

newsletter

Dane County
Natural Heritage Foundation

Fall 1987

EXTRA! EXTRA! EXTRA!
COME CELEBRATE LAND
CONSERVATION WITH US!!

See details of our upcoming dedication ceremony on page 2)



Tenney Park (above) as it looked in the early 1900s when concern for the availability of open green spaces around Madison led to the formation of the Parks and Pleasure Drive Association. Today 80 years later, the Dane County Natural Heritage Foundation has a similar opportunity to enhance the quality of life in Dane County through a proposed Greenways rem. (See article on page 3)

 *preserving a splash of green*

Members Invited

On October 21, the Foundation will celebrate the successful preservation of a wetland and wetland buffer area on Lower Mud Lake in Dunn Township.

The 12-acre McLain preserve is made possible by the donation of a conservation easement to the Foundation by Mike and Lynn McLain of rural McFarland. The parcel includes a portion of the Lower Mud Lake wetlands, one of the least disturbed in Southern Wisconsin. Also included is an oak woods and pasture on the wetland fringe. Adjoining lands are owned by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

Dr. Jim Zimmerman, State Representative Joseph Wineke, and others will appear at a dedication ceremony at 11:00 A.M. on Wednesday, October 21 in Room 415 NW of the State Capitol. Donuts and coffee will be served. We hope many of our members will join us.



Old Man River Keeps Rolling

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources recently issued a Draft Environmental Impact Statement, which evaluates the proposed lower Wisconsin River State Forest.

The Lower Wisconsin River extends 92 miles from the Prairie du Sac dam to the Mississippi River. This is the longest undammed stretch of river in Wisconsin. The state forest would follow the river through some 70,000 acres of scenic wooded bluffs, lowland forests and wetlands.

The DNR plans to ask for legislative approval to designate the new state forest and begin implementation through the use of zoning, land purchases, and alternative real estate methods. These include the acquisition of wetland and scenic conservation easements.

U.W. Professor Harold C. Jordahl, who recently met with the DCNHF's Board, feels that conservation easements are important to establishing the forest and preserving the river's scenic beauty. As a private "land trust" Jordahl felt that DCNHF would be well suited to working with private landowners to help create the long awaited forest.

Members who wish to receive a copy of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement should write to: Bureau of Environmental Analysis and Review, Department of Natural Resources, P.O. Box 7921, Madison, Wisconsin 53707.

Riley Remembered



Robert McCabe, UW-Madison Professor of Wildlife Ecology, is pictured on a recent field trip to the Riley Game Reserve with members of the DCNHF Stewardship Committee: Nan Cheney, Gene Roark, and Mary Trewartha.

Dr. McCabe was a research assistant to Aldo Leopold when he and a group of farmers and town sportsmen established the reserve as a cooperative. Located near the town of Riley, the coop began as a joint effort to increase game numbers through stocking, fencing, planting,

and feeding. At its peak the reserve covered more than 1700 acres in the towns of Verona, Springdale, Cross Plains, and Middleton.

The Riley Game Reserve is a unique example of Aldo Leopold's legacy of a "land ethic" to Dane County. It represents the successful efforts of a highly diverse group of people to protect wildlife habitat for its own sake and for man's enjoyment.

DCNHF is considering taking action to make the reserve a living memorial to Dr. Leopold.

It's Showtime!

DCNHF Director Bill O'Connor recently spoke and presented a slideshow to 300 members of Madison's Downtown Rotary club. His appearance was part of the Foundation's continuing effort to acquaint the public with the group's important work. The 12-minute slideshow has been shown throughout the county to groups that include the Windsor and East Kiwanis and the Dane County Conservation League. Contact the Foundation at 258-9797 if you know of any other groups interested in this presentation.

A Bold Plan for Our Future

by Gary Werner
assisted by David Chandler

Try to imagine Madison without the Arboretum or the State Capitol building. Unthinkable?

Today we enjoy the legacy of people who dared, 50 and 75 years ago, to boldly dream of creations on an unprecedented scale. Our ancestors' vision gave us the magnificent Capitol building, with the fourth largest dome in the world, as a centerpiece for our city of lakes, and a unique Arboretum that delights both the scholar and the recreational user.

Now try to imagine a continuous system of greenways surrounding Madison and linking it to our neighboring communities. Imagine: 50 years from now the children of another generation could enjoy its open space parkway, much as we enjoy the Arboretum today.

Madison and its neighbors occupy a region of varied terrain and diverse plant communities, courtesy of the Ice Age glaciers. We are rich in wetlands and glacial ponds and lakes. The morainal ridges harbor remnants of the prairie oak savanna that so intrigued European immigrants to Dane County 150 years ago.

Our geography, and the means by which it may be enjoyed, are varied. We have at our doorstep a National Park (the Cross Plains Gorge Ice Age National Scientific Reserve), the Ice Age National Scenic Trail, two state bicycle trails stretching nearly

across the state, two state parks, large county and city parks, as well as a well-known trout stream (Black Earth Creek).

Other recreational features include the UW Foundation's proposed 36-hole championship golf course, which will include seven miles of cross country ski trails.

In short, we have inherited a much richer landscape than Aldo Leopold and the other architects of the Arboretum had to work with. They dared to dream of creating prairies and native woodlands 50 years ago. Can we afford to be less bold with our dreams?

