

Southeastern Wisconsin
Regional Planning Commission



**Natural Areas Technical Advisory Committee
Meeting**

October 18th, 2021

●●●● Agenda

- Introductions and committee changes
- Approval of December 9, 2019 meeting minutes
- Approval March 23, 2021 minutes
- Summary of review work completed
- Summary of site profile template
- Proposed designation changes
- New Natural Areas
- Critical Species Habitat mapping update
- Aquatic Assessment scheme update
- Plans for next meeting and Adjournment



● ● ● ● ● Introductions and Committee Changes

- Introductions
- Committee Changes

- Rory Klick replaces Greg Rajskey
- Kristin Schultheis replaces Steve McCarthy
- Lindsay Motl replaces Fay Amerson





Summary of review work completed

- CSH Mapping nearly completed for Milwaukee County
- 84 sites visited since March 2021
- Most visits in Milwaukee and Waukesha Counties
 - 33-Milwaukee County
 - 15-Waukesha County
 - 9-Washington County
 - 9-Walworth County
 - 6-Kenosha County
 - 6-Racine County
 - 6-Ozaukee County



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Draft Site Profile

Map X
Barloga Woods Natural Area Site No. 29 (NA-3)



- NATURAL AREA
- SURFACE WATER
- STREAM
- PARCEL BOUNDARY

Lands Considered to be Protected Through Public or Private Ownership Interest
Defined as lands owned in fee simple by Federal, State, County, and local governments; public entities; utility companies; and local districts; and lands owned in fee simple by private organizations, including land trusts, schools, conservation clubs, non-profits and other compatible groups. Some of these lands may be vulnerable to development and, while protected by conservation easements.

Note the areas within the boundaries and/or highlighted are not open to public access for any purpose unless otherwise noted.

Barloga Woods: Natural Area of Local Significance (NA-3)

Level of Protection: High (Conservation Ownership with Site Management Plan)

Level of Threat: Medium (Invasive Species)

Size	64 Acres
Ownership	Milwaukee County
Site Management Plan	Yes
Number of Native Plant Species	134
Endangered, Threatened, or Special Concern Species	Yes, Plant and Animal

Formerly known as Eich-Honadel Woods, this remnant of the pre-European Beech-Maple hardwood forest and hardwood swamp was renamed in honor of the late local botanist and conservationist, Richard Barloga, whose efforts led to the recognition and preservation of many irreplaceable remnant communities in the Milwaukee area. Barloga Woods boasts a rich display of spring ephemeral wildflowers, with toothwort (*Cordamine concatenata*) and spring beauty (*Claytonia virginica*) in particularly high abundance. Several rare plants and animals are known to occur here, and many bird species have been observed, particularly during migration.

While most of the woods is protected, a small portion adjacent to Interstate Highway 94 was lost in the early 2010s with the redevelopment of a Diesel Avenue on-ramp. However, invasive species present an ongoing threat, and surrounding residential properties are potential sources of introduction. The 2016 SEWRPC survey discovered such a case: extremely invasive lesser celandine (*Ficaria verna*) was spreading from residential properties into a portion of the woods near a tributary to Oak Creek. Since that time, Milwaukee County has been working to address that particular threat.

A large opportunity to reconstruct forest habitat exists on County-owned agricultural land immediately to the north of the portion of the woods east of S. 20th Street. This would buffer the remnant community, increase interior habitat, and reduce the erosion of sediments into a tributary of Oak Creek that flows along the northern boundary of County property. Restoration of or the maintenance of a 250-meter buffer of open lands to the south of the woods would also help to ensure maintenance of critical wildlife habitat.



