

**BAYFIELD COUNTY FORESTRY AND PARKS DEPARTMENT
COMMITTEE MEETING
April 8, 2019
County Board Room**

Members Present: Fred Strand, Chairperson; Jeffrey Silbert, Vice-Chairperson; Larry Fickbohm and David Zepczyk

Staff in Attendance: Jason Bodine, Administrator; Lindley Mattson, Office Manager; Jason Holmes, Inventory and Analysis Forester

Others: Joseph LeBouton, WI DNR Liaison;

1. Call to Order of Forestry and Parks Committee Meeting.

The meeting of the Forestry and Parks Committee was called to order by Chairman F. Strand at 6:01 P.M.

2. Public Comment.

Chairperson Strand called for public comment. After repeating the call no one came forward. Closed public comment.

3. Approval of the March 11, 2019 Meeting Minutes.

MOTION: (Fickbohm, Zepczyk) to approve the minutes as presented. All: Yes. Carried.

4. Wildlife Opening Maintenance Request.

Todd Naas, WDNR Wildlife Biologist discussed Forest Openings Maintenance. Since the 1970's the DNR has been maintaining between 500-600 herbaceous forest openings within the Bayfield county forest for wildlife habitat. Maintenance has been done in two different ways, mowing/ hand treating and/or with herbicides. Mowing or hand treating is done with brush saw, chainsaw or tractor/ATV with pull behind brush-hog mowers. Herbicide was used heavily when openings were initially developed, but today very little use is employed.

2018 Scheduled: 121 openings with 113 acres total. Accomplished: 113 openings totaling 110 acres. This year focused heavily on which openings were available to do with a mower. Some granular herbicide (Spike 20P) was used on openings that were too thick to mow. 2018 was a successful year.

Some committee discussion on Spike 20P, weather affecting productivity, and timing of mowing/cutting.

2019 Schedule: Hand treat 48 openings totaling 29 acres in towns of Tripp, Bayview, Port Wing, Orienta, Bayfield and Bell. Mow 41 openings totaling 49 acres in towns of Iron River, Tripp, Port Wing, Orienta and Bayfield.

MOTION: (Silbert, Fickbohm) to approve the wildlife opening maintenance request by the DNR for this year. All: Yes. Carried.

Chairman Strand asks committee if they are willing to roll it into the county's annual report/work plan. Same information, just presented as part of the county's work plan. Some discussion from committee but decided to keep it as a yearly agenda item and have Todd visit and report annually.

5. Continuous Forest Inventory (CFI) Program Update/Report.

Jason Holmes, Bayfield County Inventory and Analysis Forester presented information on the Continuous Forest Inventory (CFI) project. Planning began back in early 2018. Physical plot establishment and data collection began around May. Last year, a summer intern was employed to help with the initial establishment phase. A total of 99 plots were established in 2018. This year, in addition to the plots that will be established internally, the Department also contracted with Lumberjack RC&D on the establishment and data collection of 40 plots. In total, 667 CFI plots will be established across the entire county forest. It will take about 4 years to complete the first round. No other county forest program has made this level of investment/commitment in CFI.

6. Monthly Reports. Discussion of general activities, events, issues and accomplishments. Possible action on report(s) only.

A. Forestry (all updates)

a. 2019 Budget

Timber sale revenues were a little below average in March at roughly \$236,000. To date, we have received just under \$920,000 in stumpage revenue, which is also slightly under the last three year average for first quarter.

b. Stewardship Grant

The transaction with Ceres Timber closed on March 27. We now have to withdraw all of the Ceres properties from MFL and then enroll in CFL, as well at the match parcels. A map was presented by the administrator which highlighted the properties that were involved in the project (with the exception of purchase 2) Another map was presented showing Ceres Timber and Heartwood properties in the Bayfield peninsula that would be suitable for another possible Stewardship grant. Committee discussed what we could use for match properties as well as funding sources.

c. Oak Wilt

Oak wilt information has been distributed to all municipalities in the county as well as the county highway department. This info was also shared with all the rec groups that maintain any trails on county forest land. Currently Oak wilt has been detected in the Barnes and in Drummond area. Mid July is when the next round of detections will go out to see if it has expanded to other parts of the county. We are looking to update our firewood permit to have restrictions in cutting from mid April – mid July when Oak Wilt is most prone to spread. Committee discussion about possibly getting Oak Wilt info put on burning permits, to help spread the word. DNR has done a great job of disseminating the information as well.

d. Trespass in Iron River

Nothing new to report. The snow is just now beginning to recede. Hoping to have updates next month.

B. Parks (all updates)

Parks are still closed for the season. Expecting to have a slight delay in opening, possibly second weekend in May. We have some new signs for Big Rock and Adkins Lake.

