

NATURAL RESOURCES BOARD

MINUTES

The Natural Resources Board met via teleconference at 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, November 15, 2005, in Room 774B of the State Natural Resources Building (GEF 2), Madison, for action on Item 1.

Gerald O'Brien (Stevens Point) Dan Poulson (Palmyra)
Herb Behnke (Shawano) Steve Willett (Phillips)
Chris Thomas (Stevens Point) Jonathan Ela (Madison)

Absent – John Welter

Order of Business

1. Consideration of further action on Board Order FH-42-04, revisions to NR 326 pertaining to piers, wharves, boat shelters, boat hoists, boat lifts and swimming rafts in navigable waterways

Mr. O'Brien explained that the Board acted on this rule at the September meeting, however it has not been sent over to the legislature yet. Staff has advised Board members that additional information exists that the Board may want to consider before the rule is sent over. Since the rule has already been acted on it is necessary that there is a motion to reconsider.

Todd Ambs, Administrator, Water Division stated research on the number of piers in Wisconsin lakes has been completed and there is additional scientific information from the North American Lake Management Society conference. It underscores that large structures in water bodies can have impacts on water quality and aquatic habitat. With those two developments, we thought the Board may want to reconsider the pier rule with this information.

Mike Staggs discussed the study that was conducted this summer at the request of the stakeholder group. The objective was to estimate the number of total piers and the size of the piers. Most of the 35 lakes studied were large lakes. Knowing how many piers there are will help everyone know who is affected and how shoreline habitat will be affected.

Mr. Willett asked if our current rule is ineffective. Do you want to strengthen it or incorporate the science?

Mr. Ambs stated that the new rule will be a little more precise. We are trying to zero in on very large structures that are impacting public safety and are being used for more than access to the water.

Mr. Ela MOVED, seconded by Mr. Willett to reconsider adoption of Board Order FH-42-04, revisions to NR 326 pertaining to piers, wharves, boat shelters, boat hoists, boat lifts and swimming rafts in navigable waterways at the December meeting.

Mr. Poulson asked how having 187,000 piers versus 400,000 will impact our rule.

Mr. Willett stated that we thought there were more piers and were unaware of the affects of very large piers.

Mr. Ela stated that it's a lake by lake impact.

The motion carried unanimously by all members present.

The meeting adjourned at 9:20 a.m.