Left: Toothwort puts on an impressive display in early spring. Right: Dutchman's breeches (*Dicentra cucullaria*), one of several uncommon plant species afforded refuge at Barloga Woods. Credit: SEWRPC staff - Dan Carter

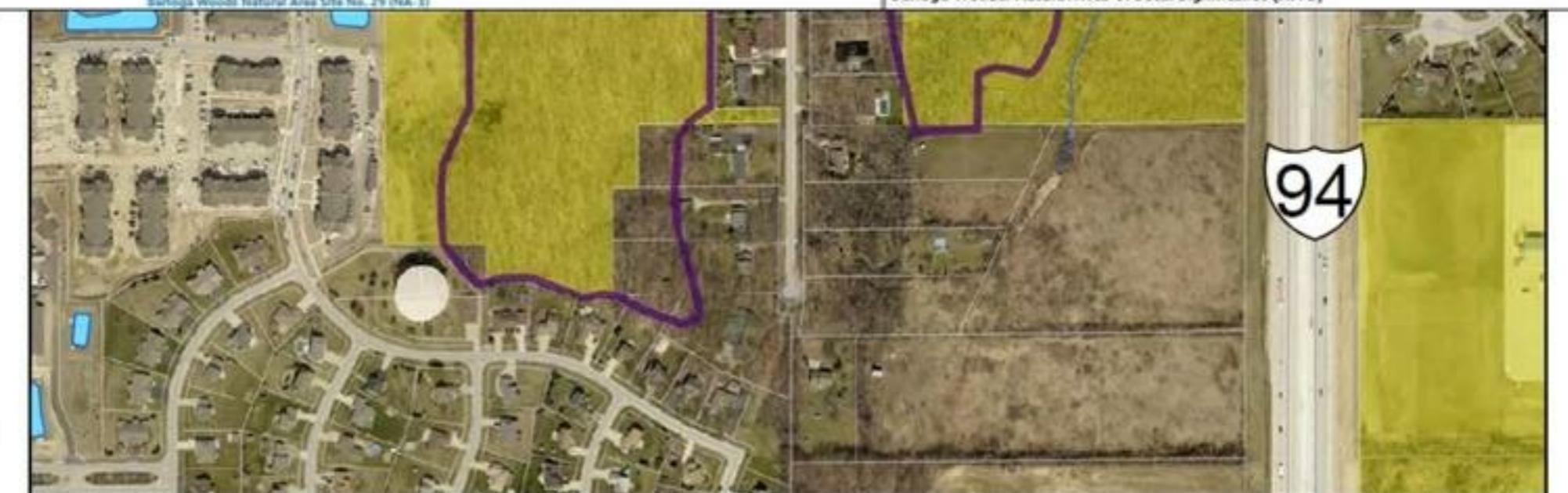


Draft Site Profile



Map X
Barloga Woods Natural Area Site No. 29 (NA-3)

Barloga Woods: Natural Area of Local Significance (NA-3)



NATURAL AREA



SURFACE WATER



STREAM

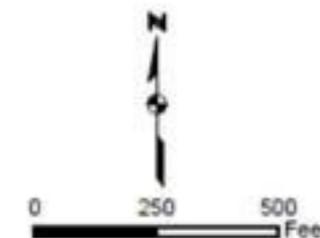


PARCEL BOUNDARY



Lands Considered to be Protected Through
Public or Private Ownership Interest

(Defined as lands owned in fee simple by Federal, State, County, and local governments; public school districts; utility, sewerage, and lake districts; and lands owned fee simple by private organizations, including land trusts, schools, conservation clubs, campgrounds and other compatible groups (some of these lands may be vulnerable to development); and, lands protected by conservation easements.)



Note: the lands within the boundaries and/or highlighted are not open to public access (for any purpose) unless otherwise noted onsite.

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Draft Site Profile

Map X
Cudahy Woods Natural Area Site No. 5 (NA-2)



NATURAL AREA
SURFACE WATER
STREAM
PARCEL BOUNDARY

Lands Considered to be Protected Through
Public or Private Ownership-Invest
(Defined as lands owned in fee simple by Federal, State,
County, and other government entities; schools, utility
sewerage, and telecommunication; and lands owned in fee simple
by private organizations, including land trusts, schools, conservation
clubs, corporations and other compatible groups (some
of these lands may be vulnerable to development and lands
protected by conservation easements).)



Note: The areas within the boundaries are not highlighted on this map.

