

Members present: Arnold Schlei (c), James Bove, Rick Seefeldt

Also present: Tom Lovlien-Forest Administrator, Jamie Polley-Director, John Beatty, Chad Keranen-DNR Liaison, Joe Tucker-County Forester

Call meeting to order – Meeting called to order by Chairman Schlei at 12:30pm, Rm 3, 212 River Dr., Wausau.

Public Comment Period – Not to Exceed 15 Minutes – John Beatty, 5901 Lakeshore Drive, Wausau WI 54401 commented on the upcoming fifteen year comprehensive plan and felt Nine Mile forest should be managed separately from the other forest units. He believed precedent has been set as this Committee has approved specific rules for forest use in the past and permits the shooting range at Nine Mile. He felt that Nine Mile is a place that meets both the County's stated goal of becoming healthier and its mission of providing recreational opportunities. Three examples where expanding opportunities exist are in the fall with the number of events such as high school cross country running meets, with extending the mountain-bike season past mid-October, and adjusting the rules so skiing can start as soon as the nine day deer hunt is over. All three examples promote healthy lifestyles, attract young people to the area and promote tourism here. Traditionally, all forests have been managed for timber and hunting and statistics say as population ages hunting is on the decline while other activities are increasing among younger people. The County has created a special use area for the shooting range so they could create a special use area around the ski chalet to accommodate greater trail use.

Approve Minutes – **Motion** / second by Seefeldt / Bove to approve the minutes from the August 6, 2019 regular Forestry/Recreation Committee meeting. Motion **carried** by voice vote, no dissent.

Educational Presentations/Outcome Monitoring Reports

A. County Forest Tour Discussion and Agenda – Lovlien said invitations have been sent out and the tour will take place on September 12th from 10:00am to 3:00pm. Items discussed include invasive species, road aids, wildlife, balancing the competing uses at Nine Mile, the Springbrook Road pine timber sale, rotating 80 year old red pine, the Nine Mile oak scarification site, and the Burma Forest Unit ATV trail. Lovlien will send out a reminder invitation this week Friday.

B. Wisconsin County Forests Association Fall Meeting – Lovlien said this meeting is being held in Rhinelander and will have some interesting topics. If any Committee members would like to attend the September 27th meeting they should let him know by next week.

C. 2019 Forest Certification Audit Preliminary Findings - Lovlien said a full recertification audit was completed this year which occurs every five years. This was the first year there were no Corrective Action Requests, no Opportunities for Improvement, and no Observations. This means that the County forest program according to third party auditors is doing a very good job in balancing the needs of a lot of different users on the county forests. It includes water quality, recreation, forest management, etc.

D. Update on the Potential Acquisition of CERES Property in the Town of Hewitt – Lovlien said that two appraisals had been done on the property. One of the values is under \$350,000 and one is over \$350,000. Because one of the values is over \$350,000 the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship guidelines require another appraisal that is paid for by the DNR. The DNR will then look at all three and certify one of them to be used for the grant match. Discussion followed.

E. Wisconsin County Forests Association Executive Director Hiring – Rebekah Luedtke has been selected as the Executive Director of WCFA following the retirement of Jane Severt. She most recently served as Center Manager for Minnesota Interagency Coordination Center. She will begin her new position on October 2nd.

F. County Forest Partnership Meeting Report – Keranen reported that at the partnership meeting they discussed County forest time standards, County forest work plan, conservation aid projects, forest certification, land use issues, and forest health. It's a good partnership between the County and the DNR and he expects that to continue. This year DNR staff worked more hours than the required minimum of 644 which helped meet the goals identified in the forest plan.

Operational Functions Required by Statute, Ordinance or Resolution

A. Discussion and Possible Action by Committee

1. Review and Consider Approving Fall 2019 Timber Sale Package - The fall timber sale package was distributed to Committee for review. The sale offers 327 acres of timber on six tracts with an estimated volume of 15,470 tons and 480.0 thousand board feet. Tucker discussed all of the sales. The sales will be advertised and the bid opening is September 30th. Questions were answered. **Motion** / second by Schlei / Bove to approve advertising the sales with a September 30 bid opening. Motion **carried** by voice vote, no dissent.

2. Develop a List of Potential Issues to Address with County Forest Plan Revisions – Lovlien said currently staff is in the process of identifying issues to address with plan revisions. A citizen response sheet was sent to individuals, organizations and adjacent landowners with suggestions being taken until September 25th. The response sheet is also available on the County website. Staff is currently reviewing and revising chapters 100 to 300. They will go to the Citizen Advisory Subcommittee on September 18 and will make recommendation to this Committee at the October meeting on revisions.

3. Review and Consider Approving 2019 County Conservation Aids Project – Lovlien said this annual grant of \$4,314 can be matched with County funds to improve fish and wildlife habitat. Two suggestions from staff were for improvements at the Shooting Range. The first, is to do retaining wall restoration and the other is for paving the entrance to the Shooting Range. Paving would be a multi-year project with a few sections being done at a time because of the expense. Schlei didn't think they could get much done with that amount of money. He thought they might be able to save some money if they brought in road base, milled it and then blacktopped over the top. Bove questioned if it would be better using granite or gravel. Lovlien thought that there had been concern in the past over dust. Lovlien thought they could wait and find out what the total project cost is and ask CIP next year instead. **Motion** by Schlei, second by Bove that the 2019-2020 County Conservation Aids project is do the retaining wall restoration. Motion **carried** by voice vote, no dissent.

Next Meeting Date & Time, Location – October 1, 2019 at 12:30pm, 212 River Dr., Rm. 3

A. Announcements/Requests/Correspondence – none

B. Future Agenda Items – Review Timber Bids and Award Contracts, 2020 Budget, Ragnar Trail Relay Race Summary, Nine Mile Event and Use Policy, Review of Revisions to Chapters 100-300 Forest Comprehensive Land Use Plan, Wausau 24 Race Participation and Revenue, summary of the timber bids

Adjourn – **Motion** / second by Bove / Schlei to adjourn at 1:35pm. Motion **carried** by voice vote, no dissent.