

1
2
3 **2023 RES-139**

4 **AUTHORIZING A PURCHASE OF LAND IN THE TOWN OF VERONA AND TOWN OF**
5 **MONTROSE FOR THE SUGAR RIVER WILDLIFE AREA**

6 Dane County Land & Water Resources Department (LWRD) recommends the purchase
7 of approximately 625.1 acres in the Towns of Verona and Montrose from Michael and
8 Shirley Duerst and Thomas and Lynnette Duerst for \$12,139,250 for the Sugar River
9 Wildlife Area. The property extends from Riverside Road south to Schaller Road and
10 would connect the former Rhiner property to the Sugar River Wildlife Area Davidson
11 Unit, providing a contiguous block of approximately 840 acres of county owned land for
12 wildlife habitat and public recreation. Lands owned by Madison Metropolitan School
13 District Forest and Wisconsin DNR lie west of Speedway Road near the property's
14 southwest side and the County's Falk Wells Sugar River Wildlife Area is approximately
15 ½ mile east of the property.

16
17 The topography is varied, with high spots providing panoramic views of the area. The
18 northern portion of the property contains approximately 2000 feet of Sugar River with an
19 additional 3000 feet of intermittent stream frontage and 1700 feet of intermittent stream
20 on the southern end. The majority of the property is active croplands with approximately
21 90 acres of woods and a two acres enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program.
22 There are 2 small farmstead areas and some additional farm buildings on the property.
23 The family will be able to remain at the northern farmstead site for up to two years and
24 will enter into a crop lease with the County to continue cropping the land for the next five
25 years.

26
27 A graveled farm road runs from Riverside Road to Schaller Road which will provide good
28 public access through the property. There is an existing 2 ½ mile snowmobile trail that
29 also runs through the property and will remain.

30
31 Acquisition of this property will provide restoration opportunities for woodland and
32 savanna and also wetland restoration along the northern streams. Future conversion of
33 croplands to prairie will reduce runoff, providing groundwater protection and improved
34 water quality while also providing improved fish and wildlife habitat. The purchase will
35 create more continuity between public lands and provide safe parking and access for
36 water based recreation within the already popular Sugar River corridor, as well as
37 hunting, trapping, foraging, snowshoeing, fishing and un-groomed cross country skiing.

38
39 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Dane County Board of Supervisors
40 and the Dane County Executive hereby authorize the purchase of approximately 625.1
41 acres from the Michael, Shirley, Thomas and Lynnette Duerst for \$12,139,250.00 plus
42 miscellaneous costs according to Wis. Stats. Chapter 27.03(3); and

43
44 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Dane County Land & Water Resources
45 Department Director and the Real Estate Coordinator are authorized to administer the
46 closing and the transfer of the above-mentioned property to Dane County, and the
47 Controller is authorized to issue checks necessary to effectuate the transaction.