

Lessard Outdoor Heritage Council (LOHC)
Monday, January 12, 2009
Room 550 N, State Office Building
8:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon
Meeting Summary

Members Present: Interim Chair Michael Kilgore, Lester Bensch, Darby Nelson, David Hartwell, Representative Rick Hansen, Wayne Enger, Senator Bill Ingebrigtsen, Representative Bob Gunther, James Cox, Bob Schroeder, Scott Rall, Senator Ellen Anderson, and Acting Executive Director Bill Becker

1. Call to Order

Interim Chair Kilgore called the meeting to order at 8:10 a.m. A quorum was present.

2. Review and Approve Agenda

David Hartwell moved to approve the January 12 meeting agenda. **Motion prevailed.**

3. Approved December 17, 2008 Minutes

David Hartwell moved approval of the December 17 meeting minutes with minor revisions noted. **Motion prevailed.**

4. Personnel Committee Report

Bob Schroeder reported that the committee is near completion on the draft executive director position description. The committee is still working to reconcile where the position will reside (DNR or the legislative branch). Representative Hansen stated that he will introduce a bill to appropriate \$150,000 from the game and fish fund to the Legislative Coordinating Commission for administrative expenses and travel expenses of Council members for this biennium. The appropriation must be reimbursed after July 1, 2009.

5. Strategy and Process for Developing 2009 Funding Recommendations Proposals – Approve

Bill Becker outlined the draft guidance document developed by the Governance Committee. This process recognizes the time constraints of our first year and the timetable will take us to April 1, the deadline for finalizing funding recommendations. The LOHC will refine this framework and process, including the development of a strategic plan, for guiding the expenditure of OHF appropriation recommendations beyond 2009.

David Hartwell moved to approve the Strategy and Process for Developing 2009 Funding Recommendations document.

The Council reviewed and discussed the document in detail. Revisions to the **minimum criteria** section include: delete bullet #4 pertaining to obtaining local support; delete #9 pertaining to identifying property tax or in-lieu of tax consequences; amend #17 to read, "Agree not to transfer the public interest of OHF fee and/or easement protected land without written approval by the appropriate state of Minnesota authority." Add a new bullet that states, "Where possible and appropriate use native plant material." Revisions to the **criteria to be met by requesting organizations** section include: delete public from the bullet and add project to the bullet. Revisions to the **criteria for identifying conservation priorities** section include: amend bullet #5 to read, "Identify the status of public access in the case of easement acquisition." Revisions to the **definitions** section include: amend 'restore' to read, "Action to bring a habitat back to a former state of sustaining fish, game or wildlife, with an ultimate goal of restoring habitat to a desired conservation condition." Amend 'protect' to read, "Action to maintain the ability of habitat and related natural systems to sustain fish, game or wildlife through acquisition of fee title or conservation easements. Mr. Hartwell's motion to approve, as amended, **prevailed.**

6. Presentations of Statewide Strategic Plans Panel

A. Conservation Legacy Council Report – Dave Zentner, Issac Walton League Mr. Zentner provided an overview of the final report. Its principal recommendations include a means for dedicated funding for the conservation, governance

and management of Minnesota's natural resources, and appoint a citizen-based commission to oversee and appropriate those funds to the priorities identified through a conservation compact.

B. Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan – Jean Coleman, CR Planning Ms. Coleman provided an overview of this plan as it relates to the Council's efforts. The plan identifies 51 recommendations under a framework of five strategic areas: 1) integrated planning, 2) critical land protection, 3) land and water restoration and protection, 4) sustainable practices, and 5) economic incentives for sustainability. She then summarized seven of its recommendations relevant to the LOCH constitutional and statutory framework. "We believe the Council should place priority on funding critical habitats of high threat."

C. A Fifty-Year Vision: Conservation for Minnesota's Future – Steve Hobbs, Belwin Conservancy Mr. Hobbs presented the Campaign for Conservation's effort to develop a statewide conservation vision. The group identified and mapped 14 conservation regions for the state and went through some 50-odd conservation plans to find the commonality. A template was identified for each of the 14 regions, and then a conservation leader was identified to meet with the local folks to review and get input on the template. From that lengthy effort, the fifty-year vision was developed. The Campaign for Conservation believes what is most important is integrating conservation efforts across all eco regions so that conservation goals are complementary.

7. Presentation of Stakeholder Listening Sessions

A. Board of Water and Soil Resources – John Jaschke Mr. Jaschke reported on the outcomes from seven listening sessions with local governments throughout the state held in December on priorities for conservation habitat and water quality improvement. Some ideas include: multiple benefits projects should be given priority, results should be measurable, it's more cost effective to protect threatened areas before they become degraded, make CRP buffers permanent to avoid paying more than once, research funds should be directed, not competitive, and projects should be based on both science and local citizen input. The BWSR goal for wetland restoration is 10,000 acres/year through permanent easements, about \$15-20 million in funding.

B. Nature Conservancy January 8 Listening Session – Tom Landwehr Mr. Landwehr provided a brief summary from the January 8 forum. He shared the following priorities categorized under the four habitat types identified in statute: For prairies, find and acquire the highest quality prairies identified through the county biological survey, improve grassland management on existing state lands, and emphasize acquisition and protection of large tracks and complexes. For wetlands, capitalize on RIM/NRCS matching programs (WRP), look for strategic fee acquisitions and fund projects that are ready to go. For forests, funding for management opportunities in the market, enhance outdoor recreation, for fish and wildlife habitat, improve habitat management for rare and endangered species. A full report on the outcomes will be available by the Council's next meeting.

8. Election of Officers

A slate of candidates was nominated and included: Mike Kilgore, Chair, James Cox, Vice-Chair, Darby Nelson, Secretary, David Hartwell, Treasurer and Representative Rick Hansen, Legislative Member. The terms of these officers is through June of 2009. **Motion prevailed.**

Public Comments

Robert Austin, New Prague addressed the council seeking guidance on submitting a funding proposal.

Adjourn

Chair Kilgore adjourned the meeting at 12:15 p.m.

APPROVED:

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Chair, Mike Kilgore

Date

Secretary, Darby Nelson

Date