

**BAYFIELD COUNTY FORESTRY AND PARKS DEPARTMENT
COMMITTEE MEETING
February 14, 2022
County Board Room**

Members Present: Fred Strand, Chairperson; Jeffrey Silbert, David Zepczyk, Larry Fickbohm

Members Attending Remotely: Steve Sandstrom

Staff in Attendance: Jason Bodine, Administrator; Lindley Mattson, Office Manager

Staff Attending Remotely: Steve Probst, Assistant Administrator

Others in Attendance: Joseph Lebouton, WI DNR; Eddie Shea, WDNR Wildlife Biologist

1. Call to Order of Forestry and Parks Committee Meeting.

This meeting was called to order at 6:00pm.

2. Public Comment: None

3. Approval of the January 10th Meeting Minutes.

MOTION: (Silbert, Fickbohm) Approve and place on file, with one change. All: Yes. Carried.

4. Resolution. Support of Lost Creek Headwaters Land Acquisition Project in Partnership with Landmark Conservancy.

Bodine presented a resolution and map to the committee. Landmark Conservancy has agreed to help us locate the funds through Stewardship and WI Coastal grants. In order to apply for these grants, both require formal support from the Board through a resolution.

MOTION: (Sandstrom, Zepczyk) approve the resolution and forward to the full county board for approval. All: Yes. Carried.

Fickbohm commented both parcels have Lost Creek running through them and are very valuable to the County.

5. Wildlife Opening Maintenance Request.

A summary and map was presented to the committee. Eddie Shea, a WDNR Wildlife Biologist, went over the summary of wildlife openings done in 2021 as well as planned openings for 2022. 83 of the 96 scheduled openings for 2021 were completed totaling 59 acres. For 2022, the DNR is proposing 73 openings, for a total of 73 acres. 36 openings would be mowed and 37 will be hand treated.

MOTION: (Silbert, Fickbohm) Support the wildlife opening maintenance request from the DNR. All: Yes. Carried.

Comment on use of herbicide only when no other option is available. Some discussion on what types of wildlife these openings support.

6. Monthly Reports. Discussion of general activities, events, issues and accomplishments. Possible action on report(s) only.

- a. Forestry (all updates): Stumpage revenue was slightly below average at around \$230k. Roughly \$300k to date.
 - a) Carbon Project. Our project seems to be exceeding initial expectations. Carbon audit is scheduled for late spring.
 - b) Direct Timber Sale Increase. The Governor recently signed Wisconsin Act 128, which increased the direct sale limit to \$10k. The Act was presented for the committee.
 - c) Red Cliff Land Sale (348 acres) This project is moving along slowly. Currently awaiting approval from corp counsel.
 - d) CFL Withdrawal – Red Cliff Land Sale (706 acres) Withdrawal was submitted. Looking at completion of this project in the next 1-2 months.
 - e) Burns/Duquette Trespass CFL Withdrawal. Corp counsel is still in the process of finalizing this transaction.
 - f) Stewardship Project. The application for a Stewardship grant was submitted to the DNR earlier this month. The application for a Community Forest grant was submitted last month. These are the primary funding sources we are pursuing to acquire the Ceres Timber parcels (roughly 2,001 acres).
 - g) New Rec Position. The new rec specialist position is on hold until we find a new office manager. We continue to plan for future workloads.
 - h) Office Manager Position. The search for an office manager continues. Lindley will continue in her role as office manager until we find a replacement.
 - i) DNR County Forest Program Audit. This is a routine audit. The audit cycle was three years but has now been moved to a five year cycle. Our last audit was completed in 2017. This year's audit is scheduled for mid-April.
 - j) DNR County Forest Time Standards Revision. The purpose of the time standards calculation is to determine the total number of hours that the DNR will allocate to each county forest program. Currently, a total of 46,000 hours/year is allocated by the DNR across the entire county forest program (all 30 of them). Time standards are revised every five years.
- b. Campgrounds and Day Use Parks: Nothing new to report.
- c. Trails and Recreation:
 - a) Motorized Trail Updates: Snowmobile season has been very active. Clubs continue to keep the trails groomed and in good riding condition.
 - b) Non-Motorized Trail Updates: We will soon be working on an RPF for the initial maintenance of the orchard on the Siskiwit property.
 - i. Siskiwit River Preserve Conservation Easement. A conservation easement was a contingency of ownership when the land was transferred from Landmark Conservancy to Bayfield County. Bodine presented a draft of the easement for the committee.
 - c) Yurt Updates: Bodine presented the occupancy rates for each yurt.
 - d) Events: All events will be brought to the committee for approval.
 - i. Mt. Ashwabay Summit Ski Race. This event was held 2/5/22, the request came after the January meeting.
- d. Delta Landfill Update: the highway department is moving forward with some staging for the project

***MOTION:** (Fickbohm, Zepczyk) Receive and place reports on file. All: Yes. Carried.*

7. Recreation Request: Iron River Area Chamber of Commerce.

The chamber is requesting permission to host the annual Northern Pines Sled Dog Race. At a previous meeting the Committee approved the improved trail development plan and long-term rec use agreement. This is the official request for the race. Bodine recommends approval.

***MOTION:** (Silbert, Fickbohm) approve recreational use request for the Northern Pines Sled Dog race. All: Yes. Carried.*

8. Draft Management Plan for the Mt. Ashwabay SMA.

Bodine presented an updated draft that was originally shared with the committee in November. Updates include; more information on county lands located within the SMA, historic and future timber management as well as four detailed maps. Bodine went over maps in detail with committee.

Bodine and other forestry staff members will meet with members of Ashwabay, CAMBA and BATS on Wednesday to go over the plan.

This plan is meant to provide additional context and clarity in regard to how county forest lands will be managed over the next 15 years (2021-2035) and how recreation will be addressed as part of the planned timber management activities.

***MOTION:** (Silbert, Fickbohm) Approve the draft management plan for the Mt Ashwabay SMA recognizing that there may be changes or subsequent drafts. All: Yes. Carried.*

9. Committee Members Discussion. Silbert thanks Lindley for her service as office manager the last three years.

10. Joseph Lebouton – No comments.

The next Forestry and Parks Committee meeting has been scheduled for **Monday, March 14 at 6:00 P.M.**

Meeting adjourned at 7:10 PM

Submitted by,
Lindley Mattson