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## NATURAL RESOURCES BOARD

### MINUTES

The regular meeting of the Natural Resources Board was held on Wednesday, April 25, 2012 in Room G09, State Natural Resources Building (GEF 2), Madison, Wisconsin. The meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m. for action on items 1-7. The meeting adjourned at 2:35 p.m.

#### ORDER OF BUSINESS

1. Organizational Matters

1.A. Calling the roll

William Bruins – absent	Preston Cole – present (via conference call)
Christine Thomas – present	Jane Wiley – present
Terry Hilgenberg – present	David Clausen – present
Greg Kazmierski – present	

1.B. Approval of agenda for April 25, 2012

**Secretary Stepp** requested the agenda be amended to remove the noon Executive Session from the agenda, which is no longer needed; and 2) to move to the last item of the day, information item 8B1 – HDR presentation on the comprehensive Study of Wisconsin’s Fish propagation System to allow extra time for Board discussion.

**Mr. Hilgenberg MOVED approval, seconded by Mr. Kazmierski as amended. The motion carried 6-0, with Mr. Bruins absent.**

1.C. Approval of minutes from March 28, 2012 **DELETED** (Moved to May 25 meeting)

2. Ratification of Acts of the Department Secretary

2.A. Real Estate Transactions

**Ms. Wiley MOVED approval, seconded by Mr. Kazmierski. The motion carried unanimously.**

3. Action Items

3.A. Air, Waste, Water, and Enforcement

None

3.B. Land Management, Recreation, Fisheries, and Wildlife

3.B.1 Request adoption of Emergency Board Order WM-03-12(E) and authorization to conduct hearings on Board Order WM-09-11 related to the bobcat hunting and trapping seasons **MODIFIED**

**Scott Loomans**, Wildlife Regulations Specialist, stated that if emergency rules are not promulgated, the season will automatically revert back to a single permit period beginning on the Saturday nearest October 17 and continue through December 31, 2012. These rules would establish the 2012 bobcat hunting and trapping season framework and eliminate the sunset of the season framework that was split into two separate time periods on a trial basis in 2010 and 2011. The emergency and permanent rules are identical. The trial season framework and regulations have worked well, providing a longer and more relaxed season with adequate protections from over-harvest. He requested the Board adopt Emergency Board Order WM-03-12(E) and to authorize public hearings on Board Order WM-09-11.

**Public Appearances:**

1. **Ralph Fritsch**, Townsend, representing WI Wildlife Federation as Wildlife Committee Chair spoke in support of the emergency rule. He stated the new season framework provides greater hunting and trapping opportunities by allowing these pursuits when there is likely to be more snow on the ground and frozen grounds allowing better access to back roads, trails and wetlands. **(Handout)**

**Dr. Thomas MOVED approval, seconded by Mr. Hilgenberg. The motion carried unanimously.**

- 3.B.2 Request authorization for public hearings on Board Order FR-19-11, relating to NR 47 subch. VII rule revision and subch. XIII rule creation of the Private Forest Landowner Grant Programs  
**Carol Nielsen**, Private lands Forestry Specialist stated that the WFLGP program provides grants to individual private woodland owners for implementing forestry practices on their own lands. The revisions proposed are aimed at implementing recommendations from the 2011 program review and providing opportunities for implementation of the Division of Forestry Strategic Direction. The main goals of the revisions are to streamline administration, provide for more efficient use of the dollars available and to provide greater flexibility over the administration of the program so we can continue to address changing landowner and forest resource needs.

Revisions for the WFLGP include modifications to allow the department to annually set funding levels and priorities; allow two of the four application deadlines to be adjusted as needed; limit matching grants to not more than 75% of actual costs; extend the grant period from 18 to 24 months; and allow for the use of nonprofit organization funding. The WMA-PFGP will provide grants to individuals or groups interested in controlling invasive plants on NIPF lands in Weed Management Areas. The proposed rules will be modeled after the WFLGP. The rules for the WMA-PFGP will include definitions related to eligible and ineligible applicants, eligible practices, and eligible and ineligible costs. The rules also will include grant and selection criteria; requirements for payment, reconsideration and enforcement; and provide for the use of other state, federal or nonprofit organization funds. She requested the Board authorize public hearings on Board Order FR-19-11.

**Dr. Thomas MOVED approval, seconded by Ms. Wiley. The motion carried unanimously.**

- 3.B.3 Project establishment and designation of the Lake Michigan State Water Trail and continue to study other waterways for inclusion into a State Water Trails Program  
**Dan Schuller**, Parks and Recreation Department Bureau Director, stated that water trails are routes that provide recreational users with information on access points, safety considerations, activities, and points of interest. He reviewed the four trail planning objectives 1) inventory existing locations, 2) engage stakeholder groups, 3) apply criteria to identify gaps where access or improvements are lacking, and 4) identify acquisition areas. He then reviewed the access analysis and the four access types of developed, carry-in, alternate, and emergency. He gave an overview of enhancement zones, public outreach, criteria elements, the two-tier system (local project and department project), and the designation process. He requested the Board approve the establishment and designation of the Lake Michigan State Water Trail and to continue to study other waterways for inclusion into a State Water Trails Program. **(PowerPoint)**

The Board discussed the great possibilities of the water trails of getting more of the public outdoors, that it is in the backyard of most of Wisconsin's population, and that water trails are already in the public trust.

