

## REC Steering Committee Minutes 2016 10 04

Members Present: Cece Rudolph, Dev Quandt (NCMS Science and Conservation Club), Wes Ebert (member at-large), Dan Smet (NCHS Phy Ed.), Megan Spatz (NCECC St. Therese), Linda Wagner (NCES St Anne 3<sup>rd</sup> grade), Mary Wagner (NCES St Mark 4<sup>th</sup> grade), Steve Schmidt (REC Coordinator consulting through Snapshot Science, LLC)

Guests Present: Brianna Wright (NCHS Biology/Env Sci.), Patrick Hollett (NCHS Physic/Chem; and Conservation Club), Dean Hermsen (St. Mark's 5<sup>th</sup> Grade)

Introductions were made to open the meeting

### Old Business

1. Approved previous meeting minutes 2016 05 26
  - a. There was no discussion
  - b. Motion to approve by Dev Quandt, seconded by Dan Smet.
2. Contact information was updated.
3. The Rudolph family plans to fund or partially fund a project in memory of Don, who passed away last March. The project should have a lasting impact. Don loved the outdoors and had a special place in his heart for the REC, which is where he grew up. We discussed the following ideas:
  - Wood chip the trail (Mary Wagner)
  - Signage for the trails. Dev Quandt sent an email last spring about this idea. Cece brought a copy of the email.
  - Wood duck houses. (Dan Smet) Steve pointed out that we have two refurbished ones ready to hang and we should hang them from poles, rather than trees.
  - Trail cams for students to study animal populations. (from previous meeting) Perhaps as part of the Snapshot Wisconsin program. Some trail cams can send pictures or video over the internet.

Cece would like proposals in writing by Thanksgiving. Email those to her at [cdrudolph59@gmail.com](mailto:cdrudolph59@gmail.com) and copy Steve Schmidt at [sschmidt@snapshotscience.org](mailto:sschmidt@snapshotscience.org)

Proposals should have the following information:

- Project leader & team, if applicable
  - General description of the project
  - Timeline
  - Who it would benefit, ie. How many students, grades, others in the community, etc.
  - Budget estimate and supply sources, ie. Fleet Farm, etc.
4. Status report
    - a. Step next to toilet to help younger students. Linda Wagner brought a stool which she will leave in the bathroom.
    - b. Deer Fence/Exclosure (Steve Schmidt)
      - i. Repairs have been needed
        1. Tree fell on corner in late spring. Repaired by Wes and Stephan Ebert in summer.
        2. Periodically, deer are jumping fence and then breaking out. Green color may have something to do with their attempts to break through the fence, once inside. Minor browsing has occurred in the exclosure.
      - ii. Deer have been increasing their browsing to fatten up for the winter. Including tasting the zip ties!! It does not look like they are ingesting the plastic, just chewing it in search of food.
      - iii. Fence is still having the effect we predicted.

1. There is obvious browsing up to fence, especially on the southwest corner. The stems coming through the fence are all chewed up. Stems inside fence grew very thick and fast this past growing season.
2. Heavier browse along paths, while poplars in the middle of stands are already beyond the height which deer can browse.
3. An excellent possible research study could be to measure the average height of poplars from the edge of the various stands to the middle.

#### New Business

##### 1. Other projects to explore/plan. Can we pick two or more to complete by end of school year?

- a. Buckthorn removal work needed. Seed sources must be treated with round up in fall, while the shrubs are taking nutrients to the roots as they prepare for winter dormancy. Perhaps conservation clubs could organize?
- b. Slippery ramp – the ramp is dangerously slippery when wet. It would be quite expensive to use the sticky sandpaper tape strips. We could paint it. Linda Wagner wondered about small wooden strips which could be screwed or glued or a combination of attachment methods.
- c. Clean up trash – perhaps in spring, one or both conservation clubs could organize?
- d. Snapshot Wisconsin program – August 2016 issue of Wisconsin Natural Resources magazine
- e. Explore idea of deer hunting in light of the clear negative impact deer browsing is having and state statute 895.52 which limits landowner liability.
  - i. Here is the link to a UW-Extension document that explains the state statute:  
<http://learningstore.uwex.edu/assets/pdfs/G3326.PDF>
  - ii. Steve also contacted Gretchen Marshall, State School Forest Specialist who shared resources about what other schools have done.
  - iii. Mike Martin is advocating for this management technique and will approach the Diocese.
- f. REC Use Policy for Teachers needs to be updated. The last version of this was from 2003-04 when NCS was still called Wausau Area Catholic Schools. Steve started to edit, but would like a team or committee to do this.

##### 2. Chores

- a. Steve & Dan cleaned the gutters on the east side of the building before the business meeting. Wes cleaned the gutters on the west side following the business meeting.
- b. Steve weed whipped between the ramp and the road before running out of line.
- c. Cece Rudolph swept the ramp.
- d. Brianna washed the REC sign by the road.
- e. A crew opened up the trail in the clear cut (Wes and...).
- f. Another crew (Dev, Steve, Patrick, and Brianna) cleaned up part of a very large oak that was downed to the west of the amphitheater. Trail work – Open trail through poplars; giant oak down near amphitheater/field; clean up driveway/sign/entry area

3. Next meeting – likely May 2017 or TBD; perhaps there will be some smaller meetings to handle some of the projects mentioned above.

The business meeting was ended with a prayer by Steve Schmidt

Respectfully submitted by Steve Schmidt, 2016 10 05