

Joint Counties Natural Resources Board
September 24, 2018
Beltrami County Conference Room
10:00 AM

MINUTES

Attendance: Commissioners:

Gary Kiesow – Marshall	Russell Walker - Roseau
Daniel Stenseng - Clearwater	Wayne Skoe – Koochiching
Bill Pratt – Aitkin	Ken Moorman – Lake of the Woods
Roger Falk – Roseau	Scott McCollum - Mahnomen

Absent: Tim Summer – Beltrami

DNR: Rita Albrecht – DNR NW Regional Director

BSWR: Matt Fisher – BSWR Board Conservationist

Guest: Lon Aune, Marshall County Engineer

Other: Kallie Briggs; Coordinator

Call to Order: Chairman Commissioner Pratt called the Joint Counties Natural Resources Board to order at 10:00 AM on Monday, September 24, 2018 in the Beltrami County Conference Room.

Agenda: Motion by Kiesow, second by Falk to approve the agenda with a speaker change to Lon Aune, Marshall County Engineer. Motion carried unanimously.

Minutes: Motion by Stenseng, second by Walker to approve the minutes from the August 27, 2018 meeting as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Financial Discussions:

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

Guest: Lon Aune, Marshall County Engineer was at the meeting to give an update on the 404 assumption process. He said the permitting process is a very cumbersome process that includes submitting applications to too many organizations. He said it is necessary to streamline the permitting process and they have been working with the DNR on electronic permitting. He said working with the State agencies has been easier than working with federal agencies and that Representative Fabian has been working on trying to legislatively change the process. The Bill he is working on would get the Corp of Engineers involved on projects early in the permitting process on all waters. The Corp did a feasibility study but the County Engineers and Commissioners were disappointed in how the study was conducted.

He went on to say the engineers and state are not trying to push the Corp out of the picture just work together to make the process easier. The end goal would be to make sure the process meets all standards and uses one software system that can apply to all organizations for the permitting process. Improving the process without jeopardizing the waters and speed up the process is supported by most state agencies although funding may be an issue.

Old Business: The following was discussed:

- 2017 Executive Summary: Motion by McCollum, second by Walker to approve the 2017 Executive Summary as presented at the last meeting. Motion carried unanimously.
- AMC Policy Committee: Walker said AMC is pushing for things that did not happen last year to be brought forth this year. He said folks will probably see such items as the Beaver issue and 404 assumption. With Transportation there will not be much change other than the language will be cleaned up.

New Business: The following was discussed:

- December Meeting: The Board will meet on December 17 which will be the third Monday of the month.
- Norbord: Skoe said he spoke with the representative of Norbord and they would like to give the Board a tour of their plant. He will try to set something up for the November 26 meeting.

DNR: Rita gave a written and oral report which is attached to the minutes. The subjects she talked about were: immediate forestry openings in the northern region; Land, Minerals and EWR; an expedited land exchange between the DNR and Beltrami County; Wildlife hunting update including bear, elk and duck seasons; proposed fishing regulation changes on LOW and Leech Lakes; Parks and Trails and color updates. Her full update is attached to the minutes.

BSWR: Matt was at the meeting and gave a written and oral report. Along with this report he handed out an article on Multipurpose Drainage Management (MDM) fact sheet and a map of Election of Jurisdiction over Buffer Enforcement. He touched base on FY19 Competitive Water Fund RFP and the August 31 deadline; One Watershed, One Plan and approved planning grants for 9 partnerships; Buffer Law and its deadline of November 1; Multipurpose Drainage Management and Natural Resources Block Grants. A full report is on file.

Next Meeting Date: The next scheduled meeting will be on Monday October 22, 2019.

Adjourn: Motion by Kiesow, second by Stenseng to adjourn the meeting at 11:53 AM.

Minutes submitted by Kallie Briggs-Administrative Coordinator

JCNRB DNR Update, September 24, 2018 - Rita Albrecht, NW Region Director

Forestry-

Intermediate Forester positions are posted for Littlefork, Big Falls, Bagley, Effie, Park Rapids, and Williams.

Lands and Minerals and EWR-

DNR is anticipating licensing and permitting work for state lands and public water crossings should the PUC issue the final route determination for Line 3. LAM and EWR staff will be busy. All DNR staff have been preparing for potential demonstrations on state land and at state offices. We have been consulting with other state agencies and local law enforcement to ensure that we are prepared to protect DNR facilities, recreational users and visitors to our facilities, and DNR offices and staff. We will do this in a way that also allows people to exercise their first amendment rights peaceably.

