

NATURAL RESOURCES BOARD

MINUTES

The regular meeting of the Natural Resources Board was held on Wednesday, September 26, 2007 at the Four Seasons Resort, Pembine, Wisconsin. The meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m. for action on items 1-7. The meeting adjourned at 3:05 p.m.

George Bosley, Marinette County Board Chairman, welcomed the Natural Resources Board to the area, “the real north of the new north and the waterfalls capital of Wisconsin”.

Dr. Thomas thanked, on behalf of the Board, Marinette County and DNR regional staff for their hospitality and the tour of the area. She apologized to anyone who showed up Tuesday afternoon to the listening session to find out that it was cancelled, but no one had registered to testify by the deadline.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

1. Organizational Matters

1.A. Calling the roll

David Clausen – present

Jonathan Ela – present

John Welter – present

Jane Wiley - present

Dan Poulson – present

Gerald O’Brien – present

Christine Thomas – present

1.B. Approval of minutes from June 27, 2007

Mr. Welter MOVED, seconded by Mr. Ela approval of the minutes as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

1.C. Approval of agenda for September 26, 2007

Dr. Clausen MOVED, seconded by Mr. Poulson approval of the agenda as amended for September 26, 2007. The motion carried unanimously.

Dr. Thomas introduced Matthew Frank, new Secretary of the Department of Natural Resources, welcomed him to the DNR, and looked forward to taking care of Wisconsin’s natural resources together.

Secretary Frank thanked Dr. Thomas and said he was honored to be Secretary of the Department and to work to continue the great environmental and conservation tradition in this state.

2. Ratification of Acts of the Department Secretary

2.A. Real Estate Transactions

Mr. O’Brien MOVED, seconded by Mr. Poulson approval of the real estate transactions. The motion carried unanimously.

3. Action Items

3.A. Air, Waste, and Water/Enforcement

3.A.1 Request modification to Board Order LE-23-06, modifications to NR 5, related to boat noise testing

Roy Zellmer, Recreation and Safety Warden, Law Enforcement Bureau stated that Section 30.62(2)(b), Stats., limits all boat noise at 86 decibels (dB). At the January 2006 Natural Resources Board meeting, the board heard comments from the public regarding their concerns over boat noise generated by airboats. The Board adopted LE-23-06 at the December 2006 meeting. Hearings were held in both the Senate and Assembly committees in February 2007. The Department was asked to consider modifying LE-23-06 to include an exemption from s. 30.62(2)(b) stats, for trappers. The Department recommends an exemption for trappers

operating airboats or hovercraft from s. 30.62(2)(b) stats, while actively engaged in trapping, from November 1 through the following March 31. This exemption will have a sunset clause of March 31, 2009. At the end of the 2 years the exemption will be reviewed. Because the noise generated by airboats comes largely from the air propeller used as the method of propulsion, it is very likely many of the airboats and similar craft in the state may not be in compliance with the current statutorily established 86 dB maximum noise level.

This exemption will give trappers the ability to engage in a sport which can and does have a positive economic impact for them and their families and will occur at a time of year with generally reduced outdoor recreational uses of the effected waters. He asked the Board for their approval of this modification.

Mr. Ela stated he understands why this is being requested of us and does not have a serious policy issue with this. He does not understand why it would actually be legal for the Department to do this under the terms of the statute. How can we exempt by regulation something that is covered in the statute?

Mr. Zellmer stated that would pertain to the same way we have already exempted by rule the previous two exemptions that currently exist anyway. There are commercial operations that would pertain to commercial fishing and so on. We had consulted with legal staff from a long standing status of trapping with interstate commerce. They felt this was something they could do for an exemption by a rule order.

Mr. Prosis, Director legal council, stated he agreed with the statements being made. A lot of these requirements came from federal law. The federal law had some exemptions in it and the statute as he understands it followed the federal law so that when there were some changes made in the federal law, we felt we could make some changes through rule making and still be consistent.

Mr. Ela MOVED, seconded by Mr. Welter approval of the request for modification to Board Order LE-23-06, modifications to NR 5, related to boat noise testing.

Mr. Welter asked how many trappers the Department expects to be using air boats on the Lower Wisconsin Riverway and the Mississippi.

Mr. Zellmer estimated there would be three to five on the Lower Wisconsin Riverway and, from contacts he has had with the Upper Mississippi Airboaters Association, there are several of their members, about 20, who are actual trappers that are also airboat owners and operators.

Mr. O'Brien asked how the rule was working out, after some earlier controversy.

Mr. Zellmer stated he knew of four complaints on airboat operation. Three come from the Chippewa River area and one from the Lower Wisconsin Riverway. In each of those cases, the field wardens went out and made contact with the owner/operators, educated them on the law and how the Department would enforce the law. To his knowledge, there have been no further complaints.

Mr. Ela asked if this rule has been implemented.

Mr. Zellmer stated the law as it stands was in existence. The rule package previously was just a modification on how we would actually test the airboats. The Department has been carrying out our duties to enforce the law as it stands.

Dr. Thomas stated the theory is this is a semi-commercial enterprise and that people's windows are probably largely closed from November – March so the noise is less intrusive in homes.

Mr. Zellmer stated that is an accurate statement.

Mr. Welter stated the intent is to phase out non-compliant boats within two years under this two year exemption from the rule. That will sunset and will mean if trappers are out after that time during that November-March timeframe there will not be an exemption for them from the rule.

Dr. Thomas stated the exemption will be reviewed at that time.

The motion carried unanimously.

- 3.A.2 Request adoption of Board Order AM-05-06, proposed rules affecting NR 440 pertaining to the incorporation of new, and changes to existing, federal new source performance standards (NSPS)

Kevin Kessler, Director, Air Management Bureau stated that under Section 111 of the Clean Air Act, the US Environmental protection Agency (EPA) is required to promulgate regulations establishing standards of performance for new stationary sources. These standards are contained in Title 40, Part 60 of the Code of Federal Regulations. The Department is required, under s. 185.17(1)(a), Stats., to incorporate these standards into rule, and does so in ch. NR 440, Wis. Adm. Code. Periodically it is necessary to amend ch. NR 440, Wis. Adm. Code, to address changes the EPA makes to existing NSPS and to incorporate standards promulgated by EPA for new source categories. These proposed revisions address changes that have been made by the EPA to general requirements which apply to all source categories, and to the specific standards for 60 individual source categories. Requirements relating to mercury emissions from certain electric steam generating units which EPA promulgated on May 18, 2005, and subsequently amended, are not proposed here. These requirements will be addressed separately in Natural Resources Board Order AM-32-05 (the mercury rule). Standards for 5 source categories not currently included in ch. NR 440 are also being proposed.

The proposed revisions are not expected to be controversial since they are substantively identical to the federal standards already in effect.

The Board authorized hearings on these proposed rules at its September 2006 meeting. The results of hearings held are summarized in the attached background memorandum.

