Land Records Order in Moose Lake

Impact of Wisconsin Act 20

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Offered by

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What is the Impact of Act 20?

- 6 in 2010 to 16 islands in 2014
  - How has Act 20 impacted Sawyer County’s Progress?
    - None yet....
    - Technically true
  - What role did the Moose Lake Legacy Initiative and citizen data inventories play?
    - Not used to reconcile the parcel record
Why is it important to have an accurate land record on even “insignificant” landscapes?

What is the result of land records chaos?

What is the impact of placing the responsibility for improving the record on a chaotic process?
Questions About the Resource

- Why are the birch trees dying?
- What is the impact of the lake drawdown?
- How significant are the (small) islands?
- How is the resource being managed?
- Who owns the resources?

- Sawyer County: 6, 10, 16 islands on Moose Lake
- WDNR: 62 islands on Moose Lake
Moose Lake Legacy Initiative

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
Lake Planning Grant
February 1, 2008

STATEWIDE CONTEXT

PROJECT LOCATION
This map delineates the boundaries of the Moose Lake Legacy Initiative project area and geographic proximity to the Chequamegon National Forest and Chippewa Flowage Legacy Landscapes.

The project area includes the all areas within the West Fork of the Chippewa River Watershed. Particular attention will focus on Moose Lake. The watershed is located within the Upper Chippewa Basin and within Ashland, Bayfield, and Sawyer Counties.

Map created by Douglas Miskowiak
Center for Land Use Education, UW- Stevens Point
Moose Lake Legacy Initiative

Accomplishments

- Compiled 29 GIS data layers
- Regional Maps
- Digitized islands and shorelines
  - 50 miles of shoreline, not 39
  - 82 islands, not 6, 10, 16, or 62
- Moose Lake Inventories (9 inventories)
- Data shared in the public domain
  - Sawyer County, RPC, WDNR
Why are accurate land records important?
Why are the birch trees dying?

Citizen inventories of the riparian shoreline and regional pre-settlement patterns reveal that birch are being succeeded by the region’s climax species (white pine, sugar maple, yellow birch, hemlock).
What is the impact of the lake drawdown?

- Citizen inventories of the aquatic macrophytes in consultation with specialists reveal
  - Cattails are invasive in WI Northwoods and are competing with wild rice.
  - Perch attenuate their eggs to wild rice in the absence of perennial macrophytes.
How significant are the islands?

Citizen wildlife inventories reveal

Loons use the smallest of Moose Lake’s islands.
How significant are the islands?

- Citizen riparian vegetation inventories reveal
  - Cedar are browsed on mainland.
  - Cedar are healthy on islands.

- Ecology of... 
  - Wolves?
How is the Resource Managed? Who Owns the Resource?

Basic Premise:

- The land and its resources can not be effectively managed unless ownership can be discerned.
Multi-Purpose Cadastre

- Conservation agreements require a cadastre
  - Research of ownership
  - Monitoring the agreements and limitations on land
- Sawyer County does not have a modern cadastre
  - County recognized only 6 of 82 islands
  - USFS ownership records in error
Moose Lake Legacy Initiative

Phase II

Couderay Waters Regional Land Trust – Lake Planning Grant.

- Research land title
  - Hired a professional abstract and title company
  - Review ownership of 24 islands
  - Cost $5,663.00
    - Search back 30 years
Ownership search was inconclusive on all, but one island.

U.S. Patents and Warrantee Deeds

- Chippewa Lumber and Boom Company, Chippewa Valley Construction Company, Chippewa Farm Land Co or successors was given ownership of the lands.

- Flowage Rights to Wisconsin Minnesota Light and Power Company, or successors.

- In 1926 Northern States Power Company Quit Claim Deeded to Chippewa & Flambeau Improvement Company all land that was below 1377 feet above sea level as determined by the records of the United States Geological Survey the flowage rights that they may have.

Moose Lake Legacy Initiative
16 islands mapped and identified correctly

4, 13, 19, 28, 31, 32, 34, 36, 38, 39, 45, 49, 50, 51, 58, 59
Sawyer County Parcel Record
Completed July 2014

- 17 islands not mapped by Sawyer County
- 24 islands mapped as mainland
- Islands mapped, with no owner
- 13 separate islands mapped as single larger islands
- Flowage bottom with no owner

Moose Lake Legacy Initiative
Act 20 Narrative

What story will we be able to tell?

What is the impact of WLIP in

2013 ($741,084)
2014 ($1,272,000)
2015 ($2,817,920)

Has Act 20 improved accuracy? Access?

How has it improved people’s lives