



MARATHON COUNTY FORESTRY/RECREATION COMMITTEE AGENDA

Date and Time of Meeting: Tuesday, November 5, 2024, at 1:00pm

Meeting Location: Conference Room #5, 212 River Drive, Wausau WI 54403

MEMBERS: Rick Seefeldt (Chairman), Tom Rosenberg (Vice-Chairman), Jean Maszk

Marathon County Mission Statement: *Marathon County Government serves people by leading, coordinating, and providing county, regional, and statewide initiatives. It directly or in cooperation with other public and private partners provides services and creates opportunities that make Marathon County and the surrounding area a preferred place to live, work, visit, and do business.*

Parks, Recreation and Forestry Department Mission Statement: *Adaptively manage our park and forest lands for natural resource sustainability while providing healthy recreational opportunities and unique experiences making Marathon County the preferred place to live, work, and play.*

The meeting site identified above will be open to the public. Persons wishing to attend the meeting by phone may call into the telephone conference beginning ten (10) minutes prior to the start time indicated above using the following number: Phone Number: 1-408-418-9388 Access Code: 2494 938 0326. When you enter the telephone conference, PLEASE PUT YOUR PHONE ON MUTE!

Agenda Items:

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Public Comment (15-minute limit)** *(Any person who wishes to address the County Board, or one of its committees, during the "Public Comment" portion of meetings, must provide his or her name, address, and the topic he or she wishes to present to the Marathon County Clerk or chair of the committee, no later than five minutes before the start of the meeting.)*
3. **Approval of the Minutes of the Tuesday, October 1, 2024, Committee Meeting**
4. **Policy Issues for Discussion and Committee Determination**
 - A. Discussion and Possible Action by Committee - None
5. **Operational Functions Required by Statute, Ordinance or Resolution:**
 - A. Discussion and Possible Action by Committee
 1. Wisconsin County Forest Association State Budget Priorities
 2. Consider the Solid Waste Management Board's Request to Research County Forest Lands for Clay Resources
 3. Timber Sale Closeout – Contract #729-24 TNT Timber Improvement LLC
 - B. Discussion and Possible Action by Committee to Forward to the Environmental Resource Committee for its Consideration - None
6. **Policy Issues for Discussion and Committee Determination for Consideration by Environmental Resources Committee - None**
7. **Educational Presentations/Outcome Monitoring Reports**
 - A. Department of Natural Resources Liaison Report
 - B. DNR Partnership Meeting Minutes and Discussion
 - C. Update on the Potential Acquisition of Land in the Town of Reid

- 8. **Next Meeting Date, Time, Location: Tuesday, December 3, 2024, at 1:00pm at 212 River Dr, Wausau, WI 54403, Room 5 or via Webex**
 - A. Announcements/Requests/Correspondence
 - B. Future Agenda Items: Review and consider approving the 2025 Wildlife Work Plan, Review and consider approving the 2025 County Forest Work Plan, Resolution: Application for County Forest Acreage Share Payment, DNR Liaison Report, Consider Timber Sale Extension Requests, Timber Sale Closeouts, Resolution: Approving an application to acquire state funding through the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Grant Program.

9. **Adjournment**

**SIGNED /s/ Thomas Lovlien
PRESIDING OFFICER OR DESIGNEE**

ANY PERSON PLANNING TO ATTEND THIS MEETING WHO NEEDS SOME TYPE OF SPECIAL ACCOMMODATION IN ORDER TO PARTICIPATE SHOULD CALL THE COUNTY CLERK'S OFFICE AT 261-1500 OR E-MAIL COUNTYCLERK@CO.MARATHON.WI.US ONE BUSINESS DAY BEFORE THE MEETING.

EMAILED TO: Daily Herald and other News Media Groups
 EMAILED BY: Winnie Parker
 EMAIL DATE/TIME: October 28, 2024, 12:00 p.m.

NOTICE POSTED AT COURTHOUSE:
 By: _____
 Date: _____
 Time: _____ a.m/p.m.

Members present: Rick Seefeldt (chair), Tom Rosenberg (vice-chair) Jean Maszk

Staff present: Tom Lovlien - Forest Administrator, Jamie Polley - Director, Jeff Sorenson - DNR Forest Liaison

1. Call Meeting to Order – The meeting was called to order by Chair Seefeldt at 1:00pm, Rm. 5, 212 River Dr., Wausau. Official notice and the agenda for the meeting was posted publicly in accordance with State statutes.

2. Public Comment – none brought forward.

3. Approve Minutes – **Motion** / second by Rosenberg / Maszk to approve the minutes from the September 3, 2024, regular Forestry/Recreation Committee meeting. Motion **carried** by voice vote; vote reflected as 3-0.

4. Policy Issues for Discussion and Committee Determination

A. Discussion and Possible Action by Committee - None

5. Operational Functions Required by Statute, Ordinance or Resolution

A. Discussion and Possible Action by Committee

1. Consider Timber Bids and Award Contracts – We had 15 bids on four (4) tracts on the county forest lands and one sale, tract 10-24, at Big Eau Pleine County Park. Four (4) of the Five (5) sales, the high bidder was Flannel Fleet and one (1) was Midwest Hardwoods. It is our recommendation to award tract 6-24, 7-24, 8-24, and 9-24 to the highest bidders which total \$249,659.80. The Park Commission will approve tract 10-24 at Big Eau Pleine Park Sale at their November 5, 2024, meeting. **Motion** / second by Maszk / Seefeldt to approve the Fall 2024 Timber Bids and Award Contracts. Motion **carried** by voice vote; vote reflected as 3-0. **Motion** / second by Rosenberg / Seefeldt to reject the Fall 2024 Timber Bids from Yoder Lumber for failure to provide bid bonds. Motion **carried** by voice vote; vote reflected as 3-0.

2. 2025 Parks, Recreation, and Forestry Department Budget Update – Jamie Polley, Director, explained that the department was directed by the County Administration to present a zero-increase budget for operations for the 2025 budget. Included in that budget, however, was an all-staff 3% increase to salaries. Personnel is our biggest expense across all areas. We currently have two vacancies; one we are in the process of hiring and the other we are in the process of figuring out the best use of that position. We have \$1.5 million in revenue that our department brings in. Even though we increased salary by 3%, we were able to decrease operations enough that the budget was only at 1% increase when submitted for both operations and salary expenditure.

