

## 2.0 Core Values

### Mission Statements

Guidance for the General Management Plan stems from the Mission Statements of the Department and its Parks and Recreation Division, and the Purpose and Significance Statements that have evolved through the planning process. The core values found in these statements must be reflected in this long-range General Management Plan for Wetzel State Recreation Area (SRA), and subsequently reflected in any shorter range action plans:

#### DNR Mission Statement

*The Michigan Department of Natural Resources is committed to the conservation, protection, management, use and enjoyment of the State's natural resources for current and future generations.*

#### PRD Mission Statement

*Acquire, protect, and preserve the natural, historic, and cultural features of Michigan's unique resources and provide public recreation and educational opportunities.*

The core values derived from these statements are that PRD will acquire, preserve and protect; (1) natural resources, (2) cultural resources, (3) provide public recreation, and (4) provide educational opportunities.

### Recreation Area Purpose

Recreation Area purpose statements are based on park legislation, legislative history, special designations and DNR policies. These statements reaffirm the reasons for which Wetzel State Recreation Area was identified as part of the State Park system.

- ◆ In 1968, the Michigan Legislature appropriated \$250,000 with the directive to purchase a new state park on Coon Creek in Macomb County, between 24 and 28 Mile Roads. This action supported the Detroit Metropolitan Area Regional Planning Commission's Regional Lands Plan, which identified the northeast sector (including Macomb County) as an area in greatest need of recreational resources.
- ◆ To preserve and protect the park's unique natural resources for current and future generations.
- ◆ To preserve and protect the park's historic/cultural resources.
- ◆ To provide opportunities for recreational uses and experiences in an area lacking, and that are compatible with the park's resource(s) base.
- ◆ To provide educational and interpretive opportunities for the public that reflect the mission of the DNR and the unique qualities of Wetzel State Recreation Area.

## Recreation Area Significance

Recreation Area significance statements capture the essence of its importance to carry out the core values of our PRD Mission. They recognize the natural and cultural heritage values of the park and the recreational and educational opportunities afforded. These statements describe the distinctiveness of Wetzel State Recreation Area (SRA). Understanding these distinctions helps managers make decisions that preserve those special resources and values necessary to accomplish the park's purposes.

- ◆ Wetzel SRA will serve as a model of cooperation between the state and local units of government in the planning and development of a state park or recreation area.
- ◆ Wetzel SRA is the only State recreation area or park in Macomb County.
- ◆ Wetzel SRA is a major source of open space and recreation in Lenox Township, and will gain value as a community asset as the population grows and land development increases.
- ◆ Wetzel SRA contains many natural features, such as mitigated and naturally-occurring wetlands, warm season prairie uplands and grasses, Coon Creek and associated floodplain, and woodlands. The mitigated wetlands and warm season prairie uplands and grasses were intentionally established in the recreation area. As there are few instances of such resources on State-owned land, they contribute greatly to Wetzel's significance.
- ◆ Wetzel SRA offers excellent opportunities for research, education and interpretation, particularly with regard to the mitigated wetlands, warm season prairie lands and grasses, and Coon Creek.
- ◆ There are occurrences of Species of Special Concern in the Recreation Area, like the Marsh Wren, Common Moorhen and Forster's Tern. Additionally, other endangered, threatened or special concern species may make the Recreation Area their habitat, as evidenced by a frog population that was previously cited in Wetzel.
- ◆ There are potential hunting and trapping opportunities available in Wetzel SRA.
- ◆ Historic and cultural resources, such as the remnants of farmsteads, are present in Wetzel SRA.
- ◆ Wetzel SRA is a node within the Macomb County Trailway Plan, as well as the greater regional trail plan. Connections are planned between Wetzel and the Wolcott Mill Metropark, and to other regional networks like the Clinton River, Paint Creek , Bridge-To-Bay trails.

## Legal Mandates

For all park General Management Plans, legal mandates are identified and serve to further guide the development of the General Management Plan and subsequent Action Plans. For our planning purposes, the term "Legal Mandates" refers to not only state law, but also the administrative tools of "Policy" and "Directive" of the Natural Resource Commission, the Department, and Parks and Recreation Division. Specific to Wetzel SRA, the following legal mandates have been identified.

