

**Golden Sands Resource, Conservation & Development Council, Inc.**  
**Forestry / Agriculture / Wildlife Committee Meeting Minutes**  
**July 16<sup>th</sup> 2020**  
**Jordan Park's West Lodge**

**Attendees:** Al Barden (Member-at-Large); Joshua Benes (Golden Sands RC&D Staff); Bill Clendenning (Wood); Brent Tessmer (Taylor); Tommy Enright (Wisconsin Farmers Union); Hugh O'Donnell (Member-at-Large); Tristyn Forget (Golden Sands RC&D Staff); Al Drabek (Marathon); Gary Beastrom (Member-at-Large); Amy Thorstenson (Golden Sands RC&D Staff); Hannah Butkiewicz (Golden Sands RC&D Staff); Rachel Bouressa (Golden Sands RC&D Staff); Denise Hilgart (Golden Sands RC&D Staff); Asa Plonsky (Golden Sands RC&D Staff).

**CALL TO ORDER:** Barden called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

**INTRODUCTIONS:** Everyone introduced themselves.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** A motion from Clendenning, seconded by Enright, to approve the minutes from the May meeting was passed unanimously.

**ELECTION OF A NEW COMMITTEE CHAIR:** A motion from Drabek, seconded by Enright, to appoint Brent Tessmer (Taylor County Conservationist as new Committee Chair) was passed unanimously.

**PROJECT UPDATES:**

**Cooperating For Woods and Wildlife/Demo Forests:** Butkiewicz assisted with the creation of two demonstration forest brochures. She has been working to schedule and prepare for filming the wildlife habitat management video component of the CFWW video series. Butkiewicz has also been working on creating updated maps for each of the Deer Management Assistance Program (DMAP) Cooperatives and is developing a mailing list of landowners she wishes to reach out to. So far she has created mailing lists for 6/10 of the current DMAP cooperatives and has contact information for over 600 landowners. Additionally, Butkiewicz participated in two CFWW informational meetings with Wisconsin Department of Natural Resource (WDNR) partners and county partners. She is currently working with county partners to schedule dates for the county startup meetings. These meetings are tasked with identifying five priority areas for the potential creation of DMAP cooperatives and or demonstration forest sites.

**US Forest Service Habitat Restoration Grants:** Benes completed two grant applications through the United States Forest Service (USFS) Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI). One focused on oak wilt. The other dealt with the restoration of properties impacted by storm damage and planting trees on a property donated to the Boys and Girls Club in Green Lake County. The two grant applications totaled \$422,000. Benes will find out if we received funding in September.

**Central Wisconsin Invasives Partnership (CWIP):** Plonsky shared updates. A training webinar will be held July 21, 2020 to kick off CWIP's Summer 2020 Mapping Blitz, an event

where volunteers will report invasive species growing along roadsides. PEDIP, a small project funded by WDNR, has been completed. The project involved searching for high-priority invasive plants in areas where they were reported. Final reporting has been completed for the Cisma start-up grant from WDNR. CWIP received a WDNR Weed Management Areas Grant to map and control invasive plants on three private forest properties in the Emmons Creek DMAP Cooperative in Portage County. Finally, CWIP started a small contracted services project to remove Japanese Knotweed from a yard in Portage County.

**Northeast Wisconsin Invasive Species Coalition (NEWISC):** Plonsky shared updates. NEWISC received a WDNR Weed Management Areas Grant to support development of the group. Funds will be used to hold meetings, create a steering committee, create governing documents, and create outreach materials including a website and Facebook page. A meeting in October is being planned for NEWISC. Topics of discussion will include changing the group's name, steering committee development, and potential projects for the next grant application cycle.

**Future Cisma work:** Benes indicated that he is looking into creating a third Cisma in Marathon County and applied for funds to do so through the WMA grant that was not successful. He will be looking at ways to get Marathon County involved later this year.

**NRCS Cooperative Agreements:** Benes filled two vacancies for our Soil Conservationists. Tristyn Forget (Wisconsin Rapids) and Robert Bauer (Prairie Du Chien) both started working on Monday. Forget gave the committee some more information about her background and the role she will play as a Soil Conservationist in the Wisconsin Rapids Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) office.

**Wisconsin Tree Farm Website:** Thorstenson reported that Amanda Bursynski has been helping with web design and edits. Progress stalled in May/June with COVID-19 demands and field season startup, but Thorstenson will meet with Burzynski next week to review what is left. The store is the biggest piece left.

**Bluebird And Bat Houses:** Some bluebird houses were sold this spring. New bat houses are available but not many have been sold due to most staff working from home.

**Tree Shelters:** This year has been a busy year for tree shelters!

**Stevens Point Area Neighborhood Gardens (SPANG):** Plonsky reported that the Cornell-Whitney Garden looks good. Sometime this season Plonsky hopes to take the compost to the Stevens Point yard waste site.

**NACD Technical Assistance Project/Managed Grazing:** Bouressa updated that 15 of the 20 plans have been completed, with the remaining 5 in progress. There is an additional list of folks interested in having plans written. The three pasture walks have been completed with bringing in about 30 people per event and involving partner organizations, such as watershed groups. The pasture walks have been an effective way to engage farmers interested in follow-up visits. Completing the follow-up visits will shift to the focus moving forward. The workshop planning has been put on hold, but Bouressa plans to connect with the planning committee next week.

**Little Plover River Appreciation Field Day:** Thorstenson said that we hope to host the event in 2021. We are currently searching for funding opportunities. The Wisconsin Public Service (WPS) provided \$200 so far.

**Waupaca County Conservation Field Day:** Due to the effects of COVID-19, many schools are not allowed to have field trips for fall 2020. Therefore, Thorstenson and Burzynski are planning on organizing a virtual field day. A \$1700 grant from the Fox Valley Community Foundation was awarded to help with the transition to an online format. Filming has begun for four video presentations about Grazing, Fisheries, Forest fires, and aquatic invasive species (AIS).

**NEW PROJECTS:**

New projects were reviewed.

- 2020 CWIP DNR WMA (#771G)
- 2020 NEWISC DNR WMA (#772G)

Motion was made by Clendenning, and second by Enright, to approve all of the projects.

**MEMBER REPORTS:** None

**ADJOURN:** Motion by Clendenning, second by Enright, to adjourn at 10:56am. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Joshua Benes  
Temporary Recording Secretary