

FLORENCE COUNTY LAND CONSERVATION DEPARTMENT

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Department Administrator: Margie Yadro

Monday, July 6, 2015

6:30 PM

LAND CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MEETING

Florence County Courthouse

SECOND FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM

MEETING MINUTES

1. **Roll Call:** Chairman Edward Wenger; Supervisors Edwin Kelley, Jeanette Bomberg, Gary Steber, and Susan Theer; and Vice Chairwoman Yvonne VanPembrook. Farm Service Agency Representative Todd Broullire was excused. Also participating were: Florence County Conservationist Margie Yadro, Zoning Administrator Rich Wolosyn, Invasive Species Program Manager Scott Goodwin, and the County Farm Service Agency (FSA) Executive Director Matt Peplinski.
2. **Approval of the Agenda:** Moved by Theer, supported by Steber, all were in favor to approve the agenda as posted on Thursday, July 2, 2015.
3. **Approval of previous LCC Meeting Minutes:** On a motion by Steber, seconded by VanPembrook, all were in favor to approve the June 1, 2015 meeting minutes as submitted by Land Conservation Department Administrator Yadro.
4. **Agency Partner Reports/Open Forum:** Peplinski gave an update of new and existing federal agricultural programs and opportunities as part of the 2014 Farm Bill. He also reminded the Committee that Florence County is included in the FSA Committee Election rotation this year where the current member has served a full term. Yadro was given additional nomination forms for local distribution that must be submitted to the FSA Office by the August 3, 2015 deadline.
5. **Invasive Species Program Manager Summary:** Goodwin presented an outline of current invasive species grant projects and actions taken over the past six weeks. Highlights included watercraft inspections carried out at eleven public boat landings along with collecting water chemistry and AIS monitoring on many of the developed water bodies. Upcoming events include decontamination stations at local Fishing Tournaments, roadside invasive species mapping, and coordinating workdays and educational programs with WRISC partners.
6. **Administrative Summary:** Conservationist Yadro followed with a report that included a "Thank You" correspondence from the Florence County Lakes and Rivers Association for nominating them as the 2015 state Invader Crusader where their organization will be recognized this week in Madison; another received from WDNR Secretary Cathy Stepp for Yadro's participation as a member of the Florence County Deer Advisory Council. Other highlights included a grant proposal submitted for a Mitigation and Enhancement Fund in conjunction with the WDNR in the amount of \$150,000 over the next 3 years for increasing stream connectivity in the Pine and Popple River watersheds; a presentation to award Florence Schoolsteward purchasing "green" equipment; the Wild Rivers Invasive Species Coalition (WRISC) Annual Meeting; finalizing

staff interviews; along with regional conservation training and meetings. A copy of the recent Invasive Species Ad Hoc Committee Meeting Minutes was also provided where input continues to be sought in the development of a *Florence County Invasive Species Prevention and Management Guide*. Ad Hoc members emphasized the need to sustain a county-wide program addressing the increased invasive plants and animals that carry environmental and economic risks to local communities.

7. **Discussion/Action – Farmland Preservation Plan:** A copy of the updated text was sent to all Committee Members and Zoning for review and comment. Discussion followed on potential options for producer and agricultural landowner tax incentives, followed by potential risks to tax revenues generated, Zoning ordinance impacts, and added County enforcement and monitoring commitments. Yadro suggested including Keyes Peak Lodge as a public facility; the Hillcrest School as a resource for certified packaging and NWTC class offerings; economic development opportunities and related town planning commissions/assessors, along with county, state and federal conservation providers/programs; and, asked for confirmation of the Managed Forest Law (MFL) property tax rates. Yadro was directed to seek more information on tax implications and mapping related to potentially eligible parcels.
8. **Discussion/Action – Grant funded projects and proposals**
 - a. **Lumberjack RC&D Community projects:** Yadro reported the RV service island is operational. All grant funding has been completed with final signage being developed to recognize sponsors. The Lake Emily spawning reef grant project was also fully satisfied where Yadro has designed a poster describing the project for display at the boat landing kiosk. The Community Gardens Committee has reviewed a contractor proposal that would seek to finalize building construction before Labor Day weekend. Florence Schools has also begun installing their water bottling filling stations with Lumberjack approval to purchase 3 units instead of 2 at a slight lower cost per unit than originally estimated. The next priority proposal was suggested for fisheries improvements at Long Lake. On a motion by Bomberg, seconded by Theer, all were in favor to pursue Lumberjack RC&D Council funding for the Long Lake proposal as outlined. Yadro will follow up with WDNR Fisheries Biologist Greg Matzke for recommendations.
 - b. **Invasive Species projects:** In addition to the two Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) projects Goodwin shared, Yadro also contacted WDNR Lakes Specialist Jim Kreitlow to consider County eligibility for a \$20,000 Rapid Response grant. Moved by Bomberg, supported by Theer, Yadro will continue to pursue this AIS funding as emphasized in the *Florence County Invasive Species Prevention and Management Guide*. All were in favor.
 - c. **DATCP Conservation projects:** The (DATCP) report listed reimbursement changes for the Soil and Water Resource Management (SWRM) grant; changes to nutrient management reporting; expanded staff training opportunities; and Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) programs. In local cost-share projects, both engineering designs were completed for the culvert sites. A cost-share contract was entered into with Long Lake for \$17,500 with the ability to adjust through change orders if necessary.
9. **Discussion/Action – Conservation Legislation/Resolutions:** a neighboring county's draft resolution was presented for requesting sustainable conservation funding from the state. No action was taken.
10. **Discussion/Action –Expense Vouchers:** On a motion by Kelley, supported by Steber, all were in favor to submit the June expense vouchers as submitted.
11. **Future Agenda Items/Upcoming Meetings:** a Jul 15 & 16 County Conservationist Meeting in Wisconsin Rapids, and a July 30 Lumberjack RC&D meeting in Oconto.
12. **Next Meeting Date:** August 3, 2015 at 6:30 PM.
13. **Call for Adjournment:** On a motion by Kelley, supported by Steber, all were in favor to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted,

Margie Yadro, Florence County Conservationist
Land Conservation Department Administrator