Recreational Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes Tuesday May 7th 2013 (No quorum)

<u>Committee Members Present</u>: Karen Mulari (C), Del Bergseth, Larry Knutson, Steve Lindow, Dennis Hopman, Lonnie Neuner, Ben Grimsley

Staff Present: Martin Wiley, Guy Fischer

Audience/Guest Participation Per Agenda: Willis Mattison, Arvan Matheny

1. Chair Welcome/Introductions:

- March Meeting Minutes/Agenda; (no quorum at May meeting)
- May Agenda; (no quorum at May meeting)
- May Meeting Minutes
- 2. Open Forum: N/A
- 3. Round Lake Wild Forest Recreation Area Presentation [(Preliminary)Presenters Willis Mattison, Arvan Matheny]:
 - Historical Background; process, silent sport interest represented, preliminary concept plan, setting priorities, GIS maps – greater the impact the more restrictions on use, time space separation of conflicting uses, suggested process approval, request for input.
 - Q. Who is your committee? Interested citizens in Round Lake Township, with a core group of 7-8 people at most mtgs. setting priorities.

Buffer discussion: differences noted; activity that affects the margin – site specific decision will need to be made.

Q. Who takes it from here? Preliminary, but hope that concepts will be applied.

Proposal discussion: Who should drive this, very preliminary discussion about process and need for proposals to be brought to the RAC for their consideration for any recreational activity being considered on County managed lands.

Power point presentations were requested by the RAC because there was too much information to understand all at once and not all members were present. Presenters expressed their interest in getting RAC feedback on the presentations.

4. No quorum; meeting adjourned

Round Lake Wild Forest Recreation Area (RLWFRA)

Project update presented to Becker County Recreational Advisory Committee (RAC) May 7, 2013 By Arvan Matheny and Willis Mattison Representing the RLWFRA Ad Hoc Committee

Limits of Acceptable Change (LAC)

- 1: Identify area concerns and issues
- 2: Define and describe opportunity classes
- 3: Select indicators of resource and social conditions
- 4: Inventory resource and social conditions
- 5: Specify standards for resource and social indicators
- 6: Identify alternative opportunity class allocations
- 7: Identify management actions for each alternative
- 8: Evaluate and select an alternative
- 9: Implement actions and monitor conditions

Opportunities

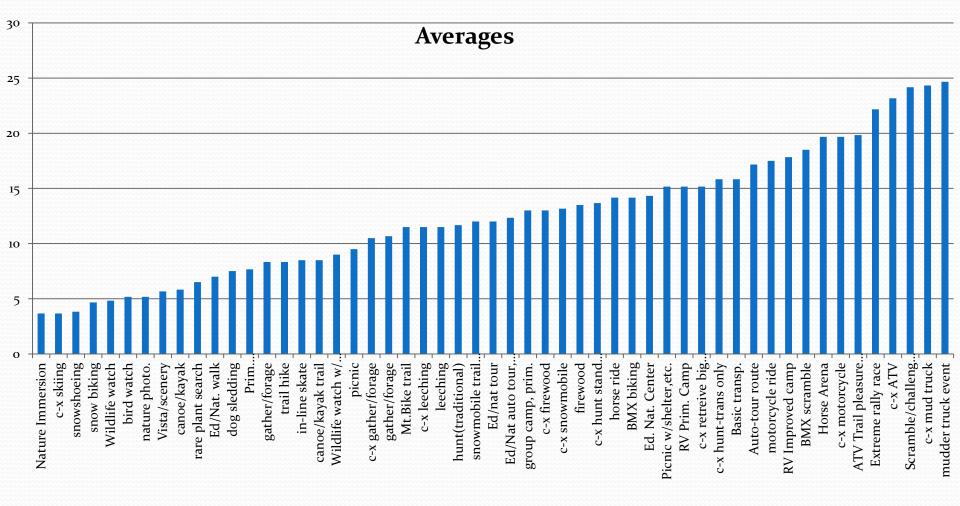
(LAC Step 2)

- 53 recreation activities were ranked against 6 possible conditions by the Ad Hoc Committee.
- The results were broken down into 6 categories or Recreational Activity Impact Levels (RAILS) of similar rankings.
- The Committee then voted on how wetlands and biodiversity (2 of the conditions)would be impacted by each RAIL
- A series of maps displaying opportunity locations were produced using these results

RESOURCE IMPACT COMPOSITE SCORE SHEET COST

RECREATION TYPE	SOILS	WILDLIFE	CONTAMINANTS	VEGETATION	WETLANDS	INVASIVES	Total
1. Nature Immersion							
2. Primitive Backpack/camp							
3. Wildlife watch							
4. Bird watching							
5. Nature Photograph							
52. Ed/nat tour							
53.Scramble/cha llenge area							

Recreational Activities Sorted by Resource Impacts as Scored by RLWFRA Committee Members



Resource Impacts

(LAC Steps 3 and 5)

- 6 Environmental Resource Conditions were examined
 - Wildlife
 - Vegetation
 - Wetlands
 - Contaminants
 - Invasives
 - Soils
- These were scored by each committee member to determine their standard rank

Impact Survey Results

Member	Wildlife	Vegetation	Wetlands	Contaminants	Invasives	Soils
1	1	1	1	4	5	6
2	2	2	1	5	6	4
3	5	1	1	3	3	6
4	5	2	4	6	2	1
5	4	3	6	1	1	5
6	2	5	1	6	3	4
7	1	2	2	5	6	4
Total	20	16	16	30	26	30
RANK	3	1	1	5	4	5

Resource Impact Survey

- Description; a low score is most important, lowest possible is 7:
- Vegetation and Wetlands tied as most important rating at 16
- Wildlife was the next at 20
- Invasives came in next at 26
- Soils and Contaminants were tied last at 30.

GIS Usage

- Vegetation and Wildlife can be mapped as BIODIVERSITY
- Wetlands can be mapped as WETLANDS
- Soils can be mapped as SOILS there can be different settings:
 - Web Soil Survey information for paths and trails, camping, picnicking, and off-road motorcycle with Off-road/Off trail erosion.
- Invasives and contaminants cannot be mapped.

