

NATURAL, AGRICULTURAL, AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

5.1 NATURAL RESOURCES

Importance of the Community Natural Resource Base

The natural resource base of the Town of Stinnett is directly interconnected to town land use. The community natural resource base impacts activities such as farming and forestry, as quality and quantity of natural resources directly influences the productivity and sustainability of land use activities. Residential development is greatly influenced by the presence of natural attributes such as woodlands, lakes, rivers, and wildlife, which attract both residents and visitors to the community. Furthermore, community economy is linked to revenues generated through tourist expenditures and agricultural productivity, both of which rely on the continued viability of the community natural resource base.

Due to the interconnectedness of land use and community natural resources and the role natural resources play in defining community character, it is important that community planning emphasize resource sustainability and protection of sensitive environmental features.

The maintenance of resource quality in the future is directly related to land use. Impacts to air, land, wildlife, and water are generated by every land use activity, and it is the cumulative effect of these activities that can create environmental problems.

Background

The Town of Stinnett encompasses approximately 22,819 acres, is located in northeastern Washburn County and borders the Towns of Bass Lake, Frog Creek, Gull Lake, and Springbrook in Washburn County and the Towns of Hayward and Lenroot in northwestern western Sawyer County.

Topography

The Town of Stinnett is located within both the Central Plains and Northern Highland geographic provinces of Wisconsin, a region that is characterized by low to moderate topographic relief. Surface elevations in Stinnett range from a maximum of approximately 1,366 feet (derived), in the north-central portion of the town, west of the STH 77 intersection with County Highway M. The town's minimum elevation of approximately 1,107 feet (derived) occurs at the Namakagon River, slightly north of the town line. Topography and slope are depicted in Map 5.1.

Slopes

Steeply sloping lands can present challenges or pose barriers to development. Steepness of topography is commonly expressed as percent slope (vertical rise/ horizontal run *100). As a general rule, slopes in excess of 20 percent are of greatest concern for any land disturbing activity. Steep slopes do not necessarily preclude all forms of development, although costly engineering and site preparation/mitigation measures are required in order to minimize potential adverse impacts. Potential problems associated with development of excessively sloping lands include erosion and slope stability.

Slopes in the Town of Stinnett range from level to nearly 38 percent. The steepest slopes are found in scattered locations throughout the town. The principal existing land use in these areas is currently woodlands. Any proposed future development of these lands will require consideration of site-specific topographic constraints.

Soils

An understanding of local soils is a critical component of land use planning. Soil conditions influence productivity of agricultural lands and forests and may pose obstacles to land and infrastructure development. Soil factors such as wetness, drainage capacity, strength, and depth to bedrock all influence soil suitability for land uses. In order to evaluate soil suitability for land uses, soil criteria for each use must be well defined and the suited soil regions must be identified.

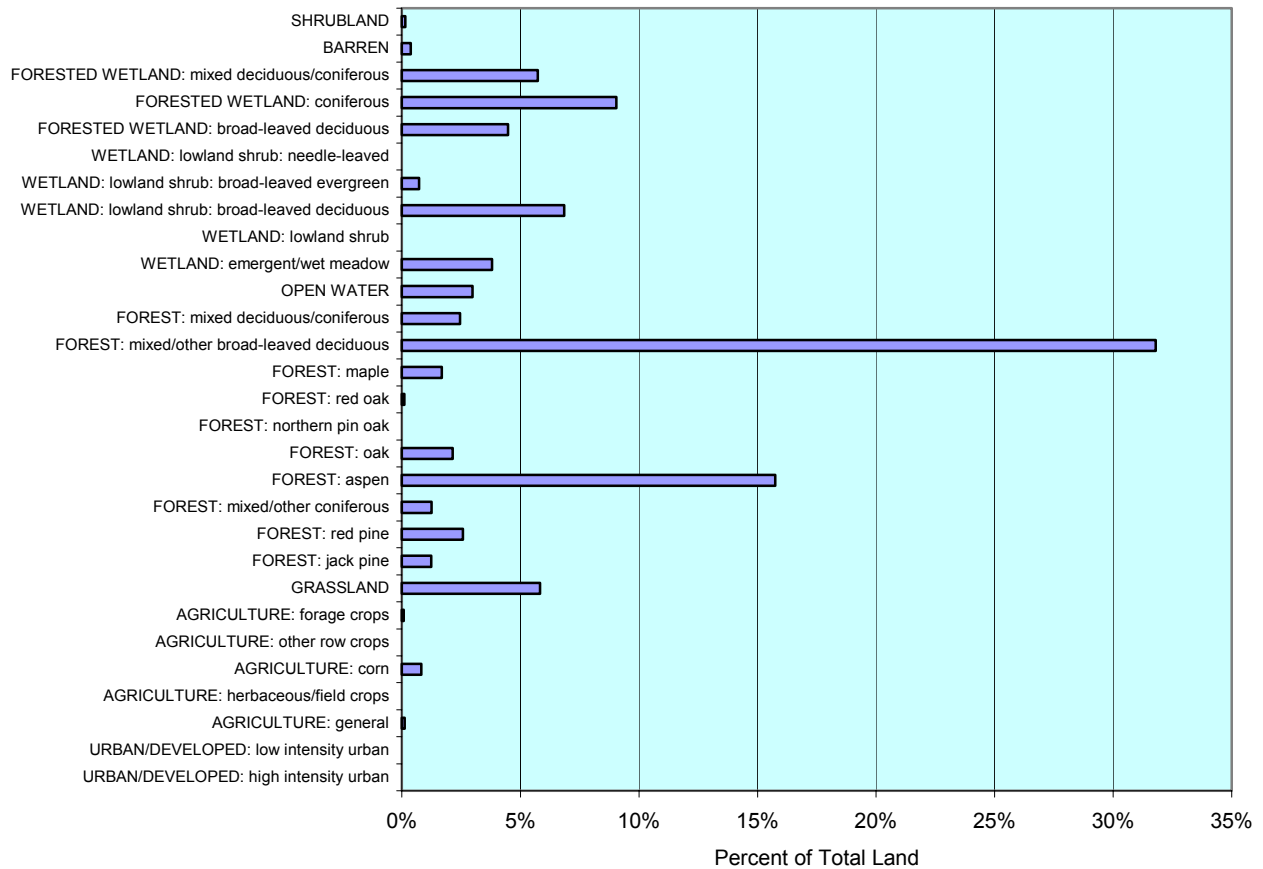
Soil properties which limit land uses or restrict land use activities are referred to as ‘limitations’ or ‘limiting factors’. Different soil types vary widely in terms of their distribution and limitations for specified uses. The spatial distribution of soils in the Town of Stinnett have been inventoried and mapped by the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), and soil properties identified. Soil limitations for specified uses are defined as “slight”, “moderate”, or “severe”. Soils rated with severe limitations have one or more properties that are generally considered unfavorable for the specified land use or activity. A “severe” rating implies that substantial cost may be incurred through special designs or construction practices, remediation, or soil maintenance practices in order to overcome the limitation. Soils that exhibit these limitations should therefore generally be avoided, and development should be guided into more appropriate locations.

