Township of Freeman

"Conserving the Past and Welcoming the New"

Comprehensive Land Use Plan

December 17th, 2009

Prepared by:

Freeman Township Planning Committee

Supported By:

OMNNI Associates, Inc.
One Systems Drive
Appleton, WI 54914

Township of Freeman
Comprehensive Land Use Plan

Distribution:

1. **Every governmental body that is located in whole or in part within the boundaries of the local governmental unit.**

   Village of Ferryville

2. **The clerk of every local governmental unit that is adjacent to the local governmental unit that is the subject of the plan that is adopted or amended as described in par.**

   Seneca Township
   Utica Township
   Sterling Township (Vernon Co)
   Wheatland Township (Vernon Co)
   Village of De Soto
   Crawford County – Laura Brown

3. **The Department of Administration.**

   Comprehensive Planning Program
   101 E.Wilson St, 9th Floor
   Madison, WI 53703

4. **The regional planning commission in which the local governmental unit is located.**

   Peter Fletcher
   Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission
   1707 Main St Suite 435
   La Crosse, WI 54601

5. **The public library that serves the area in which the local governmental unit is located.**

   De Soto Public Library

6. **Freeman Planning Committee**

   Paul Sampson, Chair
   Bob Severson, Sec
   David Olson, Town Chair
   Edie Ehlert
   John Hosemann

7. **Freeman Township Office**

Township of Freeman
Comprehensive Land Use Plan

Table of Contents

		Pages		
Executive Summary		Ex-1		
Commentary		Comm-1	to	Comm-3
Area History		Hist-1	to	Hist-11
Chapter 1	Introduction	1-1	to	1-4
Chapter 2	Issues and Opportunities	2-1	to	2-3
Chapter 3	Community Profile	3-1	to	3-18
Chapter 4	Housing	4-1	to	4-8
Chapter 5	Transportation	5-1	to	5-16
Chapter 6	Utilities and Community Facilities	6-1	to	6-12
Chapter 7	Agricultural, Natural, & Cultural Resources	7-1	to	7-30
Chapter 8	Economic Development	8-1	to	8-8
Chapter 9	Existing Land Use	9-1	to	9-6
Chapter 10	Future Land Use	10-1	to	10-7
Chapter 11	Intergovernmental Cooperation	11-1	to	11-4
Chapter 12	Implementation	12-1	to	12-14
Appendix A	14 Planning Goals	A-1		
B	Survey Results	B-1	to	B-6
C	SWOT Data	C-1	to	C-6

The planning Law was crafted as a one size fits all piece of legislation. The same topics and considerations that apply to Milwaukee and Madison have to be blanketed over Freeman. As a matter of philosophy, we resisted the temptation to include topics and information that do not apply to Freeman Township. The law, actually drafted in part by the University of Wisconsin Madison, seems to pre-suppose population growth and development pressure as one might see in urban sprawl around Madison. Freeman's rural issues are not the same as the metropolitan issues.

Following our nearly two year task to develop a comprehensive Land Use Plan for Freeman Township, we, a committee of five volunteer Freeman residents are submitting this Comprehensive Land Use Plan for Public Hearing and subsequent Board consideration.

Based on the initial public open house, a survey of land owners, exhaustive analysis of available land use historical data, planning meetings every month, meetings with other townships' and Crawford County's planning committees, and consultation with the UW Extension Planning team and our planning consultant, we submit the following commentary:

1. '***Conserving the past and welcoming the new'*** is a valuable vision for future elected leaders given the natural beauty of the topography, the uniqueness of the ecology/geography and the rich history of the township while maintaining the rural, relaxed living environment and the natural landscape beauty.

2. Economic development up to the present has been characterized by some farm consolidations and expansion and the sale of small acreages for second homes, weekend/holiday/vacation retreats and for hunting/fishing access by persons from cities within a 200-250 mile radius of the township. An essential part of the attraction to the township, aside from the beauty of the hills and valleys, has been few regulations on how and where dwellings can be located. The viable market for the privately held land and natural resources in the township has been the sale of smaller acreages. Very little 'prime' farmland has been sold for these purposes.

3. The present configuration of fire numbers as a proxy for the scattered pattern of permanent and part time residents is a good indication of why residents prefer spatial separation with each location having its own 'green space'.

4. Freeman does not have a population density problem; the current population density is approximately 13 per square mile. In addition, the population is not projected to increase over the foreseeable future according to state demographics. Therefore concentrated housing sites/developments appear not to be warranted.

5. Property taxes are the main source of revenue for providing for schools and services in the township. Property taxes are presently borne disproportionately by residential properties--full or part-time. This burden is difficult for older permanent residents and makes it difficult to attract younger newcomers. It will be increasingly difficult for Freeman residents to contribute to the support of four school districts from the residential property tax base. Expanding the tax base will remain a challenge for the Township for the foreseeable future. Future

elected township officials will possibly have to consider more 'fees for services' provided.

6. Township elected officials will be challenged with future initiatives to maintain the existing market for real estate assets including the resale of real estate assets by an aging permanent population.

7. According to our land owner survey, a majority recognized a potential need to regulate residential parcel size and siting parameters. Our plan includes this survey result as a future potential recommendation to the Town Board. The Township has adequate build able parcels and siting conditions for future residential properties. In addition the township could consider potential regulations governing garbage/refuse/unsightly conditions visually conspicuous from a road which have a negative impact on the overall beauty and environment of the township.

8. The Freeman Township has 6% of it's land as public DNR/Conservancy land as opposed to a State average of 2%. Further increases in public lands have implications for the remaining tax base.

9. Roads in Freeman Township are well maintained. The Town board goal is to have all major township roads sealed as resources become available.

10. Present residents and other property owners prefer existing family farms over industrial size operations (Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations, CAFO's).

11. Property owners surveyed prefer light industrial development and home based businesses over heavy industrial development.

12. There was interest in capturing hunting, fishing and tourism revenue opportunities due to the close proximity to the Mississippi river. However, the majority of these revenue opportunities are already provided by nearby villages and facilities.

13. Agricultural economic development could include some diverse and smaller enterprises, such as local food growing, and niche marketing, tourist based direct sales, and value added farming including organic growers in the area. In addition some family farms may grow through additional land acquisition (rent or own) to maintain economic viability. In numerous situations, the productive agricultural land throughout the township is leased to agricultural aggregators (operators). The farmland base has remained constant as supported by tax roll data from Crawford County.

14. The timber resource opportunities are basically limited to the periodic random harvesting of mature private parcels. The one sawmill in the township ceased operations several years ago.

15. Freeman Township's population is aging. Health related and other social services are available through County, State and Federal programs.

16. The township is most likely to remain in a static economic setting for the foreseeable future. This setting will be characterized by:

    - A majority aging permanent population who will need to sell real estate assets,

- An aging population of retired new residents who will also likely be trying to sell real estate assets,
- A minority of younger residents who work within a fifty mile radius of the township
- Part time residents who enjoy hunting, fishing and recreation in the region. This group will likely be constrained by transportation costs and the overall poor economic/financial climate for the next several years. Part time residents, in general, bring most of their supplies with them.
- Entrepreneurial opportunities within this environment could help maintain and grow the economic setting of the township.

Executive Summary

In 1999, the Wisconsin State Legislature passed, and former Governor Tommy Thompson signed into law Act 9, Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning Law (§66.1001 State Statutes). The law requires that every municipality in the state that wishes to have a say in land use decisions approve and adopt a comprehensive plan prior to January 1, 2010.

Commentary
Observations from the Planning Committee

History
Starts with European settlement and discusses the history of plants and wildlife.

Chapter 1 Introduction
Explains the Comprehensive Plan Law and requirements for municipalities.

Chapter 2 Issues and Opportunities
Summaries results from resident input via a public kick-off meeting and a survey sent to all tax payers

Chapter 3 Community Profile
Statistical data from the US census bureau and several informative graphs depicting land use demographics developed from analysis of Crawford County's tax rolls (1995 to 2008).

Chapter 4 Housing
Existing housing, types of housing and projected needs for the future.

Chapter 5 Transportation
Roads, trails, and other means of travel utilized by Freeman residents now and in the future. Transportation map.

Chapter 6 Utilities and Community Facilities
Utilities including electrical, communication, and septic. Inventory of township assets.

Chapter 7 Agricultural, Natural, & Cultural Resources
Farmland, environmental issues, soil survey map, extensive discussion on wildlife species and plant species

Chapter 8 Economic Development
Opportunities for economic development including types of existing endeavors and potential future endeavors.

Chapter 9 Existing Land Use
Map and discussion of existing land uses in the township. Depicts existing housing locations as well as other significant items.

Chapter 10 Future Land Use
Map and discussion of future potential land uses.

Chapter 11 Intergovernmental Cooperation
Coordination activities associated with the various governmental entities who could potentially effect or be effected by Freeman Township. Includes all surrounding townships, villages, Crawford County, Regional and State agencies.

Chapter 12 Implementation
Goals and objectives to implement the elements of the plan.

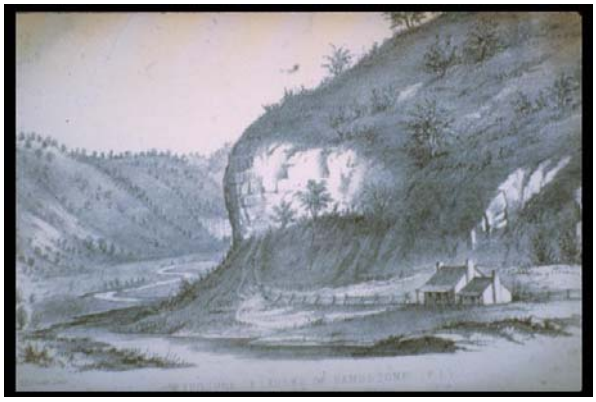
Area History

Historical Prologue of Our Region – Southwest Wisconsin

Before Euro-American settlement the Landscape was dramatically affected by Native American culture and their activities. Native Americans occupied western Wisconsin since the last glacial period, utilizing the abundant food resources of the area, cultivating crops on the fertile floodplains, and building settlements on higher landforms. Fires were set by Native Americans to aid in hunting and to provide habitat for the game they desired and plants they used. These fires prevented forests from expanding and kept the landscape in prairie, oak savanna, and open oak woodland. A map of southwestern Wisconsin published by Chandler in 1829 states that “not more than a tenth is covered by timber in detached groves, the remainder being prairies” (Schorger 1954). When European settlers arrived in the early to mid-1800s, fires were stopped and forests quickly expanded. By 1854, Daniels (1854) stated only one third of southwestern Wisconsin was prairie. He attributed this rapid change from prairie to timber to the cessation of fires and rapid growth of young trees on the open prairie.

Land Use Impacts

Historical impacts – (excerpted and paraphrased from the: “State of the Bad Axe-La Crosse Basin Report” 2002). There have been dramatic changes in the land use and land cover in this Landscape. Settlers plowed the prairies on the ridge tops and valleys for farmland, cut trees on the steep slopes for building homes and barns, and grazed the slopes with cows. The Landscape went from a primarily open structure of prairies and oak savanna at the time of Euro-American settlement to the current patchwork of agricultural fields on the ridges and valleys and second growth forests on the steeper slopes and other places that could not be tilled. Less than 0.1% of the prairies and oak savannas remain today.



Painting of typical Coulee region land cover in the early 1800's. WDNR 2002.

During and after settlement most of the area was farmed resulting in large-scale soil erosion and flash flood events. Crop fields were mostly rectangular on this highly dissected landscape, and plowing was often done up and down slopes. Steep wooded slopes that couldn’t be farmed were grazed by cows compacting the soil and removing the under story plants that prevented runoff. Millions of tons of topsoil moved from hilltops and hillsides to valley floors. An average of 12 to 15 feet of topsoil was deposited in the valley floors in the Bad Axe-La Crosse Basin, burying roads and bridges. Deep gullies were common where water washed away the soil. By the 1930s, after nearly eighty years of cultivation and grazing, virtually every rainstorm resulted in flash floods. By this time, farming in the Bad Axe - La Crosse River Basin developed into a frustrating venture with every new rainstorm washing away valuable crops, pasture and soil. The once crystal clear streams which held brook trout were now shallow, wide,

warm and full of silt. The tons of sediment that reached the valley floor buried many springs and seeps, causing many perennially flowing streams to become intermittent, flowing only after rainstorms. Streams became braided meanders with their channel lost to the massive amounts of sediment now in the valley. In-stream fish habitat was lost, and the cold water brook trout were replaced by warmwater species such as suckers, carp, chubs and other minnows.

Gullies common around the 1920's in southwestern Wisconsin. WDNR 2002.

In 1934, the Federal Soil Erosion Service launched the Coon Valley Erosion Project in the Coon Creek Watershed. Men from the newly founded Civilian Conservation Corp (C.C.C.) planted trees, fenced livestock off of steep slopes, reconfigured fields to follow the hills' contours, planted grassed waterways, and stabilized gullies. Efforts to restore streams were also attempted by adding wood and rock deflectors to force floodwaters away from streambanks toward the stream's center, and planting vegetation on streambanks. These land management practices were successfully adopted and most are still in use today.

Even after the various conservation measures, the Landscape was degraded, and flash floods continued to damage land and property in the basin. From the 1940s to the 1960s, farms on marginal land in the basin did not succeed, and the land reverted back to more natural conditions. In the 1970s, many farming operations went deeply into debt, overvalued land prices fell, and interest rates remained high. In the early to mid 1980s, many producers were forced to financially dissolve their farms. Large amounts of farmland were purchased by hobby farmers who were not interested in raising livestock or growing crops as their source of income, and these farms reverted to natural vegetation.

The Food Security Act of 1985 required compliance with farm specific conservation plans in order to receive any kind of government subsidy. From 1983 to 1988, land under conservation tillage in the area increased over 700%. The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) was an incentive to remove highly erodible land from crop rotation and replace it with perennial vegetative cover.

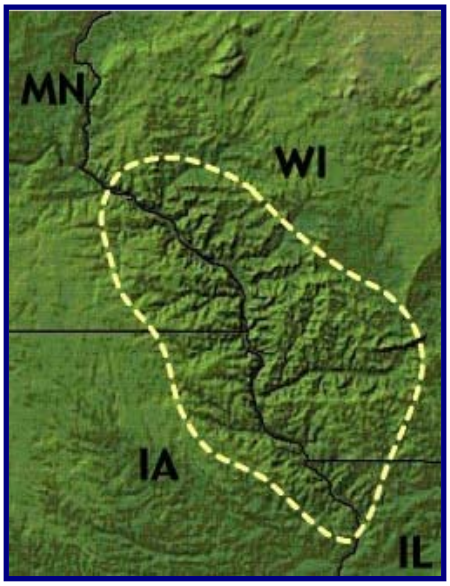
Conditions have improved with these conservation actions. Infiltration of rain and snowmelt into the soil has reduced runoff. Conservation practices such as contour farming have reduced soil erosion. CRP has taken highly erodible land out of crop production. Streams are recovering, many once again becoming narrow, deep, and cold. The Landscape still has the highest percentage of southern forest types in the state and has many rare and significant features. However, the landscape is dramatically altered from its original condition; for example, millions of tons of soil were permanently relocated from hilltops and hillsides to other areas such as the valley floor

Current impact - Current disturbances in the Landscape are largely due to human activities, primarily agriculture, timber production and harvest, and cessation of fire. Human disturbance also includes the long-term conversion of land to houses, roads, agriculture, impoundments, and utility corridors.

In Freeman Township, the frequent use of “prescribed” fire continued long after it stopped in many other areas of western Wisconsin. Farmers understood its value for keeping brush out of pastures, stimulating and increasing the nutritional value of pasture plants, and in some cases “just to get rid of the rattlesnakes”. Evidence of this is commonly found in the form of fire scars on the uphill side of trees in many areas of the township. Fred Hogan of Lansing IA remembers “the river bluffs on the Wisconsin side of the river burning every year” (Fred Hogan personal communication) as a young man. Jake Sandry of DeSoto stated “the river bluffs always got burned, sometimes being lit by the Native Americans that lived just south of town” (Jake Sandry-personal communication). The fires set by locals up into the 1960’s helped maintain some of the rarest habitat in the United States; prairie and oak savanna, and helped to give our township the unique opportunity to restore and maintain these types that is nearly unmatched.

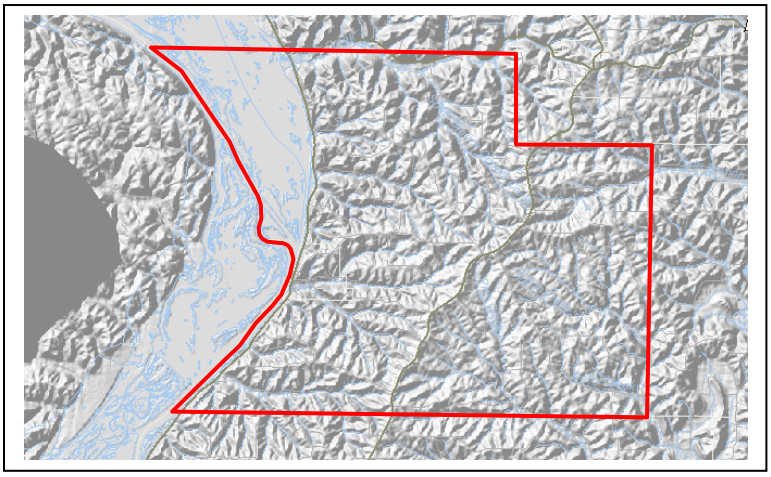
GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

The Town of Freeman is located in the “Driftless Area” of southwestern Wisconsin, an area unique in North America. The upper Midwest has undergone multiple periods of glaciation. Thick continental ice sheets have moved from Canada southward in various lobes at various times, leveling high areas of the landscape. The Driftless Area survived these glacial episodes, even though areas completely surrounding it for hundreds of miles were at one time covered with glaciers.



The “Driftless Area”

As a result, the area preserves the landscape of what the rest of Wisconsin, as well as northern and eastern United States, would have looked like before the glacial period. Without glacial drift covering the surface, topographic relief is dramatic. Bedrock, consisting primarily of limestone and sandstone, is oftentimes close to or exposed at the surface. The thin layers of topsoil in the upper areas of the landscape consist primarily of loess, which is wind-blown material. The land is deeply cut by



streams into a maze of narrow, twisting ridges and valleys. The topography stands in stark contrast to surrounding land from glaciated areas, which shows a gently rolling topography.

The gorge of the Mississippi River provides the most rugged and scenic topography in Wisconsin. Bluffs tower 400 feet above the river in the area. Highway 35, known as the Great River Road, passes through Freeman, hugging the east bank of the river, offering breath-taking views.

The heavily dissected nature of the landscape in Freeman dictates land use. Significant acreage within the town is so steeply sloped that it is only suitable for open space preservation or low-density residential development. Farming for the most part is limited to ridge tops or in some instances valley floors. Crawford County supports some of the best deer and turkey hunting terrain in North America as a result of its topography.

Changes in Wildlife over Time

(SOURCE: "WI Ecological Landscapes Handbook-Western Coulees and Ridges Chapter *in draft,* WI DNR)

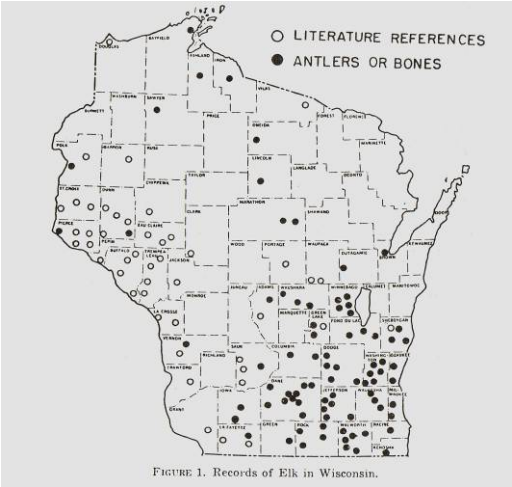
Wildlife populations have, in some cases, changed dramatically since humans arrived on the landscape, but these changes were not well documented until the mid-1800s. This section discusses wildlife species that were historically documented in the Western Coulees and Ridges Ecological Landscape. Other species for which evidence of past occurrence in the landscape is equivocal or lacking are discussed if suitable habitat exists and recent reintroduction attempts have met with apparent success. Of the latter category of animals, this review is limited to species thought to have been especially important here in comparison to their presence in other Ecological Landscapes. For a more complete review of historical wildlife in the state, see a collection of articles written by A. W. Schorger, compiled into the volume "Wildlife in Early Wisconsin" (Brockman and Dow 1982).

The Western Coulees and Ridges Ecological Landscape was important historically for a number of wildlife species, especially those using oak savanna and oak openings, oak and floodplain forests, prairies, bluffs, caves and rock outcroppings, and large river systems. This Ecological Landscape was particularly important for the elk, bison, Wild Turkey, Passenger Pigeon, Sharp-tailed Grouse, Greater Prairie Chicken, Bobwhite Quail, and both timber and massasauga rattlesnakes. In the mid 19th century, the Landscape was settled by European settlers, wild fires were prevented and controlled, and wildlife populations changed.

Although the distribution of the **Passenger Pigeon** has been described as covering the eastern half of North America (Schorger 1946), its nesting was limited by the presence and abundance of mast (beech nuts and acorns primarily). Schorger (1946) reported from newspaper accounts and interviews that Passenger Pigeons nested by the millions in Wisconsin. With a large presence of oak, this Ecological Landscape was undoubtedly an important nesting area for Passenger Pigeons during years of high mast production.

Passenger Pigeons were shot and trapped during the nesting season and squabs taken from nests and shipped to markets in Milwaukee, Chicago, and cities on the east coast by the trainload (Schorger 1937). Since the Passenger Pigeon was thought to only lay one egg each ~~a~~ year, only nest in communal roosts, and be dependent on abundant

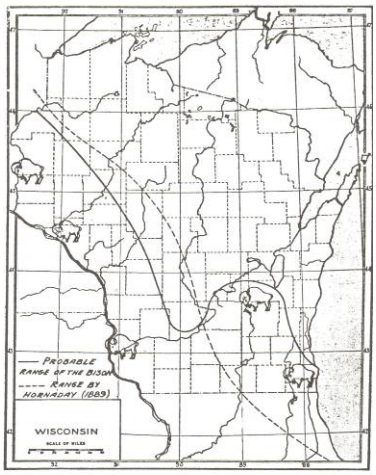
mast for nest production, the heavy kill of Passenger Pigeon led to its extinction (Schorger 1937). The last Passenger Pigeon known, died in 1914 at the Cincinnati Zoo. See Central Sand Plains Ecological Landscape chapter for more detailed discussion of the Passenger Pigeon.



Historic Elk Distribution. From Schorger 1954.

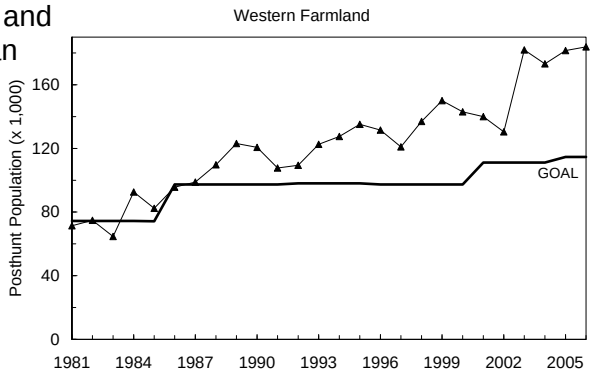
Elk were found throughout Wisconsin but flourished in open woodlands, oak openings, and at the border of grasslands and forests. Elk were most numerous and abundant in the southern and western parts of the state (Schorger 1954) and were especially abundant in this Ecological Landscape. The Chippewa, Kickapoo, Trempealeau, and Mississippi River valleys were often mentioned as having abundant elk populations and there was a report that elk were “astonishingly abundant” around the Platteville area (Schorger1954). Elk were still abundant in this Landscape during the 1850’s but declined rapidly after that. The last reliable report of elk in Wisconsin is from west of Menomonie in 1866 (Schorger1954). Attempts have been made to restore elk in Wisconsin. In 1917, 41 elk were shipped from Yellowstone National Park and placed at the State Game Farm in Vilas County (Schorger 1954). About half of the elk died immediately following release, but by 1924 they were thought to have numbered 75. By 1954 elk numbers were thought to have been reduced to 35. The population subsequently disappeared from illegal hunting and other causes. Currently, Wisconsin has about 150 elk, all of them in North Central Ecological Landscape from a more recent restoration effort.

Bison historically occupied the prairie areas of the state and were sporadically abundant in this Landscape. A map of southwestern Wisconsin published by Chandler in 1829 states that “not more than a tenth is covered by timber in detached groves, the remainder being prairies” (Schorger 1954). Daniels (1854) estimated that only one third of southwestern Wisconsin was prairie in 1854. He attributed this rapid change from prairie to timber to the cessation of fires and rapid growth of young trees on the open prairie. Bison occurred from Racine along Lake Michigan to Lake Winnebago to Burnett County in the western part of the state. Both the Wisconsin and Chippewa River valleys are mentioned as having abundant bison populations (Schorger 1937). The last bison was killed near the Trempealeau River in 1832.



Historic Bison Range in Wisconsin. From Schorger 1937.

White-tailed deer were found throughout the state and were likely more abundant in southern Wisconsin than in the northern part of the state (Schorger 1953) at the time of Euro-American settlement. Deer were reported as plentiful in southwestern Wisconsin in 1830's (Schorger 1953) and Hoffman (1855) reported that that he saw "large herds" on the prairies in February 1834. However, as settlers arrived in southwestern Wisconsin in subsequent years, they depended on venison for food and professional market hunters sent tons of venison to the eastern large cities. The severe winter of 1856-57 caused many deer to starve or be easily killed by settlers in southwestern Wisconsin (Schorger 1953). Snow 6 feet deep was reported in some places with a thick ½ inch crust making movement of deer very difficult. Deer seemed to recover somewhat within a decade and were reported as numerous again in southwestern Wisconsin in the mid-1860's. Subsistence harvest, together with market hunting, likely reduced the deer population to its lowest level late in the 19th century. Deer were considered uncommon throughout southwestern Wisconsin from 1900 through the 1960s. However, since the early 1980s deer populations have increased dramatically in this Landscape and deer are now very abundant. Today, deer are an important game species but are cause crop damage, vehicle accidents, damage to forest regeneration, and impact many forest herbs.



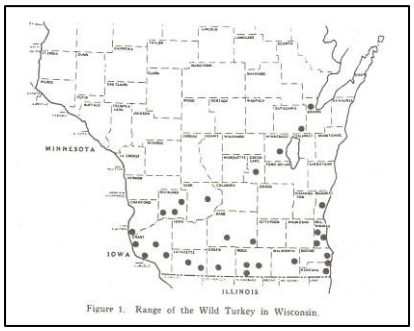
Deer population size in relation to population goals in the Western Farmlands.

The **gray wolf** was found statewide prior to EuroAmerican settlement. Wisconsin wolf numbers then declined gradually due to loss of food sources, shooting, trapping, and poisoning. By the early 1960s they were thought extirpated from the state. The wolf population has since reestablished itself and expanded from northwest to northeast and into central Wisconsin. No wolves are resident in this Landscape at this time.

Black bears were historically found throughout the Landscape but were probably more abundant in the more wooded areas in the northern part of the Landscape. The last appearance of black bears in this Landscape was from the early to mid-1900s (Schorger 1949). Today the black bear range is expanding south and southwest in the state. The northeastern edge of the Landscape in Dunn, Chippewa, and Eau Claire Counties are considered secondary range for the black bear, and northeastern Jackson County is considered primary range. Occasionally black bears are sighted in other parts of the Landscape.

Black bear range in 2008. WDNR 2008.

The historic range of the **Wild Turkey** was in southern Wisconsin below a line from Green Bay to Prairie du Chien (Schorger 1942). However, since the Wild Turkey was at the northernmost part of its range, the number of turkeys close to this line fluctuated in response to severe winters. Wild Turkeys were most abundant in southwestern Wisconsin and in the southern part of this Landscape. In 1816 James Lockwood stated "It was not an uncommon thing to see a Fox Indian arrive at Prairie du Chien with a hand sled, loaded with twenty to thirty wild turkeys for sale, as they were very plentiful about Cassville, and occasionally killed opposite Prairie du Chien" (Schorger 1942). Due to persistent hunting by settlers for food, change of habitat, and the severe winter of 1842-43 Wild Turkeys were rare by 1860. The last documented Wild Turkey was seen in Lafayette County in 1881(Schorger 1942).



Historic Wild Turkey Range in Wisconsin. From Schorger 1942.

There were a couple of attempts by private individuals to reintroduce the Wild Turkey into Wisconsin during the late 1800s (Schorger 1942). These flocks persisted until the early 1900s. Between 1929 and 1939, the State of Wisconsin released about 3,000 pen-reared Wild Turkeys in Grant and Sauk Counties (Brown and Vander Zouwen 1993). These birds frequented farmyards and were quite tame. They persisted until1958 when the last Wild Turkey was reported dead near Grand Marsh in Adams County. In the early 1950s the Wisconsin Conservation Department stocked Wild Turkeys in the Meadow Valley-Necedah Area in the Central Sand Plains. That flock, a cross between game farm hens and wild gobblers, originated from Pennsylvania. During 1954-57, 827 birds from Pennsylvania were released on the Meadow Valley Wildlife Area-Necedah National Wildlife Refuge. Although appearing successful at first, the flock encountered disease and severe winters. The flock persisted but never expanded its range significantly (Brown and Vander Zouwen 1993). It wasn't until 1976 that the Wild Turkey became reestablished in Wisconsin when 45 Wild Turkeys trapped in Missouri were obtained in a trade for 135 Ruffed Grouse trapped in this Landscape and released in Vernon County.. Other reintroduction followed, and a total of 334 Missouri Wild Turkeys were released in Buffalo, Iowa, Sauk, Trempealeau, Jackson, La Crosse, Vernon, Dane, and Lafayette Counties. Once established in these areas, the department trapped and relocated Wild Turkeys throughout the state (Brown and Vander Zouwen 1993). Although the Wild Turkey is now established in all 16 Ecological Landscapes, the Western Coulees and Ridges Ecological Landscape has the highest densities for this bird in Wisconsin , providing excellent hunting and wildlife viewing opportunities.

The **Sharp-tailed Grouse** (*Tympanuchus phasianellus*) was considered widely distributed in the state in open and brushy habitats during pre-EuroAmerican times and was likely common in this Ecological Landscape, primarily occupying the extensive oak openings and barrens (Schorger 1944). Sharp-tailed Grouse in this Landscape probably expanded into additional areas as young trees created brushy habitat with the cessation of fire. Sharp-tailed Grouse later declined, likely due to the growth of oak openings into dense forests, as well as the expansion of intensive agriculture. Today Sharp-tailed Grouse are absent from the Landscape.

The **Greater Prairie-chicken** (*Tympanuchus cupido*) was found throughout southern Wisconsin in pre-Euro-American days, although the Sharp-tailed Grouse may have been more abundant (Schorger 1944). The Greater Prairie Chicken was considered abundant through the 1850s in southern Wisconsin but later declined. Agriculture seemed to lead toe an increase in the Greater Prairie Chicken population, initially, but populations declined as agriculture became more intensive and the prairies disappeared. The Greater Prairie Chicken was forced north as prairies were plowed for agriculture in the south and forests were cleared in central and northern Wisconsin (Schorger 1944). As forests regrew in the north, the range of the Prairie Chicken was constricted to its present size of primarily being found in the Central Sand Plains Ecological Landscape in central Wisconsin. The Greater Prairie Chicken is not found in this Landscape today.

The **Bobwhite Quail** must have been distributed widely throughout the open areas of the state (Schorger 1946) in widely fluctuatingpopulations, depending on winter severity. Bobwhite Quail were especially abundant during a period of mild winters from 1846 to 1857 and reached peak numbers in 1854. During this time, it was said that a good shot could "readily bag 50 to 75 in a day" in Madison (Schorger 1946). Shipments of quail from Beloit to the eastern cities amounted to 12 tons in 1854-55. A shipment of 20,000 quail from Janesville was received in Philadelphia in 1856 (Schorger 1946). Bobwhite Quail declined quickly thereafter due to unregulated trapping and adverse weather. The winters of 1854-55 and 1855-56 were severe, but trapping continued with "tons of quail and other game hanging in the yard of the Capital House in Madison." The Bobwhite Quail population was much reduced from its former numbers by the fall of 1857. The population recovered through the 1860s but never achieved the 1854 levels. From 1870 to the 1940s the Bobwhite Quail population remained relatively stationary (Schorger 1946).

Historic Bobwhite Quail Range in Wisconsin. From Schorger 1946.

At the close of the 19th century the Bobwhite Quail population increased temporarily in the Mississippi Valley. Schorger (1946) noted that "they were abundant in 1896 at Prairie du Chien and more numerous than usual at Trempealeau …". The increase continued through 1900 and they "were to be found everywhere in the country districts at Prairie du Chien for the first time in many years" (Schorger 1946). Bobwhite Quail populations have decreased dramatically since 1900 due to changes in land use and other causes, but this Landscape has the best populations remaining in the state. The Department made an effort to increase Bobwhite Quail habitat and populations in this Landscape during the 1970s and 1980s by planting hedgerows and winter food plots on private land. These efforts met with little success because habitat was not maintained by private landowners. Up to 60% of annual variability in Bobwhite Quail numbers could be explained by winter severity (Petersen 1997).

Both **timber and massasauga rattlesnakes** were historically abundant in this Ecological Landscape. Timber rattlesnakes were found in the uplands, especially where there were rock outcroppings and rock crevices where they could hibernate. They are restricted to southwestern Wisconsin and have never been found east of Madison. Massasauga rattlesnakes were found in marshy areas, lowland prairies, and along streams and have been found throughout southern and central Wisconsin. Populations of both rattlesnake species have been dramatically reduced by land use changes and continued persecution. The Cooke family killed 150 rattlesnakes during their first year near Gilmanton in 1856 (Cooke 1940). Messeling stated that he killed a thousand rattlesnakes for their bounty each year (Messeling 1953). As late as the mid-1960s, Crawford County paid a bounty for 10,000-11,000 rattlesnakes a year. Early settlers also used pigs, which kill and eat snakes, to control rattlesnakes on their farms (Schorger 1967). The massasauga rattlesnake is more sensitive to habitat changes and now is listed as a State Endangered Species and is a formal candidate for federal listing. It still occasionally is found along the Chippewa and Black River valleys in this Landscape. The timber rattlesnake population has also been reduced; it is a Special Concern species in Wisconsin and is protected from harvest by state law. This is the only Landscape in the state that has timber rattlesnakes and where management for this species can occur.

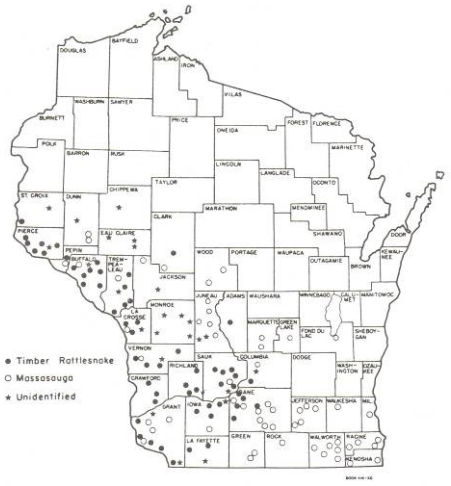


FIGURE 1. Range of the Timber Rattlesnake and Massasauga.

Historic timber and massasauga rattlesnake range in Wisconsin. From Schorger 1967.

Socially Significant Fauna – Species such as white-tailed deer, Wild Turkey, Ruffed Grouse, and American Woodcock are all important for hunting and wildlife viewing in this Landscape, as are many other species of birds. The larger rivers support waterfowl and other waterbirds that are popular for hunting and wildlife viewing. The warmwater fishery is significant and supports populations of sauger, walleye, small and largemouth bass, bluegill, perch and other panfish that are sought by anglers. Abundant coldwater streams provide habitat for native brook trout, as well as introduced brown and rainbow trout.

Forests/Forestry

(SOURCE: "WI Ecological Landscapes Handbook-Western Coulees and Ridges Chapter *in draft,* WI DNR)

The drier forests are often dominated by oaks and were affected by a somewhat different group of characteristic disturbances, especially fire and drought. Periodic wildfire formerly affected many, if not virtually all, oak forests. Besides facilitating establishment of the oaks, fires reduced the densities of shrub and sapling cover and prevented the establishment of and dominance by more mesophytic species. Native grasses, legumes, and composites may be well-represented in stands that have not been heavily disturbed by agents other than fire. From a conservation perspective, noteworthy plants of the oak forests include autumn coral-root (*Corallorhiza odontorhiza*), upland boneset (*Eupatorium sessilifolium var. brittonianum*), great Indian plantain (*Cacalia muehlenbergii*), and ginseng (*Panax quinquefolius*).

Dry-mesic and mesic hardwood forests are widespread and well-represented in the Western Coulees and Ridges Ecological Landscape. Southwestern Wisconsin's oak-dominated upland hardwood forests possess high ecological, economic, aesthetic, and recreational values. Sustainable management of the oak forests, in particular, has proven to be highly problematic as most, if not all, of the methods used have had only limited and local successes. (maybe something about "highgrading" which exacerbates the situation)

Sugar maple-basswood forest (aka 'Southern Mesic Forest' or sometimes simply 'northern hardwoods') may support exceptionally rich understory vegetation, especially in areas with loess soils and/or areas that are underlain by dolomites or limestones. Mesic hardwood forests may support distinctive assemblages of species not present in other forest communities. Additional conservation attention for this often overlooked type is needed, especially for rich sites that adjoin other forest types.

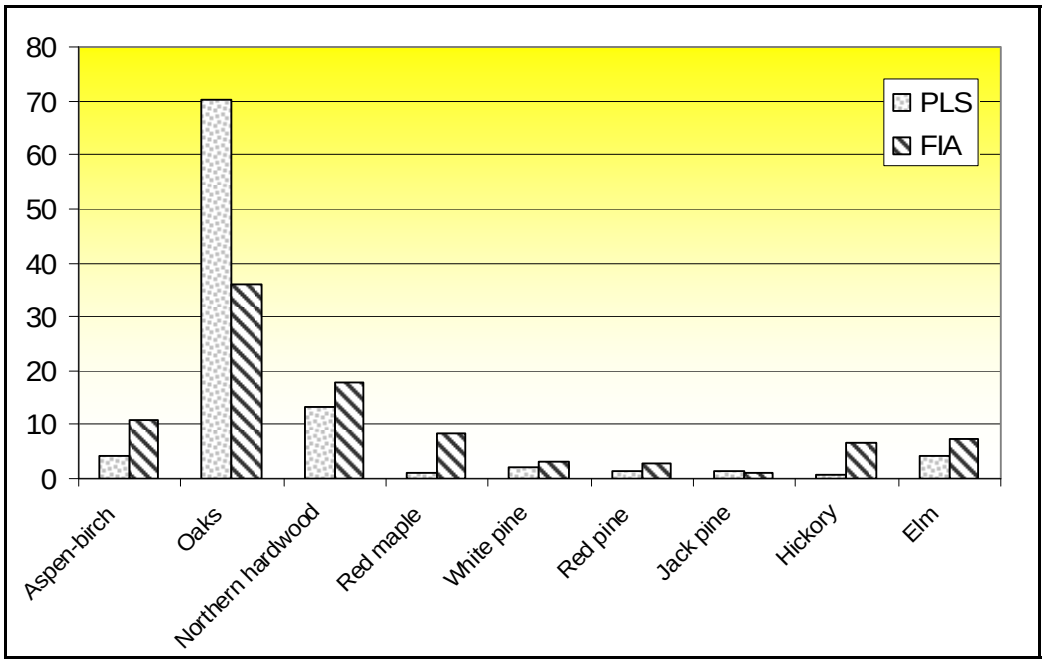


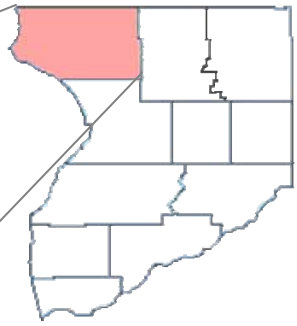
Figure 4. Comparison of tree species' relative importance value (average of relative dominance and relative density) during the mid-1800s, when General Land Office Public Land Survey (PLS) data were collected, and in 2004 based on Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) data. Each bar represents the proportion of that forest type in the data set (totals equal 100). Trees of less than 6" diameter were excluded from the FIA data set to make it more comparable with PLS data.

Current forest vegetation (based on RIV) is primarily oak species (36% of RIV), northern hardwood (18%) and aspen-birch (11%) (Figure 4). Aspen RIV has increased from 4.1% to 10.9% since pre-European settlemement, while red maple has increased from 0.9% to 8.3%. Hickory has also increased (from 0.9% of RIV to 6.6%), as has elm (from 4.2% to 7.5% of RIV).

The overall RIV for oaks has decreased from over 70% to 36% and the RIVs of the individual species within that group have also changed widely (Figure 5). The RIVs of black, bur and white oaks have decreased dramatically, while red oak RIV has increased from 2.6% to 12.9%.

Forestry - One potential land use change in this Landscape is the decline of the oak resource in upland habitats, especially on dry-mesic and mesic sites. In the absence of fire, and under pressure from unsustainable logging practices, grazing, browsing by white-tailed deer, and the spread of invasive species, oaks and oak forests are declining. Oak is very important not only as commercial timber but as the dominant genus of trees for a whole community of plants and wildlife that depend on it. Currently, we are living on the legacy of fires that occurred more than a hundred years ago and produced and maintained our oak resources in this area. With the cessation of fire, when oak is logged today it often accelerates the conversion of the stand to another forest type, especially on the richer sites. "High-grading," the practice of preferentially removing the trees (usually the large oaks, and the largest red oaks in particular) with the greatest commercial value, can further accelerate the decline of oak in these stands and lead to a conversion to other less desirable (ecologically and economically) forest types. The introduction and spread of invasive species (Eurasian honeysuckles and buckthorns, garlic mustard) has prevented oak from regenerating in some areas. More research is needed to learn techniques to restore not only the oak trees but also maintain the entire oak community in this Landscape. Use of more prescribed fire may be productive, but the logistics can be problematic, and there is a lack of experience in using fire in forested ecosystems on an operational scale Wisconsin

Where is Freeman?



The Town of Freeman is located in northwestern Crawford County on the bank of the Mississippi River. Freeman borders Vernon County and the Towns of Wheatland and Sterling to the north, the Towns of Haney and Utica to the east, and the Town of Seneca to the south. The Mississippi River provides the Town's western border across the river from Iowa. The Village of Ferryville lies within Freeman in the southwest portion of the Town. Nearby cities include Prairie du Chien, Boscobel, Viroqua, Richland Center, and Lansing, Iowa; and adjacent principal villages of Gays Mills and DeSoto. La Crosse is within an hour's drive of the community. Madison is within Two Hours.

The Town's landscape is dominated by the diverse topography typical of the Mississippi River valley. Numerous streams, including Buck Creek, Cooley Creek, Rush Creek, and Sugar Creek flow through Freeman before discharging to the Mississippi River. Major ingress and egress routes include State Highways (STH) 35, 82 and 171, and County Highways (CTH) B and C.

Why is Freeman Developing a Comprehensive Plan?

The Town of Freeman wishes to act proactively – to set its own ground rules for the types of development that will benefit the Town, maintain a rural atmosphere, and provide flexibility for landowners in making future decisions regarding the use of their land. This plan is being made with the general purpose of guiding and accomplishing coordinated and harmonious development of the Town.

In 1999, the Wisconsin State Legislature passed, and former Governor Tommy Thompson signed into law Act 9, Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning Law (§66.1001 State Statutes). The law requires that every municipality in the state that wishes to have a say in land use decisions approve and adopt a comprehensive plan prior to January 1, 2010. In 2007, the Town of Freeman hired OMNNI Associates, Inc., an Appleton-based consulting firm to assist the Town in the development of its plan. Once the plan is adopted, local land use decisions must be consistent with the document. The law does provide procedures to change the plan, if necessary, as situations warrant.

The planning process began with a Kick-off Meeting held at the Sugar Creek Bible Camp on April 7, 2008. The Town of Freeman Land Use Committee met monthly to review and discuss draft plan chapters and maps with residents, landowners, and other stakeholders.

What is Planning? [1]

Planning is…	Planning is not…
▪ Planning is an opportunity to gather information and data on trends in the township. ▪ Planning is an orderly, open approach to determine local needs, goals and priorities, and developing a guide for action. ▪ Planning is a concentrated effort by a community to reach a balance between the natural environment and agricultural, residential, commercial, and industrial development. ▪ A plan is a guide for public officials and private citizens to use in making informed decisions that will affect their community. ▪ Planning is a process that helps a community prepare for change rather than react to it.	▪ Zoning. A comprehensive plan is a foundation and guide for many tools that may be used to implement the plan. Zoning is one of these tools. Utilities, capital improvements planning, and subdivision regulations are examples of other tools. ▪ Intended to influence property tax reassessment. ▪ An attempt to replace market forces of supply and demand. It helps shape and channel market forces by establishing certain guidelines to manage development. ▪ Action. A plan is only a guide for action and implementation. ▪ An instrument for immediate change. Change will occur incrementally as the plan is implemented. ▪ Static. Good planning requires continual review of implementation successes and failures, citizen desires and the surrounding environment so the plan can be adjusted as needed.

How is this Plan Organized?

This 20-year Town of Freeman Comprehensive Plan includes four major components:

- A profile of the demographic, economic and housing characteristics of the Town;
- An inventory and assessment of the environment, community facilities, and natural resources;
- Visions, goals, objectives, policies and implementation strategies; and,
- A land use map that depicts possible future land use patterns in the Town.

The Town of Freeman Comprehensive Plan is divided into a series of twelve chapters oriented around the nine (9) required chapters defined in the Smart Growth Law:

[1] This section was excerpted from *Comprehensive Planning Fundamentals*, Mike Koles, UW-Extension, 2000.

1. Issues and Opportunities (Chapters 1, 2 & 3)
2. Housing (Chapter 4)
3. Transportation (Chapter 5)
4. Utilities and Community Facilities (Ch. 6)
5. Agricultural, Natural & Cultural Resources (Ch. 7)
6. Economic Development (Chapter 8)
7. Land Use (Chapter 9 and 10)
8. Intergovernmental Cooperation (Ch. 11)
9. Implementation (Chapter 12)

In addition, the state requires that these chapters be developed in concert with Wisconsin's 14 goals for local planning. These goals are highlighted throughout this plan. (See Appendix A)

How Were Land Owners and Residents Involved?

The Town of Freeman Comprehensive Plan was developed with the active participation of residents, landowners, business owners, and other stakeholders. To gain citizen understanding and support throughout the planning process the public was provided with a variety of opportunities to become involved in the development of the comprehensive plan.

1. ***Kick-Off Meeting***

   The Kick-off Meeting for the Town of Freeman Comprehensive Plan was held on April 7, 2008 at the Sugar Creek Bible Camp. Prior to the meeting, postcard invitations were sent to every land owner encouraging them to attend the event. During the meeting, OMNNI Associates led participants through a series of exercises aimed at identifying community strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats as well as providing input for developing a vision for the future of Freeman.

2. ***Survey***

   The Town of Freeman Land Use Committee met on a monthly basis to review draft plan chapters, maps, survey of property tax payers, and other materials.

3. ***Monthly Meetings***

   All meetings were posted and the public was encouraged to attend.

DEFINITIONS

Vision: An overall statement related to the required Smart Growth chapters expressing the Town's expectations for the future. These statements provide a framework and context to consider when making future land use decisions.

Goal: A statement that describes, usually in general terms, a desired future condition. Goals will usually only address one specific aspect of the vision.

Objective: A statement that describes a specific action or condition that is to be attained within a stated period of time. Objectives include ordinances changes, new programs, and other tasks. The objectives serve as a "to do" list to implement the plan. To be effective, objectives must be evaluated regularly and updated as necessary.

Policy: A course of action, or rule of conduct, used to achieve the goals and objectives of the plan. Policies are based on specific research. Therefore, they are developed after vision statements. In some cases, the policies relate closely to the vision, but provide more refined, specific actions.

