

# Town of Washburn

## Land Use Plan



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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*Adopted by the Washburn Town Board on June 12, 2001*

# TOWN OF WASHBURN LAND USE PLAN

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## INTRODUCTION

The Town of Washburn's land use history is similar to other Bayfield County towns in the Chequamegon Bay area. Through the years they have been changing from agricultural communities to rural residential communities. The Town of Washburn has retained much of its rural character, which was a high priority with the residents recently surveyed. The number of households has been steadily increasing as more people are choosing to live in rural areas.

Town officials and residents have recognized these changes and have expressed concerns about how their community will grow and develop in the future. With this in mind, the Washburn Town Board in January 1998 appointed an 11-member citizen committee to prepare a land use plan for the Town.

Town property owners were sent a survey to get their input on land use issues and future development. A map portraying existing land use patterns was drawn up. A set of plan goals and objectives based on the survey results was prepared to serve as a guide for future development. These guidelines emphasize the need for retention of the Town's rural character.

It should be emphasized that this plan serves only as a guide. It is not regulatory, but it is hoped it will be a tool for local government officials to use when making decisions on future growth and development in the Town of Washburn.

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

### **History**

The Town of Washburn was created in 1884. It encompasses 54,714 acres lying west of the City of Washburn, some of which extends 18 miles west into the pine barrens. Slightly over 5 percent of the land in the Town is a mix of residential/agricultural—over 2,800 acres. Almost 14,000 acres are wooded and privately owned. Commercial land only accounts for 6 acres in the Town, while federal land in the Chequamegon National Forest totals almost 37,000 acres.

The first inhabitants of the land that we know as the Town of Washburn were Native Americans, probably of the Chippewa Tribe. The harvest of the virgin white pine timber in the Town began in the 1880s. When most of the timber had been cut and moved out of the area, there was a need for new opportunities. Land company agents promoted the agricultural potential of the area and many small farms were established up through the 1920s. Immigrants from the Scandinavian and other European countries arrived during the late 1880s through the early 1900s. They came in search of work and land as both were scarce in their homelands. With its proximity to Lake Superior, it must have reminded many of those early settlers of the fjords of Norway or the ocean bordering their homelands.

Farming became the main occupation of the folks who lived in the Town up through the 1930s. Over the years new technology has supported larger farms and many small farms were abandoned and some were sold to form larger operations. Today the number of farms has been greatly reduced. Much of the land once used for farming is now in the hands of rural residents who have a full-time job off the farm.

There are three historic landmarks located in the Town of Washburn, which were designated as historical sites by the Town Board in 1983. They are: the McKinley School constructed in 1905, which is now known and used as the Town Hall and located at County Highway C and McKinley Road; the Church Corner Cemetery on Wannebo Road (formerly known as Long Lake Road), which has four graves remaining at this site; and the Westling Dam site, circa 1897, on the Four Mile Creek. These landmarks are each identified with a plaque.

The population of the Town has fluctuated through the years, but has shown steady growth since the 1970s. Many changes have taken place as the area has become favored for homes in a rural setting. The Town of Washburn remains blessed with much natural beauty and a wealth of natural resources.

### **Topography**

The Town of Washburn has quite a variety of topography. The mean elevation is approximately 1,000 feet. The lowest elevation is 620 feet (just 18 feet above Lake Superior) on the Town's eastern border near the city of Washburn. The highest elevation is approximately 1,470 feet on the western edge of the Town, 17 miles west of Washburn. There are gently rolling hills, some flat land and wetlands, ravines and river valleys, but as a rule, the terrain is quite moderate.

### **Climate**

The major factor affecting the Town of Washburn climate is the proximity of Lake Superior. Despite the northerly latitude, the average low temperature is 12° F while the average high

temperature is 67° F. However, these figures can vary significantly according to sampling location. Low temperatures can reach to -40° F and high temperatures can be around 100° F. Snowfall amounts can be significantly less at the lower elevations on the eastern portion of the Town (55”), compared to amounts at higher elevations which can reach more than 100” annually. Total precipitation amounts range from 18” to 48”, with the average approximately 27”. The frost-free season varies greatly depending on location, averaging 116 days. Dense fog can occur as a result of moisture from Lake Superior.

### **Soils and Hydrology**

Many of the soils in the Town of Washburn are extremely fragile and can become destabilized through land use changes. Soils above the 900-foot contour level are composed of deep, sandy soils, as seen at the top of Maple Hill. These soils can be considered groundwater recharge areas. Activities conducted in these areas can have dramatic impacts on the water supply on much of the Town. Immediately below these sandy areas are transitional zones that typically can be characterized as shallow sand over clay. Often ground water and perched water tables can be found here. These zones are often wet through most of the year, but especially in the spring. These zones present challenges for road construction and maintenance. These soils have severe limitations for some uses but are very well suited to crops like blueberries. The more level clay soil zones of the Town are well suited to a variety of agricultural uses. The high shrink/swell properties require an extra effort to construct stable roadbeds. Stream channels in the Town are, for the most part, deeply incised into the clay soil areas. These clay soils are often inter-bedded with sands that are frequently saturated with water at certain times of the year. Removal of the tree canopy can lead to massive soil slumps. Managing stream margin areas to promote long-lived conifer tree species as opposed to aspen can minimize this problem. Updated soil mapping was completed in the year 2000 for the Town of Washburn by the United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service.

### **Wetlands**

The wetland area is limited in the Town of Washburn. Wetlands comprise less than one percent of the Town’s land area. The larger (greater than one acre) wetland areas in the Town are generally located along stream margins and in association with lakes. Smaller wetlands can be found in clay soil areas. These small wetlands are located in concave depressional areas. Often they are less than 1/10th acre or smaller in size. The wetland resources of the Town play an important part in protecting water resources from storm water runoff and excessive soil erosion. Many of the wetlands hold open water in the spring for a short time and provide important habitat for many forms of wildlife.

### **Water Resources**

The Town of Washburn’s drainages are located in the eastern third of the Town. Important surface waters in the Town include: the Sioux River and Four Mile, Thompson, Bono, Boyd and North Whittlesey Creeks.

The Sioux River originates in the Town of Washburn and flows northeast for approximately seven miles through it, four of which are Class I<sup>1</sup> trout water. Two Class II<sup>2</sup> and III<sup>3</sup> tributaries are also in

<sup>1</sup>Class 1 – High grade trout waters with conditions favorable for natural reproduction.

<sup>2</sup>Class 2 – Streams which have some native trout that require moderate to heavy stocking to maintain good fishing.

<sup>3</sup>Class 3 – These streams are marginal trout habitat that necessitate trout stocking to provide trout fishing.

the Town. Runs of rainbow and brown trout are most abundant, with some coho salmon. There are also a fair number of residential brook and brown trout. Access to the river is good at the County C parking Lot. The Sioux is also excellent habitat for migratory fowl and fur bearers. The red clay soils allow little absorption creating high runoff, extensive fluctuations, silt loads and bank erosion. Livestock accessing stream channels cause erosion and habitat degradation in places.

Four Mile Creek is a major tributary of the Sioux River, 1½ miles of which flows through the Town of Washburn from the northwest and empties into it near the County C access. It is a Class 1 trout stream with spawning area for several trout and salmon species. It supports mostly brown and rainbow trout along with some brook trout. The heaviest catch occurs in the spring run.

Thompson Creek is a spring fed Class I trout stream which originates in and flows through the Town's southeast corner for approximately 3.5 miles before it enters Lake Superior in the City of Washburn. It has mostly brook trout with some brown and rainbow. It has runs of migratory trout and salmon species from Lake Superior. The access is good from local roads. The species are low with none rare. Both Four Mile and Thompson Creeks have red clay soils with resultant high runoff after each rainfall which results in erosion and high silt loads. They are also listed as outstanding resource waters worthy of protection by good land use.

Bono (a Class II trout stream) and Boyd Creeks and the north fork of Whittlesey Creek also originate in the southeast corner of the Town, but leave the Town shortly thereafter. The Whittlesey is a priority watershed and protection of these headwaters is important.

There are eight named lakes, totaling approximately 100 surface acres, all located in the Chequamegon National Forest. These lakes include: Long Lake, Moose Lake, Horseshoe Lake, Hoist Lake, Rib Lake, Pine Lake and two Twin Lakes.

A map depicting the location of important environmental resource areas in the Town is found on the next page.

