



TOWN OF LINN

A Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan For the Town of Linn, Wisconsin Walworth County



Draft
September 2008

Prepared by
Tallgrass Restoration, LLC



TOWN OF LINN

Town of Linn Board Supervisors

David Bollweg, Chairman
Greg Holden
Jeanne Allis
Mike Palmer
James Weiss

Town of Linn Public Park Committee Members

Mike Palmer, Co-chair
Doris Roan
Craig Luebke
Chris Jones

Jeanne Allis, Co-Chair
Bonnie Cornue
Sue Larkin

CORP Sub-Committee Members

Craig Luebke
Doris Roan
Sue Larkin
Linda Yunker



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Acknowledgments

With the gift of the Town of Linn Nature Park, the Township maintains and provides for improvements in the park's amenities and prairies. With its unique location, it is a park of rare ecological quality and importance in the state of Wisconsin. It was the CORP subcommittee's charge to draft the Town of Linn's Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP) in order to qualify for the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship 2000 grant funds. These funds are available each spring for improvements and land acquisition for local parks with Linn's main focus being to enhance the 160-acre Nature Park and provide opportunities for additional park acreage to the Town of Linn.

The park committee of the Town of Linn would like to recognize the following people and agencies for their assistance in creating the Town of Linn's Comprehensive Outdoor Plan (CORP):

A special thank you goes to Craig Luebke, Sue Larkin, and Doris Roan as we worked through the process and data collection to draft the plan for the park committee's review and input. This beginning process was invaluable in creating a working document that the full park committee could then review and build on.

The Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWPRC) was wonderful to work with in obtaining the maps that were needed to make decisions on future open space and park needs and ecological data that have been incorporated into this plan. They provided Linn with maps of the Township and the data we needed electronically to create the CORP document.

Tom Blotz and Gene Park with the WDNR provided guidance and a preliminary review of the plan to ensure that all documentation and required information to have the plan approved by the WDNR.

The Town of Linn's staff, Sue Polyock and Jeff Mishie, was great at responding quickly and appropriately to any and all requests. The Geneva Lake Conservancy provided insight on future open space and conservation needs in the Geneva Lake watershed. They have suggested that a partnership with the Town of Linn be created on a program to educate residents on conservation easements and protecting natural resources.



Past Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plans For the Town of Linn

In October 1991, the Town of Linn created its first local CORP. This current version is based on the format and layout of that plan. It draws from its initial goals to seek out what is still viable and what has been completed. With the donation of the Nature Park to the Town of Linn, an update to this plan was submitted to the WDNR, which allowed Linn to extend the deadline to June 2004. These plans were an invaluable resource to streamline the process of creating and updating the goals and objectives in the new CORP and served as a guide for discussions on existing and future park needs.

The procedures and documentation of creating the draft process started in the fall of 2007 when Town of Linn contracted with Tallgrass Restoration, LLC to begin clearing invasive species at the Nature Park. During this time, Tallgrass Restoration's grant assistance coordinator met with the park committee to discuss the possibility of obtaining grant funds for future restoration activities needed at the Nature Park. While researching the opportunities for grant funding, one item that was missing was that the Town of Linn's CORP had expired with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) in 2004.

With the help of Tallgrass Restoration, a sub-committee began the process of creating a working document in March of 2008. The first time the sub-committee met, was April 10, 2008 to review of the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) and a review of the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission's (SEWRPC) *Parks and Open Space Plan for Walworth County*. The subcommittee was then given the SEWRPC's *Principles and Standards for Creating a Local CORP* to review.

While developing the Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP) for the Town of Linn, several local, regional, and state plans were reviewed and used as primary resources. The four main plans: *The Year 2025 Town of Linn Comprehensive Plan*, the *Park and Open Space Plan for Walworth County*, the *State-wide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)* and *Town of Linn's Nature Park 10-Year Management Plan*, allowed for the alignment of the Town of Linn's CORP to complement and further mutual goals and process objectives found in all four plans.

The current land use plans were summarized by putting the pieces together in order to align the goals statewide and regionally. The sub-committee then reviewed the first draft to begin to create the local CORP.

Once the rough draft had been created, a meeting on May 15, 2008 had the sub-committee combing over the draft document to fill in the missing information that was still needed to be researched. The next draft then went to the Park Committee as a whole to be reviewed on June 3, 2008 to provide direction, guidance, changes, and additional requests for the plan.



From that meeting, the CORP was updated and the action plan was drafted. Using a spotlight exercise, the Park Committee determined the CORP's priorities. The spotlight exercise allows the committee to numerically rank the projects in order to determine clear priorities of the committee. Eight sets of the exercise were sent out with all eight being returned. The information was compiled and the action plan was drafted using the ranking system as a guideline. The action plan is setup to determine timeline and cost estimates for each project.

Citizen Participation

Citizen participation and input for the CORP consisted of past surveys from the *Year 2025 Comprehensive Plan*, a current survey for the Nature Park, and the park committee themselves as residents and board members. The park committee consists of two Town board members (Mike Palmer and Jeanne Allis) and five volunteers. In addition, the park committee meetings are well attended with guests on a regular basis.

The survey for the Nature Park results verifies the importance and priority the Nature Park has with the residents. The Nature Park is used for walking, exercising, bird watching, dog walking, cross country skiing, horseback riding, and picnicking. The residents would like to see the Park require leashes for dogs, better signage, bridges, improved trails, and an establish a volunteer group.

The draft CORP was then adopted by the Park Committee and put on the Town of Linn's website for a comment period of 30 days. In addition, copies of the CORP could be picked up at the Town of Linn Village Hall in Zenda for those residents without internet access. The comments from the residents focused on . . . (to be added).

The creation of the local CORP will enhance Linn's opportunities for funding for the Nature Park's stewardship and enhancements as well as for land acquisition needs for future parks in Linn. The Town of Linn is a small rural area in a popular summer vacation designation. To keep its tax base low for the year round residents and to improve their access to outdoor recreation; the funds budgeted for the capital improvements will be matched by grant opportunities to address the Town's open space and outdoor recreational needs for present and future residents.



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Town of Linn's Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

Introduction

Wisconsin's *Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan* (SCORP) divides the state of Wisconsin into eight planning regions that serve as a guide to allocate and prioritize limited state recreation funds. These funds support the acquisition of recreation and conservation lands, improvements to local parks, and the development of outdoor recreation opportunities (Appendix A Maps, Wisconsin SCORP Planning Regions).

The Wisconsin Knowles Nelson Stewardship Program 2000 was established in 1989 to:

1. Preserve Wisconsin's most significant land and water resources for future generations.
2. Provide the land base and recreational facilities needed for quality outdoor experiences.

One purpose of creating this Outdoor Recreation Plan is to guide the care and development of the existing parks located in Linn as well as planning for future parks and recreational needs. Tapping into the Stewardship Program 2000 funds will help to offset the high costs of land acquisition and restoration of natural areas within the Geneva Lake watershed.