1. PA 451 OF 1994, PART 741 - STATE PARK SYSTEM - NATURAL RESOURCE AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT - This act is the recodification of law that established the Michigan State Park System and defined the powers and duties of same. Notable in this law is Section 324.74102 which identifies the duties of the department and reinforces those core values cited above. This section reads:
  - (A) "The legislature finds:
    - (i) Michigan State Parks preserve and protect Michigan's significant natural and historic resources.
    - (ii) Michigan State Parks are appropriate and uniquely suited to provide opportunities to learn about protection and management of Michigan's natural resources.

(iii) Michigan State Parks are an important component of Michigan's tourism industry and vital to local economies.

(B) The department shall create, maintain, operate, promote, and make available for public use and enjoyment a system of state parks to preserve and protect Michigan's significant natural resources and areas of natural beauty or historic significance, to provide open space for public recreation, and to provide an opportunity to understand Michigan's natural resources and need to protect and manage those resources."

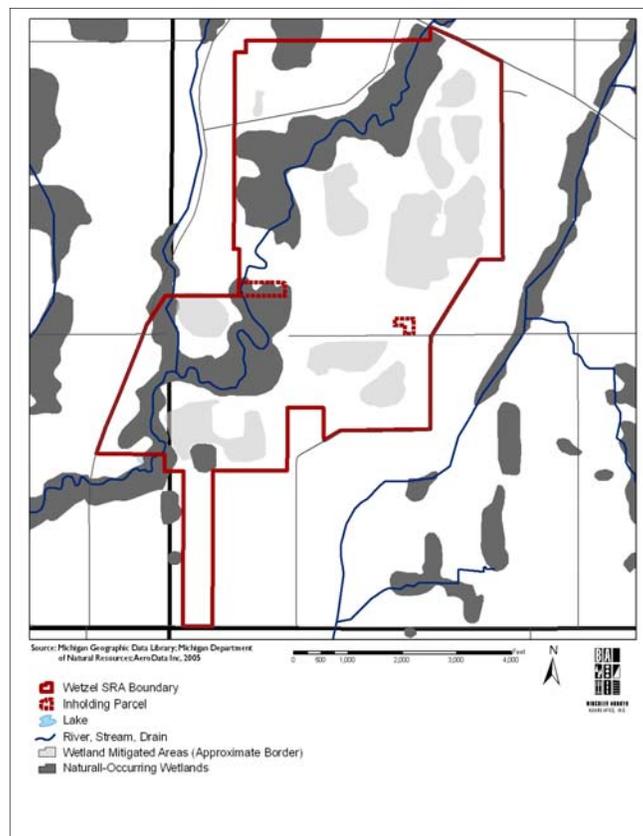
2. PA 451 OF 1994, PART 303 - NATURAL RESOURCE AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT - WETLANDS PROTECTION. There are mitigated and naturally-occurring wetlands in Wetzel State Recreation Area, as shown below, right.

Mitigated and naturally-occurring wetlands are both under the jurisdiction of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act. Section 324.30305 prescribes activities not requiring a permit under the Act and uses allowed without a permit. This section reads:

(1) Activities that require a permit under part 325 or part 301 or a discharge that is authorized by a discharge permit under section 3112 or 3113 do not require a permit under this part.

(2) The following uses are allowed in a wetland without a permit subject to other laws of this state and the owner's regulation:

- (a) Fishing, trapping, or hunting.
- (b) Swimming or boating.
- (c) Hiking.
- (d) Grazing of animals.
- (e) Farming, horticulture, silviculture, lumbering, and ranching activities, including plowing, irrigation, irrigation ditching, seeding, cultivating, minor drainage, harvesting for the production of food, fiber, and forest products, or upland soil and water conservation practices. Wetland altered under this subdivision shall not be used for a purpose other than a purpose described in this subsection without a permit from the department.
- (f) Maintenance or operation of serviceable structures in existence on October 1, 1980 or constructed pursuant to this part or former 1979 PA 203.
- (g) Construction or maintenance of farm or stock ponds.
- (h) Maintenance, operation, or improvement which includes straightening, widening, or deepening of the following which is necessary for the production or harvesting of agricultural products:
  - (i) An existing private agricultural drain.
  - (ii) That portion of a drain legally established pursuant to the drain code of 1956, 1956 PA 40, MCL 280.1 to 280.630, which has been constructed or improved for drainage purposes.
  - (iii) A drain constructed pursuant to other provisions of this part or former 1979 PA 203.
- (i) Construction or maintenance of farm roads, forest roads, or temporary roads for moving mining or forestry equipment, if the roads are constructed and maintained in a manner to assure that any adverse effect on the wetland will be otherwise minimized.