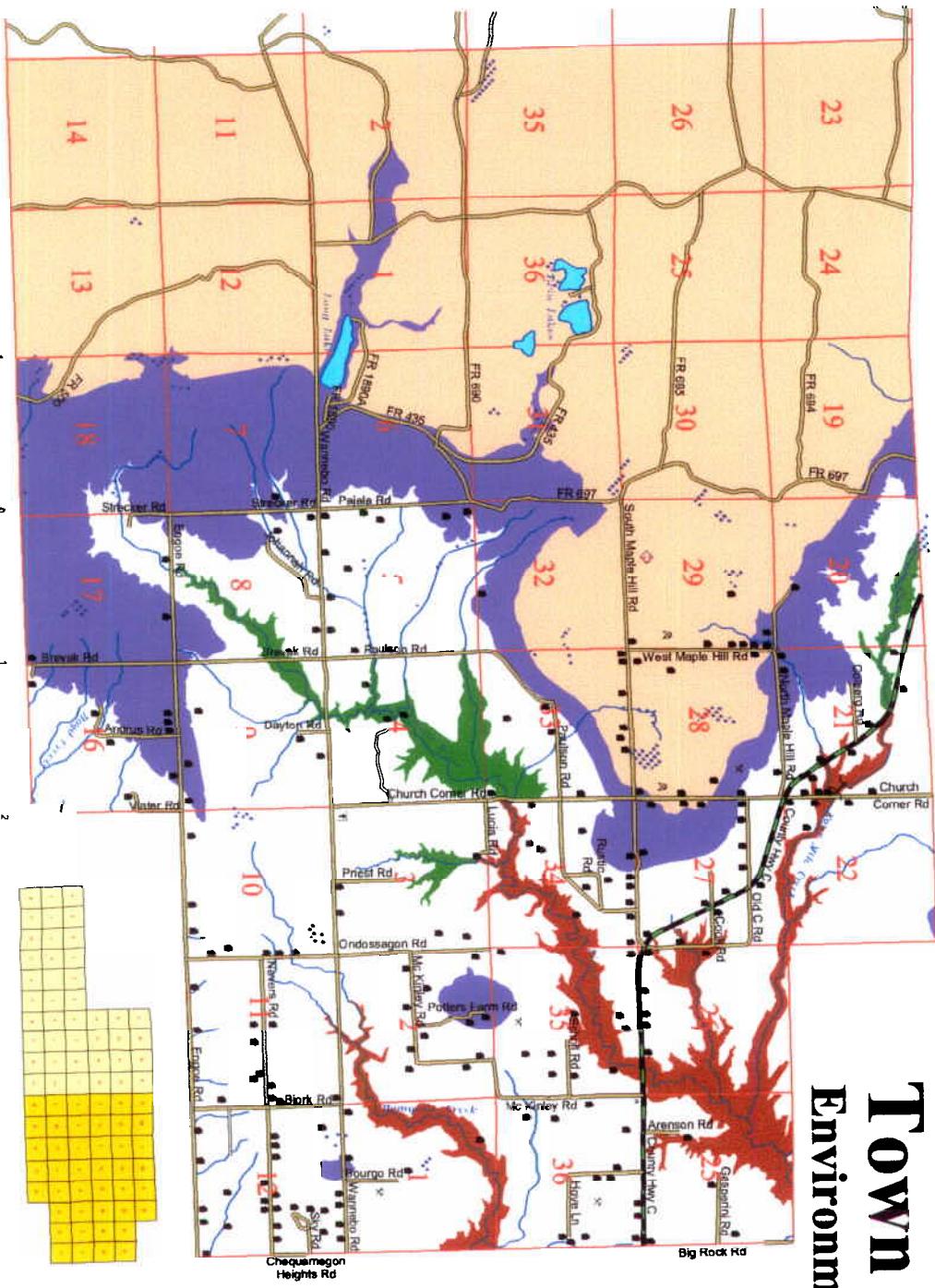
### ***Forest Lands***

The land within the Town of Washburn began to emerge from the post-glacial lake now called Superior about 10,000 years ago and at elevations higher than 1,000 feet above sea-level. Topography that we see today was likely present by 4,000 years ago. The forest that attracted the first loggers to the Town in the 1880s was dominated by white pine. After the initial logging, most of the land was put into agriculture. Agriculture has waned since the 1940s, and the majority of the land began to revert to forest.

Because the initial cut of the Town's forest was so drastic, seed sources for new generations of white pine, red pine, jack pine, upland white cedar, hemlock, and perhaps some other species were greatly diminished, even eliminated in some areas. Meantime, maples, basswood, red oak and shorter lived species such as the aspens and balsam fir have begun to dominate the landscape in many areas. Given this scenario, it is not likely that the pines and the other long-lived conifers will re-claim their former relative importance, unless humans re-intervene.

Currently, some private forest lands within the Town are being harvested in short rotations for wood important in the pulp and boltwood markets; there appears to be minimal attention to the re-establishment of forest communities that reflect the highest ecological potential of a given site. Land owners who choose the ecological approach will manage their forest according to site

# Town of Washburn Environmental Resource Areas

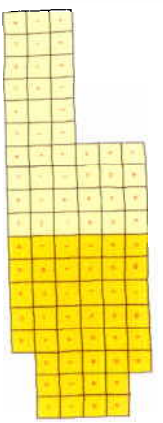


**DEFINITIONS:**  
**FRAGILE:** Soils in these areas are subject to erosion, erosion products, and sedimentation. These areas are not suitable for any form of development because of their susceptibility to erosion and slope inversions. Permanent forest cover is the best protection for these areas. Other types of cover should be encouraged in these regions.

**SENSITIVE:** These areas are subject to erosion problems and are generally unsuitable for development. Mass soil washing and severe gully erosion can occur. Unsettled ground, steeply sloping areas, and areas with high water tables are particularly susceptible to erosion. Permanent forest cover is the best protection for these areas. Other types of cover type.

**GROUND WATER RECHARGE:** These zones are areas of deep lands that may not be immediately well. Excessives are not to be used for development. The sandy soils that typically occur in these areas are not suitable for development. Development that could potentially involve water should be discouraged (i.e. kind of design facility).

**TRANSITIONALLY:** Soils in these areas have limitations for certain types of development. These areas are typified by sandy soils over clay subsoils and tend to be moderately well. Excessives are not to be used for development. Other types of cover are encouraged. Roads in these areas tend to receive and are subject to heavy erosion. Roads in these areas tend to receive and are subject to heavy erosion. Roads in these areas tend to receive and are subject to heavy erosion. Roads in these areas tend to receive and are subject to heavy erosion.



**Legend**

- Environmental Areas
  - Fragile
  - Sensitive
  - Transitional
  - Groundwater Recharge
- Roads
  - County
  - Town
  - Private
- Town Historic Sites
  - Town Hall
  - Cemetery
  - Wasting Dam
- Other Info
  - Residence
  - Sand/Gravel Pit
  - Tower
  - Abandoned Landfill
  - Streams
  - Lakes
  - Sections
  - Wetlands

**NOTE:** The Town of Washburn (see locator map to the left) is three congressional townships (18 miles wide). The eastern portion is shown on the above Environmental Resources Areas map. The western portion is not illustrated but is classified as a Groundwater Recharge Area.

**NOTE:** Major wetland areas are denoted on the map. Additional wetlands are present but are not shown due to map scale limitations.

This map is intended to depict the generalized significant environmental resource areas in the Town of Washburn. This map was originally prepared by the Bayfield County Land Records Department in October, 2000 (revised in January, February, and March 2001) based on information generated and provided by the Town of Washburn Land Use Planning Committee.

March 2001



potential as reflected in soil-types and understory vegetation; an owner who commits to this option also commits to a forest management strategy that requires many decades if not a century or more to complete.

Forest lands currently cover 92 percent (50,531 acres) of the land area in the Town of Washburn. Federal Forest land (Chequamegon National Forest) constitutes 36,739 acres of this total and private woodlands represent the remaining 13,792 acres.

Because more than half of the Town is within the Chequamegon National Forest, citizens as a whole have a realistic opportunity to plan for and achieve, in partnership with the U.S. Forest Service, the reconnection of the Town's now fragmented forest. In this way, many corridors of unbroken forest might someday extend from the eastern reaches of the Town to the Bayfield Barrens in the west.

### **Recreational Resources**

The Town of Washburn currently has approximately 50 miles of snowmobile and 20 miles of ATV routes and trails. There are four marked trails running through the Town, which include Valhalla, Iron River, Moquah Spur and Lenawee trails.

Long Lake is the only park, picnic and swimming area. There are picnic/campgrounds at Birch Grove, Pine Lake and Horse Shoe Lake. They are all located in the National Forest. There is dispersed or undeveloped camping throughout the National Forest. Many of the lakes have pan fish and largemouth bass for fishing along with canoeing opportunities for recreation. Fishing is also available for trout and salmon in the streams and rivers that run through the Town.

There are hiking trails around Long Lake, Horseshoe Lake and Twin Lakes. A horse trail originates at Horse Shoe Lake horse campground. Horseback riding is allowed on all forest roads.

The National Forest is open to hunting for deer, bear and small game. There are approximately 45 species of mammals and numerous birds for viewing. The southwest corner of the Town contains part of the Moquah Barrens Wildlife Management Area.

Other opportunities include berry picking, gathering forest products, viewing scenery by auto and bicycle, skijoring, cross country skiing, snow shoeing and dog sledding.

The recreational resources in the Town of Washburn are shown on the map on the following page.

### **Population**

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the Town of Washburn's population in 2000 was 541. Although the Town experienced an 11.3 percent decline in population from 1960 to 1970, it has grown steadily from 1970 to the present. The Town of Washburn's population increased from 282 in 1970 to 386 in 1980 to 490 in 1990 to 541 in 2000.

