

WOLF RIVER

Wisconsin

Drawer 35

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WOLF RIVER

Second priority

Location - Langlade and Menominee Counties, Wisconsin, confluence  
of the Hunting River to Keshena

Length of study area - 48 miles

Quality of recreation - Good non-motor boating, fishing and hunting.  
Mixed cold-warm water fishery. Heavily forested with deer  
and bear common.

Ownership - In Langlade County, lands are mostly private. In Menominee  
County all significant recreation lands belong to Menominee  
enterprises (Indians).

Summary of findings - Free-flowing wilderness stream of great beauty,  
unpolluted and has significant historical interest. Multiple  
ownership of land maybe problem in effort to protect river.

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF OUTDOOR RECREATION  
Region 4

FOR GOVERNMENT USE ONLY

SEP 13 1963

Memorandum

To: Director, Bureau of Outdoor Recreation  
From: Lake Central Study Team  
Subject: Wolf River, Wisconsin

The Wolf River in the State of Wisconsin meets the five criteria established for inclusion within the proposed nationwide system of wild rivers.

The unit is not recommended for study in depth because of complex land ownership problems including the large tract of land in Menominee County, controlled by the Menominee Enterprises, Inc., and the Corporation's revenue-producing policies. Also, the stream is considered canoeable only by experts and is too dangerous for novices.

The stream is a beautiful, relatively shallow stream of steep gradient having much white water and flowing through some of the most magnificent northern hardwood forest in Wisconsin, or, for that matter, in the Lake States. It is widely known as a trout stream.