While soil inventory and interpretation does provide an accurate representation of soil characteristics at the local level, this data should not supplant the evaluation of individual site soil characteristics; therefore, the following soil information should be used as a general guide for local officials, planners, citizens and developers. Soil types are portrayed in Map 5.2 and soil limitations are depicted in Map 5.3.

Land Cover

Land cover information for the Town of Stinnett was obtained from the WISCLAND (Wisconsin Initiative for Statewide Cooperation on Land Cover Analysis and Data) data set. This data represents surface vegetation, open water, and urban area delineation based on interpretation of dual year satellite imagery. The data presents a generalized view of community land cover and should not replace individual site examination. WISCLAND land cover is depicted in Map 5.4.

Figure 5.1: Town of Stinnett Land Cover Class by Percent of Total Area Forest Resources

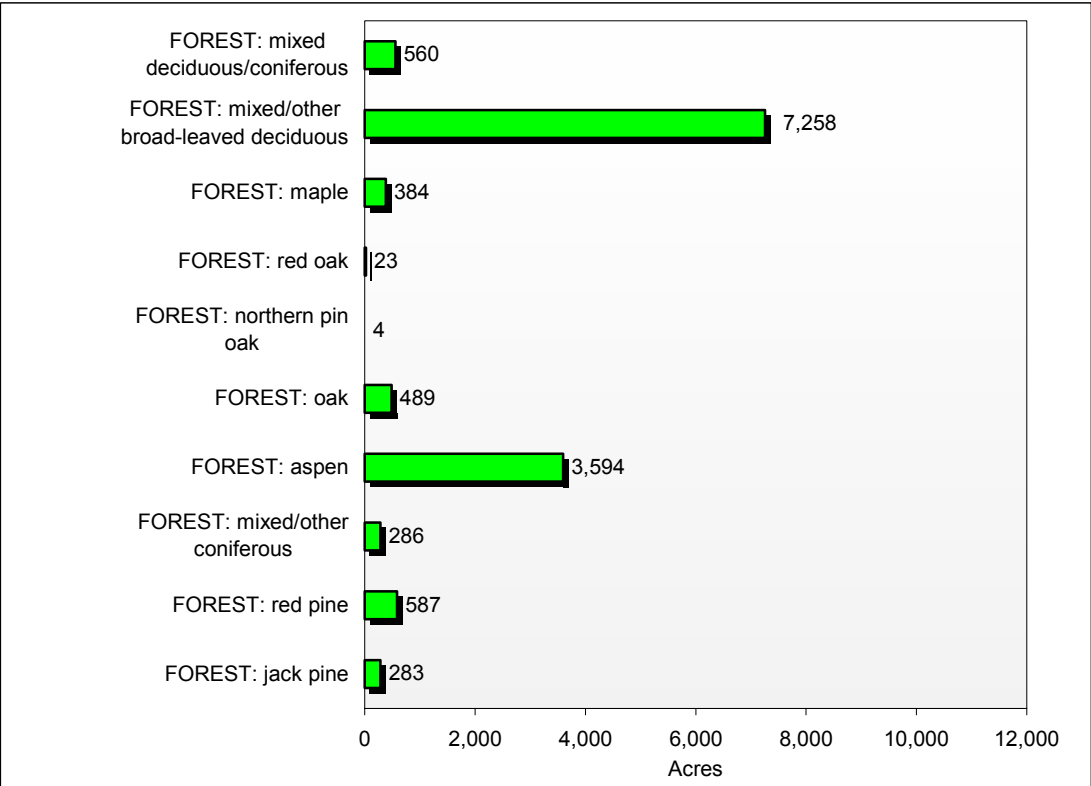


Forests are one of the most defining characteristics of northern Wisconsin. These resources represent significant cultural, social, environmental, and economic assets to citizens and communities. Forests provide a range of benefits including wildlife habitat, forest products, recreational opportunities, aesthetics, and other benefits. They are also very important to protect and enhance water quality.

The dominant forest cover type in the Town of Stinnett is mixed/other broad-leaved deciduous forest, which comprises over 7,200 acres of the total forested area. Aspen forests are the second largest forest cover type, which comprise almost 3,600 acres.

Over 60 percent of the forestland in the Town of Stinnett is currently under public ownership. There are no industrial forestland acres in the town.

Figure 5.2: Forest Cover Types, Approximate Area, Town of Stinnett



Information obtained through GIS analysis using WISCLAND data set

County Owned Forest Lands

There are approximately 13,780 acres of county-owned lands in the Town of Stinnett.

State Owned Forest Lands

There are approximately 40 state owned acres in the Town of Stinnett.

Federally Owned Lands

There are currently approximately 860 acres of federally owned land in the Town of Stinnett. Most of which is around the Namekagon River.

Surface Water Resources

Water resources in the Town of Stinnett are environmentally, socially, and economically significant. These resources represent unique and complex environments, supporting a wide range of biological diversity. The aquatic influence extends beyond the confines of the lake or stream and impacts the diversity of surrounding terrestrial communities.

Surface water resources represent central components of natural environmental corridors, creating a natural organizational framework for Washburn County, linking communities to each other and to the environment. The corridors are centered on the water bodies, wetlands, and woodlands and contain some of the most critical plant and animal habitat in the county.