Mr. O'Brien MOVED, seconded by Dr. Clausen approval of the request for adoption of Board Order AM-05-06, proposed rules affecting NR 440 pertaining to the incorporation of new, and changes to existing, federal new source performance standards. The motion carried unanimously.

3.A.3 Request authorization for public hearings of permanent rule for revisions to NR 320, NR 323, NR 328, NR 329, NR 341, NR 343, NR 345 Wisconsin Administrative Code

Martin Griffin, Water Regulations and Zoning Specialist, Watershed Management Bureau stated that considering the existing, new, and yet to be determined threats of invasive species and viruses, the Department proposes to revise chapters NR 320, NR 323, NR 328, NR 329, NR 341, NR 343, NR 345 to create new exemption and general permit standards to ensure that these invaders are not moving from one waterbody to another through equipment used in projects authorized by waterway (Chapter 30) permits.

The proposed rule establishes exemption and general permit standards for activities that would otherwise require an individual permit condition to which the same condition would apply.

These new standards would ensure that waterfront property owners exercising exemptions or general permits will take the necessary precautions to prevent the spread of invasive species and viruses by de-contaminating their equipment used during construction activities in and near waterways.

There are currently no requirements in the rules setting eligibility standards for waterway projects for de-contamination of equipment to remove invasive species and viruses. By promulgating new exemption and general permit standards for equipment decontamination we will be able to help ensure that the spread of invasive species and virus are controlled to the fullest possible extent and that the resulting economic and ecological impacts of these invasive species and viruses to the resource are avoided.

Mr. O'Brien asked how the people become of aware of this regulation in the rule on exempt and general permits.

Mr. Griffin stated it would be in the rule that deals with the general permit for that specific activity.

Mr. O'Brien asked if it was for an exemption.

Mr. Griffin stated it would also be in the rule. If they applied for an exemption determination request and the Department states they are exempt, they are getting their information that way. If they believe they are exempt and that they do not have to contact anyone, they will go ahead and do the activity. He is very hopeful that when people believe this, they are looking at the exemption criteria to make that determination. The invasive species information will be in the exemption criteria.

Mr. Ela stated the permit portion of the Department's website lays some of this out.

Mr. Griffin stated all of the exemption criteria are on-line.

Mr. Ela asked how this rule varies from the emergency rule.

Mr. Griffin stated it does not vary at all. The emergency rule will expire at some point.

Mr. Ela asked if the language is essentially the same.

Mr. Griffin stated yes, it is the same.

Mr. Ela noted that when considering the emergency rule the Board had wrestled with what was obligatory and what was recommended, and that clarifying changes had been made. Except for the one element of not using the same equipment, everything is mandatory.

Mr. Griffin stated correct. We said "if it is possible, do not use the same equipment." If you are going from someplace you know is Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia (VHS) infected to someplace that is not, if you can help it, do not use the same equipment.

Ms. Wiley asked what feedback had been received on the emergency rule from the people affected by it.

Mr. Griffin stated they had one hearing as required. No one showed up at the hearing. The only feedback he received were calls asking for clarification on what the actual emergency rule said. No one that he talked to had a negative light on how this would affect them.

Mr. Ela asked if there have been infractions.

Mr. Griffin stated this will be hard to enforce since it will be difficult to know if someone did not clean up equipment

Mr. Poulson asked if you have the exemption, are you subject to a spot check?

Mr. Griffin stated the Department does for an exemption is to randomly choose exemptions to go back with compliance monitoring to see how they did the work. We do go back to check but we do not go back to check every single one. In the past, 90% and more of the exemptions are perfectly fine. The Department does the same for all permits and not just exemptions.

Mr. Ela asked for a situation where an individual permit would be required.

Mr. Griffin stated if you do not meet the general permit standards or the exemption standards. There could be a locational standard. If you work beyond a higher protection type of water where you have critical habitat, the Department would say you do not meet the general permit criteria because of the location of your project, and you must apply for an individual permit to kick in that water more detailed review. Another situation would be if the project itself exceeds the criteria. If you do not meet the general permit standards or exemption criteria then you would have to apply for an individual permit.

Mr. Ela asked whether he was correct that the question of the individual versus general permit does not pertain to invasive species control but with the nature of the project itself.

Mr. Griffin stated that was correct.

Mr. Ela asked whether the requirements in this rule will be the same whether it is a general permit or an individual permit.

Mr. Griffin stated correct.

Mr. Welter MOVED, seconded by Mr. Ela approval of the request for authorization for public hearings of permanent rule for revisions to NR 320, NR 323, NR 328, NR 329, NR 341, NR 343, NR 345 Wisconsin Administrative Code, pertaining to general permit provisions designed to stop the spread of aquatic invasive species. The motion carried unanimously.

- 3.A.4 Request authorization for public hearings on NR 462 pertaining to Boiler MACT standards
Kevin Kessler, Director, Air Management Bureau stated that the federal National Emission Standard for Hazardous Air Pollutants for Industrial, Commercial and Institutional Boilers and Process Heaters (Boiler MACT) was promulgated by the USEPA on September 13, 2004, with a compliance date set for September 13, 2007. Shortly after promulgation, four environmental organizations filed a lawsuit that challenged the methodology USEPA used to set the emission standards and the standards themselves. In June of 2007, the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled

in favor of the environmental organizations and announced its intent to vacate the Boiler MACT. On July 30, 2007, the Court issued its mandate vacating the Boiler MACT. The compliance date for existing sources under the now vacated federal rule is no longer valid at the federal level. However, since DNR promulgated a similar standard in ch. NR 462 as required by s. 285.27(2)(a), Stats., the Boiler MACT requirements remain in Wisconsin's rules.

On September 10, 2007, the Board adopted an emergency order which stayed implementation of ch. NR 462 for 150 days. The Department is proposing an identical permanent amendment here. As described in the background memorandum, the issues here are complex. There is no specific national guidance yet from USEPA on the expected next steps following the federal court vacatur.

The Board last acted on ch. NR 462 on September 10, 2007, in a special session adopting an emergency order which stays implementation of the rule. Chapter NR 462 was originally adopted in May 2006, as required under s. 285.27(2)(a), Wis. Stats.

Dr. Clausen MOVED, seconded by Mr. Ela reaffirmed approval of the request for authorization for public hearings on NR 462 pertaining to Boiler MACT standards.

Ms. Wiley stated she would abstain since she was not part of the September 10 conference call.

The motion carried in a vote of 6 - 0. Ms. Wiley abstained.

3.B. Land Management, Recreation, and Fisheries/Wildlife

3.B.1 Request approval of the Peshtigo River State Forest Master Plan

Dan Mertz, State Forest Superintendent, Division of Forestry and John Lubbers, Regional Forestry Staff Supervisor, Division of Forestry gave the presentation together and stated that the Department requests approval of a master plan for the Peshtigo River State Forest under NR 44 which requires Department lands to have a master plan. Wisconsin Stats. s. 28.04 requires the development of plans for State Forests to assure the practice of sustainable forestry.

