

## PARK AND OPEN SPACE INVENTORY COMPLETED

In May, 1963, the SEWRPC approved a regional park and open-space inventory as a major work element in its comprehensive land use-transportation planning program.

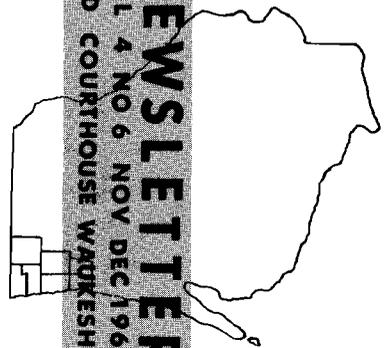
The scope of this program includes the identification and delineation of all existing and potential major park and open-space sites within the Region and the classification of these sites with respect to their location, physical characteristics, and potential use as possible state parks, forests, or conservation areas, wayside parks, scenic easements, or county parks. Separate inventories of woodlands and wetlands and of fish and wildlife habitat were also conducted as integral parts of a comprehensive recreational resources survey complementing and supplementing the park and open-space inventory.

In order to utilize the information, knowledge, and experience of the state agencies concerned with resource conservation and management, the SEWRPC joined with the Wisconsin Conservation Commission and the Wisconsin Department of Resource Development, in an Interagency Memorandum of Understanding, in which these agencies agreed to contribute both specialized staff services and available information to

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SOUTHEASTERN  
WISCONSIN  
REGIONAL  
PLANNING  
COMMISSION

NEWSLETTER  
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OLD COURTHOUSE WAUKESHA



## INVENTORY -- (continued from page 1)

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the recreational resources survey program, including the park and open-space inventory.

The potential park and open-space inventory was completed in June, 1964; and the preliminary findings have been summarized in SEWRPC Technical Report No. 1, Potential Parks and Related Open Spaces, published in September, 1964. This report has been distributed to the county boards, and a limited number of copies are available from the Commission at \$1.50 each.

### Study Shows Eight Prime Sites Remain

The survey identified 14 large areas within the Region found to possess recreational resource values of regional significance, which warrant careful consideration for preservation:

- |                            |                      |
|----------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Lake Michigan shoreline | 8. Root River        |
| 2. Kettle Moraine          | 9. White River       |
| 3. Recessional Moraine     | 10. Oconomowoc River |
| 4. Paradise Valley         | 11. Bark River       |
| 5. Pike Lake               | 12. Sugar Creek      |
| 6. Milwaukee River         | 13. Cedar Creek      |
| 7. Fox River               | 14. Turtle Creek     |

All possess multi-use potential as parks, related open-spaces, wildlife habitat, water impoundments, forest preserves, nature study areas, or sites of archaeological significance.

Over 600 potential park and open-space sites were identified, delineated, and field inspected in this study. Of these less than one-third were found to be high value sites, and only eight remaining sites were found to have the value necessary for consideration as a state or regional park! Three of these eight prime sites are in Washington County, two in Waukesha County, and one each in Walworth, Ozaukee, and Racine counties.

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## INVENTORY -- continued

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### How These Sites Were Selected

Five primary sources of information relating to potential park and open-space sites were utilized in the inventory:

1. Interviews with county and local park officials and interested citizens groups.
2. Inventory by Wisconsin Conservation Commission foresters of all forest and woodland areas in the Region.
3. Inventory by Wisconsin Conservation Commission fish and game biologists of all significant fish and game habitat in the Region.
4. Wisconsin Department of Resource Development files.
5. Inventory by an experienced park planner and landscape architect of all potential park sites.

### The Inventory

Each of the potential park sites was field inspected, and a detailed inventory was made of the physical and aesthetic attributes, such as present land use; number of acres; access; topography; drainage and general soil types; types of forest cover; road access; key attraction (such as proximity to river or lake); recreational development and expansion possibilities; present beach development, if any, and water use possibilities. Unfavorable features were also noted. The sites were then mapped on 1 inch = 4000 feet scale county base maps. Each site was assigned a value rating of high, medium, and low, based upon the information collected in the field inspection. No consideration was given in the rating to land value, ownership, or demand.

