

Pelican River Forest Public Access and Forest Conservation Easement Phase 2



© Tim Aeur



Oneida, Forest and Langlade Counties
U.S. Senator Johnson and U.S. Senator Baldwin
U.S. Representative Tiffany (WI-7)

The Pelican River Forest Easement project represents a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to protect over 68,000 acres of working forestland in Wisconsin. As the property's current owner, The Conservation Fund is partnering with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to use funding from the state-based Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program (KNSP), federal Forest Legacy Program and private funding via the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to secure an easement focused on public access and forest conservation. This will protect the state's largest remaining unprotected private working forest.

The Pelican River Forest straddles the continental divide between the Great Lakes and Mississippi River watersheds. It contains 68 miles of streams and is located in the headwaters of the Wolf and Wisconsin rivers. The permanent protection the easement will preserve the water quality of these rivers, safeguarding drinking water for over 40,000 people downstream. It also will permanently secure public access for outdoor recreation, including hiking, hunting, fishing, trapping, snowmobiling, ATV/UTV access and cross-country skiing.

The property, which contains hard maple, oak, aspen, spruce, red pine and jack pine, grows about 25,000 cords of harvestable volume each year for an estimated annual value of \$1.1 million. Accounting for 16% of Oneida County's timber output from private forestland, the property helps supply 17 mills in Oneida and adjacent counties, supporting 636 jobs. Additionally, the project's guarantee of permanent public use includes vehicular access to as many as 70 miles of maintained interior roads. These roads will be supported by a \$1.5 million perpetual road endowment fund for long-term maintenance.

Phase 2 Project Funding

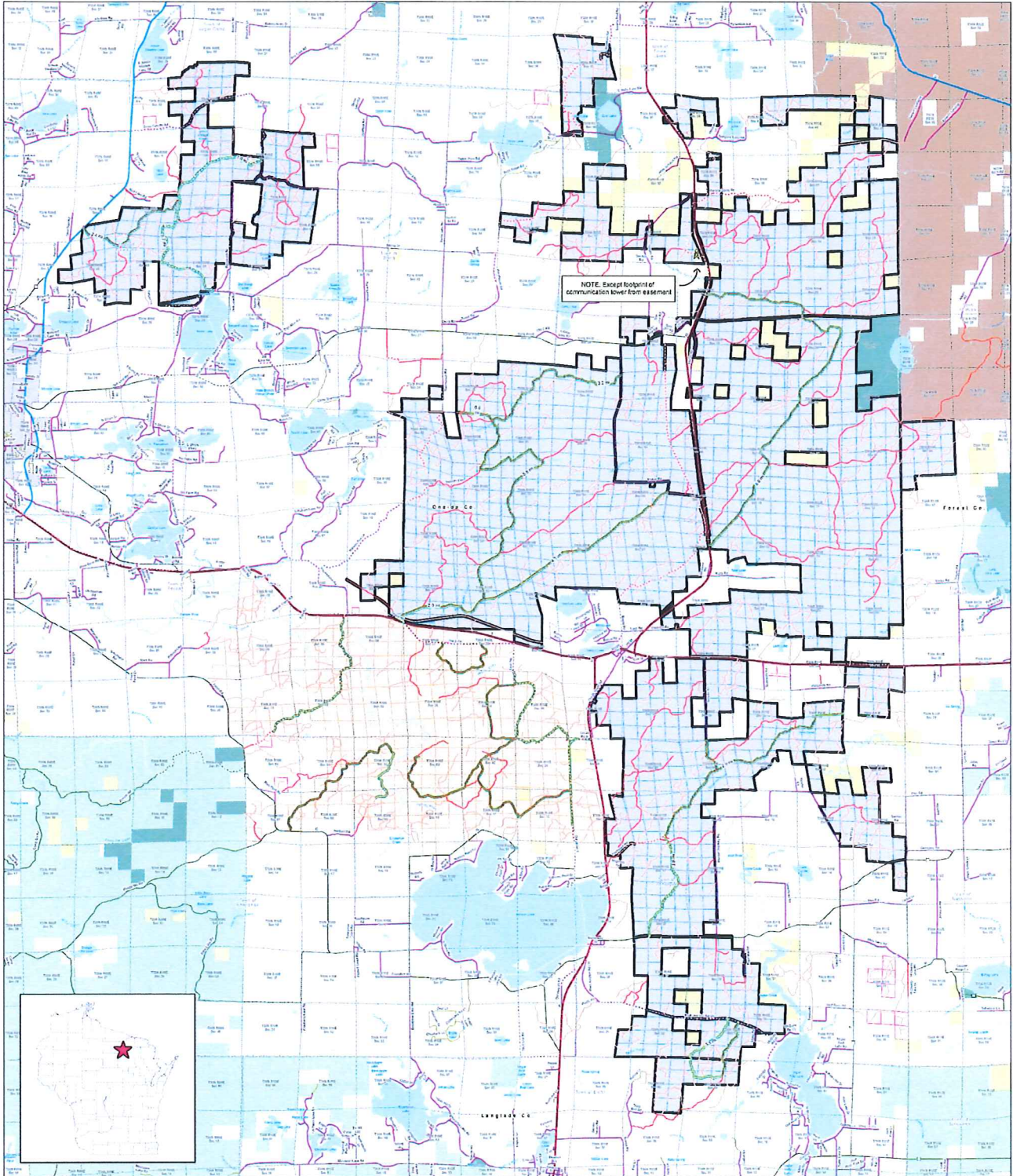
- Forest Legacy Program (federal) = \$11,000,000 (awarded)
- Gift from NFWF = \$600,000 (awarded)
- KNSP (state) = \$4,028,000 (requested)

