

Dakota County Land Conservation Marcott Valley Easement Project



**Lessard-
Sams
Outdoor
Heritage
Council**

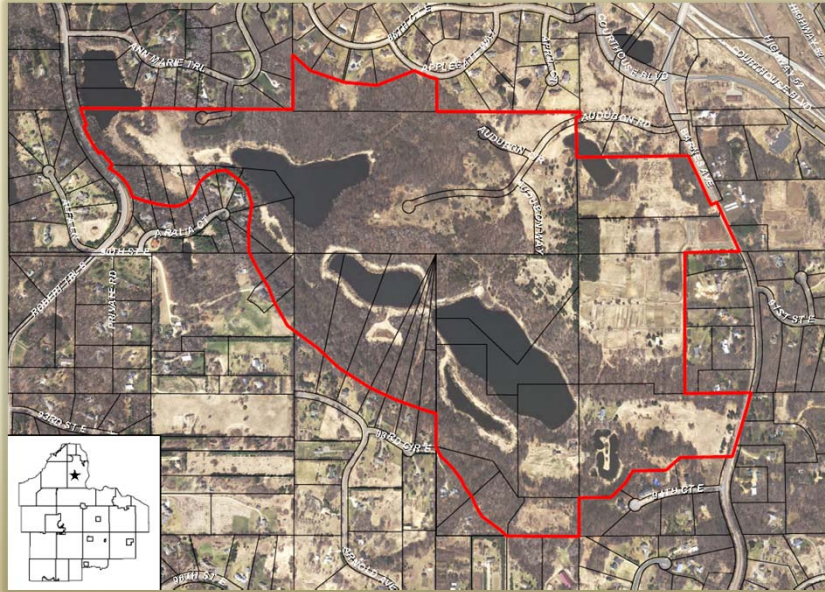
August 4, 2016

Presentation Overview

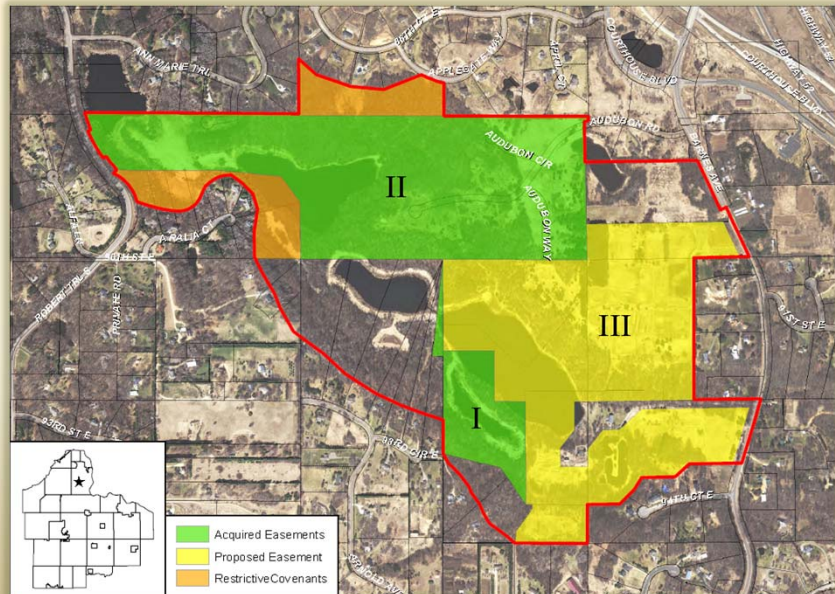
- Landscape Context
- Natural Features
- Former and Current Uses
- Project Components
 - Easement
 - a. NRMP
 - b. Designated building site
 - Option Agreement