The neighboring City of Washburn had also experienced a steady growth in population from 1960 to 1990. Going from 1,896 in 1960 to 1,957 in 1970 to 2,080 in 1980 to 2,285 in 1990. The City's 2000 population was down slightly to 2,280 according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

# Town of Washburn Recreational Resources Map

**LEGEND**

**Trails**

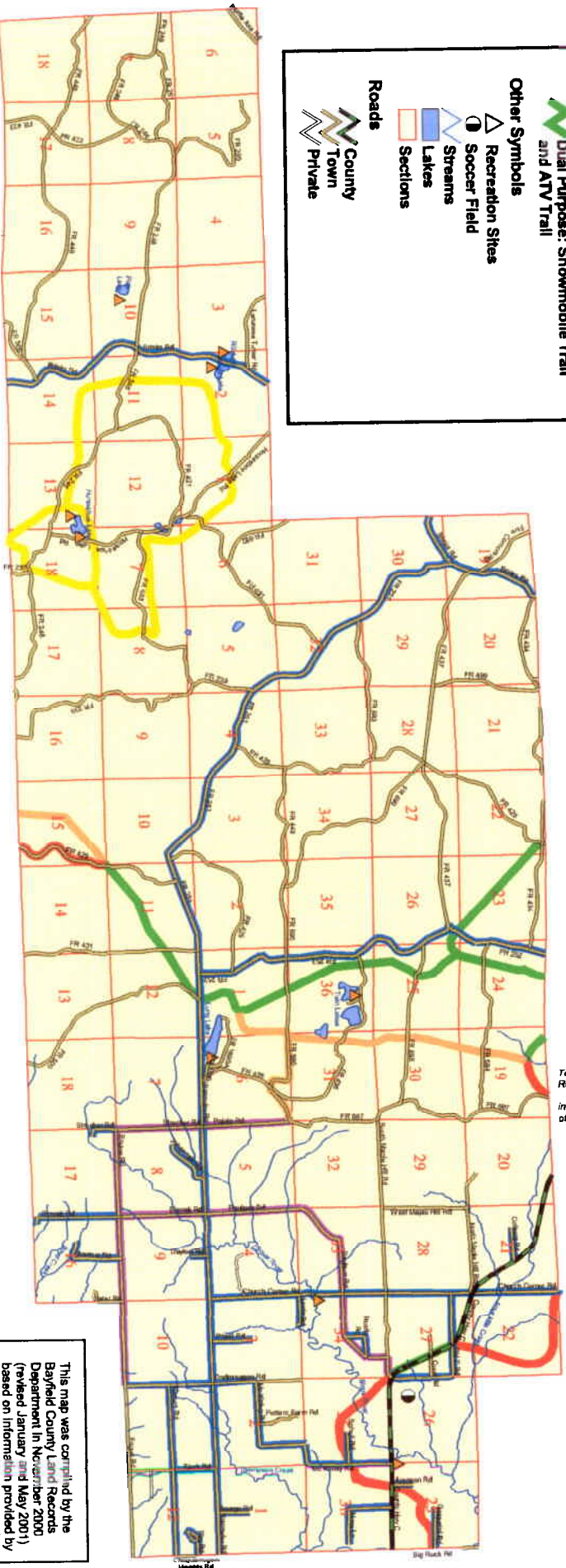
- ATV Trail
- Horseshoe Lake Saddle Trail
- Snowmobile Route
- Snowmobile Trail
- Dual Purpose: Snowmobile Route and ATV Trail
- Dual Purpose: Snowmobile Trail and ATV Trail

**Other Symbols**

- Recreation Sites
- Soccer Field
- Streams
- Lakes
- Sections

**Roads**

- County
- Town
- Private



*To Vahalla  
Recreational  
Area  
in the Town  
of Bayview*

This map was compiled by the Bayfield County Land Records Department in November 2000 (based on information provided by the Town of Washburn Land Use Planning Committee).



May 2001

## Population Trends

	<u>1960</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>
Town of Washburn	318	282	386	490	541
City of Washburn	1,896	1,957	2,080	2,285	2,280

Persons 19 years of age and younger constituted 36.1 percent of the Town of Washburn's population in 1990. The 20 to 44 age group and 45 to 64 age category made up 38.6 percent and 15.9 percent of the Town's population, respectively. The 65 years of age and older population represented 9.4 percent of the Town's 1990 population.

### Town of Washburn Population Age Breakdown 1990

	<u>0-19</u>	<u>20-44</u>	<u>45-64</u>	<u>65 &amp; Over</u>	<u>Total</u>
Number	177	189	78	46	490
Percent	36.1	38.6	15.9	9.4	100.0

In 1990 the Town of Washburn's male population outnumbered females 262 to 228.

### **Households**

The number of households in the Town of Washburn increased from 134 in 1980 to 159 in 1990. Out of these 159 households, 11.3 percent were one person and 32.7 percent two person households.

### Town of Washburn Household Size 1990

	<u>One Person</u>	<u>Two Person</u>	<u>Three Person</u>	<u>Four Person</u>	<u>Five Person</u>	<u>Six Person</u>	<u>Seven Person</u>	<u>Total</u>
Number	18	52	29	31	20	6	3	159
Percent	11.3	32.7	18.2	19.5	12.6	3.8	1.9	100.0

In 1990, 51.6 percent of the households in the Town had children under age 18 and 21.4 percent had one or more persons age 65 or over.

### **Income**

Household incomes in the Town of Washburn were higher than the City of Washburn and Bayfield County, but lower than the State of Wisconsin, according to the 1990 U.S. Census. The per capita income in the Town of Washburn was lower than the City of Washburn, Bayfield County and State of Wisconsin. The 1989 median household income, average household income and per capita income in the Town of Washburn were \$25,694, \$29,647 and \$9,704, respectively. A comparison with incomes for the City of Washburn, Bayfield County and Wisconsin is shown in the following table.

## Household & Per Capita Incomes 1989

	Median Household Income	Average Household Income	Per Capita Income
Town of Washburn	\$25,694	\$29,647	\$ 9,704
City of Washburn	\$21,179	\$26,397	\$10,591
Bayfield County	\$20,666	\$25,048	\$ 9,933
State of Wisconsin	\$29,442	\$35,180	\$13,276

### Employment

In 1990 the total civilian labor force in the Town of Washburn was 208. Of this total, 55.8 percent were male and 44.2 percent were female. During 1990, 19 persons or 9.1 percent were unemployed.

The Town of Washburn's labor force contained relatively high employment in professional, production/crafts, executive/administrative and operator/laborer occupations. In 1990, 26.5 percent of the Town's employed worked in professions, 15.9 percent had production/crafts occupational positions and another 15.3 percent held executive/administrative jobs. Persons employed in operator/laborer positions constituted 10.1 percent.

### Town of Washburn Employment by Occupation 1990

Occupation	Number Employed	Percent
Executive/Administrative	29	(15.3)
Professional	50	(26.5)
Technical	5	(2.6)
Sales	6	(3.2)
Administrative Support/Clerical	14	(7.4)
Services	10	(5.3)
Production/Crafts	30	(15.9)
Operator/Laborer	19	(10.1)
Transportation/Material Mover	9	(4.8)
Farming/Forestry/Fishing	7	(9.0)

Approximately 42 percent of the Town's work force was employed in Bayfield County and around 58 percent worked outside Bayfield County.

### Agriculture

The number of families involved in agriculture for a livelihood has decreased dramatically in number since the founding of the Town of Washburn. The number of operating farms reached a low of four in 1990 but had increased to nine by 1997, according to the Wisconsin Town Land Use Databook (1999). Acreage of land devoted to farming has however remained fairly constant over the last decade. Presently, 1,800 acres or 3.3 percent of the Town's total land area is devoted to agricultural uses. The open field areas that result from farming activities give the Town much of its visual appeal and rural character. The Town of Washburn has a surprising diversity of agricultural activities including: dairy, beef, hogs, sheep, goats, horses, poultry, corn, hay, barley, oats, greenhouse bedding plants, floriculture, berries and vegetables.

## Housing

According to the 1990 U.S. Census of Population & Housing, there were 192 housing units in the Town of Washburn. Occupied housing totaled 159 units of which 137 were owner-occupied homes and 22 were renter-occupied units. Vacant housing totaled 33 units, and 13 of these were for seasonal, recreational or occasional use.

## Land Use

The table below shows a breakdown by acres of the different land classes in the Town of Washburn based on a 2000 Bayfield County Real Estate Valuation Statement.

