

MINUTES
LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION BOARD MEETING

August 4, 2020
Skype Meeting

Item #1 Call to Order—pledge of allegiance, open meeting notice, approval of agenda, approval of June 2, 2020 LWCB meeting minutes.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Mark Cupp at 9:00 a.m. Members Eric Birschbach, Ron Grasshoff, Bobbie Webster, Mike Hofberger, Andrew Buttles, Monte Osterman, Brian Weigel, Lacey Cochart (for Walling), Bob Mott, and Andrew Potts were in attendance. A quorum was present. Advisors Angela Biggs, NRCS, Matt Krueger, WI Land + Water and Dr. Francisco Arriaga, UW-CALS were also present. Others present included Lisa Trumble, Katy Smith, Susan Mockert, Alex Elias, Kim Carlson and Zach Zopp, DATCP, Joanna Griffin, Corrine Johnson and Eric Hettler, DNR, Anita Martin and Dean Farr.

Zopp confirmed that the meeting was publicly noticed.

The pledge of allegiance was conducted.

Hofberger moved to approve the agenda as presented, seconded by Mott, and the motion carried.

Potts made a motion to approve the June 2, 2020 meeting minutes as written, seconded by Grasshoff, and the motion carried.

Item #2 Public Appearances

No public appearance cards were submitted.

Item #3 Recommendation for approval of Land and Water Resource Management Plan revision for Winnebago County

Chad Casper, Interim Director, Winnebago County Land and Water Conservation Department, and Chuck Farrey, Land Conservation Committee Chair, made a formal presentation in support of a 10-year approval of the county's LWRM plan.

DATCP's review of the plan using the LWRM Plan Review Checklist found that the plan complies with all requirements of section 92.10, Wisconsin Statutes, and Chapter ATCP 50, Wisconsin Administrative Code.

Winnebago County Land and Water Conservation Department provided written answers to the Board's standardized questions, recent work plans and accomplishments, and other materials (available on LWCB's website: https://datcp.wi.gov/Pages/About_Us/LandWaterConservationBoard.aspx).

Board members and county representatives discussed the following: wetland restoration and the water quality & stormwater benefits achieved from wetlands and shoreline buffers, as well as program to encourage shoreline buffers. Chad stated the county's approach to restoration is to try to get as big of a buffer around the restoration area as possible, then initial cost share practices followed by enrollment in a Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP). This approach yields many benefits including: water quality and stormwater benefits, wetland education at the town level, and flood mitigation. The board discussed the county's lake management plan, specifically who administer it and funding sources. In general, management is a partnership between the participating counties and the

Fox Wolf Watershed alliance; funds are raised from the participating counties to serve as seed money, which is then used by the Fox Wolf Watershed alliance to apply for additional grant funding. The board discussed the counties Soil Health Program, which is a monetary payment program to incentivize landowners to implement soil conservation practices such as no-till tillage over a six year period. Funding for the Soil Health Program was also discussed, as the program pays participating landowners up \$150/acre if they stay enrolled within the program through the 5th and 6th year. The board also had questions on the county's position on Farmland Preservation Program, nutrient management and implementation of the 590 standard, rain gardens and effort the county was pursuing to promote what the county was doing within soil and water conservation.

Osterman moved to recommend approval of Winnebago County's plan revision for a period of 10 years, seconded by Webster, and the motion carried.

Item #4 Recommendation for approval of Land and Water Resource Management Plan revision for Washington County

Paul Sebo, County Conservationist, Washington County Land and Water Conservation Department, and Carroll Merry, Land Use and Planning Committee Chair, made a formal presentation in support of a 10-year approval of the county's LWRM plan.

DATCP's review of the plan using the LWRM Plan Review Checklist found that the plan complies with all requirements of section 92.10, Wisconsin Statutes, and Chapter ATCP 50, Wisconsin Administrative Code.

Washington County Land and Water Conservation Department provided written answers to the Board's standardized questions, recent work plans and accomplishments, and other materials (available on LWCB's website: https://datcp.wi.gov/Pages/About_Us/LandWaterConservationBoard.aspx).