- (j) Drainage necessary for the production and harvesting of agricultural products if the wetland is owned by a person who is engaged in commercial farming and the land is to be used for the production and harvesting of agricultural products. Except as otherwise provided in this part, wetland improved under this subdivision after October 1, 1980 shall not be used for nonfarming purposes without a permit from the department. This subdivision does not apply to a wetland that is contiguous to a lake or stream, or to a tributary of a lake or stream, or to a wetland that the department has determined by clear and convincing evidence to be a wetland that is necessary to be preserved for the public interest, in which case a permit is required.
- (k) Maintenance or improvement of public streets, highways, or roads, within the right-of-way and in such a manner as to assure that any adverse effect on the wetland will be otherwise minimized. Maintenance or improvement does not include adding extra lanes, increasing the right-of-way, or deviating from the existing location of the street, highway, or road.
- (l) Maintenance, repair, or operation of gas or oil pipelines and construction of gas or oil pipelines having a diameter of 6 inches or less, if the pipelines are constructed, maintained, or repaired in a manner to assure that any adverse effect on the wetland will be otherwise minimized.
- (m) Maintenance, repair, or operation of electric transmission and distribution power lines and construction of distribution power lines, if the distribution power lines are constructed, maintained, or repaired in a manner to assure that any adverse effect on the wetland will be otherwise minimized.
- (n) Operation or maintenance, including reconstruction of recently damaged parts, of serviceable dikes and levees in existence on October 1, 1980 or constructed pursuant to this part or former 1979 PA 203.
- (o) Construction of iron and copper mining tailings basins and water storage areas.
- (p) Until November 1, 2007, beach maintenance activities that meet all of the following conditions:
  - (i) The activities shall not occur in environmental areas and shall not violate part 365 or rules promulgated under that part, or the endangered species act of 1973, Public Law 93-205, 87 Stat. 884, or rules promulgated under that act.
  - (ii) The width of any mowing of vegetation shall not exceed the width of the riparian property or 100 feet, whichever is less.
  - (iii) All collected debris shall be disposed of properly outside of any wetland.
- (q) Until 3 years after the effective date of the amendatory act that added this subdivision, removal of vegetation as authorized under section 32516.
- (3) An activity in a wetland that was effectively drained for farming before October 1, 1980 and that on and after October 1, 1980 has continued to be effectively drained as part of an ongoing farming operation is not subject to regulation under this part.
- (4) A wetland that is incidentally created as a result of 1 or more of the following activities is not subject to regulation under this part:
  - (a) Excavation for mineral or sand mining, if the area was not a wetland before excavation. This exemption does not include a wetland on or adjacent to a water body of 1 acre or more in size.
  - (b) Construction and operation of a water treatment pond or lagoon in compliance with the requirements of state or federal water pollution control regulations.
  - (c) A diked area associated with a landfill if the landfill complies with the terms of the landfill construction permit and if the diked area was not a wetland before diking.

4. MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU) BETWEEN MDNR AND TOWNSHIP. The DNR PRD and Lenox Township entered into an MOU for the preparation and implementation of the General Management Plan. The MOU is provided in Appendix D.

5. RESTRICTIONS OF LAND PURCHASE FUNDING SOURCES. Funds used to purchase recreation land can come with stipulations as to how the land can or cannot be used. The figure at the top of page 7, also shown in Appendix A (page A-6), illustrates the various funding sources used to purchase Wetzel SRA. Restrictions with each funding sources are:

