

**Wisconsin Conservation Congress  
Alternative Funding Committee Meeting Minutes  
Mead Wildlife Area Visitor Center  
Milladore, WI  
Saturday, August 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2009**

The Alternative Funding Committee Meeting of the Wisconsin Conservation Congress was called to order at 10 am by Chairman Russ Hitz.

Members in Attendance were Russ Hitz (Dunn Co.), Allen Shook (Waukesha Co.), Mike Reiter (St Croix Co.), Richard Halverson (Clark Co.) and Roland Peterson (Ashland Co.). Kurt Thiede from the Department of Natural Resources was also in attendance.

Absent and excused was Don Bongle (Rock Co.)

Absent and not excused was Art Anderson (Vilas Co.)

1. Discussion on an Alternative Funding Committee Mission Statement was held. It was decided that Secretary Reiter would provide a mission statement draft to be sent via e-mail and hard copy to committee members for their review. Comments and suggested modifications to the draft would be provided and a final version would be finalized before the next meeting.
2. Russ, Mike and Richard provided a review of previous efforts of the committee to secure alternative funding for natural resource management. This effort spanned the time frame prior to 1997 when a proposal was presented to the Natural Resource Board (Dec. 1997 Green Sheet) to the present.
3. A request was made for Kurt to provide a copy of that Green Sheet which described the alternative funding proposal plus a copy of the notes that were taken at the "2009 Pheasant Fest Meeting" by Rich Kirchmeyer to bring everyone on the committee up to speed.
4. A motion was made, seconded and approved by unanimous vote of the Alternative Funding Committee to support the concept of alternative funding as presented below:
  - a. Shall the Constitution of the State of Wisconsin be amended to create a dedicated Wisconsin Outdoor and Cultural Heritage Fund by increasing the sales and use tax beginning July, 2011 by 1/8 of one percent on taxable sales until 2036 and allocate funding for the following purposes only:
    1. 40% of the Fund to conservation education; fish and wildlife land management; and, parks and trails
    2. 30% of the Fund to water pollution reduction; and, invasive species control and prevention
    3. 15% of the Fund to tourism promotion
    4. 15% of the Fund to the arts

5. Enabling legislation, the mission of the Outdoor and Cultural Heritage Fund, committee make-up and time lines for enactment were also discussed. Creation of a steering committee and subcommittees would be implemented this year and establishment of PR efforts would also begin in 2009. The Wisconsin Outdoor Alliance (WOA) would provide a core organization for the effort while the steering committee and subcommittees would be made up of individuals representing a variety of diverse resource groups.
6. Member Comments:
  - a. There is a need for public education concerning the “alternative funding package” to alleviate negativeness. Perhaps “alternative funding” is not an appropriate name for this effort.
  - b. Our Committee must keep abreast of what transpires with this effort and report back to the Congress the progress being made in a timely fashion. We must be proactive instead of reactive at all times.
  - c. A back-up plan in the case that the current proposal for dedicated funding is not successful has not been formulated.
  - d. Much more information will be available following the next scheduled meeting of the promoters which is scheduled the week of September 13<sup>th</sup>. Russ will attend this meeting and report back to our committee.
  - e. Our next committee meeting will be scheduled based on the progress achieved at the September meeting of the promoter group.

With no further business the meeting was adjourned at 12:00 noon.

Respectfully submitted,

Mike Reiter - Recorder