



DOOR CREEK WILDLIFE AREA UPDATE - September, 2008

During the recent update to the Dane County Park and Open Space Plan, there was significant support and requests for additional hunting opportunities on County owned lands. In addition, the State is now requiring that many of the lands that are purchased with State Stewardship dollars provide for some type of public hunting.

In response, the Dane County Park Commission has been designating certain lands under their jurisdiction as Wildlife Areas. Lands designated as Wildlife Areas are open to hunting, trapping and fishing similar to State Wildlife Areas, however, the Commission may adopt some additional or revised rules based on the location and characteristics of a property being considered for this use.

The Door Creek Wildlife Area is located across the northern township boundaries of Dunn and Pleasant Springs. The County currently owns about 450 acres of land in this area, of which about 300 will be designated as Wildlife Area. Most of these lands are wetlands along Door Creek and are adjacent to existing DNR owned property that allows for public hunting.

On August 14th, 2008, Dane County Parks hosted an informational session at the McFarland Public Library to answer questions and listen to landowner concerns regarding the Wildlife Area designation. Three primary issues were heard throughout the meeting:

- Concern regarding use of rifles adjacent to residential areas.
- Concern regarding provision of adequate non hunting buffers adjacent to residential areas.
- Concern regarding an adequate amount of boundary signing along private property boundaries.

Much of the Door Creek Wildlife Area lands lie between State owned public hunting areas and private residential properties. Therefore, parks staff is recommending that hunting in this area be limited to shotgun, muzzleloader and bow. In addition, provision of a minimum 100 yard no hunting buffer from residential property lines. Cropping would be maintained in agricultural fields directly adjacent to residential areas to provide additional buffering. Also, Dane County would provide property boundary stakes at intervals that are within sight of one another where possible, and cost-share on fencing in some areas if necessary. Information Boards will be placed at public access points and include rules and an aerial photo of Wildlife Area.

The Dane County Park Commission will be reviewing and making final recommendations on these proposed measures at an upcoming meeting this fall. Lands within the Door Creek Wildlife Area may be open to public hunting yet this year, however, it most likely wouldn't be until 2009. For additional information, contact:

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