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**MINUTES OF THE COLUMBIA COUNTY  
LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MEETING**

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June 4, 2007

**Call to Order:** Chair, Robert Hamele, called the Land & Water Conservation Committee meeting to order at 8:01 a.m.

**Roll Call:** Robert Hamele, Chair/County Board Supervisor; John Stevenson, Secretary/County Board Supervisor/FSA Representative; Robert Stoltenberg, Vice Chair/County Board Supervisor; John Healy, County Board Supervisor; Donald Nelson, County Board Supervisor; Twyla Kite, Janice Kelly, NRCS; Sara Kehrli, DNR Wildlife Manager; Jim Bennett, County Forester; Harlan Baumgartner, County Board Chairman; Debra Wopat, County Board Vice Chairperson.

**Staff Present:** Kurt Calkins, LWCD Director; Kelly Maginnis, Administrative Secretary

**Adoption of Agenda & Minutes**

Motion by Nelson to approve agenda. Seconded by Healy. Motion carried.

Motion by Stoltenberg to approve minutes for May 7, 2007. Seconded by Healy. Motion carried.

**Review and Approve LWCD Monthly Vouchers**

Motion by Healy to approve the Land and Water Conservation Department (LWCD) Vouchers. Seconded by Stoltenberg. Motion carried.

**Old Business**

- a. **Update on 2007 Drinking Water Education Program for the Town of West Point** – the Educational meeting was held May 23, 2007. There were 121 participants, the limit they take is 150, so the turnout was very impressive. John Exo from UW-Extension reported that they usually have to include multiple townships to get to the 150 attendants. This fall we will be working with the Town of Lodi on the same project.
- b. **Update on Progress with Park Lake Management planning efforts** – A meeting will be held tonight. Last week's meeting involved 6 scenarios. We presented to them 6 different scenarios for their system. Basically the 6 scenarios were: 1) do nothing, maintain a turbid state; 2) dam removal, restore system to clear water condition, (remove dam, turn back into river, small pond area); and then the other 4 scenarios based on drawdown scenarios. PLMD Board will be asked to select a scenario this month.
- c. **Follow up on May 9, 2007 meeting with DNR urban forestry grant coordinator concerning opportunities for Columbia County Parks** – Calkins met with Jim Bennett and Jeff Rowe - he is in urban forestry, regarding grants for Wyocena Park and possibly work there. There is real opportunity to get a 50 percent match to do timber management and other projects as long as they can get money to match the grant. They will be working with either Bennett or a private consultant to do planning work for the project they want to accomplish there. The grant cycle is in October, so Calkins indicated he will be working on a proposal.
- d. **Other** - Jim Bennett reported that no emerald ash bore has been detected in Wisconsin yet. Although, the white oak disease is in Lewiston and Leeds. It is drought induced, creates stress on the white oaks, creates mites, then hit by other diseases. They found one testing positive with oak wilt disease. Leeds area is being hit hard. Lumber pricing is still in the slumps, very difficult to

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move red oak, almost fell off in market place, it is being mostly used for beams, cherry also took a drop, but white oak and hickory went up, walnut is the top of the line right now. The demand is for low-grade pulp again. There have been requests from main mills in upper WI for our area. There are research forests existing to create trees resistant to current diseases. Bennett reported that vandals sabotaged a research station intended to destroy everything just because they thought it was genetic altering, and in the process they destroyed 50 years of research.

Calkins indicated he has received a lot of calls about potential gypsy moth issues, and they have turned out to be tent caterpillars instead.

- e. **Other** – Calkins reported on the NRCS/FSA Co-habitation issue. They are at a point where the federal government is going forth with the plan, but eventually we have to come back and explore if the county wants to pursue us combining space. The lease for NRCS is up Sep. 30, 2008. We have to be thinking about getting this topic into the 2008 budget, it may have to show up in budget proposal. Chair Baumgartner indicated that in order to get it into 2008 budget it has to be in the process and presented to the project assessment committee (which consists of 2 members of property committee, the past chair, present chair, and vice chair). Vice-Chair Wopat suggested that Calkins work with Property committee. The offices involved in potentially combining space would be NRCS, FSA, UW-Extension Office and LWCD. Chair Baumgartner will put this on Executive Agenda for next week.

