



Puchyan Prairie
Green Lake County
2400 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 re-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.

Puchyan Prairie features a mosaic of wetland communities including a large wet-mesic to wet prairie, marsh, and sedge meadow in the floodplain of the Puchyan 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.

Flora and Fauna

A large population of prairie parsley, a state-threatened plant, thrives in the open prairie. Several characteristic fen species and Indian paintbrush, white wild indigo, shooting-star, cotton-grass, Michigan lily, lady's-tresses orchid, and bird's-foot violet are among the 130 species recorded for the site. Toward the Puchyan River the vegetation grades into an extensive shallow marsh of cattail and bulrush and sedge meadow dominated by tussock sedge and blue-joint grass. A small wooded island in the wetland contains large black and bur oaks with hazelnut and Pennsylvania sedge.



Photo courtesy Projectnoah.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, black dash butterfly, and the endangered Poweshiek skipperling.



Photo courtesy Wisconsin DNR



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