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Badger Army Ammunition Plant Reuse Plan

Vision for a New Beginning

When the powder plant in Sauk County was decommissioned, a community-based process was put forth to establish guidelines for future use of the land.

Baraboo Hills
courtesy of Sauk Prairie Conservation Alliance

Badger

1700

1800

Sauk Indians inhabited the area when white explorers visited in the **18th Century**. Ho-Chunk Indians inhabited the area until it was ceded in **1837**. Prior to Euro American settlement in the **1840s**, the tract was a mosaic of tallgrass prairie, oak savanna, and semi-open oak woodland.

1840s: Euro-American settlers turned the prairies into very productive farms. These lands then contained hay fields, various row crops, pasture, hedge rows, and farmsteads. In **1941**, 80 farm families were displaced as the army moved in.



Courtesy of Sauk Prairie Conservation Alliance

Where is Badger?



Adapted from WI DHFS "Public Health Assessment (1999)

Origins of the Reuse Plan

In early 2000, the Sauk County Board of Supervisors acted to establish a **locally driven reuse planning process** with the assistance of U.S. Congresswoman Tammy Baldwin and funds provided by the U.S. Department of Labor, establishing the Badger Reuse Committee (BRC). The 21-member BRC included representatives from neighboring communities, local, state, and federal governments, and the Ho-Chunk Nation. In its mission statement, the BRC charged itself with the task of developing "a common vision for the reuse of the Badger property that can be meaningfully considered and realistically implemented by the appropriate local, state, and federal agencies."

Early meetings were devoted to gathering and reviewing basic information about the Badger property and its role - past, present, and future - in Sauk County's landscape, community, and economy. The committee determined **nine key values** and detailed criteria for each value to guide consideration of future uses. The BRC chose one plan that best fit the parameters of the values out of 25 different proposals. The General Services Administration, the federal agency in charge of the redistribution, then took the recommendations of the committee into consideration in their allocation of the land.

The plan calls for all 7,534 acres to be **managed as a whole**. The land uses include conservation, prairie and savanna restoration, agriculture, education and recreation. These land uses should contribute to **reconciliation and resolution** of past conflicts.

The conversion of the Badger lands provides remarkable opportunities for the protection, enhancement, use, restoration, and enjoyment of the property's unique natural and cultural features. The BRC has sought to achieve a realistic, community-based, consensus vision for realizing these opportunities. In the past, the Badger lands have too often been a place of division, pain, and conflict. It is the hope of the committee that all members of our community may now contribute to a new beginning at Badger, one that honors the past while serving future generations in a spirit of reconciliation.

summary based on full text, and Executive Summary found on the Sauk Country Website
(<http://www.co.sauk.wi.us/data/badger/index.html>)

Values

1

stresses the need to manage the Badger property collaboratively, and as a single unit

2

directs the federal government to complete the highest quality cleanup of the Badger property in a timely manner

3

pertains to maintenance of buildings and infrastructure that are historically significant or are needed to support cleanup activities and other approved uses

4

emphasizes the desire to reuse the Badger property in a way that contributes to reconciliation and the resolution of past conflicts

5

recognizes the great potential of the Badger property to provide educational, research, and recreational opportunities

6

focuses on the role that sustainable agriculture opportunities can and should play in the reuse of the Badger property

7

addresses the protection and enhancement of the Badger property's natural features, and the critical role of the Badger lands within the broader landscape

8

recognizes the importance of the Badger property in providing open space and protecting the characteristic rural landscape of our area

9

involves the need for future uses of the Badger property to contribute to economic stability and sustainability in our local municipalities

Potential Future Owners



The **Department of Natural Resources** is the agency in charge of coordinating programs that work to provide a clean environment and outdoor recreational opportunities within the state. The DNR works toward and is committed to the preservation, protection, effective management, and maintenance of natural resources of Wisconsin. <http://www.dnr.state.wi.us>



The **Ho-Chunk Nation** is one of the strongest indigenous Nations in the United States. Ho-Chunk means "People of the Big Voice," or "People of the Sacred Language." Ho-Chunk people have always occupied lands in the Midwest, and they have been hunters and gatherers throughout time. The land is sacred to them because it provides all of their needs such as food, clothing, lodging and the means for their culture to thrive. This culture respects the land and never takes more than they need from it. <http://www.ho-chunknation.com>



The **U.S. Dairy Forage Research Center** is a part of the **United States Department of Agriculture** and currently owns a portion of land at BAAP. They formerly leased the land from the Army and became official owners in 2004. This branch of the USDA is dedicated to developing the knowledge and tools necessary to enhance sustainable and competitive dairy forage systems that protect the environment, promote animal health, and ensure a safe, healthy food supply. http://ars.usda.gov/main/site_main.htm?modecode=36553000

History

1900

2000

The US Army announced that they would build a powder plant in **1941**, and production began in **1942**. The plant produced propellants for WWII, the Korean Conflict, and the Vietnam War. Plant operations terminated in **1975**, and many support functions were placed on standby. The plant was officially decommissioned in **1998**, and the General Services Administration took over and began directing the processes of returning the land. In early **2000**, the Sauk County Board of Supervisors acted to establish a locally driven reuse planning process. Negotiations are currently under way for the final turnover of land.



Woman working at BAAP
Courtesy of Wisconsin Historical Society