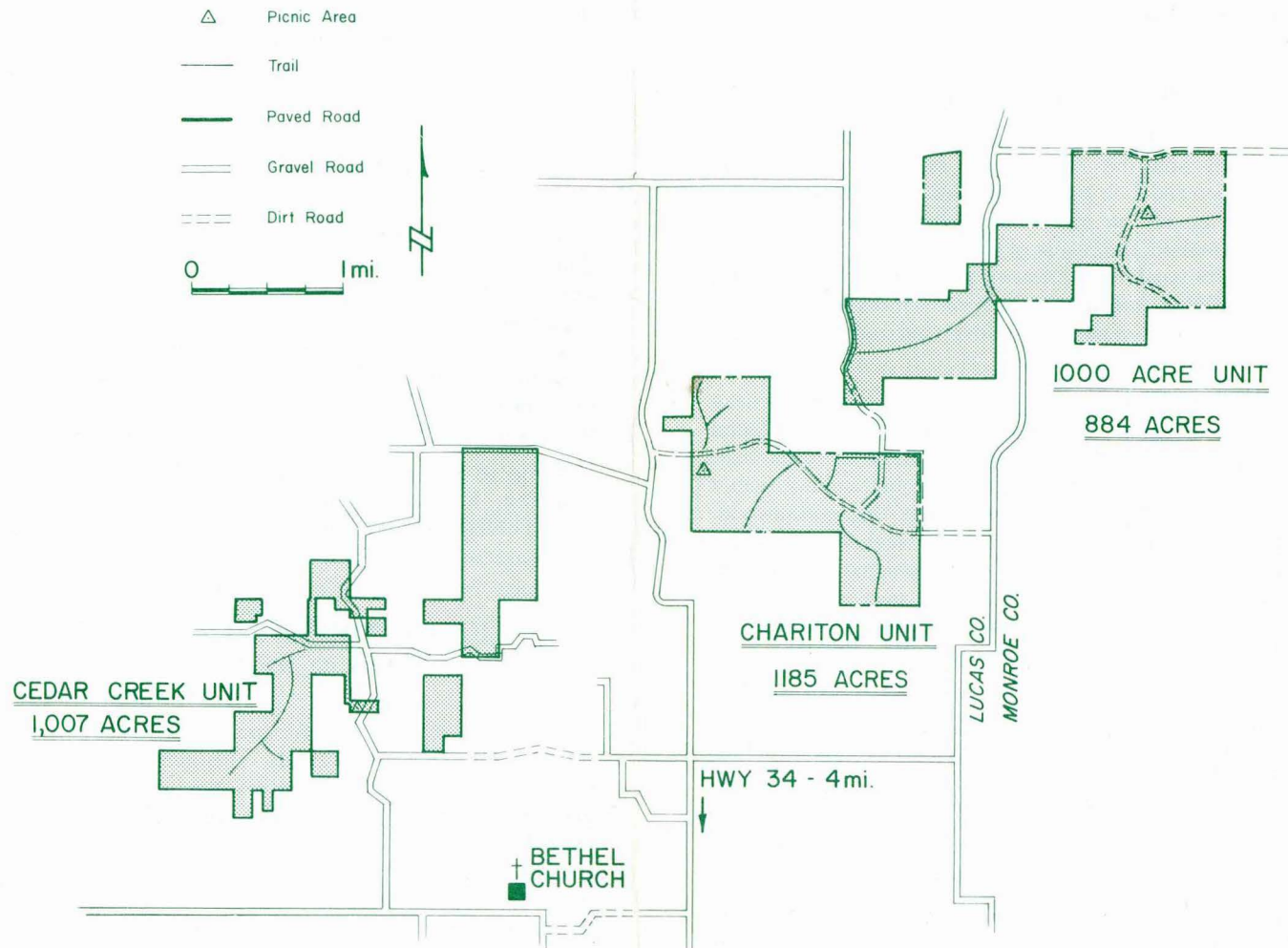


# STEPHENS STATE FOREST



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
WALLACE STATE OFFICE BLDG.  
DES MOINES, IOWA 50319-0034



The Stephens State Forest, named for Dr. T.C. Stephens, a prominent educator and Sioux City native, is located in south-central Iowa. The forest is divided into six separate units totalling 9,202 acres:

