilities all employees have regarding email and public records.

The Wisconsin Public Records law states that anyone is entitled to access records regarding government affairs and the acts of officers that represent them. Under the law, "record" is defined broadly to include **ALL** email and other electronic records that are kept by an official authority.

While there are a few exceptions, e.g. confidential land negotiations, some personnel records, and attorney/client confidential matters, virtually all the email you generate is a public record and open to disclosure to anyone who requests it.

You can't expect an email to remain private or viewable only to those within the agency. When using a DNR email account, employees should avoid making provocative or inflammatory statements. As a rule of thumb, don't send any email you wouldn't feel comfortable if your supervisor, a co-worker or an officer of the agency read it.

Always consider how your email, if read in your local newspaper, would reflect on the DNR and be interpreted by those outside of the agency. It's often suggested that in the workplace setting, the employee should treat an email as if it was a printed office document, and not include statements or information that he or she wouldn't include in a typed or written memo or letter.

As a reminder, should you be contacted by a news media representative seeking copies or other documents under open records requests, touch base with your public affairs manager **before** delivering the document to the media. While we're committed to meeting records requests promptly, it's important for program managers and others to be aware of materials being requested, as well as their content, so they can be prepared to answer any questions that arise as a result.

Footnote: *Laurel Steffes is director of the Office of Communication, and Mike Lutz is director of the Bureau of Legal Services.*



Links of interest...don't miss them

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"MyDNR" Intranet website

- **Titles:** "Project WET Annual Report" and "Project Learning Tree Annual Report"

Description: Each year, DNR is required to report to the corresponding national organization on the activities of its education programs Project WET and Project Learning Tree. Through natural resources education training for teachers, the department extends its outreach to tens of thousand Wisconsin students.

Links: ["Project WET Annual Report"](#)
["Project Learning Tree Annual Report"](#)

- **Title:** "Secretary's Office on "MyDNR"

Description: Biographies and photos of the new members of DNR's Secretary's Office.

Links: [Secretary Cathy Stepp](#)
[Deputy Secretary Matt Moroney](#)

[Executive Assistant Scott "Gundy" Gunderson](#)

- **Title:** "Wisconsin Natural Resources Board Agendas & Materials"

Descriptions: You'll find links to the audio recordings in each month's Natural Resources Board (NRB) agenda and meeting materials page. Due to technical issues, online digital audio recordings of portions of some of previous meetings aren't available. Barring technical issues, future digital recordings will be available for each board meeting.

Links to audio recordings for specific months also will be available on that month's agenda and meeting materials page.

Link: ["Board Agendas & Materials"](#)

- **Title:** "Natural Resources Board Meeting Recordings"

Description: You can purchase cassette recordings of each meeting or listen to them at the central office. To purchase a cassette recording or to schedule a visit to listen to a cassette recording, call the Natural Resources Board voice mailbox at (608)267-7420.

Links: ["Natural Resources Board Meeting Recordings"](#)

You can sign up to receive automatic notice when new audio recordings are posted by visiting ["E-mail Updates"](#) Check the "Audio Recordings" box under Natural Resources Board.

Council on Forestry's website

- **Title:** "2009-2010 Wisconsin Council on Forestry Biennial Report"

Description: During 2009-2010, the Council on Forestry focused on several issues that affect the ability of Wisconsin's forests to provide the full range of social, economic and ecological benefits today and into the future. This report highlights that work and reports on the status of the state's resources and forest industry as required by state statute.

Link: ["2009-2010 Wisconsin Council on Forestry Biennial Report"](#)

DNR news on the Internet

- **Title:** "Final mission of state Great Lakes research vessel finds low numbers of yellow perch"

Description: On its last netting surveys of yellow perch in Lake Michigan, the crew on board the Barney Devine knew that an era was coming to an end. To add to the melancholy mood, the numbers of perch were down significantly from previous surveys. Read about the speculated cause of decreased numbers of young yellow perch in this DNR news release and view a slide show of the final days of this research vessel.

