

**DODGE COUNTY  
LAND CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MEETING  
127 EAST OAK STREET  
JUNEAU, WI 53039  
JULY 27, 2015**

The Dodge County Land Conservation Committee (LCC) met on July 27, 2015 beginning at 8:30 AM in Rooms 1H and 1I of the Dodge County Administration Building.

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by Chair Ed Nelson at 8:30 AM with the following members present: Ed Nelson, Dale Macheel, Gerald Adelmeyer, Bill Muche, Howard Kriewald, Larry Bischoff, and Bill Foley.

**Other Dodge County Board Members, Dodge County Staff and Agency Advisors Present:** Marc Bethke, Dodge County Land Conservation Department (LCD); and John Bohonek, Conservation Engineering Technician; Jim Mielke, Dodge County Administrator; Josh Odekirk, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

**Others Present:** Ruth Johnson, Greg Farnham, Jim Congdon, Leonard Laufenberg, Joe Roche, Jeff Schmitt.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND PERMIT CHAIR TO DEVIATE FROM AGENDA TO EFFICIENTLY CONDUCT MEETING:** Motion by Bischoff to approve the agenda and to permit the Chair to deviate from the agenda to efficiently conduct the meeting, seconded by Muche. Motion carried.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Motion by Kriewald to approve the minutes of May 26, 2015 as sent by mail; seconded by Foley. Motion carried.

**PUBLIC APPEARANCES/COMMENTS:** Ruth Johnson thanked the committee for their efforts to gather a group of concerned county residents to consider her request for a conservation buffer ordinance in Dodge County. Greg Farnham distributed copies of the summer newsletter for the Lake Sinissippi Improvement District. Greg shared that he does not plan to run for re-election to the Lake Sinissippi Improvement District Board of Commissioners at their annual meeting in August. Greg shared his concern with progress in controlling soil erosion and nonpoint source pollution, and encouraged the committee to take more aggressive action to address these issues. Jim Congdon also thanked the committee for their efforts to consider the request for a county-wide conservation buffer ordinance, and also encouraged the committee to step up its actions to address soil erosion and nonpoint source pollution in Dodge County.

**CONSIDER DRAINAGE DISTRICT ISSUES WITH THE DODGE COUNTY DRAINAGE BOARD:** Members of the Dodge County Land Conservation Committee and the Dodge County Drainage Board discussed several issues related to maintenance and operation of drainage districts in Dodge County. Primary issues discussed included the management of woody vegetation in district drains, and the requirement to establish and maintain a 20 foot wide corridor along district drains.

**CONSIDER RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CONSERATION BUFFER ORDINANCE**

**JOINT TASK FORCE:** A task force that met twice in small group sessions and once in a large group session during July to consider the possibility of enacting of a county-wide buffer ordinance in Dodge County was not able to come to a consensus recommendation on the issue for consideration by the Land Conservation Committee. However, many individual comments and ideas were shared during these sessions, and copies of meeting notes and comments shared was organized by task force facilitator, Jeff Hoffman, and copies were distributed to committee members. Chair Ed Nelson indicated that he would like to call a special meeting in August just to consider both oral and written information provided to the committee over the past several months, and to consider additional actions to address this issue in the future. It was decided to hold this special Land Conservation Committee Meeting on August 19, 2015, beginning at 7:00 PM.

**AGENCY ADVISOR REPORTS:** Josh Odekirk reported on significant work activities and issues of the Juneau USDA-NRCS Field Office.

**REVIEW OF BILLS AND REVENUE:** The committee reviewed bills and revenues as shown on the attached listing.

**CONSIDERATION OF NEW AND REVISED CONSERVATION PLANS:** There were no conservation plans presented for consideration by the committee.

**LAND & WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT COST SHARE PROGRAM – MONTHLY REPORT:** Marc Bethke distributed copies of the June - July report of cost-share activities under the Land & Water Resource Management Program (see attached report).

**FARMLAND PRESERVATION PROGRAM:** Marc Bethke reported that approximately 50 Farmland Preservation Program (FPP) participants have not yet filed their annual conservation compliance certification report for 2015. Second notice post cards will be sent out near the end of August, at which time late penalty fees will also apply. FPP service fee collections are on track to meet 2015 budgeted revenue expectations. Two voluntary notices of noncompliance were presented for committee consideration. Motion by Muche to approve and authorize the Chair to sign FPP voluntary notices of noncompliance for Tom Haas and Steven Gay; seconded by Bischoff. Motion carried.

**COUNTY CONSERVATIONIST MONTHLY REPORT: SIGNIFICANT WORK ACTIVITIES, MEETINGS AND OTHER ISSUES:** Marc Bethke presented the monthly County Conservationist's Report (see attached report).

**COMMITTEE MEMBER REPORTS:** Bill Foley shared copies of the most recent newsletter for the Beaver Dam Lake Improvement Association. The final draft of the management plan for Beaver Dam Lake will be presented at the lake association's annual meeting on August 22<sup>nd</sup>. Bill also reported that Beaver Dam Lake has experienced some blooms of blue-green algae this summer, and discussed some of the health concerns when people or their pets are exposed to the bacteria contained in blue-green algae.

**CORRESPONDENCE:** Correspondence shared with the committee included a letter from Dodge County Farm Bureau President Roger Hildebrandt expressing Farm Bureau's concerns with a conservation buffer ordinance, a news article regarding a groundwater protection ordinance in Wood County, and a news article regarding the installation of liquid waste water recycling system on another Wisconsin farm in Manitowoc County. Copies of the May and June 2015 Lake Sinissippi Improvement District meeting minutes were also distributed.

