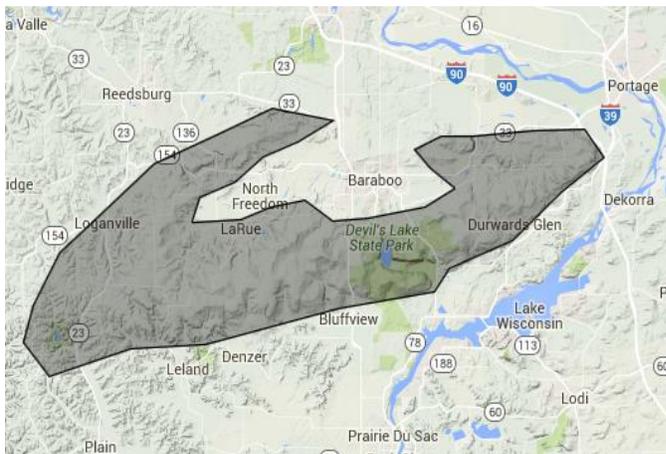


## Southern Forests:

**Baraboo Hills:** The Baraboo Hills of Sauk and Columbia counties are all that remain of one of the most ancient rock outcrops in North America. A forested sanctuary underlain by durable rock called Baraboo quartzite, the Hills are an ecologically unique part of the Midwest. The oak, maple, and basswood forests of the Baraboo Hills constitute the largest block of upland forest still standing in southern Wisconsin. They provide habitat for more than 1,800 kinds of plants and animals.

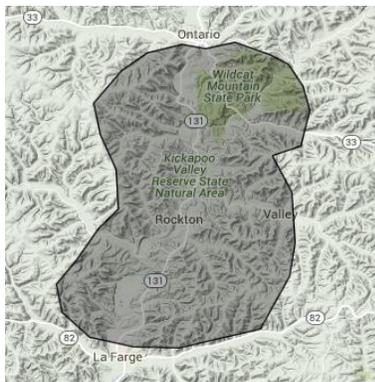
The Nature conservancy has protected more than 11,000 acres and the Wisconsin DNR has protected a similar sized area. Smaller land protection groups have also contributed. A focus on private land management has provided many benefits. Even with all this activity much still needs to be accomplished.



- Wisconsin Responsibility – Moderate
- Irreplaceable Features – Moderately High
- Diversity of Natural Features – Moderate
- Rare Species – Moderately High
- Species of Conservation Concern – Moderately High
- Vulnerability to a Warming Climate – High
- Conservation Status – Half

This site has medium opportunities for additional long-term conservation.

**Kickapoo River:** The Kickapoo River is bounded by high scenic hills, bluffs, and rock outcroppings that sometimes stand several hundred feet from the valley floor. Kickapoo Valley Reserve and Wildcat Mountain State Park form the core of this natural area. Natural features are a diversity of plant communities, numerous rare plants and animals, and significant archeological and geological features. The surrounding vegetation is diverse with northern stands of white pine and hemlock, extensive, rich southern hardwood forests, spring seeps, sedge meadow, and shaded cliffs. The shady, sandstone cliffs contain numerous seeps and harbor many rare plants that are restricted to cool, moist microclimates.



- Wisconsin Responsibility – Moderate
- Irreplaceable Features – Moderate
- Diversity of Natural Features – Moderately High
- Rare Species – Moderately High
- Species of Conservation Concern – High
- Vulnerability to a Warming Climate – Mod High
- Conservation Status – Most

The site has promising conservation opportunities.

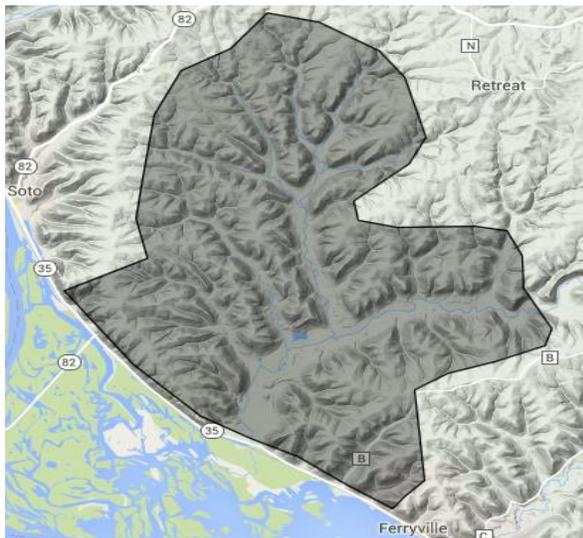
*Wyalusing Forest:* This area is mostly protected within Wyalusing State Park and portions of the Lower Wisconsin Riverway. High diversity within a small area indicates some additional protection and management are needed.



- Wisconsin Responsibility – Moderate
- Irreplaceable Features – Moderate
- Diversity of Natural Features – Moderate
- Rare Species – Moderate
- Species of Conservation Concern – Moderate Low
- Vulnerability to a Warming Climate – Moderate
- Conservation Status – Most

The site has promising conservation opportunities.