Water resources represent one of the most significant factors in defining the “Northwoods” character of northern Wisconsin. Results of the comprehensive planning survey indicate that water resources are important recreational assets. Lakes, rivers, and streams provide residents and visitors with recreational opportunities and provide economic benefits through tourism and development.

Over the past 30 years, nearly two-thirds of all lakes ten acres and larger were developed in northern Wisconsin. Continuing pressures are being placed on water resources, and the number of people using these resources continues to grow annually.

The quality and quantity of surface water resources is correlated to land use activities, and land use change is a primary factor causing water quality and habitat degradation in northern Wisconsin’s surface waters. The intensity of the activity is also a vital land use characteristic related to water quality as issues such as livestock density, septic system density, traffic density, or proportion of impervious surfaces can influence the quality of surface water resources.

In 1987, Wisconsin initiated a surface water protection policy after a federal judge ordered the state to comply with the revised Federal Clean Water Act, which instructed states to protect their most outstanding lakes, flowages, and streams from the dumping of polluted wastewaters.

Water Quality

Surface water resources were evaluated and numerically rated for water quality, fish, wildlife, and aesthetic values by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. Some water bodies were proposed for designation in Chapter 102, Wisconsin Administrative Code, (*Water Quality Standards for Wisconsin Surface Waters*), as Outstanding Resource Waters (ORW). Such a designation allows for special protection under NR 102. ORW resources were rated as having high quality values associated with water quality, fish, wildlife, and aesthetic characteristics. Exceptional Resource Waters (ERW) resources are similar to ORWs in characteristics but did not score as high in the ranking system and were not included in NR 102 revisions. ORW waters get the highest protection possible under Wisconsin law, with no water degradation allowed in the future. Any discharges into ORW waters must be as clean as the background water quality. See Table 5.1 lists of all designated ORW and ERW waters located in Washburn County.

Surface water resources for the Town of Stinnett are depicted in Map 5.5.

Section 303(d) of the federal **Clean Water Act** requires the State of Wisconsin State periodically prepare a list of all surface waters in the state for which beneficial uses of the water – such as for drinking, recreation, aquatic habitat, and industrial use – are impaired by pollutants. These are water quality limited lakes, rivers, and streams that do not meet surface water quality standards and are not expected to improve within the next two years.

Waters placed on the 303(d) list require the preparation of **Total Maximum Daily Loads** (TMDLs), a key tool in the work to clean up polluted waters. TMDLs identify the maximum amount of a pollutant allowed to be released into a waterbody so as not to impair uses of the water, and allocate that amount among a variety of sources.

