

Dane County Exec Parisi: Announces purchase of land for Black Earth Creek Fishery Area & trail connector

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Today, County Executive Joe Parisi announced Dane County will purchase 14.6 acres of property in the Town of Black Earth located on Black Earth Creek, south of State Highway 14. The acquisition will fill in a connection between Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Black Earth Creek Fishery Area lands. It will also provide a future corridor for the Black Earth Creek Trail.

“Black Earth Creek is a premier trout fishery, and its surrounding public lands offer residents a chance to explore the outdoors,” said County Executive Parisi. “This property purchase advances our efforts to preserve beloved natural resources like Black Earth Creek and expands outdoor recreation opportunities for Dane County residents and visitors.”

The Black Earth Creek Fishery Area is a pleasant mix of a high quality trout stream flowing within a wide green agricultural valley. The 14.6-acre property is relatively level and contains approximately nine acres of cropland with trees and brush running along the approximately 1,750 feet of Black Earth Creek. Acquisition of the property will fill in the gap between public lands, allowing more efficient management of the stream in partnership with the DNR.

The property is part of a larger parcel to the north and will be surveyed. The parties have agreed on a purchase price of \$11,000 per acre based on the survey. Funds for the purchase are available in the 2023 Dane County Conservation Fund budget.

In 2021, Dane County awarded two grants to Groundswell Conservancy to purchase 38 acres of land and a conservation easement on 111 acres of land within the Black

Earth Creek Natural Resource Area. These acquisitions provide a needed link for the Black Earth Creek Trail - advancing a larger vision of having the bike trail run from Middleton to Mazomanie and, ultimately, the Wisconsin River crossing.

A resolution to approve this 14.6-acre property purchase in the Town of Black Earth will be introduced at tonight's Dane County Board meeting. It is expected to be approved in the coming weeks.