Lake Central Study Team

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Wild Rivers Study

For The

WOLF RIVER

WISCONSIN

September 1963

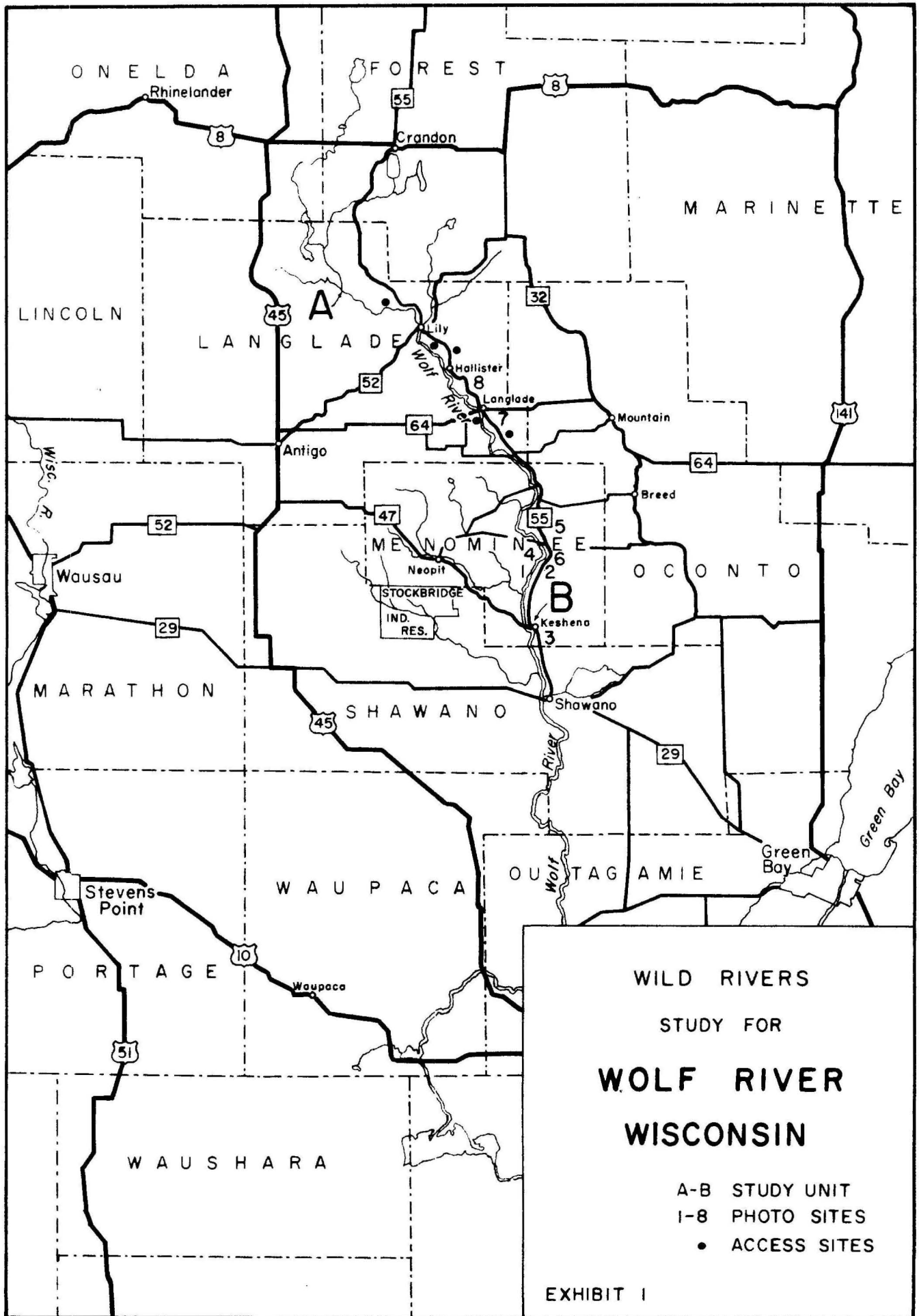
Lake Central Study Team

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THREE STEP

- I. RIVER AREA INVENTORY FORM
- II. CRITERIA
- III. FINDINGS

I. RIVER AREA INVENTORY FORM

A. General Information

1. Name of river

Wolf River

2. Location of study unit(s)

Confluence of the Hunting River to Keshena

3. State(s)

Wisconsin

4. County(ies)

Langlade, Menominee

5. Major drainage basin

St. Lawrence River Basin

6. Population within 50 miles 500,000; 150 miles 3,500,000;  
250 miles 8,500,000.

7. Weather characteristics by seasons and inclusive dates when study unit(s) is best suited for public use and normal weather conditions during that period.

November 1 - May 1	Cold - severe weather period little use
May 1 - June 15	Cool wet weather - heavy use by trout fishermen
June 15 - September 15	Warm and dry - heavy use period
September 15 - November 1	Cool dry - moderate use period

SOURCE: Arthur Oehmcke, Wisconsin Conservation Department,  
Woodruff, Wisconsin

B. Description and characteristics of river (by study unit(s)):

1. Number of miles in study unit(s)

48 miles

SOURCE: Arthur Oehmcke, Wisconsin Conservation Department,  
Woodruff, Wisconsin

2. Width characteristics

Width varies from 100 to 300 feet

SOURCE: Ralph Jones, Wisconsin Conservation Department,  
Woodruff, Wisconsin



3. Depth characteristics

Average depth 2 feet - maximum 10 feet. Generally deep enough to float a canoe but not enough depth for boats with motors.

SOURCE: Stanley Kmiotek - Wisconsin Conservation Department,  
Woodruff, Wisconsin

4. Flow characteristics

Generally stable with some response to drouth periods. During low flow the river is hard to navigate.

SOURCE: Ralph Jones, Wisconsin Conservation Department,  
Woodruff, Wisconsin

5. Course characteristics and stability

Course stability is good. The stream gradient is steep with numerous rapids and waterfalls. Canoeing the entire study unit should only be attempted by experts. The river is not good for the average canoeist; therefore, the use by this group is limited to short reaches and the overall use is light.

SOURCE: Lewis Posekany, Wisconsin Conservation Department,  
Madison, Wisconsin

6. Bed material

The stream bed is composed of rock, gravel, rubble, and sand. Granite ledges and cuts are common.

SOURCE: Arthur Oehmcke, Wisconsin Conservation Department,  
Woodruff, Wisconsin

7. Water quality (kind, degree and source of pollution)

Water has a slight brownish tinge but generally of high quality. No pollution with the possible exception of wood chip discharge in the West Branch of the Wolf.

