



STATE OF WISCONSIN

Natural Areas Preservation Council

P.O. BOX 7921 · MADISON · WISCONSIN · 53707



Natural Areas Preservation Council Meeting
Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection
2811 Agriculture Drive
Room 172
Madison, Wisconsin
8 October 2015
1:00 p.m.

MINUTES

(Subject to Council approval)

Present: James Bennett (chair), Sharon Dunwoody, Ellen Censky (by phone), Thomas Eddy, Jim Woodford, Patrick Robinson, Eric Anderson, Victoria Rydberg, Ken Bradbury
Absent: James Perry
Staff: Thomas Meyer, Dave Sample

[Note: The July 13, 2015 meeting of the council was cancelled.]

Bennett called the meeting to order at 1:10 p.m.

1. Minutes of previous NAPC meetings

A. Minutes of April 17, 2015

Eddy moved (seconded by Dunwoody) that the minutes of the April 17, 2015 NAPC meeting be approved as distributed. The motion carried.

2. Adoption of agenda

Bradbury moved (seconded by Anderson) that the agenda be adopted with the following addition:

- 6.A. Pewit's Nest SNA

The motion carried.

3. Announcements

- Patrick Robinson was recognized for his 7 years of service to the council. Meyer, on behalf of the DNR, presented him with a wooden plaque as a token of the agency's appreciation.
- Bennett: David Mladenoff of the UW-Madison's Department of Forest and Wildlife Ecology has agreed to serve as one of the UW System appointees to the council. The Board of Regents' Education Committee is expected to approve his appointment today.

4. Report on previous action items

A. Status of DOA proposal to eliminate NAPC

Woodford: According to Erin Crain (DNR Administration), the Department of Administration has quietly dropped its proposal (issued through the biennial budget process) to eliminate NAPC and selected other advisory bodies.

B. Status of NAPC Guideline development

- Former NAPC member Su Borkin was responsible for revision of the guidelines for collection of Lepidoptera on SNAs. No progress has been made on this revision. Council

recommended expanding this guidance to include all Insecta, and to focus on protection strategies with a special emphasis on pollinators.

- Bennett and Eddy have had initial discussions with Mladenoff (UW) and Matula and Hutnik (DNR forest ecology) about revision of the “Acquisition and Management of Forested Landscapes” guidelines. No further progress.
- The guidelines for “Control of Fire on SNAs” was assigned to Sample when he was a council member. No progress has been made on this revision. Anderson suggested involving UWSP’s Ron Masters, a wildland fire science expert, in this project. Staff agreed to do this.
- Woodford was assigned to facilitate development of three guidance documents. Two of these have been dropped from consideration due to the SNA Program’s conclusion that they are no longer needed. They were guidance on the sale of SNA lands and guidance on the abandonment of roads on SNAs. The third guideline, a criteria-driven policy/process for the removal of SNA status from a designated site, will be pursued but this is no longer a program priority.

5. Action items

A. Council administrative matters

1. **Modification of Operation Procedures regarding council election process**

Bennett distributed a proposal to modify NAPC’s Operation Procedures as follows: “A nominating committee consisting of Bennett, Eddy and Dunwoody discussed streamlining the officer election procedures, per the July 15, 2015 meeting minutes, and a slate of candidates for the next year. It is hereby proposed to make the terms of the office of chair and vice-chair three years, subject to a consent agenda vote every year at the July meeting [or first meeting of the council after July 1], in order to comply with the enabling statute [which requires an annual election of officers]. Accordingly, for 2015-16, the nominating committee nominates Bennett for Chair and Perry for Vice-Chair. Woodford will remain Secretary (no vote required).”

Rydberg moved (seconded by Eddy) that the council’s Operation Procedures be amended as proposed in Bennett’s statement and that the slate of candidates forwarded by the nominating committee be approved. The motion carried. [To clarify, Bennett was elected Chair and Perry as Vice-Chair, for terms ending July 1, 2016. At the first meeting of the council after July 1, 2016, the council may reelect each to a subsequent one year term of office via a consent agenda vote.]

2. **Election of officers**

Addressed above under 5.A.1.