Wetlands

Considering ONLY wetlands and the 8 different types, please fill in all 6 charts below. For the first three columns, put an X in the LOWEST Impact you feel is appropriate. Put "Y/Yes" or "N/No" in the last two columns (It is OK if the ratings repeat other Impact Levels) EXAMPLE:

Type	Slight	Moderate	Severe	100 Ft Buffer?	200 Ft Buffer?
	X			Y	N

Biodiversity

Considering ONLY Biodiversity, please fill in all 6 charts below by putting an "X" in the LOWEST Impact you feel is appropriate.

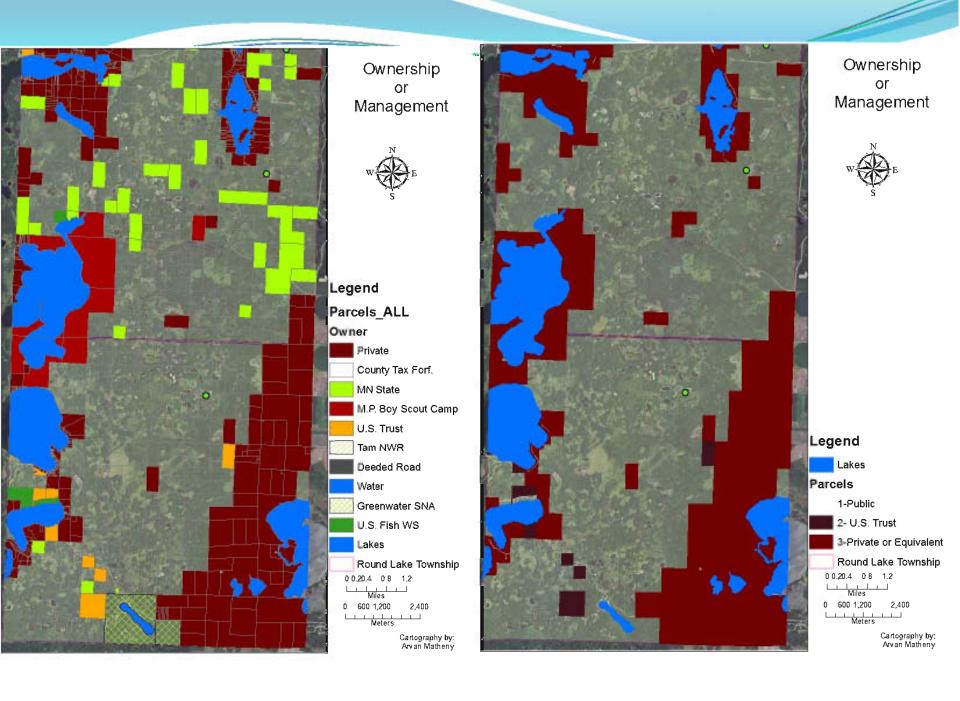
1) Rate your perceived affect of **Recreation Activity Impact Level 1** (lowest impact) on the MCBS sites. This is for the 1st biodiversity map.

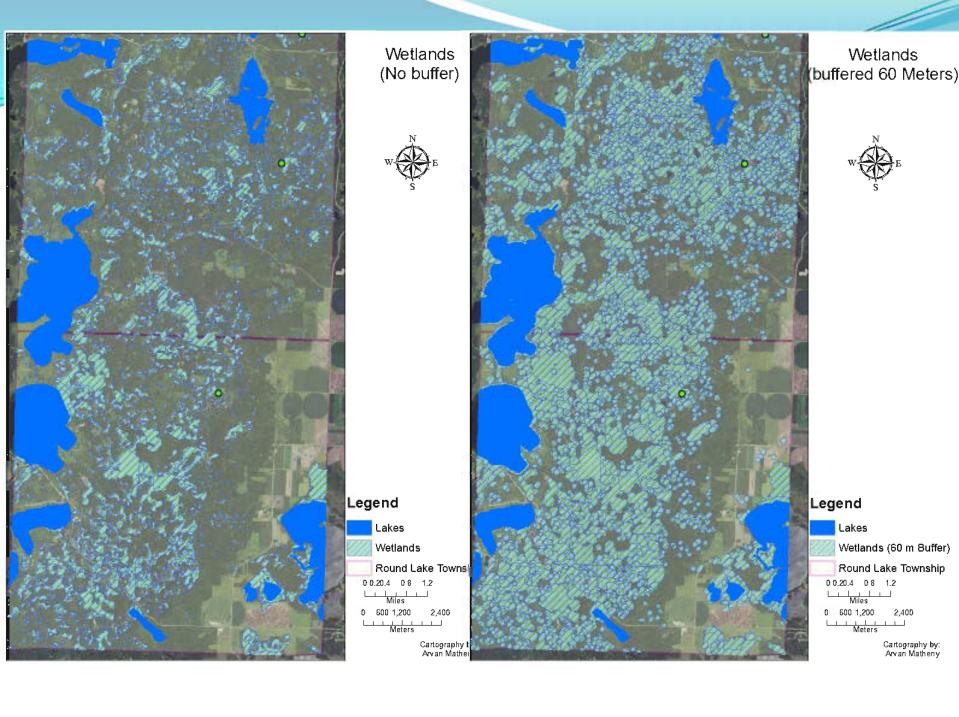
MCBS Sites	Slight	Moderate	Severe
Moderate			
High			

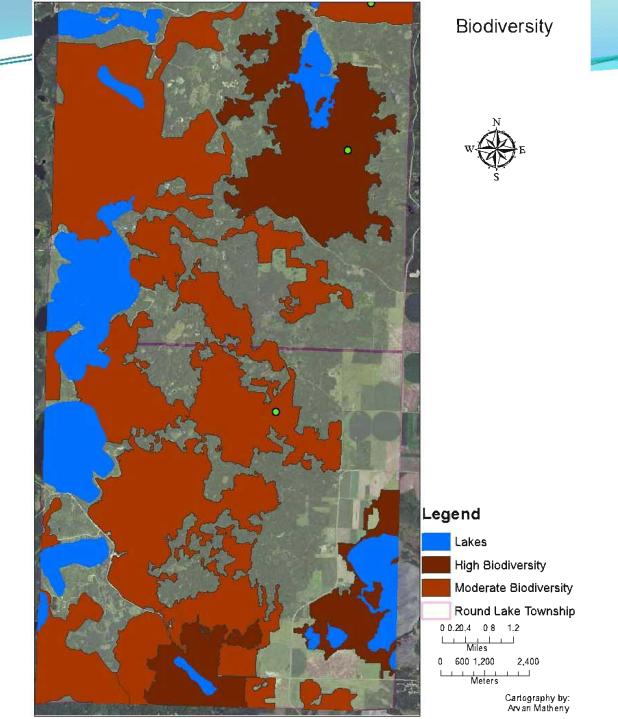
GIS usage applied to LAC and the RLWFRA Project