4. *Freemantownship.com Web Site*

5. *Intergovernmental Meeting*

The Town of Freeman Land Use Committee sent letters to each of its municipal neighbors and intergovernmental partners inviting them to attend a meeting to review the Draft plan and discuss opportunities for future collaboration. Invitees included the Village of Ferryville, Towns of Franklin, Seneca, Sterling, Utica, and Wheatland, local school districts, Crawford County, Vernon County, the Mississippi River Regional Plan Commission, and the Wisconsin Departments of Administration, Natural Resources, and Transportation. Representatives of Freeman also attended intergovernmental meetings of neighboring governmental entities.

6. *Public Hearing*

Near the end of the planning process, the Freeman Town Board held a public hearing to solicit written and oral comments in support of, or opposition to, the Recommended Draft Town of Freeman Comprehensive Plan. The meeting was posted as per state statutes and all intergovernmental partners were invited to attend. All testimony received during the meeting was entered into the official record of the comprehensive plan process.

Introduction

The Issues and Opportunities Chapter provides background information about the community and overall visions to guide future development and redevelopment over a 20-year planning period. This chapter presents an assessment of local strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT). The community characteristics and general background information that form the basis for the Issues & Opportunities Chapter is included in Chapter 3: Community Profile.

Public Participation

Rather than developing a series of policy statements, Town residents, business owners, and other stakeholders participated in a visioning process to establish a framework from which to make future land use decisions. This process was critical in soliciting comments and ideas to consider by the committee during the plan creation process.

All Freeman Township property taxpayers/land owners were given the opportunity to participate in a survey. (See appendix B)

The process to garner public input early in the planning process included SWOT and Vision exercises held during the April 7th, 2008 Kick-off Meeting. The Town of Freeman Land Use Committee met monthly to present, review, and discuss draft plan chapters and maps. All meetings were open the public and residents and other stakeholders were encouraged to attend.

Summary of January 2009 Freeman Township Survey

The Town of Freeman Land Use Committee developed a survey to receive valuable input from its land owners to help guide the development of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan. The survey was sent to all landowners with their 2008 property tax bills. The committee received 265 responses of 799 sent. Of the responses, 96 identified themselves as permanent residents, 75 as part-time seasonal, and 94 as non-residents.

Within the survey, respondents provided opinions whether to Encourage, Control or Prohibit various land uses.

Highlights of the survey include:

- **Reason to live or own land here:** The top three reasons were Quality of Life, Rural Environment, and Recreation.
- **Future Land Use:** Encouragement of land use was overwhelmingly in support of family farms. Other strong support went for public and private recreational lands, home businesses, and tourism. Control of land use carried the largest support of land sub-division, residential subdivision, and recreational parks and camps. Prohibiting of land use that received most support was large industrial farms (Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations, CAFO) and large industry. It is

noteworthy to point out that 91% want to either control or prohibit industrial farms and 87% want to either control or prohibit large industry. Small business received about half encouragement and half control ratings.

- **Permits:** Opinions regarding the need for Permits for RV/ mobile home parks, recreation/commercial business, and wind/solar all received support from approximately 75% of respondents.
- **Ordinances:** Opinions regarding the need for Ordinance control for buildable parcel size (69% support), bluff line setback (75% support), and slope for buildable sites (71% support) received large support as well.
- **Regulations:** Opinions regarding the need for Regulation control was more mixed in results. 35% want to control agriculture, 52% support control of recreation, 71% support control of commercial endeavors, and 46% would like to see residential regulations.
- **Township Changes:** Opinions of Changes that people perceived in our township over time include fewer family farms and less agricultural usage, more seasonal homes, land sub-dividing and residential development.

The Freeman Township Land Use Committee has taken these survey results as a guide in the planning work. The complete survey results are included in the appendix of the Land Use Plan.

Draft Plan available to the public on Nov 17, 2009. DeSoto Public Library, www.freemantownship.com, Township Garage

Open House – Held Dec 17th, 2009 providing residents the opportunity to review, ask questions of, and participate in discussion with, the Planning Committee members.

Public Hearing – Held on Dec 17, 2009, providing residents, landowners, and other stakeholders an opportunity to offer testimony on the Recommended Comprehensive Plan.

SWOT EXERCISE (STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, THREATS)

On April 7, 2008, the Town of Freeman held a SWOT exercise as part of the Kick-Off meeting for the Comprehensive Plan development process. A SWOT is a planning exercise that encourages participants to think about and evaluate their community in its current state by identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. The event was held at the Sugar Creek Bible Camp and was attended by 48 residents, landowners, business owners, and town officials. The meeting was facilitated by OMNNI Associates, the Town's planning consultant.

The objective of the exercise was to determine how residents, business owners, landowners, and officials viewed various aspects of the Town. Each person was asked to identify the various strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in the community from their own perspective. Following these individual SWOT, participants were asked to form small groups to discuss and identify a total of three responses for each SWOT category and present their results to the group at large. The lists appearing below and on the following pages summarize both the group and individual responses gathered during the SWOT Exercise. The numbers appearing in parentheses following the response indicate the number of groups/individuals who identified that particular issue as a SWOT. The information gather during the exercise will be used in the development of the Comprehensive Plan and in the creation of the Future Land Use maps.

Diversity of opinion in the SWOT results reflected the independence and uniqueness of the town residents and land owners. To further clarify the varied opinions, a survey of land owners was conducted.

During the Vision exercise, participants were asked to complete a series of sentences related to various land uses in the community. Each of the participants were given three adhesive red dots and asked to place them near the responses they deemed most important.

Housing in Freeman generally includes:

Transportation in Freeman generally includes:

Economic Development in Freeman generally includes:

Recreational Opportunities generally include:

(See the Appendix C for detailed raw data from the exercise)

Demographic Profile

The planning process for the Town of Freeman begins with a profile of the people who live, work, recreate, and own property in the community. This chapter examines population size, composition, and trends in the community, as well as information regarding the work force, educational attainment, housing value, and other demographic factors. This information is critical to forecasting future needs related to development, housing, and community facilities, among others. Community demographics will play a crucial role in determining the direction the comprehensive plan takes in preparing for the future of Freeman.

It is recognized that much of the data could change following the 2010 census results. More timely data was gleaned from County records.

POPULATION TRENDS & PROJECTIONS

The Town of Freeman has experienced sporadic increases and decreases in population during the past four decades (see Table 1.0 at right). Since 1960, the Town saw its population decline by 10.55% (or 84 persons). Freeman is not alone in this regard. As Table 2.0 below demonstrates, many neighboring communities in Crawford and Vernon Counties have experienced similar fluctuations in population during the past forty years, with noticeable declines between 1980 and 1990 followed by slight rebounds following the 2000 US Census. This is typical of a predominantly rural region further removed from large metropolitan areas.

Table 1.0: Town of Freeman Population, 1960-2000

1960	1970	1980	1990	2000
803	677	796	692	719

Source: Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission County Profiles, 2007.

TABLE 2.0: Population Trends, 1980-2000

Location	1980	1990	2000	Percent Change 1980-2000
Town of Freeman	796	692	719	-9.7
Town of Franklin (Vernon Co.)	1,047	926	923	-11.8
Town of Seneca	832	873	893	7.3
Town of Sterling (Vernon Co.)	626	598	713	13.9
Town of Wheatland (Vernon Co.)	407	436	533	31.0
Town of Utica	822	738	893	8.6
Village of Ferryville	227	154	174	-23.3
Village of De Soto	66	73	118	78.8
Crawford County	16,556	15,940	17,243	4.1

SOURCE: US Census 2000 and Wisconsin Department of Administration Demographic Services Center, 2007.

Table 3.0 (on following page) projects the population of Freeman through 2025. As with Table 2.0 above, the projections for surrounding communities are provided for the purposes of comparison. According to information provided by the Wisconsin Department of Administration (WDOA), who develop population projections based upon a formulae that include historic

population, regional demographics trends, and economic forecasts, the Town will experience a steady, gradual decline in population over the next twenty years. If the projections come to fruition, the declining population may have direct and indirect affects upon the community (increasing property taxes, decreasing services, less economic development and investment) and local school districts (decreasing enrollments, reduced state funding).

TABLE 3.0: Population Projections, 2005-2025

Location	2005 (est.)	2010	2015	2020	2025	Percent Change 2005-2025
Town of Freeman	713	712	707	699	692	-2.9%
Town of Franklin	915	908	902	894	882	-3.6%
Town of Seneca	918	949	975	997	1,018	10.9%
Town of Sterling	740	769	798	825	849	14.7%
Town of Wheatland	579	626	674	720	763	31.8%
Town of Utica	655	641	623	604	585	-10.7%
Village of De Soto	141	164	187	208	229	62.4
Village of Ferryville	176	179	181	182	184	4.5%
Crawford County	17,481	17,838	18,090	18,285	18,470	5.7%

SOURCE: US Census 2000 and Wisconsin Department of Administration Demographic Services Center, 2007.

It must be noted, however, that a considerable percentage of the housing units in Freeman are owned by non-residents and used as second or vacation homes. The current and projected population of the Town reflects only those people who identify Freeman as their primary place of residence. Seasonal population swings, though difficult to record demographically, play a significant role in the local economy.

POPULATION DENSITY

The Town of Freeman covers approximately 78 square miles. The estimated 2005 population per square mile was 9.1 persons. As people continue to move into the Town, additional areas will be developed for residential and commercial uses. It is anticipated that new residential development will primarily entail single-family and seasonal homes, while commercial development will be focused near the Villages of Ferryville and De Soto and at points along the STH 35 corridor.

POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

Table 4.0 (at right) compares the 1990 and 2000 population of Freeman categorized by various age groups. The percentage of the population

TABLE 4.0: Town of Freeman Population Breakdown by Age Group, 1990-2000

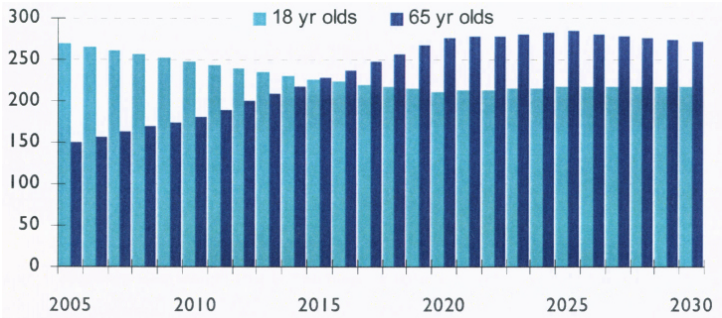
	1990		2000	
Age	**Number**	**% of Population**	**Number**	**% of Population**
Under 5	34	4.9%	49	6.8%
5 to 14	115	16.6%	84	11.7%
15 to 19	47	6.8%	43	6.0%
20 to 64	377	54.5%	414	57.6%
65 and Over	119	17.2%	129	17.9%
All Ages	692	100%	719	100%

SOURCE: US Census 2000 and Wisconsin Department of Administration Demographic Services Center, 2007.

represented by Freeman's youngest (under the age of five) and school-age (5 to 19) residents, as a portion of the total population, declined by 3.8% between 1990 and 2000. At the same time, the population of adults (20-64) and seniors (65 and over) has increased by the same percentage. As the *baby boom* generation (those born between 1946 and 1964) moves through retirement age, the Town of Freeman can likely expect continuing increases in the number of residents over the age of 65 and decreases in the number under the age of 20 (with some fluctuations to in- and out-migration).

In 2000, there were 366 males (50.9%) and 353 females (49.1) living in the Town. Most residents (98.7%) reported their race as white in the 2000 U.S. Census. This information is consistent with the data from the 1990 census. The median age of residents in 2000 was 44.4. This is higher than the median age reported for residents of Crawford County (38.9) and the State of Wisconsin (36.0).

Figure 1.0: Juncture of 18 and 65 year old population in Crawford County



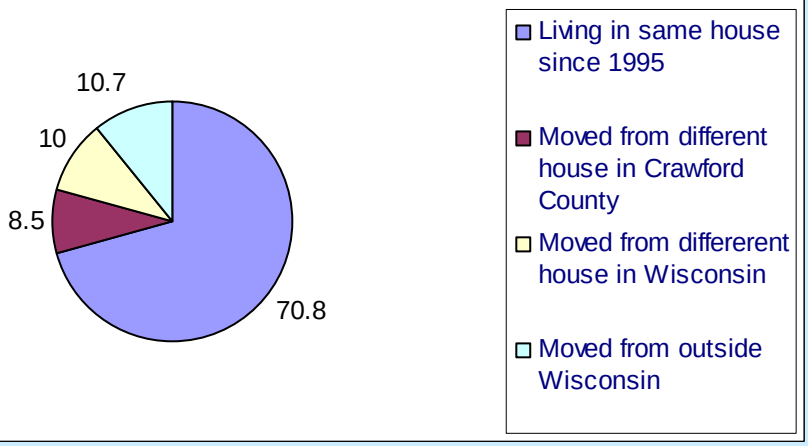
SOURCE: Wisconsin Department of Administration Demographic Services Center, Population Projections, 2004.

As the *baby boom generation* (individuals born between 1946 and 1964) reaches retirement age, communities around the country, including the Town of Freeman, will have to address the needs of an aging population. Figure 1.0 (above right) shows the juncture in projected population for 18 and 65 year old residents in Crawford County. On or about the year 2015, the number or residents age 65 will be higher than those age 18 for the first time in memory.

Where are Residents Coming From?

Figure 2.0 (at right) provides a breakdown of residency patterns between 1995 and 2000. Of the people currently residing in the Town, nearly 71% live in the same residence they occupied in 1995. Almost 19% percent either moved from elsewhere in Crawford County or from another county in Wisconsin. The remainder of Freeman's population

Figure 2.0: Residency Patterns, 1995-2000



SOURCE: US Census 2000 and Wisconsin Department of Administration Demographic Services Center, 2007.

moved to the community from outside Wisconsin. The foregoing ratios could change with the 2010 census data.

GENERAL HOUSEHOLD TRENDS

Table 5 summarizes total households and average size to the County and State.

Please refer to *Chapter 4: Housing* for additional information on current and future housing needs in the Town of Freeman.

Table 5.0: Total Households and Average Household Size

	1990	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Freeman							
Total Households	255	301	*304*	*314*	*319*	*322*	*323*
Average Household Size	2.7	2.4	*2.3*	*2.3*	*2.2*	*2.2*	*2.1*
Crawford County							
Total Households	5,914	6,677	*6,893*	*7,278*	*7,562*	*7,798*	*7,995*
Average Household Size	2.6	2.5	*2.4*	*2.4*	*2.3*	*2.3*	*2.2*
State of Wisconsin							
Total Households	1,822,118	2,084,544	*2,190,210*	*2,303,238*	*2,406,798*	*2,506,932*	*2,592,462*
Average Household Size	2.6	2.5	*2.5*	*2.4*	*2.4*	*2.4*	*2.4*

SOURCE: US Census 2000, Wisconsin Department of Administration Demographic Services Center, and Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission, 2007. 2005 and beyond are projected.

The average household size in Freeman is slightly larger than that of Crawford County as a whole. The number of persons per household in the community is decreasing (see Table 5.0). While the population of Freeman increased by 30.3% between 1990 and 2005, total households in the Town rose from 255 in 1990 to an estimated 304 in 2005, an increase of 19.2%. This compares to an increase in Crawford County households of 16.6% and Wisconsin households of 20.2% during the same period.

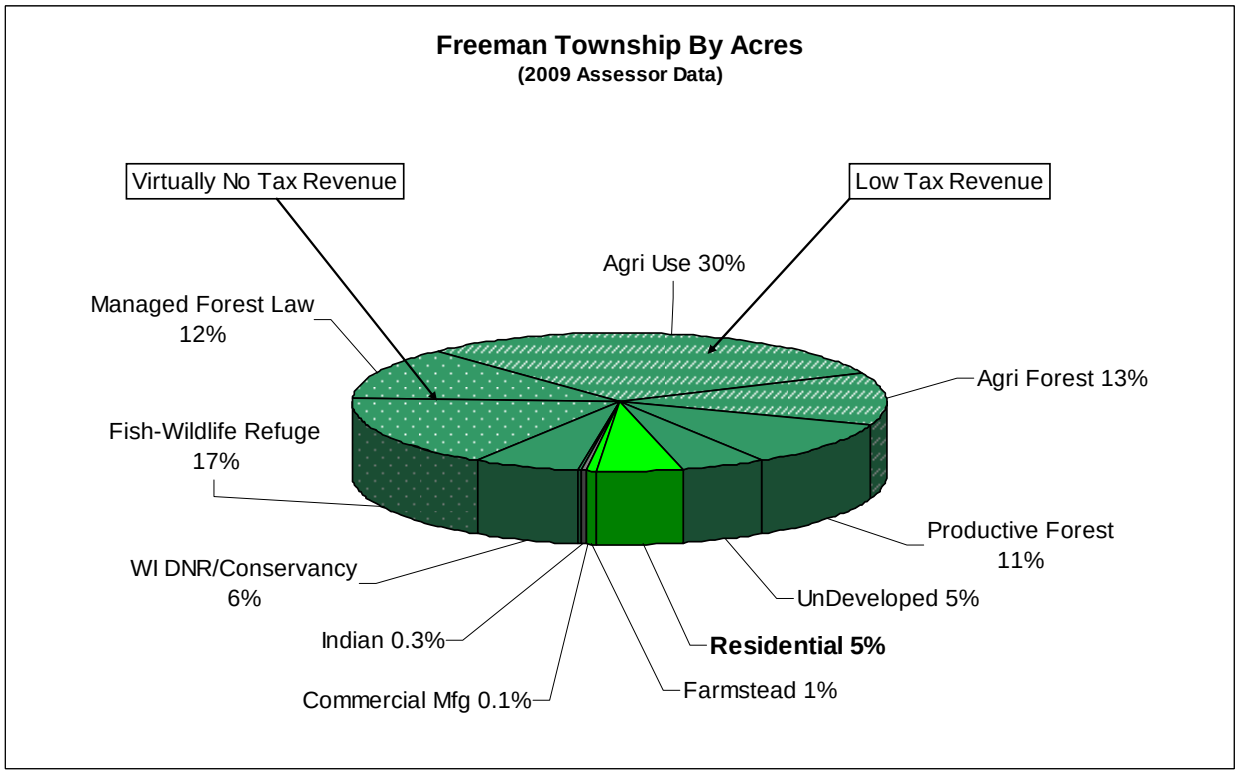
Future projections for the community suggest more of the same. As Table 5.0 demonstrates, the number of households in Freeman is projected to gradually increase from a 2005 total of 304 to an estimated 2025 figure of 323. At the same time, the average size of households in the community is projected to decline from 2.7 in 2005 to 2.1 in 2025. Increases in the number of households will correspond to existing pattern and projected patterns township home construction.

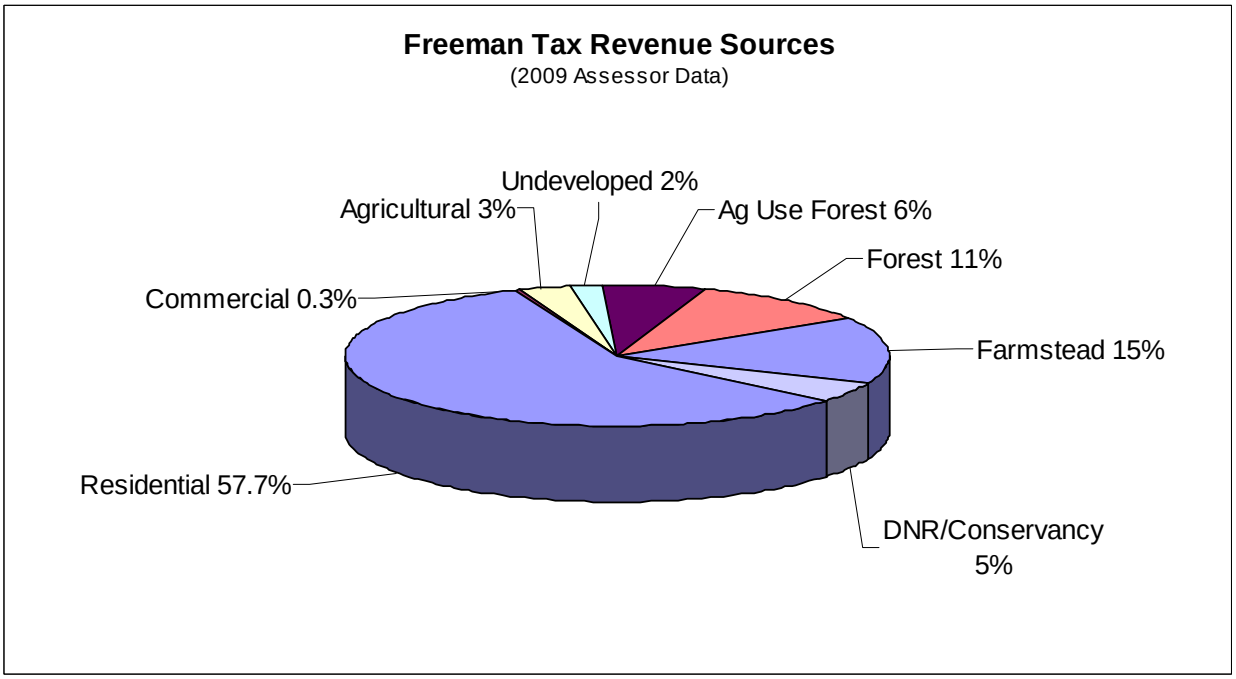
LAND OWNERSHIP TRENDS

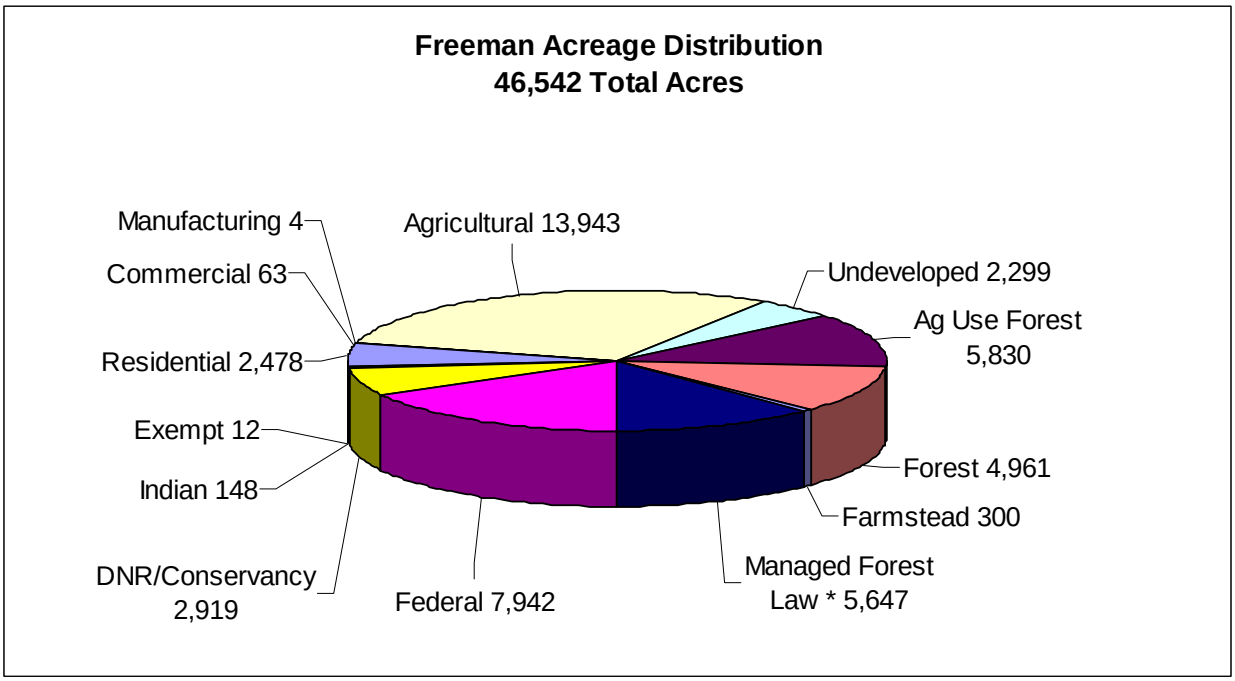
Since the 1970's land division has been a growing trend in the Town of Freeman because of the attractiveness of Freeman. Based on data obtained from Crawford County records, the number of non resident land owners is approximately 62 percent. The profile data on the non-residents is not available.

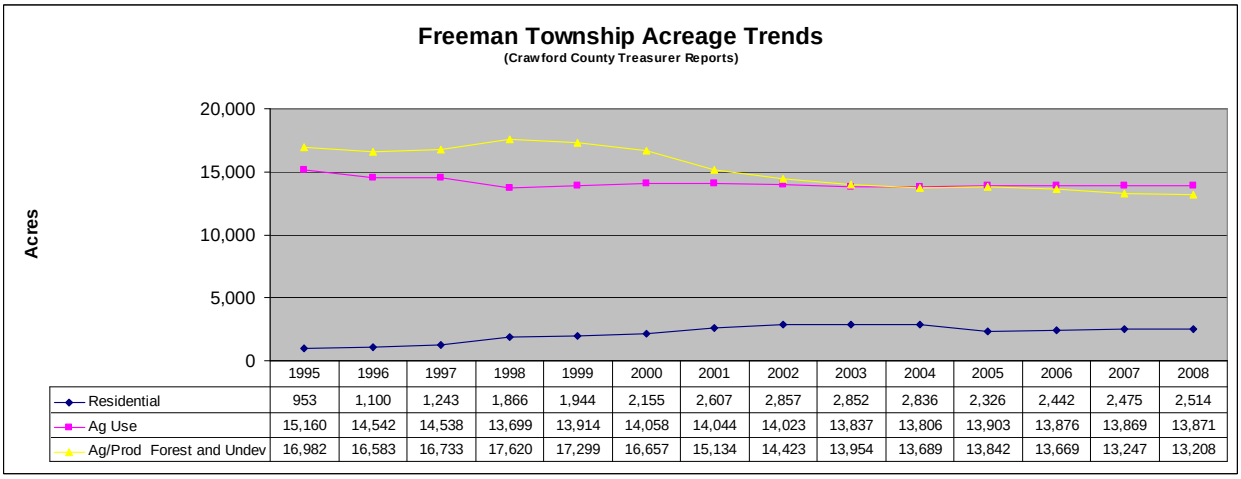
The number of active farmers has also declined since the 1970's to approximately 30 farms currently. This does not include hobby/small farms.

The following graphs illustrate the current land use land owner profile as gleaned from Crawford County Tax records.

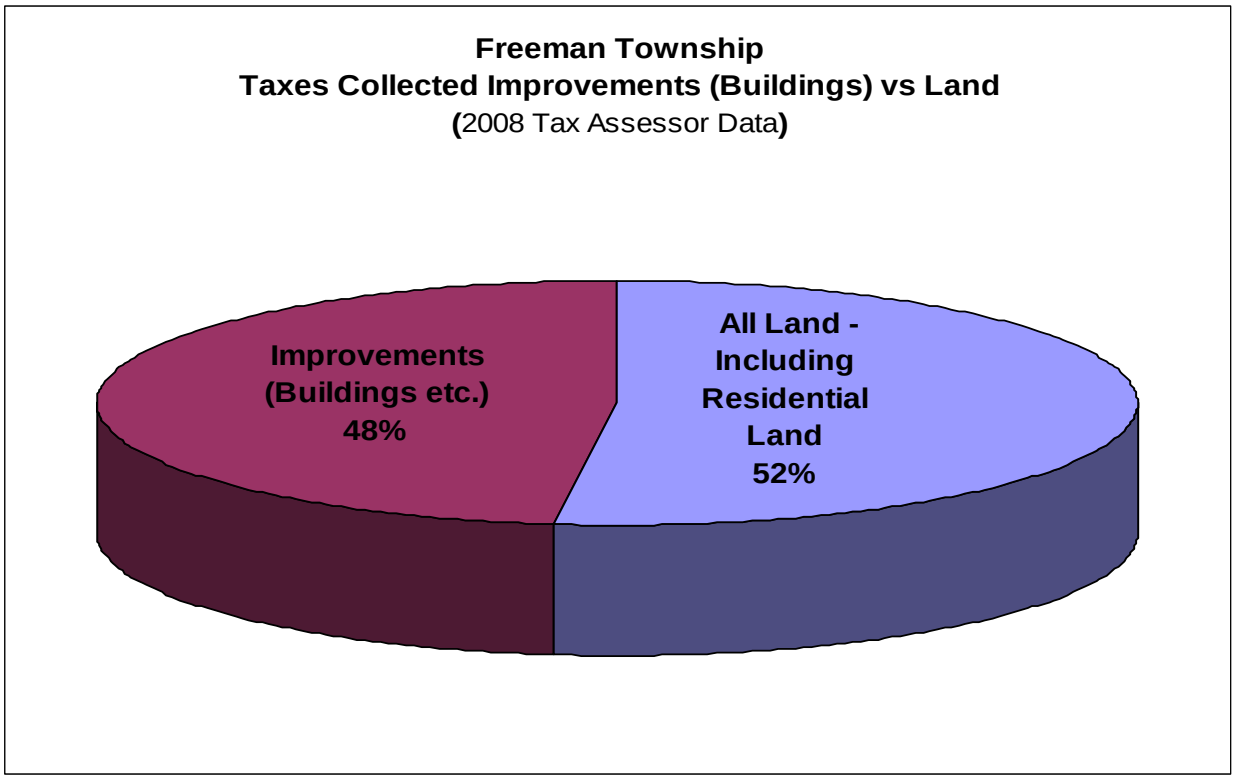


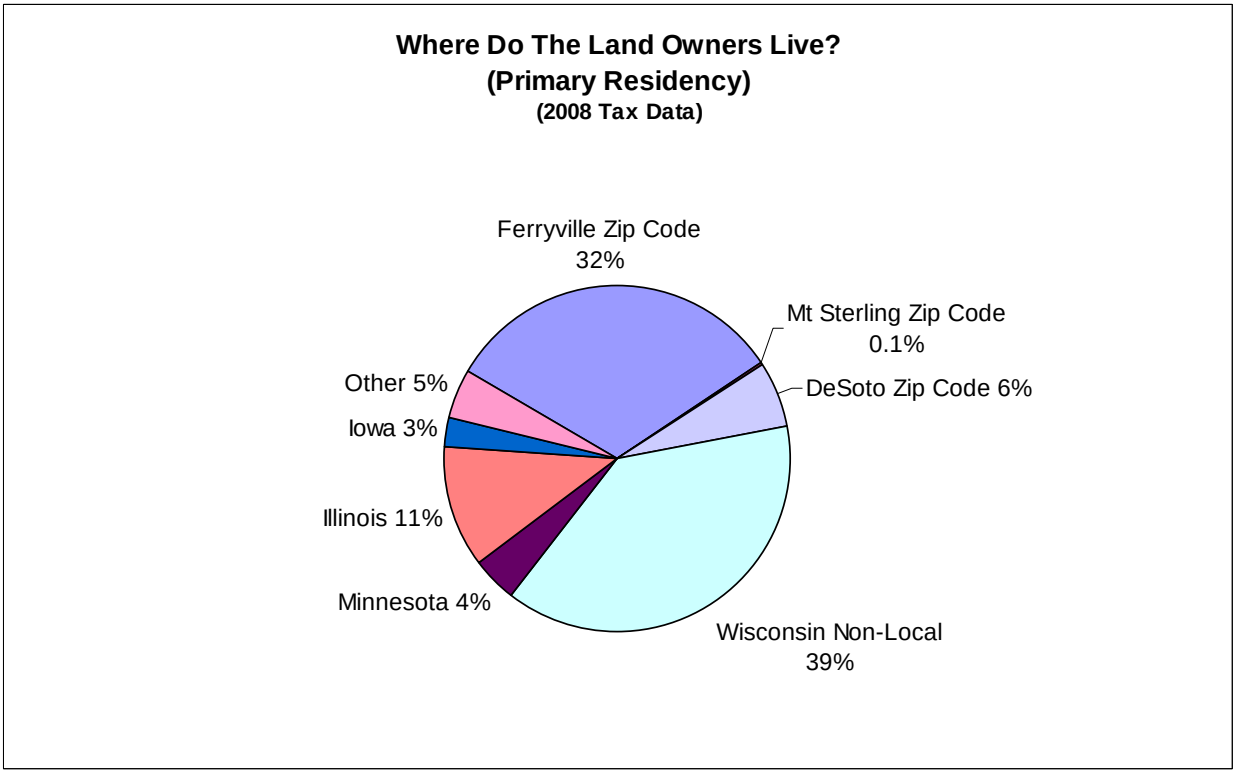




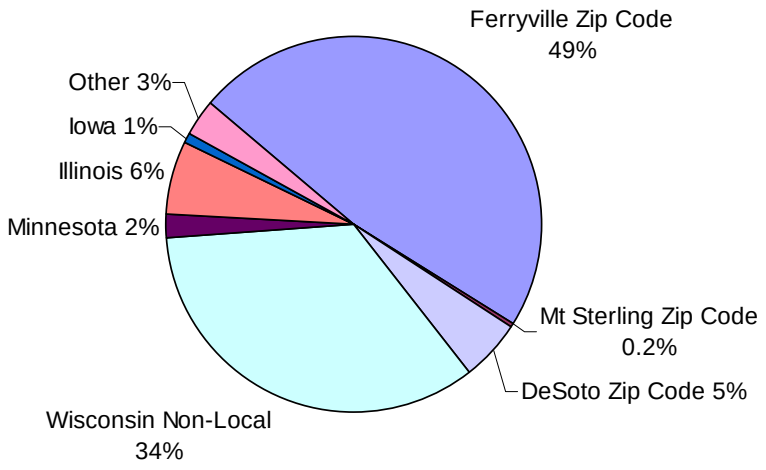


	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Residential	953	1,100	1,243	1,866	1,944	2,155	2,607	2,857	2,852	2,836	2,326	2,442	2,475	2,514
Ag Use	15,160	14,542	14,538	13,699	13,914	14,058	14,044	14,023	13,837	13,806	13,903	13,876	13,869	13,871
Ag/Prod Forest and Undev	16,982	16,583	16,733	17,620	17,299	16,657	15,134	14,423	13,954	13,689	13,842	13,669	13,247	13,208

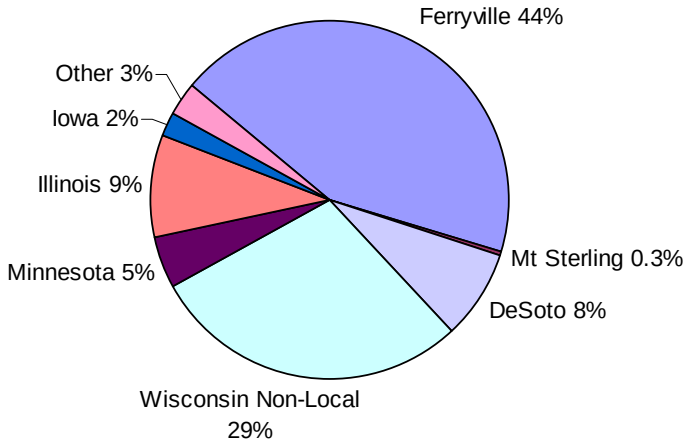

Freeman Township
Taxes Collected Improvements (Buildings) vs Land
(2008 Tax Assessor Data)
Improvements (Buildings etc.) 48%
All Land - Including Residential Land 52%

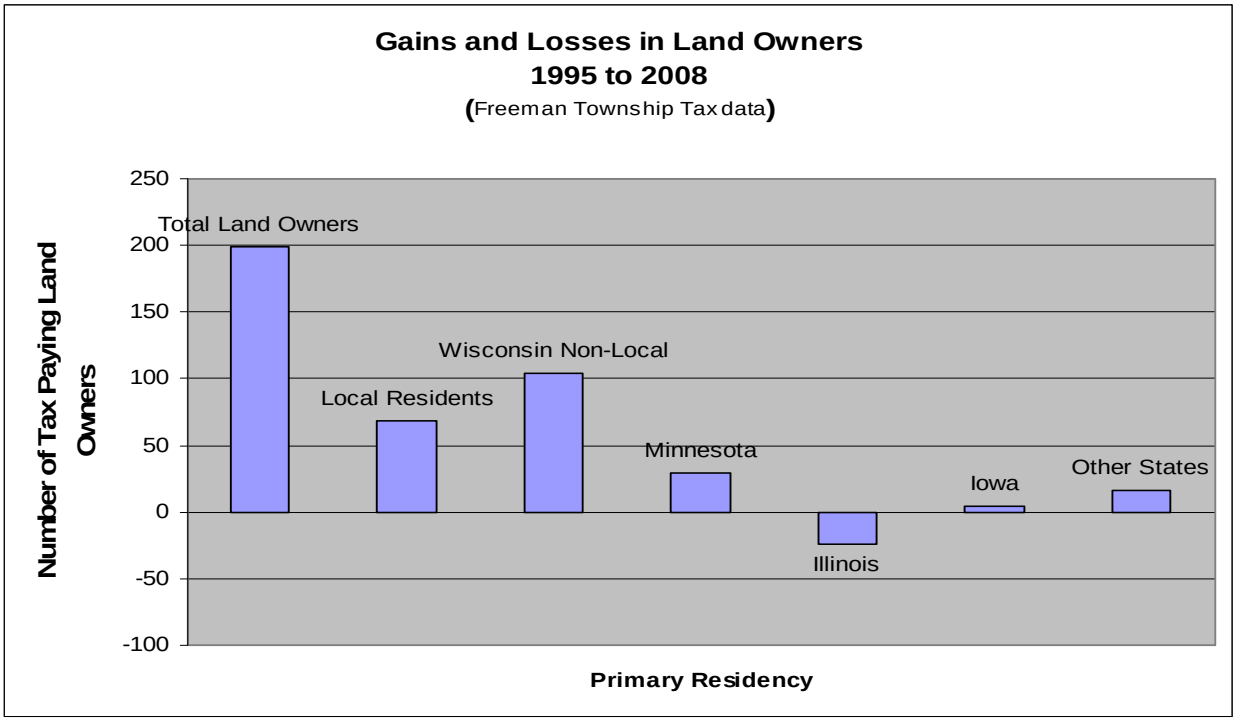

Where Do The Land Owners Live?
(Primary Residency)
(2008 Tax Data)
Ferryville Zip Code 32%
Mt Sterling Zip Code 0.1%
DeSoto Zip Code 6%
Other 5%
Iowa 3%
Illinois 11%
Minnesota 4%
Wisconsin Non-Local 39%

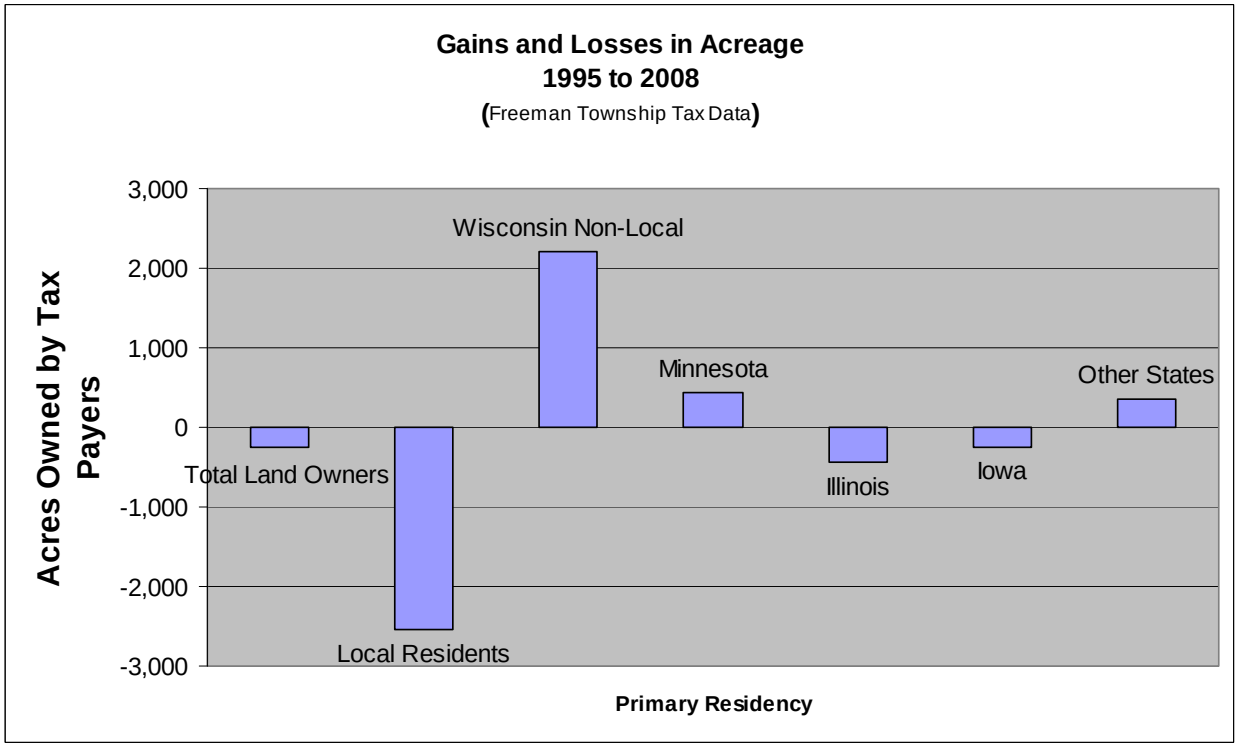
Acreage Owned According To Primary Residency Location
(2008 Tax Data)

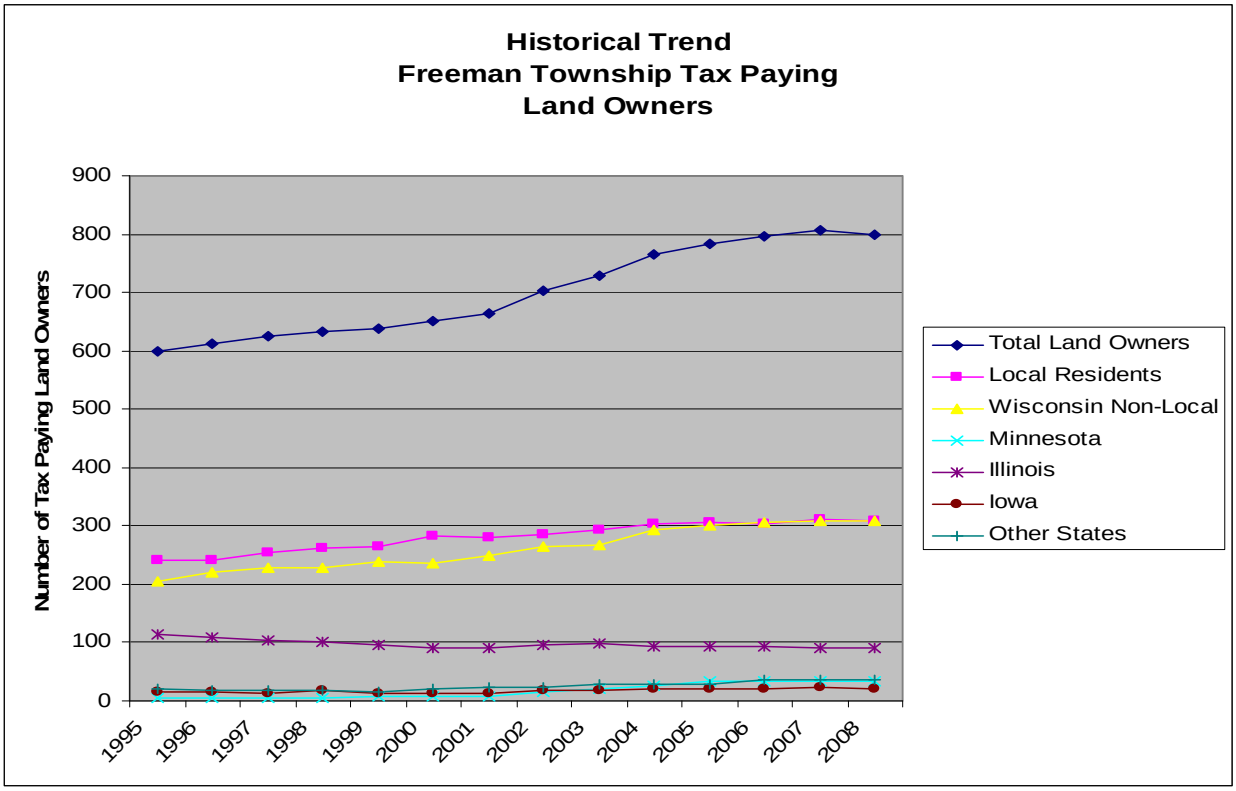


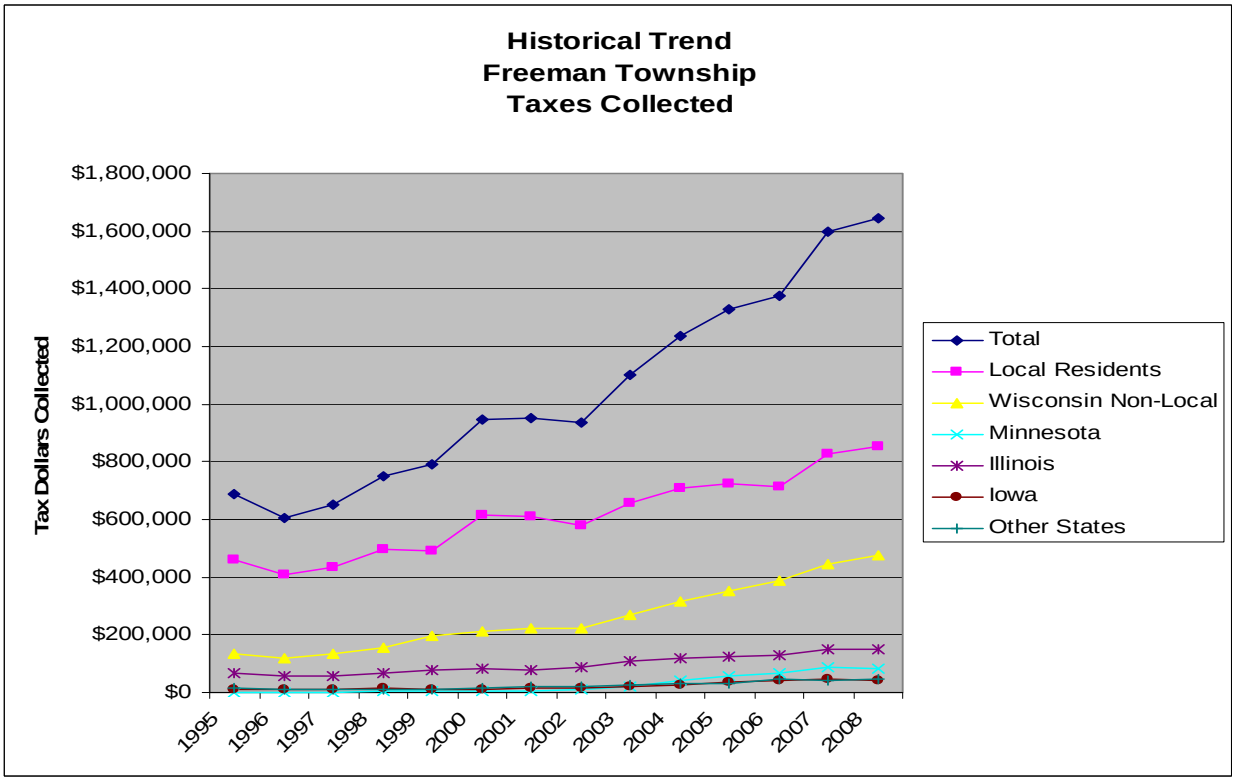
Taxes Collected by Primary Residency
(2008 Tax Data, Excludes DNR Payment In Lieu of Taxes - PILT)

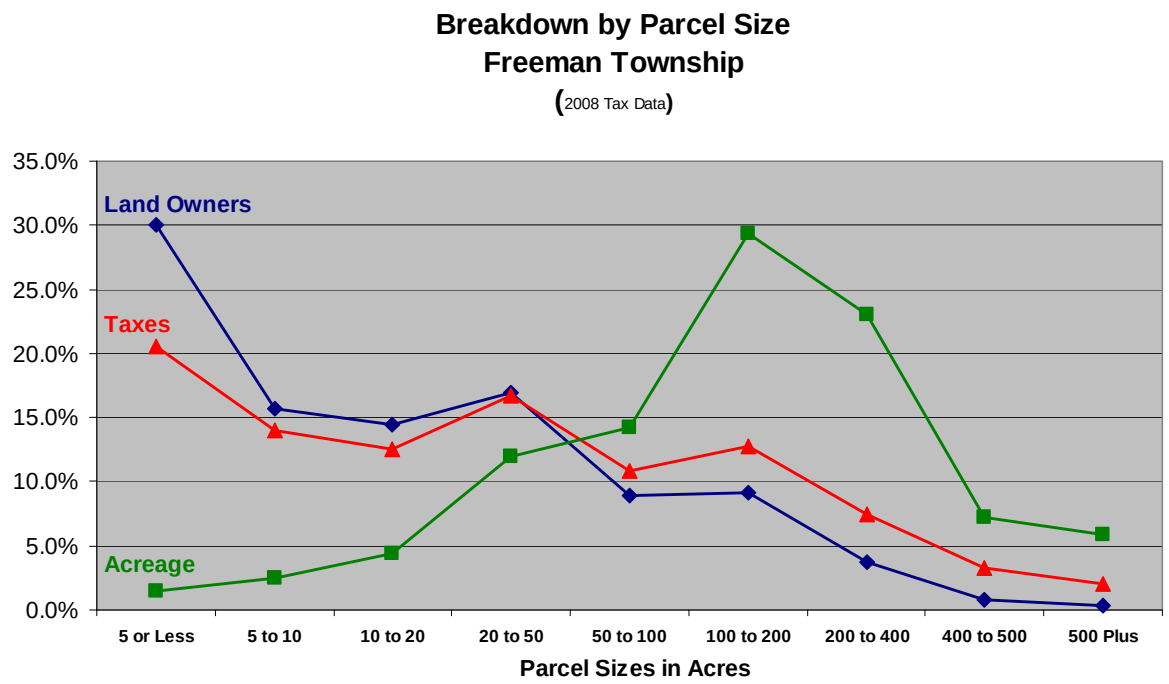



Gains and Losses in Land Owners
1995 to 2008
(Freeman Township Tax data)
Number of Tax Paying Land Owners
250
200
150
100
50
0
-50
-100
Total Land Owners
Local Residents
Wisconsin Non-Local
Minnesota
Illinois
Iowa
Other States
Primary Residency


Gains and Losses in Acreage
1995 to 2008
(Freeman Township Tax Data)
Acres Owned by Tax Payers
3,000
2,000
1,000
0
-1,000
-2,000
-3,000
Total Land Owners
Local Residents
Wisconsin Non-Local
Minnesota
Illinois
Iowa
Other States
Primary Residency


Historical Trend
Freeman Township Tax Paying
Land Owners
Number of Tax Paying Land Owners
900
800
700
600
500
400
300
200
100
0
1995
1996
1997
1998
1999
2000
2001
2002
2003
2004
2005
2006
2007
2008
Total Land Owners
Local Residents
Wisconsin Non-Local
Minnesota
Illinois
Iowa
Other States


Historical Trend
Freeman Township
Taxes Collected
Tax Dollars Collected
$1,800,000
$1,600,000
$1,400,000
$1,200,000
$1,000,000
$800,000
$600,000
$400,000
$200,000
$0
1995
1996
1997
1998
1999
2000
2001
2002
2003
2004
2005
2006
2007
2008
Total
Local Residents
Wisconsin Non-Local
Minnesota
Illinois
Iowa
Other States



Example: 30% of the 798 land owners in Freeman own parcels less than 5 acres each. They paid 20.5% of the taxes. They own only 1.5% of the total acres.

