

Wisconsin Conservation Congress Ag Damage Ad Hoc Committee Meeting Minutes
Portage County Public Library
Tuesday, August 16, 2016
9:30 AM

I. Order of Business

A. Meeting called to order by Arlyn Splitt.

B. Roll Call

Members Present: Arlyn Splitt, Kevin Marquette, Marlin Laidlaw, Mike Rogers, Ken Risley, Brad Koele (DNR), Corey Trowbridge (DNR)

Members Excused: Todd Cook, Andy Geiger

Guests Present: Colleen Matula (DNR), Dan Hirschert (USDA), Al Shook (WCC), Kari-Lee Zimmerman (DNR)

C. Agenda approval or repair. It was discussed that Colleen Matula had a long return drive, and the agenda may need modification to allow her to do her presentation early to allow her to leave earlier to return home. Marlin made motion to approve. Second by Ken. Motion passed.

D. Review committee mission statement. Mission statement was read. It was discussed to modify last sentence of statement to read: The committee is to provide any input and recommendations for changes to this program at a district leadership council meeting. Motion by Mike to accept. Second by Marlin. Motion to accept passed.

E. Public Comments. There were no members of the public present to provide comments, nor were any submitted to the chair prior to the meeting.

II. Information & Action Items

A. Citizen Resolutions: Addendum to crop damage tags (050316). Arlyn read the resolution and a letter of support for the resolution received by Ken Risley from a Jefferson County citizen. After discussing the resolution, Mike made a motion to reject. Second by Kevin. Motion to reject resolution passed.

B1. Reviewed minutes from last meeting and committee questions from 2015 Spring Hearing. No further action taken by committee.

B2. Brad Koele gave a review of current status of damage programs for all species, annual WDATCP reports, shooting permit lists, and an update on charging fees for ag damage tags. A change in next housekeeping rule package will address a loophole where some participants were charging fees for tags/access fees.

B5. Colleen Matula gave a presentation on deer impacts to forest regeneration and how this applies to MFL properties. She provided pictures of browse damage on seedlings, forests w/ excessive damage, etc. Use of deer fencing, repellents was also discussed, and how WFLGP (Wisconsin Forest Landowner Grant Program) funds helped offset fencing costs to landowners doing tree plantings. Different production requirements were discussed, depending on the age structure of the forest at the time.

B3. Dan Hirschert from USDA, Wildlife Services, gave a presentation on their mission and responsibilities. That mission is to help mitigate wildlife conflicts across the country by various means. He discussed dealing with different animals in various parts of the country, and how they dealt with them, using lethal as well as non-lethal control methods. A couple examples are working with highway departments for beaver problems (plugging culverts), major airports, and goose issues, whether it be major crop damage or municipalities with excessively high local populations. He also discussed the methods they use to determine the extent of crop damage for financial compensation to the farmer.

B4. Discussing legislative action, Al Shook informed the committee that Joe Wiess has been asked to look into different items that have successively passed through the conservation congress process and have stalled at the capitol. After this has been done, an effort will be put forth through the legislative committee to move those ideas forward.

D. Rule simplification ideas. None were brought forward.

III. Members Matters

Mike Rogers-Hoped that the WCC could move forward the recommendations made by the committee during their earlier meetings.

Ken Risley-Would like to see this committee focus with working on with land owners extremely important to the future of hunting, fishing, and trapping.

Kevin Marquette-Would also like to see movement on previous recommendations/resolutions that have successfully passed through the WCC process. Also, would like to see more habitat management education efforts to get land owners to understand having too many deer actually hurts their efforts to keep deer on their property.

Dan Hirschert-Thanked the committee for the invitation to attend the meeting and would like to attend future meetings.

Korey Trowbridge-Mentioned that they do tell land owners that they need to shoot more does, but some are set in their ways.

Brad Koele-Appreciates the opportunity to attend the meeting. Goal is to make this program as publicly acceptable as possible, while helping the producers with their problems.

VI. Adjournment.

Motion by Mike to adjourn. Second by Ken. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned.

Submitted by: Kevin Marquette