1. Lucas Unit (991 acres) is southwest and within one mile of the town of Lucas, just south of U.S. Highway 34.
2. Whitebreast Unit (3,256 acres) is two miles south and two miles west of the town of Lucas.
3. Cedar Creek Unit (1,007 acres) is four miles east and one mile south of the town of Williamson.
4. Chariton Unit (1,185 acres) is six miles east of the town of Williamson.
5. 1000 Acre Unit (884 acres) is one mile northeast of the Chariton Unit in the northeast corner of Lucas County. Part of this unit lies in Monroe County.
6. Unionville Unit (1,879 acres) is made up of eight separate tracts in northeast Appanoose County and northwest Davis County.

Maps in this brochure detail the roads and facilities within each unit.

Originally, the area's intended function was to serve as an example of forest management for the people of Iowa. The forest was a base of operations for the Civilian Conservation Corps (C.C.C.) program. Demonstration plantings of hardwoods and conifers were completed. Over the years, the planting has continued. Since 1972, commercial sales of sawtimber have been made. Ongoing cultural practices improve the forest for lumber and firewood production, wildlife values, erosion control and watershed protection. People from a wide area use the forest as a place to hunt, fish, camp, picnic, study nature and enjoy the out-of-doors.

The geology of this area was influenced by the Nebraskan and Kansan glaciers which left deposits of glacial till over the area, covering the sedimentary deposits which had lain exposed. Long after these glaciers had deposited their load of till over this part of Iowa, the Wisconsin glacier was melting in northern Iowa. The water produced by the melting ice which found its way into the Missouri River drainage caused large mud flats to be formed on the bottoms. Sometime later the prevailing westerly winds picked up the soil deposits from the Missouri Valley and carried them across what is now southern Iowa. In some areas, the deposits built up to be 100 feet thick.

This fine, silty material termed loess is found on ridge tops overlaying glacial till. On the sides of hills, erosion has exposed glacial deposited materials. The relatively narrow valleys are covered by alluvial material carried from the hills by erosion. In some instances, erosion has proceeded far enough in the valleys to expose glacial till or underlying sedimentary material. The terrain then, is characterized by narrow, flat ridges separated by deeply cut drainages.

The flora of the region consists of the tallgrass prairie association and the oak-hickory bottomland hardwood timber types and their transition zones. Since the forest area is located mainly on soils which have been formed under forest vegetation, the plants of the prairie are not common. However, big and little bluestem, switchgrass, Indian grass, prairie cordgrass and also various prairie forbs such as purple coneflower, round-headed bush clover and leadplant do occur on the area.

On the better upland sites, white oak, red oak and hickory usually predominate. The oak-hickory type usually found on the poorer upland sites consists mostly of black oak, bur oak, shingle oak and hickory. The bottomland timber type on the forest includes red and white elm, cottonwood, hackberry, green ash, silver maple and black walnut. Many areas have been planted to coniferous trees and some broad-leaved trees which are not native to the area. These include a large variety of pines as well as some Douglas-fir, spruce, black locust, osage-orange and tulip poplar.

The forest is the home of the white-tailed deer which is abundant on the area and the largest of the fauna. Here also are fox and gray squirrels, raccoon, cottontail rabbits, woodchuck, muskrat, skunk, red and gray fox, coyote, beaver, opossum and other small animals.

Non-poisonous snakes are common but the two poisonous species, the rattlesnake and copperhead, are very rare.

A variety of birds are present including those native to the woodland and its borders. Numerous species of songbirds utilize the extremely varied habitat. Game birds include some pheasant, numerous quail and wild turkey. The woodcock is an occasional visitor to the area. The wild turkey stocking program, begun in 1968, has developed the population so successfully that the first hunting season in modern times was held in 1974.

The area is characterized by intermittent streams or seep fed, slow running streams which dry up completely at times. Many dew ponds, which are small impoundments, were built by the C.C.C. to serve as a water supply for fire protection and for the use of wildlife.

Overnight camping is allowed only at the designated campgrounds on the Lucas and Whitebreast Units and at backpack trail camps in the west portion of Whitebreast. There is a camping fee for overnight camping at the designated campgrounds. The campgrounds usually do not receive heavy use except on holiday weekends during mild weather. There is no camping fee for camping at the backpack trail camps.

