

Land & Water Conservation Committee Minutes

August 20, 2025

1. Call to Order:

The monthly meeting was called to order by Meg Turville-Heitz at 8:30am. Committee Members Meg Turville-Heitz (Chair), Matt Foelker (UW) (Vice-Chair), Margaret Burlingham (PACE), Walt Christensen, Elizabeth Hafften (UW) (via Teams), Cassie Richardson (via Teams @ 8:35), and Scott Schultz (Ag) were present. Also in attendance were Patricia Cicero, Director, Land & Water Conservation Department (LWCD); Kim Liakopoulos, LWCD; Dave Hoffman, LWCD; Joe Strupp, LWCD; and Danielle Thompson, County Corporation Counsel (via Teams).

- Others in Attendance: Curtis Backlund, Deb Hall-Kind, Anita Martin, Sue Marx (via Teams @ 8:45), and Blane Poulson.

2. Roll Call (Establish a Quorum):

A quorum was established.

3. Certification of Compliance with the Open Meetings Law:

It was determined that the committee was in compliance with the Open Meetings Law.

4. Review of the Agenda:

The agenda was reviewed by the committee members. No changes were proposed.

5. Approval of the July 16, 2025 Meeting Minutes:

Foelker made a motion to approve the July 16, 2025 meeting minutes as written, Christensen seconded. Motion passed 6/0.

6. Public Comment:

Deb Hall-Kind gave public comment on agenda item #14. Curtis Backlund gave public comment in support of Hall-Kind on agenda item #14. Anita Martin gave public comment on an item that was not on the agenda.

7. Communications:

- Department of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection (DATCP) Report.

8. Discussion on Departmental Updates:

Cicero attended the Wisconsin Association of Drainage Boards meeting and two Strategic Plan meetings. Cicero met with the Health Department and the Wisconsin Geologic and Natural History Survey (WGNHS) to determine next steps and possible grant opportunities regarding arsenic in groundwater. Cicero has been invited to serve on Wisconsin Geologic Mapping Advisory Committee which gives advice to WGNHS on proposed projects. Cicero is one of the speakers for the August 21, 2025 Coffee and Conversations session on renewable energy facilities. Hoffman met with the City of Watertown to update them on potential conservation projects. Colton Hutchinson continues to conduct fieldwork on Lake Ripley, Lower Spring Lake, Blue Spring Lake, and Rock Lake. Hutchinson attended various lake organization meetings. Hutchinson is working with DATCP engineers on a riprap project for Kanow Park. Liakopoulos is communicating with Laura's Lane Nursery to finalize an order for the 2025/2026 Tree & Shrub Sale. Strupp arranged a new carburetor for the agricultural sprayer with a local repair shop. Strupp worked to obtain bids to address compaction issues at the County Farm.

9. Discussion on Updates from Land+Water Meetings:

Turville-Heitz spoke to the committee about various meetings she has attended including the National Association of Conservation Districts annual meeting. The Land+Water Association annual meeting is March 4-6, 2026 at Chula Vista in Wisconsin Dells. Turville-Heitz informed the committee that Governor

Evers applauded county conservation departments and farmers for the Farmland Preservation Program and the PACE program.

10. Discussion on Southern Area Association Tour:

The tour is on September 4, 2025 from 9:00 - 3:00. Committee members should register with the LWCD. Per diem will not be applicable.

11. Discussion and Possible Action on Amending a Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)

Conservation Plan: Hoffman discussed the amendment and answered committee questions. Christensen made a motion to approve the amendment to the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program conservation plan as written, Burlingham seconded. Motion passed 7/0.

12. Discussion on Producer-Led Groups: Jefferson County Soil Builders (JCSB) & Rock River Regenerative

Graziers (R3G): Schultz talked about the drone seeding field day on September 3, 2025. Schultz informed the committee that the JCSB cover crop cost share money has all been spent for the year. Schultz spoke about the R3G board meeting last month and said that R3G has cost share funds available for grazing and pasture projects. Both producer-led groups are preparing their 2026 grant applications which are due in September.

13. Discussion and Possible Action on Notices of Noncompliance - Farmland Preservation Program (FPP):

There were no notices.

14. Discussion and Possible Action on Review of Notice of Noncompliance - FPP for Deb Hall-Kind:

The committee discussed Hall-Kind's noncompliance and consulted department staff. Christensen made a motion to allow for a cancellation of notice of noncompliance if the necessary documentation is submitted to LWCD staff by September 10, 2025 to determine if standards were met, Hafften seconded. Motion passed 7/0.

15. Discussion and Possible Action on Cancellation of Notices of Noncompliance - FPP:

Steven Behm

Burlingham made a motion to accept the notice, Christensen seconded. Motion passed 7/0.

16. Discussion and Possible Action on Purchase of Agriculture Conservation Easement (PACE) Applications & Baseline Documentation: Hoffman updated the committee on the Rollefson application.

~ Richardson left the meeting @ 9:45 ~

17. Discussion and Possible Action on 2026 Department Fees:

Cicero and Hoffman discussed updated PACE fees for the 2026 budget. Turville-Heitz made a motion to establish a 2-tier PACE application fee structure - the first fee, \$650.00 will be required at step 4 of the easement process, the second fee, \$1,400.00 at step 10, Schultz seconded. Motion passed 6/0.

18. Discussion on 2026 Department Budget:

Cicero outlined the 2026 Department Budget and answered committee questions.

19. Review of the Monthly Financial Report:

The most recent statement of revenues and expenditures was distributed.

20. Discussion on Items for the Next Agenda:

Possible agenda items include: Clean Boats, Clean Waters Grant Resolution

- **Next Scheduled Meeting:** September 17, 2025 at 8:30am in Room C2063

21. Adjournment:

Schultz made a motion to adjourn at 10:15am, Foelker seconded. Motion passed 6/0.