

TAYLOR COUNTY LAND CONSERVATION COMMITTEE Minutes of 12/18/2012 Meeting

The monthly LCC meeting was called to order by Dave Krug at 9:05 AM. The meeting was held in the UW Extension Meeting Room, County-USDA Service Center, Medford, WI. Member present were David Krug, Chairman, Scott Mildbrand, Tim Peterson, JoAnn Smith, and Ray Soper. Others present were Lanice Szomi, Pri-Ru-Ta RC&D project manager, Steve Oberle, County Conservationist, and Ed Zyzdik, Wildlife Damage Specialist.

MOTION by Soper/Mildbrand to approve the agenda as distributed and posted. **MOTION CARRIED.**

MOTION by Mildbrand/Peterson to approve the October 9 regular meeting minutes with correction. Soper mentioned the initials for Wisconsin Land & Water Conservation Association should be WLWCA, not WWLCA as in the minutes. **MOTION CARRIED.**

October 9 – December 17, 2012 bills were circulated for review, and the September-November budget analysis was distributed. **MOTION** by Peterson/Mildbrand to approve the bills and budget analysis as presented. **MOTION CARRIED.**

OLD BUSINESS:

1985-2012 State of Our Groundwater Report: The report for Taylor County includes water testing information which Steve updates yearly with new maps and is a work in progress. He has received positive feedback about the report. Question was raised about how well yield is calculated. Oberle replied that is based on the pump tests done when the well was drilled. This initial yield amount is not updated and doesn't distinguish between a farm well vs. a residential, nor any changes to area water use that could affect the yield amounts.

The full report was sent out to the Taylor County Land Conservation Committee, County Board, and Town & Village board chairs.

NEW BUSINESS:

Reports

Land Conservation Department – Steve Oberle, Conservationist reported:

The LCD Engineering Technician position has been filled. He welcomed Ben Stanfley to the department. Ben has a farm background & graduated from UW-Platteville with a degree in civil engineering.

Wildlife Damage Program – Ed Zyzdik, Wildlife Damage Specialist reported:

Ed asked the committee to approve the 2012 crop damage prices. Corn - \$7.13/bu; Soybeans - \$15.20/bu; Oats - \$3.80/bu; Straight Alfalfa - \$157/ton; Mixed hay - \$87/ton. These prices are the average over the year. Committee could raise, lower or approve what was presented. Question was raised as to what other counties that Ed works with did. Rusk & Sawyer counties passed the averages presented.

MOTION by Peterson/Smith to accept the average prices as presented. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Ed mentioned that some claims may not be covered since the landowners did not get their damage control tags filled. Landowners have until January 1.

Farm Service Agency – JoAnn Smith reported: There is no national Farm Bill yet. JoAnn was re-elected to the FSA county committee for Taylor County and Don Unchuck is the Price County representative.

Pri-Ru-Ta RC&D Council – Lanice Szomi, Project Manager reported: Oberle met with TC Treasurer Brandl to get budget line item numbers for the Grazing Specialist contract. Council will have their annual meeting on Dec. 21 in Hayward.

Northwestern Land Conservation Association (NWLCA) – Ray Soper reported: The group hasn't met lately. Soper attended the Legislative committee meeting for the newly integrated Wisconsin Land & Water Conservation Association (WLWCA). The group elected officers. The committee discussed the staffing grants and the funding formulas. The consent was to continue with the 100/70/50. DATCP would like greater accountability with the funds. Soper reminded the WLWCA committee was LCD is and why it's important.

2013 Regional Nutrient Management Planning (NMP) classes: Oberle sent out a draft schedule to the committee. NTC will host the regional classes at the Medford, Spencer and Wausau campuses. Matt Zoschke, Clark County LCD & Richard Halopka, Clark County UWEX will assist Oberle. There is a full course & a refresher course available. NMP grant funding is available to make the courses affordable. Completion of the course will allow the producer to write their own NMP plans.

LCD Administration of Invasive Species grant: Szomi presented the committee with a proposal to take over the administration of a Forest Service grant that sponsors the Upper Chippewa Invasive Species Cooperative. The funds are to support a coordinator and education & control activities the Co-op does throughout Taylor, Price, Rusk & Sawyer counties. This would be a similar agreement to the grazing specialist that was drafted earlier. Following discussion, **MOTION** by Soper/Peterson for Szomi to send the proposal/contract draft to Corp Council for review and bring back to the next meeting for action. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Taylor County Metallic Mining Committee: Oberle said this committee has been meeting monthly and is close to finalizing an ordinance for Taylor County. Neighboring counties are watching what comes of this. The next meeting is January 21st. Soper encouraged other to read the proposed ordinance and voice any opinions because Taylor County only gets one shot at getting it done right.

2013 DATCP/DNR Allocation Plan: Oberle reported that staffing grant allocation came in \$2,000 higher than expected for 2013. Taylor County received \$116,284 for 2012, while they now have \$118,928. This discussion led into the next agenda item.

LCD Conservation Assistant position: With the department staffing budget in a better position than back in November when posting this position was first discussed, Oberle asked the committee to consider increasing the hours to 28/week. Oberle had submitted the grant as a ½ time position, thinking there would be a significant cut as there was in 2012. This \$16,000 cut didn't occur. After discussion **MOTION** by Soper/Mildbrand to approve filling the Land Conservation Assistant position at 28 hours/week. **MOTION CARRIED.** Oberle will recommend this change to the personnel committee.