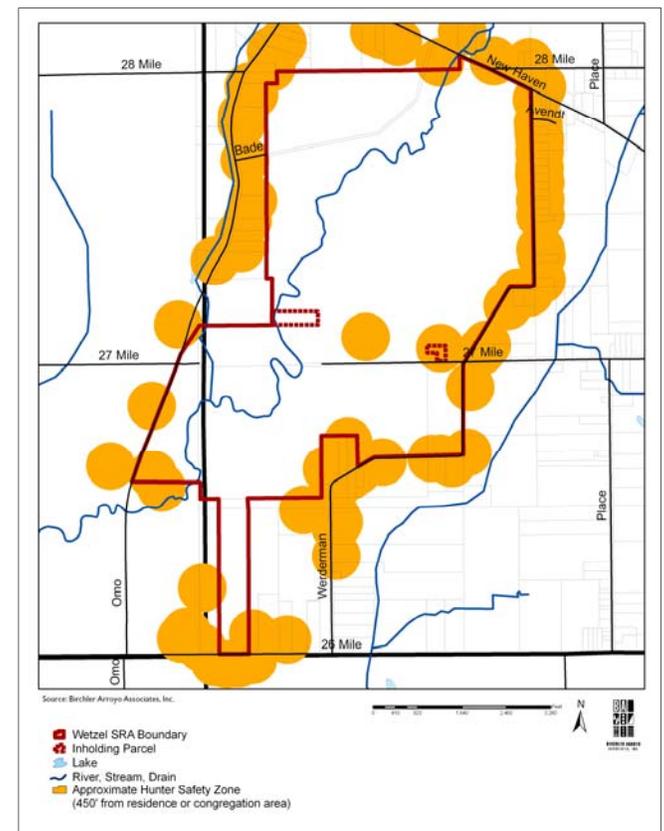
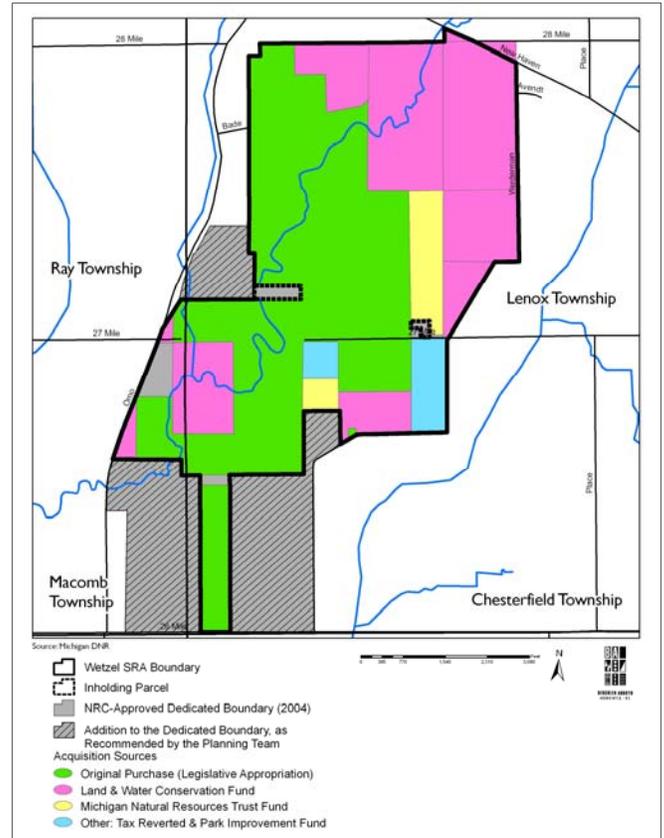
- ◆ Original Purchase Restrictions: Purpose of the original acquisition was for establishment of a State Park.

- ◆ Land & Water Conservation Fund Restrictions: The Federal Government funds this program, and with the funding is the restriction that all recreation land adjacent to land purchased under the LWCF must remain as a park and recreation use. Therefore, all of Wetzel SRA must be retained and used for outdoor public recreation in perpetuity. The project site cannot be wholly or partly converted to other than public outdoor recreation uses without prior approval of the DNR and the NPS. (Source: LWCF Application Guidelines, IC 5600, 4.18.06).

- ◆ Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Restrictions: The project site shall be retained and used for public outdoor recreation in perpetuity. The project site cannot be wholly or partly converted to other than public outdoor recreation uses without prior approval of the DNR and, if appropriate, the MNRTF Board. Also, the project site must be open to appropriate entry and use by all persons regardless of race, color, national origin, age, marital status, height, weight, religion, sex, residency, or disability. Preferential membership or annual permit systems are prohibited; however, admission price and other fees may be based on residence. Nonresident fees shall not exceed twice that charged residents; where no fees are charged, nonresident fees may not exceed the rate charged residents at other facilities in the area open to the public (2006 MNRTF Application Guidelines, IC 1905, 12.27.05).

