

LOWER WISCONSIN STATE RIVERWAY BOARD

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MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 13, 2009, RIVERWAY BOARD MEETING

The Lower Wisconsin State Riverway Board (LWSRB) met on Thursday, August 13, 2009, at Wyalusing State Park to conduct a regular monthly business meeting. The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Chairman Bill Lundberg. All members were present with the exceptions of Don Greenwood, Ron Leys and Fred Madison. Acknowledgment that the meeting was properly noticed was provided by Mark E. Cupp, Executive Director. A motion to approve the agenda was made by Jerry Dorscheid, seconded by Nick Nice. **MOTION CARRIED.** The minutes of the July 9, 2009, meeting then were considered. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Dorscheid, seconded by Melody Moore. **MOTION CARRIED.**

The Executive Committee report was presented by Chairman Lundberg. Lundberg introduced Brian Hefty, Wyalusing State Park Superintendent, for a presentation on the State Parks System. Hefty reviewed the history of the state park system in Wisconsin beginning with Interstate State Park, which was designated in 1900. Hefty said an important event occurred in 1907 when famed planner John Nolen was hired to plan a statewide system of parks, which included Wyalusing, Devil's Lake and Peninsula and which was supposed to include a portion of the Wisconsin Dells. Hefty said the state park system continues to be popular and is an important form of recreation for both state residents and tourists.

Correspondence was reviewed. Lundberg noted a letter had been received from Andrew Nelson of Nelson Hardwoods regarding the use of fire in woodlots as a management tool by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). Cupp said the site that served as the catalyst for the letter was owned by Colin Masica and is located in the Town of Watterstown, Grant County, adjacent to the Ellenbolt Prairie, a designated state natural area (SNA) that is part of the Blue River Bluffs SNA. Nelson expressed concern with tree mortality resulting from the fire, damage to the timber resource and lack of effective communication with the landowner regarding outcomes from the use of fire on his property. Cupp said Masica had cooperated with DNR for a number of years on vegetative management on his property and the state ownership next to his property. Cupp said an on-site meeting was facilitated that included Cupp, Masica, Andrew & Gary Nelson, Brad Hutnik - DNR Riverway Forester, Bill Carlson - DNR Area Forester, and Matt Zine - DNR SNA Manager. A frank discussion occurred regarding the pros and cons of using fire as a management tool in the woods. Cupp said clear delineation of management objectives is important in determining the appropriateness of fire as a management tool.

Cupp also reported he had been contacted by Steve Ventura from the University of Wisconsin regarding the use of biofuels at the Charter Street power plant on campus. Cupp said a large amount of wood product is needed to transition the plant from coal-fired to biofuels. Don Bates, Acting DNR Riverway Manager, said there may be opportunities for invasive species control and some timber stand improvement projects but questioned whether it would be sustainable considering the volume of material needed is 40 truckloads/day, which would have to be shipped by rail and would have to come from within a 50 mile radius of Madison to make it cost effective. Cupp noted the use of marginal lands for production of woody vegetation, such as fast growing hybrid poplars, also was being considered. He asked Greg Greenheck if the concept was being discussed among the agricultural community. Greenheck said the use of corn stover and switchgrass has been considered but not necessarily growing of poplar on marginal lands. Bates noted the Charter St. plant will require woody vegetation. Cupp said he would keep the board apprised of future developments with the project as it may affect the Riverway.

For the Year of the Riverway update, Cupp reported that nearly 200 people participated in the voyageur canoe trips sponsored by the board. He said other events included a presentation on the history of barns in Wisconsin at the Boscobel Threshere and over 150 people attended the 20-year anniversary event at Muscoda on August 2nd. Other Year of the Riverway events will include a presentation on August 15th in Blue River regarding Tippesaukee, the site of a former Ho-Chunk village that became the homestead of John Coumbe, the first non-Indian settler in Richland County, and a music festival at the Wisconsin Riverside Resort on August 30th.

The Operations Committee report was presented by Chairman Dorscheid. The permit request from Colin Masica for a timber harvest in the Town of Watterstown, Grant County, was considered. The consultants are Andrew & Gary Nelson. Dorscheid noted a field inspection was conducted by Cupp on July 28, 2009. Brad Hutnik, DNR Riverway Forester; Bill Carlson, DNR Area Forester; Matt Zine, DNR Natural Areas Manager; Mr. Masica; and the Nelsons were present for the field inspection. A portion of the proposed harvest area adjoins the Blue River Bluff State Natural Area. Zine has used prescribed burning as a management tool to assist in efforts to restore the native plant community and had a cooperative agreement with Mr. Masica to use fire on the landscape on his land as well. Gary & Andrew Nelson contacted Mr. Masica to express concern regarding damage to the timber resource caused by the fire(s). Andrew Nelson then wrote a letter to Cupp further detailing those concerns. Cupp facilitated the on-site meeting between the aforementioned parties to discuss the matter. Since the on-site meeting, Zine has provided a written response. Ultimately, Mr. Masica must decide the management activities that will occur on the site and must further determine the long term objectives for vegetation at the site; e.g., timber production, wildlife habitat, oak woodlands/savanna, prairie, etc.