3. Consider Investigating Land for Sale in the Town of Reid for an Addition to the County Forest – We have been approached by an individual who wants to sell his 41-acre parcel which is adjacent to the Kronenwetter Forest Unit at the end of Kline Road. This Aspen and Red Maple parcel does align with our County Forest Comprehensive Use Plan. If approved to start the investigation process, we would need to get a resolution from the Town of Reid to purchase the property. We would need this resolution for the Knowles Nelson Stewardship Grant application, which, if awarded, would pay 50% of the cost. In the meantime, we would send Joe Tucker, Forester, to do an estimate of the timber value. Once we have all these components in place, we would put a resolution together to start the application process for the Knowles Nelson Stewardship Grant. Then we would have the property appraised. Forestry, Environmental Resources, Finance and Property, and the County Board all must approve to apply for the grant and then approve to purchase the property. Questions were answered. Committee was in consensus to have Lovlien pursue investigating the land for sale in the Town of Reid for an addition to the County Forest.

B. Discussion and Possible Action by Committee to Forward to the Environmental Resource Committee for its Consideration - None

6. Policy Issues for Discussion and Committee Determination for Consideration by Environmental Resources Committee – None

7. Educational Presentations/Outcome Monitoring Reports

A. Department of Natural Resources Liaison Report – Jeff Sorenson, DNR Liaison, reported that John Hunt started scarification on a recently-sold red maple stand, tract 8-24, because it was inundated with muscle wood and iron wood. Scarification cuts the plant below ground level and digs up the roots which in turn exposes the mineral soil, mixes up the ground and leaf matter and mixes the organic matter. This mix of organic and mineral soil allows the seed to germinate, giving us the best chance to get a fair amount of red maple and basswood. If we cut as is, we would not be able to get anything to regenerate. All the merchantable timber remains for the logger to harvest for the sale. The annual partnership meeting was held the beginning of September with a new team leader from the DNR, Jordan Truitt.

B. Ragnar Trail Wisconsin Update – Ragnar had their 5th year race in a row at Nine Mile with 1649 participants. Each participant is charged \$12.79 and the total revenue to the county for the event alone was \$21,000. We had three (3) vendors for \$500 each, which netted another \$1,500 in revenue. The Chalet was rented for the weekend as well. All totaled, the county realized approximately \$25,000 in revenue. There are two divisions for the Ragnar Trail Wisconsin: the under 40 division and the master's, which is the over 40 division. There are eight (8) person teams made up of women, men, and mixed. In addition, they have teams which are only four (4) people. This year they had a new two-person team called an ultra-ultra team that ran each of the three loops as well as the long black loop. Another new event was held on Saturday only, called the "Sprint," in which four (4) person teams sprinted the two short loops. Because Nine Mile is a forest unit, we have active logging happening simultaneously. We were able to work it out with the logger to have the trails cleared and leveled the Wednesday prior to the race. They moved out of the immediate area of the race and cut an area that didn't have any effect on the racecourse. They took Friday off and came back in on Monday to resume logging operations. We don't have timber sales every year at Nine Mile while Ragnar is going on, but we hope that if we do, we will be able to continue to work together in the future with the organizer and the loggers like we have this year and in years past to collaborate for all involved.

8. Next Meeting Date, Time, Location: Tuesday, November 5, 2024, 1:00 pm, 212 River Drive, Wausau, WI 54403, Room 5, or via Webex

A. Announcements/Requests/Correspondence – Chair Seefeldt may not be here next month. Nine Mile tree removal is taking place at the shelter and sand has been delivered for the new septic system, which is being paid for from ARPA money. Then you may be seeing some of the new upgrades to the Chalet being done as well. Our last tour was September 15, 2022, and so let's shoot to have another tour for late summer or early fall of 2025.

B. Future Agenda Items – Consider Timber Sale Extension Requests, Consider Timber Bids and Award Contracts, DNR Liaison Report, Update from Fall WCFA Meeting, DNR Partnership Meeting Minutes and Discussion, Potential Land Purchases – Town of Reid.

9. Adjourn – **Motion** / second by Seefeldt / Rosenberg to adjourn the meeting at 2 p.m. Motion **carried** by voice vote; vote reflected as 3-0.

BUDGET PRIORITIES

The mission of WCFA is to provide leadership uniting the interests of the world's largest county forest program while ensuring long-term forest health and sustainability.

WCFA represents the 30 counties in Wisconsin with County Forest lands established under WI §28.10 and §28.11. Collectively, these 30 counties manage over 2.4 million acres of forests, the largest public ownership in Wisconsin. Our county forests are a major contributor to public land management and rural economic development in the State, and are highly valued because they provide a reliable source of raw materials for the forest products industry, as well as a tremendous amount of recreation opportunities and abundant wildlife habitat. We believe that **County Forests are vital to the State's overall wellbeing**, contributing to the economic, social and environmental health of the State and helping to provide a quality of life which everyone enjoys.

[WI §28.11](#) obligates the State of Wisconsin to compensate the counties for the work and services they provide to the public and for the betterment of the State. The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) financially and technically supports the counties through their budget and with staff positions, which is important to the counties' success.

BUDGET PRIORITY #1:

Increase funding for the County Forest Administration grant, Sustainable Forestry grant and Wildlife Habitat grant by a minimum of \$630,000 each year of the biennium.

Without the financial support of the DNR, through grants and loans, keeping pace with inflation and the complexity of the county forest system, both in scope and scale, the impact realized by our county forests is diminishing every year.

NOTE: The funds necessary for these grants already exists! An increase to the DNR's spending authority of the Forestry SEG account, under the DNR Conservation Fund, is all that is required.

- ✦ **County Forest Administration Grant** – Per [WI §28.11\(5m\)](#), the DNR agrees to “fund all of the following for one professional forester in the position of county forest administrator or assistant county forest administrator: 1. Up to 50% of the forester's salary. 2. Up to 50% of the forester's fringe benefits, except that the fringe benefits may not exceed 40% of the forester's salary.” The amount the DNR allocates for this grant annually is quickly consumed by the ever-increasing costs of salary and fringe. **REQUEST: Increase funding by \$250,000 annually.**
- ✦ **Sustainable Forestry Grant** – Per [WI §28.11\(5r\)](#), the DNR offers Sustainable Forestry Grants, which are used primarily for emergency and unanticipated work, but because the funding is also taken from the same Forestry SEG account as the County Forest Administration grant, as salary and fringe costs grow with inflation, there is less available for work accomplished through this grant. The grant is substantially over subscribed every year. **REQUEST: Increase funding by \$250,000 annually.**
- ✦ **Wildlife Habitat Grant** – The Wildlife Habitat Grant has been at \$0.05/acre since 2010. However, it has also been prorated for the last several years, as the funds are being redistributed elsewhere. Even so, \$112,600 doesn't go a long way on 2.4 million acres of publicly owned land. At a minimum, the Wildlife Habitat Grant should be made whole with no proration occurring. Secondly, the Wildlife Habitat Grant should be increased up to \$0.10/acre, as it states in statute ([WI §23.09\(17m\)](#)). **REQUEST: Increase funding by \$130,000 annually.**

BUDGET PRIORITY #2:

Increase and stabilize the Department of Natural Resources staff commitment to the County Forest program given through “time standards” from 46,000 hours annually to 52,000 hours annually.