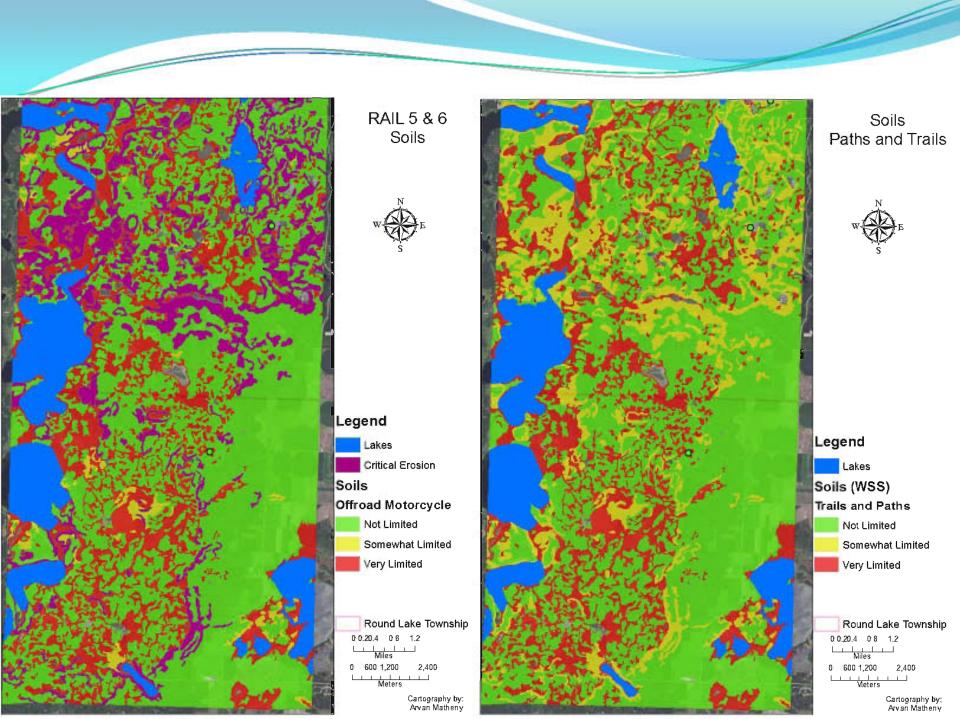
LAC Step 4: Inventory resource and social conditions 4 Main Layers

- Property Ownership/Management
 - Public
 - Becker County Tax Forfeited
 - Minnesota State
 - U.S. Fish and Wildlife
 - Private or Equivalent
 - Private
 - Many Point Boy Scout Camp
 - U.S. Trust
- Wetlands
 - With added Buffer Zones by RAIL Number
- Biodiversity
 - 14 Moderate Significance Sites
 - 3 High Significance Sites
- Soils
 - Vary with RAIL Number









Existing Inventory (LAC Step 4 continued)

National Significance

- White Earth Reservation and U.S. Trust land
- Adventure Cycling Association (ACA) Northern Tier Route
- North Country Scenic Trail
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Managed Property
- Tamarack National Wildlife Refuge
- Many Point Boy Scout Camp Access Road
 - Over 250 troops each summer from all over U.S. and Canada

State Significance

- Greenwater Scientific and Natural Area (SNA)
- State Managed Property
- White Earth State Forest
- GIA Snowmobile Trails
- State Highway 113

Existing Inventory

- County Significance
 - County Roads
 - Becker County Forest Preserves
 - Recreational Leases
- Round Lake Township Significance
 - Township Roads
- Local Significance
 - Land Ownership
 - Forest Roads/Trails



Adventure Cycling Association

America's bicycle travel experts



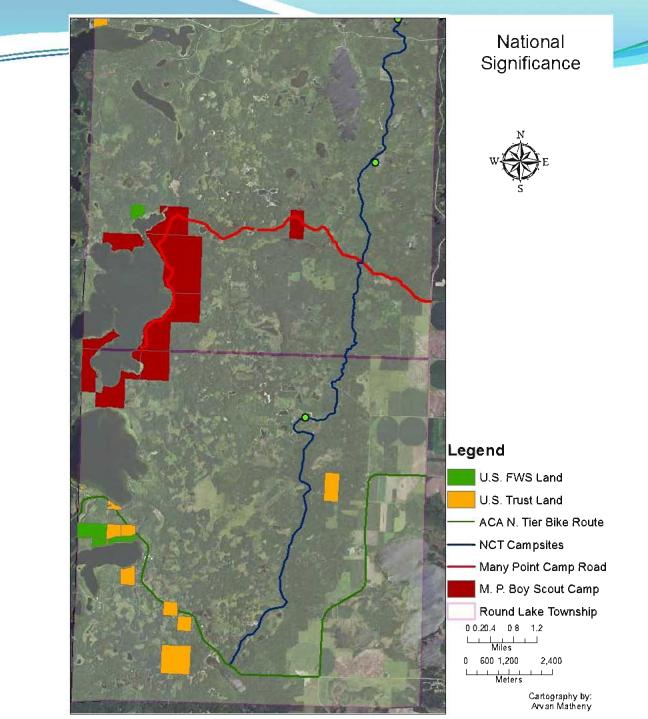
Northern Tier Route
Anacortes, Washington

