UNDERSTANDING THE NATURAL AND CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE OF POWERS BLUFF: IMPLICATIONS FOR PARK INTERPRETATION AND DESIGN

by

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Rising up from the surrounding farmland, Powers Bluff is the highest point in Wood County. Its isolation and solitude appeals the nature observer. Add snow to its steep slopes and it lures winter sports enthusiasts. Its prolific spring wildflowers bring many visitors, and the bright fall colors of its hardwoods attract sightseers. The park is used in all the seasons, often visited by the same persons at different times. Most of the visitors are area residents, but the park and its attributes are well known outside the county. Seventy acres of the park is a State Natural Area, with geologic and vegetative resources of state significance. Elsewhere in the park are several notable cultural features, from an Indian settlement. Two cemeteries and two dance rings are the only visible remnants of a Wisconsin Indian culture that occupied Powers Bluff until the 1920's.

Photo courtesy of Wisconsin State Historical Society, Gerend Collection
Because so little has been written about the history of the Bluff and the surrounding area, this study gathered data through historical research and through interviews with long-time local residents. The interviews are contained in Appendix A and contain many wonderful stories about the Bluff. The interviewees revealed what the Bluff means to them and their feelings about it.

White Pigeon in full regalia at Skunk Hill.

Photo courtesy of Wisconsin State Historical Society, Gerend Collection
This study provides a basis for assessing the importance of the natural and cultural features at the Bluff. It also analyzes the activities that take place within the park, and the relationships between the activities and the natural and cultural resources. Certain activities are in conflict with another, or with the resources. This study proposes changes for Powers Bluff Park, which would minimize the conflicts and would improve the park experience for all users. This study offers suggestions for interpretation, providing the groundwork for an interpretive plan for the park. The text of the present interpretive signs was written in the 1950's and this study provides recommendations for updating the signs. Also, the park presents a rich environment for educational use by area schools. Teacher guides and improved interpretation could increase usage and promote awareness of the park and its resources to area residents.
Recommendations for the re-design of the park, listed below, are based on a conviction that the landscape of Powers Bluff is special and unique, and needs to be protected and used with care.

1. The County should develop a comprehensive plan for Powers Bluff Park, in order to accommodate all uses, while protecting its natural resources.

2. The purchase of additional park land could allow for expansion of recreational activities, while protecting the State Natural Area and historical sites.

3. Until additional land can be purchased, a simple park re-design, with protective zones around the dance rings and cemeteries, would be an easy, no-cost start to resolving problems and conflicts.

4. An interpretive plan needs to be implemented. The rich cultural history associated with the bluff, in addition to its complex natural resources, provides the information and themes for the interpretive plan.

5. An educational package should be developed, with the assistance of students and teachers. Such a package or program could reach great numbers of students and create stewards and interested citizens for the park.

6. A "Friends Group" could be a great asset to the park. Friends or volunteers could help with raising funds, stewardship of the land, volunteer labor for brushing of the trails or other jobs, and as docents/interpreters for school groups or seasonal nature walks.
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## I. INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT
- NEED FOR THIS STUDY .................................................... 1
- STATE INTERESTS IN POWERS BLUFF .............................. 4

## II. HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL BACKGROUND OF POWERS BLUFF
- METHODS ...................................................................... 7
- INDIAN INHABITANTS .................................................. 8
- SPIRIT HOUSES ............................................................ 13
- BIG DRUM RELIGION ................................................... 16
- EARLY SETTLEMENT ...................................................... 19
- BETHEL .......................................................................... 19
- POWERS BLUFF/SKUNK HILL ............................................. 20

## III. EXISTING CONDITIONS
- INTRODUCTION .......................................................... 23
- GEOLOGY ....................................................................... 25
- EXISTING VEGETATION ............................................... 26
- CULTURAL ARTIFACTS .................................................. 29
- EXISTING INTERPRETATION .......................................... 30
- CURRENT PARK ACTIVITIES ........................................... 31
- ACTIVITY AREAS .......................................................... 32

## IV. NEED FOR RE-DESIGN OF PARK FACILITIES
- NEED FOR PARK RE-DESIGN ......................................... 34
- CONFLICTS BETWEEN ACTIVITIES .................................. 34
- CONFLICTS BETWEEN ACTIVITIES AND NATURAL RESOURCES 34
- CONFLICTS BETWEEN ACTIVITIES AND CULTURAL RESOURCES 35

## V. ALTERNATIVE PLANS
- INTRODUCTION .......................................................... 36
- REDUCING CONFLICT BETWEEN ACTIVITIES .................. 36
- FITTING ACTIVITIES TO THE SITE .................................. 39
- ALTERNATIVES ............................................................ 39

## VI. IMPLICATIONS FOR INTERPRETATION
- INTERPRETATION AND INTERPRETIVE PLANNING .............. 48
- GOALS AND OBJECTIVES .............................................. 49
- MARKET ANALYSIS ...................................................... 51
INTERPRETIVE RESOURCE INVENTORY .............................................................. 52
PRIMARY INTERPRETIVE THEME ................................................................. 52
SUBTHEMES ........................................................................................................ 52
MEDIA .................................................................................................................. 60
IMPLEMENTATION ............................................................................................ 67
EVALUATION ..................................................................................................... 68

VII. DISCUSSION .............................................................................................. 71
RECOMMENDATIONS ...................................................................................... 71

VIII. BIBLIOGRAPHY ...................................................................................... 74

APPENDIX A-INTERVIEWEES AND INTERVIEWS ............................................ 76
APPENDIX B-SPECIES PRESENCE LIST .............................................................. 94
APPENDIX C-TRAIL PLANNING CLASSIFICATIONS ......................................... 96
APPENDIX D-TEXT OF EXISTING INTERPRETIVE SIGNS .............................. 97
APPENDIX E-INTERPRETIVE SITE INVENTORIES ........................................ 100
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

FIGURE 1. EARLY PHOTO AT POWERS BLUFF ................................................................. 9
FIGURE 2. CHIPPEWA SPIRIT HOUSE ................................................................. 18
FIGURE 3. SACRED DRUM ........................................................................ 18
MAP 1. WOOD COUNTY ........................................................................... 23
MAP 2. POWERS BLUFF PARK ........................................................................... 24
FIGURE 4. BOULDER TRAINS ........................................................................... 25
MAP 3. TENSION ZONE ............................................................................... 27
FIGURE 5. ACTIVITIES/FEATURES MATRIX .................................................. 37
FIGURE 6. RELATIONSHIPS MATRIX .............................................................. 37
FIGURE 7. ZONE DIAGRAM ......................................................................... 38
FIGURE 8. SITE ANALYSIS ........................................................................ 40
FIGURE 9. SCHEMATIC SITE PLAN, ALTERNATIVE I ........................................... 45
FIGURE 10. SCHEMATIC SITE PLAN, ALTERNATIVE II ...................................... 46
FIGURE 11. SCHEMATIC SITE PLAN, ALTERNATIVE III ..................................... 47
FIGURE 12. INTERPRETIVE SITE MAP ............................................................ 50
FIGURE 13. JOHN NUWI, OR NEWE, OR NOUWE ............................................. 55
FIGURE 14. JOHN YOUNG ........................................................................... 56
FIGURE 15 SIGN PANEL FOR JOHN NEWE CEMETERY .................................. 57
FIGURE 16. SIGN PANEL FOR KIOSK ............................................................ 58
FIGURE 17. BLUEPRINT FOR KIOSK ............................................................. 59
FIGURE 18. LEAH GRAHAM ........................................................................ 85
FIGURE 19. GRAHAM FAMILY ..................................................................... 90
FIGURE 20. EMIL MUELLER ..................................................................... 93
I. INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

Rising from the surrounding flat farmland and marshes, Powers Bluff is a landscape containing important natural features as well as historic artifacts. One-hundred and sixty acres of the bluff are maintained as a county park. A portion of the park is preserved as a State Natural Area, although some important cultural features outside the natural area also need to be preserved. The park is used seasonally for various types of recreation. It was apparent from interviews with local residents and park users that conflicts existed between recreational use and preservation. These conflicts could be reduced or eliminated by implementing a new site plan and an interpretive plan for the park. A site design that is sensitive to the needs of the various users can enhance the experience for all park visitors. An interpretive plan can create awareness of these sites and promote thoughtful use of the park.

This study will first review and assess the significance of the historical and natural features associated with the park. Based on this review, I will 1) propose an interpretive plan to increase awareness of these features and 2) explore design alternatives to reduce conflicts between recreational uses and the existing natural and cultural resources.

NEED FOR THE STUDY

Although Powers Bluff Park contains historical resources of state and national significance, few people are aware of its importance and little has been written about the history of the area. Some of the local residents still remember, or have passed
along memories and stories about the area, yet few have been recorded. There are historical remnants, such as old photographs, interviews, and recollections, but no one has compiled a comprehensive natural and cultural history of Powers Bluff. The site is significant not only for its geology and its vegetation, and but also as the home of the Skunk Hill band of Potawatomi Indians.

Robert Birmingham, the Wisconsin State Archaeologist, and Dr. David Wrone of the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, an authority on Wisconsin Indians, both feel that the events related to Powers Bluff are a part of Wisconsin history that need to be told (Birmingham, interview, Oct., 1997, State Historical Society; Wrone, lecture, UW-Marathon County, Sept. 25, 1997). Instead of signs describing the Indian as the noble red man (text from an interpretive sign on Powers Bluff), we need honest and forthright information that 'tells it like it is.' Current trends indicate that this is proper; recent exhibits in museums and parks are tackling such difficult and unpleasant subjects as the Holocaust and slavery in the American South. It is not just politically correct; this sort of information can create an awareness and appreciation of the people who endured hardships and survived. The Skunk Hill Potawatomi and their descendants are survivors who have a story to tell.

One of the stated goals of the Wood County Park and Forestry Committee is "Through conservation and wise use of resources, preserve, develop and make accessible such quantity and quality of outdoor recreation as will be necessary and desirable for individual enjoyment and to assure the physical, cultural and spiritual benefits of outdoor recreation." (Wood County Park, Recreation and Open Spaces
Plan, 1996). Wood County is in the same tight financial state that many other public
despite shrinking budgets, pressure to produce revenue, possible loss of
services because of cutbacks, all while maintaining recreational opportunities for its
citizens. With a limited budget, the Wood County Park Department at Powers Bluff
attempts to accommodate many different users, while preserving a historical site with
natural and cultural features.

Powers Bluff Park possesses natural and cultural resources of regional and
state significance, worthy of documentation. A re-design would allow continued use
of the park’s recreational opportunities while protecting its rich historical resources.
The information in this study is intended to be used by park management, planners,
interpreters, and educators. This study could also be used as a rationale for the
purchase of additional land for the park.

This study will provide background information to be used in a proposed re-
design of Powers Bluff Park; it is not a definitive study or a master plan.
Information-gathering is one component in the planning process. In general, the
planning process includes certain common elements: 1) resource analysis, 2) user
analysis, 3) design solutions, and 4) public participation and review. (Knudsen, 326).
This study is not intended to be a comprehensive overview; it has selected one
problem (conflicts between users) and one aspect (historical) to examine in depth.
This study polled a selected group of local residents and park users, and was not
meant to be a representative sample.
For the purpose of this study, I will refer to American indigenous people as Indians. One of my Indian interviewees informed me that the term 'Native Americans' refers to a racial group. I use the term "Indian" as a way of identifying indigenous Americans, when specific tribal designation is not appropriate.

STATE INTERESTS IN POWERS BLUFF

The State Natural Area Program (NAP) began as the Wisconsin Scientific Areas Program. It is housed within the Bureau of Endangered Resources (BER), within the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). Its mission is to locate and preserve a system of State Natural Areas harboring all types of biotic communities, rare species, and other significant natural features native to Wisconsin. These areas are generally remnants of natural plant and animal communities that escaped the effects of intensive settlement. Designation confers a significant level of protection. The purpose of the program is to preserve these natural areas with their plant and animal species, as benchmarks against which we can evaluate present and future human impact on Wisconsin's landscape.

The management plan for the Natural Area at Powers Bluff was developed and approved by the Department of Natural Resources Bureau of Endangered Resources (BER) and Wood County. It is reviewed periodically. The primary objective of the plan is to protect the site in a natural condition with little human disturbance. General management of State Natural Areas prohibits the removal of plants, animals, rocks, and minerals. Hunting, fishing, trapping, berry picking, and nut gathering are permitted. The cutting or removal of living or dead trees, standing or down, is
limited to those trees that may endanger the safety of park users. Introduction of exotic plant or animal species is prohibited. The use of herbicides, pesticides, fungicides, and biological controls is prohibited.

Intensive public use in the Natural Area is discouraged. Recreational use, such as hiking, nature appreciation, and educational use, which does not degrade the natural features is encouraged. Boundary and interpretive signs are allowed, but attention drawing signs to fragile sites is discouraged. Vehicular traffic is discouraged, although hiking trails and service roads are allowed. No buildings or other amenities can be constructed inside the boundaries of the State Natural Area. Any public use or maintenance facility should be located in a buffer zone or outside the natural area.

The specific management plan for Powers Bluff identifies the 70 acre area as a southern mesic forest. A plant species of concern is butternut (Juglans cinerea), due to a canker that has devastated this species in surrounding woodlands. No animal species of concern have been identified. Facility-related concerns include road maintenance through the southwest portion of the natural area, maintenance of boundary fences, trail maintenance and interpretive signing. Use of the area by horses is discouraged because horse feces often contain the seeds of exotic plant species. The plan recommends monitoring the site for breeding birds every two to three years. Research and educational use by school groups is encouraged. Inspections are required once a year and reported to the BER. The anticipated effects
of these management actions is the maintenance of the site's integrity (Powers Bluff Maple Woods No. 131, State Natural Area, Management Plan).

The management plan was updated in 1995 and has been followed by the Wood County Park and Forestry Department. Wood County and the Bureau of Endangered Resources concur that that the management objectives for the area are "to preserve and protect the natural ecological values by permitting natural processes to continue and maintaining access to the interior for interpretive and educational purposes" (Correspondence, Wood County Park and Forestry Department, Larry Francis, Maintenance Program Supervisor, to Randy Hoffman, Natural Areas Management Specialist, Bureau of Endangered Resources).
II. HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL BACKGROUND OF POWERS BLUFF

METHODS

In order to gather information about Powers Bluff, two types of research were done: a historical study was done for the area, including regional information on the Potawatomi. Historical research can provide enlightenment and perspective, and can help to understand present-day situations and facilitate intelligent policy making (Kyvig, 11-12). The historical background helps to tell the story of the Bluff, giving meaning to features in the landscape.

The second type of research was the collecting of oral histories. The purpose of this part of the study was discovery. By interviewing selected persons at some length, I hoped to perceive Powers Bluff as they did. Stories or myths concerning the bluff were uncovered. The landscape of Powers Bluff took on new meaning through the language of the interviewees. The interview process revealed personal expressions of the Bluff's significance. For instance, naming of the different rock outcroppings, such as Devil's Chair, gave the landscape of Powers Bluff meaning for both European-descent residents and Indians.