SOURCE: Arthur Oehmcke, Wisconsin Conservation Department,  
Woodruff, Wisconsin

8. Type of fishery (warm or cold water) and dominant species of fish (commercial and sport)

The river supports a mixed cold-warm water fishery. Rainbow, brown, and brook trout and smallmouth black bass are the principal species of fish. Brown trout fishing in certain segments of the river is considered the outstanding feature of the fishery. Most of the fishing is done from the bank or by wading.

SOURCE: Arthur Oehmcke, Wisconsin Conservation Department,  
Woodruff, Wisconsin

C. Description and characteristics of setting (by study unit(s)):

1. Nature of topography

The surface features are the result of glaciation during the Pleistocene epoch. When the glacier retreated the former uneven rocky terrain was reduced to almost a level plain under various thicknesses of glacial drift with numerous rock outcrops.

SOURCE: Arthur Oehmcke, Wisconsin Conservation Department, Woodruff, Wisconsin

2. Ecological type (deciduous, coniferous, prairie, desert, shrub, or other) and brief description.

The study unit is heavily forested with both deciduous and coniferous trees. The noteworthy feature of the area is the large stands of virgin timber in Menominee County. Some of the virgin timber still borders the study unit.

SOURCE: Stanley Kmiotek, Wisconsin Conservation Department, Woodruff, Wisconsin

3. Important species of wildlife and status

The area supports typical forest big and small game. White-tailed deer and bear are common. Ruffed grouse, snowshoe hare, and woodcock are present. Waterfowl utilization of the area is limited. Otter, beaver, muskrat and mink are also common. Hunting and trapping pressure in Langlade County is high depending to some extent on current population trends.

SOURCE: Arthur Oehmcke, Wisconsin Conservation Department, Woodruff, Wisconsin

D. River access

1. Types and locations of public access (spot on map)

The locations of public access areas are shown on Exhibit I. In Langlade County they are fairly well developed. There are no public access areas in Menominee County. All access is controlled by the Menominee Indian Enterprises, Inc. and is subject to special use fees.

SOURCE: Lewis Posekany, Wisconsin Conservation Department, Madison, Wisconsin

2. Factors limiting public access (physical, legal)

The major limiting factors for access are the use charges made by the Menominee Indian - See attached exhibit II.

SOURCE: Arthur Oehmcke, Wisconsin Conservation Department, Woodruff, Wisconsin

E. Special scientific, educational and esthetic values

1. Geologic

None

2. Biotic

The large stands of virgin forests in Menominee County are the outstanding biotic features.

SOURCE: Lewis Posekany, Wisconsin Conservation Department, Madison, Wisconsin

3. Historic

Highway 55 along the river is the old military road from Green Bay to the Keewenaw Peninsula. The River was used as a travel route for the Chippewa and Pottawatomi Indian. Some artifacts can be found in the area.

SOURCE: Arthur Oehmcke, Woodruff, Wisconsin, Wisconsin Conservation Department

4. Archeologic

Nothing of outstanding significance.

5. Other

F. Present quality of recreation and environmental factors limiting quality:

<u>Kinds</u>	<u>Quality</u>				<u>Environmental Limiting factors</u>
	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	
Boating:					
Motor				X	Rocks - low water
Non-motor		X			For expert canoeists only
Fishing	X	-	X		Excellent to good for brown trout
Hunting					
Big game		X			Limited by access
Small game		X			Limited by access
Waterfowl				X	Poor waterfowl utilization
Camping	X	-	X		Limited by access
Swimming				X	Shallow and rocky
Hiking		X	-	X	Lack of trails
Sightseeing	X	-	X		Limited accessibility
Nature study	X	-	X		" "
Other _____					

G. Classification of study unit(s) (according to six ORRC classes)

Class II - General Outdoor Recreational Areas. Areas subject to substantial development for a wide variety of specific recreation uses.

Class III - Natural Environment Areas. Various types of areas that are suitable for recreation in a natural environment and usually in combination with other uses.

Class IV - Unique Natural Areas. Areas of outstanding scenic splendor, natural wonder, or scientific importance.

H. Status of economic development

1. Characterize the economy of the general river area.

The economy of the area is based on forest products and agriculture, the principal agricultural crop being potatoes irrigated by water from the rivers. There is a limited amount of recreational development in the area.

