

LOWER WISCONSIN STATE RIVERWAY BOARD

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MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 11, 2021, RIVERWAY BOARD MEETING

The Lower Wisconsin State Riverway Board (LWSRB) met on Thursday, November 11, 2021, 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 Jerry Dorscheid. All members were present with the exception of Randy Poelma. (NOTE: One vacancy exists.) Acknowledgment that the meeting was properly noticed was provided by Mark E. Cupp, Executive Director. Lara Czajkowski Higgins was introduced as the new Crawford County representative. A motion to approve the agenda was made by Steve Williamson, seconded by Gigi La Budde. **MOTION CARRIED.** A motion to approve the minutes of the October 14, 2021, meeting was made by Steve Wetter, seconded by Meredith Beckman. **MOTION CARRIED.**

The Executive Committee report was presented by Chair Dorscheid. La Budde gave a presentation on pokeweed including images of the plant and the varieties. She said increase in the numbers of the plant in the Riverway may be due to changes in weather patterns. She explained the difference between the native variety and non-variety, which can be identified by an erect cluster of fruit as opposed to a hanging cluster.

Cupp then said he was waiting for guidance regarding the need for board members to complete ethics and open records training requirements. He has completed the ethics portion of the training. Cupp will inform the board of the training requirements for members soon. Cupp said he received a citizen complaint regarding the lack of maintenance on the burial mounds at the Black Hawk Unit in the Town of Mazomanie, Dane County. Cupp said Jesse Kellogg, Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Property Manager, was made aware of the complaint. Kellogg reported the matter will be addressed during the restoration of the battle site associated with the Battle of Wisconsin Heights from the Black Hawk War of 1832. Cupp said he had been in communication with the Grant County Board Chair regarding locating a communications tower in the Town of Millville, Grant County. Cupp said a permit is required for any new tower in which the base is located within the Riverway boundary. Grant County has an alternative location in the same vicinity but outside the Riverway, which likely will be the location. The tower may be visible from the river, but the LWSRB would not have any regulatory jurisdiction.

The Operations Committee report was presented by Chair Wetter. Numerous management permit extension requests and one new management permit application were considered. All extension requests and the new permit request were submitted by DNR wildlife biologists. A listing of the requests is detailed below.

- =DNR/Grayless (management/extension)(Town of Marietta, Crawford County)
- =DNR/Grayless (management/extension)(Town of Richwood, Richland County)
- =DNR/Grayless (management/extension)(Town of Wauzeka, Crawford County)
- =DNR/Grayless (management/extension)(Town of Muscodia, Grant County)
- =DNR/Grayless (management/extension)(Town of Woodman, Grant County)
- =DNR/Grayless (management/extension)(Town of Millville, Grant County)
- =DNR/Grayless (management/extension)(Town of Wyalusing, Grant County)
- =DNR/Grayless (management/extension)(Town of Boscobel, Grant County)
- =DNR/Grayless (management/extension)(Town of Buena Vista, Richland County)
- =DNR/Grayless (management/extension)(Town of Millville, Grant County)

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- =DNR/Grayless (management/extension)(Town of Wyalusing, Grant County)
- =DNR/Frost (management/extension)(Town of Prairie du Sac, Sauk County)
- =DNR/Frost (management/extension)(Towns of Troy and Prairie du Sac, Sauk County)
- =DNR/Anderson (management/extension)(Town of Arena, Iowa County)
- =DNR/Anderson (management)(Town of Clyde, Iowa County)

Savanna Grayless and Nancy Frost from DNR were in attendance remotely and addressed the requests. A motion to approve the Grayless extension requests for two years was made by Williamson, seconded by Ritchie Brown. **MOTION CARRIED.** A motion to approve the Frost extension requests was made by Czajkowski Higgins, seconded by Brown. **MOTION CARRIED.** A motion to approve the Travis Anderson extension request for the Helena Unit was made by Williamson, seconded by La Budde. **MOTION CARRIED.** The conditions of the original permits will remain intact. A motion to approve the permit request of Anderson for FECON work at the former Mathews tract in the Town of Clyde, Iowa County, was made by Wetter, seconded by La Budde. **MOTION CARRIED.** The site is not visible from the Wisconsin River during leaf-on conditions. The standard conditions for a management permit were included.

Cupp said he had conducted a field inspection with Joe Friar regarding a timber harvest in the Town of Woodman, Grant County. The LWSRB previously issued a permit for the harvest with a condition requiring Cupp to review the harvest area. Cupp said the harvest area visible from the river will be a light selective harvest of walnut and oak. No new roads will be required. On the back side of the bluff, there will be a heavier harvest of mature to over-mature trees. An additional permit request will be forthcoming to address a separate parcel, which is not visible from the river. Cupp explained there is an issue with the adjoining landowner, which is DNR, regarding the location of the fence line.

Cupp said he and the Operations Committee had met with Terry and Suzanne Shifflet to tour the Wintergreen facility in the Town of Wyoming, Iowa County. Cupp said the 250 acres of land, including a mile of river frontage and scenic bluffs, not to mention the structure would be a wonderful addition to the Riverway. La Budde said she appreciated the Shifflets' objective of hoping to sell to the State of Wisconsin for public purposes, including aesthetic protection for the Riverway. Wetter noted the HVAC system is all new and the property has been cleaned up very well. Brown said there is new LED lighting and the building, although 30 years old, basically, is like a brand-new structure. Cupp asked the LWSRB for a directive to pursue acquisition of the property by the State. A motion to that effect was made by Wetter, seconded by Brown. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Cupp said he had received a permit application for burial of a fiber optic cable under the Wisconsin River at the Hwy. 23 at Spring Green. Cupp indicated he would issue a utility permit for the activity since there would be no visible impact unless there was objection from the board. Hearing none, Cupp said he would proceed.

Cupp reported he has issued a general permit extension to Mike Finlay, DNR Forester, for activity on lands not visible from the river in the Town of Spring Green, Sauk County. Cupp issued a management permit to the Levi Plath of the Mississippi Valley Conservancy for prairie restoration efforts in the Town of Boscobel, Grant County.

The Budget Committee report was presented by Chair Williamson who reviewed the status of the FY 22 budget.

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There was no report from the Personnel Committee.

The Executive Director's report was given by Cupp who reviewed the materials in the board members' packets including activities/correspondence, river flow chart and articles of interest.

Under business from board members, La Budde said over 1600 sandhill cranes were counted at the staging area on the river visible from private property in the Town of Troy, Sauk County. Wetter said he counted 117 eagles in a field near Montfort.

There was no DNR report other than the information provided earlier in the meeting.

During the public comment session, Larry Anding of Arena said river flow is being mismanaged. Cupp said the dam at Prairie du Sac and other dams upstream are regulated by the federal government through a licensing process. Cupp said he would attempt to have a guest speaker at a future meeting to discuss river flow management.

Forest Jahnke of Crawford Stewardship Project (CSP) participated remotely. He said CSP continues to work on groundwater and bedrock studies. He said there is no new news on the Roth feeder pig proposal. Jahnke said he and CSP appreciate the work being done by the Riverway.

Sue Carr, Muscoda, asked if it was true that there is a proposal to hunt sandhill cranes in Wisconsin. Cupp said legislation has been drafted to allow for sandhill crane hunting but that, to the best of his knowledge, a hearing has not been held.

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