### New Business

- a. **Update on status of GLCI grazing grants for 2008, and discuss general grazing program issues** – The group had never really met as a whole previously. Laura Paine was there in her new role. The funding going into 2008 is not existent for GLCI grazing programs, it was an earmarked Federal program.
- b. **Discuss and Approve Resolution Relating to the Request to Regulate Phosphorous in Lawn Fertilizer on a State Level** – Calkins reported that he did have a call from Senator Mark Miller supporting that this resolution be done in each county. The resolution was approved to go to county board on motion by Nelson, seconded by Stoltenberg. It should be amended before final form is sent for distribution to Governor Doyle and State Representatives and Senators. Motion carried.
- c. **Discuss June 4, 2007 Columbia County Manure Users Group meeting** – Calkins did publicly notice the meeting for tonight at 7:00 p.m., he invited the committee members to participate. Calkins reported that the relationship we have with these local producers will guide animal waste management regulation. At the end of the year everyone has to have a NPM Plan. The necessity of them having one means we have to recognize a process of why they have to have one. Last month's discussion was that the farmers realize that there is a process. Calkins stated they want our office to get "those people off their backs", and the answer is getting into the process of regulating what is being put on your field and if you have a plan of doing what is right or not. Now they have a much easier way to do this and that is the people's reason for buying into this process. Dane County has enacted some very strict regulations into animal waste management and people don't want that carried over into our county. Chair Baumgartner asked if there is any discussion of methane containment. Calkins said it hasn't come up yet but it would be an interesting to discuss that.
- d. **Present and discuss 2007 CWD Update Report from Wisconsin DNR** – Sara Kehrlie reported that the update went to landowners with 5 acres of land or more. This update covers the public dialog process and they are currently compiling a board consisting of 30-40 members. This board will be for people to apply to that want to participate in discussion/feedback on establishing the CWD rules. Kehrlie also reported that testing for CWD was on 300 deer. The area tested this year

was for Richland, Sauk and Columbia counties. They switch off counties every other year. Outside of the CWD zones they will be sampling from the northern region of the state. They also have helicopter survey results to update the eradication zones. This year they counted deer from every section so they should be very accurate. The map gives the numbers from the core samples, they are at a high number consisting of 109 deer in one square mile. CWD works that way, they find a lot of infected deer in one area. Kehrli also reported that this deer season they are going back to the earn-a-buck system, it will be unlimited, and they DNR will be grandfathering any doe tagged from last year. If you tagged a doe last season, you will be available for a buck tag this year, or the same system for each deer taken last year. She also reported that the season dates are also listed in update.

Calkins inquired if they have helicopter flights for the whole State. Kehrli responded that no they don't cover the whole state, they only record from the sex, age, kill method in the infected areas. The "fixed wing flight" is done throughout the year in just the HRZ sites. Kehrli reported that she will try to get us the number for the fixed wing flights. Calkins said he was working with Pat Kaiser previously to do a DNR hands-on approach to landowners to give them information on the negative vs. positive factors for not shooting deer or being selective in their area. Calkins indicated he would like to educate people from a different viewpoint. Kehrli reported that they found 4 positive deer with CWD in Devil's Lake area, which borders our county. This number she reports is very high for 1 square area. This last year there are 15,000 less, and the number of does shot went down. This is one of the reasons why they are having the earn-a-buck system.

Kehrli reported that the CWD budget got cut about 2 million dollars, the Health & Human Services might change that. Columbia County would still be involved in the food pantry donation, most of the samples came from this program. With the food pantry, all the deer donated are tested. Their process is the meat isn't given away until the negative results are back. The studies done haven't shown that humans can contract CWD, they say it can not jump species. Although, they are doing studies now on other animals eating carcasses to see what the affects are if any. She reported that in Pennsylvania they now has CWD reports, because they have the highest hunting count. The biggest area in Wisconsin is in the Dodgeville area.