Status

- The Conservation Fund acquired the Pelican River Forest (nearly 70,000 acres) in 2021
- Phase 1 (12,000 acres) easement was conveyed to state DNR in March 2022
- Phase 2 (56,000 acres) easement will be sold to state DNR once federal and state funds are available.
- State DNR Natural Resources Board approved Phase 2 unanimously in November 2022

Key Features

- Protects the largest remaining unprotected private working forest in Wisconsin, sustaining hundreds of jobs in the forest products sector
- Expands opportunities for hunting, fishing, hiking, snowmobiling and wildlife viewing
- Preserves water quality of the Wolf and Wisconsin rivers, which provide drinking water to over 40,000 people downstream
- Provides permanent public access to as many as 70 miles of roads



Legend

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication Tower Decker Co. Snowmobile Trails | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roads Federal State County Municipal Private Other | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DNR Managed Land DNR Fee Title DNR Easement DNR Easement Closed to Public Access County Forest National Forest County |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interior Roads (Source: The Foreland Group) "New" Road "Roads Road" Phase 2 Designated Open Access Roads (Preliminary) Phase 1 Designated Open Access Roads Easement Footprint BCPL Land | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commitment Parcels Phase 1 Phase 2 Other: The Conservation Fund Parcels (Pelican River Forest LLC) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Section Boundary City/Village Town Boundary |

Pelican River

Phase 2 Commitment Parcels & Roads Inventory

0 2
Miles

Easement Footprint
(Phase 2 GIS acres):
56,259 acres

N

BUREAU OF FACILITIES AND LANDS
REAL ESTATE SECTION
WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

The data shown on this map have been obtained from various sources and are of varying age, accuracy and resolution. This map is not intended to be used for navigation, nor is the map to be used as a source of information about legal land ownership or public access.

Users of these maps should confirm the accuracy of data through other means in order to avoid hazardous. No warranty, expressed or implied, is made regarding the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of any information displayed on this map.

