

LOWER WISCONSIN STATE RIVERWAY BOARD

202 N. Wisconsin Avenue
P.O. Box 187
Muscodia, WI 53573
(608) 739-3188 or 1-800-221-3792

MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 9, 2025, RIVERWAY BOARD MEETING

The Lower Wisconsin State Riverway Board (LWSRB) met on Thursday, January 9, 2025. The meeting was conducted in-person at the LWSRB office in Muscodia and via Zoom and was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Chair Gigi La Budde. All members were present with the exceptions of Rich Ten Pas and Lara Czajkowski Higgins. (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 Kim Cates. **MOTION CARRIED.** A motion to approve the minutes of the November 14, 2024, meeting was made by Dan Hillberry, seconded by Poelma. **MOTION CARRIED.**

The Executive Committee report was presented by La Budde. Under correspondence, Cupp noted the terms of Poelma, Cates and Hillberry will expire on May 1, 2025. Board members serve for three-year terms with three members up for appointment or re-appointment each year. All three members expressed a willingness to be re-appointed. Cupp said he is working with the Governor's Appointments Office and Iowa County and Richland County on the re-appointment process. Poelma can be re-appointed directly by Governor Evers subject to Senate confirmation.

Cupp spoke to the Natural Resources Board in December of 2024 in recognition of the Riverway's 35th anniversary. He reported the Sauk City recreational bridge project is moving forward with construction expected to begin in late winter or early spring. The bi/multilingual safety signage project supported by the Spring Green Lions Club and Cardinal Glass is progressing. The Muscodia Lions Club and FLOW are supportive as well. Harrison Stone, DNR Riverway Park Manager, is working with a small group regarding placement of additional signs at DNR managed access points in the Riverway. Cupp said the Driftless Area Land Conservancy is working on acquisition of the Wintergreen property in the Town of Wyoming, Iowa County, currently owned by Terry and Suzanne Shifflet.

A federal rule requiring a "no disturbance" or "limited disturbance" zone around active eagle nesting sites was discussed. Bridget Rathman, DNR State Natural Areas Ecologist, and Mike Finlay, DNR Forester, explained application of the rule to the Riverway and said it has caused some consternation. Cupp asked about locations of eagle nests and how a property manager or landowner is supposed to know if the rule applies. Rathman said there are aspects of the rule that remain unclear and guidance on implementation is expected.

Cupp said field trips for board members and the public will continue in 2025. The voyageur replica canoe trips will begin in June and continue until mid-July. Other trips will be held at various locations from April through October. The trips will highlight different aspects of the Riverway.

The Land Acknowledgement Statement Subcommittee Chair Merrie Beckman then introduced the revised statement for board consideration. Following discussion, a motion to remove the item from the table was made by Beckman, seconded by Brown. **MOTION CARRIED.** A motion to adopt the land acknowledgement statement was made by La Budde, seconded by Brown. **MOTION CARRIED.**

The Operations Committee report was presented by Chair Hillberry. The permit request of Charles Marn for modification of an existing structure (construction of addition to a house) for a site in the Town of Troy, Sauk County, was considered. Multiple field inspections have been conducted by Cupp, including one on

September 27, 2024. Mr. and Mrs. Marn were present for the field inspection. Previous consultation also had been conducted by Cupp and the Marns prior to purchase of the property. Plans call for the addition of living space to the south end of the existing house located on top of the bluff. The height of the structure will not result in the structure being visible from the river during leaf-on conditions. The structure will be visually inconspicuous when viewed from the river during leaf-on conditions. The exterior colorization will harmonize with the natural surroundings during leaf-on conditions. A PowerPoint presentation was shown. A motion to approve issuance of a structure permit with the following standard conditions was made by Poelman, seconded by La Budde :

- 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 and shall not exceed 28 feet;
- The exterior colorization of the structure, including roof color, shall harmonize with the natural surroundings during leaf-on conditions and shall be reviewed for compliance with the Riverway regulations and approved prior to initiation on construction;
- There shall be a limited amount of glass or other reflective material visible from the river;
- The LWSRB shall review any modifications to the plans, as submitted, for compliance with the applicable performance standards;
- The landowner or his/her agent shall notify the LWSRB upon completion of the project; and,
- The activity shall comply with all other federal, state, and local regulations.

MOTION CARRIED.

The permit extension requests of Bridget Rathman on behalf of DNR were considered. Each year, approximately half of the DNR SNA permits are reviewed by the LWSRB. Work on the SNAs includes prescribed burning, brush removal and invasive species control. Rathman gave a presentation on the management permit extension requests and a general update on SNA activities. A listing of the requests is detailed below. In addition, Annie McDonnell, DNR Wildlife Biologist, requested extensions to two management permits; one in Richland County and one in Crawford County. She introduced herself and gave a quick overview of activities on the sites in the Town of Richwood and Town of Wauzeka. A motion to approve two-year extensions for the following management permits was made by Brown, seconded by La Budde:

- >Adiantum Woods SNA (Town of Millville, Grant County)
- >Avoca Prairie SNA (Town of Avoca, Iowa County)
- >Blue River Sand Barrens SNA (Town of Watterstown, Grant County)
- >Ferry Bluff SNA (Town of Prairie du Sac, Sauk County)
- >Mazomanie Bottoms SNA (Town of Mazomanie, Dane County)
- >Richwood Bottoms SNA (Town of Richwood, Richland County)
- >Tower Hill Bottoms SNA (Town of Arena, Iowa County)
- >Wauzeka Bottoms SNA (Town of Wauzeka, Crawford County)
- >Woodman Sand Prairie SNA (Town of Woodman, Grant County)
- >Wyalusing Hardwoods SNA (Town of Wyalusing, Grant County)
- >Wyalusing Walnut SNA (Town of Wyalusing, Grant County).

MOTION CARRIED.

A motion to approve two-year extensions for the following management permits was made by Poelma, seconded by Cates:

- >Richwood Unit (Town of Richwood, Richland County)
- >Wauzeka Unit (Towns of Wauzeka & Marietta, Crawford County)

MOTION CARRIED.

Cupp reported the following permits had been issued since the last board meeting:

- >DNR/Frost (management/extension)(Bakken's Pond, Sauk County)
- >DNR/Frost (management/extension)(Laudon Road, Sauk County)
- >DNR/Frost (management/extension)(Wyoming Bluffs Unit, Sauk County)
- >DNR/Anderson (management/extension)(Mazomanie Unit, Dane County)
- >DNR/Anderson (management/extension)(Avoca Unit, Iowa County)
- >Bremmer (timber/extension)(Town of Orion, Richland County).

The Budget Committee report was presented by Chair Beckman who reviewed the status of FY 25 budget. Cupp said the Executive Budget Bill will be introduced by Governor Evers later in January or early February.

There was no report from the Personnel Committee.

Under Executive Director's report, Cupp reviewed materials in the board members' packets related to activities and correspondence and river flow.

During the DNR report, Stone reported the crew is preparing for the summer recreational use season. Finlay reported timber sales are active at the former Mathews tract in the Town of Clyde, Iowa County; Campbell Ridge Road in the Town of Millville, Grant County; and, the Mazomanie Unit, Town of Mazomanie, Dane County.

During the public comment period, Timm Zumm, President of the Friends of the Lower Wisconsin State Riverway (FLOW) reported on several FLOW activities and reminded board members that Canoecopia will be held in Madison from March 7-9.

A motion to adjourn was made by Poelma, seconded by Cates. **MOTION CARRIED.**