

NATURAL RESOURCES BOARD
Conference Call Minutes

A special meeting of the Natural Resources Board via telephone conference call was held Thursday, August 11, 2005, in Room 774B of the State Natural Resources Building (GEF 2), 101 South Webster Street, Madison, Wisconsin.

The meeting was called to order by Gerald O'Brien at 10:30 a.m.

Participating Board Members:

Gerald O'Brien (Stevens Point)
Jonathan P. Ela, (Madison)
Herb Behnke (Shawano)
Christine Thomas (via cell phone)
John Welter (Eau Claire)

Absent: Howard D. Poulson (Palmyra)
Steve Willett (Phillips)

Order of Business

1. Adoption of modifications to Board Order ER-11-05, revisions to NR 12 related to proposed endangered/threatened species and gray wolf damage to livestock payment program.

Signe Holtz, Director, Endangered Resources Bureau stated that the NRB approved this rule in April 2005. Legislative hearings were held on this rule on June 16, 2005 by the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Transportation and on June 29, 2005 by the Assembly Committee on Natural Resources. Both Committees returned the rule to the Department of unspecified modifications. To address the concern of both committees, the Department proposes to amend the criterion in NR 12.54(2)(c)5, that a cattle producer must meet in order to be eligible for payments for missing calves. Specifically, the Department proposes that the three member agricultural committee (Department of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection (DATCP), Farm Bureau, and UW Agriculture Extension) that will be established to determine caps on livestock payments would be responsible for determining if research would be an "unreasonable burden" on the claimant. IN addition, the Department proposes to delete the word, "fully" from the phrase, "cooperate fully" because it is redundant and DATCP recommended it's deletion. This rule proposal includes the information the Board asked for at the July 21 conference call including: 1. Confirmation from all three agencies participating on the committee, 2. Clarification of the role of each committee member, and 3. Clarification about specific research criteria that will be used.

Mr. Behnke asked if the claimant doesn't agree to the research as proposed and that is supported by the three person committee who reviews the research, will the claimant still be eligible for payment under the original formula after one depredation. Will they be paid for missing calves or is there another procedure?

Ms. Holtz stated that the short answer is that yes they would be eligible. The long answer is that if the committee says there are certain things that impose a significant economic impact or unreasonable burden or hardship and identify those and then if the Department can come up with a way to meet those issues. It would be expected that the rancher would participate.

Mr. O'Brien asked that if the Department met those concerns, it would still have to go back to the committee to approve the modified research.

Ms. Holtz stated yes.

Mr. Behnke moved, seconded by Mr. Welter approve adoption of modifications to Board Order ER-11-05, revisions to NR 12 related to proposed endangered/threatened species and gray wolf damage to livestock payment program. The motion carried unanimously by all members present. Mr. Poulson and Mr. Willett were absent.

The meeting adjourned at 10:38