Economic Profile

Economic conditions have a direct impact on the supply, demand, and costs for housing, infrastructure, and services within a community. Therefore, it is necessary to examine the economic situation in the Town to anticipate future housing, infrastructure, and service needs. This section profiles the local economic environment by examining factors including per capita income, poverty rate, and unemployment rate.

To understand and appreciate the local economic picture in Freeman, we must look beyond the Town and examine characteristics of Crawford County and the southwest Wisconsin region. These comparisons provide additional information about the local economic situation beyond that which can be provided by looking exclusively at Freeman. Given that the economy of the Town depends heavily on the regional economy (i.e. Viroqua, Prairie du Chien, Lansing IA, La Crosse, etc.), an understanding of the relationship between these communities and Freeman is beneficial. Strong fluctuations in the regional economy will have a direct affect upon the Town of Freeman.

Due to a lack of detailed local economic data, the much of the remainder of the chapter focuses upon Crawford County. The information presented is based on 1990 U.S. Census, 1997 U.S. Economic Census, 2000 U.S. Census and other reliable sources. Specific information available for the Town of Freeman is incorporated where available and appropriate.

LABOR FORCE

The labor force is the sum of employed and unemployed persons who are 16 years of age and older. Table 6.0 (at right) tracks the rate of employment and unemployment in Crawford County over the last several years.

Table 6.0: Crawford County Civilian Labor Force Data

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Labor Force	9,339	9,333	9,405	9,456	9,691
Employed	8,866	8,820	8,819	8,949	9,223
Unemployed	473	513	586	507	468
Unemployment Rate	5.1%	5.5%	6.2%	5.4%	4.8%

Source: Crawford County Workforce Profile, Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, Office of Economic Advisors, Bureau of Workforce Information, Local Area Unemployment Statistics, December 2006.

The term used to describe the relationship between the labor force and population is participation rate. At 73%, Crawford County has a higher participation rate than the State of Wisconsin (70%) and the United States (67%). By comparison, Freeman's participation rate in 2005 was 61%, significantly lower than the three higher levels of government. Participation rates are the result of both economic and demographic conditions in a community, area, or region.

Are You In The Labor Force?

The labor force is the sum of employed and unemployed persons who are 16 years of age and older and who are willing and actively seeking work. Institutionalized populations are not included in the labor force.

Table 7.0 (below) highlights the labor force in select Crawford County communities in 2000. With an unemployment rate of 1.4%, the Town of Freeman was less than half of that of Crawford County and the State of Wisconsin.

Table 7.0: Labor Force Comparison, 2000

	Town of Freeman	Town of Seneca	Town of Utica	Village of Ferryville	Crawford County	Wisconsin
Labor Force	350	452	394	92	8,681	2,872,104
Employed	342	431	370	86	8,250	2,734,925
Unemployed	8	21	21	5	420	134,311
% of County Labor Force	4.0%	5.2%	4.5%	1.1%	100%	n/a
Unemployment Rate	1.4%	3.1%	3.7%	3.4%	3.1%	3.2%

SOURCE: US Census 2000 and Wisconsin Department of Administration Demographic Services Center, 2007.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The Town of Freeman, like many rural communities, possesses limited commercial and industrial development. Residents in the work force tend to find employment outside of the Town…within Crawford County or elsewhere in the region. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, there were 431 employed residents of Freeman. Table 8.0 (on the following page) provides a description of employment by industry sector for Freeman residents in 2000.

As the table shows, the largest employers of residents by industry sector in 2000 were:

- Agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting, and mining (20.8%);
- Manufacturing (19.3%);
- Retail (12.6%); and,
- Educational, health, and social services (11.4%).

By comparison, in 1990 the largest employers of residents by industry sector were:

- Agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting, and mining (28.9%)
- Educational, health, and social services (13.1%)
- Retail (12.8%); and,
- Manufacturing (12.4%).

Table 8.0: Freeman Employment by Industry Sector, 2000		
Industry Sector	**Number**	**Percent**
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting & mining	71	20.8%
Construction	13	3.8%
Manufacturing	66	19.3%
Wholesale trade	15	4.4%
Retail trade	43	12.6%
Transportation and warehousing and utilities	23	6.7%
Information	4	1.2%
Finance, insurance, real estate and leasing	22	6.4%
Professional, scientific, management, administrative and waste management services	15	4.4%
Educational, health and social services	39	11.4%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	10	2.9%
Other services (except public administration)	11	3.2%
Public administration	10	2.9%
SOURCE: US Census 2000 and Wisconsin Department of Administration Demographic Services Center, 2007.		

Although farming remains a principal economic influence in Freeman, The agricultural sector, in terms of the number of farms, has declined noticeably during the past decade As of July 2009, there are approximately 30 fulltime active farms.

LOCAL EMPLOYERS

The previous section in this chapter described the type of employment available to residents following the 2000 US Census. Table 9.0 (below) provides a listing of the top twenty-five employers in Crawford County. Although Census data does not identify actual workplaces, it can be assumed that many residents of Freeman are employed by one of the firms included in this table.

Table 9.0: Crawford County Top 25 Employers, November 2005.			
Rank	**Employer**	**Industry Type**	**Employee Size Range**
1	Cabela's Wholesale, Inc.	Mail order houses	1000+
2	Miniature Precision Components, Inc.	All other plastic product manufacturing	500-999
3	3M Company	Abrasive product manufacturing	500-999
4	Design Homes, Inc.	Prefabricated wood building manufacturing	250-499
5	Wal-Mart Associates, Inc.	Discount department stores	250-499
6	Prairie Du Chien Memorial Hospital	Child day care services	250-499
7	Prairie Du Chien Public School	Elementary and secondary schools	100-249
8	Prairie Industries, Inc.	Packaging and labeling services	100-249
9	Prairie Du Chien Correctional Facility	Correctional institutions	100-249
10	County of Crawford	Executive and legislative offices, combined	100-249
11	Cabela's Retail, Inc.	Sporting goods stores	100-249
12	Dillman Equipment, Inc.	Construction equipment merchandise wholesalers	100-249
13	Wyaslung Academy	Residential mental health and substance abuse facility	100-249
14	Prairie Maison	Nursing care facility	100-249
15	City of Prairie Du Chien	Executive and legislative offices, combined	100-249

16	North Crawford School District	School and employee bus transportation	100-249
17	UFP Ventures, Inc.	Wood preservation	100-249
18	Coaches Family Restaurant, Inc.	Full-service restaurants	50-99
19	Sannes Skogdalen Nursing Facility	Nursing care facilities	50-99
20	Homeward Bound, Inc.	Services for the elderly and disabled	50-99
21	Wauzeka Public School	Elementary and secondary schools	50-99
22	Lori Knapp Crawford, Inc.	Community Based Residential Facilities (CBRF)	50-99
23	Brodbeck Enterprises, inc.	Supermarkets and other grocery stores	50-99
24	School District of Seneca	Elementary and secondary schools	50-99
25	Gundersen Lutheran Administrative	Offices of physicians, except mental health	50-99

Source: Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development and Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission, 2007.

Some of these firms have either closed or reduce their employment recently.

COMMUTING PATTERNS

American workers are becoming increasingly mobile. The national average drive-to-work time is approaching thirty minutes (33.1 minutes in Freeman). Telecommuting and working from home are becoming a more acceptable and desired employment option.

A glimpse at Table 10.0 (at right) shows the commuting patterns of Crawford County. Of the total employed workforce of Crawford County, 5,896 reside and work in the county. The number of workers who commute outside the county for work (2,231) is comparable to those who live outside the county and commute in (2,253). Considerably more people commute in to Crawford County from Iowa (1,027) than commute out (387), while 13 county residents find employment in Cook County, Illinois.

Table 10.0: Crawford County Commuting Patterns, 2000

	Crawford County Residents Commuting to Other County	Residents of Listed County Commuting into Crawford County	Net Commute
Grant Co. WI	782	837	55
Vernon Co. WI	351	167	-184
Clayton Co. IA	264	737	473
La Crosse Co. WI	164	82	-82
Richland Co. WI	153	52	-101
Dane Co. WI	99	-	-99
Allamakee Co. IA	90	246	156
Iowa Co. WI	36	11	-25
Sauk Co. WI	22	-	-22
Monroe Co. WI	21	-	-21
Milwaukee Co. WI	17	-	-17
Rock Co. WI	16	-	-16
Waukesha Co. WI	15	-	-15
Cook Co. IL	13	-	-13
Dubuque Co. IA	12	-	-12
Benton Co. IA	11	-	-11
Dodge Co. WI	10	-	-10
Linn Co. IA	10	21	11
Winneshiek Co. IA	-	23	23
Elsewhere	145	77	-68
Total	2,231	2,253	-22
Reside and work in Crawford County			5,896

SOURCE: US Census 2000 and Wisconsin Department of Administration Demographic Services Center, 2007.

INCOME & WAGES

There are numerous ways in which demographers categorize income. The three most common are *per capita, median household,* and *median* family *income*:

- ***Per capita income*** is total income divided by the total number of residents, including children and other groups of individuals who do not actually earn income.
- ***Median household income*** is the middle point of household incomes reported in a community (households include families, married couple households, and individual households).
- ***Median family income*** is the middle income reported by families in the 2000 U.S. Census.

Table 11 shows the income comparisons for Crawford County Townships.

Table 11.0: Income Comparison

	2000 Per Capita Income	2000 Median Household Income	2000 Median Family Income
Town of Freeman	$16,609	$30,500	$39,375
Town of Franklin	$12,849	$32,931	$34,511
Town of Seneca	$16,434	$35,227	$42,321
Town of Sterling	$13,402	$28,125	$31,563
Town of Wheatland	$19,246	$35,500	$40,000
Town of Utica	$12,177	$30,000	$33,015
Village of Ferryville	$20,602	$33,958	$45,833
Crawford County	$16,833	$34,135	$41,540
State of Wisconsin	$21,271	$43,791	$52,911

SOURCE: US Census 2000 and Wisconsin Department of Administration Demographic Services Center, 2007.

Income for residents in Crawford County has been consistently lower than state averages, as illustrated in Table 11.0 (above). Again, this typical of a relatively undeveloped rural county. In fact, each of the selected communities (as well as the County) fell below the state income standard for each of the three income classifications.

POVERTY STATUS

According to the 2000 U.S. Census:

- One-hundred and twenty-one individuals in Freeman were living below the poverty line in 2000
- Nineteen of these individuals were age 65 or older
- There were also eighteen families living below the poverty line in 2000

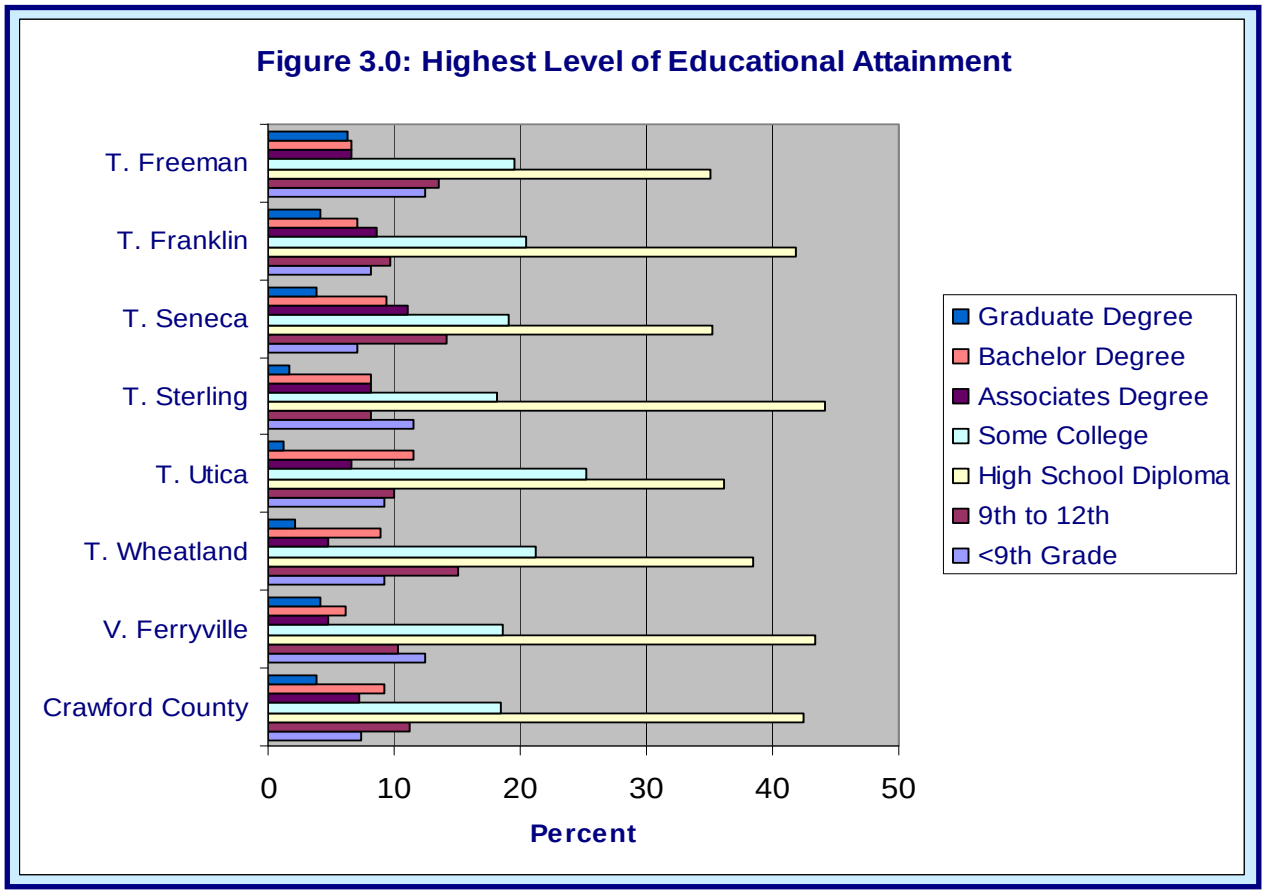
Table 12.0: 2007 HHS Poverty Guidelines			
Size of Family Unit	**48 Contiguous States and D.C.**	**Alaska**	**Hawaii**
1	$10,210	$12,770	$11,750
2	$13,690	$17,120	$15,750
3	$17,170	$21,470	$19,750
4	$20,650	$25,820	$23,750
5	$24,130	$30,170	$27,750
6	$27,610	$34,520	$31,750
7	$31,090	$38,870	$35,750
8	$34,570	$43,220	$39,750
Each Additional	$3,480	$4,350	$4,000
SOURCE: 2007 Health and Human Services Poverty Guidelines, One Version of the Federal Poverty Measure, Federal Register, Vol. 71, No. 15, January 24, 2007, and pp. 3848-3849.			

In total, 16.3% of the Town's population were living in poverty in 2000. This figure is significantly higher than Crawford County (10.2%) as well as the State of Wisconsin (8.7%).. Poverty guidelines are a base-level figure (see Table 12.0 at right). They do not take into account, at the local level, the costs of housing, transportation, goods and services. Although the poverty level for a family of four in Chicago is the same as that of a family of four in Freeman, the cost-of-living differences between the two communities would indicate a greater ability to "make ends meet" in the rural community.

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

The level of educational attainment in a community serves as a good indicator of the quality of life. Generally, a high level of educational attainment reflects a skilled population with higher earnings potential. Figure 3.0 (on following page) illustrates the level of educational attainment for persons age 25 and over in Freeman and surrounding communities in 2000. Each of the bars in the chart represents the percentage of the community that has reached its highest level of educational attainment within a given category. For example, the educational attainment for 35.3% of the residents of Freeman over the age of 25 climaxed at a high school diploma or equivalency, whereas, 74% of residents achieved *at least* a high school diploma. The additional 38.7% received some college education (19.5%), an associate degree (6.6%), a bachelor's degree (6.6%), or a graduate degree (6.3%).

The bulleted list below provides a comparison of the select communities with respect to the percentage of their residents over the age of 25 that have achieved high school graduation or higher. The source for data included within Figure 3.0 and the list below was the WDOA Demographic Services Center and 2000 US Census.



Percentage of Population Over Age 25 with High School Diploma or Higher

- Town of Freeman 35.0%
- Town of Franklin 41.9%
- Town of Seneca 35.3%
- Town of Sterling 44.1%
- Town of Utica 36.1%
- Town of Wheatland 38.5%
- Village of Ferryville 43.4%
- Crawford County 42.5%

General Economic Forecasts[1]

The United States, Wisconsin, and Crawford County are expected to post markedly slower economic growth over the next 25 years than during the past quarter-century. The prime causal factors for this slowdown are already in place: labor force growth constrained by demographic forces that cannot be quickly reversed and relatively moderate growth of the capital stock.

For the Town of Freeman, these indicators are important because they may impact land use and the quality of life for residents living in the area. Furthermore, these key economic indicators provide a gauge for the Town's ability to support additional commercial and industrial development over the next 20 years.

[1] Much of the text in this section was excerpted from the Wisconsin Department of Revenue Long-Term Economic Forecast, 2001.

Introduction

In most instances, rural towns have a high percentage of single-family homes with few other housing choices available. In the process of developing the Comprehensive Plan for Freeman, the existing housing stock has been reviewed.

Of the fourteen planning goals, one listed below specifically relate to planning for local housing:

- Providing adequate infrastructure and public services and an adequate supply of developable land to meet existing and future market demand in the township.

Housing Vision

In 2028, Freeman offers rural residential living choices consistent with the Town's natural environment. Single-family homes are the primary housing choice with additional well designed and well constructed alternative housing styles meeting the needs of a diversity of residents. Seasonal- and second-homes continue to comprise a significant portion of the housing units in the community.

Housing Issues and Concerns

Significant amounts of new residential development will, if unguided, change the character of Freeman. Concern about increased growth and its impact on the rural character of the Town was an important motivation for developing this plan. The following options may be considered as a strategy to maintain the community's rural character:

- Retain farmland and open/undeveloped lands (this topic is discussed more in the Agricultural, Natural & Cultural Resources Chapter 7);
- Consider the development of a subdivision ordinance, zoning ordinance, and other local management tools to manage new residential development;
- Encourage or require conservation design for all new subdivision development; and,
- Locate homes and mobile homes in the most appropriate place within a new parcel.

VACATION AND SECOND HOMES

The Town's beautiful natural setting presents residents and elected officials with what some see as an opportunity and others view as a nuisance…residential and commercial development pressure. Freeman's scenic location on the banks of the Mississippi River, with its bluffs, valleys, and diverse topography, drives the development of second and vacation homes. As the demand for this type of development increases, property values will continue to rise,. Rising property values, together with the lack of employment opportunities may pose challenges for residents to afford to live in the community, particularly young families and retirees. However, rising values also provide other residents the ability to "cash out" as their needs change.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT & GREEN BUILDING DESIGN[1]

The township recognizes the advantage of environmentally sound building practices and designs. These could include more efficient construction methods and materials and efficient energy uses. A number of web sites exist to guide residents and landowners.

SENIOR HOUSING

The number of Town residents age 65 or older is growing. The number of people in Freeman between the ages of 45 and 65 increased from 150 in 1990 to 221 in 2000 (47.3% increase).

Freeman has seniors who live in their own homes, but has no senior housing as traditionally defined. Public services are available through the county, and state (Meals on Wheels, Medical Transportation). Private services are available through family, friends, and church groups.

In recent years, a variety of alternative housing options for seniors have become available in nearby communities which are often better suited to locations in closer proximity to other services like healthcare and shopping.

Existing Housing Supply

Township of Freeman, has land development occurring and is expected to continue into the future. Land development is different from traditional urban and suburban subdivision developments in that the land development provides roads, electric and phones, but private owners build their own homes and have private septic systems.

The Existing Land Use map in Chapter 9 shows a one acre dot for each fire number. The vast majority of fire number locations depict housing and show a scattered low density profile. Some fire numbers however are not residences like boat ramps.

In addition to farmstead and scattered site housing, the housing stock in Freeman Township is increasing in several specific areas including the following:

Lawrence Ridge (Grand Vista)
Halworth Rd
Moldrem Rd
Chandler Rd
N. Buck Creek Rd
Buck Creek
DeSoto Bluffs
DeSoto Ridge
Turkey Run
White Rd
Mule Hollow
Rush Creek – Coulee Creek
Sugar Creek (Cty “C”)
Smith Rd

[1] SOURCE: *http://www.usgbc.org/*

In 1990, there were 373 housing units in the Town of Freeman. By the 2000 U.S. Census the number had increased by 32.2% to 493. By comparison, the total number of housing units in Crawford County increased by 15.9% during the same timeframe. Table 13.0 (on following page) compares the change in housing units from 1990 to 2000 for select communities adjoining the Town of Freeman. As the table shows, the percentage increase in housing units in the Town of Freeman exceeded that of the State, Crawford County, and every other community excepting the Village of Ferryville.

Table 13.0: Total Housing Units, 1990 and 2000

	1990	2000	Percent Change
Town of Freeman	373	493	32.2%
Town of Franklin	352	382	8.5%
Town of Seneca	397	479	20.7%
Town of Sterling	253	278	9.9%
Town of Utica	343	360	5.0%
Town of Wheatland	289	317	9.7%
Village of Ferryville	95	149	56.8%
Crawford County	7,315	8,480	15.9%
Wisconsin	2,055,774	2,084,544	1.4%

SOURCE: US Census 2000 and Wisconsin Department of Administration Demographic Services Center, 2007.

The housing supply in Freeman consists primarily of single-family homes (see Table 13.0 below right), with a high percentage of mobile homes (34.9% in Freeman compared to 20.2% for Crawford County and 4.4% for Wisconsin as a whole). The Town recognizes that single-family homes may not fit the needs of, or be desired by, everyone. Some residents are not able to afford a single-family home. Others may not wish the maintenance responsibilities necessary to keep up a home and yard. Still others may simply prefer living in an alternative style of housing. Given the rural nature and topography and low population density per square mile of Freeman, higher density housing developments are not likely in the next 20 years.

Table 14.0: Breakdown Of Housing Stock in Town of Freeman by Type, 2000.

Type	Number	Percent
Single Family Detached	286	60.2%
Single Family Attached	2	0.4%
Duplexes	6	1.3%
Tri- and Quad-Plexes	--	--
5 to 9 Unit Structures	--	--
10 to 19 Unit Structures	--	--
20 or More Unit Structures	--	--
Mobile Homes	166	34.9%
Boat, RV, van, etc	15	3.2%
Total	475	100%

SOURCE: US Census 2000 and Wisconsin Department of Administration Demographic Services Center, 2007.
*Note: The discrepancy between total housing units in Tables 12 and 13 results from individual reporting errors during the 2000 US Census.

AGE AND QUALITY OF HOUSING STOCK

A good indicator of the quality of available housing in a community is the age of the housing stock. Table 15.0 (at bottom right) lists the number of units and the corresponding percent of housing stock by year built. More than half (50.8%) of the Town's housing has been constructed since 1970. One quarter of the existing housing units were built before 1939. These figures are important for two reasons. First, it demonstrates that the majority of Freeman's housing is relatively modern – built with modern building products/technologies and to modern code requirements. At the same time, a significant share of the Town's housing predates World War II and the post-war improvements in building construction

Occupancy

In 2000, the vacancy rate in Freeman was 4.0% for owner-occupied units. No data was available for rental vacancy rates. By comparison, the owner-occupied housing unit vacancy rate in Crawford County as a whole was 2.8% in 2000. Although the 4.0% rate for owner-occupied housing in Freeman is high when com[pared to HUD guidelines, it must be noted that 160 of the 192 vacant units in 2000 (83.3%) were classified as for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use. This is typical in a community with such a high percentage of second- and vacation-homes.

Table 15.0: Age Of Housing Stock in Freeman, 2000.

Year Structure Built	# of Units	% Of Total
1990 to 2000	77	16.2%
1980 to 1989	72	15.2%
1970 to 1979	92	19.4%
1960 to 1969	68	14.3%
1940 to 1959	45	9.5%
1939 or earlier	121	25.5%
Total	475	100.0%

SOURCE: US Census 2000 and Wisconsin Department of Administration Demographic Services Center, 2007.

Cost of Housing

Owner-occupied Housing Units

Table 16.0 provides a comparison of median home values following the 2000 Census for the communities adjoining Freeman, Crawford County, and the State of Wisconsin. The median value of an owner-occupied home in Freeman following the 2000 Census was $74,000, an increase of 83.2% from the 1990 Census. The increase in home value in the community was higher than that of the County and the State; most likely due to the desirability to live in Freeman.

Table 16.0: Median Owner Occupied Home Values, 2000.

Community	1990 Median Value	2000 Median Value	% Change 1990-2000
Town of Freeman	$40,400	$74,000	83.2%
Town of Franklin	$49,200	$67,500	37.2%
Town of Seneca	$38,300	$64,100	67.4%
Town of Sterling	$33,500	$55,800	66.6%
Town of Wheatland	$41,300	$80,500	94.9%
Town of Utica	$36,800	$66,000	79.3%
Village of Ferryville	$33,100	$67,500	103.9%
Crawford County	$42,900	$75,100	75.1%
State of Wisconsin	$62,500	$112,200	79.5%

SOURCE: US Census 2000 and Wisconsin Department of Administration Demographic Services Center, 2007.

Table 17.0 (on the following page) provides a comparison by value of owner-occupied units in the Town of Freeman following the 1990 and 2000 Census. The table does not reflect units built since 2000. In 2000, more than half of all owner-occupied (non-vacant) homes in Freeman were valued between $50,000 and $99,999.

Rental Units

Of the 33 rental units located in Freeman in 2000, none included more than two units per structure. Rental housing in the community may include single-family homes, duplexes, and mobile homes. The median monthly contract rent rate in Freeman was $413. By comparison, the median amount paid by all renters in Crawford County in 2000 was $394.

Table 17.0: 2000 Owner-Occupied Housing Value In Freeman, WI		
Cost Range	**Number of Units**	**% Of All Town Owner Occupied Housing**
Less than $50,000	19	27.9%
$50,000 to $99,999	38	55.9%
$100,000 to $149,999	4	5.9%
$150,000 to $199,999	2	2.9%
$200,000 to $299,999	5	7.4%
$300,000 to $499,999	-	--
$500,000 or more	-	--
SOURCE: US Census 2000 and Wisconsin Department of Administration Demographic Services Center, 2007.		

Table 18.0: Percentage of Annual Income Allocated to Housing for Households in Town of Freeman, 2000.		
Owner-occupied Housing		
Percent of Income	**Number of Households**	**Percent of Households**
Less than 15%	25	36.8%
15% to 19%	14	20.6%
20% to 24.9%	10	14.7%
25% to 29.9%	4	5.9%
30% to 34.9%	8	11.8%
35% or more	7	10.3%
Not computed	--	--
Renter-occupied Housing		
Percent of Income	**Number of Households**	**Percent of Households**
Less than 15%	17	51.5%
15% to 19%	--	--
20% to 24.9%	5	15.2%
25% to 29.9%	--	--
30% to 34.9%	--	--
35% or more	3	9.1%
Not computed	8	24.2
SOURCE: US Census 2000 and Wisconsin Department of Administration Demographic Services Center, 2007.		

Current and Future Housing Needs

The abundance of second- and vacation-homes undoubtedly plays a role in the availability of affordable and other alternative housing options in Freeman. The next section of this chapter focuses on current and future housing needs in the Town of Freeman. As noted in chapter 3, the projected population growth is flat to decreasing. This suggests a minimal increase in the quantity of full time residential housing stock in the Township. What is likely to increase is the quantity of 2nd homes and cabins.

This section of the Housing Chapter is intended to identify the alternatives to be considered in order to meet current housing shortfalls and future needs in the Town of Freeman. The housing issues and alternatives discussed in this section were identified based upon a variety of factors, including:

- Input from landowners, business owners, elected and appointed officials, and other stakeholders during the SWOT and Vision Exercises;
- A thorough review of demographic data from the 1990 and 2000 US Censuses;
- National, regional, and state trends related to the economy, environment, and changing lifestyles resulting in increased demand for alternatives to large, single-family homes.

OPTIONS FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING

HUD defines housing affordability based upon the median household income of current residents compared with the median value of available owner-occupied and rental housing in a community. HUD criteria have determined that housing is *affordable* when the annual cost of housing does not exceed 30% of the annual income of residents. Following the 2000 Census, 22.1% of home owners and 9.1% of renters exceeded the 30% threshold (see Table 18.0 on page 4-5). Although the current housing stock in Freeman is valued lower than that of neighboring communities and the County as a whole, national and regional trends suggest that future property values will increase in proportion to household incomes thereby decreasing the availability of affordable housing in the community.

A variety of options are available to local government to increase the availability of affordable housing. They may be regulatory or non-regulatory in nature, and include:

MANUFACTURED HOUSING

Freeman township recognizes stick built manufactured homes and mobile homes as affordable housing.

LOW INCOME HOUSING TAX CREDITS

The Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program is run by the IRS and allows companies to invest in low-income housing while receiving 10 years of tax credits. This important program works with state housing finance agencies to administer the program on a state level. Housing credit units are privately owned by developers and are run at a profit.

Housing Programs

A number of federal and state housing programs are available to help the Town promote the development of housing for individuals with lower incomes, seniors, and people with special needs.

1. US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

   HUD is the federal agency primarily responsible for housing programs and community development. Though many of its programs are directed to larger cities and urban areas, the Town would qualify for some available funds. Specifically, HUD provides money to non-entitlement (i.e. communities with populations less than 50,000) communities through grants. In the State of Wisconsin, The Division of Housing and Intergovernmental Relations (DHIR), within the Department of Administration, is responsible for the distribution of these federal funds. It awards the funds through a competitive proposal process.

2. United States Department of Agriculture-Rural Development (USDA-RD)

USDA-RD provides a variety of housing and community development programs for rural areas. Its programs are generally available to communities with populations of 10,000 or less. It provides support for rental housing development, direct and guaranteed mortgage loans for homebuyers, and support for self-help and cooperative housing development. These funds may prove helpful in the development of a senior housing facility.

3. Wisconsin Department of Administration – Division of Housing and Intergovernmental Relations (DHIR)

   Beyond the funds distributed through HUD, the DHIR administers several state funded programs that can potentially be used to finance housing improvements. Money available through the DHIR, because it is funded by general-purpose revenue, cannot be used to invest directly in housing development. However, funds can achieve the desired result by helping organizations develop the capacity to construct houses or by providing various types of financial assistance to homebuyers or renters through grants to local governments or non-profit agencies.

4. Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA)

   WHEDA is a quasi-governmental agency that finances housing development through the sale of bonds. Unlike the DHIR, it receives no direct state-tax support. Therefore, WHEDA can provide mortgage financing for first-time homebuyers and financing for multi-family housing as well. Specific programs evolve and change with the needs of the housing market.

Coordination with Other Comprehensive Plan Chapters

Housing is the primary developed land use in the Town of Freeman. As such, it directly affects most other chapters of this comprehensive plan. The goals and policies set forth in this Housing Chapter will affect these chapters and vice versa. Therefore, it is important that the chapters are consistent and support one another.

LAND USE – CHAPTER 9 AND 10

Land use dictates the amount of land available for housing, as well as its location, type and density. The Future Land Use Map(s) devote acres to residential use over the next 20 years in accordance with desired density restrictions.

UTILITIES & COMMUNITY FACILITIES – CHAPTER 6

Recommended improvements such as roads, parks, trails, and schools all must be coordinated with the housing decisions and vice versa. The best method to coordinate improvements is to follow the land use pattern presented on the Future Land Use Map(s) as closely as possible and plan for future improvements in a Capital Improvements Plan and Budget as recommended in *Chapter 6: Utilities and Community Facilities*. This approach will greatly enhance the efficiency of capital improvements and services.

TRANSPORTATION – CHAPTER 5

The location of housing affects commuting patterns and transportation costs. The location of housing influences which roads people drive or whether they need to drive at all. These factors were carefully considered in *Chapter 5: Transportation* to ensure compatibility with projected residential development.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - CHAPTER 8

Housing needs must be linked to a community's economic situation. Specifically, it is important to ensure that the local housing supply is affordable to residents. For this reason, an affordability analysis is presented in this chapter (pages 4-4 and 4-5). Furthermore, given that housing is the primary developed land use in the community, quality local housing directly impacts the Town's ability to finance needed improvements to support the local economy through collection of property taxes.

AGRICULTURAL, NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES - CHAPTER 7

The desire to preserve agricultural and natural areas competes with the desire of others to build additional housing. These competing interests are balanced through the land suitability analysis information presented in the *Chapter 7: Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources*. This information helps to ensure that housing is located in areas that will have the least impact possible on existing farming areas and important natural resources, while still supporting additional residential development needs.

Housing Policies, Goals, and Objectives

The policies, goals, and objectives related to Housing in the Town of Freeman can be found in *Chapter 12: Implementation*.

Introduction

A diversified, well-balanced transportation system is a major factor affecting growth and quality of life in a community. The transportation system exists to move people, goods, and services both through and within the community. Planning for the various modes of transportation is an important component of the Town of Freeman Comprehensive Plan.

The Town transportation system consists of arterial roads, county trunks, a state highway, and a railroad corridor. This chapter examines the transportation network, including a summary of existing transportation plans, studies, and assessments, and provides a list of recommendations to address future transportation needs and desires.

Wisconsin's Smart Growth Law for transportation planning includes the following 3 specific goals:

- Encouragement of designs that support a range of transportation choices.
- Encouragement of coordination and cooperation among nearby units of government.
- Provides an integrated, efficient, and economical transportation system that affords mobility, convenience and safety and meets the needs of all citizens, including transit dependent and disabled citizens.

Inventory of Existing Transportation Facilities

Transportation facilities in Freeman include state highways, town and county roads, and surface streets. Residents enjoy easy access to STH 35 along the Mississippi River shoreline and STH 82 crossing the Mississippi River just south of the Village of De Soto. Highway 35 provide direct access to USH 18 near Prairie du Chien to the south and USH 35 to the north to La Crosse. STH 171, in the far southern portion of the Town, and CTH B and CTH C are the primary east-west access routes through Freeman. Other modes of transit, including light rail and air transportation are not currently available and are not likely to be developed during the next 20 years.

Walking & Bicycling

Areas for safe walking and bicycling within the Town are limited to the Villages of Ferryville and De Soto and on lightly traveled country roads. However, Town and County roads have limited shoulder areas and posted speed limits of 45 miles per hour or more in most areas. These conditions hinder safe pedestrian travel. In addition, nearly all places of work, shopping, or entertainment are located in nearby communities, several miles away, making pedestrian travel to these location unrealistic, the exception being for those living and working within the developed areas of the villages of Ferryville and De Soto. .

Trails

There are no State or local trails currently running through the Town of Freeman except for the State and Conservancy land. .

BICYCLE ROUTES / CORRIDORS

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) has completed a statewide bicycling conditions assessment to identify key bicycle linkages in each county. The assessment offers recommendations without officially establishing bicycle routes. Potential bicycle routes identified along State highways are planned and maintained by WisDOT. The bicycle conditions assessment is based on:

- Road width (i.e. ability to accommodate a shoulder path)
- Traffic volume
- Truck traffic as a percentage of all traffic (secondary consideration)
- Site distance restrictions (secondary restriction)

WisDOT limited the scope of its assessment to county and state corridors. WisDOT generally considers town roads acceptable for bicycling given their limited traffic flows (please refer to *Transportation Network Map*). In the Town of Freeman, the following road segments were identified by WisDOT as having the following conditions for bicycling:

Best Conditions

- STH 35 from the southern to northern boundary of the Town
- CTH B from STH 35 to the far northeast corner of Freeman
- CTH C from Ferryville to the eastern boundary with the Town of Utica

Moderate Conditions

- STH 82 across the Mississippi River to Iowa
- STH 171

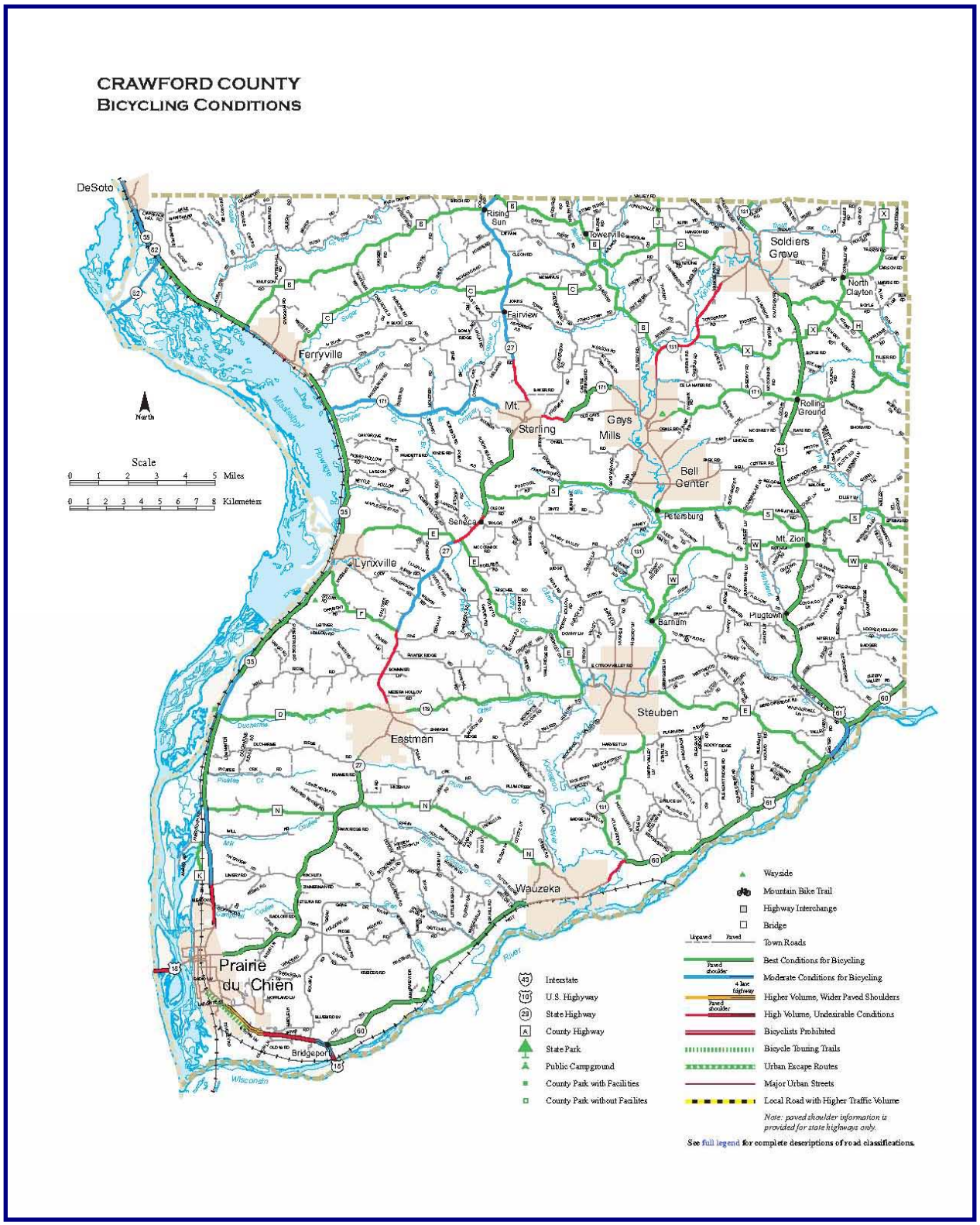
High-volume Undesirable Condition

- The are no high-volume, undesirable roads listed in the Town of Freeman

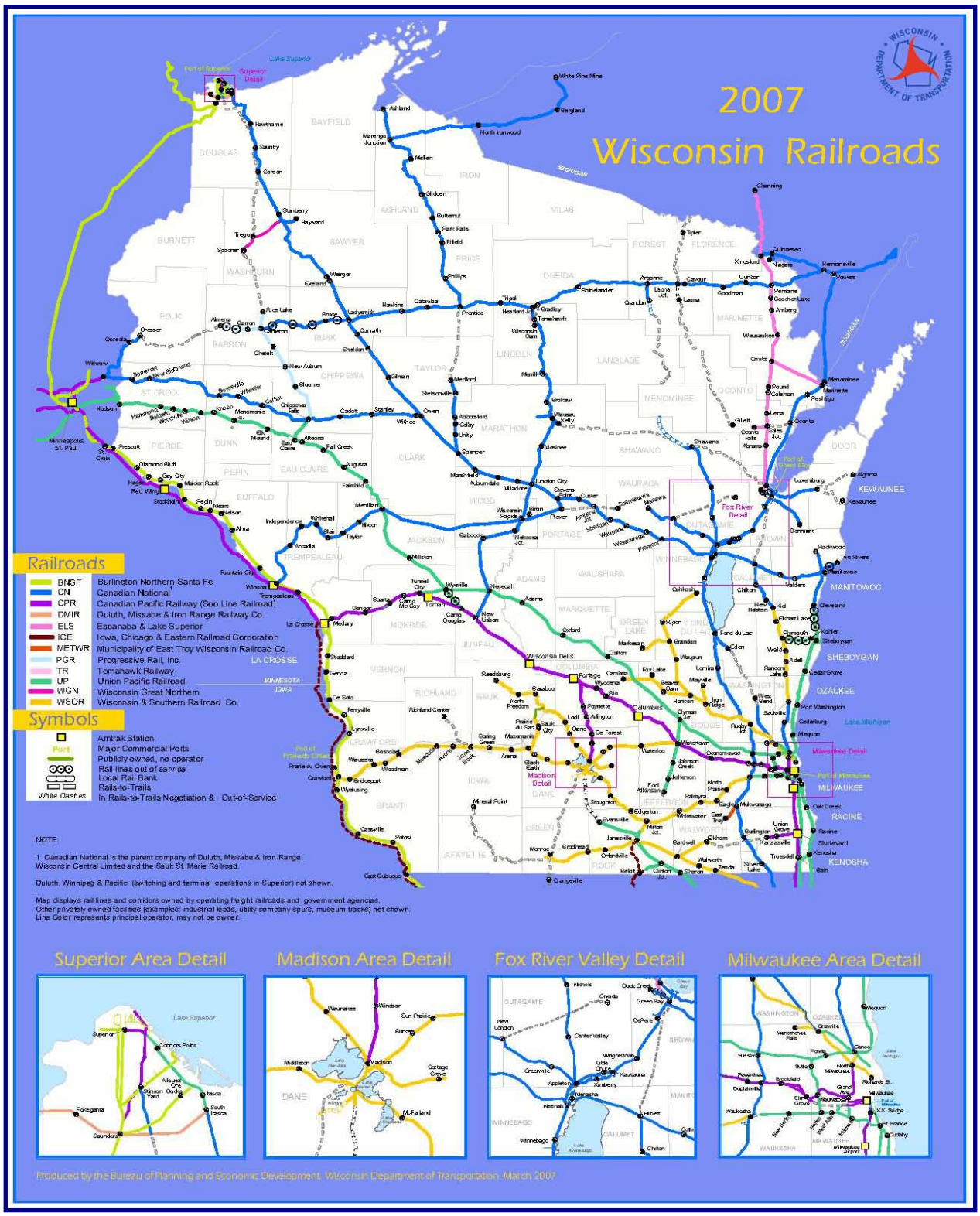
Please refer to the Crawford County Bicycling Conditions map on the following page.

RAILROAD CORRIDORS

The Burlington Northern-Santa Fe Railroad operates a freight rail line running from the border with Illinois, through the Town of Freeman, and through the Twin Cities before terminating northwest of Superior. The Wisconsin & Southern Railroad Co. also operates a freight rail line extending west from Sauk City to Prairie du Chien. The map on page 5-4 shows the active rail lines and “rails to trails” corridors in the state of Wisconsin.



Source: WisDOT Statewide Bicycling Conditions: Crawford County from WisDOT website, January 2008.



Source: WisDOT 2007 Wisconsin Railroads from WisDOT website, January 2008.

SNOWMOBILE TRAILS

The Association of Wisconsin Snowmobile Clubs and the Crawford County Land Conservation Department coordinate with private landowners to establish and maintain trail routes throughout the County. For additional information on snowmobile trails in the area, please contact the Crawford County Land Conservation Department.

Source: AWSC

MASS TRANSIT

There are no public transit systems currently operating in the Town of Freeman. Mass transit via bus, high-speed rail, or other means is not likely to be established throughout Freeman in the next 20 years given limited demand, low population density, and a small overall population base. At this time, Freeman cannot provide the rider-ship needed to support a complete transit system serving all areas of the Town. As the population of the Town ages, however, both the need and market for some form of public transportation potentially will grow.

WATER TRANSPORTATION

Although Freeman is located on the banks of the Mississippi River, the longest inland waterway in the U.S., there are not commercial port locations in the community or, for that matter in Crawford County. The nearest port facilities for barge staging are located in La Crosse Wisconsin and Marquette Iowa. .

None of the various streams and surface waters in Freeman are suitable to significant water transportation.

RUSTIC ROADS[1]

There are no designated Rustic Roads in Freeman

TRUCK TRANSPORTATION

Truck traffic on local roads is a common concern for residents, with speed, noise, and volume being areas of contention. WisDOT designates state highways and specified county highways and local roads as truck routes. The designation is based upon a variety of factors including service to local business; proximity to schools, churches, and other places where people congregate; and, the ability of a given roadway to withstand the greater weights associated with truck traffic, among others. The Wisconsin Statutes define standards for the length, width, and weight of trucks allowed on certain roadways to prevent road degradation and untimely maintenance.