Time Standard hours are critical to the county forests’ mission. DNR Division of Forestry personnel complete essential tasks on behalf of the counties every year. The time standard allocation has been more or less 46,000 hours for 20 years. A recent needs assessment exercise, using calculation formulas established by the Division of Forestry, WCFA and the Counties, showed a need of over 52,000 hours.

However, due to other priorities and staffing shortages, the Division is still only able to supply 46,000 hours, leading to a proration of 88%. Given the increasing complexity of the county forest system, both in scope and scale, less work is being done with the same number of hours received.

REQUEST: Fund an additional 6,000 DNR Division of Forestry hours annually for work on county forests by increasing the DNR’s position authority by 3.5 full time positions.

BUDGET PRIORITY #3:

Continued and increased support of the Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry operations and budget.

Because of the support the DNR supplies to the county forests every year, it’s important for the DNR itself, especially the Division of Forestry, to be healthy. In the last budget, we witnessed a decrease in the Division of Forestry’s budget, both in operating budget and for staff positions. Both of these things have negatively impacted the county forest system. We fully support their request to increase their operating budget.

In addition, we fully support replacing those staff positions previously removed, and increasing staff positions in forest products, forest hydrology and for county forest time standards.

Last, we fully support continuous funding for WisFIRS maintenance and upgrades, as the county forests rely heavily on that system for their work.

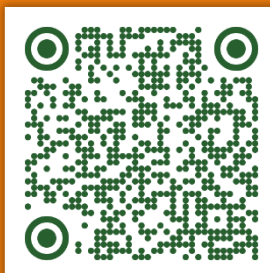
OTHER BUDGET PRIORITIES:

- ✦ County Forest road infrastructure, transportation and aids ([WI §86.315](#))
- ✦ Wisconsin’s Council on Forestry initiatives
 - Initiatives for new wood markets are critical
- ✦ County Forest Acreage Share Payments ([WI §28.11\(8\)\(a\)](#)).
- ✦ Reauthorization of the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program

LEARN MORE:

Rebekah Luedtke, Executive Director

- rebekah@wisconsincountyforests.com
- 715.539.1067 (o) | 218.410.0268 (c)
- www.wisconsincountyforests.com



FAST FACTS

- 1st County Forest established in 1928 in Langlade.
- Currently there are 30 established County Forest Programs.
- Collectively the largest public landholder in Wisconsin.
- Collectively they manage over 2.4 million acres, roughly 14% of Wisconsin’s forested acres.
- 27 County Forests, with over 2.4M acres, are 3rd party certified by the Forest Stewardship Council and/or the Sustainable Forestry Initiative.
- Nearly 1,800 miles of ATV trails, over 9,000 miles of snowmobile trails exist across the system.
- Forestry is the #1 employer in 10 Counties
- Forestry is #1 in output in 14 Counties

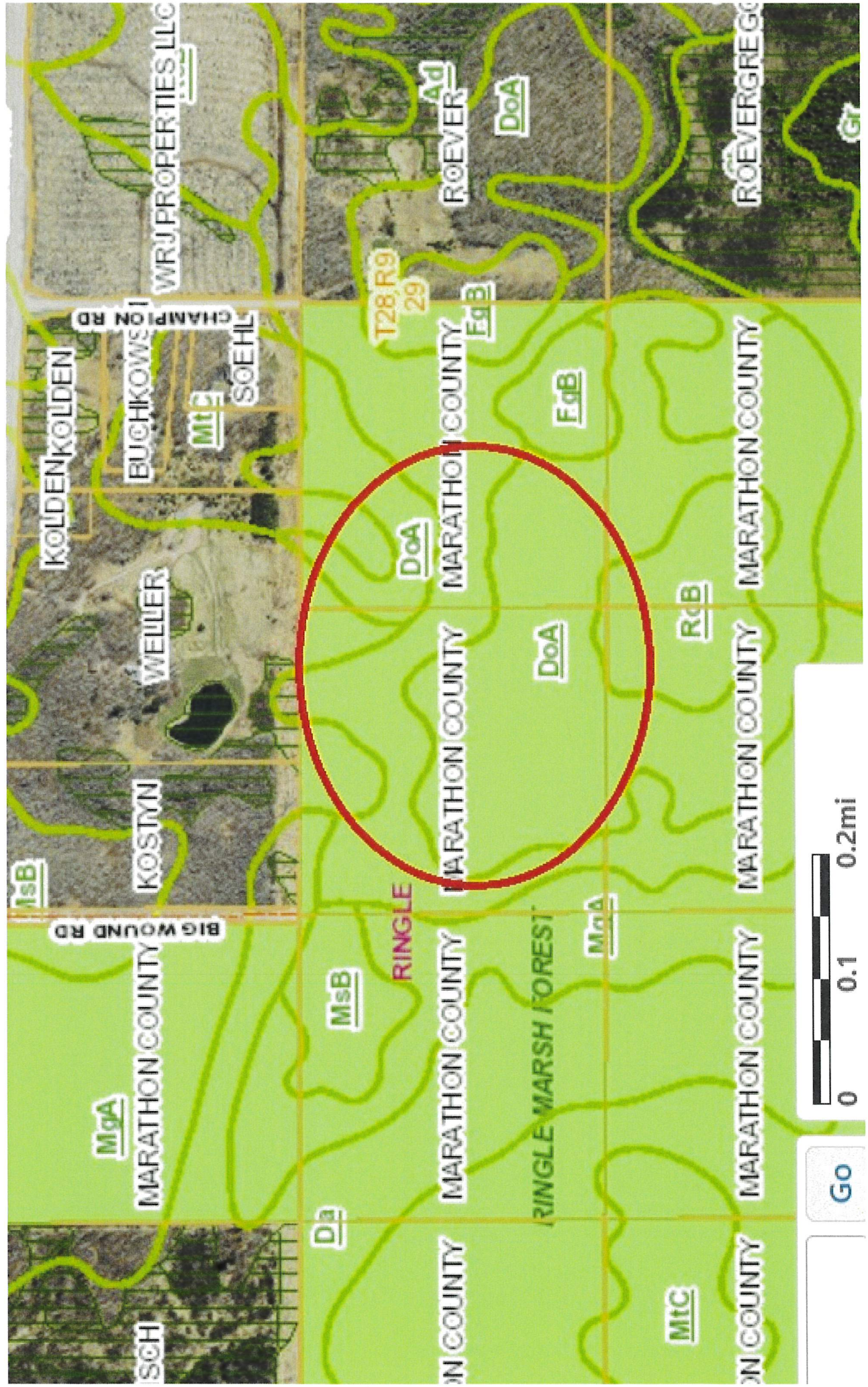
The annual forest certification audits continually find that the Wisconsin County Forest system operates at the highest levels of forest management, regularly meeting national and global best management standards. The system has been previously described as “the model” for public land management in the United States.