2013 LCC Meeting Schedule: Committee will continue to meet the 3rd Tuesday of every other month. Next meeting is February 19th at 9:30 AM in the USDA-Service Center meeting room. Rest of the 2013 meetings will be set then.

Review Conservation & NMPs: Hold until next meeting

Correspondence: Oberle handed out information on the upcoming GrassWorks grazing conference in Wausau, and the Groundwater report summary.

Other New Business:

Future meetings/events:

Pri-Ru-Ta RC&D meeting (Soper)..... (Hayward) December 21, 2012
NWLCA (Soper/Oberle) (Hayward) January 18, 2013

WLWCA Admin/Legislative Committee mtng (Soper) (Stevens Point) February 7, 2013
Next LCC Meeting9:30 AM, February 19, 2013

MOTION by Peterson/Mildbrand to attend these meetings. **MOTION CARRIED.**

MOTION by Peterson/Soper to adjourn at 11:50 AM.

TAYLOR COUNTY LAND CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

Minutes of October 9, 2012 Meeting

The monthly LCC meeting was called to order by Dave Krug at 9:30 a.m. The meeting was held in the UW Extension Meeting Room, County-USDA Service Center, Medford, Wisconsin. Members present were David Krug, Chairman, Scott Mildbrand, Tim Peterson, JoAnn Smith, and Ray Soper. Others present were Lanice Szomi, Pri-Ru-Ta RC&D Program Manager; Bob Brandt, Pri-Ru-Ta RC&D Grazing Specialist; Bob Plawski, NRCS District Conservationist; Steve Oberle, County Conservationist; and Cathy Mauer, LCD Conservation Assistant. Larry Brandl, Taylor County Accountant, was present for part of the meeting.

MOTION by Soper/Smith to approve the agenda as distributed and posted. **MOTION CARRIED.**

MOTION by Peterson/Mildbrand to approve the August 21 regular meeting minutes and the September 11 special meeting minutes. **MOTION CARRIED.**

August 21-October 8, 2012 bills were circulated for review, and the August budget analysis was distributed. **MOTION** by Peterson/Mildbrand to approve the bills and budget analysis as presented. **MOTION CARRIED.**

OLD BUSINESS:

2012 Drinking Water Education/Testing Program update: High levels of arsenic were found in a previously untested well in Jump River. Wells such as this one, with arsenic levels of 50 ppb or higher may be eligible for the Wisconsin Well Compensation Program, which offers partial payment for treatment systems and/or a new well.

NEW BUSINESS:

Reports

Natural Resources Conservation Service – Bob Plawski, District Conservationist, reported: A new budget has not yet been approved so NRCS is operating on a continuing resolution until March 27, 2013. Existing funding is being used, which means certain items like training and travel have been cut. They are taking applications for EQIP (until January 15) and CSP (until December 15) projects. Rates have not yet been determined. It is likely that CSP acres will be reduced. NRCS will be looking at adding additional activities to existing CSP contracts. EQIP rates are likely to change, with some single practices being divided into multiple practices. Wisconsin, Michigan, and Minnesota will be setting rates on a regional basis, and Wisconsin rates may increase as a result because the other two states currently have higher rates for most practices. Acreages for new grazers will probably be reduced and practices incorporated over a several year period. This will decrease the initial cost and increase the likelihood of approval. Construction is being wrapped up. Paul Malovrh of NRCS has taken over projects that Kyle Noonan, who left LCD, had been responsible for. \$40,000 is available to add enhancements added to three previously restored wetlands, and Malovrh will be surveying these properties, mostly to add additional wetland scrapes. They are caught up and HEL and wetland determinations. A new policy on wetlands and HEL is being incorporated.

Pri-Ru-Ta RC&D – Lanice Szomi, Program Manager, reported: A teleconference is planned for October 26, and the annual meeting will be held in mid-December. Several specialist positions have ended, with some of the people moving to other agencies. One topic at the annual meeting will be to decide if Pri-Ru-Ta should completely close down or if it should continue running.

Wisconsin Land & Water Conservation Association (WWLCA) – Ray Soper reported: Both proposed resolutions were approved at the annual business meeting. One dealt with full funding from DATCP for staffing and cost-share grants to the counties and the other with increased funding for aquatic invasive species. Three people were elected to the Land and Water Conservation Board. Soper volunteered for the Legislative Committee but questioned whether the county would reimburse him for his costs of attending meetings. Following discussion, Krug directed Oberle to put the question of reimbursement on the agenda for the next LCC meeting. Soper encouraged other LCC members to attend future WLWCA meetings.

Review/take possible action on Service Contract for the North Central Grazing Network Project: Following discussion, **MOTION** by Soper/Mildbrand to approve the contract upon approval by the county corporation counsel. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Wildlife Damage and Abatement Claims Program (WDACP) budget: The county administers funds for this program. **MOTION** by Soper/Peterson to approve the budget as presented. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Unallocated funds connected with the LCD Tree Sale Program were discussed. No action was taken.

LCD Engineering Technician position update: The application closing date is October 26. Ten applications have been received as of this morning.

Discuss/take possible action on LCD Conservation Assistant position: Oberle cited change in position description that was distributed with LCC packets as follow-up to discussion from September 11 special meeting. Discussed refilling position due to Mauer having submitted her resignation notice on October 8 with October 22 being her last day. Oberle requested refilling the position at twenty-four hours per week. **MOTION** by Mildbrand/Soper to approve refilling the position at seventeen and a half hours per week as requested by Oberle in the budget he presented at the August 21 meeting. **MOTION AMENDED** at Oberle's request to refill at twenty-one hours per week. **MOTION CARRIED.** Vote was four to one with Peterson voting no.

