



**Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
Tier 3 Management Plan**

Property Name: Hardies Creek Stewardship Demonstration Forest

Property Designation or Type: Demonstration Forest

DNR Property Code Number: 6209

Property Location-County: Trempealeau

Real Estate:

Fee acres owned: **57**

Easement acres owned: **1**

NRB approved acreage goal (land records):

Maps *(can be few or many)*

1. Ownership, State Locator, Facilities
 2. Property Boundary and Cover Types
 3. Roads and Access
-

Property Manager: Scott Laurie

Address 1: PO Box 645

Address 2:

City, State, Zip: Whitehall, WI 54773

Office Phone: 715 538-4480

Approved by Natural Resources Board: Date: Oct. 29, 2014

A. Regional and Property Assessment

1.Landscape and Regional Context

Hardies Creek Demonstration Forest is part of the Western Coulee and Ridges Ecological Landscape and more specifically, the property lies within the Trempealeau Sandstone Hills Landtype Association. Additionally, the property is located within the Continentally Significant 'Coulee Forest' Conservation Opportunity Area as identified within the Wildlife Action Plan's implementation document for the Western Coulees and Ridges Ecological Landscape: http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/WildlifeHabitat/documents/WAP_Implementation.pdf This COA was primarily identified for its' large block forest opportunities and the property contains one Priority Natural Community type identified within the plan; southern dry-mesic forest.

2.Ownership and Adjacent Land Uses

Adjacent surrounding land use is privately owned and primarily agricultural. Woodlands dominate the ridges and slopes where farming is not practiced. Private homes and hunting cabins are found throughout the general area.

3.General Property Description and Management History and Use

The property is located approximately 6 miles west of Galesville, Wisconsin. The wooded parcel was purchased by the Wisconsin Conservation Department in 1949 and consists of 57 acres. Prior to state ownership the parcel had a continuous history of grazing. No serious fires or timber harvesting had occurred prior to state ownership. The forest lies within the unglaciated or 'driftless' area of southwest Wisconsin. The property is situated on predominantly east to northeast aspects with slopes ranging from 20 to 45%. The soil is Hixton Loam, a Typic Hapludalf, formed in loamy sandstone residuum, underlain by sandstone bedrock.

Early researchers divided the forest into 8 compartments and established research plots. Over the past 60 years 7 of the compartments have undergone different types of harvests to help predict successful techniques to regenerate red oak. One compartment of mature timber has been left as a control to understand the biological lifespan of red oak.

4.Land Management Cover Types

The forest originated about 1868 – the uncut control compartment is the last representation of this age class. The forest stands are generally dominated by red oak. Black oak and white oak are more prevalent on some upper slopes. In the lower tree canopy, shagbark hickory and black cherry are common species. Other subordinate tree species include American elm, box elder, pin cherry, and serviceberry. Understory species include gray dogwood, American hazel, common blackberry, lady fern and interrupted fern.

Size classes of the timber varies by compartment due to the staggered harvest regime the

property has experienced. All size classes (sapling to sawtimber) are represented. Tree age varies from 18 to 146 years.

5. Endangered, Threatened, Special Concern Species or Habitats, and Wildlife Species of Greatest Conservation Need

There are no endangered, threatened or special concern species within the forest and no surveys have yet taken place to identify such species. Negative impacts to rare species will be avoided by following DNR's Species Guidance Documents:

<http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/EndangeredResources/guidance.asp>. In cases where species guidance documents haven't been developed, avoidance to rare species will occur via practices such as time of year restrictions, modified harvest boundaries, and/or consultation with rare species experts.

The forest is considered a Southern Dry-mesic Forest Community type which is a priority type identified within the Conservation Opportunity Area the property falls within.

Priority Species of Greatest Conservation Need for the Western Coulees and Ridges Ecological Landscape associated with the southern dry-mesic forest included: Four-toed Salamander, Acadian Flycatcher, Cerulean Warbler, Hooded Warbler, Kentucky Warbler, Veery, Wood Thrush, Worm-eating Warbler, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Northern Long-eared Bat, Woodland Vole, Hickory Hairstreak, Blue-winged Warbler, and Whip-poor-will. Although the majority of these species will benefit from large block old forest management, a few (primarily the latter species listed) will benefit from the development of quality "feathered" edge habitat along field edges and other open habitats.

