NORTH CENTRAL AREA LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION – Meeting Minutes

Forest, Florence, Lincoln, Langlade, Marathon, Oneida, Portage, Vilas, & Wood Counties

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NORTH CENTRAL AREA LAND & WATER CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION

Meeting Date: 1/28/2026

Meeting Location: Winter Planning Meeting – Hosted by Vilas County

In Attendance: Kayla Littleton – Forest County, Lucas O'Brien – Forest County, Tom Boisvert – Lincoln County, Michele Sadauskas – Oneida County, Linnaea Newman – Oneida County, Kirk Langfoss – Marathon County, Kirstie Heidenreich – Marathon County, Caleb Armstrong – Marathon County, Jared Mader – Marathon County, Shane Wucherpfennig – Wood County, Cathy Higley – Vilas County, Quita Sheehan – Vilas County, Al Wirt – Vilas County, Camryn Brewbaker – Portage County, Audrey Gossett – Langlade County, Kathryn Bahr-Bender – Langlade County

Counties Present: Forest, Lincoln, Langlade, Marathon, Oneida, Portage, Vilas, and Wood Counties

Others Present: Kelli Myers – WI Land+Water, Mark Kaczorowski – WDNR, Tom Nedland – WDNR, Eric Stadig – WDNR, John Heusinkveld – Northwoods Land Trust

1. Kirstie Heidenreich called the meeting to order at 12:21 p.m.
2. Introductions were done of those in attendance.
3. Approval of Agenda.
    a. **A motion to approve the agenda as presented: Shane Wucherpfennig – Wood County, seconded by Linnaea Newman – Oneida County**
        i. **Vote: All ayes, no nays, motion carried.**
4. Approval of 5/13/25 meeting minutes.
    a. **A motion to approve the minutes as presented: Linnaea Newman – Oneida County, seconded by Al Wirt – Vilas County**
        i. **Vote: All ayes, no nays, motion carried.**
5. Presentation from Host County (Vilas)
    a. Quita Sheehan gave a presentation regarding Vilas County's volunteer bat monitoring program. This program has had high volunteer involvement and continues to grow annually. The program has been very successful with Vilas County contributing a large majority of bat population trend data for the State.
6. Treasurer's Report
    a. Kirk Langfoss provided the Treasurer's report.
    b. It was noted that the organizations finances are in good standing. For 2025, some additional expenses were incurred for professional services (legal guidance).
    c. Kirk noted that the next meeting will be to set the annual budget.

   d. **A motion to approve accept the Treasurer's Report as presented: Quita Sheehan – Vilas County, seconded by Linnaea Newman – Oneida County**
      i. **Vote: All ayes, no nays, motion carried.**
7. WI Land+Water Conservation Association Board Report
   a. Tom Boisvert (LCD Representative) provided a report.
   b. WI Land+Water is partnering with Nestle to administer conservation programming. The details of this program are still developing, but it may be similar in nature to the DATCP Producer Led program. WI Land+Water has accepted funding from Nestle to begin program development.
   c. WI Land+Water still has Canva seats available for County use. Any interested Counties should contact Kristin Teston for more details.
8. Reminder of WI Land+Water Annual Conference.
   a. Kirstie Heidenreich reminded the group that the annual conference will be held at the Chula Vista Resort in the Wisconsin Dells. The event will be held March 4-6, 2026.
9. North Central and Northwestern Areas Joint LCC Training in summer 2026.
   a. Originally WI Land+Water was looking to pair an LCC training with the North Central and Northwestern Area Associations. Kelli Myers now stated that there will be an LCC training for both Area Associations. There was not a central meeting point that would have accommodated both areas well.
   b. NCLWCA will host an LCC training in June. A date is to be determined. The event will be hosted by Lincoln County. The NCLWCA Spring Meeting will be held on the same day to hopefully garner additional participation.
10. Budgeting and Planning Items:
   a. WI Envirothon Support
      i. NCLWCA is intending to contribute $500 towards the Envirothon again in 2026.
   b. NCLWCA Youth Conservation Camp Scholarships
      i. NCLWCA will provide a middle school and high school scholarship to attend the WI Land+Water Conservation Camps. It was decided that each County will be allowed one vote during the scholarship ranking process. This will eliminate any potential bias.
      ii. Youth scholarships will be available for 2026. Tom Boisvert will work with Kim Warkentin at WI Land+Water to determine a scholarship deadline and the posting of this opportunity on the WI Land+Water website.
   c. NCLWCA LCC Scholarship for Annual Conference
      i. It was noted that NCLWCA will provide an LCC scholarship to attend the WI Land+Water Annual Conference. It was decided that each County will be allowed one vote during the scholarship ranking process. This will eliminate any potential bias.
      ii. This scholarship will become available in 2027. The primary reason for this is registration has already begun for the 2026 conference.
   d. 2026 Meetings:
      i. Spring Meeting (June) will now be paired with the LCC training.
      ii. Summer Tour & Meeting will be hosted by Marathon County (August or September).
      iii. Potential NCLWCA Trainings
         1. Training ideas discussed were: Grant writing and administration, manure spill response, and PFAS education.
11. Youth Education Update
   a. Caleb Armstrong provided the following update:

b. Poster and speaking winners from the Area Contest will now be advancing to the State Contest at the Chula Vista Resort in the Wisconsin Dells on March 4th.
c. WI Envirothon will be held on April 10th at the Lions Camp in Rosholt. Please consider making a $55 contribution (or more) on your WI Land+Water dues statement.
d. The middle school conservation camp for students in grades 6-8 will be held June 28th – July 1st, 2026 at Camp Lakotah in Wautoma, WI.
e. The high school conservation camp for students in grades 9-12 will be held June 15th – June 18th, 2026 at the North Lakeland Discovery Center in Manitowish Waters, WI.