These two types of data were merged so that the story of the area is told through historical data and through the voices of longtime residents (see Appendix A), thus providing a fuller understanding of the unique character of the Bluff.

For interviews, I chose people with an evident connection to the Bluff. One set of interviewees were Indians, people with traditional beliefs and spiritual attachment to the Bluff. Another set of interviewees were long-term and short-term
local residents. Because I was seeking historical as well as personal information, I chose three elderly residents whose average age was 86 and who had lived in close proximity to the Bluff. Another set of interviewees were maintenance people. I chose to include maintenance staff because they may be more aware of conflicts, and because maintenance is an issue with which park planners need to deal (Molnar, 72).

INDIAN INHABITANTS OF CENTRAL WISCONSIN

The landscape of Powers Bluff was not always so beautiful; it was not always a park. Almost one hundred years ago, it was the property of a logging company who cut every sizable tree. Early photos (figure 1) show a barren landscape with few trees. It must have been an inhospitable place to live, with no shade from the summer sun and no shelter from the winter wind. It was inaccessible, surrounded by marshlands, with a makeshift logging road and foot paths as the only means of transportation. In the winter the snow drifted, making it nearly impossible to travel. This was the site settled by the Skunk Hill band of the Potawatomi. To understand why they would have chosen such a remote and austere place to live, one must examine earlier events preceding European settlement.

Central Wisconsin was inhabited by various tribes of Woodland Indians, with the controlling tribe changing from time to time. The Woodland tribes each spoke a dialect of the Algonquian language and possessed a common culture which was well-adapted to the forest environment. Of the Indians that lived in central Wisconsin, the
Chippewa, the Menominee, the Winnebago, and the Potawatomi are Woodland tribes. These Woodland Indians had a culture which was well-adapted to the woodland environment, using its plants and animals for food, shelter, and other material goods. Their way of life changed with the arrival of the European fur trade. Their economy became increasingly dependent on trade, and their material culture came to include European trade goods. The Potawatomi became successful middlemen in the fur trade and their settlement at Green Bay became center for trading.

Central Wisconsin provided a rich environment for these Woodland tribes, with the occupying tribe changing from time to time. The Menominee, Chippewa, and
Winnebago were the early inhabitants, with the Potawatomi moving in after 1833 when they signed a treaty and lost their lands to the south in the Chicago and Milwaukee area.

There is little written about the very early history of central Wisconsin, but there are some documented events. One such event was the Battle of Smokey Hill, which occurred near the Eau Pleine River, on the east side of Rice Lake (currently contained in the Mead Wildlife Area in southwestern Marathon County). This area was rich in game, as well as blueberries, sugar maples, and wild rice. Encampments of Chippewa and Winnebago both took advantage of the opportunities of the area. The legend of Smokey Hill, as recounted by Malcolm Rosholt, tells of a battle between the Chippewa and the Winnebago that occurred during the French and Indian War (1755-58). The Chippewa had been camped on Smokey Hill, but had travelled south in order to tap some sugar maples. In their absence, the Winnebago moved in. When the Chippewa found out what had happened, they went to their allies, the French, to help them win back their land. (It is almost certain that the Chippewa were trading furs and maple sugar at this time with the French at Green Bay, probably travelling down the Eau Pleine to the Wisconsin River, then portaging at the Fox River and travelling on to the trade center of Green Bay [Rosholt, 89]). French aid came from their nearest fort at Green Bay, in the form of two small cannons and numerous muskets. The Chippewa and French drove the Winnebago east into an ambush, where the Winnebago were "massacred" (Rosholt, 91).
After the decline of the fur trade in the early nineteenth century, the early loggers moved into the area of Central Wisconsin. The earliest of the white settlers made the first contact with the occupying Indian tribe, the Menominee. In 1827, Amable Grignon had the first trading post near Necedah. Also at this time Daniel Whitney obtained permission from the Winnebago to make shake shingles on the upper Wisconsin River. Whitney’s first mill was on the Wisconsin River near Nekoosa in 1832. Grignon’s first mill on the Wisconsin River required permission from the Menominee, who in return received gunpowder, shot, and flint. In 1836 the federal government signed a treaty with the Menominee for a strip of land 3 miles wide on either side of the Wisconsin River from south Wood County to the Wausau area (Rosholt, 10-13).

After the loggers had harvested what they wanted, they moved on. In this area of central Wisconsin the first settlers were Germans who had moved from Manitowoc, arriving in the 1870’s (Rosholt, 87). They were met by Potawatomi who had moved north from the Milwaukee area after signing away their land to the federal government. At this time the Potawatomi were occupying the land near Rice Lake in southwestern Marathon County, now part of the Mead Wildlife Area.) Stories of early inhabitants recount the sound of drums coming from the vicinity of Rice Lake when the Potawatomi were having a festival or religious ceremony (Rosholt, 88).

These stories characterize this area in central Wisconsin as rich in fish and game, as well as plant material such as wild rice and sugar maples. It was fought
over and dominated by various Woodland tribes, including the Chippewa, the
Menominee, the Winnebago, and the Potawatomi. The European fur trade came and
going, the loggers came and went; it was the white settlers in the mid-1800’s who
came and stayed. They were land hungry and saw the resident Indian as an
impediment to their destiny. The earliest settlers merely wanted land. Later, they
sought to be rid of the Indian menace and wanted the Indians to relocate and
"disappear."

With the Treaty of 1833 the Potawatomi lost the last of their Wisconsin
territory. The treaty provided the government with the option of "removing" the
Indians to a reservation. After this treaty, some of the Potawatomi were relocated to
a reservation, which was first located in Iowa, then in Kansas. Some Potawatomi hid
to avoid removal, and became refugees. These 'stray band' Potawatomi were
sometimes joined by other members of their tribe who fled from the reservation in
Kansas and returned to Wisconsin. They settled in remote areas in order to avoid
contact with the white man. They were considered squatters, landless refugees living
and roaming the central and northern part of Wisconsin (Birmingham, 1). Indian
Farms or settlements existed at Rozelleville and in Taylor County near Perkinstown,
as well as at Skunk Hill, now called Powers Bluff.

The various tribes that had inhabited central Wisconsin each suffered a
separate fate after signing treaties and losing their land to the federal government.
The Chippewa and Menominee were moved to reservations in the northern part of the
state. Because these reservations were near their homelands, these tribes were
afforded the opportunity to maintain some cultural and geographical continuity. The Potawatomi and Winnebago were not as fortunate, since their reservations were located west of the Mississippi on prairie lands. Neither tribe have any land claims within the state and have received little or no benefit from the treaties they signed (Birmingham, 1).

The Potawatomi settlement at Powers Bluff became known as the Skunk Hill band, and are now called the Wisconsin Rapids Potawatomi. They are the descendants of the people who lived and died on the bluff, who constructed the cemeteries and spirit houses, and who practiced the Dream Dance religion celebrated in the dance rings.

SPIRIT HOUSES

Spirit houses, or grave houses, or grave boxes, or, in Ojibwa, djibe’gumig (djibe=spirit, gumig=locative) are houses or shelters erected over a grave. Over a hundred years ago they were constructed of logs or birch bark, but in the late 1800’s they started to be constructed of sawn lumber, as seen in figure 2. An interpretive sign at the LaPointe Cemetery on Madeleine Island states that Christianized Indians built the spirit house for their dead. (I surmise that the word "Christianized" connotates Europeanized rather than actually converting to a Christian religion, since the spirit houses show no outward signs of Christianity such as crosses. It was common for European fur traders to demand a show of acceptance of European culture as a prerequisite for trade, and these spirit houses could have been a symbol of this "Europeanization.") The spirit houses were and are still being built by various
Woodland Indian tribes in Wisconsin, including the Chippewa, the Prairie Band Potawatomi, the Menominee, and the Winnebago.

Today spirit houses still exist at the LaPointe Cemetery on Madeleine Island, (with the Red Cliff Chippewa tribe as caretakers), in a cemetery marked by a historical sign near Odanah on State Highway 2, and in the Indian Bill Cemetery at Powers Bluff. Many of these spirit houses are in the state of disrepair, decaying and rotting, but they are meant to do so. The spirit houses were intended to disintegrate gracefully, and with their demise to release the soul of the deceased for the journey to the here-after. Spirit houses were still being built by the Winnebago as recently as the 1960’s (Lurie, xxvii). The Menominee settlement of Zoar, outside of Keshena, continues to construct spirit houses over their graves (telephone interview with Stan Webster, Dec. 1990).

The graves and houses were always laid out on a east-west axis, with the feet pointing west so that the soul, upon waking, would see the setting sun and know which way to travel to the afterlife. The presence of spirit houses indicates a belief in an after-world (Densmore, 75).

The spirit houses often had a window cut out, sometimes with a ledge underneath the window. This was for food offerings; these offerings also provided a social service. If a hungry friend or relative needed food, the offerer would tell them to go down to the cemetery, and they could find food at a specific spirit house (Ritzenthaler, 1983, 40-41).
Spirit houses are a common cultural trait of Woodland Indians, the structures exhibiting the cultural changes that occurred with the introduction to European culture. They also served as a social service to the poor and hungry, exhibiting the generosity within tribal boundaries.

The dance rings at Powers Bluff were an integral part of the religion of the Prairie Potawatomi living there. The formation and transference of the Big Drum religion played a significant role in the story of the Skunk Hill Potawatomi:

BIG DRUM RELIGION

The Big Drum religion, also called the Dream Dance religion, is an Indian set of beliefs and values that originated in the 1880's and persists today. The religion began among the Sioux Indians, probably in Minnesota. An Indian story explains the origin of the religion. A Santee Sioux woman lost four sons in warfare with the white man. She ran away from the conflict and hid in a lake for four days. During this time the Great Spirit told her to go back to her people and make a drum. She was taught songs and rituals to accompany the drum, and the Great Spirit told her that this was the only way to stop the soldiers from killing her people. The drum was meant to be copied and passed on to other tribes, to avoid warfare with the white man. This story probably is true, taking place sometime in the 1870's in west-central Minnesota (Vennum, 44-45).

As instructed, the Santee did build the first drum. They then passed drums on to the Ojibwa, who subsequently gave drums to the Fox, the Menominee, the Potawatomi, and the Winnebago (see figure 3 for a photo of a contemporary drum).
The religion traveled from west to east, to the Ojibwa and Menominee; and south to the Fox in Iowa and the Potawatomi in Kansas and Oklahoma. (John Young, a Skunk Hill Potawatomi, was instrumental in bringing the Dream Dance religion to the Kansas Potawatomi [Bieder, 107].) When a tribe was given a drum, along with it came the obligation to make another drum and pass it on to another tribe. A drum presentation was a serious event, given in an act of friendship, or passed on to a tribe that wanted one (Vennum, 45). The religious ceremonies took place four times a year, based on the seasons. The ceremony took place within an outdoor circular enclosure, 30 to 80 feet in diameter. Only authorized people were permitted in the ring, and it was considered sacred ground.

The Big Drum religion evolved out of desperation, in the belief that magic and ritual could save the Indians from the white man. The religion promised that if its code of behavior were followed, all whites and Catholic Indians would fall to the ground, and the Indians could repossess their land (Clifton, 1977, 383). Although the magic did not work, the new religion did serve the purpose of cultural survival. In fact, by the 1950’s the Big Drum religion was predominant among the Prairie Potawatomi in Kansas and was helping them to achieve cultural stability and the perpetuation of the Potawatomi identity (Clifton, 1977, 386). The religion has certainly declined in Wisconsin, yet still has its proponents, some in the Vesper area south of Powers Bluff (interview with Joseph Young).

The Big Drum religion promoted peace and brotherhood among Indian tribes, stressing an ethical code of behavior for its members. It encouraged cooperation,
avoidance of quarreling, and abstinence from drinking, gambling, and stealing. Kindness, helpfulness, and aid for people in need were encouraged (Vennum, 126-128). Kehoe compares the Big Drum religion to the Ghost Dance of the Western Indian tribes, characterizing them as cultural revitalization movements. Typically, a movement such as this not only prescribes religious behavior, but also political, economic, and social changes as well. A cultural revitalization movement is typical of a culture that has experienced a period of successful adaptation (for example, the Potawatomi as successful middlemen in the fur trade), then a period of increased stress (the decline of the Potawatomi fur trade and loss of their economy), and then a period of cultural distortion (the loss of land, loss of their traditional way of life, plus the threat of removal and reservation status). A cultural revitalization movement may then occur, followed by a period of generally satisfactory adaptation (Kehoe, 122). The existing Indian tribes of today have survived wars, epidemics, fluctuating federal policies, and the denial of human rights. Today’s survivors have had to be adaptable and willing to re-formulate their cultural patterns without losing their beliefs and values (Kehoe, 127).
Figure 2. Chippewa spirit house (Ritzenthaler).

Figure 3. A sacred drum used in Dream Dance ceremonies (State Historical Society).
EARLY SETTLEMENT OF CENTRAL WISCONSIN AND ARPIN

Central Wisconsin was settled by Europeans relatively late, in comparison to other areas of the state such as Green Bay or Milwaukee. The first wave of logging and settlement occurred near the Wisconsin River, using the river for transportation of the logs and as a source of power for the sawmills. The second wave of logging occurred when the railroads penetrated previously inaccessible land. It was not until 1890 that the Wisconsin Central Railroad entered Wood county, missing Powers Bluff and the town of Arpin by 3/4 of a mile (Jones, 236).

The same year that the railroad arrived, The Arpin Lumber Company built a sawmill and the nearby Sherry Cameron Company extended their rail line to it. It wasn’t long before the best pines were gone and the lumber mill was barely breaking even. In 1891 the sawmill was moved to northern Wisconsin, and the remaining machinery sold in 1904. Some of the cutover land was sold to prospective settlers, a mix of Americans and recent immigrants. Land clearing and logging of the area’s hardwoods continued, with the logs being sold as fuel or for furniture production (Engels, 54-57). In the early 1900’s so many trees had been cut that an area resident remembered being able to travel from Arpin to Bethel by jumping from stump to stump (Leah Graham, interview).

BETHEL

Bethel is a small community occupying the northwest slope of the Bluff. It has played a part in the history of the Bluff, since many of its members lived near and used the land. The community of Bethel began with a gift of 200 acres to Bethel
Academy from the Lyman Lumber Company. A condition of the gift was that another 800 acres would be sold members of the Seventh Day Adventists. The first church meeting of the Woodland Seventh Day Adventists was held October 2, 1899 and the first baptism was held in the creek west of the school, on a cold day in November, 1899 when the ice had to be cut in order to lower Bert Chapman into the icy water (Graham, 6). By December of 1899, a building was constructed, containing a dormitory, school, and chapel. A logging road connected the school to Arpin, but the road was impassable most of the time. By 1903 a church had been built and a strong community of Seventh-Day Adventists had built adjacent to the Academy because of the educational opportunities it provided (Jones, 244). The interviewees of the Graham family, as well as Leah Graham, were all members of an extended family which had been drawn to the area by the church and school. In the 1950's the Academy was sold and the school moved, but a church, a junior academy, and a nursing home remain (Graham, 96).