## LUCAS & WHITEBREAST UNITS

Most of the forest's recreational development has been done on the Lucas and Whitebreast Units. Each of the two units has two large ponds four to five acres in size. The department carries on a stocking program using bluegill, largemouth bass and channel catfish. Backpack and cross-country ski trails have been built on the western portion of Whitebreast. There are designated snowmobile trails on the rest of Whitebreast and on the Lucas Unit as well.

Some of the activities offered are fishing, picnicking, camping, hunting, hiking, riding, mushroom hunting, snowmobiling, cross-country skiing, backpacking and searching for Indian relics.

## CEDAR CREEK, CHARITON & 1000 ACRE UNITS

The Cedar Creek, Chariton and 1000 Acre Units are not served by all-weather roads. Therefore, access to them is difficult at times. These areas are not developed for camping and other types of recreation and have the most appeal to hunters and activities that do not require facilities. Because they are more difficult to locate and not served by all-weather roads, they receive fewer visitors than do the Lucas and Whitebreast Units. Activities on the area include picnicking, hunting, hiking, riding, mushroom hunting and snowmobiling.

## UNIONVILLE UNIT

Access to several tracts of the Unionville Unit is very good but they have not been developed for camping because they are some distance from the service facility. Picnicking is permitted, however. Some other activities that the area may be used for include hunting, hiking, riding, mushroom hunting and nature study.