Statewide Designations

Walworth County is located in the Lower Lake Michigan Coastal Planning Region and has been classified as a *Nature-based, Water-based Resource Type and Setting* by Wisconsin's SCORP. The region covers the southeast part of the state, which encompasses Kenosha, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Racine, Sheboygan, Walworth, Washington, and Waukesha Counties. The Lower Lake Michigan Coastal Region is *the* most urban and populated region in Wisconsin.

The SCORP also characterizes Walworth County as a Non-Metro County meaning it is a county with high levels of tourism, recreation, entertainment, and seasonal housing. Non-Metro Counties are generally vacation destinations and are important to the economy of Wisconsin. Walworth County is the only county with this designation in southern Wisconsin (Appendix A Maps, Non-Metro Recreation Counties).

Another important state-wide designation in the SCORP is *Land Legacy Areas*. The Town of Linn is located in the *Kettle Moraine State Forest Land Legacy Area*. This designation ranks second out of fifteen land legacy areas in priority for preservation, restoration, and funding opportunities.

The National Survey on Recreation and Environment (NSRE 2004) and the Outdoor Industry Foundation's (OIF) studies show that recreation participation rates were higher in Wisconsin than other regions of the country since Wisconsin hosts four seasons that provide a diversity of outdoor recreation year-round.

Health and the Environment

Physical activity is important to the overall health and well being of our society. Yet there are many barriers to physical activity in today's society. Personal and social barriers such as school, work, family, and friends can significantly influence physical activity. The relative accessibility and locations of parks, trails, sidewalks, and recreational centers, as well as the design of streets, density of housing, and the availability of public transit all act to promote or discourage an individual or family's level of physical activity.

According to Richard Louv, in his award winning book, Last Child in the Woods, "The childhood link between outdoor activity and physical health is clear. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) reported that the number of overweight adult Americans increased over 60% between 1991 and 2000. According to the CDC, the U.S. population of overweight children between the ages of two and five increased by 36% from 1989 to 1999."

"And, it is not just physical health that is affected in people's lives. A 2003 survey published in the journal *Psychiatric Services* found that the rate of which American children are prescribed antidepressants almost doubled in five years; the steepest increase (66%) was among preschool children. Although countless children who suffer from mental illness and attention disorders do benefit from medication, the use of nature as an alternative, additional, or preventative therapy is being overlooked."

In Wisconsin, the data from the CDC indicates that 61% of all Wisconsin adults are overweight or obese while 24% of Wisconsin's high school students are overweight or at risk of becoming so. Physical activity is one of the most important factors in controlling obesity, yet as many as 60% of adults and 30% of children in Wisconsin do not get enough exercise.

Accessibility Recreation Considerations

According to the SCORP, Wisconsin has 790,917 mobility disabled people (14% of the state). Among residents 65 and older, 36.5% are classified as disabled. As Wisconsin's large baby boomer population continues to age, the demand for disabled recreation facilities is also expected to increase. Therefore, this has become an important issue when planning, developing, or retrofitting recreational facilities. Of the 15 recreation uses that were determined in the SCORP to have an average or above average participation rates among mobility disabled individuals, the Town of Linn supports eight of these nature-based activities: bird watching, horseback riding, fishing, nature study, sightseeing, view fish, visit historic/archeology sites, and wildlife viewing.

Summary

The similarity between the goals in each of the four plans: to protect environmental corridors, to preserve farmlands, and to protect water quality while promoting outdoor recreation is exactly what the Town of Linn residents want. They have created a *Year 2025 Town of Linn Comprehensive Plan* that has proven to save prime farmlands and to keep the Town of Linn a small town of rural character in the midst of one of the largest vacation destinations in Wisconsin. Linn Township's population blooms each summer with families from throughout northeastern Illinois and Wisconsin who come to visit and enjoy the outdoors in the Geneva Lake Watershed. The challenge is to be able to enjoy the recreational opportunities while maintaining its beauty and dedication to its natural and economic resource base.

Town of Linn

Geneva Lake was created 10,000 years ago and is known for its deep, clear water. The first residents were the Pottawatomie who named the lake “Kish-wau-kee-to” which means “clear water.” Geneva Lake is 9 miles long and from 3 miles to ½ mile wide. About 1/6 of the Town is covered by the lake itself. Fourteen miles of the 26 miles of shoreline lie within the Town of Linn.

The Town was established January 23, 1844 and lies along the north and south shores of Geneva Lake. The land use pattern in the Town of Linn is characterized by high quality residential lakeshore development adjacent to productive farmland. Small wooded lots are scattered throughout the town, adding to its scenic value and rural character.

Over the years, the town and its residents have maintained control on the type of development which has taken place. They have created a compact residential area along the lake, preserved farmland, and prevented the sprawl of tourist-oriented development along highways that would cause traffic congestion and have a negative impact on businesses in the City of Lake Geneva by drawing away people from the downtown area. Linn is a valuable counterpoint to the suburbanizing areas of southeastern Wisconsin and northern Illinois.

The Town is located in southeastern Walworth County and conforms to the standard survey pattern established in the Northwest Territories. It is roughly six miles by six miles with a total area of 33.6 square miles. The southern boundary of the town lies on the Wisconsin-Illinois state line. The Town of Bloomfield lies to the east, the Town of Geneva to the north, the Town of Walworth to the west. The City of Lake Geneva borders the Town of Linn to the northeast. The northwest corner is bordered by the Village of Williams Bay north of Geneva Lake and the Village of Fontana on the west end of Geneva Lake.

In 2004, the Town of Linn adopted the *Year 2025 Town of Linn Comprehensive Plan*. The planning phase of the Town’s comprehensive plan included a survey to its year-round and seasonal residents and landowners. With a 50% response rate, the community survey findings included overwhelming support to:

- Preserve the rural character of the Town
- Preserve agricultural lands
- Limit residential development and require conservation subdivisions
- Limit commercial development
- Preserve environmental corridors

The survey results showed that 90% of the residents agreed or strongly agreed that “*The town should preserve a network of greenways in order to control stormwater, protect wildlife habitat, and provide areas for multi-use trails.*”



The Town of Linn's Vision Statement
Year 2025 Comprehensive Plan

- The Town of Linn is a distinct community that strives to balance growth and preservation. A majority of the town's development has taken place within the Geneva Lake watershed. The town also has a few small rural neighborhoods that contrast with agricultural and open space lands that make up a majority of the town's land use.
- Linn is a rural township characterized by small town atmosphere and friendly people.
- Within the town's borders lie the north and south shores of Geneva Lake, one of the premier lakes in a region that boasts many.
- The town and its surrounding area have attracted an abundance of high quality lakeshore developments adjacent to rich farmland.
- Local residents have a strong land ethic that continues to this day. Natural resources such as wetlands, floodplains, and woodlands have been preserved in order to provide wildlife habitat and protect the water quality of Geneva Lake.
- Non-motorized trails are connected to a public shorepath that encircles the entire length of Geneva Lake. Residents enjoy the town's rural character while living in close proximity to entertainment and service areas of Fontana, Williams Bay, and Lake Geneva.
- Future generations are always considered when reviewing development proposals and making land use decisions.
- The town has a strong working relationship with neighboring municipalities, which promote orderly growth and development, as well as efficient service delivery.
- Public participation in the planning process has contributed to the creation of a compact residential area along the lake, preserved farmland, and prevented the sprawl of tourist-oriented development along highways.