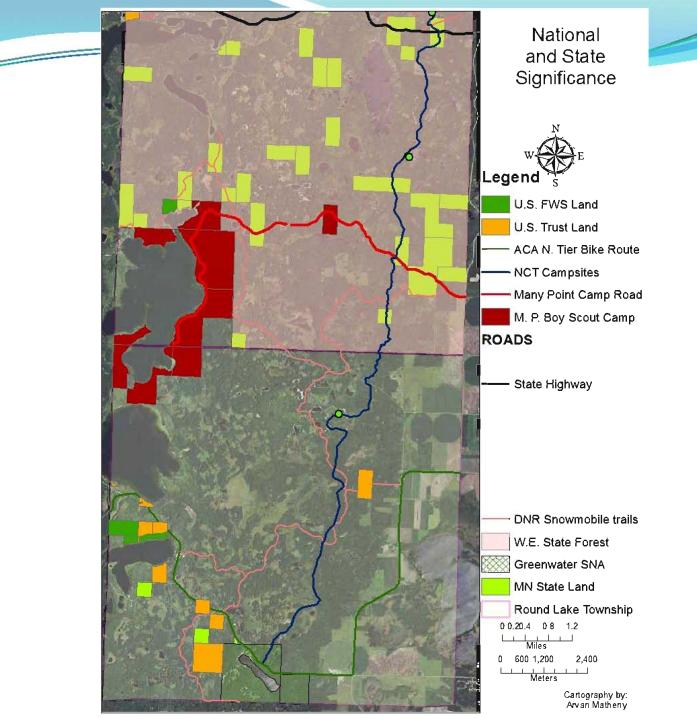
Bar Harbor, Maine

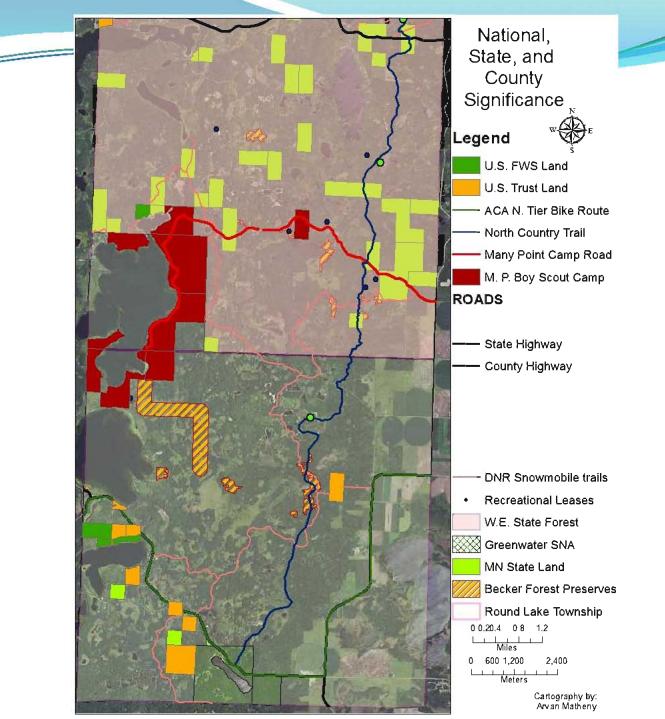
Number of maps of Round Lake Township Section sold:

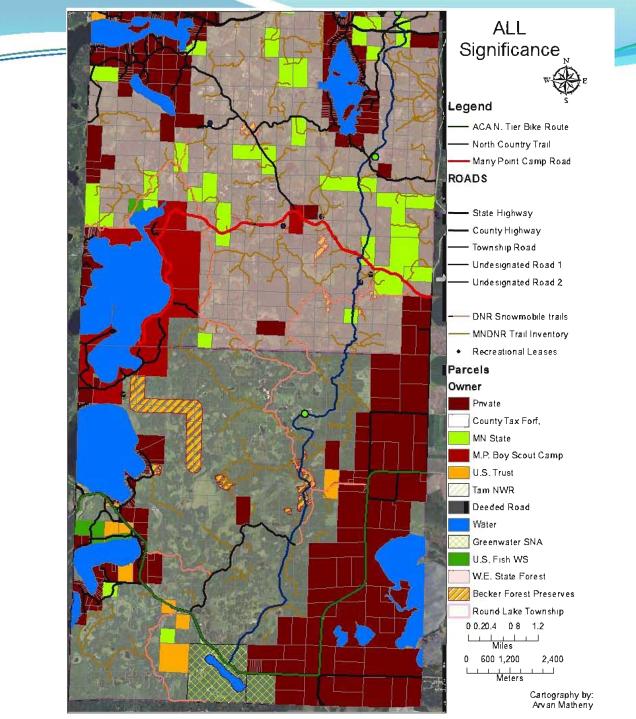
- 2009 268
- 2010 258
- 2011 355











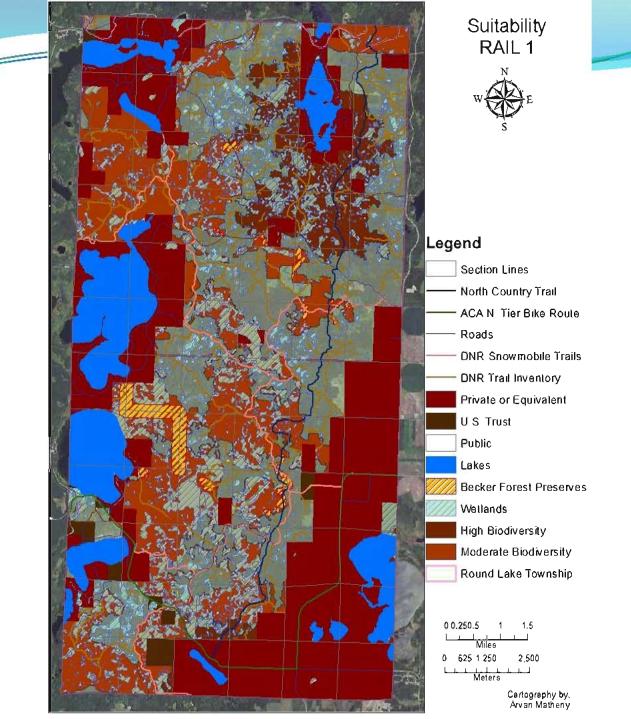
The Breakdown of the Maps

LAC Step 6:

Identify alternative opportunity class allocations

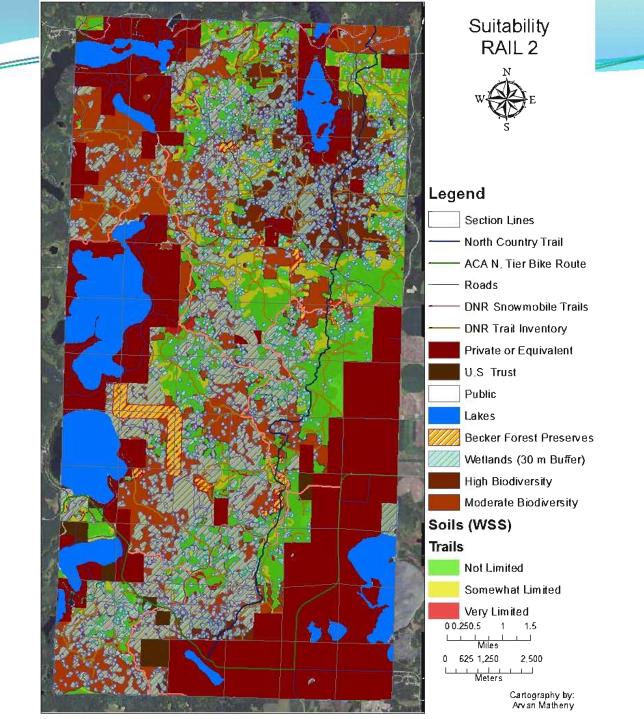
RAIL 1 (All of these are non-motorized, mostly dispersed activities): Nature Immersion, C-X Skiing, Snowshoeing, Snow Biking, Wildlife Watch, Bird Watch, Nature Photography, Vista/Scenery, Canoe/Kayak, Rare Plant Search, and Education/Naturalist Walk.

- Wetlands: Slight to Moderate Impact; no buffer
- Biodiversity:
 - Moderate Significance=Slight Impact
 - High Significance=Moderate Impact
- Soils: N/A
- This is the only group allowed in the Greenwater Scientific and Natural Area (except NCT and a short section of snowmobile trail).



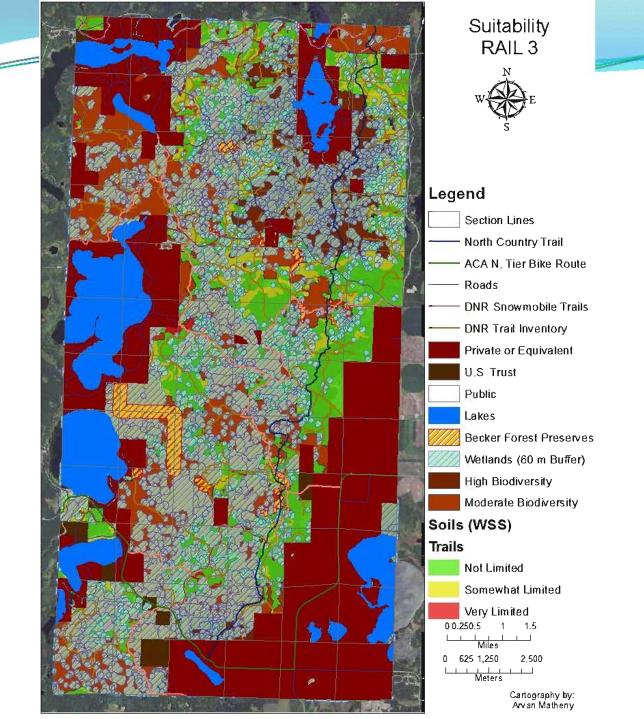
RAIL 2: Dog Sledding, Primitive Backpack/camp, Gather Forage (non-motorized), Trail Hike, In-line Skate, Canoe/Kayak Trail, Wildlife Watch with Blinds, Picnic, C-X Gather Forage (motorized, non-linear), Gather Forage (motorized, linear), and Mountain Bike Trail.

- Wetlands: Moderate Impact; 30 meter (100 foot) buffer
- Biodiversity:
 - Moderate Significance=Moderate Impact
 - High Significance=Moderate Impact
- Soils: Web Soil Survey (WSS) Paths and Trails



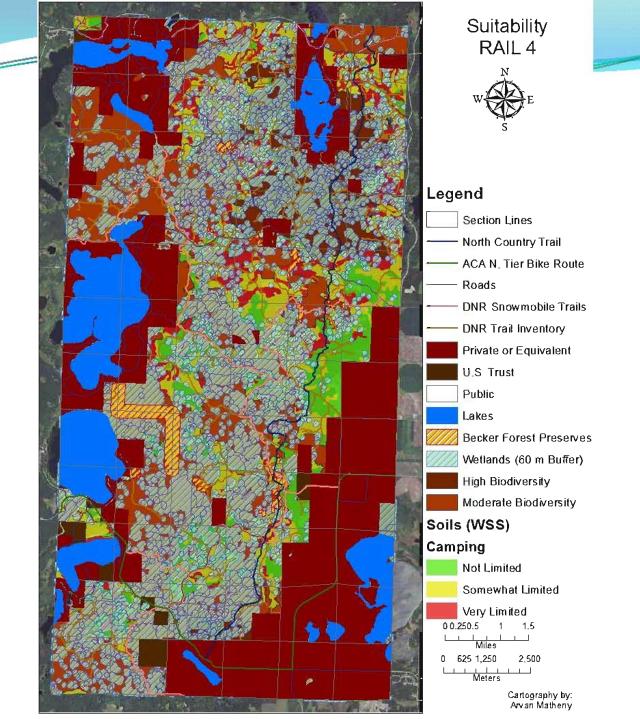
RAIL 3: C-X Leeching, Leeching, Hunt (traditional), Snowmobile Trail Ride, Educational/Naturalist Tour, Educational/Naturalist Automobile Tour (group), Group Camp (primitive), C-X Firewood, C-X Snowmobile, Firewood, C-X Hunt – Stand Construction.