Cudahy Nature Preserve: Natural Area of County-Wide or Regional Significance (NA-2)

Level of Protection: **High** (Conservation Ownership with Site Management Plan)

Level of Threat: **Medium** (Invasive Species)

Size	47 Acres
Ownership	Milwaukee County
Site Management Plan	Yes
Number of Native Plant Species	178
Endangered, Threatened, or Special Concern Species	Yes: Plant and Animal

Cudahy Nature Preserve, also a State Natural Area known as Cudahy Woods, consists of a relatively large remnant tract of white oak-red oak dry-mesic forest, beech-maple northern hardwood forest, and hardwood swamp with skunk cabbage seeps. It harbors a rich ground flora that includes trout lilies (*Erythronium albidum* and *E. americanum*), Spring cress (*Cordamine bulbosa* and *C. douglasii*), toothwort (*Cordamine concatenata*), and many other species that have been extirpated from most of the surrounding area. American cancer root (*Corallorrhiza americana*) and Beech drops (*Epifagus virginiana*) both fully parasitic plants that lack chlorophyll, are two of the more unique members of the Cudahy Woods plant community. They respectively depend on the presence of oaks (*Quercus* sp.) and American beech (*Fagus americana*) as hosts. The woods also supports many bird species during migration and the breeding season.

Invasive species are the primary threats to the long-term preservation of biodiversity at Cudahy Nature Preserve. There are ongoing efforts to control garlic mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*), but perhaps the greatest threat to the woods' diverse and irreplaceable spring ephemeral community are exotic "bulb" species, which are actively displacing spring ephemerals in parts of the woods. Siberian squill (*Scilla siberica*) and Bossler's glory-of-the-snow (*S. luciliae*) are the most problematic, but snowdrops (*Galanthus nivalis*) also poses a threat. Other invasive species present in or at the margins of the woods and warranting consideration for eradication include bush honeysuckle (*Lonicera x bella*) and common buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica*).

Acquisition and afforestation of adjacent properties to the west and south of the woods, which already contain some mature oaks and wetland areas, would buffer the core remnant community from surrounding development and further enhance wildlife values.



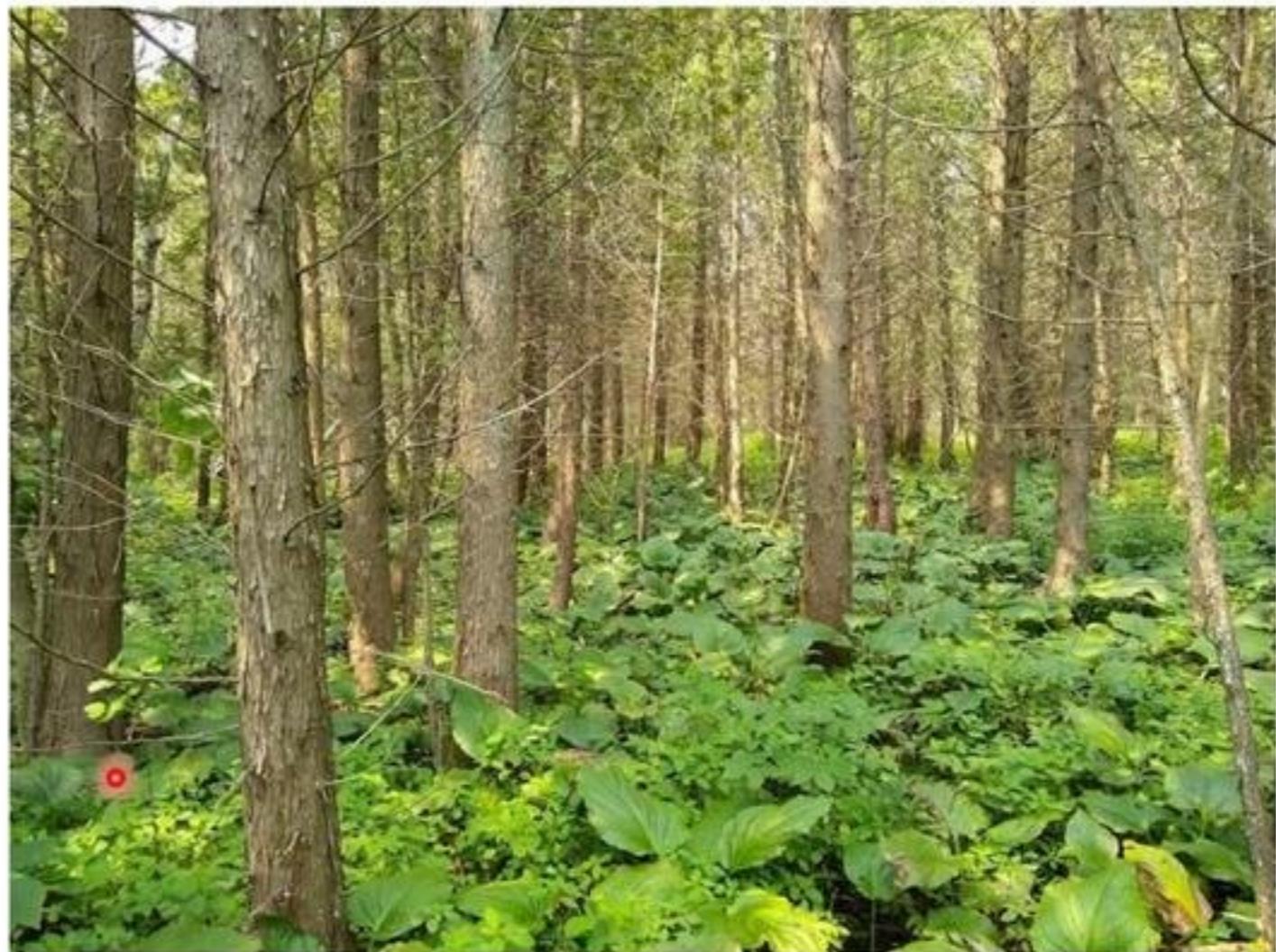
Left: White trout lily, a spring ephemeral wildflower, carpets portions of Cudahy Nature Preserve in early spring. Right: Invasive Bossler's glory-of-the-snow expanding in a portion of the woods. Credit: SEWRPC staff - Dan Carter

