



## The Plot Thickens

The teams need to work through a process and reach a *compromise* on how the property will be used. Some possible outcomes include:

### Sustainable, Low Impact Use

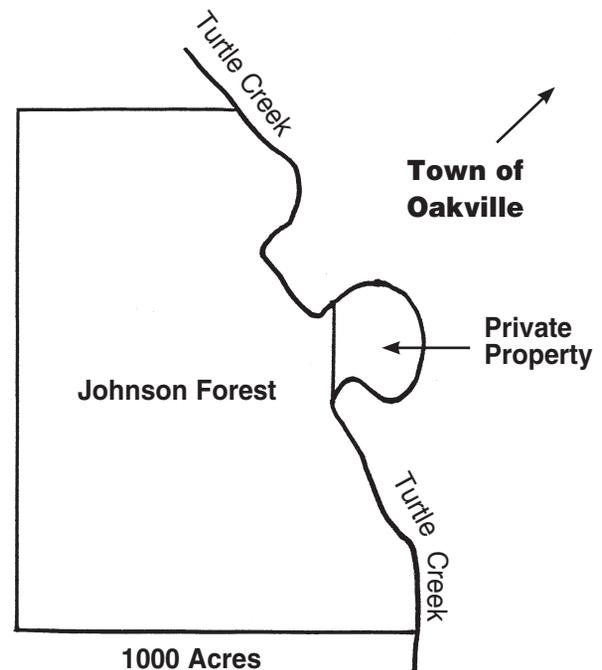
This scenario helps all interested parties get what they want, with some restrictions. For example, the developers may need to design buildings to have a low impact on the surroundings. The golf course may need to be certified by Audubon International as a Cooperative Sanctuary. Residents may be required to keep all cats indoors, so they don't threaten birds. The contract with the timber company could require the use of sustainable harvest methods, such as no clear-cuts and a strict replanting schedule. The parks department could develop a nature center on the edge of the property with hiking and cross-country ski trails limited to a portion of the area, thus maintaining a large wooded block that's undisturbed. The birders are able to hire a consultant to monitor the progress of all the groups, and check on their adherence to their promised bird-friendly compromises.

### Limits on Lumber

The timber company may offer so much money for the land that the public officials decide to sell with the stipulation that experts in timber management and bird conservation be consulted as to the best way to harvest trees from the area and preserve bird species diversity. Perhaps if only small parcels of trees are cut along the edge of the woodland at 10-year intervals and replanting is done to maintain the woodland, the bird species dependent on the woodland would be able to continue to thrive. The timber company may agree to allow the parks department to use the property for education; however, at certain times of the year these uses would not be compatible. The development company would have to build elsewhere.

### Putting the Park in Charge

The parks department may convince officials to allow them jurisdiction over the property. It would then be used for trails, camp sites, and a nature center. The department could agree to the birders' request to set aside a large portion of the forest as an undisturbed refuge for forest-interior nesting by Neotropical migrant birds. The timber company and the development company would have to look at other locations for their activities. This should bring in a discussion of the "not-in-my-backyard" syndrome: People utilize wood products everyday and need housing and recreation areas, so simply moving activities to a different location may not solve the problems they can create. The economic loss with this scenario also should be discussed.





## Who's Who Cards

### Natural Products Timber Company

The company plans to harvest mature oak trees from the site. Oak is currently in high demand, and the company can sell the wood for a high price in the furniture market. The slash (residue remaining on the ground after cutting, such as tree tops and bark) could be sold to a local firewood dealer. Since 15% of the town residents are employed by this company, the increase in business would benefit those people financially. In addition, the company would hire several additional employees, including a site manager and forester, though not necessarily from this community. These economic benefits will only extend into the future if the wood is harvested in a way that sustains the forest. The company has adequate resources to afford any harvest it plans in the Johnson Forest.

### Tall Oaks Home Developers

This company began in Oakville in the early 1900s when much of the area was being settled. Over the years, the company has overseen much of the housing and business development in the area. The developer has a good reputation in the Midwest for innovation in construction to conserve energy and make use of locally available materials. Several members of the community work for this developer and many more work for businesses that contract with the developer, such as plumbers and electricians. Tall Oaks has been looking for a place in Oakville to locate a retirement community. They propose that this forest would be an ideal location. Many elderly people have an interest in bird watching. There is no retirement community in Oakville and as the population ages, there is more need for this housing. Tall Oaks has made efforts to locate the community elsewhere. The only other suitable location, however, is 30 miles north. Tall Oaks has already received financial backing from a local bank to develop a retirement home. Also, Oakville zoning law requires that any commercial development plans include an environmental assessment.

### Audubon Society Members

Sara Johnson, an active member of the local Audubon chapter and a great bird enthusiast, made her wishes clear when she willed the land to the town. The Audubon members remind the town that the Johnsons required the conservation of the forest for wildlife, including birds. Audubon Society members advocate conservation of the forest for Neotropical migratory birds, especially forest-interior nesters, such as the Wood Thrush and many species of warblers. They recognize that some development may occur but prefer that it be limited and restricted to specific areas of the forest where it will have the least impact on nesting forest birds. Because of large membership, the Audubon Society has sufficient monetary donations to make certain that many of its views and wishes are known and carried out.



