

# **DRAFT**

## **Buffalo County Minutes**

**Committee/Board:** Land Conservation and Resource Management Committee

**Date of Meeting:** Thursday, February 18, 2016

**Electronic and Hardcopy Filing Date:** Wednesday, February 24, 2016

The regular meeting of the Land Conservation and Resource Management Committee (LCRMC) was called order at 5:00 p.m. by Chairperson Dennis Youngbauer. Roll call showed that Dennis Youngbauer, Nettie Rosenow, Don Hillert, and Hank Weisenbeck (new FSA representative replacing Terry Sobotta) were all present.

Others present for all or part of the meeting: Carrie Olson, County Conservationist

**Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes** Ms. Rosenow made a motion to approve the December 8, 2015 minutes as presented, seconded by Mr. Weisenbeck. All in favor. Carried.

**Public Comments regarding posted agenda items** No public comments.

**Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) Report** Todd Mau, District Conservationist, presented an update on federal programs and projects. Environmental Quality Incentives (EQIP) Program sign-up ends March 4<sup>th</sup>. Projects are prioritized based on “shovel-readiness”, with approximately 40 new applicants. The Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) has 12 expiring contracts with options to renew, plus new sign up options. NRCS recently selected projects for funding through the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP). In Wisconsin, a cold-water driftless area stream project was funded, while the bluff prairie management initiative that Buffalo County drafted was not selected. Summer internship scholarship interviews are scheduled for next Friday for two students: 1) general natural resources work and 2) natural resources with emphasis on bluff prairie restoration & education.

**Farm Service Agency (FSA) Report** No report.

**GIS and Land Information Office Report** Jason Poser presented an update on the GIS and Land Information programs. Preparing to get long-term imagery Lidar in place with the county after a successful grant award. A discussion was held on the various applications that could be utilized with Lidar, including flood loss and repair evaluations, sediment analysis, etc. GIS Department has been preparing to move digital to become a paperless department. Ms. Rosenow asked for position description review as a future agenda topic with third party participation to assist with review of the technical aspects of the description. Buffalo County website functionality, future developments, and web-mapping applications were explained and discussed.

**CapX2020 Trout Stream Restoration and Bluff Prairie Restoration Applications** Ms. Olson presented the committee with a status report of funds allocated for these projects, funds spent, and pending applications requesting approval.

**Trout Stream Restoration Projects:** Funding was set up to expend \$100,000 of CapX funds over five years with matching funds for trout stream rehabilitation projects with approval by the Land Conservation and Resource Management Committee.

- Richard and Vicki Allemann- 3000 linear feet of Danuser stream site- requesting \$7,000 from County CapX funds with partners (Arcadia FFA, Wamandee Rod & Gun Club, WI-DNR, and Trout Unlimited) contributing to total project cost of \$50,000.
- Gerald Boberg- 1486 linear feet of Swinns Valley Stream- requesting \$7,000 from County CapX funds with partners (Arcadia Sportsman's Club, WI-DNR, and NRCS) contributing to total project costs of \$40,000.

Mr. Hillert made a motion to approve both the Richard & Vicki Allemann and Gerald Boberg applications as presented. Ms. Rosenow seconded. All in favor. Carried.

**Bluff Prairie Restoration Projects:** Funding was set up to expend \$75,000 of CapX funds up to \$15,000 each year over five years, subject to 50% matching funds for bluff prairie restoration projects, obtaining a signed contract with the landowner to allow public access on a regular basis, and with approval by the Land Conservation and Resource Management Committee.

- Tim Salwey 4.6 Acre site- requesting \$2,800 from County CapX funds with \$5,400 funded from USFWS Partners Program and \$3,000 match by landowner.
- Grace Hohman 6.1 Acre site- requesting \$4,100 from County CapX funds with \$7,100 funded from USFWS Partners Program and \$2,000 match by landowner.

Mr. Hillert made a motion to approve both the Tim Salwey and Grace Hohman applications as presented. Mr. Youngbauer seconded. All in favor. Carried.

**CapX2020 Application approval process** Discussion on policy development for both bluff prairies and trout stream application selection process. The committee agreed that stream projects should be funded with a maximum of up to \$5,000 per year and \$10,000 per landowner (for 2 stream stretches) for projects that will support habitat, improve water quality, and provide public access during trout seasons. Intent is to supplement projects with funds where needed (for R&G Clubs/Conservation Clubs). Committee requested Ms. Olson work with NRCS Mr. Mau to develop a draft policy and bring back to the committee for review and approval.

