

Not Committee Approved

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

DATE: March 22, 2022

ROLL CALL: T. DUSELL, M. QUADE, W. MCBAIN, N. BESASIE, J. MEYER, M. SCHMITT (VIA VIDEOCALL)

OTHERS PRESENT: N. STADNYK, R. HANSEN

Open Session: Meeting called to order @ 2:25 pm

Public Comment: None

Minutes: McBain/Meyer motion to approve minutes from February 8th. Motion carried.

Payment Approval Report: Meyer/McBain motion to approve payment approval report. Motion carried.

Next Meeting Date: Tuesday, April 12th, 2022 @ 8:00 am

Wildlife Damage Claim Program: No report presented.

NRCS Report: Besasie stated there were 26 unique conservation projects selected through the EQIP process. Funding is able to support several projects including water pipelines, rotational grazing, invasive species control, and wetland restoration. The Conservation Stewardship program received 19 additional applications. The NRCS is looking to hire two full-time employees to increase staffing in the Ladysmith and/or Medford offices. Anyone interested in applying for the positions can search on USA Jobs.

FSA Report: Stadnyk clarified the FSA report would still be presented by Quade as a member of the LCC for future meetings.

Land Conservation & Development Department: Stadnyk explained efforts to rebuild beaver dams for a landowner in the County. The Zoning Department has an average number of sanitary permits this year in comparison to last year and a higher number of land use permits than last year at this time.

Land Conservation Report

Animal Waste Storage Applications: None

Out of County Travel: None

AWS Ordinance Language: Stadnyk provided committee members information subject to change in the AWS ordinance. Language was added to clarify aspects of the ordinance and a grandfather clause was drafted. The question to utilize NR151 ag enforcement standards within the AWS ordinance was posed. Committee members discussed standards and how to enforce them. Discussion continued on current practices used and the importance of nutrient management planning. More information will be discussed next meeting before a resolution is brought to the County Board for approval.

Drone: Stadnyk demonstrated the features of the recent drone purchased for the department. A unique feature of the drone is georeferencing the location of data collected. The drone can be preprogrammed

to a flight path for ease of use. Plans to use the drone in upcoming months include mapping locations of nonmetallic mines and determining active versus nonactive areas.

Fishers & Farmers Grant: The Fishers and Farmers Grant is an opportunity to earn \$30,000 in funding to support the Devils Creek Watershed. There are 10 potential projects within the Devils Creek area which would be supported by the grant. Stadnyk recently presented his findings on the watershed and is optimistic about being selected to receive the grant.

Reimbursements: Stadnyk explained several funds the department has received to allow landowners engagement in conservation practices. A few of the recent funds include the DATCP, Nutrient Management Education, and Healthy Lakes Grant. Committee members were shown how funding efforts would cover a variety of past and upcoming projects in the County.

Outreach: Stadnyk updated the committee on the recent idea of satellite offices at locations in the County. Starting in early-April, the LWCD will be present at the Bruce Village Hall on Thursdays and the Sheldon Community Center on Tuesdays. The committee suggested advertising the satellite offices in the newspaper, radio, and several locations in Sheldon and Bruce. The next invasive species seminar will be 3/23 and there are currently 6 people signed up to attend. Stadnyk expressed interest in getting students more involved with conservation. There are presentations set up to speak to students at Ladysmith and Flambeau about Earth Day and Arbor Day. Committee members discussed ways to educate kids and intrigue them to participate. It was noted a field day is in the works for mid-summer and several individuals in the community are willing to participate.

Additional products from LiDAR data: Stadnyk described products LiDAR data would allow the County to access including 2ft contour lines, hydrology, building elevations, and culvert inventory. The LiDAR data would improve current data at an additional cost. Stadnyk suggested presenting at the Property committee to use funding the County received due to COVID-19. The remaining funding would come from the Land Information grant.

Shoreland Program: The LWCD Committee has \$10,000 worth of funding for lakes. This funding can be used throughout the County to support prospective landowners. A discussion was held to find candidates who would be best suited for this grant.

Wildlife Damage Program Discussion: A discussion was held about the current cap on wildlife damage claims. Several committee members offered their input on the current circumstances and how to prevent economic impact. It was suggested the County would offer support to the Farm Bureau to increase funding for damage claims. Recommendations included research and developing data based on economic impacts. Discussion to move forward will continue at the April meeting.

Adjourn: Meyer/McBain motion to adjourn at 4:15 pm. Motion carried.

Minutes prepared by Rachel Hansen.