

LOWER WISCONSIN STATE RIVERWAY BOARD

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MINUTES OF THE JULY 12, 2012, RIVERWAY BOARD MEETING

The Lower Wisconsin State Riverway Board (LWSRB) met on Thursday, July 12, 2012, at the Kratochwill Memorial Building in Muscodia to conduct a regular monthly business meeting. The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Chair William Lundberg. All members were present with the exceptions of Ritchie Brown, 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 Don Greenwood, seconded by Jerry Dorscheid. **MOTION CARRIED.** A motion to approve the minutes of the June 14, 2012, meeting was made by Dorscheid, seconded by Nick Nice. **MOTION CARRIED.**

The Executive Committee report was presented by Chairman Lundberg. Cupp reported there were no new developments related to board appointments. He continues to work with the Governor's staff on the matter. Cupp reviewed a letter of support for The Nature Conservancy's grant application for Stewardship Fund dollars to acquire lands adjacent to The Spring Green Preserve. He noted the Executive Committee had approved the letter. An article in *The New York Times* regarding the Mazomanie Beach was distributed. Greg Greenheck asked if the 70,000 annual users at the nude beach was an accurate number. Brian Hefty, Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Riverway Manager, said the estimate is based on a number of persons per car average, which is a formula used in estimating users at places such as this. Hefty said the 70,000 annual users is a ballpark estimate. Cupp noted that July 25th will be Aquatic Invasive Species Day in the Riverway with the River Alliance of Wisconsin, Friends of the Lower Wisconsin State Riverway (FLOW) and DNR partnering to make it a fun and family-friendly educational event.

The Operations Committee report was presented by Chairman Dorscheid. The permit application of Joann Shea for a timber harvest in the Town of Millville, Grant County, was considered. Dorscheid noted a pine thinning was conducted at the property in the winter of 2011-2012. The consultant was Bud Jelinek. Ms. Shea now wishes to conduct a hardwoods harvest. The consultant for the hardwoods harvest is Craig Hollingsworth. Dorscheid said a field inspection was conducted by Cupp on July 11, 2012. Mr. Hollingsworth and Bill Carlson, DNR Forester, also were present for the field inspection. Previous field inspections have been conducted by Cupp and others in conjunction with timber harvests and management activities on adjacent and nearby properties. Cupp noted portions of the property are highly visible from the Wisconsin River during leaf-on conditions. The harvest area encompasses the Bluff Zone, Riverview Zone and Resource Management Zone. Plans call for the selective harvest of merchantable hardwoods, mainly oak. A few very small regenerations cuts of aspen and ash will be conducted in the Riverview Zone/Resource Management Zone. Due to dense foliage, an accurate delineation of zones was not possible. One new road may be required but the location and design have not been determined. The harvest will be conducted during leaf-off conditions and when ground conditions are frozen or dry. The trees slated for harvest have been marked. Cupp said an additional field inspection will be required if a new logging road is deemed necessary. Lundberg asked if the new road, if required, would be visible from the river. Cupp said the new road will be on a visible slope so location and design will be important to minimizing the visual impact.

Dorscheid made a motion, seconded by Greenwood, to approve issuance of a timber harvest for the activity with the following conditions:

- 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 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 permit request of Matt Millen for cutting and removal of invasive species in the Town of Troy, Sauk County, was discussed. Dorscheid noted a field inspection was conducted by Cupp on June 29, 2012. Mr. Millen and Mike Finlay, DNR Forester, also were present for the field inspection. Previous field inspections have been conducted by Cupp on the Millen property as well as on adjacent and nearby tracts. Plans call for removal of red cedar in conjunction with efforts to restore/enhance the existing prairie/oak savanna/oak woodlands. Goats may be used for additional woody vegetation control. A prescribed burning schedule is planned to be aggressive for the next few years and then move to an every other year or every third year cycle.

Cupp noted Mr. Millen has worked with Steve Swenson of the Aldo Leopold Foundation – Blufflands Project and the US Fish and Wildlife Service in the past. The new project will be a partnership with US Fish and Wildlife Service, which will provide some funding. There are three bluffs on Cassel Prairie involved: the easternmost of the Twin Bluffs, Chamberlain Bluff and Thomas Bluff. There is limited to no visibility from the Wisconsin River for these areas and much of the work simply will not be seen from the river during leaf-on conditions. No structures become visible from the river as a result of the activity. The DNR (Finlay) has determined the activity to be appropriate for the site. Additional invasive species control may occur in the future. Based on the June 29th field inspection, the previous efforts to restore the oak savanna and prairie have been successful. Work should continue.

Dorscheid made a motion, seconded by Greenheck, to approve issuance of a two-year permit with the following conditions:

- The activity shall not result in an existing structure becoming visible from the river;
- The LWSRB shall approve any modifications to the plans, as submitted;
- The landowner or his/her agent shall notify the LWSRB upon initiation and completion of the project.