Last year a coalition of citizens representing the Madison Audubon Society, Capitol Community Citizens, League of Women Voters, Sierra Club, and the Ice Age Trail Council proposed that this array of natural treasures be linked together in a web of protected greenways encircling and winding through the communities of central Dane County.

They saw this system as the only way to adequately protect the large investment in public parkland from erosion by urban sprawl. What today seem like large parks in a fabric of farmland may one day be tiny havens in an urban sea if natural linkages are removed.

The coalition — the Greenbelt Network — presented the idea at a series of public meetings and hearings last winter. In response, the Madison and Fitchburg City Councils, the Towns of Middleton and

Verona, and the Dane County Board requested the Regional Plan Commission to study the creation of a greenway zone around Madison with emphasis, initially, on the area between Seminole Highway and Highway 14. That study is underway. Its completion is scheduled for early next year.

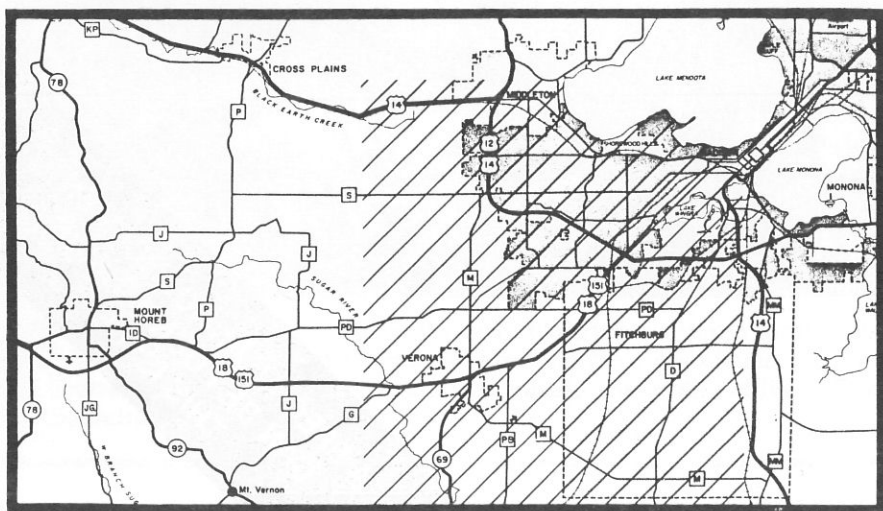
A committee of citizen representatives from Madison, Fitchburg, Middleton, Verona, and the Towns of Middleton and Verona is monitoring and guiding the planning process.

Chaired by Fred Arnold, District 22 County Supervisor, this group meets monthly to review planning, oversee study progress, and discuss issues. Simultaneously, the Madison Planning and Development Department is conducting a Peripheral Development Study to evaluate the needs and set guidelines for future expansion of the city.

The DCNHF has a vital role to play in this process by raising the private funds necessary to complement any public funds allocated for greenway preservation.

Additionally, the DCNHF can directly negotiate with individual landowners for many of the conservation easements and other legal agreements that will turn a greenway preservation plan into a reality.

The time to act is now! Dane County leaders have the opportunity to project a vision for the future, inspired by two of our greatest teachers: John Muir and Aldo Leopold.



The Southwest Sector, a growing development area. Provided courtesy of the Dane County Regional Planning Commission.

NEW MEMBERS: WELCOME!

Robert W. Baird
Dane County Conservation League
Goodman, Inc.
Arthur & Hatheway Hasler
Judy and Richard Loofboro
W.T. Rogers Co.
Charles Sommers
Vogel Properties
Frances Weinstein
Trish White
Eva Wright
Jim Zerwick

Profile: Nan Cheney: DCNHF Stewardship Chair



Nan Cheney, chair of the DCNHF's Land Stewardship Committee, is a charter member and former secretary of the organization. The committee identifies land worthy of conservation action. Members are both foundation directors and volunteers with an interest or expertise in fields related to the proper evaluation of potential conservation lands.

Nan brings to this position the idealism of a naturalist, the awareness of a politician, and the organizational skills that have contributed to her success in many areas. She credits several well-known Madisonians with stimulating her knowledge and enthusiasm for the preservation of natural areas — among them Rosemary Fleming, who trained her for her work as a naturalist at Cherokee Marsh, botanist Hugh Iltis, birder Lu Severson, and naturalist Jim and Libby Zimmerman. A former chair of the Dane County

Democratic Party and candidate for State Assembly, she worked hard for the successful passage of legislation protecting Wisconsin wetlands. She is employed as an administrator working with the Friends of the Lower Wisconsin River.

Nan and her husband, David, live in the Highlands overlooking a five-acre prairie they planted when they built their house 22 years ago. They have four children: Alec, who is married and living in Alaska; Nina, who with her husband comprises the Mime, Mask, and Clown duo; Rebecca, a recent graduate of Evergreen College in Washington; and Charles, a student at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Nan's enthusiasm for wetlands, wildlife, and woods has made her an energetic activist in the drive to preserve Dane County's invaluable natural resources.



Dane County
Natural Heritage Foundation
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The Dane County Natural Heritage Foundation was organized in 1983 to preserve, maintain, and enhance land areas contributing significantly to the beauty, open space, and ecological, scenic, historic, and archeological integrity of the lands and water of Dane County, Wisconsin, and the surrounding region.

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Lynne Looftboro,

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A SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT
CAN BE FOUND INSIDE
THIS ISSUE

 preserving a splash of green