CLASS B HIGHWAYS

May include county and town roads, or portions thereof, on which no person, without a permit, shall operate any vehicle or combination of vehicle and imposing wheel, axle, group of axels, or gross weight exceeding 60% of the listed capacity weight of the roadway. For additional information, refer to Wisconsin Statutes, Chapter 348.

[1] Text excerpted from WisDOT Rustic Roads website, 2005.

Designated truck routes in the Town include STH 35, STH 82, and STH 171.

Freeman has the option of designating roadways as “Class B Highways” (see box at right) through a Town ordinance. At this time there are no Class B Highways in the Town.

AIRPORTS

There are no public use airports located in the Town and no plans exist for the development of a commercial airport in the near future. The nearest airports are:

- Boscobel Airport, Boscobel;
- Prairie du Chien Municipal Airport, Prairie du Chien;
- Richland Airport, Richland Center;
- Viroqua Municipal Airport, Viroqua;
- La Crosse Municipal Airport ,La Crosse; and,

These airports meet current resident needs for travel and business freight and are expected to do so into the foreseeable future.

PRIVATE AIRPORTS/AIRSTRIPS

There is one private landing strip in the Town of Freeman.

STREETS AND HIGHWAYS

Streets and highways are classified according to their primary function, either to move vehicles or to serve adjacent land. For example, *arterials* accommodate the movement of vehicles, while *local roads* are designed to provide direct access to individual parcels of land. *Collectors* serve both local and through traffic by providing a connection between arterials and local roads.

Facilities classified under the Federal Aids Secondary System (county trunks and state highways) qualify for federal aid for capital projects involving construction, reconstruction, or repair. State highway aid is available to communities for construction and maintenance. Federal aid may not exceed 85% of expenditures, based on a 3-year average. The following classifications of highways and roads exist in the Town of Freeman:

- Principal Arterials. *serve interstate and interregional trips* .STH 35 is the only principal arterial in Freeman. The most recent average daily traffic count (ADT) for STH 35 ranged from 3,000 to 4,200 vehicles per day (please refer to *Transportation Network Map* on page 5-8).

- Minor Arterials. *accommodate inter-regional and inter-area traffic movements, often in conjunction with principal arterials* STH 82 is the only minor arterials in the Town. The 2004 ADT data for STH 82 was 2,300 vehicles.

- Major Collectors. *provide service to moderate sized communities and other intra-area traffic generators. Many county trunk highways fall into this classification* Major collectors in Freeman include CTH B and CTH C, both running on an east-west axis through the center of Town. The 2004 ADT was 260 vehicles for CTH B and 390 vehicles for CTH C.

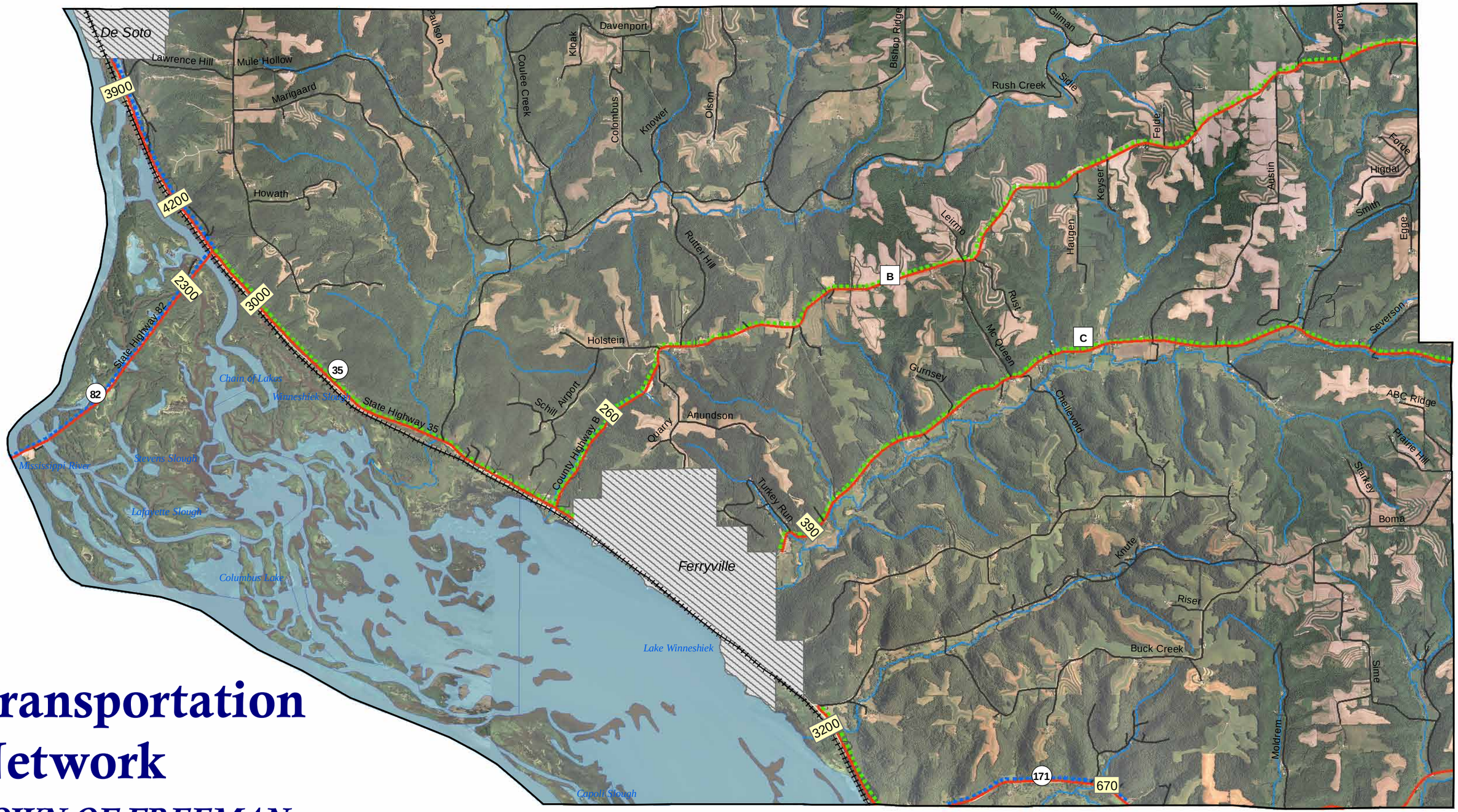
- Minor Collectors *these roads collect traffic from local roads and provide links to all remaining portions of smaller communities and other higher function roads*. There are no roads designated as minor collectors in Freeman.

- Local Roads *provide direct access to residential, commercial and industrial development.* The remaining roads in the Town are classified as local. There currently 84 miles of Town roads.

All of the roads described in this section are illustrated on the Transportation Network Map on the following page.

Summary of Existing Transportation Plans

This section of the chapter summarizes existing federal, state, and regional transportation plans relevant to the future transportation network fro the Town of Freeman.



Transportation Network

TOWN OF FREEMAN

CRAWFORD COUNTY, WISCONSIN

0 0.5 1 2 Miles

- Best Bicycle Conditions
- Moderate Bicycle Conditions
- Poor Bicycle Conditions
- Bicycles Prohibited
- Major Road
- Minor Road
- Residential
- Other
- Rail Road
- 3200 Average Daily Traffic Count
- Communities
- Streams & Rivers
- Open Water

This data was created for use by OMNNI Associates Inc, Geographic Information System. This information is displayed for planning purposes only, unless otherwise noted. Any other use/application of this information is the responsibility of the user and such use/application is at their own risk. OMNNI Associates Inc. disclaims all liability regarding fitness of the information for any use other than for OMNNI Associates Inc. business.

OMNNI ASSOCIATES
PROJECT#: M1298A08
DATE: 03/27/2008
DRAWN BY: BAW
REVISED:
ONE SYSTEMS DRIVE, APPLETON, WI 54914
PHONE: (920) 735-6900 FAX: (920) 830-6100

LOCATION: F:\MUNICIPAL\JOBS\M1298A08 TOWN OF, FREEMAN\DRAWINGS\BASEMAP_11x17 SOURCE: CRAWFORD COUNTY

FEDERAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

A number of federal and state policies guide the planning, development, maintenance, and operation of the transportation network. Their implementation is accomplished with the development of regulations, often with tight ties to funding. Federal regulations most closely related to this chapter include:

- Title VI, Civil Rights Act, and specifically the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and the Executive Order concerning Environmental Justice;
- Clean Air Act;
- Planning requirements under the Inter-modal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA), and the subsequent Transportation Equity Act of 1998 (TEA-21); and,
- Federal historic preservation regulations also affect transportation planning, project development and construction.

The most recent federal transportation planning efforts are included within the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21). This act largely reaffirms the tenets of the ISTEA. This legislation sets out all federal transportation funding programs and their planning requirements. For instance, TEA-21 describes the Transportation Enhancement Program, the minimum level at which it will be funded, and the general principles and intentions of the program. It also includes requirements for transportation/land use plans for urbanized areas. Administrative rules are used to implement these and other federal program requirements.

WDNR STATE RECREATIONAL TRAIL NETWORK PLAN[2]

The State Recreational Trail Network Plan (see map at right) was drafted by WDNR and approved by the Wisconsin Natural Resources Board. The plan provides a long-term, big-picture vision for establishing a comprehensive trail network thru Wisconsin. It identifies existing and proposed trails and connections that would serve as the main corridors for a statewide trail system. The plan doesn't include every trail in Wisconsin, just the major arteries. It focuses mainly on abandoned rail corridors, utility corridors, critical road connections, and natural feature corridors that link places where people live and play, natural resource features, public lands, and other destinations.

Source: WDNR website, 2008
http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/Org/land/parks/specific/findatrail.html

The State Recreational Trail Network Plan recognizes that trails developed by local units of governments serve as critical links. Under the plan, WDNR staff will continue to work with local governments and encourage them to connect trails onto this network as they update local plans.

The Town of Freeman currently has no trails connected to the WDNR Trail Network,.

[2] Source: *WDNR State Recreational Trail Network Plan* website, 2005.

MIDWEST REGIONAL RAIL INITIATIVE PLAN[3]

Since 1996, the Midwest Regional Rail Initiative (MWRRI) advanced from a series of service concepts; including increased operating speeds, train frequencies, system connectivity and high service reliability; into a well-defined vision to create a 21st century regional passenger rail system. This vision has been transformed into a transportation plan known at the Midwest Regional Rail System (MWRRS). The primary purpose of the MWRRS is to meet future regional travel needs through significant improvements to the level and quality of regional passenger rail service. The major MWRRS elements will improve Midwest travel. These elements include:

- Use of 3,000 miles of existing rail rights-of-way to connect rural, small urban and major metropolitan areas throughout Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Michigan and Wisconsin;
- Operation of "hub-and-spoke" passenger rail system through Chicago to locations throughout the Midwest;
- Introduction of modern train equipment operating at speeds up to 110 mph;
- Provision of multi-modal connections to improve system access; and,
- Improvements in reliability and on-time performance.

WISCONSIN STATE HIGHWAY PLAN 2020[4]

Wisconsin's State Trunk Highway system, consisting of approximately 11,800 miles of roads, is aging and deteriorating while traffic is increasing. The system consists of 11% of the total roadway miles in Wisconsin, but carries nearly 60% of the total traffic. Recognizing the importance of the system, WisDOT, in partnership with stakeholders, developed the WisDOT State Highway Plan 2020. This strategic plan considers the current condition of the highway system, analyzes future uses, assesses financial constraints, and outlines strategies to address Wisconsin's preservation, traffic movement, and safety needs. The plan is updated every six years to reflect changing transportation technologies, travel demand, and economic conditions in Wisconsin. For more information on the Wisconsin State Highway Plan 2020, visit: http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/projects/state/hwy2020.htm.

PASER RATING SYSTEM REPORT --- TOWN OF FREEMAN

All town roads in Freeman are evaluated in accordance with WisDOT requirements using the *Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating* (PASER) system. PASER is a visual inspection system to develop a condition rating for community roads. PASER is an important tool for smaller government unit planning because it gives a picture of road conditions on all roads and can identify candidates for maintenance and rehabilitation. Surface defects, cracking and potholes are all examined during a typical PASER evaluation. Paved roads are rated 1 – 10 based on their condition.

Paved Roads Rating	Needs
Rating 9 & 10	no maintenance required
Rating 7 & 8	routine maintenance, crack sealing and minor patching

[3] Source: Midwest Regional Rail System, 2004.
[4] Source: WisDOT, *Wisconsin State Highway Plan 2020*.

Rating 5 & 6	preservative treatments (seal coating)
Rating 3 & 4	structural improvement and leveling (overlay or recycling)
Rating 1 & 2	reconstruction

Roads are rated in segments. As a result, one portion of a particular road may rank as 9, whereas a different segment may only rank a 6. These fluctuations can greatly impact the overall need for road surface improvements. According to the PASER manual, it is recommended that communities strive to attain a rating of 7 for all paved roads. PASERWARE is a software program designed to help communities consider different scenarios for optimizing road maintenance and improvements expenses. Using PASERWARE, a community can determine what sequence of improvements is recommended to meet a certain goal (i.e. get all roads to a 7 rating). PASERWARE also will provide cost estimates for maintenance and construction projects. Technical and financial assistance with this program is available through the Mississippi River Regional Plan Commission.
Table 19.0 shows the total number of miles of roadway in the Town by PASER rating, as well as the percentage of all roads within each category.

Table 19.0: Town of Freeman Roads by PASER Rating, 2007.

PASER Rating	Total Miles	Percent of all Roads
1	1.36	2.0%
2	8.30	12.4%
3	28.54	42.6%
4	22.17	33.1%
5	6.69	9.9%
6	--	--
7	--	--
8	--	--
9	--	--
10	--	--
Total	**84**	**100%**

Source: Town of Freeman, 2008.

Comparison to State and Regional Plans

Jurisdiction over transportation facilities and services is divided among several layers of government. Planning for the transportation network in the Town of Freeman requires coordination among these jurisdictions. During the development of this plan, the Town researched regional and state transportation plans, policies, and programs (several of which are highlighted in this section). Available information indicates that there will be little significant state investment in the transportation network in the community.

The transportation goals, policies, objectives, and programs in this plan seek to complement regional transportation goals, objectives, policies, and programs by providing local transportation facilities and services that connect to county, regional, and state facilities.

What is an Official Map?

An official map is one of the oldest plan implementation devices at the disposal of a local community. It is used to manage the problem of reserving land for future public use. Section 62.23(6) of the Wisconsin Statutes provides that the governing body of any local municipality may establish an official map for the precise identification of right-of-way lines and site boundaries of streets, highways, waterways, and parkways, and the location and extent of railway right-of-ways, public transit facilities, and parks and playgrounds. Such a map has the force of law and is deemed to be final and conclusive.

Transportation Issues and Concerns

This section of the chapter focuses on the transportation issues and concerns raised during the exercises held during the Kick-off Meeting of the planning process.

Bike Paths

Some participants at the Kick-Off expressed a desire for bike paths and pedestrian trails in the community. The *Transportation Network Map and Plan* designates on-road bicycle routes to accommodate area cyclists. In addition, trail development is encouraged within new subdivisions and along suitable roads in accordance with WisDOT plans. As county and town roads are upgraded, opportunities for trails should also be considered within road rights-of-way. There are no public bike paths within the Town of Freeman.

Funding opportunities exist through the WDNR and WisDOT to help finance trail and bicycle route projects. To help support trail development efforts, the Town of Freeman should consider the potential of including trail routes on any future Official Map (see box) adopted by the Town in concert with the long vision for the Town. The WisDOT *Safe Routes to School Program* (SRTSP) provides funding for the development of pedestrian and bicycle facilities. For additional information on the SRTSP, please visit: www.dot.wisconsin.gov/localgov/aid/saferoutes.htm.

It is important to note that not all residents will favor trails and bicycle routes. Two common issues expressed by those opposed to trails are the potential for decreases in property values and impacts on private property (i.e. vandalism and crime). Studies have shown that trails actually increase property values for homes located along established trail routes and increase exposure (and profits) for local businesses that have trail access. Elevated vandalism and crime rates have not been seen along trail routes[5].

Future of the Rail Line

Some discussion occurred during the Kick-off Meeting regarding potential future uses of the Burlington Northern-Santa Fe Railroad rail line. Market forces make it unlikely that the line will be abandoned in the foreseeable future. Should abandonment occur, the Town of Freeman will coordinate the best and most appropriate use of the abandoned line with Crawford County, MRRPC and WDNR.

Roads and Infrastructure

The poor condition of some roads in the Town of Freeman was identified as a concern during the SWOT Exercise. The Town of Freeman will utilize annual PASER Ratings to coordinate future upgrades with Crawford County and WisDOT.

Creating a Walkable Community[6]

At the current time and during the planning time horizon of this plan, the demographics, land-use, and topography do not lead the Town to a vision of being a ‘walkable community’. If the Town character were to change significantly, then the tenets associated with a ‘walkable community’ would be considered. At current time, residents walk by the roadways for exercise or enjoyment.

Farm Equipment

[5] Source: Fox River Trail Study, Brown County Planning Commission December 2001.
[6] Source: Based on the information available from Walkable Communities, Inc., as prepared by Dan Burden, a nationally recognized authority on bicycle and pedestrian facilities and programs.

Farming has been and continues to be a significant component of Freeman's economy and landscape. Town residents take pride in their agricultural heritage and believe farming should be an important part of the Town's future. Modern agricultural operations often require farmers to move agricultural equipment on local roads. These large, slow moving vehicles can present a potential hazard for other motorists, as well as motorists to the farmer. To improve safety, the Town may want to consider installation of warning signage and, in some areas, wider shoulders on the roads most frequently utilized by farm equipment.

Dependency on Automobiles

The majority of residents in Freeman commute to jobs in nearby employment centers: Prairie du Chien, Richland Center, LaCrosse, Viroqua, Gays Mills, Seneca, Boscobel, etc.). While the population of the Town of Freeman will grow slowly over the next 20 years, traffic congestion is not anticipated to be an issue. It is anticipated that some type of service based public transportation potentially could emerge for seniors.

Transportation for Seniors

As discussed in Chapters 3 and 4, population of people over the age of 65 is projected to increase during the next twenty-five years. Providing safe and accessible transportation alternatives for Freeman seniors will be a challenge, requiring awareness of available programs by the Town Board.

Safety Concerns

Speed enforcement on Town and County roads was the primary safety issue expressed by residents during the Kick-off Meeting. The Town should collaborate with the County and the Sheriff's department to improve safety and enforce existing speed limits on local roads.

Transportation Budgeting – Capital Improvements Plan

Road maintenance and improvement costs are a major expense and can consume a large share of the local budget. The development of a *Capital Improvements Plan* (CIP) and budget can aid in anticipating and funding future transportation needs. A CIP is a five to six year short-range plan with updates occurring annually. A transportation-oriented CIP will help identify and prioritize future expenditures, including:

- Town road improvements (e.g. widening, paving, additional gravel, culverts, bridges, etc.).
- Public buildings improvements and maintenance;
- vehicle purchase and replacement;

Capital items are generally defined as those items that are expensive ($5,000 or more) and will last at least 3-5 years. The CIP also includes improvement projects required for the community's future and the appropriate timeline and funding to be followed to implement the improvements. The general steps involved in developing and maintaining a CIP include:

- Identifying desired capital items. Items should be categorized by type (i.e. road, fire, water, sewer, etc.). This process should involve staff, residents, plan commission, and elected officials.
- Estimating the cost and means of financing each capital expenditure.
- Comparing the desired expenditures to the budget to determine annual spending priorities.

The CIP process helps to ensure that improvements are made in a logical order and do not surprise local officials or taxpayers. Moreover, a CIP allows the community to focus on needs and goals and establish rational priorities.

TRANSPORTATION BUDGETING – TRANSPORTATION UTILITY

Another financing option to consider is the creation of a *Transportation Utility*. A transportation utility deals specifically with transportation infrastructure, including the design, construction and reconstruction, operation, and maintenance of streets. These activities are currently funded through limited state and federal aids, and general revenue from local property taxes.

Transportation Programs[7]

1. GENERAL TRANSPORTATION AID

General Transportation Aid (GTA) is the second largest program in WisDOT's budget. The program returns approximately 30% of all state-collected transportation revenues (i.e. fuel taxes and vehicle registration fees). This aid helps to offset the cost of county and municipal road construction, maintenance and other transportation-related costs. Under the GTA program, State aid is paid to each county and municipality that pays a portion of local government costs for such activities as road and street reconstruction, filling potholes, snow removal, grading shoulders, marking pavement, and repair of curb and gutters.

2. LOCAL TRANSPORTATION ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

The Local Transportation Enhancement Program provides funding to local governments and state agencies for projects that will improve or enhance a current or pending transportation project. Under the program, federal funds may account for up to 80% of the project. WisDOT administers the money based on 12 eligible project categories:

- Providing facilities for bicycles and pedestrians
- Offering safety and educational activities for pedestrians and bicyclists
- Acquiring scenic easements and scenic or historic sites
- Sponsoring scenic or historic highway programs including the provision of tourist and welcome centers

[7] Sources for Transportation Programs: WisDOT; Bay Lake Regional Planning Commission: *Bay Lake Regional Planning Commission 2030 Regional Comprehensive Plan.*

- Landscaping and other scenic beautification
- Preserving historic sites
- Rehabilitating and operating historic transportation buildings and structures
- Preserving abandoned railway corridors
- Controlling and removing outdoor advertising
- Conducting archaeological planning and research
- Mitigating water pollution due to highway runoff or reducing vehicle caused wildlife mortality
- Establishing transportation museums

3. Local Roads Improvement Program

Established in 1991, this biennial WisDOT reimbursement program provides up to 50% funding to local units of government for the costs associated with improving seriously deteriorating county highways, town roads, and municipal streets in cities and villages under the authority of the local government. Projects are required to have a minimum design life of 10 years. Applications are submitted through the county highway commissioners by November 15 of the odd numbered years, and all funds are distributed in the first year.

There are three entitlement components for funding road improvements. They are:

- County Highway Improvement component (CHIP);
- Town Road Improvement component (TRIP); and,
- Cities and villages under Municipal Street Improvement component (MSIP).

In addition to those, there are three discretionary programs that allow towns, villages, cities and counties to apply for additional funds for high-cost projects. The Town Road Discretionary component program allows applications from towns when the project costs more than $100,000; villages, cities and counties are allowed to apply when the amount is over $250,000 under their respective programs.

Coordination with Other Required Plan Chapters

Issues and Opportunities

The Issues and Opportunities Chapter (strengths, weakness, opportunities & threats) establishes the framework for planning & local values and visions as expressed by residents during the planning kick-off meeting. The Transportation Chapter Vision was created in response to the values, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats, and visions highlighted in *Chapter 2: Issues and Opportunities*. The Transportation Vision on page 5-1 of this chapter will guide the way the Town considers and approves changes to the transportation network.

Housing

Each new home developed is estimated to generate nearly 10 vehicle trips per day[8]. These include trips by resident(s) to school, work, shopping, and other destinations, as well as, trips by school busses, postal route drivers, private delivery services, service repair providers, etc. to the home. As a result, potential transportation impacts should continue to be considered with any land sub-division, new residential homes, and any potential new residential subdivisions and commercial development projects..

Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources

The critical question with respect to the Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Chapter and this chapter is: how will changes to the transportation system impact the preservation / protection of environmental resources? Given the development limitations presented by the topography in Freeman, new road construction (and associated development) must continue to respect these attributes in accordance with Town codes and ordinances, as well as County, State, and Federal regulations.

Future Land Use

What steps will be taken to ensure that transportation decisions and land use decisions are compatible? Although transportation is not the only influence on land use, it is important to be aware that decisions regarding the transportation system may significant affects on future preservation and development in Freeman. If not properly designed and located, negative impacts to the environment can result from the construction of new streets and roads or changes to existing facilities.

Implementation

By developing and utilizing a Capital Improvements Plan, the Town of Freeman will be able to adequately prepare and budget for future transportation-related expenditures. Revisions to existing ordinances, and the development of new ones, will allow the Town to guide future development to ensure that the rural character of the community is preserved well into the future.

Transportation Policies, Goals, and Objectives

The policies, goals, and objectives related to Transportation in the Town of Freeman can be found in *Chapter 12: Implementation*.

[8] Source: Institute of Transportation Engineers Trip Generation Manual (9.75 trips per day per single-family residence)

Introduction

Utilities and community facilities are important factors in determining development potential and quality of life. The information contained in this chapter, coupled with demographic trends and projections, provides a realistic picture of service supply and demand. The information regarding community facilities and utilities provided here was carefully considered in the development of the Future Land Use Map.

Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning Law includes 14 goals for local comprehensive planning. Those listed below specifically relate to planning for utilities and community facilities in Freeman:

- Promotion of the redevelopment of lands with existing infrastructure and public services and the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing residential, commercial, and industrial structures.
- Providing adequate infrastructure and public service and an adequate supply of developable land to meet existing and future market demand for residential, commercial, and industrial uses.

Utilities Vision

In 2025, the Town of Freeman coordinates with neighboring local governments and the County to ensure that Town residents have easy access to efficient services and quality facilities. The Town's property taxes have been maintained at a stable level by controlling debt, maintaining Town equipment, and carefully planning expenditures. The Town has been able to reduce costs and improve efficiencies in services by entering into shared service agreements with neighboring communities.

Utilities Inventory: Location, Use & Capacity

This section documents those utilities provided by the Town, Crawford County, neighboring communities, and private providers.

WASTEWATER COLLECTION & TREATMENT FACILITY

All development in the Township of Freeman is accommodated with private on-site wastewater treatment systems (POWTS). These systems must comply with the state plumbing code (COMM 83), to ensure that on-site systems do not threaten groundwater resources and to keep each permitted system functioning properly over the course of its lifetime. The nearest waste water treatment facility if located in the Village of Ferryville.

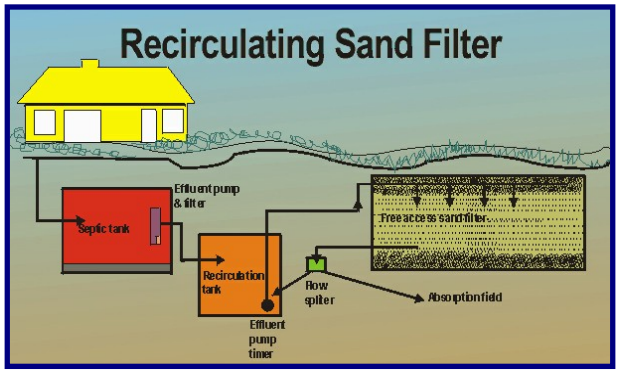
WI Fund Grant

The WI Fund provides financial assistance to homeowners in the rehabilitation or replacement of failing septic systems. The type of septic failure, household income, and state funding determines grant eligibility. For additional information, contact the Crawford County Zoning Department or the WI Department of Commerce.

The cost of developing a Township-wide municipal wastewater treatment system is not practical given the scattered development located within Freeman. However, clustered, alternative sanitary facilities can provide an environmentally-friendly wastewater treatment system at a fraction of the cost of on-site systems. Options for clustered sanitary systems for future development include re-circulating sand filters, constructed wetlands, and The Living Machine System, among others.

- **Re-circulating Sand/Gravel Filters**

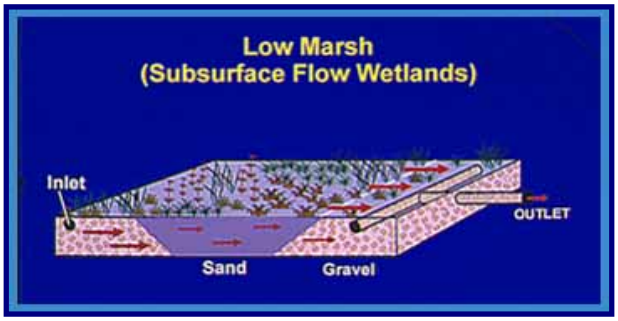
Re-circulating sand/gravel filters (RS/GF) offer an economically viable, environmentally benign alternative to conventional drain field-based treatment systems. The basic components of a RS/GF system include a septic tank, recirculation tank, and sand or gravel filter. Water discharged from the system far exceeds the quality of a conventional system, and at a fraction of the price. RS/GFs have been in use for more than a century and are a permitted alternative to septic tanks and mound systems.



SOURCE: ToolBase Services, 2005.

- **Constructed Wetlands**

Constructed wetlands have been used as effective wastewater treatment systems for more than thirty years. They have become the dominant treatment system for communities in the Minneapolis metropolitan region not served by municipal wastewater treatment. Although there are a variety of wetland-based systems used to treat effluent, the most common is a sub-surface flow wetland. Sub-surface flow wetlands utilize an anaerobic reactor (septic tank) for pretreatment followed by a forced-bed aeration system and wetland treatment cells. Constructed wetlands are designed to achieve tertiary treatment at a fraction of the cost of a municipal system. They become cost-effective at the small scale when treating effluent from eight or more homes.



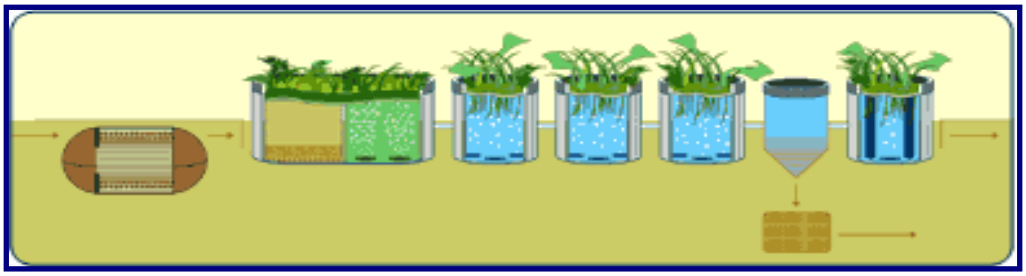
SOURCE: North American Wetlands Engineering, 2004.

- **Living Machines®**

Living Machines are a patented wastewater treatment system that is growing in popularity around the world. They entail a linked-system of tanks teeming with live plants, trees, grasses, algae, fish, shrimp, snails and a diversity of microorganisms and bacteria. Each tank is a mini-ecosystem designed to eat or beak down waste. The process takes about four days to turn wastewater crystal clear. It is chemical-free, odor-free, and, compared to conventional wastewater treatment, costs less financially and ecologically1.

[1] SOURCE: *The Living Machine*, Jeff Wolovitz, Penn State Department of Research and Policy, 2000.

Living Machines are permitted systems and are currently in use at the Conserve School in Land O' Lakes, at Cedar Grove Cheese Factory in Cedar Grove, and at Edgewood College in Madison.



SOURCE: Living Machines, Inc., 2001.

The Town supports the continued use of POWTS, as approved by the Town and County. Based on soil conditions, current and anticipated development densities, state laws governing POWTS and anticipated future technologies in private waste disposal, a municipal sanitary system is not needed for the Town.

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT[2]

Open grass lined natural drainage ways slow the flow of stormwater, reduce erosion, filter pollutants, and allow infiltration of groundwater. These grass lined drainage ways are a good way of controlling stormwater in rural areas with small amounts of impervious surface. Given the rural character of Freeman, existing practices will meet most future rural residential development need in this part of Town. However, additional development in and around the community of Freeman and more densely developed portion of the community may require the use of more effective means of stormwater treatment. Freeman will protect surface waters by utilizing:

- Watershed Planning. All watershed planning activities in the Town of Freeman will be coordinated with the Crawford County Land Conservation Department to identify, protect, and enhance critical habitat and aquatic corridors in the community.

- Land Conservation Techniques. Land conservation techniques include: conservation subdivisions, setbacks, buffers, land acquisition, and adherence to the development patterns outlined on the Future Land Use Map.

- Riparian Buffers. Riparian buffers are natural areas extending inland from the streambank and are comprised of a blend of trees, grasses, and other plants. Riparian buffers have proven to be the most effective means of reducing runoff to surface waters.

[2] For additional information on stormwater management, including descriptions of local watersheds, please refer to *Chapter 7: Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources*.

- Site Design Techniques. Effective site design techniques encourage the use of natural landscaping, limit impervious surface, enforce setbacks and buffers, and protect natural resources.

- Stormwater Best Management Practices (BMP). Stormwater best management practices seek to reduce stormwater pollutant loads, maintain groundwater recharge and quality, protect stream channels and safely maintain the 100-year floodplain. Successful BMPs include ponds, wetlands, infiltration areas and filtering systems, and grassed swales, among others.

- Erosion and Sediment Control. The State of Wisconsin establishes construction site erosion control requirements for development and redevelopment projects in the county. Effective erosion and sediment control measures reduce the amount of time that soil is exposed to the elements.

Given the rate and density of projected future development, existing practices are expected to meet future development needs. However, the Town of Freeman may adopt and enforce its own stormwater management and construction site erosion control ordinance should it choose to do so.

WATER SUPPLY[3]

The water supply for all residents and businesses in the Township of Freeman is provided by individual on-site wells. The cost of well installation can range between $10,000 and $25,000+depending on soil conditions, depth-to-groundwater, and casing requirements. Shared and clustered wells, serving a small number of homes, may provide a viable alternative to individual private wells, however, they require effective agreements to address issues related to metering and well placement. In addition, they may lead to disagreements over water usage by the homeowners served by the shared water system. A more effective alternative for new subdivisions may be requiring a community water system. Community wells would serve the entire subdivision and offer the safest and most cost-effective alternative for larger residential development projects (typically 20 or more homes). Additional information about groundwater is provided in *Chapter 7: Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources*.

ELECTRICITY AND ENERGY

Alliant Energy (AE), the Scenic Rivers Energy Cooperative (SREC), and Vernon Electric are the electric providers in the community. Alliant Energy's utility operations serve more than 1.4 million customers in Iowa, Minnesota and Wisconsin.[4] The Scenic Rivers Energy Cooperative headquarters is located at 231 North Sheridan Street in Lancaster, Wisconsin in Grant County. The service territory covers Lafayette, Crawford and Grant Counties, with some members in the neighboring counties of Green, Iowa, Richland, and Vernon. We also serve a few members in Illinois that border with southern Lafayette County. Scenic Rivers Energy Cooperative is a Touchstone Energy Cooperative. Touchstone is a national alliance of local, consumer-owned

[3] For additional information on Freeman's water supply, including a description of the geology and underground aquifers, please refer to *Chapter 7: Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources.*
[4] Source: Alliant Energy corporate website, 2008.

electric cooperatives serving more than 17 million customers every day.[5] Vernon Electric, located in the City of Westby, provides electricity to a limited area in Freeman.

Local propane and fuel oil suppliers provide fuel for heating.

ALTERNATIVE ENERGY SOURCES

Alternate energy sources are individual/landowner systems for private use.
There are no commercial alternative energy sources located within the Town of Freeman at this time. However, wind energy farms are increasing becoming a component of Wisconsin's rural landscape. As the price of fossil- and petroleum-based fuels increases, and as their supply diminishes, it is likely that wind power, solar power, and other alternative energy sources will become a more economically viable and desirable addition to the Town's energy network.

Additional information related to alternative energy sources, including wind power, is provided later in this chapter.

Community Facilities Inventory

This portion of the chapter profiles the community facilities available to Town residents, including facilities operated by Crawford County and private providers.

LOCAL PARK AND RECREATION FACILITIES

The Town of Freeman possesses beautiful natural areas and scenic vistas dispersed throughout the community, each contributing to the unique, rural character of the Town. Residents expressed their desire to preserve the natural beauty of the community, including support for public parks, through comments made during the Kick-off Meeting as well as responses to the Land Use Planning Survey. Although there are no park facilities currently located in the Town of Freeman, there are nearly 3,000 acres of State Natural Area (Rush Creek SNA, and Sugar Creek Bluff SNA). Additionally, parks located in Ferryville and DeSoto are available and accessed by Freeman residents.

COMMUNICATION FACILITIES

Access to communication facilities is very important in the modern economy. Several communication companies provide service to Freeman. The quality of communication services depends on the capacity of the network (wires, fiber optics, towers, etc.) serving the Town.

- Local and Long Distance and Cellular Telecommunication Services are all available throughout the Town of Freeman The principle land line suppliers are: Vernon Telephone, Century Tel.
- Internet. Internet services in Freeman is provided by various satellite services, cable, DSL and several dial-up providers
- Newspapers. The Courier Press, Crawford Independent, LaCrosse Tribune, & Vernon Country Broadcaster are the most frequently read daily newspapers in Freeman. The Northeast Iowa Shopper and Shopping News are provided free of charge on a weekly basis.

[5] Source: The Scenic Rivers Energy Cooperative corporate website, 2008.

- Television and Radio. Coverage is provide by telecommunication providers; local radio include stations in Viroqua, Prairie, LaCrosse, and Waukon and for local news and weather.
- Postal Services are provided by Ferryville (54628) and DeSoto (54624)Package Delivery and Pickup Services are available through most commercial providers such as Fed-Ex, UPS, Speedy Delivery, etc.
- Cellular/PCS Towers. Ever advancing communication technologies have greatly increased the need for towers to provide receiving and sending capabilities. The federal government formally recognized this need by passing the Federal Telecommunications Act of 1996. Under Section 704 of the Act, the Town has the power to regulate the placement, construction and modification of personal wireless facilities, as long as the rules do not unreasonably discriminate between providers or prohibit service. There currently no towers in the town of Freeman.

CEMETERIES

There are four cemeteries currently located in the Town of Freeman. They include:

- Freeman Lutheran Cemetery on CR B;
- Mt. Vernon Cemetery, on Lawrence Ridge;
- Eitsert Cemetery on Boma Ridge,,
- Rush Creek Cemetery on Rush Creek Rd., and
- Cemetery located on Sonneburg Property on S. Buck Creek.

HEALTH CARE FACILITIES

There are no medical or healthcare facilities located in the Town of Freeman. The nearest providers can be found in Viroqua (Vernon Memorial Hospital) and Gunderson Lutheran Clninic) and in the City of Prairie du Chien (Prairie du Chien Memorial Hospital, Gundersen-Lutheran Clinic, and Franciscan Skemp Clinic) and Waukon Iowa. In addition, there are small clinics located in Soldier's Grove and Lansing Iowa.

CHILDCARE FACILITIES

In general, people seek childcare providers located near their homes or near their places of employment. There are no licensed day care centers currently located in Freeman. Town residents also have informal networks of child care (i.e. family or friends).

Prairie du Chien Memorial Library.

LIBRARY

There are no public libraries located in Freeman. The nearest public libraries include DeSoto Public Library,

The Gays Mills Public Library, the Solders Grove Library, the Prairie du Chien Memorial Library, Lansing Public Library, in Lansing Iowa, and the McIntosh Memorial Library in Viroqua.

SENIOR SERVICES

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, 129 Freeman residents (17.9% of the population) were age 65 or over. As the percentage of the population over the age of 65 continues to increase, additional services will be required to serve this growing demographic group. As demand for senior services grows during the coming decades the Town will work with Crawford County to ensure that necessary services are available to those in need. Meals on Wheels are provided by Crawford County.

Low-income housing facilities are located in Ferryville (Ferryville Manor) , DeSoto (Winneshiek Manor) and Lansing Iowa (Thornton Manor)..

Local nursing homes include:

- Thornton Manor in Lansing, Iowa
- Bethel Home in Viroqua
- Vernon Manor in Viroqua
- Sannes Skogdalen in Soldier's Grove
- Prairie Health Care Center, Prairie du Chien

Assisted Living facilities include:

- Thornton Manor in Lansing, Iowa
- Bethel Home in Viroqua

SCHOOL DISTRICTS

The Town of Freeman is served by four school districts: De Soto Area Schools, North Crawford School District, Seneca School District, and Viroqua Area School District

- **De Soto Area Schools**

De Soto Area Schools serve 582 K thru 12 students at two Elementary Schools (Stoddard and Prairie View), a Middle School, and a High School. It ranks 308th in enrollment out of Wisconsin's 445 public school districts. District offices are located at 615 Main Street in De Soto.

- **North Crawford School District**

The North Crawford school District provides 4K through 12th grade education to students at its Elementary school, Middle School, and High School. It has a teaching staff of 45 serving 478 students and ranks 344th in the State of Wisconsin in total enrollment. District offices are located at 47050 County Rd. X in Soldiers Grove.

- **Seneca School District**

The Seneca School District has a teaching staff of 86 serving 291 students in grades Kthrough 12. It ranks 403rd out of Wisconsin's 445 public school districts in size. District offices are located at 202 Main Street (STH 27) in Seneca.

- **Viroqua Area School District**

The Viroqua Area School District offices are located at 115 N. education Avenue in Viroqua. The District operates an Elementary School, a Middle School, and a High School. With a teaching staff of approximately 175, the District serves 1,139 students in grades K through 12. The District also operates two charter schools: Laurel High School and Vernon County Better Futures High School. The Viroqua Area School District ranks 183 out of the State's 445 school districts in enrollment

Like many rural school districts in Wisconsin, the Districts serving the Town of Freeman have experienced fluctuating enrollment numbers (please ee Table 21.0 below). Under the full-time, inter-district open enrollment program, Wisconsin students may apply to attend school in any K-12 public school district in the state, regardless of whether or not they live in the district. Families of students who transfer from their local district do not pay tuition. However, a local district loses state aid for each student who transfers to another district and gains state aid for each student who transfers from another district. The program first took effect in the 1998-99 school year. It is designed to encourage competition among districts as a means of fostering improvement in public schools and to provide families with increased flexibility in their educational choices. Participation has increased each year since the program's inception.

Table 21.0: School District Enrollment Trends, 2001-08.

Year	De Soto Area Schools		North Crawford School District		Seneca School District		Viroqua Area School District	
	Total Enroll.	Change Prev. Yr	Total Enroll.	Change Prev. Yr	Total Enroll.	Change Prev. Yr	Total Enroll.	Change Prev. Yr
2008	582	0.5%	478	0.4%	291	-5.8%	1,139	-1.0%
2007	579	0.7%	476	-5.9%	309	-3.1%	1,150	0.6%
2006	575	3.4%	506	-5.2%	319	1.3%	1,143	-2.2%
2005	556	-2.8%	534	-4.8%	315	-0.9%	1,169	-6.3%
2004	572	-5.8%	561	-1.8%	318	-7.6%	1,248	-3.3%
2003	607	-0.2%	571	-6.9%	344	-1.4%	1,291	-0.8%
2002	608	0.5%	613	5.3%	349	-6.2%	1,302	-0.8%
2001	605	--	562	--	372	--	1,312	--
	Percent Change 2001-2008		**Percent Change 2001-2008**		**Percent Change 2001-2008**		**Percent Change 2001-2008**	
	-3.8%		-14.9%		-21.8%		-13.2%	

Source: Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2008.

In addition to the public schools, a limited number of students are home schooled. Also, some students attend private and parochial schools in the area.

Viroqua has a Charter School. The Wisconsin Charter School Program was initiated in the 1993-1994 school year. Charter schools are public schools that are exempt from many state regulations and rules. In exchange, the schools are accountable to their chartering authority for

meeting measurable goals in their charter. This freedom encourages various programs that may stimulate change, innovation, and creativity to enhance student learning. In 2004, there were 137 charter schools in the state. Charter schools are nonsectarian, employ DPI-certified staff, and participate in statewide assessments.

Higher Education

State and private institutions of higher learning in the area include: the University of Wisconsin in La Crosse, Platteville, & Madison; Western Wisconsin Technical College in La Crosse, Viroqua, & Southwest Technical College in Fennimore; Viterbo in La Crosse and Luther College in Decorah Iowa.

Town Hall and Town Equipment

The Freeman Town Building is located on CR B and includes a small recycling center and a salt storage structure. The Town of Freeman owns a number of vehicles and a variety of equipment.

- Two Cat Graders (and associated equipment)
- A Ford Tractor and Mower
- CIH Tractor and Mower
- A John Deere Tractor/Loader/Backhoe
- A John Deere End-loader
- A Ford truck with plow, 2 International Harvester Dump Trucks with plows, and Dodge ½ Ton truck.

Community Services Inventory

Solid Waste Disposal and Recycling

The Town contracts with Town & County Sanitation of Boscobel (an independent service provider) to provide residential waste disposal service and recycling. Freeman also operates a small recycling center adjoining the Town Building.

Police Protection

Police protection in the Town of Freeman is provided by the Crawford County Sheriff's Department (CCSD). The CCSD is located at 224 North Beaumont Road in the City of Prairie du Chien. In addition to patrolling the unincorporated communities, the CCSD provides back-up assistance to residents of cities and villages within Crawford County.

The Town of Freeman does not have a Town Constable.

Fire Protection

Fire protection in the Town of Freeman is provided by the De Soto Fire Department (DSFD) in the Village of De Soto and the Gays Mills Fire Department (GMFD) in the Village of Gays Mills.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE

Emergency and rescue service in Freeman is coordinated through the Crawford County Sheriff department 911 system, with rescues provided by the Villages of Ferryville, Gays Mills and Soldier's Grove. The 911 system dispatches rescues on a case basis.

First Responders are provided by the communities of Ferryville, De Soto, and Gays Mills.

Utilities and Community Facilities Issues & Opportunities

This section of the chapter describes the various issues, concerns, and opportunities related to utilities and community facilities that arose during the SWOT and Vision Exercises and during monthly meetings of the Freeman Land Use Committee.

MAINTAINING REASONABLE TAX LEVELS

Town residents respect the fiscal discipline demonstrated by local officials and value their reasonable tax rates. Given limited finances, coupled with long-term uncertainties surrounding Wisconsin's shared revenue program and state-imposed levy limits, the Town of Freeman understands the need to carefully consider all expenditures. This consideration certainly extends to providing utilities and community facilities for the community. To provide efficient, cost-effective services, the Town has a history of cooperatively working with neighboring communities and Crawford County (i.e. wastewater treatment, fire protection, police protection, senior services, road maintenance, etc.). Regionalizing services can minimize duplication and promote cost efficiency, which may reduce the tax burden for all residents. To keep local taxes at a reasonable level, Freeman will continue to consider shared service opportunities with neighboring communities.

PARK AND RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) recommends a community standard of 10 acres of local recreation land per 1,200 residents. The current population of Freeman is an estimated 713 persons, with a projected 2025 population of 692. To meet the NRPA standard by 2025, the Town would need a minimum of 5.8 acres of public parkland. The Mississippi River and the DNR state land provide adequate recreational and parkland opportunities for the residents. The Freeman Township does have over 11,000 acres of Federal wildlife refuge and over 2,000 acres of State of Wisconsin DNR land and private conservancy land open to the public.

WATER AND WASTEWATER GRANT AND LOAN PROGRAM

The USDA Rural Development (Rural Utility Service) has a water and wastewater grant and loan program to assist cities, villages, tribes, sanitary districts, and towns in rural areas with a population up to 10,000. The program provides loans and grants to construct, improve, or modify municipal drinking water and wastewater systems, storm sewers, and solid waste disposal facilities. This program may be useful for establishing shared/cluster sanitary and water systems in Freeman.

STATE TRUST FUND LOAN PROGRAM

The Board of Commissioners of Public Lands provides this loan program with terms of up to 20 years and deeply discounted interest rates. Loans may be used for a variety of purposes including: road improvements, water and sewer, equipment, recreational facilities, industrial development, and other public facilities that may include community centers/halls and trail development. The funds available fluctuate annually. The current annual loan limit is $2,000,000. The Town of Freeman could utilize these funds for development of new park facilities, trails, road projects (including projects to pave shoulders for trail routes), or expansion and renovation of the Town Hall. However, it must again be noted that federal and state funding for parks acquisition is contingent upon the approval and adoption of a local CORP (see box at left).

Rural Development Community Facility Grants

The USDA Rural Development also offers grants to communities seeking to build or improve their community facilities. These include schools, libraries, childcare, hospitals, medical clinics, assisted living facilities, fire and rescue stations, police stations, community centers, public buildings and transportation. These grants are awarded to communities with a population up to 20,000 based on a competitive application process.

Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security awards competitive grants to fire departments and non-affiliated emergency medical services that will enhance the ability of first responders and firefighters. In 2006, the program was allotted $485,595,000 to be disbursed through three separate programs: the *Assistance to Firefighters Grant*, *Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response Grants,* and *Fire Prevention and Safety Grants*.