MAP PRODUCED 6/25/2022 gfm (ver. 01)

5-year Work Plan – 2020-2024

G. Increase awareness of sensitive areas and species			
	1. Develop a sensitive area webpage.	LWCD	Web page developed. (2-year goal).
	2. Increase awareness of hubs, corridors and landscape connectivity.	LWCD, DNR	Incorporate material in 1 presentation.
	3. Support landowners utilizing easements, land trusts, and incentive payments to protect sensitive and critical areas.	Northwoods Land Trust, LWCD	Distribute one educational piece. Communicate with Northwoods Land Trust 1 time for updates.
	4. Provide technical assistance to lake associations/districts to identify and protect sensitive areas.	LWCD, DNR, OCLRA	Promote development of 2 lake management plans. Encourage implementation of lake management plans via OCLRA.
	5. Support local governments in adopting ordinances to protect sensitive areas and species.	P&Z, LWCD, DNR	As needed.
	6. Support the Oneida County Forestry & Outdoor Recreation Dept. to protect/manage 'exceptional resources' in county forests.	DNR, Forestry LWCD	1 new exceptional resource area every 5 years.
H. Increase forestry outreach			
	1. Promote water quality BMP's.	LWCD, DNR, Forestry	1 presentation, 1 article written.
	2. Expand outreach on invasive species that affect forests.	DNR, WHIP, LWCD	Continued partnership with WHIP. Hold officer positions within WHIP.
	3. Increase communication between LWCD and Forestry & Outdoor Recreation Departments.	Forestry, LWCD	Meet 2 times.

Under Goal #2 - Increase our community's level of Natural Resource knowledge and inspire stewardship