**Public Appearances:**

1. **Darren Bush**, Monona, representing Rutabaga spoke in support of the Lake Michigan State Water Trail establishment and designation. He stated that in 1984 he moved to Wisconsin from California. He is happy and blessed to be here. He started Rutabaga, which is the largest paddle sport company in the U.S. He has paddled over 45 rivers, Lake Superior and Lake MI. Wisconsin's waters attract people from out-of-state. The economic impact of paddling is very significant. This is a really good idea.

**Ms. Wiley MOVED approval, seconded by Dr. Thomas. The motion carried unanimously.**

3.B.4.a. Washburn County CWD Positive Deer Update

**Tom Hauge**, Wildlife Management Bureau Director, reviewed the 2 mile deer surveillance area and the total CWD sample results by township in 10 and 50 mile buffers, CWD sampling since 2002 and from when the sick deer was collected near Shell Lake on November 19, 2011, the department's immediate response, future response, carcass disposal, and new protocols. **(PowerPoint)**

Discussion followed on the general attitude at the public meetings.

**Dr. Clausen** thanked Mike Zeckmeister, DNR Northern Region Program Manager for his work at the Spooner CWD hearing. It was handled as well as it could be. He walked away pleased.

Discussion followed on whether a baiting and feeding ban was discussed at the CWD meeting.

**Mr. Kazmierski** complimented the department on how they have handled the response so far.

Discussion followed on the tribal concerns of whether genetic testing will be done and that the department should have discussions with the tribes.

**Secretary Stepp** expressed her appreciation to the Board for their patience. She acknowledged the unfortunate gap in time for the sample to be tested. The department is trying to regain trust and support of the public and this took the department back a few steps. Going forward, they are putting protocol and accountability measures in place so this never happens again.

**Chair Clausen** thanked Secretary Stepp for her acknowledgement. The department learned significant things which are valuable in going forward.

Discussion followed on whether the disposal site was cleaned up, carcass movement and disposal recommendations, public outreach, ongoing costs and funding, CWD test costs, whether the department has access to federal funds for wildlife diseases, and whether the Board should direct the department to reach out to Congressman Ryan on federal funding.

**INFORMATIONAL ITEM – NO ACTION WAS TAKEN**

3.B.4.b. Request approval of antlerless deer quotas and permit levels and adoption of Emergency Board Order WM-05-12 related to an October, antlerless-only firearm deer season in the CWD Management Zone

**Kevin Wallenfang**, Big Game Specialist, stated that this rule proposal would re-establish the annual October, antlerless-only, four day firearm deer season that has been held in the CWD management zone. The rule establishes that a four-day October season for hunting with firearms for antlerless deer begins on October 11 instead of the Thursday nearest October 15. He reviewed the key themes from public comment and results from the deer forums. He thanked all the research volunteers.

He requested the Board amend the Secretary's Order to remove deer management unit 27 from the list of proposed herd control units in the 2012 deer hunting season framework outside of the CWD Management Zone. Unit 27 will be a "regular unit" with an antlerless harvest quota of 3,500 and 5,000 bonus permits available at the price of \$12.00.

**Mr. Kazmierski** distributed handouts on methods used to make deer population estimates. **(Handouts)**

Discussion followed on why unit 21 is a regular unit and not herd control, concerns of hunters that they are not seeing deer in units 35 and 36, whether the CWD hunt should be removed as an olive branch to CWD zone hunters, and whether there was public input on specific areas.

**Dr. Thomas** requested the department seek input from the landowners in the CWD area in the form of a survey on the department's Website as to what the department can do to slow the spread and incidence of CWD in the CWD zone that also would be acceptable to the landowners.

**Secretary Stepp** expressed her appreciation of the leadership team in Wildlife Management. She stated the importance of effectively communicating to the deer hunting public and balancing science. The department will review landowner ideas and address public/private land concerns. The department is on a holding pattern and looks forward to hearing from Dr. Kroll's deer team. They are going forward with cautious optimism.

Discussion followed on the importance of landowner input and what the department should do instead.

### **Public Appearances**

1. **Rob Bohmann**, Racine, representing WI Conservation Congress as Chair stated this is the first year WCC did not have a recommendation on the season structure. The committee did not take a position on a 4-day hunt. They recently finished facilitating six (6) town hall meetings for Dr. Kroll. The common discussion was frustration. This proposal has been out for only one and one half weeks. He offered that the Board should hold off for one month on approving antlerless quotas in some of these units. He felt more input or agreement was needed with the number of tags being made available. A discussion should take place to find balance between the public and the department.