State Stewardship Fund

The Stewardship Fund is the State of Wisconsin's land acquisition program for public outdoor recreation and habitat protection. Administered by the Department of Natural Resources, the fund makes 60 million dollars a year available to buy land for nature-based parks and associated infrastructure improvements, trails, habitat areas, and campgrounds. The funds can also be used for shoreland stabilization and riparian buffer enhancement projects. The Stewardship Grants provide up to a 50% match in funds to that coming from the local government. In order to be eligible, local and tribal governments must have a DNR approved Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan or Master Plan that has also been adopted by the local governing unit (Town Board). Freeman could use these funds to establish local trails or a new nature-based park and its associated infrastructure.

Capital Improvements Plan

A Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) is typically a five-year plan with updates occurring annually. Capital items are generally defined as those items that are more expensive and will last at least 3-5 years. These items are financed through borrowing, as they may overburden the annual operating budget. A general CIP includes a community's capital items such as:

- Parkland acquisition and improvements

- Trail development projects
- Public buildings improvements and maintenance
- Emergency vehicle or road maintenance vehicle purchase and replacement
- Street maintenance and reconstruction
- Replacement of aged sanitary sewer and water mains

The Town of Freeman uses the CIP for road and bridge maintenance. To more effectively implement the Comprehensive Plan and prepare for future expenditures, the Town should consider expanding CIP coverage.

Coordination with Other Comprehensive Plan Chapters

Utilities and community facilities can dictate future planning for a community if capacity, location, and services are not adequate to support development. Therefore, it is important to inventory existing utilities and community facilities to understand how utilities and community facilities will be provided during the tenure of the Comprehensive Plan.

HOUSING

Improvements such as roads, sewer, parks, recreational facilities, and schools are all affected by residential development. The recommended method to coordinate improvements is to follow the land use pattern presented on the Future Land Use Map as closely as possible and plan for future improvements in a CIP.

FUTURE LAND USE CHAPTER

Land use drives the need for utilities and community facilities. Conversely, the availability of utilities and community facilities can determine where development can occur. The Future Land Use Map was developed with careful consideration of where utilities and community facilities are now available, or will be available, within the planning period. In addition, the Future Land Use Map carefully considers the economic feasibility of utilities and community facility extensions to serve areas planned for future development. Areas where the extension of sewer service, alternative treatment systems or other basic infrastructure is cost prohibitive are not encouraged for future development.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

The Town currently participates cooperatively with the County and neighboring communities to provide efficient services. During the implementation of this plan, Freeman will consult with adjoining municipalities, Crawford County, and MRRPC, among others, to coordinate park planning, wastewater treatment, and other utilities and facilities needs.

Utilities & Community Facilities Policies, Goals, and Objectives

The policies, goals, and objectives related to Utilities & Community Facilities in the Town of Freeman can be found in *Chapter 12: Implementation*.

Introduction

This chapter provides an inventory of existing agricultural, natural, and cultural resources in the Town of Freeman. Issues associated with these resources are discussed and a vision, with supporting goals and objectives, is presented.

Wisconsin's Smart Growth Law listed the following goals relative to planning for agricultural and natural resources:

- Protection of undeveloped areas including wetlands, wildlife habitats, lakes, woodlands, open spaces and environmental corridors.
- Protection of economically productive agricultural areas.
- Protection of agricultural lands for agricultural purposes.

Agricultural Resources

Agriculture remains a significant component of Freeman's landscape. In 2009, there are approximately 30 active family farmers engaged in livestock and or crop farming as well as a number of farms having smaller enterprises in the Town of Freeman, exclusive of the individual land operators. However, the economy, the topology, the nearness to the Mississippi River, and the vast amount of hunting opportunities continue to threaten turning productive agricultural land into primary and secondary housing, hunting cabins and weekend retreats, and future land investments. . Residential and commercial growth in rural communities typically occurs through "green field" development; that is, it takes place on land not previously developed. Green fields include woodlands, wetlands, grasslands, fallow areas, and agricultural lands. In the Town of Freeman, a substantial portion of wooded areas exists along steep slopes.

Productive farm soils are located throughout the community (refer to Agricultural Productivity Map on page 7-24). A variety of factors threaten the long-term viability of farming in the Town of Freeman. They include:

- The economic viability of family farms and even the economic viability for farm operators (those who lease the land of others for productive use.)
- A projected year-round population exceeding 1,000 by the year 2025;
- Continued development of vacation and seasonal homes;
- The increasing average age of the typical farm operator combined with fewer young people interested in farming.
- The desire for more space for residential development

A variety of tools are available to local governments and farmers to preserve prime agricultural lands. These include Wisconsin's Farmland Preservation Program, various Natural Resource Conservation Service programs, Working Lands Initiative and the purchase or transfer of

development rights, among others. These programs are most effective in communities where farming will remain a primary land use over time. Successful farmland preservation efforts are dependant upon the support of local farmers and their ability to pursue new markets to sustain operations over time.

Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations

Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations, also known as CAFOs, (factory farms), is an issue of concern for many rural Wisconsin communities. In 2006, the State of Wisconsin enacted ATCP-51, the livestock siting law. Additional information regarding CAFOs and ATCP-51 can be found later in this chapter under the *Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources Issues and Concerns* section.

Long-Term Sustainability of Farming

This section provides options available to the Town and local farmers to preserve locally owned agricultural operations. Local land trusts and conservation subdivision designs are encouraged, but may not be appropriate in all areas. Other strategies to protect farmland include:

> *For More Information*
>
> about EQIP, CRP, and other programs to preserve farmland, visit:
>
> *www.fsa.usda.gov/dafp/cepd/crp.htm*
> *www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/eqip*

- Permitting value-added operations such as cheese-making and on- and off-farm direct retailing (roadside farm stands);
- Encouraging local schools to provide education to students about careers in farming;
- Transitioning from conventional to organic farming techniques, if economically feasible; and,
- Reevaluating current livestock and crop selection.

Conservation–Based Development

The township currently has conservation development occurring because of linear scattered site housing along existing town roads and anticipates more of this to occur. This is preserving existing agriculture land and is expected to continue.

Land Trusts and Agriculture Conservation Easements

Land trusts provide another option to landowners seeking to protect natural areas and farmland. They offer landowners advice on protection strategies that best meet the landowner's conservation and financial needs. Land trusts accept lands donated by landowners for conservation purposes. Land trusts can also work with landowners to establish conservation easements (see on following page). The local land trust active in the area is Mississippi Valley Conservancy (MVC). For more information contact MVC at 608 784-3606 or http://www.mississippivalleyconservancy.org/.

MVC is currently expanding the Sugar Creek Bluff State Natural Area (SNA) which includes approximately 200 acres on both sides of Sugar Creek near Highway 35.

Agricultural land, agricultural forests, productive forests, woodland in the Managed Forest Law (MFL) and undeveloped land in private hands coupled with the Federal State and Local conservation land comprise approximately 93% of all the land in Freeman.

SPECIALTY FARMING

Due to topography and relatively small field size, specialty farming is appropriate and encouraged in Freeman Township.

Agricultural Concerns and Opportunities

SUSTAINING FARMLANDS AND NATURAL AREAS IN A GROWING COMMUNITY

Even though State projections and other data sources suggest a zero or negative growth for Freeman in the next 20 years there is concern about the impact development will have on natural areas and farmland. Conservation of natural resources and farmland is important to preserving the rural character of the area, maintaining wildlife habitat, and providing green infrastructure (e.g. wetlands and floodplains for storm water management, scenic areas, etc.) needed to sustain the Town of Freeman's high quality of living.

A means of conserving important landscapes, natural and agricultural, is to establish a purchase and/or transfer of development rights (PDR/TDR) program. A PDR or TDR program would allow the Town to "send" development from farmland and natural resource areas to designated "receiving" areas. Advantages of these approaches include the fact that landowners are compensated and farmland and natural resource preservation is permanent. PDR is a voluntary program, where a land trust, local government, or some other agency usually linked to local government makes an offer to a landowner to buy the development rights on the parcel. The landowner is free to turn down the offer, or to try to negotiate a higher price. When the development rights to a farm are sold, the farmer receives payment equal to the difference between the fair market value of the land a developer would pay if it could be developed and the price the land would command for agricultural use. In return for this payment, a conservation easement is recorded on the deed to the property. The easement stays with the land in perpetuity. The private landowner still retains the right to occupy and make economic use of the land for agricultural purposes. The landowner gives up the right to develop the property for some other use in the future. Farmers are not compelled to sell their development rights. Participation in PDR programs is entirely voluntary.

The main disadvantage of PDR is cost. Development rights can be expensive to purchase, so funding for PDR needs to be selectively targeted to preserve and protect agricultural land that is most worthy of preservation. As a result, not every farmer who wants to sell his or her development rights will be able to do so.

TDR involves transferring development rights from one piece of property to another. In this approach, a landowner is compensated for selling his/her development rights. However, rather than simply eliminating these rights, they are transferred to another property in the Town that is planned for development. That landowner has the right to develop his/her property and also use

the transferred rights they purchased from the other landowner to develop at a greater density or intensity (e.g. smaller lot sizes to locate more homes in a single area). This approach results in the preservation of farmland and natural areas in designated “sending” zones and more intensive development in the designated “receiving” zones.

ATCP 51 – Livestock Siting Rule

On September 16, 2005, the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture's Board gave final approval of ATCP 51, which establishes standards for the siting of livestock operations. In its approval, the Board added an amendment to have the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) annually review ATCP 51 to see if any modifications are needed.

ATCP 51 implements Wisconsin’s Livestock Facility Siting Law (s. 93.90, Stats.). The law does not require local approval of new and expanding livestock operations, but if local approval is required by the community, the local government must grant or deny approval according to this rule. A local government may not consider other siting criteria, or apply standards that differ from this rule, except as specifically authorized in the law. This rule applies to new or expanded facilities that keep cattle, swine, poultry, sheep or goats.

Under the law, a local government may not deny or prohibit the siting or expansion of a livestock facility of any size unless one of the following applies:

- The site is located in a non-agricultural zoning district.
- The site is located in an agricultural zoning district where the livestock facility is prohibited. The zoning prohibition, if any, must be clearly justified on the basis of public health or safety. The law limits exclusionary local zoning based solely on livestock facility size.
- The proposed livestock facility violates a valid local ordinance adopted under certain state laws related to shoreland zoning, floodplain zoning, and construction site erosion control or stormwater management.
- The proposed livestock facility violates a state building, electrical or plumbing code for that type of facility.
- The proposed livestock facility will have 500 or more “animal units” (or will exceed a lower threshold incorporated in a local zoning ordinance prior to July 19, 2003), and the proposed livestock facility violates either 1) the standards in the rule or, 2) a stricter local standard by ordinance. Those standards must be based on scientifically defensible findings of fact that clearly show the standards are necessary to protect public health or safety.

Natural Resources

The condition of the natural environment is a key ingredient in Freeman's "quality of life" and the strong sense of resident community pride. A correlation exists between the presence and prevalence of open space and the positive feelings people have about their community. Woodlands, grasslands, croplands, pastures, trout streams, towering bluffs, and the Mississippi River provide important wildlife habitat and recreational opportunities for residents. They improve the visual appeal of the Town, provide tourist income from hunting, fishing and other recreational activities, and function as development buffers.

At the time of European settlement, the landscape of Freeman Township appeared vastly different from what it is today. At that time, the area had far fewer trees and was dominated by groves or scattered individual oaks with a grassy understory. This habitat type is known as "oak savanna". Many of the south and west slopes, as well as the larger flat ridge tops were nearly treeless and dominated with prairie grasses and flowers. Frequent fires set by Native Americans maintained the landscape in this open condition. Forested conditions, similar to what we have today, were limited to cooler/moister north and east slopes as well has some of the moister ravines and valley bottoms.

In many respects, the natural landscape determines where development can and cannot happen. The shallow soils and their erodibility due to the extreme topography limit row crop production. The high relief within the town also limits construction activities.

Based on resident input provided at the Kick-Off Meeting, conservation of natural resources (trout streams, bluffs, prairie, woodlands, Mississippi River) is an important priority in Freeman. Local residents value the benefits (e.g. stormwater control, water quality, air quality, wildlife habitat, aesthetics, recreation, etc.) provided by a healthy and diverse natural environment.

This section of the chapter provides an assessment of the different natural resources in Freeman. The information is graphically represented on the *Natural Resources Map.*

Wildlife (From Western Coulees and Ridges Chapter of the Ecological Landscapes DNR Handbook in Draft)

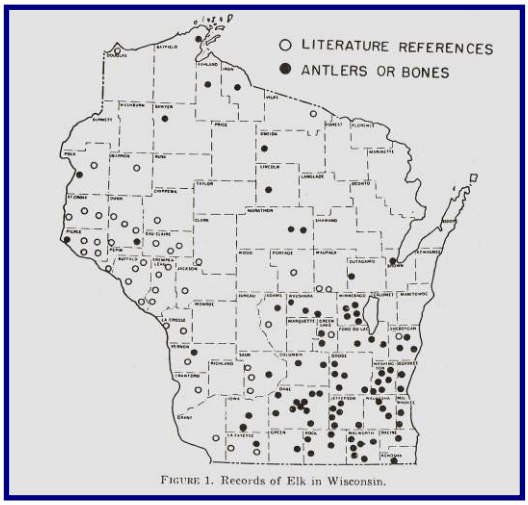
CHANGES IN WILDLIFE OVER TIME

Wildlife populations have, in some cases, changed dramatically since humans arrived on the landscape, but these changes were not well documented until the mid-1800s. This section discusses wildlife species that were historically documented in the Western Coulees and Ridges Ecological Landscape. Other species for which evidence of past occurrence in the landscape is equivocal or lacking are discussed if suitable habitat exists and recent reintroduction attempts have met with apparent success. Of the latter category of animals, this review is limited to species thought to have been especially important here in comparison to their presence in other Ecological Landscapes. For a more complete review of historical wildlife in the state, see a collection of articles written by A. W. Schorger, compiled into the volume "Wildlife in Early Wisconsin" (Brockman and Dow 1982).

The Western Coulees and Ridges Ecological Landscape was important historically for a number of wildlife species, especially those using oak savanna and oak openings, oak and floodplain forests, prairies, bluffs, caves and rock outcroppings, and large river systems. This Ecological Landscape was particularly important for the elk, bison, Wild Turkey, Passenger Pigeon, Sharp-tailed Grouse, Greater Prairie Chicken, Bobwhite Quail, and both timber and massasauga rattlesnakes. In the mid 19th century, the Landscape was settled by European settlers, wild fires were prevented and controlled, and wildlife populations changed.

Although the distribution of the Passenger Pigeon has been described as covering the eastern half of North America (Schorger 1946), its nesting was limited by the presence and abundance of mast (beech nuts and acorns primarily). Schorger (1946) reported from newspaper accounts and interviews that Passenger Pigeons nested by the millions in Wisconsin. With a large presence of oak, this Ecological Landscape was undoubtedly an important nesting area for Passenger Pigeons during years of high mast production.

Passenger Pigeons were shot and trapped during the nesting season and squabs taken from nests and shipped to markets in Milwaukee, Chicago, and cities on the east coast by the trainload (Schorger 1937). Since the Passenger Pigeon was thought to only lay one egg each a year, only nest in communal roosts, and be dependent on abundant mast for nest production, the heavy kill of Passenger Pigeon led to its extinction (Schorger 1937). The last Passenger Pigeon known, died in 1914 at the Cincinnati Zoo. See Central Sand Plains Ecological Landscape chapter for more detailed discussion of the Passenger Pigeon.

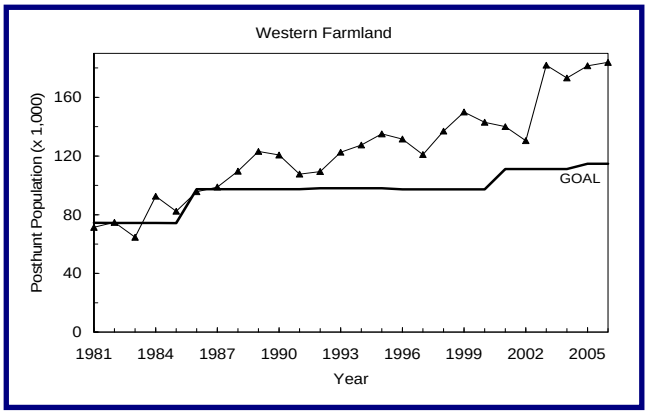


Historic Elk Distribution. From Schorger 1954.

Elk were found throughout Wisconsin but flourished in open woodlands, oak openings, and at the border of grasslands and forests. Elk were most numerous and abundant in the southern and western parts of the state (Schorger 1954) and were especially abundant in this Ecological Landscape. The Chippewa, Kickapoo, Trempealeau, and Mississippi River valleys were often mentioned as having abundant elk populations and there was a report that elk were “astonishingly abundant” around the Platteville area (Schorger1954). Elk were still abundant in this Landscape during the 1850’s but declined rapidly after that. The last reliable report of elk in Wisconsin is from west of Menomonie in 1866 (Schorger1954). Attempts have been made to restore elk in Wisconsin. In 1917, 41 elk were shipped from Yellowstone National Park and placed at the State Game Farm in Vilas County (Schorger 1954). About half of the elk died immediately following release, but by 1924 they were thought to have numbered 75. By 1954 elk numbers were thought to have been reduced to 35. The population subsequently disappeared from illegal hunting and other causes. Currently, Wisconsin has about 150 elk, all of them in North Central Ecological Landscape from a more recent restoration effort**.**

White-tailed deer were found throughout the state and were likely more abundant in southern Wisconsin than in the northern part of the state (Schorger 1953) at the time of Euro-American settlement. Deer were reported as plentiful in southwestern Wisconsin in 1830’s (Schorger

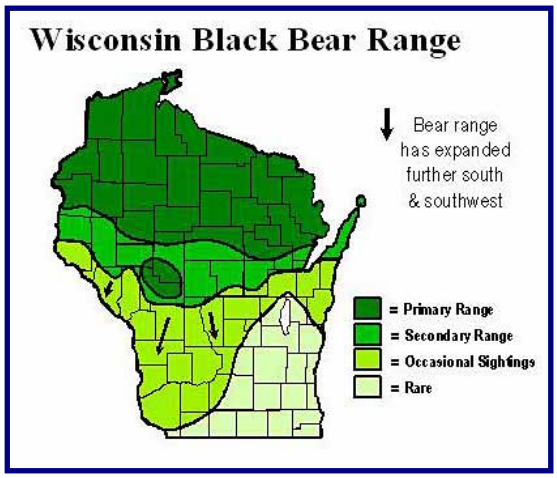
1953) and Hoffman (1855) reported that that he saw "large herds" on the prairies in February 1834. However, as settlers arrived in southwestern Wisconsin in subsequent years, they depended on venison for food and professional market hunters sent tons of venison to the eastern large cities. The severe winter of 1856-57 caused many deer to starve or be easily killed by settlers in southwestern Wisconsin (Schorger 1953). Snow 6 feet deep was reported in some places with a thick ½ inch crust making movement of deer very difficult. Deer seemed to recover somewhat within a decade and were reported as numerous again in southwestern Wisconsin in the mid-1860's. Subsistence harvest, together with market hunting, likely reduced the deer population to its lowest level late in the 19th century. Deer were considered uncommon throughout southwestern Wisconsin from 1900 through the 1960s. However, since the early 1980s deer populations have increased dramatically in this Landscape (Figure XXX), and deer are now very abundant.



Deer population size in relation to population goals in the Western Farmlands.

Today, deer are an important game species but are cause crop damage, vehicle accidents, damage to forest regeneration, and impact many forest herbs.

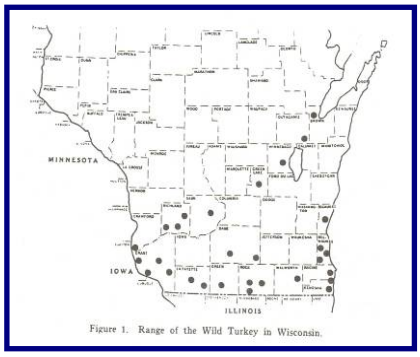
Black bears were historically found throughout the Landscape but were probably more abundant in the more wooded areas in the northern part of the Landscape. The last appearance of black bears in this Landscape was from the early to mid-1900s (Schorger 1949). Today the black bear range is expanding south and southwest in the state. The northeastern edge of the Landscape in Dunn, Chippewa, and Eau Claire Counties are considered secondary range for the black bear, and northeastern Jackson County is considered primary range. Occasionally black bears are sighted in other parts of the Landscape.



Black bear range in 2008. WDNR 2008.

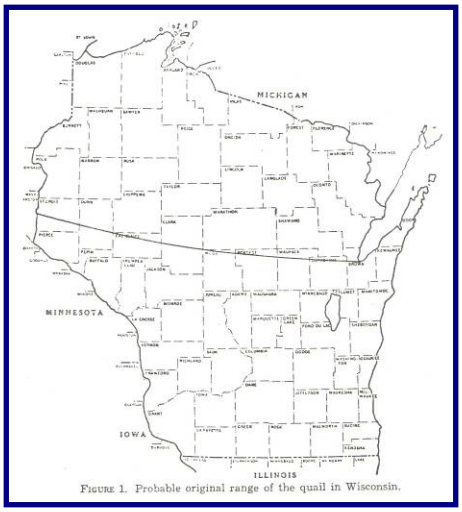
The historic range of the Wild Turkey was in southern Wisconsin below a line from Green Bay to Prairie du Chien (Schorger 1942). However, since the Wild Turkey was at the northernmost part of its range, the number of turkeys close to this line fluctuated in response to severe winters. Wild Turkeys were most abundant in southwestern Wisconsin and in the southern part of this Landscape. In 1816 James Lockwood stated "It was not an uncommon thing to see a Fox Indian arrive at Prairie du Chien with a hand sled, loaded with twenty to thirty wild turkeys for sale, as they were very plentiful about Cassville, and occasionally killed opposite Prairie du Chien" (Schorger 1942). Due to persistent hunting by settlers for food, change of habitat, and the severe winter of 1842-43 Wild

Turkeys were rare by 1860. The last documented Wild Turkey was seen in Lafayette County in 1881(Schorger 1942).



Historic Wild Turkey Range in Wisconsin. From Schorger 1942.

There were a couple of attempts by private individuals to reintroduce the Wild Turkey into Wisconsin during the late 1800s (Schorger 1942). These flocks persisted until the early 1900s. Between 1929 and 1939, the State of Wisconsin released about 3,000 pen-reared Wild Turkeys in Grant and Sauk Counties (Brown and Vander Zouwen 1993). These birds frequented farmyards and were quite tame. They persisted until1958 when the last Wild Turkey was reported dead near Grand Marsh in Adams County. In the early 1950s the Wisconsin Conservation Department stocked Wild Turkeys in the Meadow Valley-Necedah Area in the Central Sand Plains. That flock, a cross between game farm hens and wild gobblers, originated from Pennsylvania. During 1954-57, 827 birds from Pennsylvania were released on the Meadow Valley Wildlife Area-Necedah National Wildlife Refuge. Although appearing successful at first, the flock encountered disease and severe winters. The flock persisted but never expanded its range significantly (Brown and Vander Zouwen 1993). It wasn't until 1976 that the Wild Turkey became reestablished in Wisconsin when 45 Wild Turkeys trapped in Missouri were obtained in a trade for 135 Ruffed Grouse trapped in this Landscape and released in Vernon County. Other reintroduction followed, and a total of 334 Missouri Wild Turkeys were released in Buffalo, Iowa, Sauk, Trempealeau, Jackson, La Crosse, Vernon, Dane, and Lafayette Counties. Once established in these areas, the department trapped and relocated Wild Turkeys throughout the state (Brown and Vander Zouwen 1993). Although the Wild Turkey is now established in all 16 Ecological Landscapes, the Western Coulees and Ridges Ecological Landscape have the highest densities for this bird in Wisconsin, providing excellent hunting and wildlife viewing opportunities.



Historic Bobwhite Quail Range in Wisconsin. From Schorger 1946.

The Bobwhite Quail must have been distributed widely throughout the open areas of the state (Schorger 1946) in widely fluctuating populations, depending on winter severity. Bobwhite Quail were especially abundant during a period of mild winters from 1846 to 1857 and reached peak numbers in 1854. During this time, it was said that a good shot could "readily bag 50 to 75 in a day" in Madison (Schorger 1946). Shipments of quail from Beloit to the eastern cities amounted to 12 tons in 1854-55. A shipment of 20,000 quail from Janesville was received in Philadelphia in 1856 (Schorger 1946). Bobwhite Quail declined quickly thereafter due to unregulated trapping and adverse weather. The winters of 1854-55 and 1855-56 were severe, but trapping continued with "tons of quail and other game hanging in the yard of the Capital House in Madison." The Bobwhite Quail population was much reduced from its former numbers by the fall of 1857. The population recovered through the

1860s but never achieved the 1854 levels. From 1870 to the 1940s the Bobwhite Quail population remained relatively stationary (Schorger 1946).

At the close of the 19th century the Bobwhite Quail population increased temporarily in the Mississippi Valley. Schorger (1946) noted that "they were abundant in 1896 at Prairie du Chien and more numerous than usual at Trempealeau …". The increase continued through 1900 and they "were to be found everywhere in the country districts at Prairie du Chien for the first time in many years" (Schorger 1946). Bobwhite Quail populations have decreased dramatically since 1900 due to changes in land use and other causes, but this Landscape has the best populations remaining in the state. Up to 60% of annual variability in Bobwhite Quail numbers could be explained by winter severity (Petersen 1997).

Socially Significant Fauna – Species such as white-tailed deer, Wild Turkey, Ruffed Grouse, and American Woodcock are all important for hunting and wildlife viewing in this Landscape, as are many other species of birds. The larger rivers support waterfowl and other waterbirds that are popular for hunting and wildlife viewing. The warmwater fishery is significant and supports populations of sauger, walleye, small and largemouth bass, bluegill, perch and other panfish that are sought by anglers. Abundant coldwater streams provide habitat for native brook trout, as well as introduced brown and rainbow trout.

FORESTS/FORESTRY

The drier forests are often dominated by oaks and were affected by a somewhat different group of characteristic disturbances, especially fire and drought. Periodic wildfire formerly affected many, if not virtually all, oak forests. Besides facilitating establishment of the oaks, fires reduced the densities of shrub and sapling cover and prevented the establishment of and dominance by more mesophytic species. Native grasses, legumes, and composites may be well-represented in stands that have not been heavily disturbed by agents other than fire. From a conservation perspective, noteworthy plants of the oak forests include autumn coral-root (Corallorhiza odontorhiza), upland boneset (Eupatorium sessilifolium var. brittonianum), great Indian plantain (Cacalia muehlenbergii), and ginseng (Panax quinquefolius).

Dry-mesic and mesic hardwood forests are widespread and well-represented in the Western Coulees and Ridges Ecological Landscape. Southwestern Wisconsin's oak-dominated upland hardwood forests possess high ecological, economic, aesthetic, and recreational values. Sustainable management of the oak forests, in particular, has proven to be highly problematic as most, if not all, of the methods used have had only limited and local successes. (Maybe something about "high grading" which exacerbates the situation.)

Sugar maple-basswood forest (aka 'Southern Mesic Forest' or sometimes simply 'northern hardwoods') may support exceptionally rich understory vegetation, especially in areas with loess soils and/or areas that are underlain by dolomites or limestones. Mesic hardwood forests may support distinctive assemblages of species not present in other forest communities. Additional conservation attention for this often overlooked type is needed, especially for rich sites that adjoin other forest types.

Forestry - One potential land use change in this Landscape is the decline of the oak resource in upland habitats, especially on dry-mesic and mesic sites. In the absence of fire, and under

pressure from unsustainable logging practices, grazing, and the spread of invasive species, oaks and oak forests are declining. Oak is very important not only as commercial timber but as the dominant genus of trees for a whole community of plants and wildlife that depend on it. Currently, we are living on the legacy of fires that occurred more than a hundred years ago and produced and maintained our oak resources in this area. With the cessation of fire, when oak is logged today it often accelerates the conversion of the stand to another forest type, especially on the richer sites. "High-grading," the practice of preferentially removing the trees (usually the large oaks, and the largest red oaks in particular) with the greatest commercial value, can further accelerate the decline of oak in these stands and lead to a conversion to other less desirable (ecologically and economically) forest types.

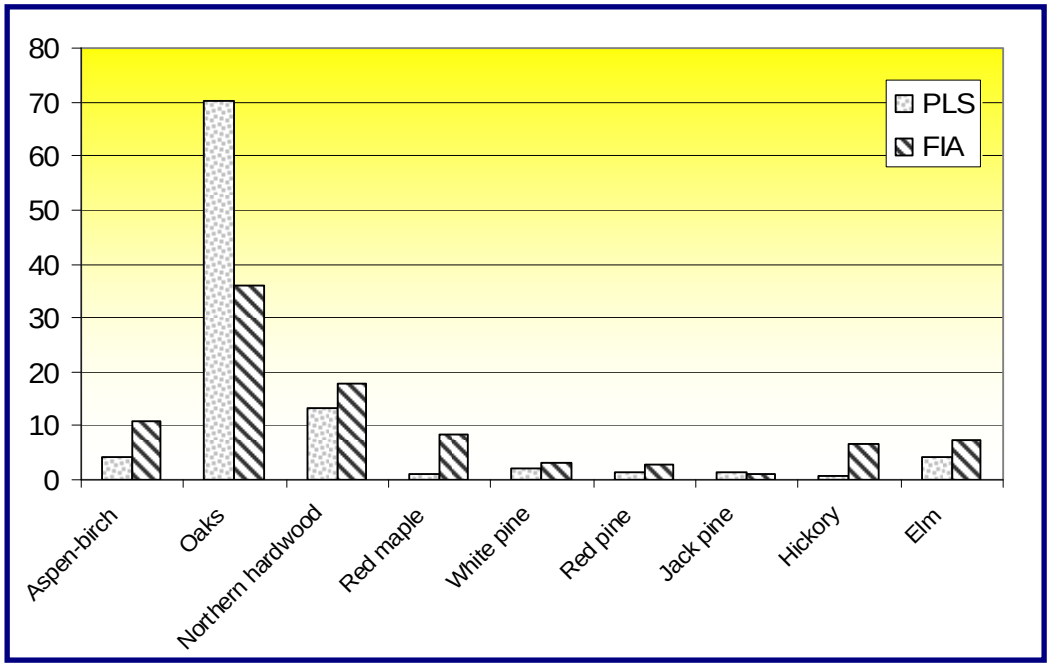


Figure 4 Comparison of tree species' relative importance value (average of relative dominance and relative density) during the mid-1800s, when General Land Office Public Land Survey (PLS) data were collected, and in 2004 based on Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) data. Each bar represents the proportion of that forest type in the data set (totals equal 100). Trees of less than 6" diameter were excluded from the FIA data set to make it more comparable with PLS data.

The introduction and spread of invasive species (Eurasian honeysuckles and buckthorns, garlic mustard) has prevented oak from regenerating in some areas. More research is needed to learn techniques to restore not only the oak trees but also maintain the entire oak community in this Landscape. Use of more prescribed fire may be productive, but the logistics can be problematic, and there is a lack of experience in using fire in forested ecosystems on an operational scale Wisconsin

Current forest vegetation (based on RIV) is primarily oak species (36% of RIV), northern hardwood (18%) and aspen-birch (11%). Aspen RIV has increased from 4.1% to 10.9% since pre-European settlemement, while red maple has increased from 0.9% to 8.3%. Hickory has also increased (from 0.9% of RIV to 6.6%), as has elm (from 4.2% to 7.5% of RIV).

The overall RIV for oaks has decreased from over 70% to 36% and the RIVs of the individual species within that group have also changed widely (Figure 5). The RIVs of black, bur and white oaks have decreased dramatically, while red oak RIV has increased from 2.6% to 12.9%.

STREAMS AND WATERSHED DRAINAGE AREAS

Surface water resources are extremely valuable assets to a community because of their potential environmental and economic benefits. Water-based recreational activities and appropriately designed residential development that capitalizes on surface water amenities can have lasting impact on the local economy. Appropriate location and management of residential uses near surface water features is extremely important because of potential threats to water quality. Residential development's threats to surface water resources include lawn-applied chemicals, petroleum-based substances and salts from local road runoff.

Typical topography in Town of Freeman. The highly dissected topography was described by residents as a valued natural resource during the Vision Exercise.

The interior of the township consists of a highly dissected topography. A ridge divides Freeman from south to north, carrying the main road through the township, STH 27. The streams west of the ridge flow into the Mississippi River, while the streams to the east flow into the Kickapoo or Wisconsin Rivers. The streams are typically short, cold, and fast-moving, providing ideal trout habitat. The majority of watersheds within the Town of Freeman contain either class 2 or class 3 trout streams. Generally, upper reaches of streams carry the class 2 designation, while lower reaches, which are warmer and slower-moving, are classified class 3.

Efforts are being made to reverse damages to streams caused by past agricultural practices, primarily siltation due to runoff caused by logging and cropping. During the latter half of the 1800's until the 1930's, there was no soil conservation practices used in the Driftless Area. The ridges were logged, plowed, and planted. Rain ran down the steep slopes instead of infiltrating into the ground, creating gullies, and carrying enormous amounts of silt into the creeks. Cattle were pastured in the stream bottoms, compacting the soils and exacerbating erosion problems.

Soil conservation practices were begun in the Driftless Area in the mid-1930's, championed by Aldo Leopold. Farmers were taught to terrace land, to practice contour planting of alternating

corn and hay crops, and to vegetate areas along waterways. These efforts have increased rainfall infiltration to groundwater, which in turn recharges area streams with colder water. Silt is prevented from reaching the streams, which maintains the graveled streambeds favored by trout.

Modern stream restoration efforts include the removal of silt from streambeds and valley floors; the creation of gentle, sloping banks; the installation of riprap, weirs, and other structures in streams to reconstruct natural habitat; and the planting of buffer zones alongside stream banks.

THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER, LAKE WINNESHIEK, AND THE UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER NATIONAL WILDLIFE AND FISH REFUGE

Lynxville Lock and Dam.
Source: Crawford County website.

The defining water body within the Town of Freeman is the Mississippi River. The west boundary of Freeman extends into the Mississippi River. The Lynxville Dam, constructed in 1937, created a pool known as Lake Winneshiek, which is located within the Townships of Freeman and Seneca in Crawford County. The lake contains wooded islands and sloughs, providing habitats for a rich diversity of fish and other wildlife. It is the largest federally managed pool on the Mississippi River.

Lake Winneshiek is an integral part of the Mississippi flyway, a major waterfowl and neo-tropical (song) bird migration route, and is part of the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge. The Mississippi flyway is the migration corridor for 40% of North America's waterfowl and shorebirds. Needs re-writing

In 2004, a consortium of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Geological Survey, and neighboring state Departments of Natural Resources developed recommendations for improving habitat within the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge. The resultant plan, entitled *Environmental Pool Plans, Mississippi River Pools 1 – 10*, includes recommendations for the area of the refuge in the Town of Freeman. Lake Winneshiek originally contained several hundred acres of low elevation and shallowly flooded islands, which provided ideal habitat for migratory waterfowl. Over time, many of these floodplain features have been lost due to erosion. Recommendations include island construction and protection, mud/sand flat construction, and water level management, to increase the aquatic vegetation coverage in the area.

The lake is an important component to the region's substantial tourism industry, providing plentiful opportunities for fishing, boating, hunting, and bird watching.

The Upper Mississippi River is also a working river. It is unique in the United States, in that it is the only inland waterway that has been federally recognized as both a nationally significant ecosystem and a nationally significant navigation system. The Lynxville Lock and Dam, averages 6,000 lockages annually. In recent years, 70 to 85 million tons of cargo are shipped

annually between Minneapolis and the mouth of the Missouri River. Barges ply the river during the shipping season, transporting primarily agricultural, petroleum, and coal products.

The Mississippi River flooded frequently in the past, most significantly in the Great Mississippi River Flood of 1927. The flood covered 27,000 square miles, mostly in its middle and southern reaches, killing 246 people. The water remained above flood stage for two months, displacing 700,000 people. The flood resulted in the construction of 23 dams between Hastings, Minnesota and Alton, Illinois during the 1930's, in an effort to control flooding and facilitate river traffic. The Lynxville Dam was opened in 1937. The dams have helped to control the frequency, duration, and intensity of flooding, but flooding still occurs. Major flooding occurred in the area in 1978, causing deaths and considerable economic hardships. Most of the major watersheds in the area recorded record or near-record crests. The Crawford County town of Soldiers Grove was destroyed, and was later relocated to higher ground as a result of the flood. Significant flooding also took place in these watersheds in 1993.

The significant floodplain in Freeman lies in Rush Creek. Sugar Creek has some mild flooding within the village limits of Ferryville. Buck Creek floods in the field area adjacent to Rt 35. The flood plain maps contained in this chapter were produced online for free through the WIDNR web site: http://dnrmaps.wisconsin.gov/imf/imf.jsp?site=SurfaceWaterViewer.floodplain.

WETLANDS, FLOODPLAINS, AND BLUFFS

Wetlands act as a natural filtering system for sediment and nutrients such as phosphorus and nitrates. They also serve as a natural buffer, protecting shorelines and stream banks from erosion. Wetlands are essential in providing wildlife habitat, flood control, and groundwater recharge.

In the portion of the Town of Freeman east of the Mississippi River, due to the severity of the topography, few significant wetland areas are found. They exist to a small degree along stream banks. The significant wetland acreages within the township are associated with the sloughs, backwater areas, and floodplains of the Mississippi River.

Floodplains serve many important functions related to flood and erosion control, water quality, groundwater recharge and fish and wildlife habitats. Floodplains provide an area for streams and rivers to swell into during high rainfall and snowmelt events. These areas are unsuitable for development because of risks to lives and property.

The primary floodplain areas within the Town of Freeman are associated with the Mississippi River. The Mississippi River flows through a gorge in the area. The floor of the gorge contains the river's floodplain, with additional floodplain areas extending inland a short distance along major stream valleys. Minor floodplain areas can also be found further inland in stream valleys within the township.

The Flood Insurance Rate Map identifies areas along the Mississippi River as areas subject to flooding. The primary areas of flooding outside the Mississippi River gorge include the Copper Creek area, the Lynxville area, and an area just north of the Lynxville Lock and Dam. Crawford County regulates development in and around floodplains.

Wisconsin counties also regulate development activities within shoreland areas, which in Crawford County are defined to be within 300 feet of the ordinary high water mark of navigable rivers or streams or to the landward side of the floodplain, whichever distance is greater. Shorelines are often thought of as a boundary between the land and water, but shorelines are also a transition area within which the health of land and water ecosystems can be positively or negatively affected. Shoreland vegetation traps and filters sediment and debris from rainfall and snow melt, buffering surface waters. In August of 2007, and again in June of 2008 (another major event took place in 2002-3), Freeman Township received record rainfalls within a very short period of time. These events caused significant damage to township bridges and roads, caused severe soil erosion, and caused damage to homes, personal property, and driveways. These events, and the costs associated with them, exemplify the need to utilize techniques that mitigate and minimize future impacts of severe rainfall events. These methods include:

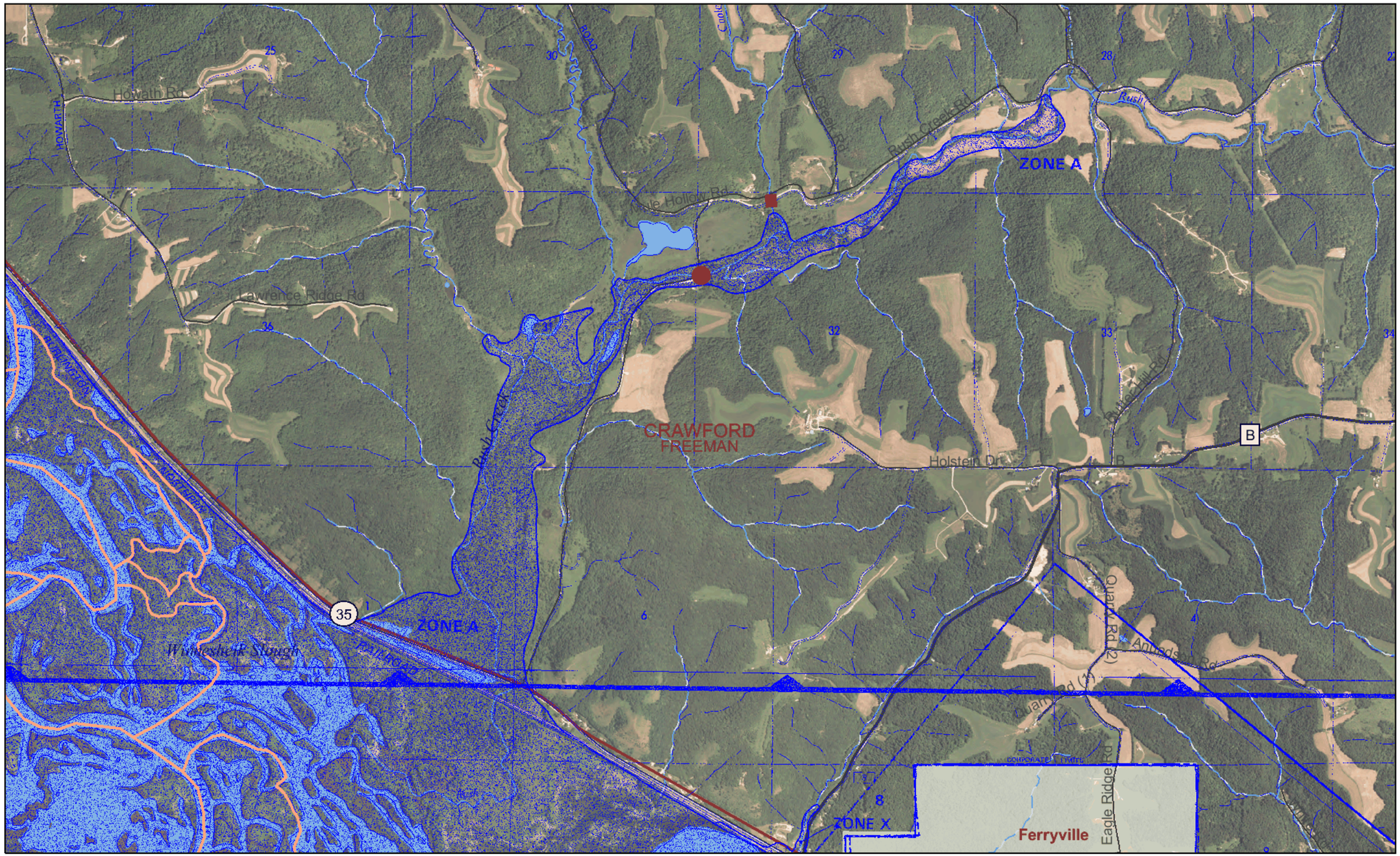
- Maintaining/installing buffer strips and terraces in agricultural fields; especially on larger ridgetop fields
- Maintaining/installing buffer strips along stream corridors
- Maintaining and restoring wetlands

Shoreland zoning regulations are designed for efficient use, conservation, development, and protection of water resources. They are intended to:

- Prevent and control water pollution;
- Protect spawning ground for fish and aquatic life;
- Control building sites, placement of structures, and land use; and,
- Preserve shore cover and natural beauty.

Additional natural features within the Town of Freeman are the towering bluffs overlooking the Mississippi River. These landmark features contribute to the scenic diversity and attractiveness of the township. The Mississippi bluffs are not addressed in the Crawford County shoreland zoning ordinance. There are a number of methods available to protect these resources. A common approach is to require deeper structure setbacks in bluff areas. Another method is the development of overlay districts to encompass and protect these areas. A third method is to define bluff areas as “environmentally sensitive areas”, and include them in setback provisions. Identified as a Priority Conservation Action in the state’s Wildlife Action Plan

Freeman Floodplain Map



0 2250 4500 6750 ft.

Legend

- Dams
- Analysis Points
- BRIDGE
- OTHER
- FLOOD INSURANCE STUDY
- Analysis Lines
- BRIDGE
- OTHER
- FLOOD INSURANCE STUDY
- Major Highways
- Interstate
- State Highway
- U.S. Highways
- County Roads
- Local Roads
- 24K County Boundaries
- Civil Towns
- Civil Town
- Digital Flood Boundaries
- 100 Year Floodplain
- 500 Year Floodplain
- Floodway
- 24K Open Water
- 24K Rivers and Shorelines
- Intermittent
- Fluctuating
- Perennial
- Cities and Villages
- Village
- City

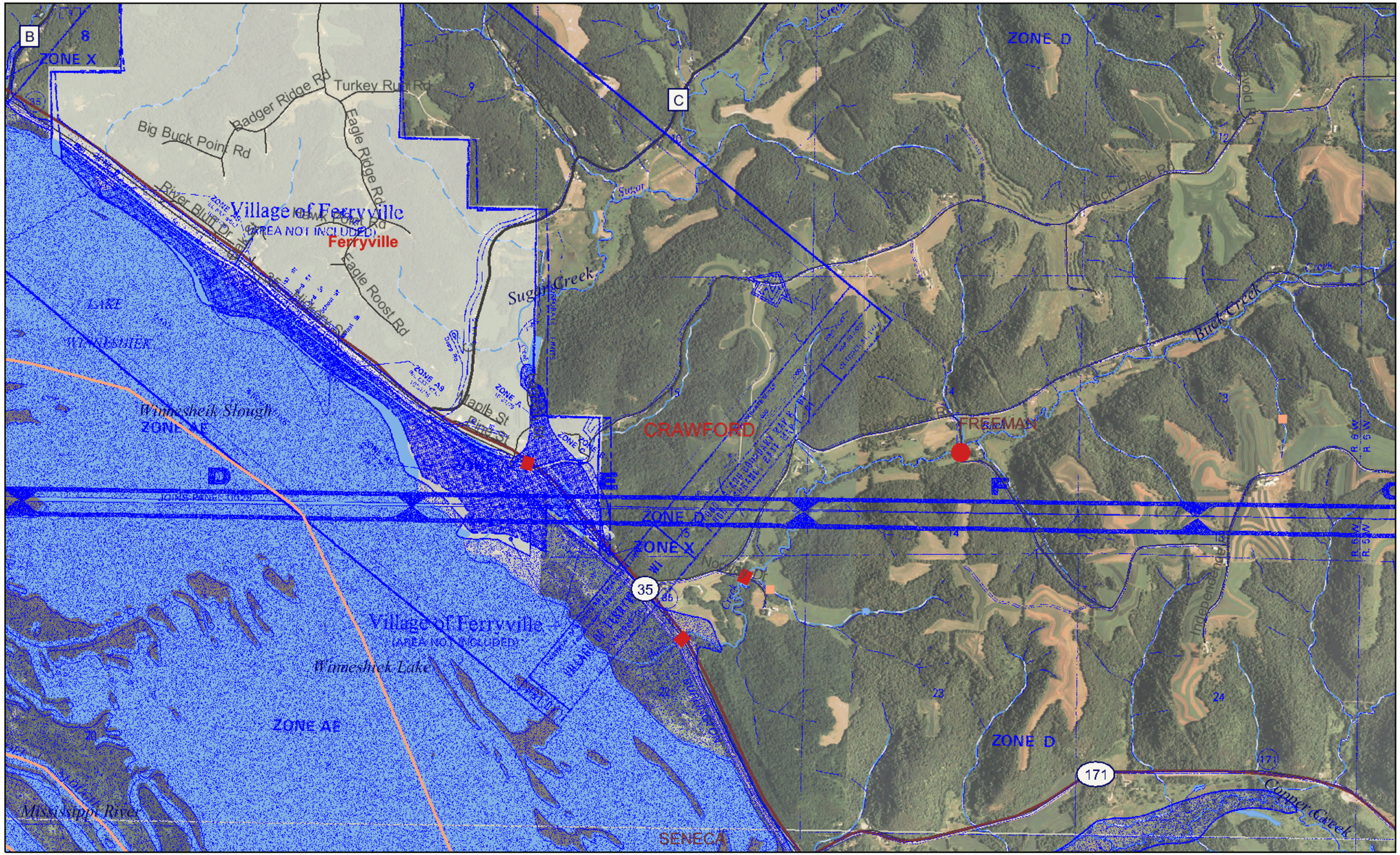
N

Scale: 1:23,914

This map is a user generated static output from an Internet mapping site and is for general reference only. Data layers that appear on this map may or may not be accurate, current, or otherwise reliable. THIS MAP IS NOT TO BE USED FOR NAVIGATION.