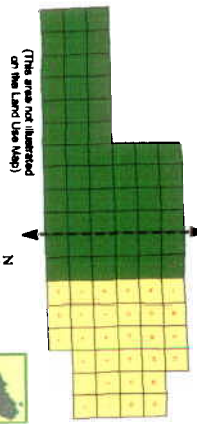
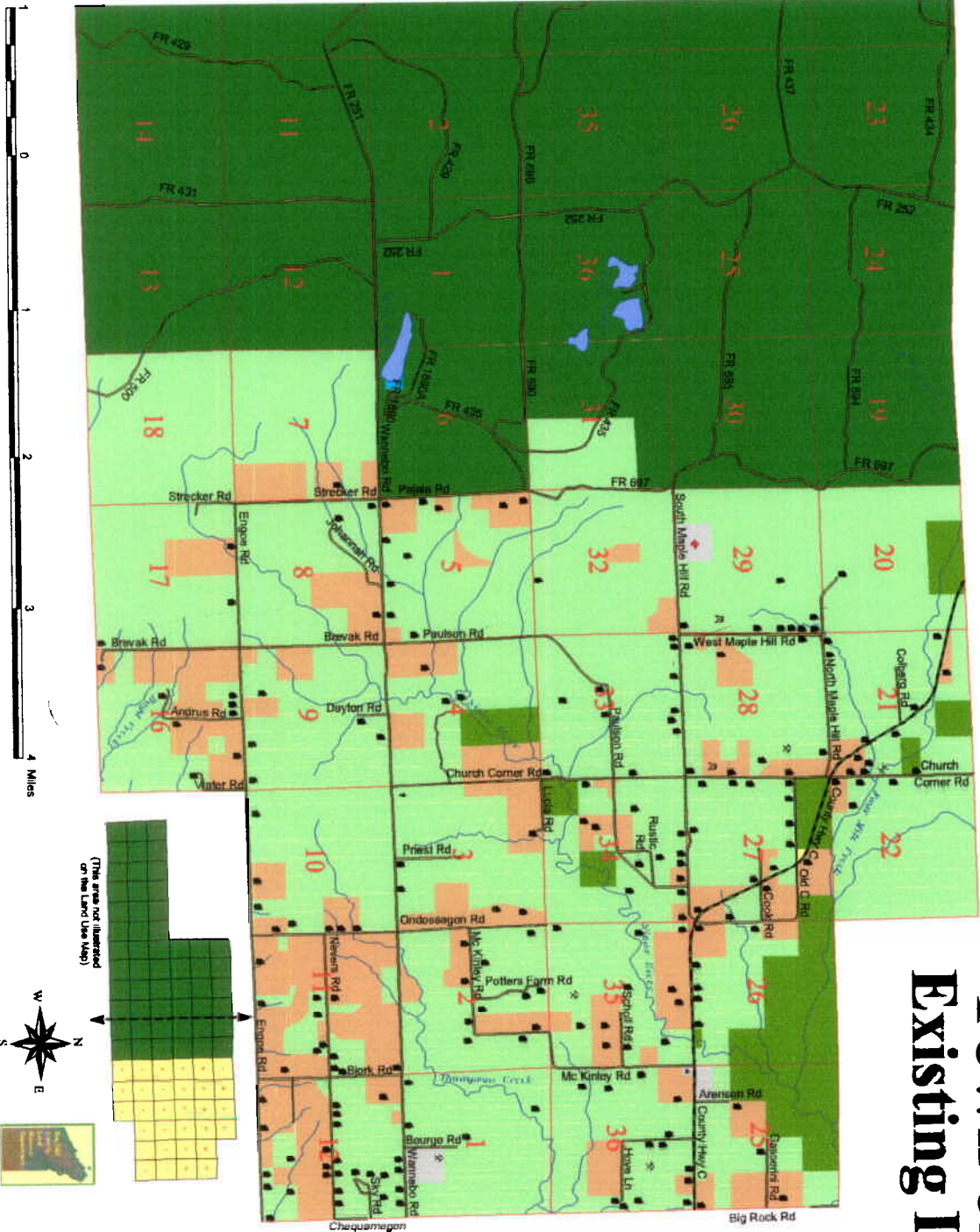
Town of Washburn Land Uses 2000

<u>Class/Use</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Residential	1,028	1.9
Commercial	6	0.0
Agricultural	1,800	3.3
Swamp & Waste	105	0.2
Forest/Woodlands	50,531	92.4
Private Forest	(13,792)	(25.2)
Federal Forest	(36,739)	(67.2)
State	1,012	1.8
Bayfield County	82	0.1
Other (other tax exempt land)	150	0.3
TOTAL	<u>54,714</u>	<u>100.0</u>

Forest/woodlands comprise 92.4 percent of the land in the Town of Washburn, of which 25.2 percent is in private forest/woodlands and 67.2 percent is in Federal Forest. State and county-owned lands, which are also primarily woodlands, comprise another 1.8 percent and 0.1 percent, respectively. Agricultural land constitutes the next largest category with 3.3 percent. Residential land makes up 1.9 percent.

A windshield field survey to determine the Town's existing land use patterns was conducted by the Town Land Use Planning Committee. Existing land use patterns in the Town of Washburn are shown on the map on the next page.

# Town of Washburn Existing Land Use Map



**LEGEND**

**Land Use Categories**

- Agricultural
- Commercial
- Municipal
- Residential
- Federal Forest Land
- State Land
- County Land
- Private Forest Land

**Roads**

- County
- Town
- Private

**Town Historic Sites**

- Town Hall
- Cemetery
- Washing Dam

**Other Information**

- Residence
- Sand/Gravel Pit
- Tower
- Abandoned Landfill
- Streams
- Lakes
- Sections



**NOTE:** The Town of Washburn (see locator map to the left) is three congressional townships (see locator map to the left) in the County of Washburn. This map was compiled courtesy of the Bayfield County Land Records Department in December 1988 (revised Apr. 1996, and November 2000, January and March 2001) and is not illustrated because nearly all that part of the Town of Washburn is in Chequamegon National Forest land, thus, classified as Federal Forest Land.

This map is intended to depict the existing land use patterns in the Town of Washburn. The map was compiled courtesy of the Bayfield County Land Records Department in December 1988 (revised Apr. 1996, and November 2000, January and March 2001) and is not illustrated because nearly all that part of the Town of Washburn is in Chequamegon National Forest land, thus, classified as Federal Forest Land.

## TOWN OF WASHBURN LAND USE SURVEY

In order to get community input on future growth and development issues in the Town of Washburn, the Town Land Use Planning Committee prepared a survey and distributed it to Town property owners in November 1998. A total of 190 completed surveys were received out of the 305 surveys distributed for a return rate of 62.3%. Responses were received from year-round residents (68%), seasonal residents (5%) and non-resident property owners (26%). A majority (65%) of the respondents have owned property in the Town for 10 or more years with another 23% owning between 3 and 9 years. Survey respondents who owned their property less than 3 years constituted 12%.

Among the survey results, several findings stood out:

- 95% favored single family residential growth in the Town.
- 86% supported preserving the aesthetic appearance of the Town's roadways through vegetative screening of commercial and industrial developments.
- 85% favored specific standards for advertising signs and billboards.
- 85% also felt it is important to preserve and protect the Town's unique characteristics and natural resources.
- 74% favored the development of recreational trails in the Town.
- 70% supported additional homebased businesses in the Town.
- 65% deemed it important to preserve the Town's productive farmland from non-farm development.
- 60% opposed additional commercial recreational development in the Town of Washburn.
- 56% favored the development of parks and other public recreational facilities in the Town.
- 56% opposed the installation of additional communication towers within the Town.

Refer to the Appendix for more complete survey results.

## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Town of Washburn Land Use Planning Committee used results from the land use survey to help develop plan goals and objectives. Goals represent broad based statements of intent on how to attain the Town's desired future. Objectives constitute more specific action statements on how to achieve the goals.

The following goals and objectives were developed.

### **GOAL 1:     *Preserve the rural character of the Town of Washburn.***

#### **OBJECTIVES:**

- *Maintain and enhance the Town's cultural heritage inventory, including historic sites, buildings, etc.*
- *Minimize the visual impact of existing communication towers (e.g., find alternative lighting system that is not so intrusive to the residents) and discourage additional communication towers.*
- *Promote pride in community by providing opportunities at public meetings to give talks on the history and heritage of the Town, and by having Town picnics and other community events.*
- *Educate townspeople on the following concepts: conservation easements, forest and agriculture stewardship programs, purchase of development rights, etc.*
- *Support single family, low density residential development that maintains the rural character of the Town.*
- *Encourage setback of residences from roads.*

### **GOAL 2:     *Provide for the protection of existing agricultural land in the Town.***

#### **OBJECTIVES:**

- *Encourage the support of local agricultural businesses.*
- *Encourage utilization of idle farmland for agricultural purposes (e.g., rental of land).*
- *Identify and clearly designate the Town's prime farmland areas.*
- *Discourage conversion of prime farmland to nonagricultural use.*
- *Encourage participation in Farmland Preservation Program.*
- *Encourage sound soil and water conservation practices.*



**GOAL 3:** *Preserve and protect the diverse natural resources and wildlife habitats, including the quality of air, waterways and groundwater, in the Town of Washburn.*

**OBJECTIVES:**

- *Maintain and enhance the Town's natural heritage inventory, including old growth timber stands, etc.*
- *Engage in activities to prevent water pollution (e.g., maintain the Town landfill clay cap and monitoring wells and continuous follow-up, cover Town salt pile, etc.).*
- *Maintain forest buffer strip along lakes, rivers and trails.*
- *Educate townspeople about watersheds, sensitive soil areas and importance of large prime, undisturbed forest tracts for wildlife habitat.*
- *Encourage use of Wisconsin's forestry Best Management Practices for water quality protection.*
- *Require proper practices and a reclamation plan for all resource extraction activities.*
- *Minimize soil erosion by using sound conservation practices.*

**GOAL 4:** *Encourage sustainable forest management practices on private and public lands in the Town of Washburn.*

**OBJECTIVES:**

- *Maintain an aesthetic buffer strip along roadways.*
- *Develop a forest restoration plan for the Town.*
- *Educate and make available information on proper forest management practices from county, state and federal agencies and private organizations.*
- *Encourage cooperative landscape level planning in partnership with the U.S. Forest Service.*
- *Promote cooperation of loggers and U.S. Forest Service in maintaining Town roads.*

**GOAL 5:** *Provide diverse recreational opportunities in the Town.*

**OBJECTIVES:**

- *Support development of nonmotorized recreational trails.*
- *Maintain a system of snowmobile and ATV trails.*
- *Encourage diverse recreational trails and areas in the Chequamegon National Forest.*
- *Identify sites suitable for recreational uses that are consistent with maintaining the Town's rural character.*

**GOAL 6:**     *Support businesses that are compatible with the rural character of the Town.*

**OBJECTIVES:**

- *Encourage homebased businesses.*
- *Encourage the location of commercial and light industrial development within the Washburn city limits.*
- *Encourage vegetative screening of commercial and industrial developments.*
- *Limit the size and location of signs and billboards.*
- *Encourage businesses that would have minimum environmental impact on the land.*

## **FUTURE LAND USE PLAN MAP**

The Town of Washburn future land use plan map, which depicts a general land use design for Town's future, is shown on the next page. Using the plan's goals and objectives as a guide, the Town of Washburn Land Use Planning Committee members reviewed the Town's existing land use patterns, and through a consensus process identified areas they considered appropriate for different land uses. Note, this map is very similar to the existing land use map. **It reflects a desire to try to maintain the Town's rural character and existing land use pattern.**

Eight land use categories were identified and are described below:

### **Agricultural**

The Agriculture classification applies to the land used in a variety of farming activities such as: dairy, livestock, hay, fruit, vegetables, small grains and seed production. Prime agricultural land should remain in agricultural use, as indicated in the Goals and Objectives section, however, it is recognized that some residential development has occurred and will continue to occur on land that is considered agricultural.

