

Minutes of the May 12, 2011 Meeting
BOMC Planning and Land Use Committee

Members in attendance: Richard Grant, Rick Walgenbach, Don Hammes, Randy Poelma, Bill Wenzel, Laura Olah, Frank Olah, Steve Schmelzer, Craig Karr.

Others: Terre Carlson, Dana White-Quam, Nick Morehouse.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Dana White-Quam, DNR Regional Trails Coordinator informed the committee of efforts underway to convert the rail line through BAAP to trail. Contrary to the process earlier outlined, likely this conversion will occur via a MOU between DOT and DNR. Wisconsin River Rail Transit Commission and the Wisconsin Southern Railroad would also be involved in the process. It is assumed this will take place prior to fall, 2011 - which would represent two years of non-use of the rail through Badger.

Dana also talked about a possible corridor to connect the BAAP rail to Devil's Lake State Park.

In addition, Dana described DNR's role in working with DOT on trail issues from Mazomanie to Sauk City as well as the rail line from Madison to Reedsburg.

She also described the likely process for engaging the public in the master planning process and how trail decisions fit with other property land use decisions to be made.

2. Nicholas Morehouse, DNR Forester, shared with the committee the Forest Inventory he is doing on DNR lands at Badger. He has inventoried and mapped about 2170 acres to date. Aside from the pine plantations most of the timber cover is of poor quality from a marketing standpoint. There is the potential to "sell" over 1000 acres of this poor quality timber as a source of biofuel. Such a sale would also greatly facilitate conversion of these acres to grassland. Nick urges the use of prescribed burning – as much and as soon as possible – to help remove invasives.

CHECK-IN:

Craig Karr:

- Good news. DNR has found funds and staff to do the biological inventories at Badger this summer which will provide the data needed to proceed with master planning in 2012.
- Work continues on studying the salamanders in the reservoir and making plans to transfer them elsewhere so the reservoirs can be drained and deconstructed.
- It appears Army's infrastructure removal plans now include the removal of the Rocket Press houses, but not Building 273 ("red roof inn"), the River Pump Station, nor the reservoirs.
- A deed for transfer of 370.52 acres to DNR is on the DNR Secretary's desk awaiting signing. This is for parcels P2, P5, P6, and S2.
- At the recent Conservation Congress Spring Hearings attendees voted 2555 Yes and 909 No in support of the question concerning accommodation of various dog-related activities at Badger. Don Hammes may propose a letter be sent from BOMC to the parties involved ensuring they are aware of the master planning process.
- Plans are being made for the movement of office space from Building 200 to Building 207 for DNR, Badger History Group, and The Sauk Prairie Conservation Alliance.

Rick Walgenbach:

- Development of an Environmental Analysis (EA) of the proposed new facilities within BAAP for the USDA Dairy Forage Research Center has begun. Final recommendations on the scope of the new facilities will be publicly released at the same time as the results of the EA.

Laura Olah:

- Laura informed the committee on recent activity concerning the Army's Alternative Feasibility Study of Groundwater Remediation at BAAP. The Army has submitted a proposed strategy to DNR which indicates its preferred remedy is to install a public water system. Associated with the proposal is the elimination of residential well and MIRM treatment. CSWAB is concerned about the potential impacts to livestock wells and homes in the path of the three groundwater contamination plumes identified by the Army. Area farms, including the DFRC farm, may be expected to use municipal water.

Maps show that groundwater contamination has reached nearby wetlands and the Wisconsin River. There will be a public comment period providing opportunity for all to give input on the Army's proposal.

Frank Olah:

- He is working to determine whether there are any access points (e.g. manholes) in the pipeline from the River Pumping Station to the Filtration Plant which could allow the pipeline to be used for bat hibernation.

Steve Schmelzer:

- Steve and Rick Walgenbach are meeting to reach agreement on USDA's cropping of DNR-owned lands at BAAP.
- Steve reports there has been public interest in turkey hunting on Parcels L, N, and W (outside the fence).

NEXT MEETING:

Tentatively scheduled for Thursday, July 14, site to be determined.