D.C.
Ravine Park Woods Natural Area Profile (246640)



●●●● Summary of Proposed Designation Changes

- No change for most sites visited
- Loss of NA status for one site
- One CSH sites to NA-3 (Natural Areas of Local Significance)
- One NA-3 to NA-2 (Natural Area of Regional Significance)
- One downgrade NA-2 to NA-3





Proposed Designation Changes

➤ Milwaukee County

- Two proposed upgrades
 - Grant Park Woods
 - Wood Creek Woods
- One Site recommended for a downgrade
 - Franklin Oak Savanna SNA





Proposed Designation Changes

➤ Wood Creek Woods

- Site # 70
- Proposed upgrade to NA-3 (currently CSH)
- 27-acre Southern Mesic and Dry-Mesic Forest
- Habitat for many listed plants and animals





Proposed Designation Changes



➤ Wood Creek Woods

- Nine regionally uncommon species
- Three rare species
- Diverse flora
 - 121 native species
 - Native Mean C = 4.8
- Owned by Milwaukee County and Private





Proposed Designation Changes

- Upgrade Grant Park Woods to a Natural Area of County or Regional Significance (NA-2)
 - Clay seepage bluffs and Southern Mesic Forest (87 Acres)
 - Amongst highest quality clay seepage bluffs in the County
 - 276 native plant species
 - Many rare and uncommon species
 - Regionally uncommon species dominant on the bluffs









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Proposed Designation Changes



➤ Franklin Oak Savanna

- Downgrade to CSH
- 79 acres *
- Ownership by Milwaukee County
- The area provides habitat for critical species
- NA-3 in the 2010 amendment
- InNN are dominant
- Very small remnant remains, less than 0.25 acres







Proposed Designation Changes





➤ Sites left for review in Milwaukee County

- Adams Prairie (NA-2)
- Convent Woods (NA-3)
- Bl~~o~~e Mound Country Club Woods (NA-3)
- Monastery Lake Wetlands (NA-3)
- Root River Riverine Forest (NA-3).
- Menomonee River Swamp-South (NA-3)
- Bender Park (several CSH sites)



