Wisconsin’s Glacial Heritage Area

A Community Based Outdoor Recreation and Conservation Project
What is the GHA?

A series of parks, preserves, wildlife and natural areas, and other conservation lands that will be linked together and to nearby cities and villages through a network of trails.

“A network of Strings and Pearls”.

Glacial Heritage Area
How did we get here?

- 2005 – The NRB approves the implementation of a feasibility study for the GHA.
FINDINGS

Regional Recreational Needs

• Half-day, day, and weekend trips.
• Trail-based activities.
• Wildlife watching.
• Hunting & Fishing.
• Camping.
• Connected to other cultural destinations.
Regional Conservation Needs

- Prairie, oak savanna, oak woodlands.
- Large wetland complexes.
- Water quality.
- SGCN
1. Provide exceptional outdoor recreational opportunities for residents and visitors.
2. Preserve wildlife and water resources.
3. Complement voluntary protection of farmland.
4. Combine ecology and economy to improve resident’s quality of life.
5. Work collaboratively across jurisdictions.
GHA would be readily accessible to a majority of the state’s population.
Glacial Heritage Area

WHY HERE?

1. High quality of recreation experiences.
2. Existing public properties.
3. Cost of land, parcel size.
4. Existence of comprehensive plans.
5. Local support.
What’s in Demand in the Region?

- Cross-Country Skiing: 21%
- Canoeing/kayaking: 17%
- Horseback Riding: 9%
- Camping - primitive: 11%
- Camping - developed: 12%
- Hunting: 16%
- Picnicking: 34%
- Biking (off-road, mtn.): 10%
- Motorboating: 18%
- Visit/swim beach or lake: 17%
- Biking (recreational): 14%
- Fishing: 18%
- Wildlife Viewing: 44%
- Hiking: 24%

Projected population growth in region from 2000 to 2030 = 25%

Projected participation - 2030
Current participation - 2000

Recreation-Days (millions)
Glacial Heritage Area

WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS?

Coordinated Network of:

- Conservation Parks
- Linking Trails
- River-based Conservation Areas
- Wildlife & Natural Areas
• Expand all 11 State Wildlife Areas.
  – Protect additional wetland and grassland habitat.
  – Improve public access.
  – Provide additional hunting & trapping and rustic settings for hiking and wildlife watching.

• Establish Crawfish Prairie Habitat Area.

• Establish Rural Landscape Protection Areas (buffers of undeveloped farmland).
Glacial Heritage Area
Conservation Parks

- Provide high quality trail-based activities and associated facilities *(picnic areas, water/toilet, wildlife watching sites, interpretive kiosks)*
- Native habitat settings.
- Modest sized *(200-700 acres)*.
- Expand 5 existing parks, establish 7 new parks.
• Connect conservation areas to cities.
• Preferred off-road or separated from vehicle traffic connections.
• Offer longer distance opportunities, primarily biking, horseback riding, and cross-country skiing.
• 100 miles of trails within narrow corridors.
Three types of places:

1. Small boat access sites for water trails; some larger blocks for river-based camping.
2. Large blocks of high-quality wetlands and floodplain forests.
## Glacial Heritage Area

### Which lands will be included?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Currently owned or authorized for purchase</th>
<th>Proposed purchases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conservation Parks</td>
<td>3,500 acres</td>
<td>3,801 acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linking Trails</td>
<td>300 acres</td>
<td>1,344 acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>River Corridors</td>
<td>400 acres</td>
<td>2,075 acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wildlife Areas</td>
<td>31,500 acres</td>
<td>20,800 acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>35,700 acres</strong></td>
<td><strong>28,020 acres</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*DNR, counties, municipalities, or non-profit conservation groups.
Glacial Heritage Area

What makes this project unique?

• Network of resources and not one “place”.

• External Advisory Team very involved in planning and development.

• Community-based partnership in design and implementation.

• Linked to local economic growth
Public Reaction to Draft Plan

- 694 surveys completed.
- 9 letters or resolutions.

➢ Overwhelming support (90% strongly or moderately support each of the four components as proposed).
Glacial Heritage Area Implementation Team
Why Here?

