

**MINUTES OF THE LAND & WATER CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**Wednesday, May 20, 2009**  
**Oneida County Courthouse – 9:00 a.m. – Committee Room 1**

**Members Present:** Chairman Tom Rudolph, Wilbur Petroskey, Matt Matteson, Jack Martinson, and Gary Baier.

**Members Absent:** Rod Kuczarski, FSA Member (excused absence) and Ben Brusio TAG member, (absent)

**Others Present:** Nancy Hollands (County Conservationist), Jean Hansen (Conservation Specialist), Barb Payne (Secretary), Chuck Wickman (County Supervisor), Susan Hunter (Farm Service Agency) (Jim from wpeg media)

***Call to Order***

Chairman Rudolph called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. in Committee Room #1 on the second floor at the Oneida County Courthouse. He noted that the meeting of the Land and Water Conservation Committee has been properly noticed in accordance with the Wisconsin Open Meeting Law and meets the Americans with Disabilities Act.

***Approve Agenda/Approve Minutes***

Motion by Matteson, second by Petroskey, to approve the current agenda and the minutes from the April 15<sup>th</sup> meeting with the order of agenda items presented at the discretion of the Chairman. Motion carried; all ayes.

***Set date for next meetings***

Chairman Rudolph noted the next meeting dates will be Wednesday, June 17<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m. and Wednesday, July 15<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m.

***Public Comments***

Chuck Wickman reported the Lake Tomahawk Property Owners Association is also a part of the Minocqua District that he represents. They will be holding their annual picnic in July. Wickman stated they have a very ambitious membership program and their annual membership dues are \$80 per year. Wickman asked Hollands if she had been in touch with them. Wickman stated they do more than monitor boat landings. Last summer they hired two divers from the University of Wisconsin to find and locate Eurasian Water Milfoil (EWM). They have a Watch Team that monitors for EWM growth. They probably have a more significant investment in AIS activities than most other lake associations. Discussion followed. Hollands stated she had received a letter from the Lake Tomahawk Property Owners Association and she would read its contents under agenda item #14.

***Wildlife Damage Program/Budget/Services for 2009***

Hollands reported she had not received a reply back from the DNR on the status of our 2009 budget for the Wildlife Damage Program. Hollands anticipates hearing from the DNR soon. She reminded the Committee that DNR had asked the Counties to cut back on their budgets for 2009. Hollands suggested that, in regard to the WDP services for 2009, we wait to make a decision until we see what proposed changes for LWCD will be taking place. Martinson asked Hollands what amount was proposed for the 2009 budget. Hollands replied the amount submitted for the 2009 budget was approximately \$13,650.00. Hollands explained the WDP budget is 100% reimbursed by DNR, with the revenues equaling the expenses.

***County Cost Share***

Hansen reported the Broukal project on Upper Post Lake had rock work completed last fall. The second phase was started last week. The contractor will be putting down vegetated geogrid and also using envirolok bags for the plantings. The Deletski project on Lake Nokomis was also started last week. Both projects should be completed by the end of May, weather permitting. Hansen stated even with economic times being difficult, people are still showing an active interest in the cost-share program. Hansen has two sites that will be surveyed on Friday with the DATCP Engineer, Stacy Dehne.

***Update on AIS Coordinator Position Vacancy***

Rudolph stated there wasn't anything new to report as the Committee had just attended the joint meeting with LRES on this vacancy. Hollands stated John Potters, Oneida County Coordinator, was unable to attend the meeting today as he is staffing his office this morning. Potters indicated he would like to meet with Rudolph, Hollands, and Kuzlik in regard to how we will proceed with the merger of LWCD with UWEX. Hollands said they would have more details after that meeting. Hollands explained that LRES wants someone to fill in for the AIS position until the end of the year.

The position is subject to a three-year review by LRES and John Potters, Oneida County Coordinator. After the evaluation is completed, a decision will be made on filling the AIS Coordinator position. Baier asked why this Committee can't approve appointing Hansen until a set time, by following the protocol used to post a union based position. Baier asked who is doing the AIS work right now. Rudolph stated Potters has temporarily authorized using the remaining 27% of Hansen's hours from Planning & Zoning to LWCD. Hansen would then be back to LWCD for 100%, so she can work on AIS until a permanent decision is made on the AIS Coordinator vacancy. Hollands stated she is uncertain as to any final action on any positions right now. Committee discussion followed. The Committee expressed their disapproval concerning Potters, County Coordinator, not being available to attend today's meeting to answer their questions. The Committee asked that this be put on next month's agenda or as soon as Potters will be available to answer their questions.