Notes: Rush Creek Area

Freeman Floodplain Map (South)



Legend

- Dams
- Analysis Points
- BRIDGE
- OTHER
- FLOOD INSURANCE STUDY
- Analysis Lines
- BRIDGE
- OTHER
- FLOOD INSURANCE STUDY
- Major Highways
- Interstate
- State Highway
- U.S. Highways
- County Roads
- Local Roads
- 24K County Boundaries
- Civil Towns
- Civil Town
- Digital Flood Boundaries
- 100 Year Floodplain
- 500 Year Floodplain
- Floodway
- 24K Open Water
- 24K Rivers and Shorelines
- Intermittent
- Fluctuating
- Perennial
- Cities and Villages
- Village
- City

0 2250 4500 6750 ft.

N

Scale: 1:23,949

This map is a user generated static output from an Internet mapping site and is for general reference only. Data layers that appear on this map may or may not be accurate, current, or otherwise reliable. THIS MAP IS NOT TO BE USED FOR NAVIGATION.

Notes: Sugar Creek and Buck Creek Areas

OUTSTANDING/UNIQUE FEATURES

Freeman Township is truly unique in that it possesses resources that are not only important from a local perspective, but are important from a statewide, continental, and even a global perspective. The following outlines factors contributing to our uniqueness:

EXTENSIVE BLUFF PRAIRIE AND SAVANNA COMPLEXES

Freeman Township contains the most extensive series of bluff prairies in the Upper Midwest, a natural community type that is of limited extent in the Midwest and occurs nowhere else in the world. Prairies once covered 2.1 million acres in Wisconsin. According to the WI Natural Heritage Inventory, only 2000 acres of native prairie, or 0.1% of the original acreage remains (pg 22 prairie atlas). Because of this, dry prairie is considered “globally rare” due to the limited acreage that remains. Associated with and occurring on the periphery of these prairies is a community type known as oak savanna. Once covering 5.5 million acres, savanna was the most common community type in southern WI. Intact stands of oak savanna are now so rare that less than 500 acres, or less than 0.01% of the original acreage, are listed in the Natural Heritage Inventory as having a plant assemblage similar to that of the original oak savanna (pg27, 8). Because of this, oak savanna is one of the rarest, most decimated plant communities in the world and is considered “globally imperiled”. The remaining prairies and savannas now contain the last vestiges of many unique and declining species of plants and animals. Prairies once produced and now provide us with the rich soils we now use for agricultural purposes.

The few remaining prairies and savannas are part of our heritage, part of our culture, a link to the past, and a potential resource of the future. The “father” of wildlife management, Aldo Leopold once said "the first rule of intelligent tinkering is to save all the pieces". These few remaining "pieces" are now in need of our attention if they are to continue to survive into the future.

MISSISSIPPI RIVER FLYWAY AND ASSOCIATED UPLAND FORESTS.

The Mississippi flyway is the migration corridor for 40% of North America’s waterfowl and shorebirds.
Associated uplands of the township provide important stopover habitat for hundreds of species of terrestrial songbirds that utilize the flyway during spring and fall migration. In fact, bird densities can be so great that they appear on Doppler radar in massive waves during peak migration. The Driftless Area Initiative has identified the forests of Freeman Township as having some of the highest forest cover along the Mississippi river in the state. These large forest blocks provide quality breeding habitat for rare birds known as “area sensitive forest interior birds” including some that are state threatened as well as some that are more common. The American Bird Conservancy has identified the Mississippi River Flyway as a “Globally Important Bird Area” and the Wisconsin Bird Conservation Initiative has identified the flyway and associated uplands as an “Important Bird Area” (IBA) of WI. Only sites considered “critical” for the conservation and management of WI’s birds are considered for IBA designation (citation).

CONSERVATION OPPORTUNITY AREA OF CONTINENTAL SIGNIFICANCE

It is for the above reasons that nearly the entire Freeman Township is designated a "Conservation Opportunity Area" (COA) of Continental Significance in the states Wildlife Action Plan. Freeman Township is centered in what has been identified as the "Rush Creek COA" which extends to the north to the upper Bad Axe River watershed and south to the confluence of the WI and Mississippi rivers. This designation exemplifies the outstanding natural resources that Freeman Township contains.

OTHER INTERESTING FEATURES/HABITATS

Cliffs provide habitat for rare plants and animals, including some species that are restricted to Western Wisconsin. For example, Shadowy goldenrod (Solidago sciaphila) inhabits dry sandstone cliffs. This state "special concern" plant is limited in distribution and restricted to the Upper Midwest's Driftless Area. Cliffs may also be used as nest sites by some bird species (including the reintroduced Peregrine Falcon). Drafts created where winds hit the bluffs and are deflected upward, are often used by large raptors to help them move efficiently and with minimal expenditure of effort from one place to another. Other important habitats associated with the local bedrock include caves, and fissures, all of which may be used as roosting areas or hibernation sites by bats or reptiles, and as nesting sites for some birds such as the Turkey Vulture. In areas where calcareous bedrock is exposed at the surface, the outcroppings are sometimes covered with unusual ferns such as walking fern (Asplenium rhizophyllum) and bulblet fragile fern (Cystopteris bulbifera) at moist sites, and cliff brake fern (Pellaea glabella), and slender lip fern (Cheilanthes feei) at dry sites.

Pine Relicts, although rare in southern Wisconsin, they occur as holdovers from earlier, colder times before the glaciers had completely retreated. Two known Pine Relicts (white pine) occur in Freeman Township, both in the Rush Creek valley of which one is permanently protected by a conservation easement held by Mississippi Valley Conservancy. Northern species (plants and animals typically found in northern Wisconsin) such as blueberry, starflower, and wild lily-of-the-valley are known to occur at the protected site. Also, a number of northern birds may be associated with these relicts such as Red-breasted Nuthatch, Pine Warbler, Sharp-shinned hawk and Hermit Thrush.

FORESTED SEEPS[1]

Seeps are a common but often overlooked wetland community associated with groundwater seepage. They occur at or near the base of slopes, in coves, and on benches in areas of upland forest. In these topographic settings, it is common to find a sub-surface layer of bedrock or hardpan that impedes the downward movement of groundwater, resulting in horizontal flow and discharge of water at the surface. The local topography and the linear extent of seepage determine the size of individual seeps. It is common to find several locations with groundwater seepage at the upslope end of each seep. Seeps are typically long and narrow with a total area less than one half acre.

Groundwater discharge provides a constant supply of water to the seep community, with flows at many seeps persisting even through the driest summer months. As a result of the continuous soil saturation, thin surface organic layers are generally present over saturated mineral soils.

[1] Excerpted from *Wetland, Woodland, Wildland*, Vermont Fish and Wildlife department website, 2009.

Seeps are often the headwaters of perennial streams and have traditionally been used as sites for the construction of spring boxes for household water supplies. Another feature of groundwater that is important in this community is temperature. Groundwater in our region is typically about 47° F and varies only a few degrees from this temperature. The constant supply of 47° F water at the upper edges of seeps typically results in early spring development of grasses and sedges. This early spring vegetation can be an important source of food for black bears emerging from their winter sleep.

STATE NATURAL AREAS

State Natural Areas (SNA) are tracts of land or water that represent the diversity of Wisconsin's natural features. These features are relatively unaltered by human-caused disturbances or have substantially recovered from disturbance over time. The finest of these sites are considered for establishment as *State Natural Areas* by the WI DNR's State Natural Areas Program. State Natural Areas protect outstanding examples of native biological communities such as prairies, floodplain forests, and forested seeps. They also preserve significant geological and archaeological features and are often the last refuges in the state for Endangered, Threatened, and Special Concern species. SNAs are parcels that can be visited and studied to better understand the ecology of areas with little past disturbance. Officially recognized SNAs provide a comprehensive array of sites to apply adaptive management strategies and science-based management.

SNAs represent only a small portion of the total area of the state (less than 2% statewide, over 6% in Freeman), so are insufficient by themselves for sustaining all of the state's biological diversity. While some sites are relatively large, many are small and may be impacted by activities on surrounding lands. Even though they represent a small fraction of the state, they are unlike typical parcels of land. The sites are identified and established only after evaluating rigorous inventory and science-based criteria. The value of these sites help assure the long-term sustainability of our states biological diversity. However, SNA's cannot do this alone thus the need for local protection and management of rare habitats is extremely important.

Rush Creek Natural Area (source: WDNR website)

Two Wisconsin State Natural Areas are located in the Town of Freeman. The Rush Creek State Natural Area encompasses the bluffs and bottomlands surrounding the lower reach of Rush Creek. The outstanding feature of the area is a two-mile long series of dry prairies situated on the steep southwest facing limestone-capped bluffs of the Mississippi River. These prairies are known as "dry goat prairies", due to their steep, rocky terrain. The area is one of the few extensive remnants of dry prairie left in the Upper Midwest, having escaped the plow due to the steepness and dryness of the area. Add other features Numerous rare plants and animals have been identified in the area.

The Sugar Creek Bluff State Natural Area contains similar dry prairie bluffs along Sugar Creek near Ferryville. The site is privately owned by Mississippi Valley Conservancy and is open for public use including hunting. Many rare prairie, forest, and wetland species exist on the site. Sugar Creek is a class 2 trout stream.

WOODLANDS

The first record of vegetation in the Town of Freeman occurred in 1843, when the U.S. General Land Office performed a land survey of the area. In the Town of Freeman, the native vegetation was composed primarily of prairie grasses and sparse oak forest. During the last half of the nineteenth century much pre-settlement forestland was cut and cleared for agriculture.

The Bordner Survey was a vegetative assessment of the entire State of Wisconsin, conducted by the University of Wisconsin between 1933 and 1945. That survey found that the majority of ridge tops and upper ridge slopes within the township were cropped. The majority of lower stream valleys contained oak-hickory woodlands, some of which were used for pastures.

Presently, much of the area cropped during the earlier part of the 1900's is now woodland. The *Town of Freeman Natural Features Map,* as well as the *Current Land Use Map* (presented in the Current Land Use Chapter) delineates the location of woodland areas. To protect woodlands, the WDNR Managed Forest Program is available to landowners who own more than 10 acres of contiguous forestland. Through the program, landowners agree to manage their forestland for hunting, fishing, wildlife, and recreation purposes and not permit development in exchange for tax credits. Additional information about this program is available on the Internet at *www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/forestry*.

White-tail deer.

WILDLIFE HABITAT

The majority of the Town of Freeman provides ideal habitat for deer and turkey. The combination of farmland and oak-hickory woodlands offers year-round food sources and cover for these species. The difficult terrain provides additional protection for these hunted animals.

Aquatic habitats in Freeman include the numerous trout streams and the Mississippi River. The quality of these water resources as aquatic habitats was discussed in earlier sections of this chapter.

THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES

There are a number of threatened and endangered plant and animal species in Crawford County. Unfortunately, there is not a list or map available specific to Freeman. The WDNR has county-level maps of threatened and endangered species. These maps do not precisely identify habitat areas within each county. The WDNR does not want people to visit or otherwise intrude on the habitats of endangered and threatened species. The WDNR is attempting to identify and catalog endangered plant and animal species across the state. For a complete, up-to-date list, refer to: *www.dnr.state.wi.us*. The state and federal government have programs and laws in

effect to protect threatened and endangered plant and animal species in the Town of Freeman and beyond.

EXOTIC AND INVASIVE SPECIES

Non-native invasive plant and animal species have been recognized in recent years as a major threat to the integrity of native habitats and species, as well as a potential economic threat (damage to crops, tourist economy, etc). The WDNR requires that any person seeking to bring a non-native fish or wild animal for introduction in Wisconsin obtain a permit. The Town of Freeman can help combat invasive species by educating residents about non-native species (using the Internet or a Town newsletter as primary tools in this effort) and by encouraging residents to use native plants in landscaping.

Purple loosestrife.

Invasive plants are a serious problem at many locations, and non-native insects and pathogens are now affecting some forests and putting others at risk. For example, Dutch elm disease has killed most of the large elms, altering forest structure and composition throughout the Landscape. Eurasian honeysuckles and buckthorns now dominate the tall shrub and sapling layers of many upland forests, and garlic mustard has become a serious problem and a dominant plant in the herbaceous layer at numerous locations. Reed canary grass often invades disturbed lowland forests and can inhibit, or even prevent, the regeneration of native trees. Gypsy moth is at this Landscape's doorstep, and the impacts of emerald ash borer could be devastating to lowland hardwood forests and mesic forests where ashes are sometimes important species.

In forested community types, glossy and common buckthorn (Rhamnus frangula and R. cathartica), non-native honeysuckles (Lonicera spp.), garlic mustard (Alliaria petiolata), Japanese barberry (Berberis thunbergii), Dame's rocket (Hesperis matronalis), multiflora rose (Rosa multiflora), Norway maple (Acer platanoides), and black locust (Robinia pseudoacacia) already pose problems. These species may initially colonize disturbed areas and edges but, once established, can continue to invade surrounding habitats.

In grassland communities, problem species include non-native grasses such as smooth brome (Bromus inermis), Kentucky bluegrass, and Canada bluegrass (Poa compressa); other invasives are crown vetch (Coronilla varia), cut-leaved teasel (Dipsacus laciniatus), bird's foot trefoil (Lotus corniculata), white and yellow sweet clovers (Melilotus alba and M. officinalis), wild parsnip (Pastinaca sativa), autumn olive (Elaeagnus umbellata), and multiflora rose. Discuss health issues related t parsnip

Several native plant species in this area have become (or are perceived to have become) aggressive due to the alteration of disturbance regimes (e.g., hydrological modifications such as attempted drainage, the introduction of livestock into relatively confined areas, and suppression of fire). These include prickly ash (Zanthoxylum americanum), red-osier dogwood (Cornus stolonifera), several sumacs (Rhus glabra, R. typhina), poison ivy (Toxicodendron radicans),

river grapevine (Vitis riparia), Virginia creeper (Parthenocissus quinquefolia), and wild-cucumber (Echinocystis lobata). In some cases these plants may out-compete other native plants and result in ecosystem simplification.

In aquatic and wetland ecosystems, Eurasian water milfoil, curly pondweed (Potamogeton crispus), rusty crayfish (Orconectes rusticus), common carp (Cyprinus carpio), giant/common reed (Phragmites), purple loosestrife, and reed canary grass are the primary problem species. For a complete listing of invasive plants and animals, visit: *www.dnr.state.wi.us/invasives/.*

METALLIC AND NON-METALLIC MINING RESOURCES

As part of NR 135, Wisconsin Administrative Code, adopted in December 2000, any community in Wisconsin may adopt an ordinance to establish requirements for reclamation of non-metallic mines, such as gravel pits and rock quarries. If a community decides not to develop its own ordinance, a county may develop an ordinance for the area instead. Likewise, a regional planning agency may develop ordinances for the counties within its region. The ordinance must establish reclamation requirements to prevent owners and operators of quarries and gravel pits from abandoning their operations without proper reclamation of the mine or quarry.

The process of siting a mine continues to be a local matter governed under existing zoning procedures by local authorities. The reclamation requirements through NR 135 add to the status quo, but do not replace or remove any other means of regulation. The requirements neither regulate active mining processes nor have any effect upon local zoning decisions, like those related to the approval of new mine sites.

Under NR135, any landowner of a demonstrated “marketable non-metallic deposit” may register the site for mining. The local zoning authority may object to the application if the zone does not permit non-metallic mining as a use. Registration expires after a 10-year period and may be extended for a single 10-year period if it is demonstrated that commercially feasible quantities continue to exist at the property. Towns rezoning property in a manner consistent with their Comprehensive Plan are not required to permit non-metallic mining operations that are inconsistent with their adopted plan. The Town may want to consider establishing requirements for quarrying including a mandatory operation plan.

AIR QUALITY

Air pollutants can impair human health, harm the environment and cause property damage. The United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) evaluates air quality using health-based criteria (science-based guidelines) as the basis for setting permissible air quality levels. One set of limits (*primary standard*) protects health; another set of limits (*secondary standard*) is intended to prevent environmental and property damage. A geographic area that meets or exceeds the primary standard is called an *attainment area*; areas that don't meet the primary standard are called *non-attainment areas*.

Crawford County is an attainment area.

SOILS

Soils are the physical base for development and agriculture. Knowledge of their limitations and potential difficulties is important in evaluating crop production capabilities and other land use alternatives, such as residential development.

The predominant soil type in the Town of Freeman is the Fayette silt loam series. This series typically varies in slope from 6% to 30% in Freeman, as do many of the remaining minor soil series in the township. Bedrock is typically close to the surface in Freeman. Because of the high slope and high bedrock within the township, many areas are considered very limited for agricultural crop production, building and road construction, and the placement of onsite sanitation systems.

> For additional information about specific soil characteristics and limitations, refer to the Crawford County Soil Survey.

Severe soil limitations do not always mean a site cannot be developed, but rather that more extensive construction measures may have to be taken to prevent damage to the land or structures. Any specific use of a parcel will require onsite investigation.

Opportunities

SAVANNAS

Historically, Oak Openings were the most common savanna communities in southwestern Wisconsin, often occurring as a structurally distinct transitional community between the treeless prairies and closed canopy oak woodlands and hardwood forests. The combination of fire suppression, logging, and the spread of agriculture eliminated almost all of the Oak Openings, here and elsewhere in southern Wisconsin, making conservation of this now globally rare natural community almost entirely a restoration-focused endeavor.

Dry savannas also occur on steep south or west-facing bluffs with shallow, rocky soils on which the dominant trees may be bur oaks. On dolomite bluffs bordering the Mississippi River Prescribed fire and brush removal are being used to restore portions of this area to savanna and woodland conditions.

Savanna conservation requires active restoration. The dry sites may offer some of the only opportunities for savanna restoration, as the lands they occupy are not as productive and sought after for commercial forestry or agricultural uses and uncommon plant species (from a Midwestern/continental perspective) still exist at varying levels. All savanna communities are now rare. Good quality remnants have been identified at a number of locations, including Rush Creek and the Sugar creek Bible Camp, among others. Active restoration efforts are now aimed at protecting and maintaining these.

In the absence of frequent fire, the savannas rapidly lost their open aspect. Many of the light-demanding plant species declined or disappeared. Some of these plants now hang on in forest

edge situations, but these habitats do not offer long-term viability. In Freeman Township, many of these rare species (including both state Threatened and Endangered) continue to persist along forested roads where the surrounding area was once much more open. This can primarily be attributed to township road crews maintaining roadside ROW's via mowing of brush and selective tree removal without the use of broadcast herbicide. The method of mowing the "cut banks" of the roads annually and mowing the flat areas above the cut banks ever 4 years or so has been especially beneficial to many of these rare light dependent species. Broadcast herbicides used to control roadside vegetation can have the detrimental effect of altering the stable mix of perennial vegetation that has developed through years of mowing by allowing annual weeds to invade. The annual weeds are often much taller and require more frequent mowing than the previous cover of native perennials. In addition, these weeds are often exotic and or invasive such as wild parsnip, which has exploded within the township in recent years often invading pastures and fallow fields. However, it should be noted that selective use of herbicides is needed in some situations where crews cannot safely handcut trees or where shrub densities are too thick to mow.

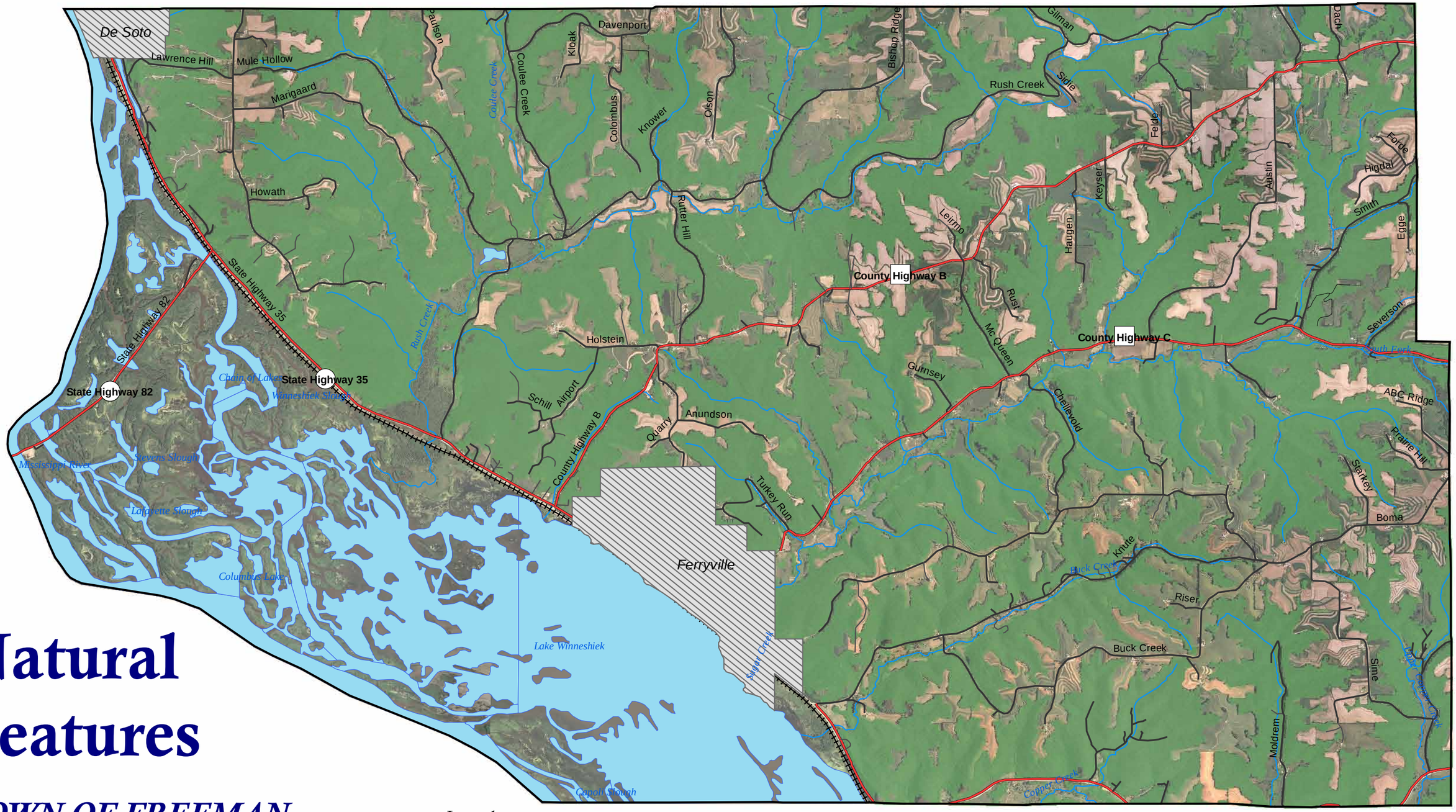
DRY PRAIRIE

Dry Prairie (also called 'Goat Prairie,' 'Dry Lime Prairie,' 'Driftless Bluff Prairie') is a characteristic plant community which occurs on the upper slopes of steep bluffs with southern or western exposures.

Though most of Wisconsin's remnant prairies are small, isolated, and in need of considerable management attention, the Western Coulees and Ridges Ecological Landscape harbors some of the state's best examples of Dry Prairie and Sand Prairie. Though small, sometimes isolated, and difficult to protect, even small remnants of these rare native prairie communities can act as irreplaceable refugia for native plants and some animals (e.g., rare invertebrates). Efforts to preserve these unique ecosystems are ongoing with organizations including WDNR, the NRCS, and private landowners focusing on cedar removal and understory brush removal to reduce fuels and lessen the intensity of future wild fires while protecting homes, personal property, and human life.

FORESTS

Relatively undisturbed ("intact") stand of Southern Mesic Forest are capable of supporting exceptionally rich assemblage of herbs. Besides well known and showy groups such as the spring ephemerals (Curtis 1959), noteworthy plants that are strongly associated with the mesic maple-basswood forests of this Landscape include the WI Endangered Carey's sedge (Carex careyana), the WI Threatened snow trillium (Trillium nivale), and the following plants on the state's Special Concern list: nodding pogonia (Triphora trianthophora), putty root orchid (Aplectrum hyemale), twinleaf (Jeffersonia diphylla), glade fern (Diplazium pycnocarpon), and oval-leaved skullcap (Scutellaria ovata). Golden seal (Hydrastis canadensis) is a rare herb that is sometimes collected because it is thought to have medicinal qualities (small scale attempts to grow this plant commercially were attempted in the past, but we are not aware of any current efforts to farm golden seal. It may, however, still receive pressure from collectors who take plants from the wild).



Natural Features

TOWN OF FREEMAN

CRAWFORD COUNTY, WISCONSIN

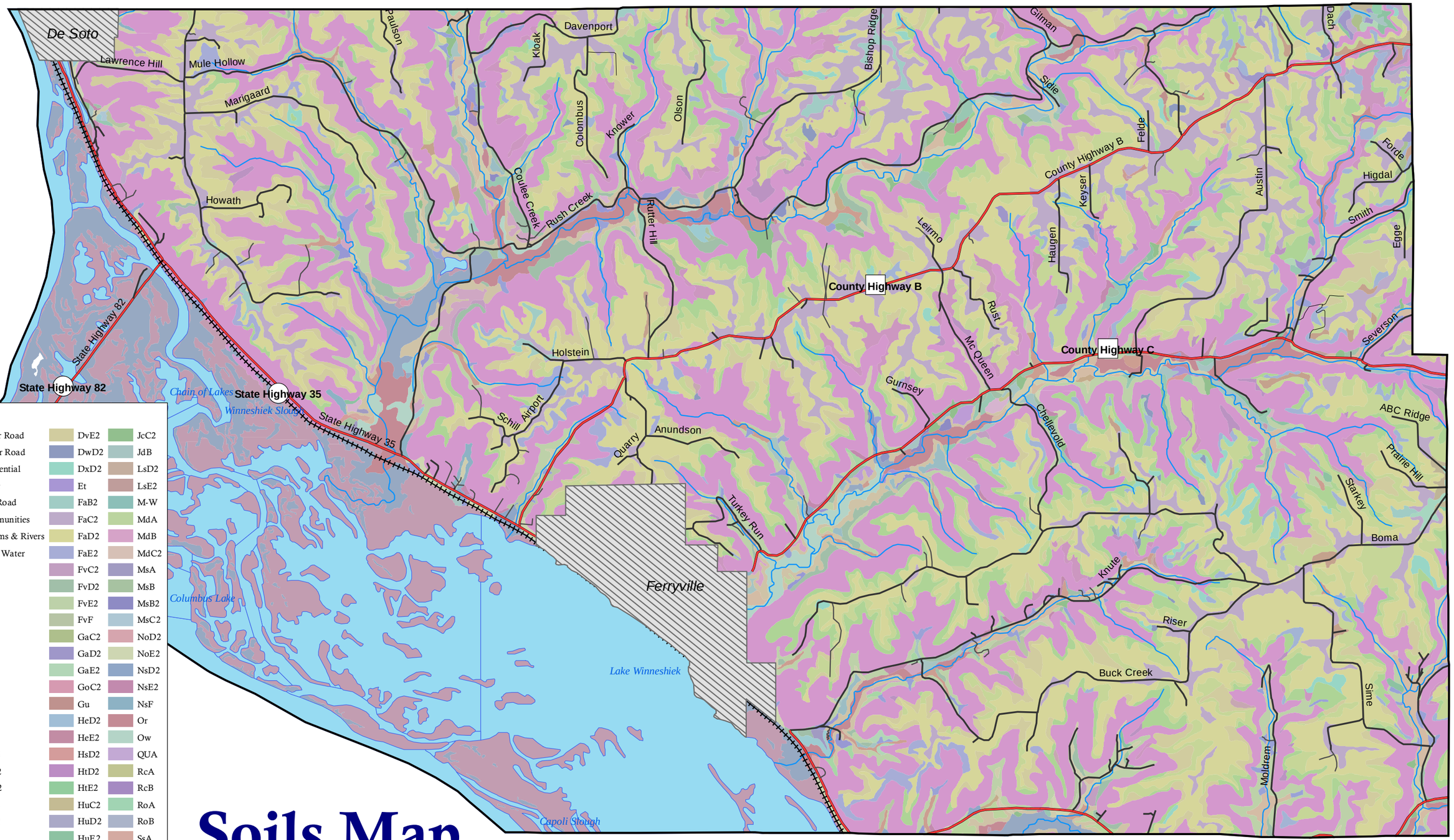
0 0.5 1 2 Miles

Legend

- Major Road
- Minor Road
- Residential
- Other
- Rail Road
- Communities
- Woodlands
- Open Water
- Streams & Rivers

This data was created for use by OMNNI Associates Inc, Geographic Information System. This information is displayed for planning purposes only, unless otherwise noted. Any other use/application of this information is the responsibility of the user and such use/application is at their own risk. OMNNI Associates Inc. disclaims all liability regarding fitness of the information for any use other than for OMNNI Associates Inc. business.

OMNNI ASSOCIATES
PROJECT#: M1298A08
DATE: 03/27/2008
DRAWN BY: BAW
REVISED:
ONE SYSTEMS DRIVE, APPLETON, WI 54914
PHONE: (920) 735-6900 FAX: (920) 830-6100



Soils Map

TOWN OF FREEMAN

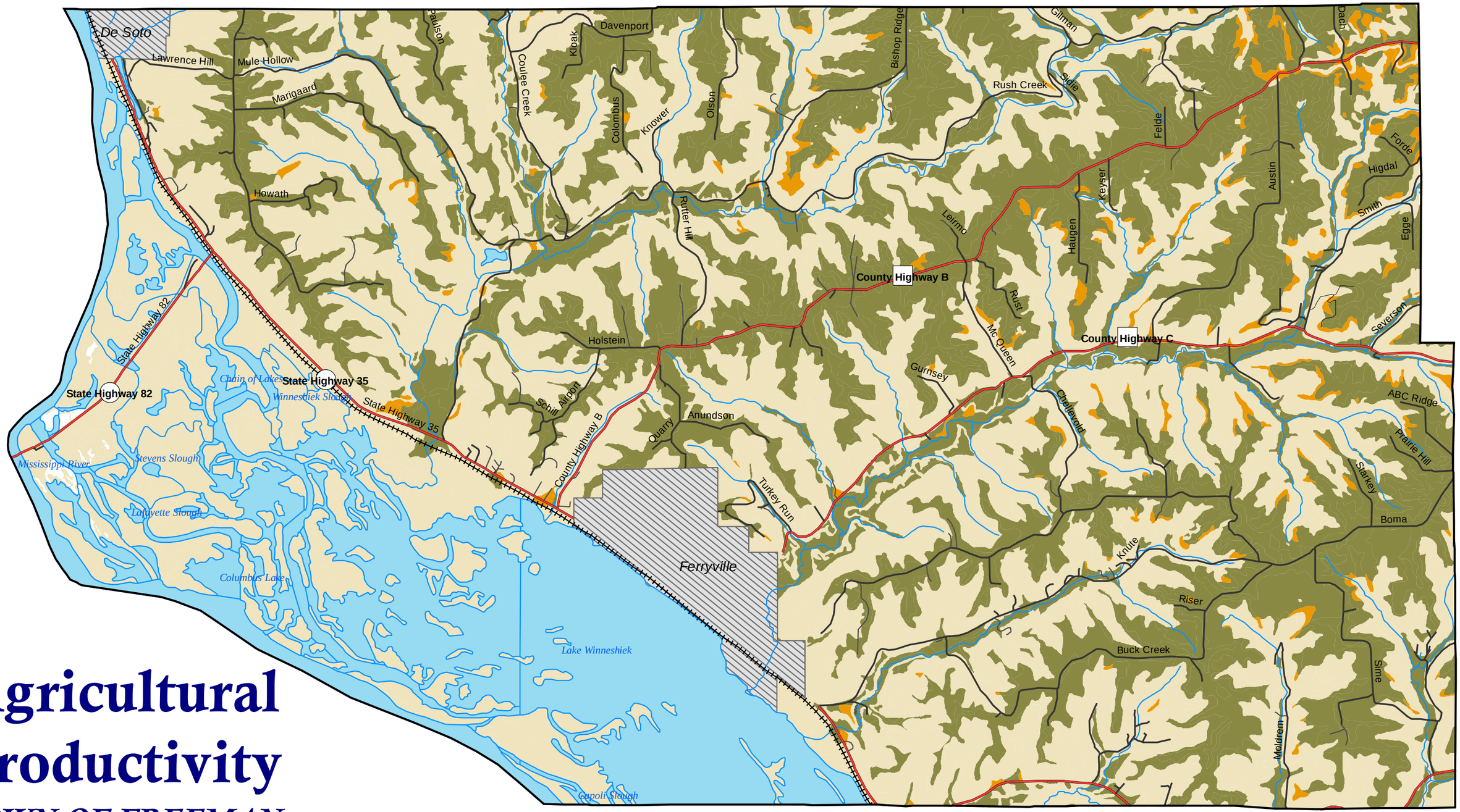
CRAWFORD COUNTY, WISCONSIN

0 0.5 1 2 Miles

This data was created for use by OMNNI Associates Inc, Geographic Information System. This information is displayed for planning purposes only, unless otherwise noted. Any other use/application of this information is the responsibility of the user and such use/application is at their own risk. OMNNI Associates Inc. disclaims all liability regarding fitness of the information for any use other than for OMNNI Associates Inc. business.

OMNNI Associates
PROJECT#: M1298A08
DATE: 03/27/2008
DRAWN BY: BAW
REVISED:
ONE SYSTEMS DRIVE, APPLETON, WI 54914
PHONE: (920) 735-6900 FAX: (920) 830-6100

LOCATION: F:\MUNICIPAL\JOBS\M1298A08 TOWNOF, FREEMAN\DRAWINGS\BASEMAP_11x17 SOURCE: CRAWFORD COUNTY



Agricultural Productivity

TOWN OF FREEMAN

CRAWFORD COUNTY, WISCONSIN

0 0.5 1 2 Miles

Legend

- Major Road
- Minor Road
- Residential
- Other
- Rail Road
- Streams & Rivers
- Open Water
- Communities

Agricultural Productivity

- Very Productive
- Productive
- Unproductive

Areas in green indicate soil types which are capable of producing high yields of crops typically grown in the county under a high level of management. Productive soils are those which are capable of producing an average of 4 tons per acre per year or grass-legume hay, or 100 bushels per acre of corn. The Soil Conservation Service Considers a "high level of management" to include provisions for adequate drainage, appropriate tillage, planting and seeding with high yielding varieties, control of weeds, diseases, insects, optimum fertilizer application and timely, efficient harvesting techniques.

This data was created for use by OMNNI Associates Inc, Geographic Information System. This information is displayed for planning purposes only, unless otherwise noted. Any other use/application of this information is the responsibility of the user and such use/application is at their own risk. OMNNI Associates Inc. disclaims all liability regarding fitness of the information for any use other than for OMNNI Associates Inc. business.

OMNNI ASSOCIATES
PROJECT#: M1298A08
DATE: 03/26/2008
DRAWN BY: BAW
REVISED:
ONE SYSTEMS DRIVE, APPLETON, WI 54914
PHONE: (920) 735-6900 FAX: (920) 830-6100

LOCATION: F:\MUNICIPAL\JOBS\M1298A08 TOWNOF, FREEMAN\DRAWINGS\Agriculture_11x17 SOURCE: CRAWFORD COUNTY, USDA

Natural Resource Concerns and Opportunities

LOSS OF HABITAT FOR UNIQUE SPECIES

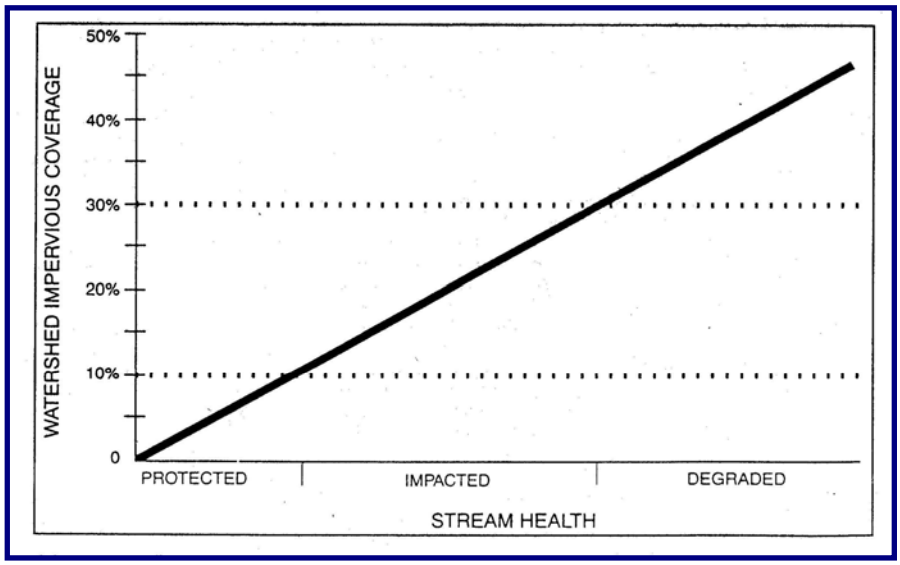
The Town has an abundance of important natural resources. As discussed earlier in this chapter, the Town's natural areas provide important wildlife habitat for a number of rare, threatened, and endangered species. Responses to the Community Survey and during the public meetings held at the beginning of this plan process demonstrated the importance of the natural environment in the eyes of the residents of the community. Habitat loss and fragmentation are often the results of poorly planned development. In a community that values its natural environment as much as the Town of Freeman does, it will be important for the Town to guide development away from the most sensitive habitat areas to insure the long-term viability of a healthy local ecosystem.

PRESERVATION OF SURFACE WATER QUALITY

In many ways, the Mississippi River and its feeder streams serve as the backbone of the Town of Freeman. It was the river that drew the original settlers and entrepreneurs to the community and they continue to attract visitors and new residents to this day. However, with each new home, additional strains are placed upon the aquatic ecosystem. Development in a watershed has direct and predictable effects on the lakes, streams, and wetlands within the watershed.

Historically, water quality was degraded by point sources, or direct discharges to lakes and rivers from industry, municipal sewerage districts, and the like. Since the passage of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act of 1972 (the Clean Water Act), the United States had taken dramatic steps to improve the quality of our water resources. No longer are industries allowed to discharge untreated waste directly to surface waters.

Today, the greatest threat from a cumulative standpoint to our streams and lakes comes through nonpoint source water pollution. Nonpoint source water pollution, or runoff, cannot easily be traced to a single point of origin. It occurs when rainwater or snowmelt flows across the land and picks up soil particles, organic wastes, fertilizers, and other contaminants that become pollution when carried to surface and/or groundwater. Nonpoint pollution, in the form of nitrogen, phosphorus, and total suspended solids (soil particles), contaminates streams and lakes, increases the growth of algae and harmful aquatic weeds, covers spawning beds and feeding areas, and turns clear rivers into conveyances of stormwater. The sources of nonpoint pollution include:



Source: Center for Watershed Protection, 1995.

Impervious Surface. A positive correlation exists between the percentage of impervious surface in a watershed and surface water quality (see graph above). Stormwater runoff from impervious surfaces such as roads and roofs has an adverse effect on surface waters. As the percentage of impervious surfaces increases in a watershed, lakes and streams experience greater degradation from stormwater runoff. According to the Center for Watershed Protection (CWP) in Ellicott City, Maryland, "More than 30 different scientific studies have documented that stream, lake, and wetland quality declines sharply when impervious cover in upstream watersheds exceeds 10%." In 1999, CWP developed criteria that allowed local governments and watershed organizations to predict the effects upon surface water quality resulting from increases in impervious surfaces within a watershed. CWP classified watersheds into three groups, each defined by the percentage of impervious surface within the watershed.

Agricultural Fields. Plowed fields, row crops, winter manure spreading, lack of riparian buffers, wetland conversion, and the overuse of commercial pesticides and fertilizers all intensify nonpoint source pollution loading to surface waters. By utilizing techniques such as conservation tillage, nutrient management planning, wetland restoration, grazing management, cover crops, manure confinement, and agricultural buffers, farmers can dramatically reduce nonpoint source pollution as well as the cost of farming.

Lawn Fertilizers, Herbicides, and Pesticides. Wisconsin and Minnesota residents use more fertilizers and pesticides on their lawns per capita than those of any other state. Upwards of 95% of the chemicals applied to residential lawns are washed into storm drains and then into nearby creeks and streams following rain events. In northern climates, turf grass is only capable of ingesting fertilizer during the fall. Fertilizers applied during spring and summer months contribute to algae blooms and eutrophication of lakes and streams. Most herbicides, even those that claim to be focused on specific "weeds" or "pests", kill healthy aquatic and terrestrial organisms and are suspected causal factors in many autoimmune and endocrine illnesses in humans and pets.

The *Implementation* chapter will discuss a variety of tools, best management practices, and funding courses to aid in the reduction of nonpoint source water pollution in the Town of Freeman.

PROTECTION OF GROUNDWATER

With most of the Town of Freeman's supply of potable water provided by private wells, susceptibility to contamination remains a concern. As discussed in *Chapter 6: Utilities and Community Facilities*, sources of groundwater contamination include leaking fuel tanks, surface discharges, and natural substances present in the subsurface geology.

Homeowners can protect groundwater by properly sealing abandoned wells. Always use "best management practices" on lawns and farm fields. These practices include properly treating sewage, improving roadway and property drainage, minimizing pesticide and fertilizer use, and following application guidelines when pesticides or fertilizers are necessary. Recycling programs that reduce the solid waste stream and proper disposal of hazardous household waste will also reduce the risks of contamination to nearby residential wells.

Cultural and Historical Resources

Cultural and historical resources, like natural resources, are valuable community assets warranting preservation. The only historical site in the town is the Hauge Norwegian Church owned by the Crawford County Historical Society.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

As discussed in the Introduction chapter, what is now the Town of Freeman was long occupied by native people. Reminders of the pre-settler cultures can still be found today in the arrowheads, spear points, and campsites that turn up on occasion.

Modern cultural assets in the Town of Freeman include historic church and school sites, nineteenth- and early twentieth-century structures, and farmsteads scattered throughout the community. These facilities offer spiritual enrichment, education, and gathering spaces that contribute to the local culture.

HISTORICAL RESOURCES

Town governments, like other governments in Wisconsin, have the authority to preserve their historical heritage (Wisconsin Statutes §60.64). One of the most effective ways to do so is through a local historic preservation ordinance. The historic preservation ordinance can establish procedures to designate historically and culturally sensitive properties and places and to review projects that have the potential to negatively affect these important places.

The Wisconsin Historical Society has created the Architecture and History Inventory (AHI), an internet-based search engine that provides architectural and historical information on

approximately 120,000 properties in Wisconsin. The AHI contains information on buildings, structures, and objects that illustrate Wisconsin's unique history. The AHI documents a wide range of historic properties such as round barns, log houses, cast iron bridges, small town commercial buildings, and Queen Anne houses, among others.

CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROGRAM[2]

Local units of government that have enacted historic preservation ordinances may consider being certified to participate in the state and federal Certified Local Government (CLG) program. The CLG program provides special grants to fund planning and educational activities. The Division of Historic Preservation at the Wisconsin Historical Society administers the CLG program. Wisconsin has 44 Certified Local Governments.

The Town of Freeman neither maintains nor supports any local historic preservation.

Cultural Resource Concerns and Opportunities

PRESERVATION TAX INCENTIVES

The Federal government encourages the preservation of historic buildings through various means. One of these is the program of Federal tax incentives to support the rehabilitation of historic and older buildings. The Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives program is one of the Federal governments most successful and cost-effective community revitalization programs. The Preservation Tax Incentives reward private investment in rehabilitating historic properties such as offices, rental housing, and retail stores. Current tax incentives for preservation, established by the Tax Reform Act of 1986 (PL 99-514: Internal Revenue Code section 47 [formerly Section 48(g)]) include:

- A 20% tax credit for the certified rehabilitation of certified historic structures; and,
- A 10% tax credit for the rehabilitation of non-historic, non-residential buildings constructed before 1936.

For more information on this and other programs to protect and restore historic structures, contact the Wisconsin State Historical Preservation Officer.

Coordination with Other Comprehensive Plan Elements

The development of the Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Element required coordination with all of the required plan elements. For example, when considering economic development strategies, the limitations presented by natural resources are important to consider as were the benefits natural areas provide to the local quality of living. Below is a description of the critical issues addressed with respect to the Land Use and Housing Elements. These

[2] Excerpted from *A Guide to Smart Growth and Cultural Resource Planning*, Wisconsin Historical Society; and, *Certified Local Government Program* from the National Park Service website, 2006.

elements are profiled because their coordination with the Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Element is critical to the success of the plan.

LAND USE

Residents of the Town have clearly indicated that the conservation of natural resources is a priority. As a result, the Future Land Use Maps important natural resource areas. The goals, objectives, and policies in this chapter include provisions to protect the natural environment of Freeman.

HOUSING

The Future Land Use map allows for continuation of the trend of scattered site housing consistent with the vision for conserving natural resources and rural character of the town.

Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources Policies, Goals, and Objectives

The policies, goals, and objectives related to Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources in the Town of Freeman can be found in *Chapter 12: Implementation*.

Introduction

The purpose of the Economic Development Element is to promote the stabilization, retention, and expansion of the economic base, and to promote employment opportunities. In 2009 the Town Of Freeman is best characterized as a community for agriculture, forestry, 2nd homes, and rural bedroom community.

To address this requirement, the Economic Development chapter includes:

- Highlights of the labor force information from *Chapter 3: Community Profile*;
- An assessment of strengths and weaknesses with respect to attracting and retaining business and industry;
- An overview of programs that deal with environmentally contaminated sites for commercial or industrial uses; and
- A list of agencies (and website information) providing economic development programs at the county, regional, state and federal levels.

In terms of the 14 state comprehensive planning goals, those listed below relate specifically to the Town of Freeman for economic development:

- Encouragement of land uses,
- Promote efficient development patterns and relatively low township costs.
- Encouragement of coordination and cooperation among nearby units of government.
- Building and maintaining a community identity.
- Providing adequate infrastructure and public services and an adequate supply of developable land to meet existing and future market demand for residential, commercial, agriculture and forestry uses.

Local Economic Development Vision

Freeman, like many other rural townships, has emphasized a quality residential setting, conserving natural resources, while supporting agricultural operations, small businesses and light industry. Ideas and comments collected during the Kick-Off Meeting and survey provided the background information to identify future economic development goals in Freeman.

A number of participants identified nature-based eco-tourism and agri-tourism as possible economic options. Other suggestions included scattered light manufacturing, resident and visitor services, and home-based businesses, among others (please refer to *Chapter 2: Community Profile* for a summary of the planning exercises).

Labor Force and Economic Base

The Community Profile Chapter (3) provided a detailed analysis of Freeman and Crawford County's economy and the labor force. Highlights from that chapter include:

- **Local workers are mobile.** Residents take advantage of convenient access to STH 27 and STH 35 to commute to nearby employment centers.
- **Income.** Median household income in the Township is lower than that of surrounding communities but is growing.
- **Occupational Types.** While the Town of Freeman has a relatively diverse working population including professionals, sales people, construction workers and farmers, the Census reveals that the highest employed occupations are in the agricultural. Opportunities outside the township include manufacturing, retail trade, education, and healthcare sectors.
- **Educational Attainment.** Freeman residents are becoming more highly educated, with 38.7% of the population receiving some level of college education.

Current Business Inventory and Business Environment

The current inventory of businesses and commercial operations in Freeman is minimal and focused primarily on local and tourist-based services including hunting and fishing. In small towns there are generally five types of economies[1]:

1. **Resource-Based Economy.** This type of economy is characterized by geographic isolation, as they are typically far away from larger cities / metro areas and have limited interstate access. These communities often have an aging population base and lack of opportunities for higher education and local employment.

2. **Industrial Economy.** This type of economy is characterized by dependence on yesterday's economic base. Often a community of this type has a single manufacturing or industrial operation that sustains the vast majority of residents.

3. **Metropolitanizing Economy.** These communities are experiencing a high amount of residential development which causes concern about decreasing land supplies, loss of community identity, maintaining small town character, and avoiding becoming a "bedroom community."

4. **Dependent Economy.** Usually an unincorporated (i.e. township) area outside of the suburban ring of development. The economic vitality of this community depends on the economic success of the larger adjacent/nearby community (i.e. La Crosse, Prairie du Chien). The Town of Freeman is a good example of a rural bedroom community.

5. **Lifestyle Economy.** These communities include university towns, small communities with military bases, and tourist destinations. Residents enjoy their small community setting and quality of living, but are concerned about their long-term dependency on a single economic source. In the case of Freeman, participants expressed concern about residential development in the form of second homes and time-shares for people who reside outside of the community.

Therefore, the Town of Freeman is a blend of the resource-based, dependent, and lifestyle economies.

[1] Randall Gross, Embracing Change in Small Communities, APA National Conference, March 2005.