SOURCE: Lewis Posekany, Wisconsin Conservation Department,  
Madison, Wisconsin

2. Is the economy growing, declining, stagnant: What economic activities are there that are growing, declining:

The entire economy of the area is somewhat static. The recreational aspects are being pushed by various local and state groups.

SOURCE: Arthur Oehmcke, Wisconsin Conservation Department, Woodruff, Wisconsin

3. Describe the transportation routes to and through the general river area (rail, air, boat, auto) and facilities (such as landing strips, etc.)

Two U. S. Highways, 45 and 8, serve the study unit and six main State Highways, 55, 47, 64, 32, 29 and 52 provide access to the area along with a poor net of county roads. The Soo Line and the Chicago and Northwestern Railroads and the North Central Airline Company also serves the area.

SOURCE: Some personal knowledge of study group.



- I. Describe present development and give the status of plans for water resource developments in the general area by federal agencies and others that would drastically and permanently affect the study unit(s).

There are no known plans for water resource developments in the area which would drastically affect the study unit.

SOURCE: Lewis Posekany, Wisconsin Conservation Department,  
Madison, Wisconsin

Arthur Oehmcke, Wisconsin Conservation Department,  
Woodruff, Wisconsin

J. What impact (detrimental or beneficial) will the following uses (present or planned) have on the qualities of the study unit(s):

1. Agriculture

Irrigation for potato growing has caused reduced flows and has resulted in some siltation in Wolf River.

SOURCE: Lewis Posekany, Wisconsin Conservation Department,  
Madison, Wisconsin

2. Forestry

Little change expected in forestry practices.

SOURCE: Arthur Oehmcke, Wisconsin Conservation Department,  
Woodruff, Wisconsin

3. Mining

No mining at present - none indicated.

SOURCE: Arthur Oehmcke, Wisconsin Conservation Department,  
Woodruff, Wisconsin

4. Transportation

General improvement of roads predicted. However, no major new roads planned in area.

SOURCE: Stanley Kmiolek, Wisconsin Conservation Department,  
Woodruff, Wisconsin

5. Industry

No new developments indicated.

6. Recreation

With increased emphasis on recreation this aspect of the economy will grow. State of Wisconsin is acquiring land along the Wolf and gradually improving access. This activity is limited to Langlade County.

SOURCE: Arthur Oehmcke, Wisconsin Conservation Department,  
Woodruff, Wisconsin

7. Residential - Community

No increase in size of communities indicated.

SOURCE: Lewis Posekany, Wisconsin Conservation Department,  
Madison, Wisconsin

8. Other \_\_\_\_\_

The ownership of all the land in Menominee County by the Menominee Indians and their future plans for the area are highly uncertain. They are interested in developments which will bring them the most money. It will probably be time consuming to deal with them.

SOURCE: Arthur Oehmcke, Wisconsin Conservation Department,  
Woodruff, Wisconsin

K. Conditions of headwater lands and trends in management

The headwater lands are primarily forested and semi-managed. Little change in land use pattern is indicated. Potato growing largely by irrigation in the basin utilizes a relatively large acreage of land but as far as the streams are concerned, this activity is closely regimented.

L. Land ownership (general pattern of Federal, State and private ownerships) (show on map)

In Langlade County the lands are predominantly private--large holders are Marathon Corp., Owens, Illinois, and Wisconsin Power and Light. In Menominee County all significant recreation lands belong to Menominee Enterprises - no map available.

SOURCE: Arthur Oehmcke, Wisconsin Conservation Department,  
Woodruff, Wisconsin

M. Actions that have been taken or are planned to protect the natural qualities of the river and its environment (such as special State legislation, zoning, easements, etc.)

Two State Laws have been passed prohibiting construction of dams on Wolf River in Langlade County and on all trout water in the Wolf which also includes Menominee County.

Wisconsin Conservation Department has spent \$12,000 in stream improvement on Wolf from 1951 - 1960. State has plans to acquire or secure perpetual easement on all lands along Wolf in Langlade County from Pearson south to County line. They also want a contiguous strip along Wolf through Menominee County for recreation purposes.

