

Joint Counties Natural Resources Board
March 28, 2016
Beltrami County Conference Room
10:00 AM

MINUTES

Attendance: Commissioners:
Gary Kiesow – Marshall Scott McCollum - Mahnomen
Daniel Stenseng - Clearwater Wayne Skoe – Koochiching
Brian Napstad – Aitkin Ken Moorman – Lake of the Woods
Joe Vene – Beltrami

Absent: Todd Miller - Roseau

DNR: None

Guest: Phil Hunsicker, DNR AIS Coordinator, Coordinator
Bruce Anspach Beltrami AIS Program

Other: Kallie Briggs; Administrator

Call to Order: Chairman Commissioner Kiesow called the Joint Counties Natural Resources Board to order at 10:01 AM on Monday, March 28, 2016 in the Beltrami County Conference Room.

Chair Kiesow began the meeting by doing introductions.

Agenda: Motion by Napstad, second by Skoe to approve the agenda with additions. Motion carried unanimously.

Minutes: Motion by Vene, second by Stenseng to approve the minutes from the February 22, 2016 meeting as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Guest: Phil Hunsicker, AIS Coordinator for the DNR began by telling the Board he is from Brainerd and is in charge of the northern counties. He also has a counterpart who oversees the central counties. He said AIS funding for education is allocated to every county based on the number of public accesses and the number of parking spaces at those launches. There has been a database compiled with all the public accesses and launches giving all counties the opportunity to edit their information if corrections need to be made. Each county decides what works best for them and uses the funding as they see appropriate. Some counties are coordinating with state parks to enhance accesses and maximize dollars. Phil also handed out information from Regional AIS Prevention Workshops – a post review of 2015 Work by counties. A hard copy is on file. They will be adding more information to create a document that can be used by each county. The top 10 counties such as St. Louis and Itasca receive approximately 4 million dollars and are looking at ways to partner on 1 or 2 bug issues with other counties. There will be a few conferences throughout the state for counties to talk about their issues and get ideas on what is working for others. Phil finished by saying they are trying to work with the legislators to enforce tougher fines and laws for those transporting AIS and not following the laws. He will be meeting with the AIS person from each county to share with them the full document when it is complete.

Bruce Anspach, AIS Coordinator for Beltrami County was also in attendance at the meeting. They have been very proactive and have quite an extensive program. Beltrami is not in the top 10 counties but is up with the top 20. He began by handing out a 1 page fact sheet of Beltrami's AIS Program 2015. A copy is on file. They started their program in 2014 by hiring RMB Laboratories to prioritize the risk value on the top 50 lakes to see which ones could be defined as designated infested. They have been tracking the amount of training and surveying they are doing to boost awareness and enforce the laws at launches. Their complete program can be found on the Beltrami County web site along with other pilot projects they are working on. He ended by saying that 98% of people show up at the landings with their plug out so education is working as the state is at 96%.

Financial Discussions:

- Administration/Office Expenses: Motion by Napstad, second by McCollum to approve the March administration/office expenses. Motion carried unanimously.
- Miscellaneous Expenses: Motion by Stenseng, second by Skoe to approve the March miscellaneous expenses. Motion carried. Vene Abstained.
- Account Activity Report: The March Account Activity Report submitted by Marshall County and distributed by Coordinator Briggs was approved. Motion was made by Skoe, second by Napstad to approve the March Account Activity Report. Motion carried unanimously.

DNR Update: There was no DNR Update.

New Business: The following was added to the agenda and discussed:

- **EQB:** Brain said the primary responsibility of the EQB is to establish categories for environmental reviews. The questions the EQB are asking themselves regarding the law are how much, how well are we implementing the law and are we better off. The law states "encourage productive and enjoyable environmental harmony". Brain said caution needs to be used when measuring the law correctly and using the words may or must. The statutes and rules have to be looked at carefully so they will stand up in a court of law.
- **Beaver Control:** A group of folks came before the Aitkin County Board regarding beaver control. It is difficult to find folks who are willing to do beaver control because the price of the pelts are so low. Therefore, the beaver problem continues to grow. Beaver issues are unique in ConCon areas however the Board still may be interested in supporting a Bill to address the situation. If the Bill could summon funding for each county (including those with ConCon Lands) for beaver control, it would be a winning situation. After some discussion, the Board decided to have Kallie draft a letter to all the 8 county representatives within the JCNRB membership supporting Representative Lueck in a Bill he is considering writing to appropriate funding for beaver control. **Motion by Napstad seconded by Vene to send a letter of support to the membership's representative encouraging them to support Representative Lueck's (District 10B) Bill to appropriate funding for beaver control.**
- **Bigfork Watershed:** Wayne said the Bigfork Watershed program is doing some research on inflow and run off. They are saying water runoff is finding its way to streams. They are testing stream flow but not the sediment which holds a lot of history as it lays in the rivers.

Old Business:

- **Northern Long-eared Bat:** Joe believes the DNR should be doing some research on the Northern Long-eared Bat. Recently the Minneapolis Tribune folks are catching the bats and looking at a forest management plan in lieu of the bats. Logging has nothing to do with the bats and/or the White nose syndrome. If this continues to it could be very serious for the logging industry.

Next Meeting Date: There will not be a meeting in April so the next scheduled meeting will be on Monday, May 23, 2016.

Adjourn: Motion by Skoe, second by McCollum to adjourn the meeting at 12:14 PM.

Minutes submitted by Kallie Briggs-Administrative Coordinator