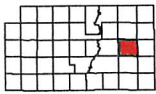


TOWN OF RINGLE - SECTION 29 T28N-R9E OWNED BY SOLID WASTE DEPT.



TOWN OF RINGLE - SECTION 29 T28N - R9E

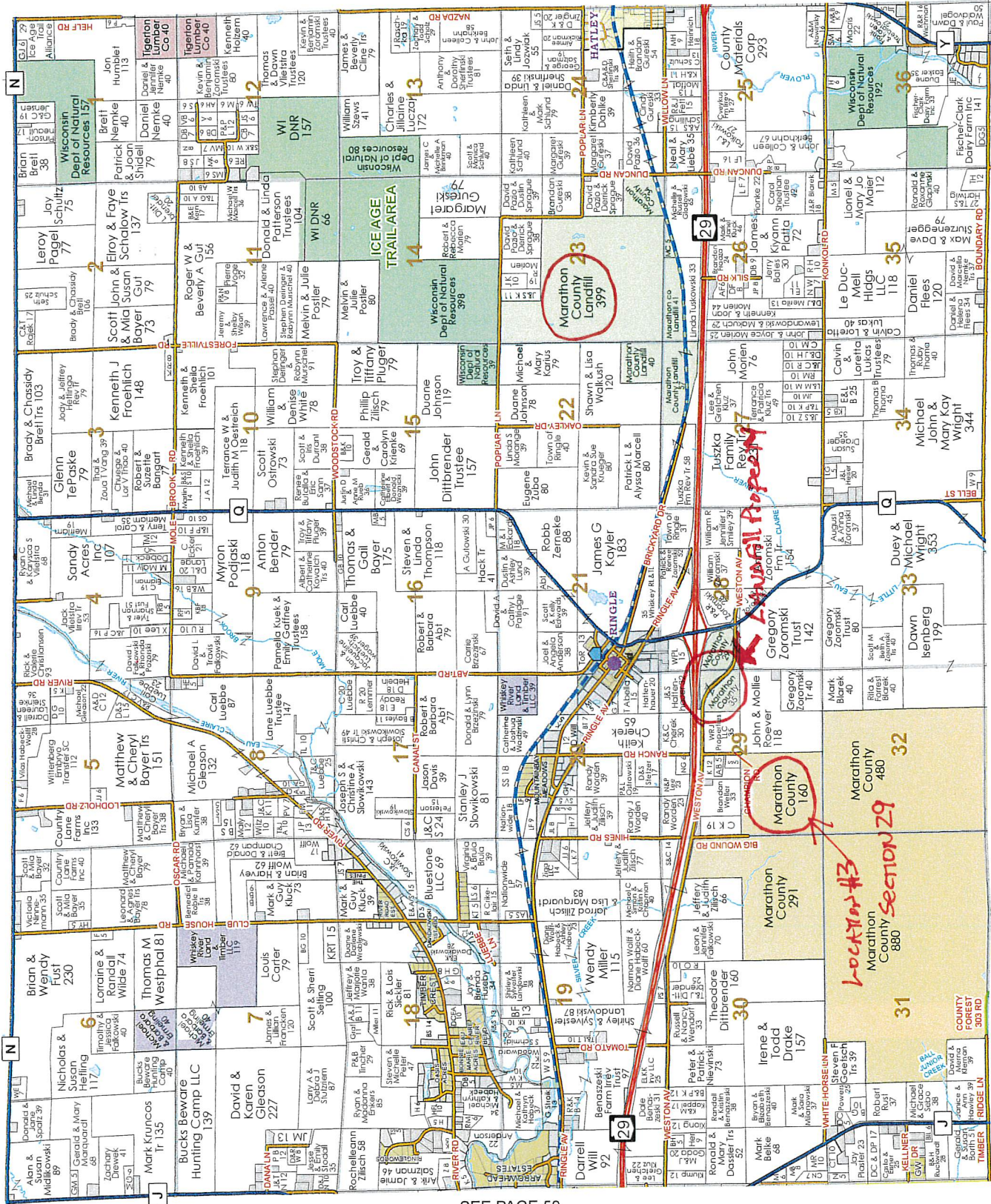




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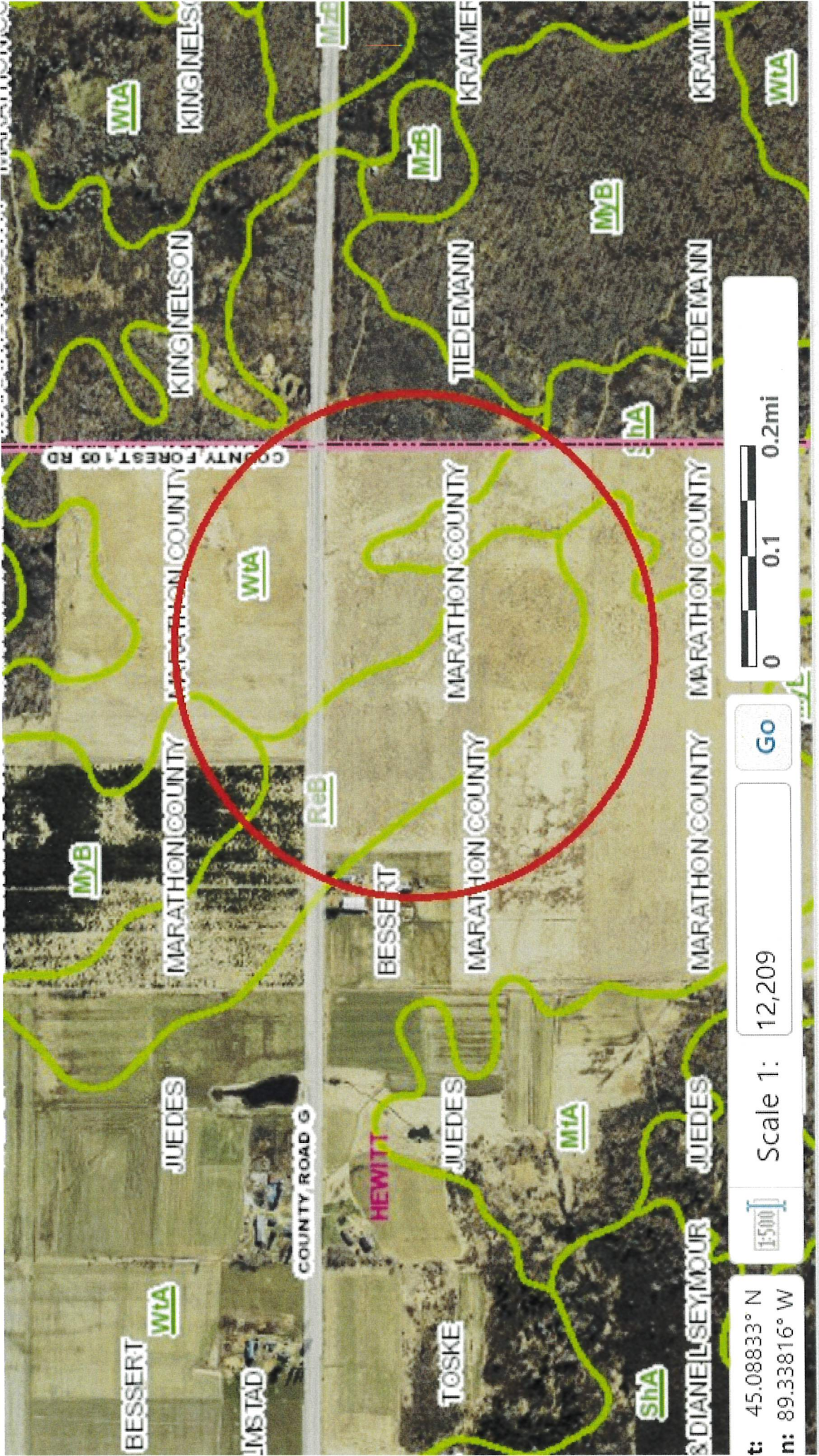