The big game committee would like to see research continue to be done. They will work with the department on a citizen based research fund.

2. **Dr. Anthony Grabski**, Ph.D., Blue Mounds, representing self spoke in opposition to re-establishing the October antlerless-only four day firearm season in the CWD management zone. At a minimum, changes to the season structure like the return of the four day October hunt should not be made until the recommendations of Drs. Kroll, Alt, and Guynn's are first considered. **(Handout)**

Discussion followed on the CWD stakeholder group's recommendation of a December hunt in lieu of an October hunt.

3. **Ralph Fritsch**, Townsend, representing WI Wildlife Federation as Wildlife Committee Chair spoke in support of the proposed quotas and permits for the 2012 deer hunting season. The department listened to those of us in northeastern WI that had units with a zero antlerless quota last year but were slated for a substantial increase this year. He then expressed concern over the framework set out in the proposed CWD management unit and its reliance on the bonus buck program as the sole main incentive for greater antlerless harvest. **(Handout)**

Discussion followed on whether WWF had recommendations for the CWD zone, whether WWF supports the bonus buck program, and whether WWF had a position on the October hunt in the CWD zone.

**Ms. Wiley MOVED approval, seconded by Dr. Thomas as amended by the department to remove unit 27 from the list of proposed herd control units in the 2012 deer hunting season framework outside of the CWD Management Zone. Unit 27 will be a "regular unit" with an antlerless harvest quota of 3,500 and 5,000 bonus permits available at the price of \$12.00.**

Discussion followed on whether WI Conservation Congress' request to delay is feasible and concern that not one Joe or Josephine hunter showed up today to testify.

**Mr. Hilgenberg MOVED, seconded by Mr. Kazmierski to amend the proposal to designate unit 35 and unit 36 as buck only.**

**Chair Clausen** requested a roll call vote.

**The motion to amend passed 5 – 1 on a roll call vote.**

**William Bruins – absent**

**Preston Cole – yes**

**Christine Thomas – yes**

**Jane Wiley – no**

**Terry Hilgenberg – yes**

**David Clausen – yes**

**Greg Kazmierski – yes**

Discussion followed on whether the October hunt is pushing hunters further away and concern Board members may use their position on the Board to manipulate the hunting season.

**Mr. Kazmierski MOVED, seconded by Mr. Hilgenberg to amend to remove the CWD October hunt from the proposal.**

**Chair Clausen** requested a roll call vote.

**The motion to amend failed 1 - 5 on a roll call vote.**

<b>William Bruins – absent</b>	<b>Preston Cole – no</b>
<b>Christine Thomas – no</b>	<b>Jane Wiley – no</b>
<b>Terry Hilgenberg – no</b>	<b>David Clausen – no</b>
<b>Greg Kazmierski – yes</b>	

**The motion as amended passed on a voice vote.**

3.B.5 Approval of Predation Management Addendum to Sharp-tailed Grouse Management Plan

**Scott Walter**, Upland Wildlife Ecologist, reviewed Option 1 for predator control/removal – reduction in predator abundance via active removal efforts. He then reviewed Option 2 for predation management – habitat modifications to reduce the impact of predators on focal species. He discussed the current research priorities, research priorities from the STG Management Plan, and additional research goals. In summary, he stated that the removal of raptors is not possible, the removal of mammalian predators would lead to little benefit for STG, and that proactive habitat management that incorporates knowledge of how STG respond to landscape-level disturbance most likely to achieve Plan goals. Proactive Habitat Management was endorsed by the WI STG Society, the Friends of the Namekagon Wildlife Area, and the Friends of Crex. He requested the Board approve the Predation Management Addendum to the STG Management Plan. **(PowerPoint)**

Discussion followed on how successful habitat management has been in the last decade, whether STG is doomed in WI and whether the department should be spending money on this program, whether the department was aggressive in contacting the FWS regarding raptor control, and whether raptors can be trapped and transferred.

**Mr. Hilgenberg MOVED approval, seconded by Mr. Kazmierski. The motion carried unanimously.**

3.B.6 Ratification of Department decision to issue a Stewardship grant to The Conservation Fund (TCF) in the Town of Chicog, Washburn County for more than 50% of the acquisition cost

**Pam Foster Felt**, Nonprofit Stewardship Grant Manager, and **Karen Blodgett**, Natural Resources Financial Assistance Specialist, spoke jointly. They stated that the circumstances of this project meet the three statutory conditions and recommend approval of funding up to 75% of eligible acquisition costs to The Conservation Fund for 262 acres in the Town of Chicog, Washburn County. All five nature-based outdoor activities (hunting, fishing, trapping, hiking, and cross-country skiing) would be allowed on all the acres. Protection of this parcel would allow for coordinated management of this and adjacent DNR-owned lands; would result in conservation of 822 contiguous acres and approximately 3.5 miles of Wild River frontage. The property includes 2.5 miles of the Totagatic River, a State designated Wild River. Pine barrens communities on the property are identified as globally significant.