The master plan spells out how the land will be managed, used and developed; how it will look; and what benefits it will provide. The plan provides a vision and framework for the use, development, management and acquisition of the forest well into the future with an emphasis on the next 15 years. The development of the Peshtigo River State Forest master plan has been guided by a commitment to sustainable forestry. Planning is complex given the varying opinions, viewpoints, and values people and organizations bring to the issues. The Department worked actively with federal, state and local governments, tribes, non-governmental organizations, citizens and business over two years to develop the plan.

The master plan maintains and expands protection of critical ecological communities, habitats and species; maintains existing forest types with a slight increase in the pine type and a slight decrease in the aspen type; supports regional and local economies by providing resources and jobs related to the forest products industry and tourism industry; establishes a scenic management zone to protect the flowages and river; designates high conservation value forests / natural areas; increases the number of rustic and primitive camp sites and hiking and biking trails; maintains quantity and quality of snowmobile trails; increases the project boundary by 47,000 acres; and maintains existing ATV trails and calls for a regional planning effort to evaluate potential ATV connector trails.

The majority of the issues have been resolved with the exception of the use and designation of trails for the purpose of ATVs. No new ATV trails are designated in the master plan. There was a strong desire by some to designate a north-south trail through the forest to connect existing trails, whereas others oppose it. The trail connector can not be completed by the Department alone and requires multiple landowners to identify and discuss alternatives.

Mr. Welter asked for further clarification on the boat landing expansion plans and how the number of boat landing parking sites would comport with Department guidelines for the numbers of those sites.

Mr. Mertz stated the boats on the water are controlled by the parking stalls at each boat landing. The Department is proposing to increase the number of stalls at most boat landings to

accommodate the boat trailers that are parking on town roads and along roads leading to the boat landings. NR 1.91 sets guidelines or standards for the number of boaters or watercraft on a body of water. In order to exceed what NR 1.91 recommends, part of the master plan is an alternative public boating recreation plan which justifies exceeding the NR 1.91 standard. The present boat trailer capacity is about 300 and we are proposing to increase that to about 390. There would be no increase on the Caldron Falls Reservoir because it is an outstanding water resource and that capacity will be maintained where it is.

Mr. Welter asked for the justification for that alternative approach.

Mr. Mertz stated the justification is to get trailers and vehicles off the town roads for safety reasons. The town roads are packed with boat trailers and vehicles on busy days.

Mr. Welter stated that if you add 100 places and get people off the town roads, what would you anticipate as an increase in boat traffic.

Mr. Mertz stated it should be about the same because you would have the same number of trailers parking. They would be parking in a different place now. The Town of Stevenson would have to cooperate in controlling parking on town roads.

Mr. O'Brien stated he had a question on All Terrain Vehicles (ATV's). In reading the material, he is not sure if the Plan calls for continuing to maintain the existing ATV trails and to look at possible development of future trails. He has the impression that future ATV trails will be subject to whatever the Department chooses without coming back to this Board. We ran into a misunderstanding when we talked about the Northern Highland – American Legion (NH-AL) when someone misinterpreted our intention saying that we were recommending a task force to go out and establish trails. We were not taking a position on trails at that time. He asked for clarification, based on what you have in your report, what your plan is for future ATV trails?

Mr. Mertz stated the plan is to work with other partners, whether it be ATV clubs, the owners of other lands – private, county, federal – and other stakeholders, to work together with them to look at what the options are out there. If any of these options can provide a regional connector we would decide whether the connector would include state forest land.

Mr. O'Brien asked if the Board passed the Plan as proposed today, agreeing to continue the maintenance of ATV trails that currently exist, does the plan also say that now the Department can choose when and where to put additional ATV trails if they choose without coming back to this Board?

Mr. Mulhern, Deputy Administrator, Division of Forestry stated that based on the way the plan is written his understanding would be that the Department could designate trails. It would be an action that would require an Environmental Impact Statement. You could make that request just like you did with Northern Highland that future trails on the property would need Board approval.

Mr. Ela stated this raises a broader issue. If the Board approves a Master Plan and the Department takes action that goes beyond what is in the master plan without coming back to the Board, why bother to approve Master Plans in the first place?

Mr. Mulhern stated what we are saying in the Plan is that we believe there is a role for the Department as a regional trail connector in that process. We have not had the opportunity yet at this point to work with other partners to determine exactly what that role may be. As we work through that process and determine what that is, we would then implement that action as far as a part of a regional trail network. He would be very comfortable bringing those kinds of actions back to the Board.

Dr. Clausen asked whether if you went forward on this regional connector trail, would that get the full range of public input where all the citizens on all sides of this issue would have a chance to weigh in on this?

Mr. Mulhern said yes. The Department has a track record now with the Northern Highland – American Legion State Forest and what we did there with the stakeholders group. We are currently in the middle of a public process there to identify the alternatives the stakeholders came up with. We would look at doing a similar process for this.

Dr. Thomas said that her impression was the Board approved a plan for the NH-AL but left the ATV question open. That was a really big mistake. A plan is supposed to let people know where you are going in the future. While it is a living document, it should not be a swirling controversy

every moment after it is approved. She is concerned that what we are doing here is leaving this big open question that is now going to become another swirling controversy that goes on and on.

Dr. Thomas asked if Board members have other questions unrelated to the ATV trails.

Mr. Poulson stated that if you are going to pull 100 boat trailers off and put them over here, is your anticipation then that this leaves room for another 100 trailers on the side roads. What is your anticipation about how much additional boat traffic you will draw?

Mr. Mertz stated that the Town of Stevenson would have to get the boat trailers off the town roads because it is a safety hazard. We are trying to provide parking spots for the current users.

Mr. Lubbers stated we would seek approval from the towns to post their town roads as “no parking” for some distance from the boat landing.

Mr. Welter inquired that rather than effectively 25 % - 33% increase in the number of boats that are going to be on High Falls, what you are talking about is effectively maintaining the level of boat use on high falls that you have now.

Mr. Mertz said correct.

