

**Polk Co. Glades**  
**Polk County**  
**1500 Acres in Total**

The Forest Transition Landscape was historically forested.. Today's agriculture dominated landscape still retains patches of quality natural communities. Most of the communities are locally important , but one (bedrock glades) is extreme vulnerable to total loss.. Bedrock glades support unusual combinations of species. The thin soils over solid rock greatly limits the composition to those species that can survive extremes of drought and heat.. Cacti, succulents, dry prairie species , lizards, and lichens do well in this environment.

**Ecology & Significance**

- Wisconsin Responsibility – High
  - Irreplaceable Features – High
  - Diversity of Natural Features – Mod High
  - Rare Species – Several
  - Conservation Concern Species – Mod High
  - Vulnerability to a Warming Climate – Mod Low
  - Conservation Status – Some
- This site has narrow conservation opportunities.

The bedrock geology of Central Polk County is crucial to understanding the glacial geology of St. Croix lobe. Exposed bedrock features at Trollhaugen Glade and the Osceola Glades (map below) farther north are at the conjunction of the massive ice sheet and its drainage channels. The Trollhaugen Glade is at the headwaters of the Horse Creek drainage channel that terminates at the Apple River Canyon in St. Croix County. Osceola glades formed a barrier and glacial debris flowed over the bedrock.

**Flora and Fauna**

Trollhaugen Glade (270 acres) is the finest glade in the state harboring rare cactus, succulents, and lizards. Glacial features along with the outstanding biology makes protection crucial. Astronomical challenges await. The site is mostly owned by trap rock mining companies. They can outlast public outcries, and they can lobby the legislature to get favorable laws passed. The only foreseeable means of protection is to have a conservation buyer with deep pockets purchase the site.

Osceola glades are partially protected, but a substantial portion is still private. Mineral companies have a similar interest in these glades. The rare plants and animals are similar to Trollhaugen, but much more patchy in distribution.



Photo courtesy Wikipedia.com

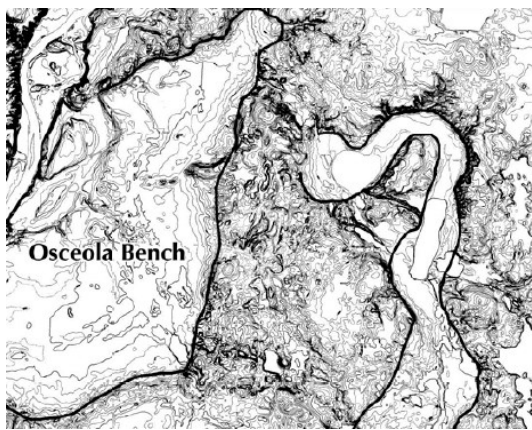


Photo courtesy Wisconsin Geological Survey

Ivers Mountain near Frederic has patches of exposed bedrock, but the primary features is a forested block on thin soils over bedrock. The seeps coalesce into small streams and flow into forested wetlands at the base of the mountain. A small scale ecosystem reminiscent of eastern mountainous areas.



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