SOURCE: Lewis Posekany, Wisconsin Conservation Department, Madison, Wisconsin

N. Other

O. Sources of reference and information (maps, reports, agencies, persons, etc.

Lewis Posekany, Wisconsin Conservation Department, Madison, Wisc.  
Arthur Oehmcke, Wisconsin Conservation Department, Woodruff, Wisc.  
Stanley Kmiotek, Wisconsin Conservation Department, Woodruff, Wisc.  
Ralph Jones, Wisconsin Conservation Department, Woodruff, Wisconsin  
George Kenote, Wisconsin Conservation Department, Keshena, Wisconsin  
State and County Highway Maps  
U. S. Geological Survey Maps and Tables  
Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, Minneapolis, Minnesota  
Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, Ann Arbor, Michigan  
National Park Service, McGregor, Iowa  
U. S. Forest Service, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

P. Photographs (color and black and white) (label and spot on map)

Eight photographs of the study unit on four pages  
immediately following page 17.



Photo 1 - A riffle in the Wolf River Study Unit



Photo 2 - Big Eddy Falls





Photo 3 - Wolf River below Keshena



Photo 4 - Smokey Falls



Photo 5 - Wolf River White Water



Photo 6 - Rock ledges are common

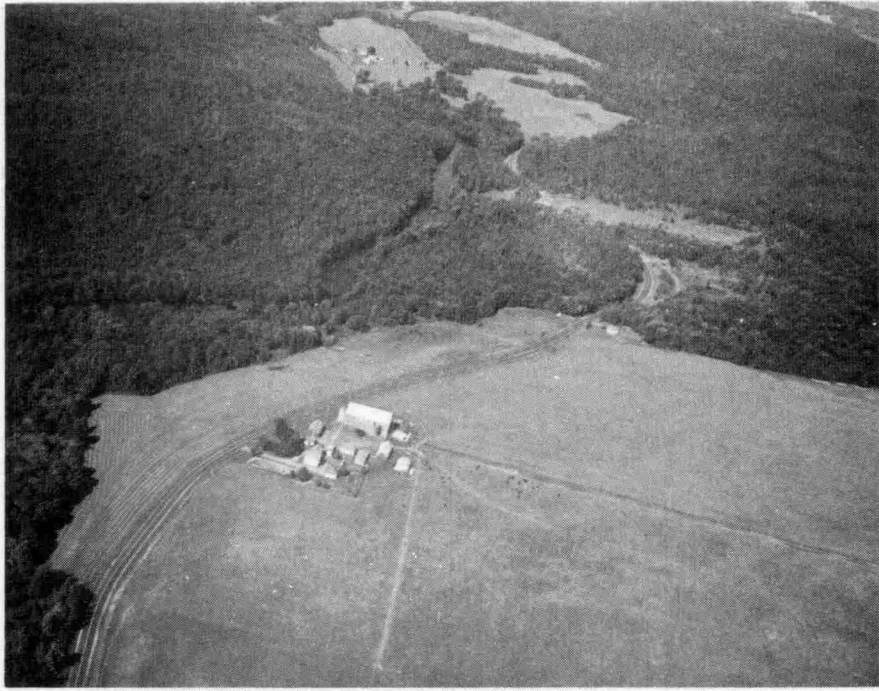


Photo 7 - A farm adjacent to the upper Wolf



Photo 8 - The Wolf River in Menomonee County

Q. Method of study

Investigation was made by car along segments of roads leading to or along the river.

Airplane flights were made over the river area.

A great deal of the information was obtained from such secondary sources as maps, reports, interviews, etc.

Stretches of the river in the study unit have been canoed, fished and hiked at times past by members of this study group.

R. Period of study

A field study was made during a two-day period August 20-21 by Robert Uppgren, BSF&W and John Eichstedt, BOR.

## II. CRITERIA

Based on the information and impressions gained during the study, evaluate the river area against the following five criteria. To qualify for further consideration for status in a national system of wild rivers, a river area should meet all of these criteria:

1. The river is still relatively undeveloped, unpolluted, and free-flowing and the scene as viewed from the river is pleasing whether primitive or rural-pastoral, or these conditions must be capable of restoration as far as practicable and within foreseeable legislative, financial and technical capabilities.