- **Link:** ["Final mission of state Great Lakes research vessel finds low numbers of yellow perch"](#)

Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District on "You Tube"

- **Title:** "Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District 2010 Report" and "Greenseams"

Description: Check out two "You Tube" videos produced by the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District, one reporting on the company's activities during 2010, and the other featuring its "Greenseams" program to reduce flooding through sustainable management of lands in the metropolitan area that can perform like a sponge in a natural state.

Links: ["Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District 2010 Report"](#)
["Greenseams"](#)

CWD map for neighboring Minnesota

- **Title:** "Pine Island, MN CWD surveillance area"

Description: The Minnesota DNR has released a map showing the area under surveillance following finding a chronic wasting disease (CWD) positive deer killed during last year's hunt. Movement restrictions have been placed on 12-13 captive [cervid](#) farms within 10 mile radius of the positive case.

Link: ["Pine Island, MN CWD surveillance area"](#)

Watershed Trust website

- **Title:** "New Survey Shows Area Residents Concerned About the Future of River and Lakes"

Description: Southeast Wisconsin Watershed Trust, Inc., or [Sweet Water](#), recently announced the results of its "1000 Friends of Wisconsin Survey" of public opinion and knowledge concerning water resources. While the public considers the water quality of our rivers and Lake Michigan to be satisfactory or better, they also believe water quality in surface waters and groundwater will become a bigger problem. Survey respondents think that the major sources of water pollution are sewer overflows and industrial wastes, even though the vast majority of water pollution today comes from nonpoint sources such as urban and rural runoff.

Link: ["New Survey Shows Area Residents Concerned About the Future of River and Lakes"](#)



Wildlife's Marty Johnson received Endangered Resources Excellence Award

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Wildlife biologist Marty Johnson received the Endangered Resources Program's "2010 Excellence in Biodiversity Conservation Award" at the Wildlife Managers meeting on January 11-13.

Beginning in 2009, the Endangered Resources Program has presented this honor to a group or an individual who has demonstrated outstanding contributions toward the protection of Wisconsin's biological diversity. It seeks especially to recognize those who use a collaborative and creative approach to their work. Nominees are evaluated based on their career contributions in four categories.

Johnson, stationed in Sturtevant, is responsible for Racine, Kenosha and part of Milwaukee counties. In addition to his wildlife-related duties, he's done much to further the goals of the Endangered Resources Program, both at the species and natural community levels.



Bureau of Wildlife Management director **Tom Hauge** (left), Secretary **Cathy Stepp** and executive assistant **Scott Gunderson** (right) joined Marty Johnson, named Endangered Resources' "2010 Conservation Award."
WDNR Photo

Johnson is the property manager for five State Natural Areas (SNA) including Chiwaukee Prairie, one of the most biologically diverse sites in Wisconsin and a keystone of the SNA system. This 460-acre site contains more than 400 species of vascular plants, 10 of which are listed as endangered or threatened. A host of rare amphibians, reptiles, birds, invertebrates and mammals also inhabit this SNA.

The nomination paper described Johnson as "a tireless advocate for Chiwaukee Prairie and the State Natural Areas Program for more than 14 years. Marty not only gets physically involved at Chiwaukee by conducting prescribed burns and eradicating invasive species, he also helped secure nearly \$500,000 for SNA work over the last five years alone."

Among the grants awarded were a \$30,000 Wisconsin Coastal Management Grant for restoration and a \$30,000 National Fish and Wildlife Foundation grant. Recently, Johnson partnered with others to secure \$2 million in federal money from the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, of which \$275,000 will come to Chiwaukee Prairie for invasive species control and hydrological restoration.

Johnson took the lead in acquiring 92% of the land comprising the Chiwaukee Prairie, referred to as "a lot of land transactions!"

The prairie had been platted into hundreds of tiny lots decades ago, most of which never developed. In addition to land management and grant administration, Johnson went about "assembling Chiwaukee a quarter-acre at a time," read his nomination. DNR now owns more than 606 lots, thanks to Johnson's efforts.

In honoring Johnson, the Endangered Resources Program thanked "Marty Johnson for his dedication and commitment to protect Wisconsin's natural heritage for future generations."



