

## Conservation Challenges:

- \*Urbanization
- \*Conversion to agricultural uses
- \*Changes in agricultural practices
- \*Increased draitiling makes stream flow more flashy, reduces groundwater
- \*Fluctuating/declining groundwater levels
- \*Invasive spp.: Buckthorns, Eurasian honeysuckle, garlic mustard, leafy spurge, EAB
- \*Habitat fragmentation
- \*Agricultural water pollutants/sedimentation
- \*Fire-dependent communities are likely to decline due to difficulty in restoring natural fire regimes

## Conservation Opportunities:

- \* Watershed is engaged in natural resource management planning

## Existing Conservation Network:

### State Parks:

### State Forests:

### SNAs:

Mary Crawford Schmidt  
Wolsfeld Woods  
Wood-Rill

### Wildlife Management Areas:

### County Park Reserves:

Baker

## Rare Features:

Acadian Flycatcher  
American Ginseng  
Bald Eagle  
Blanding's Turtle  
Cerulean Warbler  
Colonial Waterbird Nesting Site  
Gopher Snake  
Halberd-leaved Tearthumb  
Ice Deposition (Quaternary)  
Red-shouldered Hawk  
Trumpeter Swan  
Upland Sandpiper



# Western Metro Big Woods Opportunity Area

## Ecological Significance:

The Big Woods of east-central Minnesota have rich forests that have climax species of sugar maple, red oak, basswood, and previously American elm. Rich wildflower assemblages occur from the fertile soils and ongoing recycling of calcium and magnesium through the leaf litter. These woods have been largely logged and transformed into agricultural fields and urban development. In addition, these biomes are susceptible to the multi-pronged assault from invasion by common buckthorn and garlic mustard, overbrowsing by deer, and loss of seed germination medium due to exotic earthworms. Therefore the small percentage of Big Woods that remains is very susceptible to a number of threats. This is why it is important to preserve the few intact examples of big wood that remain.



## Counties:

Hennepin  
Wright

## Rare Native Plant Communities:

Red Oak - Sugar Maple - Basswood -  
(Bitternut Hickory) Forest  
Sedge Meadow, Lake Sedge Subtype  
Sugar Maple Forest (Big Woods)  
Tamarack Swamp (Southern)