A Preferred Land Use Plan

Land use is an important determinant of both the supply of and the demand for outdoor recreation and open space facilities. Existing land uses in Walworth County consist of residential, commercial, industrial, governmental, institutional, transportation, communication, and utility uses.

The Town of Linn has created and adopted a *Preferred Land Use Plan* that represents the desired arrangement of future land use in the town. This plan is intended to reflect community desires and provide justification for local officials when making decisions regarding conservation and development in the Town of Linn.



Town of Linn Comprehensive Plan Land Use Plan:

Goal: Avoid incompatible land uses within the Town of Linn

1. Identify preferred areas for rural residential growth outside of existing developed areas such as impacts on productive farmland; natural area and open space are minimized.
2. Maintain extensive open space as a key component of land use.
3. Use the concepts of clustering, site design, landscaping, and location controls for all development to maximize and emphasize rural land qualities.
4. Subdivision and cluster-type development should be used to fulfill the desired quota of development in the town.
5. Require the dedication of parkland or greenspace as part of subdivision approval.

Town of Linn Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan:

Goal 1: To provide sufficient land-based recreation facilities to align with the population of Town of Linn for residents and tourists.

1. Continue to develop parks for general recreation in Linn Township.
2. Improvements to the roadside bicycle and pedestrian trail systems.
3. Planned development along the current routes should be required to include trails connecting the area.
4. Require the dedication of parkland or greenspace as part of subdivision approval as adopted from the *Preferred Land Use Plan* goals.
5. Acquire park acreage on the north shore for residents there.
6. Acquire park acreage in Zenda to create a neighborhood park.

Goal 2: To provide opportunities for residents and tourists to participate in water-based outdoor activities on Geneva Lake consistent with safe and enjoyable lake use and maintenance of good water quality.

1. Acquire additional lake frontage for public recreation.
2. Boat launches and parking should be improved at Linn Pier Park and Hillside Robinson Park.

Goal 3: To protect high quality open space lands to sustain the natural resource base while enhancing the social, economic, and environmental quality of this town.

1. Acquire natural areas for the protection of wildlife and the conservation of the town's natural heritage within existing environmental corridors.
2. Restore and maintain the Town of Linn Nature Park to historic Wisconsin landscapes.
3. Identify other opportunities to preserve and protect open space and farmland in the township.

Goal 4: To preserve the historical, cultural, and natural heritage of Linn Township.

1. Support the *Year 2025 Town of Linn Comprehensive Plan*.
2. Continue to address the loss of farmlands and family farms.
3. Save and restore the Nichols Schoolhouse to be moved to the Nature Park and placed within the active use acreage of the park as an education and outreach center.



Goal 5: To provide outdoor recreation opportunities and save additional open space in a responsible and economical manner for the continued benefit of the citizens of the Town of Linn.

1. Align land acquisition and the Nature Park enhancements to funding opportunities in order to leverage Linn's funding for existing and future park needs.
2. Develop an outreach program in partnership with the Geneva Lake Conservancy to promote and educate residents on conservation easements and preservation of open space.
3. To create a community foundation whose purpose is to acquire land for open space and additional park acreage within the Town of Linn.

Developed Land Setting Activities

Outdoor recreation in developed settings includes a mix of recreational activities, which all use some form of manmade development (sidewalks or roads for example) or involve a high level of social interaction. *Developed Land Setting Outdoor Recreation* is by far the most popular form of recreation in Wisconsin. More residents participate in two developed land recreational activities—walking for pleasure (85.8%) and outdoor family gathering (78.95%) – than any other Wisconsin activity.

Developed Land Setting Activities in the Town of Linn include hiking, jogging, bicycling, horseback riding, hunting, trapping, bird watching, and participation in aviation and ballooning as well as the use of ultra-lite aircraft is increasing. The Nature Park also has facilities for picnics and family gatherings.

Water-based Activities

Just under half of Wisconsin residents participate in motor boating, visiting a beach, or swimming in a lake or stream. The Lake Michigan Coastal Region provides miles of shoreline for water-based recreation.

Water-Based Activities in the Town of Linn include boating, swimming, fishing, waterskiing, sailing, sight-seeing, scuba diving, ice boating, and ice fishing.

Populations/Demographics

Wisconsin has experienced a variety of changing demographic trends that have influenced its outdoor recreation. Between 1950 and 2000, the state gained 2,098,380 residents, an increase of 61%. Although most of the state remains rural, the majority of the state residents (68%) live in a relatively small number of urban and suburban areas, primarily in southern areas of the state.

General Population Characteristics

The area that is now the Southeastern Wisconsin Region was first included in the Federal census in 1850. In that year, the Region had a resident population of 133,400 persons or about 37% of the total population of the state. By 1990, the region's population was 1,810,400, which is still 37% of the state's population.

Between 1970 and 1990, the increase in the number of households was 49% in the county and 26% in the region. The number of households is increasing at a faster rate than the population as the number of persons per household decreases.

Table 3-1 Population Trends Town of Linn 1970-2000							
Census Count				Population Change			
<i>1970</i>	<i>1980</i>	<i>1990</i>	<i>2000</i>	<i>1970</i>	<i>1980-90</i>	<i>1990-00</i>	<i>1970-00</i>
1,910	2,064	2,062	2,194	154	-2	132	284

Table 3-2 Comparative Population Change Town of Linn and Selected Areas 1970-2000							
	1970	1980	1990	2000	% Change 1970-80	% Change 1980-90	% Change 1990-00
<i>Town of Linn</i>	1,910	2,064	2,062	2,194	8.1%	-0.1%	6.4%
<i>Town of Geneva</i>	3,490	3,933	3,472	4,099	12.7%	-11.7%	18.1%
<i>City of Lake Geneva</i>	4,890	5,612	5,979	7,148	14.8%	6.5%	19.6%
<i>Walworth County</i>	63,444	71,507	75,000	93,759	12.7%	4.9%	25%
<i>State of Wisconsin</i>	4,417,731	4,705,642	4,891,769	5,363,675	6.5%	4.0%	9.6%

When compared to other areas in Wisconsin, the Town of Linn experienced the least amount of growth in the most recent decade while the county and neighboring communities had dramatic increases. Two reasons for this are the implementation of the Town Land Use Plan and enforcement of the Walworth County Zoning Ordinance, which is mostly zoned A-1, Prime Agriculture, and restricts residential development.