The applicant had match commitments at the time of application that have since been withdrawn. A 75% award would bring the remaining fundraising target of \$46,000, within reach of the nonprofit raising the match. A 50% award would mean a funding gap that they cannot reasonably expect to fill by the time the option expires. There is sufficient NCO funding remaining for this project after all other NCO projects in fiscal year 2012 have been funded. They requested the Board approve the Stewardship Grant of more than 50% but not to exceed 75% to The Conservation Fund. **(PowerPoint)**

**Public Appearances:**

1. **Representative Nick Milroy**, South Range, representing 73<sup>rd</sup> Assembly District, stated this project is of particular importance to the region. It is one of the true wild places left in Wisconsin. It has abundant wildlife and is a tremendous fishery. Over the course of the last 20 years, he has seen the parcellation and fragmentation of properties. The timber companies are selling off parcels which are turning into recreational properties. With less and less public lands, it takes away opportunities for young people to enjoy the outdoors. This project is important to the region for a couple of reasons: 1) wild places help define the people of northern WI, and 2) emerging tourism based on wild experiences. The Totagatic River is a state designated Wild River which is easily accessible. When you canoe down this river, you feel almost as if you are the only one. You do not see

any signs of civilization. If you have a chance, get up there to see this spectacular resource. He noted that Rep. Rivard, 75<sup>th</sup> Assembly District, is also in favor of this acquisition. He requested the Board save one of Wisconsin's last wild places by approving the Stewardship Grant to The Conservation Fund.

Discussion followed that these types of opportunities for public access are quickly disappearing.

2. **Tom Duffus** or **Bethany Olmstead**, Duluth MN, representing The Conservation Fund stated they were in attendance to answer questions and did not have testimony.

Discussion followed on whether there were any plans for this project to be conveyed to a public agency.

3. **Tony Tubbs**, Minong, representing Washburn County Lakes and Rivers Association. He stated that Rep. Milroy has all the passion of the river and that he echo's 100% of what he said. They long have had concerns on the impacts of development on the Totagatic River. In 2009 they were approached by the owners of the Solar property. Their Board voted to pursue the purchase and partnered with The Conservation Fund to make the acquisition. At that time, they had a verbal pledge of \$100,000 by a donor. Unfortunately, the donor had financial problems and the Association lost the pledge. The match did not happen. They are trying to raise funds through their organization of 114 individual members and 15 lake associations. A \$46,000 balance, if approved at a 75% level, is doable by the organization.

**Ms. Wiley MOVED approval, seconded by Dr. Thomas. The motion carried unanimously.**

**Dr. Clausen** requested an optional Board tour on the Totagatic River for Monday, June 25, 2012.

- 3.B.7 **Ratification of Department determination that prohibitions of nature-based outdoor activities (NBOA) are necessary: Village of Mount Pleasant, Racine County**

**Dan Kaemmerer**, Southeast Region Natural Resources Financial Assistance Specialist. He stated that Lavane Hessler, Local Government Stewardship Grants Manager who previously presented this project, was unavailable for today's meeting. He had been working with the Village of Mount Pleasant on this and their previous grant projects pertaining to the restoration of the Pike River Watershed. At the March 28, 2012 meeting, the Board requested information on two items: 1) Information on the recent history of hunting in the vicinity and on these specific parcels, and 2) A Review and Clarification of the existing Village of Mount Pleasant ordinances pertaining to hunting. Both items were covered in the Green Sheet package. As a result of this further review of their ordinance, the Village amended their request to the Natural Resources Board to ask only to be allowed to prohibit hunting on the 26.1 acres (29.5%) of this property north of Braun Road that lies within the village's prohibited area. The remaining 62.5 acres (70.5%) of this property south of Braun Road would continue to allow bow hunting. He requested the Board ratify the department's determination that one NBOA prohibition is necessary on one parcel in this project: 26.1 acre parcel located north of Braun Road in the Village of Mount Pleasant, Racine County.

Discussion followed on whether a hunting permit from the municipality is needed to hunt south of Braun Road, why the public could hunt on the one parcel before and now would not be able to, and whether the municipality could pass an ordinance to restrict hunting in the south area.