*Rush Creek:* The outstanding feature of Rush Creek is a two-mile long series of dry lime prairies situated on the steep southwest facing limestone-capped bluffs of the Mississippi River. These “goat prairies”, named for their steep, rocky terrain, are part of the most extensive dry prairie remnants left in the state. While most Wisconsin prairies were lost to the plow or development, Rush Creek’s steepness and dry southwestern exposure are largely responsible for its preservation. The narrow north and east-facing slopes bluff tops are forested with red and white oak and a significant amount of black walnut, hickory, basswood, sugar maple, and aspen. The extensive nature and diversity of vegetation make Rush Creek important habitat for numerous rare plants and animals. Rush Creek has the potential to be the largest block of protected oak-hickory forest in the state. Much protect still needs to be accomplished.



- Wisconsin Responsibility – Moderate High
- Irreplaceable Features – Moderate
- Diversity of Natural Features – Moderate
- Rare Species – Moderate
- Species of Conservation Concern – Moderate
- Vulnerability to a Warming Climate – Mod Low
- Conservation Status – Half

The site has promising conservation opportunities.

*Bass Hollow:* Located in a deep, cliff-lined coulee, Bass Hollow contains an undisturbed forested gorge of mesic hardwoods with sugar maple, basswood, and red oak. Other trees include yellow birch and black ash found in springy areas. Hemlock occupies north-facing cliffs. This site features one of the largest blocks of undisturbed southern mesic forest in the state. The topography is very steep with sandstone cliffs rising over 100 feet high in some places. Some of the area is protected, but many opportunities still exist.



- Wisconsin Responsibility – Moderate
- Irreplaceable Features – Moderate
- Diversity of Natural Features – Moderate
- Rare Species – Several
- Species of Conservation Concern – Moderate
- Vulnerability to a Warming Climate – Mod Low
- Conservation Status – Some

The site has promising conservation opportunities.

*Kickapoo Wild Woods:* Kickapoo Wild Woods supports a diverse forest ranging from bur and white oak dry forest to sugar maple mesic woodland. Much of the site diversity is due to the extensive topography lending to a great variety of slope aspect. A relatively level ridgetop is surrounded by hillsides which descend 350 feet to the Kickapoo River. This site contains one of the largest blocks of old forest remaining in the Driftless Area.



- Wisconsin Responsibility – Moderate
- Irreplaceable Features – Moderate
- Diversity of Natural Features – Moderate
- Rare Species – Several
- Species of Conservation Concern – Moderate
- Vulnerability to a Warming Climate – Mod Low
- Conservation Status – Some

The site has promising conservation opportunities.

### Small forested Tracts that may have Limited Conservation Opportunities:

- *Garden Valley Oak Forest, Jackson County:* This small block has older good quality oak forest, but it is threatened by adjacent mining. No protection or recognition is in place.



- *Taylor Pine-Oak Forest, Jackson County:* This small block has a mix of white pine and red oak. The primary use is for hunting. No protection or recognition is in place.



- *Pine Creek Woods, Pierce and Pepin counties:* This watershed is forested mostly with mesic forest species. Numerous springs and seeps add to the diversity. A few landowners have conservation easements on their land.

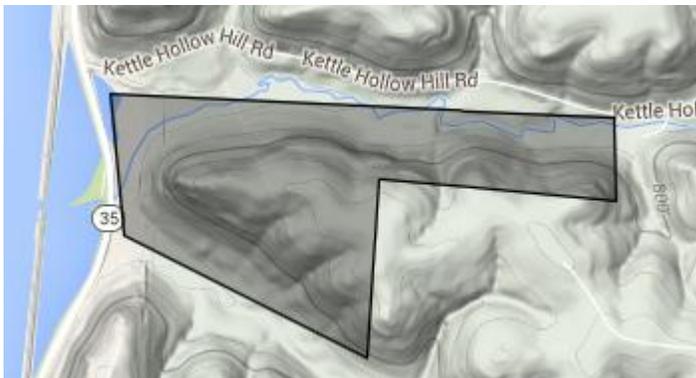


- *Perrot State Park, Trempealeau County:* This well-known state park has many acres of oak forest within and adjacent to its boundary that provides habitat for forest dwelling

species, as well as a connection to Trempealeau NWR. Most of the forest is protected, but the refuge connect isn't.



- *Kettle Hollow Woods, Crawford County*: This north-facing hillside is forested mostly with mesic forest species. Past management has been light. The site could be a small forest reserve.



- *Eagle Valley, Grant County:* The former site of an eagle preservation group, the site was purchased as a private reserve and is managed for protection.



*Coulee Experimental Forest, LaCrosse County:* Portions of this forest harbor prairie and savannas remnants and the northeast section has steep-sided slopes with old oak forest.