Table 3-3 Population by Age Town of Linn 1990-2000					
Age	1990		2000		% Change
	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total	
<i>Under 5</i>	112	5.4%	129	5.9%	15.2%
<i>5-19</i>	424	20.6%	408	18.6%	-3.8%
<i>20-44</i>	726	35.2%	673	30.7%	-7.3%
<i>45-64</i>	485	23.5%	641	29.2%	32.2%
<i>65+</i>	315	15.3%	343	15.6%	8.9%
<i>Total</i>	2,062	100%	2194	100%	6.4%

The age group that increased the most during the 1990s was the 45 to 64 age group, which increased by 32.2%. This trend is typical and can be found throughout Wisconsin and the U.S. as the baby boomers generation nears retirement.

Education Levels

According to the 2000 Census, approximately 92% of persons age 25 and over in the town have attained a high school diploma or some post-secondary education. Approximately 35% have bachelor degrees or higher.

Income Levels

According to the 2000 Census, the median household income within the town was \$54,213. The largest income group had incomes between \$50,000 and \$74,999.

Per Capita Valuation

The Town of Linn has the highest per capita valuation of any town in the state of Wisconsin. The town’s current valuation is \$876,400,000 which translates to a per resident valuation of \$33,453 or \$199,726 when considering the seasonal population. The county-wide average for per resident valuation is approximately \$91,000 while the state is \$61,000.

Employment Characteristics

According to the 2000 Census, the greatest percentage of employment of town residents in 2000 was in the manufacturing sector, which contained 19.6% of total employment. Educational, health, and social services have the second highest amount of employment at 15.1%. The employment trends found in Linn are very similar to those found countywide.

Population Projections

In 2004, the Wisconsin Department of Administration (WDOA) Demographic Services Center prepared preliminary baseline population projections through the year 2025 for the communities and counties in Wisconsin. As indicated in Table 3-4, the Town of Linn is projected to have a population of 2,331 persons by the year 2025. This is a 6.2% increase from the 2000 Census count of 2,194.



Table 3-4 WDOA Populations Projections Town of Linn 2000-2025					
2000 Census	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
2,194	2,210	2,238	2,302	2,340	2,331

Housing

The number of households is important to land use and public facility planning because it influences the demand for converting rural land to urban use to accommodate additional residential development. It is an important component in creating demands for transportation and other facilities and services, including parks and recreational facilities.

Linn experienced a net gain of 159 housing units between 1990 and 2000. This is an average of 16 new housing units per year. Based on this trend, the Town of Linn could expect to add 400 units during a 25 year planning period.

Table 3-5 Housing Supply Town of Linn 1990-2000				
			# Change	% Change
	1990	2000	1990-00	1990-00
<i>Total Units</i>	1,911	1,901	-10	-0.5%
<i>Occupied Units</i>	817	910	93	11.4%
<i>Owner Occupied</i>	587	705	118	20.1%
<i>Renter Occupied</i>	230	205	-25	-10.9%
<i>Vacant Year Round Units</i>	1,094	991	-103	-9.4%
<i>Seasonal Units</i>	1,025	946	-79	-07.7%

Summer Population Estimates

The Wisconsin SCORP states that although recreation demand is largely determined by Wisconsin residents, out-of-state visitors also influence it. There are two Direct Marketing Areas (DMAs) that bring tourists into Wisconsin: Chicago, Illinois and Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minnesota. The Department of Tourism Wave Report shows that Chicago area tourists come up through the southern part of the state through Kenosha and Walworth Counties moving north and northwest through the state (Appendix A Maps, Recreation Demand from Outside of Wisconsin).

According to the 2000 Census, the Town of Linn has 946 seasonal housing units, which is 49.8% of total housing units. The Census states that there were 2.41 persons per household in the Town of Linn. When seasonal housing units are fully occupied, it adds an additional 2,280 people to the population in Linn. Approximately 58% of the town’s tax bills are sent out of town, which is a further indication of the town’s significant seasonal population.



The combination of decreases in renter occupied units, vacant units, and seasonal units accounted for the overall decline in total housing units. The declines experienced in these three categories indicate that many smaller seasonal homes are being converted to full-time residences as evidenced by owner-occupied units increasing by 20%. This trend is common in many areas of Wisconsin that are affected by seasonal populations. In addition, this trend is likely to continue as the baby boomers retire and seek to convert seasonal homes into permanent residences (Appendix B, 2000 Census Data).

Town of Linn Natural Resource Base

Watersheds and Drainage

In Wisconsin, watersheds vary in scale from major river systems to small creek drainage areas. River basins encompass several watersheds. There are 32 river basins in Wisconsin. The Town of Linn is located in the Fox River-Illinois River Basin. The Township contains four subwatersheds including Geneva Lake, Nippersink Creek, the North Branch of Nippersink Creek, and the Piscasaw Creek subwatershed.

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources has redesigned its natural resource management approach around the concepts of ecoregions and watersheds. This shift in approach recognizes that working with natural structure and function of resources, as opposed to strictly political or social boundaries, will provide successful improvements. In order to protect the water quality in Geneva Lake, the Town has proposed five strategies to address development impacts.

1. requiring conservation subdivisions
2. incorporating low impact development (LID) strategies
3. preserving environmental corridors
4. encouraging shoreline restoration
5. more actively enforcing erosion control ordinances

Besides Geneva Lake, Nippersink Creek is the only other named water feature in the Town. The creek forms a topographic boundary between the lower, nearly level lands of the southeastern corner of the town, and the higher, rolling terrain of the rest of the town.

Floodplains

Floodplain features in the Town of Linn are primarily located adjacent to Nippersink Creek and along the drainage basin of Geneva Lake.

Wetlands

Wetlands cover about 7% of the County and provide essential breeding, nesting, resting, and feeding grounds and escape cover for fish and wildlife. The Town of Linn does not have a significant number of wetland resources although there are limited wetlands along the north shore of Geneva Lake and along Nippersink Creek. At this time, the SEWRPC and the WDNR are reviewing and delineating the Advance Identification (ADID) wetlands in Walworth County. (Appendix A Maps, Wetlands and Floodplain).

Surface Water Resources

Surface Water Resources that consist of streams and lakes form a particularly important element of the natural resource base in Linn. Surface water resources provide recreational opportunities, influence the physical development of the county, and enhance its aesthetic quality.



Geneva Lake is the most significant surface water resource in the Town of Linn and considered one of the most important natural resources in southeastern Wisconsin. The lake provides recreational and tourism opportunities, wildlife habitat, aesthetic and economic value to the area.

According to the Wisconsin Lakes Book 2001, Geneva Lake is 5,262 acres and has a maximum depth of 135 feet. It is classified as a spring lake, indicating that the lake has no inlet, but does have an outlet. All surface-water outflow is through the White River, which flows northeast through the City of Lake Geneva. The elevation is controlled at 864.42 feet by a dam and sluice gates installed in 1894.

