

Iron County Land Conservation Committee Meeting
Thursday, September 6, 2012
Iron County Forestry Board Room

Approved
12/5/2012

1.) Call to Order: Luke called the meeting to order at 2:00 P.M.

Present: **Gerald Luke, William Thomas, Tom Popko, Vernon Moore, MaryJo Gingras, Dave Schultz (Wildlife Damage), Heather Palmquist**

Absent: Dennis DeRosso, Dale Wehmas, Larry Youngs, Gary Haughn (NRCS)

2.) **Public Comment:** Luke spoke about the Northwest Wisconsin Land & Water Conservation Association tour held on August 17, 2012 in Ashland and Bayfield. First part of the tour was held at the Xcel Energy Bay Front Generating Plant. The plant burns railroad ties for power production and tires are also burned for power production. They burn at such a high temp that they reduce less emissions than if put into a landfill. The second half of the tour was held at the Northern Aquiculture facility in Red Cliff. The facility raises fish species for food consumption. Luke also stated that that PRI-RU-TA has officially dissolved due to lack of funding.

3.) **Minutes: Motion to approve April 23, 2012 draft minutes Popko/Thomas. MC.**

4.) **2013 Wildlife Damage Budget:** Schultz reviewed proposed budget for 2013. Salary is estimated at \$4,015 for Iron County's share. This may be adjusted after Ashland County sets the salary rate. Bear Relocation Fees and Fencing materials are estimated at \$13,250, which is based on the two previous years claims (2011 and 2012 actual claims). This amount would cover 20-30 bear removals a year. Technician and abatement materials are reimbursed expenses from the Department of Natural Resources. It is estimated to increase about another \$1,000 for the 2014 budget. Cost of administration and bear relocation is \$375 per bear in 2012. Schultz expects to assist 3 growers with damage that may result in claims equaling or exceeding \$10,000 in value, which is reimbursed to the landowner directly from the state.

Motion to approve 2013 Wildlife Damage Program budget \$18,365.00 Thomas/Popko. MC.

5.) **2013 Land Conservation Budget:** MaryJo reviewed line by line the proposed budget for 2013 of \$275,265. This includes a county levy of approximately \$39,748. This may be lowered is additional grants are generated next year that we have not applied for at this point. The County receives a return of \$6 on every dollar they spend for this program. There was discussion about funding of Waters project. The Department funds \$2750 annually for the Program. In 2012 the previous coordinator, Zach Wilson, left the Discovery Center. The County has paid the Discovery Center for contracted services for at least 10 years. The Forestry Dept. stopped funding to the Discovery Center for the Woods component of this project and will instead provide funding directly to the schools in 2012-2013, which have decided to contract with Zach Wilson through his private company to coordinate the program. The LCC requested to bring Zach Wilson to our next meeting to discuss the program. Action will be taken whether to continue contract with North Lakeland Discovery Center in 2013. There was a short discussion about health insurance increase. No additional comments. **Motion to forward 2013 Land Conservation budget of \$275,265 to county board for approval Thomas /Moore. MC.**

6.) **2013-2017 Wildlife Damage Plan of Administration Approval:** Schultz reviewed Plan of Administration and participant eligibility for 2013-2017. **Motion to approve 2013-2017 Wildlife Damage Plan of Administration by Thomas/Popko. MC.**

7.) 4-County Grazing Specialist Position: Dale Peacock used to hold the contracted position to write Rotational Grazing Plans in the 4 counties. He no longer is working in that position. Douglas County would like to pull from the 4-County agreement and have its own coordinator. Ashland is concerned how it would impact the financial structure to support the office space position in Ashland. Douglas does not want to host a 4-County position. Iron County LCC/farmers agree that we do not have the farm operation needs to warrant a position specific for Iron County. **Motion to support multi-county Grazing Specialist position as hosted by another county Thomas/Moore.** MC.

8.) AIS summer review: Palmquist reviewed AIS outreach and monitoring projects implemented through 4 interns this summer. Interns were trained and supervised by Heather and funded through 3 different funding sources or grants. 3 interns were specific to AIS projects and the additional intern focused more on department work and projects for the Forestry and GIS departments, including extensive GIS map work for the three departments to document information essential to the county. Very busy summer with interns and they did a fantastic job!

9.) Staff/ Conservation Reports:

NRCS: No report provided.

Wildlife Damage (Schultz): Provided written report. Schultz has spent quite a bit of time in the fields recently conducting damage appraisals. He is currently setting up Deer Donation program. There is no drop off in Iron County, but there is a pick up location in Mercer that will receive venison from Butternut processor if there is enough available.

Staff Reports: Gingras and Palmquist provided written conservation reports that were distributed with agenda.

13.) Next Meeting Date: October 30 at 2pm.

14.) Adjourn: **Motion to adjourn at 3:45 pm Thomas/Moore.** MC.