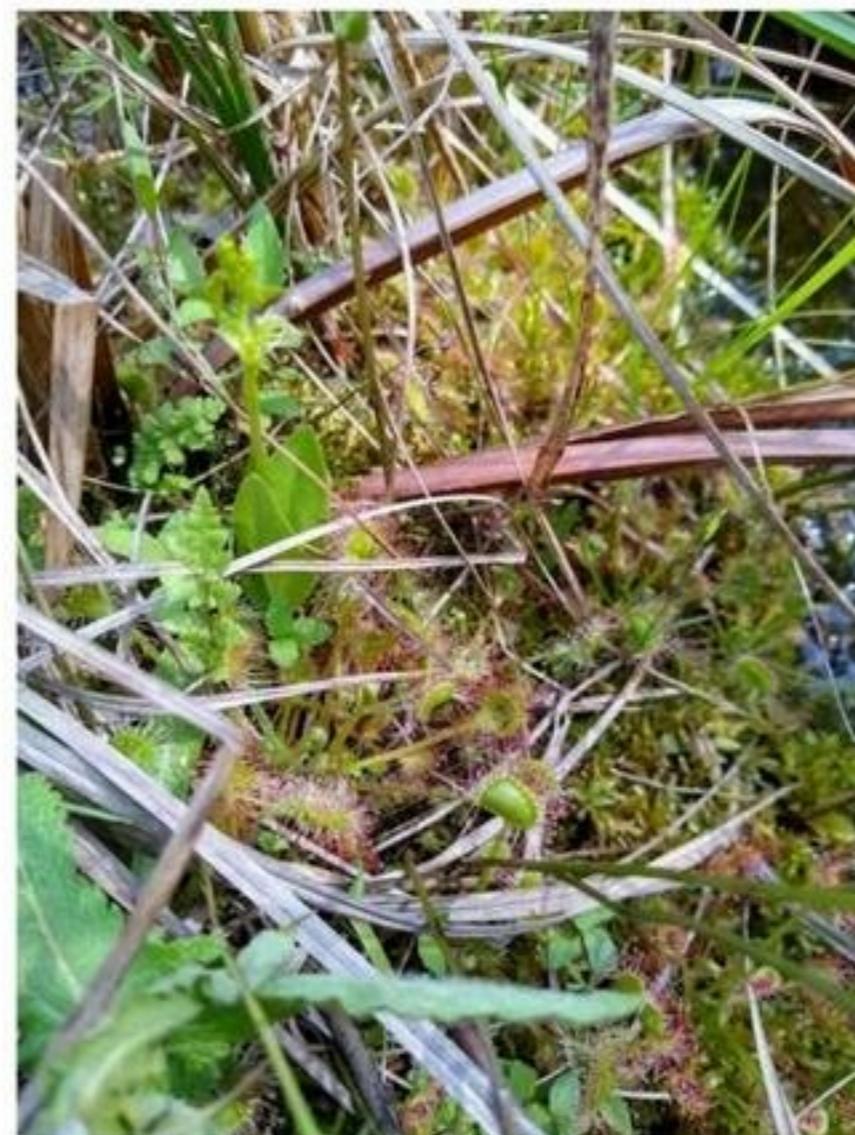


Proposed Designation Changes



➤ Waukesha County

- Recommended for rank downgrade
 - Vernon Tamarack-Fen



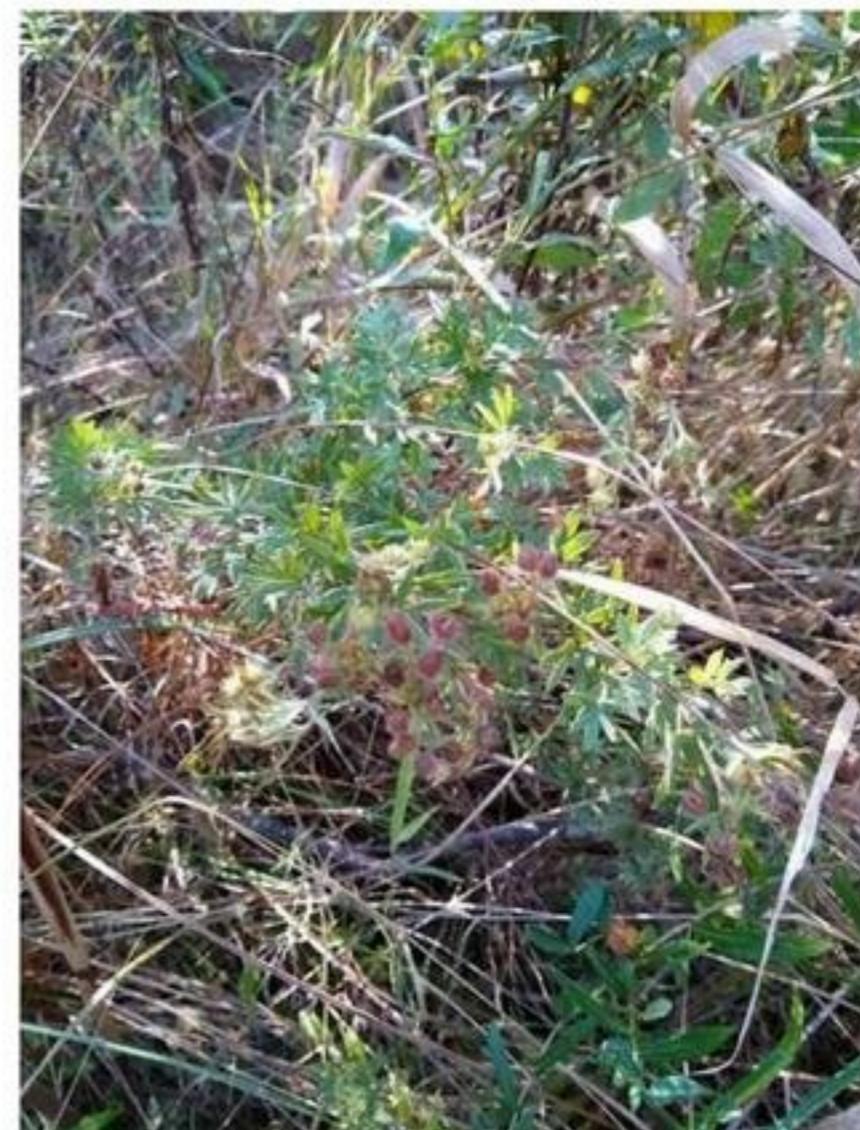


Proposed Designation Changes



➤ Vernon Tamarack-Fen

- Owner – Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
- Site # 20, 18 Acres
- Downgrade to NA-3
- InNN shrubs are dominant
- Herbaceous layer varies in quality
- Historic alterations to hydrology
- Rare species present