Public Appearances:

1. **Sharon Petraska**, Florence, representing the WI State Horse Council and Northern Saddle Club spoke in support of the Peshtigo River Master Plan and especially for the proposed horse trail.
2. **Pat Petraska**, Florence, representing WI State Horse Council and Northern Saddle Club Spoke in support of the plan and the equestrian trails. He likes to camp with his horses and ride trails.
3. **George Bousley**, Niagara, Marinette County Board Chair, representing Marinette County presented Marinette County Resolution No. 247 – Support of Recreational Trail Network to the Board. He stated that ATVs are rapidly replacing snowmobiles in popularity. Regardless of weather conditions they provide an excellent recreational experience during the year. Passage through portions of the Peshtigo River State Forest is an essential link to make this trail connection a reality. He urged the Board to include a specific provision for the Peshtigo River State Forest connection as a goal in the “Planned Recreation Facilities and Developments” component of the Peshtigo River State Forest Master Plan for reasons of safety and economic future of area business that provide services to the users of the trail system.
Mr. Ela asked whether it was the County’s intent to support a specific ATV trail route in the acreage of the current Peshtigo River State Forest or whether the objective was more general.
Mr. Bousley stated they have been working with the people that are involved with tourism and the people out in that area. He would hope the Board could hold that question until the upcoming presentation. They are more informed and he does not want to speak for them. His concern is the safety and economic issue as how it pertains to the whole county.
4. **John Guarisco**, Wausaukee, Crivitz Recreation Association President stated that their area is directly affected by tourism. The northwoods experience complements and enhances the social structure of northeastern Wisconsin. The more diversity our county has in our recreational industry the less likely we are to strain segments of our natural resources. He further stated that 1) within the guidelines of the master plan, the Peshtigo River State Forest and adjacent area be recognized as type 4 setting with regards to NR 44.07(7) 2) the Peshtigo River State Forest boundary expansion and subsequent land acquisitions support the type 4 setting of NR 44.07(7) and that the degree of implementation be tempered to consider the socioeconomic effect on the community profiles surrounding area so as to enable municipalities involved to continue to serve their constituents; and 3) the Peshtigo River connection trail be recognized as a multi-use recreation trail for development within the Peshtigo River State Forest boundaries with an assigned committee with the task of completion of the trail plan currently focusing on a deadline within 24 months.
5. **Pat Mullarky**, Pembine, representing the Dunn-Good Riders ATV Club offered two points

regarding the trail system in Marinette County: 1) The county has 232 miles of winter only ATV trails and 204 miles of summer ATV trails and 2) The Marinette County trails connect with Oconto, Forest, and Florence counties along with the state of Michigan. The connection through the Peshtigo River State Forest would connect the north and south ATV system and expand our trails to accommodate the upcoming increase of ATV riders. About 80% to 85% of the proposed trail would utilize existing winter snowmobile trails or logging and skidding trails that are already in place.

The county and local clubs are working together to provide connections to service areas such as lodging, gas stations, food, camping and the many sites of interest that will fill the needs of the ATV riders.

Jim Orłowski, representing Crivitz Recreation Association gave an overview of their proposed trail connector. He showed on the map where this connector trail would come across state forest property. He stated that 80% - 85% of the proposed trail goes over existing winter use, ATV, or snowmobile trails or existing logging roads or old road beds. **Dr. Clausen** asked if you have considered the fact that we are also proposing expanding this boundary with the idea if it would be possible to put a trail in the expanded boundary area for a connector.

Mr. Orłowski stated there are a couple of aspects going on there from the County. They want to locate the trail on as many existing winter use trails as possible to lessen the impact to the state forest property. In addition, where it goes through is the key recreation area in the county. It has all the resources that people need to recreate – the restaurants, lodging. Right now, they cannot get to those facilities. From an economic and commerce standpoint, we looked at what is best for both worlds. We understand we need to minimize the ecological impact. To move the trail too far out of the area of where it is proposed is going to take away from other aspects of that trail

6. **Ray Booth**, Silver Cliff, representing himself spoke on the social aspects of motorized recreation. The trail is not just a financial motivation. There are many people like him and members of the various snowmobile and ATV clubs who donate thousands of hours to assist in these efforts that are without financial motivation. Their motivation is to help the riders in the community and the riders in the motorized recreation community in general. That is purely social motivation. These riders are families and groups of scattered childhood friends that only meet on the trail rides once a year.

They also have well-attended charitable events in their communities that benefit the local volunteer fire departments, ski team, handicapped, and for people in need. Others, especially the elderly, use ATV's to gather firewood, visit the local trail stop, ice fish, or to drive back a local society and the very fabric of it.

7. **Don Clewley**, Marinette, representing Marinette County Association gave up his time for Jim Orłowski.
8. **Steve Corbeille**, Crivitz, Marinette County Administrator, representing Marinette County welcomed the Board to Marinette County, the "Real North".

It is interesting to look at the demographics as to who the ATVer's are. This is specific to northeastern Wisconsin. 40% of the people that are out there are families riding around and enjoying the trails. We are talking 78% of the people that are out there are family and friends recreating and enjoying the social aspects of family and nature. They also spend money which is important to the county which has a ½% sales tax. For ATVer's, the average individual per trip spending is about \$475.

Marinette County had about \$112 million in tourism income in 2006, and tourism income has grown rapidly. They support the plan. He asked the Board to support the connecting trail. **Dr. Thomas** stated some reticence on the part of the Board may be coming from their experience two years ago when we went on a tour of ATV issues in Lincoln County. The Board spent an afternoon looking at damage: soil erosion, people running off the trail, mud holes, and that sort. The County officials there and Department staff told the Board they do not have enough money to maintain the existing trails and that they do not have enough law

enforcement to enforce people staying on the trails. The Department does not have any more money or law enforcement than two years ago.

She asked whether Marinette County has enough law enforcement to enforce the issues it is currently having? Do you have enough money to maintain the trails that you have? What kind of possible partnership would we have for the extra financial burden it would take to open these trails through the summer months? In the winter there is less damage because theoretically it is frozen and now we would be getting into the mud scenario of over 17 miles of trails that we have not had before.

Mr. Corbeille stated that his remarks could be affected by the state budget. Marinette County does have law enforcement activities on the ATV and snowmobile trails. We do have at least 20 hours per week of enforcement activities, at a minimum. People had stated earlier that some of the trails run on roads. We are worried from the standpoint that if there is not a connecting trail, that the towns may pass ordinances that allow ordinances that allow ATV's to go on the roads which then opens up a whole area to even more enforcement and could be issues then that we would not have the capability to take care of. He also understands the ecological aspects of not running over certain valued species. Their goal is to work together to not have that happen and make it safe.

Mr. Welter noted that with the boundary expansion as proposed in the draft master plan there may be a much broader area of potential state forest here. What we are dealing with here is a narrow corridor which is an interesting patchwork of undeveloped and fairly intensively used lands and this proposed trail would go right in the middle of that corridor.

Mr. O'Brien MOVED, seconded by Mr. Welter approval of the request approval of the Peshtigo River State Forest Master Plan with a requirement that any future plans for ATV trails come back for Board review and approval.

Ms. Wiley stated she did not know how they could do that. The reason is because of the part of the plan that goes through the park we are going to have to do an Environmental Assessment (EA) because nothing has been done on it.

Mr. Mulhern stated the EA is Chapter 3 in the Plan. It is not on existing projects that may require an EIS at some point as an action.

Dr. Thomas stated in other words, nothing new would happen if the Board approved this. No new trail would happen without the Department developing that Plan doing public hearings, coming to the Board, and then an Environmental Assessment would have to be part of any expansion.

Ms. Wiley asked if that includes making the existing trails that are available for winter use available in the summer.