Currently, five lakes in Washburn County are classified as 303(d) waterbodies, based on elevated levels of mercury. These lakes include:

Gilmore Lake (Minong Twp.)	Silver Lake (Brooklyn Twp.)
Harmon Lake (Madge Twp.)	Spring Lake T40 R11W S25 (Springbrook Twp.)
Minong Flowage (Minong Twp.)	

Each of these waterbodies has a low priority ranking under the State of Wisconsin Priority Watershed Program, which provides grants to local governmental units in both urban and rural watersheds selected for priority watershed projects.

Table 5.1: ORW & ERW Waters Located in Washburn County

Water Resource	Status	Municipality
Bass Lake (T40N-R10W-Sec. 17)	ORW	Bass Lake
Beaver Brook	ORW	Beaver Brook
Long Lake	ORW	Long Lake
Middle McKenzie Lake	ORW	Casey
Namekagon River	ORW	Bass Lake-Chicog-Springbrook-Trego
S. Fork Bean Brook	ORW	Stone Lake
Sawyer Creek	ORW	Bashaw
Dago Creek	ERW	Evergreen
Shell Lake	ORW	City of Shell Lake
Stone Lake (T39N-R10W-Sec. 24)	ORW	Stone Lake
Chippanazie Creek Tributary (T41N-R10W-Sec. 9 to 16)	ERW	Stinnett
Chippanazie Creek	ERW	Stinnett
Crystal Brook	ERW	Madge
Dahlstrom Brook	ERW	Bashaw
Godfrey Creek	ERW	Stone Lake
Gull Creek	ERW	Springbrook
Little Bean Brook	ERW	Bass Lake
McKenzie Creek	ERW	Casey & Chicog
Namekagon River Tributary (T41N-R13W-Sec. 18)	ERW	Casey, Chicog, & Brooklyn
Shell Creek	ERW	Minong
Spring Brook	ERW	Springbrook
Whalen Creek	ERW	Trego
Yellow River Tributary (T38N-R13W-Sec. 4)	ERW	Bashaw
Yellow River Tributary (T39N-R12W-Sec. 31)	ERW	City of Spooner

Source: Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

Watersheds

A watershed can be defined as interconnected area of land draining from surrounding ridge tops to a common point such as a lake or stream confluence with a neighboring watershed. The

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources has transitioned its resource management approach to utilize watershed boundaries rather than political or social boundaries.

The Trego Lake/Middle Namekagon River watershed encompasses the entire Town of Stinnett, and it is located within the St. Croix River Basin. Washburn County watersheds are depicted on Map 5.6.

Lake Characteristics

Within the Town of Stinnett exist 7 named and 47 unnamed lakes encompassing approximately 792 surface acres.

Table 5.2: Town of Stinnett, Named Lakes

Name	Location Sec. T-N R-W	Surface Acres	Maximum Depth	Miles of Shoreline	Miles of Public Shoreline	Percent of Private Shoreline
Chippanazie Lake	13-41-10	57.9	31	1.30	1.3	0
Davis Flowage	15-41-10	201.1	12	4.75	4.17	12
Lost Lake	7-41-10	41.0	10	1.00	1	0
Stanberry Lake	28-41-10	34.6	7	0.93	0.08	91
Sugarbush Lake	17-41-10	51.7	20	1.93	0	100
Tranus Lake	19-41-10	174.7	12	2.21	1.08	51
Brickman Lake	32-41-10	19.2	13	.76	.15	80

Source: Washburn County Lakes Classification

**Surface acres reflect area of entire lake and are not broken down by municipality

Lake Types

The named lakes of the Town of Stinnett are classified as:

- “spring lakes” These lakes have both an inlet and outlet where the main water source is stream drainage
- “seepage lakes” These lakes do not have an inlet or an outlet, and only occasionally overflow. As landlocked water bodies, the principal source of water is precipitation or runoff, supplemented by groundwater from the immediate drainage area
- “drainage lakes” These lakes have no inlet, but like spring lakes, have a continuously flowing outlet. Their primary source of water is from precipitation and direct drainage from the surrounding land

Lakes Classification System

The Washburn County Lakes Classification System was developed as a way to assess county surface water resources based on the characteristics of individual water bodies. Lakes in Washburn County were evaluated based on the following criteria:

Lake surface area
Maximum depth
Lake Type

Size of the watershed
Shoreline Development Factor (SDF)
Development density

Each one of the evaluation criteria for each lake received a score from 0 to 3, based on the lake characteristics. The total sum of all scores is referred to as the *vulnerability ranking*, which ranges from 0 to a possible score of 24. These rankings are used to then define the lake classification assigned.

<u>Overall Vulnerability Ranking</u>	<u>Lake Classification</u>	<u>Protection Level</u>
Score of 13 and greater	1	Minimum
Score of 10 to 12	2	Moderate
Score of 9 or less	3	Maximum

The Washburn County shoreland zoning ordinance regulates development on all county waterways, including surface waters in the Town of Stinnett.

