

LOWER WISCONSIN STATE RIVERWAY BOARD

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MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 12, 2020, RIVERWAY BOARD MEETING

The Lower Wisconsin State Riverway Board (LWSRB) met on Thursday, November 12, 2020, via Zoom 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 exceptions of Ritchie Brown and Jim Czajkowski. (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 Steve Williamson, seconded by Steve Wetter. **MOTION CARRIED.** A motion to approve the minutes of the October 8, 2020, meeting was made by Williamson, seconded by Wetter. **MOTION CARRIED.**

The Executive Committee report was presented by Dorscheid. The guest speaker for the meeting was Mike Finlay, Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Forester, who discussed DNR outreach to private landowners. Finlay described various state and federal programs available to assist landowners with timber sales, timber stand improvement (TSI) projects, invasive species control and other native plant community restoration/enhancement efforts.

Cupp reviewed correspondence. He noted Friends of the Lower Wisconsin Riverway (FLOW) Science Team member, Jean Unmuth, had written a blog on the Ramsar designation for the Riverway wetlands. He noted volunteer workdays for the Blue River Barrens State Natural Area will be held the second Saturday of each month through the winter. He said the FLOW event for showing the Rhythm of the River documentary was cancelled due to the pandemic. He said the STH 23 bridge at Spring Green is closed as the re-decking project begins. Cupp also reported the LWSRB continues to follow state guidelines in response to COVID-19.

The Operations Committee report was presented by Cupp. A timber harvest permit application from Kurt and Wendy Schultz for a parcel in the Town of Wyoming, Iowa County, was considered. The consultant is TD Hawkeried. Plans call for the removal of ash to address the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) infestation and harvest of other species to encourage growth of swamp white oak. The River Edge Zone will remain intact (no harvesting) and all trees to be harvested will be located in the Resource Management Zone (not visible from the river during leaf-on conditions). The harvest is consistent with the Managed Forest Law (MFL) plan for the site.

A motion to approve issuance of a permit with the following conditions was made by Williamson, seconded by Gigi LaBudde:

- The harvest shall be limited to areas not visible from the Wisconsin River during leaf-on conditions;
- The integrity of the River Edge Zone shall be maintained;
- 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 application of Michael and Mary Pautz for a timber harvest in the Town of Wyoming, Iowa County, was considered. The consultant is Andrew Nelson of Nelson Forest Products. Plans call for harvest of merchantable hardwoods pursuant to an MFL plan for the site. Oak wilt also will be addressed. The harvest

encompasses the Bluff Zone, Riverview Zone and Resource Management but only a few trees will be harvested in the Bluff Zone. The aesthetic impact will be minimal. No new roads will be constructed. A motion to approve issuance of a permit with the following conditions was made by Williamson, seconded by LaBudde:

- 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, if necessary, 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 timber harvest permit application of Brian Weigel for a parcel in the Town of Prairie du Sac, Sauk County, was considered. The consultant is Charles Brooks. Plans call for group selection harvesting in the bottomlands adjacent to Honey Creek near Ferry Bluff pursuant to the MFL plan for the site. Each patch clear cut will be about ½ acre in size with 15 small regeneration cuts identified. The harvest will occur during frozen or dry ground conditions after October 31st. Any new roads will follow Best Management Practices (BMP) and BMPs for invasive species control. The site is not visible from the Wisconsin River during leaf-on conditions. A motion to approve issuance of a permit with the following conditions was made by LaBudde, seconded by Dick McFarlane.

- 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.

Permit applications submitted by DNR (Finlay) included four management activities and one timber harvest on lands not visible from the river. There will be TSI work and invasive species control work using a forestry mower (FECON) on lands not visible from the river at the following locations:

- Mazomanie Unit (Town of Mazomanie, Dane County);
- Black Hawk Unit (Town of Mazomanie, Dane County);
- Lemanski tract (Town of Pulaski, Iowa County); and,
- Cassel Prairie Unit (Town of Troy, Sauk County)

The timber harvest is known as the Little Blue harvest and will occur within the Cassel Prairie Unit. Patch clear cuts (26) will be conducted to regenerate the bottomland forest. The harvest will take place on lands not visible from the Wisconsin River during leaf-on conditions.

Cupp recommended issuance of management permits with standard conditions for the four management permit applications. A motion to approve issuance of the permits for all four applications was made by Wetter, seconded by Randy Poelma. The conditions of the management permits include:

- 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.

Cupp recommended issuance of a general permit with standard conditions for the Little Blue timber harvest. A motion to approve issuance of a general permit was made by McFarlane, seconded by Williamson. Standard general permit conditions for a timber harvest include:

- 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.

Cupp said he had issued utility permits to Alliant Energy for burial of a fiber optic cable at Bridgeport and to Richland Grant Telephone Cooperative for burial of a fiber optic cable at Muscoda. He said habitat work continues at the former Seeley property, now DNR owned, in the Town of Wauzeka, Crawford County. Eddie Shea, DNR Wildlife Biologist, is supervising the activity. Cupp said Travis Anderson, DNR Wildlife Biologist, has submitted requests for management permit extensions at properties in Dane, Sauk, and Iowa counties. The extensions will be considered at the December meeting.

The Budget Committee report was presented by Chairman McFarlane who reviewed the status of the FY 21 budget. McFarlane noted the fiscal year is one third gone and the budget is in good shape. Wetter asked if the LWSRB received any COVID money. Cupp replied in the negative.

There was no report from the Personnel Committee.

The Executive Director's report was given by Cupp who reviewed materials in the meeting packets. He said he and LaBudde are working on a joint presentation to the Middleton Rotary Club in February. He noted there has been nothing done to control the erosion problems at the Dingman mound group in the Town of Eagle, Richland County. Cupp said a prescribed burn was conducted by DNR personnel at the Bloyer/Twin Lizard Mound Group in the Town of Orion, Richland County.

Under board members business, McFarlane said he appreciated the weekly video report done by Cupp and encouraged other board members to follow the posting on the website or Facebook page.

The DNR report was presented by Finlay who reviewed active sales and those planned to begin soon or sometime in 2021. He noted the Riverside Sawmill near Muscoda has shut down.

During the public comment session, Timm Zumm, FLOW President, said he was able to view the controlled burn conducted by DNR at the Twin Lizard Mound Group in the Town of Orion, Richland County. He said the crew was very professional and the burn appeared to be successful. FLOW Vice-President Charles Rathman said the group hopes to show the Rhythm of the River documentary in 2021.

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