



White River Prairie
Green Lake County
1200 Acres

The Glaciated Southeastern Wisconsin landscape is the most disturbed, fragmented and highly developed part of the state. The glacial features limited complete conversion to development and provides the basis for maintaining natural features and habitats.

Glaciated Southeastern Wisconsin Important Natural Features—Rare Natura Communities, including—Fen, Prairies, oak savannas , and bog relicts; kettle Moraine Forests and Savannas; and Emergent Marshes.

Ecology & Significance

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

White Prairie features a mosaic of wetland communities including a large wet-mesic to wet prairie, marsh, and sedge meadow in the floodplain of the White River. The prairie is particularly diverse and includes several characteristic fen species .

The soils are deep loamy mucks that are susceptible to flooding at any time of the year. In the past the primary use of the land was to make marsh hay, when conditions were dry enough. Today the land is either protected or used primarily as hunting land. Some marsh hay is still harvested, but the prairie outside the protected area is converting to narrow-leaved cattail or aspen. A concerted effort is needed to protect larger portions of the prairie.



Photo courtesy Wisconsin DNR

Flora and Fauna

The low, wet prairie contains an excellent flora with some fen aspects and is dominated by a great diversity of native species, none of which occupy more than 10% of any area. Some plants more typical of fens include sweet grass, shrubby cinquefoil, and boneset. Grasses present are big blue-stem, blue-joint grass, and prairie cord grass. Showy forbs include prairie blazing-star, Michigan lily, narrow-leaved loosestrife, wild bergamot, swamp milkweed, swamp saxifrage, spiderwort, culver's-root, golden alexanders, northern bedstraw, and hoary vervain.



Photo courtesy Wikipedia.org

A rich bird fauna includes many rare species such as American bittern, black tern, king rail, northern harrier, sedge wren, Short-eared owl, and Henslow's sparrow. Other rare animals include the rare Blanding's turtle, wood turtle, black dash butterfly, Baltimore butterfly and numerous dragonfly species.



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