Dr. Thomas stated Mr. O'Brien has not suggested doing that.

Mr. O'Brien stated only the existing uses and trails.

Dr. Thomas stated basically he is just going with the Department recommendation but saying if anything in the future happens, the Department has to come back.

Mr. O'Brien stated correct.

Mr. Welter stated if you look at the Executive Summary on page 3 in relation to ATV trails, he looks at the third paragraph that says "The Department will cooperate with federal and local governments, private landowners, and other interested parties in a public planning process to evaluate potential future trail connector(s) that support a regional trail network." What the Board is saying with Mr. O'Brien's motion, to add to that requirement that any future trails be brought back to this Board for review and approval.

Mr. Ela stated he supports that. In fairness to local interests we should express some sense of skepticism on the part to the Board that any such connector is going to be squeezed into this very narrow corridor, and that most plausibly any connector is going to be built in conjunction with the expansion of the western part of the forest.

Mr. O'Brien stated that would be his feeling too.

Dr. Clausen stated he would be supportive of trying to find a connecting trail further to the west. There is a bit of a disconnect because we had a discussion here earlier on limiting the

number of boating parking lots with the fear that we are going to degrade the recreational experience on those lakes. Now we are talking about putting a whole new nine months more of usage and a whole bunch more people right through the heart of this area. He did not think this a consistent viewpoint.

Mr. O'Brien stated the Board does not want to be in a position like we supposedly were in as a result of our motion at the Northern Highland – American Legion forest where we were appointing a task force to come back. That is not intended by his motion. His motion was that as it now stands with that very narrow corridor, he would not be optimistic that we would be able to find something in that narrow corridor.

The motion carried unanimously.

3.B.2 Land Acquisition and Project Boundary Modification - Yellowstone River and Canon Creek Stream Bank Protection Area - Lafayette County

Mr. Welter MOVED, seconded by Dr. Clausen approval of Land Acquisition and Project Boundary Modification - Yellowstone River and Canon Creek Stream Bank Protection Area - Lafayette County.

Mr. Ela asked how many units there are and how they fit together.

Mr. Steffes stated that Yellowstone has a wildlife area that is to the west and north and a state park that is basically along the north and east shore of Yellowstone Lake. The state park is relatively concise and the wildlife area is quite a bit more acreage.

Mr. Ela asked if the Stream Bank Protection Area is 1/3.

Mr. Steffes stated yes. That is somewhat unique to south central region. When the Stream Bank Protection came on line in the early 1990's, some of our areas in the state, our fisheries people looked at stream corridors similar to what we would have with our Trout Stream Programs and Remnant Fishery areas. South Central Region looked at it, for example, at Governor Dodge State Park and at this one where they have small lakes solely contained within state parks. Erosion, siltation, and high fertility are big issues for those small lakes in the recreation areas. They look to buffer some of that landscape around there. That is how they came forth before the Board at that time as asked for the Stream Bank Protection Areas.

The motion carried unanimously.

3.B.3 Land Acquisition - Goose Lake Wildlife Area - Dane County

Mr. Ela MOVED, seconded by Mr. Welter approval of Land Acquisition - Goose Lake Wildlife Area - Dane County. The motion carried unanimously.

3.B.4 Easement Acquisition and Donations - Rush River Stream Bank Protection Area - Pierce County

Mr. Welter MOVED, seconded by Dr. Clausen approval of Easement Acquisition and Donations - Rush River Stream Bank Protection Area - Pierce County. The motion carried unanimously.

3.B.5 Land Acquisition - Little Wolf River Fishery Area - Portage County

Dr. Thomas MOVED, seconded by Dr. Clausen adoption of Land Acquisition - Little Wolf River Fishery Area - Portage County. The motion carried unanimously.

3.B.6 Land Donation - Avon Bottoms Wildlife Area - Rock County

Dr. Clausen MOVED, seconded by Ms. Wiley approval of Land Donation - Avon Bottoms Wildlife Area - Rock County.

Mr. Poulson asked who the Natural Heritage Land Trust is.

Mr. Steffes stated they used to be the Dane County Land Trust and are based in Cross Plains.

Mr. Ela asked if this is the one that the Governor announced in May.

Mr. Steffes stated yes, but in June. It did not come before the Board at that time because the Land Trust wanted to get the restoration well underway and now that they have that done, they are making the gift this fall.

The motion carried unanimously.

3.B.7 Land Donation and Project Boundary Modification - Willow Creek Fishery Area - Waushara County

Mr. O'Brien asked how people got there before we obtained this.

Mr. Steffes stated there is other access.

Mr. Welter asked if the Department has the capability of putting some parking at the north end of this.

Mr. Steffes stated this is only for walk-ins so people will need to park on the side of the road.

Mr. Poulson MOVED, seconded by Mr. Ela approval of Land Donation and Project Boundary Modification - Willow Creek Fishery Area - Waushara County.

The motion carried unanimously.

3.B.8 Land Acquisition – Glacial Habitat Restoration Area – Fond du Lac County

Mr. Welter MOVED, seconded by Dr. Clausen approval of Land Acquisition – Glacial Habitat Restoration Area – Fond du Lac County.

Mr. Poulson stated he has a problem that within one year's time they will turn it around and sell it to us and come clean. He hates to see the state be in a position with those kinds of things.

Mr. Steffes stated the Department did offer it to the real estate broker who had it listed from the former owner. At the time that our offer was made, unfortunately it was delayed a few months due to budgetary reasons. The Department went to the broker and said "here is our offer, can you approach your client?" The broker went to find the client and could not find him, because he had left the area. After the bank took it back, the Broker went over to the Banker and said he understood you are taking offers. That led to the transaction.

The motion carried unanimously.

Dr. Thomas adjourned the meeting for lunch

4. Citizen Participation – 1:00 p.m.

4.A. Citizen Participation

Public Appearances

1. **Glenn Seger**, Sheboygan, representing himself. His topic was Lake Michigan Whitefish Stocks. He stated that over the last 10 – 12 years the Whitefish numbers in Lake Michigan's zone 3 have dramatically increased. Because of this increase in population, the size, weight, and health of the stock has been significantly reduced. In the 1970's, 1980's and early 1990's, there were large numbers of the stock which attained weights of 5# - 15# each. Despite many of the fish still attaining the age 8 – 10 years old, this is no longer happening

Not only are many of the fish skinny, but they are contracting Bacterial Kidney Disease through malnutrition much in the same manner the Salmon did in the late 1980's.

He stated he brought along frozen samples of Whitefish which had contracted Bacterial Kidney Disease and offered them to the Department as evidence of this ongoing problem Zone 3 of Lake Michigan has limiting rules as to when and where you can fish Whitefish

and as to what types of commercial fishing gear you can use are all contributing factors as to how effectively this stock of fish can be harvested. Trap nets are the only effective legal gear which can presently be used in Zone 3 to harvest Whitefish. Large mesh gill nets can be used along with trap nets to harvest Whitefish in Zones 1 and 2 of Lake Michigan which makes for more mobile options of fishing for reasons such as changes in water temperature, currents, winds, or ice conditions. Alternating gear options could greatly increase the catch of Whitefish.