According to the *Hydrology and Water Quality of Geneva Lake, Walworth County, Wisconsin; Water-Resources Investigations Report 02-4039*:

- The major source of phosphorus in the lake was from its tributaries.
- Water quality characteristics measured at the surface (water clarity, chlorophyll, and nutrient concentrations) was uniform throughout the lake.
- Direct measurements and indirect measurements based on sediment-core analyses indicate that the water quality of Geneva Lake has degraded in the last 170 years, with the greatest effects resulting from urbanization.
- The major source of water to the lake is precipitation, surface water inflow, and groundwater discharge.
- Analyses of sediments at the bottom of Geneva Lake indicate that municipal and agricultural drainage from the watershed has produced elevated and potentially problematic concentrations of some elements and compounds.
- Future decreases in phosphorus loading to the lake are likely to improve the water quality of the lake.
- Septic systems were estimated to contribute between 2-8% of the total phosphorus load to the lake.

Groundwater

According to the Wisconsin Geological and Natural History Survey's publication, *Groundwater Resources and Geology for Walworth County, Wisconsin*, all of Walworth County depends on groundwater for its potable water supplies. The principal sources of these supplies include the sand-and-gravel aquifer, the Niagara aquifer, the Galena-Platteville aquifer, and the Sandstone aquifer. Most groundwater contamination is related to agriculture, petroleum, and salt storage located in areas of high groundwater tables or fractured bedrock.

The materials that control the movement and storage of ground water in Walworth County range from basement rocks of Precambrian age to the unconsolidated glacial deposits, alluvium, and soils of Pleistocene and Holocene ages. Bedrock is overlain by glacial drift and crystalline rocks of the Precambrian age underlie the entire county. The Precambrian rocks have low permeability and mark the lower limit of ground water movement. Cambrian sandstone overlies the Precambrian rocks and is present under the entire county. The ability of Cambrian sandstone to store and yield water and its great thickness make it an important

water resource. Other bedrock found within the county includes Ordovician dolomite, sandstone, shale, and Silurian dolomite. All of these rocks dip toward the east.

Topography

Topography in the Town of Linn is characterized by gently rolling, glaciated land. The land drops fairly rapidly toward Geneva Lake in the areas immediately adjacent to the lake. A number of small intermittent and perennial feeder streams have created some fairly well formed valleys leading to the lake. The southern half of the town is an upland plain. Nippersink Creek runs in a west to northeast direction through the southern part of this plain.

In pre-settlement days, the southern portion of the town was largely wooded with scattered pockets of prairie and oak openings. Seasonal ponds and persistent marshes were present, but have been largely drained. Scattered bur oaks and hickories were common in oak openings. Protected areas along streams, ponds, and below the break along Geneva Lake were covered with mixed deciduous hardwood forests including a variety of oaks, maples, basswood, elms, willows, and other species characteristic of this region. Some of the more mature oak and maple forest stands on the north shore is representative of relics of the pre-settlement forest communities (Appendix A Maps, Topography).

Soils

Soils in the Town of Linn are generally of the Miami-McHenry association. They are well-drained soils that have a subsoil of clay and silty clay loam. These soils occur on glacial till plains throughout the county and make up the majority of soils within the town. Permeability of this soil is moderate and the available moisture capacity is moderately high. This soil type is suitable for all general farm crops and for many special crops.

The southeastern portion of the town has soils of the Plano-Griswold association. These are characterized by well-drained soils that have a subsoil of silty clay and sandy clay loam. This soil is among the best farming soils in the county. Permeability is moderate, and the available moisture capacity is moderately high.

A small portion of the town in Section 5 has Houghton-Palms association of soils. These are very poorly drained, organic soils formed in depressions and bottomlands. Specific soil distribution becomes very complex, particularly in the areas adjacent to Geneva Lake because of glacial topography and erosion effects (Appendix A Maps, Agricultural Soil Capability).

Environmental Corridors

One of the most important tasks under Walworth County's regional planning program has been the identification and delineation of those areas in the region where the concentrations of the best remaining elements of natural resource base occur. The preservation of these areas is vital to maintaining a high level of environmental quality, protecting the natural heritage and beauty, and providing outdoor recreational opportunities. Environmental corridors have one or more of the following important elements of the natural resource base:

- Rivers, streams, lakes, and associated shore lands and flood lands
- Wetlands
- Woodlands
- Prairies
- Wildlife habitat areas
- Wet, poorly drained soils
- Rugged terrain and high relief topography.

The presence of these elements is considered in the delineation of environmental corridors. Corridor lands provide storage of flood waters, help protect water quality by filtering sediment and fertilizer from runoff before it enters surface waters, provide wildlife habitat and corridors of movement for animals, and contribute to the scenic beauty of the region. Planning urban development away from environmental corridors helps to prevent problems such as water pollution, wet and flooded basements, and building and pavement failures.

Secondary Environmental Corridors

These environmental corridors are located along small perennial and intermittent streams. They contain a variety of natural resource elements and are often remnant resources from primary corridors that have been developed with intensive agricultural or urban uses. They facilitate surface water drainage and provide corridors for the movement of wildlife and the dispersal of seeds for a variety of plant species. Such corridors should be considered for preservation in natural, open space, local parks, or recreation trails and incorporated as drainage ways, stormwater detention, or retention areas. (Appendix A Maps, Planned Environmental Corridors).

Threatened and Endangered Species

Within Walworth County, there are a number of endangered, threatened, and special concern species including plants, birds, insects, and fish. There are ten plant species, three fish species, two reptiles, and one insect that were identified as endangered within the county. Any development proposals for Linn are first forwarded to the WDNR to evaluate the presence of any threatened or endangered species.

The Town of Linn Nature Park is home to many species of grassland birds. The *Town of Linn Nature Park 10-Year Management Plan's* goal is to improve the park for the birds. The restoration schedule is set up for activities to be scheduled around the birds' breeding and nesting needs. The Nature Park supports the habitat of the Henslows sparrow, a state-designated threatened species (Appendix C Grassland Birds).

Isolated Natural Areas

In 1994, a comprehensive inventory of natural and geological resources in Walworth County was conducted by the Regional Planning Commission as part of the natural areas and critical species habitat protection and management plan. The inventory identified all remaining high quality natural areas, critical species habitat, and sites having geological significance.

Natural areas are tracts of land or water so little modified by human activity, or sufficiently recovered from the effects of such activity, that they contain intact native plant and animal communities believed to be representative of the landscape before European settlement. The SCORP classifies natural areas sites into one of three categories: natural areas of statewide or greater significance (NA-1), natural areas of county-wide or regional significance (NA-2), and natural areas of local significance (NA-3).

Classification is based on the diversity of plant and animal species, natural communities, the structure and integrity of the native plant and animal communities, the extent of disturbance from human activity, the commonness of the plant and animal communities, unique natural features, the extent of acreage, and the educational value.

There are 77 natural areas identified in 1994 in Walworth County: seven NA-1 sites, 12 NA-2 sites, and 58 NA-3 sites.