MOTION CARRIED.

Vegetative management on the riverbank by the Frank Lloyd Wright Visitor Center in the Town of Wyoming, Iowa County, was discussed. Cupp said a report on the status of the site and management options had been developed by DNR Acting Riverway Forester Mike Finlay at the request of the LWSRB. Bill Carlson, DNR

Forestry Supervisor, summarized the report noting the short term and long term activities and management objectives. Lundberg said it is a good report. The phased approach to vegetative removal is appropriate to maintain the balance between retention of existing screening vegetation and planning for long term objectives for both screening and for desirable species at the site. Lundberg noted several problems exist with the species that currently provide screening vegetation at the site; both in regard to longevity and desirability (non-native invasive species). Lundberg suggested another site visit be conducted by the Operations Committee prior to final board action on the proposal. Greenwood asked if future plans to improve CTH C would impact these plans. Cupp said he had discussed the matter with Craig Hardy, Iowa County Highway Commissioner. There are no immediate plans to alter that section of roadway. Any changes to the highway would be a minimum of 3-5 years away and it would likely be longer before improvements are made. The board concurred that the Operations Committee will visit the site prior to the September meeting.

Cupp said Ryder Will, DNR Recreation Specialist, had submitted several applications for activities at DNR owned structures in the Riverway. Cupp determined that all activities would be consider "routine maintenance" so LWSRB permits would not be required. Cupp said the structures are not visible from the Wisconsin River during leaf-on conditions.

Construction of a new house on the Kevin Bartels property in the Town of Orion, Richland County, was discussed. Cupp said construction continues under the LWSRB permit but a determination on the need for additional screening vegetation should be delayed until the siding has been completed. Greenheck asked if the existing house would be razed. Cupp said plans are to retain the existing house.

There was no update on the Crystal/Fish/Mud Lake District pumping project this month. Cupp said he had paddled the Gotham to Port Andrew segment of the river with Mike Bindl, Richland County Zoning Administrator, to review shoreland zoning activities and to discuss the Riverway law. He said the trip was very worthwhile. Cupp said he would like to do similar trips with other Riverway county zoning officials. Cupp said he had not issued any new permits since the last meeting.

The Budget & Office Committee report was presented by Chairman Nice who reviewed the status of the FY 12 budget.

The Personnel Committee was presented by Chair Moore who said the DCA payments for Cupp and Nachtigal finally had been made.

The Executive Director's report was presented by Cupp who reviewed the materials in the board members' packets. He noted river flow continues to be extremely low. Cupp said the voyageur canoe trips had been popular again this year. A thank you note from one of the participants was shared with the board.

Under board members' business, Greenwood said he appreciated being on the voyageur canoe trip and remarked on the beauty of the Riverway and his appreciation for the lack of "McMansions" on the scenic bluffs. Dorscheid said he was surprised by the algae present in the river. Cupp said the algae visible in the river can be attributed to the rich algae blooms in upstream impoundments, such as Lake Wisconsin, which eventually reach the lower Wisconsin River.

The DNR report was given by Brian Hefty, DNR Riverway Manager, who noted an emergency burning ban remains in place due to the extremely dry conditions. He said the DNR Riverway crew has not been doing much mowing but has concentrated on brush removal, trail work and structure maintenance. A grant has been received for road work in Richland, Iowa and Grant counties. Greater uniformity in signage is being addressed. Hefty noted Becky Roth has left her position as a DNR wildlife biologist working out of Tower Hill State Park and

covering the east half of the Riverway. Also, Ryder Will, DNR Recreation Specialist, has transferred to Devil's Lake State Park. Closures of areas adjacent to Mazo Beach are being enforced but citations for illegal behavior continue to be issued.

Dorscheid asked if the trails at Wyalusing State Park had been re-opened after the flood event from a few years ago. Hefty said some trails were rehabilitated or re-installed but others have been left alone due to the steep terrain and lack of adequate funding.

Bill Carlson, DNR Forestry Supervisor, noted the Riverway Forester position will be open for lateral transfers until July 31st. It is hoped that the position will be filled by the end of August.

Cupp noted former Muscoda resident and former roommate of Greenheck, Mr. Dan Baumann, has been named Director of the DNR's West Region.

During the public comment session, Patrick Reinsma from the Department of Tourism gave an update on tourism activities in the area. Cupp asked for an update on the Fox-Wisconsin Heritage Parkway project. Reinsma said efforts have been slowed by concerns expressed over private property rights. Lundberg asked if the Department could assist with promotion of the voyageur canoe trips to which Reinsma replied in the affirmative. Reinsma noted the Great River Road along the Mississippi River recently won a national contest for most scenic drive in America.

A motion to adjourn until August 9th when the meeting will be held in Spring Green was made by Dorscheid, seconded by Greenwood. **MOTION CARRIED.**

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