POWERS BLUFF/ SKUNK HILL

Powers Bluff was called Tah qua kik by the Indians and is still known to local residents as Skunk Hill. The Bluff was named after Levi Powers in 1878, when the county sold the land to itself after non-payment of taxes in 1874 and 1875. Levi P. Powers was the notary public of Wood County at the time. He and J. H. Lang were partners in a land agency business at the time, and witnessed the appropriate transfer of deeds. Powers was also the first county clerk and district attorney in Wood
County (Rudolph, 66). Although it carries his name, Powers never lived on or owned the land of the bluff (Engels, 59).

The area was inhabited by Indians in the 1850’s when settlers began to move into the region. Conflicts probably started when the settlers found Indians inhabiting good farm land without using it efficiently, in their opinion. The story is told that at that time Indian homes were burned, and a few Potawatomis and Winnebagos were killed. Potawatomi leaders then moved their people to the Bluff, where no one would bother them. It was surrounded by marshland, deep winter snow made travel difficult, and little farmland existed there. Once moved, the Indians made small clearings for dwellings and larger ones for two cemeteries and two dance grounds. During the next 60 years the Skunk Hill Potawatomi, along with in-married Winnebago and Menominee, relied on hunting, gathering, trapping, and occasional horticulture for subsistence. Some of them worked for brief periods for farmers in the area, preferring to be paid in farm produce rather than cash (Hodge, 150).

The land of Powers Bluff changed ownership often. The names of early lumbermen such as Arpin, Nash, Grant appear on the land deeds. Starting in 1915, real estate tax rolls for this section show that a portion of land was owned by Indians, with names such as Ke Kom Oquah and Cody Jackson. They purchased land near the Bluff with tribal payments received from the United States government for land in Kansas (Engels, 61). The Wood County tax records show that twenty acres were sold in 1914 to four Indians. Their village occupied a clearing of approximately 20 acres (Schroeder, 5). These Indians were "stray band" Potawatomi, either fleeing
from the southern part of the state or having returned from the reservation in Kansas. These Potawatomi were probably refugees, fleeing from the threat of removal and avoiding contact with white settlers.

Through 1925 the Potawatomi enjoyed a thriving community which served as a meeting place for the Kansas Potawatomi as well as some of the northern Indians. It was here that they would hold their Dream Dance rituals, during which white people were discouraged from coming near the area.

Leah Graham remembers 17 homes on the Bluff, all in a row. The settlement consisted of bark huts, tents, and log cabins. The Bluff had been recently logged, earning it the nickname "bald mountain." There was no road to the settlement, only a wagon trail. Leah also recalled Indians arriving on the train, about 1905, and asking her brothers where the "big hill" was. She fondly remembered White Pigeon and his stepson Albert Thunder. She recalled selling pies, cakes, and ice cream to the Indians. Other Marshfield residents remember going up to the Bluff to trade for maple syrup. The Graham family used an Indian basket, for which their mother had traded a chicken, as their lunch bucket for many years (see figure 19 for a photo of the Graham family grouped around the basket). The Grahams remembered an Indian woman with a basket coming to their door in search of nourishment for her sick child.
III. EXISTING CONDITIONS

INTRODUCTION

Powers Bluff is a prominent elevation in central Wood County, located 2.5 miles southwest of Arpin, 17 miles northeast of Wisconsin Rapids, and 15 miles southeast of Marshfield (map 1). It is the 13th highest point in Wisconsin at 1,472 feet. In 1936, 50 acres were donated to the Wood County Park Commission and Powers Bluff County Park was established. The present park covers 160 acres, with 70 acres in the Wisconsin State Scientific (Natural) Areas Program (map 2).

Map 1. Wood County.
Map 2. Powers Bluff, State Natural Area
(Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources--Bureau of Endangered Resources)
GEOLOGY

Powers Bluff is the highest point in the Wood County, rising over 250 feet from the surrounding countryside. Its slope ranges from 6% to over 30%. The Bluff possesses many rocky outcroppings of quartzite, which are easily seen before the trees leaf out. Some of these outcroppings are over 20 feet high. The soils of Powers Bluff are silt loams, and the bedrock is rather close to the soil surface. Wet, poorly drained areas existing within the park boundary are the result of perched water tables and soils that percolate slowly. The steep slopes and stony, poorly drained soil make this land unsuitable for agricultural use. Appropriate land use would be outdoor recreation, woodland, and wildlife habitat (Wood County Soil Survey, 60-61, 66-67, 69-70).

Figure 4. A sketch map of the quartzite boulder trains extending southeast and southwest from the bluff (Wisconsin Scientific Areas Preservation Council, Scientific or Natural Area Report, Powers Bluff Maple Woods, Oct. 9, 1974).
Powers Bluff is the result of geological and glacial processes that created a landscape with distinct features. The bluff is a monadnock, remains of an ancient mountain over a billion years old. A report written for the Wisconsin Scientific Areas Preservation Council states various aspects of the bluff's geological history:

It consists of varicolored quartzite, of Precambrian age (1.5-2.0 billion years old). Most of the quartzite is dark in color and is similar to other quartzite bluffs found in the region, i.e., North Bluff in the Sandhill Preserve and Rib Mountain near Wausau. The base of the bluff is overlain by upper Cambrian sandstone, north and northwest of the Bluff. Despite the fact that it is highly fractured and has been scraped by glacial ice in the past, the bluff stands above the surrounding land due to the durability of the quartzite. The bluff has a rounded shape. Sandstone bluffs in the area, although less fractured, have weathered parallel to their nearly vertical planes, thus cleaving off parts of the sandstone and maintaining steep slopes. Two boulder trains extend southeast and southwest from the Bluff, with the southeast one being more extensive. These trains, (see figure 4), suggest that glacial ice moved over and around the bluff from at least two different directions. On top of the bluff, also suggesting past glacial activity, are numerous loose blocks of quartzite which have been tilted at least 90 degrees from their original orientations" (1974).

EXISTING VEGETATION

The area of Powers Bluff lies within a rather unique narrow band of vegetation that connects two vegetative provinces. The southwestern portion is called the prairie-forest province. The northeastern portion is called the northern hardwoods province. Powers Bluff lies in the tension zone between the two provinces, and contains some plant members of each [map 3] (Curtis, 16-17). The Bluff contains an example of a southernmost forest of northern hardwoods. The dominant trees in the forest are sugar maple, yellow birch, basswood, and red oak. Although there is
Figure 3.—Summary of range limits for 182 species. The figures in each county indicate the number of species attaining a range boundary there. The shaded band is the tension zone. Its exact location was determined from the densest concentration of individual range lines.

Map 3. The shaded band is the tension zone; the numbers refer to the range limits for chosen plant species (Curtis, 20).
much pole-sized maple, the canopy is fairly closed and in the fall the ground cover is sparse. The humus layer is thin and the forest floor is strewn with boulders (Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources-Bureau of Endangered Species, Powers Bluff Maple Woods, State Natural Area No. 131)

There is a pronounced difference between the vegetation on the north and south slopes of Powers Bluff. Because Wisconsin is basically a rolling plain with little change in elevation, differences in vegetation are influenced primarily by microrelief. Curtis states that in most cases of microrelief, elevation is of less importance than the degree of slope or direction of slope (32). A south slope can have greater amounts of evaporation and higher soil temperatures. In the spring season, snow-melting and ground-thawing can occur as much as three to four weeks later on a forested north slope (Curtis, 41). Some of the most pronounced examples of microclimates are north/south exposures, such as at Powers Bluff. Spring ephemerals are more abundant on the north slope. Spring ephemerals are short-lived plants which grow rapidly in the spring, often while there is still snow on the ground. The flowers and leaves appear together, with full bloom and maximum leaf expansion occurring before the trees leaf out. These plants make enough food to complete their life cycle in a short period of time, and will have visibly disappeared by early June (Curtis, 112). Powers Bluff has the reputation as one of the best sites in central Wisconsin to observe these early wildflowers (see Appendix B for a list of flora).
CULTURAL ARTIFACTS

There are several important cultural artifacts on the Bluff. These are remnants of an Indian settlement of Prairie Potawatomi that occurred on the Bluff in the early part of this century. The artifacts consist of two cemeteries and two dance rings. Both cemeteries have low stone walls constructed around them. The John NeWe cemetery is on the top of the Bluff, near the entrance to the nature trail. The other cemetery, the Buffalo Bill cemetery, is adjacent to the park exit to Bluff Road. The two dance rings are defined by a number of Norway spruce (11 in one ring and 17 in the other), planted in a circle about 60 feet in diameter. These trees are presently about 60 feet tall. Originally the dance rings had been surrounded by earthen mounds (still evident); the spruce were planted later by the park manager. (I believe that this was the same well-intentioned park official that rebuilt a vandalized spirit house after it was vandalized.) There is also a low stone wall built, northwest from the dance rings and incorporating a rocky outcropping. This could have been built for livestock enclosure for the Indian settlement.

As a historical and cultural site, the Bluff is significant because it contained one of the last settlements of Prairie Potawatomi in the state. Other sites include the Indian Farms in Taylor County, which is the subject of a paper "Stray Bands and Dream Dancers," written by Robert Birmingham, the Wisconsin State Archaeologist. He states that these sites are significant for their representation of a portion of Wisconsin history. Little scholarly attention has been paid to the refugee Indians of this time. Birmingham writes that it is remarkable that these stray bands were able to
maintain their traditional social and religious values. He also feels it is noteworthy that these settlements were established by John Young, an important political and religious leader among the Prairie Band Potawatomi, not only in Wisconsin but also in Kansas. About the site, Birmingham summarizes: "...Indian Farms is significant in its interpretive and educational value. As noted earlier, the lives and ways of non-reservation Indians in Wisconsin's late history have been poorly documented. The real story of Indian Farms and many sites like it is one of a people's attempt to preserve their culture in the face of great pressure. Dissemination of these stories will give the general public a greater understanding and a deep respect for these people" (28).

EXISTING INTERPRETATION

Signage at Powers Bluff consists of a number of informative and interpretive signs. The signs are typical of Wisconsin county parks, stained brown with routed letters painted yellow. The entrance sign states that the area also provides winter recreation. There is a sign indicating the park's hours. There are also signs marking the land donated by Lloyd Felker, the Potawatomi nature trail, the John NeWe cemetery, and the cross country ski trail. The interpretive signs at the top of the bluff include: The History, the Geology, and the Dance Rings. The sign panels measure 3' x 4', are brown painted panels with attached brown enamel panels with yellow polyvinyl lettering in capital letters. There is also a sign adjacent to the Indian Bill cemetery, seen as one exits the park (interpretive sign text in Appendix C).
I have rarely observed people reading these signs. The text is long and wordy. The longest text is 256 words. Standards for interpretation have changed. Today’s interpretative signs are short and concise. A successful sign should be simple and inviting, using graphics and text to deliver its message. The text should be short and readable, using a minimum of capital letters (Trapp, Gross, and Zimmerman, 5, 9, & 28). The landscape of Powers Bluff contains a wealth of historical, geological, and biological information that could be conveyed to the visitor more effectively.

CURRENT PARK ACTIVITIES

There are a wide variety of activities that take place over the period of a year at Powers Bluff. I have grouped the various users into five interest groups: active recreation, silent recreation, group gatherings, visitors with an interest in nature study and cultural history, and sight-seers. Active recreation includes many of the winter activities, such as tubing and downhill skiing. Silent recreation includes snowshoeing, cross country skiing, and walking or hiking. Social groups visit the Bluff primarily for the use of the shelter building and the picnic facilities. It includes small groups, such as individual families, as well as large gatherings, such as youth groups, family reunions, and weddings. Visitors with an interest in nature study and cultural history include bird watchers, photographers, wildlife observers, and Indian people with ancestors buried in the cemeteries on the Bluff or with religious feelings for the Bluff. This group also encompasses those visitors who come for the spring wildflowers or the fall color. The last group, sight-seers, are people who come by
car and are unable or unwilling to walk further than the parking lot. Increased accessibility could greatly improve the park for all visitors. The Wood County Park, Recreation, and Open Space Plan, revised in 1996, provides for accessibility improvements to be completed by 1997.

In addition to recreation, the Bluff is used by the county for a communications tower. The tower is used by the sheriff's department and the highway department. A new tower was constructed in 1998, adjacent to the maintenance garage, and there are plans to remove the old tower from a rocky outcropping.

**ACTIVITY AREAS**

Active recreation occurs on the top and north slopes of the bluff. The north slopes retain snow and are sufficiently steep for tubing and skiing. Here the users can also take advantage of the shelter and restrooms.

Nature study and silent recreation take place primarily near or on the trail system that meanders through the park. The most widely used portion of the trail lies within the State Natural Area. The vegetation is distinct within this area, with larger hardwoods and more abundant spring ephemerals. The trail through this area also incorporates geologic features, such as the rocky outcroppings.

Group gatherings generally occur on the top of the bluff. A large grassy area contains picnic tables and grills, as well as some playground equipment. This mowed area encompasses the dance rings. Near the park exit is another mowed area with picnic facilities. This area is adjacent to the Buffalo Bill cemetery, which contains spirit houses.
Sightseers generally drive through the park, without leaving their car. They come to see the spring wildflowers or the fall color, or simply to visit the park. Often nearby residents bring visiting guests to see the bluff.
IV. NEED FOR RE-DESIGN OF PARK FACILITIES

NEED FOR PARK RE-DESIGN

As shown in the previous chapter, Powers Bluff Park contains natural and cultural resources of regional and state importance. In attempting to preserve these natural and cultural resources, conflicts occasionally arise within the park, either between recreational activities or between activities and the bluff’s resources. A park re-design could reduce these conflicts.

CONFLICTS BETWEEN ACTIVITIES

Some activities are clearly in conflict with one another, for example, the outdoor amplification of music that accompanies downhill skiing interferes with the silence and solitude desired by cross-country skiers. Active and passive recreation have differing needs and preferences. Some activities need particular features while other uses could occur in many places. For example, skiing and tubing need the steep slopes and snow retention qualities found on the north slopes of the Bluff. But group gatherings desiring such supporting facilities as ballfields could occur at a more suitable area.

CONFLICTS BETWEEN ACTIVITIES AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Future development of recreational areas could be a source of conflict between activities and natural resources. Development would need to avoid the State Natural Area, as well as the cultural sites. From the interviews I learned that tree removal and earth moving have in the past been opposed by local residents. In the 1950’s, when the ski and tubing hills were developed, local residents remember hearing
blasting. They objected to any alteration of the environment, especially the rocky outcroppings and the forest. One interviewee emphasized that he would be against any logging taking place on the bluff.

CONFLICTS BETWEEN ACTIVITIES AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

The most serious conflicts occur near the cultural sites, where picnic facilities are located adjacent to the dance rings. The dance rings are considered sacred ground and need distinct separation from everyday activities. Indian visitors have observed and objected to the use of the dance ring area as a picnic area. (The Buffalo Bill cemetery has similar facilities for picnicking nearby, but both cemeteries are protected by a low stone wall surrounding them.) By placing picnic facilities directly adjacent to the sacred sites of the dance rings and cemeteries, the county is showing tacit approval of these disrespectful activities.

