

# Appendix 8 - Public Lands in the Lower Chippewa Basin

## State Parks

- **Brunet Island State Park** – Cornell: Framed by the Chippewa and Fisher Rivers, this island park's bays and lagoons offer a quiet respite. 1225 acres
- **Lake Wissota State Park** – Chippewa Falls: This park has 1,062 acres of primarily young rich forests and open prairie on a 6,300-acre manmade lake. It attracts hikers, campers, recreational boaters, and anglers after walleye, muskie, and bass. 1,062 acres

## State Trails

- **Chippewa River State Trail:** A 20-mile trail linking Eau Claire with the Red Cedar Trail. The five miles adjacent to Eau Claire are paved for in-line skaters. River and rural scenery.
- **Old Abe State Trail:** Ride a scenic corridor between Lake Wissota and Cornell. Trail follows the Chippewa River and connects two state parks. Parallel horse trail connects to Lake Wissota State Park.
- **Red Cedar State Trail:** The trail shadows the steep walls of the Red Cedar Valley 14.5 miles from Menomonie to the Chippewa river Valley. Connects to the 20-mile Chippewa River trail.

## State Recreation Areas

- **Hoffman Hills State Recreation Area – Menomonie:** A 60-foot observation tower offers sweeping views of this rugged hill country, wetlands, and restored prairie. Lots of watchable wildlife. 707 acres

## Ice Age National Scientific Reserve

- **Chippewa Ice Age Moraine** – New Auburn: Situated along the Ice Age Trail, visitors enjoy unspoiled beauty with kettle lakes and many glacial features. The interpretive center sits atop a hill that was once a glacial lake bottom.

## State Natural Areas

- **Bear Lake Sedge Meadow** - 190 acres in Barron County  
**Location:** The natural area is located west of the village of Haugen in Township 36N, Range 12W, in portions of sections 11-12.  
**Description & Reason for Preservation:** The site is owned by Barron County and the Village of Haugen, with a memorandum of understanding with the DNR. The sedge meadow provides habitat for several rare birds, most notably the yellow rail and the leConte's sparrow.
- **Blue Swamp** - 560 acres in Clark County  
**Location :** The site is located on Clark County Forest land in Township 27N, Range 4W, in portions of sections 21 and 28.  
**Description & Reason for Preservation:** The site is a sedge meadow, poor fen, and tamarack swamp and provides habitat for a diversity of species.
- **Putnam Park** - 105 acres in Eau Claire County  
**Location & Access:** On the UW-Eau Claire campus. To the western portion, walk west from parking lot #4 along the interpretive trail into area. To the eastern portion, access via Putnam Drive, a one-way drive that bisects the area and starts across from parking lot #14.

**Reason for Preservation:** The site contains southern wet-mesic and northern dry-mesic forests with very diverse flora and fauna including one state-threatened plant species.

**Description:** Putnam Park consists of natural, mostly forested land that extends in a long curving, narrow strip through the city of Eau Claire. With varied topography, bedrock exposures, seepage springs, and a variety of soil types all in close proximity, Putnam Park possesses many plant and animal habitats. More than 400 species of plants, 100 species of birds in summer, 23 mammal species, and 6 reptiles, including the prairie skink, have been recorded within the park. Major forest types are northern dry-mesic with some impressive white and red pines and southern wet-mesic with river birch, silver maple, hackberry, red maple, and paper birch dominating. Occasional tamarack and white cedar are found in the wettest portions, at the east end of the park.

- **Coon Fork Barrens** - 610 acres in Eau Claire County

**Location:** The site is situated close to Coon Fork County Park on Eau Claire County Forest land in Township 26N, Range 5W, in portions of sections 19, 20, 29, and 30.

**Description & Reason for Preservation:** Pine barrens make up this state natural area, providing excellent habitat for the federally endangered, Karner Blue butterfly. The County, together with the DNR, works to maintain this important habitat. Prescribed burning and timber management are the primary tools used to maintain this habitat.

- **Pea Creek Sedge Meadow** - 200 acres in Eau Claire County

**Location:** The site is located on Eau Claire County Forest land in Township 25N, Range 5W, in portions of sections 3 & 4.

**Description & Reason for Preservation:** The species of concern are the Northern Harrier and the Sedge Wren. Prescribed burning and prevention of water level manipulation are the primary tools for maintaining this habitat.

- **South Fork Barrens** - 120 acres in Eau Claire County

**Location:** The site is located in Township 26N, Range 5W, in portions of section 14 & 15.

**Description & Reason for Preservation:** The natural area consists of pine barrens which provide prime habitat for the endangered Karner Blue butterfly as well as a diversity of birds. Prescribed burning and timber management are the primary tools used to maintain this habitat.