The Town of Linn hosts 3 NA-3 sites that include:

- Wychwood: T1N, R17E, Sections 2, 3, 4 in Town of Linn and T2N, R17E, Section 35, in the Town of Lake Geneva. It is privately owned and proposed for protection by a Park and Open Space Plan for Walworth County by a private conservancy organization and has a 226 acre dry-mesic hardwood forest occupying a terminal moraine on the north side of Geneva Lake
- Peninsula Woods: This site is privately owned and proposed by a *Park and Open Space Plan for Walworth County* to be donated to a private conservancy organization. It is a 39-acre dry-mesic hardwood stand on the north side of Geneva Lake. The property contains the American gromwell (*Lithospermum latifolium*), a state-designated special concern species.
- Williams Bay Lowlands: This site is owned by the Village of Williams Bay and is an eight acre moderate quality complex of sedge meadow, shrub-carr, shallow marsh, wet prairie, and lowland hardwoods. This area supports the white lady's slipper orchid (*Cypripedium candidum*), a state-designated threatened species.

Isolated natural areas provide wildlife habitat and are good locations for local parks and nature areas as they lend aesthetic character and natural diversity to the area and should be considered for protection as open space.

The Town of Linn's Nature Park is being restored and fits the definition of an isolated natural area. It will qualify as a NA-2 site, hopefully the Town of Linn's first NA-2 site. This designation will bring additional recognition and priority funding for the park as well as providing critical specie habitat.

Critical Species Habitat

Critical Species Habitats are areas outside of natural areas whose primary value lies in their ability to support rare, threatened, or endangered species. Such areas constitute critical habitat that is important to ensure the survival of a particular species or group of species of special concern. Two aquatic critical species habitats are found in the vicinity of Linn.



- Pottawatomie, Van Slyke, and Southwick Creeks are all cold-water trout streams with good fish populations.
- Geneva Lake is 5,262 acres of surface waters, is a deep spring lake, and the largest lake in the region. It hosts good overall fish diversity with critical species present.

Prime Agricultural Lands

In 1995, approximately 381 square miles were in agricultural use in Walworth County. Prime agricultural lands are those lands which, in terms of soil characteristics, are best suited for the production of food and fiber. Walworth County has defined prime agricultural lands as those farmlands that consist largely of Class I, II, and III soils as identified by the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

There are a number of important public purposes that are served through the preservation of prime agricultural lands. These include the maintenance of agricultural reserves, the maintenance of open space, the control of public costs for providing urban services, the preservation of the local economic base, and the preservation of a rural lifestyle.

Agricultural land within the Town of Linn is the single largest land use. The southern portion of the town, particularly south of CTH BB, is primarily agriculture. Agricultural land is a resource necessary to the economic livelihood of many current residents and future generations.

During the 10 years from 1982 to 1992; 152,100 acres were lost to development. Between 1992 and 1997, an additional 121,600 were lost. There are many factors that contribute to urban and rural development. While population growth is a factor, demographics factors are equally important.

USDA-National Agricultural Statistics Service 2002 Agricultural Census Town of Linn, Wisconsin	
Year	Lands in Farms Acres
1978	17,838,982
1982	17,234,127
1987	16,606,567
1997	16,232,744
2002	15,741,552
Average Size of Farms (Acres)	
1978	206
1987	221
1997	227
2002	204



Highways and Transportation

The existing road system is characterized by two features. The southern area of the town is characterized by a typical rural grid roadway pattern of primarily north-south and east-west roads. The northern portion of the town, particularly the ones surrounding Geneva Lake, is characterized by various loop and cul-de-sac roads, which provide direct access to land for residential development.

The general traffic circulation patterns through Linn are:

- State Highway (STH) 50 is an east-west roadway on the northern border of the town that connects the area with Kenosha and Racine to the east and Delevan to the west.
- South Shore Road and County Trunk Highways (CTH) B and BB provide for east-west travel within the southern portion of the town.
- STH 120 is the primary north-south travel route within the Town of Linn. This highway connects the greater Lake Geneva area with Illinois to the south and the City of East Troy to the north.
- Local town roads serve as collectors to the state and county highway system serving Linn and provide both east-west and north-south directional travel.

There are two airports located in Walworth County, the East Troy Municipal Airport and the Burlington Municipal Airport. According to the *Wisconsin State Airport System Plan 2020*, both of these airports are classified as general utility airports. The nearest airport with commercial air passenger service is General Mitchell International Airport in Milwaukee or the Greater Rockford Airport located in Rockford, Illinois. There are three private airstrips in the Town of Linn.

The Wisconsin and Southern Railroad Company has a rail line which runs through the southern portion of the Town of Linn. This line leads northward to the City of Janesville where it connects to several other rail lines. The Wisconsin and Southern Railroad is classified as a regional railroad operating approximately 622 miles of railroad in south central Wisconsin and northern Illinois.

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation Rustic Roads Program designates lightly traveled country roads in an effort to preserve their scenic value as “Rustic Roads.” Snake Road, from the intersection at STH 50 in the City of Lake Geneva, west to the intersection at STH 50 in the Town of Geneva, is the Town’s only designated Rustic Road. The route is paved and is 2.7 miles long.

Existing Parks

When categorizing the existing parks in the Town of Linn, the School Park designation has two schools that serve the purpose of a neighborhood park. The third school park, Reek School, is located in a rural area across South Lake Shore Drive from the Nature Park. This park would not be appropriate as a neighborhood park, as it is not within walking distance. But the opportunity to use the Nature Park as an outdoor classroom does exist.

It should be noted that there are no improvements or recommendations included in this plan for school parks, as they are the responsibility of School Districts.

School Parks		
School	Park Type and Size	Activities and Uses
<p><i>Traver School</i> School District Linn JT4 Located at the intersection of Linton & Brink Roads W3490 Linton Road Lake Geneva, WI 53147</p>	<p>School and Neighborhood Park 5 acres</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playground equipment • Baseball and soccer fields • Hopscotch, four square • Swings • Basketball hoop • Gym is accessible to public at night by reservation
<p><i>Reek School</i> School District Linn JT6 Intersection of Maple Ridge Road and South Lake Shore Drive W4094 S. Lakeshore Drive Lake Geneva, WI 53147</p>	<p>School Park Across the street from the Nature Park</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playground equipment • Soccer and baseball fields • Hopscotch, four square • Swings • Basketball hoop • Gym is accessible to public at night by reservation
<p><i>Wood School</i> School District Geneva JT4 Located on the north shore of Geneva Lake N2575 Snake Road Lake Geneva, WI 53147</p>	<p>School and Neighborhood Park</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playground equipment • Soccer and baseball fields • Hopscotch, four squares • Swings • Basketball hoop

The Town of Linn’s Park Committee is working with the Geneva Lake Conservancy and Reek School to develop an outdoor environmental education program at the Town of Linn Nature Park. Suggestions for educational programs include the Mighty Acorns Stewardship Program that promotes restoration, education, and personal responsibility for third and fourth graders.

