

DOOR COUNTY PARKS AND OPEN SPACE 2006-2010



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INTRODUCTION

PAST COUNTY PARK AND RECREATION PLANNING

The 1964 report, "Door County Comprehensive Planning Program," was the first technical document to examine critically the county's recreational features. The report provided an inventory of existing recreational areas, estimated future needs, and offered numerous suggestions on how to preserve and enhance the visual quality of the county. In 1969, a detailed document entitled "Door County, Wisconsin, Outdoor Recreation Plan" was produced by the Wisconsin State Department of Local Affairs and Development under contract to Door County. The report, which served Door County for five years, detailed the recreational opportunities, needs and potential of the county and provided a specifically stated recreation action program. Five subsequent five-year outdoor recreation plans were developed - one in 1974, one in 1979, one in 1987, one in 1994 and the other in 2000. This, then is another in a succession of such plans and is intended to cover the period 2006 through 2010.

OBJECTIVES OF PLAN

The objectives of this plan are as follows:

1. Provide a basic document which identifies and details a coordinated park and outdoor recreation program to meet the needs and demands of Door County residents and visitors.
2. Promote and encourage the development of sufficient park and recreational facilities of high quality.
3. Identify and preserve sites of significant scenic, historical, archaeological, and natural characteristics.

UNDERLYING PREMISE REGARDING PARK AND OPEN SPACE LANDS

It has been generally accepted in Door County, though perhaps not adequately stated, that the parks in the county are more than a place for people to engage in active recreation; the parks are also a part of the county's open land composition. Open land is generally defined as those areas which are characterized by the limited presence or absence of man-made structures and limited presence of man's activities. Park land and open space provides many benefits (the following information was found in The Benefits of Parks and Recreation: A Catalogue produced in 1992 by the Parks and Recreation Federation of Ontario):

1. physical and psychological needs;
 - build strong families
 - leisure opportunities that allow for togetherness and sharing, promote closer, healthy relationships within families
 - community pride
 - leisure opportunities, facilities, and the quality of the local environment are the foundation of local pride
 - promotes physical and emotional health
 - participation in physical activities is effective in achieving physical and emotional health
 - brings beauty and quality of life
 - parks and open spaces bring beauty to an area while giving people satisfaction and improving their quality of life
2. protecting natural resources;
 - protection from pollution
 - open space which helps conserve plants and trees provide a valuable contribution towards pollution control by mitigating water, air and noise pollution
 - habitats for plant and animal specie
3. economic benefits (information found in The Economic Benefits of Parks and Open Spaces by Steve Lerner and William Poole, 1999 The Trust for Public Land)
 - catalyst for tourism
 - across the nation parks, protected rivers, scenic lands, wildlife habitat and recreational open space help support a \$502 billion tourism industry.
 - Door County attracts 2 million visitors a year and tourism is one of the major industries in the county
 - business relocation
 - corporate CEOs say quality of life for employees is the their most important factor in locating a business
 - owners of small companies ranks recreation/parks/open space as the highest priority in choosing a new location for their business
 - smart growth
 - sprawl development not only consumes more land than high density development, it requires more tax-supported infrastructure such as roads, sewer lines, police and fire service and schools

Because of these benefits, it is recognized that to provide for open space is a meaningful function of government.

The community of Door County should critically evaluate the open space potential of their properties. Certain basic recreational services should be provided for the public in a manner that is convenient and inviting, such service facilities having widespread appeal. Often the high activity area to total park area ratio is high for these recreational areas. They accommodate active recreation on a mass scale. Certain other recreational areas, however, possess intrinsic characteristics worthy of careful management so as to accentuate and perpetuate those fragile, topographical features, or rare herbaceous species, or provide a habitat for many and varied animal species. Such areas might properly be adjudged as unsuitable or undesirable for heavy recreational use. They should be included in the open land composition of the county to enhance the county's environmental quality and for those who enjoy quiet recreational pursuits.

Historical, nature, and conservation groups, local units of government, state and federal agencies and other interested parties have offered valuable assistance, both financially and advisory in the development and operation of the Door County Parks System. These relationships are highly valued and should continue to be developed as Door County enters the 21st Century.

This plan is built on the premise that the park systems in Door County are and rightfully should be a portion of the county's open land composition. A multiple use approach to meet recreational needs should be utilized, but it is also recognized that special use areas are also required to meet a full range of recreational needs and desires and to add to the open land base.