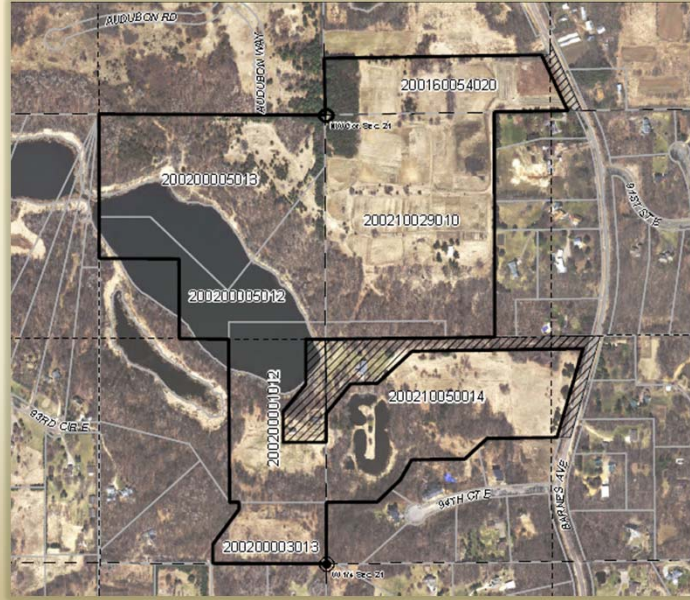
Marcott Valley Protection Area



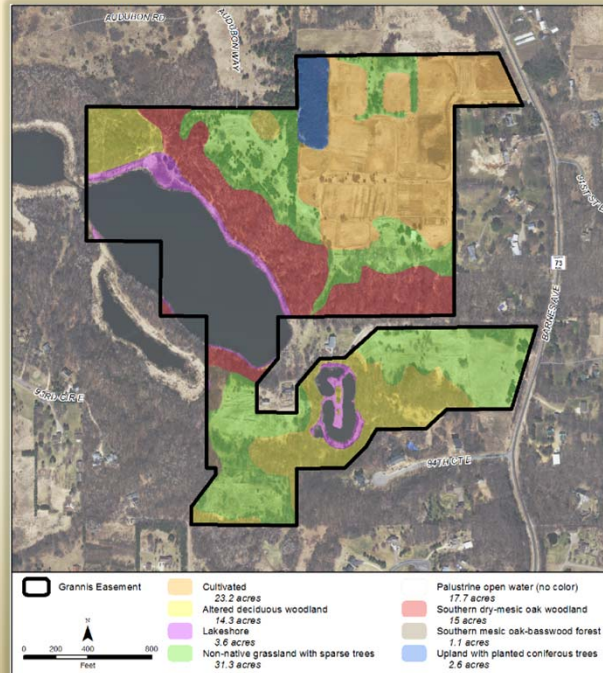
Current and Proposed Protection



Grannis Family Property



Property Land Cover



Natural Features

Pristine Waters

- 18-acre lake
 - 50-foot depth
 - 20 to 30-foot clarity
- 10 fish species
 - Walleye
 - Largemouth bass
 - Northern pike
 - Panfish



Natural Features

Diverse Upland

Oak and Basswood Forest and Grasslands

- 27 mammal species
- 109 bird species
- 13 reptile and amphibian species



Former Property Uses



Dairy farming in the 1920's

Fifty years of raising ducks, geese, pheasants, and swans
- DNR Trumpeter Swan Reintroduction Program



Current Activities: Restoration



Introducing Native Species



Improving Edge Habitat



Removing Invasive Species



Carp Removal

Current Activities: Wildlife Rehabilitation

- Thousands of Waterfowl
 - Mallards
 - Wood Ducks
 - Hooded Mergansers
- Great Blue Herons
- Pileated Woodpeckers
- Flying Squirrels



Current Activities: Programs and Classes



Phase III Project Components

- Acquisition of 108.7-acre Easement
 - Natural Resource Management Plan
- Eight-year Option Agreement
 - Acquire fee title of both easement areas
 - Restrictions on Homestead Exception Area
- Operating Agreement
- \$1M from Dakota County
- Significant Landowner Donation



Key Easement Requirements

- Conservation values are protected
 - Annual monitoring and enforcement
- All uses and activities must not degrade or damage habitat



Easement Restrictions

- No residential, commercial or industrial development
- No roadways or paved trails
- No new utilities
- No agricultural use
- No alteration of waterbodies



Allowed Uses

- Habitat restoration and wildlife rehabilitation
- Existing non-paved trails
- Small, non-permanent structures
- Public access with landowner permission
- Restricted motorized vehicle use
- Low impact activities
- Designated building area



