

# LOWER WISCONSIN STATE RIVERWAY BOARD

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## MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 14, 2019, RIVERWAY BOARD MEETING

The Lower Wisconsin State Riverway Board (LWSRB) met on Thursday, November 14, 2019, at the Avoca Village Hall to conduct a regular monthly business meeting. The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Chairman Jerry Dorscheid. All members were present with the exception of Ritchie Brown. (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 Randy Poelma, seconded by Gigi LaBudde. **MOTION CARRIED.** A motion to approve the minutes of the October 10, 2019, meeting was made by Steve Williamson, seconded by Dick McFarlane. **MOTION CARRIED.**

The Executive Committee report was presented by Chairman Dorscheid. The Riverway 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary event was discussed. All board members who were present at the event agreed it was a good turnout and a good line-up of speakers. Cupp said the theme of working together and bipartisanship resonated with many in attendance.

Cupp said he participated in a conference call with Amanda Black, Alliant Energy Prairie du Sac Dam Manager, regarding river flow. In addition to Alliant Energy officials, Scott Teuber, owner of Wisconsin River Outings, and Timm Zumm, President of the Friends of the Lower Wisconsin Riverway (FLOW), were on the call. Efforts to better communicate changes in flow at the dam were discussed and resolution of some of the concerns was achieved. Blank noted that the aberrant daily fluctuations were due to work on the spillways. Cupp said the dam's toll-free number for river flow will be updated more frequently if river conditions warrant and said the computer site indicating flow has been refined to be more accurate.

Cupp said the flooding issues at Crystal Lake and Fish Lake/Mud Lake have been a concern to many in the area. He noted media articles were included in the packets. Cupp said the FLOW science team had developed recommendations that have been shared widely. He will forward the FLOW recommendations to the full board.

The Operations Committee report was presented by Chairman Leys. Requests from Jack Kussmaul for an extension to a management permit for a prairie restoration and for a timber harvest permit for removal of 17 walnut trees in the Town of Millville, Grant County, were considered. Cupp said he and Trevor Hamdorf, DNR Forester, met with Mr. Kussmaul on October 18, 2019. The prairie restoration is in excellent condition. A two-year extension of the existing permit was recommended by Cupp. A portion of the walnut trees slated for harvest are visible from the river. The trees have been marked and the basal area for the residual stand was determined to be compliant with the applicable performance standards by Hamdorf. No new roads will be constructed. The activity will occur during leaf-off times and frozen or dry ground conditions. Cupp recommended issuance of permit with standard conditions. Leys said the Operations Committee concurred and made a motion to approve the management permit extension for two years, seconded by Steve Wetter. **MOTION CARRIED.** Leys then made a motion, seconded by Wetter, to approve issuance of a timber harvest permit 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 Steve Williamson for a timber harvest in the Town of Eagle, Richland County, was considered. Leys noted Williamson is an LWSRB member. Williamson indicated he will abstain from voting and discussion on the matter unless asked a question. Cupp said the harvest will be conducted according to the existing Management Forest Law (MFL) plan. Plans call for the selective harvest of merchantable hardwoods in the Bluff Zone and Resource Management Zone. Existing roads and skid trails will be used. The harvest will occur during leaf-off times and frozen or dry ground conditions. The harvest area included the Bluff Zone and Resource Management Zone. Leys made a motion, seconded by Wetter, to approve issuance of a timber harvest permit with the following standard 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 request of Jeff Brownlee for an extension to a previously issued timber harvest permit for a parcel near the mouth of the Blue River in the Town of Watterstown, Grant County, was considered. Cupp said the harvest area includes the River Edge Zone and the Resource Management Zone. Plans call for the selective harvest of merchantable hardwoods including silver maple, swamp white oak, ash and river birch. The trees slated for harvest have not yet been marked. Hamdorf will meet with Brownlee on November 15, 2019, to discuss access to the site across DNR lands. Cupp noted there may be an opportunity to combine the Brownlee harvest with a future DNR harvest. In the interim, a two-year extension is recommended. Leys made a motion, seconded by McFarlane, to approve a two-year extension with retention of the following conditions:

- The harvest shall comply with the basal area limits for the residual stand in the River Edge Zone, as detailed in Chapter NR 37, Wisconsin Administrative Code;
- In the River Edge 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 River Edge 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;
- If necessary, the River Edge Zone and Resource Management Zone shall be delineated prior to initiation of the harvest;
- In the River Edge 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;
- 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 management permit extension requests for activities on state owned lands submitted by Travis Anderson, DNR Wildlife Biologist, were considered. Anderson explained the work involves invasive species control and removal of undesirable woody vegetation to restore or enhance native plant communities. The sites include the Arena Unit in Iowa County, the Cassel Prairie Unit in Sauk County, the Helena Unit in Iowa County, and the Spring Green Unit in Sauk County. The sites are not visible from the river. Leys made a motion, seconded by LaBudde, to approve issuance of two-year extensions for each of the management permits with retention of the following standard conditions:

- No existing structure(s) shall become visible from the river as a result of the activity;
- The LWSRB shall approve of any modification to the plans, as submitted; and,
- The landowner or his/her agent shall notify the LWSRB upon initiation and completion of the activity.