Costs and Benefits of Economic Development

The Town of Freeman has several positive attributes relative to resource-based, dependent, and lifestyle economies.

- A location that has traffic flowing through it from north, south, and east centrally located between Prairie du Chien and La Crosse.
- Properties with highway frontage on STH 35 and STH 171
- Properties with scenic views of the Mississippi River and the surrounding valleys.
- An attractive and safe community environment with a quality lifestyle.
- Quality school districts serving the area;
- Reasonable tax rates compared to urban areas;
- Easy access to recreational areas, open space, and water;

While the Town of Freeman enjoys the advantages identified above, there are several challenges relative to our economy, including:

- Residents must drive to nearby towns and cities to purchase services and products;
- Similarly, many residents travel outside of the Town to work and find shopping, dining, entertainment choices, educational opportunities and healthcare;
- Seasonal residence of the Town will likely continue to increase based on the economy of the region and state.
- Maintaining the Town's rural character and quality of living.

Economic Development Opportunities

This section highlights some of the economic development opportunities available to Freeman. Supporting goals, objectives and policies are provided at the end of the chapter to help Freeman capitalize on its most desired economic opportunities.

AGRICULTURE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Rural development is closely tied to the agricultural / farm economy and the aging population of the agriculture / farm operators. As the perceived value of land for non-agricultural use increases with an improving economy, there will be a growing trend to convert agricultural land to non-farm use. (This potential future trend mirrors the trend in Freeman during the 70's to 2008.) . Central to this land use shift is the demand for rural housing and recreational land.

STRATEGIES TO MAINTAIN OUR AGRICULTURE BASED COMMUNITY

The *Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources* chapter highlighted several strategies for sustaining agriculture in the Town over the next 20+ years. Given the importance of agriculture to the local economy, this section offers some additional opportunities available to local farmers.

- Sell products directly to customers.

- Development of historical and/or niche farm tours to showcase local farm operations and farm products by local citizen / landowners.

- Access resources i.e., UW-Extension to learn about opportunities and tools.
- Organic agriculture.

AGRICULTURE / NATURE RELATED TOURISM

Two potential agricultural tourist markets exist in Freeman:

1. Eco-Tourism. The Mississippi River, rural / rustic bike routes and state and county parks provide opportunities to bring nature enthusiasts to the area.
2. Agri-Tourism. Opportunities exist to offer tourist activities related to area agriculture, including: farmer-for-a-day experiences, rural bed & breakfasts, roadside stands, horse boarding and trail riding, pick-your-own produce operations, corn mazes, and pumpkin patches, etc.

Locations for New Business Development

The town of Freeman does not anticipate any medium to large business to move into the township during the planning period because of the limited public utility infrastructure of the Town. Growth opportunities do exist for small and/or owner/operator businesses including internet/telecom businesses.

The Future Land Use Map in *Chapter 10: Future Land Use* does not identify specific areas for future economic development.

BROWNFIELD SITES

The Town of Freeman is not aware of any Brownfield sites within the Town.

Interested Town residents can search for properties in the Town of Freeman for environmental contamination (and have been reported) through the WDNR Bureau for Remediation and Redevelopment Internet web site tracking available at: www.dnr.state.wi.us/botw/welcome.do . This database tracks identified sites from first reporting through closure or no further action. Records are kept in perpetuity regardless of whether or not contamination was actually found, the size of the incidence, and whether or not the site has been cleaned.

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) definition of a Brownfield site is "With certain legal exclusions and additions, the term `Brownfield site' means real property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant."

Economic Development Tools, Programs, and Partners

Numerous planning tools, governmental programs and partnerships are potentially available to assist the Town of Freeman with Economic Development. They include the following:

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM (CIP)

The Capital Improvements Program (CIP) allows a town to plan for future improvements. The Town of Freeman has a CIP for its road system and the Town will consider other elements (other Town facilities) for inclusion in the CIP as the Town develops and as the need arises.

INTERNET MARKETING

The Town of Freeman is currently developing a web site as a communications and marketing tool for the Town. The capability of the website will be expanded as development continues and as the Town Board converts communications and forms / permits to digital form.

TAX INCREMENT FINANCING

Tax Incremental Financing (TIF) allows communities to undertake a public project to stimulate beneficial development or redevelopment that would not otherwise occur. It is a mechanism for financing local economic development projects in underdeveloped and blighted areas. Taxes generated by the increased property values pay for land acquisition or needed public works.

Until recently, TIF has been an economic development tool available exclusively to cities and villages. However, the Wisconsin Law was changed to allow Towns to establish TIF districts to promote agricultural and forestry development. Towns are more restricted than cities and villages in the range of activities that may receive TIF benefit. The list of eligible activities for a Town TIF district includes[2]:

- Agriculture - animal and crop production and direct support activities.
- Tourism - camps, RV parks, campgrounds, dairy product stores and public golf courses.
- Forestry - including logging and direct support activities.
- Manufacturing - defined as animal slaughtering and processing, wood product manufacturing, paper manufacturing, or ethyl alcohol manufacturing.
- Residential development - limited to sleeping quarters within a TIF district for employees who work for employers engaged in an eligible TIF project (cannot include hotels, motels or traditional homes).
- Retail development - Related to the sale of products as a result of allowed agriculture, forestry or manufacturing activities.

The Town of Freeman does not have a TIF district as of 2009. The Town would consider any requests.

[2] At least 75 percent of the area of a TIF in a Town must be used for one of the allowable activities.

STATE AGENCIES/PROGRAMS

- Wisconsin Department of Commerce – www.commerce.state.wi.us: This department is the state's primary agency for delivery of integrated services to businesses.
- Wisconsin Department of Transportation – www.dot.state.wi.us: The Office of Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Programs encourages firms owned by disadvantaged individuals to participate in all federal and state transportation facility contracts.
- Forward Wisconsin – www.forwardwi.com: Forward Wisconsin markets outside Wisconsin to attract new businesses, jobs, and increase state economic activity.
- Department of Workforce Development – www.dwd.state.wi.us: This department builds and strengthens Wisconsin's workforce by providing job services, training and employment assistance, and helping employers find necessary workers.
- Wisconsin Small Business Development Centers – www.uwex.edu/sbdc: These centers help ensure the state's economic health and stability. They offer formative business education, counseling, and technology training.
- Wisconsin Youth Apprenticeship Program - http://uwhelp.wisconsin.edu/admission/requirements/freshman/wisyouthprog.asp helps businesses prepare future workers and is an integral part of the State Department of Workforce Development's workforce training strategy. Youth apprenticeship is a rigorous two-year elective program for high school juniors and seniors that combine academic and technical classroom instruction and on-the-job training from mentors.
- Dairy 2020 Initiative is a state, business, and education partnership that works to enhance the competitive edge of the Wisconsin dairy industry.
- Wisconsin Women's Business Initiative Corporation - www.wwbic.com : This statewide economic development organization offers quality business workshops and trainings, one-on-one business assistance, business incubation programs, a variety of micro loan programs and individual development accounts.

RURAL BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY GRANTS[3]

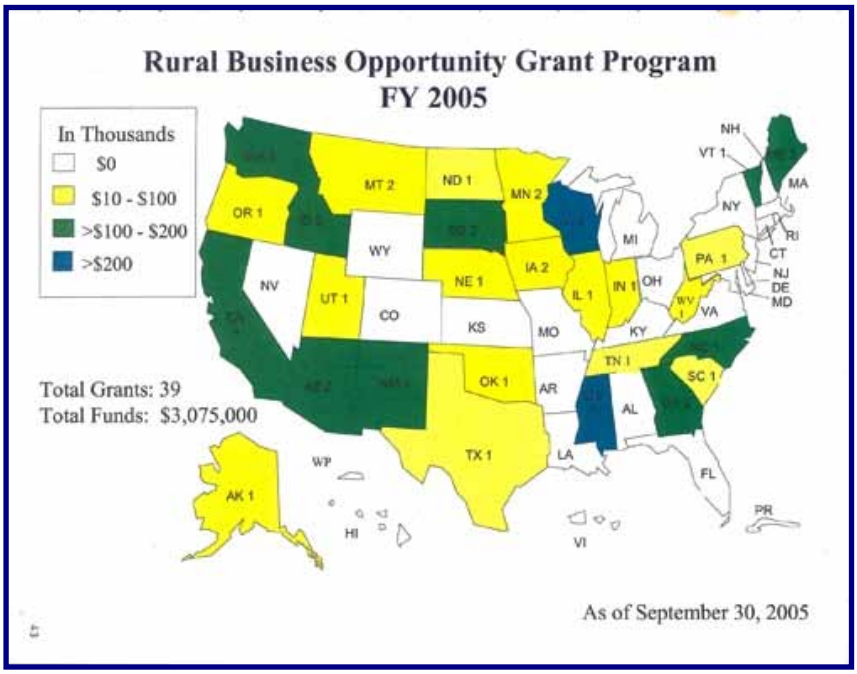
See box at top right of following page.

FEDERAL AGENCIES/PROGRAMS

- Department of Agriculture Rural Development Administration – www.rurdev.usda.gov
- US Small Business Administration – www.sba.gov: provides financial, technical and management assistance to help Americans start, run and grow their businesses.

[3] SOURCE: United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), 2006 at: *http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/busp/rbog.htm*

- US Department of Commerce – www.doc.gov
- US Department of Transportation – www.dot.gov



Economic Development Issues & Concerns

Residential Development As Economic Development

Residential development is a growing source of taxable income in the Town of Freeman. These new developments add significantly to the revenue base for the Town with no to minimal additional expenses incurred by the Town because of the lack of Town provided public services, which are not foreseen during the this planning horizon as a minimum. Contrary to urban development, the cost to Freeman Township, for development, is minimal.

Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs)

As indicated by comments received during the Kick-off Meeting and survey mailed to all landowners, concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs) are of concern to many residents of Freeman. Residents are concerned about odors, groundwater contamination, and the contradiction in scale to traditional family farming operations in Town.

In order for a CAFO to be approved, it must be in accordance with State and Crawford County regulations (refer to *Chapter 7: Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources* for more information regarding ATCP 51). Freeman Township supports the need for a comprehensive hydro-geological study of the region. It is possible that no suitable location could be found in the Town of Freeman for a CAFO.

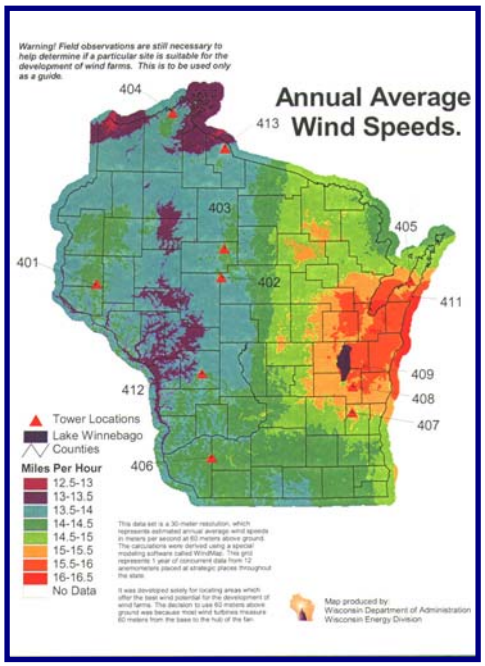
Respecting Rural Character

The visions in preceding chapters highlighted the need to preserve natural features, maintain farmland, and continue to offer a quality rural living environment. Accordingly, it is important that economic development respect these visions by being of a complimentary scale. Intensive industry (with potential pollution concerns) and large commercial establishments (i.e. big box stores, strip malls, etc.) are not consistent with this image.

While a limited number of new businesses (see the above paragraph) may be established in Freeman, they must be appropriately located to minimize potential conflicts with residential areas. Furthermore, new business development must exist in harmony with the rural setting.

Economic Development and Energy Production

Wind, solar, and other alternative raw energy sources are available to a limited extent within the Town; any development will probably be accomplished by individuals for individual use. Commercial development is not foreseen as economically viable. Focus on Energy, a state program, is a resource for alternative energy information.



Coordination with Other Comprehensive Plan Chapters

Future Land Use Chapter

Any new development should not create a nuisance for neighboring properties or natural resources. These criteria were carefully considered during the development of the Future Land Use Map.

Transportation Chapter

Any new business development Freeman should be done in coordination with Crawford County and WisDOT.

Housing Chapter 4

Visitors to the Town who may decide its rural, scenic, country-setting is an ideal location to live. Housing is an asset to the Town of Freeman. Scattered site housing will continue to be the trend for the residential landscape.

Utilities & Community Facilities

The *Utilities and Community Facilities* chapter discusses Freeman's existing and planned infrastructure to serve the needs of the community, including economic interests.

Economic Development Element

The policies, goals, and objectives related to Economic Development in the Town of Freeman can be found in *Chapter 12: Implementation*.

Introduction

Land use, both existing and future, is the central element of a Comprehensive Plan. Previous chapters have discussed:

- Projected population changes.
- Potential future housing needs.
- Available utilities and community facilities.
- Local business choices and economic growth opportunities.
- Freeman's natural resources and recreational opportunities, among others.

This chapter focuses on existing land uses, trends in land development, and available local land use tools. *Chapter 10: Future Land Use* will address actions necessary to achieve the goals and visions created during the development of this Comprehensive Plan.

Of the 14 local planning goals provided in the Comprehensive Plan~~ning~~ Law, those below specifically relate to planning for land use:

- Protection of natural areas, including wetlands, wildlife habitat, lakes, woodlands, open spaces and groundwater resources.
- Protection of economically productive areas, including farmland and forests.
- Encouragement of land uses, densities and regulations that promote efficient development patterns and relatively low municipal, State governmental and utility costs.
- Preservation of cultural, historic and archaeological sites.
- Providing adequate infrastructure and public services and an adequate supply of developable land to meet existing and future market demand for residential, commercial and industrial uses.
- Balancing individual property rights with community interests and goals.
- Planning and development of land uses that create or preserve varied and unique urban and rural communities.

Existing Land Use Inventory

The Existing Land Use Map (on page 9-5) was created from baseline mapping data provided by the United States Department of Agriculture, United States Geological Survey, Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission (MRRPC), Crawford County, and the Town of Freeman. The descriptions of the land use categories illustrated on the Existing Land Use Map are as follows.

NUMBER OF FIRE NUMBERS – 677

NUMBER OF TAX PARCELS – 1,600 (APPROX. BASED ON ASSESSOR DATA)

NUMBER LAND OWNERS – 799 (BASED ON 2008 TAX ROLLS)

NUMBER OF RESIDENT LAND OWNERS – 309

NUMBER OF NON-RESIDENT LAND OWNERS – 490

LAND CLASSIFIED AS RESIDENTIAL – 2,778 ACRES

Existing residences and developed parcels within the community. For the purposes of land use projections, one acre of land is associated with each parcel.

FEDERAL LANDS – 7,941.9 ACRES

Land owned by the U.S. Government. Freeman Township includes a portion of the Upper Mississippi River Fish and Wildlife Refuge extending to the center of the Mississippi River channel on the Iowa side.

WDNR LANDS – 2, 983 ACRES

Land owned by the State of Wisconsin and managed by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. Predominantly the Rush Creek and Sugar Creek Bluff State Natural Areas.

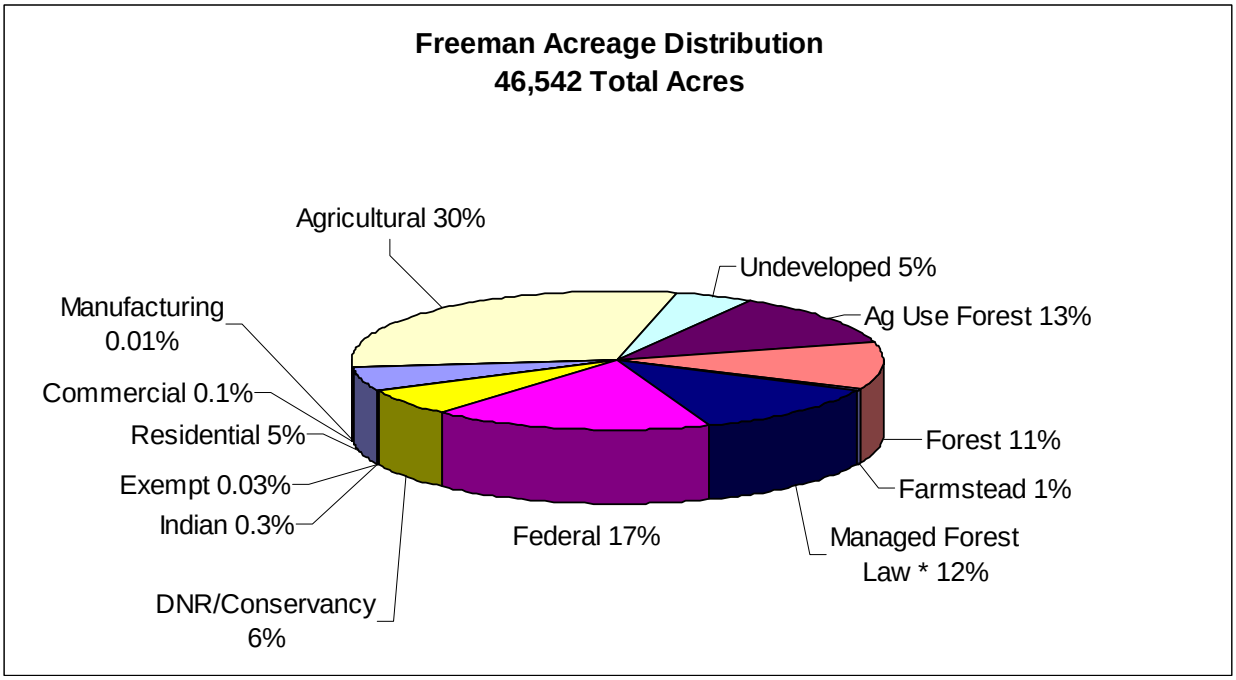
NATIVE AMERICAN LANDS – 148 ACRES

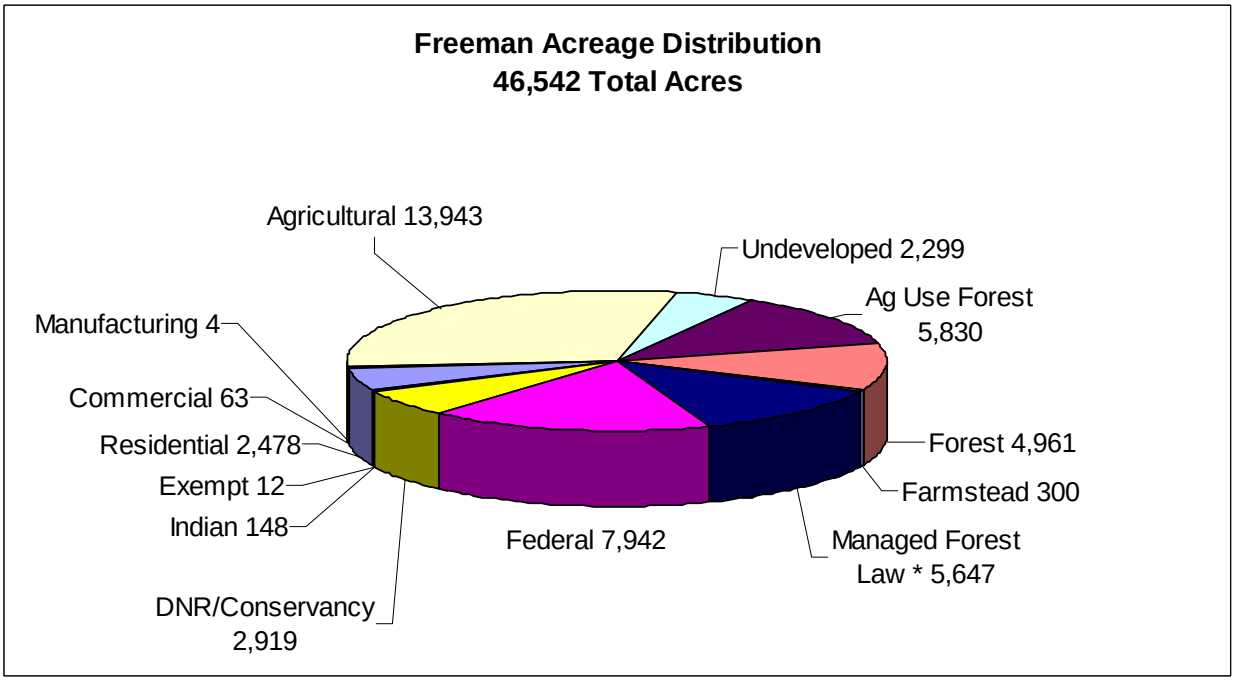
Lands owned by Native American Tribes or held in trust for Tribes by the federal government.

AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL LANDS – 35,446.39 ACRES

The vast majority of Freeman's remaining landscape is dominated by forested areas on steep slopes intermixed with scattered agricultural lands. Existing mapping layers do not provide a sufficient level of detail to segregate agricultural and non-agricultural uses within these areas of the Town. During future plan revisions, and when available, the Town will incorporate more detailed data.

TOTAL ACRES, TOWNSHIP OF FREEMAN – 46,542 ACRES


Freeman Acreage Distribution
46,542 Total Acres
Agricultural 30%
Undeveloped 5%
Ag Use Forest 13%
Manufacturing 0.01%
Commercial 0.1%
Residential 5%
Exempt 0.03%
Indian 0.3%
Forest 11%
Farmstead 1%
Federal 17%
Managed Forest Law * 12%
DNR/Conservancy 6%


Freeman Acreage Distribution
46,542 Total Acres
Agricultural 13,943
Undeveloped 2,299
Ag Use Forest 5,830
Manufacturing 4
Commercial 63
Residential 2,478
Exempt 12
Indian 148
Forest 4,961
Farmstead 300
Federal 7,942
Managed Forest Law * 5,647
DNR/Conservancy 2,919

Land Use and Development Regulations

ZONING AND SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS

The Township of Freeman does require permits for new buildings and private driveways. Freeman Township does not have a zoning ordinance. Freeman Township has adopted the Crawford County subdivision ordinance.

SHORELAND AND WETLAND ZONING

The Shoreland and Wetland Zoning Ordinance are administered by Crawford County for all lands within the County including the Township of Freeman. The ordinance regulates land uses within 1,000 feet of the ordinary high watermark of navigable lakes, ponds, or flowages and within 300 feet of the ordinary high water mark of navigable rivers or streams. For additional information on shoreland and wetland zoning in Crawford County please visit http://crawfordcountywi.org/.

NON-METALLIC MINING RECLAMATION

The Crawford County Land Conservation Department (CCLCD) administers state non-metallic mining reclamation requirements for all Townships in the County consistent with §NR 135.02(1) and (2), Wis. Adm. Code. The ordinance prohibits any person from engaging in nonmetallic mining or in nonmetallic mining reclamation without a permit unless the proposed activity is specifically exempted. For more information on Non-metallic Mining Reclamation, please visit the CCLCD website at: http://crawfordcountywi.org/landconservation/programs_services.htm. The township of Freeman has two active quarries.

LIVESTOCK SITING

Crawford County administers livestock siting regulations in the Township of Freeman. The Crawford County Land Conservation Department (CCLCD) administers the county's livestock siting regulations. The Ordinance for Licensing Livestock Facilities adopts the standards set in ATCP-51 by reference. For additional information on livestock siting please refer to the section on ATCP-51 beginning on page 7-20 of *Chapter 7: Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources*. To review the Ordinance for Licensing Livestock Facilities please visit the website at: http://crawfordcountywi.org/landconservation/ programs_services.htm.

Trends in Land Supply and Demand

According to the Wisconsin Department of Administration, the Town's population is expected to decrease by three percent during the next twenty years (from 713 in 2005 to 692 by 2025).

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Residential development accounts for less than 6% of the Town's total land area. From a tax base standpoint, however, it accounts for 75% of local tax revenues. 30% of the land owners own parcels less than 5 acres. Those small parcels only account for only1.5% of the taxable land acreage yet 20% of the total tax revenue. The Townships' geographic location, natural resources, rural character, and other amenities make it a desirable location for low density residential properties.

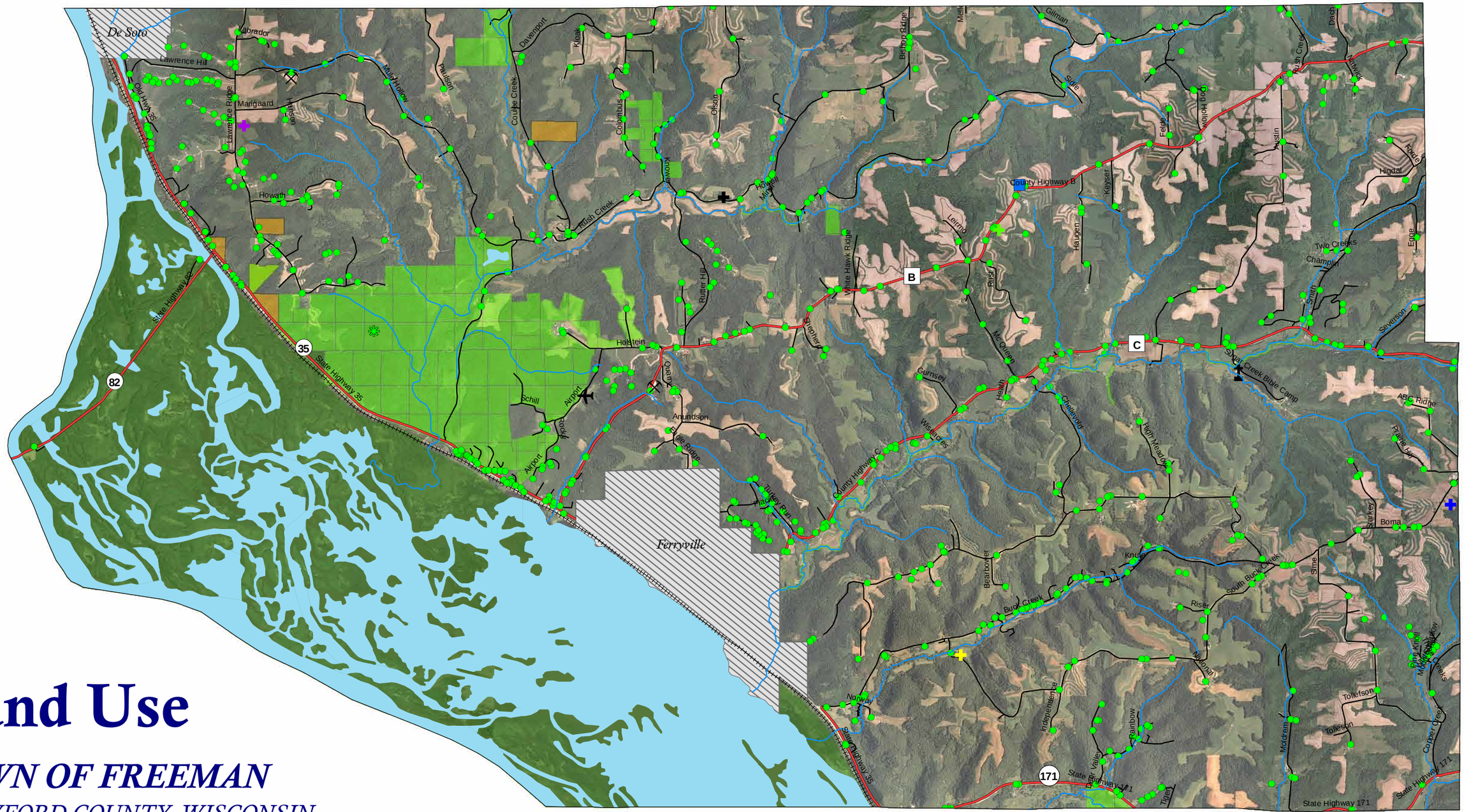
FARMING

Throughout the planning process, residents have expressed a strong desire to retain farming as a significant component of the Town's landscape and economy. The local farming economy has continued to see the number of area farms decrease. This can be attributed to diminished farm product returns, aging farmers seeking retirement through land sales, and demand for rural housing. Simple economics also plays a role in the loss of farmland.

Preservation of rural character is contingent upon successful efforts to retain farmland. *Chapter 7: Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources* provides additional information related to agriculture in the community.

COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Commercial development represents a very small portion of land use within the Township. Large scale commercial and Industrial development is not a desired future land use in the community. There is presently no industrial development.



Land Use

TOWN OF FREEMAN

CRAWFORD COUNTY, WISCONSIN

0 0.25 0.5 1 1.5 2 Miles

Legend

- Freeman Town Garage
- Quarry
- Private Air Strip
- Sugar Creek Bible Camp
- Rush Creek State Natural Area
- Cemetery
- Eitsert Cemetery
- Freeman Cemetery/Church
- Lawrence Ridge Cemetery
- Rush Creek Cemetery
- Rivers & Streams
- Fire Numbers - Tax Parcels
- Rail Road
- Town
- State and County Highways
- Federal Lands
- WDNR Managed Lands
- Native American Lands
- Communities
- Open Water

This data was created for use by OMNNI Associates Inc, Geographic Information System. This information is displayed for planning purposes only, unless otherwise noted. Any other use/application of this information is the responsibility of the user and such use/application is at their own risk. OMNNI Associates Inc. disclaims all liability regarding fitness of the information for any use other than for OMNNI Associates Inc. business.

OMNI ASSOCIATES
PROJECT#: M1298A08
DATE: 10/05/2009
DRAWN BY: BAW
REVISED:
ONE SYSTEMS DRIVE, APPLETON, WI 54914
PHONE: (920) 735-6900 FAX: (920) 830-6100

LOCATION: F:\MUNICIPAL\JOBS\M1298A08 TOWNOF, FREEMAN\DRAWINGS\LandUse_11x17 SOURCE: CRAWFORD COUNTY, USDA

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter of the Comprehensive Plan is to accurately describe the goals and visions for the future of Freeman, as determined by the people who live and work in the community, and identify a guide for future land use and development decisions. The character of Freeman is defined by its people, rural setting, agricultural land, and natural environment. The Town's forested land and diverse topography, as well its proximity La Crosse, Madison, and Prairie du Chien, provides for a desirable place to live.

THE FUTURE LAND USE MAP

The Future Land Use Map (on page 10-6) illustrates the goals, objectives, visions and policies expressed throughout the plan. The map seeks to reflect, to the greatest extent feasible, the desires, expectations, and demands of residents and landowners in the Town of Freeman. Its creation was governed by the desire of residents and landowners to preserve the community as it is today, with limited future residential and commercial development.

Land Use Vision

To conserve the rural, agricultural and natural resource character of the Town of Freeman while allowing and encouraging economic opportunities.

Resident Opinions about the Future of Freeman

Chapters 2: Issues & Opportunities describes the opportunities for public participation available to residents and landowners during the planning process. Public input received during the planning process, together with comments provided during the Kick-off Meeting and township land use survey were critical to the development of the Comprehensive Plan.

Community Design Considerations

The Town of Freeman does not currently have a Zoning or Subdivision Ordinance nor does Crawford County enforce zoning and subdivision regulations within the community.

PROPERTY RIGHTS

The issue of private property rights versus community need underlies every Comprehensive Planning effort. Throughout the development of this Plan, landowners have expressed their desire to see property rights protected. Those rights have been respected, to the greatest extent feasible, throughout this planning effort.

PRESERVING RURAL CHARACTER

In the Town of Freeman, rural character means, but is not limited to, a blend of:

- Farms and open spaces.
- Scattered, single-family residential development.
- Streams, creeks, and environmental corridors.
- Open, scenic, views of forests and bluffs.
- Abundant natural resources and wildlife.
- Limited commercial development.

Conservation

Freeman's landscape provides an array of natural features including diverse topography, numerous stream corridors, wooded valleys, and wetlands. Conserving the rural character of the community is a goal of the Comprehensive Plan. When residential development occurs, the Town shall encourage:

- Protection of rural character by maintaining natural areas, woodlands, scenic views, open undeveloped areas, and farm fields, while addressing desired residential and commercial development needs;
- Conservation of agricultural and forest lands.

ZONING

Currently the Township does not have a zoning ordinance. There was mixed responses for future zoning from our survey and public meeting. This land use plan has preserved the Town's ability to consider zoning in the future.

LAND DIVISION/SUBDIVISION

Land division and subdivision regulations provide the procedures and standards for dividing a large parcel of land into smaller parcels for sale and development. Subdivision regulations require a developer to meet certain conditions in order to record a plat. As with zoning, subdivision regulation is a land use control used to carry out a community's plan. However, the regulations governing the division of land are different from zoning regulations in two primary areas.

First, while zoning regulations are meant to control the use of property, subdivision regulations address the quality of development (the availability of public services, services the subdivider must provide, the layout of the site, etc.).

Second, Wisconsin has only one local enabling law for local subdivision regulation. That law is found in Chapter 236 of the Wisconsin statutes. This single enabling law provides the authority to adopt subdivision regulations and is very different from the authority for zoning. For example, towns do not require county approval to adopt subdivision regulations. Likewise, counties do not need town approval for the county subdivision regulations to apply within that town unless the town in question has adopted its own subdivision ordinance.

The design standards included within a land division ordinance can provide a community with the tools to protect public health and safety, conserve natural resources, and enhance quality of life.

HISTORIC/CULTURAL PRESERVATION

The historical and cultural resources (cemeteries, churches, etc.) are currently well maintained.

Future Land Use Map

The Future Land Use map appears on page 10-6 of this chapter. It will be used to guide the development within Freeman during the next 20 years.

HOW WAS THE FUTURE LAND USE MAP DEVELOPED?

The Future Land Use map began with the Existing Land Use map as a foundation. From that base map:

- Natural resource areas were identified to delineate existing development limitations, including wetlands, floodplains, and surface water.
- Prime agricultural soils were identified to preserve the most productive farm areas in the community.
- The existing housing supply and future population and household projections were examined to understand the extent of future residential development.
- Utility and community facility capacities plans were reviewed to understand future community needs.
- The results of the Kick-off Meeting and township survey were reviewed to emphasize resident desires and expectations.

HOW WILL THE FUTURE LAND USE MAP BE USED?

The Future Land Use map is a planning tool to be used by the Town Board to guide future zoning revisions, land and subdivision applications, and other local land use decisions in accordance with the Comprehensive Planning law. The law states:

> *If a local governmental unit engages in any of the following actions, those actions shall be consistent with that local governmental unit's comprehensive plan:*
>
> - *Official mapping established or amended under s. 62.23(6)*
> - *Local subdivision regulation under s. 236.45 or 236.46*
> - *County zoning ordinances enacted or amended under s. 59.69*
> - *City or village zoning ordinances enacted or amended under s. 62.23(7)*
> - *Town zoning ordinances enacted or amended under s. 60.61 or 60.62*
> - *Zoning of shore lands or wetlands in shorelands under s. 59.692, 61.351, or 62.231*

The Future Land Use Map is intended to guide overall development within the township. It is important to note that a Plan is not a static document. It must evolve to reflect ever changing

conditions. In some situations, it may be desirable to amend the Plan (and map) to accommodate a compatible but previously unplanned use. Likewise, a change in county or regional policy, technological advances, the economy, or the natural environment may affect the Plan.

Any change to the Plan (including the Future Land Use Map) must be considered in the context of all nine required plan elements, including the visions, goals and policies expressed in this document. If an amendment is to be approved, the process must include a formal public hearing and distribution per the requirements of the Wisconsin Comprehensive Planning Law. Any amendment must be approved by the Town Board.

Description of Proposed Land Use Changes

This section provides a brief description of the proposed future land use changes identified on the Future Land Use map.

BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN ROUTES – (WITHIN EXISTING ROAD RIGHTS-OF-WAY)

The proposed trail system appearing on the Future Land Use Map (dashed brown lines) will provide linkages between key destinations points and provide access to bicyclists and pedestrians.

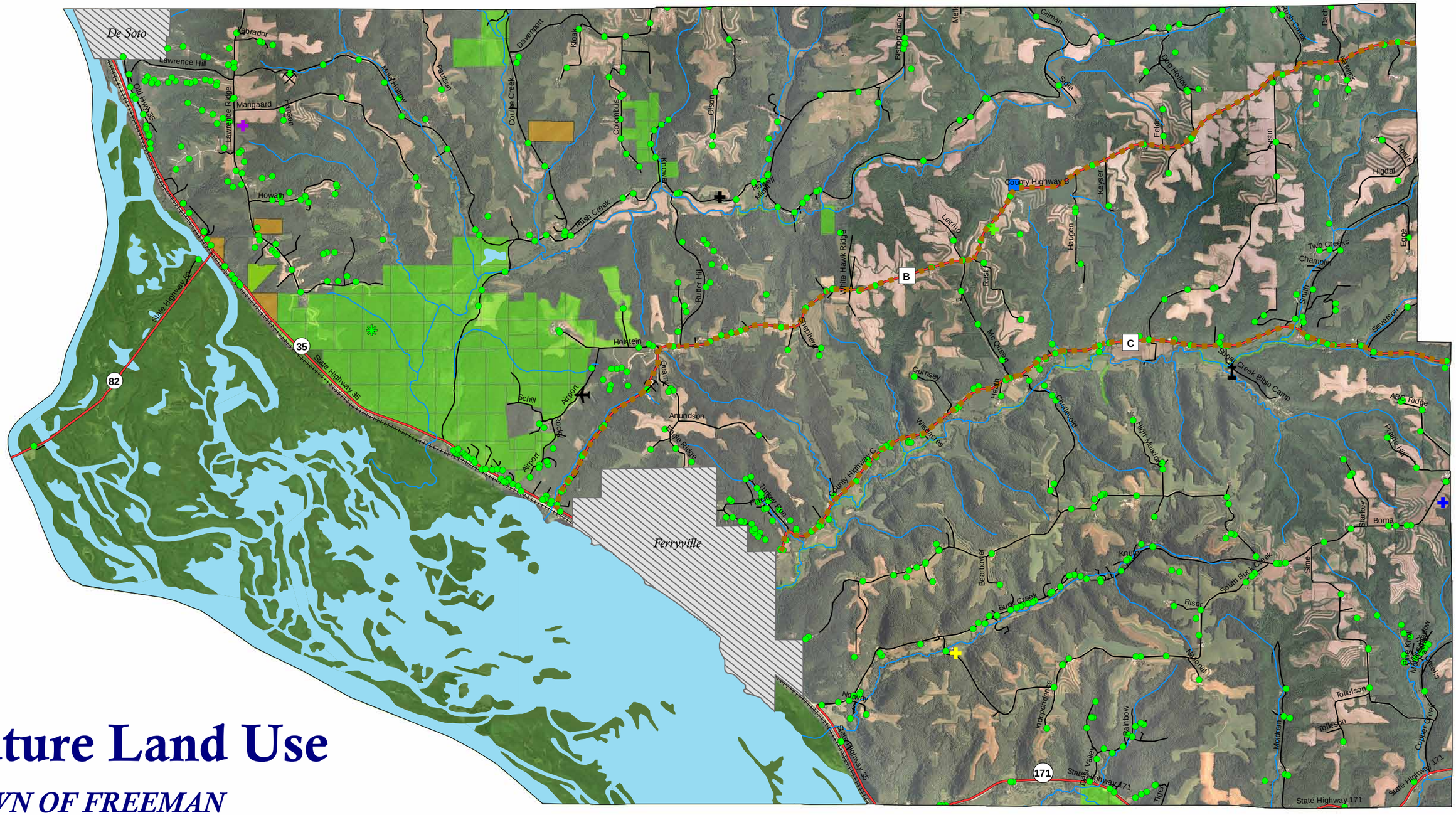
Future Land Use Projections

Table 22 (below) provides a breakdown of projected future development in five-year increments, as per statutory requirements. As with any long-term planning document, these projections are tentative and based upon existing and past trends. Actual changes in land use may occur at a slower or more rapid pace than currently anticipated.

Table 22: Projections for Future Land Use by Acreage in the Town of Freeman, 2010-2030.

Land Use	Total Acreage				
	Current	2015	2020	2025	2030
Federal Lands	7,942	7,942	7,942	7,942	7,942
WDNR Managed Lands	2,983	3,093	3,193	3,293	3,393
Native American Lands	148	148	148	148	148
Tax Parcels	799	811	836	861	886
Mixed Residential/Commercial	--	84.60	169.20	253.80	338.39
Open Water	6,103.03	6,103.03	6,103.03	6,103.03	6,103.03
Other Lands (ag. and open space)	35,446.39	35,355.54	35,264.69	35,173.84	35,083.00
	Linear Miles				
State and County Highways	31.34	31.34	31.34	31.34	31.34
Town and Other Roads	117.61	122.61	127.61	132.61	137.61
Railroad	11.45	11.45	11.45	11.45	11.45
Rivers and Streams	235.67	235.67	235.67	235.67	235.67
Bicycle Routes	--	-	6.75	16.11	16.11

Source: Town of Freeman Comprehensive Plan Existing and Future Land Use Maps, 2009.



Future Land Use

TOWN OF FREEMAN

CRAWFORD COUNTY, WISCONSIN

0 0.25 0.5 1 1.5 2 Miles

Legend

- Bicycle & Pedestrian Trails
- WDNR Managed Lands
- Federal Lands
- Native American Lands
- Communities
- Open Water
- Freeman Town Garage
- Quarry
- Private Air Strip
- Sugar Creek Bible Camp
- Rush Creek State Natural Area
- Cemetery
- Eitsert Cemetery
- Freeman Cemetery/Church
- Lawrence Ridge Cemetery
- Rush Creek Cemetery
- Fire Numbers - Tax Parcels
- Rivers & Streams
- Rail Road
- Town Roads
- State and County Highways

This data was created for use by OMNNI Associates Inc, Geographic Information System. This information is displayed for planning purposes only, unless otherwise noted. Any other use/application of this information is the responsibility of the user and such use/application is at their own risk. OMNNI Associates Inc. disclaims all liability regarding fitness of the information for any use other than for OMNNI Associates Inc. business.

OMNNI ASSOCIATES
ONE SYSTEMS DRIVE, APPLETON, WI 54914
PHONE: (920) 735-6900 FAX: (920) 830-6100

PROJECT#: M1298A08
DATE: 11/10/2009
DRAWN BY: BAW
REVISED:

LOCATION: F:\MUNICIPAL\JOBS\M1298A08 TOWNOF, FREEMAN\DRAWINGS\LandUse_11x17 SOURCE: CRAWFORD COUNTY, USDA

Relationship to Other Required Plan Chapters

Discussion of the ways in which each element of this Comprehensive Plan related to *Chapter 10: Future Land Use* has been included throughout the document. As described below, this chapter will have a significant role in the two remaining elements of the plan.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

Intergovernmental activities have the potential to impact Freeman in many ways. For example, transportation projects implemented by the County or the Wisconsin Department of Transportation can affect accessibility in the Town and create or diminish development demand.

IMPLEMENTATION

Chapter 12: Implementation outlines the goals and objectives from all required elements with milestone dates for achieving each item. In addition, *Chapter 12* provides recommendation for the creation of new and revised local land use tools (zoning and subdivision ordinances) to achieve the visions presented in this Plan.

Future Land Use Policies, Goals, and Objectives

The policies, goals, and objectives related to Land Use in the Town of Freeman can be found in *Chapter 12: Implementation*.

Chapter 11: Intergovernmental Cooperation

Introduction

Intergovernmental cooperation entails communicating with neighboring governments, the County, MRRPC, and state agencies to identify opportunities for collaboration and areas of potential conflict and to effectively coordinate and implement the Comprehensive Plan. Planning activities in adjoining Towns may have a direct affect upon the future goals of Freeman, particularly with respect to transportation and future development in boundary areas. This chapter describes that status of ongoing planning efforts in the area and identified potential opportunities for cooperation and collaboration in the future.

Intergovernmental Vision

In 2030, The Town of Freeman has worked cooperatively with neighboring Town and the County to effectively implement the Comprehensive Plan. Local governments have considered opportunities for joint services to reduce the burden on local tax payers and have worked successfully with the school districts, Crawford County, MRRPC, and the State of Wisconsin to provide coordinated, cost-effective services to residents while maintaining low local tax rates.

Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning Law includes fourteen goals for local comprehensive planning. The goals listed below specifically relate to planning for intergovernmental cooperation:

- Encouragement of land uses, densities and regulations that promote efficient development patterns and relatively low municipal, State governmental and utility costs.
- Providing an integrated, efficient and economical transportation system that affords mobility, convenience and safety and that meets the needs of all citizens, including transit-dependent and disabled citizens.

The Comprehensive Planning Law requires that the Town of Freeman coordinate planning activities with:

- Village of De Soto and Ferryville
- Towns of Seneca, Utica, Sterling, and Wheatland
- Crawford County
- Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission
- De Soto, North Crawford, Seneca, and Viroqua School Districts
- Wisconsin Departments of Administration, Natural Resources, and Transportation

Existing Intergovernmental Activities and Partners

Current planning efforts and intergovernmental programs may have an effect upon planning efforts in the Town of Freeman. This section highlights some of these programs and ongoing planning activities.

ADJACENT GOVERNMENTAL UNITS

The Villages of De Soto and Ferryville are located within the Town's boundaries along the Mississippi River. The Town and the Villages have a positive relationship and will coordinate future planning and development activities to ensure that the needs of each community are adequately represented when development occurs.

The class 4 Villages of Ferryville and DeSoto have extraterritorial authorities granted to them by state statutes, including extraterritorial plat review and, potentially, extraterritorial zoning authority. The extraterritorial area is limited to one and a half miles from the village boarder.

Prior to enacting extraterritorial zoning authority, a city or village must adopt an ETZ resolution, consult with the town in question, and form an ETZ Committee made up of three appointed members from the village and three from the town. Ref State Statute 62.23 (7a).

Freeman's relationship with neighboring Towns can be characterized as one of mutual respect. These communities share a common history, social culture, and rural character with Freeman. Since Towns cannot annex land from one another, boundary disputes are non-existent. Public services such as road maintenance and construction are conducted individually by each community.

SCHOOL DISTRICTS

The Town of Freeman and the school districts recognize the significant role each plays in the other's future. Each is dependent upon the other, to varying degrees, to ensure a healthy long-term future. With respect to intergovernmental cooperation, opportunities were identified during the planning effort to strengthen relations between the Town and the districts. Specific goals and objectives to help realize several of these opportunities are included in the Intergovernmental Cooperation section of *Chapter 12: Implementation*.

CRAWFORD COUNTY

Crawford County provides a number programs and services to the Town of Freeman and its residents. Those that most directly affect Freeman include:

- County highway maintenance and improvement programs.
- Library funding support (to help cover the costs of County residents who use the library).
- Social services.
- Land use planning and mapping assistance.

In those areas where Crawford County has jurisdiction (i.e. shoreland zoning), the County consults the Town before making decisions affecting Freeman. During the planning process, additional communication with the County was identified as a priority, particularly with respect to County road improvement projects. Future communication will also be especially important as it relates to:

- Stormwater management
- Septic System Management
- Coordination with the Crawford County Comprehensive Plan
- Public safety

The Town will cooperate with the County and other local communities to discuss and address matters related to:

- Subdivision, zoning, and other local land use tools.
- Housing, transportation, and services for seniors.
- Affordable housing for Crawford County's year-round residents and seasonal workers.
- Wind energy and wind farm regulations.

STATE AGENCIES

- Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR)
- Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT)
- Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection (DATCP)
- Wisconsin State Historical Society

WDNR and WisDOT are the primary State agencies with whom Freeman must coordinate to achieve the goals and objectives of this Plan.

WDNR takes a lead role in wildlife protection and the sustainable management of woodlands, stormwater regulations, wetlands, State parks, and other natural wildlife habitat areas. Given the priority Town residents give to natural resource protection, the WDNR is an important partner with the Town of Freeman in planning for the future.

WisDOT is a key player in the planning and development of highways and pedestrian/cycling facilities in the Town and region. Freeman has a good relationship with WisDOT and will continue to work with them, particularly with respect to ongoing and future work within the STH 35 corridor. The Town will continue to communicate with WisDOT about land use and transportation decisions made locally.

DATCP is in charge of State agriculture regulations.

SCHOOL DISTRICTS

To facilitate school district planning, this Plan will be made available to those districts as a tool to predict future school enrollments from the Town of Freeman.

MISSISSIPPI RIVER REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

MRRPC is a unit of government that interacts with the Town and County on planning related projects as well as transit, trail and recreational activities coordination. With Crawford County as a member of the Commission, all the Towns, Villages and Cities in the County became members of the Commission, allowing MRRPC to provide technical assistance as requested on a wide range of issues.