6. Invasive Species

Exotic honeysuckle is scattered throughout the property.

7. Cultural and Archaeological Features

No cultural or archaeological concerns are noted for the property.

8. Public Uses and Infrastructure

Hunting is the most common use of the property. Deer season brings in the most visitation; lesser numbers of hunters use the forest for turkey hunting. Other associated uses include hiking, bird-watching, and nature photography. Other than a small grass parking area there are no public facilities or buildings on the forest. A county maintained hard-surface road provides access to the parking area. A series of trails provides walking access for the public.

Motorized equipment is not allowed.

9. Refuges and other Closed Areas

None

10. Administrative Facilities

None

Significant Property Management Issues, Trends and Needs:

Littering continues to be an issue on the property – especially in the parking area.

Property boundaries are becoming more difficult to identify as the existing boundary fence falls into disrepair.

ATV's have not impacted the property yet but the potential for such exists. Barriers or gates on the trail head(s) may be a need in the future.

B. Property Purpose and Goals **Management Objectives and Prescriptions**

1. Property Purpose and Goals

The original intent of the property was to investigate different timber harvest techniques that would successfully regenerate red oak. Compartments were established and received different harvest techniques. All of the compartments have been successfully regenerated – some have more red oak than others. The current goal of the property is to manage the existing timber resource while providing recreational and educational opportunities for the general public.

2. Current and Planned Land Management Objectives and Prescriptions

Retain red oak as the dominant cover type through commercial and non-commercial thinnings
 Retain the control (uncut) compartment as a reserve area
 Thin, commercially if possible, the pole and small sawtimber oak stands to release the better quality trees
 Conduct non-commercial crop tree release in the younger age-class compartments
 Maintain the existing trail system for hiking, hunting and timber management access
 Control invasive bush honeysuckle population
 Maintain narrative trail signs for educational purposes
 Patrol parking area for litter
 Repair and/or replace established property fence lines

Current and Planned Facilities or Infrastructure

Type of Facility	Total (number/length)	Management Activities	Management Issues and Constraints
Roads - public	1 / ½ mile	County maintained	none
Parking lots	1 (grass opening)	Periodic mowing	littering
Managed, non-designated trails	5 / ¾ mile	Periodic mowing	access

Other On-going Management Activities (add additional items as necessary)

	Current Management Actions	Management Issues and Constraints
Project Boundary Modification	Identification and repair of existing fence lines.	none
Invasive exotic species	Bush Honeysuckle control	none
Endangered, Threatened, Special Concern Species or Habitats, and Wildlife Species of Greatest Conservation Need	See paragraph 5 (page 3)	none
Cultural and Archeological Resources	None identified for the parcel	none

SUMMARY OF PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES FOR THIS PLAN AND COMMENTS RECEIVED

On May 20, 2014, a 21-day public review period for revision of Stewardship Demonstration Forest property management plans was publicly noticed statewide. Publics and partners were informed by way of a statewide press release and an email distribution to subscribers of 'eGov', a statewide government delivery system.

A comprehensive DNR web page was developed for Stewardship Demonstration Forests to describe their history and purpose, and to identify individual properties and locations. Draft management plans were posted on the website for public viewing.

The public was invited to respond by on-line electronic comment form, paper comment forms and email. Consultation occurred for Stewardship Demonstration Forests located within the tribal ceded territory.

No comments were received by the public.



Hardies Creek Demonstration Forest



- Interstate
- US Hwy
- State Rd
- County Rd
- Town Rd
- City St
- Railroads
- Parcels
- City
- Town
- Stream/River
- Lake/Pond

All boundaries on this web image are general representations and should not be used for any legal documentation, boundary determinations, or other property related issues. Trempealeau County is not responsible for any use of this data. All data is distributed in an "as is" format with no guarantees or warranties.