Table 5.3: Town of Stinnett Lakes Class & Development Standards

Name	Score	Class	Lot Area per Single Family Unit	Minimum Lot Area	Minimum Shoreline Setback¹	Vegetation Removal²	Minimum Side Yard Setback³	Minimum Rear Setback
Chippanazie Lake	13	1	150'	30,000 ft ²	75' *	30'/50'	10'/30'	40'
Davis Flowage	10	2	200'	80,000 ft ²	100' *	30'/75'	20'/60'	40'
Lost Lake	8	3	300'	3 Acres	100' / 125'*	30'/75'	30'/90'	40'
Stanberry Lake	9	2	200'	80,000 ft ²	100' *	30'/75'	20'/60'	40'
Sugarbush Lake	9	2	200'	80,000 ft ²	100' *	30'/75'	20'/60'	40'
Tranus Lake	12	2	200'	80,000 ft ²	100' *	30'/75'	20'/60'	40'
Brickman Lake	10	2	200'	80,000 ft ²	100' *	30'/75'	20'/60'	40'
Source: Washburn County Zoning								

Perennial and Intermittent Rivers, Creeks, and Streams

Riparian surface features such as rivers, creeks, and streams represent unique and diverse natural systems. The quality and quantity of these resources is intimately linked to land use and human activities.

There are two kinds of streams, perennial and intermittent. Perennial streams flow throughout most (>50%) of the year. Intermittent streams usually flow only after rainstorms or snowmelt and are, therefore, dry most of the year. Intermittent streams must be protected because they channel runoff into perennial streams and lakes and may become part of the aquatic ecosystem when water flows in them. Riparian surface features such as rivers, creeks, and streams represent unique and diverse natural systems. The quality and quantity of these resources is intimately linked to land use and human activities.

There are approximately 29 miles of rivers, creeks, and streams in the Town of Stinnett. There is one designated trout stream and tributary in the Town of Stinnett. Part of Chippanazie Creek and

¹ Minimum Shoreline Setbacks Class I –100' lakes, 125' rivers. Setback averaging per section 271(1) Washburn County Zoning Ordinance applies to Class I and II.

² Vegetation Removal = Removal Corridor/feet from Ordinary High Water Mark (OHWM)

³ Minimum Side Yard Setback = Feet Off One Side/ Feet Total Both Sides

the Chippanazie tributary are touted as class 1 trout streams. These are high quality trout waters, which have sufficient natural reproduction to sustain populations of wild trout at or near carrying capacity.

Other Named Rivers and Streams in the Town of Stinnett

Namekagon River
Elm Creek
Maggie Creek

Hay Creek
Tranus Creek

Special Water Resources

The Davis Flowage is located 3 miles north of Stanberry near the intersection of County M and Highway 77. This 250-acre body of water is a shallow flowage completely surrounded by county forest. In the fall of 1999, the county replaced the dam and dike after the existing control structure failed in 1995. The flowage is filled with old stumps and shallow flats creating excellent wildlife and fish habitat. The flowage was restocked with walleye, northern pike, and panfish in 2000. Access to the flowage is from a boat landing along Chippanazie Road on the east side of the flowage. Entrance to the flowage is gained after a short float down Chippanazie Creek (200 yards). No other motorized access to the Davis Flowage exists. Two primitive campsites just off the dike on the west end of the flowage were built in 2000. The sites contain a picnic table and fire ring, and both offer a scenic view of the water.

Floodplains

Floodplains are lands adjacent to rivers or streams, which are subject to periodic, recurring inundation by water. Due to the flood-prone nature of these lands, development and other land use activities within this zone are strongly discouraged. Appropriate land uses for these areas would consist of resource protection and wildlife habitat uses.

Flood Hazard Assessment

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has defined areas of flood susceptibility in the Town of Stinnett. The Flood Hazard Boundary Map (FHBM) series for Washburn County depicts these flood zones as shaded areas. Flood prone areas were determined by statistical analyses of records of river flow and rainfall, information obtained through consultation with the community, floodplain topographic surveys, and hydrologic and hydraulic analyses. The Town of Stinnett is strongly encouraged to obtain the appropriate FHBM series for its location and to consult where matters of development occur.

Washburn County has adopted flood plain regulations that apply to all bodies of water in the county. Determination as to whether a building site is located in a flood plain must be made through zoning office review of flood plain maps or through field verification of flood boundary.

Flood plains in the Town of Stinnett are depicted in the Map 5.7.

Groundwater

Groundwater is a critical resource for Washburn County and for Wisconsin. It is the main source from drinking water for 70 percent of Wisconsin residents and 95 percent of Wisconsin communities.

Groundwater Quantity

Under natural conditions, a balance existed between the volume of water entering an aquifer and the volume of water being discharged from an aquifer. With the development of water wells, the natural balance between recharge rates and discharge rates was disrupted. In Wisconsin, the overall groundwater supply has been depleted due to increased discharge. Natural fluctuations in groundwater supply can occur due to droughts or natural seasonal precipitation fluctuations.