Linn Pier Park	
Park Type and Size	Park Uses
<p>Special Use Park (revenue-generating) .5 acre This small lake access park is located on the south shore of Geneva Lake at the terminus of Linn Pier Road This is the largest boat launch in Linn Township.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boat launch/Lake Access • Swimming • Picnic tables • Sandy area for play • 15 parking spaces for trailers • 28 stalls for cars • Port-a-potty
Recommendations and Improvements	Yearly Budget
The Town of Linn provides for the maintenance and upkeep of this park in their annual budget.	

Robinson/Hillside Road Park	
Park Type and Size	Park Uses
<p>Special Use Park (revenue-generating) .5 acre This small lake access park is located on the south shore of Geneva Lake at the terminus of Hillside Road</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boat launch • Marina/piers for locals to rent on a yearly basis • Parking for 20 trailers and 15 cars • Swimming • Port-a-potty
Recommendations and Improvements	Yearly Budget
The Town of Linn provides for the maintenance and upkeep of this park in their annual budget.	

Chapin Road Park	
Park Type and Size	Park Uses
<p>Special Use Park .25 acre Located on the north shore of Geneva Lake at the terminus of Chapin Road. There is no parking at this site and very little room to turn around or back up a boat trailer.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boat launch • No parking • Emergency access for fire and police • Marinas are put into the lake each summer for the local area
Recommendations and Improvements	Yearly Budget
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Signage needed for safety cautions and noted emergency access 2. The Town of Linn provides for the maintenance and upkeep of this park in their annual budget. 	

Shadow Lane Drive Park	
Park Type and Size	Park Uses
<p>Special Use/Mini Park .25 acres</p> <p>This small “walk in” area is located at the terminus of Shadow Lane Drive and provides access to the shorepath.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to Lake Shorepath • No parking/walk in access only • Historical marker (boulder) Northwestern • Memorial for Shirlee Jackson • A park bench
Recommendations and Improvements	Yearly Budget
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Installation of a park bench 2. The Town of Linn provides for the maintenance and upkeep of this park in their annual budget. 	

Triangle Park	
Park Type and Size	Park Uses
<p>Mini Park .25 acre Corner of Linn Pier Road and South Lake Shore Drive</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a dangerous intersection and at this time has not been developed for use
Recommendations and Improvements	Yearly Budget
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Town of Linn provides for the maintenance and upkeep of this park n their annual budget. 	

Town of Linn Nature Park

Following the guidelines in the SCORP's *Appendix B Park and Recreation Designs*, the Town of Linn's Nature Park falls under the category as a Community Park as well as a County Park.

The park is 160-acres located across from Reek School and is bordered on the west by Maple Ridge Road and on the south by South Lake Shore Drive. The property was donated to the Town of Linn and is held in a conservation easement through the Geneva Lake Conservancy. It allows for six acres of active recreation and 154 acres of restored, natural areas.

The park's natural communities consist of tallgrass prairie, pothole wetlands, and oak savannas and are important ecologically to the Town of Linn, Walworth County, and to the state of Wisconsin. Globally, tallgrass prairies and oak savannas are endangered ecosystems. This park and its prairie communities are also part of the World Wildlife Fund's eco-region of the Upper Midwest forest-savanna transition zone.

The *Town of Linn Nature Park 10-Year Management Plan* was adopted in 2007 by the Town of Linn Board of Supervisors, and is the restoration guideline for restoration and enhancements to the natural communities within the park. Currently, the Nature Park has seen invasive and woody vegetation cleared as well as some erosion control methods along the creek. Seeding took place during the spring of 2008 to reintroduce/enhance native plant species to benefit grassland birds. Horse trails and walking trails have been established and are maintained for hiking, dog walking, and bird watching as well as cross country skiing and snow shoeing during the winter months. Playground equipment was installed and a handicapped accessible port-a-potty maintained throughout the warmer months. There is parking for approximately 30 vehicles and a pavilion with picnic tables.

The primary objectives of the 10-year management plan are:

1. To restore the natural communities of the park to benefit grassland birds
2. To improve and enhance the passive recreational opportunities at the park.

Appendix D outlines the management zones and restoration activities over a 10-year period for the Nature Park based on priorities within the 10-year management plan.

The establishment and sustained health of any natural habitat is affected by variables of unpredictable influence such as weather, animal or insect predation, the proliferation of invasive weeds, and human impacts. Since annual stewardship and monitoring are critical to the sustained health of the park, the stewardship plans are based on a best estimate of future conditions using best practices of restoration. The plans are to remain dynamic and flexible in order to ensure the best results for the Nature Park.



Projected Recreation Needs

Data was collected from the Wisconsin Department of Administration’s (WDOA) projected growth predictions for the Town of Linn and planned environmental corridors were used as a guideline to recommend areas that could possibly be saved through land acquisition and/or conservation easements. The challenge here is the high cost of land. There are 22 acres in Zenda that the park committee would like to purchase for a neighborhood park in Zenda, yet the land costs \$425,000. To add additional shoreline for public access on Geneva Lake costs \$1.5 million. Therefore, the Park Committee discussed options and funding mechanisms that would address the barriers to this.

Future Park and Open Space Sites Recommendations

The Town’s *Preferred Land Use Plan* relies on future donations of parkland and open space to fulfill future park and open space needs linked to the development requirements. This will ensure that the acreage of parkland within in the Town increases as it population does.

The Geneva Lake Conservancy, the Nature Park’s easement holder, has proposed a partnership between the Conservancy and the Town of Linn as a way of preserving and acquiring open space for the Town through education and outreach to local landowners on conservation easements for important ecological lands and prime farmlands. Lynn Ketterhagen, Land Protection Specialist, for the Geneva Lake Conservancy writes, “Because of our unique area, the prices on parcels of land in the area are very expensive. We continue to seek conservation easements or better described as voluntary land protection agreements. What we suggest to the Town of Linn for future open spaces is consider working with the Conservancy in creating a program that establishes a process whereby the property owners can participate in the continuing movement to preserve open space of all types.”

Current and Future Per Capita Parkland Needs				
Year 2000 Existing Acreage	Permanent Residents	Summer Residents	Net Acreage Required	Net Acreage Needed
165.25	2194 Residents 2.2 acres	4474 4.5 acres	8.58 Permanent 17.55 Summer	-156.67 -147.7
Year 2020 Projections	Permanent	Summer	Net Acreage Required	Net Acreage Needed
	2340 Residents 2.3 acres	4761 4.8 acres	8.97 Permanent 18.72 Summer	-156.28 -146.53

Keeping in mind the Town of Linn’s Goal 5: *To provide outdoor recreation opportunities and save additional open space in a responsible and economical manner for the continued benefit of the citizens of the Town of Linn*, creating a community foundation to focus on acquisition of open space and additional park needs, the Town of Linn will have an opportunity to save ecologically important open space, and possibly own more shoreline of Geneva Lake for public access.