Conservation Plans and Nutrient Management Plans: Oberle circulated an NMP for Scott Mildbrand property.

Correspondence: Email from Richard Castelnuovo, DATCP, encouraging Oberle to attend the local Farm Bureau meeting and contact local Farm Bureau leaders to provide information about the value that the Land Conservation Department brings to local farmers and the community.

Other New Business:

Future meetings/events:

NWLCA (Oberle, LCC) (Hayward) October 19, 2012
Next LCC Meeting 9:30 a.m., December 11, 2012

MOTION by Peterson/Smith to adjourn at noon.

TAYLOR COUNTY LAND CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

Minutes of August 21, 2012 Meeting

The monthly LCC meeting was called to order by Dave Krug at 9:30 a.m. The meeting was held in the UW Extension Meeting Room, County-USDA Service Center, Medford, Wisconsin. Members present were David Krug, Chairman, Scott Mildbrand, Tim Peterson, JoAnn Smith, and Ray Soper. Others present were Steve Oberle, County Conservationist, and Cathy Mauer, LCD Conservation Assistant. Lanice Szomi, Pri-Ru-Ta RC&D Program Manager; Bob Brandt, Grazing Specialist with Pri-Ru-Ta; Deb Esselman, FSA County Executive Director; Chris Borden, NRCS Soil Conservationist; Ed Zyzdik, USDA-APHIS were present for part of the meeting. Brian Wilson, *Star News*, was also in attendance for part of the meeting.

MOTION by Peterson/Mildbrand to approve the agenda as distributed and posted.
MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION by Soper/Mildbrand to approve the June 22, 2012, LCC meeting minutes.
MOTION CARRIED.

June 22 to August 20, 2012, bills were circulated for review, and the June budget analysis was distributed. **MOTION** by Peterson/Mildbrand to approve the bills and budget analysis as presented. **MOTION CARRIED.**

OLD BUSINESS:

2012 Drinking Water Education/Testing Program update: Mauer distributed a summary of the special discounted program during which water was tested on August 20, and samples were taken to the lab on August 21. There were over ninety participants. The cost to the county of testing and advertising was about \$4,540 based on 92 Homeowner's Packages, 67 Metals Packages, and 20 retests for bacteria. Prices were increased to \$25 this year for each package; in recent years the price had been \$10. The cost to the county is \$49 for the Homeowner's and \$42 for the metals. Participation was down from past years, probably due in large part to the price increase. Out-of-county participants, in most cases, pay full price. The educational programs and distribution of results will be held September 18 in Medford and September 20 in Gilman.

NEW BUSINESS:

Reports

Land Conservation Department – Steve Oberle, County Conservationist, reported: Oberle discussed the Farmland Preservation Program, reviewing a spreadsheet of existing contracts that was distributed by Mauer/Noonan at the June LCC meeting. He expressed to the LCC that this spreadsheet was incomplete and had several errors, so it would best not to use this in evaluating the program. Oberle conducted a recent status review of all FPP files and has had several conversations with DATCP. Basically, there are different requirements for the FPP contracts, depending on their effective date. Also, currently there are twenty-nine contracts; eighteen of these have current (2011/2012) nutrient management plans; ten meet RUSLE 2 with conservation plans; ten properties have been inspected; and twenty-two meet T (tolerable soil loss). A draft FPP compliance strategy was also circulated and discussed.

Natural Resources Conservation Service – Chris Borden, Soil Conservationist, reported: NRCS has funded three barnyards and one manure storage facility through the EQIP program, along with several water systems and fencing for grazers. Additional WRP funds are available, and they are looking at enhancements on three existing sites. Farmers have increasingly been clearing forested lands, and if they are in FSA programs, there needs to be an HEL and a wetland determination, which is done by NRCS. As in past years, the local NRCS may get additional funds from other parts of the state where

funds have gone unused. The combination of having projects ready and piggybacking funds with LCD has helped NRCS here get allocations of surplus funds.

Farm Service Agency – Deb Esselman, County Executive Director, reported:

There are thirty-five CRP contracts in Taylor and Price Counties. Fifteen of these contracts are eligible for release for grazing and haying. Participants can use half of each field. There will be a ten percent reduction in payments for fields used. There are no disaster provisions for 2012 in the current farm bill so it will require an act of Congress to authorize them. Those with insurance may do okay; others may not receive payments until 2014. FSA staff is getting ready for payment cycles. They are current with crop reports, etc. FSA may be getting new software. Different versions of a new Farm Bill were passed by the Senate and the House. No direct payments were included in either version. There is a push in the proposed bills toward buying crop insurance. Premiums would be subsidized with taxes and payments would be made largely with taxes. The insurance companies/agencies would probably benefit. The bills did not contain much about dairy. Conservation was subject to some cuts, and there is some question as to whether compliance requirements would be included. There may be a 30% budget cut. Seventy percent of the Farm Bill supports food and nutrition. Esselman expects that the current Farm Bill will be extended.

Wildlife Damage Program – Ed Zydzik, USDA-APHIS, reported: Zydzik asked the committee for input on the venison donation program. Payments to participating processors will again be \$55 per deer. **MOTION** by Peterson/Krug to approve Taylor County participation in the program. **MOTION CARRIED.** Zydzik has approved deer, goose, and bear shooting permits and has been trapping bear. So far, he has moved 140 bear. Corn and bean yields do not look good. Some crane permits have been issued through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. There is a \$100 application fee for those permits. There should be sufficient funds for full payment on regular wildlife damage claims. However, claims for payments for wolf damage might need to be pro-rated because of the delisting of wolves from the Federal Endangered Species list. When they were listed, wolf damage claims were paid by the federal government. Since delisting, such payments are the responsibility of the state.