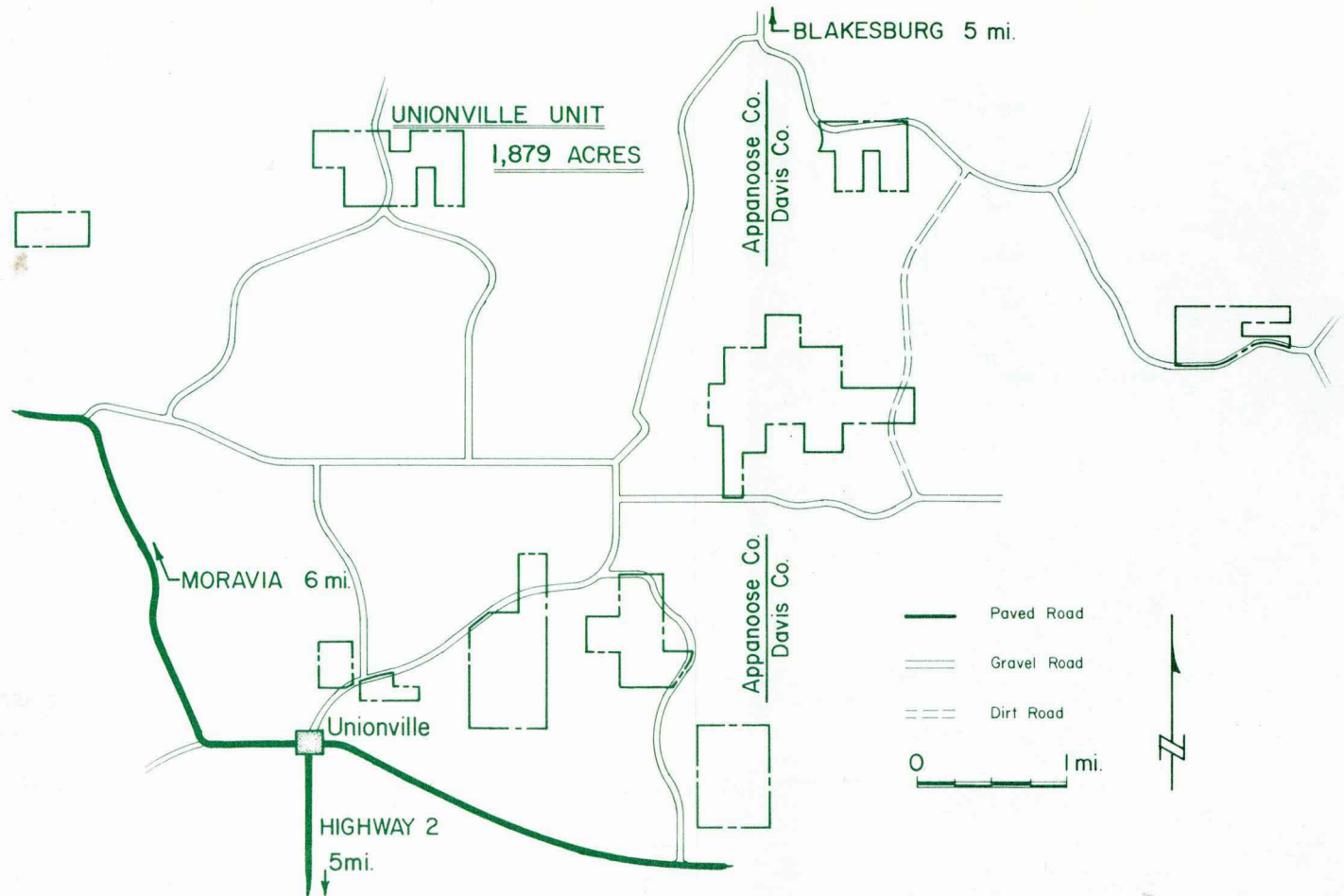
## HUNTING & FISHING

With the exception of the designated campgrounds, the entire forest area is open to hunting during the legal hunting seasons. Hunters are asked to refrain from shooting at equipment, signs, or trees and to be particularly careful of fellow hunters and other forest users. Many hunters use the forest during turkey and deer seasons.

The four large ponds on the Lucas and Whitebreast Units and a few smaller ponds on the Whitebreast, Cedar Creek and Chariton Units provide fishing pleasure.

### RULES:

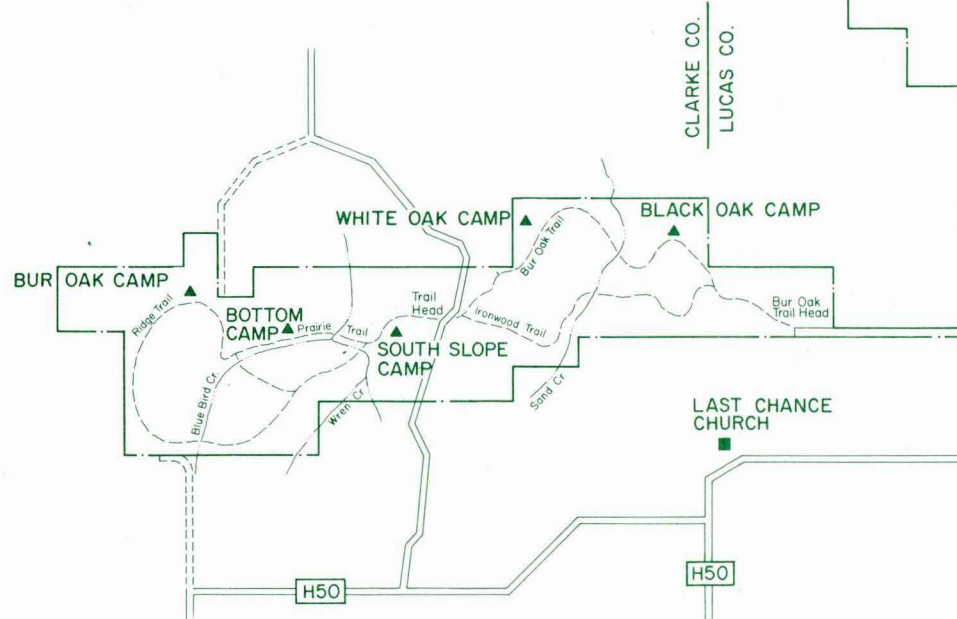
1. Be careful with fire. Do not leave fire unattended. Make sure it is out before abandoning. If you should lose control of a fire or discover a wildfire, notify the nearest fire department. Use of tools in fire boxes at various locations for the purpose of putting out fires is permitted.
2. Confine vehicles to main roads. Drive carefully.
3. Do not disturb plant life, wildlife, equipment or buildings.
4. Please refrain from taking horses into picnic areas.
5. Please observe all signs and notices.
6. Use of dead wood on the ground is permitted for cooking or campfire.
7. Camp only in designated campgrounds.