HISTORY OF DOOR COUNTY PARK AND OPEN SPACE SYSTEM

In 1927, the 1st act of the newly formed Door County Park Board was to purchase the land now known as Tornado Memorial. This was the beginning of the Door County parks system. Robert La Salle followed in 1929 as did Frank E Murphy in 1933 and Baileys Harbor Ridges in 1937. The 1940s saw the addition of Cave Point in 1943, Chaudoir's Dock in 1944, Sugar Creek, Door Bluff Headlands and Lyle Harter Matter in 1945 and Percy Johnson (formerly known as Eastside) and Meridian in 1947. Ellison Bluff was added in 1950, Forestville Dam in 1963, Lily Bay Boat Launch in 1987 and John Miles County Park (formerly known as Fairgrounds) in 1990. In 1994, Door County acquired two parks by lease agreements with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Olde Stone Quarry and Ahnapee State Trail. In 2005, in partnership with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Robert M Carmody Park was opened.

The eighteen parks, some well developed and others virtually undeveloped, are distributed throughout the county; twelve of the fourteen towns in the county contain at least one county park. Management responsibility for County Park maintenance and development belongs to the Airport and Parks Committee of the Door County Board of Supervisors. Actual "in the field" park development and maintenance is provided by the Door County Parks Department. Listings of the county parks are as follows:

<u>YEAR</u> <u>ACQUIRED</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>ACREAGE</u>
1927	Tornado Memorial	3
1929 & 2005	Robert LaSalle	23
1933	Frank E. Murphy	14
1937	Baileys Harbor Ridges	30
1943	Cave Point	19
1944	Chaudoir's Dock	5
1945	Sugar Creek	40
1945	Door Bluff Headlands	156
1945	Lyle-Harter-Matter Sanctuary	40
1947	Meridian	92
1947	Percy Johnson	5
1950 & 2000	Ellison Bluff	174
1963	Forestville Dam	79
87	Lily Bay	1
1990	John Miles	60
1994	Olde Stone Quarry Park - Leased	9
1994	Ahnapee State Trail - Leased	144 (12 Miles)
2001	Robert M Carmody - Owned	2.25
	Leased	<u>2.25</u>
TOTAL ACREAGE		898.5

SCENIC AREAS

Door County boasts of great scenic beauty throughout its confines. Many of the more significant scenic areas have been mentioned elsewhere in this document, particularly those listed in the natural areas section. Approximately 55 % of Door County Parks and 71% of our acreage fall within northern door. As the population of Southern Door continues to grow especially with the expansion of HWY 57, we will continue to evaluate the needs and park services within Southern Door. The addition of Carmody Park and the expansion of LaSalle Park are results of an expanding need for park services in this part of the county.

GENERAL AND SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR AN ACTION PROGRAM

There seems to be no question that provision for and maintenance of public parks is in the public interest. Consequently, all levels of government attempt to provide some kind of park and recreational program. In order that park programs by the various levels of government not take on a haphazard character, the roles and goals of each level of government are periodically evaluated and established so as to promote coordinated governmental service. Door County started its park system over 70 years ago in an effort to “preserve lands for their esthetic, their spiritual, their economic and their recreational value”. Door County Park Board Report 1945. Following are some recommended policy statements:

1. Governmental agencies should not compete with or duplicate the efforts of private interests which provide recreational activities and facilities to the public in an adequate, efficient, and economical matter.
2. In general, park programs of state-wide and macroregional (areas consisting of many contiguous counties) interest and importance, should be the responsibility of the state government; those of county-wide and microregional (areas composed of only one or a few contiguous counties) interest and importance, should be a county responsibility; the park programs of towns, villages, and cities should be structured to meet the needs and desires of the immediate respective areas.
3. All levels of government should pursue a policy of attempting to acquire and protect areas of significant scenic, cultural, and historical value and important wildlife and wetland areas. Both public and private non-profit organizations can be more effective in reaching their goals if they work together and pool their resources.
4. Environmental quality should never be sacrificed in the interest of need satisfaction.

GUIDELINES FOR LAND ACQUISITION

The park systems in Door County should not only provide outdoor recreation opportunities, they should also serve to satisfy the county's open space and landscape protection needs. Because of the outstanding natural features characteristic of Door County, effort should be directed toward their protection by various means, including acquisition.

Land acquisition projects of the following type, should be given highest priority:

Projects involving acquisition of land adjacent to lake waters to increase public water access opportunities particularly near Rowleys Bay and on the Lake Michigan shore between Baileys Harbor and Sturgeon Bay.