- **Trenton Bluff Prairie** - 110 acres in Pierce County

**Description:** Trenton Bluff Prairie is a dry prairie on a southwest-facing slope in the Mississippi River Valley, about a mile away from the river. It consists of two units, the western portion consisting of two prairies separated by a wooded draw. The eastern portion is much steeper; an open cliff grades quickly into shrubby oak woods. The bluff summit rises some 300 feet above the flat, sandy river terrace. Vertical cliffs expose the bedrock layers, dolomite capping the basal sandstone. Dominant grasses on the dry prairie include Indian grass, little bluestem, big bluestem, side-oats grama, muhly grasses, and porcupine grass. Several Great Plains species are at their eastern range limit here: bladderpod, prairie sagewort, dragon sagewort, plains muhly, ground plum, and prairie larkspur. Reptile fauna includes milk snake, blue racer, and timber rattlesnake. Common nesting birds are house wren, rough-winged swallow, rufous-sided towhee, and field and lark sparrows.

**Reason for Preservation:** The prairie has been identified as the best remaining dry prairie in the region. Several rare plant species at the eastern edge of their range are found here including a state-endangered species.

**Access:** The two units are accessible from the junction of County Hwys. E and VV north of Hager City. The west unit is reached by taking County Hwy. E west 1.4 miles to the

southeast boundary. The east unit is reached by taking County Hwy. VV north 0.25 mile to the southeast boundary.

- **Rush River Delta** - 325 acres in Pierce County  
**Description:** The Rush River Delta forest is dominated by silver maple, with lesser amounts of willow, elm, cottonwood, and green ash. Wetter areas and the beach fringe are dominated by dense thickets of willow. Shrubs are scarce; only occasional lianas of grape and woodbine are present. The ground is covered with large patches of wood nettle. Several wet depressions are vegetated by river bulrush and knotweeds. A sand spit extends into Lake Pepin at the Rush River mouth. Gulls and terns nest on the beach and forage in the adjacent shallow bay. Turtles also use the sandy shore as nest sites. Woodland bird species abound including eastern wood pewee, brown creeper, blue-gray gnatcatcher, yellow-throated vireo, warbling vireo, prothonotary and cerulean warblers, American redstart, northern oriole, and several woodpecker species.  
**Reason for Preservation:** This site contains a southern wet-mesic forest on a depositional delta. Two state-threatened bird species nest on the site.  
**Access:** From the intersection of State Hwy. 35 and County Hwy. A west of Maiden Rock, go east on State Hwy. 35 0.1 mile across Rush River. The natural area lies south of Hwy. 35.
- **Morgan Coulee Prairie** - 54 acres in Pierce County  
**Description:** Morgan Coulee Prairie lies on a steep to moderately steep slope with a southern exposure. The entire slope from coulee bottom to bluff top is prairie. Dominant grasses include big and little bluestems, side-oats and hairy grammas, Indian grass, porcupine grass, northern dropseed, and several muhly grasses. The forbs are equally diverse, highlighted by such showy species as asters, milkweeds, prairie clovers, evening primrose, bush clover, cream wild indigo, blazing stars, and prairie larkspur. At the bluff top is a southern dry oak forest. Between these communities is bur oak savanna, dominated by open-grown, gnarled bur oaks. The brushy savanna edge contains hazelnut, bittersweet, smooth sumac, and dogwoods. Scattered limestone outcrops support a community of lichens and ferns.  
**Reason for Preservation:** The site contains the second largest dry prairie in the west central region and a small bur oak savanna.  
**Access:** From the intersection of State Hwy. 35 and County Hwy. A west of Maiden Rock and 0.1 mile west of the Rush River, go east on Hwy. 35 0.25 mile, then northwest on Cemetery Road 0.1 mile, then northwest on East Rush River Road 3.1 miles, then east on Morgan Road 0.2 mile to the southwest corner of the site.

### State Wildlife Areas

- **Big Beaver Creek Wildlife Area** is in Dunn County, 8 miles NE of Boyceville and is 584 acres. The habitat is primarily stream, marsh, grassland, and forest, and supports waterfowl, grouse, beaver, muskrats, and deer.
- **Hay Creek Wildlife Area** is in Dunn County, 15 miles north of Colfax and is 375 acres. The habitat primarily stream, marshland and cropland, and supports grouse, waterfowl, deer, and beaver.
- **Otter Creek Wildlife Area** is in Dunn County, 6 miles NE of Wheeler, and is 402 acres.. The habitat is primarily stream, forest and marsh, and supports deer, grouse, waterfowl, beaver, muskrat and otter.