He asked the Board to consider the following alternatives: 1) Increase the present quota limit of 100% or more until the Whitefish stocks attain weight levels per fish which mirror the pre-quota system and until the presence of Bacterial Kidney Disease is eliminated from Whitefish stocks in the waters of Lake Michigan; 2) Allow some small changes in present trap netting rules in Zone 3 like depth restrictions or modified allowed zones; and 3) Allow the use of large mesh gill nets in two six-week periods throughout the year. The first period would be from March 1 – April 15 and the second period would be from August 15 – September 30.

Mr. Welter stated you had asked that one possibility would be to use large mesh gill nets instead of or in addition to trap nets. Are large mesh gill nets allowed for commercial fishing on Lake Michigan now?

Mr. Seger stated they are allowed in Zones 1 and 2 which encompass the entire Bay of Green Bay except for small refugee areas

Mr. Welter asked if the large mesh gill nets not allowed in Zone 3 because of concerns to other species.

Mr. Seger stated yes because of incidental catches of Lake Trout. There are incidental catches of Lake Trout, there are incidental catches of Walleye, and maybe an occasional Salmon in the nets in Zones 1 or 2.

Ms. Wiley asked if it is appropriate for the Board to forward this to the Fisheries Bureau and get a response since the Board has been addressed.

Dr. Thomas stated this is Citizen Participation and our job here is not to try to figure out who can rebut or confirm what citizens are saying. It is for them to express their concerns. Your suggestion is a good one. Secretary Frank has already said they will take care of the fish and the Department will take a look at them from a fish health perspective. Staff already has the handout. The Kidney Disease is a new issue to her. You may have all talked about it on the Board years ago but she has not encountered this. She wondered if perhaps the Board could have an information item at some point in the future on this issue to bring the Board up to speed on the Kidney Disease and on the quota issues for Whitefish in Lake Michigan.

The Board agreed.

2. **Glenn Resch**, Wausaukee, representing himself. His topic was CWD. Mr. Resch was not in attendance.
3. **Bill West**, Black Creek, representing the Wisconsin Aquaculture Association (WAA). His topic was the Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia (VHS) Emergency Order. He thanked the Board for the opportunity to speak. He has been on four technical advisory committees for the Department of Natural Resources and he currently serves on three additional advisory committees for the Aquaculture Association, both locally, statewide, and for the federal. He is in tune to what is going on with the industry and is very concerned about where the industry is heading with certain respects to the advent of VHS.

The WAA had an opportunity to present our concerns on the Emergency Rule. WAA did that. They also had opportunities to present at the public hearings for making the rule permanent, which they did

The permanent rule is designed for containment and in all reality no one has been able to contain the virus. This is historically unachievable

If the rule goes through as proposed, one of the things that is going to happen is that if the virus gets outside of the currently designated waters, then this whole rule goes statewide. If it goes statewide, that means you cannot use bait fish for fishing if it is not obtained from the waters that you are fishing. If you are fishing Lake Michigan water you have to use bait from

that water. You can not use bait from other waters. If this rule goes statewide, that means that is the end of the bait industry.

Therefore, this industry is lumped in with the wild bait harvesters. If this rule goes through, we are not only going to potentially wipe out the \$15 million bait industry that the aquaculture people have, but we will also wipe out the wild harvest. That is just a couple of the economic impacts. Then you would have to go to all the dealers in Wisconsin, the vendors, the dealers, and the transporters that move wild bait, you will have to go to the Lake Associations, resort owners, tourist industry, and maybe even the people that sell licenses. There is going to be a huge impact if that actually happens.

He asked the Board to recommend to the DNR to set up a committee of stakeholders to hammer this out. There is no urgency to get this emergency rule done.

Dr. Thomas asked if there is a way to test for VHS in the bait fish industry facilities and to certify that your facility is free of VHS? In other words, by making adjustment in whatever the rule is that is out for hearing right now, could we keep the bait industry viable by making sure that your fish were healthy and then able to be used.

Mr. West stated the WAA and DATCP have been working since the beginning of June on developing procedures on exactly that. They have also included the wild bait industry.

5. Board Members' Matters

Dr. Thomas moved this item to the end of the meeting due to staff presentations that are coming up.

6. Special Committees' Reports

None.

7. Department Secretary's Matters

7.A. Retirement Resolutions

7.A.1 Kent Harrison

7.A.2 Ronald E. Thiel

7.A.3 Nancy A. Shew

7.A.4 Russell J. Bellmann

7.A.5 Eric C. Mosher

7.A.6 Joan T. Novak

Mr. Ela MOVED, seconded by Mr. Welter approval of the retirement resolutions. The motion carried unanimously.

7.B. Donations

7.B.1 Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin, Inc. will donate \$5,000 to the Bureau of Endangered Resources in support of the Wisconsin Trumpeter Swan Recovery Program

Dr. Clausen MOVED, seconded by Mr. Welter approval of the Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin, Inc. donation of \$5,000 to the Bureau of Endangered Resources in support of the Wisconsin Trumpeter Swan Recovery Program. The motion carried unanimously.

7.B.2 Pheasants Forever will donate up to \$35,000 over a 5-year period to support an LTE position in Southeast Region. This LTE position will work on private lands throughout southeastern Wisconsin conducting prescribed burns, prairie plantings, and grassland maintenance.

Mr. Welter MOVED, seconded by Mr. Poulson approval of the Pheasants Forever donation of up to \$35,000 over a 5-year period to support an LTE position in Southeast Region. This LTE position will work on private lands throughout southeastern Wisconsin conducting

prescribed burns, prairie plantings, and grassland maintenance. The motion carried unanimously.

8. Information Items

8.A. Air, Waste, and Water/Enforcement

None

8.B. Land, Management, Recreation, and Fisheries/Wildlife

8.B.1 Report on continuing activity related to the Sex-Age-Kill (SAK) Audit

Keith Warnke, Wildlife Biologist, Wildlife Management Bureau stated that an audit of the Department's model for estimating deer populations was commissioned by the Natural Resources Board and conducted by a panel of nationally recognized experts. This progress report is an update for board members on activities resulting from the audit since its completion.

The final SAK Audit report was accepted by the NRB in February of this year. Since then the stakeholder steering committee met three times to evaluate the report's recommendations and conclusions and to develop a strategy for implementing improvements in the Department's use of the model. The committee is also developing a strategy for improving communication with the public regarding deer population estimates.

Specific concerns that have been addressed by the steering committee include:

- Strategies for communicating key audit findings to the public
- Evaluating buck survival research projects
- Identifying improvements to fawn:doe ratio information
- New deer management communication strategies.

Dr. Clausen stated that in the last few years, overharvesting has not been a concern on a statewide basis. Is there a biological reason why we are spending all of this money and this effort to count these things when we have trouble getting people to believe this anyway?