Projects to continue public ownership of Cana, Plum, and Pilot Islands.

Projects to expand present park lands either for reasons of satisfying additional space needs, protection of critical landforms or natural areas, or protecting the environmental integrity of a park.

Projects involving lands capable of supporting multi-seasonal activities.

GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PARK AND OPEN SPACE PLAN

1. Develop a full range of programs for the preservation of parks and open space including: purchase, dedication, zoning, acquisition of easements and other rights.
2. Encourage state and federal allocation of financial resources for parks and open space in Door County.
3. Encourage greater private sector participation in the preservation of park and open space lands.
4. Seek new and innovative methods of using private sources of funding such as land donation, donation of easements and other rights, labor donations, and in-kind goods and services.
5. Maintain a policy that ensures adequate compensation to the county when granting exclusive use of county park facilities and or resource lands to non-county agencies, groups or individuals, or granting easements or other permanent rights to park and resource lands. Research the need for a volunteer program that identifies tasks for volunteers and provides supervision, support, and recognition.
6. Relinquishment of county-owned park land for purposes other than preservation or recreation shall be dependent upon:
 - The long-term impacts on park and recreational use throughout Door County
 - An equal exchange of land
 - Dedication of revenues to additional park lands and improvements
 - Action being consistent with local and regional plans
 - Determination that the land is not needed for county park and open space purposes, both at the present and in the future
 - Consideration of the total costs and benefits of ownership of the land
 - Protective deed restrictions placed on title of property
7. Donations of land to the county parks system should be evaluated in terms of:
 - Consistency with needs identified in the “Door County Outdoor Recreation Plan”
 - Proximity to existing parks
 - Maintenance and development costs
 - Any special environmental or cultural qualities
 - Allowing the county to accept land donations for resale with the proceeds used for purchasing other park and resource land
8. The county cooperates with private groups and with all other units of government in financing and in sharing management of recreation resources where appropriate.
9. The county endorses the projects of other units of government, which meet regional objectives and provide regional use.
10. The county encourages local municipalities to provide for the park and recreational needs of the citizens of unincorporated communities within their boundaries. The towns may assist in implementing Door County’s plan by coordinating their plans with Door County’s plan, and enhance the value of the parks, open space and recreational facilities of both the towns and county.

GUIDELINES FOR PARK DEVELOPMENT

For the planning period, the following development projects should be considered:

Parks should generally provide at least basic facilities which include:

1. ADA accessible Toilets, preferably vault-type where more sophisticated systems are not practical.
2. Potable water supply for drinking, washing, and fire defense purposes.
3. Designated parking facilities
4. Adequate access and marking
5. Facilities should always include features that will aid handicapped people including specialized walkways, hard surfaced walkways, wide doorways, grab rails in restrooms, special seating at picnic areas and at spectator events, and special playground apparatus.
6. Identification of park entrance(s) and boundaries.
7. Nature and/or hiking trails, where practical.

Development of areas providing entrance(s) and boundaries.

Development of areas providing a variety of activities, as opposed to single purpose activities.

Facilities presently provided should be improved and maintained in a safe and useful manner.

DESCRIPTION AND NEEDS OF CURRENT DOOR COUNTY PARKS

AHNAPEE STATE TRAIL

In mid-1994, Door County signed a 15-year renewable lease with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources for the operation and maintenance of the Ahnapee State Trail, an abandoned railroad track. The lease designated that the trail become a part of the County Parks System. In 1995, funding in excess of \$175,000 was provided through state and federal funds to upgrade and improve the trail under the supervision of the Door County Parks Department. The trail was raised in low areas; several culverts installed, and was resurfaced to a 10' width. Door County's responsibility for trail maintenance and supervision runs from the south county line at County X, 12 miles north, to and including the parking lot, just east of Neenah Street in Sturgeon Bay. In 1998, over 5000 trees and shrubs were planted along open areas of the trail's right-of-way; repairs to the restrooms and parking lot at Neenah Street were made. The entire trail is mechanically brushed ever other fall. The Ahnapee is used for biking, hiking, education, nature, equestrian, and snowmobiling in the winter. Snow grooming is done by local clubs.

The Ahnapee is a multi-facet trail. There are several areas on the trail where trees are growing on the edge of the 10' surface. For safety, particularly for snowmobiles, these trees are being removed to provide 5' buffer on each side of the trail. Brushing, weed control, mowing and grading are annual maintenance requirements.