Development would need to avoid the cultural sites. Burial and historical sites are protected under state law. The State Historical Society is concerned about disturbing archaeological sites within the park (telephone interview, Ron Arendt, May 1997). (The county is required by law to inform the State Historical Society about any development, and any construction could not be within 25 feet of the burial grounds and should not "adversely affect" the site [telephone interview, Larry Reid, June 1997]).
V. ALTERNATIVE SITE PLANS

INTRODUCTION

The primary goal of the re-design of Powers Bluff Park was to arrive at a balanced utilization of the parkland, providing for a spectrum of recreational opportunities as well as preserving the important features of the site. A re-design could accomplish objectives such as reducing conflicts and improving aesthetics, thereby increasing the satisfaction of all visitors. Three alternative designs are presented, the first two within the existing park boundaries and the third with additional parkland.

The design process involved a site survey, analysis of the site’s elements, and a synthesis of the data into a schematic site plan. The survey, consisting of significant features and activities that occur within the park, are described in Chapter III, Existing Conditions. These elements will be examined and analyzed using a systematic, rational approach.

REDUCING CONFLICT BETWEEN PARK ACTIVITIES

To reduce conflicts between activities, the space of the park, its activities, and their relationships need to be analyzed. Space adjacency analysis is a process that examines a space and its uses, the users needs and interrelationships, and produces a design that is responsive to these elements. A series of matrices shows the relationships between activities and features, and between activities. Similar and dissimilar needs of the various activities become evident under examination. First, each activity and its required or preferred features and facilities are examined within a
### Figure 5. Activities/features matrix.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Vegetation</th>
<th>Geology</th>
<th>Height</th>
<th>Slope</th>
<th>Historical Facilities</th>
<th>Silence, Expense</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Active recreation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silent recreation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature study</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Picnickers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group gatherings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sightseers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Figure 6. Relationships matrix.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>active recreation</th>
<th>silent recreation</th>
<th>nature study</th>
<th>picnickers, groups</th>
<th>sightseers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3/4</td>
<td>7/6</td>
<td>5/2</td>
<td>5/2</td>
<td>1/2</td>
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<tr>
<td>7/6</td>
<td>7/6</td>
<td>4/3</td>
<td>4/3</td>
<td>4/3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/2</td>
<td>4/3</td>
<td>2/3</td>
<td>2/3</td>
<td>4/3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/2</td>
<td>4/3</td>
<td>2/3</td>
<td>2/3</td>
<td>4/3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Positive relationships

Negative relationships
matrix (figure 5). Similar requirements determine which activities are similar or dissimilar and whether they have a positive or negative relationship. From this analysis it became apparent that the strongest positive relationship exists between silent recreation and nature study. Another positive relationship exists between active recreation, picnickers and groups, and sightseers. Negative and positive relationships are examined in figure 6. By grouping similar activities, a zone diagram emerged (figure 7), with a buffer zone separating dissimilar activities. A common characteristic of noise, or lack of noise, became evident among the similar and dissimilar activities. The next step was to determine the location of the activity groups.

Figure 7. Zone diagram.
FITTING THE ACTIVITIES TO THE SITE

The site analysis (figure 8) contains key features which are essential to the re-design. It shows the different slope gradients, good entry points, drainage areas, historical artifacts, prominent views, and the State Natural Area. This drawing includes the all the land in Section 30, primarily to show the land attributes for the property to the north, which would be ideal for the park’s expansion. The park boundaries are drawn, as well as the boundaries of the State Natural Area. Existing county roads and the park road are included.

Activities are located where the necessary physical features exist. The boundaries of the State Natural Area and the location of the cultural features of the dance rings and cemeteries determined the area for silent recreation and nature study. The northern slopes which retain snow and have steep slopes are best suited for skiing and tubing. The relatively flat, open land south of County Trunk N are appropriate for play fields and playground equipment.

ALTERNATIVES

Three alternative plans will be presented--first, a plan with no changes, second, a plan relocating activities within the existing park boundaries, and last, a plan for an expanded park. The first alternative (figure 9) shows the park with no change. Without change, the park would experience continued conflicts. The disrespectful use of the historical sites could lead to desecration. Further expansion of facilities for groups renting the shelter would be at the expense of those visitors seeking solitude and silence. To them the pristine character of the park would be
Figure 9. Site analysis.
imperiled. Over-use of the area could result in trail erosion and loss of vegetation. Expansion of active recreation within the present park boundaries could impact the historically-significant sites. Blasting of the rocky outcroppings would permanently alter the environment. Logging, if improperly done, could also affect the aesthetics and character of the park.

The second alternative, in figure 10, shows the park within its present boundaries with relocated facilities. There are buffer zones around the historical artifacts, ski and tubing runs are expanded to the northwest, and an observation tower and interpretive signs are added. The grills and picnic tables would be grouped, and moved away from the cultural sites. The park’s appearance would be improved, by replacing the trailer used for storage on the tubing hill. The advantages of this plan would be to relocate active recreation and group activities far from the sites designated for silent recreation. Interpretation could be added to increase park visitors’ awareness of the cultural and natural significance of Powers Bluff. The disadvantages are that the active recreation and group activities can only be moved a short distance because the shelter and restrooms, which are needed by these activities, are permanent structures and will continue to be in close proximity to the historical sites.

The third alternative, shown in figure 11, depends on the purchase of additional land (250 acres) to the north and approximately 40 acres to the west to expand the park’s boundaries. In this design the picnic and playground facilities could be enlarged, and winter activities such as ice skating and sledding could be
located where the slope and soils are more suitable. The land in question is currently in cropland and managed forests. The farm fields would provide suitable land for active recreation, with the possible addition of playing fields. There is a small creek or drainage-way that could be dammed to form a small pond as it had in the past. With an additional 250 acres, trails could be lengthened and improved for hiking and cross-country skiing. The additional land would allow for added tubing runs while the eastern ski slope could be restored to a natural state. The restored ski slope could act as a buffer zone between the active recreation and the passive recreation. The downhill ski and tubing tow ropes could be managed from the bottom of the bluff, increasing efficiency. A new shelter building, located near the bottom of the hill, would better serve skiers and tubing enthusiasts as well as skaters and sledders. Parking for the shelter could be expanded to accommodate large gatherings, in addition to winter sports participants. Central heating (the present lodge is heated solely by two fireplaces) and indoor restrooms would add to the comfort of the park’s visitors. A new entrance road off of County Trunk N would provide better access to the park. The land is flatter and the road would be easier to maintain, especially in the winter. Mowing and snow plowing would be greatly facilitated.

The parcel of land to the north has slopes ranging from 0-6%, which could increase accessibility for the new facilities. New facilities could be designed to conform with the ADA, serving the physically able-bodied as well as the impaired. By adopting a system of graduated difficulty-of-access, a wider spectrum of opportunities could be provided that would accommodate or challenge all people
regardless of their abilities (Harris and Dine, 240-2). Trails of varying difficulty would be appropriate. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources has devised a system of classification for trails with graduated difficulty, using such factors as length, slope, surface of trail, and width of trail (Appendix C). With additional land, a wide range of hiking experiences for all park visitors could be provided. The picnic facilities could be located on level surfaces, with tables and grills designed for use by seated individuals. Playground equipment could be located on a surface that can accommodate wheelchairs and other users. Diversity of play opportunities could be provided to accommodate all levels of ability and need. Also, new buildings could be designed to be more accessible, with a minimum of stairs or grade changes. All of the provided facilities need to be connected with a pedestrian accessible route, with periodic places to stop and rest.

A new interpretive package should be implemented, with signage near heavily trafficked areas, thereby eliminating obtrusive signage on top of the Bluff. The purchase of the land could be supplemented by the stewardship fund of the state. In Alternative III the top of the bluff would be allowed to return to its natural state with minimal maintenance. This area could be used for passive recreation and nature observation as well as an outdoor classroom for nature study and Native American curriculum.

The primary disadvantage to the third alternative is that it would be costly, with land acquisition and construction of new facilities. Costs and benefits would need to be weighed; possible grant monies investigated (for example, the Wisconsin
Stewardship Fund for land acquisition and the Wisconsin Environmental Education Board for educational materials); and a long-range plan approved and implemented by the County Board.
Figure 9. Schematic site plan, alternative I.
Figure 10. Schematic site plan, alternative II.
Figure 11. Schematic site plan, alternative III.
VI. IMPLICATIONS FOR INTERPRETATION

INTERPRETATION AND INTERPRETIVE PLANNING

Interpretation is a communication process whose purpose is to provoke and arouse interest in its subject, and which is not purely informational. Tilden (1977) defined it as "An educational activity which aims to reveal meanings and relationships through the use of original objects, by firsthand experience, and by illustrative media, rather than simply to communicate factual information." The purpose of interpretation is revelation, and should make use of the visitor’s curiosity. Tilden formulated six Interpretive Principles, which state:

1. Any interpretation that does not somehow relate what is being displayed or described to something within the personality or experience of the visitor will be sterile.

2. Information, as such, is not Interpretation. Interpretation is revelation based upon information. But they are entirely different things. However, all interpretation contains information.

3. Interpretation is an art, which combines many arts, whether the materials presented are scientific, historical, or architectural. Any art is to some degree teachable.

4. The chief aim of Interpretation is not instruction, but provocation.

5. Interpretation should aim to present a whole rather than a part, and must address the whole person rather than any phase.
6. Interpretation addressed to children (say, up to the age of twelve) should not be a dilution of the presentation to adults, but should follow a fundamentally different approach. To be at its best it will require a separate program.

An interpretive plan will take into account: the objectives of the interpretation, the visitors to the site, the resources and themes of the site, the cost of implementation of the plan, and evaluation (Veverka, 32).

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The goals of this interpretive plan are:

| To enhance the experience of all visitors to Powers Bluff Park. |
| To increase awareness of the importance of the park's historical and natural features. |

The objectives of this plan are:

| A majority of park visitors will see and be aware of the interpretive signage. |
| All visitors will be aware of the nature trail. |
| A majority of visitors will leave the park knowing the historical importance of the Bluff. |
| The majority of visitors will leave the park knowing the significance of the Indian cemetery and dance rings. |
| More visitors will behave with respect for the sacred sites on the Bluff. |

This plan for interpretation is based on the premise that the existing park boundaries remain intact.
Figure 12. Interpretive Site Map.
MARKET ANALYSIS

Visitors come to Powers Bluff for recreation, to observe nature, and for social gatherings. Most visitors reside in Wood County and travel 5 to 20 miles to reach the park. They are repeat users, visiting the park in more than one season.

The park at Powers Bluff is used by fewer people than other Wood County Parks. Of five shelters in Wood County, the one at Powers Bluff is used the least (1995 Wood County Park and Forestry Department Annual Report). The park also has the lowest attendance of all Wood County Parks (1990 Wood County Park and Forestry Department Annual Report). County figures for park usage include winter recreation and summer shelter rentals (visitors for hiking, nature observation, and special interests are not included). In an informal survey, people liked the fact that the park is underutilized. Many visitors are seeking solitude and enjoy having the area to themselves. A gate to the entrance road is locked in off-season, yet many people hike up the road or trails (one Sunday afternoon in November 1997 five cars were parked outside the gate).

A survey done by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources found that the most popular outdoor recreation activities were: sightseeing and events, nature and wildlife observation, and walking, running and riding (SCORP, 1991). The park is only 160 acres and expansion of the recreational opportunities is limited. But with its rich resource base, Powers Bluff Park has the potential to attract many more users for nature study. An interpretive and educational program could bring more visitors
to the park and enhance their appreciation and awareness of its natural and cultural features.

INTERPRETIVE RESOURCE INVENTORY

A survey of the site was done, taking note of all interpretive resources (figure 12). Interpretive resources can include biological areas, cultural areas, and geological areas (Veverka, 35). The resulting site inventories (Appendix D) helped to devise the themes for the site. A theme should summarize the main story or essence of the park, and will give organization and clarity to the interpretive program (Veverka, 40). I have written a primary theme, as well as subthemes, to tell the story of the bluff. These themes could be used for the actual sign text.

PRIMARY INTERPRETIVE THEME

Once an imposing mountain, Powers Bluff has endured the forces of man and nature to remain an imposing feature in the landscape. The bluff possesses qualities which attract various visitors. Multiple uses can coexist with respect and consideration.

SUBTHEMES

Geology-The forces that wore down the Bluff

The Bluff once stood tall enough to be considered a mountain, but has been worn down over time. The effects of weather--wind and rain--eroded the mountain. But the hard, erosion-resistant rock refused to be worn down, leaving the rocky outcroppings and steep slopes that skiers and tubing enthusiasts currently use. Glaciers, with their thick sheets of ice, scraped across the bluff. The ice picked up and carried boulders, and depositing them. Large quartzite blocks, weighing many tons, were tilted 90 degrees from their original placement.
Ecology-A southernmost example of northern hardwoods

The vegetation of the Bluff is unique because it is an example of a northern hardwood forest found as far south as possible. The Bluff is in an area called the tension zone, a strip of land running diagonally through the state, containing plants and animals of southern as well as northern Wisconsin. The forest here has many layers, much like an onion. The highest layer, the canopy, has different plants and animals than the lower shrub layer and the forest floor.

In spring the forest floor is carpeted with wildflowers, called ephemerals because they are short-lived. Racing to complete their life cycle, the plants emerge, flower, and fruit by early summer, by which time the trees have leafed out, blocking out most the sunlight.

The Bluff is tall and steep enough to have different climatic effects on the north and south slopes. The sun is more intense on the south slopes, warming the earth up earlier in spring. Because it is warmer and drier, the vegetation is more typical of the southern part of the state. The north slope, slower to warm up in the spring and subsequently more moist, has a different character. The forest canopy is more dense, with abundant wildflowers in the spring and a deeply shaded forest floor in the summer. Here the sugar maples, which would have attracted local Indians in the spring for their valuable syrup, are abundant.

History-the humans that impacted the Bluff

Early European settlers and an Indian settlement occupied the land of the Bluff. The first white settlers logged the Bluff, first taking the desirable large pines. Later they logged off the hardwoods, used in the making of barrels. Then the Bluff was abandoned-- the lumbermen moving north in search of more pines and while the settlers inhabited the flat, tillable land around the Bluff.

The remoteness and inaccessibility at the top of the Bluff attracted a settlement of Indians in the mid 1800's into the early 1900's. This was a dismal time in Wisconsin Indian history; their lands had been lost through treaties, they had lost their traditional way of life, and disease had greatly reduced their communities. These people struggled to hold onto their traditional culture and ways, living in small settlements of extended families and tribal members. The Potawatomi had no
reservation land in Wisconsin, though some tribal members had been removed to a reservation in Kansas. The Wisconsin Potawatomi owned no land, living as squatters on undesirable, vacant land such as Powers Bluff. They avoided contact with most of the white settlers, who disapproved of their way of life and were intolerant of their lifestyle. Other Woodland tribes, such as the Winnebago, Menominee, and Ojibwa intermarried with the Potawatomi. They shared common cultural traits, such as constructing of spirit houses over their gravesites. They held onto their common beliefs and perpetuated their basic Indian culture. A part of this culture was the Dream Dance Religion, which is still practiced today.