Mr. Warnke stated the Department is considering some of those very issues when we are talking about the bigger picture of deer management. We use SAK for the reasons you described. We were managing for a period of scarcity to prevent overharvest. We have evolved and have tried to evolve our deer hunting, our deer hunting culture and our population model into a period of abundance. In some units, particularly up here in northeastern Wisconsin, right now there is a need to continue to manage antlerless deer harvest.

8.B.2 Report on Wisconsin's Double-crested Cormorant Management Plan and Population Objectives

Jeff Pritzl, Regional Program Manager, Wildlife Management Bureau, Division of Land stated that In order to gather public input on the proposed Double-crested Cormorant Management Plan and Population Objectives, we propose holding hearings in Green Bay and Madison in September.

A Wisconsin Cormorant Team consisting of wildlife management, endangered resources and fisheries staff recommends a goal of no more than 5,000 nests in four distinct colonies on the northern Door County Islands. A goal of no more than 1,000 nests is recommended on Cat Island in lower Green Bay. No population management is needed at this time on the Mississippi River, Lake Superior, or the interior of Wisconsin.

Currently, cormorant management by the DNR takes place under a USFWS Public Resources Depredation Order. If increased management is to take place, however, Wisconsin must conduct an Environmental Assessment of cormorant management. State population goals for cormorants and a management plan must be in place before the Environmental Assessment can be developed.

Double-crested cormorant numbers have expanded tremendously across North America over the previous 20 years. Most states and provinces in the Great Lakes region have found it necessary to manage cormorants due to concerns about impacts on public resources including fish stocks, co-nesting waterbird populations, and protection of unique island vegetative habitats.

Mr. Ela asked if 5,000 breeding pairs in Door County probably means a total population of

approximately 20,000 birds including nonbreeders.

Mr. Pritzl said that 10,000 birds are actually actively nesting. There is some discussion of how many non-breeders are out there. Some feel there are just as many non-breeders in the population as breeders. In other words, take the breeding population and double it. There are others that think that is a little bit liberal.

Mr. Ela stated 20,000 birds is in the ballpark. How are you euthanizing?

Mr. Welter asked if there is anything from the stomach content research that makes any suggestion of the correlation on the Brown Trout impacts?

Mr. Pritzl stated no. Nothing has been done from a biostudy standpoint.

Mr. Ela asked generally what the public reactions have been.

Mr. Pritzl stated based on attendance at meetings four years to five years ago with FWS, 95% of the people that have been commenting are interested in seeing cormorant management take place. He also been in contact with organizations that are concerned about how this will impact other species and the cormorants themselves. When we do these public meetings, we will specifically invite Wisconsin Society for Ornithology, some avian interests that have been asking and have been in communication with both them and fishing groups all the way along. It will be interesting to see what kind of communication we get on the plan.

5. Board Members' Matters
- 5.A. Approve the 2008 NRB meeting schedule

Deferred to the October Meeting

Mr. Welter stated he had three proposals to go to Secretary Frank for consideration by staff.

1) DNR to work with DOT-MVD and legislators to develop a four-tiered natural resources license program. The program could provide four choices of specialized licensees each year, with plate designs changing for each type over a four-year cycle, to draw attention and support to a variety of resource issues and programs. He proposes Category 1-Endangered Resources; 2-Habitat Restoration; 3-Parks; and 4-Resource Partnerships. License plate patterns in each category could rotate patterns according to an announced schedule from year to year.

2) USER CONFLICTS – Concerns about user conflicts and management challenges that are being posed by the increase in recent years of tubers on the Namekagon, especially in the area near Trego and Earl. He asked the Secretary's office and NOR make contact with the US Park Service which has concurrent jurisdiction because of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to discuss the management challenges that 4,000 tubers a day can impose in that area. It poses its own series of headaches and he does not know if the situation is that people have been made to feel unwelcome on the Apple and decided they were going to move to another river. The Namekagon is good in the paddling sense but when we have litter and conflicts and a lot of other challenges we need to take a look at that.

3) The recent flooding in southwestern Wisconsin: We have an opportunity to assess the impacts of that flooding in a variety of ways that could help policy making. The Board and the department have an opportunity to assess how land use and zoning and other measures to reduce flooding such as if the PL 566 flood control dams in the area have been working to reduce flood impacts, and to compare the kinds of losses that were incurred to infrastructure, (roads and bridges), soil losses, crop damage, etc. We should try to figure out if there are things that have worked among the zoning efforts, the flood control, and watershed management efforts and probably what other agencies have tried to do. What worked, and what did not?

He understands from a Department press release that Wisconsin counties lost around 44 homes while in Minnesota they lost over 950 homes. What have we been doing right and what can we do better ought to be questions that we are asking in the aftermath of this. We also have more than one agency that may be real interested in this: Emergency Management, Emergency Government, Counties, Department of Transportation, and local and county transportation units should be concerned. If they had land use problems in their areas that led to more bridge wash outs and road wash outs. He is intrigued by the whole idea of soil loss but did not know how

interested the Corps of Engineers is in changing the amount of dredging that they do in the Mississippi. The upland areas of the Driftless Area are places where we really ought to be looking at what kind of impacts our human activities are having and how our soil erosion control measures are working. It may be a good opportunity to do a real assessment of the impacts of that flooding. If Minnesota is doing the same thing, we might start to get a real good view of regional impacts of what agencies and what communities can do to mitigate those impacts. It may better inform us for future flooding events because we should not be silly enough to think that we are never going to have another 500 year or 1,000 year flood in that area.

Dr. Thomas stated that a couple years ago she was appointed by the Secretary of Interior to a committee to advise on issues of concern to sportsmen. She is the "sportsman's representative" on the committee. That committee has been expanded to the Secretary of Agriculture as it relates to public lands management. The committee has been dealing with a lot of issues, mainly western lands issues. She believed because most of the pro-active people on the committee are mostly interested with western lands issues. Some of us on the committee are from the Midwest and we would like to see some focus on things that are our issues also. To that end, she wondered if staff, namely Tom Hauge, might be interested in talking with the Conservation Congress to see if there are things that Dan Desseker and she (the two Wisconsinites out of 12 people on committee) might raise with the Secretary's Advisory Committee at the late November meeting.

Dr. Thomas stated that Mr. Poulson told her that today was going to be his last meeting with the Natural Resources Board. She thanks Mr. Poulson, on behalf of the Natural Resources Board, Department staff, and the citizens of the state of Wisconsin, for 12 years of dedicated and responsible service in caring for the natural resources of our state. She noted that Mr. Poulson was really welcoming to her when she came on to the Board, and thanked him for taking her under his wing as she sat next to him at the table. She stated that she has great respect for him.