### How This Inventory Will Be Used

Data from the potential park and open-space inventory will be incorporated into the regional land use planning effort and will be reflected in the advisory regional land use plan presently being prepared by the SEWRPC. The plan is intended to be used by state, county, and community engineers and planners to guide land use and transportation development in

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such a way as to limit the encroachment of urban land uses and transportation routes upon the remaining high value park and open-space sites. It is also hoped that the inventory will be used as a guide to acquiring park and open-space lands by the state, county, and local units of government within the Region. The inventory represents an important step toward the preservation, improvement, and proper utilization of the Region's limited amount of good park and related open-space lands. It is now incumbent upon the interested public agencies and citizen groups to take the next steps.

#### The Need For Preservation of Open-Space

The rather surprising results of this study should stimulate considerable concern on the part of local and state agencies to take the initiative in seeking to preserve the very few remaining high value park sites from further encroachment and destruction through urban development. The need for park and open-space areas in southeastern Wisconsin is most apparent when one considers that the present outdoor recreation facilities serve a region which has over 40 percent (1.6 million) of the total population of the state but only 5 percent of the total land area of the state and only 3 percent of the total state park and forest lands. In addition to the present and growing needs of Wisconsin residents, our parks and open lands, in their proximity to the highly populated northeastern Illinois region (over seven million), will attract an ever increasing number of our neighbors from the south.

The population of our Southeastern Wisconsin Region is presently growing at the rate of over 30,000 persons per year; and as this urban population increases, more and more people will seek out parks and associated open space for leisure time recreational activities. At the same time, this urban expansion is converting large amounts of rural land to urban use. Unfortunately, the areas having the highest potential for park or open-space use also often have the highest potential for residential development; and it follows that, if these areas are not protected now, they will be lost to development forever.

## STATE AND FEDERAL AIDS AVAILABLE FOR PARKS

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The state and federal governments are aware of the problem of preserving open-space in rapidly urbanizing areas such as southeastern Wisconsin and have anticipated the need for financial assistance to local agencies if adequate open space is, indeed, to be preserved. The preservation of park and related open-space lands must compete with many other pressing demands upon local financial resources, and such aids are intended to encourage the local units of government to act in an area which might otherwise tend to be neglected. There are three programs under which aids or grants for park and open-space land acquisition can be obtained by local governments.

### 1. State Aid for Recreational Lands

Under this program, which is made possible through an additional cigarette tax first levied in 1961, the sum of \$200,000 has been appropriated by the State to be used in the acquisition of recreation lands in and around urban areas. Counties having a population in excess of 90,000 are eligible to apply for grants amounting to 50 percent of the cost of such acquisition. Although counties are the normal recipients of this aid, the Department of Resource Development, which administers the program, will permit counties to lease lands acquired for park and open-space purposes under the program to local municipalities on a long-term basis. This aid is limited to land acquisition and may not be applied to the cost of improvement.

### 2. Federal Open-Space Land Program

Title VII of the Housing Act of 1961 provides that federal grants of 20 percent of the cost of land acquisition may be made to public bodies to assist them in the acquisition of needed park and open-space lands. Public bodies in the Southeastern Wisconsin Region are eligible for 30 percent grants under this program upon execution of the "Regional Open-Space Land Acquisition Agreement," prepared by the Commission and subsequently executed by five of the seven counties comprising the Region. Improvement costs and costs incurred prior to HHFA approval of a proposed acquisition are not eligible items in this program, which is administered by the Housing and Home Finance Agency.

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3. The Land and Water Conservation Fund

A new federal program to become effective on January 1, 1965, will provide 50 percent grants-in-aid for the acquisition of park and open-space lands to states through the Department of Interior. These funds may be used to prepare comprehensive, statewide, recreational plans; to acquire land and water recreation areas; to develop these areas; and to construct recreational facilities upon them.

To be eligible for such grants, the State must have a comprehensive, statewide, outdoor recreation plan approved by the Secretary of the Interior. The State may transfer these monies to local units of government for local recreation projects. The State of Wisconsin has not as yet specified the criteria for such transfer of grants to the local units of government.

Details of these three programs, including fact sheets and procedure for application, are available through the SEWRPC Community Assistance Advisory Service program.