Under the permit application, plans call for a salvage harvest at the site. Some regeneration cuts will occur. Also, trees damaged by installation of a snowmobile trail will be harvested. The trees slated for harvest have been marked and partially reviewed for compliance with the applicable performance standards. The harvest area encompasses the Resource Management Zone but could expand to the Bluff Zone or Riverview Zone if additional harvesting is conducted. No new roads will be constructed.

A motion to approve issuance of a permit with the following permit conditions was made by Dorscheid, seconded by. Conditions of the permit include:

- The harvest shall comply with the basal area limits for the residual stand in the Bluff Zone and Riverview Zone, as detailed in Chapter NR 37, Wisconsin Administrative Code;
- In the Bluff Zone and Riverview Zone, all trees selected for harvest shall be appropriately marked and reviewed by the LWSRB for compliance with the applicable performance standards prior to initiation of the harvest;
- In the Bluff Zone and Riverview Zone, the harvest shall be limited to the times when the ground is frozen or dry and the leaves are off the deciduous trees;
- The LWSRB shall review the location and design of all new logging roads, if any, in the Bluff Zone and Riverview Zone;
- The new logging roads, if any, shall comply with the applicable performance standards regarding grade and erosion control and shall be re-seeded upon completion of the harvest;
- The LWSRB shall review the location and design of all small regeneration cuts, if any, in the Riverview Zone to assure compliance with the applicable performance standards;
- The Bluff Zone and Riverview Zone shall be delineated prior to initiation of the harvest, if necessary;

- The landowner or his/her agent shall notify the LWSRB within 10 working days upon completion of the harvest and, if necessary, the LWSRB shall conduct a post-harvest field inspection; and,
- The LWSRB shall review modification of the plans, as submitted, for compliance with the applicable performance standards.

MOTION CARRIED.

The Crystal/Fish/Mud Lake District pumping project in the Town of Roxbury, Dane County, was discussed. Cupp said the level spreader design for the discharge site has not worked as promised, the latest in a litany of proposals that didn't perform as advertised. Erosion at the site is a concern. The Operations Committee will visit the site in September to determine if additional armoring of the shoreline is required, which is likely. The Friends of the Lower Wisconsin (FLOW), or individuals associated with that organization, have requested a contested case hearing on the issuance of the discharge permit by DNR. Cupp said a new proposal is to have the excess water from Crystal Lake pumped directly to Fish Lake, which would then be pumped to the Wisconsin River.

Cupp said he had not issued any new permits since the July meeting.

The Budget Committee report was presented by Chairman Nice who reviewed the most recent report for FY 09. Nice then reviewed the status of the FY 10 budget.

There Personnel Committee report was presented by Chairwoman Moore who noted the Office of State Employee Relations had approved the furlough plan.

The Executive Director's report was given by Cupp who reviewed the materials in the board members' packets.

Under board members' business, Greenheck asked if one of the wardens uses a jet ski. Bates said he believed that a jet ski is used by wardens from time to time.

The DNR report was presented by Bates who said he attended a meeting of the Sauk County Drainage District Board. The route for the ditch to Bakken's Pond is no longer a considered option, rather, the route along CTH JJ to Bear Creek is being considered. Greenheck said the Bear Creek option also has a number of problems. Bates said it may not work hydrologically but added that it is up to the professionals to make that call. He noted the USH 14 bridge construction is on schedule and there may be an opportunity to open the boat landing later this fall. He said DNR had acquired 4 properties since the last meeting: Town of Muscoda – 5 acres; Town of Wauzeka – 7.2 acres; Town of Marietta – 27 acres; and, Town of Spring Green – 126 acres. Bates said long-time DNR Real Estate Supervisor Greg Delwiche has retired. He said the River Road bridge in the Town of Arena on the way to the boat landing will be replaced this fall. Bates noted he had been contacted by a Boy Scout who is working on his Eagle Scout status and wishes to construct a handicapped accessible hunting blind(s) in the Riverway.

Hutnik reported that a certification audit had been completed. He said the Forest Legacy program may provide a new funding source for purchase of easements in the region. He added that timber sales for the fall-winter harvest season will be presented at the September LWSRB meeting.

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During the public comment session, Timm Zumm, FLOW Co-Chair, said filming for the Riverway documentary produced by Dave Erickson continues.

A motion to adjourn until September 10th when the meeting will be held at the Spring Green Public Library was made by Brown, seconded by Moore. **MOTION CARRIED.**

END

For further information, corrections, additions or deletions to the minutes, contact Mark Cupp, Executive Director, at (608) 739-3188 or 1-800-221-3792.

Minutes submitted by:

Mark E. Cupp, Executive Director
Lower Wisconsin State Riverway Board