



Wisconsin Land+Water Conservation Association

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Legislative/Administrative Committee

Minutes of the August 18, 2021 Meeting

Meeting called to order by Calkins at 1:00 pm.

- **Roll Call** - All attendees virtual
Committee Members: Kurt Calkins Chair (Columbia), Paul Daigle (Marathon), Scott Frank (Shawano), Brian Haase (Waupaca), Erin Hanson Vice Chair/Secretary (Door), Melissa Luck (Richland), Dan Masterpole (Chippewa), Monte Osterman (Racine), Amy Piaget (Dane), Russ Rindsig (Barron), Paul Tollard (Fond du Lac), Ben Wojahn (Vernon)
WI Land + Water Staff: Christina Anderson, Matt Krueger
Agencies: Jennifer Heaton (DATCP), Katy Smith (DATCP) for a portion of the meeting, and Mike Gilbertson (DNR)
Other Attendees: Chris Arnold (Columbia) for a portion of the meeting, Chase Cummings (Dunn)
- **Adopt Agenda/Additions (08/18/2021)**
MOTION (Frank, Wojahn) to approve the agenda, changing order. Motion carried, no negative vote.
- **Approve Previous Meeting Minutes (06/16/2021)**
MOTION (Piaget, Rindsig) to approve the June 16, 2021 minutes. Motion carried, no negative vote.
- **Agency/Partner Reports**
Jennifer Heaton – DATCP
 - Public comments on Preliminary Joint Allocation Plan will be accepted until Sept 7
 - DATCP’s first technical standard (Verification of Depth to Bedrock) has been published
 - Coreen Fallat is lead for the ATCP 50 scope statement, scheduled for the September Land & Water Conservation Board meeting.
 - Any county that needs in-depth training on DATCP programs is welcome to set up with DATCP.
 - Innovation grants – the highest scoring projects received their full request this year. Partial funding was awarded based on project scores.Mike Gilbertson – DNR
 - Targeted performance standard for nitrate: a webinar series with information relevant to the current draft rule is ongoing. Previous webinars are posted on the DNR nonpoint page. A UW independent economic analysis webinar date is still TBD. The September Natural Resource Board meeting will have request to go to public hearing/comment for the draft rule. DNR will post the response to comments for the Economic Impact Analysis online once it is finalized.
- **Review of the 2022 Preliminary Joint Allocation Plan**
DISCUSSION: Heaton was asked to give background on DATCP’s future funding directions “allow cost-sharing for cropping practices for farms without a NM plan, but with a farm assessment”.

Some committee members were concerned about not holding farms accountable to meeting the minimum performance standards. Heaton explained that DATCP is aware of areas of the state that are highly resistant to nutrient management plans, where there is potential to for conservation through other practices. DATCP is evaluating the nutrient management program and SEG funding, but has not yet reached consensus on a future approach. Innovation grants through DATCP are not tied to a farm having a nutrient management plan. Other committee members spoke in favor of the flexibility DATCP is providing through innovation grants, noting that counties could take responsibility for including compliance with the standards in their proposals.

- **FPP Certificate of Compliance Related to DOR Use**

DISCUSSION: Columbia County is looking for confirmation that the process for communicating between DATCP and Department of Revenue (DOR) is working as it should. They have noted that parcels that have been merged/split/other title changes and do not receive an updated certificate of compliance from the county are still able to claim the tax credit and are not being audited by DOR.

ACTION: Katy Smith will follow-up with DOR to see if there is a database error to be resolved.

- **Debrief on BOD Approval of NMP Position Paper and Discuss Next Steps**

DISCUSSION: The Land + Water Board of Directors (BOD) gave unanimous support for the position paper. Next steps are to engage DNR and DATCP and preliminary discussion with other stakeholders. The executive committee requested that Krueger start engaging with farm groups and he has started to do so. Those discussions should occur first before engaging with legislators. The full Land + Water membership will need to be informed early in the process too.

ACTION: Krueger will share the position paper with DATCP and DNR to start discussion.

- **Discuss Legislator Engagement Strategy (Build Conservation Champions)**

DISCUSSION: Krueger has identified key legislators for future coordinated effort to build relationships, starting with field tours in fall 2021. WI Land + Water is able to help plan tours in their districts and provide consistent messaging. Discussion of existing fall field days hosted by committee members. Many key areas were not represented by committee members on the call.

ACTION: Krueger will reach out to counties in key districts to further discuss idea.

- **Discuss Possible Pilot Watershed Project in Marathon County**

DISCUSSION: Daigle described legislative efforts to fund incentive payments to farms for “superior farming systems” in one HUC-12 watershed as a demonstration project. Base is meeting the agricultural performance standards with a progressive payment schedule to farms that further reduce their Phosphorus Index below the state standard. They are seeking \$610,000/year for six years to expand their pilot program.

MOTION (Wojahn, Haase) to have WI Land + Water support future legislation related to this project, with the condition that the funding not be redirected from current/future statewide staffing or implementation funding. Motion carried, no negative vote.

- **Update on BOD Action Related to Proposed Bylaw Changes**

DISCUSSION: The proposed bylaw changes (previously reviewed by this committee) were approved by the BOD. Next the changes will be presented to the full membership for action at the annual conference in 2022. The BOD also wanted clarification that the originator of a resolution will be

involved in committee discussions and provided rationale behind committee decisions. This will be incorporated into the guiding principles of all committees, rather than the bylaws.

▪ **Update on Process for Further Assessment of Guiding Principles, Policy Positions and Legislative/Budget Priorities**

DISCUSSION: Krueger will have an update for a future meeting.

▪ **Legislative Updates**

DISCUSSION: Krueger provided updates on:

- Farmland Preservation Program bill passed out of committee in both houses, awaits scheduling.
- SB 494 <https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2021/proposals/sb494> WI Lakes Association is in opposition. Concern about changing the definition of private lakes and legislation while DNR is in process of updating rules related to aquatic plant management. Krueger will monitor.
- Draft bill directing WI Public Service Corporation to designate “agriculture-friendly solar installation” if various requirements are met. Unknown impacts, may have tax implications. Krueger will monitor bill language once it is available.
- Portions of water quality task force recommendations may be forthcoming. Krueger will monitor bill(s) language once it is available.
- Next steps for the “Clean Water Initiative” (joint efforts with DBA and others) are still TBD. Krueger and Calkins will soon be meeting with DBA. Long-term items may be a comprehensive review of the nonpoint and CAFO programs.

▪ **Other Items of Interest**

DISCUSSION: The Wisconsin Land and Water Board discussed FSA representatives to Land Conservation Committees. They are reviewing to identify if there are legal considerations related to Ch. 92 and to what extent there is/may be a concern. This could be a future agenda item.

▪ **Adjourn**

Next meeting dates October 18, 10:00 and December 10 (afternoon after county con meeting)

MOTION (Frank, Daigle) to adjourn at 3:15 pm.