The MRRPC Regional 2030 Comprehensive Plan was completed in 2005.

Relationship to Other Comprehensive Plan Chapters

Intergovernmental Cooperation weaves its ways into every chapter of this Plan. Regional housing demand and supplies determine the market for housing in the Town of Freeman. Transportation improvements made to County and State highways have the potential to affect land use and development patterns in the Town. Likewise, the Town's ability to expand economically depends on quality services being provided, not only by the Town, but also its intergovernmental partners (i.e. schools, police, fire, etc.). Moreover, the Town's ability to support development opportunities at its perimeter must be coordinated with neighboring communities to ensure compatibility with adjacent land uses.

Intergovernmental Cooperation Goals, Objectives, and Policies

The goals objectives, and policies related to Intergovernmental Cooperation in the Town of Freeman can be found in *Chapter 12: Implementation*.

Introduction

The Implementation Chapter is the “how to” portion of the plan. It prescribes those actions necessary to realize the visions presented in this document. The actions include revisions to existing ordinances as well as recommendations regarding new tools to aid the Town in implementing the plan.

This chapter includes a strategy for measuring progress, identified the parties responsible for implementation, and includes recommendations for the timely review and, when necessary, amendment of the plan. It also includes policies, goals, and objectives for each of the nine elements and lists primary and available sources of funding for implementation.

Upon approval and adoption of the Comprehensive Plan by the Town Board, and as required by the Wisconsin Comprehensive Planning Law (66.1001 State Stats.), the Town of Freeman must ensure that ***all local land use decisions are consistent with the policies, goals, and objective***s of this plan. Once the plan is adopted and distributed as per state requirements, the Town must review and, if necessary, revise existing land use tools so that they conform to Comprehensive Plan recommendations. In addition, the Town must begin the process of implementation, which may require the adoption of new land use tools capable of achieving plan goals.

Relationship Between Chapters

Coordination between the nine required plan elements has been highlighted throughout the plan. In this chapter, those relationships are presented within the tables pertaining to each previous chapter of the plan.

Measuring Progress

To track planning progress and help to ensure that the plan is implemented, milestone dates are provided for each objective. Special attention has been given to the milestone dates to ensure that individual objectives act in harmony with other stated goals and objectives. Town Board members and the Plan Commission have reviewed the milestone dates to ensure that they are feasible expectations for the Town.

To ensure that the plan chapters are understood in their totality over the life of the plan, the Freeman Town Board will annually review the goals and objectives. Part of this effort, will also include addressing any conflicts which may arise among the nine elements.

Comprehensive Plan Review and Update Process

A Comprehensive Plan may be revised at any time (see *Petition for Plan Revision* section below); however, State statutes require that a Comprehensive Plan be updated no less than once every ten years. However, adopting a more aggressive review and revision schedule will allow the Plan to evolve to meet an ever-changing planning environment. As such, the Town of Freeman will adhere to the following Comprehensive Plan review process:

- Annual Review. A Plan Commission member would be designated to conduct, at minimum, an annual review. Based on that review the Plan Commission would discuss the Comprehensive Plan and determine whether the document should be reviewed and revised. This would include placing the Comprehensive Plan onto the agenda for a regularly scheduled meeting of the Plan Commission. No action would be required unless significant changes in land use have occurred or are proposed for the near future.

- Five-year Review. The Five-year Review would require that a designated Plan Commission member (or members) undertake a detailed review of the Comprehensive Plan to determine whether changing conditions warrant revisions to the document. Upon completion of the review, the member will report a Comprehensive Plan Report to be presented to the Plan Commission, Town Board, and general public.

- Ten-year Review. As required by state statutes, the Plan Commission will undertake a broad review of the Comprehensive Plan to identify the specific revisions necessary to update the document. Prior to beginning this process, the Town of Freeman will notify all intergovernmental partners that it will be reviewing and updating the Plan. As with the initial development of the Comprehensive Plan, the Town must abide by all public participation requirements as per the Wisconsin Comprehensive Planning Law.

Petition for Plan Revision

Residents, landowners, business owners, and other parties may petition the Plan Commission for a revision to the Comprehensive Plan at any time. The process for petitioning for revision would entail:

1. Submit request to have a *petition for revision* placed on the agenda of the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Plan Commission.
2. Plan Commission votes to approve or deny the petition. If it approves, Plan Commission recommends Plan revision to the Town Board.
3. Town Board votes to approve or deny Plan revision. If it approves, Town must adhere to all of the intergovernmental notification and public participation requirements identified in state statutes.
4. Upon completion of recommended review, but prior to adoption of the amended plan, the Town must hold a Public Hearing in accordance with state statues.
5. Following Public Hearing, Plan Commission makes recommendations to Town Board to adopt amended Plan.
6. Town Board votes to adopt, adopt with changes, or deny the amended Plan.

Responsibilities

Implementation of the Town of Freeman Comprehensive Plan will be the primary responsibility of the Town Board. The Town Board will make decisions and recommendations pertaining to land use and development issues in accordance with this Comprehensive Plan.

Implementation Policies, Goals, and Objectives

The policies, goals, and objectives of the Town of Freeman Comprehensive Plan were developed to ensure that Freeman:

- *Remains a rural place to raise a family for the next 20 years, and well into the future.*
- *Limits new development to options that retain the Town's rural setting.*
- *Respects the opportunity for all property owners to receive fair value for their land.*
- *Has defined standards for managing growth and maintaining an effective plan.*

Housing Element

HOUSING POLICIES

1. Remains primarily a rural place.
2. New development should conform to the Town's rural setting and topography.
3. Respects the opportunity for all property owners to receive fair value for their land.
4. Has defined standards for neighborliness.
5. Encourage or allow a range of housing styles, types, and price ranges to support lifestyle needs and preferences.
6. Encourage green space in any new developments.
7. Encourage housing stock to be well maintained and satisfy applicable codes.

GOAL 1: GUIDE FUTURE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT.

Related Element(s)	Objectives	Potential Funding Source	Champion/Partner	Milestone Date
Implementation	Continue to enforce existing residential codes and ordinances.	Town Budget Permit Fees	Building Inspector	Continuous
Implementation	Develop new ordinances as needed.	Town Budget Permit Fees	Town Board	Continuous

GOAL 2: MAINTAIN HOUSING VALUES OVER TIME.

Related Element(s)	Objectives	Potential Funding Source	Champion/Partner	Milestone Date
Implementation	Enforce residential codes and ordinances to ensure that properties are well maintained.	Town Budget	Building Inspector	Continuous
Implementation	Conduct an internal review of Town codes and ordinances every five years to consider amendments to address housing concerns.	Town Budget	Town Board	Every 5 years

GOAL 3: SUPPORT A VARIETY OF HOUSING TYPES, DESIGNS, AND PRICE RANGES TO MEET THE NEEDS OF RESIDENTS OF VARYING INCOMES, AGES AND LIFESTYLE PREFERENCES AND TO SUPPORT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.

Related Element(s)	Objectives	Potential Funding Source	Champion/Partner	Milestone Date
Implementation	Evaluate the need for support services for residents.	Town Budget	Town Board	Continuous
Land Use	Follow provisions in the County land Subdivision Ordinance.	Town Budget	Town Board	Continuous
Intergovernmental	Support activities of the Crawford County Housing Coalition in achieving its long term and short term goals related to the creation of affordable housing for all age groups.	NA	Crawford County	Continuous
Land Use	Coordinate with local developers to encourage a variety of local housing choices.	Town Budget	Town Board	Continuous

Transportation Element

TRANSPORTATION POLICIES

1. Maintain and improve Town Roads in a timely and well-planned manner.
2. Support the long-term viability of area roads.
3. Partner with the County, MRRPC, and WisDOT to plan and coordinate transportation improvements.
4. Keep residents informed of transportation improvements.
5. Maintain the transportation network in accordance with adopted land use plans, economic considerations, physical constraints, and community desires to meet local travel needs.
6. Seal coat or hard surface all Freeman Township roads. Develop a Capital Improvements Plan and utilize it to effectively plan and budget future improvements and enhancements to the Town's transportation network.
7. Regularly monitor the condition of Town roads to maintain safety and ensure that necessary improvements are undertaken in a timely manner.
8. Promote opportunities for walking, hiking, and biking where practical to enjoy the natural character of the community as appropriate and consistent with the land use plan.
9. Research transportation choices for the elderly, disabled, and children through coordination with county and neighboring community programs as appropriate.
10. Manage the development of roadways in environmentally sensitive areas such as wetlands, floodplains, prime agricultural lands, and soils with severe engineering limitations.

GOAL 1: MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE TOWN ROADS IN A TIMELY AND WELL-PLANNED MANNER.

Related Element(s)	Objectives	Potential Funding Source	Champion/Partner	Milestone Date
Implementation	In accordance with state law, using PASER, continue to update road ratings, as required. Seek to increase local funds for road maintenance to support PASER recommendations.	WisDOT	Town Board Highway Superintendent	Continuous
Utilities & Community Facilities	Use a Capital Improvements Plan, PASER results, traffic counts, and accident rates to coordinate and plan for annual roadway improvements and maintenance as well as other capital projects (e.g., municipal building upgrades, equipment purchases, etc.).	Town Budget	Town Board	Continuous

GOAL 2: PARTNER WITH THE COUNTY, MRRPC, AND WISDOT TO PLAN AND COORDINATE TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS.

Related Element(s)	Objectives	Potential Funding Source	Champion/Partner	Milestone Date
Intergovernmental	Communicate and coordinate transportation improvements and plans with WisDOT, MRRPC and the Crawford County Highway Department.	Town Budget	Town Board	Continuous
Intergovernmental	Provide copies of this plan and subsequent updates to WisDOT, MRRPC, and Crawford County.	Town Budget	Town Clerk	Continuous
Intergovernmental	Encourage WisDOT, Crawford County, and MRRPC to directly notify residents and businesses of anticipated transportation projects and provide regular work schedule updates.	WisDOT	WisDOT Crawford County Town Board	Continuous
Intergovernmental	Work with WisDOT, Crawford County, and MRRPC to identify and designate desired Town roads as Wisconsin Rustic Roads.	MRRPC	WisDOT Crawford County Town Board	Continuous
Intergovernmental	Work with WisDOT and Crawford County to identify an appropriate location for a park & ride facility in the Town.	NA	Town Board WisDOT Crawford County	Continuous

GOAL 3: MAINTAIN THE TRANSPORTATION NETWORK IN ACCORDANCE WITH ADOPTED LAND USE PLANS, ECONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS, PHYSICAL CONSTRAINTS, AND COMMUNITY DESIRES TO MEET LOCAL TRAVEL NEEDS.

Related Element(s)	Objectives	Potential Funding Source	Champion/Partner	Milestone Date
Land Use	Develop and maintain an Official Map to plan for roadway extensions and improvements over time.	Town Budget	Town Board	Continuous
Land Use	Review the Transportation Network Map provided in this chapter at least every five (5) years to ensure that it accurately reflects changes indicated on Town Official Map and any current development plans.	Town Budget	Town Board	Every Five Years
Utilities & Community Facilities	Possibly pursue grant funds to develop trail and bicycle routes.	WisDOT Transportation Enhancement Program	Crawford County & Town Board	Continuous

Utilities and Community Facilities Element

It is the goal of the Town that future utility and community facilities needs be met by coordinating with neighboring communities, the school districts, Crawford County, MRRPC, state agencies, and private companies, all of which provide community facilities and utilities to Freeman residents.

The goals and objectives for this chapter are related to actions that the Town can control. Other agencies, and communities will establish their own objectives and priorities for the future. The Town will work, in accordance with the Intergovernmental Cooperation Chapter of the Wisconsin Comprehensive Planning Law, with neighboring communities and the school districts to ensure that adequate community and utilities facilities are available to serve the area.

Utilities and Community Facilities Policies

1. It is the policy of the Town of Freeman to ensure that all Town residents are aware of available community facilities and services.
2. Pursue shared service opportunities when mutually beneficial (i.e. cost savings) to improve the efficiency and quality of utilities and community facilities.
3. Require developers to pay their "fair share" for improvements needed to support new development requests.

Goal 1: Ensure that all Town development is served by efficient, cost-effective services and infrastructure within the Town's capacity to provide services and facilities.

Related Element(s)	Objectives	Potential Funding Source	Champion/Partner	Milestone Date
Implementation	Develop a Capital Improvements Program as a central tool to implement this Comprehensive Plan. The CIP should help the Town plan for needed utilities and community facilities improvements, as well as transportation, and other improvements.	Town Board	Town Board	Continuous
Implementation	Explore the potential for alternative funding sources (Compliant with Act 477) to help pay for new Township construction and improvements to local facilities.	Various	Town Board	Continuous

GOAL 2: CONTINUE TO ENSURE THAT FREEMAN IS A SAFE COMMUNITY BY MEETING RECOGNIZED STANDARDS FOR PUBLIC SAFETY.

Related Element(s)	Objectives	Potential Funding Source	Champion/Partner	Milestone Date
Issues & Opportunities	Coordinate with neighboring communities to maintain adequate fire department staff coverage.	Local Fire Departments	Fire Administration Grants	Continuous

Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources Element

The residents of the Town of Freeman value the community's rural and natural character, scenic landscape, and natural environment. Residential and commercial development will occur in harmony with the Town's natural environment. The Town will also work with neighboring communities, the school districts, Crawford County, and the State of Wisconsin to ensure that natural resources are adequately protected for future generations.

AGRICULTURAL, NATURAL, AND CULTURAL RESOURCES POLICIES

1. Protect the biodiversity and scenic splendor of the Freeman corridor and the Mississippi River shoreline.
2. Conserve the natural resource base, primary environmental corridors, and surrounding agricultural lands, which contribute to the maintenance of the ecological balance, natural beauty, economic well being, and quality of life of the Town.
3. Protect groundwater and develop programs to ensure the long-term viability of the aquifer as a source of potable water.
4. Support local family farm operations and small specialty farms to maintain agriculture as a productive part of the rural landscape.
5. Maintain the Town's rural character by encouraging land owners to consider options such as land trusts and conservation development design techniques.
6. Encourage the conservation of the cultural and historical heritage of the Town for future generations.
7. Encourage the conservation of the natural resource base and surrounding agricultural lands, which contribute to the maintenance of the ecological balance, natural beauty, and economic well-being of the Town.

GOAL 1: CONSERVE THE RURAL AND NATURAL RESOURCE CHARACTER OF THE TOWNSHIP.

Related Element(s)	Objectives	Potential Funding Source	Champion/Partner	Milestone Date
Housing Utilities & Land Use	Encourage land owners to be familiar with the Freeman plan and its land use map.	Town Budget	Town Board	Continuous
Housing Economic Development Land Use	Consider developing ordinances which support the goal.	Town Budget	Town Board	Continuous

GOAL 2: CONSERVE AND ENHANCE WILDLIFE HABITAT.

Related Element(s)	Objectives	Potential Funding Source	Champion/Partner	Milestone Date
Land Use	Encourage landowners to pursue opportunities to protect their land by working with land trusts and other conservation programs.	Town Budget Land Trusts	Town Board	Continuous

GOAL 3: PROTECT THE QUALITY OF SURFACE, GROUND, AND POTABLE WATER.

Related Element(s)	Objectives	Potential Funding Source	Champion/Partner	Milestone Date
Housing Utilities & Land Use	Encourage land owners to be familiar with county and state ordinances for water and septic systems.	Town Budget	Town Board	Continuous
Housing Land Use	Encourage residents to implement an annual well-monitoring strategy for existing wells within the Town.	County WDNR	Town Board WDNR	Continuous
Land Use	Encourage farmers to use best available manure management technologies.	County USDA	Town Board Crawford County	Continuous
Housing Land Use Intergovernmental Cooperation	Encourage natural buffers along river, stream, and lake banks. a. Work with Crawford County, WDNR, and the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection to promote and help fund riparian buffers along streams and lakeshores. c. Educate residents about the importance of environmental corridors.	Town Budget Crawford County WDNR DATCP	Town Board Crawford County WDNR	Continuous
Land Use Intergovernmental Cooperation	Coordinate with Crawford County and WDNR to implement agricultural and residential best management practices to reduce nonpoint source water pollution.	Town Budget Crawford County WDNR	Town Board Crawford County WDNR	Continuous

Housing **Utilities & Community Facilities** **Intergovernmental Cooperation**	Coordinate with Crawford County and MRRPC to educate homeowners on the need for proper maintenance of private well and onsite wastewater treatment systems, periodic testing of private well water, and planning for eventual well, pump or drain field replacements.	Town Budget Crawford County MRRPC	Town Board Crawford County MRRPC	Continuous

GOAL 4: CONSERVE AND PROTECT THE HISTORIC RESOURCES OF THE TOWN.

Related Element(s)	Objectives	Potential Funding Source	Champion/Partner	Milestone Date
Land Use **Intergovernmental Cooperation**	Encourage residents and other groups to inventory historic properties and locations in the Town of Freeman. Share this information with the State of Wisconsin Architecture and History Inventory.	Volunteer SHPO	Town Board SHPO	Continuous
Land Use **Intergovernmental Cooperation**	Recognize the historic resources of the community by supporting local preservation groups.	Volunteer	Town Board	Continuous

Economic Development Element

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

1. Recognize agriculture as an integral part of the Town's economy.
2. Enhance the natural character of the community to ensure the attractiveness of the Town to tourists and visitors.
3. Encourage new development within the Town consistent with the plan.
4. Support agriculture, forestry, residential housing, hunting, fishing, recreation and tourism to provide local economic revenue at a minimal cost of additional service (i.e. infrastructure).
5. Facilitate the establishment of agri-business and home-based businesses that address consistency and compatibility with the character of the surrounding area, maintain the rural appearance of the landscape and minimize potential negative impacts (traffic, noise, odor, glare, signage, parking, truck deliveries, etc.).

GOAL 1: CONSERVE PRODUCTIVE AGRICULTURAL LAND FOR LONG-TERM AGRICULTURE USES.

Related Chapters	Supporting Objectives	Potential Funding Source	Champion / Partner	Milestone Date
Ag/Natl/Cult	Direct farmers seeking to innovate or modernize their operations to information and resources available through the UW-Extension.	UW-Extension	Crawford County UW Extension Agents	Continuous

GOAL 2: ENCOURAGE LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES THAT EXIST IN HARMONY WITH FREEMAN'S RURAL ATMOSPHERE AND SUPPORT THE LOCAL TAX BASE.

Related Chapter	Supporting Objectives	Potential Funding Source	Champion / Partner	Milestone Date
Issues & Opportunities	Develop and maintain a Town web site to market the rural and natural characteristics of the area.	Town Budget or Volunteer	Town Web Administrator	Continuous
Ag., Cult. & Nat. Resources	Coordinate economic development activities with Crawford County.	Town Budget	Town Board Crawford County	Continuous

Land Use Element

LAND USE POLICIES

1. Protect and preserve the rural character of Freeman.
2. Ensure that development and redevelopment is done in accordance with the policies and goals of the Comprehensive Plan.
3. Protect prime agricultural lands and environmentally sensitive areas.
4. Restore and conserve environmental corridors in order to protect water quality, provide wildlife habitat, and maintain rural character.
5. Encourage conservation-based development in the community.
6. Promote energy efficient, sustainable development.
7. Improve multi-modal transportation opportunities by providing pedestrian and bicycles facilities.

GOAL 1: DEVELOP EFFECTIVE TOOLS TO GUIDE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTAIN THE RURAL CHARACTER OF THE TOWN OF FREEMAN.

Related Element(s)	Objectives	Potential Funding Source	Champion/Partner	Milestone Date
All	Consider developing a Zoning Ordinance to effectively implement the comprehensive Plan.	Town Budget	Plan Commission	Continuous
Housing Land Use	Consider developing a Town of Freeman Land Division/ Subdivision Ordinance to guide future residential development in the community.	Town Budget	Plan Commission	Continuous
All	Approve an Official Map that accurately reflects desired future land uses.	Town Budget	Plan Commission	Continuous

GOAL 2: MAINTAIN AND ENHANCE HABITAT, WATER QUALITY, AND OPEN SPACES IN THE TOWN OF FREEMAN.

Related Element(s)	Objectives	Potential Funding Source	Champion/Partner	Milestone Date
Housing Ag/Natl/Cult Land Use	Encourage conservation design for all future residential development in the community.	Town Budget	Plan Commission	Continuous

GOAL 3: CONSIDER CREATING ACCESSIBLE DESTINATION POINTS FOR RESIDENTS AND VISITORS THAT OFFER BASIC GOODS AND SERVICES.

Related Element(s)	Objectives	Potential Funding Source	Champion/Partner	Milestone Date
Housing **Transportation** **Land Use**	Improve multi-modal connectivity by encouraging the development of pedestrian and bicycle trails.	Town Budget WisDOT	Plan Commission Crawford County WisDOT	Continuous

Intergovernmental Element

INTERGOVERNMENTAL POLICIES

1. Cooperate with neighboring municipalities, Crawford County, MRRPC, state agencies and the school districts.
2. Continue to work with adjoining governments as the Town revises and updates it comprehensive plan in coming years and coordinate future planning and development activities in boundary areas.

GOAL 1: MAINTAIN AND ENHANCE OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPROVE COMMUNICATION WITH NEIGHBORING COMMUNITIES, THE SCHOOL DISTRICTS, WDNR, WISDOT, CRAWFORD COUNTY, MRRPC AND OTHER INTERGOVERNMENTAL PARTNERS.

Related Element(s)	Objectives	Potential Funding Source	Champion/Partner	Milestone Date
Land Use **Econ Dev** **U&CF**	The Town will maintain open lines of communication to encourage coordinated planning efforts, particularly at shared boundaries.	Town Budget	Crawford County Town Board	Continuous
Intergovernmental	Continue to actively participate in the comprehensive planning activities of neighboring communities, Crawford County and MRRPC.	Town Budget	Town Board	Continuous
Utilities & Community Facilities	Participate in the planning activities of the school districts, particularly with respect to expansion and building of new facilities.	Town Budget	Town Board	Continuous

GOAL 2: SEEK WAYS TO COORDINATE AND SHARE COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES WITH NEIGHBORING COMMUNITIES AND CRAWFORD COUNTY.

Related Element(s)	Objectives	Potential Funding Source	Champion/Partner	Milestone Date
Utilities & Community Facilities	Consider opportunities when signing contracts with private companies to coordinate with neighboring communities and the school districts that need similar services (i.e. plowing, road resurfacing, etc.).	N/A	Town Board	Continuous
Transportation	Consider opportunities to purchase road maintenance equipment jointly with neighboring communities.	N/A	Town Board	Continuous

Transportation	Consider opportunities to lease existing Town equipment to generate revenue for the Town and avoid situations where neighboring communities and the school district own similar equipment that is underutilized.	N/A	Town Board	Continuous
Transportation	Consider coordination with surrounding communities, to consider snowplowing schedules that efficiently meet the needs of area residents. This may involve using Town equipment to plow portions of City streets (and vice versa) to maximize efficiencies and minimize costs.	N/A	Town Board	Continuous
Utilities & Community Facilities	Investigate opportunities to provide garbage collection and recycling more efficiently by cooperating with neighboring communities to coordinate collection times and contract negotiations with private providers to secure costs savings.	N/A	Town Board	Continuous
Utilities & Community Facilities	Explore joint use agreements concerning the use of recreational facilities in order that the advantages of such an agreement can result in avoidance of facility duplication and a greater diversity of recreational opportunities	N/A	Town Board	Continuous
Housing Transportation Utilities & Community Facilities	Investigate opportunities to jointly address the housing, transportation, and service needs of seniors with the County and adjoining local governments.	N/A	Town Board Crawford County	Continuous
Housing	Work with the County and local governments to develop a county-wide affordable housing strategy.	N/A	Town Board Crawford County	Continuous

Appendix

14 Local Planning Goals

The Comprehensive Planning Law itself identifies 14 local goals for comprehensive planning. The law does not prescribe how communities might achieve these goals.

1. Promotion of the redevelopment of lands with existing infrastructure and public services and the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing residential, commercial and industrial structures.
2. Encouragement of neighborhood designs that support a range of transportation choices.
3. Protection of natural areas, including wetlands, wildlife habitats, lakes, woodlands, open spaces and groundwater resources.
4. Protection of economically productive areas, including farmland and forests.
5. Encouragement of land uses, densities and regulations that promote efficient development patterns and relatively low municipal, state governmental and utility costs.
6. Preservation of cultural, historic and archaeological sites.
7. Encouragement of coordination and cooperation among nearby units of government.
8. Building of community identity by revitalizing main streets and enforcing design standards.
9. Providing an adequate supply of affordable housing for individuals of all income levels throughout each community.
10. Providing adequate infrastructure and public services and an adequate supply of developable land to meet existing and future market demand for residential, commercial and industrial uses.
11. Promoting the expansion or stabilization of the current economic base and the creation of a range of employment opportunities at the state, regional and local levels.
12. Balancing individual property rights with community interests and goals.
13. Planning and development of land uses that create or preserve varied and unique urban and rural communities.
14. Providing an integrated, efficient and economical transportation system that affords mobility, convenience and safety and that meets the needs of all citizens, including transit–dependent and disabled citizens.

Summary of January 2009 Freeman Township Land Use Survey

Summary of Results

During the fall of 2008, the Town of Freeman Land Use Committee developed a survey to receive valuable input from its land owners to help guide the development of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan --- required by State Statue to be completed and approved by the Town Board by 1 January 2010.

The following sections present the statistical results of the survey.

The survey was sent to all land owners (799) by including the survey in the 2008 property tax statements mailed in December 2008 by the Town of Freeman Treasurer, Sandra Anderson. The surveys were received via returns with the property tax payments and by US Mail to the secretary of the Land Use Committee, Bob Severson. A copy of the survey is attached to this summary report.

Surveys :

Sent: 799 Received: 265 33 % Returned

Demographics: Respondents were asked to indicate whether they were: Permanent residents, Part-Time seasonal residents, or Non-Resident Land Owners. The survey also asked the number of years they have owned land in the Township, the acreage, the distance from their Town of Freeman property if they were not Permanent residents, and whether they potentially planned to move their permanent residency to the Township. The number of survey receive per resident category and the associated results are as follows:

Permanent Resident: 96 responses

Acreage:	<10	10-40	40-80	80-160	160-320	>320	
	17	23	15	15	12	8	
Years Owned:	<1	5-10	10-15	15-25	25-35	35-45	>45
	7	14	11	17	10	13	17

Part -Time Seasonal: 75 responses

Acreage:	<10	10-40	40-80	80-160	160-320	>320	
	3	22	5	4	1	0	
Years Owned:	<1	5-10	10-15	15-25	25-35	35-45	>45
	6	25	11	14	10	2	1
Distance (miles):	<50	50-100	100-250	>250			
	7	8	47	7			
Move Here:	Yes	Maybe	No				
	18	38	7				

Non-Resident: 94 responses

Acreage:	<10	10-40	40-80	80-160	160-320	>320	
	34	23	8	12	7	0	
Years Owned:	<1	5-10	10-15	15-25	25-35	35-45	>45
	13	13	19	9	13	3	3
Distance (miles):	<50	50-100	100-250	>250			
	16	8	32	11			
Move Here:	Yes	Maybe	No				
	9	42	22				

Reasons People Own Land in the Town of Freeman by Resident Categories: A critical question asked was WHY people choose to live or own land in the Township. A number of reasons were hypothesized. Respondents were asked to select the 3 Most Important Reason why their either live or own land in the Township. The data below is a tally of the results by the category of resident. (It must be noted that not all respondents provided 3 answers and some chose not to answer the question.)

Reason:	*Permanent*	*Part-Time*	*Non-Resident*
Employment	16	0	2
Recreation	24	46	41
Business Location	8	0	3
2nd / Seasonal Home	0	57	31
Near Family	23	5	11
Quality of Life	70	34	33
Land Value/Investment	12	7	35
Rural Environment	60	32	42
Property Taxes	6	4	0
Lack of Land Use Ordinances	7	7	11

Future Land Use: The critical question for the Comprehensive Plan and the Land Use Committee as the plan is developed is: What type of Future Land-Use do the land owners desire over the next 20 year planning horizon? Twelve (12) categories of Land-Use were identified based on the April 2008 Kick-Off Meeting of the Land Planning Process held at Sugar Creek Bible Camp facilities. For each of the 12 land-use categories, the survey asked the respondent whether he/she want to either "Encourage, Control (meaning through future land zoning and/or ordinaces) or Prohibit the category. The statistical data is provide below for each of the "resident categories" and then summarized in a combined grouping including ALL land owners (without distinction for category of residency). (Note: not all respondents replied to each category.)

Permanent Residents:

Land Use	Permanent			Part-Time/Season			Non-Resident		
	E	**C**	**P**	**E**	**C**	**P**	**E**	**C**	**P**
Family Farms	77	11	3	64	2	3	78	7	2
Industrial Farms	10	34	48	5	26	40	6	37	38
Small Business	35	42	14	33	29	8	41	22	13
Large Industry	11	37	40	6	28	34	13	34	33
Public Recreation Lands	50	34	9	58	11	8	70	7	4
Private Recreation Lands	46	37	10	47	20	2	60	20	5
Tourism	54	29	10	41	26	3	53	29	3
Seasonal Homes	37	48	7	30	37	1	50	31	2
Recreational Parks / Camps	15	50	26	18	43	9	26	42	17
Land Sub-division	10	48	33	6	49	14	10	59	15
Residential Sub-division	12	50	25	7	50	11	18	51	14
Home Business	60	39	4	45	22	2	52	33	2

What Do You Favor: Three groups were selected for the respondents to show whether they 'favored or did not favor' the following:

TOPIC AREA	*Permanent Res*		*Part/Seasonal Res*		*Non-Res*	
	Yes	*No*	*Yes*	*No*	*Yes*	*No*
General:						
Rv / Mobile Home Parks	63	25	50	16	63	22
Recreation/Commercial Business	68	18	52	12	58	25
Wind / Solar Farms	65	22	52	13	70	17
Ordnance Control						
Buildable Parcel Size	59	25	48	20	56	28
Bluff Line Setback	66	16	51	17	58	24
Slope for Buildable Site	68	15	46	22	56	30
Regulations to Manage Land Use						
Agriculture	29	55	21	45	31	46
Recreation	54	27	27	37	32	40
Commercial	66	15	45	17	45	29
Residential	47	36	32	34	26	46

Township Changes: Each land owner was asked to rate the changes they have seen in the Township in recent years . Ten categories of change were selected. The survey results are tabulated below by land owner type.

(M)ore (L)ess (S)ame (?)Don't Know

Change	Resident				Seasonal				Part-Time			
	M	L	S	?	M	L	S	?	M	L	S	?
Agricultural Usage	3	55	20	11	3	21	19	22	2	30	12	29
Family Farms 2	70	9	2	2	27	16	21	3	36	8		31
Land Sub-Dividing	59	5	7	13	34	1	14	18	50	0	5	25
2nd or Seasonal Home	69	4	9	8	40	1	8	8	50	0	6	20
CRP Acreage	17	22	26	25	5	5	17	36	6	10	5	50
Private Rec Usage	38	7	26	24	20	3	12	23	28	1	11	39
Home Based Business	12	6	27	40	12	1	13	36	4	3	5	59
Residential Development	45	6	18	16	23	4	8	21	39	1	7	29
Permanent Population	15	20	27	27	7	7	20	26	15	2	14	40
Road Maintenance	34	14	36	10	11	4	23	24	19	2	25	31

Freeman
Freeman Township

Appendix B

Land Use Survey

2008

The Town of Freeman Land Use Planning Committee is sending this survey to ALL land owners listed on the 2008 tax roll.

The Land Use Plan, per state statue, will be a guide for the **future** land development of the Town of Freeman – our community. The time horizon for the plan is the next 15-20 years. Land Use Plans are meant to be updated on a regular basis as the township changes. The land use plan will also become the foundation for future processes and regulations to manage development according to the adopted land use plan.

The intent of this survey is to obtain statistical data in terms of what you, the land owner, view as future land use goals, how the township has changed over the past several years, why you own land in the township, and how you view the management of land use in the Town.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey and being a part of the land planning process. Town of Freeman Land Use Planning Committee:
Paul Sampson, Chair; Edie Ehlert; John Hosemann; David Olson; Bob Severson, Secretary

----------**Tri Fold and Tape**----------

1. Which category describes your residency in the Township of Freeman? **(please circle 1)**

Permanent resident Part-time seasonal resident Non-resident landowner

2. Is Freeman Township your voting location?.....**YES NO**

3. Future Land Use (for each land use check either **"E**ncourage**, C**ontrol**,** or **P**rohibit**")**

E	C	P	
			Family based farms (non-CAFO)
			Industrial farms (CAFO)
			Home based business
			Small scale industry (<200 employees)
			Large scale industry
			Public recreation Lands (preserves, parks, trails, ..)
			Private recreational lands (hunting, trails,…)

E	C	P	
			Tourism (B&Bs, specialty shops, golf course, …)
			Seasonal homes
			Recreational vehicle parks/camps
			Land sub-division (splitting land into smaller parcels)
			Residential sub-division (residential housing)

4. How has the Township of Freeman changed over the last 5-10 years? **(check 1 per change)**
More**, L**ess**, S**ame**, ?**unknown

M	L	S	?	
				Agricultural usage
				Active family farms
				Land sub-dividing
				2nd or seasonal homes
				Land set-a- side (CRP.)

M	L	S	?	
				Private recreational land usage
				Home based businesses
				Township maintained roads
				Residential developments
				Permanent Population

5. Why do you own land in Freeman Township (**circle the 3 Most Important to you**)

employment recreation opportunities business 2nd or seasonal home near family quality of life

good land value/ investment rural environment property taxes lack of land use ordinances

Other:_____

Name: _____ **Email address:** _____
(optional) (optional) if you would like to be added to the planning process email list

6. Land Owner Demographics

a. If permanent resident: **(circle 1)**

Years of residency..... **>1 >5 >10 >15 >25 >35 >45**

b. If a seasonal/part-time resident: **(circle 1 per question)**

Years you have owned land in Freeman..... **>1 >5 >10 >15 >25 >35 >45**

Miles from your permanent residence to Freeman..... **<50 50-100 100-250 >250**

Do you plan to become a permanent resident of the Town of Freeman? **No Maybe Yes**

c. How many acres in the Town of Freeman, do you own? **(circle 1)**

<10 10-40 40-80 80-160 160-320 >320

7. Do you favor permits to manage selected non-agricultural uses of the land such as:

RV or mobile home parks..... **YES NO**
Recreational and/or commercial business..... **YES NO**
Wind or solar farms..... **YES NO**

8. Do you favor ordinances to control:

The size of buildable land parcels..... **YES NO**
Bluff line setback for structures..... **YES NO**
Slope of hillside for a buildable site..... **YES NO**

9. Do you favor stricter regulations to manage different land uses within the Town such as:

Agriculture..... **YES NO**
Recreational..... **YES NO**
Commercial..... **YES NO**
Residential..... **YES NO**

Comments:

.....

.....

.....

This form can also be found on the Freeman website:

Definitions: ***CAFO*** *(commercial agriculture feedlot operation);* ***CRP*** *(crop reserve program);* ***MFL*** *(managed forest land);*

Please return this survey with your property tax payment, or, mail to:

----------Tri Fold and Tape----------

Freeman Township

Stamp

Town of Freeman
Land Use Planning Committee
Bob Severson, Secretary
P. O Box 329
Ferryville, Wisconsin 54628

www.freemantownship.com/survey

Detailed Data from the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) exercise April 7th, 2008

Group SWOT

STRENGTHS

- Scenic / Diverse topography (5)
- Friendly / sense of community / folks helping each other out (5)
- Natural environment / natural resources / wildlife (4)
- Rural – quiet and low population (2)
- Agriculture (2)
- Sportsman's paradise (2)
- Open land (2)
- Halls Rivers
- Surfaced Roads
- Family Farms – ethics
- Small schools
- Low crime
- Recreational opportunities
- Better educated and stable
- Farms with housing units dispersed helping each other
- Individual initiative
- No zoning
- Bordering the Mississippi

WEAKNESSES

- Limited employment opportunities (3)
- Already high taxes continue to go up (3)
- Fewer young people / Aging population (2)
- Lack of working ordinances (2)
- Unplanned development (2)
- Developers – loss of control to outside interests
- Absentee landowners
- Government mandates
- Poor agricultural practices damage water quality
- Not using natural resources
- Declining school enrollment
- Dying community – have to go out of area for shopping and services
  - Different way of thinking by new landowners compared to the current land owners
  - Closed lands
  - Junky looking yards
- No public transportation
- Assessments not based locally
- Water supply is vulnerable to pollution do to Karst geology of area

OPPORTUNITIES

- Recreational opportunities – both for locals and tourism (6)
- Medium or small scale farming – especially organic and sustainable (4)
- Nature-based tourism (hunting, fishing, bird watching (2)
- Make local networking for goods for future hard times
- Establish good practices for using our natural resources
- Draw up a comprehensive plan
- Need to lower taxes for permanent residents
- Promote tourism
- Wind and solar energy on ridges
- Protect rural character of the Town
- Communications industry

THREATS

- DNR regulation/government interference (4)
- Loss of family farms / farmland (3)
- CAFO's (2)
- Too much growth (2)
- Over population
- Over regulation
- Becoming a play land for outsiders
- Hunting and recreational abuse
- Deer population
- Loss of rural character
- Compromised drinking water
- Development without planning
- Too many part-time outsiders who take advantage of the township
- High value on recreational land
- Beauty of the area
- Closed lands
- Abandoned cabins and trailers

Individual SWOT

STRENGTHS

- Natural beauty, scenic topography – hills and bluffs (14)
- Friendly, caring neighbors (9)
- Rural character & charm (6)
- Low Population (6)
- Hunting & fishing (6)
- Recreational opportunities (5)
- Community interaction, involvement, initiative (5)
- Solid, stable, farm-based community with good family ethics (5)
- Agriculture (4)
- Diverse natural resources (4)
- Wildlife (4)
- Mississippi River (4)
- Good roads & road maintenance (4)
- Fresh air / clean water (3)
- Low crime (3)
- Rivers and streams (3)
- Open space (2)
- Tourism due to our natural areas, hiking, boating, hunting & fishing (2)
- Quiet/peaceful (2)
- Relatively low taxes (2)
- Borders the Mississippi River (2)
- Quality of life
  - Isolation
  - Organic farms
  - Several communities co-existing
  - Active school system
  - Close to good health care
  - Shopping close by
  - Environmentally friendly values
  - Environment
  - Riverfronts
  - Rolling land provides beautiful home sites
- People moving in with a higher education
- Good Town services
- Residents are more knowledgeable on community issues
- Fertile soil for agriculture
- Property values
- Lack of zoning
- Low traffic
- Rush Creek Natural Area
- Mississippi Wildlife Refuge

WEAKNESSES

- Lack of good employment with benefits (6)
- Rising property taxes (5)
- No ordinances pertaining to "junk" in yards – especially old cars & trailers (2)
- Landowners who don't live here full time (2)

- Lack of zoning on land size/sales (3)
- Vulnerable water supply with run off due to poor ag practices and KARST geology (2)
- Trash collection (2)
- Closed mindedness/reluctance to change (3)
- Overdevelopment (2)
- No local control/enforcement of land laws (2)
- Schools - not enough good teachers, sports dominates over academics (2)
- Lack of public transportation (2)
- No plan for growth (2)
- Declining agriculture
- Wage freezes by businesses
- Price gouging by local gas stations
- Lack of "Green" monies from State for wind and solar energy
- No manufacturing
- No flood control in valleys where streams sometimes overflow
- No local health or social services
- Tax programs that require work on land that may never justify the cost & work spent
- Limited business opportunities

- Lack of agreement in what the area should be
- Economic stagnation
- Changing source of income from agriculture to services to retired
- Poor housing market
- Lack of secondary education
- No bike routes
- Local fare networking (producer to consumer)
- People (trespassers) who think the law doesn't apply to them
- No protection from State mandates/expenses with only limited resources
- Small/little safety nets
- Haves/have nots
- Lack of education regarding CAFO's
- Lack of education regarding health care availability
- Few, if any cultural events – theater, plays, music
- Property assessments are based on state rather then local values
- Small cabins and trailers from the weekend landowner
- Developers dividing and possibly destroying natural habitat
- Aging population
- Government
- Land features
- Tendency to want the government to solve our problems – this will only make more problems
  - Abandoned buildings
  - Dying small towns
  - No local grocery, retail, etc.
- Poor community
- Unchecked recreational housing development

OPPORTUNITIES

- Small farming, i.e. organic, sustainable (7)
- Promote outdoor recreation – hiking, biking, camping, and other low-impact activities for locals, but will also bring economic growth (6)
- Develop a plan for controlled, stable growth (4)
- Public transportation (2)
- Education/school improvements (2)
- Lower property taxes for full-time residents (2)
- Prairie preservation
- Attract visitors to area
- Community volunteering & socializing
- Energy efficient housing
- Communications industry

- Clean industries
- Home jobs
- Small industry for job growth
- Encourage economic development
- Cultural/artistic outlets
- Small business development
- Bike paths (connecting)

- Local networking for goods in times of recession
- More services/facilities for retirees
- Forestry
- Road maintenance without changing the rural nature of community
- Wind and hydro energies with our ridge tops and rivers
- To preserve those aesthetic & natural resources that set this town apart

THREATS

- Overregulation, control by County, State or DNR (8)
- Declining agriculture and farmland (6)
- CAFO's (4)
- Small tract land sales-subdivisions(4)
- Development without planning and lack of guiding ordinances (2)
- Water quality – surface & groundwater threats (2)
- Loss of landowner rights (2)
- Loss of control to outside interests (2)
- Too much growth can be bad – need to find good balance (2)
- High property taxes (2)
- Zoning
- Comprehensive plan
- Government interference
- Becoming a play land for baby boomers
- Wind generators in Mississippi Flyway
- Loss of rural character with development
- Invasive species
- Overpopulation
- Overuse of water & septic
- Loss of recreational land
- Light pollution, water & air pollution
- Unchecked recreational housing development
- Poor agricultural practices
- Potential of adverse effects of growth & development
- Loss of woods, wildlife due to development
- Stagnation
- Developers
- Erosion from development
- Too much traffic
- Urban sprawl
- Control of River by outside states
- Building on unstable bluff land
- Meth labs
- No growth plan
- Outsiders defacing land, resources
- Wealthy people moving in part-time and driving up property taxes
- Vacant houses/cabins attract vandalism & crime
- Higher taxes threaten property values and limit opportunities for current landowners to sell their land
- Declining younger population
- Inability to attract above average, young teachers
- Few economic opportunities to keep young people/families living here

VISION EXERCISE

During the Kick-off Meeting, attendees participated in a visioning exercise aimed at generating ideas regarding the ideal future for the Town. Following the meeting, OMNNI used the results to develop draft vision statements and plan chapters which were subsequently reviewed and revised by the Land Use Committee. The final vision statements are included at the beginning of each plan chapter.

During the Vision exercise, participants were asked to complete a series of sentences related to various land uses in the community. Responses were recorded on a large wall

graphic. Following the completion of the graphic, each of the 58 participants were given three adhesive red dots and asked to place them near the responses they deemed most important. Below you will find a complete inventory of Vision Exercise responses. The number to the right indicates the number of yellow dots placed with that response.

Housing in Freeman Includes…

- Planned unit Development (PUD) (clustered) – 5
- Town more active in residential development – 4
- CSMs to maintain farming – 3
- Owner-occupied (predominantly single-family) – 3
- Housing where appropriate – 1
- Energy efficient
- Mobile homes / trailer regulations
- Assisted housing / seniors
- 5-acre lot size (or 20-30)
- Preserve woodlands / density bonuses (topographic sensitivity, prairies, and stabilized bluffs)
- Ensure proper access to residential development
- Lesser [lower] percentage of seasonal [homes]
- Diverse housing stock
- Planned residential area
- Campgrounds

The transportation system in Freeman includes…

- 100% paved roads – 2
- Bike paths
- Role in future railroad corridors
- Road ordinance / infrastructure
- Boating launch / access limits
- Alternative forms of transportation
- Commercial (for hire) taxi or bus (for seniors, sustainable)
- Expanded senior transportation opportunities
- Safe access for horse riding on local roads
- Limited snowmobile / ATV trails

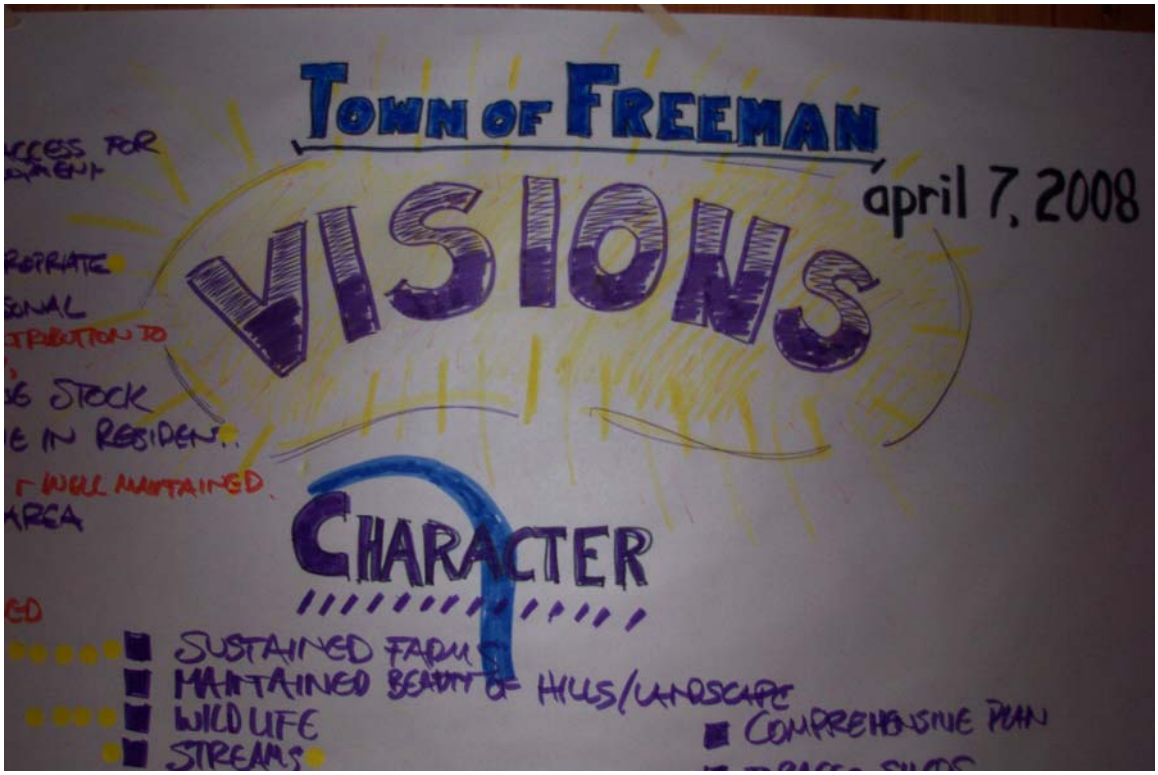
Economic development in Freeman includes…

- Nature-based and eco-tourism – 4
- CSAs / Organic agriculture (family farms) – 3
- Housing construction – 2
- Cottage industry – 1
- Continued support for education (major employer) – 1
- Stable growth – 1
- Scattered-site, small and medium manufacturing
- Clean industry
- Service-oriented industry
- Marketing strategy
- Recreational opportunities
- Home-based business
- Full internet coverage
- Infrastructure supports (economy)

Parks and recreational opportunities in Freeman include…

- Lots of natural areas (protected wild places)(hunting and fishing as rights) – 5
- Campgrounds
- Parks – 1
- Bike paths – 1
- Trails

- Improved recreational opportunities on Lake Winnisheik
- Prevent large-scale guiding firms
- Greenspace / parks in future housing
- Recreational flights, ultra-lights [aircraft]
- Equestrian opportunities

Preserving the character of Freeman means…

- Woodlands / prairies (goat prairies) – 6
- Sustained farms – 5
- Endangered resources – 5
- Wildlife – 4
- Agriculture – 3
- No junkyards along roads – 2
- Streams – 2
- Growing economic base – 2
- Bible camp – 1
- Gravel roads – 1
- Churches – 1
- Tobacco sheds – 1
- Maintained beauty of hills / landscape
- Rural community, community minded (small town atmosphere)
- Friendly neighbors
- Comprehensive Plan
- Old log cabins
- Old cemeteries
- Inventory historic / archaeological sites, resources
- Significant architecture (inventory)