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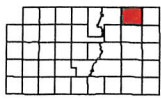
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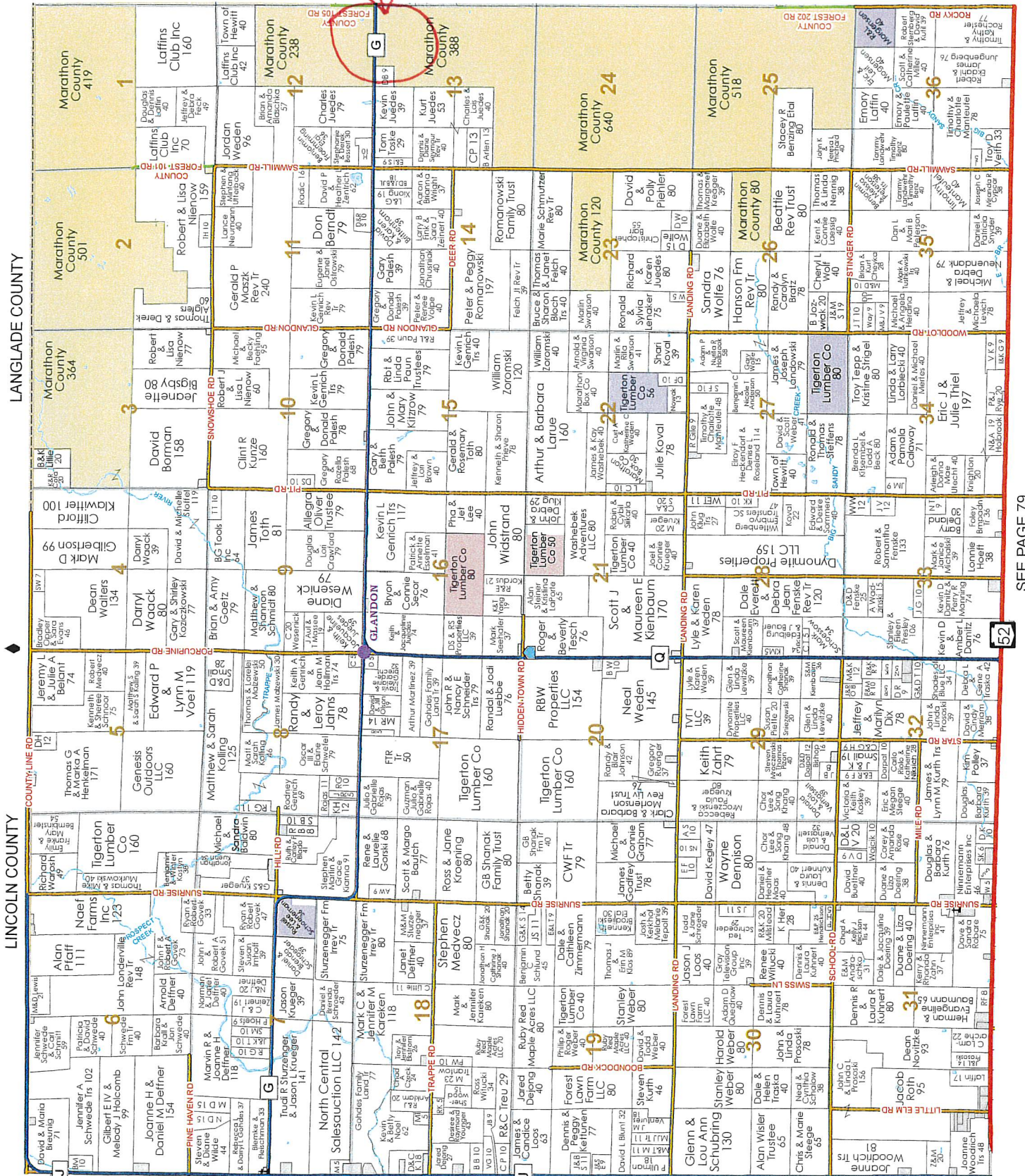
Town of Hewitt - Section 13, T30N-R9E





LOCATION #1 SECTIONS 12, 13.