Northwest Land & Water Conservation Association (NWLCA) – Steve Oberle reported: Oberle and Soper attended a recent NWLCA meeting, followed by a tour to a power plant in Ashland and the Aquaculture Research and Education Facility near the Great Lakes Visitor Center. Soper announced that a fall WLWCA will be held in Wisconsin Rapids October 4-5 in conjunction with a county conservationist meeting.

Pri-Ru-Ta RC&D Grazing Specialist position: Pri-Ru-Ta RC&D, which has been administering the grants that fund the Grazing Specialist positions, is dissolving due to lack of funding from the federal government. The three Grazing Specialist positions have grants that will fund them into 2014 or 2015. One of the positions, held by Bob Brandt, covers Taylor, Price, Clark, and parts of Rusk and Sawyer Counties. Lanice Szomi, Pri-Ru-Ta Project Manager, asked if Taylor County would be willing to take over administration of the grant funding this position. She presented two possibilities, one that Brandt be hired as an LTE and the other that he work as a private contractor. The exact amount of the available funds will be dependent on whether or not NRCS will be providing a match to other money. The actual time frame that the positions will be active will be based on the funds available rather than the calendar. The grant is based on reimbursement after payment is made. Administration of the grant would be budget neutral, and the county could charge an administration fee against the grant. Reporting is required November 1, January 1, and at the end of the grant; preparation of the reports could also be contracted. Soper expressed concern that if no entity stepped forward to administer the grants, the money would have to be returned and the area would lose a valuable service. **MOTION** by Mildbrand/Soper to approve Taylor County becoming the fiscal agent for a contract with Bob Brandt as the Grazing Specialist, subject to review by the Corporation Counsel and the Human Resources Manager that it is budget neutral. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Proposal that the LCD move to the Courthouse: Oberle presented a proposal that the Land Conservation Department be relocated in the courthouse. According to Oberle, Marie Koerner, Human Resources Manager, had set up four or five department head meetings among LCD, the Real Property Lister, Zoning, and Land Information/Surveyor to discuss consolidation of the departments. Two recommendations had come out of those meetings: one was that the status quo was best as far as consolidation. The second was that the LCD consider moving to the courthouse. Oberle said the factors in favor of moving to the courthouse were that the county has talked about selling the Ag Service Center building and that the LCD has relationships with departments in the courthouse. In response to Peterson's question of who in the courthouse, Oberle said the Zoning Department and that co-locating would better facilitate the LCD to assist the Zoning office and that cross-training could be provided. Committee members pointed out that there are important working relationships with the other agencies located in the Ag Service Center and that the community, especially the farm community, is better served by the LCD being located with them.

2013 Budget: Oberle submitted a budget that included a decrease in the Conservation Assistant position to about half-time, stating that it was necessary due to a likely decrease in state funding for local staff. Discussion and comments followed. **MOTION** was made by Peterson/Smith to approve and send the budget as submitted by Oberle to the Budget Review Committee. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Conservation Plans and Nutrient Management Plans: Preliminary Approvals of Nutrient Management Plans for Steve Bach and Richard Rau. Nutrient Management Plans for Alan and Judith Feldkamp, Harry and Chris Kolasa, and Ray Soper.

Correspondence: WLWCA Board of Directors agenda for meeting on August 27.

Future meetings/events:

LCD 2013 budget review (Oberle)(Courthouse) 11:45 a.m., September 13, 2013
WLWCA Annual Meeting and Fall County Conservationist Meeting (Oberle)(Wisconsin Rapids)
October 4-5, 2012

Next LCC Meeting9:30 a.m., October 9, 2012

MOTION by Mildbrand/Smith to adjourn at 12:40 p.m.

TAYLOR COUNTY LAND CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

Minutes of June 22, 2012 Meeting

The monthly LCC meeting was called to order by Dave Krug at 9 a.m. The meeting was held in the UW Extension Meeting Room, County-USDA Service Center, Medford, Wisconsin. Members present were David Krug, Chairman, Scott Mildbrand, Tim Peterson, JoAnn Smith, and Ray Soper. Others present were Deb Esselman, FSA County Executive Director; Bob Plawski, NRCS District Conservationist; Kyle Noonan, LCD Engineering Technician; and Cathy Mauer, LCD Conservation Assistant.

MOTION by Mildbrand/Peterson to approve the agenda as distributed and posted.
MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION by Soper/Mildbrand to approve the May 1 and May 30, 2012, LCC meeting minutes. **MOTION CARRIED.**

April - June 2012 bills were circulated for review, and the April 2012 budget analysis was distributed. **MOTION** by Peterson/Smith to approve the bills and budget analysis as presented. **MOTION CARRIED.**

OLD BUSINESS:

Mining Committee update: Soper reported that at its June 18 meeting the Mining Committee approved an amendment to the County Code that would define the Committee's makeup and authority. The amendment was approved by the County Board at its June 20 meeting.

Animal Waste Ordinance permits update: Noonan reported that two permit applications are being processed. One is from Chad Webster in the Town of Pershing for a manure storage facility for 998 animal units, though Webster currently has only 350 cows (490 animal units). The project is being funded in part by NRCS, and an NRCS engineer has done the design. Webster already has an NMP. The other application is from John Brost in the Town of Browning. Noonan and NRCS staff did the soil test pits and Noonan did the design, which has a year's storage for 250 cows. The project will not be receiving federal or state cost-share funds. Both projects have enough land available for spreading manure.

