



STATE OF WISCONSIN

Natural Areas Preservation Council

P.O. BOX 7921 · MADISON · WISCONSIN · 53707



**Natural Areas Preservation Council Meeting
Wisconsin Geological and Natural History Survey
211 South Blue Mound Street
Mount Horeb, WI
11 May 2016
9:30 a.m.**

MINUTES

(Subject to Council approval)

Present: James Bennett (chair), Sharon Dunwoody, Thomas Eddy, Kevin Anderson, Eric Anderson, Ken Bradbury, James Perry, David Mladenoff
Absent: Ellen Censky, Jim Woodford, Craig Thompson
Staff: Thomas Meyer, Dave Sample, Dawn Hinebaugh, Matt Zine

[Note: The February 4, 2016 meeting of the council was cancelled.]

Bennett called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

1. Adoption of agenda

Dunwoody moved (seconded by E. Anderson) that the agenda be adopted without modification. The motion carried.

2. Announcements

- Bennett: Introduced David Mladenoff of the UW-Madison's Department of Forest and Wildlife Ecology who has been appointed by the UW Board of Regents to serve as one of four UW System appointees to the council. Mladenoff holds a Ph.D. in forest ecology from UW-Madison.
- Bennett: Introduced Kevin Anderson, appointed by the Department of Public Instruction to replace Victoria Rydberg on the council. Anderson earned a Ph.D. from UW-Madison's Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis and serves as DPI's Science Education Consultant.
- Bennett: Craig Thompson with DNR's Division of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, has been appointed by the agency to replace Dave Sample on the council.
- Eddy: The Botanical Club of Wisconsin is hosting Botany Blitzes at Arbutus Oaks SNA on June 4 and at Winchester Meadows SNA on August 20. Visit the BCW website for more information.

3. Report on previous action items

A. Modification of Operation Procedures regarding council election process

Bennett restated the council's action taken at the October 8, 2015 meeting. The terms of the office of chair and vice-chair run for three years, subject to a consent agenda vote every year at the July meeting (or first meeting of the council after July 1), in order to comply with the enabling statute which requires an annual election of officers. Further, Bennett clarified that this action was not intended to be retroactive, i.e. the

three-year terms of Bennett as chair and Perry as vice-chair subject to the modification of the Operation Procedures began with their election at the October 8, 2015 meeting, the first meeting of the council after July 1.

B. Status of NAPC guideline development

1. Acquisition and Management of Forested Landscapes

Mladenoff and Eddy, leads for this issue, were somewhat unsure what these guidelines were intended to address. After much discussion, the council decided to redraft the document to read more as a “policy statement” regarding the defense of, and justification for, forested ecosystem protection by the SNA Program. Sample stated that SNA Program staff were in the midst of reviewing the program’s gap analysis, and that development of the forested ecosystem guidance should wait until that review has been completed, likely this fall. Sample, Bennett and Mladenoff agreed to draft new guidelines following the gap analysis review.

4. Action items

A. Minutes of October 8, 2015

Eddy moved (seconded by E. Anderson) that the minutes of the October 8, 2015 NAPC meeting be approved as distributed. The motion carried.

B. Guidance for sourcing plant propagules for SNA restoration

Zine: SNA Program does few plantings, mostly on SNA buffer lands and to augment species diversity on sites undergoing heavy restoration. Community types are mostly prairie, savanna, and woodland. The program seeks guidance from the council on sourcing propagules (mostly seeds) for these efforts. Issues to consider include: How geographically removed can seed source be to planting site? Genotypes? Site factors (soils, moisture, etc.) to consider? Species previously present on site but no longer extant? Propagule considerations – heavy vs. light seed, dispersal mechanism, etc.?

Perry, Bennett and Eddy agreed to form a committee to address this request. It may include a literature review and input from experts from outside the council. Evelyn Howell and John Harrington from the UW-Madison Department of Landscape Architecture were mentioned as potential collaborators. SNA staff will work with the committee to more narrowly define the questions that it seeks to have answered in the guidance.

C. NAPC Guidelines for the Use of Biological Controls on SNAs

Zine: The council’s existing guidelines on use of biocontrols in SNAs are very dated (1996), no longer reflect current state of understanding, and are inadequate to address emerging issues. He mentioned a recent request to the SNA Program to release parasitoid wasps on SNAs as a biocontrol agent for emerald ash borer. Staff rejected the request, but the justification proffered –the 20-year-old NAPC guidelines -- was a bit awkward. Perry agreed to explore the biocontrol issue and report back to the council.

D. Future meetings of the council

The council has scheduled July 26, 2016 for its next meeting. The meeting will be held in Central Wisconsin, perhaps in Marquette and/or Green Lake County. Meyer will arrange a location for a morning business meeting followed by a post-lunch field tour of SNAs in the area.

5. Information items

A. WGNHS spring inventory

Grace Graham, Associate Research Specialist with the WGNHS, gave a presentation on the statewide survey of springs she is conducting over the next two years. Information captured and placed in a database includes spring location, water chemistry and

quality, flow rate, ecological integrity, temperature, and site geomorphology. The inventory is being conducted to assist the Department of Natural Resources when it evaluates the potential environmental impact of new high-capacity wells, including the impact on nearby springs. Several springs inventoried are on SNAs.

B. SNA Tier 3 management plans

Zine: DNR master and management plans are placed in one of three tiers based on the complexity of the property to be planned. Most SNAs are placed in Tier 3 since they generally have no facilities, draw relatively fewer visitors, and have a single focus. The process for T3 plans is not well-defined, with few properties having been planned in this tier. The SNA Program will draft ~100 T3 plans over the next 10 years, averaging 10 plans/year, and grouping the properties with similar management issues and community type. Nine SNA T3 plans were developed over the past 5 months and will go to the Natural Resources Board for approval on May 25. The SNAs are dry prairies, mostly along the Mississippi River corridor.

C. Bureau of Natural Heritage Conservation report

Sample gave the report on behalf of Woodford.

- DNR continues its agency realignment, with the aim of making structural changes designed to improve efficiency. NHC has retained its status as a bureau. More information on the realignment is expected in June.
- The bureau is in the midst of work-planning and budget setting. There has been an increase in the number of gifts and donations to the program, thus meeting for the first time in three years the maximum 1-1 match of \$500K provided by general purpose revenue funds.
- The number of candidates for the NHC bureau director position has been narrowed to three, all of whom are DNR employees.
- The bureau is recruiting a Field Operations Team Leader position to supervise the four southern Wisconsin NHC District Ecologists.

D. Roads in SNAs

Zine: The legislature directed the DNR to inventory all roads on department property by July 1, 2017. Teams have been assigned to define the term "road" and to create inventory and mapping protocols. Although few standard roads exist on SNAs, the road definition may include access lanes, fire breaks and other linear, drivable features that could be accessible by vehicle. The impact to SNAs under this scenario is not yet known. Zine will circulate the existing NACP guidelines on roads in SNAs and the legislature's directive regarding motorized access and road inventory.

E. SNA land acquisition update

Meyer: The entire agency budget for FY16 land acquisition is only \$3.5 million and allotments to individual DNR programs are not being made. DNR is currently negotiating for a single large property that may consume the entire allocation for the year. Fortunately, it happens to a tract within an SNA project boundary.

F. Bernthal wetland project

Item deferred to a future meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:15 pm. Following lunch, the council toured the Parrish Oak Opening SNA, the Pleasant Valley Conservancy SNA, and the Black Earth Prairie SNA.