These dance rings and cemeteries are sacred to the people whose ancestors lived here, they have the same meaning that churches and cemeteries have to descendants of European cultures.
Figure 13. John Nouwe, or NeWe, or Nuwi (State Historical Society, Gerend Collection).
Figure 14. John Young (State Historical Society, Gerend Collection).
John Nouwe Cemetery

This cemetery served the Indian settlement that was here in the early 1900's. John Nouwe was the leader of this group of refugees who were fleeing from contact with the white settlers in the area. John Young was another important leader for this band of Potawatomi. He is credited with maintaining ties with the Kansas Potawatomi and with bringing the Big Drum religion to them.

Figure 15. Interpretive sign panel (2'x3') for the John NeWe cemetery (graphics by Kathy Ferracane).
Geology
The forces that wore down the Bluff

The bluff once xxxxx
xxxxxxxx xxxxxx xxxxx x
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Figure 16. Interpretive sign panel (2’ x 3’) for the kiosk (graphics by Kathy Ferracane).
Figure 17. Design for a kiosk, scale 1" = 1' (graphics by Kathy Ferracane).
MEDIA

Appropriate media for this site includes signs, a kiosk, and a self-guided trail. All of these media would be available at all times of the day and are self-paced. The self-guided trail would be accompanied by a brochure, which would require restocking. Markers along the trail could be easily modified or moved and would be less intrusive than signs. Signs placed near the sacred sites could further identify the sites to visitors and would emphasize their significance. A kiosk at a centralized location could be less intrusive than individual signs and could lower costs and maintenance.

SIGNS AND SELF-GUIDED TRAIL

A cluster of signs within a kiosk (figure 17) could explore the subjects of geology including what is a monadnock and the glaciation process, the history of the area including logging and white settlement, the Potawatomi Indians and the place they occupy in our State's history, the purpose of State Natural Areas, and a brief synopsis of the park's history. Park rules and etiquette could also be stated here. These signs should be located between the parking lot and the shelter, for ease of accessibility for winter and summer visitors. The signs should have large panels, 3' X 5', positioned at eye-level. They should be of consistent color and type-face, and contain graphics as well as written information. The following are models for possible interpretive messages:
INTERPRETIVE SIGNS-INSRIPTIONS

John Nouwe Cemetery
This cemetery served the Indian settlement that was here in the early 1900's. John Nouwe was the leader of this group of refugees who were fleeing from contact with the white settlers in the area. John Young was another important leader for this band of Potawatomi. He is credited with maintaining ties with the Kansas Potawatomi and with bringing the Big Drum religion to them (Figures 13, 14, & 15).

Dance Rings
These dance rings were used for religious ceremonies by the Indians who lived here. They are still considered sacred areas. The drums would beat, and dancers and participants would offer thanks for the coming of spring, or the fall harvest. White men and alcohol were prohibited. One offender was reportedly tied to a tree for the duration of the day's ceremony.

Close your eyes and imagine the drums echoing through the forest, accompanied by chants of thanksgiving.

Buffalo Bill Cemetery/Spirit houses
This Indian cemetery contains spirit houses, the long, low wooden structures built over graves to protect and mark them. It is believed that as these structures disintegrate, then the soul of the deceased is released to find its way to the after-life. Descendents still live in the area and visit this cemetery--please respect it.

Rocky Outcroppings/Monadnock
Powers Bluff was once a mountain, rising up from the surrounding land. The forces of wind and rain, as well as the sheets of ice of two glaciers, have worn away the once-mountain down to the present Bluff. The erosion-resistant quartzite rock outcroppings are the remnants of the mountain. It still is the highest point in the county at 1472 feet (figure 16).

Observation Tower, Views to the North and South

From this tower you can see Rib Mountain, about 45 miles to the northeast. Rib Mountain, like Powers Bluff, is a
monadnock or ancient mountain. To the northwest, the city of Marshfield and the Marshfield-Neillsville glacial moraine are visible. To the west is Lindsay Bluff, and to the southwest is Cary Bluff. To the south is an expansive plain that was once Glacial Lake Wisconsin.

State Natural Area

State Natural Areas are pieces of land that have been relatively untouched by human impact. They have been preserved by the State of Wisconsin--Department of Natural Resources for study, either by scientists or educational groups. They are maintained with a strict set of rules in order to keep the land 'natural.' Only such recreational use as hiking and nature observation are allowed, and educational use is encouraged. Enjoy the area but keep it "wild".

Self-Guided Trail

Welcome to the Potawatomi Nature Trail. This trail is ___ in length and takes about ___ to walk. Parts of the trail are steep, so sturdy walking shoes are recommended! Numbered stops along the trail correspond to the numbers in the brochure. The plants in the forest change seasonally so not all plants will be readily seen. Your brochure will give you more information--Enjoy your Walk!

Nature Trail Brochure

Include relevant bits of information in nature trail brochure, such as:

Boulder trains-- Powers Bluff has felt the force of many weathering effects, such as wind and rain. But the biggest impact was the huge sheets of glacial ice that crept down from the north, scraping the landscape, removing rocks from one area and depositing them in another.

Spring beauty (Claytonia Virginiana)--This plant often carpets the forest floor, its flowers open only in bright light. The flowers can be white or pink, with two narrow ribbonlike leaves growing partway up the stem. Indians and early settlers ate the underground tubers of this plant. They taste crisp and pleasant,
like chestnuts. This starchy food is best roasted until warm, and eaten as is or added to a soup or stew during the last few minutes of preparation. Euell Gibbons called the tubers "fairy spuds."

**Trillium**—Its name means "in threes;" three petals, three leaves, three sepals, six stamens, three stigmas. The flowers bloom for 2-4 weeks. The fading blossoms turn pink. Its leaves persist into summer. Trilliums are a threatened plant and are protected—they should not be picked. The trillium was one of the first plants taken back to the Old World to be cultivated. Indians used it for eye medicine, squeezing the juice directly into the eye, or they boiled the root and made an eye wash out of it.

**Solomon's seal (Polygonatum pubescens or P. canaliculatum)**—Its common name probably comes from the resemblance of the scar on the root stalk to that of a seal impressed on wax, or because the crushed root stalk was considered healing or "sealing" on a wound.

**Hepatica**—One of the first spring ephemerals to bloom. The shy flowers hide under the flat, reddish brown wintering leaves. The leaves have three lobes like the liver, hence the Latin name meaning liver. Farmers knew that when they saw the hepatica blooming, it would soon be time to start planting.

**Blood root (Sanguinaria canadensis)**—Because it is the earliest ephemeral to emerge, its single blossom bud is enveloped in a curled up basal leaf to protect it against the cold. The white flowers open wide during the day and close at night. The flower unfurls for about a week, and after the flower fades the leaves continue to grow, until mid summer. The name sanguinaria means bleeding, referring to the root which contains a red juice which the Indians used as a dye for baskets and as a ceremonial body paint. Early settlers used the liquid to treat various ills.

**Dutchman's breeches or squirrel corn (Dicentra cucullaria)**—This plant's unmistakable winged blossoms arch delicately above a mass of feathery foliage, like miniature pairs of yellow belted Dutch pantaloons strung out to dry. Squirrel corn flowers are
more heart shaped, growing from tubers resembling grains of yellow corn. This plant is related to the bleeding heart plant that gardeners and children are fond of.

**Trout lily (Erythronium americanum)**--About the time trout season opens, large patches of mottled leaves and nodding yellow flowers appear in woods and damp areas. The name trout lily may refer to time of bloom or appearance, or it may refer to the markings on its leaves, which resemble those on the back of a brook trout. The flower lasts only a few days, and the leaves disappear soon as well.

**Mature Upland Broadleaf Forest**--This type if forest is typically more than 30 years old, with trees more than 30 feet in height. More than half of the trees are broadleaf, with a solid canopy shading the forest floor. As older trees break down, gaps are created, letting in sunlight. The understory may be lush or sparse.

In northern hardwood stands, such as this one at Powers Bluff, sugar maples dominate. Young sugar maple seedlings can remain nestled on the floor of a mature forest for years, growing slowly until a windstorm or death of an old tree creates a gap in the canopy above. Sudden available light triggers several years of rapid growth. Sapling maples lean into the gap and stretch their branches towards the sky, refilling the void in the canopy with green maple leaves. Shady, moist conditions created by maples encourages young maple growth and reproduction. An individual tree may live as long as 400 years. The maple seeds spiral to the ground, buried under leaf litter. Yearly leaf litter can average 2 tons per acre. The leaves are rich in minerals, creating fertile ground for seeds to sprout. Only sunlight, as created by a gap, is needed for the young plants to shoot up.

This is a multi-layered forest, with differing wildlife populating each vertical layer. From the moist burrows of red-backed voles to the sunny treetops of the warblers, this diverse habitat harbors a great zoo of wildlife species. The forest also provides dense cover for grouse and voles to protect them from the eyes of predators. Moisture loving insects and amphibians, and reptiles lurk among the leaves and fallen logs. For predators with keen hearing, such as great horned owl, rustle of dry leaves magnifies sounds, help them locate their next meal. Other foods include the succulent herbs of spring, seeds, berries, acorns, and nuts of autumn, as well as tree trunks full
of overwintering insects. Aged trees, called snags, may stay standing for years because of the strength of hardwoods. They provide room and board for woodpeckers and nest sites for flying squirrels, owls, raccoons, nuthatches, and other tree dwellers.

References


Edsall, Marian S. *Roadside Pants and Flowers*. University of Wisconsin Press.

Observation tower

An observation tower could facilitate the interpretation of the glacial effects at the Bluff. The results of glaciation could be seen by viewing Rib Mountain, the Marshfield moraine, and the ancient bed of Glacial Lake Wisconsin. An observation tower at nearby Rib Mountain was built at a cost of approximately $20,000 in the 1950’s. It has needed minimal maintenance, with re-staining every 10 years. The management has also replaced some steps and installed metal gratings on the first set of steps to lessen wear. There have been occasional problems with this tower, but overall is seen as an asset. In the fall, it generates revenue by sightseers wanting to observe the fall colors (there is an admittance fee for state parks).
Teacher guides

Since both environmental education and Native American history are mandated by Wisconsin for inclusion in curriculums, a teacher guide could help local teachers use Powers Bluff as a resource. The guide could include elementary (4th grade) and high school level materials. Some local schools do not have a school forest, and the State Natural Area could serve as an outdoor laboratory for them. A local (Marshfield) foundation, the Roddis Foundation, may be a possible source for funds for a guide with historical and educational value.

Historical exhibit--inside shelter building

Because of heavy winter and summer use, an indoor exhibit could be very effective. Using historical photos to tell the story of human impact on the Bluff, the exhibit could show early logging and Indian settlement on the Bluff. The State Historical Society (Gerend Collection, Visual Archives) is a good source for these photos.

Auto tour

Powers Bluff Park could be part of an auto tour of Central Wisconsin, which could include the Mead Wildlife Area, Foxfire Gardens, Wildwood Zoo and the Upham Mansion in Marshfield, the Wisconsin River and historical sites in Wisconsin Rapids, and the Conservation Hall of Fame and Schmeeckle Reserve in Stevens Point. A sign stating the significance of the Bluff could be located at the park entrance on Bluff Drive, inviting sightseers into the park.
IMPLEMENTATION

The following matrix is a guide to the implementation of this plan. It contains information on each site (objectives and recommended media), a schedule for phasing, and approximate costs. This plan takes into account site development and media development, but does not include additional staffing needs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site Index #</th>
<th>Interpretive Media and Services</th>
<th>Priority, 1-5</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Dance Rings</td>
<td>Sign, cultural events</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$475</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Buffalo Bill Cemetery</td>
<td>Sign</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>$475</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 John Nouwee Cemetery</td>
<td>Sign</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$475</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Potawatomi Nature Trail</td>
<td>Trail brochure, signage</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>$975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 State Natural Area</td>
<td>Sign</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>$475, or paid by BER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Observation tower.</td>
<td>Tower, sign</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Central parking lot--Primary theme (geology, history, vegetation)</td>
<td>Kiosk</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$1175</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Signs to be printed by direct digital imaging, on Scotchprint, on to aluminum panels)
EVALUATION

Evaluation is a necessary component of an interpretive plan, in order to know if the interpretation has accomplished the plan's objectives and is effective.

Evaluation techniques which are appropriate for the stated objectives can be chosen. Evaluation techniques include observation, interviews, focus groups, and questionnaires. Evaluation can be done before constructing media, and can continue during fabrication and after completion.

PRE-TESTING

Pre-testing, or the construction of mock-ups, will allow the opportunity to test the interpretive signs and nature trail brochure before finalization. Pre-testing can save time and money before the final product is produced.

OBSERVATION

Observation would be appropriate to determine if the signs are being read by visitors. Also, observation could provide information on the trail usage.

QUESTIONNAIRE

A questionnaire can evaluate the visitor's experience and determine what was learned during a visit to the Bluff. Questionnaires could be distributed through a variety of means; as a component of a rental agreement for the shelter, with lift tickets for winter skiers and tubers, and under windshields of cars in the parking lot.

INTERVIEWS

Interviews could be conducted, since many people are more willing to communicate verbally than in writing. Exit interviews could be done, since there is only one exit
from the park. Also, telephone interviews with visitors, such as shelter rentals, could be utilized.
Theme: The Bluff has endured the forces of man and nature to remain an imposing feature in the landscape. The Bluff possesses qualities which attract various users. Multiple uses can coexist with respect and consideration.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subtheme</th>
<th>Message</th>
<th>Experience</th>
<th>Target Groups</th>
<th>Media</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GEOLOGY</td>
<td>The Bluff was once a mountain, but has been worn down by wind, rain, and ice</td>
<td>To read the interpretive sign</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Interpretive sign</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weathering effects</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher guide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glaciation</td>
<td>Glaciers have scraped the top of the Bluff, creating boulder trains.</td>
<td>To read the interpretive sign and walk nature trail, climb observation tower</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Interpretive sign, nature trail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher guide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECOLOGY</td>
<td>The Bluff lies within the tension zone. The forest is multi-layered, with varying plants and animals in each vertical layer.</td>
<td>To read the interpretive signs and walk nature trail.</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Interpretive sign for State Natural Area, nature trail Teacher guide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HISTORY</td>
<td>The first white settlers came to the Bluff to log it; they then abandoned it.</td>
<td>To read the interpretive signs and walk nature trail.</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Interpretive signs, historical exhibit, nature trail Teacher guide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact of white settlers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact of Indian settlement</td>
<td>The Potawatomi came to the Bluff for refuge; they left behind remnants of their culture.</td>
<td>To read the interpretive signs, attend cultural events</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Interpretive signs, historical exhibit, cultural events Teacher guide</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
VII. DISCUSSION

Powers Bluff Park is used by a variety of people, most of whom feel that the Bluff is a special and unique place. All users are important and one use cannot be favored at the expense of another. The tubing parties have become as much a part of the park as the nature observers. But no single use should be allowed to negatively impact the Bluff and its features. Blasting, logging, and bulldozing should be limited, if done at all. The historical features are the most fragile and could be endangered by overuse and expansion. These areas need distinct protection and separation from other activities. Interpretation and education could help achieve these goals.