**Public Appearances:**

1. **Tony Bever** and **Attorney Ed Bruner**, Racine, representing Village of Mount Pleasant, were available for questions only. **(Handout - Maps)**

**Ms. Wiley MOVED, seconded by Dr. Thomas to bring this item off the table from the March 28, 2012 Natural Resources Board meeting for a vote. The motion carried unanimously.**

**Ms. Wiley MOVED approval, seconded by Dr. Thomas.**

**Mr. Hilgenberg MOVED, seconded by Mr. Kazmierski to amend as reflected in the April 16, 2012 Secretary's memo, that the Board Ratify the Department's determination that one NBOA prohibition is necessary on one parcel in this project: 26.1 acre parcel, north of Braun Road, Village of Mount Pleasant, Racine County.**

**The motion to amend carried unanimously.**

**The original motion as amended carried unanimously.**

3.B.8 Land Acquisition, Project Boundary Modification, and Partial Donation of Value – Tichigan Wildlife Area – Racine County

**Mr. Hilgenberg MOVED approval and to acknowledge the donation, seconded by Ms. Wiley. The motion carried unanimously.**

**Chair Clausen** moved the meeting to agenda item 4.A.1 Comeback Champs – Trumpeter Swans.

4. Citizen Participation

4.A. Citizen Recognition

4.A.1 Comeback Champs – Trumpeter Swans

**Secretary Stepp**, stated that Mary and Terry Kohler exemplify the best of what the private sector can do to assist the department in meeting our conservation goals. In 1989, the Kohler's heard from then-Governor Thompson that the DNR needed help to collect up to 50 Alaskan Trumpeter Swan eggs allowed by the Fish and Wildlife Service. Representing the Windway Capital Corporation, the Kohler's utilized their considerable experience and expertise as private pilots to fly DNR biologists Randy Jurewicz and Sumner Matteson to and from Alaska for 9 years. Of 385 eggs collected by WI biologists and transported by the Kohler's during 1989-1997, 356 or 92% hatched at the Milwaukee County Zoo.

The young Trumpeters that hatched out at the Zoo have been the foundation for what has become one of Wisconsin's greatest conservation stories ever told. Thanks to the tireless dedication of the Kohler's and many other partners involved in the restoration program, there are now nearly 200 breeding pairs of Trumpeters in the state, and last year over 300 young took to the skies over our marshes. Considering that the original recovery goal was 20 breeding and migratory pairs by the year 2000, we have witnessed a 10-fold increase of that goal.

The Kohler's support did not end with the Alaskan egg collections. They provided key financial support for over a decade that allowed our biologists to monitor the state's growing flock. Due to the great comeback of these magnificent birds, the Natural Resources Board authorized their removal from our state's endangered and threatened species list in 2009.

For their outstanding service to the State of Wisconsin in helping to restore the majestic Trumpeter Swan to our wetlands, Governor Scott Walker officially recognizes Mary and Terry Kohler as the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources' "Comeback Champs" for April 2012. She then presented the award to Mary Kohler. Terry Kohler was not in attendance.

**Mary Kohler** thanked the Board and department for the opportunity to fly to Alaska for all those years, collecting eggs, and seeing them in their wild state in Alaska. It has been a pleasure that she and Terry have enjoyed. They would like to continue to do so.

4.A.2 Rebecca Wallace Award

**Chair Clausen** stated that the Rebecca Wallace Award is given to a DNR employee nominated for making the greatest contribution toward either the improvement of relationships with external partner agencies and organizations on environmental quality issues or mentoring of staff. The Natural Resource Board created the award as a memorial to Rebecca Wallace, who was killed with her husband in an automobile accident in 1997. Wallace was an 18-year veteran of the department who was known for her dedication to her work and her ability to bring people together to solve problems.

**Secretary Stepp** introduced Spencer Wallace who was representing his family. She thanked him for being there. She then announced that Jeff Bode, Lakes and Wetlands Section Chief in the Watershed Bureau, was the recipient of the 2012 Rebecca Wallace Award. Jeff's peers recognized him for his exemplary skills and achievements in the two areas that are the major aspects of this award - building relationships with external partners and organizations and mentoring and serving as a role model for DNR staff.

Over his 35 year career in district and central office positions, he has been instrumental in developing and enhancing a robust network of lake organizations. The Wisconsin Lakes Partnership (which includes WDNR, UW Extension, and Wisconsin Association of Lakes) is the most visible and long lasting of these partnerships.

Jeff also stepped in and worked with the Wisconsin Wetlands Association and other wetland interests and guided the development of the Department's first Strategic Plan for Wetlands. Today, the Wetland Team has more than 20 different partner organizations from federal, state, local and tribal agencies to conservation organizations and the team continues to grow.

Jeff's co-workers recognized him in their nominations in how he has served as a mentor and positive role model in balancing career with community and his personal life. Throughout his career, Jeff has made it a major priority to devote a significant amount of his time to recruiting, training, and mentoring staff. He is known to lead by example, and is always willing to talk through ideas, asking questions rather than giving answers, and instilling confidence in those who come to him for guidance. It was frequently noted by his colleagues that Jeff encourages maintaining a healthy balance between their personal life and career. He has gone out of his way to help fellow staff with non-work and personal issues on many occasions.

