

LOWER WISCONSIN STATE RIVERWAY BOARD

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MINUTES OF THE MAY 8, 2025, RIVERWAY BOARD MEETING

The Lower Wisconsin State Riverway Board (LWSRB) met on Thursday, May 8, 2025. The meeting was conducted in-person at the LWSRB office in Muscodas 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 Meredith Beckman 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 Dan Hillberry, seconded by Ritchie Brown. **MOTION CARRIED.** A motion to approve the minutes of the March 13, 2025, meeting was made by Hillberry, seconded by Rich Ten Pas. **MOTION CARRIED.**

The Executive Committee report was presented by La Budde. Cupp introduced guest speaker Annie McDonnell, DNR Wildlife Biologist, who discussed habitat projects on state managed lands on the western half of the Riverway. She noted fire is an important tool for managing wildlife habitat. La Budde raised concern about pampas grass establishment for trophy deer management on private lands. Mike Weideman of Boscobel expressed frustration with a DNR rule against seining minnows to use for fishing and then releasing the unused minnows back to the same stream/water. He said the rule doesn't make sense.

Cupp said the appointments of Kim Cates for Iowa County and Dan Hillberry for Richland County had been finalized by Governor Evers. He noted Meredith Beckman may continue to serve as the Dane County representative although she has moved out of the county because the statutes indicate the person must be a resident "at the time of appointment" so Beckman still qualifies. Cupp noted he appeared before the Senate Natural Resources Committee regarding his re-appointment to the Natural Resources Board.

Cupp reported he briefed an attorney with the DNR Bureau of Legal Services on the Riverway origin story from his perspective. DNR staff are expected to participate in a voyageur canoe trip in the summer. He noted the Roxbury Plan Commission is looking at a variance for a new business near the USH 12 bridge at Sauk City but the site is not located within the Riverway boundary. He said a celebration of the Sauk City recreational bridge, currently under construction, was held earlier in the day. Governor Evers was among the speakers at the event.

The Operations Committee report was presented by Chair Hillberry. Cupp said he had been contacted by a concerned citizen regarding expansion of a trailer park in the Town of West Point, Columbia County. However, the area is not within the Riverway boundary. He communicated with a prospective buyer of a lot(s) on Velvet Lane in the Town of Bridgeport, Crawford County. Cupp noted part of one lot is within the Riverway boundary and one lot is outside the Riverway boundary. Cupp met with a landowner in the Town of Orion, Richland County, regarding the possibility of building a new house on the Bogus Bluff property owned by the Neman family. No definite plans as yet but it was a positive initial meeting.

Since the March meeting, Cupp noted the following permits had been issued:

- DNR/McDonnell (management)(Town of Eagle, Richland County)
- DNR/McDonnell (management)(Town of Millville, Grant County)
- DNR/Finlay (management)(Towns of Buena Vista & Orion)(Richland County)
- DNR/Finlay (general/timber)(Towns of Buena Vista & Orion)(Richland County)
- DNR/Finlay (management)(Town of Millville, Grant County)
- DNR/Finlay (timber)(Town of Millville, Grant County)
- Johnson (timber)(Town of Troy & Spring Green, Sauk County)

The Budget Committee report was presented by Acting Chair Cates who reviewed the status of FY 25 budget.

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. He noted an archeology focused field trip for the Natural Resources Foundation was conducted by him and Don Greenwood. Cupp participated in an Earth Day (week) event with Governor Evers and the Driftless Area Land Conservancy (DALC) in the Town of Wyoming, Iowa County. He also spoke at the DALC 25th anniversary event held at Spring Green on May 1st. Cupp said there will be lectures at the LWSRB office in conjunction with the Muscoda Morel Mushroom Festival as well as a tour of Frank's Hill. He then reviewed the river flow chart.

During the DNR report, Mike Finlay, DNR Forester, reported harvesting is wrapping up on state owned lands until fall. Some forestry mower operations will take place where appropriate under existing management permits.

There were no comments during the public comment period.

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