**PER DIEMS:** Motion by Bischoff, seconded by Foley to approve the regular per diems, in addition to the following:

Bill Muche – Lake Sinissippi Improvement District Meeting on June 2, 2015 – per diem and 15 miles.

Dale Macheel – Fox Lake Inland Lake District Meetings on June 11 and July 9, 2015 – per diem and 22 miles for each meeting.

All seven members of the Land Conservation Committee – Conservation Buffer Task Force Meeting on July 22, 2015 – regular meeting per diems and mileage amounts.

Motion carried.

**NEXT MEETING:** The next regular meeting will be held on Monday, August 24, 2015 beginning at 8:30 AM in Room 3A of the Dodge County Administration Building, 127 East Oak Street, Juneau, Wisconsin.

**ADJOURNMENT:** There being no further business to come before this committee, motion by Kriewald to adjourn at 10:40 AM, seconded by Bischoff. Motion carried.

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Ed Nelson, Chair

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Gerald Adelmeyer, Secretary

**Disclaimer: The above minutes may be approved, amended or corrected at the next committee meeting.**

**LAND CONSERVATION DEPARTMENT BILLS & REVENUE**

(BILLS)

**No Operating Costs / Bills to Report**

(REVENUE)

Twenty seven (27) Farmland Preservation Program Participants – 2015 Service		
	Fee Payments	= \$ 675.00
DNR – 1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarters 2015 Wildlife Crop Damage Program Expense		
	Reimbursement	\$11,624.57
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>= \$12,299.57</b>

## **2015 SOIL EROSION SURVEY RESULTS AND COMMENTS**

### **The Findings**

- The average soil erosion rate for 2015 decreased slightly as compared to 2014 (going from 2.3 ton/acre/year in 2014 to 2.2 ton/acre/year in 2015), with the calculated total amount of cropland soil erosion in Dodge County for 2015 at 672,492 ton (a decrease of just over 49,000 ton as compared to 2014). According to the RUSLE2 soil erosion calculation data for 2015, 11.0% of our cropland acres are currently eroding above tolerable levels, down from 12.0% in 2014.
- In 2015, the amount of cropland in hay land use was calculated to be at 49,288 acres, up from 48,961 acres in 2014, an increase of 327 acres. Total hay land acreage is down by 43.9% when compared to hay land acreage when we began conducting the survey in 1999. Currently, only 15.9% of our cropland is in hay land use.
- The percentage of cultivated cropland having 30% or more crop residue cover left after planting increased from 28% in 2014 to 29% in 2015. Likewise, the percentage of cultivated cropland under no-till or strip-till planting methods also increased in 2015, from 12% in 2014 up to 17% in 2015. The highest years of no-till and strip-till use were 2006 and 2007 when 30% of cultivated cropland was planted using these methods.

### **Other Items of Interest to Note**

- There are 5,250 more acres of corn planted in 2015 as compared to 2014.
- There are 5,850 fewer acres of small grain (usually winter wheat) in 2015 as compared to 2014.
- There are 1,850 more acres of soybeans planted in 2015 as compared to 2014.
- There are an estimated 780 acres of fallow (unplanted) cropland in 2015 – down from 2,720 acres in 2014.

### **Conclusions**

- An overall increase in the percentage of cultivated cropland under good residue management practices has contributed to an overall decrease in Dodge County's cropland soil erosion rate for 2015, as compared to 2014. The main reason for the increased acres of cultivated cropland with good residue cover is the use of no-till and strip-till planting practices, which increased from 12% in 2014 to 17% in 2015, and which is up from an all-time low of 8% in 2013.
- Ephemeral (small gully) erosion was minimal in 2015, found to be present in only 1% of cropland fields. Ephemeral erosion control has been, and will continue to be, promoted through media releases and by landowner contacts.

**LAND & WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT COST SHARE PROGRAM REPORT**

July 28, 2015 - August 24, 2015

**Cost Share Agreements Signed**

<u>(Name)</u>	<u>(Cons. Practice)</u>	<u>(\$ Committed to Agreements)</u>
Nehls Brothers Farms LTD	Well Decommissioning	\$500.00
LeMar LLC	Barnyard Runoff Control	\$15,576.05
<b>Total</b>		<b>16,076</b>
<b>Uncommitted Balance for 2015 =</b>		<b>\$762.70</b>

**Cost Share Payments to Landowners**

<u>(Name)</u>	<u>(Cons. Practice)</u>	<u>(\$ Expended)</u>
<b>Total</b>		

## **AUGUST 2015 COUNTY CONSERVATIONIST REPORT**

### **SIGNIFICANT WORK ACTIVITIES AND MEETINGS:**

- Spent considerable time researching relevant information regarding the effectiveness of grass buffers – prepared a “thoughts and recommendations” document for committee consideration.
- Continue to receive/process Farmland Preservation Program annual conservation certification reports
- Prepared the 2015 SWRM Grant Reimbursement Request to DATCP and submitted the request through County Administrator Jim Mielke
- Finalized and mailed Farmland Preservation Program Certificates of Compliance to participants in the Town of Trenton
- Worked on preparing the proposed 2016 Land Conservation Department budget
- Worked with Traci Guse on start-up of her new duties as the ½ time Administrative Secretary III for the Land Conservation Department