### **Commercial**

The Commercial category includes private for-profit businesses selling a product or service, excluding homebased and agricultural businesses.

### **Recreational**

The Recreational classification includes noncommercial parks, picnic areas, campgrounds, boat landings and trails available for public use. Currently this includes sites in the Chequamegon National Forest at Long Lake, Birch Grove, Pine Lake, Horseshoe Lake, Hoist Lake and Rib Lake, and snowmobile, horse, hiking and ATV trails. Also included are existing Wisconsin DNR access sites to the Sioux River and Four Mile Creek. In addition, there are privately owned soccer fields in the Town.

### **Private Forest Land**

The Private Forest Land category consists of private land that is at least 20 percent stocked by forest trees of any size, or formerly having had such tree cover, and not currently developed for nonforest use. It is recognized that many, if not most, new residences in the Town will be built on these forested areas.

### **Federal Forest Land**

All forests that are owned and managed by the U.S. Forest Service comprise the Federal Forest Land classification.

### **State Land**

The State Land category consists of state owned land under the jurisdiction of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

### **County Land**

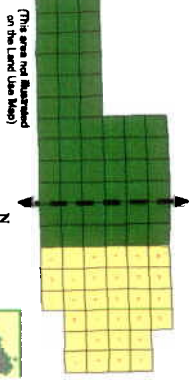
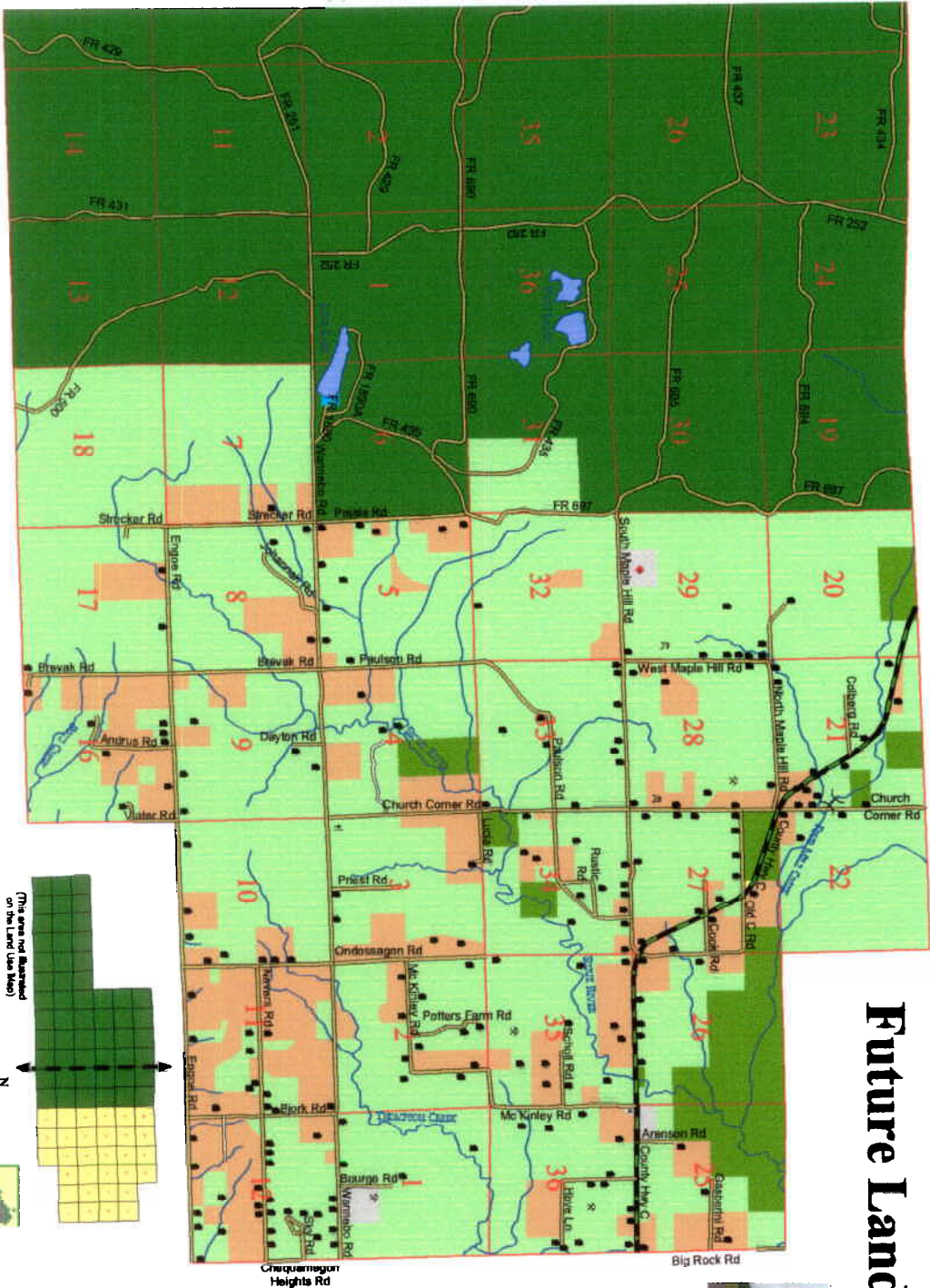
All land owned by Bayfield County constitutes the County Land classification.

### **Municipal**

The Municipal classification includes Town owned property and facilities. This currently includes: the Town Hall, Town Garage, former Town landfill site and a Town sand pit.

# Town of Washburn Future Land Use Plan Map\*

\* The Future Land Use Plan Map represents the desired future land use pattern for the Town of Washburn



May 2011

**LEGEND**

- Land Use Categories
  - Agricultural
  - Commercial
  - Municipal
  - Recreational
  - Federal Forest Land
  - State Land
  - County Land
  - Private Forest Land
- Roads
  - County
  - Town
  - Private
- Town Historic Sites
  - Town Hall
  - Cemetery
  - Meeting Dam
- Other Information
  - Residence
  - Sand/Gravel Pit
  - Tower
  - Abandoned Landfill
  - Lakes
  - Streams
  - Sections



**NOTE:** The Town of Washburn has been mapped to match the Future Land Use Plan. The map was prepared by the Land Use Department in December 1988 (revised April 2011, and November 2011, January, March, and May 2011) based on the Future Land Use Plan. The map is not intended to be used as a legal document. The map is not intended to be used as a legal document. The map is not intended to be used as a legal document. The map is not intended to be used as a legal document.

## IMPLEMENTATION

The future character of the Town of Washburn and quality of life for its residents will be strongly shaped by land use choices and decisions. This plan is intended as a guide for the individuals and Town and County government who will be faced with the land use choices and making the decisions. To move towards the goals and objectives laid out in this plan it is essential that the plan be understood and used by residents, by the Washburn Town Board, and by the Bayfield County Board and Zoning Committee. It is also essential that the plan be treated as a living, dynamic document and reviewed and modified as needed to address changing conditions in the Town and larger community.

To implement this plan fully, the following areas of concern will all need to be addressed:

Citizen Awareness and Participation. This plan has been developed by a committee of interested citizens appointed by the Town Board. The entire community in the Town needs to be aware of the plan, to understand it and to support it. Copies of the plan should be provided to current Town residents and to new residents when they move into the Town.\* Also, it is recommended that periodically a Town newsletter be sent out, which could contain information on land use related issues and other topics.

Developer Awareness. Potential developers in the Town need to be aware of the plan and its intent. Creative development practices which will help preserve the Town's rural/residential character need to be encouraged through education and supported by regulation at the Town and County level.

Town Decision Making. The Town Board needs to approve and adopt the plan, and Town Board members need to be educated on the details of the plan. The Town Board should actively use the plan as a guide for decisions at the Town level and in giving input to the County Zoning Committee. Input from the Town Board is sought by the Zoning Committee on land use issues requiring rezoning or conditional or special use permits. Town input is quite influential in these cases and input which evaluates a proposed land use in terms of a land use plan is highly regarded.

Town Planning Committee. It is recommended that the Town consider appointing a standing Planning Committee, representing a cross section of the community, to review development proposals in terms of the plan. The committee would review development proposals in detail and offer constructive suggestions to help proposals serve the intent of the plan. This committee would also serve to update the plan as needed to ensure that it reflects the vision and desires of the Town's citizens. It is also recommended that a Recreation Committee be appointed to look into issues related to recreational trails and sites in the Town.

