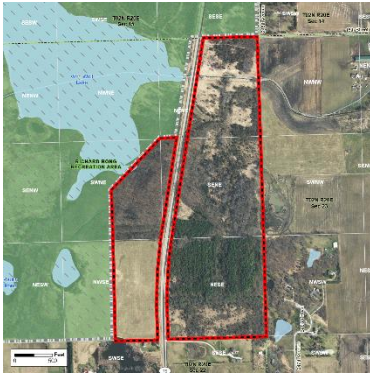


Wisconsin Natural Resources Board accepts 132-Acre Land Donation



It's official!!

On May 22, 2024 the Wisconsin Natural Resources Board (NRB) voted to accept the donation of 132 acres of land located adjacent to the SE corner of Richard Bong State Recreation Area (RBSRA.), and at the same time make this land part of RBSRA.

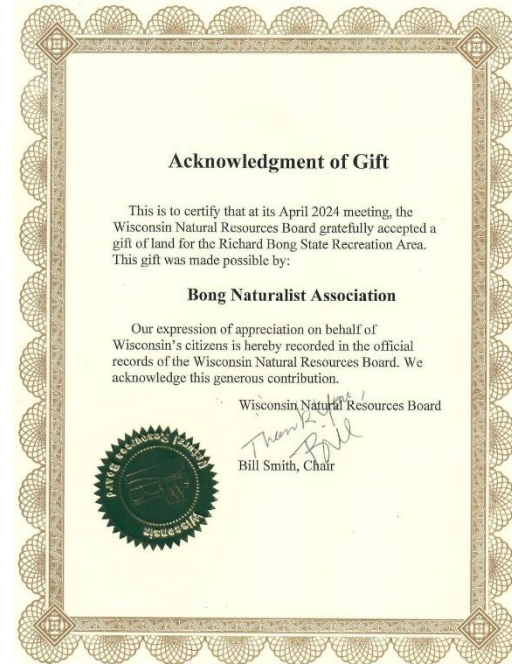
Over the past four years, the Bong Naturalist Association (BNA) has worked tirelessly to raise over \$365,000 needed to match State and Federal grants, culminating in raising a total \$1.3M needed to make the purchase. About a year into the process the BNA joined forces with Ducks Unlimited, the fifth largest land trust in the US, for without their help the acquisition would not be possible. In addition, the NRB voted unanimously to acknowledge the BNA for its gift and presented a certificate of acknowledgement thanking the BNA for its part in making this gift possible.

The 132-acre parcel is comprised of a mix of wetlands, mature forest, and grasslands, . It is an ideal habitat to support waterfowl breeding and migration, conservation objectives and is of great benefit to grassland and woodland birds. Additionally, this section includes two RBSRA developed trails currently being used for hiking, horseback riding and snowmobiling, and the land helps support the east bank of Wolf Lake.

The BNA will be forever grateful to numerous local businesses and private individuals who made donations to the effort, the Knowles Nelson Grant Foundation, Federal Fish and Wildlife, and all local government bodies who supported and encouraged this acquisition to move forward. An official land dedication ceremony is in the planning stages and will be held at RBSRA. Please check here and on Facebook for updates and plan to join us for this important celebration.

Thank you to all for your efforts.

Bong Naturalist Association





America's Ace of Aces, Richard I. Bong's, P-38 Lightning Fighter Found in Papua New Guinea

Richard Bong State Recreation Area (RBSRA) is named after World War II Flying Ace and America's Ace of Aces, Richard I Bong.

On May 24, 2024, the Richard I Bong Veterans Historical Center, in Superior, WI, announced that Major Richard I Bong's P-38 Lightning fighter plane, *Marge*, had been located in Papua New Guinea. The Richard I Bong Veterans Historical Center collaborated with Justin Taylan, Director of Pacific Wrecks, Inc., in a historic project to locate Richard Bong's P-38, *Marge*.

Justin Taylan, search team leader, travelled to Papua New Guinea where Richard Bong's P-38 Lightning, *Marge*, went down due to engine troubles while flown by another pilot more than 80 years ago. Using cutting edge technology and working closely with the Papua New Guinea's government Justin Taylan found several matching serial numbers as well as sections that had been painted red, that were specific to that aircraft, which confirmed the plane was indeed, the P-38 Lightning, *Marge*, flown by Richard Bong during his career.



Richard Bong, born in Superior, WI (close to Poplar), at age 22 in December 1942, was assigned to the Ninth Fighter Squadron and sent to Australia. By December 1944 Richard had become the Ace of Aces, shooting down 40 enemy planes. Among his many military accomplishments, Richard received the Congressional Medal of Honor in December 1944. In January 1945 Richard Bong returned to the US, married his fiancé, Marge, and promoted war bonds in addition to his test pilot position. On August 6, 1945 while testing a P-80, the jet's fuel pump malfunctioned and Richard Bong, age 25, died in the crash.

To read more about Richard Bong, please click on the Park Background/Richard I Bong tab on this website. RBSRA has also developed an excellent brochure on Richard Bong, which can also be found on the website. [RichardBongBrochure](#)

Please visit the Richard I Bong Veterans Historical Center website at [Richard I. Bong Veterans Historical Center \(bongcenter.org\)](http://RichardI.BongVeteransHistoricalCenter.org) and the Pacific Wrecks, Inc. website at <https://pacificwrecks.com> to read and hear more about this historical mission.

Watch the YouTube video on the Richard I Bong Veterans Historical Center – Pacific Wrecks, Inc. press conference via WDIO as they discuss the search and discovery of the plane at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Aq5ln_LhcWQ

Read an excellent online article in the May 24, 2024 [Stars and Stripes](#)

Photos are courtesy of the Richard I Bong Veterans Historical Center and may be found on their website.