#### ***Update on Typist II Position Vacancy***

Hollands reported this position was brought to LRES, and they denied the waiver to fill the Typist II position before the six-month mandatory vacancy period. Hollands thanked Matteson for his intervention in obtaining Hendricks to work two days a week in our department in the interim. Hollands stated it is only temporary, but any help even on a temporary basis will be very helpful. Discussion followed by the Committee.

#### ***DATCP – SWRM Grant Contract for 2009***

Hollands reported we have received our DATCP grant contract for 2009 in the amount of \$118,346 for our staff positions in Land & Water Conservation. We also received the cost-share grant for 2009 in the amount of \$61,394. We had a carryover from 2008 in the amount of \$51,175. That brings the SWRM grant total in the amount of \$230,915.00. Hollands stated there weren't any cuts in our DATCP allocation for 2009. Motion by Petroskey, second by Martinson to approve the DATCP grant contract for 2009. Motion carried; all ayes.

#### ***Program Reduction/New Revenues for 2009/2010***

Hollands stated she had received a memo from Finance requesting information to help them in the budget process for 2010. They are asking all departments to look at ways to either reduce programs or increase revenues for 2010. Hollands stated the difficult part of this request is with DATCP. We will not know what they are planning to give us for at least a couple months yet. The information we are going by right now are estimates only.

Hollands provided a spreadsheet for the Committee to review. This spreadsheet is basically what Hollands had provided to the Committee at the last meeting. We still do not have an approved 2009 budget for the Wildlife Damage Program. Hollands explained a note she placed on the bottom of the spreadsheet for a possible decrease in dollars spent. The notation states if UWEX is able to get a full-time horticulture position, they could be directed to work on AIS and Terrestrial Invasive Species. It could actually save the County approximately \$38,000 starting in 2010. If Kuzlik is able to get the position through the University, the State would provide 60% cost sharing, and the County would provide the remaining 40%. Hollands explained that we won't know anything for a while yet until the State acts on the request. It would be to the County's benefit if some county dollars were applied to the AIS position. When the County applies for grants, the DNR asks for a 25% grant match. If we have some dollars associated with County expenditures for the AIS position, we can use their salary and fringes toward the grant match. If we do not have an AIS Coordinator position that we are paying for, it would be very difficult to come up with the 25% grant match that the DNR requires.

Hollands stated there is another option if the UWEX option would fail. This option was developed by Jean Hansen. Hansen's option would allow the Land & Water Conservation Department to reorganize internally. Instead of having three full time positions and two part time positions, we would have four full time positions and basically the Conservation Specialist and Hollands would do much of the AIS work and then having a program assistant and one secretary. This would be a cost saving of approximately \$33,000. This option would give us four stable positions. Committee discussion followed. Motion by Rudolph, second by Baier to accept the program reduction/new revenues for 2009/2010 proposal as presented. (Matteson – no) (Martinson – no) (Petroskey – no) (Baier – yes) (Rudolph – yes) (Kuczarski – absent). Motion failed; (3 nays and 2 ayes and 1 absent). The Committee wasn't in agreement on whether there should be any suggested budget cuts made to the Land & Water Conservation budget.

***Select Conservation Youth Camp Scholarship Recipient(s)***

The Conservation Youth Camp is being held June 16 – 19 at Trails End Camp in Bruce, Wisconsin. We received two applications for the youth camp scholarships. One application is from Cassandra Hoger. She was a 2008 state speaking contest winner in the Junior Division. She is a local speaker from the Three Lakes Junior High School. Cassandra spoke at a special session at the Oneida County Health Department last year. Her speech was on the topic of outdoor wood burners.

The second application we received was from Hans Hoehn who lives in Hazelhurst. Hans expressed that he has been involved in highway clean ups, recycling at school, and he cuts and hauls wood for forest maintenance. There are two scholarships available. The cost is a \$100 per student and the mileage costs are up to the parents. Motion by Petroskey, second by Matteson to approve the two applicants who applied for the Youth Camp scholarships to attend the Youth Camp sponsored by Wisconsin Land & Water Conservation Association. Motion carried; all ayes.

***Environmental Education Scholarships for Teachers***

Hollands reported we sent out information on the teachers' scholarships for 2009. Trees for Tomorrow have drastically reduced the number of workshops they will be holding this year due to financial constraints. They will be holding two workshops. One is July 13 – 16, entitled "Natural Resource Education" and the second one is July 22 – 26, entitled "Nature Photography." In the past we have authorized teacher(s) to attend other environmental courses. This information was sent out to the schools earlier this month. Hollands said she hopes to have something new to report on at next month's meeting.