Need for Immediate Action

In a recent HHFA publication, "Preserving Urban Open Space," it is pointed out that land in our urban areas is being consumed at a prodigious rate, with over one million acres a year being converted to urban uses. Between 1950 and 1960, 97 percent of our population increase occurred in urban areas. In 1960, 70 percent of the people in the United States lived in urban areas, and it is predicted that this figure will rise to 80 percent by 1980.

The more densely settled an urban area, the greater is the need for nearby public recreational facilities; suitable land in such localities, however, is usually scarce and expensive. It clearly would be advantageous, therefore, to move quickly to acquire appropriate open-space land in the path of anticipated urban growth while the cost is still comparatively low.

## SEWRPC NOTES

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### Quarterly Meeting Held in Racine

The December quarterly SEWRPC meeting, held on December 3 in the Racine County Courthouse, resulted in two important actions: The election of the Officers and Executive Committee for 1965 and the approval of the Prospectus for a Comprehensive Fox River Watershed Planning Study for transmittal to the six County Boards involved.

In electing the Executive Committee for 1965, the Commission extended the terms of the following Commissioners for one year, commencing January 1, 1965:

George C. Berteau, Chairman	Kenosha County
Joseph A. Schmitz, Vice-Chairman	Washington County
Richard W. Cutler, Secretary	Milwaukee County
Lyle L. Link, Treasurer	Waukesha County
Ray F. Blank	Ozaukee County
Milton F. LaPour	Racine County
Eugene Hollister	Walworth County

The Fox River Watershed Planning Study Prospectus had been recommended to the Commission for approval by the Fox River Watershed Committee, the Technical Advisory Committee on Natural Resources and Environmental Design, the SEWRPC's Intergovernmental and Public Relations Committee, and Planning and Research Committee as well as the Executive Committee. The Prospectus outlines 10 serious resource-related problems within the Fox River watershed, requiring early solution if further deterioration of environment is to be avoided, and recommends the immediate mounting of a three-year comprehensive Fox River Watershed Study to find solutions to these interrelated problems. The study would be financed in part through an HHFA Section 701 planning grant for 2/3 of the cost, the balance to be supplied by the six counties involved on the basis of relative assessed valuation within the watershed. The Prospectus will be transmitted to the County Boards involved and to

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the HHFA for unofficial confirmation of their financial support of the study prior to submittal of the necessary official applications.

Regional Open-Space Land Acquisition Agreement

The State Conservation Commission of Wisconsin became the most recent signatory of the Regional Open-Space Land Acquisition Agreement with its official approval dated December 8, 1964. The State Conservation Commission, in signing the compact, becomes immediately eligible for 30 percent federal funds in any open-space land acquisition within the Region. Original signatories, constituting over 60 percent of the Region were Milwaukee, Racine, Walworth, and Waukesha counties with Ozaukee County subsequently signing the agreement last October.

Three applications for 30 percent aid funds under the Federal Open-Space Land Program have been filed with the HHFA to date. They are the cities of Milwaukee and Racine and the county of Milwaukee, as follows:

<u>Municipalities</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Request</u>
City of Milwaukee	2.9	\$ 70,596
City of Racine	30.0	9,000
Milwaukee County	15.6	498,963

Any local unit of government or county which has not previously registered its approval of the agreement may also participate by executing the agreement independently. Signatories can withdraw at any time, and the agreement will be effective only as long as the collective jurisdiction of the original county signatories remains at over 60 percent of the South-eastern Wisconsin Region.

It is possible to combine this source of funds with the state aid for recreation lands (see page 6) bringing the total aid available to some counties to 80 percent of the total land acquisition cost.

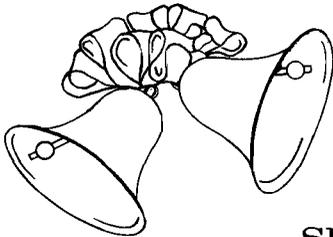
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Root River Watershed Program

Plans are tentatively being made for a meeting of the Root River Watershed Committee on January 22, 1965, at the Grant Park Clubhouse.