## Who's Who Cards

### Parks and Recreation Department

This department has been under pressure by the Chamber of Commerce to increase tourism in Oakville. The Chamber of Commerce feels that Oakville currently lacks outdoor recreation opportunities. The town is located close enough to a large urban center to bring vacationers. By developing more recreation opportunities in Oakville, the Chamber of Commerce hopes to draw some of these people into Oakville to spend money in local restaurants, shops, and hotels. They propose a large park, including a nature center and trails for nature observation, hiking, and cross-country skiing. The extent of development, such as amount of parking, building space, and trail configuration must be discussed. By law, any Parks development must include an environmental assessment to determine impacts on wildlife. Park staff want to make sure there is adequate habitat for the birds and other wildlife within the forest, as this is one reason people will come to the area. The county has already provided grant money to Parks and Recreation to develop parks in Oakville.

### Private Landowners

Just at the border of the Johnson Forest is private property owned by Sara Johnson's daughter and her husband, the Millers. Their property consists of a small home on 20 wooded acres. The Millers are wildlife enthusiasts and believe the neighboring Johnson forest provides them many opportunities to see wildlife on their own land. The Millers occasionally harvest wood from their property to supplement their income. This year, they had planned to conduct a very large wood harvest. In addition to bringing in income, they feel the planned timber cutting on their property will attract additional wildlife to their area, particularly edge-dwelling species, such as Indigo Buntings and deer. However, the Millers are aware that changes to the Johnson Forest in the near future may cause them to change their plans for harvesting timber on their land. They attend the town meeting, with their advisors, to offer their own proposal for the Johnson Forest that would complement their plans for their own land. The Millers also are concerned that if the Johnson Forest is developed, it will add significant traffic and noise near their property.

### Wildlife Biologist

Charlie Beakler has a Ph.D. in ornithology. He has been studying Peregrine Falcons for the last 30 years. Dr. Beakler is well versed in the main threats to some Neotropical bird populations. He teaches at the University in Urbana.



## Who's Who Cards

### Editor for the "Oakville Gazette"

**A**s editor of the only newspaper in town, Eddie Webster has the job of making sure all important events are covered. Eddie has been working for the *Gazette* for 25 years (including the 3 years he delivered papers on his bike) and knows the town well. He wants to see the town grow economically and supports the local businesses. He is skeptical that a nature area will bring more dollars to the community. He has two daughters he needs to send to college and just bought stock in the Natural Products Timber Company.

### Outdoor Writer for the "Urbana Informer"

**Z**ach Whitewater just graduated from college with a degree in journalism. He's landed his first job with the *Urbana Informer*, the newspaper from the big city nearest to Oakville. Zach is an avid outdoorsman, spending all of his spare time hunting, fishing, and photographing wildlife. He is also a member of several national conservation organizations and reads all of their publications. As a Native American, he remembers his grandmother telling the stories that her grandmother had told of the area that is now Johnson Forest. He was happy to be assigned to cover the town meeting on the forest, and wants to learn if the historical importance of the area to Native Americans will be researched and taken into consideration in the decision-making process.

### Town Council Member

**B**etsy Henderson owns and operates a farm near Oakville. All of her three children are in college now and will be in need of good jobs soon. She would like to see her children be able to come back to Oakville to find jobs and possibly take over the family farm. Betsy has a keen interest in the environment, making efforts to employ agricultural practices that benefit wildlife, control soil erosion, and reduce chemical inputs. She is not excited about having more tourists in the area, as they might trespass on her land and cause her liability problems.

### Town Council Member

**H**arvey Crow is a 50-year-old banker. He loves to birdwatch and fish. Harvey is planning to take a guided birding tour to the Yucatan in Mexico this year. He is well aware of the tourism dollars that quality natural areas can bring into a community. He feels the Johnson Forest area has economic and recreational potential, but is worried about the impact that might have on rare bird species nesting there. Harvey's bank has agreed to finance Tall Oaks' planned development of the Forest.



## Who's Who Cards

### Town Council Member

**L**inda Olsen started her real estate business in Oakville five years ago. Her business is doing well. She has been selling a lot of acreages to people who work in Urbana, the nearest big city. These people want to work in a city, but live in a small town. Her customers value scenic areas near their homes and she is already planning to subdivide some of the land adjacent to Johnson Forest for a housing development.

### Energy Engineering

**D**iane Ohmmer has been asked by the Tall Oaks Home Developers to be their technical advisor on building energy efficient housing complexes. She knows nothing about birds, but wants to protect air and water resources with her project specifications. She has received several awards for building designs that minimize impact on natural areas and blend well with the surroundings.

### Botany Unlimited

**G**eorge Root discovered an endangered species of orchid growing in Johnson Forest 15 years ago. This orchid population has continued to thrive in the undisturbed forest and is partially dependent on hummingbirds for pollination. He fears that with development and tourists in the area, the plants will lose the shade they need to grow or be dug up by unethical plant collectors or lose their pollinators. He is investigating the requirements of the Endangered Species Act.