**County Trout Stream Easement Options** Mr. Mau and Ms. Olson led a discussion on a potential County-led program that would promote public trout stream restoration and recreational opportunities. The program would promote fish habitat and sediment control (by securing restoration projects) on local streams while allowing for public fishing opportunities. The County would be the holder of perpetual easements for areas of the county where a local conservation club was not interested in holding an easement. The committee had concerns with expenses of maintenance of the easement sites. Ms. Rosenow stated that a maintenance clause with responsibility on the landowner should be included into any agreement.

**Bluff Prairie Initiative Cooperative Agreement with USFWS** Ms. Olson provided a packet of information on the partnership effort between U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Partner's for Fish and Wildlife Program and Buffalo County. The agreement would allow the County to administer funds secured by the USFWS for bluff prairie restoration. Buffalo County would use CapX allotted dollars as a match to the landowner's contributions along with USFWS contribution of \$20,000. The partnership goal is to provide local landowner/community outreach and to restore 20 acres by next March, 2017. Ms. Olson reminded the Committee that this concept was originally supported at the October 2015 meeting. This is the final scope document. Discussion was held. Committee supported partnership agreement as presented.

**Outdoor Recreation Plan Update** County Outdoor Recreation Plan for 2016-2020 has been drafted. Ms. Olson is currently writing and prioritizing 'Action Items' for the plan, including projects, maps, trails, etc. that will enhance outdoor recreational opportunities. Once drafted the plan will require approval with a resolution through the committee and adoption by the County Board.

**Milestone Buck Ridge Rock Limestone Quarry Update** Reclamation permit and final plan submitted to County Land Conservation and Resource Management Department. Update given to committee to provide information on project, including: site location, access, permit decision timeline. Milestone owns Mondovi Quarry adjacent to proposed rock quarry site and will access and process limestone rock in existing Mondovi Quarry. Proposed site is not associated with industrial sand mining. County staff tasked to: review for completeness (60 day timeline), Public Notice in newspaper, optional Informational hearing, issue permit decision. Zoning is on similar track for Conditional Use Permit decision.

### **County Conservationists Report**

- Farmland Preservation Plan (FPP) Update- FPP Survey placed on Buffalo County webpage, sent out to Farmers Union list, Farm Bureau newsletter delayed. 22 responses so far.
- Garden Valley Pond Update- Municipal Dam Grant was submitted to WI-DNR who is currently evaluating the projects; selections will be made after March 21. Sediment sample results came back as acceptable. NRCS denied offer to assist with engineering.
- Awarded a \$100,000 match from Town of Belvedere, if successful with DNR Dam Grant.
- Nutrient Management Farmer Education Training held, 2 of 3 classes completed. Good discussions on cover crops and opportunity to work on NM 590 Plans with landowners.
- Youth Conservation Speaking & Poster contests were held in the Courthouse. Colton Brecka received 1<sup>st</sup> at the county contest and 3<sup>rd</sup> at the Area contest. Buffalo County had two Alma school students move onto the state competition for their posters: Kesley Secrist and Macy Stewart.
- Approved as a notary to better assist landowners through the conservation sign-up process.
- Worked with Technician, Tom Schultz to select and sign-up 11 landowners for cost-sharing projects based on priorities and funding available. Internal goal of the department is to rehab five CCC structures each year. We have 3 signed up for this year, along with grade stabilization structures and grassed waterway installations.
- Surveying and documentation was completed for last year's conservation projects; sent in reimbursement requests and associated data to the State for compliance.
- NR135 NMM Reclamation Annual Reporting due March 31 to DNR. Tim Wucherer working on compiling data and annual fees for the annual report.
- Land and Water Resource Management plan updates: 10 year plan (2012-2022)
  - New annual work plan requirements to describe specific measurable annual and multi-year benchmarks.
  - 5-year check-in report due to the Land and Water Board in Madison this year.

**Chairperson Report** No Report.

**Public Comments Not Relating to the Agenda** None given.

**Next Meeting Date** The next meeting was scheduled for Thursday, March 17, 2015 at 8:00 a.m. in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Board Room, County Courthouse, Alma.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carrie Olson  
County Conservationist