A wayside is currently under development in Maplewood at an old abandoned gas station. Privately owned property south of the trail between Highway 42 and County "H" has been donated to the county and has been developed as a part of the proposed wayside. The old trailhead, parking lot, and restrooms at the Sturgeon Bay city limits are being refurbished as funds become available. Restrooms at the Forestville wayside (Forestville Dam County Park) were replaced in 2006.

Currently land is being acquired, by the State of Wisconsin, to extend the Ahnapee Trail from the north parking lot to the Bayview Bridge. Negotiations are also underway with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation to provide a trail extension north of the Bayview Bridge up to Michigan Street. Our long range goal is to provide a trail up to the north split of Highway 42-57.

BAILEYS HARBOR RIDGES COUNTY PARK

The site is most noted for its two rangelight houses, used as water navigational aids in bygone days. The houses still stand, but the original lights have been removed and modern directional rangelights have been installed elsewhere on the property by the Coast Guard. The houses are considered historical landmarks by many local people and visitors.

The portion of the property on the harbor side of Ridges Drive is used to gain access to approximately 550 feet of Lake Michigan shoreline for swimming and for sunning on the beach. The site is served by a parking lot for approximately 25 cars, a restroom facility and several picnic tables.

By action of the Door County Board of Supervisors on February 15, 1972 (Resolutions 61-89 and 62-89), all property north of Ridges Drive was leased to Ridges Sanctuary, Inc. for ninety-nine (99) years. The corporation is to maintain the property in its present state and to provide maintenance to the two-range light houses.

The areas on both sides of the parking lot are significant as habitat for various sensitive plants, including orchids. Measures to combat trampling of the areas should be incorporated. Informational

signing and erection of rustic fences should be considered as a means to deter trampling. The parking lot is noticeably low on the south end. The blacktop should be ground up and the base raised as much as possible and still allow drainage from north to south. The addition of a gazebo to replace a previous one would inspire more use of the park.

CANA ISLAND

Door County filed an application in 1997 with the Federal Bureau of Land Management to acquire this property which is being relinquished by the US Coast Guard. This piece of Door County's Maritime Heritage should be preserved for future generations. If Door County does acquire this property a relationship with the Door County Maritime Museum may be established to preserve and operate the island and lighthouse. Parking concerns will have to be addressed on the mainland as well as restroom facilities on the island. The transfer process is slowly moving through the Federal System.

CAVE POINT COUNTY PARK

Well-known for its wave-worn limestone ledges, underwater caves and stirring view of Lake Michigan, the park is a popular attraction for residents and visitors alike. Fishermen, skilled scuba divers, photography buffs, and nature observers find the park a great delight. Facilities include picnic tables, cooking grills, fire rings, a well, toilets, parking space for twenty-five cars, and 900 feet of shoreline and ½ mile trail that links up with several miles of trails in the adjacent State Park. In 1997, the road through the park was blacktopped and the shore and circle trails were graveled. In 1998, dead storm-damaged trees were removed within the road right-of-way north and south of the park as well as in the park. Restrooms were replaced in 2002 and solar powered lighting was installed. A historical sign describing the history of the formation of Cave Point was installed in 2003. Whitefish Dunes State Park borders the park on three sides.

Improvements at this park should be provided in a low-key manner, its striking natural setting should dominate. To enjoy the quietness of nature, hiking trails could be improved and additional parking is needed. A gazebo could be built on the south lawn area. The drinking water well is currently closed and needs to be replaced.

CHAUDOIR'S DOCK COUNTY PARK

Owing to two substantial docks, the site is able to accommodate boat launching facilities and serves as an emergency harbor of refuge for small boats. Other facilities include two picnic tables, toilets, fire ring, and cooking grills. The dock and nearby waters provide fishermen with excellent fishing opportunities. In 1997 and 1998, the harbor was enlarged by 80%, the south breakwall was replaced, navigation lights installed, a third boat launch ramp added, new handicap toilet facilities installed, and the lower parking lot repaved. Stairs and handicap ramps were built from the upper parking area to dock level and the area was relandscaped. Increased electrical service was also brought into the park and the harbor was dredged. The outer entrance to the harbor was dredged in 2001 and again in 2005 during bin wall repair from ice damage. The area is partly wooded, has over 625 feet of shoreline and has been a favorite picnic spot for people of the vicinity for years.

This park has seen major redevelopment in 1998 and has only minor needs. The upper east edge of the park could have a 10-12-car parking lot built on it. Signage within the park continues to be updated. Continuing low water concerns may require periodic dredging to maintain access to the harbor.