12. County Updates
    a. Due to time constraints only brief updates were provided.
    b. Portage County
        i. Camryn Brewbaker provided an update.
        ii. Portage County is making great strides in nutrient management planning. Portage is receiving and utilizing more SEG funding than ever.
        iii. They have partnered with multiple other Counties on a Nutrient Management Farmer Education (NMFE) Program.
        iv. Portage is revising/renewing their Farmland Preservation Plan.
    c. Langlade
        i. Kathryn Bahr-Bender provided an update.
        ii. Langlade County has been busy renewing Farmland Preservation Agreements throughout the County.
    d. Lincoln
        i. Tom Boisvert provided an update.
        ii. Lincoln County is hiring multiple positions, including: A Conservation Specialist, an LTE Water Resources Technician, and three LTE Aquatic Invasive Species positions.

13. Agency/Partner Updates and Discussion:
    a. <u>WI Land+Water:</u>
        i. Kelli Myers, Conservation Training & Membership Services Manager, provided a verbal update.
        ii. The organization has hired Jonathan Taylor as the new Office Manager/Accountant.
        iii. Kelli reminded the group to submit nominations for the Farm Family of the Year award.
        iv. Kelli reminded the group to ensure any new LCC contacts after the spring elections are communicated with WI Land+Water.
        v. WI Land+Water is collaborating with WDNR to hold several waterway/wetland permit trainings throughout the State. The closest training for our area will be on May 1st, in Wausau, WI.
    b. <u>WDNR – Wetlands/Waterways:</u>
        i. Tom Nedland and Eric Stadig provided an update.
        ii. A handout was provided illustrating common conservation practices and any permitting requirements that may be needed. The document was discussed in detail.
        iii. Eric Stadig informed the group that he is now the primary Water Management Specialist for some of the Eastern Counties in our organization.
    c. <u>WDNR – Nonpoint Program:</u>
        i. Mark Kaczorowski provided an update.

ii. Mark notified the group of an NR 151 compliance audit initiative by the WDNR. Mark noted that WDNR nonpoint staff may coordinate with County LCD's to determine compliance on randomly selected farmland sites throughout the State. It was noted by County staff present that coordination will be done to the extent possible, but that certain properties may not have compliance data available. If any ground verification needs to be completed, it was suggested that WDNR and County staff coordinate that visit together.

iii. Mark reminded the group that the TRM and NOD grant deadline is April 15. Interested Counties should coordinate with Mark on potential projects.

d. Northwoods Land Trust:

i. John Heusinkveld, Conservation Outreach Specialist, provided an overview of the Northwoods Land Trust's mission and goals. John encouraged all County partners present to work with their regional land trust to accomplish mutualistic goals.

14. Other Business
    a. None
15. Adjourn at 2:30 p.m.
    1. **Motion to adjourn: Shane Wucherpfennig – Wood County, seconded by Quita Sheehan – Vilas County.**
        a. **Vote: All ayes, no nays, motion carried.**

Host County			
	Planning Meeting/ Area Poster & Speaking Contest January/February	**Virtual Spring Meeting May/June**	**Summer tour/Meeting August/September**
2026	VILAS	FLORENCE	MARATHON
2027	WOOD	FOREST	ONEIDA
2028	FLORENCE	LANGLADE	PORTAGE
2029	FOREST	LINCOLN	VILAS
2030	LANGLADE	MARATHON	WOOD
2031	LINCOLN	ONEIDA	FLORENCE
2032	MARATHON	PORTAGE	FOREST
2032	ONEIDA	VILAS	LANGLADE
2033	PORTAGE	WOOD	LINCOLN
2034	REPEAT ORDER ALPHABETICAL	REPEAT ORDER ALPHABETICAL	REPEAT ORDER ALPHABETICAL

Elected and Appointed Terms		
Role	**Individual**	**Term/Appointment Expiration**
President	Kirstie Heidenreich	April 18th, 2026
Vice President	Linnaea Newman	April 18th, 2026
Treasurer	Kirk Langfoss	April 18th, 2026
Secretary	Tom Boisvert	April 18th, 2026
LCC Rep. WI Land+Water BOD	Mike Ritter	May 13th, 2027
LCC Alt. Rep. WI Land+Water BOD	Linnaea Newman	April 18th, 2026
LCD Rep. WI Land+Water BOD	Tom Boisvert	April 18th, 2026
LCD Alt. Rep. WI Land+Water BOD	Tracy Arnold	April 18th, 2026