- Wetlands: Moderate Impact; 60 meter (200 foot) buffer
- Biodiversity:
 - Moderate Significance= Moderate Impact
 - High Significance= Severe Impact
- Soils: WSS Paths and Trails



RAIL 4: Horse Ride, BMX Biking, Educational/Naturalist Center, Picnic with Shelter, RV Primitive Camp, C-X Retrieve Big Game, C-X Hunt (transport only), Basic Transportation.

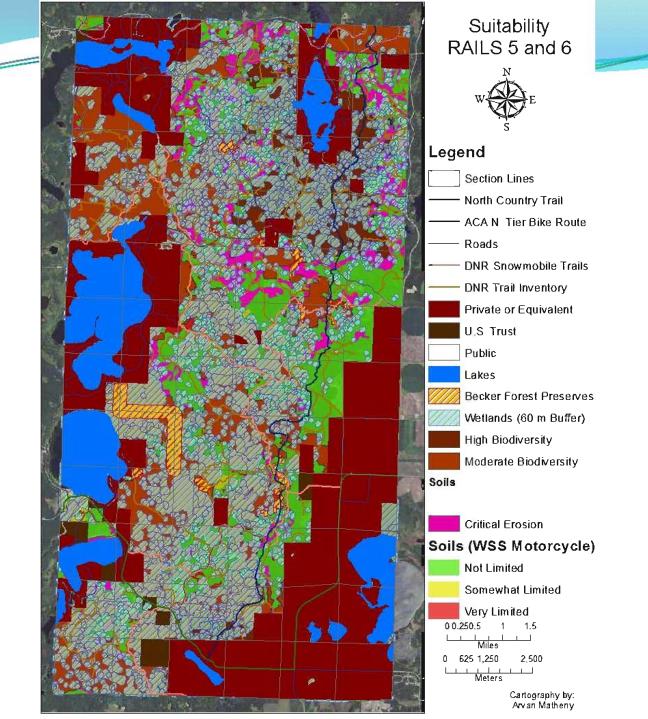
- Wetlands: Severe Impact; 60 meter (200 foot) buffer
- Biodiversity:
 - Moderate Significance= Moderate to Severe Impact
 - High Significance= Severe Impact
- Soils: WSS Camping



RAIL 5: Automobile Tour Route, Motorcycle Ride, RV Improved Camp, BMX Scramble, Horse Arena, C-X Motorcycle, ATV Trail Pleasure Ride.

RAIL 6: Extreme Rally Race, C-X ATV, ATV Scramble/Challenge Area, C-X Mud Truck, Mud Truck Event.

- Wetlands: Severe Impact; 60 meter (200 foot) buffer
- Biodiversity:
 - Moderate Significance=Severe Impact
 - High Significance= Severe Impact
- Soils: WSS Critical Erosion and Off-Road Motorcycle
- Also add Many Point Camp Road as a social concern



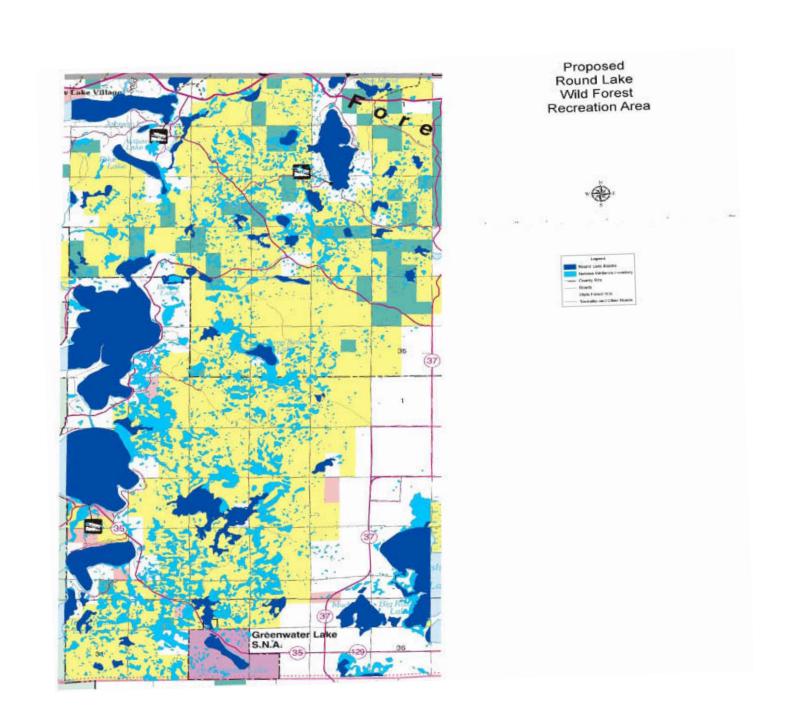
LAC steps 7, 8, and 9 are still to come.

Comments or Questions?

THE ROUND LAKE WILD FOREST RECREATION AREA-An Interim Report to RAC & Request for Input

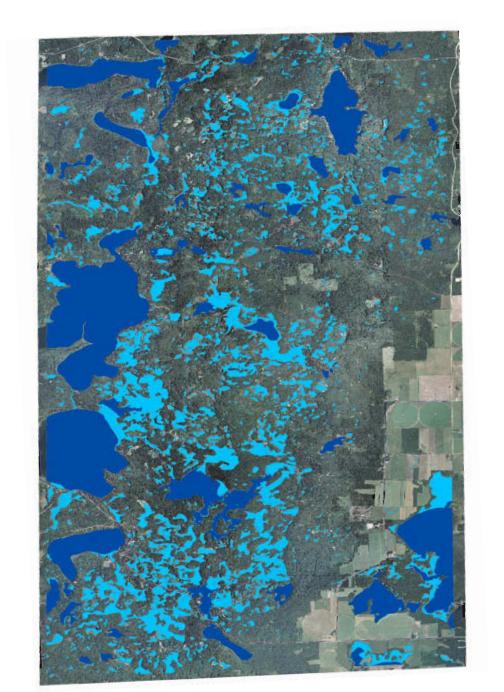
Presentation to the BECKER COUNTY RECREATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE May 7, 2013
Willis Mattison and Arvan Matheny

