

AUTHORIZING A PURCHASE OF LAND IN THE TOWN OF VERONA FOR BADGER
MILL CREEK NATURAL RESOURCE AREA AND
SUGAR RIVER NATURAL RESOURCE AREA

Dane County Land & Water Resources Department (LWRD) recommends the purchase of approximately 160 acres in the Town of Verona from the Rhiner family for \$3,000,000. The property is located in both the Badger Mill Natural Resource Area and the Sugar River Natural Resource Area boundaries. The property contains approximately 1,935 feet of two bank frontage along Badger Mill Creek and 1,775 feet on the Sugar River and the confluence of the two streams sits in the southern portion of the property. Both are classified as Tier I Stream Projects in the 2018 - 2023 Dane County Parks & Open Space Plan.

The majority of the property is active croplands along with a 4 acre farmstead area and some pasture and grasslands. The land bordering the streams is designated wetland and this southern portion of the property has experienced flooding in the past. The Rhiner family will continue to reside at the property and continue cropping for the next two years.

Acquisition of this property will protect these water resources from future development and allow restoration on these stretches of stream. The future conversion of croplands to prairie will reduce the amount of runoff into the streams providing groundwater protection and improved water quality. Restoration will also enhance wetland functions, enabling more floodwater storage while also providing improved fish and wildlife habitat. Located between Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Sugar River Wildlife Area and the county's Falk Wells Sugar River Wildlife Area, this property will create more continuity between public lands and provide additional recreational opportunities, including fishing and paddling, within the already popular Sugar River corridor.

Funds for the purchase are available in the Flood Risk Reduction Fund and the Dane County Conservation Fund. The debt issued to support this expenditure will have a term of 20 years. LWRD may also apply for USFWS North American Wetlands Conservation Act grant funds or use the parcel as match for existing grants.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Dane County Board of Supervisors and the Dane County Executive hereby authorize the purchase of approximately 160 acres from the Rhiner family for \$3,000,000 plus miscellaneous costs according to Wis. Stats. Chapter 27.03(3); and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Dane County Board of Supervisors and the Dane County Executive hereby authorize applications to USFWS NAWCA for grants to offset the purchase costs and to match already committed USFWS grant dollars, and that the Dane County Executive and County Clerk are authorized to execute the grant and partnership documents necessary to maximize cost-sharing from project partners; and

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