- ◆ Tax Reverted Properties or Park Improvement Fund Restrictions: Wetzel SRA must be used for park purposes.

6. PA 451 OF 1994, NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT (EXCERPT) – 324.41901 Regulation and prohibitions in certain areas; powers of department; area closures; hearings, investigations, studies, and statement of facts; regulations. This part of PA 451 establishes the powers of the Department to establish safety zones for hunting. In accordance with the Administrative Rules established by Wildlife Division for hunting safety, a 450 foot "Safety Zone" is established around all occupied dwellings (which includes campgrounds). Under the State Land Rules, the Department also has the authority to expand the application of this 450 foot "Safety Zone"



to encompass "Day-Use Areas" such as beaches, picnic areas, boat launches, and parking areas, should the need arise. This is determined on a case-by-case basis. The figure to the right illustrates approximate Hunting Safety Zones for Wetzel SRA.

## 7. RIGHTS-OF-WAY.

- ◆ **Bade Road.** Macomb County Road Commission (MCRC) indicated that Bade Road is a certified Right-of-Way 1,400 feet east of Omo Road. This extends into Wetzel SRA approximately 1,400 feet. In the future, the DNR may desire to request abandonment from the MCRC of the ROW.
- ◆ **26 Mile Road Expansion.** The MCRC Long Range Master Plan 2004-2030 establishes that 26 Mile Road will be expanded from 160 feet to 204 feet for a four-lane boulevard entry. This effort is to occur between 2010 and 2020 and will encroach the southern boundary of Wetzel SRA.
- ◆ **26 Mile Road Michigan Bell Telephone Company Easement.** The easement is located along 26 Mile Road and extends ten feet (east to west) across the southern property line of the Recreation Area. Restrictions include:
  - 1) Notice must be given before any construction may proceed, in accordance with PA 53 of 1974, and
  - 2) All provisions of the Soil and Sedimentation Control Act (PA 347 of 1972) must be followed.
- ◆ **Omo Road Easement.** The MCRC has a sixty-foot ROW along Omo Road, south of 27 Mile Road. The southern edge of the ROW commences near the boundary and Omo Road's southern meeting point, and extends northeast along Omo Road approximately 300 feet. Conditions of the easement include:
  - 1) Notice must be given before any construction may proceed, in accordance with PA 53 of 1974
  - 2) All provisions of the Soil and Sedimentation Control Act (PA 347 of 1972) must be followed
  - 3) No fences shall be constructed on the ROW or existing trail roads closed without prior written approval of the DNR
  - 4) The DNR manages the timber and forest growth, except that MCRC may cut in the area needed for road construction or for maintenance purposes
  - 5) MCRC must obtain written approval of the DNR authorizing use of the ROW
  - 6) MCRC and employees must take all reasonable precautions to prevent and suppress forest fires, not cause unnecessary damage to forest growth or to any plantations, and shall be responsible and liable for any damage to the state property
  - 7) All brush or refuse resulting from operations under the permit must be disposed of as directed by the MDNR
  - 8) The agreement becomes null and void after the MCRC no longer needs to use the ROW for original purpose
  - 9) No herbicides are permitted without first obtaining permission from the DNR, and
  - 10) MCRC agrees to special ROW construction, restoration and maintenance conditions (e.g. vegetational restoration, blocking vehicular access, soil erosion prevention / mitigation).
- ◆ **International Transmission Company (ITC) Land Ownership and Easement.** ITC transmits high voltage electricity. One of its transmission lines traverses the northern portion of the Area's southern leg, and is approximately 200 feet wide. Additionally, ITC has a ten to twelve foot easement south of their property for overhangs. Resulting limitations or restrictions include:
  - 1) ITC will consider roadways and underground utilities but no trees can be planted nor permanent structures constructed in the corridor
  - 2) Any use must maintain a clearance of 20 feet from the lines and towers, and
  - 3) All final plans for Wetzel must be submitted to ITC for review.

Note: An ITC substation was installed at 161/2 Mile Road and Werdeman in 2006. The substation location is shown on the *Management Zone Plan* Figure, page 12.