She then congratulated Jeff in receiving the Rebecca Wallace Award for 2012.

**Jeff Bode** thanked Secretary Stepp and all those that nominated him. This is a very special award since Becky was a dear friend and peer. She was a person you were proud to be associated with. It was special to have Spencer at today's meeting. He babysat for him so Becky and Lyle could enjoy their time at the Wisconsin Dells one day. He first met Becky when she interviewed for the section chief job in water quality. He also was a section chief. What separated her from the others was her human dimension. She touched people. Her charisma and leadership outdistanced her from other candidates. What was really special to him, was that about one week or two week after she came on to the job, she asked him if he would be her mentor. Not only because she was a first time supervisor and manager, but because she was a big fan of the WI Lakes Partnership. She liked doing business using science and engineering and by bringing out the local communities. She really liked that model. She had a vision for working with lake, river, and wetland folks and matching them up with agriculture, business, and community to have it come together on a watershed basis.

He enjoyed private and fun times with her. He lived in Oconomowoc and Becky and her family lived in Lake Mills. Her home was located on his way to work and often they would carpool or travel to locations throughout the state. To know Becky, she was always dressed to the nines. She would come running out of the house all dressed up with soccer shoes hanging over her purse because later that afternoon she would coach the high school soccer team. She was a good person at work and in the community. This month, he eclipsed his 39th anniversary in public service with the state. He spent most of that time as a supervisor. He had hired over 200 people and mentored well over 150, not only within the DNR but with the University. He noted to Spencer that out of those hundreds of people whose lives and careers he had touched, there had been no one that he had loved and admired more than Becky. He was proud to honor Becky, her husband Lyle, and her family by accepting this award.

- 4.B. Citizen Participation  
None

**Chair Clausen** then moved the meeting to agenda item 3.B.9.

- 3.B.9 Land Acquisition - Ice Age Trail - Marathon County

**Dr. Thomas MOVED approval, seconded by Ms. Wiley. The motion carried unanimously.**

- 3.B.10 Land Acquisition, Partial Donation and Project Boundary Modification - Lost Creek Bog Natural Area - Bayfield County

**Dr. Thomas MOVED approval and to acknowledge the donation, seconded by Ms. Wiley. The motion carried unanimously.**

- 3.B.11 Land Acquisition and Project Boundary Modification - Menard Island Resources Area - Lincoln County

**Ms. Wiley MOVED approval, seconded by Mr. Hilgenberg. The motion carried unanimously.**

3.B.12 Land Acquisition and Project Boundary Modification - Stream Bank Protection - Honey Creek Area - Walworth County

**Mr. Kazmierski MOVED approval, seconded by Mr. Hilgenberg. The motion carried unanimously.**

3.B.13 Land Donation - Statewide Habitat Areas - Adams County

**Ms. Wiley MOVED approval and to acknowledge the donation, seconded by Mr. Kazmierski. The motion carried unanimously.**

3.C. Scope Statements

3.C.1 Request approval of the statement of scope for Board Order FR-07-12 regarding authorization to initiate rules for administration of a Time Standards grant for County Forests

**Jeff Barkley**, County Forest Specialist, stated this is a new rule and grant program. Presently, the Division of Forestry (DOF) provides assistance to County Forests, aligning workload with the statutory role of the DNR in oversight of the County Forest program. An agreed upon number of hours are provided to each county based on the workload for that particular county. The DOF's Strategic Direction process in 2011-12 realigned forest resources to better accomplish the DOF's mission in Wisconsin's Statewide Forest Plan. As part of that process each County Forest was given the opportunity to modify the suite of grants and assistance the DOF provides to their best advantage. Three counties (Iron, Jackson and Clark) had elected to reduce their assistance from DNR in exchange for funding that would allow them to hire contractors or seasonal staff to accomplish forestry work. The thought is that some of the forestry tasks could be done adequately using contracted or lesser paid staff, the end result being the ability to get more work done with the same amount of resources. The proposed grant program would be structured to focus on tasks already identified in the time standards agreement for each county. He requested the Board approve the statement of scope for Board Order FR-07-12.

**Mr. Hilgenberg MOVED approval, seconded by Ms. Wiley. The motion carried unanimously.**

**Chair Clausen** moved the meeting to item 5.

5. Board Members' Matters

**Dr. Thomas** requested a report in the near future on the prairie chicken nesting season to include where we are on an upward/downward trend.

**Dr. Clausen** requested this report be given annually.

**Mr. Hilgenberg** challenged department staff to continue down the path in seeking customer and citizen input. In particular, the Spooner CWD hearing and all the hunter forums. The more input from the public, the better for all.

**Mr. Cole** wished staff and Natural Resources Board colleagues a happy Arbor Day.

**Ms. Wiley** stated there is an issue on the state statutes as to what constitutes a trail. She requested the department clean up the statute so that it includes waterways as a state trail system.