Specialized Recreation and Open Space Areas

Trails and Bicycle Ways

The Geneva Lake Shorepath is a perpetual easement that encircles Geneva Lake and connects the Town of Linn to the neighboring communities of Lake Geneva, Williams Bay, Fontana, and Walworth. The shorepath receives year-round use for walking, jogging, sightseeing, and birding. This shorepath is 20.5 miles of walking path around Geneva Lake.

The Town of Linn Nature Park hosts 3.5 miles of hiking trails for walking, birdwatching, with trails for horseback riding.

The Town of Linn has recently (2007) completed a bike path from Willow Road to the Town of Fontana. This was a road widening project on South Lake Shore Drive and provides an additional four feet of paved and marked roadway expressly for the use of bicycles. It connects similar pathways from the Town of Lake Geneva to the Town of Fontana.

Private Business and Groups

A host of additional outdoor recreation resources are controlled by privately owned groups that include not-for-profit organizations and for-profit businesses.

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources operates Big Foot State Park on the eastern shore of Lake Geneva in the Towns of Linn and Bloomfield. This park provides a public beach, picnic facilities, fishing, camping, and nature trails.

Supporting the Town of Linn is The Lake Geneva Sailing School, a private, not-for-profit group that operates out of the Lake Geneva Yacht Club. Other private recreational resources include the Lake Geneva Yacht Club with a boat launch area, piers, and moorings, and the Lake Geneva Country Club, a 19-hole golf course with tennis courts.

Many of the property owners, lake associations, and clubs along the lake have private piers, some with boat launch facilities and beaches for their members. While this somewhat alleviates the demand for public facilities, they are not open to the public.

Since recreational boating and fishing are very popular activities on Geneva Lake's, there are several businesses around the Lake that offer boat and Jet Ski rentals.

A Cruise Line offers daily tours and narrated excursions of Geneva Lake.

Historic Sites

Bonnie Brae Estate

This privately owned residential estate was listed in 1986 on the National Registry of Historic Places. It was built in 1881 and was originally owned by Martin Ryerson. It is located along Snake Road.

Black Point Mansion

Black Point was listed in 1994 on the National Registry of Historic Places. The state of Wisconsin spent \$1.7 million for renovation and another \$1.8 million to the WDNR for operation costs. The lakeside mansion is accessible by boat provided by the Lake Geneva Cruise Line.

In 1997, William Petersen, Chicago attorney and great-grandson of Conrad Seipp, offered the house, its grounds and contents to the state of Wisconsin as a gift. The property consists of 7.5 acres and 620 feet of undisturbed Geneva Lake shoreline. Black Point is protected by a conservation easement held by the Geneva Lake Conservancy and the nonprofit Black Point Historic Preserve. The state owns the property and leases it to the preserve to manage the property as an historic site.

The house was built by Chicago beer magnate Conrad Seipp. The grand, three-story house was done in Queen Anne style with a wrap around porch and 13 bedrooms. It also has a four-story lookout tower. Built as a summer home, Black Point doesn't have a heating system, so tours end in October.

Conclusion

The Town of Linn Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan looks to the future for the need for additional park and public access areas for the Geneva Lake Watershed while addressing the high costs of land in the watershed. The Town of Linn Park Committee is working to maintain and improve outdoor recreation within their jurisdiction while maintaining a small town feel. In this way, the challenges to add park and open space is being addressed by innovative mechanisms, a community foundation, an outreach and education program for residents on conservation easements, and a land use plan that requires the donation of park land and/or open space from developers.

Action Plan and Budget

Priorities						Responsibility Partnerships
<i>Town of Linn Nature Park</i>	2009 <i>Restoration & Stewardship</i>	2010 <i>Restoration & Stewardship</i>	2011 <i>Restoration & Stewardship</i>	2012 <i>Restoration & Stewardship</i>	2013 <i>Restoration & Stewardship</i>	
Linn's Budget	12,500	12,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	Town of Linn
Funding Opportunities	15,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	5,000	Park Committee Tallgrass Restoration
Totals:	27,500.00	22,000	20,000	20,000	15,000	
<i>Additional Nature Park Projects</i>	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	
Establish the park as an outdoor classroom	Partnerships established, curriculum determined	Pilot program, evaluation	Possible expansion, more classes, other schools	Ongoing support		Town of Linn Geneva Lake Conservancy Reek School
Establish a volunteer or stewards group for the Nature Park	Partnerships established, structure and purpose designed	Recruitment, ongoing support, education				Town of Linn Park Committee Geneva Lakes Conservancy
Ongoing grant research and writing	Ongoing					Tallgrass Restoration Park Committee
Linn Budget	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,000	Town of Linn
Funding Opportunities	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,000	
Totals:	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	4,000	
<i>Nichols Schoolhouse</i> Outreach and Education Center	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	
Nichols School donated to Linn	Done					Leedle & Linn
	School moved to Nature Park					Park Committee
	Restoration: Stabilize structure and exterior	Restoration: Stabilize structure and exterior				Town of Linn Walworth County Historical Society
Determine final outcomes and purpose structure	Create Partnerships, Design program	Materials, evaluation created	Grand Opening!	Ongoing support and maintenance program created	Ongoing support	Town of Linn Walworth County Historical Society Geneva Lake Conservancy



Priorities						Responsibility Partnerships
Fundraising and Grant writing	Started in 2008	Ongoing				Town of Linn
Interior Design		Interior designed to fit final outcomes and purpose	Grand Opening!	Ongoing support and maintenance program created	Ongoing support	Town of Linn
Linn Budget	10,000	10,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	Town of Linn
Funding Opportunities	5,000	5,000	3,000	3,000	2,000	Park Committee
Totals:	15,000	15,000	8,000	8,000	7,000	
<i>Land Acquisition for Parks/Open Space Options</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>2010</i>	<i>2011</i>	<i>2012</i>	<i>2013</i>	
<p>The high cost of land in the Geneva Lake watershed is very expensive. By creating a community foundation, Linn will be able to receive donations of land and cash to use as matching funds for land acquisition for parkland and open space. The foundation will also provide funding for historical and cultural buildings and lands. In addition, donated funds will be used to acquire ecologically sensitive lands within the environmental corridors of the county.</p>						
Create a Community Foundation	Partnerships, purpose, and board developed	Establish the foundation	Marketing, and easement education	Ongoing	Ongoing	Town of Linn
Develop parks with donated lands through the current land use plan	Ongoing					Town of Linn Plan Commission Park Committee
Create an outreach program to educate landowners on conservation easements	Create partnerships Design Program	Fundraising Materials developed Evaluation developed	Grand Opening to coincide with Schoolhouse	Ongoing support		Park Committee Geneva Lake Conservancy
Linn Budget	2,000	2,000	2,000			
Funding Opportunities	2,000	2,000	2,000			
Totals:	4,000	4,000	4,000			



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