Tree Sale Summary: Mauer reported that approximately 18,000 trees were sold through the annual tree sale.

LCC Meeting Schedule: The next meeting was set for Tuesday, August 21, at 9:30 a.m. Future meetings will be tentatively set for the third Tuesday of each even month at 9:30 a.m., with the final date and time to be set at the preceding meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

Reports

Land Conservation Department – Kyle Noonan, LCD Engineering Technician, and Cathy Mauer, LCD Conservation Assistant, reported: Noonan reported on cost-share projects that have been or will be installed through the Conservation Assistance Program. These include one waterway that has been completed and three barnyards still to be installed. Additional waterways may still be funded. Noonan and Mauer assisted at Rib Lake with a shoreland restoration project related to a new fishing pier, replacing excessive riprap with vegetation. Mauer and Noonan reviewed the status of Farmland Preservation Program compliance and distributed a spreadsheet for the committee to review before the August meeting.

Natural Resources Conservation Service – Bob Plawski, District Conservationist, reported: Conservation Stewardship Program contracts and packets

have been given to participants, who are now working on activities that need to be completed by October. Noonan is assisting with NRCS EQIP projects, especially when the NRCS technician is in Price County. As landowners file their crop reports with the Farm Service Agency, they are referred to NRCS if they are planning on clearing land, draining, etc. Chris Borden is now doing wetland and highly erodible land determinations. Plawski invited committee members to stop in the NRCS office to view a mural that was created by art students from the Medford Area High School. The Farm Bill has passed the U.S. Senate and will go to the House.

Farm Service Agency – Deb Esselman, County Executive Director, reported: Crop reports are due July 16. MILC payments for April were \$1.21 and payments for May and June are expected to be about \$1. The new Farm Bill, as passed by the U.S. Senate, eliminates direct payments but may include some loss payments. A decrease in clients may result from a decrease in programs. In that case, it is likely that some offices will be closed.

Northwest Land & Water Conservation Association (NWLCA) – Krug and Noonan reported on the NWLCA meeting that was held May 18. Polk County wants to transfer from the West Central Area to the Northwest Area. Krug noted that there is a problem getting people to serve on committees, in part due to travel issues. He also notified committee members of the upcoming Northwestern Area tour on August 17. It will be combined with the next NWLCA meeting and will include visits to Excel Energy’s biomass plant at Ashland and the Northern Aquaculture Demonstration Facility in Bayfield County.

Drinking Water Testing and Education Program: The 2012 program will be held in the middle of August. Residents/landowners have been inquiring about the program, including the fee that will be charged. The committee and LCD staff discussed funding and costs. MOTION by Peterson/Soper to charge \$25 for each Homeowner’s Package sample, \$25 for each Metals Package sample, and \$10 for each bacteria retest. MOTION CARRIED with Krug voting no.

Correspondence: Farm Technology Days Brochure; WLWCA Technical Committee minutes; Farm Bill status; WLWCA Board of Directors listing.

Future Meetings/Events

Farm Technology Days (Outagamie County) July 17-19, 2012
Northwest Tour and NWLCA Meeting(Ashland) August 17, 2012

Next LCC Meeting Tuesday, August 21, 2012 (9:30 a.m.)

MOTION by Soper/Smith to adjourn at 11 a.m.

TAYLOR COUNTY LAND CONSERVATION COMMITTEE
Minutes of May 30, 2012 Meeting

The meeting was called to order by Dave Krug at 9:00 a.m. and was held in the UW Extension Meeting Room, County-USDA Service Center, Medford, Wisconsin. Members present were David Krug, Chairman, Scott Mildbrand, Tim Peterson, JoAnn Smith, and Ray Soper. Others present were Steve Oberle, County Conservationist.

MOTION by Mildbrand/Peterson to approve the agenda with the addition of one agenda item: Report on Mining Committee activities provided by Oberle/Soper. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Taylor County Mining Committee update: Draft Mining Committee Ordinances were distributed and discussion ensued on progress toward completion of these Ordinances, and the general progress of the Mining Committee and the mining/permitting processes in Taylor County. Oberle/Soper briefed the committee on discussions with the Bureau of Land Management, USDA-Forest Service, WDNR, and Aquila during the last Mining Committee meeting.

MOTION by Soper/Peterson to adjourn and move into closed session per 19.85(1) (c) and/or (f), Wis. Stats. to review/discuss County Conservationist's request for a Personal Leave of Absence. **UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED** on a roll call vote.

MOTION by Smith/Peterson to move into open session. **MOTION CARRIED.**

MOTION by Mildbrand/Smith to approve County Conservationist's request for a Personal Leave of Absence from Monday, June 4 to Friday, June 29. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Review/take action on next LCC meeting date: After some discussion, the LCC decided to keep the date and time (for the next meeting) that was set during the last LCC meeting: **Friday, June 22, 9:00 a.m.**

MOTION by Mildbrand/Peterson to adjourn at 9:50 a.m.

**TAYLOR COUNTY LAND CONSERVATION COMMITTEE
Minutes of May 1, 2012 Special Meeting**

A special LCC meeting was called to order by Dave Krug at 9:30 a.m. The meeting was held in the UW Extension Meeting Room, County-USDA Service Center, Medford, Wisconsin. Members present were David Krug, Chairman, Scott Mildbrand, Tim Peterson, and Ray Soper. JoAnn Smith was absent. Others present were Steve Oberle, County Conservationist, and Cathy Mauer, LCD Conservation Assistant.

