

Wisconsin Conservation Congress
Forestry, Parks and Recreation Study Committee

Meeting Minutes
Saturday, August 21, 2010
Sandhill Wildlife Area
Babcock, Wisconsin

Call to Order – Chair Gary Severson

Welcome and Introduction

Roll Call – Secretary Kyle LaFond

All members accounted for or excused

Mission Statement Review – Chair Gary Severson

Mission Statement read and discussed

Motion: Leave as read with no changes or amendments (Erdman)

Second: (Seidl)

Vote: Carried unanimously

Citizen Resolutions – Chair Gary Severson

540210 Allow Trapping and Hunting of State Park Lands

Introduced in 17 counties

Letter from author (Larry Myer) read to committee

Motion: Adopt as is (Olson)

Second: (Erdman)

Discussion:

The unique features and attributes of individual State Parks were discussed in relation to breadth and scope of the proposed resolution. A single resolution may not be adequate to provide for the management necessities of many different parks located throughout Wisconsin.

There is a pre-existing history of individual management of State Parks. This resolution may not be consistent with previous management efforts.

There are different management parameters for different types of State owned property. State Wildlife Areas are automatically open to hunting, while State Parks are closed to everything until opened as deemed necessary by the Natural Resources Board. The NRB can open everything but trapping.

There is interest in pursuing this resolution but it would be beneficial to re-write it with the input from the trapping committee. The Chair is responsible for consulting with the author of any resolution to create a question for the spring hearing.

The committee generally agreed that this resolution should be re-written. Additionally, work should be done at the Legislative level to provide that hunting and trapping seasons are open on State properties until closed by property managers or other governing bodies (currently seasons are closed until opened by necessity).

Motion to amend: Allow **limited** trapping and hunting on State Park Lands
(Olson)

Second: (Seidl)

Vote: Carried Unanimously

110210 Naming of Public Lands

Introduced by Lee Roberts

Naming rights given to Conservation Congress, not Wisconsin Governor

Motion: Adopt as is (Hamm)

Second: (Seidl)

Discussion:

The naming of public lands is a unique right. There are many larger issues that merit discussion before a particular property should be named. Traditionally, property names have been decided upon by the Natural Resources Board. This could be a very contentious issue for the Conservation Congress to become involved with.

The intent of the resolution is unclear. Several members expressed concern and would like clarification from the author.

Motion: Return to author (Duhr)

Second: (Erdman)

Vote: Carried unanimously

170410 Allow Bow Hunting Within the Hoffman Hills Recreation Area

Concerns an area of Dunn County

Motion: Adopt as is (Bowe)

Second: (Ellingson)

Discussion:

There is a need for more local information. Several committee members voiced a concern with the lack of background knowledge before this resolution can move forward. WDNR wildlife managers should be consulted prior to further action.

Motion: Request a rule change to manager (Bowe)

Second: (Erdman)

Vote: Carried unanimously

Member Discussion

The committee members requested a list of lands and definitions clarifying what properties are Wildlife Areas, Forestry Lands, Parks, etc.. This should be compiled by WDNR staff and provided to committee members.

Several committee members also questioned what Stewardship funding applies to. Specifically, the membership wants to know how state funds are appropriated to ensure rights and access to public hunting and fishing.

WDNR Updates

Emerald Ash Borer

Expansion has been detected throughout various areas of Wisconsin. These insects are easily carried and introduced to new areas through the transportation of firewood. The WDNR and Federal partners are working to institute new regulations to limit the spread of EAB. More attention should be paid to mill operations.

Gypsy Moth

Conditions were favorable to limit the spread of these insects throughout the spring and summer of 2010.

Farm Bill Requirements

Efforts are underway to compile a comprehensive statewide forest strategy. The process is now at the public input stage. Committee members are encouraged to attend public sessions and notify sportsmen of the importance of this process.

Hayward Nursery

This nursery is not currently generating a profit. Plans are underway to phase out this operation. Nothing will be grown past 2013. This facility may be used for other WDNR purposes. The WDNR is seeking input on ideas for better nursery management from both the public and private sector.

MFL

The Legislative Study Committee is now reviewing MFL practices. This committee is comprised of State Legislators, Agency officials, and members of the general public. The WDNR is encouraging participation in the process by Conservation Congress members and interested sportsmen and women.

Deer Research Project

The WDNR is working in conjunction with partners from UW-Madison and several other research institutions to plan and execute an extensive research project monitoring the influence of deer on the Wisconsin landscape. More information is available through the UW-Madison Department of Forestry and Ecology.

Funding Mechanisms

Due to difficult financial times, the WDNR is experiencing funding shortages. This will ultimately lead to fewer services and public opportunities.

Member Matters

There is real interest in supporting WDNR deer studies, updating maps of both Federal and State owned properties, addressing the issues associated with expanded UTV use, and creating designated areas for ATV use.