- **Lambs Creek Wildlife Area** is in Dunn County, 4 miles north of Menomonie and is 711 acres. The habitat is primarily stream, timber and marsh and supports deer, ruffed grouse, ducks, squirrels, rabbits, beaver, muskrat, and turkey.
- **Hay River Wildlife Area** is in Dunn County, 1 mile east of Wheeler and is 122 acres. The habitat is primarily river bottom and forest upland and supports deer, ruffed grouse, waterfowl, rabbits and furbearers.
- **Tom Lawin Wildlife Area** is in Chippewa County, 2 miles SE of Jim Falls and is 4000 acres (2000 owned and 2000 leased). The habitat is primarily marsh, farmland and upland forest and supports pheasants, ruffed grouse, rabbits, waterfowl, deer, furbearers, and deer.
- **Muddy Creek Wildlife Area** is in Dunn County, 2 miles west of Elk Mound and is 4,351 acres (3,185 owned and 1,166 acres leased). The habitat is primarily marsh, woodlots, stream, planted prairie grass, and supports pheasants, rabbits, squirrels, ducks, deer, muskrats, ruffed grouse and turkey.
- **Eau Galle River Wildlife Area** is in Dunn County, 14 miles SW of Menomonie and is 237 acres. The habitat is primarily stream and forest and supports waterfowl, ruffed grouse, furbearers, turkeys and bald eagles.
- **Dunnville Wildlife Area** is in Dunn County, 5 miles south of Downsville and is 5,063 acres (3,673 owned and 1,388 leased). The habitat is primarily marsh, river bottom, farmland and planted prairie fields and supports ducks, pheasants, rabbits, grouse, deer, squirrels, furbearers, bald eagles and turkeys.
- **Rock Falls Wildlife Area** is in Dunn County, one mile SW of Rock Falls and is 271 acres. The habitat is primarily stream bottom, marsh, and planted prairie grass and supports pheasants, deer, waterfowl, furbearers, rabbits and squirrels.
- **Augusta Wildlife Area** is in Eau Claire County, 4 miles north of Augusta and is 2,100 acres. The habitat is primarily marsh and forest and supports ruffed grouse, deer, ducks, rabbits, squirrels, woodcock, bear, turkeys, waterfowl, furbearers and turkeys.
- **Pierce County Islands Wildlife Area** is in Pierce County, 1 mile west of Bay City and is 860 acres. The habitat is primarily river, sloughs and forest and supports deer, waterfowl and furbearers.
- **Pepin County Extensive Wildlife Habitat Area** is in Pepin County, 1 mile west of Durand and is 293 acres. The habitat is primarily river bottom, forest, marsh and planted prairie grass and supports deer, ruffed grouse, rabbits, squirrels, furbearers, waterfowl and turkeys.
- **Tiffany Wildlife Area** is in Buffalo and Pepin Counties on both sides of the Chippewa River between Durand and Nelson. Hwys 25 and 35 provide access to the property. The wildlife area consists of 12,720 acres, all state-owned. The habitat is primarily river slough, forest, lake, and marsh and supports numerous waterfowl, deer, ruffed grouse, turkeys, panfish, walleye, smallmouth bass, channel catfish, northern pike, massasauga rattlesnakes, red-shouldered hawks, blanding's turtles, bald eagles, great egrets, crystal darters, river red horse, blue suckers. Other recreational opportunities include berry picking, canoeing, cross-country skiing, hiking (no marked trails), camping (by permit only), fishing, and birdwatching.

**State Fishery Lands** (Beaster Gazetteer/Schott Property Manager's List)

- **Bolen Creek Fishery Area** - Dunn County
- **Duncan Creek Fishery Area** - Chippewa County
- **Elk Creek State Fishery Area** - Chippewa County
- **Engle Creek Springs State Fishery Area** - Barron County
- **Hay Creek State Fishery Area** - Chippewa County
- **Lake Menomin Fishery Area** - Dunn County
- **McCann Creek State Fishery Area** - Chippewa County

- **Otter Creek State Fishery Area** - Dunn County
- **Pine Creek State Fishery Area** - Barron County
- **Sand Creek Fishery Area** - Chippewa County
- **Yellow River State Fishery Area** - Barron County
- **Lowes Creek State Fishery Area** - Eau Claire County

**US Fish and Wildlife Service Waterfowl Production Areas (WPAs)**

- **Strehlau WPA:** Dunn County, Sec 14, T28N-R17W; 80 acres
- **Red Cedar WPA:** Dunn County, Sec 14 & 23, T28 N-R17W; 268 acres
- **Cook's Pond WPA:** Dunn County, Sec 33 & 34, T28N-R17W; 80 acres
- **Iron Creek WPA:** Dunn County, Sec 35, T28N-R17W; 47 acres
- **Rock Creek WPA:** Dunn County, Sec 26, 35, & 36, T26-27N-R11W; 479 acres