## Ecological Evaluations:

Crawford Schmidt Woods  
Orono Woods Wood Rill  
Schmidt Woods  
Wolsfeld Woods

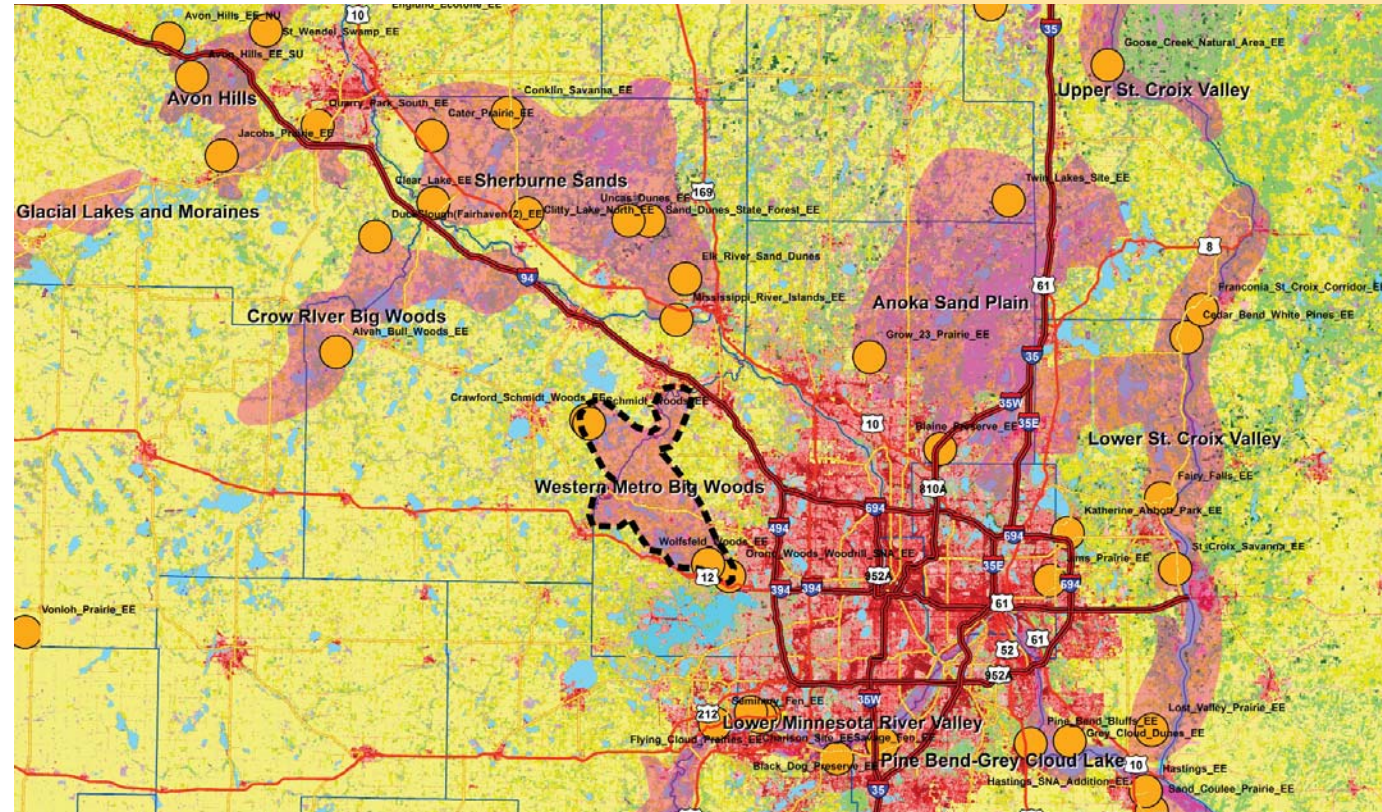


Photo courtesy of John Gregor



# Western Metro Big Woods

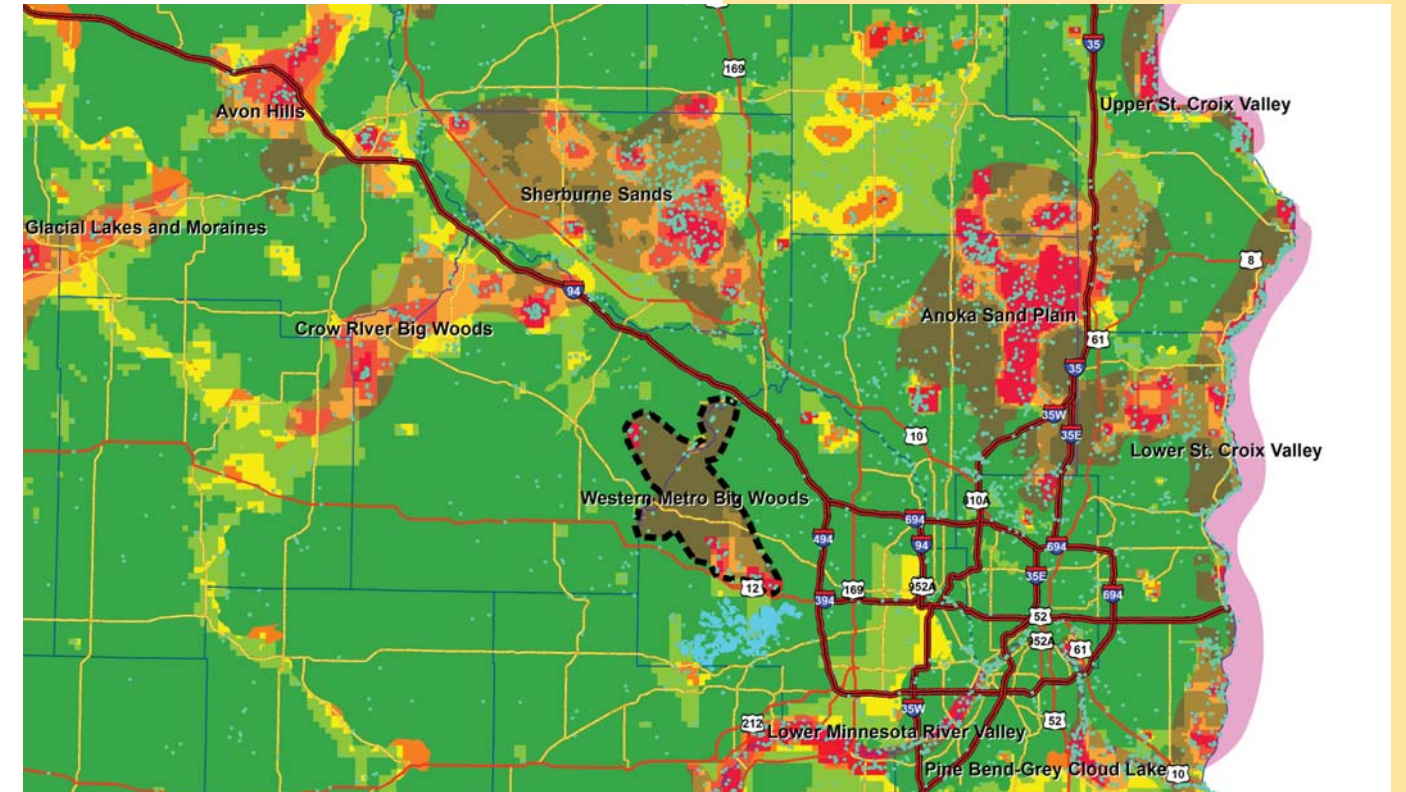
## Ecological Evaluations, Land Cover, Public Ownership



Please see Legend at the front of the Opportunity Area Descriptions for a key to this map

# Western Metro Big Woods

## Marxan Prioritization, Element Occurrences



**Legend**

- Profiled COA
- Conservation Opportunity Area
- Rare Feature
- County Boundary
- Large Lake

**Marxan Conservation Prioritization**

- Lowest Priority
- Low Priority
- Medium Priority
- High Priority
- Highest Priority
- Interstate Highway
- U.S. Trunk Highway
- MN Trunk Highway