Groundwater Quality

The quality of natural groundwater varies by location. As groundwater passes through sediments, naturally occurring chemicals may become deposited in the water. While naturally occurring groundwater contamination is generally mild, human-induced contaminants can make groundwater supplies unusable. The quality of groundwater is directly related to land use activities. The application of fertilizers, chemical spills, urban runoff, and non-point pollution can contribute to decreased quality of groundwater reserves.

Groundwater Depth and Contamination Susceptibility

Groundwater depths (Map 5.8) in the Town of Stinnett range from 0-20 feet in the northern and central portions of the town to 20-50 feet or in the southern parts of the town. Groundwater contamination susceptibility corresponds to groundwater depth (Map 5.9), with shallow groundwater depths being the most vulnerable areas for potential contamination. These areas are of significant concern in relation to the installation of conventional septic systems.

Environmental Corridors

Environmental Corridors are defined by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources as:

“Linear areas of natural resources that are critical to maintaining water quality and quantity and to providing habitat linkages that ensure biological diversity. Environmental corridors are often associated with rivers and streams.”

Natural benefits provided by environmental corridors include: air filtration, erosion control, and improved water quality. In addition, these natural features benefit the overall quality of life in the area and reduce the need for more expensive manmade solutions to water quality issues.

Many areas within these corridors provide important habitats for land and aquatic plants and animals. Connected habitats are superior to disjointed habitats, and larger habitats are better for ensuring the survival of a species than smaller areas. Ensuring these corridors can continue to work as a system, and the relationships between plants, insects, animals, land, and water continue to function properly are critical to environmental health and continued biological diversity.

The impacts and benefits of these corridors are not limited to one community or the responsibility of one jurisdiction. These areas follow natural boundaries and do not stop at political boundaries. Coordination among communities/jurisdictions is necessary in order to achieve the environmental, economic, cultural, community building, and health benefits which can be attributed to these natural features. Environmental corridors are depicted in map 5.10.

Wetlands

Wetlands represent one of the most unique and diverse elements of the natural community. Defined by the presence of water and water-loving vegetation, these communities support a range of plants and animals adapted to survive and thrive in this wet environment, including many threatened and endangered species.

These environments provide additional benefits through the services they provide.

- Wetlands act as natural filters removing nutrients and chemicals from the water and are often constructed as bio-engineered water filtration devices, used to treat and cleanse municipal wastewater or urban runoff.
- Wetlands serve as natural flood control devices by intercepting and holding water, a service that reduces flood risk to local communities.
- Wetlands also serve as groundwater recharge supplies for Washburn County communities.
- Wetland vegetation serves to stabilize stream banks and watercourses. This action reduces overall soil erosion and protects water quality by reducing siltation and sediment loads.

The United States Army Corps of Engineers, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, and local zoning codes regulate wetlands. Section 404 of the Clean Water Act establishes a program to regulate the discharge of dredged and fill material into waters of the state, including wetlands, and is the primary federal regulatory program for wetlands.

Article 27 (Shoreland Regulations) of the Washburn County Zoning Ordinance regulates the use/alterations of wetlands in the county. The regulations contained within this document apply to all lands within 1,000 feet of the ordinary high-water mark of any navigable lake, pond, or flowage and those lands within 300 feet of the ordinary high-water mark of any navigable river or stream.

Wetlands have been delineated by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. The Wisconsin Wetland Inventory (WWI) displays all wetland areas within Washburn County, which are less than five acres in size.

Washburn County has 518,236 surface acres, of which 79,140 acres are wetlands. Based on the WWI data, the Town of Stinnett has approximately 7,189 acres of wetlands (wetlands five acres and larger).

Wetlands are a significant land cover feature of the Town of Stinnett. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Wisconsin Wetland Inventory reveals that wetlands (five acres or greater) comprise nearly 32 percent of the entire town. The majority of wetlands in the Town of Stinnett are classified as *forested wetlands*, which include bogs and forested floodplain complexes, and are characterized by trees 20 feet or more in height such as tamarack, white cedar, black spruce, elm, black ash, green ash, and silver maple. *Scrub/Shrub* wetlands are also common in the town, especially in areas near the Yellow River. These communities include bogs and alder thicket and are characterized by woody shrubs and small trees such as tag alder, bog birch, willow, and dogwood. Less common is the *emergent/wet meadow* wetland type, which is characterized by the presence of sedges, grasses, and weeds. *Aquatic bed* type wetlands are the least dominant type of wetland in the Town of Stinnett. This type is characterized by plants (pondweed, duckweed, lotus and water-lilies) growing entirely on or in a water body no deeper than 6 feet. Wetlands are depicted in Map 5.7.

Name	Approximate Acres
Forested	4,271
Scrub/Shrub	2,238
Emergent/Wet Meadow	533
Aquatic Bed	147
APPROXIMATE TOTAL	7,189

Resources of Concern

The Town of Stinnett provides habitat for many species of wildlife, including rare, threatened, or endangered species of plants and animals. These critical resources have been documented by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources as part of the Natural Heritage Inventory Program. The specific location of endangered resources is confidential.