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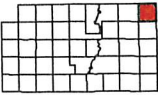
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TOWN OF HARRISON - SECTIONS 20 AND 29 T30N-R10E

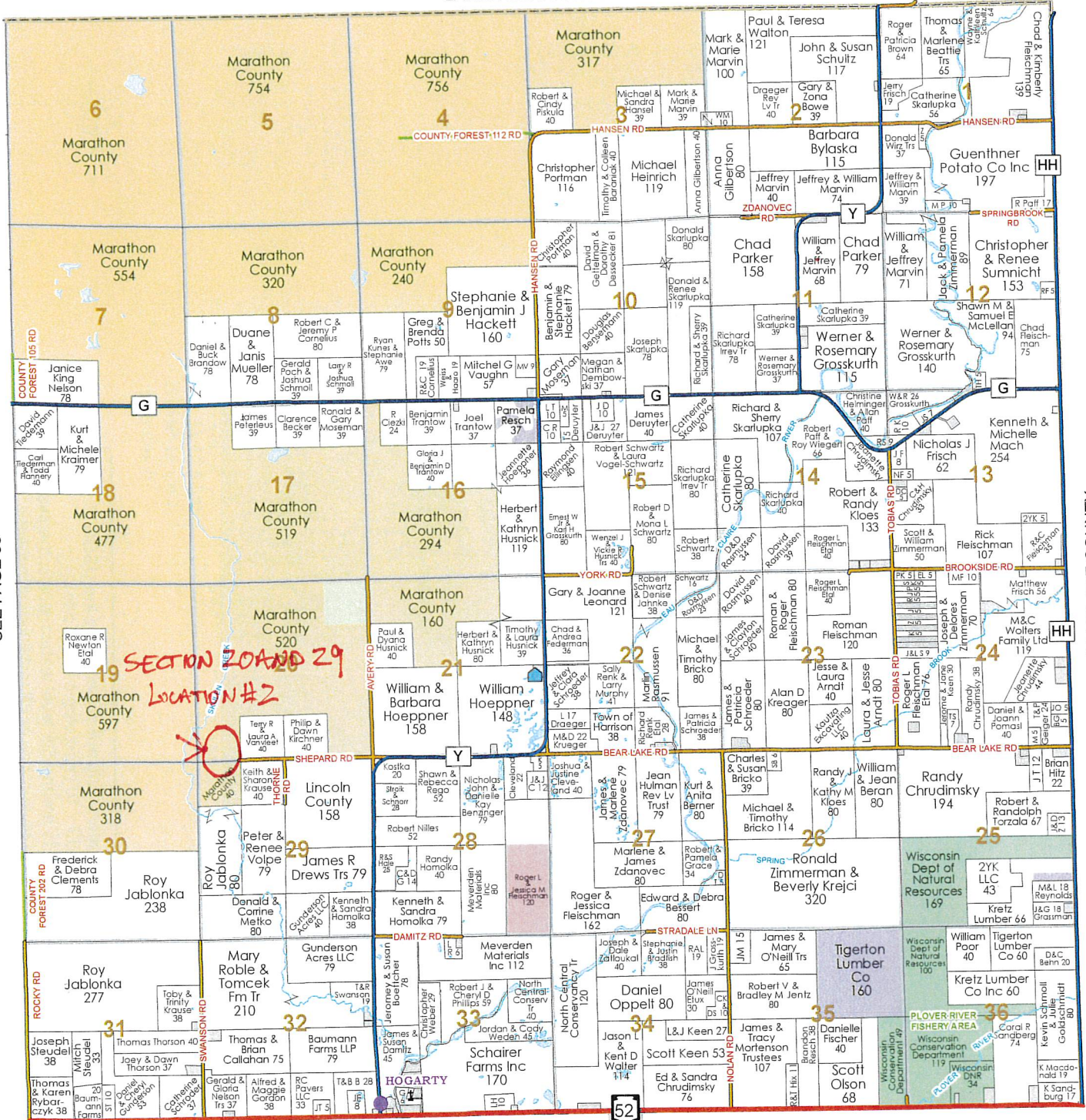




County of Marathon, Wisconsin, State Highway 29, Parcel 10, Section 16, T16N, R10E



LANGLADE COUNTY



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Need Additional Plat Books?

Extension Marathon County Office
212 River Drive, Suite 3 • Wausau, WI 54403
(715) 261-1230

marathon.extension.wisc.edu/4h

Call for additional purchase locations.



UW-MADISON EXTENSION

CLOSE OUT TIMBER SALES

Sale 729-24

TNT TIMBER IMPR

	Estimated	Cut
Red Pine Pulp	2450 Tons	2866.26 Tons Red Pine Pulp
	2450 Tons	2866.26 Total Tons Cut

Total Revenue for Sale: **\$97,596.18**

Balance: (\$2,003.82)

Bond Amount: \$20,855.63

Bond Type: Cash Bond

Recommendation: **Close sale and return cash bond
\$20,855.63 and remaining balance in
their account \$2,003.82.**

Marathon County Forestry Committee

November 5th, 2024 Meeting

- As of 10/29/24, DNR staff will have completed ~264 hours of the 660 time standard hours (~ 40%) covering 1/3 of the time period for '24/'25.
- As of 10/29/24, Sorenson will have completed ~168 hours of the 535 hour personal goal time standard hours (~ 31%) covering 1/3 of the time period for '24/'25.
- Sorenson completed outlining and started marking the ~100 acre timber sale in the Ringle Forest Unit.
- Hunt (along with Jonathan Knusta - Medford forestry technician) continued scarification work on "Old Sled" timber sale red maple shelterwood.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeff Sorenson

Jeff Sorenson

Wisconsin DNR – Marathon County Forest Liaison

DATE: September 24th, 2024

TO: Tom Lovlien - Marathon County Forest (MCF) Administrator, Jordan Truitt - WI DNR Wausau Team Leader, and Doug Brown – WI DNR County Forest & Public Lands Specialist

FROM: Jeff Sorenson – DNR/Marathon *County Forest Liaison*

SUBJECT: (FY 25) Marathon County Forest Annual Partnership Meeting Minutes

Overview:

The annual Wisconsin DNR and Marathon County Forest (MCF) partnership meeting was held on September 24th, 2024 at the WI DNR – Wausau Service Center at 9 am. Tom Lovlien - MCF Administrator, Joe Tucker – MCF Assistant County Forest Administrator, Joe Schwantes – WI DNR Woodruff Area Leader, Jordan Truitt – WI DNR Wausau Team Leader, Brandon Stefanski – WI DNR Wildlife Biologist, John Hunt, WI DNR Forestry Technician – Wausau Service Center and Jeff Sorenson WI DNR/MCF Liaison were in attendance.

