

WCC Private and Public Land Use Study Committee
Ramada Inn
Stevens Point, WI
October 15, 2011

Meeting was called to order at 9:03 am by Chairman Larrie Hazen

Roll call

Present: Larrie Hazen, Ed Choinski, Peter Doperalski, Alan Harrison, Matthew Jacowski, James Griglak, Gary Kanarowski, John Jones, Mark Knoll, Steven Washkuhn, Allen Jacobson, Dave Natter, Arnold Popp, Richard Warosh.

Excused: Jerry Aulik, Walter Camp, Kevin Marquette,

Unexcused: Greg Wysocki.

Also present for the Department of Natural Resources were Alan Crossley and Melissa Keenan.

Larrie Hazen read the Mission Statement and asked if there should be any changes. The Committee had no Citizens Resolutions and there was no Public Comments. Larrie Hazen asked to move to the DNR update.

The Department of Natural Resources Liaison Alan Crossley spoke about Public Lands. Larrie asked Al to speak about Act 21. Al discussed this briefly and basically stated the fact will affect how rules will take two and half years to see changes. Mark Noll commented the Congress will hold its meetings as we have in the past. The DNR side of the meeting will be different and it will add years to our process of rule changes. Mark also spoke how the rules changes will start with the Governor and how easier it will be to go to the Legislature than it will be to get something passed through our process. Larrie Hazen stated this is not productive. Gary Kanarowski stated the Governor asked to streamline things and then complicates it even more.

Matt Jacowski asked Alan Crossley why a property donation in Door County was turned down? Al replied there was crop land involved and the Department did not want crop land to come out of production. In the Southern part of the state we do for waterfowl habitat. We take each property one at a time to decide whether to purchase or not. Larrie Hazen asked is there a statue that will not allow you to purchase certain properties? Al, no. We look at properties by policy and objective. We don't like to grow crops.

Matt Jacowski asked Alan Crossley to speak about the fence project on the deer farm in the CWD Area. Is the Department going to put deer back inside the fence once a double fence has been erected to study them? Also what happened to the sale of the house on this property? Al replied the house will be used by the research people. Jacowski, people are not happy with the DNR owning a house.

Allen Harrison asked Al if it was possible to lease out Managed Forest Lands AB331 or AB311 (not sure). Mark Noll replied you cannot lease it out if it is closed, but there is a movement to open these properties to leasing. Alan Crossley stated he never heard of this one. Alan Harrison asked if this bill would reverse this? Crossley said he will have to look at this one. Harrison stated he is against this and if you want to lease then remove your land from Forest Management. Matt Jocowski said we need to get this bill stopped. Mark Noll the program is not being administered properly. If you want to lease take it out of the program. It hurts the County. It's all about big bucks and money. It is a big game being played here.

Knowles Stewardship Lands

Al Crossley handed out copies of a report. In the report one or more Nature Base Sports is prohibited in outline. Arnie Popp asked Al what is this 10,000 acres in Sawyer County about? It is open to the public? AL yes. The money came from the Feds, State, Stewardship, Forest legacy Easements to protect the land. Popp stated \$5 million just to hunt? Al it is a great opportunity to provide access to the public. It is very difficult to purchase land in the southern part of the state. Al Harrison asked if they still pay taxes. Al Yes, but only on the remaining property rights they still own. Arnie Popp asked once it goes into an easement, does it stay forever? Crossley, yes it runs with the land no matter who owns it. Noll does the state carry liability insurance? AL Yes Arnie Popp commented about Iron County being mostly State, Federal or County land.

Alan Crossley talked about the prohibitions on lands. We use the money to protect the lands. Larrie Hazen asked Crossley why is trapping not allowed on certain lands, you should allow it. Crossley stated there is a downward decline in any prohibition on the lands being purchased. Dave Natter asked how are we progressing on more land purchases. Crossley responded that the report comes out every two years and will forward to our committee when the report is ready. Matt Jacowski asked to send us the report for November 2012. Al Harrison stated the prohibitions should not be approved by the Natural Resources Board. Crossley responded there are three things we look at before we decide to purchase. Public Safety, Plant, and Animals. Sometimes local ordinances don't allow for hunting, there could be an endangered resource on the property. Al Harrison asked if he could find out information on the website? Crossley, Yes Transparency is what were working towards.

Dave Natter asked what happens when you partner with a sovereign nation? Crossley, I can't really say. Do you want me to send this information to Kari? Larrie Hazen Yes. Al Crossley stated the Nature Conservancy has three parcels looking to advance to purchase. One will prohibit trapping to protect Dragon Fly Species. We need a web based system to register so we know who is using the property. NRB wants an onsite registration. We really don't know how many people are using the lands. We are interested in learning about who is using the state wildlife area and for what purpose. Our survey boxes have a way of disappearing.

