Chapter 3
ISSUES AND CONCERNS

During the internal and external scoping process for this planning process, a number of issues were identified. Members of the general public, local units of government, state agencies, federal agencies, and other interested public gave their input on the plan at planning meetings, agency meetings, town, and county board meetings, open house meetings and through letters and comment sheets. These issues are summarized below.

Why this location for the Ice Age NST?
What factors determine the location for the Ice Age NST? During the Pleistocene epoch, the glacier advanced and receded across Marathon County many times creating the landscape that we see today. In its wake, it also left numerous geologic features such as the terminal and recessional moraines, kettle ponds, glacial drainageways, and outwash plains. The purpose of the Ice Age NST is to preserve some of the finest features left by the last glacial advance, as well as other scenic, natural, and cultural resources, while providing opportunities for an outstanding hiking experience and educational activities. For further details on the purpose and goals for the trail, the planning process, and Marathon County's geology see: Chapter 1—Background on the Ice Age National Scenic Trail; Chapter 4—Implementation of the Corridor Planning Process; Chapter 6—Corridor's Affected Environment: Geology; and Appendix C—NPS Purpose and Significance Statement of the Ice Age National Scenic Trail.

Impacts to existing public lands and their use.
Some individuals expressed concerns regarding impacts to the use of the existing public state fishery and wildlife areas for the trail. Any segment of trail that is placed on public lands has the potential to cause some level of impact to the resources and use of those properties. However, in the 2005-2010 SCORP, research findings suggest that hiking and hunting can be compatible given proper planning and managed user interactions. These issues are discussed in Chapter 6—Corridor's Affected Environment: Water Resources, Recreation Resources, and Public Health.

Impacts on natural resources by trail construction and use.
People expressed concern about the impact on natural resources that could result from the construction and use of new trail. The Ice Age NST has A Handbook for Trail Design, Construction, and Maintenance that guides its development. If the standards are followed, the physical impacts would occur primarily when the trail is constructed and would be minor and temporary. In sensitive environments such as wetlands, the trail either would be routed around them or would go through a permitting process to construct bridges or boardwalks through them. These issues are discussed in Chapter 7—Corridor Impact Analysis: Geology, Soils, Water Resources, Air Quality, Ecosystem, Invasive Species, Wildlife, Fisheries, and Threatened and Endangered Species.

Preservation of the glacial landscape
Some individuals were concerned about preserving the resources that are important to the trail's geologic story and the scenic experience of the hiker. The glacier affected virtually the entire landscape of eastern Marathon County. Through the planning process, the Core Team identified

the preferred alternative corridor that captured, what we believe to be, the best examples of geologic features left by the glacier. Working with willing landowners, we will attempt to protect some portion of these resources for the trail. For further details see Chapter 7—Corridor Impact Analysis: Visual Resources; and Land Acquisition and Trail Development.

Impacts on cultural resources by trail use and construction of new trail.
An impact on cultural resources that may occur due to new trail construction was considered by some people to be an issue. As stated in 36 CFR Part 800—PROTECTION OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES, Subpart A—Purposes and Participants, 800.1 Purposes: "Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act requires Federal agencies to take into account the impacts of their undertakings on historic properties and afford the Council a reasonable opportunity to comment on such undertakings…." The National Park Service has a Memorandum of Understanding with the Wisconsin State Historic Preservation Office that defines methods to identify and avoid impacts to cultural resources when designing and building the Ice Age NST. For further details see Chapter 7—Impacts to Cultural Resources, and Appendix E—Memorandum of Understanding between the State Historical Society of Wisconsin and the National Park Service.

Impacts on private land and private ownership.
Some people expressed concerns regarding the completion of the trail through the county and its impact to private land. By congressional authorization, the Ice Age NST is a continuous footpath that spans the State of Wisconsin for approximately 1,200 miles and in doing so has the potential of crossing both public and private lands. Private interests may be affected by the trail in a variety of ways such as purchase of lands, community economic development, or change of land use from agriculture to conservation. These issues are discussed in Chapter 7—Corridor Impact Analysis: Communities and Businesses, Land Use and Land Ownership, Land Acquisition and Trail Development, and Tax Base and Fiscal Impacts.

Impacts related to Health, Safety, and Community Resources
An individual expressed concern about the use of public roads as a temporary route for the trail and the potential impact to community resources in the event that an indigent hiker was injured. While the Ice Age NST is meant to be a continuous overland (off-road) trail, this does not preclude the use of short sections of lightly used town or county roads (usually less than one mile) or bridges when necessary in order to cross-rivers, lakes, interstate highways, dams, etc. This issue was addressed in a follow-up letter, which was sent to landowners in May 2005. A copy of the correspondence is included in Appendix F. Also see Chapter 7—Corridor Impact Analysis—D. Communities and Businesses. Another individual was concerned about routing the trail near large, active agricultural fields as are found throughout the southern half of the proposed corridor. This individual recommended a buffer of 100 to 150-feet to ensure a hiker's safety. See Chapter 7—Corridor Impact Analysis: Land Use and Land Ownership.