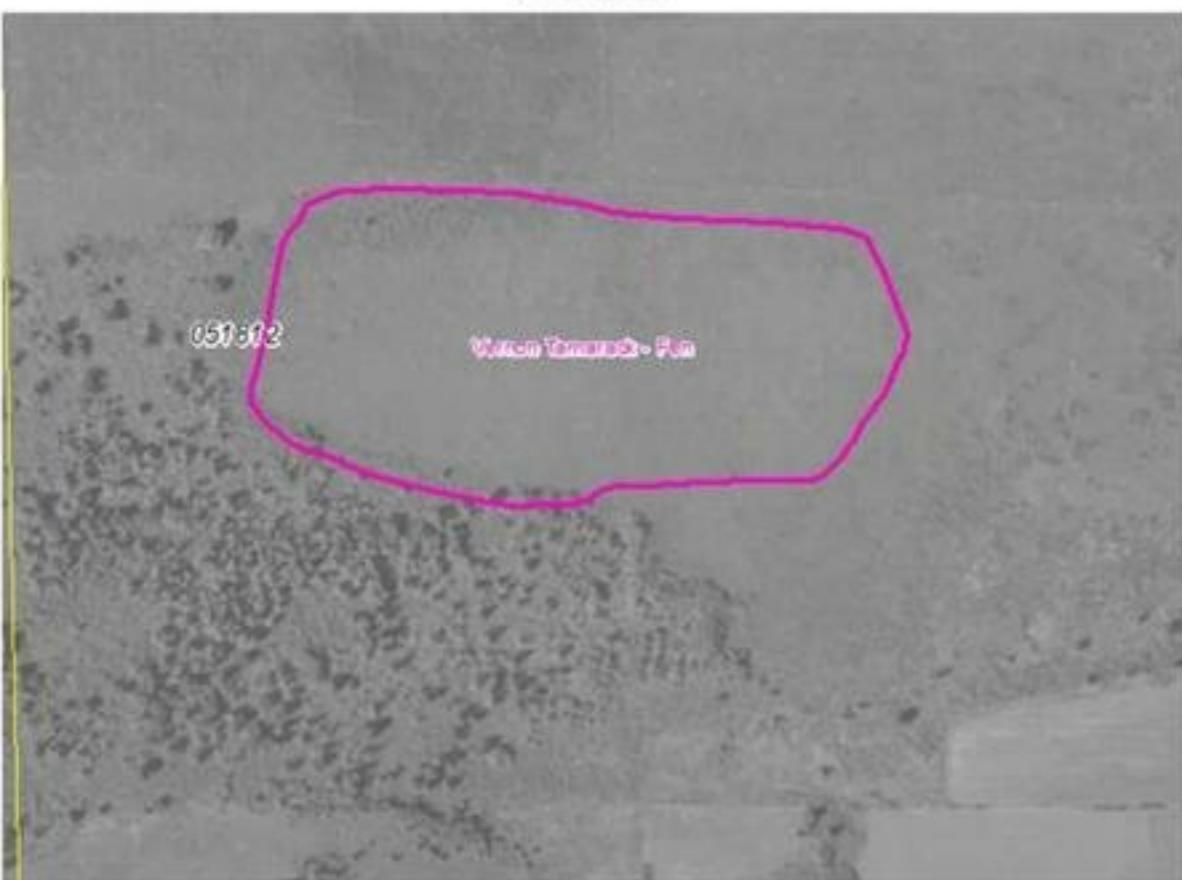




Proposed Designation Changes



1950



2015





4/4





4/7





Proposed Natural Areas



- Waukesha County
 - Holiday Road Fen and Oak Woodland (NA-3)
- Kenosha County
 - Basset Creek Wetlands (NA-3)
- Washington Co
 - Hoy-Anderle Woods (NA-3)



●●●● Proposed Natural Areas

➤ Holiday Road Fen and Oak Woodland (NA-3)

- New NA-3
- Calcareous Fen, Skunk Cabbage Seep, Shrub-Carr, and Oak Woodland
- Currently in private ownership
- Plan recommendation - Protective Ownership and Management by a Private Conservancy Organization or Local Unit of Government
- Located in the Town of Genesee





Proposed Natural Areas



- Holiday Road Fen and Oak Woodland (NA-3)
 - Uncommon species observed included Ohio goldenrod, Northern Bog violet, and Bird-foot violet
 - 97 native plants
 - Conservative wetland species are dominant within the fen including *Carex buxbaumii*, *Carex sterilis*, *Carex stricta* and Skunk cabbage.
 - A follow-up survey is needed



●●●●● Proposed Natural Areas

➤ Kenosha County

- Basset Creek Wetlands (NA-3)
 - 35-acre wetland complex including calcareous fen, emergent Marsh, southern sedge meadow, and shrub-carr
 - Found along an unnamed tributary of Bassett Creek in the Town of Randall
 - Visited in late September
 - Plan recommendation - Protective Ownership and Management by a Private Conservancy Organization or Local Unit of Government