☆ Ecological Index



Watershed Code: **040302020103**

Watershed Name: **Upper Post Lake-Wolf River**

Ecological Health Score: **91.1 /100**

Statewide Eco Health Rank: **100 /1,744**

Statewide Priority: **Y**

HUC6 Priority: **Y**

% Natural Land Cover: **92.77%**

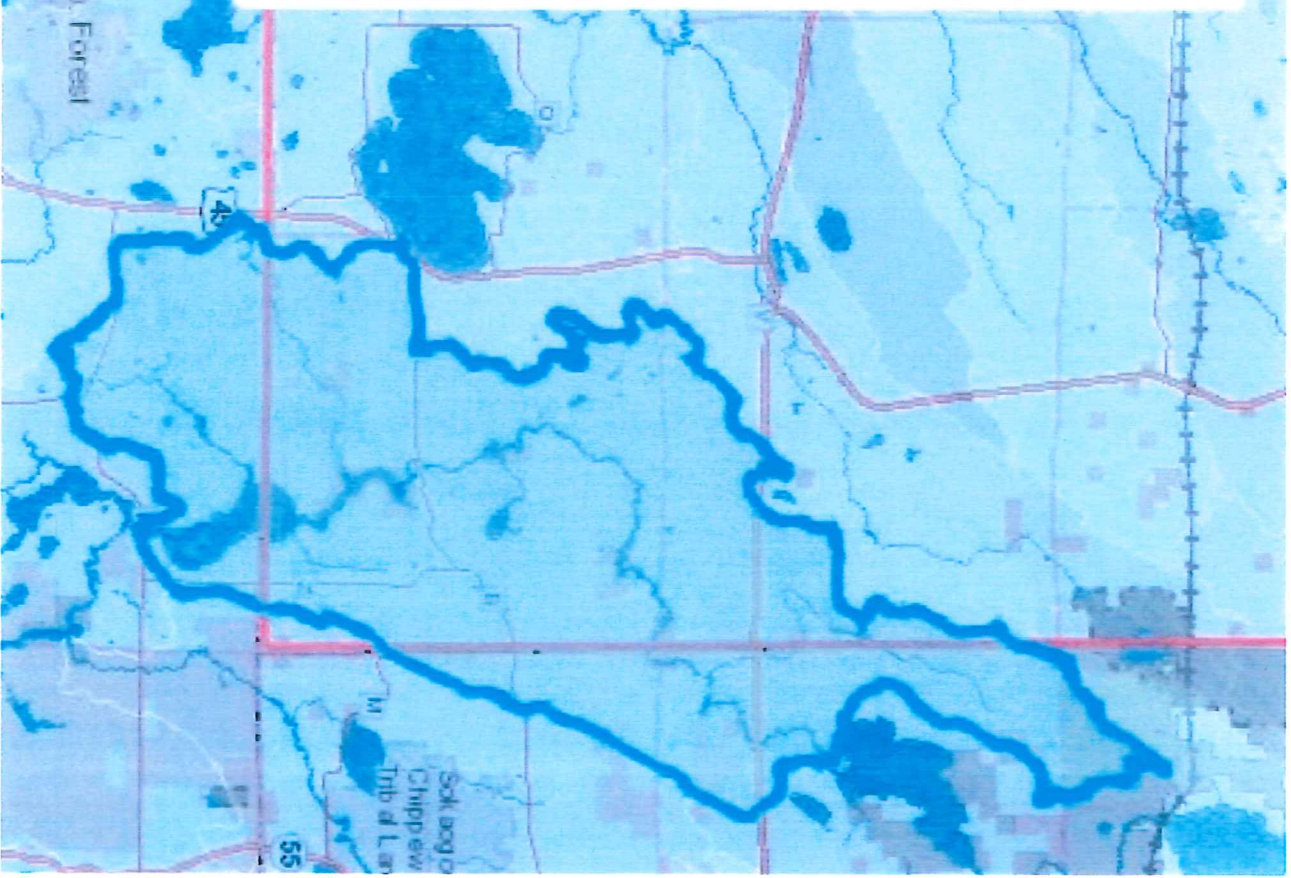
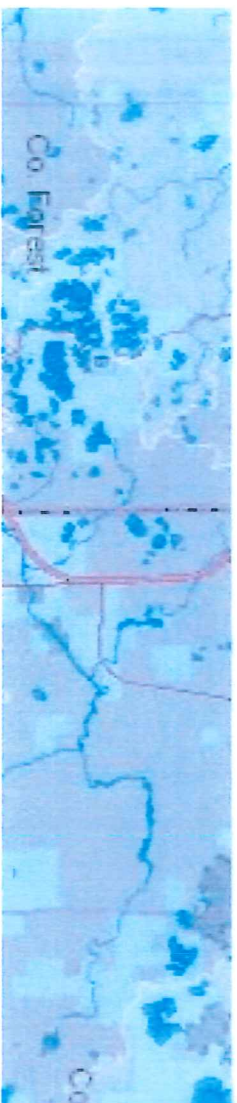
Majority County: **Oneida County-WI**

For More Information:

[HWHOW Webpage](#)

[Remove from Results](#)

[View Additional Details](#)



I want to...

