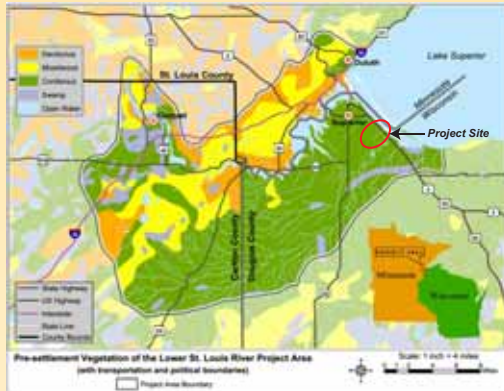


But what do we restore it to?

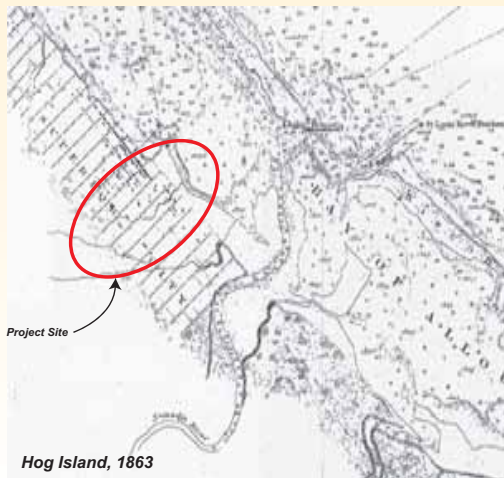
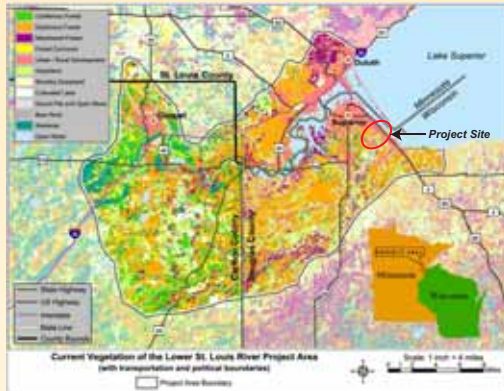
Historical, Pre-Settlement Conditions



Historical ecological data can provide a blueprint of natural community composition and distribution across a landscape during pre-settlement ("pre-disturbance") conditions.

An example of this is displayed in the map to the left, where during pre-settlement conditions, the project site is dominated by an extensive, contiguous boreal coniferous forest.

In contrast, the next map displays the current landcover, which consists of urban development, deciduous forests, and forest cut-overs in the project area. Almost no parts of the historic boreal coniferous forest remain intact...



An 1863 map of the Hog Island coastline and Newton Creek reveals what was likely a 50-60' wide wetland or sandy shoal running along the shoreline, gradually dropping to a depth of 7-8 feet of open water where Hog Island now lies. The Bay bottom here is noted as "mud". In addition, the orientation of Newton Creek is apparent, although the urban grid of Superior City has been established at this time, and the creek has already become urbanized.

Existing Reference Landscapes

Wisconsin Point, Allouez Bay, and Superior Municipal Forest contain high quality habitat complexes that may be suitable reference landscapes for Hog Island and Newton Creek. Their proximity to the project area, and the possibility of creating a linkage between these previously unconnected natural areas with a restored Hog Island and Newton Creek corridor makes their potential as reference ecosystems especially relevant.

WISCONSIN POINT & ALLOUEZ BAY



Wisconsin Point is the eastern portion of a long coastal barrier spit separating the waters of Lake Superior from Allouez Bay, a portion of the St. Louis River Estuary. Major site features include several miles of open sand beach and dunes, small intertidal wetlands, and a xeric forest of white and red pines. The point and adjacent Allouez Bay receive heavy visitation by migrating birds in the spring (WDNR, 2006).



Allouez Bay is situated between the City of Superior's east-side neighborhood of Allouez and Wisconsin Point. The eastern end of the bay is shallow and contains a large marsh with patches of sedge meadow and a drowned tamarack swamp present near the base of Wisconsin Point (WDNR, 2006).



Although somewhat disturbed, Wisconsin Point and Allouez Bay are considered to be areas of high ecological integrity, containing relic assemblages of endemic Great Lakes natural communities. These areas are valued as a sanctuary for bird, fish, and wildlife species due to the intact, functional, and diverse habitat complexes that exist in this part of Allouez Bay and the Superior coastline.

SUPERIOR MUNICIPAL FOREST



The 4,000 acre Superior Municipal Forest contains stands of mature boreal coniferous forest, emergent marsh, and wet clay flats supporting a mixture of shrub swamp and wet meadow. Dominant forest species include white spruce, white pine, balsam fir, balsam poplar, and paper birch. In some stands, red pine, black ash or white cedar are important.