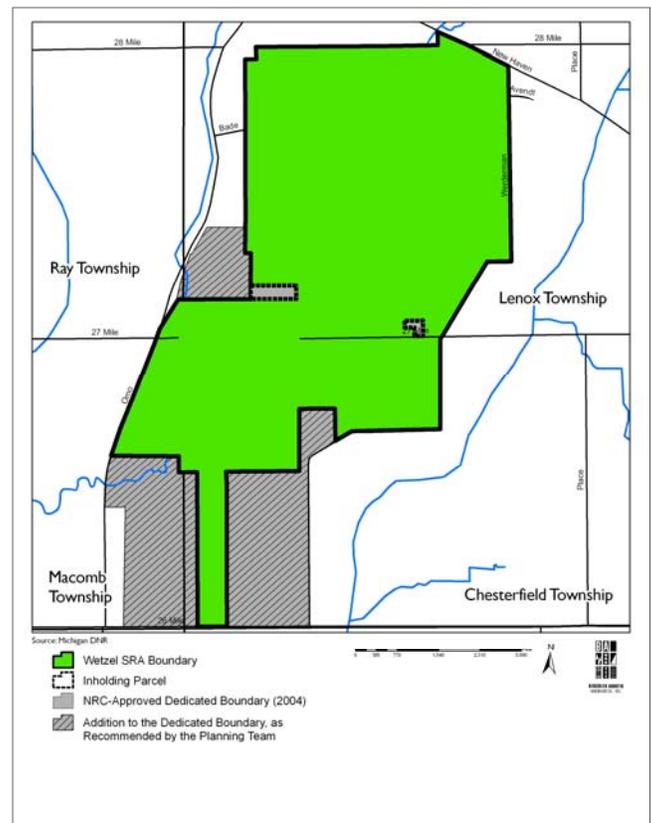
- ◆ **Sunoco Pipeline L.P. (Sunoco) Easement.** The Sunoco ROW runs southwest-northeast, and traverses southern Wetzel SRA in two places. Limitations or restrictions within the ROW include:
  - 1) Driveways or roadways may cross the ROW and pipeline perpendicularly, but at no time can they be parallel to, over and within the ROW.
  - 2) Buildings, swimming pools, sheds, decks, trees, shrubs or any obstruction of a permanent nature shall not be constructed, planted or placed within the ROW and easement (50 foot easement, structures must be no closer than 25 feet to the pipeline).
  - 3) Wells, leach beds, cesspools or sewer systems of any type shall not be placed within the ROW.
  - 4) All underground facilities crossing the ROW shall cross under the existing pipeline with a minimum of one-foot clearance. This includes sewer drain lines.
  - 5) The earth cover over the pipelines shall be maintained and never changed in any manner without the express permission of Sonoco.
  - 6) Any parking area placed over the pipeline with permission of Sunoco shall be subject to an amendment to agreement entered into by subject parties prior to construction.
  - 7) If heavy equipment is to cross the existing pipeline for any reason, it will be necessary for the owner to provide a ramp of sufficient material to protect the pipeline.
  - 8) A Sunoco inspector must be present at the time that any work is done within Sunoco's ROW.
  - 9) No blasting is permitted within 300 feet of the pipeline. Anything less than 300 feet must have the approval of an instruction from Sunoco's Engineering Department.
  - 10) All final plans for Wetzel must be submitted to Sunoco for review.

## Land Acquisition

Acquisition of land that would expand Wetzel State Recreation Area is of high priority for the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Parks and Recreation Division (DNR-PRD). Imbedded in its mission statement and core values is the acquiring of land for the direct purposes of preserving and protecting natural and historical / cultural features and providing public recreation and educational opportunities.

The DNR-PRD has targeted land in (privately-owned 'inholding' parcel) and around Wetzel State Recreation Area for future purchase, should there be an opportunity to do so. The figure to the right illustrates the existing boundary for Wetzel, and the *dedicated* or *project* boundary for the Park. The dedicated boundary was approved by the Natural Resources Commission in 2004. The DNR would like to acquire any private lands within the *dedicated* or *project* boundary as they become available, and as funding allows. For Wetzel, priority purchases would include the private inholding on Omo Road.

Part of the Phase I General Management Plan process was to evaluate the dedicated boundary and determined whether revisions are required or necessary. The Planning Team reached a consensus with regard to expanding the boundary





as shown on the figure. In general the recommended boundary would follow Omo Road south to 26-Mile Road (going behind existing residential housing) and would extend east to Werdeman Road, with the specific intent of expanding the potential for more developed recreation zone opportunities.