The issue also was raised to Kehrli about Sandhill Cranes and damage done to crops from them and if there will ever be a hunt to control them. Calkins stated that he will inquire with Phil from APHIS about this.

- e. **Discuss Columbia Counties participation in planning upcoming 2007 WLWCA Annual Conference Dec 5-7, 2007** - The State Conference takes place December 5-7. We are one of the host counties this year around the Dane County metro area. Kelly from LWCD will be the lead person assisting with planning the conference from Columbia County. We will attend the next planning meeting on June 26, 2007. A lot of new topics will be presented. Calkins reported it will take place at the Concourse. There will be a questionnaire sent out regarding feedback on topics.
- f. **Update on progress of 2007-2009 State budget as it relates to LWCD program areas** – The Governor's process consists of several new monies, including 12 million dollars for NPM. The Joint Finance Committee has endorsed his proposal, it is a strong message to the people.

Calkins reported that as far as we know, the monies are there and they are starting to talk as a State to utilize these monies. JFC reduced TRM programs by 2 million and need to get that program back in. It is our only real program to utilize if someone doesn't qualify for EQIP cost-sharing

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dollars. The priority watershed grants are gone. Calkins reported that we received \$46,000 this year for NPM, and we have to monitor it closely because the state has applied a usage scoring program. We only have so much given time and available staff to get the programs going and monies distributed. Calkins reported that overall, it is turning out to be a good state budget, the only problem is the staffing. The statute says there should be funding for staffing. You can't throw cost-sharing dollars for programs and expect deadlines on it but not provide additional staff or people to accomplish the programs.

- g. Discuss attendance at June 27, 2007 Southern Area Summer Tour in Dodge County** –Calkins reports that the Tour leaves from Juneau, and the tour will be making of several stops. He reported he will be attending as well as Mr. Nelson.
- h. Review and Set Upcoming Late Summer, Early Fall Committee Meetings** – Karen Nelson attended this discussion in order to set-up meeting schedule. July meeting will be held July 16, 2007, the August meeting will be held August 13, 2007 and there will be no September meeting.

### Agency Report

**a. NRCS (Twyla Kite and Janice Kelly) –**

Twyla Kite reported they will be busy doing food security, in compliance with swamp buster. Each year they pull a certain amount of tracks during the year. They have always been busy will field checks and EQIP checks. They will also be checking up on prescribed grazing, and they will be having office checks, busy checking files for proper documentation. Twyla passed out a flyer for the June 28th Multifloral Rose days. Healy presented a question regarding pastured corn. Twyla said it would have success although alot of farmers don't check back in to see if they can change the plan when it is possible. Only about 20 tracks get pulled each year for CMI reviews. In addition, if they get any complaints they add them to the list. Each year they have about 1 of 2 they have issues with.

Janice Kelly reported that they have wrapped up all their EQIP contracts from the previous fall, they are all signed & ready to go.

**DNR** – Sara Kehrli reported that last week they went through all of the spring turkey registrations. The result was Columbia County registered over 1,200 turkeys, 77 percent were adult toms, the other percent was jakes and bearded hens. The most successful period was the 3rd period. Sara reported that 2 weeks ago she attended a meeting at Leopold Center and decided to group 4 areas together for a bird center: they consist of Pine Island, the Leopold Center, Waterfall Production Area (between highways 33, 39 and 90/94), and Phil Pines. Those areas would be combined for management of birds.

**b. APHIS**

Not present

**c. FSA (Bob Kellsvig)**

Not present.

### Recess/Adjourn

Next meeting: July 16, 2007 at 8:00 am in the Annex Building.

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Kelly J. Maginnis, Administrative Secretary

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Kurt Calkins, Director