

**North Branch Milwaukee River Wildlife and Farming Heritage Area
Citizen Advisory Committee Meeting - Farmington Town Hall
7:30 p.m., Monday, September 12, 2005**

Facilitator

Dan Wilson Washington County UWEX

CAC Members in Attendance

Mike Becker	Wash. Co. Farm Bureau
Mike DeMaster	SCCS
Jim Dieringer	Town of Farmington
Andy Holschbach	Ozaukee County PRLM Dept.
Brian Huiras	Town of Fredonia
Richard Mueller	Town of Fredonia
Kenneth Albinger	Ozaukee County Farm Bureau
Dan Wilson	UW-Extension Washington Co.
Rose Hass Leider	Ozaukee County
Eric Rathke	Town of Fredonia
Bill Miller	Town of Sherman

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

Dale Katsma	Wildlife Biologist
Tami Ryan	Wildlife Area Supervisor

Excused: Jill Hapner Hewitt
 Shawn Graff
 Steve Young

Meeting Notes

CAC members were welcomed and introduced themselves.

Reviewed March 14, 2005 meeting minutes and noted the Milwaukee Journal/Sentinel attachment (Don Behm article).

Governor's event

- Still on his calendar.
- Not confirmed yet.
- May occur in September (27th) to correspond with NRB meeting (North Branch easement on the agenda).
- NRB will also take a tour at this time

Questions arose about the CAC's representation at the NRB tour? Dale will check into this. Notification will be provided to CAC members. All are welcome and encouraged to attend.

Dale provided updates on parcel acquisitions/easements:

- Merkel's has been approved by the NRB. Closing is in a few weeks.
- 20-acre fee simple purchase of Wagner property near Huirus Lake.

- Two easement options are being pursued:
 - Weinhold-Cadigan near Lake Twelve (stewardship money, no federal cost sharing). 56.2 acres, buildings excluded from the easement (PDR easement with 100' buffer along river). Landowner donated balance between offer and appraised value. Mr. Weinhold has been a strong supporter of the project since 2002. This purchase fits the CAC criteria well. By consensus, the CAC approved sending a letter of support for the Weinhold-Cadigan property to the NRB.
 - Paul Mueller - 243.42 acres conservation easement – offer contingent on getting Federal funds. Recent tour by NRCS indicates they are supportive. Not as much information could be disclosed as much because negotiations are still underway. 142 acres are cropland CRP/CREP. It will probably be at least November before it gets on NRB agenda.
- Dale has 2 in the works – appraisals complete. Negotiations ongoing. Both easements.

OWLT update:

- Dan relayed information from Shawn that OWLT is just about ready to announce a 40 acre donation on the Milwaukee River within the Project Area. They are also working on several possible easements over the next 18 months. Finally, they are collaborating with DNR on a couple of projects (appraisal).

Funding (DNR) – \$36 million/year is provided by the Stewardship Fund. Our Project Area is unlikely to get much more funding this year since about \$20 million has been committed to purchases in northern Wisconsin. As a result, Dale has been putting off some pursuits. Due to NRCS cost-sharing, Dale has been focusing on large, agricultural protection easements. This program is currently threatened with reduced funding. By consensus, it was determined that the CAC a letter in support of the Federal Farmland Preservation Program to Senator Kohl with a copy to Senator Bennett to not reduce funding. A copy of this letter will be sent along with the meeting minutes to CAC members.

Rose recommendation that a resolution be pursued through the Ozaukee County Board since this may have more of an impact. The oversight committee is meeting next week. Andy will seek more information to see if a resolution can be drafted. Andy will share a copy of the resolution with Dan who will take it to the Washington County Land Conservation Committee.

Dale will draft the CAC letter and Mike DeMaster will review it. Rose and Andy will use this letter as the basis for a county resolution.

Active membership on CAC – discussion held. There is a faithful contingent. How do we move forward with inactive members? Do we want to continue as is, ask non-actives if they want to continue, and/or seek more active members. There was an overall satisfaction with membership involvement. It was decided by consensus to provide a non-judgmental means to resign in the next letter sent to CAC members.

Other CAC comments included:

- Commending Dale for his success and efforts to date!
- Need to find more funding. Dale plans to pursue other grant sources.
- The system is working – voluntary people are finding Dale, seeking him out with interest.
- Easements give the landowner control of other uses of the land besides development.
- Outright purchases by DNR are still being cropped by local farmers.
- Signage is needed to promote the easement program

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM.

Next meeting date – 7:30 PM on March 13, 2006 at the Farmington Town Hall