Proposed Natural Areas



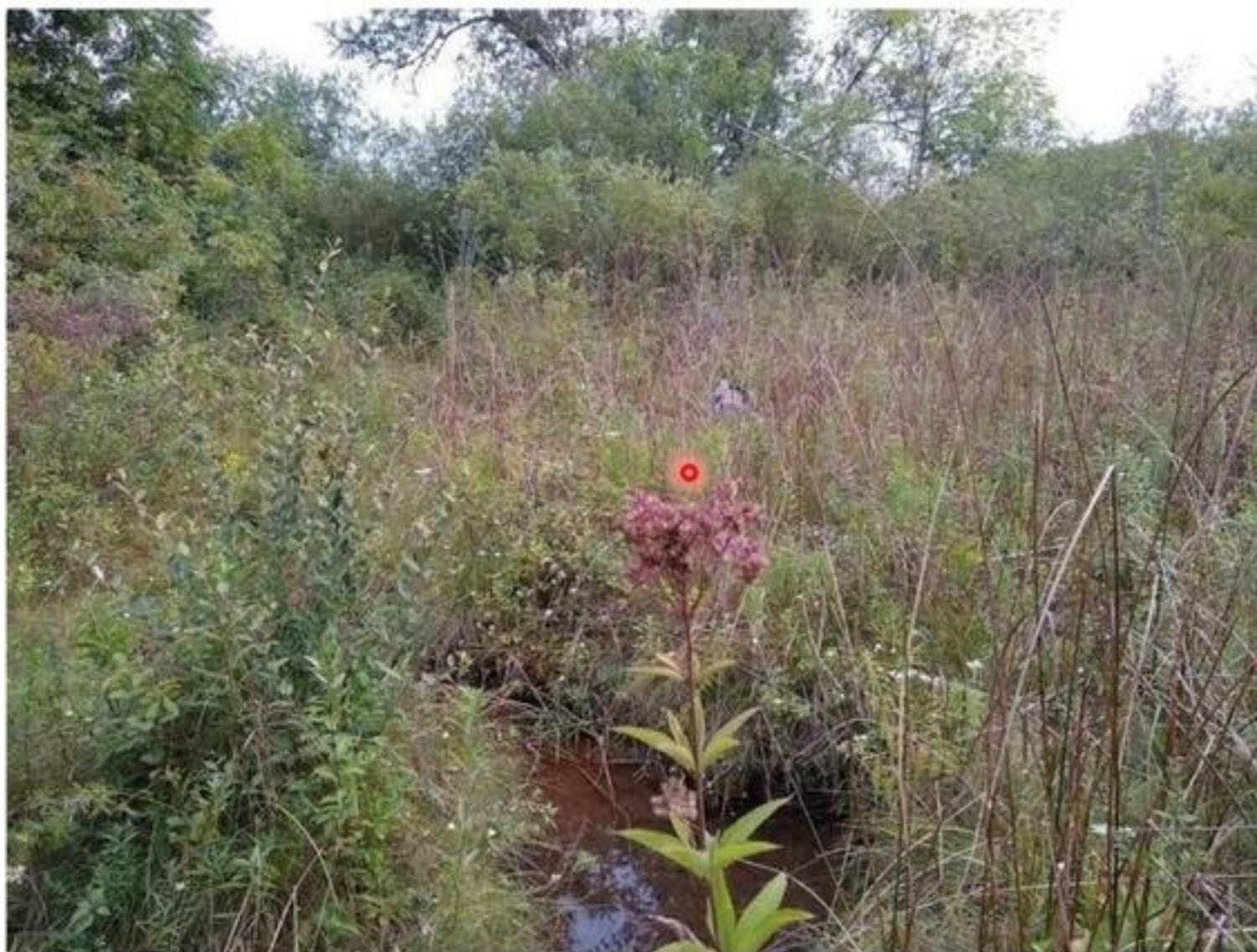


Proposed Natural Areas





Proposed Natural Areas



●●●●● Proposed Natural Areas

➤ Washington County

- Hoy-Anderle Woods
 - New NA-3
 - 36-acre Southern Mesic Forest, ephemeral pools and emergent marsh.
 - Many rare and uncommon species
 - Will visit again in spring
 - Plan recommendation - Protective Ownership and Management by a Private Conservancy Organization





Proposed Natural Areas





Proposed Natural Areas





Proposed Natural Areas



●●●● Critical Species Habitat mapping update

- Summary from Previous meetings
 - Maintain 2010 CSH sites
 - Include NHI, SEWRPC, and other records
 - Based on suitable habitat for a given species
 - Publish to online application
 - Attributes will not include species-specific information





Critical Species Habitat mapping update



➤ Status

- CSH layer compiled for Racine, Kenosha, and Milwaukee Counties
- Exploring data viewer platforms, not ready for publication
- Next in line; Waukesha, Ozaukee, Washington, then Walworth



●●●●● Plans for next meeting

- Likely virtual, perhaps with a field visit component
- Tentative meeting date in June 2022
- Prioritize field visits for the in Waukesha, Ozaukee, Washington, and Walworth Counties.
- Reach out if you would like me to review any existing or proposed sites





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