

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

DATE: August 3, 2022

ROLL CALL: T. DUSELL, M. QUADE, J. KALEPP, M. SCHMITT, R. STOUT

OTHERS PRESENT: N. STADNYK, R. HANSEN, T. WEDWICK

Open Session: Meeting called to order @ 2:00 pm

Public Comment: None.

Minutes: DuSell/ Kalepp motion to approve minutes from July 12th. Motion carried.

Payment Approval Report: DuSell/ Schmitt motion to approve payment approval report. Motion carried.

Next Meeting Date: Tuesday, September 13, 2022 @ 8:00 am

Wildlife Damage Claim Program-Elk Abatement Spraying: Stadnyk spoke on behalf of Zesiger. The USDA has proposed another aerial spraying to deter elk from crops. Stadnyk asked for approval of a total of two sprayings in the amount of \$6,000. The cost will be reimbursed by the DNR through the wildlife damage program. DuSell/ Kalepp motion to fund two aerial sprayings to deter elk on cropland. Motion carried.

NRCS Report: No report provided.

FSA Report: No report provided.

Land Conservation & Development Department: Stadnyk highlighted the LCDD Intern's work gathering road centerline data and aerial footage of nonmetallic mines. Land use permits are above average and sanitary permits are in between last year and the long-term average. The Land Information Department has the possibility of getting a grant to assist with the 911 database. This funding would be used to fix data management within the system. Committee members commented on cell towers and the impact on dispatch services.

Land Conservation Report

Animal Waste Storage Applications: None

Out of County Travel: None

Farmer Led Watershed Effort: Stadnyk commented local farmers Zook and Hillan are excited to start a farmer led watershed. Moving forward Stadnyk will assist as needed while the farmers are heading up the program and applying for grant funding. This program will allow landowners to meet and discuss issues they face. The watershed area will cover land south of Ladysmith including Main and Deer Tail Creek. Watershed practices may include no-till or cover crop implementation.

Shoreland Program Update: Stadnyk reported positive feedback on the program with incoming calls daily. Spoke with about 30 people already and complete site visits. Planning on signing contracts at the end of August based on analysis. Stadnyk will be speaking with Island Lake Association on August 13th.

Turners Pond Discussion: Stadnyk provided historical information about the pond and the current state it is in. Years ago, the WRA installed a culvert under the road in an attempt to create a fish passage from the lake to the pond. Beavers have since overtaken the pond. Wedwick spoke on behalf of landowners near the pond. It was noted the pond has declined since 2006. Stadnyk recommended leaving the dam to maintain the water level. A few choices to preserve the pond are available as discussed by Stadnyk, Wedwick, and committee members. LCDD committee members suggest to leave the dam and keep conditions as is while monitoring the dam. Kalepp/DuSell motion to send recommendations to Highway Committee for a final decision on their behalf. Motion carried.

2023 Budget Discussion: Stadnyk broke down the 2023 budget for committee members.

- County Owned Dams: Maintenance and expenses for Pigeon Creek.
- Wildlife Damage: Funding reimbursed through DNR and USDA programs. Committee members questioned prices for commodity crops. Concluded increasing crop prices by 30% was reasonable.
- NACD: Funds for staffing and equipment. Applied for full funding through grant.
- Tree Program: Self-funding program based on tree cost and revenue generated.
- Well Decommissioning: About 9 well abandonments per year. Funds pay 30% of cost for landowner.
- Special Project Grants: Multiple year grants for programs including Fish & Wildlife, TRM grants, and DATCP Reserve.
- Non-Metallic Mining: Account for permit fees for mines. Generates nearly \$13,500.
- Shoreland Program: Funds to assist landowners with shoreland restoration. \$25,000 DNR Grant.
- SWRM Grant: Large scale funding (bond money) and smaller scale projects (seg funding). Hoping to increase grant funding for next year.
- Staffing Grant and Expenses: Pays for outreach, supplies, and employee wage increases.

Adjourn: DuSell/Kalepp motion to adjourn at 3:26 pm. Motion carried.

Minutes prepared by Rachel Hansen.