

Iron County Land Conservation Committee Meeting  
Wednesday, December 5, 2012  
Iron County Forestry Board Room

**DRAFT**

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

**Present:** Present Larry Youngs, Tom Popko, Dale Wehmas, Vernon Moore, Gerald Luke, William Thomas, Heather Palmquist, MaryJo Gingras, Gary Haughn (NRCS), Dave Schultz (Wildlife Damage), Zach Wilson (consultant), Valerie Damstra (Bad River Watershed Association)

**Absent:** Dennis DeRosso

2.) **Public Comment:** None heard.

3.) **Minutes:** Motion to approve September 6, 2012 draft minutes Thomas/ Youngs. MC.

4.) **Bad River Watershed Association:** Valerie Damstra from the BRWA provided an overview of the association and what they do. It is a non-profit association founded in 2002 that works with citizens to assess, maintain and improve the Bad River Watershed. The organization has about 250 household memberships, which includes volunteers and households that make a financial contribution, and covers land area in Ashland, Bayfield, and Iron Counties. Focus areas include Bad River, Tyler Forks, Potato River, White River and Marengo River. Their funding comes from several sources including 75% funding from federal and states grants, 15% from foundations, and 15% from household donations. The association manages various programs including water quality monitoring, watershed action program, and culvert monitoring and replacement. The organization is currently hiring a new Executive Director and will also soon be filing the culvert program coordinator position which is currently vacant.

5.) **2012 Wildlife Damage Claim Prices:** Schultz reported one damage claim was made in Iron County by Kretschmar Holsteins in 2012. He checked 418 acres in 13 fields and reported 915 bushels of corn lost to damage. Average price is about \$7.45/bushel for corn lost.

**Motion to accept \$7.45 as price /bushel for damage claim Popko/Thomas.** MC.

6.) **2013 Waters Project:** Zach Wilson from Northwoods Living Adventures presented the history and data collection of the Iron County Waters project which began in 1999. He reviewed goals, objectives and findings of data collected through the project. In addition, he described the importance of the project for Iron County schools and students. The project teaches skills to students such as canoeing, kayaking and water testing, that they do not get from other places. He is committed to continuing with the project if nit is funded through the Mercer School. **Motion to fund the waters project through the Mercer School for 2013 Thomas/Youngs.** MC.

7.) **2012 Internship review:** Palmquist provided review of summer internship program. Our department hired 4 interns in 2012. 1 intern assisted with general conservation technical assistance while the additional 3 worked on Aquatic Invasive Species monitoring, education, and control efforts. A total of 1,020 hours were spent conducting boat inspections by the 3 interns. 1,230 boats were inspected and 2,369 people were contacted. 89% of people stated that they inspect their boat/trailer for plants and animals and 83% of people stated that they have removed plants/animals from their boat/trailer.

## **8.) Conservation Reports:**

**NRCS:** Haughn reported that a Farm Bill has not been approved yet for 2013. NRCS is currently completing 2012 projects and taking requests for future projects. There is no funding currently available for WRP (Wetland Reserve Program). WHIP (Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program) is being consolidated with the EQIP (Environmental Quality Incentive Program). Conservation Stewardship program is potentially being proposed to be eliminated. Projects that fall under the Conservation Activity Plans are most likely to all get funded. All other projects will get ranked for available funding.

**Wildlife Damage:** Schultz reported that he finished all damage claims for 2012. He reported that 30 deer had been donated (up from 20 in 2011) through the Deer Donation Program by the end of November. Schultz appraised over 2400 acres in the four counties this year. There were 110 corn damage appraisals this year which is up from 82 in 2011 and approximately 40 in 2010.

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

**9.) Next Meeting Date:** TBD

**10.) Adjourn:** Motion to adjourn at 3:50 pm Thomas/Youngs. MC.