LOWER WISCONSIN STATE RIVERWAY BOARD
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NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

RIVERWAY BOARD COMMENTS ON DNR MASTER PLAN

MUSCODA.....The Lower Wisconsin State Riverway Board has offered comments to the Department of Natural Resources regarding the recently released Draft Master Plan for management of state owned lands in the Riverway, according to Mark Cupp, Executive Director. Previously, the board had offered recommendations for items to include in the Master Plan during the public comment period in 2014.

Cupp said, “In general, the DNR’s Draft Master Plan for the guiding decision-making on state lands in the Riverway for the foreseeable future is good, the document is comprehensive and details the many virtues that make the Riverway such a unique and important natural resource.”

He noted the board supports the development of additional river access sites as well as increasing the number of miles of trails for hiking. The development of a number of day use areas also is supported by the board. However, Cupp noted there are a few areas of disagreement.

“The Riverway Board is opposed to closing the High Bank Road west of Muscoda and a stretch of Wightman Road and the High Bank Road near the Blue River Barrens and Fish Trap Flowage to vehicles and equestrians. The area has been used by generations of local folks who are fond of taking a relaxing drive on the sand road to view wildlife, including waterfowl and migratory birds, as well as the beautiful flowering plants. Many elderly people and others who have mobility limitation enjoy the opportunity to drive near the backwaters, through the woods and past the prairies. In addition, the route has become a favorite of local horse enthusiasts who would have to travel a great distance to enjoy trails on public lands if it weren’t for the six-mile Muscoda to Blue River trail,” said Cupp.

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RIVERWAY BOARD COMMENTS/ADD ONE

Cupp said the board suggested support for a hiking trail from Wyalusing State Park to Devil’s Lake State Park receive a stronger commitment from DNR. The board encouraged greater emphasis on protection of backwater areas and habitats, including use of buffer areas around sloughs; and, opposed development of a new shooting range near Mazomanie.

“DNR staff deserves credit for the major effort in developing the Draft Master Plan and now it is up to the public to offer their opinions on the department’s proposals,” he said.

Cupp encouraged anyone with an interest in the Riverway to visit the DNR’s website and offer comments about the draft plan. Questions about the Riverway Board’s comments to DNR may be directed to him at the Lower Wisconsin State Riverway Board office by calling 1-800-221-3792, by e-mail at mark.cupp@wisconsin.gov or by visiting the Riverway Board website.

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For further information, contact Mark E. Cupp, LWSRB Executive Director, at (608) 739-3188 or by cell phone at (608) 739-2179 or by e-mail at mark.cupp@wisconsin.gov.