C. Trails and Recreation (all updates)

a. Motorized Trails

Snowmobile trails are closed. The Snowmobile Alliance will have a new president in the next few weeks. The relationship between the Alliance president and Bayfield County Forestry is an important one. Hoping for a smooth transition. ATV trails generally open about the same time as parks.

b. Non-Motorized Trails

Ski and bike trails are closed as well. J. Bodine and M. Motiff will be meeting with a new group looking to form a regional trail recreation group with interests in Bayfield County land.

c. Yurts

Evergreen and Terra Cotta were 50% booked in February and currently at 55% for March. Cable was 43% in February and is at 40% so far for March. J. Bodine logged into the Airbnb website and gave a brief overview the reservation calendar.

d. Siskiwit River Estuary

We are still waiting for approval from WI Costal Management regarding the parking lot improvements. Hoping to get that approved and start working on that in the next month or so. Committee discussed some hearsay on parking lot location and size.

e. Yurts

Occupancy rates are strong. April tends to have the lowest occupancy rates due to trail closures. Our yurts have received a ton of interest from both private parties as well as other counties looking to duplicate our success.

f. Events

No recurring events approved, no new requests for this month.

g. FEMA Grant/Projects

i. Motorized Trails

Quite a bit of progress has been made, the project that was contracted out has been approved and sent to the state for final processing. The internal project is just about done, some minor changes and updates were made. Hoping to see an award this month.

ii. Delta Landfill

A lot of progress has been made here as well. Project has been made through various review queues and is now waiting on environmental and historical approval. Expecting another request for information (RFI) before it goes through. Hopefully more to report in May. Committee discussion on a “back-up plan” who could help cover costs if FEMA grant falls through?

***MOTION:** (Fickbohm, Zepczyk) Receive the monthly report and place on file. All: Yes. Carried.*

7. 2019 Spring Timber Sale Offering

Biggest timber sale to date. In total, 34 sales, covering over 2,800 acres, with a minimum bid value of over \$1.44 million will be part of this offering. Maps and harvest requirements for each sale are included in the packets. Also attached is a summary of all tracts, bid sheets, a locator map and the spring bid letter.

Two items are noteworthy for this offering. 1) one of the re-offered sales and four of the new sales contain significant harvest volumes, with heavy components of black ash, and frozen ground only harvest restrictions. These sales have traditionally been difficult to sell and the markets have not significantly improved. In an attempt to counter these issues, tracts 52-17, 4-19, 5-19, 13-19 and 16-19 are being offered as 3 year contracts (instead of the traditional 2); and 2) sale 24-19 is a ROW clearing in Cable, along Randysek Road. The Town of Cable requested this clearing to open up the roadway for maintenance purposes. Randysek Road is a snowmobile route and is also heavily used by bikers. CAMBA as well as the Berkie board is aware of the sale. We have done sales like this in the past for wildfire protection purposes in the Barnes Barrens area. Committee recommends contacting new Cable Town Chair to notify him of the sale.

Committee discussion about timber sales and keeping in contact with all recreation groups that utilize Bayfield County Forest. J. Bodine states there is ongoing dialogue keeping groups up to date on sales.

***MOTION:** (Fickbohm, Zepczyk) Approve proposed timber sales for advertising. All: Yes. Carried.*

8. Recreational Use Request

Chequamegon Area Mountain Bike Association (CAMBA) is requesting permission to use existing trails around Mt. Ashwabay for a Women's Mountain Bike Clinic May 17-19. J. Bodine recommends approval.

***MOTION:** (Silbert, Fickbohm). Approve the recreational use request for the Women's Mountain Bike Clinic. All: Yes. Carried.*

9. 2018 Accomplishment Report

Report is not yet completed. J Bodine is hoping to have it out in the next couple weeks, so committee has a chance to look it over before the May meeting.

10. Resolution Authorizing Participation in Various State and Federal Aid/Grant Programs

The annual applications for state assistance to maintain the motorized trail networks (snowmobile and ATV) is due around the middle of this month. As a requirement of that application, we need to include a resolution that gives us the authority to make the application and manage the programs.

***MOTION:** (Silbert, Zepczyk). Approve resolution for the participation and outdoor motorized recreation trail aids, stewardship local assistance grants programs and federal recreation trails act and pass the recommendation to the full county board. All: Yes. Carried.*

Joseph LeBouton, DNR Liason Comments

Wants to thank county for getting this 2019 spring timber sale together. Foresters are a great group of people. States he can see large growth in the forestry department in the last couple years.

Meeting adjourned at 7:27 P.M

The next Forestry and Parks Committee meeting will be held **Monday, May 13, 2019 at 6:00 P.M.** at Bayfield County Courthouse, County Board Room, Second Floor, 117 E. 5th Street, Washburn, Wisconsin.

Submitted by,
Lindley Mattson