MOTION by Peterson/Soper to approve the agenda as distributed and posted. **MOTION CARRIED.**

MOTION by Mildbrand/Peterson to approve the April 10, 2012 LCC meeting minutes. **MOTION CARRIED.**

OLD BUSINESS:

LCC representative and alternate to the Pri-Ru-Ta RC&D Council, Inc.: Ray Soper and JoAnn Smith were selected as representative and alternate, respectively, by **MOTION** from Peterson/Mildbrand. **MOTION CARRIED.**

LCC and LCD representatives and alternates to the NWLCA (Northwest Land Conservation Association): Ray Soper and Dave Krug were selected as LCC representative and alternate, respectively, and Steve Oberle was approved as the LCD staff representative by **MOTION** from Peterson/Mildbrand. **MOTION CARRIED.**

NEW BUSINESS:

Model by-laws for the new WLWCA area associations, including NWLCA, were distributed by Oberle.

Oberle submitted the SWRM (Soil and Water Resource Management) Grant Contract for 2012 to Krug for his signature.

Next LCC MeetingJune 22, 2012 (9:00 a.m.)

MOTION by Mildbrand/Peterson to adjourn at 9:50 a.m.

TAYLOR COUNTY LAND CONSERVATION COMMITTEE
Minutes of April 10, 2012 Meeting

The monthly LCC meeting was called to order by Dave Krug at 9:05 a.m. The meeting was held in the UW Extension Meeting Room, County-USDA Service Center, Medford, Wisconsin. Members present were David Krug, Chairman, Scott Mildbrand, Tim Peterson, JoAnn Smith, and Ray Soper. Others present were Lanice Szomi, Pri-Ru-Ta RC&D Program Manager; Deb Esselman, FSA County Executive Director; Bob Plawski, NRCS District Conservationist; Ed Zydzik, USDA-APHIS; Steve Oberle, County Conservationist; and Cathy Mauer, LCD Conservation Assistant.

MOTION by Soper/Mildbrand to approve the agenda as distributed and posted. **MOTION CARRIED.**

MOTION by Mildbrand/Soper to approve the February 21, 2012 LCC meeting minutes. **MOTION CARRIED.**

February - April 2012 bills were circulated for review, and the February budget analysis was distributed. **MOTION** by Peterson/Smith to approve the bills and budget analysis as presented. **MOTION CARRIED.**

OLD BUSINESS:

North Breeze Dairy (NBD) update: Brian Gerrits from NBD emailed that, as of the end of March, they are still waiting for their high capacity well permit from DNR.

WLWCA update: The merger between WLWCA and WALCE was approved. One LCC representative and one LCD staff representative will be needed for each area organization. These representatives should be selected by mid-May; the area meeting is scheduled for May 18. Each area will elect one of each to the state board, and the state board will send three representatives to the Wisconsin Land and Water Conservation Board. In order to select the LCC area representative in a timely fashion, the LCC will meet at 9:30 a.m. on May 1 (before the UW-Extension committee meeting). The Pri-Ru-Ta RC&D representative will also be selected at then. LCC committee members will be elected at the April 17th meeting of the County Board.

NEW BUSINESS:

Reports

Natural Resources Conservation Service – Bob Plawski, District Conservationist, reported: There are eleven EQIP contracts so far, totaling \$352,518. Three cropland (\$29,849); one pastureland (\$25,643); one conservation forestry activity plan (\$2,727); five farmsteads, including four barnyards and one storage, (\$278,304); and one organic transition (\$15,995). More applications are still coming in. There were twenty-three applications for the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP). Fifteen have been pre-approved for \$157,142. Eleven are for cropland/pastureland including three for beginning farmers (\$153, 555) and four for forestry (\$3,587). All applicants that wanted to proceed were approved. There were six applications in Price County. The maximum payment for storage is \$100,000; storage facilities generally cost \$150,000 and up. With few exceptions all new pits will be concrete. The 313 (Waste Storage Facility) and 590 (Nutrient Management) standards are being reviewed. NRCS is getting requests for wetland determinations and highly erodible land determinations, mostly as referrals from FSA. Krug expressed concern about the amount of soil erosion he is seeing, especially on soybean fields. He also mentioned fields where equipment is being run through sod waterways and fence rows. Plawski noted that on HEL land operators need to use an approved tillage system and/or a conservation plan. The major problems are

with corn and beans. Problems may be noted during a compliance review and compliance could be enforced, though operators are usually given a year to come back into compliance. They would then be subject to yearly review.

Farm Service Agency – Deb Esselman, County Executive Director, reported:

There were MILC payments for February of approximately \$0.39, and payments are also projected for March, April, and May, perhaps as high as \$1.00. DCP sign-ups are underway with payments to be made in October; there will be no advance payments. Taylor County is number one in the state for percent of sign-ups. There will probably be a Farm Bill extension. One facility loan for a grain bin has been approved, and one for hay storage, in Price County, is being processed. There were no CRP applications, and there were five applications for SURE for 20120 crops.