Development emphasis for this park is on water access. Consequently, little attempt has been made to provide other use facilities. Adjacent property should be considered for acquisition if it becomes available.

DOOR BLUFF HEADLANDS COUNTY PARK

The Bluff, or Headlands, are unique in their structure and appearance, being one of a few such formations in this country. It is reputed that it was at this point where the Washington Island Indians (Iroquois), fought the mainland Indians (Potawatomi). Second largest of the county parks with approximately 6800 feet of shoreline, it is undeveloped save for an access road to its interior. The park is characterized by vertical bluffs rising up from the waters of Green Bay, a variety of tree species, numerous species of ground vegetation, and varied topography. In short, it is a delight for the naturalist, but because it is not developed for active recreational use, it receives limited usage. New highway signage has helped visitors locate the park.

Development of this park should definitely be low-key. It should be enjoyed for its awe-inspiring scenery, its flora and fauna, and its relative remoteness. Accordingly, only hiking trails should be provided. Vault-type toilets and more parking spaces may be desirable in the future; as would scenic vistas spaced along the drive. The purchase of adjacent land should be considered if it becomes available.

JOHN MILES COUNTY PARK

On August 28, 1990, by Resolution 82-90, the Door County Fairgrounds became part of the Door County Parks System and was renamed the Door County Fair Park. The 59 acre park is located approximately one half mile west of Highway 42-57 in the City of Sturgeon Bay.

In 1994, an 18,300 square foot multi-purpose cattle barn was built and the west half of the older cattle barn was remodeled for a hog barn. The east half was torn down, as was the horse- racing stable in 1998.

In 1997, the drainage problems of the Fair Park were tackled head on. Three large water quality/retention ponds were built, and a storm sewer system was installed within the park. The 14th Avenue parking lot and pit area were raised substantially, midway subsurface and surface replaced and a surmountable curb installed on the west side of the midway.

In the fall of 1998, the old bleacher system on the south end of the midway was torn down and the construction of a 2671 seat, full roof, concrete grandstand was completed in the spring of 1999. In 2001 the park was renamed JOHN MILES COUNTY PARK in memory of a previous fair secretary and to recognize its evolution into a multi use park. New track lighting and 14th Ave parking lot lighting have been installed. Perimeter fencing on the east and south sides of the park has been replaced. In 2004, the Junior Fair restrooms and food service areas were rebuilt and enlarged.

This facility certainly receives heavy usage during county fair time, but has seen a considerable increase in use throughout the year for a variety of events and purposes, including horse shows, soccer, auctions, camping rallies, stock car races, go-kart races, 4-H events, and other activities. Hence, the facility satisfies certain recreation demands not possible or even allowed at other public recreation areas. As such, use of the park should be considered in the context of its contribution to the county's overall recreation resource and not as a service facility apart from other recreation facilities.

The physical appearance of this park has been greatly improved, with the installation of a storm sewer system and the construction of a pavilion, playground, soccer fields, and multipurpose/cattlebarn, secretary's office and 2671 seat concrete grandstand. Several older buildings need replacing. The chicken building and the hog barn (originally built as a cattlebarn) were both built in the 1930's with used materials and are showing signs of deterioration. The horse barn, though in fair condition, is undersized and inconveniently located in relation to the horse ring. The horse ring itself may need to be relocated. Buildings used for animals now have concrete floors for sanitary reasons and rodent control. Several buildings need electrical upgrades for safety and to increase the present 60-amp service. The insulating of the Junior Fair building should be completed because of increased use earlier and later each year. As buildings are being used more, storage of staging, shelving, tables and chairs becomes more difficult each year. The acquisition of several storage buildings formally used by the highway department has been of great benefit. The soccer program in Door County has grown dramatically and has outgrown the present three fields located on the north end of the Fair Park. The program could use up to 6 fields to allow proper rejuvenation and rotation of the playing surface. This can not be accomplished within the present boundaries of the park. Land acquisition for future development needs to be a priority for the continued development of John Miles Park. Landscaping to provide a park like atmosphere needs to continue. Entrance roads also need to be resurfaced. There has been interest expressed in BMX racing, and both indoor and outdoor ice-skating and hockey.

In addition to the above, it must be recognized that by its very location, the John Miles Park is a logical facility to be used extensively by Sturgeon Bay City residents. There may be a need in the future for an arena-type building or convention exhibit hall in which various recreation and community activities can occur. The John Miles Park should be considered as a site for such facility.