Expedited Exchange- We received approval on September 14 for an expedited land exchange with Beltrami County. This is the result of legislation passed to provide an expedited exchange process between LGUs and the state. This is the first one completed after the legislation was passed.

Wildlife-

Beltrami Island SF LUP Citizen Input Panel- Our next meeting for the LUP Citizen Input Panel will be at Norris Camp on Thursday, October 4. For those that can make it, there will be a field trip, which begins at 4 pm followed by a light meal at 5:30, and the meeting will begin at 6pm. We will plan on being done by (or before) 8:00 PM.

Gretchen will send out an agenda next week. The main topic will be the planning work that has just begun to update the Red Lake WMA plan. Laurinda Brown, the Project Manager for this effort, will be there to give a presentation.

Hunting- Archery deer season, birds, waterfowl seasons are open.

Bear- Statewide, bear season registration through Monday 9/17 was 1,375. About 75-80% of what it was at this time last year. License numbers same as 2017. Since early 2000's permit numbers have declined and we expected to see the bear population stabilize, but in looking, back reductions in licenses were always chasing a declining population trend. Since about 2010, the bear population appears stable, but the goal is to see consistent years of an increase before increasing licenses numbers in the quota area. This year appears to be down because of good food conditions in portions of the quota area, especially area 51 (NE) where harvest is down about 60-70% from last year. Based on a normal food year about 85% of the bears are harvested in the first two weeks. Hunters tend to have most success early in the season and efforts decline as season continues. We expect to register an additional 200-300 bears through the remainder of the season.

Elk – first elk season saw all nine tags filled. Second of three elk seasons starts Sept. 22. The Grygla elk population continues to decline in number. The 2018 survey counted only 15; 2017 survey counted 17, 2016 counted 21. We have not had a hunting season since 2012 and are below the goal level of 30 to 38. Our current number is cause for concern for their long-term survival in Marshall and Beltrami counties.

Duck season will be open for 60 days in each of the three waterfowl zones:

- In the **north zone**, duck season is Sept. 22 through Tuesday, Nov. 20.
- In the **central zone**, duck season is Sept. 22 through Sunday, Sept. 30, closes for five days, then reopens Saturday, Oct. 6, and runs through Sunday, Nov. 25.
- In the **south zone**, duck season is Sept. 22 through Sept. 30, closes for 12 days, then reopens Saturday, Oct. 13, and runs through Sunday, Dec. 2.

Fish- DNR is seeking input on **Lake of the Woods and Rainy River** regulation changes

Angling regulations that would change on Lake of the Woods and the Rainy River in northern Minnesota are the topic of an open house for the public to give input on the proposals from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m., Monday, Oct. 8, at Lake of the Woods School.

The changes under consideration by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources would reduce the number of walleye and sauger allowed to be kept in the winter on the lake, and on the river allow only catch-and-release fishing for those fish in the spring. The changes would take effect on March 1, 2019.

Leech Lake-

A proposed walleye regulation change on Leech Lake would allow anglers more opportunities to keep walleye beginning when the 2019 open water fishing season opens.

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources is seeking input on the change at an open house from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m., Monday, Sept. 24, at the Walker Area Community Center.

The proposed regulation change would remove the 20- to 26-inch protected slot and replace it with a regulation similar to the statewide regulation, but with a four-fish walleye limit, only one of which can be over 20 inches.

Parks and Trails (PAT)-

Border to Border Route- At the September 10 PAT meeting about the Border to Border Touring Route, regional staff shared with the project leader (Mary Straka), the project sponsor (Laura Preus) and the project contractor (Ron Potter from NOHVCC) that Clearwater County prefers to not have that project cross their County.

During a larger Border-to-Border Touring Route meeting September 14, Clearwater County's resolution was again discussed. The contractor's action item from that meeting is to provide DNR with a new route by the end of September that would take this project north of Upper Red Lake.

BISF Morehouse Road trail connection- Planners have completed the BISF Phase II Trail Plan. The environmental review (ER) needs determination was completed and an EAW is not mandatory for the Beltrami Island Phase II. One more step of internal review is required before the trail plan is sent to the Commissioner's Office for signature and publication. Trail work can commence at that time. As soon as this formal designation process is finished, the trail can be opened to ATVs. Trail groups can work on maintaining and upgrading the snowmobile trail now.

County visits- Regional staff have been making annual visits to counties as able. So far we have visited Beltrami, Otter Tail, Kittson, and Roseau counties. We are scheduled to meet with Marshall County board on 10/2.

Fall Colors Map- The map is updated weekly on Friday and available on the DNR's website.

https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/fall_colors/index.html