Wildlife Damage Program – Ed Zydzik, USDA-APHIS, reported:

Seventy wolf shooting permits have been issued, one wolf was shot. Eight wolves have been euthanized. The governor signed a wolf hunting bill but no details have yet been worked out. Licensing must now fund all wolf damage payments; there will be not endangered resources funds for payments. At this time it is likely that payments will be made if someone claims they were coyote hunting and a dog gets killed, but not if they were wolf hunting. There is concern that other hunting dogs, such as bird dogs, could get caught in traps set for wolves. APHIS will try to steer hunter/trappers toward farms with chronic wolf problems. Elk are likely to get introduced into county forests in Price and Rusk Counties. Bears are a problem for elk. Elk and cougars are being added to the wildlife damage program. There was a case of CWD found in a wild deer near Shell Lake. Damage payment claims have not yet been processed through the Madison office. Zydzik is assisting with installation of electric fencing on beehives.

Pri-Ru-Ta RC&D – Lanice Szomi, Program Manager, reported:

Szomi is applying for grazing grants; the applications are due April 23. There will be Farm Bill public information meetings with Senator Kohl on April 12 in Loyal and April 17 in Ladysmith. Pri-Ru-Ta expects to be active until October, and will then enter a dormant state.

Taylor County Mining Committee update: Oberle said the committee is reviewing other county ordinances and that the committee toured the mine. The committee plans to start with an outline for an ordinance, with details to be filled in later. Krug commented that an ordinance should cover both open pit and shaft mines. Soper said that because representatives from Aquila (the company investigated the potential for the Bend mine), the focus has been on the Bend mine rather than taking a broader outlook.

2012 LCD budget issues: Larry Brandl, Taylor County Accountant, prefers to wait until the end of the year to make any transfers from one account to another to cover a shortfall in LCD staffing funds.

Oberle proposal for LCD office hours in Gilman: In order to better serve residents in the western part of the county and because he is moving to Gilman, Oberle would like to offer office hours in Gilman one or two days a month. Discussion followed, and the proposal will be considered at the next meeting.

2013 Joint DATCP/DNR Grant application: Submitted by Oberle for Krug signature. Oberle is applying for \$163,442 for staffing and \$178,000 for cost-sharing (\$150,000 for hard practices and \$28,000 for SEG nutrient management planning). **MOTION** by Soper/Mildbrand to approve the application. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Conservation Plans and Nutrient Management Plans: Review of Conservation Plan for Alan Feldkamp. Review of nutrient management plans for Bovine Asset Management, Brian Bolstad, Jeffry Fiedler, Richard Halopka, Seth Hamland, Peter Skille, and Sherri Young.

Correspondence: Oberle circulated the following correspondence: Wisconsin Grazing Initiative, USDA Summary of Livestock Operations, State Report on Organic Agriculture in Wisconsin, Clark County spreadsheet that can be used to calculate the value of manure, and

information on torque arresters that can be installed on well pumps to eliminate one potential source of stray voltage.

Future meetings/events:

Next LCC Meeting (Special)9:30 a.m., May 1, 2012

Next LCC Meeting (Regular)10:00 a.m., June 19, 2012

MOTION by Mildbrand/Peterson to adjourn and move into closed session per 19.85(1)(c), Wis. Stats. for Oberle evaluation. **UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED** on a roll call vote.

MOTION by Peterson/Smith to move into open session. **MOTION CARRIED.**

MOTION by Peterson/Smith to adjourn at 12:14 p.m.

TAYLOR COUNTY LAND CONSERVATION COMMITTEE
Minutes of Tuesday, February 21, 2012 Meeting

The monthly LCC meeting was called to order by Dave Krug at 9:30 a.m. The meeting was held in the UW Extension Meeting Room, County-USDA Service Center, Medford, Wisconsin. Members present were David Krug, Chairman, Scott Mildbrand, Tim Peterson, JoAnn Smith, and Ray Soper. Others present were Steve Oberle, County Conservationist, and Cathy Mauer, LCD Conservation Assistant. Also present for part of the meeting were Lanice Szomi, Pri-Ru-Ta RC&D Program Manager; Deb Esselman, FSA County Executive Director; Bob Plawski, NRCS District Conservationist; Ed Zydzik, USDA-APHIS;

MOTION by Peterson/Mildbrand to approve the agenda as distributed and posted.
MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION by Mildbrand/Smith to approve the December 20, 2011 LCC meeting minutes.
MOTION CARRIED.

January - February 2011 bills were circulated for review, and the 2011 budget analysis was distributed. **MOTION** by Peterson/Mildbrand to approve the bills and budget analysis as presented. **MOTION CARRIED.**

OLD BUSINESS:

North Breeze Dairy (NBD) – Oberle said that the most recent pump tests at the proposed NBD site did not provide enough information to determine, in his opinion, if there was enough water for the dairy or for Stetsonville. Discussion followed on the status of the proposed dairy and the permitting process, both for a high capacity well (WPDES permit) and a livestock siting permit.

NEW BUSINESS:

Reports

Land Conservation Department – Steve Oberle, County Conservationist, reported: The final allocation for the staffing and support portion of the Soil and Water Resource Management grant that the LCD receives from DATCP was approximately \$16,000 less than the LCD had budgeted in its 2012 budget, which was based on a projected allocation from DATCP. Oberle also said there were some changes in priorities for use of state funds, with less emphasis being placed on the county's Land and Resource Management Plan and more on state priorities. In response to a question from Krug, Oberle said that the Farmland Preservation Program did not seem to be a priority with the state anymore. Discussion followed about options for making up the shortfall. Options considered included cutting elsewhere in the department budget, obtaining additional county funds, finding other funding sources such as grants, staffing cuts, staff retirement, and cutting hours. Oberle said there were funds in the department's vehicle outlay account, which had been set up for eventual replacement of the department truck. The department has recently received a truck previously used by the Forestry Department. While it is uncertain how long that truck will last, the truck account could provide one source of funds. Other potential sources of funds are the department's Soil Survey and Tree Sale accounts. Soper suggested that rather than depleting any one account, it would be preferable to pull funds from several accounts.

