



DANE COUNTY

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Falk announces first Land & Water Legacy purchase

Marks 10th anniversary with map release, 'Dane in a Day' series

The first land buy tapping the new fund dedicated to water quality, a four-color map of Dane County's recreational goldmine and a Lake Wingra paddle kicking off a monthly outings series capped today's celebration of Dane County Kathleen Falk's 10-year anniversary in office.

"When I was elected, I promised to save our land and water and make sure people have opportunities to improve their lives and their kids' lives," Falk told a crowd gathered at Vilas Park for the anniversary event. "Today, we celebrate great human services, improved public safety, and healthier lands and waters.

"Now, let's do some more!" Falk said after arriving at Vilas Park by canoe with about a dozen friends.

FIRST LAND PURCHASE UNDER NEW LAND & WATER LEGACY FUND

And the 'more' is the first land purchase under the new Land and Water Legacy Fund. It is a \$1.95 million purchase of 80-acres of former wetlands near Waunakee and will help improve Lake Mendota – the county's largest lake. "Dane County citizens love their waters," Falk said. "This purchase will undo the damage from the past and improve this wetland – all in the name of a better future."

“Drained wetlands are a big reason our lakes face problems. Wetlands clean water, they limit floods, they provide fish spawning habitat. When experts studied the best way to improve Lake Mendota, restoring drained wetlands was identified as one of the best things we can do. This 80 acres was listed as one of the most important to restore. It’s great we can now accomplish this.”

The county will use the Land & Water Legacy Fund, created in the 2007 budget to protect water resources, and the Conservation Fund for the purchase. The county then would apply for funding from the state’s Department of Natural Resources Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program.

Dane County will work cooperatively with partners including the Village of Waunakee and the Natural Heritage Land Trust regarding the restoration of the property and future recreational use.

Falk said the County expects to restore approximately 30 acres of wetland with the remaining 50 acres restored to wet and dry prairie. The purchase is pending before the Dane County Board of Supervisors.

NEW MAP SHOWCASES ALL LANDS, TRAILS FOR PUBLIC USE

Also as part of the morning anniversary event, Falk unveiled the Dane County map of recreational opportunities and natural resources treasures.

“This is a first,” Falk said of the free map. “As far as we know, this is the first map showing all the federal, state and county lands, parks and trails open for public use.”

Falk said on the flip side of the map are details about biking, hiking, fishing, dog parks, hunting and more.

“This is a one-stop look for fun. Every Saturday morning, a family can sit down with this map, pick an activity on one side and look to the other side to find out where and how to get there,” Falk said. “And did I say it’s free? It’s free.”

The map was developed by the Dane County Land & Water Resources Department, Parks Division. Copies will be available next week at the Lyman Anderson Agriculture and Conservation Center, the Lussier Heritage Center, the City-County Building and the Greater Madison Convention & Visitors Bureau. Also, the map will be posted on the park’s Web site, www.countyofdane.com/lwrd/parks/.

'DANE IN A DAY' OUTING SERIES UNDER WAY

"This gorgeous four-color map is loaded with information about everything from disc golf, aeromodeling, biking to hunting and boating," Falk said of the map that includes a highly detailed guide to water- and land-based trails. "You may have noticed I came here by canoe today.

"This canoe ride today was the first of a series I'm calling Dane in a Day," Falk said. "Each month, I'll explore one of the county's many fun spots doing all sorts of things including disc golf, fishing and biking. Stay tuned, pack a lunch and come along!"

Falk was first elected in April 1997 as the first woman to serve as Dane County Executive. Ten years later, she is the longest-service Dane County executive and the only one to be elected to three consecutive terms.

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