Yes           X          

No                           

Explain

The river meets the above qualifications completely.

2. The river area possesses recreation, scientific, historic, or esthetic values of outstanding quality.

Yes           X          

No                           

Explain

The area has a high recreation potential and has significant historic and esthetic values.

3. The river area is large enough to sustain existing public recreation use or accumulate more without resulting in appreciable reduction of the quality of the experience or damage to the resource (rule of thumb: 50 miles long and 50 feet wide).

Yes           X          

No                           

Explain

The river unit is only 48 miles in length but could sustain more public use without reduction in quality.

4. The quality, size, and uniqueness of the river and its setting is of sufficient importance to attract use from beyond the boundaries of the locality and state(s) and would appear to outweigh other uses of the river.

Yes           X          

No                           

Explain

With the possible exception of size, the river meets this criteria.

5. Plans for other uses of the river or its setting that would permanently and drastically impair the natural conditions have not progressed to the point that construction has commenced.

Yes           X          

No                           

Explain

There are no known plans for development in the area that would drastically impair the present condition of the study unit.

### III. FINDINGS

If the river area meets the five criteria and thereby qualifies for further consideration for status in a national system of wild rivers as an alternative to other uses that may be proposed:

1. Summarize briefly the basis for your conclusion.

The Wolf River in Langlade and Menominee Counties is an essentially free-flowing wilderness stream of great beauty. It is not highly developed, it is essentially unpolluted and has significant historical interest. For these reasons this unit qualifies for further consideration in a national system of wild rivers.

2. Identify the river unit(s) that are worthy of wild river status and delineate on a map the lands that should be included in order to effectively protect the river and its setting.

The river unit worthy of wild river status is from the Hunting River mouth to Keshena. Lands have not been described on a map as area needed for protection of the streams.



3. Identify problems that may be encountered should efforts be made to protect the river area and its watershed, and suggest possible solutions.

The multiple ownership of the land along the river may be a considerable problem in efforts to protect the River. The Menominee Indians are interested in capitalizing on the large segment of land under their control. For this reason they may not be interested in proposals that this be considered a wild river. It is believed that concrete commitments may be difficult to secure at this time.

4. Other

**Wolf River Rapids** — Heavily wooded setting and the rushing waters as at the "Dalles of the Wolf". Capacity — 12 units.

The following campsites are located in remote areas, their only access is by lumbering roads and fire trails. Not recommended for family camping, these sites are ideal for "roughing it" . . . no water pumps or sanitation facilities. Each campsite features a woodland setting and fine trout stream.

**Red River** — Capacity — 5 units.

**West Branch of the Evergreen River** — Capacity — 5 units.

**South Branch of the Oconto River** — Capacity — 5 units.

**Bass Lake** — a remote, heavy-forested area with fine fishing and swimming. Capacity — 10 units.

Because some roads leading to campsites are primarily logging trails and firelanes, especially in remote areas, campers should check with authorities before traveling these roads with trailers, and also with autos after a heavy rain. Visitors travel at their own risk.

**PROPERTY USE** Destruction, molesting or defacing of trees, plant life, signs, buildings or closed areas is prohibited. Violators will be prosecuted. Berry picking in quantity away from campsites and removal of shrubbery is prohibited.

**REFUSE** No refuse or other waste shall be left at any campsite or picnic area except in receptacles or areas provided for that purpose. Please clean up all areas before leaving.

**FIRES** Fires are not permitted except in designated camp and picnic areas. Dead fallen timber may be used for camp fires, but under no conditions is anyone allowed to cut or damage standing vegetation. Please do not leave fires unattended and make sure they are absolutely extinguished before leaving.

**BOATING** Campers who have paid the fee are permitted the use of the lake or stream on which they are located for boating purposes. Motors are not permitted on Sand Lake, are boats of any sort permitted on the South Branch of the Oconto River.

**HORSES** Menominee County boasts many fine horse trails and annually sponsors a well attended mass trail ride during the autumn of each year. Use of trails is free, but horses are not permitted in picnic or campsite areas.