Natural Resources Conservation Service – Bob Plawski, District Conservationist, reported: There was an increase in funding for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) in Wisconsin from \$17 million to \$19 million. There were twenty applicants for the program: barnyards - 5, cropland nutrient management plans (NMPs) - 3, wetland - 1, pasture - 3, manure storage - 2, forestry - 1,

comprehensive nutrient management plans - 2, and organic practices -1. All three cropland NMPs are likely to get funded along one of the pasture applications. The other two pasture applications may also get funded if other counties do not use all of their funds. The organic application was approved for \$15,000, covering conversion of cropland to hayland on Highly Erodible Land and installation of fencing for grazing. There were twenty-three applicants for the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP): agriculture - 15 and forestry - 8. There have been delays in reviewing and ranking the applications. This is a five year program with payment based on what the applicant is now doing and what they agree to do. Wetland determinations are being done. For the 2013 budget there will probably be cuts from the President's budget. There has been some discussion of closing all three area soil survey offices in the state with the work being handled in the districts. Smith asked how NRCS was handling NMPs. Plawski said that Oberle is working on some at no charge, though the client gets a payment. Cost-sharing for NMPs is available through EQIP. DATCP requirements must be met, and payments range from \$5.44/ac to \$10.78/ac for three years.

Farm Service Agency – Deb Esselman, County Executive Director, reported: The DCP program is going on. There will be no advanced payments, and payments are not expected until October. CRP sign-ups will be sometime in March/April. Few, if any, sign-ups are expected because landowners can usually get more money in rent. The MILC program is likely to have payments, due to high feed costs, in the range of \$0.40 - \$0.50 starting in March (or February) and continuing for the rest of the year. The SURE disaster program had only four or five sign-ups; the program is geared toward grain and has low participation here. Some FSA offices are being closed nationwide. The local office will not be affected. A new Farm Bill is not likely by October, and there will probably be an extension. A new bill may have no direct payments although it is likely there will still be facility and other loans.

Wildlife Damage Program – Ed Zyzdik, USDA-APHIS, reported: Zyzdik presented four claims for damage payments from 2011. Three were for bear damage: Jim Miller - \$1884.82, Keith Skabroud - \$2078.13, and Brandner Dairy - \$1101.38. One was for deer damage: Joe Zenner - \$3638.14. Zenner also had deer shooting permits that were filled. **MOTION** by Peterson/Mildbrand to approve payment of the damage claims. **MOTION CARRIED.** Wolf permits were issued to Jim Tlusty and Darrin Kohls. Zyzdik will also be removing wolves from problem farms.

Northwest Land & Water Conservation Association (NWLCA) – Steve Oberle reported: Paula Carow, County Conservationist in Rusk County, has retired. Mike Zimmer, the LCD technician has moved into the County Conservationist position, and his technician position is being refilled. Iron and Oneida Counties are taking over management of the Conservation Camp, which will be held June 12-15 at Trees for Tomorrow in Eagle River. Burnett and Ashland Counties are taking over the speech and poster contests. The next meeting will be May 18 in Hayward.

Pri-Ru-Ta RC&D – Lanice Szomi, Program Manager, reported: The Pri-Ru-Ta executive committee met on February 13 and recommended closing. The next meeting of Pri-Ru-Ta will be held February 24. Szomi handed out a proposal that the LCD take over administration of the grant supporting the grazing specialist position in Taylor County, currently held by Bob Brandt, and to apply for new grants, as well. The position is now funded by two grants, a technical assistance grant that expires in three months and an education/demonstration grant that extends into 2013. It was noted that the services provided by the grazing specialist were especially helpful to beginning farmers and hobby farmers, especially those raising beef, and that Brandt has been responsible for making no-till drills available to area farmers. Discussion of the financial implications for the county followed. More information will be presented at the April 10 LCC meeting. Approval to pay the already budgeted \$150 Pri-Ru-Ta membership dues for 2012.

Soil and Water Conservation Society Annual Conference: This year's theme was groundwater. Oberle attended the conference.

Proposed groundwater study for Taylor County: Oberle and Arlen Albrecht, UW-Extension Community and Natural Resources Development agent, have approached the towns concerning an informational meeting to discuss a county-wide groundwater study and assess the overall level of support from the towns for such a study. The LCC had previously (in November 2010) decided to postpone any decision or action on the proposed groundwater study and suggested that the proposal needed support from the public and businesses in order to get approval. Oberle said he would not bring the topic back to the committee but might if there was money available and local support for such a study. Krug expressed concern that the LCC decision was being circumvented. Discussion followed on the usefulness of such a study.

Nutrient Management Plans: Review of plans for Andy and Karen Dums, Phil Jazdzewski, George Niggemann, Jim Schley, and Ardyss Skille.

Correspondence: *Runoff Lessons on Frozen Snow-covered Ground*; Letter to Krug from WLWCA along with dues invoice for dues of \$1279.62, which has already been budgeted.

Future meetings/events:

Pri-Ru-Ta RC&D (Soper).....(Hayward) February 24, 2012

Spring County Conservationist meeting (Oberle)(Wausau) April 4-5, 2012

Next LCC Meeting April 10, 9:00 a.m.

MOTION by Peterson/Mildbrand to adjourn at 12:30.