3. **SNA Program/NAPC initiatives**

Woodford:

- SNA marketing and outreach initiative – the SNA Program has been featured in several ways recently, including the NHC annual report; a Natural Resources Foundation pamphlet designed to raise funds for SNA management; a series of SNA-related blog posts by NRF communications director Lyndsay Mayer; *Wisconsin Natural Resources* magazine articles; and Eddy’s SNA Newsletter sent widely via email to subscribers.
- The SNA Volunteer Steward initiative continues to progress, with Jared Urban employed ½ time to coordinate the project. In the last two years, 230 volunteers have contributed more than 5,000 total hours to the management of 26 SNAs.

- The SNA site assessment initiative assigned to Borkin and Meyer has evolved into the Heritage Site Program coordinated by NHC's Lucas Olson.
- No progress has been made on initiatives to define the role of NAPC and to further the use of SNAs as scientific research areas.

4. Review of NAPC Operation Procedures

Bennett: No progress on this item.

5. Future council meetings

Meyer will poll members to set meeting dates in early February, mid-May, and late July of 2016. The May meeting is tentatively scheduled to convene at the WGNHS office in either Madison or Mount Horeb and will include a short presentation on the WGNHS's flowing spring survey.

6. Information items

A. Bureau of Natural Heritage Conservation report

Woodford:

- DNR is undergoing a realignment of the agency, resulting in structural changes designed to improve efficiency. The fisheries programs have been moved into the former Land Division, and a new Division of Fish, Wildlife and Parks has been created. NHC has retained its status as a bureau and is in this new division. DNR administration continues to gather information on each program's functions in anticipation of further reorganization.
- The NHC bureau director position remains vacant. Over the next several months, DNR staff will serve as acting bureau directors for six-week terms.
- The Citizen-based Monitoring Coordinator position, now vacant, has been approved for filling.
- The SNA management crews have added staff in Alma, Fitchburg and Kansasville.
- The 10-year Wisconsin Wildlife Action Plan was approved by the Natural Resources Board.
- The new bald eagle license plate, with proceeds benefitting NHC, was released and is selling well.
- Chiwaukee Prairie SNA has been designated a Wetland of International Importance by the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands.
- Pewit's Nest SNA continues to suffer from chronic overuse by the public resulting in site disturbance, vandalism, parking problems, and injuries from illegal cliff jumping. A plan of action to address overuse is being drafted.

B. DNR land sales update

Meyer: The legislature directed DNR to offer for sale (not necessarily sell) 10,000 acres of DNR lands by June 30, 2017. Only lands located outside of approved project boundaries are to be considered. The agency is now in Phase 2 of the analysis, having identified an initial 1,400 acres in Phase 1. GIS and DNR land records analyses located 2773 acres at 17 SNAs that could potentially be sold. Of those acres, 2047 acres were removed from consideration because they were later determined to lie within an approved boundary, they are deed-restricted from sale, or were determined to be critical to the SNA mission after being field checked. The remaining 726 acres will be offered for sale: 367 acres at four SNAs (Bear Bluff, Jones Lake, Nourse Sugarbush, and Caroline Lake) will be offered for purchase only to the county in which they're located; 359 acres at two SNAs (Spread Eagle Barrens and Bass Lake) will be offered to the public.

C. SNA land acquisition update

Meyer: The SNA Program was allotted \$800,000 from the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program to acquire land in fiscal year 2015. Successful negotiations resulted in the program spending \$1.22 million to acquire 595 acres of land at four SNAs. They include 300 acres at the Lower Chippewa River, 70 acres at Cedarburg Bog, 40 acres at Bark Bay Slough, and 185 acres at Ridgeway Pine Relict (pending closing). The land acquisition budget for FY16 looks grim, with only \$3.5 million available to the entire agency for purchasing land in fee title. Unlike in past years, DNR land-holding programs will not be given separate allocations to purchase land. Instead, each program will submit its three highest priority projects to be considered collectively.

D. Rib Mountain Talus Forest SNA

Meyer: The Granite Peak Ski Area within Rib Mountain State Park is operated by a private company. The company is pursuing a plan to expand the number of downhill runs, one of which pushes across the boundary of the Rib Mountain Talus Forest SNA on the west end of the park. Parks staff, in consultation with the SNA Program, continues to work with the developer to find a way to avoid the SNA or mitigate impact.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:35 pm a motion by Eddy and seconded by Woodford.

Inquiries regarding these minutes and the Natural Areas Preservation Council may be directed to:
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