The 2011 Legislature is back in session...two sessions, actually

By: Paul Heinen, Secretary's Office

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The 2011 Legislature has returned to the capitol for its regular 2011-2013 session. At the same time, the Assembly and Senate are continuing debate in a special session on bills introduced at the request of Gov. Scott Walker. A special session has a narrow focus of issues, and legislators deal only with bills introduced on those issues. The focus of this special session is job creation.

So, as you can see in the ["2011 Bill Tracker,"](#) I'm tracking three special session bills at this point:

- **Assembly Bill (AB) 8** and its companion **Senate Bill (SB) 8** make changes to the state rulemaking process.
- **SB 10** provides exemptions from some wetland regulations.

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



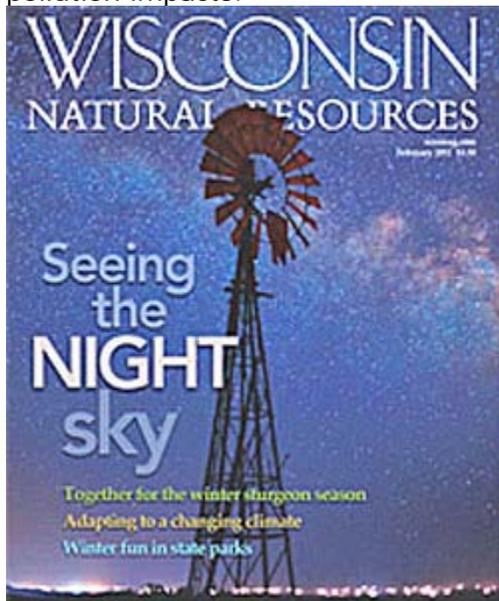
Wisconsin Natural Resources magazine looks at options to curb light pollution

By: Natasha Kassulke, Bureau of Customer Service and Licensing

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The February issue of the [Wisconsin Natural Resources](#) magazine takes readers through a mix of stories about outdoor experiences, natural resource progress and environmental successes.

“The fading universe” takes a look at options communities can use to curtail stray night lights and take back a view of the evening sky. The story features striking images of night skies impacted by city lights and those that have escaped light pollution impacts.



WDNR Photo

A feature story, “A small window for a big opportunity,” follows a family, friendships and tradition that bring winter sturgeon spearkers back to the ice each year on Lake Winnebago. Fun photos by Michael Kienitz show the success.

“A lifetime of skiing” promotes cross-country skiing as a great workout and a way to see Wisconsin parks and forests. The story comes just as skiers around the world prepare to come to Wisconsin for the American Birkebeiner. But you don’t have to be a marathon skier to appreciate a quiet day on skis with friends.

“Managing our future: Getting ahead of climate change” recaps the first reports from working groups of researchers who suggest how Wisconsin can adapt to stave off some of the consequences of a changing world due to climate change.

As a bonus, the issue contains two inserts: A four-page reminder to potential Conservation Patrons license buyers that it’s time to think about buying 2011 licenses; and, a brochure telling the public how the DNR spends license dollars and uses the Fish and Wildlife Account to provide a positive experience using Wisconsin’s natural resources.

Consider the magazine as a thoughtful gift that you can share throughout the year. Six colorful issues are delivered to reader’s doors all year for less than \$1.50 a copy. Year-round the magazine shares ways and places to enjoy the Wisconsin outdoors for

only \$8.97. Subscribe toll-free at 1(800)678-9472, online at [Wisconsin Natural Resources](#) magazine or by mail. Subscription blanks and single issues also are available from our circulation office at P.O. Box 7921, Madison, WI 53707. For more information contact me, **Natasha Kassulke**, at (608)261-8446 or **Karen Ecklund**, circulation editor, at (608)267-7410.