In summary, use of this park has not reached its potential either for the rural or city residents of the county. Its role in the county's overall recreation program should be given its due consideration.

ELLISON BLUFF COUNTY PARK

Placed on Niagara escarpment, our largest park provides an awe-inspiring view of Green Bay waters. The beauty of the trees and ground cover, too, is a significant feature of the park. Facilities include picnic tables, a fire ring and grill, toilet facilities, and parking for fifteen cars. A stairway leading to a viewing site is provided. An outstanding feature of the park is the three-quarter mile drive from a blacktop road to the park. The drive is free of all building development with woods on one side and a stone fence and field on the other side. Access to the waters of Green Bay and approximately 7000 feet of shoreline from the developed portion of the park is impossible because of a high limestone precipice separating the two. In 1997, the road in the park was improved to provide safer access for buses and motor homes, and the parking area was reorganized. The restrooms will be replaced in 2006. Improvement of nature trails within the park is ongoing. The addition of undeveloped property to the south consisting of approximately 86 acres and 1939 feet of shoreline was completed in the fall of 2000. Other land that becomes available should be pursued. The park also has the potential for several more viewing areas. Possible access to the parks lower levels should be studied.

An adequate facility for its purpose and location, the park offers quiet picnicking and an awe-inspiring view of Green Bay. A scenic vantage point overlooks the many Green Bay Islands.

FORESTVILLE DAM COUNTY PARK

This park has over 410' of shore frontage on the east side of the Forestville Pond that is undeveloped. The Forestville Pond was formed by damming a portion of the Ahnapee River during the late 19th century to provide power for a gristmill. The dam, an earthworks thrown across the river, has

been repaired and rebuilt many times over the years. In 1984, the dam's spillway was completely rebuilt. In 1993 a dam failure analysis was completed by Mead & Hunt. This analysis determined the dam to be a low hazard dam. Once a popular fishing and swimming area, it does not now provide an enjoyable experience for either use, however, catch and release fishing is starting to show a come back. Picnic tables, fire rings, grills, an open pavilion, toilets and expanded playground are provided. Parking for about twenty-five cars is provided. A launch area provides access to the pond for small fishing boats and canoes. The pond attracts a number of wild waterfowl and is consequently used for hunting. The park is adjacent to the Ahnapee State Trail and serves as a wayside for trail users.

This site holds great promise as a fine recreational park, very much needed in the Southern Door area. Development of the northeast side of the park was started in 2005 and will almost double the area available for family outings when complete. New ADA restrooms will be installed in 2006. A millpond study completed in 1996 provided numerous management plans. The most cost-effective recommendations involve draining the millpond for 12 months each 8-10 years. Though no action was taken from the study, the weed growth and ensuing odor will still be present during the hot dry years. Pond management will need to continue being reviewed annually. The parking area needs to be sealcoated or chip sealed. The low-lying wooded area south of the dam earthworks is maintained as a wildlife area. Land to the south and east of the park along the Ahnapee River should be considered for acquisition as if becomes available. The WDNR has also expressed an interest in assisting with these purchases to be added to the Ahnapee State Trail for purposes of public fishing access.

FRANK E. MURPHY COUNTY PARK

This site, with approximately 1300 feet of shoreline. It provides excellent swimming opportunities, volleyball court, picnic facilities (tables, fire rings, and grills), toilets with changing rooms, well with shelter, and playground equipment. Parking space is provided for 55 cars. A large dock provides fishing opportunities, protects the swimming area from rough water, and serves as an emergency harbor. In 1988, the entire dock was rebuilt and is in good condition. A two-lane boat launch ramp is located at the south end of the park. Low water and excessive sand movements presently makes the launch difficult to use.

On August 23rd, 1998, a tornado did extensive damage to the south half of Murphy Park. 99+% of all the trees and shrubs in the area were destroyed and removed. The north half of the park sustained minimal damage. In October 98 a 1950 sq foot open pavilion was constructed on the north end of the park near the playground. The south half of the park is being reforested and to eliminate the boaters from hauling their boats through the picnic/beach area, a new road has been developed for better access to the launch ramp area.