Natural Resource Management Plan

- Preliminary and Final NRMP
 - Manage habitat
 - Approve improvements
- Landowner Agreement
 - Landowner commitment of a minimum \$50,000 cash or in-kind contribution to implement NRMP



Designated Building Area

- Located on former farmstead, on perimeter of property, adjacent to residential properties
- Served by existing gravel access road
- Includes existing 1,500 square foot building and small parking area
 - Seasonal program staging/equipment storage area
 - Building cannot be moved; it must be torn down and the area restored
- Would allow future building replacement

Designated Building Area

Former Farmstead



Existing Building

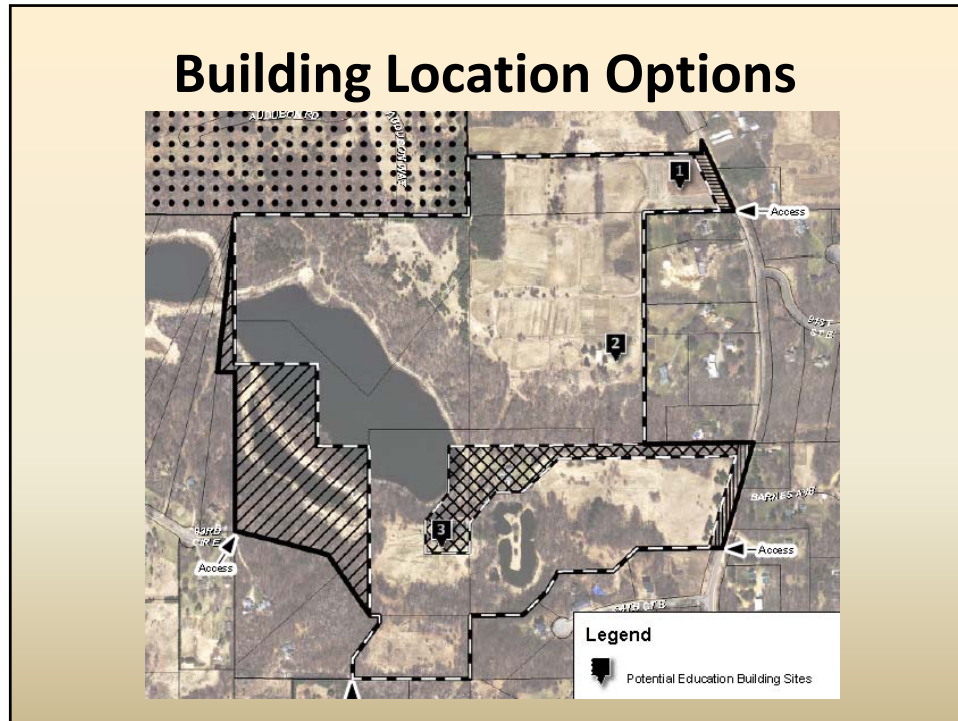


Designated Building Area



Revised Designated Building Area





Building Location Options

- 1) Northeast Area
 - Poor setting
 - Distance from rest of property for programs
- 2) Existing Site
- 3) Homestead Property
 - New 1,500-foot access road needed
 - Steep topography
 - Removal of 150-year old oak trees
 - Closer proximity to the lake and “refuge area”
 - Poor transportation access
- 4) Other

Homestead Exception Area



Homestead Exception Area

- 7.0 acres includes: house, driveway, two barns
- Future ownership (for next 60 years)
 - 1) Family
 - 2) Educational non-profit
 - 3) County
- Restrictions
 - 1) 10% house expansion
 - 2) Home-level garage
 - 3) Easement terms followed



Project Comparison

Grannis Family Property

- 108 acres
- Unpaved trails
- Educational programs
- 2-acre Designated Area (2%)
 - Multi-purpose building
 - Parking area
 - Future building, with renewable energy structures and associated utilities

Carpenter Nature Center

2015 - \$1.033M of OH Funding

- 85 acres
- Existing and new paved and soft-surface trails and trailhead
- Educational programs
- 10-acre Designated Area (12%)
 - Raise and produce crops
 - New structures to facilitate the sale of agricultural products
 - Poles, towers, antennas, renewable energy structures/ and associated utilities

Project Benefits

- Prime wildlife habitat protection/enhancement in the metro region
- Compatible public use
- Leveraged resources