Board members and county representatives discussed the following: The depth to bedrock GIS map the county produced, the Soil Health movement and the benefits of the Nutrient Management Farmer Education Program in the county. The board discussed the new Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) with the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District. The RCPP has received \$4 million from the USDA to be matched (totaling \$8 million) to acquire easements and sponsor best management practices between Washington and Ozaukee County. Participating farms are required to have conservation plans. The board also discussed the shared aquatic invasive species (AIS) position between Washington and Waukesha County's, the logistics behind the decision to share the AIS position and how this practice could be a model for cross-county collaboration to promote the stability of the AIS position and government efficiency. Lastly, the board discussed the status of Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFO) in the county. Paul stated there are five CAFOs in the county and that the county is expected to have an additional three CAFOs in the next couple years. Paul stated that the county has a good working relationship with these operations and is able to provide advice, the WI DNR handles the CAFO regulations.

Grasshoff moved to recommend approval of Washington County's plan revision for a period of 10 years, seconded by Birschbach and the motion carried.

Item #5 Climate Change Resiliency and LWRM Plans Discussion

Cupp, Grasshoff, and Krueger updated the board on their recent meeting to discuss climate change resiliency and LWRM plans. Krueger mentioned that WI Land + Water has convened an ad hoc group of county land and water conservation departments (LWCD) from across the state to discuss this issue.

The ad hoc group has the charge to discuss how climate change can be integrated in LWRM planning on the county level. WI Land + Water is planning to convene a meeting in the upcoming weeks with LWCDs, at which Cupp will attend to convey the interest of the board. Cupp stated that he will also meet with the WI Land + Water policy committee and present follow up content at the December LWCB meeting. The board discussed narratives LWCDs can consider to recognize the impacts of climate change within LWRM plans such as examples of weather changes, suggestions on tools, funding & limitations, emphasis on flexibility when addressing climate change. The board discussed its own role and that the board should not impose mandates on LWCDs, rather the goal is to have LWCDs develop their own responses to climate change within the LWRM plan that the board can comment and present questions on.

Item #6 Non-point funding sources

Mockert, DATCP, reported on the State of Iowa Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund. This program provides funding to four subcategories a non-point source projects: local water protection, livestock water quality, domestic septic repair & replacement, stormwater management practices. Approved projects work with one of 400 approved lenders to facilitate a sponsored loan. The sponsored loans pair of publically owned treatment work project with a non-traditional project so that the non-traditional project receives funding. Cupp noted the board's continuing desire to look at other state programs and requested that members contact him with requests for research into other state programs to learn about other innovative funding sources.

Item #7 DNR Presentation of the Scores and Rankings of Targeted Runoff Management (TRM) Projects for CY 2021

Griffin, Runoff Management Grants coordinator for DNR, stated that the deadline for Targeted Runoff Management (TRM) project applications had been extended from May 15th to June 15th to provide applicants an extra month to account for the Covid-19 pandemic. Griffin stated they observed a general increase in TRM applications this year. TRM projects are separated into four categories: small scale with and without total maximum daily load (TMDL) capped at \$225,000 and then large scale with and without TMDLs capped at \$600,000. The respective projects are scored and ranked within their category and the top ranking small scale project receives a regional boost factor. A single applicant cannot receive more than 20% of the allocation by category. The board discussed the total allocation amount for TRM grants and how delayed release of the DATCP/DNR preliminary joint allocation plan until October, 2020 will push back notification of TRM grant finalist until December, 2020.

Item #8 DNR Presentation of the Scores and Rankings of Urban Nonpoint Source and Storm Water Management Projects for CY 2021

Griffin, Runoff Management Grants coordinator for DNR, stated the DNR has received 31 applications, totaling approximately 3.5 million dollars, for Urban Nonpoint Source and Storm Water Management Projects. All 31 applicants are eligible for funding and there is a similar 20% cap to the TRM grants (i.e. an applicant with multiple applications cannot receive more than 20% of the available allocation). The board discussed the logistics around the preliminary joint allocation plan scheduled for October, 2020 and the final joint allocation plan presented in December.

Item #9 Update on the Best Management Practice Implementation Tracking System (BITS)

Eric Hettler, Water Resources Management Specialist for the DNR, presented on the Best Management Practice Implementation Tracking System (BITS). Eric stated BITS is a system that will consolidate information from different DNR programs in a single interface for the public and that this system has been under development for about 4 years. The board discussed the development of the BITS interface. Eric stated that the interface was developed by both DNR staff and an independent consultant. The independent contractor is devoted to developing the system, while the DNR is responsible for data management. The board discussed the allocation of DATCP Reserve funding for updates to the SWRM database. The board also discussed the new EPA grant the DNR received support a limited term full-time project position for three years. This position will work as a BITS business/project manager and coordinate with the independent IT contractor, this position will also be responsible for BITS training and education.