1	RING CREEK	WHITE EARTH	MAPLE GROVE	EAGLE VIEW	ROUND LAKEN	FOREST	SAVANNAH :
ATLANTA	RICEVILLE	CALLAWAY	SUGAR BUSH W	SÚGAR BUSH E	ROUND LAKE S	PINE POINT	TWO INLETS
CUBA	HAMDEN	RICHWOOD	HOLMESVILLE	HEIGHT OF LAND	N SHELL LAKE	CARSONVILLE 34	OSAGE
LAKE PARK	AUDUBON	DETROIT	ERIE	HEIGHTOFLAND	S TOAD LAKE	WOLFLAKE	GRÆN VALLE
CORMORANT	LAKE EUNICE	LAKE VIEW	BURLINGTON	SILVERLEAF	EVERGREEN	SPRUCE GROVE	RUNEBURG



Background/History

- □Round Lake Township is mostly publically owned land, tax forfeit, State (MDNR) and Tribal Trust;
- ☐ The predominant land cover is wetland of several types, hardwood and coniferous forest;
- □County, State and Tribes used land for timber production;
- ☐ Historical public use was primarily for hunting;



Proposed Round Lake Wild Forest Recreation Area

1:100,000 Topographic Map





General Public Discovers Round Lake Township's Wild Forest area

- ☐Snowmobile trails were developed;
- □ATV Club Proposed 70 mile Trail;
- □North Country National Scenic Trail route Approved
- □But local, long-time residents have known for decades what new-comers are just discovering:

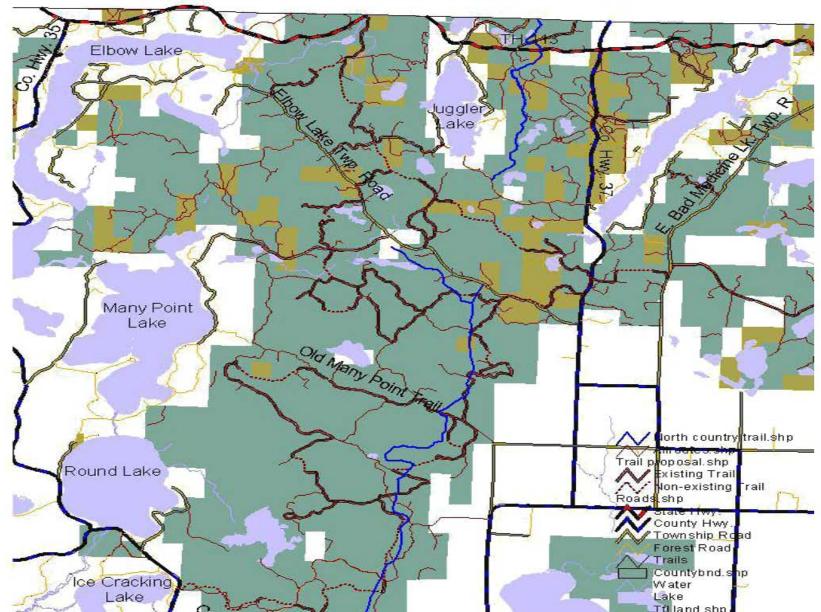
This land is a public treasure!

- Wonderland of semi-wilderness character;
- Amazing biological diversity;
- Spectacular scenic beauty;
- Wildness and seclusion that rivals BWCA;
- Historical and Cultural treasure trove;
- Continental Divide & Source water of two major river basins, the Red and Mississippi Rivers;
- Groves of Sentinel Red and White Pine that survived the logging boom of the 1800's;
- Black spruce and Tamarac bogs with rare orchids.
- Relatively intact ecosystems of significant size
- Some parts relatively inaccessible except on foot when frozen

It is no wonder why those who discovered this treasure more recently wanted to visit it often and take their friends and family there.

In 2005 there was a proposal...

Proposed All-Terrain Vehicle Trail Map Woods-N-Wheels ATV Club



ROUND LAKE WILD FOREST RECREATION PROJECT HISTORY

- County Recreation Plan anticipates recreational group proposals.
- Motorized recreation groups: Snowmobilers and ATVers well organized, even mudder truck advocates have a club, manufacturers and powerful lobbyist (ATVAM) in Minnesota;
- No such organizations, clubs, manufacturers or lobbyists represents ordinary nature lovers, bird watchers, wildlife photographers, kayakers, x-c skiers, snowshoers, campers, backpackers, etc.

How to balance competing recreational interests and protection of the "treasure"?

- The notion of designing a multi-use, nature-based, outdoor recreation project was hatched by loose knit group of citizen volunteers.
- Named: Round Lake Wild Forest Recreation Area Project or RLWFRA

RLWFRA GOAL

 "Provide for reasonable access for broadest range of recreational uses of largest contiguous parcel of County Managed Land while proactively protecting the quality of the natural resource and minimizing social conflict"

One Common Assumption

- Any and all forms of recreational use will eventually degrade the resource to some degree.
- The Question then becomes: "How much degradation can be justified?"

Public and Technical Advisory Meetings Fall 2010

- Generally presented the concept of a planned, nature based recreation area where all types of recreation would be given fair consideration;
- 2010 Ad Hoc Citizen Committee established under auspices of the Round Lake Township Board
- Developed plan for Township board approval before being submitted to RAC and County Board for approval/implementation.

RLWFRA AD HOC COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Jerry Wettels, Township Chairman Kay Grignon Cathie Ferguson Ruth Bergquist Wes Hall (Replaced Ed Gunderson) Rayna Tucker (Replaced Silvia Clukey) Sue Scott Willis Mattison, facilitator Arvan Matheny, Technical Consultant/Thesis

LIMITS OF ACCEPTABLE CHANGE (LAC) as adapted from U.S. Forest Service

The LAC has been developed in response to the need of managers for a means of coping with increasing demands on recreational areas in a visible, logical fashion.