Plants and animals threatened with extinction are protected under federal and state endangered species legislation. Protection is not limited to only the individual species but includes protection of habitat critical to the species’ survival.

Natural Heritage Inventory List for the Town of Stinnett:

Birds	Scientific Name	Status
<i>Osprey</i>	<i>Pandion Haliaeetus</i>	<i>Threatened</i>
<i>Bald Eagle</i>	<i>Haliaeetus Leucocephalus</i>	<i>Special Concern</i>
Frogs		
<i>Bullfrog</i>	<i>Rana Catesbeiana</i>	<i>Special Concern</i>
Turtles		
<i>Wood Turtle</i>	<i>Clemmys Insculpta</i>	<i>Threatened</i>
Plants		
<i>Mingan's Moonwort</i>	<i>Botrychium Minganense</i>	<i>Special Concern</i>

⁴ Based on Wisconsin Wetland Inventory data, five-acre minimum mapping unit.

Communities

Lake--Shallow, Soft, Drainage
 Northern Wet Forest
 Northern Sedge Meadow
 Alder Thicket
 Springs And Spring Runs, Soft

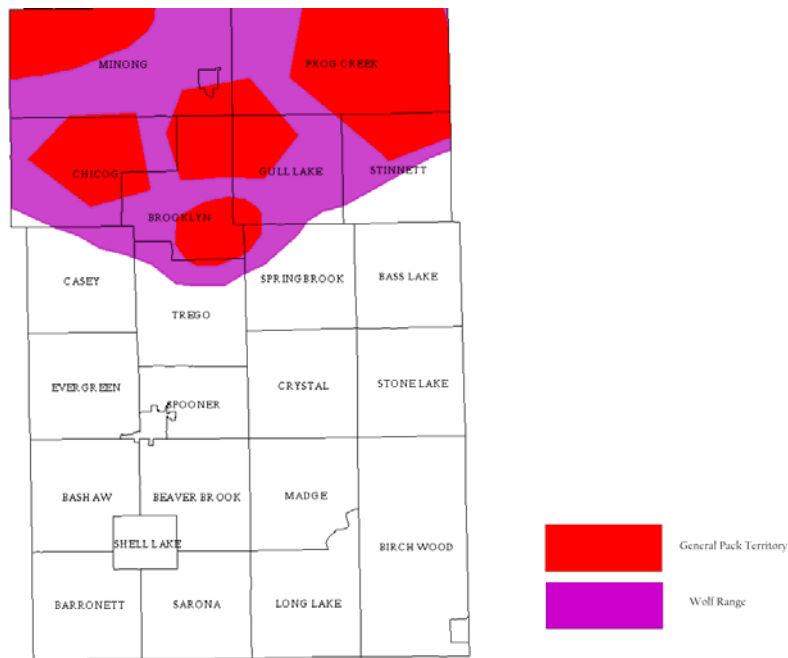
Site

Tranus Lake
 Lost Lake Acid Bog
 Bean Brook
 Bean Brook
 Bean Brook

Timber Wolves (*Canis lupus*)

Once classified as an endangered species, the Timber Wolf has successfully re-colonized portions of its former home range in northern Wisconsin, including parts of Washburn County. Wolves were officially reclassified to “threatened” status in Wisconsin in 1999, and may be delisted (in Wisconsin) in the near future.

Figure 5.3: Washburn County Wolf Range and General Pack Territories



Source: Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

Most of the Town of Stinnett is considered “probable wolf range” according to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources⁵. Information regarding specific pack ranges is not published and the transient nature of these animals combined with large pack territories make specific population estimates difficult in small areas such as townships. Based on WDNR inventory information, wolf packs are known to have home ranges within at least a portion of the Town of Stinnett.

⁵ Gray Wolf Distribution in Wisconsin: Winter 2001

Other endangered, threatened, or rare species or communities may also occur within the Town of Stinnett. Attention should be paid to monitor the addition of future endangered, threatened, or rare species or communities in the town.

5.2 AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

Productive Agricultural Lands

Agricultural lands play an important role in defining the character of many Wisconsin communities. While not a considerable land use in each Washburn County community, agriculture is an economically and culturally significant activity in some portions of the county. Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning legislation requires communities to review and analyze their agricultural land base, and to formulate goals, objectives, and policies for preserving prime agricultural lands. Prime farmlands are depicted in map 5.11.

County Agricultural History

Early agricultural activities in Washburn County were primarily focused on providing food supplies to lumber camps; and by 1935, there were 1,754 farms producing on 215,316 acres of cropland. Low yields due to poor soil conditions caused many of these operations to fail; and by 1978, nearly 50 percent of the county's farm acreage had been sold for other uses. The greatest losses occurred between 1949 and 1969, when nearly 95,000 acres of agricultural lands were converted to other uses. Agricultural use trends have continued a downward slide, as reflected by the Agriculture Census for Washburn County, which indicate an additional 2.9 percent decrease in farmland between 1987 and 1997. Agricultural uses have declined countywide, especially in the marginal lands on the sand barrens of the northern and western parts of the county, but remain a viable activity on the more productive lands of the southern parts of the county.