Item #10 Agency Reports

FSA- no written report filed

NRCS – Biggs reported that Matt Lohr, NRCS Chief, is leaving the agency to go back to farming in Virginia. In response to the COVID pandemic, the NRCS is working towards allowing visitors in offices. However, many NRCS offices are still in phase I (social distancing, wearing masks, no visitors) and only a handful of offices have moved to phase II to allow visitors. Biggs stated that the NRCS is working on addressing storm damage in northern regions of WI, primarily Langlade County. Biggs reported that the NRCS Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) are very active. The NRCS is also nearing the end of their fiscal year and is working to fill vacant staff positions while preparing for next fiscal year. The board discussed movement on the NRCS mentorship program, which is still looking for volunteers to partner with newer employees. Furthermore, the board discussed the FSA Clear 30 program, which provides a 30 year Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) contract on recently expired or expiring CRP contracts that were enrolled under water quality conservation practices. Question regarding FSA Clear 30 should be directed to FSA.

UW Cals & Ext- Arriaga reported that the University of Wisconsin-Madison (UW-Madison) has been functioning during COVID and that UW-Madison has entered phase II of planning as it prepares for the start of the Fall 2020 semester and the return of students. Within phase II staff generally work remotely especially office staff, however lab work and other functions that require an in-person presence is resuming. UW-Extension has initiated limited in-person meetings for small groups and may approval some limited travel.

WI Land + Water - Krueger reported that WI Land + Water staff are continuing to work remotely full-time amid the COVID pandemic. WI Land + Water staff are continuing to translate in-person events, trainings, and seminars over to virtual settings when possible and cancelling some in-person activities that can't be translated. Krueger reported on the recent virtual County Conservationist Meeting, which had more than 100 people attend, including a keynote speech from WI Lieutenant Governor Mandela Barnes whom reported on the Governor's Task Force on Climate Change. WI Land + Water is in the process of planning the virtual December County Conservationist meeting and is evaluating how to proceed with the March Conference. Krueger informed the board that WI Land + Water has many new County Supervisors on Land Conservation Committees and following the recent April county elections WI Land + Water board of directors has changed. Furthermore, Krueger stated

that Monte Osterman is the new WI Land + Water board chair, Bob Micheel is the new WI Land + Water President, and Bob Mott is a new board member whom has also joined the executive committee.

DOA - Potts reported that DOA is in the initial phases of evaluating the 2021-2023 budget, which includes funding evaluations for SWRM and TRM grants. Funding requests are not due until Sept 15 from agencies and DOA is not expected to issue a decision until October or thereafter.

DATCP - Cochart provided an update on the Aerial Electromagnetic (AEM) survey project contract and progress. The AEM project is currently working to secure land needed to conduct calibration tests on the AEM equipment and DATCP expects to know more about contracts in mid fall, possibly ahead of the October LWCB meeting. Cochart stated that the new DATCP Depth to Bedrock standard (DATCP 01: Verification of Depth to Bedrock) should be published in September, 2020 and thanked Kate Brunner, WI Land + Water and Rachel Rushmann from DATCP for their efforts to publish the standard.

DNR - Weigel reported that DNR staff are transitioning into phase II of the COVID response plan. Currently, the majority of DNR staff are working remotely, while a few individuals will be reentering the office. The DNR will be initiating increased farm inspections with specific guidelines to be as safe as possible. Weigel informed the committee that targeted performance standards for ground water quality is moving forward. DNR stormwater staff have completed 114 facility permits and more than 400 construction permits have been issued in the last two months. Weigel announced that CAFO program engineers have reviewed 44 construction plans, re-issued 8 permits, conducted 24 inspections.

Member Updates- None entered.

Item #11 Planning for October 2020 LWCB meeting

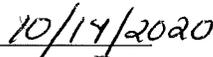
Trumble shared revised schedules for 2020 and 2021 for LWRM planning. The board should expect 2 5-year reviews, and 2 full plans to be presented at the October meeting.

Item #12 Adjourn

Mott moved to adjourn, seconded by Buttles, and the motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 11:49 am.

Respectfully submitted,


Bobbie Webster, Secretary


Date

Recorder: ZZ, DATCP