**Ms. Wiley** then requested an inventory be created consisting of waterway systems being used as canoe/kayak waterways, to include the status of portages around dams. The lower Wisconsin waterway has only one by Sauk Prairie. Going up water, there are many. Post-9-11, the utilities built fences through the portages. Going forward, portages should be convenient and well marked.

**Dr. Clausen** reiterated comments from this morning on a great job done by both administration and staff on CWD in making a positive out of an unpleasant situation.

6. Special Committees' Reports

None

7. Department Secretary's Matters

**Secretary Stepp** stated that earlier this morning, the Board had a very frank discussion about CWD testing and the findings up north. She made a few key points of clarification. There was a story that came out literally minutes after the presentation insinuating that she was blasting staff. After talking with the Board Members off-line during lunch, she wanted to make sure no one interpreted it that way because it was never meant that way. It is a really unprofessional thing to do to dress down any staff no matter what company you work for. Her statements only had to do with accepting responsibility for a drop in or lack of protocol and making sure that again, this administration acknowledges things like this. We are not here to make excuses. She will continue to sing the praises of staff when appropriate; which is way more often than having to make negative statements about process. She also will continue to "own" the mistakes which were her intent in making the remarks. She hopes the Board Members and members of the audience interpreted her remarks that way too. The department has a lot of things to brag about at the DNR. The number one thing is the dedication, passion, spirit, and commitment of staff. The DNR has brilliant men and women on staff who have dedicated their lives and careers to the state and to the calling of the DNR. For many years, the songs were not sung about the good work going on. She will sing from the rooftops and also will accept responsibility when things do not go as well as it could.

There also has been a couple of dribbled stories that are out there with some allegations and insinuations that the department is not enforcing current regulations or new rules that may have been passed. When they first came in to this administration, they had six months left on the fiscal budget. They unfortunately had to hold the line on vacancies. It was no secret to past-Board Members just how devastated and neglected this agency had been, which is not an overstatement. Many critical vacancies were left vacant for far too long. Staff did the work of two and three people for many years. She has the utmost respect for the work they do and that staff will continue to do so going forward. The department had to hold vacancies over for that first six months of their administration. That did not mean the department did not address the problem. The core deliverables were identified and restated and then made staffing plans to make sure that the department was ready and able when the time was right and finances were better to be able to fill those needs quickly. The department continues to fill more vacancies. With these vacancies, our natural resources are not being protected. This is not the fault of department staff.

7.A. Retirement Resolutions

7.A.1 Stewart J. Smith

7.A.2 Daniel L. Thill

**Dr. Thomas MOVED approval, seconded by Mr. Hilgenberg of the retirement resolutions. The motion carried unanimously.**

7.B. Donations

7.B.1 Friends of Mirror Lake State Park will donate \$60,000 to help fund the replacement of the seating located at the existing amphitheater area of Mirror Lake State Park

**Public Appearances:**

1. **Waldo Peterson**, Madison, representing Friends of Mirror Lake State Park. He stated that the Friends of Mirror Lake State Park had been working with staff at the park and with Dan Schuller in which the Friends Group agreed to finance the amphitheater. The park is composed of 2,200 acres of land and surrounds 75% of the shoreline around Mirror Lake. It is Wisconsin's 9<sup>th</sup> busiest park and welcomes over 350,000 visitors each year. The renovations will include new seating, electrical lighting, landscaping, and covered stage. Renovations will be completed later this year. The amphitheater will seat over 200 people which will be used for naturalist programs, concerts, weddings, and many other activities. To assist in financing this project, the Friends group is donating \$70,000. This money was raised by members by cutting, splitting, bundling, and selling firewood to campers in the park - a lot of time, sweat, and effort.

He stated he is also on the Board of Directors for the Friends of WI State Parks which is the parent group for the local state park groups. There are about 81 friends groups in Wisconsin. The total value of the friends groups is in the millions. Without these friends groups, department staffing needs would no where come close to being able to operate the parks. \$410,000 was donated to the department last year due to concessions last year. \$240,000 worth in grants were given out by the department and matched by the Friends. Without partners, things would not get done. As Peter Biermeier and Dan Schuller can testify, if it was not for these partners, the department may have had to close down some of the state parks like other states did. Parks have a huge economic impact in the areas in which they serve. Parks allow us to interact with nature, rejuvenate our spirit,

and return home fresh. We all owe the friends groups a thank you. Years ago they hosted the Board to a Mirror Lake tour. He extended an invitation to this Board to join them at Mirror Lake to see the park, new amphitheater, take a pontoon ride on the lake, and then perhaps stop at a local restaurant for dinner.

**Ms. Wiley** asked Mr. Peterson to contact the Rib Mountain State Park Manager to talk about managing weddings. Her message was to not overbook the amphitheater.