Since much of the lore about Powers Bluff has been forgotten and little has been recorded, I set out to collect data which would document the significance and importance of this site. The data, a collection of historical writings and oral histories, serves to document of the area's history and give meaning to the landscape of Powers Bluff. The oral histories yielded personal accounts, stories which may or may not be factual, yet add to our understanding and reveal the essence of the bluff. These oral histories are invaluable--some of the interviewees were in their nineties. After collecting the oral histories and conducting a site analysis, conflicts became apparent. I consider the most serious conflicts to exist between recreational use and the park's cultural resources. I believe that a re-design of the park could eliminate the conflicts.
RECOMMENDATIONS

The County should develop a comprehensive plan for Powers Bluff Park, in order to accommodate all uses, while protecting its natural resources. Public meetings would provide everyone the opportunity to make their feelings known. If logging is to occur on the Bluff, then county residents should be given the opportunity to give their input on the matter. Logging may help to offset the costs of a new tubing hill, yet at what cost? And to whom?

The purchase of additional park land could allow for expansion of recreational activities, while protecting the State Natural Area and historical sites. Additional land could allow for more winter sports, better vehicular access, and could facilitate maintenance. Moving some functions off of the top of the Bluff would enhance the experience for nature observers and others with special interests. Conflicts could be minimized, and park usage could be increased. More and better opportunities for park visitors could be provided. Funds for such projects are available from the State Stewardship Fund.

Until additional land can be purchased, a simple park re-design, with protective zones around the dance rings and cemeteries, would be an easy, no-cost start to resolving problems and conflicts. Careful placement of grills and picnic tables would be an improvement that could demonstrate consideration of all users. An interpretive plan needs to be implemented. The rich cultural history associated with the bluff, in addition to its complex natural resources, provides the information and themes for the interpretive plan. Improved interpretive signs are needed. The
current signs demand re-design; some of the offensive words have been scratched or defaced. Updated text and type-face, with the addition of graphics such as historic photos, would greatly improve the readability and approachability of the signs. The signs would inform visitors about the geological, ecological, and historical significance of the Bluff. The sacredness of some of the sites would be explained, creating an awareness and considerate use of adjoining facilities. Consultation with cultural liaisons for nearby Indian tribes would ensure that the language and terminology used would be correct.

An educational package should be developed, with the assistance of students and teachers. Focus groups could provide the necessary components, and could also pre-test the materials. Grant and foundation money is available for such a project. The Wisconsin Environmental Education Board and the Roddis Foundation would be two probable sources of funding for curriculum development and materials. Such a package or program could reach great numbers of students and create stewards and interested citizens for the park.

A "Friends Group" could be a great asset to the park. Friends or volunteers could help with raising funds, stewardship of the land, volunteer labor for brushing of the trails or other jobs, and as docents/interpreters for school groups or seasonal nature walks. The local Indian casino, Rainbow Casino in Nekoosa, has helped fund other local events and may be willing to become a "friend" and help with the park. After the data was collected, the design drawn, and the conclusions formed, I feel more than ever that Powers Bluff is a very special place that should be used with care
and its resources protected for the future. Powers Bluff Park may only be a county park, yet it has treasures that are worthy of state and perhaps even national recognition. It is a special place, deserving documentation and a purposeful plan.
VIII. BIBLIOGRAPHY


Association for State and Local History. Nashville.


Webster, Stan. Telephone interview. UW-Stevens Point. Stevens Point, WI. Dec. 1990.


Wood County Soil Survey.

Young, Joseph. Interview, Pittsville. June, 1996.
APPENDIX A-INTERVIEWEES AND INTERVIEWS

INDIAN INTERVIEWEES

Paula and Joseph are Indians; Paula was born out of state and moved back, while Joseph was born and grew up in the area. They both are highly educated. They both hold onto traditional beliefs. They have strong family and community ties; They choose to live near family and friends despite long commutes to their workplaces. They are strongly religious.

PAULA FOX

Paula is a middle-age, Sauk-Fox woman, raised in Oklahoma but returned to her roots in Wisconsin. She is a modern Indian, contemporary by all appearances yet with some very strong traditional values. She has strong family ties, strong ties to her tribe and other Algonquian tribes, and she has very strong ties to the land. She lives on a reservation and commutes over 40 miles to work. She has two teen-aged daughters, and is divorced. She is well-educated (she is working on an advanced degree) and has a professional position with the State of Wisconsin. She asked that she not be identified by her real name.

Paula visits the Bluff for "pilgrimages" with her daughters at certain times of the year. She feels a strong attachment to the land. Wherever she has lived, she has found a place with which to connect. She often goes for long walks, in any weather, usually at the same place. She seems to have a very good understanding of 'sense of place,' recognizing her need and the needs of others, which may be different. Paula describes her feelings for the Bluff:
"It's a sanctuary for me. It's a lovely place, especially when I lived nearby. It was too much for me [living in a city nearby], and this was a place I could always go and I would be alright. One of the things I notice is that whenever I'm around everybody over in Vesper [with Indian friends] or anything like that, I say I'm going to the park, all the kids jump in. Everybody wants to go. So I know that it is a real common feeling--a good place to be in--a refuge. In a spiritual sense, that's one of those places where we are connected with the energy of the cosmos and the energy of the earth. When you are in that dance ring, you are just pulling that right through you body, you know. We all need places like that where we recharge. Some people go do it in a hot tub. It's the same thing--some people could do it in a shopping mall, but we all need places where we can go and feel that sense of sanctuary and this is O.K. and get reconnected with whatever is important to us, whether it is therapeutic massage or whatever. A lot of people are depending on the outdoors for that, and it is pretty hard to find places...."

Paula has witnessed conflicts with the cultural resources on the Bluff; the grills and picnic tables in close proximity to the dance rings, people "fooling around" on the spirit houses, the intrusive nature of the radio tower, and the locked gate barring entrance in off-seasons. Yet there are things she likes about the park; the stone walls around the cemeteries, the fact that other people use the park in similar ways as she does, hiking and climbing the rocks, and the fact that the park is big enough to be alone even with others there.

Paula acknowledges that the Prairie Potawatomi have no legal claim to the land of Powers Bluff since they never signed a treaty for this region. Yet she would like to see the Potawatomi re-gain ownership, and feels that the Bluff really belongs to them. She would like to see the ski and tubing runs dismantled, and let the Bluff go back to its natural state.
JOSEPH YOUNG

Joseph Young is also a modern Indian, with very strong traditional values. He is more traditional than Paula in many ways, such as his religious beliefs. He, like Paula, commutes to his work, over 120 miles from his home. He, like Paula, feels a strong attachment to land, living less than 20 miles from his father's birthplace. He lives in close proximity to other family members.

He also is highly educated, with a strong moral code, and working for the betterment of his people. (He was instrumental in the Lac du Flambeau tribe winning their gaming rights in federal court.)

Joseph has very strong ties to the Bluff--his father was born there. He was recently married on the Bluff. He lives nearby, south of the Bluff between Pittsville and Vesper. His sisters have homes on the same property as his home, which he shares with his wife Lisa and his children. He participates in the Dream Dance or Big Drum religion. His father Frank was Potawatomi, his mother Dorothy is Winnebago or Ho-Chunk.

Joseph was an All-American athlete in high school in Wisconsin Rapids. He graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point and went on to graduate from law school. Presently he is a private attorney, working for the Forest County Potawatomi.

His father told him about losing the land in the 20's. He also told Joseph about curious whites coming up to the Bluff, especially during their religious
ceremonies. The Indians did not want them there, but didn't feel able to do anything about it.

Joseph feels that when the land was lost in the 20's, that it lost its religious significance because of the number of white people using it. He also feels that the Bluff has been "violated", by women using the park when "in their time" (menstruating).

He still uses the park, for seeking peace and solace, but not for religious reasons. He others still participate in the Big Drum religion, but at another location. (The Dance Rings were originally used for the Dream Dance or Big Drum ceremonies.) Because of the graves and cemeteries, he still feels it to be a spiritual place. In fact, his wedding ceremony took place in the larger Dance Ring.

He and his friends have seen conflicts on the Bluff, such as people eating at a picnic table inside the Dance Ring. But they don't complain. He reasons that since his tribe has been refugees and runaways avoiding contact or conflict with whites for so many years, that they have become passive and avoid confrontation. Joseph explained:

"...the Potawatomi, what I've noticed over the years, when you are a refugee and when you are running around out in the woods, you promise to keep away from contacts with white people. Today this is just kind of a theory. I have a theory that they are passive-resistance. There is nothing they could do; but because they felt real vulnerable, they never wanted to confront other people. Whenever they had a confrontation with white people, either they would get, from what I was told, anytime that white people found them in a village, they would move the whole village. Like the next day, they would all be gone. They would move from the Big Eau Pleine, towards Junction City, from there to different places. Whenever they were found out, they would move again and hide."
Joseph continued, talking about the Potawatomi and their claim to the Bluff:

"We don't have our land up there and I suppose we could have fought over all these years and tried that. Legally, we didn't have much of a legal claim because in the years that the Potawatomi wanted to get some land up here, there were a lot of different policies of the federal government. They wanted us to kind of disappear. There were no lawyers back then, there were no policies that said, 'Oh, those poor Indians, we'll give them some land out here and we'll take care of them and shelter them so they can survive.' We have never put up a big fight over the Bluff. It's like we can believe what's in our heart, but that's ours. It shouldn't have been taken away just for the taxes."

Joseph spoke about the Potawatomi tribe and its divisions; his relatives never went to Kansas to live, but others did. There was a lot of travelling back and forth between Wisconsin and Kansas. When the land was allotted in Kansas, some Potawatomi from Wisconsin went down to get their allotments and then came back to Wisconsin to live. Some Prairie Potawatomi moved north, to a place called McCord. Some Prairie Potawatomi, in fact, some of Joseph's distant relatives, live with the Forest County Potawatomi where he now works.

Concerning the park, Joseph feels that it is well taken care of. The recreational areas do not bother him, since "they are not really polluting it." He would like to see more protection of the cemeteries, so people could not enter them. Joseph's father himself played on the rocks. He had names for certain places and for some of the rock formations.
LONG-TERM RESIDENTS

Leah Graham and the Graham family are cousins. Both their families moved here in the early 1900’s so that their children could attend Bethel Academy. They have strong family attachments. Leah, through her teaching and tutoring, is known throughout the community.

Both families have fond memories of the Bluff, participating in school picnics and childhood outings there. Henry was proud of the fact that his father helped drill the first well on the Bluff. They both have stories of meetings and friendships with the Indians of Powers Bluff.

Emil Mueller was park superintendent of Powers Bluff when the winter sports area was added. In addition, he is a longtime resident of the town of Arpin.

LEAH GRAHAM

Leah Graham is 92 years old. She lives in the same house she was born in, which is about 2 miles northeast of the Bluff. Her parents, Addie and John, came to the area in 1903. Although Leah never married, later in life she did adopt two children. She attended Bethel Academy and then went on for teacher’s training. She is a member of the Seventh Day Adventist Church and considers herself strongly religious. She continues to tutor students. She has a remarkable memory, and is somewhat of a historian, having written Bethel History and Memories 1898-1949, a 96-page compilation of Church and local history.

While growing up, her family was on friendly terms with the area Potawatomi. She remembers when the train when come into town about 4:00 and all the children
in town would go to the station to see who had arrived. She remembers the day five Indians "fell" off the train. They asked her brother where the big hill was, and he replied "I can take you there." Leah remembers he going ahead of everyone, and every once in a while he would let out a "war whoop and laugh for all it was worth."

They cut through the woods and used the trail that led up to the woods. They said they were looking for a home, and looked around for the large rock. They came back with their ponies and settled in. Leah stated that one of the Indians on the train had tuberculosis and it was thought that the fresh air on the Bluff would cure him. Leah remembers that day as April 3, 1907. She reports that the following spring the Indians had a dance.

Leah recalled a story when she was seven years of age. Albert Thunder, an Indian from the Bluff, knocked at their door. Her father went, and Albert announced that he had a pony for sale. He said "Your papoose needs it." When White Pigeon, Albert's stepfather, came home he found his pony at the Graham residence. He accused Leah's father of stealing the pony. He said no, he had paid money for it. Leah began to cry, and White Pigeon said "I give my favorite pony to my white papoose." Before Leah could dry her tears and thank White Pigeon, he was gone. She named the pony Molly Dimples and said that Molly Dimples took her everywhere she wanted to go.

Leah stated that she had Indian chums on the Bluff, including Lucy Boyce. Lucy was beautiful and her photograph appeared on postcards portraying an Indian princess. Leah has many old postcards depicting idyllic Indian scenes. When Lucy
was old enough, her family arranged a marriage for her. She did not want to get married and ran away to the Graham household. Eventually Lucy did marry and moved away.

Leah also remembers the logging camps in the area. They would cut and saw the logs in the summer, and use sleds in the winter to haul them out. Girls would deliver mail to the camps. On occasion Leah delivered it and then looked inside the bunk house. She remembers the bunks looking like shelves hanging from the wall; they were so narrow. They were just boards with feather ticking and blankets. There was a pot bellied stove for heat and drying socks and mittens. She recalled it having
an unpleasant odor because the loggers did not bathe often. Her brother worked at one of the camps, and when he would return home his mother made him stay out on the porch until he had bathed. She was afraid he was full of bedbugs, and said "I'll have none of that in my house!"

She remembers the Arpin lumber company cutting the trees and shipping the logs. The company then moved on. She remembers a beautiful pine tree that was on the corner near her home. Her father blasted the remnant pine stumps and left holes as big as a house.

After the logging ended there were only small trees left on the Bluff. Leah remembers being able to see Marshfield from the top of the Bluff. (Today the views are totally obscured by trees except where cleared for the ski and tubing runs.) She also remembered the Indians sending smoke signals from the Bluff.

Leah recalled the burials on the Bluff. She said that the deceased were buried with everything they needed for the Happy Hunting Grounds. A little girl died and she was buried with her toys, jewelry and blanket, new sheets and pillowcases, and her best clothes. She also remembers that one of the Indians had their pony buried in the cemetery. It is the grave marked with a pile of logs instead of a spirit house.

Leah objected to the blasting that occurred on the Bluff. She recalled a very large rock that had to be blasted out of the ground for the road. She remembers rocks being named the Devil’s ride, Devil’s basin, Devil’s chair, and Devil’s pot. The Devil’s slide was near the existing radio tower.
Leah would like to see the Indian houses and spirit houses recreated on the Bluff. She remembers going up to the Bluff with a friend after the Indians left. They went inside one of the houses and declared that "It smells like the old days!"

GRAHAM FAMILY

The Graham Family consists of three brothers, Henry (the spokesperson), Lawrence, and Oscar; and one sister, Mildred, all cousins of Leah. They are all in their 70's and 80's, never married or had children, and at the time of the interview were living in the original family dwelling. One year later I returned and they had sold their home and built a new home nearby. At that time they expressed some regret, primarily for their fruit and vegetable plants and trees, but otherwise seemed content in their new home.

Their family moved here (in 1902) so that the children could attend Bethel Academy. Henry felt himself indifferent about religion, but Mildred is active in the Seventh Day Adventist Church. They farmed all their lives, at one time owning four separate farms.