The decrease in overall farmland acreage coincides with an increase in the average farm size. Between the years of 1935 and 1997, the average farm size in Washburn County had increased from 122.8 acres to 276 acres, a net increase of nearly 125 percent. This trend mirrors statewide trends towards farmland consolidation and reflects the combining of many smaller family farms into larger, more economical units.

Agricultural Trends in the Town of Stinnett

The Town of Stinnett has experienced a net decline in overall farmland acreage from 1967 through 2001. Between the period 1967 and 1976, the town lost 1,126 acres of farmland. During the same period, the town lost five farms. From 1977 through 2001, the town lost an additional 145 acres of land assessed as farmland. Further information is found in the Land Use element of the Town of Stinnett Comprehensive Plan.

Prime Farmland (Washburn County Farmland Preservation Plan)

The Washburn County Farmland Preservation Plan (1982), drafted under the 1977 Wisconsin Farmland Preservation Act, provides detailed statistics, background information, maps, goals, objectives, and policies for farmland preservation. Prime farmland has been delineated from the Washburn County Soil Survey and is depicted in map 5.11.

5.3 CULTURAL RESOURCES

Introduction

Community cultural resources are a significant element in defining local character. The cultural heritage of the community may consist of many things such as historic buildings, festivals, cultural groups, entertainment, and viewsheds. This section proposes to identify a number of cultural attributes in the Town of Stinnett and propose meaningful objectives to the enhancement and protection of town cultural resources. According to the Architecture and Historic Inventory (AHI), provided by the Wisconsin Historical Society, there are three sites identified in the Town of Stinnett. These sites are listed in Table 5.5.

Table 5.5: Historic Sites Inventory

Town	Township/Range	PLS	Common Name	Historical Name	Type of Structure	Date
Stinnett	41-10-23	SE/NE	-	-	Home	-
Stinnett	41-10-28	NW/NW	-	-	Home	-
Stinnett	41-10-35	SW/SW	Olde Stinnett School	Stinnett School	-	-

Source: Wisconsin Architecture and History Inventory, Wisconsin Historical Society

Archaeological Sites Inventory

The Wisconsin Historical Society maintains a list of archaeological sites and cemeteries known as the Archaeological Site Inventory Database (ASI). Up to this point in time, 173 archaeological sites and cemeteries have been reported to the Wisconsin Historical Society for Washburn County. These sites cover an extended period of time, which include campsites/villages/communities, cabins/homesteads, sugar mapling sites, cemetery/burial/mounds, trading/fur posts, mill/sawmills, and kilns. Of the 173 present in the county, four are reported for the Town of Stinnett and are shown in Table 5.6.

Table 5.6: Archaeological Sites & Cemeteries in Stinnett

Site Name	Site Type	Cultural Study Unit
Stinnett Logging Camp and Dam/CAI 14-164-1	Dam/historic earth work	Historic Euro-American
N/A	Dam/historic earth work	Historic Euro-American
N/A	Lithic scatter	Late Prehistoric
N/A	Lithic scatter	Unknown Prehistoric

Source: Archaeological Site Inventory Database, Wisconsin Historical Society

Viewsheds and Scenic Resources

One of the qualities that characterize the Town of Stinnett is the picturesque view that is common throughout the general vicinity of the town. Accessibility to the views may over time be limited or denied due to private development of land. It should be a planning policy to try and ensure that the characteristic natural landscape features are protected and that views remain accessible to the public. Land use design should consider the natural scenic views during the development review process.

5.4 NATURAL, AGRICULTURAL, AND CULTURAL RESOURCES GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND ACTION STATEMENTS

Goal: Conserve, protect, manage, and enhance the town's natural resources.

Objective 1: More input into management, usage, and acquisition of county forest lands within the town.

- A. Develop a town usage and acquisition plan for county forestland within the township.

Objective 2: Cooperation with existing water and wetland protection acts.

- A. Coordinate and review with lake associations regarding their existing plans.
- B. Identify property owners with lake, stream and wetland properties for future education and regulations of lake, stream and wetland properties.
- C. Ensure county zoning restrictions reflect Town of Stinnett's Land Use Plan.

Objective 3: Define and preserve historic sites, buildings, and environmentally sensitive areas and habitat corridors.

- A. Inventory historic signs within the township.
- B. Identify on our land use plan environmentally sensitive areas and habitat corridors.

Objective 4: Input on the management of mining practices.

- A. Coordinate with the county to limit mining practices and stripping of topsoil in the township.

Objective 5: Better land management regarding logging practices, forest crop management, and productive agricultural lands.

- A. Encourage select cut for better forest management.
- B. Encourage use of professional foresters.
- C. Work and coordinate with forestry agencies.
- D. Identify productive agricultural lands.