This park is presently a very complete facility for large groups. In 2005, the 1st Door County Triathlon was held at Murphy Park. A 2nd event is planned for 2006. Some improvements are needed, however. Additional game facilities could be installed to better facilitate family and group activities. Lighting at the ramp area should be provided. Because this is one of the most heavily used parks in the county system, playground equipment should be upgraded and expanded

LILY BAY COUNTY PARK

The smallest of the County Parks, the property was donated to the County in 1987, in two parcels; one was from the DNR and one from John and Eva Groenfeldt. The park is located on the shoreline of Lake Michigan at the end of County Highway T in the Town of Sturgeon Bay with 150 feet of shore frontage. Because there are no picnicking facilities, this park is used exclusively for boat launching. Sunbathers often use the county property as access to the beautiful private sand beach which borders

the north and south. The park is approximately one acre with parking for six cars. In 1997, sheet piling was driven on the north edge of the ramp area to prevent erosion.

Due to the size of this park, development emphasis should be on the water access. One of the removable launch ramps was rebuilt in 2005. Possibly replaced with an articulated concrete revetment system may be studied. Extension of the launch facility to deeper water should also be studied because in low water years launching depth water was short of the present structure. Our 24-foot ramp extensions fall far short of waters edge.

LYLE-HARTER-MATTER SANCTUARY COUNTY PARK

Given in 1945 to the county as a sanctuary, this 40-acre tract is completely undeveloped. The parcel is not served by a public road; however, the grantors did provide an easement for ingress and egress along the section line dividing Sections 1 and 12, beginning at Logerquist Road and extending to the sanctuary. A magnificent, high sand dune runs through the property. Heavy woods, both deciduous and coniferous species, cover most of the property. A marsh is also found there. It is an excellent wildlife area.

No extensive development is recommended for this park; it should remain as a wildlife and nature study area. The access road along the county's easement should be made passable for emergency entrance and routine inspection purposes. Hiking trails should be installed. The property between Kangaroo Lake and the sanctuary should be acquired and added to the sanctuary.

MERIDIAN COUNTY PARK

The third largest of the county parks, the property is undeveloped, save for a wayside located on the southeast corner adjacent to State Highway 57. The wayside is maintained by the State Department of Transportation and includes toilets, picnic facilities, a well, and parking spaces. Heavily wooded and in places marshy, the park provides excellent wildlife habitat. As the park is contiguous to the Lyle-Harter-Matter Sanctuary, the use of one park should be integrated with that of the other.

Adjacent to Lyle-Harter-Matter Sanctuary, development of this park should not be done without considering the effect it would have on the sanctuary. This park, too, is a good wildlife area; consequently, use of the land should be limited to wildlife and nature study and hiking trails. The addition of the Light property to the northeast, now owned by The Nature Conservancy, is being pursued, as should adjacent land.

No development should take place within visible distance of State Highway 57, save for the wayside. The area should remain in its natural state to be appreciated by the passing motorists.

OLDE STONE QUARRY COUNTY PARK

On January 1, 1994, the County entered into an agreement with the DNR to lease a parcel of property known as the Quarry which has approximately 1000 feet of shore frontage. The property is located approximately 5 miles northwest of Sturgeon Bay on County Highway B. During 1995 and 1996, with state and federal grants totaling in excess of \$270,000, the park was developed. Dedicated in the fall of 1996, the Olde Stone Quarry County Park, located in one of the oldest and largest stone quarries in Door County, is now a favorite spot for local fisherman. Several submerged vessels near the fishing pier provide excellent habitat for bass, northern, and perch. The park includes restrooms, boat launch, parking, shore fishing and picnic facilities. In 1999 a State historical marker was erected and the stern section of what is believed to be the Mueller was brought to the park.

This park has been enthusiastically received by its users. The lack of a breakwall or safe harbor is what most hampered this park from reaching its potential. Comments from users and the general public plus personal observation indicate that the next step in this park's development had to be focused on the construction of a safe harbor. Current low water conditions also make this a very important park to the fishing public as water depth increases rapidly off shore thereby being less affected by low water conditions. Three feasibility studies for the construction of a safe harbor have been done since 1997. After the 1st feasibility study in 1997, the search for sufficient funding, both at the state and federal level, was started. In the late summer of 2005, a 4 million dollar redevelopment of the Olde Stone Quarry Park was begun. Funded entirely with state and federal funds, the project will consist of a 6 lane launch situated in a 1.5 acre harbor of refuge, 90 plus parking stalls, new restrooms, lighting and landscaping. If historical and safety concerns can be addressed, the property to the southeast should be considered for acquisition if it becomes available.