☆ Ecological Index

Watershed Code: **070700010704**

Watershed Name: **Gudegast Creek**

Ecological Health Score: **95.4** /100

Statewide Eco-Health Rank: **18** /1,744

Statewide Priority: **Y**

HUC6 Priority: **Y**

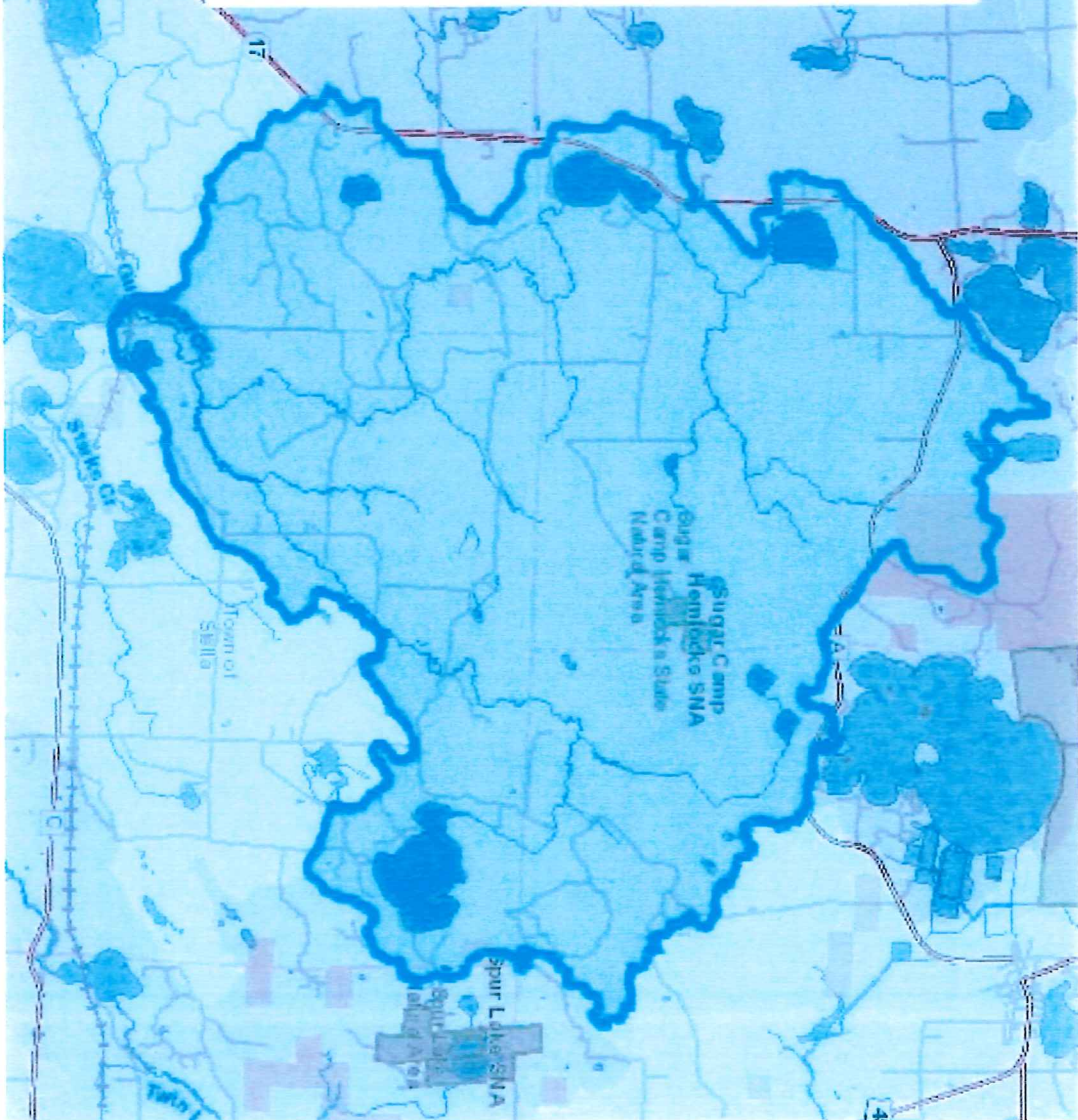
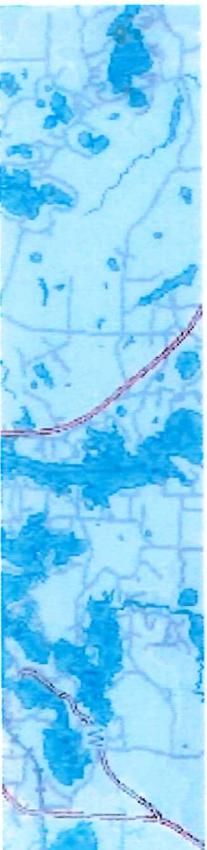
% Natural Land Cover: **85.48%**

Majority County: **Oneida County-WI**

For More Information:

[HWHOW Webpage](#)

[Add to Results](#) [View Additional Details](#)



☆ Ecological Index

X

Watershed Code: **070700010707**

Watershed Name: **Middle Pelican River**

Ecological Health Score: **91.8** /100

Statewide Eco Health Rank: **81** /1,744

Statewide Priority: **Y**

HUC6 Priority: **Y**

% Natural Land Cover: **97.76%**

Majority County: **Oneida County-WI**

For More Information:

[HWHOW Webpage](#)

[Add to Results](#)

[View Additional Details](#)

