

Rusk County Land and Forestry Committee

Meeting Minutes

March 15th, 2023

The monthly meeting of the Rusk County Land and Forestry Committee was called to order at 3:02 pm Wednesday, March 15, 2023.

Present from the Land and Forestry Committee: Schneider, DuSell, Kalepp, Biller, P. Unterschuetz

Also present: J. Macholl, H. Woldhuis, D. Gravesen, M. Zimmer, D. Jochimsen, A. Heath, A. Rathsack, N. Stadnyk, J. Runstrom

Present from the Public:

G. Sihsmann, D. Mansky, R. Ellwanger, R. Ellwanger

Approval of Minutes:

Motion by DuSell and second by Kalepp to approve February 15th, 2023 meeting minutes. Motion carried

Public Comment:

- Question regarding the closure date of Snowmobile trails
- Concern regarding AdHOC committee recommendation
- Shared Ladd Creek Trail map
 - Request to view an original contract
- Received letter from logger regarding current contract extension precedence

Parks and Recreation Report:

M. Zimmer reported on the following:

- Snowmobile council approved storm damage grant
 - County has received an award letter
- Applying for storm damage clearing for ATV trails
- Josie Creek well project updates
- Weirgor ATV Trail Gravel project
 - Halting for the year due to road bans, past and future snowstorms
 - Bid out again next winter
 - Potential to do some hauling this summer of gravel on the portion that has the primary laid this winter
 - Bridge bid information has been advertised, bid opening April
 - Potential new ATV trail project

Timber Sale Report:

D. Gravesen reported on the following:

- Staff scaling for hauling
- Ted is finishing up sales and getting logs hauled out to the road
 - Has five sales he is hauling out of
- Northwest Hardwoods is working on a couple of sales and getting wood hauled out
- Hoyt is working out East
- 2 lump sum sales being cut out East

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Administrator Report:

J. Macholl reported on the following:

- New hire – Roy Zubrod has been hired as a Forester
- Forest Technician posting expires this coming Sunday
 - Class A CDL class offered at Fox Valley Tech in a 3-week period
- Access Permit request for water crossing of private access permit language to be updated per Corp Council
- Government Day – Staff participated and the event went well
- Bat Habitat updates regarding the agreement and incidental intake procedures
- ANEW (carbon Credit) September for distribution of ERBs
 - Approximately \$3.1 value of year 1 of carbon credit usage
 - Potential payment in early 2024
 - If the county has reservations regarding who credits can be sold to, ANEW is asking for a list within two months
- Trails End Camp – pavilion
 - Request to use Forestry Staff to assist with felling trees

Public Lands AdHoc Committee Updates – County Ordinance Update Proposal:

Committee members received the proposed ordinance to review. Included email regarding the financial implications of the current and new proposed ordinance. Discussion of the requirement of inspecting proposed open county land areas. The committee discussed man hours, the cost of signage, and funding source concerns. The committee additionally addressed additional ordinance language they would like to be included regarding enforcement, signage, and opening and closing of trails. The language regarding most of the issues is included in the 15-year plan passed by the Committee and County Board. Request for clarification regarding the difference between ATV-built trails vs wood roads, logging trails, and general access points. 15-year plan chapters 700 and 900 were displayed for committee reference.

Nick Stadnyk was requested to comment. Discussed the need to balance historic access, financial impact, and use. Recommendation for an ordinance that stands alone from the 15-year plan.

Request to suspend conversation to address next agenda item. Approved by the Chair.

ATV Trail Grant Application Approval:

George Sihsmann presented the request. The application needs to be submitted by April 15th, 2023.

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To: Rusk County Forestry Committee

RE: New ATV Trail Request

The RUSK RIDERS ATV CLUB is requesting that a new trail be built using State funding from the ORV Grant Program. This new trail would be within the County Forest in the Town of Wilson and within the existing 1A 20 mile loop. Starting at the west end of Three Lakes Road proceeding north and west to a mid-point where one leg would go west to North Buck's Lake Road and the other leg would go north to Dejung Road, make a short jog west on Dejung Road, then head north to Betty Lake Road. Our preliminary estimate is a range of 6-7 miles depending on exact routing. Our proposed identification for this trail layout is 1B & 1C. We hope that you approve this request as we are looking forward again to provide our user group from all parts of the country with a wonderful experience in the Beautiful!! Blue Hills.

Sincerely,

George Sihsmann; President of the RUSK RIDERS ATV CLUB



Motion by P. Unterschuetz, second by Kalepp to approve new ATV Trail Grant Application. Motion Carried

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Public Lands AdHoc Committee Updates – County Ordinance Update Proposal - RESUMED

No further discussion was held.

Motion by Kalepp, second by P. Unterschuetz to table discussion until March Meeting. Motion Carried

2023 Recreational Grant Approval:

Mike presented:

2023 FORESTRY RECREATIONAL GRANT APPLICATIONS

SNOWMOBILE APPLICATIONS:

<u>Snowmobile Maintenance</u> 318.7 mi. @ \$300.00/mi.	\$ 95,610.00
Snowmobile Trail Corridor 12 – New Culverts (2 – 42"x30' HDPE)	\$ 8,300.00

ATV APPLICATIONS:

<u>ATV/UTV Maintenance</u> 32.0 mi. @ \$600.00/mi.(ATV) + 32.0 mi. @ \$200.00/mi.(UTV) + \$1,200.00 (Insurance)	\$ 26,800.00
<u>Bucks Lake ATV Trail Development Project (6 Miles)</u> New ATV Trail development (Clearing/shaping, culverts, gravel base material)	\$ 455,400.00
ATV/UTV Storm Damage Cleanup	?

TROUTE MAINTENANCE APPLICATION:

<u>Current Funded TROUTE Miles:</u> Betty Lake Rd. (5.0 mi.), Serely Camp Rd. (1.5 mi.) Weirgor Rd. (3.7 mi.), Three Lakes Rd. (1.3 mi.), Four Hill Rd. (1.4mi.) 12.9mi. @ 249.00/mi.	\$ 3,212.10
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TOTAL = \$ 589,322.10

ATV Storm damage is estimated at \$15k originally, the cost may double.

Motion by Biller, second by DuSell to approve Grant applications. Motion Carried

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Sustainable Forestry Grant Application Approval:

Forest Administrator requesting \$21,700 for storm damage clean up at campgrounds, Dodson disc golf, Ski trail, and hunter walking trails. etc.

Motion by Biller, Second by Kalepp to approve Sustainable Forestry grant application. Motion Carried

Commercial Driver's License Discussion:

Committee members expressed concerns for and against requiring a CDL for employment.

Out-of-County Travel:

Elk Processing and Collaring – March 14th, 2023 Sawyer Co
M. Zimmer, J. Moore

Motion by DuSell, second by P. Unterschuetz to approve out-of-county travel for M. Zimmer and J. Moore. Motion Carried

Elk Advisory Meeting – April 5th – Wausau
J. Macholl

Motion by Biller, Second by DuSell to approve out-of-county travel for J. Macholl. Motion Carried.

Budget Review:

The budget report was made available to committee members in the committee folder on the server for review.

Review and Approve Bills:

Motion by Kalepp, Second by P. Unterschuetz to approve the February AP report. Motion carried.

Adjourn:

The meeting was adjourned by Schneider at 5:01 p.m.

The next meeting will be Wednesday, April 19th, 2023 at 3:00 p.m. LEC Board Room.