Footnote: *Natasha Kassulke is the creative products manager for the Wisconsin Natural Resources magazine.*



Around the state...DNR employees shine

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Central office success stories

- A thank you note received by **Bob Masnado** (chief of Water Evaluation Section, Bureau of Watershed Management) regarding the death of **Tom Janisch**: Almost one year ago, Tom Janisch, a retired DNR employee, passed away unexpectedly. Staff from throughout the state who had worked with Tom sent notes to the family expressing not only their sympathy, but their tributes to the legacy Tom left behind. To nearly everyone who worked with Tom, be it in the field or in the office, he was the epitome of dedication to doing the right things to ensure clean water for all. The family chose not to have a memorial or funeral service at the time of his death. Today, however, I received a note from Tom's brother (Chuck) and was asked to share this with DNR staff. The note read as follows:

"In memory of Thomas P. Janisch who passed away on January 23, 2010: A sincere thank you to all of Tom's co-workers at the Bureau of Watershed Management and employees of the DNR for your Internet condolences. Though we have never met, your kind and thoughtful words of sympathy and acknowledgment of Tom's dedication to his life's work has helped us through the most difficult time of our lives. Forever grateful to all, the Family of Thomas P. Janisch"

- The Division of Air & Waste launched its regulatory improvement effort "Smart Regulation" in December of 2003. As a part of this effort, managers and staff are accountable for assuring that the following attributes are reflected in our programs: Responsiveness, Efficiency, Timeliness, Effectiveness and Consistency. One measure of the division's success in implementing "Smart Regulation" is feedback we get from customers. Check out the ["Air & Waste Division Success Stories"](#) received from October through December 2010.

Northeast Region success stories

- **Jonathan Wright** (air management engineer, Oshkosh): Thank you for speaking at the Environment 2010 Conference and Exhibition. Because of efforts like yours, the conference was a real success. From the beginner sessions to the more advanced, the attendees appreciated the knowledge they gained and the contact they made with other professionals and speakers in the field. Many also enjoyed accessibility of speakers to answer questions. Thank you again for your support and generously giving your time and knowledge in making the conference a value for all those in attendance. *Tony Montemurro*

- Warden **Ted Dremel** (Waupaca): Thanks again for helping us out today at the Fishing Is Fun Day. The kids had a great time! I have attached a few pictures for you! *Barrie Lutze*

- **Christine Lilek**, Remediation & Redevelopment hydrogeologist, Sheboygan: Thank you for speaking at the Lakeshore Technical College Career fair. Over 1,530 students attended the 2011 Career Connections event (January 5-7,2010), with nearly 100 different speakers giving of their time and talents. Those speakers were there because of each and every individual I am sending this email to. Without each of you, giving of your time and expertise, this event would never have happened. *Lori Kerwin, Sheboygan County Chamber of Commerce*

South Central Region success stories

- **Mirror Lake staff**: We received a glowing thank you from Mirror Lake cross-country skiing customers citing the “wonderful park” and the “extremely helpful” customer service from all the staff in answering questions and helping to plan their trip. Way to go Mirror Lake staff.

- **Paul Zajackowski** (park supervisor), **Mike Green** (warden, Poynette) and **Gerry Schneider** (facilities repair worker, Mirror Lake): On Monday, January 17, two men driving a semitrailer left westbound Interstate 90/94 and entered the median near the Mirror Lake bridge in Sauk County, near Lake Delton. The semi continued through the median, crashed through a guardrail and plunged down a 107-foot cliff, crashing through the ice of Mirror Lake. Among the first to respond to the incident was Paul Zajackowski, supervisor at Mirror Lake. Despite the desperate situation, Paul demonstrated a high level of professionalism and expertise. Warden Mike Green and Paul did a great job. Special thanks also to Gerry Schneider, Mirror Lake facility repair worker, who has been cleaning up debris from the scene in difficult terrain.

Southeast Region success stories

- The Lake Geneva School District selected **Anne Korman**, park manager at Big Foot Beach State Park, for their “Involvement Plus” award. The School District Administrator commended Anne for always graciously hosting and supporting school programs run on Park property and stated she “demonstrated exemplary service to our public schools” and “made efforts above and beyond that which is normally expected.” Congratulations, Anne.