LIMITS OF ACCEPTABLE CHANGE (LAC) as adapted from U.S. Forest Service

 The LAC represents a reformulation of the recreational carrying capacity concept, with the primary emphasis now on the <u>conditions desired in the area</u> <u>rather than on how much use an area can</u> <u>tolerate.</u>

In summary, LAC involves the following purposes, processes, and products:

- PURPOSE
- To identify features or values of particular concern to be maintained or achieved
- To identify specific locations of concern
- To provide a basis for the establishment of management objectives
- To guide the proportionate allocation of land to different recreational uses (opportunity classes) (RAILS in this case)

PROCESS

- Identify issues raised during public involvement
- Identify concerns raised by resource managers, planners, and policymakers
- Review applicable agency policy
- Analyze regional supply and demand
- Analyze opportunities in the area from a regional and national perspective

Citizens Ranking of factors in order of importance in planning RLWFRA facility:

- 1. Social Impacts Acceptability/Conflicts (23 votes)
- 2. Natural Resource Impacts (22 votes)
- 3. "Favorable" Economic impact on Tourism/Business (18 votes)
- 4. Base on Popularity of recreation activity type (8 votes)
- 5. What does most good for most people in Township (6 votes)
- 6. What does most good for most people statewide (5 votes)
- 7. Financial Risks (3 Votes)

The following items received no votes indicating that the assembled group thought these factors should not be give consideration in planning a recreation facility

- 1. Special Interest Groups;
- 2. Political Influence;
- 3. Public Health
- 4. Any other considerations

How to Manage all the Information

- Geographic Information System Computerized (digital) mapping that can overlay different information revealing opportunities or problems
- Arvan Matheny BSU Graduate Student

Arvan Matheny made his Power Point presentation here.

SETTING PRIORITIES

- What to do if you can't do everything!
- Which factors are most important?
- Which factors are least important?
- Are there "show stoppers" involved?

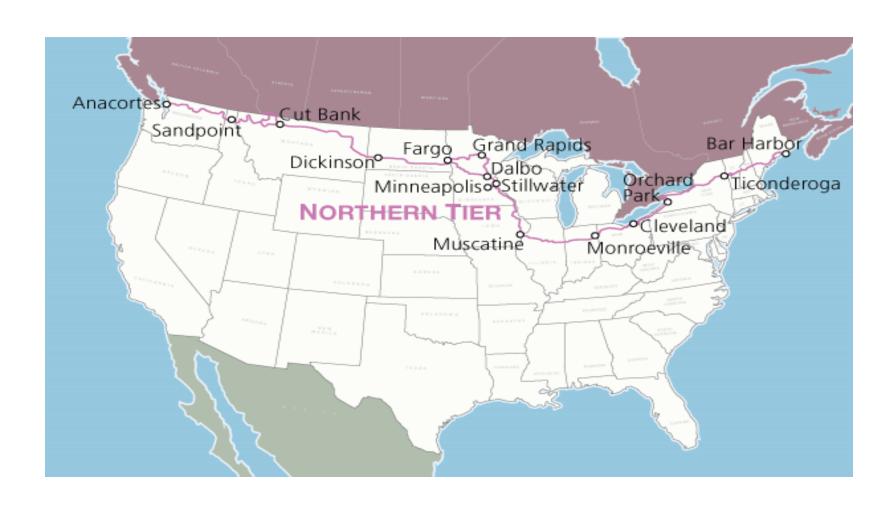
Preliminary Show Stoppers?

- Not a good site for Mudder Truck rallies?
- Not a good place for ATV Challenge Course?
- Not a good place for "Rally Racing"?
- Not a good place for a dirt bike track?
- RAC agree or disagree?
- RAC Show-stoppers?

Geographic Significance?

- Should features of nation-wide significance have preference over state, regional or local options?
- Should features of state-wide significance have preference over regional or local options?
- Likewise with regional over local?

Adventure Cycling Association Northern Teir Route





North Country National Scenic Hiking Trail



Does the hydrologic or ecological setting matter?

- How should the project design reflect the project's location at the very top of two major watersheds, straddling the continental divide?
- How should the project reflect its location bridging three major biomes: Prairie, Central Hardwoods and Conifers?

International Considerations

- How can the project accommodate the fact that it spans across internal, yet international government boundaries?
- How do we respond to criticism that project isn't possible because neither the state nor the county can obligate recreational or utilitarian uses by Tribal members?

Motorized vs. Nonmotorized

- National studies recommend separating conflicting recreational uses either in time or in space?
- Time: Schedule conflicting uses at different times of the day, month or the year?
- Space: Designate different areas sufficiently separated for conflicting uses?
- Require conflicting groups to simply deal with one another in the same area?

Should uses that favor existing resorts economically be given preference?

- What if only one resort or tourist business in benefited by the project? Would that be unfair?
- Or, should the project seek to benefit most if not all resort/tourist business in project area?
- Should entrepreneur be able to capitalize on the project?

Scarcity or abundance?

Should recreation types that have fewer or more distant opportunities (sites) have preference over types that have greater opportunity or alternatives at sites nearby?

Quality of Recreational Experience?

Should the project strive to provide higher quality experiences even if it could mean reduction in quantity?

What are the proper proportions?

- If area available is limited, how should the space be allocated between recreational types that are incompatible?
- Should limited space be allocated proportionate to share (percentage) of total population engaging or preferring each recreation type?
- Must all recreation types be allotted some portion of the project area?

As a society, should a particualar type or category of nature-base recreation be given preference?

- Should recreation that requires more physical exertion be give preference to help fight the nation's epidemic of obesity?
- Should structured educational activities be given preference?
- Should senior citizens be given preference?
- Should youth be shown some kind of favor?
- Should physically handicapped persons be provided special amenities?

Development, Ownership and Management

- Is this concept worth considering as a county venture in some fashion?
- Would this be better suited to private enterprise under some sort of lease or memo of understanding contract with a private/corporate entity?
- Could the project be a hybrid of the two above or some other configuration?

State-wide Park and Trail Deficient Designation

Becker County was located in a part of the state known to have a rapidly growing population but lacking regional park and trail opportunities*

*2011 Minnesota Parks and Trails Legacy Plan

Can RAC members offer other factors that should be considered?

- Are there "red flags" in anything you have heard or read today?
- What about funding sources?

What's Next

- Modify Plan based on RAC Input
- Complete Draft Concept Plan
- Schedule Public meeting in Township
- Modify Concept Plan based on public input
- Develop detailed final plan and identify funding sources
- Indentify Entity with Authority to apply for funding, implement plan and manage project
- Present final plan at public meeting in Township
- Secure Township approval to move forward with plan
- Submit final plan to RAC and County for Approval