Review of Prior Year's Time Standards and Accomplishments (FY 24):

DNR staff provide 688 hours to MCF (660 were needed). The bulk of these hours came from two individuals, Jeff Sorenson – 574 hours (52 - admin., 49 - recon., 26 - regen. and 447 - timber sales, John Hunt – 104 (60 regen, 39 timber sale and 6 recon).

The breakdown of these hours went pretty much as planned with the bulk of Sorenson's hours in timber sales and Hunt's in regeneration with oak shelterwood scarification dozer work.

Review of Current Years' Time Standards (FY 25):

The intent of county hours again is for Sorenson is to use the bulk of his 535 required hours for time standards to assist Tucker with timber sale establishment (starting in the fall as leaf drop occurs) and then whatever MCF determines to be the highest priority as the year evolves. So far, this fiscal, Sorenson has spent the bulk of his time conducting habitat classification typing and stand recon along with some time spent getting a scarification site determined, finalizing the fall timber sale bid letting and some sale administration. Hunt has begun scarification work for the year on a red maple shelterwood site and has 125 hours total committed to Marathon County time standards. Through September 23rd, ~ 145-time standards hours have been completed with Sorenson providing ~115 hours and Hunt ~30 hours. Sorenson and Hunt will begin setting up an approximate 80–100-acre oak/red maple/aspens even-aged timber sale next week in the Ringle Forest Unit.

Timber Sale Goals and Updates:

Lovlien and Tucker gave a brief overview of the MCF for Jordan Truitt to get her up to speed on forest acreages, annual allowable cut (~625 acres) and timber types (2/3 aspens, with the remaining acreage mainly red maple, red oak, northern hardwoods and red pine).

Spring sale bid openings are typically summer chance ground and fall sales typically are winter/frozen ground. Aspen and red maple sales are typically winter ground. DNR staff usually takes the lead on two sales per year and then assists Tucker with marking on all the other sales. Sales are usually limited to 50-100 acres in an attempt to complete sales in a timely manner and limit contract extensions.

Lovlien specifically noted the Nine Mile Forest Unit. This is the “gem” of the MCF system. It is a heavily used recreation area – cross country ski, mountain bike (winter and summer), hiking, snow shoeing, hunting and foraging. Numerous running, biking and skiing race events are held there annually. In

addition, it is an active working forest with annual timber management. The mixture of the multiple use forest makes management sometimes tricky. But, with careful planning and steady communication with the main user groups, it continues to be a valuable asset to outdoor enthusiasts from, not only Marathon County, but across Wisconsin and the Great Lakes.

Currently, there are four active timber sales two in Burma and two in Nine Mile. So far in calendar year 2024, four timber sales have been closed out with \$180,789.07 in revenue to Marathon County after the 20% payment to the State for paying interest free loans and 10% to the Towns. It is anticipated that Marathon County PRF Department will meet the timber sale revenue goal of \$305,000 by year end.

Recon Status & Goals:

Tucker reviewed MCF's system of recon, which, prioritizes a focus on hardwood/oak timber types with aspen recon the lowest priority until it reaches approximately 30 years in age. Aspen at that point can be analyzed for possible early/late harvest in an attempt to break up large aspen age stands for the benefit of both wildlife habitat and to even out the peaks and valleys of aspen harvest years.

So far in '24/'25 759 of a targeted 1,550 acres have been reconed.

Reforestation and Forest Regeneration:

Completed red pine planting on Springbrook Rd site. Excellent survival rate but may need blackberry/bramble and other woody (thistle) control. The current plan is let the stand grow and then treat woody competition next fall after bud set.

334 acres of regeneration checks are needed for the rest of the 2024 calendar year and 694 acres are needed for the 2025 calendar year.

No Rx burns scheduled.

No planting needs in the near future.

Wildlife Program:

Report below is from Brandon Stefanski – WI DNR Wildlife Biologist

2024 Marathon County Partnership Meeting – Wildlife Update

- Nickel-an-Acre Budget
 - \$750 allotted for oak site prep
 - \$750 allotted for trail mowing and maintenance.
 - Ordered \$500 of wild rice and will plant this fall.
 - Still have \$400 budgeted in nickel-an-acre for flowage maintenance
- Flowages
 - Water levels are currently low but were very high most of the spring and summer.
 - Wild rice production is down on most of the flowages this year.
 - This is likely due to the persistent rainfall during the floating leaf stage.
 - Supplemental seeding of rice in struggling flowages of Harrison-Hewitt will take place this fall.
 - USDA Beaver trapping

- Three beavers were trapped in Swamp flowage and three in Steinke flowage.
- Beaver was also removed from Birch in Nine Mile but currently unsure of the number.
- Bern Inspection, Operation and Maintenance Plan (IOM) was completed last September.
- Deer Hunting
 - CDAC
 - The quota/harvest recommendation was set at 6,000 antlerless deer.
 - Marathon County will have 1 free antlerless farmland tag with the purchase of each license.
 - There are 2,500 private and 300 public land bonus tags available for purchase.
 - There will not be a Holiday hunt or extended archery season.
 - Big Eau Pleine County Park
 - The park decided to continue with an open archery season in the park starting November 15 and running through the end of archery season.

In addition, the group discussed that no concrete data on how many deer were harvested on the Eau Pleine but reports show lower deer ag damage tag requests.

Burning the 100-acre Hoffman Farmlands was discussed. Tucker stated that it is probably not going to be possible due to other time commitments related to red maple and oak management scarification projects. Tucker/Stefanski mentioned possibly mowing in late August to help discourage woody competition as patchy warm season grasses cover ~ 40 acres where the ground is more well-drained. Group decided for now to not consider burning but to re-address in the future.

Grants & Loans:

MFC has not applied for SFG for the last couple of years due to limited funds.

Project loan for land purchases has also have not been utilized in the past several years due to the availability of Knowles-Nelson grants and few lands becoming available for purchase.

Interest free loan balance is currently \$747,307.82. Annually, 20% of MCF timber sale revenue is used to pay down loan balance.