Town Ordinance Adoption. The Town is currently subject to the Bayfield County Zoning Ordinance, but has the option of adopting its own ordinances to regulate land use in the Town. The Town Board may consider passing Town ordinances to regulate particular land uses, if the County ordinances are not considered adequate.

County Land Use Planning. It is essential that the County land use plan reflects and supports the goals laid out in this plan and in the plans of other towns.

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\* Copies of the plan should also be distributed to the following: Town property owners, Washburn Town Board & Clerk, Bayfield County (County Board Chairman, Zoning Committee Chairman, zoning administrator, land records administrator, Land Use Plan Steering Committee Chairman), neighboring towns, City of Washburn, Washburn Public Library, Washburn High School Library, US Forest Service, Wis. DNR, NWRPC and local real estate agencies.

County Ordinances. The Zoning, Subdivision Control and Sanitary Ordinances administered by the County Zoning Department should be reviewed for consistency with the Town land use plan and modified as necessary to ensure consistency. The possibility of using a special overlay district amendment to the County Zoning Ordinance could be considered. An overlay district provides additional regulations on top of existing zoning requirements within a designated area. The County Zoning Ordinance should be revised after the County finishes its land use plan.

County Decision Making. Because at this time most of the decision making authority regarding land use resides on the County level, it is imperative that the County Board, the County Zoning Committee and the County Zoning Department be acquainted with the Town's land use plan and use it as a guide for decision making which affects land use in the Town. As mentioned above, Town input is solicited on many land use issues and the Town should be diligent in providing that input with clear reference to the Town land use plan.

Other Land Use Management Tools. The Town Board and/or property owners should consider the many other tools that are available to help preserve the Town's rural character for future generations. A few of these tools are: conservation easements, purchase of development rights, direct land purchases and exclusive agricultural zoning. (See the Appendix for additional information on various implementation and land protection tools.)

Landfill Oversight. Ongoing efforts should be established to monitor the closed Town of Washburn landfill (located in Section 29). The financial responsibility for the landfill is shared among the City of Washburn (77% responsible), Town of Bayview (12% responsible) and Town of Washburn (11% responsible). Specific recommendations for oversight and monitoring of the landfill were adopted at the Town of Washburn Annual Meeting on April 11, 2000 by the Town Board. These recommendations were:

- 1) Review the three monitoring wells' information at least annually and give a report at the Town of Washburn Annual Meeting.
- 2) Inspect the clay cap for winter damage due to frost heaving and/or other settling twice a year—once in the spring (May) and later in the fall (October). Allow enough time so repairs can be made prior to winter freeze-up and snows.
- 3) Forward correspondence of the findings to all of the above to the City of Washburn and the Town of Bayview. It is important to maintain this dialog with these communities and remind them (with changing boards and citizens) that they are responsible for any clay cap restoration, hazardous cleanup, ongoing monitoring, etc.
- 4) Be responsible for making it an ongoing practice to renew and remind the Town Board members each spring at the Washburn Town Annual Meeting, and also at the time when the new Town of Washburn Board officers are sworn in.

# **APPENDIX**

*Town of Washburn*  
*Washburn, WI 54891*

November 10, 1998

Dear Town of Washburn Property Owner:

If you have a vision for the Town of Washburn's future, this is your opportunity to have input into that future. The Town of Washburn is in the process of preparing a land use plan to help guide its future growth and development. So that this plan reflects the concerns of Town property owners, we are asking one person from your residence to give us your household's opinion on a number of issues.

Please take a few minutes to complete the enclosed survey and return it in the enclosed, prepaid envelope by November 24, 1998.

Your responses will be very helpful to the Town Board and 11-member Town Land Use Planning Committee as they develop long-range goals and objectives for the Town of Washburn.

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Sincerely,



Jim Miller  
Town Board Chairman

Enclosures



Total Households responding 190  
out of 305 for 62.3%

### TOWN OF WASHBURN LAND USE SURVEY

Please have one person from your residence take a few minutes to give us your household's opinion on a number of Town land use issues by completing this survey and returning it using the enclosed, prepaid envelope. Please return this survey no later than **November 24, 1998**. This is a confidential survey and it is not necessary to sign your name.

1. How long have you owned property in the Town of Washburn? (check one)  
23 (12.1%) less than 3 years      50 (26.3%) 10 to 20 years  
  
44 (23.2%) 3 to 9 years      73 (38.4%) more than 20 years
2. Are you a: (check one)  
130 (68.4%) Year-round resident      9 (4.7%) Seasonal resident      49 (25.8%) Non-resident property owner  
2 (1.1%) No response
3. Do you feel that it is important to preserve land that is currently or historically in productive farm use from non-farm development in the Town? (check one)  
123 (64.7%) Yes      43 (22.6%) No      21 (11.1%) No opinion      3 (1.6%) No response
4. Throughout its history, the Town of Washburn has been described as a rural, agricultural community. If you could control the future, which one term would you select to describe the Town in 10 years? (check one)  
72 (37.9%) Rural, agricultural community      5 (2.6%) Mixed residential/business community  
4 (2.1%) Residential community      \_\_\_\_\_ Industrial community  
96 (50.5%) Mixed agricultural/residential community      10 (5.3%) Other \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Business community      (please specify)  
3 (1.6%) No response
5. As the Town of Washburn continues to grow, what kind(s) of residential growth do you favor in the Town? (check all that apply)  
180 (94.7%) Single family residential      61 (32.1%) Second, vacation homes  
27 (14.2%) Multi-family residential, duplexes      9 (4.7%) Mobile home parks  
9 (4.7%) Multi-family residential, apartments      10 (5.3%) Other \_\_\_\_\_  
12 (6.3%) Condominiums      (please specify)
6. Single family residential development in rural areas throughout the Town should be required to have a: (check one)  
9 (4.7%) Minimum of one acre      12 (6.3%) Minimum of 35 acres  
93 (48.9%) Minimum of five acres      8 (4.2%) Other size: \_\_\_\_\_ acres  
35 (18.4%) Minimum of ten acres      (please specify)  
16 (8.4%) Minimum of 20 acres      15 (7.9%) No acreage requirement  
2 (1.1%) No response
7. Would you favor the clustering of residential development in the Town to conserve open space and allow for the efficient provision of public services? (check one)  
63 (33.2%) Yes      105 (55.3%) No      21 (11.1%) No opinion      1 (0.5%) No response

Total Households responding 190  
out of 305 for 62.3%

8. Do you favor the development of parks and other public recreational facilities (e.g., skating rinks, sports fields, etc.) in the Town? (check one)

107 (56.3%) Yes                      61 (32.1%) No                      17 (8.9%) No opinion                      5 (2.6%) No response

9. Do you favor the development of recreational trails in the Town? (check one)

141 (74.2%) Yes                      41 (21.6%) No                      5 (2.6%) No opinion                      3 (1.6%) No response

If yes, which types of trails would you prefer? (check one)

13 (6.8%) Motorized (e.g., snowmobile, ATV)

63 (33.2%) Nonmotorized (e.g., walking, skiing, biking)

65 (34.2%) Both

10. Do you favor additional commercial recreational development (e.g., resorts, golf courses, etc.) in the Town of Washburn? (check one)

60 (31.6%) Yes                      114 (60.0%) No                      14 (7.4%) No opinion                      2 (1.1%) No response

11. Do you favor the development of additional homebased businesses in the Town? (check one)

134 (70.5%) Yes                      30 (15.8%) No                      21 (11.1%) No opinion                      5 (2.6%) No response

12. Do you favor light industrial development in the Town of Washburn? (check one)

77 (40.5%) Yes                      90 (47.4%) No                      19 (10.0%) No opinion                      4 (2.1%) No response

If yes, where should light industrial development occur in the Town? (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

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13. Do you favor additional commercial development in the Town? (check one)

62 (32.6%) Yes                      95 (50.0%) No                      27 (14.2%) No opinion                      6 (3.2%) No response

If yes, where should commercial development occur in the Town? (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

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Total Households responding 190  
out of 305 for 62.3%

14. What kind of business development pattern would you favor, if any, along the main roadways through the Town of Washburn? (check one)
- 7 (3.7%) Strip development along main roadways, no restrictions
- 64 (33.7%) "Clustered" or high density development in pockets along main roadways. (Businesses are grouped together and set back from the highway. A common driveway links them to the main road.)
- 46 (24.2%) Low density development (single businesses on large lots)
- 49 (25.8%) No additional development
- 11 (5.8%) No opinion
- 13 (6.8%) No response
15. Should the Town of Washburn set specific standards for advertising signs and billboards such as where they can be located, their size and maintenance requirements? (check one)
- 162 (85.3%) Yes                      20 (10.5%) No                      6 (3.2%) No opinion                      2 (1.1%) No response
16. Should the aesthetic appearance of the Town's roadways be preserved through vegetative screening of commercial and industrial developments? (check one)
- 163 (85.8%) Yes                      8 (4.2%) No                      15 (7.9%) No opinion                      4 (2.1%) No response
17. Do you favor the installation of additional communication towers within the Town of Washburn? (check one)
- 40 (21.1%) Yes                      106 (55.8%) No                      40 (21.1%) No opinion                      4 (2.1%) No response
18. Do you feel it is important to preserve and protect the unique characteristics and natural resources (e.g., woodlands, wetlands, water, etc.) of the Town of Washburn? (check one)
- 161 (84.7%) Yes                      19 (10.0%) No                      6 (3.2%) No opinion                      4 (2.1%) No response
19. Do you have any other comments relating to land use issues that you wish to make? (please specify)
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THIS SURVEY**  
Please return your survey by **November 24.**

## *Community Planning Implementation Tools*

A community's land use plan requires implementation by a variety of tools. Some of these tools are regulatory (e.g., zoning, subdivision review), while others are non-regulatory (e.g., acquisition of property, installation of public improvements). Information "tools" (e.g., monitoring of trends and issues, public education) are important in achieving community objectives because they help ensure that the plan and implementation tools are understood, accepted, and kept up-to-date.