One of the GHA's primary goals is to provide convenient and readily accessible recreational opportunities close to where people live. The plans were created to preserve these precious pearls and promote economic growth by sharing them with others.

This area supports high quality grasslands, wetlands and forests, interspersed with productive agricultural land. It provides a unique opportunity to protect a landscape that harbors a wide variety of habitats, provides a wide range of outdoor, nature-based recreation and sustains viable farming operations.

The GHA area is located between two of Wisconsin's largest metropolitan areas—Madison and Milwaukee. It is primarily in Jefferson County but portions are in Dane, Dodge and Rock counties. It offers excellent recreational opportunities for residents in the Innovation area and those from outside the region.

The GHA is not a county or state facility. It's not a bike or walking trail. It is all of these. It includes dozens of public conservation areas extending into four counties with future planned public conservation areas tied together by bike, pedestrian, and waterway trails.

The pearls are irreplaceable natural resource areas and the string is all connecting trails.

Enjoy outdoor recreation close to home

The Glacial Heritage Area (GHA) is a network of parks, wildlife and natural areas, historic and cultural sites connected to each other and nearby cities and villages by trails and waterways—like pearls on a string.

It provides recreational activities, preserves wildlife and water resources, complements urban and rural recreation, demonstrates ecosystem and communities' quality of life, and intrudes on various groups with the common goal of preserving these precious pearls.

This string of pearls is also an economic development engine that meets a growing demand for accessible and diverse recreational choices. Between Madison and Milwaukee, it provides existing and economic development opportunities, promoting the area's businesses and agricultural interests.

Come to the GHA!

To learn more about GHA, the opportunities it provides and how you can help or to request a recreation area map contact:

- Department of Natural Resources at glacialheritage@wisconsin.gov or 608-273-3620
- Jefferson County Parks at 920-674-7200
- www.glacialheritagearea.org
**Glacial Heritage Area**

**GHA Brochure, Page 2**

**Mission**

The GHA’s mission is to reconnect people to the land through recreation, conservation, and education. The GHA promotes outdoor recreation opportunities and supports conservation efforts. The mission includes connecting people with the land and promoting sustainable practices.

**Conservation Parks**

Conservation parks provide high-quality opportunities for residents and visitors to engage in outdoor activities such as hiking, biking, mountain biking, horseback riding, and cross-country skiing. As the demand grows, additional parks will need to be established and existing parks expanded. Existing parks include Cold Spring, Douthit Coves, Garman Preserve, North Park, and Lake Ripley EMD Preserve. The seven new conservation parks to be created are Cushman Mill, Holzhueter, Hope Lake, Huddlestone, Moraine, Oakland Highlands, Red Cedar Lake, and Sleepers Valley.

**River-Based Conservation Areas**

Two types of lands along rivers and creeks are part of the GHA. These areas provide recreation opportunities, including kayaking, paddling, and canoeing. Some campsites are accessible by water, and others offer opportunities to explore wetlands and diverse ecosystems.

**Wildlife and Natural Areas**

The GHA contains numerous wildlife areas, including the Cold Run, Rainier, and Shady Creek wildlife areas. These areas provide habitat for a variety of plant and animal species.

**Linking Trails**

About 100 miles of linking trails are planned to connect the conservation areas to the nearby cities and villages, as well as the countryside. These trails will offer opportunities for hiking, mountain biking, and cross-country skiing. Thru hiking trails will connect and promote the use of these trails.

**Benefits**

There are many potential benefits from implementing the GHA Plan. These include:

- Increased recreational opportunities
- Enhanced wildlife habitat
- Improved health and quality of life
- Economic benefits
- Environmental protection

Implementation of the GHA could potentially result in $50 to $100 million in direct and indirect spending annually.
Glacial Heritage Area

GHA On the Web

Dedicated Webpage via Mead and Hunt

Facebook

WDNR
http://dnr.wi.gov/org/land/facilities/glacial/
Glacial Heritage Area

GHA On the Web

Jefferson County Parks

Jefferson County Tourism Guide
http://www.enjoyjeffersoncounty.com/index.asp
“Keep close to Nature's heart... and break clear away, once in awhile, and climb a mountain or spend a week in the woods. Wash your spirit clean.”

~ John Muir