

**RUSK COUNTY LAND & WATER CONSERVATION COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES**

“Not Committee Approved”

DATE: March 13, 2018
ROLL CALL: A. RATHSACK, R. GIERKE, G. SWOVERLAND
OTHERS PRESENT: C. TESKY, P. RICHTER, J. ELM, S. ZESIGER

Open Session: Meeting called to order @ 8:00 AM by Alan Rathsack

Minutes: Gierke/Swoverland motion to approve minutes from Jan. 9, 2018. Motion carried.

Next Meeting Date: Tuesday, May 8, 2018 @ 8:00 A.M

Payment Approval Report: Gierke/Swoverland motion to approve payment approval report. Motion carried.

Wildlife Damage Claim Program: Zesiger is getting ready for spring start-up. The seasonal employees begin April 2. Rusk County Forestry and Highway and the Towns of Strickland and Hubbard are signed up for the beaver program this year. Two farms were treated for starlings this winter. Zesiger had to move a bear in early February that had found it's way to a farm.

NRCS Report: Richter introduced Jared Elm, the new area forester with the Ruffed Grouse Society. He will be helping with young forest management in the NW area. The best way to accomplish this is through farm bill funding. Richter has 18 contracts for young forest/alder shearing projects. Several of those have multiple sites. For EQIP, everything applied for in Rusk County has been funded. \$165,533 in contracts has been signed. The Conservation Stewardship Program enrollment has been going well. 4500 acres have been enrolled in Rusk County.

Farm Service Agency: None provided.

Land Conservation Report: Tesky read a report provided by Krell. The 2017 SWRM reimbursement was received. It was \$98,906. The Farmland Preservation Plan was certified by DATCP and is good until December 31, 2028. The grant reimbursement for doing the plan came in higher than expected at \$27,082. The office hosted a Nutrient Management workshop for local farmers. There were 14 speakers in the county speaking contest in January. 2 speakers went on to the Northwest Area contest in Spooner. Staff is working on 3 new manure pits with nutrient management plans, one barnyard and one subsurface drain. Runstrom has been working on nonmetallic mining and LW staff will likely take this over from zoning in the near future. Krell has been assisting in the possible repurposing of a waste storage facility at the NW Mink Ranch. There is a CDAC meeting on March 19, the Farm Show on March 24 and the trees will be in for the tree sale at the end of April, depending on the weather.

Land Conservation and Development Department: Tesky reported that she has been working on 2017 budget items and will soon be putting together projects for 2019.

Animal Waste Storage Applications: None

2018 Turkey Donation Program: The turkey donation program is similar to the deer donation program that we participate in with the WI DNR Wildlife Damage Abatement and Claims Program. Hunters can donate their turkey to a food pantry. A local processor will process the turkey for the food pantry. The processor will get paid \$15 a turkey. The WI DNR will coordinate with the food pantries and processors. Gierke/Rathsack motion to participate in the Turkey Donation Program. Motion carried.

Upper Chippewa Invasive Species Partnership: Discussion about participating in a Memorandum of Understanding between the US Forest Service and Rusk, Taylor and Price Counties. The partnership would be for management of non-native, invasive species in the area, such as Garlic mustard, Spotted knapweed, etc. Taylor County will serve as the fiscal administrator of the partnership and no financial commitment is required. Funding would be available through the partnership for Rusk County landowners to eradicate invasive species. Swoverland/Gierke motion to approve the MOU for the Upper Chippewa Invasive Species Partnership. Motion carried.

Out of County Travel:

Technician Meeting in Park Falls on March 22 for Runstrom. County Conservationist/DATCP Update Meeting in Eau Claire on April 10 for Krell. Swoverland/Gierke motion to approve Out of County travel. Motion carried.

Adjourn: Chairman Rathsack adjourned the meeting at 8:30 AM

Minutes prepared by CeCe Tesky