



Letters to the Editor

Three factors to support Schuetz property purchase

To the Editor:

Here are three factors in support of the purchase the Schuetz orchard property.

- Opportunities for our children to experience the natural world.

Many young adults, especially those who grew up in rural areas, are realizing that there are fewer and fewer opportunities for their children to spend time in the woods and fields and learn first-hand about the community of animals and plants to which they belong. Some people describe this phenomenon as "extinction of experience."

The fact that 100,000 children per year take part in Dane County outdoor education programs indicates that this issue is important to today's parents.

Adding the Schuetz parkland to the adjoining properties owned by the Village, Dane County and the State of Wisconsin would increase opportunities for all our children, not just those whose families can afford distant travel, to enjoy outdoor experiences and educational programs.

- Preservation of wildlife corridor along the Yahara River.

Preservation of habitat to sustain healthy populations of animals of all species is equally important to those who cherish Wisconsin's traditions of hunting

and fishing and to those who prefer to observe wildlife.

The aerial photos on display in the Village Hall and recent village maps clearly show how acquisition of the Schuetz property will fill in a missing link in the existing wildlife corridor.

- Long-term economic consequences of establishing a significant conservancy area.

At least one million people per year visit two of southern Wisconsin's natural areas: 600,000 at the UW-Madison Arboretum and 400,000 at Horicon Marsh. People come from near and far to observe wildlife, learn about pioneering efforts in ecological restoration, and, at Horicon, to enjoy hunting and fishing. The attractiveness of these properties is emphasized in efforts by the cities around their borders to promote business and tourism.

Forward-looking decisions made by local and state officials in the 1920s and '30s have preserved these two natural areas. I hope our Village Trustees will follow their example and vote to purchase the Schuetz property for our posterity.

Johanna B. Fabke

McFarland

- *Attendance figures for the UW-Madison Arboretum and Dane County children's programs were provided by the Director of Outreach at the Arboretum.*

Attendance at the Horicon National Wildlife Refuge is published in a fact sheet on the Web site maintained by the US Fish and Wildlife Service.