***Lac du Flambeau Band's Proposed Water Quality Standards***

Rudolph commented to the Committee about a letter he and Hollands had received last week from Gretchen Watkins, Water Resource Specialist, representing the Lac du Flambeau Tribal Resource Department. The letter was written to Andy Smith, County Board Chairman, on March 31, 2009. The letter was filed in the County Clerk's Office on May 7, 2009. This letter from Watkins is requesting comments from interested parties on the Tribe's proposed Water Quality Standards. Rudolph stated he had spoken to Smith about this proposal the last time it came up. The County chose not to get involved at that time, but Smith said that it should be brought before our Committee. Motion by Baier, second by Matteson to acknowledge receipt of the letter in May that was written on March 31, 2009, by Gretchen Watkins, Water Resource Specialist representing the Lac du Flambeau Tribal Resource Department. The letter requested comments from interested parties on the Tribe's proposed Water Quality Standards. On recommendation from Andy Smith, County Board Chairman, the Land and Water Conservation Committee declined taking any action on this letter. Motion carried; all ayes.

***Update/Status of AIS Grants/Budgets/Activities***

Hollands read a letter she had received from Mr. Greedy from the Tomahawk Lake Association. In this letter the Tomahawk Lake Association is requesting an exemption in complying with the County AIS Transportation Ordinance. Basically they are asking for permission to transport AIS plant materials to their disposal site. They will be harvesting EWM and disposing of EWM at the Minocqua site the same as last year. Mr. Greedy stated that in applying for a DNR permit the DNR requested they receive written authorization from Oneida County allowing them to transport EWM on Oneida County roads to the site on Highway 70 West of Minocqua. The letter further explained how they will transport the EWM. Committee discussion followed. Motion by Matteson, second by Martinson to approve writing a letter granting permission to the Tomahawk Lake Association to waive the Oneida County AIS Ordinance prohibiting the transport of AIS plant materials within the County. Motion carried; all ayes.

Hollands reported she had received a phone call from the Town of Lynn in regard to placing the AIS signs that have been given to the towns, the lake associations and the lake districts. The Town of Lynn expressed they are unable to provide the manpower or money to put up these AIS signs, and they were wondering how to proceed. Rudolph commented the Town of Lynn should contact the DNR.

Hollands reported the next time frame for applying for an AIS grant is August 1<sup>st</sup>. The DNR has created another category for projects under \$50,000. They will also be using a new point system for ranking and new guidelines. This will ensure that the small scale lake projects won't have to compete with the large scale multi – county or regional projects for grant funding.

The guidelines have not been finalized yet. Hollands stated we have until the July meeting to provide input into what we want to do in regard to applying for future AIS grants. Hansen commented on the 2009 AIS grant that we submitted last February. After looking it over, there are some areas where the grant will have to be revised if it is to be used in the future grant application process. Hansen and Hollands have reviewed some of these areas where they feel changes are needed. This grant was for a three-year period. The new ranking system may have significant changes. Hansen asked the Committee to consider whether they still want to commit to a three-year grant now. Hansen suggested a one year grant may be more doable right now. It may be easier considering the changes that may be involved with the merging of the Land & Water Conservation Department with UWEX. Hansen asked the Committee to consider the options and provide their recommendations at the next meeting as to how they want to proceed. The Committee would like to have Kevin Gauthier, DNR, attend our next meeting to explain what has changed in the grant application process. The Committee expressed concern that our lack of an AIS Coordinator may very well hurt us when we apply for the next grant.

***Report on Terrestrial Invasive Species Meeting in Eagle River***

Hansen attended a Terrestrial Invasive Species meeting held in Eagle River. The attendance for this meeting was down because the date Ted Ritter selected conflicted with other meetings scheduled for the same day. Hansen felt it was an interesting meeting overall. Ritter asked if Oneida County may be interested in possibly joining the effort of that group. Ritter wanted Hansen to bring the message to the LWCC that Vilas is in the process of making the boundaries and they would like to include Oneida County in with Vilas County. There are weed management areas East and West of the Rhinelander area. There isn't any commitment required other than having someone attend the informational meetings on a regular basis to pass along information. So basically Ritter asked if they could include Oneida County in the Central part of this weed management area. There is another meeting coming up in the near future. Committee discussion followed. Committee seemed agreeable, but no action was taken at this time.

***Report on Lake Convention, March 18-20 in Green Bay***

Petroskey reported the break out sessions he attended were generally good. Petroskey commented they didn't have any repeat sessions as far as he was aware of. Petroskey feels it is an excellent opportunity to discuss the issues with other counties and how they deal with them. Baier reported he felt the sessions were too long and he would like to see more time allowed for discussion.

***Lake Districts/Agency Reports (FSA, NRCS, LWCD, UWEX, DNR, LWCB, WLWCA, & RC&D)***

***Bear Lake District*** – Martinson reported the Bear Lake District is still waiting for a decision on what is going to happen with the developer.

***Mid Lake District*** – Petroskey reported the Mid Lake District will be holding their annual meeting in July. He had nothing new to report.