**Mr. Kazmierski MOVED approval and to acknowledge the donation, seconded by Ms. Wiley. The motion carried unanimously.**

- 7.B.2 Menomonee Valley Partners will donate a sculpture valued at \$27,000 to the Hank Aaron State Trail in Milwaukee

**Chair Clausen** questioned whether the sculpture project would be completed in time for the August 7, 2012 Board tour.

**Mr. Cole MOVED approval and to acknowledge the donation, seconded by Mr. Hilgenberg. The motion carried unanimously.**

8. Information Items  
8.A. Air, Waste, Water, and Enforcement  
None

**Chair Clausen** moved the meeting to agenda item 8.B.2.

- 8.B. Land Management, Recreation, Fisheries, and Wildlife  
8.B.2. Real Estate Appraisal and Review Process, Stewardship Grants

**Doug Haag**, Realty Operations Manager, **Pete Wolter**, Statewide Review Appraiser, and **Pam Foster Felt**, Nonprofit Stewardship Grant Manager, gave a combined presentation on how the department values real estate as being funded through the Stewardship Grants program. They discussed the grant program appraisal requirements primarily based in statute, code, and the DNR Real Estate Handbook. They also briefed the Board on the appraisal review process. They noted that the department's real estate staff have a lot of experience and they work hard to make decisions supported by local markets. **(Handout)**

Discussion followed on how the department makes a decision to purchase a property such as the one before the Board at the March 28 meeting: a six (6) acre parcel in Madison at over \$70,000/acre, whether these parcels are buildable or whether the department is paying for wetlands, whether cost per acre is part of the selection criteria for prioritizing projects, and analysis on appraisal comparisons.

#### **INFORMATIONAL ITEM – NO ACTION WAS TAKEN**

**Chair Clausen** mentioned that Northern Region staff moved into the new Headquarters building in Spooner. He drove by it the other night and cannot wait to tour it.

**John Gozdziwski**, Northern Regional Director, stated they can add the Spooner facility to their brag list. It is a wonderful facility. He looks forward to giving the Board a tour. Yesterday when they opened the doors for business there was a line of folks waiting to get in. The deconstruction and recycling of the old building begins next week. They will have a grand opening/ribbon cutting some time in August 2012. Thanks for all of your support over the years.

**Chair Clausen** moved the meeting to item 8.B.1.

- 8.B.1 HDR presentation on comprehensive Study of Wisconsin's Fish Propagation System  
**Al Kaas**, Fish Culture Section Chief, stated that this study was driven by a need to understand the costs and timeline associated with the maintenance and renovations of the department's fish production system to meet the stocking goals now and into the future. The information contained in this study will be used to inform and work with our administration, the Natural Resources Board, the WI Conservation Congress, and the public we serve to implement

the work that is described in the work and to develop a funding mechanism to construct the improvements outline. In 2009, HDR Engineering, Inc. was contracted by the fisheries program through the Department of Administration, Division of State Facilities using fisheries program funds to conduct an engineering study to document the state of Wisconsin's fish production facilities and recommend improvements needed to achieve fish stocking goals. In concert with the fisheries bureau and the species teams, the fish production staff, the fish health specialist, and other prominent fish culture and fish health experts across the country, information about each facility were collated, reviewed, and verified during field visits. Conceptual improvements, attributed to existing facility conditions and the bio-criteria needed to raise fish, were developed and costs to construct the improvements were estimated for each facility resulting in the report today. He then introduced Tom Johnson, Senior Fisheries Biologist for HDR Engineering, Inc. and is the Vice-President of Aquaculture Services.

**Mr. Johnson** reviewed the 2 ½ year work effort. 24 DNR staff worked with their team of 8 people and did several thousand hours of work to generate this document. He thanked the department's capable staff and stated that this report is not just HDR's but theirs too. He gave a review of what was included in the four volume report: objectives of the study, detailed and systematic review of the seventeen (17) existing fish production facilities and the areas of critical review. He then reviewed long-term planning, the economic value of WI fishing, what the department's system includes, current use of stocked fish, age of facilities, how the facilities will benefit, fish production gaps, infrastructure improvement gaps, short-term and long-term construction program recommendations, funding options used by other states, funding sources used by various states, funding recommendations, and action needed by the department. **(PowerPoint)**

Discussion followed on the size of the project, when the last review in this specific area was done, and whether any other department programs are going through a comprehensive study process.

**Dr. Thomas** noted that the hatchery program may be the longest operating program, since 1870. At that time, the federal government had money for hatcheries. The downside is why it was started. Pressure on the resource was so great that the resource could not keep up with it. Pressure is still there. The habitat cannot produce enough fish for the demand on the fishery.

Discussion followed on the annual revenue on fishing licenses and stamps.

#### **INFORMATIONAL ITEM – NO ACTION WAS TAKEN**

**Mr. Cole MOVED, seconded by Mr. Kazmierski to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried unanimously.**

\*\*\*The meeting adjourned at 2:35 p.m.\*\*\*

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