**MOTION CARRIED.**

The permit request of Mike Finlay, DNR Forester, for liquidation of a pine plantation in the Town of Muscoda, Grant County, was considered. Cupp noted Finlay, Hamdorf and the Operations Committee had visited the site prior to the board meeting. The area will be restored as prairie and oak savanna. Oak and jack

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pine will be retained. Similar clear cuts of pine and pine rows have taken place on lands immediately adjacent to the parcel to the east. The site is not visible from the Wisconsin River during leaf-on conditions. Leys noted a 30-40 acre clearcut is larger than usually seen in the river. He encouraged public outreach to help people understand the type of work being done. LaBudde suggested signage at the site. Leys made a motion, seconded by McFarlane, to approve issuance of a general permit for the harvest to include the following conditions:

- The harvest shall be limited to areas not visible from the Wisconsin River during leaf-on conditions;
- 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 Joe Frost, DNR Warden Supervisor, for construction of a new storage shed in the Town of Spring Green, Sauk County, was considered. Cupp noted the site is on the Riverway boundary off of Leone Road and will be adjacent to an existing DNR shed. The new shed will be brown in color, same height as the other shed, and will be 30 ft. x 60ft. The site is not visible from the Wisconsin River during leaf-on conditions. Leys made a motion, seconded by Williamson, to approve issuance of a general permit with the following conditions:

- The existing screening vegetation shall be maintained and replaced if damaged or destroyed;
- The height of the structure shall be limited so that the structure does not become visible from the Wisconsin River during leaf-on conditions;
- The LWSRB shall review any modification to the plans, as submitted, for compliance with the applicable performance standards,
- The activity shall comply with all other applicable local, state and federal regulations; and,
- The landowner or his/her agent shall notify the LWSRB upon initiation and completion of the project.

### **MOTION CARRIED.**

Cupp said he attended a meeting with Department of Transportation (DOT) and DNR officials regarding the redecking of the STH 23 Bridge at Spring Green. Cupp said debris capture was a major topic as well as navigational marking for river users. An additional meeting will be held in early 2020 to finalize these approaches. He reported there will be vegetative removal on the right of way for the natural gas line that crosses the river. The company will retain vegetation on the shoreline. Cupp said work on the Boscobel to Lone Rock 69kv line continues with poles set in place by helicopter on the Iowa County side and on the island. Bird diverters will be placed soon and the navigational buoys will be removed. Cupp said the committee had met with Scott Lancaster, DNR Forester, to discuss future work at the Laudon tract in the Town of Pulaski, Iowa County. Cutting of aspen clones in the Bluff Zone may be requested. A permit request has not yet been submitted. A timber harvest permit application is expected from Jeff Neuheisel for a parcel in the Town of Spring Green, Sauk County. Steve Smith of Riverside Sawmill is the consultant. Cupp said he issued a general permit to Mike Bartels for a timber harvest in the Town of Watterstown, Grant County.

The Budget & Office Committee report was presented by Chair McFarlane who reviewed the status of the FY 20. McFarlane complimented staff on the frugal use of supplies and services funding. Cupp said he may request authorization to purchase a new phone and intercom system for the office.

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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, McFarlane distributed informational brochures on the Sauk Prairie State Recreation Area and a lecture series held at the Ruth Culver Library in Prairie du Sac. LaBudde asked about the sycamore planting in the Town of Wyalusing, Grant County, which led to a broader discussion regarding "trees of the future."

The DNR report was presented by Seguin who said DNR employees have been working on mowing burn breaks, pheasant stocking, wood duck banding, sturgeon tagging and seed collection. He said the Black Hawk Unit solar project will be under construction in the coming weeks. Seguin then introduced Jesse Kellogg who is the new DNR Property Manager for the Riverway. Finlay reported active timber harvests at the Knapp Creek Unit in the Town of Richwood, Richland County, and the Dittman Hill site near Wauzeka. Finlay said the commercial timber harvest and timber stand improvement project at the Laudon tract near Avoca will commence shortly.

During the public comment session, Mark Storti from the Town of Pulaski, Iowa County, introduced himself as the area county board supervisor and as a member of the Tri-County Airport Commission. Storti expressed concern with continued flooding at the airport.

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