NHC/Endangered Resources:

Tucker stated that all issues related to seasonal or timing restrictions for timber sales in regard to NHC/Endangered species are dealt with on a case-by-case basis. Most species are currently found on the Nine Mile Forest Unit.

Forest Health:

Oak wilt at Nine Mile was initially treated back in 2004 using a rapid response treatment. Some breakouts have occurred since but have been very limited. Sites (old and new) are all referenced via GPS and monitored annually.

Red pine pocket decline at Burma was discovered. Pockets are controlled via removing non-affected trees through a buffer. Testing for Heterobasidion root disease was negative at that site but will be

continued to be monitored as Alex Hornung thought symptoms at the site were suspicious. Another small area of pocket decline was found at Nine Mile Forest unit.

No Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) have currently been recorded on MCF but there is a high probability that it is present on the forest as it is all around it on neighboring private lands. Limited ash volume on MCF is currently present due to past aggressive harvesting starting around 2010. The harvesting will limit the negative effects of EAB on MCF, at least in the near future.

Invasive Species:

Buckthorn is present in only in significant numbers on isolated pockets on both Nine Mile and Kronenwetter Forest units. An invasive species SFG grant was utilized in 2021.

The current buckthorn control plan is to treat/control buckthorn only when regeneration harvests are being implemented.

Garlic Mustard is present on the Burma Unit and on Nine Mile units. Populations are being controlled via annual pulling, bagging and removal. All spots are geo-referenced for future monitoring.

Dozer Projects:

Hunt is currently scarifying Old Sled – a red maple shelterwood in the Hewitt/Harrison Forest Unit to control muscledwood and ironwood. So far about 10 acres have been completed.

Another oak site at Burma and possible other oak stands will be scarified next year.

Recreation:

See narrative on Nine Mile Forest Unit earlier in this report.

Forest Certification:

Forest certification continues to be very successful across the state county forest system. No CARS, OFI/OBS were found. MCF will continue to adhere closely to all rules regarding forest certification. The next field audit for MCF is scheduled for 2027.

Open Forum:

Office relocation/remodeling for both DNR and MCF will occur sometime probably this coming spring.

Time frame for remodeling for DNR will be set in early October. DNR staff will be utilizing a mixture of teleworking and using the fire garage for working areas until remodeling is completed.

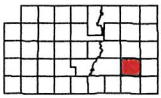
MCF offices will be tentatively moving to the basement of UWSP at Marathon County this spring.

Respectfully submitted,

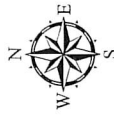
Jeff Sorenson

Jeff Sorenson

WI DNR/MCF Liaison Forester



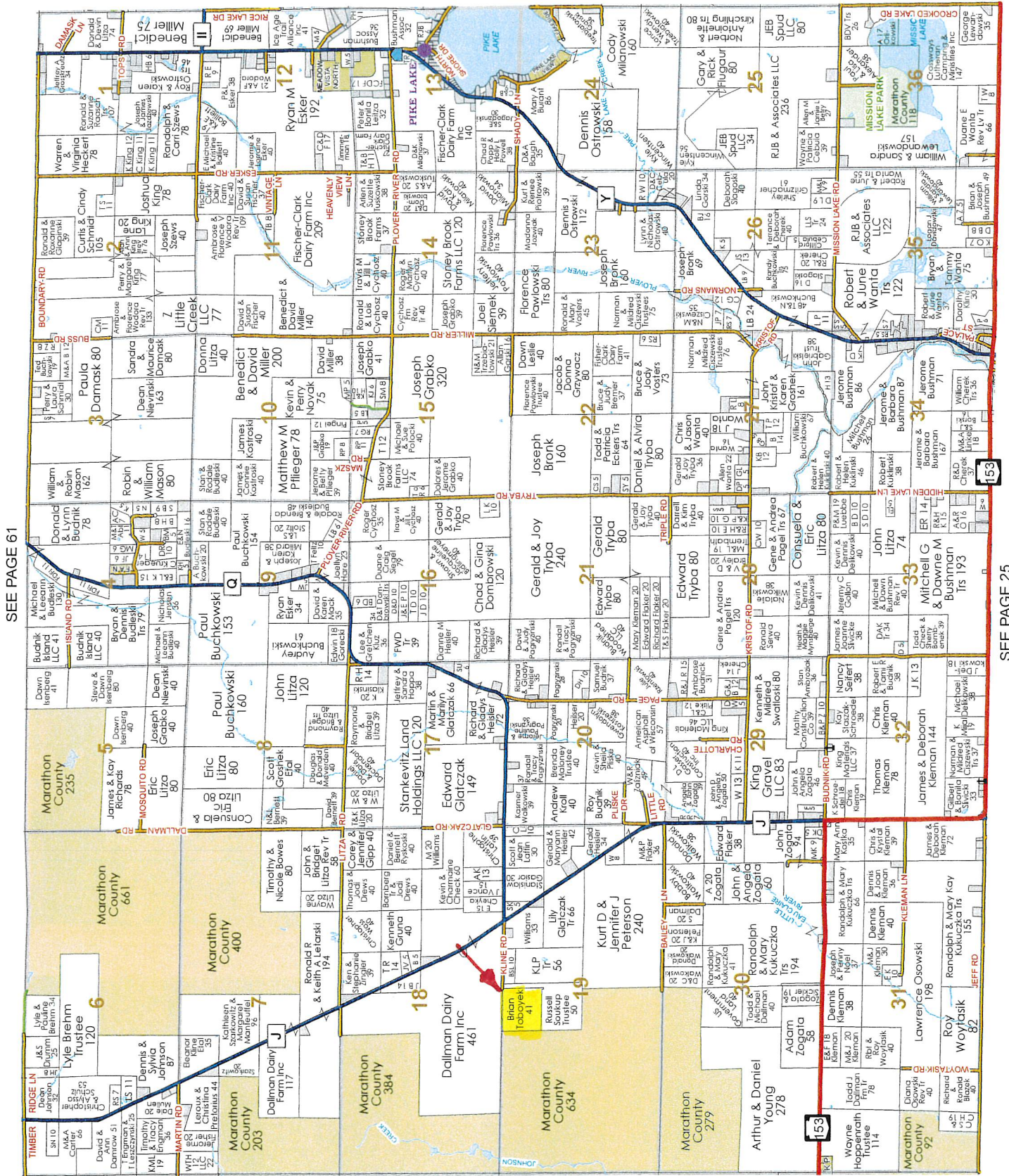
Reid



Township 27N - Range 9E

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