***Thunder Lake District*** – Baier had nothing to report this month from the Thunder Lake District. Baier reported the Thunder Lake District never had a meeting.

***Horsehead Lake District*** – Rudolph reported that the Horsehead Lake District will be holding their annual meeting in August. Rudolph reported they have a meeting scheduled for July 14<sup>th</sup>. They are getting the final touches on their lake study by ONTERRA. Rudolph commented that he believes there will be a presentation by ONTERRA at the July meeting on their findings.

***FSA*** – Susan Hunter, Farm Service Agency, was present to report. Hunter handed out the FSA Report for May. She went over Item 2 regarding supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments (SURE crop disaster program) – replaces old crop disaster assistance program. Any producer would be eligible to apply if they had over 50% overall loss on all of their crops combined. They will announce a sign-up for the SURE crop disaster program sometime at the end of the summer when they figure out national payment rates. Hunter further explained how the program will work. Committee discussion followed.

***NRCS*** – Julie Malvitz, NRCS, notified Hollands they would not be able to attend this month's meeting.

***LWCD*** – Hollands reported the AIS Coordinator vacancy and the Typist II vacancy have taken up a significant amount of time this past month. We have worked on the scholarships. We have submitted the 2010 grant application and final 2008 report to DATCP. Hollands commented on a recent article that appeared in the Vilas County News Review concerning the possible termination of the RC&D program. The other news item in this article was about the State plotting to remove water from county conservation work. Hollands stated she isn't sure how much truth there is in that article.

Rudolph commented that as far as RC&D is concerned that has been an annual proposal. It has been restored in the state budget each year. Rudolph remarked as far as removing water from the local county conservation programs, he wasn't aware of anything mentioned in that regard. Rudolph did go on to state that we must remain vigilant as to what is going on around us.

**UWEX** – No one was present to report.

**DNR** – No one was present to report.

**LWCB** – Rudolph reported the next meeting will be held in Madison on June 2<sup>nd</sup>. Rudolph stated it remains to be seen if there will be anymore meetings in the future because of the proposal in the Governor's Budget to eliminate that board and replace it with a council. Rudolph stated he doesn't know when that will happen as it could be another month or two before the Governor's Budget is finalized. There is a lot of opposition out there to the proposal, as it would take away input from the Counties.

**WLWCA** – Rudolph reported the last couple of meetings were held by teleconference, which is a very difficult way to conduct meetings. At a previous meeting WLWCA agreed to furlough the Executive Director to help bring the budget for 2009 into balance. His work was limited to a part-time basis from April to about October. He will still do some lobbying for us and attend pertinent meetings. He will not be present in the office on a daily basis. There will be a meeting in Stevens Point on May 26<sup>th</sup>. At this meeting they will be looking at the 2010 budget for the State Association.

**RC&D** – Rudolph reported this proposal to eliminate the RC&D program nationally has been proposed in the last two budget cycles. Each time this proposal wasn't followed through by Congress. Hopefully that will be the case this time also. The last time they received an increase in the budget through NRCS.

#### ***Monthly Budget Review***

Hollands reported we have received a check from DATCP in the amount of \$109,474.00 for cost sharing on salaries and fringes for LWCD staff in calendar year 2008. We also received monies from DATCP for the County cost share Program. Committee discussion followed.

Motion by Petroskey, second by Matteson, to approve the March budget for the Land & Water Conservation Department, Wildlife Damage Program, and AIS Program. Motion carried; all ayes. Motion by Martinson, second by Matteson, to approve the April budget for the Land & Water Conservation Department, Wildlife Damage Program, and AIS Program. Motion carried; all ayes.

#### ***Travel Authorization***

Motion by Baier, second by Petroskey to approve attendance at the following meetings. Motion carried; all ayes.

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|-----------------|---|-----------------|
| • May 27, 2009  | Terrestrial Invasive Species Meeting        | Vilas County    |
| • May 29, 2009  | Clean Boats, Clean Waters Workshop          | Minocqua, WI    |
| • June 10, 2009 | Clean Boats, Clean Waters Workshop          | Three Lakes, WI |
| • June 12, 2009 | North Central Association Spring Conference | Antigo, WI      |

#### ***Approval of invoices, purchase orders, and line item transfers***

Motion by Petroskey, second by Matteson, to approve the invoices as presented. Motion carried; all ayes.

A list of the approved bills is attached to the minutes.

#### ***Items for the next meeting agenda***

Items will be determined as suggested during current meeting.

#### ***Adjourn***

The meeting adjourned at 12:35 p.m. Motion by Martinson, second by Petroskey. Motion carried; all ayes.

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Thomas Rudolph  
Chairman

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Nancy Hollands  
County Conservationist