

Ashland County Land Conservation Committee
June 28, 2013
Ashland County LWCD Office

Minutes Approved 7-26-13

Present:

George Mika	Tom Fratt
Gerry Richardson	Mike Pero
Jim Oakley	Dave Schultz
Ken Lindquist	Tim Mika
Charlie Ortman	

Call to order: by George Mika @ 9:30 AM. The meeting had been properly noticed.

Minutes: Motion to approve minutes of 5-31-13 by Oakley/G.Richardson MC.

Public Comments: Ortman provided a summary of a meeting he attended in the Town of Oma in Iron County concerning iron mining in the Penokees. Ortman will provide a written summary that can become part of the public record for this meeting.

Additional public comments were received from Richard Ketring, Kelley Westlund and Kaeleen Ringberg with concerns for both iron mining and the potential for development of a concentrated animal feeding operation (CAFO). The comments centered on the need for continued vigilance to ensure that these large developments minimize environmental impacts to the greatest extent possible.

Agenda Items

1. Potential for CAFO in Ashland County

Fratt had received a request for information from Deer Creek Farms (Brian Anderson) about construction of a 10.5 million gallon manure storage facility to provide 365 days of storage for a farm that is “teetering” just below the CAFO threshold of 1000 animal units. Because the farms will likely become a CAFO in the relatively near future, any construction would need to meet standards for a CAFO. The DNR requires a pre-application for CAFO status be submitted 12 months prior, and all the regulation of a CAFO would fall under the jurisdiction of the WDNR. Fratt has referred the request to Duane Popple of the WDNR in Eau Claire and he will contact Brian to get headed down the correct path. This development, along with several other farms that have recently expanded or intend to expand, resulted in a request to have Fratt research and provide examples of agricultural ordinances that counties can use to regulate livestock management, and to review the LWRMP to see if and how the issue was addressed.

2. Metallic Mining Ordinance for Ashland County

The Ashland County ordinance received high marks at the Town of Oma meeting, and Iron County was urged to adopt the Ashland County Ordinance as their own. Development of local ordinances is seen as one way to ensure that any mining company coming to the area would need to work with the county to develop a local agreement, and the local agreements are the key to ensuring that specific protections are realized.

3. Conservationist Report

Fratt provided a report of his activities since the last meeting and highlighted some upcoming deadlines and important dates. Tom provided details of a lake landowners workshop about developing lake organizations to be held in the Mellen High School on

Saturday July 6th. Tom also discussed the award of 3 grants – one for drinking water (well) testing across Ashland and Iron Counties, and the two others for culvert replacements and streambank stabilization in the City Creek watershed south of Mellen.

4. Engineering Technician Report

Pero provided a handout with information about project status for 2013.

5. Wildlife Damage Specialist Report

Schultz provided a handout detailing his program activities since the last LCC meeting.

6. AIS Coordinators Report

Caven provided a handout of his activities since the last meeting. Additional discussion followed about remaining grant funds for the AIS program, future direction, and funding opportunities

7. Grazing Specialist Report

Tim Mika provided a handout of his activities since the last meeting and discussed the turnout at his place for a UWEX-sponsored field event.

8. Agency and Partner Reports: None provided

Other Business:

- Ortman provided a recap of the NW Lakes Convention recently held in Spooner.
- More information and coordination is needed to address changes to the Poster and Speaking Contests at the local and area levels, with the hope that things will be cleared up prior to our next NW Association meeting.
- The subject of silage bag pads was raised again. Fratt explained that while DATCP may allow cost-sharing of these pads, the NRCS will not, and at an estimated cost of \$50K it would be necessary to find an “outside” grant to build these. These pads would likely be a hard sell to most grantors unless the environmental benefits of the practice can clearly be demonstrated, and this information is not currently available.

Approval of Bills: A summary list of bills submitted for payment since the previous LCC meeting was handed out.

- **Motion to approve the bills by Ortman/Lindquist MC.**

Next meeting date: Friday, July 26th, 2013 @ 9:30 a.m.

Adjourn: 11:59 a.m. by Chairman Mika