- Congratulations to **Bizhan Sheikholeslami** (waste management engineer, Waukesha) from the Law firm of Gonzalez Saggio & Harlan, LLP: Both Toldt Development and Horizon Development are very appreciative of your expedited review and issuance of the exemption dated November 16, 2010. Your prompt attention to the Mt. Tosa project allowed a key transaction to close and preserved the viability of financing for a related project. As a result of the successful public-private interaction on this project, Horizon Development expects to break ground this winter and Toldt Development is moving forward on its development planning activities. Thank you for your participation in the project and cooperation in helping us meet deadlines.



Call (608)275-7777 in case of catastrophe or serious event

By: Jeff Smoller, Division of Customer and Employee Services

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Recently-retired South Central Region public affairs manager **Greg Matthews** called it the red “Bat Phone.” It sat in his office. But, there was nothing entertaining about this phone’s purpose.

At times of catastrophic or serious events, the Continuity of Operations (COOP) information phone line at **(608)275-7777** will provide critical information to DNR employees. Employees should keep the number handy and call it whenever it’s likely external events could affect when or where they should report for work. The department’s COOP staff maintains the line and is responsible for supporting service restoration and recovery when disaster strikes.

In serious emergencies affecting operations, DNR administration will communicate with employees in multiple ways, including through the media. The COOP phone is one reliable way to make sure that an entire and unfiltered message is available to employees on demand, not displaced by other news.

The COOP Management Team encourages all DNR employees to keep the number handy at their homes and with them at all times.

You can test the phone number at any time. You’ll hear the recording: “there are no special alerts or announcements at this time.” That’s the voice of **Tom Joestgen**, chief of DNR’s Safety and Risk Management Section. The COOP team calls him “Robin,” since he’s not the team’s real Bat Man.

The real COOP Team Bat Man is **Joe Senulis**, information technology consultant in the Bureau of Technology Services. A dedicated chiroptologist (a person who studies bats) who frequently can be seen crawling around real bat caves conducting bat censuses as a DNR volunteer.

Footnote: *Jeff Smoller is deputy continuity of operations manager.*



Timber sale on DNR land nets donation to children’s charity

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The Timber Professionals Association in Rhinelander, on behalf of its “Log a Load for Kids” charitable arm, recently sent a [thank-you note](#) to Northeast Region forester Richard Wickham, Wautoma, following a \$2,900 donation to the Children’s Miracle Network Hospital in Milwaukee by the association’s Great Lakes chapter.

You might ask why DNR received thanks for a charitable donation by a private organization. The department had set up a “demonstration sale” for a joint meeting with the Society of American Foresters (SAF) and Great Lakes Timber Professionals Association (GLTPA) in September. Wickham sold the sale to Koerner Forest Products, which then sold the wood and donated the money made to “Log a Load.” Ultimately, the donation went to the Miracle Network “Aaron Burmeister (Burmeister Logging, Seymour) and Scott Koerner (Koerner Forest Products, Oshkosh) were responsible for organizing the ‘Log a Load’ donation and really deserve all the credit,” said Wickham.

But, that’s neither the beginning nor the end of the story about this piece of DNR-managed land near Wautoma in Waushara County.

One parcel tells a tale of a varied history of outdoor uses

In telling the story of this 40 acres, Northeast Region land leader **Jean Romback-Bartels** refers to what has occurred on this parcel as a “neat little bit of business, here.”

DNR bought the forty acre parcel in 1966. Before and into the 1990s, it was used as a sand pit for various local habitat and facility projects. Near the end of that decade, Bartels said that state stopped “mining” the land, and forestry staff helped reclaim the site using fire control tractor plows.

Stewardship of this parcel also included an oak regeneration harvest and a tree planting project in the late 1980s. Wildlife and fisheries staff planted the open areas with prairie grasses and forbs, which are maintained through prescribed burning.

The parcel is part of the larger [White River Fisheries Area](#). The department manages the area for many uses including turkey, deer and waterfowl hunting; fishing access; hiking; and off-trail snowshoeing.

A short logging road built to accommodate the timber sale and logging operation now provides access to a hunting blind for disabled hunters. Matt Moline of Oshkosh chose this as one of two locations to construct blinds for his Eagle Scout project.

The property is managed for multiple uses and reflects a land ethic. “Forty acres can make a huge difference in many people’s lives,” said Romback-Bartels.



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