Following are a brief description and statement on applicability concerning

- *regulatory tools*
- *acquisition tools*
- *fiscal tools*
- *privately-initiated tools*

<i>Regulatory Tools</i>	<i>Brief Description</i>	<i>Applicability</i>
<b>General Zoning</b>	<p>General zoning regulates the use of land, lot size, and the height and bulk of structures. It also provides standards for various types of development and construction activities. General zoning is probably the most commonly employed land use tool. Communities are not required to adopt general zoning ordinances.</p>	<p>Cities and villages may adopt general zoning within their borders. They also have authority to establish "extraterritorial" zoning in the adjacent town territory, under the jurisdiction of a joint city or village and town committee, but this is not common.</p> <p>Counties may adopt a general zoning ordinance covering all areas in the county outside cities and villages, but the ordinance is effective in a town only if the town board approves the ordinance. A town may not adopt only a part of the county zoning ordinance.</p> <p>In counties that have a general county zoning ordinance, town zoning is possible only with the agreement of the county board. Town residents may vote to assume "village powers." The town may then develop a zoning ordinance following the same procedures for cities and villages. The town zoning ordinance, and amendments to it, become effective if approved by the town board <i>and</i> the county board.</p> <p>In counties that have not adopted a county zoning ordinance, a town may assume village powers and enact a town zoning ordinance following the same procedures for cities and villages. In these cases, no county board approval is required. Alternatively, towns may petition the county to adopt a county zoning ordinance. If the county does not adopt a zoning ordinance, the town may adopt its own without having assumed village powers. Exercise of this authority is rare, however, with most towns preferring to exercise town zoning under village powers.</p>

<p><b>Special Zoning</b></p>	<p>Wisconsin has several special zoning programs with specific statutory requirements that distinguish them from general zoning. These include <b>exclusive agricultural zoning</b> under the state's Farmland Preservation Program that gives farmers an income tax credit for working to preserve agricultural areas. Other special zoning programs include <b>floodplain zoning</b> and <b>shoreland zoning</b>.</p>	<p>Cities, villages, and counties are all required to adopt floodplain zoning. Counties are required to adopt shoreland zoning for the towns. County shoreland and floodplain zoning are not subject to approval by the towns. Cities and villages are required to adopt zoning to protect certain wetlands. While the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources sets the minimum standards for floodplain and shoreland/wetland zoning, local communities have the right to be more restrictive in their regulations. Exclusive agricultural zoning allows communities to participate in the Department of Agriculture, Trade &amp; Consumer Protection's Farmland Preservation Program. (Farmers in counties not in the this program may participate by agreement with DATCP.)</p>
<p><b>Subdivision Regulation</b></p>	<p>Subdivision regulations allow communities to control the division of land and the quality of development by specifying the subdivider's responsibility for installing on-site facilities (e.g., roads and sidewalks), and by ensuring the availability of public facilities, such as sewers and water, to handle development. Subdivision regulations can also address land suitability, environmental and design issues, and require dedication of park lands or fees in lieu of dedication.</p>	<p>Counties, cities, villages and towns can all adopt subdivision or land division regulations. Towns do not need the approval of counties to adopt subdivision regulations and counties do not need the approval of towns for the county subdivision ordinance to apply within that town. Counties also have the authority to object to subdivisions in cities and villages in certain circumstances. Cities and villages can apply their ordinances to influence development patterns in their "extraterritorial" area (i.e., the town area adjacent to their borders). In areas where two or more subdivision ordinances apply, the more restrictive ordinance controls. Several state agencies also review subdivisions of a certain size. State agency review is not dependant upon a local community having a subdivision ordinance.</p>
<p><b>Official Maps</b></p>	<p>Official maps show existing and planned public facilities such as streets and parks. They can also show historic districts and waterways. The maps can be used to restrict the issuance of building permits within the limits of the mapped areas. The maps are an effective means to reserve land for future public use.</p>	<p>Cities, villages and towns can all adopt official maps. Cities and villages may make their official maps applicable in the "extraterritorial" area (i.e., the adjacent town territory.) County approval is not needed for towns to adopt official maps. Counties have limited official mapping authority.</p>

<b>Historic Preservation Ordinance</b>	Historic preservation ordinances are meant to protect historic buildings and districts in communities and enhance the character of the community.	Counties, cities, villages and towns can adopt historic preservation ordinances. Cities and villages that contain property listed on the state or federal register of historic places must enact an historic preservation ordinance.
<b>Design Review</b>	Design review allows communities to establish their desired future appearance by controlling landscaping, architectural, signage and site design conditions. Communities can maintain or improve valued aspects of community character by defining conditions which contribute, for example, to northwoods, rural, small town or neighborhood character.	Communities adopt design review as part of a zoning ordinance, or as a separate ordinance under a community's statutory "police power" regulatory authority. Some communities use overlay districts to define areas with special design needs. Communities typically assign design review to the plan commission, although sometimes a separate design review committee is established.
<b>Moratoria</b>	A moratorium is used to temporarily limit issuance of permits while new regulations are being developed so that plan objectives are not undermined.	While there is no specific statutory moratorium authority, communities have relied upon general and implicit authority to impose moratoria while they update or develop a plan and implementation tools. Moratoria should be used only in good faith planning efforts and should be limited as to time and scope.
<b><i>Acquisition Tools</i></b>	<b><i>Brief Description</i></b>	<b><i>Applicability</i></b>
<b>Land Purchases</b>	Communities can purchase all rights to needed land or partial interests in land (e.g., easements).	Counties, cities, villages, and towns have the authority to purchase land outright, when full use of the property is needed, or to purchase partial interests in land when that will suffice to serve the public interest.
<b>Eminent Domain</b>	Eminent domain (or condemnation) allows government to take private property for public purposes, even if the owner does not consent, but the government must compensate the property owner for their loss.	Counties, cities, villages, and towns can condemn land using the power of eminent domain. This authority can also be used to take partial interests in land (e.g., easements).

<b>Conservation Easements</b>	Conservation easements are legally binding agreements made voluntarily between a landowner and a land trust or local community in which permanent limits are placed on a property's use and development.	Counties, cities, villages, towns and conservation organizations such as land trusts can use conservation easements. Donated conservation easements that meet federal tax code requirements qualify as charitable deductions for landowners.
<b>Purchase of Development Rights (PDR)</b>	Under a PDR program, a community buys the development rights to land it wants to permanently protect. PDR programs are used to preserve agricultural lands, open space, scenic vistas, and important natural resources.	Counties, cities, villages, and towns all have the authority to use PDRs. A conservation easement is recorded to indicate that the development rights have been removed from the land.
<b><i>Fiscal Tools</i></b>	<b><i>Brief Description</i></b>	<b><i>Applicability</i></b>
<b>Capital Improvement Program (CIP)</b>	CIPs help a community plan for the timing and location of capital improvements (facilities such as sewers and water, parks and schools). CIPs ensure proper local budgeting for capital improvements. The location of capital improvements has a major impact on development patterns.	Counties, cities, villages and towns can all adopt capital improvement programs.
<b>Impact Fees</b>	These are financial contributions imposed on new development to pay for capital improvements needed to serve the development.	Counties, cities, villages, and towns can all impose impact fees for certain public facilities (excluding schools).
<b><i>Privately-Initiated Tools</i></b>	<b><i>Brief Description</i></b>	<b><i>Applicability</i></b>
<b>Land Trusts</b>	Land trusts are private non-profit organizations established to protect land and water resources. Generally, they are community-based organizations established by conservation minded citizens.	Communities can work with land trusts for the long-term preservation of agricultural areas and important natural resources. Land trust often seek the purchase or donation of land or conservation easements to limit harmful development.

Source: Ohm, Brian, *Today's Decisions, Tomorrow's Wisconsin*, pp. 11-16, University of Wisconsin (1999); adapted by Video Design Team members James Schneider, Wayne Tlusty and Michael Dresen. February 1999.

### **Protecting unfragmented landscapes in Wisconsin**

The Baraboo Hills, in south central Wisconsin, are a unique case of a relatively unfragmented landscape in the southern part of the state. Forests in the Baraboo Hills stretch 25 miles and serve as a haven for migratory songbirds. Despite many parks in the area, the Hills still need greater protection to keep the forest intact. Each new house or road creates a new permanent clearing which fragments the forest and introduces more edge habitat into the landscape. The extensive lakes and forests in northern Wisconsin are another example of large blocks of habitat.

### **Tools to Protect Land from Fragmentation**

Private owners can be excellent stewards of the land, but habitat protection needs to extend beyond the lifetime of the current owners. Today landowners, non-profits and local governments have a variety of tools to protect habitat across the landscape.

### **Tools for Public Conservation**

**Direct purchase** Buying land and setting it aside protects unique sites and benefits recreation. But isolated nature preserves do not address fragmentation. Land acquisition remains important for critical areas, but direct purchase needs to be supplemented with other forms of land protection to connect the lands in between public lands.