The scheduling of this two-year comprehensive watershed study calls for the publication of alternative plans by October, 1965. The Watershed Committee is being advised periodically of the technical results being developed in the program; and at the January meeting, the Commission Staff and Harza Engineering will present a progress report on the Hydrologic Investigation and on the results of the Flood Damage Survey recently completed.

There will also be a discussion of some of the possible alternative plan proposals based upon the knowledge developed to date in the study.



**SEASON'S GREETINGS  
FROM THE  
SOUTHEASTERN WISCONSIN REGIONAL  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
AND STAFF**



## AROUND THE REGION

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Williams Bay - A "Planning Open House" was held on Sept. 4 by the Williams Bay Village Board, at which the comprehensive village plan presently under preparation was presented to interested citizens. Literally hundreds of people attended, and all reports confirm the success of the event. Philip J. Vogel, the Village President, and the Village Board are to be complimented in this effort to provide constituents with an opportunity to come and ask questions and generally become informed concerning planning in the community, as well as to participate personally in the community's planning effort, which literally affects all tax paying residents in the community. Reports indicate that their new monthly publication, "The Village Board Newsletter," mailed to 600 boxholders in Williams Bay is also being well received.

West Allis - A new planning director was appointed to fill the post recently created by the Common Council. He is Thomas A. Campbell, formerly an Associate Partner with Harland Bartholomew and Associates, Memphis, Tennessee. The selection of a planning director is always a matter of grave importance to a community, but it becomes particularly so when the position is being filled for the first time. Mr. Campbell assumed his position in December and is exceptionally well qualified to assume the important duties and responsibilities of this new office. Mayor Arnold Klentz, the Common Council, and citizens of West Allis are to be congratulated for their foresight in this matter.

Waukesha - Frank Paquette, formerly with the architectural firm of LeFebvre and Wiggins of Milwaukee, has recently been appointed to the post of Assistant City Planner. He and Planning Director Bill Hippenmeyer have two major projects: the parking problem and a new minimum housing code for Waukesha, which is nearly ready for presentation to the council.

Waukesha County - Two new planners recently have joined the staff of Waukesha County Park and Planning Commission. They are Jerome Starling, Planner II in the Planning Division, and Walter Tarmann, Planner II in the Park Division. Mr. Starling was formerly associated with

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## QUESTION BOX

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### WHAT IS "OPEN-SPACE LAND"?

In its broadest sense, the term "open-space" refers to any land that has not been converted to residential, commercial, industrial, or other urban development and, therefore, remains in such "open" rural uses as crop land, woodland, wetland, or in "open" public or private parkland. More narrowly, the term is applied to such of the foregoing open uses which by virtue of their location or features serve to enhance the park potential of any adjacent existing or potential public park site.

Adequate open-space is an important and necessary feature of any region if the underlying and supporting natural resource base is to be preserved and serious environmental problems avoided. Properly located and managed open-space can serve to avoid and abate such environmental problems as flooding, soil erosion, lake and stream siltation, irregular streamflow, water and air pollution. It can assist in assuring adequate supplies of pure surface and ground water, provide fish and wildlife habitat and if properly located and linked, can do much to lend form and structure to urban development lending the "feeling of open space" so important to viable environment for healthy human life.

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### AROUND THE REGION --continued

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the Wisconsin State Department of Resource Development and will be concerned with watershed planning in Waukesha County. Mr. Tarmann was formerly with the American Forestry Division in California and will be concerned primarily with park design.

Kenosha - The Commission and Staff note with deep regret the sudden passing of Warren Taylor, Kenosha City Planner and Park Director. His absence will be felt throughout the Region and will be a particularly serious loss to the Kenosha Planning District Program.

QUOTABLE QUOTE.....

*"Land is the most precious resource in the metropolitan area. The present patterns of haphazard suburban development are contributing to a tragic waste in the use of a vital resource now being consumed at an alarming rate.*

*"Open space must be reserved to provide parks and recreation, conserve water and other natural resources, prevent building in undesirable locations, prevent erosion and floods, and avoid the wasteful extension of public services. Open land is also needed to provide reserves for future residential development, to protect against undue speculation, and to make it possible for state and regional bodies to control the rate and character of community development."*

John F. Kennedy  
March 9, 1961

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