PERCY JOHNSON COUNTY PARK

This park was formerly called Eastside for its location on the eastern side of Washington Island. In 1994, by Resolution 48-94, the park was renamed Percy Johnson County Park in memory of a former county board supervisor from Washington Island. The western half of the park is heavily wooded. Large pine shelter a picnic area in the northeast corner including toilets and a well, and a 500-foot sand beach provides swimming on the east. Parking is available for approximately ten cars.

The park area in the northern portion has been cleared of underbrush and could be used for expanded picnic and game use; additional "cleanup" work is required, however. Cleanup work in the northern portion would make the beach in that area more attractive for swimming use. Because Hog Island is so visible from this site, an informational marker ought to be placed on the site explaining Hog Island's status as a National Wildlife Refuge.

The parking area needs to be increased to accommodate a larger number of cars.

Restrooms will have to be upgraded or replaced to comply with ADA standards.

Playground equipment within the park is limited and should be upgraded and expanded.

ROBERT M. CARMODY COUNTY PARK

In 2001, Door County and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources jointly purchased 4.5 acres on the shores of Little Sturgeon Bay for the purposes of constructing a boat launch. Archeological studies were also done. Initial design started in 2002 and a house and cottages were sold and removed from the property. Dredge material was studied for contamination and 3 separate disposal sites were investigated. Board of Adjustment hearings and required zoning law changes consumed most of 2003. Harbor dredging was started in the fall. 2004 saw the majority of the construction which was funded entirely by state and federal funds. The park, which is designed around 3 mature oak trees, opened in June of 2005 following final blacktopping and landscaping. Robert M. Carmody Park is a 6 lane boat launch protected by a 350' x 12' wave attenuator dock. This dock also serves as an excellent handicap accessible fishing pier. Restrooms, lighting and landscaping compliment the facility. Currently the park only has 24 parking stall available. Additional off site parking is being pursued, but is slow in forthcoming due to a large bankruptcy case. An additional 4-6 acres is needed for sufficient parking room.

ROBERT LASALLE COUNTY PARK

Provided at this park are two parking areas, toilets, picnic tables, fire rings, grills. A monument has been erected by the Door County Historical Society commemorating the site as a landing place by the French adventurer, Robert de LaSalle in 1679. The park is characterized by its three-tiered landform consisting of the pebble-strewn Lake Michigan shore, then a level, grassy upland area, and a higher wooded upland area. Steep sandy bluffs separate each tier. Pedestrian access to the various tiers is facilitated by several stairways. A small stream cuts through an interesting sandy ravine along the southern side of the park. This park provides 440 feet of public access opportunities to Lake Michigan along the Southern Door Shoreline. In 2005, a 15 acre, ½ mile long parcel was added to the north end of the park. This addition is bordered by Lower LaSalle road on the east and County Trunk "U" on the west.

An adequate facility, only a few improvements need be cited. Both upper and lower level parking lots need grading and paving. Restrooms need upgraded. Playground equipment is old and limited. Additional playground equipment would be a benefit to this area. A 1 mile loop trail system will be constructed in the future.

SUGAR CREEK COUNTY PARK

Facilities include a fair weather boat launch, toilets, picnic tables, fire rings, grills, and parking for twenty cars. Though the park has 1050 feet of water frontage along Green Bay, great difficulty has been experienced in attempting to provide boat launching facilities owing to the park's exposure to intense storms. A large heavily wooded section of the park has remained entirely undeveloped. Sugar Creek, for which the park is named, is a popular tributary with smelt-dippers. In 1998, an area south of the boat launch was landscaped to provide a water front picnic area.

The entrance should be made more inviting by landscaping and signing. Installation of game facilities and playground equipment should be considered. The parking arrangement should be evaluated for its adequacy. Trails might be installed in the wooded undeveloped area east of Sugar Creek. A pedestrian bridge ought to be placed over the creek. The blacktop roads are in need of repair. Additional parking could be developed on the upper grass area near the entrance. Restrooms are in fair condition and need to be upgraded to ADA standards.

TORNADO MEMORIAL COUNTY PARK

In 1927, the purchase of this property created the 1st county park in Door County. Today, it functions as a highway wayside and is maintained by the State Department of Transportation. Provided are vault-type toilets, picnic facilities, and parking for fifteen cars. It is near the site of the former village of Williamsonville, which was destroyed in October 1871 by fire along with 128 lives. The site is officially recognized by the Door County Historical Society with an historical marker.

This park is currently a State of Wisconsin Wayside and maintained as such by the Door County Highway Department. In 2007 a new highway will bypass this park and it should then be returned to the parks system.

The area should remain in its natural state to be appreciated by the passing motorists.