

# LOWER WISCONSIN STATE RIVERWAY BOARD

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## MINUTES OF THE APRIL 13, 2017, RIVERWAY BOARD MEETING

The Lower Wisconsin State Riverway Board (LWSRB) met on Thursday, April 13, 2017, at the Sauk City Public Library to conduct a regular monthly business meeting. The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Chair Fred Madison. All members were present with the exceptions of Ritchie Brown and Steve Williamson. (NOTE: One vacancy exists.) 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 Gigi LaBudde. **MOTION CARRIED.** A motion to approve the minutes of the March 9, 2017, meeting was made by Ron Leys, seconded by Bob Cary. **MOTION CARRIED.**

The Executive Committee report was presented by Chair Madison who noted the first presentation would be from the Sauk City Fire District. Presenters were Tom Wipperfurth, Mike Savage and Chase Rott. The District's new river and ice rescue equipment were viewed, including the inflatable boat to assist with shallow water navigation on the Wisconsin River. The equipment was purchased with a grant from Firehouse Subs.

Dick McFarlane then introduced the second guest speaker, Steve Swenson, Aldo Leopold Foundation – Director of Conservation. Swenson provided a brief biological sketch of Leopold and his work, including his most famous book “A Sand County Almanac” and noted the global influence of Leopold's writings and philosophy. Swenson then discussed the importance of proper land stewardship on private lands to protect native plant communities. He said the hills around Sauk Prairie were once devoid of most trees and were prairie/oak savanna until fire was removed from the landscape. The remnant prairies are becoming increasingly rare and preservation of these habitat types is important. Swenson said that lands in the Driftless Area are 95% privately owned. He emphasized the importance of private property owner participation in active management of their lands.

Cupp reported he discussed the “aquaculture” legislation with a lobbyist for the aquaculture industry and explained the definition of “agricultural” in the Riverway law as found in s. 30.40 (1), Stats. Most agricultural activities in the Riverway are exempt from the permit process and performance standards contained in the Riverway law. The proposed legislation would add “aquaculture” to the definition of “agriculture”. Cupp also noted Executive Committee members Dorscheid and Cary and he had met with Department of Transportation (DOT) and Department of Natural Resources (DNR) officials regarding the STH 60 project between Gotham and Muscodia. A presentation will be given at the May 11<sup>th</sup> LWSRB meeting in Boscobel regarding the stretch between Bogus Bluff and Bremmer's Riverview Hills Canoe Livery, which follows the river closely.

The Operations Committee report was presented by Chairman Dorscheid who noted Jason Sable, DNR Forester, had requested several extensions to existing permits for timber cutting and management activities on state owned lands. Mike Finlay, DNR Forestry Supervisor, was present to provide background information. Activities are planned for a parcel in the Town of Millville, Grant County, off of Munz Lane. Small regeneration cuts will be used to regenerate oak. A motion to approve a two year extension was made by Dorscheid, seconded by McFarlane. **MOTION CARRIED.** A project to remove red pine and conduct a thinning of a white pine plantation in the Town of Pulaski, Iowa County, was discussed. All red pine will be removed due to continue decline of the species in the Riverway. The site is not visible from the Wisconsin River. A motion to approve a two year extension was made by Dorscheid, seconded by Cary. **MOTION CARRIED.** A timber harvest at the former Matthews tract in the Town of Clyde, Iowa County, will include a selective harvest only in the Bluff Zone and small clear cuts in the Resource Management Zone. A motion to approve a two year extension was made by Dorscheid, seconded by Leys.

**MOTION CARRIED.** Additional habitat work and timber harvesting will be conducted at the former Bogenschneider tract in the Town of Wyoming, Iowa County. A motion to approve a two year extension was made by Dorscheid, seconded by Leys. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Cupp said additional information had not been received on the Christy Helms application for a treehouse in the Town of Spring Green, Sauk County. No action required at this time. Plans for a new cell tower at Avoca are moving forward. The tower will be shorter than originally planned.

The Budget & Office Committee report was presented by Chair Cary who reviewed the FY 17 budget.

There was no report from the Personnel Committee.

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

Under board members' business, LaBudde noted lighting at the Spring Green Gun Club was quite bright. She discussed her work to identify prohibited species in Wisconsin, such as the princess tree and the tree of heaven. Finlay noted DNR has a rapid response team ready to address these situations in an attempt to eradicate before further distribution. Leys said commercial fisherman in the Prairie du Chien area expressed concern about a channel downstream of the railroad bridge by Wyalusing and asked DNR to investigate. Cary said he appreciates efforts to preserve habitat for grassland birds and noted the rapidly diminishing numbers of formerly common birds seen in the area. He also expressed opposition to the concept of a sandhill crane hunting season.

The DNR report was presented by Finlay who said DNR personnel are conducting prescribed burns, eagle flights and road maintenance. LTE hires for the Riverway are coming on board soon. Ospreys have been seen in the Riverway.

During the public comment session, Forest Jahnke of the Crawford Stewardship Project said his group was interested in the idea of the rights of nature as a method of protecting resources. Wendy Carlson asked about the Riverway Master Plan and was referred to DNR. Timm Zumm and Don Golembieski from Friends of the Lower Wisconsin State Riverway (FLOW) said FLOW will host a symposium at Spring Green in the fall. The Kids Don't Float project is in need of additional life jackets. FLOW assisted with a successful prairie burn at the Jones property near Spring Green.

A motion to adjourn was made by Dorscheid, seconded by McFarlane. **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.