



**March 20, 2006**

## **UWSP's Central Wisconsin Environmental Station acquires Minister Lake land**

The University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point's College of Natural Resources (CNR) has acquired an environmentally sensitive, 45-acre parcel in eastern Portage County that will become a permanent addition to their Central Wisconsin Environmental Center to be used for education, research and recreation.

This parcel is located at northeast corner of Sunset Lake Road and County MM and has a long history of conservation stewardship, thanks to over a century of ownership by the North New Hope Lutheran Church. A unique and environmentally sensitive property, this tract includes much of the land surrounding Minister Lake, a scenic, natural pond and wetland area just east of Sunset Lake. CWES has enjoyed an excellent relationship with the Church in the past. Various groups served by CWES – including youth, school, UWSP and adult groups – have been allowed to use the property for education, research and recreation. The deal ensures that those uses will continue for the foreseeable future.

“Everybody wins in this acquisition, including the general public,” said Randy Champeau, CNR associate dean for outreach and extension. “Preserving this special piece of green space for CWES users and central Wisconsin residents will yield benefits for years to come, thanks to excellent cooperation between the Church, UWSP Foundation, the County, and the State. This will strengthen CWES programs and help build its reputation as a leader in environmental education.”

The \$212,500 purchase was made possible by grants from the state of Wisconsin's Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program, the Land Preservation Fund administered by Portage County, and donations from friends and alumni to UWSP Foundation, which will hold the deed. The transaction had been discussed for many years, but serious negotiations between the university and North New Hope Lutheran Church began nearly two years ago. The deal was finalized on March 15, 2006.