Henry remembered picnics on the Bluff, or Skunk Hill as it was called in the old days. He also recalled taking visitors and relatives up to see the park. His father helped drill the first well on the Bluff. Most recently, the family went up to the Bluff in September looking for butternuts, but found none.

Henry remembered trading with the Indians. The Indians would come to buy a chicken when a child was sick and they wanted to make soup. The family still
owns a native-made basket for which their mother had traded a chicken. They used that basket every day for their lunch out in the field.

Henry remembers as many as 400 Indians living on the Bluff in the past. He recalled the state of the cemeteries, when all the graves had spirit houses on them. Some of the spirit houses were made of logs, sides and ends, like little log cabins. More of these log spirit houses were found in the lower cemetery. Most have rotted out now.

Henry recalled that when they moved to the Arpin area there was no pine or spruce on the Bluff (probably because they had been logged). He stated that when the park was formed, they planted the conifers that are in the park today. The dance rings were originally encircled by hardwoods, with a ridge of soil and rock to sit on.

He also remembered the Indians making maple syrup on the Bluff,

..."but they didn’t make as much syrup as sugar because they had no way of storing the syrup too good. They’d cook it down into sugar and put that in burlap sacks. A big Indian kid by the name of Russell Barnes who’d go to school when I did. He was probably 18 or 19 years old, weighed probably 200 pounds, a big husky kid. And he’d come to school and tell 'We’ve got so many bags of sugar made up now.'" (In her autobiography, Mountain Wolf Woman, a Winnebago or Ho-Chunk from the Black River Falls area recounted visiting Potawatomi relatives near Marshfield and receiving some bags of maple sugar as gifts. Lurie, the editor of the autobiography, notes that this maple sugar was and is a highly valued commodity [Lurie, 24 & 120]).

Russell Barnes, the Indian classmate of Henry Graham, often left his rifle hidden in the edge of the forest when he went to school. He’d carry two or three large rifle bullets in his pocket, saying he might need them when he went home, probably
meaning to hunt game. Henry remembered other Indians who attended Bethel Academy such as Jimmy and Florence Pigeon and Lucy Boyce, as well as Russell Barnes. As a child, Henry visited the Bluff often, "...practically every week. We would always run up there--just an outing. And we knew where every bit of those things were, but they have changed. It’s over at the east end, and where they cut the road through there, they cut some of that rock off..."

He recalls the rock called the Devil’s Chair, on the east end of the rocky outcropping that is directly to the west of the ski run. The west end of the rock was used as a ski jump, but it was quite dangerous because one had to ski through the trees. He remembered the Devil’s Wash Basin as being in that same rock formation. Henry remembered going up on the Bluff with visiting relatives to buy beads and other Indian crafts. After the Indians lost ownership of the Bluff, Henry remembers their houses stayed standing for quite a while. "In fact, our Junior-Senior picnic when we graduated from school here was held on these empty houses. The Indians were gone at that time but those buildings were still up there." He also recalled that everyone was covered with wood ticks after the picnic.

Henry remembered Indians working for his father:

"I know in the depression days there, when we first got this land back ...and cleaned some of it up, we were hiring help to cut wood. They would go down there, 4 or 5 of them. They were good workers. They would work 'til the end of the week. The end of the week they piled the wood up, a cord in a pile, a good job of it. Then they would come down and say, 'Well, we want our money. We have (so many) cords of wood down there.' Then Dad would pay them up and they would go..."
Henry also recalled that the Indians had drinking problems. After they received their pay, "...they wouldn’t get back to work until maybe Tuesday or Wednesday or some other time in the week because they got drunk. They got that money and had to drink it up first."

The Graham’s land is directly adjacent to the north boundaries of the park, with County Trunk N as its north boundary (see figure 7). This area has a high water table. Henry found fault with the County when they developed a cross-country ski trail near that boundary and changed the drainage pattern. They bulldozed and
mounded the soil, and left a break where water could drain through. Henry felt that his woods was affected by this and he lost trees for some years afterward. The Grahams cut timber every year and sold it. They take pride in having the best timber in the area.

Before electricity, Henry’s family would cut ice on their pond. They have a small creek that they dammed up and created a pond. In the winter they would cut ice and store it. In the summer, the pond was used by their livestock.

The Graham family, with Henry as their spokesperson, had many memories and experiences on the Bluff. Their stories were similar to Leah’s, with working relationships and occasional friendships with the Indians. There were also the happy memories of class picnics and other childhood outings on the Bluff.

EMIL MUELLER

Emil Mueller was the park superintendent of Wood County from 1944 til 1969. He also sold insurance from his home. He has been a widower since 1964. He is 90 years old and has lived in Arpin all his life. He graduated from 8th grade from the Powers Bluff School. He remembers visiting the Bluff for school picnics. He has visited the Bluff often, for his job and also for pleasure. When I asked him what he liked or what he thought was good about the park, he responded by mentioning the winter sports. (He was superintendent when the park commission developed the winter sports area.) He feels the park is well-maintained and sees nothing to change or improve.
My interview with Emil took a short amount of time; I spent more time watching his old films/videos. He used a 16mm camera at the time, then compiled all the films on video, with his commentary dubbed. The video showed the ski hill with races going on, the shelter house being built, the park commission meeting at the Bluff, a boy scout outing, a family reunion, school picnic, a National Guard bivouac, a Presbyterian Church picnic with Melvin Laird, a former Secretary of Defense from Marshfield, in attendance, visiting Indians from Kansas, and the fall color.

Emil is a modest man, yet he is quite proud to have been a part of the making of Powers Bluff. On a subsequent visit to Emil, we visited the Bluff and he told me about building the shelter house; the first year, they finished the first story of the building. He pointed to some stonework, remembering who had laid them. He noted that over time he and his crew had become more proficient at the masonry work. It was also Emil and his crew who had planted the Norway spruce around the dance rings.

Emil, more as park superintendent than long-term resident, had a very great impact on the Bluff and its present-day appearance and usage. His philosophy of doing at least one good deed a day has persisted over the years, his goodwill and works as evidence.
Figure 20. Emil Mueller, standing at the top of the ski hill (photo by Donna Zimmerman).

MAINTENANCE CREW

Tom Domine and Scott Fox have been part of the maintenance crew for Wood County Parks for a number of years.

SCOTT FOX AND TOM DOMINE

I interviewed Tom and Scott one fall day when they were working in the maintenance building at the Bluff. Most of their responses were directed to maintenance issues, although Tom admitted that he and his family visit the Bluff a
couple of times a year. He also remembered visiting the Bluff with an uncle when there was a pow wow or celebration occurring.

When I asked about good or special things at the Bluff, Tom mentioned the scenery and the view. He also talked about the seclusion, getting away from the city, and the wildlife. He mentioned the park’s proximity to Marshfield. The Indian dance rings and the cemetery were also cited.

When I asked about disadvantages or conflicts on the Bluff, the first thing mentioned was the tow rope and the possibility of installing a t-bar system for the ski hill. They also talked about expanding the tubing hill, because it gets crowded and because the state inspector told them it is one of the best tubing hills in the state. They also said that it was a good money maker. The winter sports area is not advertised; brochures are printed but not widely distributed.

Scott noted that the road needs re-paving. They get quite a few requests for camping, which the park is not equipped for. They also said people have asked for an ice skating rink and a sledding hill. The shelter is not insulated and is difficult to heat, the fireplaces being the only source of heat.

Tom and Scott noted that the cross-country ski trail was quite difficult and did not get much use. Grooming is also a problem for the ski trail; their grooming equipment is homemade and does not work well.

The possible expansion of the park to the north was discussed. They thought the ski tow would be better situated at the bottom of the hill instead of the top where it is now.
They were both opposed to logging if it were to occur on the Bluff. They felt strongly that there were some large, older trees on the Bluff and they would not want to see them cut down.

Years ago they both had heard rumors that the Indians wanted the park land back, but they didn’t think the Indians had any legal claim to the land.

The last time there had been blasting on the Bluff was when the tubing hill was constructed and they blew off the top of the tubing hill.

Once the former park superintendent took them across the Bluff Road and showed them where another Indian settlement had been. He remembered riding his bicycle up on the Bluff. He told them that there were Indian settlements across the road as well as on top of the bluff.

They thought that an observation tower might be built soon by the Wisconsin Conservation Corps, the same group that constructed the cross-country ski trail. Although Tom and Scott’s observations were primarily maintenance-oriented, they both had insights about park usage. Tom had many first-hand experiences as a user, and I think that both men were able to perceive the Bluff as more than a maintenance issue.

NEWCOMERS

Both Gary and Sharon are newcomers to the Bluff area; they both bought land and built homes nearby. Besides being neighbors, they both use the park. Gary visits the park often and uses it in many different ways. He also has a strong attachment to the land, evident during our hike on the Bluff. Sharon uses the park
primarily as a place to exercise, yet she likes it for many different reasons. I would speculate that she also feels a close attachment to the land, judging from the nature of her property and home in addition to the fact that she participates in outdoor activities,

GARY EMERSON

Gary Emerson lives a short distance down the road from the park. He owns 3 acres with a home on it. He is 45 years old and single. He was born in Fairbanks, Alaska but only lived there 2 years. He lived in Pittsville before moving near the Bluff. He attended high school as well as vocational and Army schools. He has his own religion and feels he is moderately religious.

I met Gary at the entrance gate to the park. The gate was open, but we decided to hike. First we went to a rock outside the park, to the east. Gary showed me a "cave" (more of an overhang) of which he had seen many bats fly out. While we talked a raccoon appeared in the dark shadow of the overhang.

Gary was a logger and seemed to know his trees well, even in February. We admired some large maple and oak on the north slope.

We hiked to the old toboggan run which Gary remembered going down. He pointed out the fireplace at the start of the run, in which fires were built to keep the winter recreationists warm. The fireplace was built out of ordinary concrete blocks. When I suggested that perhaps it could be removed, he thought it should stay as a reminder of days gone by. He liked the way moss, lichens, and other vegetation were growing on it.
Gary likes to ski and likes the ski hill. He said he has taught many children of friends how to ski, and lends or sells his old equipment to friends. He showed me a nearby rock which he used to ski off, through the trees, and onto the ski run. As we walked towards the lodge, Gary remarked that he liked the old stone buildings (the lodge and washrooms), but did not care for the metal garage the County built for its vehicles. He thought it did not fit in.

As we hiked to the bottom of the ski and tubing hills, he recalled a night he was called at two a.m. to see if he could tow a car out of that area. Some "kids" had driven down the hill and were stuck. Later he got a call from the police asking about the car. It seemed that someone had towed the car before the authorities could catch them, and now they were looking for the car and people involved. (I have heard from other local people that the Bluff gets used for teen parties.)

As we continued our walk, Gary expressed concern with rumors he had heard about the possibility of logging within the park. He would be very opposed to it. He then talked about his love of the outdoors.

Gary visits the park often; almost every day he thought. He comes for the solitude, the beauty, the environment, the wildlife. He also come for recreation, and has attended social gatherings also. When asked what was special about the Bluff, his answer was the elevation and the micro-climate; that it can be sheltered from the wind and warmer. He does not like the semi-trailer on the tubing hill and the metal maintenance building.
When asked about conflicts on the Bluff, he recalled some vandalism and the use of motorized recreational vehicles. He felt that logging would be a conflicting use. He also knew of hunters who had driven deer out of the park onto adjacent land, and he felt this was wrong.

SHARON MABIE

Sharon is a newcomer to the Bluff area, having moved here 12 years ago. She visits the park mostly in the summer, for hiking and biking on the road. She uses the park primarily for exercise, using the road and the trails. She has also attended a Big Brother-Big Sister gathering on the Bluff. She loves the park, its natural beauty and its sense of history (the interpretive signs). She would like to see it stay "rustic," with perhaps better marked nature trails. She does not like the noise of cars and other motorized traffic that the park attracts.

Sharon is a pediatrician, working at the Marshfield Clinic. She is single. She was born and raised in Ohio, and has lived in Cincinnati, Boston, Hartford, and Albany. She built a home in 1985 on 37 acres of property directly to the west of the park. The home fits into the landscape, being an earth home built into a hillside. Native stone was used on the exposed portion of the home.
APPENDIX B

POWERS BLUFF COUNTY PARK--WOOD COUNTYSPECIES PRESENCE LIST

Acer saccharum
Actaea pachypoda
Actaea rubra
Adiantum pedatum
Allium tricoccum
Amphicarpa bracteata
Anemone quinquefolia
Aquilegia canadensis
Aralia nudicaulis
Aralia racemosa
Arisaema triphylla
Asarum canadense
Aster lateriflorus
Aster macrophyllus
Aster sagittifolius
Athyrium filix-femina
Botrychium virginianum
Brachyelytrum erectum
Carex albursina
Carex pennsylvanica
Carex plantiginea
Carya cordiformis
Caulophyllum thalictroides
Circaea quadrisulcata
Claytonia virginica
Conopholis americana
Cryptotaenia canadensis
Cystopteris bulbifera
Cystopteris fragilis
Dentaria diphylla
Dentaria laciniata
Desmodium glutinosum
Dicentra cucullaria
Dryopteris goldiana
Dryopteris spinulosa
Erythronium (americanum?)
Eupatorium rugosum
Fraxinus americana
Galium triflorum
Geranium maculatum
Geum canadense
Helianthus (strumosus?)
Hepatica acutiloba
Hydrophyllum virginianum
Hystrix patula
Impatiens capensis
Laportea canadensis
Maianthemum canadense
Mitella diphylla
Monotropa uniflora
Orchis spectabilis
Oryzopsis racemosa
Osmorhiza claytonii
Osmorhiza longistylis
Parthenocissus inserta
Phlox divaricata
Phryma leptostachya
Podophyllum peltatum
Polygonatum canaliculatum
Polygonatum pubescens
Polypodium virginianum
Prenanthes alba
Prunus serotina
Quercus borealis
Ranunculus abortivus
Ranunculus septentrionalis
Sanguinaria canadensis
Sanicula gregaria
Sanicula marilandica
Sanicula trifoliata
Smilacina racemosa
Smilax lasioneura
Solidago flexicaulis
Solidago ulmifolia
Streptopus roseus
Thalictrum dioicum
Tilia americana
Trillium grandiflorum
Triosteum auriantiacum
Uvularia grandiflora
Viola canadensis
Viola conspersa
Viola pubescens
Viola sororia
APPENDIX C--TRAIL PLANNING CLASSIFICATIONS

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<th>SLOPE</th>
<th>SURFACE</th>
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<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>0-1/4 MILE</td>
<td>1-WAY-4 FT.</td>
<td>1:50</td>
<td>CONCRETE, ASPHALT</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2-WAY-6 FT.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>1/4-1 MILE</td>
<td>1-WAY-3-4 FT.</td>
<td>1:20</td>
<td>ASPHALT, WOOD PLANK, VERY FINE CRUSHED ROCK</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2-WAY-4-5 FT.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>1-3 MILE</td>
<td>3-4 FT.</td>
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<td>WELL-COMPACTED</td>
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<td>1:8</td>
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<td>V</td>
<td>+10 MILES</td>
<td>UNDEFINED</td>
<td>STEPS OR NATURAL</td>
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(Minnesota Department of Natural Resources)
APPENDIX D-TEXT OF EXISTING INTERPRETIVE SIGNS
AT POWERS BLUFF PARK

Powers Bluff

The Indians named Powers Bluff Tah-Qua-Kik, and was for some years the home of three tribes of Indians: the Chippewa, the Potawatomi, and the Winnebago. Local historians say that some of the Potawatomi lived here as early as 1866. They lived on the hilltop beside the rock formation in houses of log, bark, and frames. Some lived in tents. Each dwelling had a fireplace in the center of the floor and a hole in the roof to allow the smoke to drift out. There was little or no furniture and few cooking utensils. The squaws did most of the work, tanned hides and wove colorful baskets of rushes and reeds. The Indians' diet consisted almost entirely of meat, bread, and potatoes. The braves traveled many miles in search of woodchucks which were considered a great delicacy. Powers Bluff was an ideal place for the red man. Nearby were the Yellow, the Black, and the Wisconsin Rivers, the hard maples to be tapped for maple syrup in the spring, and the pine forests. The marshes furnished reeds and tough grasses for basket weaving. In the fall marshlands and bogs supplied cranberries to be harvested on crisp autumn days and then stored in decorated baskets. Wild fowl were present in abundance and streams were alive with fish. Wild rice grew in the river beds. Mink, muskrat, foxes and beavers were trapped along the river banks. Deer and bear roamed over meadow and wood. The Indian village stood in a clearing of some twenty acres in the bluff.