Mark Noll asked Larrie Hazen if we could come up with a question to support the collection of data to help Al Crossley. Crossley we really would like to know who is using the lands. Matt Jacowski said that maybe you should consider using Stevens Point College Students. Crossley thought this was a good idea.

Status of funding for current and past purchases.

Alan Crossley handed out more information regarding this issue. In the next two years there will be Five million for signs, parking, and roads. Mark Noll asked if money could be used for food plots on state land. Larrie Hazen stated that Minnesota does it. Noll, there is a big difference between public and private lands. Arnie Popp we need new growth in our forests. Matt Jacowski the department pulled the question concerning what is a normal agriculture practice. Noll should we ask the question. Larrie Hazen we need more logging. Noll National Forest has to be cut. Popp we need to cut for new growth.

Al Crossley spoke about the 178 wildlife areas in the state. Harrison asked what does BCPL stand for. Crossley, Bureau Commission of Public Lands. Public access is wide open. Mark Noll are you aggressively cutting State project Lands. Crossley yes we have been cutting 80-86% of our yearly goal.

Status of Master Planning for lands purchased

Al Crossley spoke about Master Planning. He said it allows property managers to take a time out to evaluate the properties and then project how we want to plan the future. We need a mechanism to hand over the properties to the next people after others have retired. Currently there is a big push to do master planning. Last time it was done was in the 1980's. We are in process of hiring more people to help. Currently it takes two years to complete a plan and we are working on reducing it to one year by 2014. We need to speed this up. Larrie Hazen commented that the governor wants this sped up and people are retiring. Al Harrison asked if you look at everything? Woodlands, wildlife. Crossley responded, everything eventually gets look at.

Strategies for future land purchases

Al Crossley said that whatever land we purchase should be critical lands. Recreational lands for high density populations. These lands are typically more expensive. We need to purchase more properties for conservation. We rank properties to indentify most important properties. Larrie Hazen asked how much Crop Land have you lost? Crossley responded that he really didn't know at this time but admitted that we have.

Melissa Keenan presented a power point on Voluntary Public Access. Currently there are 16,000 private acres leased for public use. Currently there is 1.4 million in monies to fund lease easements. \$300,000 to upgrade current leases, \$300,000 for new areas, and \$150,000 for the Southwest focus area. This money is per year for two years. She explained the payment schedule and all the properties are in the southern part of the state.

Al Harrison asked if you have to contact the landowner prior to going on the property? Keenan responded no. Most landowners do not want to be bothered. These lands are foot travel only and you have to obey all laws. Harrison questioned if a landowner can get out of the easement contract? Keenan, yes but they will have to pay back what they didn't fulfill on the lease agreement. Al Harrison asked if the program would end in 2014? Keenan responded yes unless we find new funds. Mark Noll asked how do you determine who gets in or does not get in the program? Keenan responded the closer you are to populated areas the better chance you have. Al Crossley said we focus on areas for bigger blocks of land and close to populations. It seems doubtful this program will continue. This committee may be able to help continue in the future through our legislature.

Al Crossley the governor has asked us to simplify regulation. Noll want to simplify things. How come there is a barrel length for hand guns?

Member Matters

Matt Jacowski talked about wetland mitigation and DOT closed an area close to Stevens Point and it should be open to the public to hunt. We need to promote the Congress. We need to stand up taller and stronger.

Al Harrison stated he believed the Congress will be phased out.

John Jones said the biggest turnout at the Spring Hearings was over cats.

Rich Warosh we are facing a storm and we have to defend it.

Allen Jacobson we are losing our viability under Act 21. I would encourage the Executive Council to think outside the box. We should not roll over.

Mark Noll We should go back and hold a Town Hall format meetings talking about everything. We should have discussions before voting. Our ballot system has changed this. We should get questions and solicit questions from the public. Mark also handed out a question that came out of the Big Game Committee. His handout provided a different avenue for issuing doe permits. Al Harrison question who would administer the permits. Noll the Game managers would still decide. Jcowski responded the private land owners will not shoot the does. Al Jacobon Yes they will. Noll Earn A Buck forced us to kill.

Larrie Hazen Because of Act 21 we have to stand together.

Ed Choinski talked about the deer study areas and asked if any of the members thought the mortality of fawns was normal in the Northern Zone. Noll responded that it has really opened people's eyes. Choinski stated that he has been witnessing this for years and nobody would listen. He further commented on the amount of doe tags issued in the

Northern forests. As the success rate for hunters drops the more tags have to be issued to achieve the Department's goals. This is wrong. There has to be a better way.

Mark Noll asked to Adjourn. Arnie Popp Second.

Meeting was adjourned at 11:54 am.

Lunch was provided by the Ramada Inn

Minutes of the meeting were provided by Secretary Choinski Oneida County