**PETS** Pets are not allowed on beaches, lake or stream shores at campsites or picnic areas. They are permitted in camping areas, provided they are secured by a leash, no longer than eight feet in length, at all times.

**FIREARMS** The use of firearms, airguns, and bows and arrows is permitted only at designated ranges. Hunting or killing game is not permitted in any area. Toy bows and arrows may be used where safety to others is not endangered.

**FISHING** Campers and their families, who have paid the daily fee, are permitted to fish their campsite lake or the streams within the area fronting on their campsites for all game fish except trout. Fishing on other lakes or streams away from the campsite is allowed on a permit basis, at the fee listed below. Fishermen must also have possession of a Wisconsin State Fishing license.

**FISHING PERMITS** may be obtained at:

Neopit	Shawano	Keshena
Boivin's Store	Bilmay Hotel	Arrowhead Store
Main Office, Menominee Enterprises, Inc.	Brunner's Bar	Court House
Police Station	Jerry's Bait Stand	Information Office
Ponfil's Station	K & G Sports	Indian Village
	Stan & Bud's	Monroe Weso
	Breed	The Teepee
Antigo	Ponsegraf's Store	Wally's Station
Marine Mart		Phlox
Johnny's Sporting Goods	Berry Lake	Koepfel's Store
Alft's Resort Hwy. 55, 18 mi. north of Keshena	Berry Lake Resort	Suring
	Gresham	Brazeau's Store
	Stier's Hardware	Gamble Store

## General Fishing Rules

With respect to Trout fishing, it is the policy of Menominee Enterprises, Inc. to regulate and control the use of streams, springsteads and lakes, to propagate and preserve trout and other fishing in so far as possible, in its best natural state. To control the pressure upon the streams and springsteads, and to carry on this program, the assessment of a reasonable fee for access is necessary. All fees collected are used to sustain and improve fishing conditions on a continuing basis.

### LAKE FISHING other than Trout

- \$2.00 per day per person
- \$10.00 per week per person (7 days)
- \$20.00 per week per family
- \$35.00 per season per family

### TROUT FISHING on Lakes and Streams

- \$5.00 per day per person
- \$20.00 per week per person
- \$50.00 per season per person

Payment of the above trout fishing fees also includes lake fishing and camping privileges.

- Spinning equipment is permitted on all of the Wolf River and the Lakes.
- Spinning equipment is permitted on the South Branch of the Oconto from Camp 23 Bridge to the East line of Menominee County.
- Posted Springs and Streams may not be fished.
- All permittees must have a Wisconsin license before a Menominee permit will be issued.
- No boats are permitted on the South Branch of the Oconto River.
- Permits will be revoked for any violation of these rules or state laws.

**PERSONAL CONDUCT** Intoxication will not be tolerated, nor will the use of violent, abusive, loud, vulgar, lewd or otherwise disorderly language and conduct tending to breach the peace or create a disturbing annoyance. Individuals using the facilities of Menominee County are reminded that they are guests of Menominee Enterprises, Inc. and its shareholders.

**BREACHES OF THE PEACE** Any breaches of the peace, molestations, or other disorderly conduct should be reported immediately to the Patrol Wardens, commissioned Deputy Sheriffs in Keshena, or the Menominee County Sheriff's Office in Neopit: phone 2111 or 2532 at Neopit.

**VEHICLE TRAFFIC** Most county secondary roads are not intended for heavy traffic, and motorists should apply good judgment in maintaining speed levels commensurate to road conditions. No speeds over 15 MPH in campsite areas. Travelers are cautioned to observe all posted speed limits and to be especially alert at all times for logging trucks and other heavy equipment.

**CANOEING** Canoeing is limited to the Wolf River, the West Branch of the Wolf River, and the Lakes area, since other streams are prime trout waters. Canoeing on the South Branch of the Oconto, the Evergreen and the tributaries of the Wolf above Neopit is prohibited during the annual trout season, from early May through early September. Canoeists are cautioned that the Wolf River and the West Branch of the Wolf River contain many falls and rapids which are impassable or extremely dangerous. Portages are necessary at falls or rapids so designated on the map.

Exhibit II