For further information, contact  
**AREA FORESTER**  
 R. R. 3  
 CHARITON, IOWA 50049  
 PHONE (515) 774-4559 or 774-4918

- △ Picnic Area
- Trail
- Paved Road
- == Gravel Road
- Dirt Road

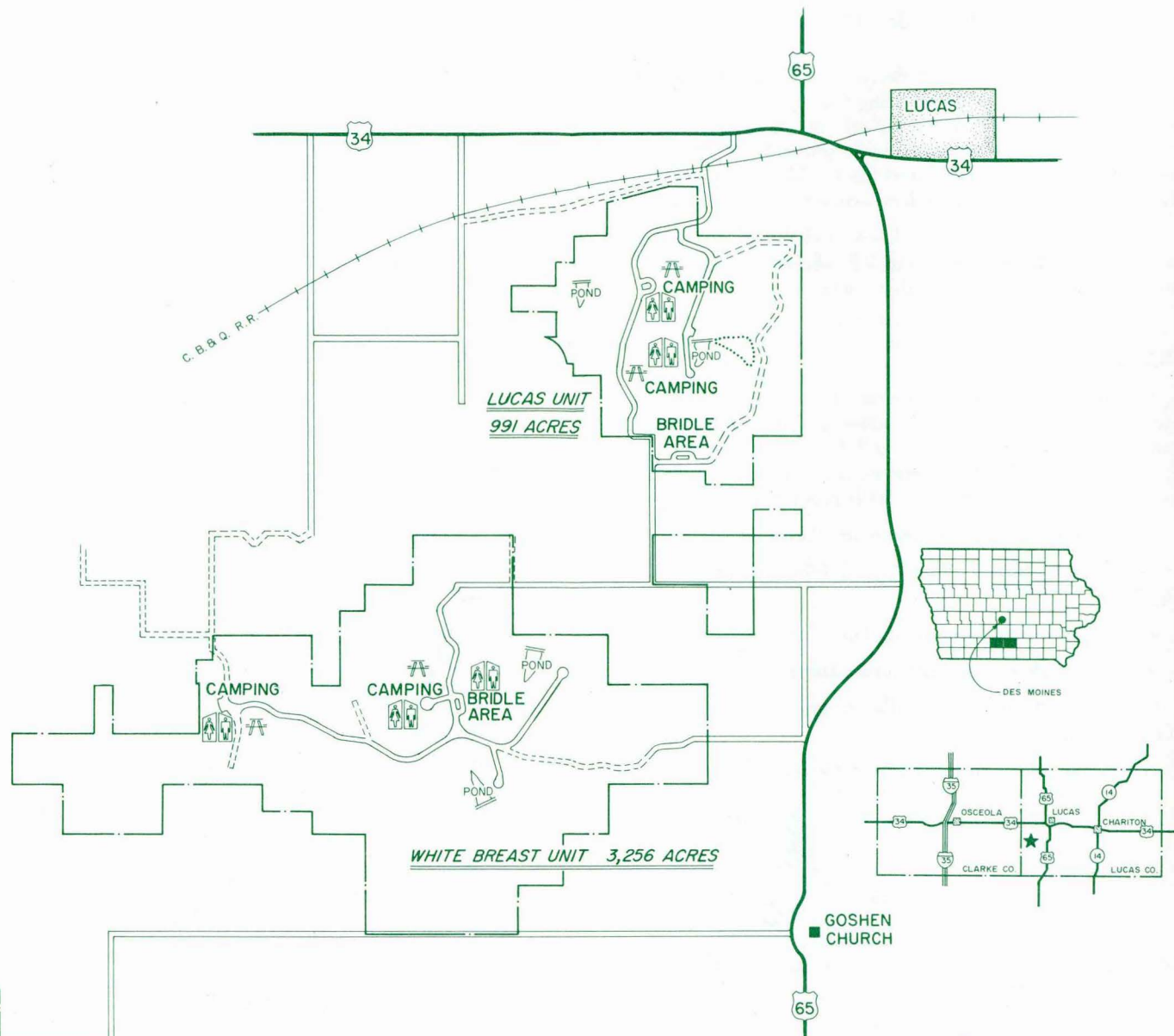
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LUCAS CO.

LAST CHANCE  
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LUCAS

LUCAS UNIT  
991 ACRES

WHITE BREAST UNIT 3,256 ACRES

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GOSHEN  
CHURCH