**Purchase of Development Rights** A PDR program takes a market approach to land protection. State or local governments can set up a program to buy the right to develop a parcel and retire that right. The landowner gets paid cash compensation for the value of the development rights and continues to live on the land as before.

**Temporary moratorium** A moratorium is a growth control measure that temporarily suspends development or subdivision for up to two years. Moratoria are extreme actions and can only be used to give local governments a chance to plan or prepare stronger land use regulations.

**Zoning** Environmental zoning can play a critical role to prevent fragmentation. Regulations can cover a broad area relatively cheaply and quickly, however, zoning is changeable and can be revoked in the future. Zoning should be used in combination with other tools.

#### **Preservation overlay zoning**

Overlay zoning matches the boundaries of an ecological area and imposes strict regulation only in the most ecologically sensitive region. Landowners outside the overlay area are not subject to extra restrictions, making such zoning more politically acceptable. Overlay zoning is ideal for conservation since it is tailored to fit each individual landscape.

**Large lot zoning** Large lot zoning requires a minimum lot size, typically 10, 15 or 35 acres. It has been commonly used in Wisconsin to protect open space and agricultural land, and can limit intensive development and parcelization. However, large lot zoning only changes the *density* of development-- it still allows fragmentation and cannot prevent building in ecologically sensitive areas. Large lot requirements can also backfire and encourage sprawl.

### **Tools for the Private Landowner**

Private options involve the landowner and should always be used together with public tools for land protection. Private conservation gives landowners incentives to protect natural areas on their property, and can offer permanent and parcel-specific protection.

**Conservation easements** Conservation easements allow landowners to protect land permanently and also maintain ownership. Easements generally restrict development, mining and clearcutting, and do not open the land to the public. Conservation easements are flexible documents tailored to unique site conditions and adapted to landowners' goals and wishes. Extra building sites can be reserved for the landowner's family in the future. Donations of easements also qualify landowners for an income tax deduction and may lower property and estate taxes as well. Conservation easements protect land "in perpetuity." The restrictions apply to all future owners and a designated land trust monitors and enforces the terms of the easement.



## Land Protection Tools

Type	Description	Advantages	Disadvantages
Direct purchase	Land owned by public or conservation group	Permanent protection Public recreation	Expensive to buy and maintain
Purchase of Development Rights	Government buys development rights; landowner keeps title	Permanent protection Landowner gets cash and possible tax benefits	Can be expensive to buy, which limits broad use
Development Moratorium	Temporarily stops subdivision or development	Can halt development while preparing stronger regulation	Temporary Can create rush on development
Preservation Overlay Zoning	Designated area is covered by special zoning designed to help preservation	Flexible to suit local situation Inexpensive	Temporary since zoning can be changed
Large Lot Zoning	Minimum lot size restricts density of development	Can reduce parcelization Inexpensive	Temporary May encourage sprawl
Conservation Easements	Development rights or other lands rights restricted and given to conservation group; Landowner keeps title	Permanent Flexible, tailored to local situation Donation tax deductible Lower land value may reduce property, estate, capital gains taxes	Some long-term expense to monitor easements
Land Management Contracts	Landowners follow binding management contract for designated time (10-50 years)	Contract runs with land No development or subdivision Lower property taxes May result in better land management	Short-term protection only
Conservation Buyers	Land bought by person interested in owning land for natural values	Private source of funding Steward lives on land Often includes conservation easement	Difficult to match land with appropriate buyer
Reserved Life Estates	Landowner sells or donates title but continues to live on land	Tax benefits during lifetime Owner can remain on land for lifetime	Management may be restricted while owner lives on property
Bargain Sales, Donations & Bequests	Owner sells property for discounted price; or donates or bequeaths land for conservation	Permanent protection Bargain sale offers owner some cash; makes deal affordable	Bargain sale price might still be too high; Donations not always possible

**Land management contracts** Tax incentive-based land management contracts, like Wisconsin's Managed Forest Law, offer important temporary protection. These 15, 25 and even 50- year contracts protect forest land and open space from development and subdivision. The contracts "run with the land," and apply to future landowners until the term expires. Land management contracts delay development and shift it away from prime habitat for now.

**Conservation buyers** A conservation buyer is any private buyer interested in owning natural areas for hiking, bird watching, hunting, fishing, or other quiet enjoyment. The conservation buyer provides funds to purchase a property, and typically accepts placing a conservation easement on the land. Conservation buyers also act as stewards of the property. Locating potential buyers can be difficult, but a conservation-minded real estate broker can help match buyers with ecologically-sensitive land.

**Bargain-sales, donations and bequests** Landowners can donate property during their lifetime or leave the property for conservation by will. A bargain-sale is another popular option since it provides the landowner with direct income and a tax deduction as a charitable gift for the amount of the discount, if the sale is made to the government or to a qualified non-profit group. A bargain-sale makes the land more affordable, thus making it more likely to be protected.

**Reserved life estates** A reserved life estate allows private landowners to donate their land but still live on it. The land belongs to the conservation organization, but landowners reserve the right to live on the property for the rest of their lifetime and receive tax benefits from the land donation.

## Resource Agencies And Organizations

### Town of Washburn

- ❑ **Town Garage** – Telephone (715)373-2567

### Bayfield County

#### ❑ **Land Conservation Department**

*County Conservationist, Conservation Education Coordinator, Wildlife Damage Specialist*  
315 Sanborn Avenue, Suite 100, P.O. Box 267, Ashland, WI 54806  
Telephone (715)682-7187

#### ❑ **Land Records Department**

*Land Records Administrator* – 117 E. 5th Street, Bayfield County Courthouse, Washburn, WI 54891  
Telephone (715)373-6156

#### ❑ **Zoning Department**

*Zoning Administrator* – 117 E. 5th Street, Bayfield County Courthouse, Washburn, WI 54891  
Telephone (715)373-6138

### University of Wisconsin-Extension

- ❑ *Agricultural Agent, Family Living Agent, 4-H Agent, Resource Agent* – 117 E. 5th Street, Washburn, WI 54891  
Telephone (715)373-6104

- ❑ *Resource Agent* – 201 W. Main Street, Ashland County Courthouse, Ashland, WI 54806  
Telephone (715)682-7017

- ❑ *Basin Educator* – Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center, 29270 County Highway G, Ashland, WI 54806  
Telephone (715)685-2674

### University of Wisconsin-Madison College of Agriculture & Life Sciences

- ❑ *Ashland Agricultural Research Station* – RR 3, Box 413, Ashland WI 54806  
Telephone (715)682-7268

### Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

- ❑ *Area Conservation Warden Supervisor, Lake Superior Fisheries Manager* – 141 S. 3rd Street, P.O. Box 589, Bayfield, WI 54814  
Telephone (715)779-4030
- ❑ *Forester, Lake Superior Team Supervisor for Lands, Wildlife Manager* – 203 E. Bayfield Street, P.O. Box 545, Washburn, WI 54891  
Telephone (715)373-6165
- ❑ *Lake Superior Team Supervisor for Waters* – 401 Tower Avenue, Superior, WI 54880  
Telephone (715)395-6911
- ❑ *Water Regulation & Zoning Specialist* – 6250 S. Ranger Road, Brule, WI 54820  
Telephone (715)372-8539, Ext. 107

**Wisconsin Department of Transportation**

- ❑ 1701 N. 4th Street, Superior, WI 54880  
Telephone (715)392-7925

**United States Department of Agriculture**

- ❑ **Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service—Animal Damage Control (ADC)**

*Director* – Rhinelander, general information & non-agricultural complaints

Telephone (800)228-1368

*Agricultural Bear Trapper* – Brule, agricultural complaints only

Telephone (715)372-4899

- ❑ **Farm Service Agency (FSA)**

*Director* – 2014 W. 3rd Street, Ashland, WI 54806

Telephone (715)682-9117, Ext. 2

- ❑ **U.S. Forest Service (USFS)**

*District Ranger* – 113 E. Bayfield Street, Washburn, WI 54891

Telephone (715)373-2667

- ❑ **Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)**

*District Conservationist* – 2014 W. 3rd Street, P.O. Box 267, Ashland, WI 54806

Telephone (715)682-9117, Ext. 3

- ❑ **PRI-RU-TA Resource Conservation & Development Council**

*Coordinator* – 850 N. 8th Street, Medford, WI 54451

Telephone (715)748-2008

- ❑ **Rural Development (RD)**

*Community Development Manager* – 2014 W. 3rd Street, Ashland, WI 54806

Telephone (715)682-9117, Ext. 4

**United States Department of Interior**

- ❑ **U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS)**

*Project Leader* – 2800 E. Lake Shore Drive, Ashland, WI 54806

Telephone (715)682-6185

**Great Lakes Indian Fish & Wildlife Commission (GLIFWC)**

- ❑ *Executive Administrator* – Chief Blackbird Center, P.O. Box 9, Odanah, WI 54861

Telephone (715)682-6619

**Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center**

- ❑ *Director* – 29270 County Highway G, Ashland, WI 54806

Telephone (715)685-9983

**Northwest Regional Planning Commission (NWRPC)**

- ❑ *Executive Director* – 1400 S. River Street, Spooner, WI 54801

Telephone (715)635-2197

**Land Trust Organizations**

**Bayfield Regional Conservancy**

P.O. Box 410, Bayfield, WI 54814

Telephone (715)779-5263

**The Nature Conservancy**

707 W. Main Street, Ashland, WI 54806

Telephone (715)682-5789