Mr. Poulson thanked Dr. Thomas. He stated his Board Member issue arose in the Palmyra area with Horseman's Park. They have a family across the road that deals with horseback riding and has property that butts right up to Department property. He cannot move from his property onto Department property because it is not at a junction of access to the horseback trail. This forces his riders $\frac{3}{4}$ mile down the road before they can get on the trail. He wondered why the Department cannot figure out a way to open up his back fence to the trail and get the riders off the road.

Mr. Poulson stated he was in Tommy Thompson's office one day in 1995 and they were talking about use value tax. When they were all done with the conversation the Governor asked him to serve on the Natural Resources Board. Someone else had just said to Mr. Poulson two days before that he wished to serve on the Board, so Mr. Poulson mentioned that to Governor Thompson, who looked at him and said "I did not ask him. I asked you." He decided at that point if agriculture was going to have a place at the table he would have to take it

Prior to then, he had a pretty good knowledge of DNR and state holdings because ever since 1948 he had lived next to the Southern Kettle Moraine. He has found the Department to be an excellent neighbor.

He has served with three Secretaries: Secretary George Meyer, Secretary Darrell Bazzell, and Secretary Scott Hassett. He told Secretary Frank, it is nice to have this one day with him. He has always found the staff to be of the highest quality. They took the opportunities to prep the Board on what was forthcoming so that we understood.

He said that he has rejoiced in seeing the success of our labors. You can work at things for a long time and not be successful but we can look at things and measure the successes that we have had. When he looked at the water issues in 1972 and the Clean Water Act was passed, we knew the point-source was going to be the first attacked. Non-point would be the second. We worked hard at selling the farm public on the fact that they needed to accept the non-point issues because they were important, not only to them but to the state and the nation. We worked hard at selling that and in being sure it was done right.

With Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) he would not do any different than what we did. He thought that he had been proactive on animal health matters. If there is an unhealthy herd of dairy cows, beef cows or white-tailed deer, and they can all die of the same diseases, then you have to make sure that all of them are healthy.

He is a proponent of farmland preservation. He said the work we did on the North Branch of the Milwaukee River was laborious and long but he believed that is a good model for efforts to preserve both farmland and at the same time fragile land. He thought it was a good use of money and suggested changing the rules of Stewardship to allow use of some of the Stewardship dollars for farmland preservation, which he believes is as important as the other reasons we preserve land. The North Branch does give you a good opportunity for a model to follow.

Mr. Paulson recalled that when he went onto the Board, he was very fortunate that Secretary Meyer had Jim Kurtz as a liaison to the Department of Agriculture. Jim was a great mentor to him and not because he was an NRB member but because he was part of the Wisconsin Farm Bureau. Jim's job was to help the agriculture community understand what was going on within the DNR that affected their interests. They talked a lot about the whole preservation issue, and about what we could do to develop some type of agricultural zones. They talked a lot about issues that were everyday types of things to agriculture, such as non-point-source pollution.

Mr. Paulson urged Secretary Frank to develop a strong liaison with the agricultural community, and to appoint a person who spends time visiting with the agricultural groups: things will be a lot easier if they understand. We need to have the opportunity for the agricultural community to understand first hand conservation issues as they affect them.

He thanked the Board for the opportunity to speak and asked his wife Jean to stand. He stated that Jean takes pretty good notes at the meetings and can ask some tough questions. After each meeting, she would ask why he voted like that or what was Duke talking about or Jerry's reasoning. She always had questions that relate to the activity. These questions are tough sometimes because you have to have a soul search and get back to the reason why. He and his wife have enjoyed it and thanked everyone.

Mr. Poulson received a standing ovation.

Dr. Thomas stated that the Secretary and other Board members would like to say a few words.

Secretary Frank stated that on behalf of the Department of Natural Resources and all the staff that have worked with you for the time you have been a Board member, how deeply the Department appreciates your contribution to the efforts that the Board makes and that we all make in Wisconsin for a strong environment and, particularly the perspective that you invariably pointed out here connecting our commitment to strong environment conservation in the agriculture community. Because of your service on the Board, there is a lot to build on, we will maintain that, and look to continue to strengthen those ties because it is very important. The public understands that the Board has a very important role to play in Wisconsin. He is not sure it is always understood about the personal commitment that Board members make to serve the people in the state of Wisconsin and the fact that you have spent not just one or two years but twelve years on the Board is a tremendous testament to your commitment to the state. On behalf of the DNR, thank you and congratulations for your service.

Dr. Clausen stated when he came on the Board, Mr. Poulson was right there to make him feel welcome and reassured him on which direction he should go and how he should do things. He was a great mentor. He has been impressed with how well prepared he is and that he always does his homework. His views as he states them are thoughtful, well reasoned, and really balanced. Most of all, Mr. Poulson is a real gentleman and he appreciated serving with him.

Mr. Ela stated he has had a lot of surprises serving on the Board, mostly pleasant. One of the most wonderful surprises was how much respect and affection the beast from the Sierra Club should have for the beast from the Farm Bureau. He cannot say enough of how much he has enjoyed working with Mr. Poulson and the esteem in which he holds him. On a per word basis he has contributed the most of any Board member he has served with, certainly including himself.

He has always treated him with graciousness and ease particularly during the rather long probationary period he served at the request of the State Senate. He appreciates the support Mr. Poulson gave him then and he honors the gentlemanliness of his entire character. Thank you.

Mr. Welter stated he has told Mr. Poulson how much serving with him has opened up new perspectives for him. He is reminded every time we address issues of the shared value of stewardship and that gives him a great deal of hope for communities being able to work together on issues that sometimes seem to divide them. He has learned so much from your perspective that helps him appreciate that stewardship ethic. That has been tremendously valuable. You and Jean have been a great joy to be with as part of this journey that we are all on and he appreciates that. Thank you.

Mr. O'Brien stated it is hard to add to what has already been said. Everyone has said it very well. Talking about Mr. Poulson for him is like the passing of an era. Mr. Poulson was the last of the Board members who was on when he first came on the Board. It is getting close to a complete changeover, which is good, normal, and needed. He often noticed Board members waiting for him to speak on a topic to see what his view was when we were debating. He always came through with a good solid comment and a good solid thought. The camaraderie that Board members feel for each other is very important, and it comes because we all spend so much time together with what we do. It has been delightful to be there and he really appreciates all the things he has done on this Board. Thank you.

Ms. Wiley stated that Mr. and Mrs. Poulson are certainly a good and gracious team together. Mr. Poulson has been her mentor as she guessed he was to Dr. Thomas. One of the things she will practice and remember before the next meeting is that whenever she wanted to get Mr. Poulson's attention she would reach over and tap his knee. She is not sure she should do that assuming Mr. Cole is there. She not only appreciates your telling her to calm down but also just letting her use your ear. Thank you.

Mr. Poulson stated you have all said such nice things. He noted that citizens are passionate about things and that is one thing we need to recognize. What is important to them is important and we should always treat that with the utmost patience. When they speak, the Board should listen. Thank you.

Dr. Thomas adjourned the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 3:05 p.m.