Indian Bill Cemetery

These Indian burial sites are believed to be from the descendants of the
Winnebago and Prairie Band Potawatomi People. The Potawatomi tradition was to build a grave house over the burial site. These grave houses are meant to deteriorate naturally until their spirits rest in the happy hunting grounds of immortality.

**Geological History of Powers Bluff**

Powers Bluff is a worn down peak of an ancient mountain range which once covered northern Wisconsin. In geology it is known as a monadnock. It is comprised almost entirely of solid metamorphic rock called quartzite. Powers Bluff originated eons ago at the bottom of a primeval sea. Great depths of sediment accumulated and was compressed into sandstone. In the later cycle it was compressed and heated and changed into quartzite. During this stage other minerals invaded it, catalyzing and coloring it. The final colored quartzite made it suitable for use as a gemstone. After being formed the quartzite in association with other softer sedimentary rocks became warped and folded forming as a result of natural forces. Almost vertical strata, these were influenced by volcanic action and in time became uplifted and rose as ancient mountains. The softer sedimentary rock: sandstone, limestone, and others were worn away and Powers Bluff was left in its present elevated state, as a survivor of one of the oldest mountain ranges in North America. Powers Bluff is among the most ancient landmarks of Wisconsin. It is claimed to be about the 13th highest point in the state at an elevation of 1,472 feet.

**Indian Dance Rings**

In early spring the native ceremonial dance took place here. At their conclusion the Indians returned to their firesides amid chants and the symbolic beat of
drums to thank the Great Spirit for the spring's return. Indians from other tribes attended these rites, coming from other counties and neighboring states. Some arrived by train, alighting at Arpin, which was the nearest station. The Winnebagos of Wood County regularly came to these Potawatomi ceremonies. The Dance of Thanksgiving took place in July. The drum beat again. The sound of chanting filled the summer air. Warriors addressed the assembly between chants. The women joined in the chanting, but did not dance. Although the ceremonies followed a sacred pattern the rites varied from day to day. The fourth and last day the Indians appeared in their best dress, often in full regalia, their faces painted in brilliant colors. White visitors were allowed to witness the ceremonies but the taking of any pictures was strictly prohibited.
Interpretive Site Inventory

Site Index No. 1  Site Name: Dance Rings

Site Location: Top of the Bluff, south of road, across from the shelter building.

Description: Two rings of grassy area surrounded by large Norway spruce.

Seasonal Accessibility: The road is plowed, the area is mowed all summer. A locked gate at the entrance of the park limits access in early spring and late fall.

Interpretive Significance: These dance rings were used for religious ceremonials by the Indian settlement that lived on the Bluff and their guests. This group of Indians consisted of Potawatomi, Menominee, Winnebago, and Chippewa. Some Potawatomi came from as far as Kansas. Other Indians came from northern Wisconsin. Dance rings were and are an integral part of the Dream Dance or Big Drum religion, a set of beliefs that arose in the late 1800’s and spread from the Sioux in the west. Drums were passed on to other tribes to the east and north, into Wisconsin. The Potawatomi in Wisconsin gave drums to members of their tribe in Kansas. This religion was a cultural revitalization movement; it began as a response to the hopelessness of the Indian situation of the late 1800’s; yet it continued as a way to carry on traditions and values. This religion advocated community values and frowned upon the use of alcohol and gambling.

It has been suggested that these Dream Dance ceremonials were the beginnings of the pow-wow. A pow-wow is a celebration, a gathering but without religious meanings.

Attach photo/illustration here:
Story Development

Site Index No. 1

Site Name: Dance Rings

Interpretive Mode(s):
1. Sign--telling the religious and cultural significance of this site. Also recounting some of the history, of the Potawatomi and other Wisconsin Indians who roamed the land, having no reservation or land set aside for them but having signed treaties giving their land to the US government. The recounting of the hardships and struggles these Indians had, and how they were able to hold onto their traditional values and culture would instill admiration and respect for them and their cultural sites on the Bluff.

2. Seasonal cultural events--in cooperation with local Indians or nearby tribes; possibly in collaboration with Indian business in the area (Rainbow Casino). The event could include hands on demonstrations, such as sugaring and Indian crafts, as well as exhibits showing traditional dress, houses, and way of life. An event like this could create awareness and respect for Indian traditions.

3. Since the dance rings are directly south of the park road, they could be included in an auto tour. The signage described above in No.1 could serve both purposes.

4. The dance rings should be included in any teacher guide or educational material, since Native American culture is mandated to be included in our schools' curriculum. Fourth graders typically study Wisconsin history, and this would be an excellent opportunity to do away with the "noble red man" ideology and replace it with the facts.

5. Historic exhibit--inside the shelter building, for winter and summer users.
Site Index No. 1  
Site Name: Dance Rings

Justification:
This site is of national importance because:

1. The Dream Dance religion was the first of many cultural revitalization movements, such as the Ghost Dance religion.

2. Powers Bluff was one of the last sites of a non-reservation settlement of Prairie Potawatomi in the country.

3. The Dream Dance was possibly the precursor of the pow-wow of today.

4. Little has been written on this unpleasant phase of Wisconsin Indian History. With the State Sesquicentennial coming in 1998, this could be the time for this information to be made available.

4. The Dream Dance religion is still being practiced today, by ancestors of the Powers Bluff Potawatomi as well as others.

5. The dream Dance religion and the way it was spread across the Midwest demonstrates the letting down of tribal boundaries, the beginnings of Pan-Indianism, and the tribal ties that still bound the Potawatomi together between Wisconsin and Kansas.

Planners Comments:
This is an extremely significant site of national and state importance. There are only a few sites with dance rings left, and they are less accessible (Taylor County, McCord). The site, surrounded by Norway spruce planted by the park management, still has the earthen mounds or ridges, which were used for seating as well as a boundary for the ceremony, surrounding the dance circle. There are some early photos of the dance rings with ceremonies taking place--these were taken without permission and should not be used in any manner, certainly not for reproduction or use in any interpretation.
Site Index No. 2  

Site Name: Buffalo Bill Cemetery

Site Location: adjacent to the park exit, bottom of the park road, north of and visible from Bluff Dr.

Site Description: This cemetery is surrounded by a low stone wall. It contains 5 spirit houses, and depressions can also be seen where houses once stood and graves exist. Also, a pile of lumber or logs is mixed in with the spirit houses, perhaps also marking a grave.

Seasonal Accessibility: The park road is plowed in the winter and the area is mowed. There are picnic facilities nearby (grill, tables).

Interpretive Significance: This cemetery was used by a second Indian settlement, located partway down the southern slope of the Bluff. Spirit houses are still standing, one of the few places remaining in the state. Spirit houses have been described by early white-European settlers among Wisconsin Woodland Indian tribes, including the Chippewa, Potawatomi, Winnebago and Menominee. They mark the gravesite, they protect the gravesite from digging by animals, serve as a site for food offerings for the deceased, and are meant to decay at which time the soul is released. Note: one spirit house has asphalt shingles and galvanized nails-curious building materials for something that is meant to decay. I interviewed the former park superintendent and he told me that house had been vandalized, and well-meaning park workers repaired it in this manner.

Attach photo/illustration here:
Interpretive Mode(s):
Interpretive sign, telling about the second settlement of Potawatomi south of the Bluff. One of the families lived here until 1944. Family members still visit the graves of the ancestors. State the significance of spirit houses, their meaning and importance.
Justification: Spirit houses are no longer being built and this is one of the few remaining sites where they can be found (Odanah, Madeleine Island). They were built by many Woodland tribes, including the Chippewa, Menominee, and Winnebago as well as the Potawatomi.

Planner's Comments: These structures are not only fascinating in themselves, but also tell us a lot about the Indian cultures they represent--their construction of sawn lumber with the introduction of European culture (previously they had been a pile of logs laid over a sheet of birch bark), the presence of windows and ledges for food offerings (which also served as a social service for feeding the poor and hungry, for they could go and take these food offerings for themselves), and the "religious" meaning--as a resting place, where the deceased was accompanied by grave goods, for his/her eventual journey to the hereafter.
Site Index No. 3  
Site Name: John Nouwe Cemetery

Site Location: Top of the Bluff, southeast of the shelter, below old radio tower. Between road and rocky outcroppings.

Site Description:  
Surrounded by a low stone wall, current interpretive sign "John Ne-we Cemetery". Grassy area, is filled with trillium in the spring.

Seasonal Accessibility: The road is plowed, the area is mowed.

Interpretive Significance: The cemetery was used by the settlement of Potawatomi in the early 1900's. Some notables may be buried here, including John Nouwe, who was the leader of the Skunk Hill Potawatomi. He was born at Fort Dearborn in Chicago, and lived in Milwaukee and Watertown before coming here. He died in 1926, having lived 90-some years. He travelled widely and was considered an authority on Indian History, including the Prairie Band Potawatomi as well as the Michigan Shore Indians.
This settlement of Potawatomi intermarried with the Winnebago, which was typical of the times. many tribes had dwindled in number, and to find a mate one had to look beyond tribal boundaries. There were no reservations in Wisconsin set aside for either the Potawatomi or Winnebago.
This cemetery may have contained spirit houses, but they have long since decayed.
Site Index No. 3  

Site Name: John Nouwe Cemetery

Interpretive Mode(s): Sign, indicating that this is a cemetery used by the Skunk Hill Potawatomi. State that there were two settlements, and hence two cemeteries (Buffalo Bill and John Nouwe). Descendants still visit these graves, and this cemetery is due the respect that we show for our own.

Cultural event--this site could be included, in a seasonal event such as a pow wow or other Indian celebration.

Teacher guide--Indian history and common cultural traits (respect for dead, graves, grave markers, east-west axis for graves) could be explored.
Justification: This cemetery served one of the last settlements of Wisconsin Prairie Band Potawatomi. It is notable because of the burial of John Nouwe, the settlement’s leader.

Planner’s Comments: This cemetery, because it is so close to the top of the Bluff, is very visible and therefore important to be interpreted. It and other cultural artifacts are not shown the respect they should be. I think that if people realized their importance, to the deceased ancestors, as well as all Wisconsin Indians, that behavior could be modified.
Interpretive Site Inventory

Site Index No. 4

Site Name: Potawatomi Nature Trail

Site Location: Southeast of the summit, adjacent to the road.

Site Description: Presently the trail is signed at and starts next to the road, before reaching the John Nouwe Cemetery. An old parking lot is located at the entrance, but it is in disrepair.

Seasonal Accessibility: The trail needs some improvement, the addition of chips or gravel, some drainage control (near old toboggan run). It is a nice hiking trail, less desirable as a cross country ski trail. Actually bettersuited for snowshoeing.

Interpretive Significance: This trail is in the State Natural Area; considered significant because it is in a semi-natural state, had been logged once, never grazed; in addition the spring ephemerals and a boulder train are important. Significant features include the geology/boulders moved by glaciers, the rocky outcroppings--some of which have been named-Devils Chair-, the maple forest, the spring ephemerals, aspect or difference between the north slope and the south slope (temperature, humidity).
Site Name: Potawatomi Nature Trail

Interpretive Mode(s):

Self-guided trail, with an accompanying brochure. A trail and guide already exist, but need updating.

Possible guided walks, especially in the spring for the wildflowers. Winter walks, perhaps on snowshoes, would also work.
Story Development

Site Index No. 4  Site Name: Potawatomi Nature Trail

Justification: This area has been designated a State Natural Area. Except for past logging, it is virtually untouched. The spring ephemerals are notable—for variety as well as quantity—for central Wisconsin. The geology is significant, because it is a monadnock or ancient, worn down mountain. Also, the effects of two glaciers are evident, from the boulder trains. Finally, the maple woods are a southernmost example of northern hardwoods.

Planner’s Comments: The existing booklet for the trail has very good information—but it could be updated, with better graphics and more relational information. The trail itself is nice, except for a couple of steep slopes. One is dangerous, because it comes very close to a ledge...old fencing is no longer doing its job. The trailhead should be moved closer to the shelter and main parking lot. I think this would enhance trail usage and change the start of the trail to a more appropriate (less steep and dangerous) location. More visitors would see the trailhead, and maintenance would be facilitated (brochures could be replace more often, the trailhead would be more visible).
Site Index No. 6  
Site Name: Observation tower

Site Location: To be determined, preferably on the west boundary of the park.

Site Description: The west boundary is away from the State Natural Area (which should not be further impacted) and views the the north, northeast, west, and south could be visible.

Seasonal Accessibility: The trail leading to the tower could be black topped and cleared of snow.

Interpretive Significance: Because the Bluff is the highest spot in the county, the views afforded are quite nice. Rib Mountain, the Marshfield-Neilsville glacial moraine, and Glacial Lake Wisconsin could be seen. These possible views are also mentioned in the report when Powers Bluff was made a State Natural Area. With its hardwoods, and those in surrounding areas, the fall color would be very good.
Site Index No.  6  

Site Name: Observation Tower

**Interpretive Mode(s):** The tower itself, along with a sign explaining the views in each direction.
Justification: The views possible from the top of the Bluff are cited in the report for the State Natural Area. Since it is the highest point in the county, the views are very good. Nearest site with an observation tower is at Rib Mountain State Park, which gets heavy usage, especially in the fall.

Planner’s Comments: I think an observation tower would enhance the park; it would be costly but would also bring more visitors. After a talk with the manager at Rib Mountain, it appears there is little vandalism and maintenance is not too involved. A paved trail cuts down on wear and tear on the step boards. Staining every 20 years or so is the most expensive maintenance. Some selective cutting would greatly improve visibility and possibly save on construction costs because the tower would not have to be as high. If the proper site could be found on the west slope, I think the views would be the best. This location could also save the Natural Area from further usage, which the DNR frowns upon.