

**Soil and Water Committee
Meeting Minutes
June 3, 2025**

The meeting was called to order by Committee Chairman Koch at 10:05 a.m.

Members present for roll call were Owen DuCharme and Chad Sime. Members of the community were also present. Mary Kuhn and Kate Krachey were absent.

Motion by DuCharme, second by Sime to approve April 8, 2025, minutes as mailed. Motion carried unanimously.

Land Conservationist report, Dave Troester: Troester informed the committee that the DNR visited and audited the nonmetallic mining program. Troester stated the auditors seemed to think the annual fees collected are higher than work put into the program. Troester stated the big news for the department was that the new truck is here and added that the topper is on order. Once the topper is here the old truck will be put on the state auction site. Troester said there will be a DAWS virtual meeting. DAWS funding does not look promising. Troester attended a PFAS training last week via webinar stating it was informative. Troester continued by telling the committee that he met with Robert Bauer, who is attending virtually.

Troester asked Bauer to introduce himself. Bauer stated he is a grazing specialist with Golden Sand Resource and Development, Stevens Point, works across county boundaries, 12 county service area, addresses resources and concerns. Sustainable agriculture, healthy forests, and clean waters. Talking today about the sustainable agriculture project he's working on through funding from Natural Fish and Wildlife Foundation.

Through this grant funding he is working with farmers and landowners to create grazing, and conservation plans to help reduce nutrient and sediment inputs to water, erosion and run off. By way of prescribed grazing, nutrient management, pasture and hay planting. With this transition in his work, Bauer is learning about funding resources. Bauer will continue to work with Great River Graziers.

Bauer is looking for ways to connect farmers and landowners with educational opportunities. Troester suggested the Crawford County Fair. Bauer asked the committee if it was ok if he do outreach at the fair. The committee approved Robert providing time at the Crawford County fair table.

Troester asked the committee how to proceed with the SWRM grant funds. Bunting added in the past we have referred landowners to NRCS, typically NRCS paid better. Koch doesn't feel the committee needs to overregulate; Troester and Bunting may allocate funds as they see fit.

Troester introduced the Aquatic Invasive Species intern, Madison Caya. Caya stated she is from Prairie du Chien, she has been working in and out of the office, conducting boat surveys and training.

Troester informed the committee that tree pick up was held at the end of April. Adding that the truck was the fullest it had ever been, tree sizes were larger this year. Electronic Clean Sweep in Prairie du Chien on April 18. It was a success with 2 semi-trailers filled to the brim and a few items that didn't fit in the trailer. Troester added that he applied for and was awarded the full \$15,000 DNR e-waste grant for fall 2025 and 2026 in Seneca, and spring 2026 in Prairie du Chien.

Troester informed the committee that he met with Tim Jackson and Wrangler Jones from DATCP to review our Farmland Preservation Program administration and see where they can assist us more. Troester stated he has attended various meetings, Troester stated he will attend a meeting with National Fish and Wildlife Federation conservation partners, looking to work together, partner with counties, grant programs, and talk about feasibility. Troester updated the committee on 2025 nutrient management plans, stating he is still waiting for some plans.

Land and Water Plan updates will be moving forward with a meeting. The Advisory committee people who should be present NRCS, DNR, UW Extension, Forest Jahnke, have a meeting to see what our priorities are.

Troester asked the committee what he can do to help the committee be prepared for the meeting. Troester stated he will email draft, and suggested dates to get something on the calendar. Troester stated there will be a meeting in Seneca, 2 months later, an official meeting, and another meeting to approve the plan. Koch asked Troester to get the meeting on the calendar and keep the committee apprised of the Advisory committee.

Motion by Koch, seconded by DuCharme to approve \$20 food coupons for the conservation award winners. Motion carried unanimously.

Troester added that benches have been completed by the Prairie du Chien High school for the conservation award winners.

Motion by DuCharme, second by Sime to approve vouchers as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Land & Water Projects report, Travis Bunting: Bunting reported to the committee that he has completed a NRCS project, and he built a box for the new truck. Bunting continued stating the CREP program has been difficult. Adding that Mike Kelley has had issues with DATCP getting his project put through. Working with representatives to get this moving forward. Constant fight for Mike Kelly. DATCP is hosting a hydrology training, along with WI Wetland Association, in the Plum Creek Watershed. Bunting stated he did a pre-tour to scope things out for his presentation for the training. Construction will get back into play.

NRCS report, Josh Bushee: Bushee stated June 12 at 10 am the Annual meeting to shape funding for EQIP 2026; local work group, Crawford, Richland, Sauk, and Juneau County's. Bushee talked about the CSP renewal deadline for 2025, and funds have been finalized. Bushee informed the committee the numbers ended at: 32 EQIP contracts, 7 CSP contracts, 2 regional conservationist partnership contracts. Down a bit from previous years, hopeful of getting more projects funded next year. Bushee stated NRCS is about half done with compliance and will see more field reviews. Wrapping up payment certifications.

Troester asked Bushee if he would be able to participate on the advisory committee. Bushee stated he is willing to do it but is waiting for approval from his supervisor.

DNR Forester report, Aidan Schmitt: Dave talked to Julie Van Cleve, Richland Center, informed of new forester, Aidan Schmitt out of Boscobel nursery took over Crawford County the last couple months. Rebecca Vasquez has worked with NRCS. Bushee added staff is moving around.

UW Extension report, Owen DuCharme: DuCharme stated Sara Tedeschi has been working on the Agritourism Business Development Cohort. DuCharme stated the first module took place at a farm by Soldiers Grove and it went well. DuCharme added there was a good turnout at the event.

FSA report, Chad Sime: Sime updated the committee on the ECAP sign up - marketing of crops, will continue through August or September and has been going very well. Sime added there are a few more hoops to jump through for crop reporting. Sime stated there will be a rush in July to hit deadlines and changes due to retirement in the office. JoAnn Cooley is covering two counties.

Public Comment: Ellen Brooks, Crawford Stewardship Project alerted the committee that July 19 is the Crawford Stewardship Project Karst Exploration. There will be a presentation in Gays Mills and field visit to follow.

The next meeting date is Tuesday, July 8, 2025.

Motion by Ducharme, second by Sime to adjourn at 10:52 a.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted



Amy Opprieht
Clerk