

Natural Resources Advisory Board
Meeting Minutes
July 30, 2018
IDNR Headquarters

Board:

Jerry Hiller	Scott Bryant	Marshall Douglas	Marcia Polhamus
John Fleischli	Darel Martin	Tim Caughran	

Guests:

Michael Rasmussen	Mick Wanless	Ken Polhamus	Karrie Alms
Steve Leek			

IDNR Staff:

Director Rosenthal	Steve Baggerly	Kathy Barker	Jennifer Weisenberger
Tim Schweizer	Tami Evans		

Chairman Fleischli opened the meeting at 3:00 p.m. Scott Bryant motioned to adopt the July 30th, 2018 meeting agenda; Jerry Hiller provided the second. Marshall Douglas motioned to adopt the April 30, 2018 meeting minutes; Marcia Polhamus provided the second.

LWCF Grant Application Review – Kathy Barker – The Land & Water Conservation Fund is a 100% federally funded grant program and managed by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. LWCF grant monies are derived from offshore oil & gas leases and are used for acquisition of land for outdoor recreation. Board members were asked to sign a Confidentiality Agreement and Conflict of Interest Disclosure prior to discussing the grant applications.

IDNR received a total of 5 projects requesting approximately \$2.8 million dollars. Kathy provided an overview of each of the 5 projects. Along with the LWCF monies, SAR money, a special reapportionment account is also available; these are grant monies that come back from a previously unused grant and available to use for one year. Money is also available from the Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act Fund which is also off shore drilling money. John commented that all the applications are from collar counties and asked why that is, is there a process for those counties that are less fortunate. Kathy stated that it's because they don't have the 50% match. There isn't as much opportunity as there is for OSLAD. OSLAD does provide for distressed communities but they must prove that they are a distressed community. Scott asked about the cost per acre for Butterfield Park District and if it was accurate. Yes - the department does have to defend those to the National Park Service; they are required to provide the means of the estimate and they did have a full appraisal. Grants staff recommended that the board approved the 5

recommended grant projects. Scott motioned to accept the 5 recommended grant applications. Jerry provided the second. No opposition was heard; motion carried.

Steve Baggerly, Grants Manager stated that separate from the LWCF grants that were just voted on, but through the Land & Water Conservation Fund, there is a nationally competitive grant program called the Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program. The City of Kankakee has requested \$750,000 in acquisition funds with \$375,000 coming from the ORLPP program. Their request is for a 7-phase project that includes acquiring 7 properties on the north side of the river for whitewater kayaking, an amphitheater and a restaurant area. The board's approval is needed to move forward; September 14th is the deadline. Since there is no cost to IDNR, Scott motioned to approve the request; Darel provided the second. No opposition was heard. Motion carried.

Attendance by Other Means – John Fleischli – Previously, the board discussed sending letters to members who don't attend scheduled meetings asking that they make every effort to attend or consider resigning from the board. Do we have an answer? The director stated that we are ok, it's being discussed. Marcia stated that something needs to be done.

Board Comments

Jerry asked where we are with Rend Lake. The director stated that the vendor conference was in July, and that multiple people attended. Responses are due in August. The department has spent about \$1 million on mold mitigation and on the demolition of the Windjammer.

Director's Comments

A vendor conference for Eagle Creek is scheduled for August. There has been some interest.

The OHV park for Sahara woods in Harrisburg is on track and expected to be ready by May of 2019. Main trails are open, and we are determining sites for water, electric, etc. The OHV park is 1,400 acres out of a 4,000-acre site and will have 26 miles of trails. The department is working on an Request for Proposal and anticipates having a vendor to operate the site.

The turkey hunter survey has been developed; due to the JCAR rulemaking and licensing processes, changes won't reflect until the 2020/2022 season. The removal of shot size limitations as requested by our constituents has moved forward. Staff will begin working on the 5-year waterfowl plan, the 5-year furbearer hunting and trapping plan and then deer & upland game.

Attended the National R3 Symposium and one of biggest problems nationwide is recruiting diversity. Illinois is regarded because of our analytics and data; other states look at Illinois for its R3 program. To date, staff have developed programs & curriculums, hosted 31 events including 11 waterfowl, 10 terrestrial, 3 small game, 2 turkey specific, 2 deer specific, 2 scouting workshops and 1 equipment buying seminar. Over 200 people have been engaged in workshops and seminars, 17,000 people have been reached on social media and the department has gained over 600 followers. 24 sponsors and partners have assisted in promoting, planning and volunteered at the Learn to Hunt events. 72% of participants

have friends or family who hunt. Species of interest are deer 84%; turkey 75%; and duck 69%. Average time interested in hunting is 10 years and average hunter age is 38 years. 41% have hunted before taking a workshop, 70% plan to live in IL for the next 5 years and access was the biggest barrier to hunt, followed by time.

Future planning includes: 15 seminars on scouting, wild game cooking, and waterfowl calling; we expect to have 35 workshops annually. Defining target market segments, focus groups – new hunters, lapsed hunters, experienced hunters. Monitor participant license buying trends. Increase collaboration with program partners.

R3 within the fishing industry has been successful partly because people can fish any place. Access is needed to hunt. This not just an Illinois problem, it's a nationwide decline.

IDNR has a budget that is working but there are still problems with some of the special funds. FY19 money can be spent but the department does not have spending authority for previous years. The problem has been identified and will be brought up at VETO session.

The department went two years with a hiring freeze; for 13 months we hired 5. 240 people are eligible to retire in the next year. A Conservation Police Class is under way and we are in the process of notifying 20 individuals that they have been selected.

Darel asked if the East-Central Illinois counties 15-day implementation for deer is moving forward. Constituent meetings were positive, and most hunters are on board. This is the best method to increase the population. Hunters can still buck hunt the first two weeks of archery deer season.

The department is still working on the language for the supplemental deer feeding bill. Prairie Research Institute will be the lead in the study.

Equipment and trucks are coming in and we are looking to add cabins at some of our state parks. There is a demand and they pay for themselves quickly.

Scott asked if the duck blind material issue could be discussed; no one knows what going on. It's on 2nd notice with JCAR.

Public Comments – Karrie Alms, Peoria IL – Karrie stated that she was speaking on behalf of the Land and Water Conservation Fund. Peoria has a parcel of land along the riverfront that the people of the city did not want converted for private use. An initial response was submitted by Friends of Riverfront Park to try and stop it. The City has since terminated the redevelopment contract because it was found that there were four conversions. Karrie asked that IDNR seriously consider how the State of Illinois does their land and water conversions once the money has been funded, and that tighter standards be in place so that parcels aren't converted back to private use.