



Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program:

1990 – 2010 Notable Accomplishments

Since the Stewardship Program began on July 1, 1990, the Department, local units of government and non-profit conservation organizations have acquired through fee and/or easement about 580,000 acres of land with rare ecological sites, pristine shorelines and great recreational capacity. The Stewardship Program funded approximately \$515 million for these conservation projects. Major accomplishments include the following transactions:

- 2010 Lower Wisconsin State Riverway (Richland County) – to be presented at June NRB**
The purchase contract includes a 125.5 acre parcel in fee title that has a total of 3,800 feet of frontage. Cost for this project is \$440,000. This smaller purchase is typical of the steady, incremental building of the river protection project. The Lower Wisconsin Riverway was formed by combining nine existing wildlife areas along the Wisconsin River between Prairie du Chien and Sauk City. To date, approximately 49,000 acres of land on both sides of the river have been acquired as part of the Lower Wisconsin State Riverway. More than half of this land has been protected under the Stewardship Program.
- 2008 Rainbow Springs (Waukesha and Walworth Counties)**
The 970 acres of land purchased in fee title from Rainbow Springs Golf Company, Inc., and U.S. Residential Golf Properties, Inc. is proposed for natural resource protection as well as for public recreation as a new unit of the Kettle Moraine State Forest. Cost of this project was \$10,800,000. The south half was open to hunting immediately upon state purchase.
- 2006 Pine-Popple Wild River (Florence, Forest and Marinette Counties)**
This project featured 5,610 acres in fee title for the Pine-Popple Wild River and a 44,000 acre Forest Legacy Easement in northeastern Wisconsin that includes more than nine miles of frontage on the Pine River, three miles on the Popple River, and frontage on 48 lakes and ponds. Much of the land is located in the Nicolet National Forest and all of the land will be open to the public for outdoor recreational uses. Total cost of the transaction was \$33,000,000 with funding coming from the Stewardship Program. The Nature Conservancy also spent \$6,000,000 for a conservation easement on an additional 14,567 acres of forest land in Marinette County. The easement area remains in private ownership as working forests.
- 2005 Straight Lake Wildlife Area and State Park (Polk County)**
The 2,779 acre purchase had a total transaction cost of \$10,600,000 with funding coming from the Land and Water Conservation Fund and the Stewardship Program. The Straight Lake Wildlife Area and State Park includes Straight Lake, a 107-acre wild lake, 3.5 miles of the Ice Age National Scenic Trail and several smaller lakes and flowages.
- 2005 Forest Legacy Easement (Langlade County)**
This 18,511 acre project included more than five miles of the Ice Age National Scenic Trail and 15,000 acres of contiguous hardwood forest. The land will be open to the public for outdoor recreational uses. The total cost of the project was \$9,180,629 with funding coming from the Stewardship Program and the Federal Forest Legacy Program.

- 2004 Rainbow Flowage and Pickerel Lake (Oneida and Vilas Counties)**
Located in the Northern Highland American Legion State Forest, this project of 5,875 acres of land and 63 miles of shoreline cost \$7,950,000 with funding from the Stewardship Program. The Rainbow Flowage is a highly productive fishery and offers habitat for eagles, osprey and many species of waterfowl. This purchase assures that nearly all the Rainbow's 63 miles of shoreline will remain undeveloped.
- 2002 Forest Legacy Easement (Iron, Marathon, Lincoln and Oneida Counties)**
This project featured a 35,337 acre working forest and conservation easement purchase in north central Wisconsin that provides for public recreation, will prohibit subdivision and buildings, and will ensure sustainable forestry practices on a large acreage. Total project cost was \$7,244,000 with funding from Stewardship 2000 plus 69% federal Forest Legacy.
- 2001 Peshtigo River State Forest (Marinette and Oconto Counties)**
The purchase of 9,239 acres of land in fee title and easement rights on 383 acres cost \$25,000,000 with funding from the Stewardship Program. The land includes 70 miles of Peshtigo River frontage surrounding the following flowages: Caldron Falls, High Falls, Johnson and Potato Rapids. Also included is a six-mile free flowing stretch of the river.
- 1999 The Great Addition (Iron, Oneida, Vilas and Lincoln Counties)**
At the time, the Great Addition was the largest state conservation land acquisition in history, both in size (32,000 acres, about 50 square miles) and in cost (\$25,000,000). The project protects 42 miles of river and stream frontage, 6.3 miles of lake frontage, and provides land for 14 important conservation programs in northern Wisconsin.
- 1997 Willow Flowage Scenic Waters Area (Oneida County)**
The 8,720 acre purchase included 64.1 miles of frontage on the Willow Flowage, and an additional 9.4 miles of frontage protected by a 100-foot-wide scenic easement. It included 106 of the flowage's 117 islands. The \$9,800,000 project was funded by the Stewardship Program.
- 1994 Dells of the Wisconsin River State Natural Area (Sauk, Columbia, Adams and Juneau Counties)**
The purchase included 1,033.81 acres of land in fee title and a scenic easement on 36.4 acres from Dells Boat Company (a subsidiary of the Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation) at a cost of \$2,900,000. The property has important natural and geologic values and is well known for its beautiful scenery.
- 1994 Mountain Bay Recreation Trail (Brown, Marathon and Shawano Counties)**
This project included the purchase of 83.4 miles of abandoned rail corridor as well as land needed for trailheads and rest areas. Cost for purchasing the entire rail corridor was \$222,000. As of 2009, over 1,100 miles of converted rail corridor have been acquired as part of the State Trails Network.
- 1990 Turtle-Flambeau Flowage (Iron County)**
This project included 22,345 acres (11,000 of the total below the ordinary high water mark) and more than 100 miles of frontage. Approximately 12,500 acres of land and 114 miles of mainland shoreline along with 150 islands are included. The Turtle-Flambeau Flowage is one of Wisconsin's most scenic waters. The project cost of \$9,131,000 was funded by the Stewardship Program.