

Natural Resources Advisory Board

April 29, 2008

DNR Headquarters

Chairman Blackford opened the meeting at 1:00 p.m.

Roll call was given; Board members present:

Randy Blackford, Joyce O'Keefe, Richard Mark, Dick Wren, Dale Stewart, Gene Abbott

DNR Staff Present:

Deborah Stone, Leslie Sgro, Ellen King-Pietrzak, Mike Conlin, Tim Schweizer, Jack Price, Tami Evans

Quorum was not met. Chairman Blackford asked for a voice vote to accept the February 7, 2008 minutes; all board members present accepted.

Chairman Blackford amended the agenda so that if quorum was met at anytime during the meeting the election of Chairman/Vice Chairmanship be up for vote at that moment.

No Child Left Inside Initiative - Chicago Wilderness - Peggy Stewart, Outdoor & Environmental Education Manager, Chicago Park District. Peggy introduced herself and provided the Board with an interesting and informative presentation on the No Child Left Inside Initiative, the goals of the Chicago Wilderness and examples of the many innovative programs the Chicago Park District is doing across the region to get children connected to nature. There are four main goals with the No Child Left Inside Initiative: 1) get more kids outside, 2) actively engage adults, 3) bringing nature to children, and 4) foster a conservation ethic. Chicago Wilderness is comprised of approximately 220 entities from Illinois, Michigan & Wisconsin involved in a variety conservation related endeavors. For more information, access www.kidsoutside.org Information passed out at the April meeting is included in the minutes.

Mike Conlin added that nationwide fishing license sales have decreased on average 15%. In an effort to encourage individuals to get outdoors, and to renew their fishing licenses, DNR partnered with an angler retention program, the Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation to look at individuals who have purchased licenses in the past but not renewed them. This gives DNR the opportunity to contact them directly and remind them to renew their license.

Budget - Ellen King-Pietrzak - Ellen provided the Board with an overview of each piece of the FY09 budget, potential revenue initiatives and provided copies of an FY09 budget fact sheet; a copy of the fact sheet is included with the minutes. The FY09 is an introduced budget and has not passed.

Executive Order - Consolidation of Certain Application Development, Human Resources, Personnel, Payroll, Timekeeping, Procurement & Financial Processes - Ellen - This Executive Order was to create and group like agencies together to perform common functions as noted above. This initiative has been underway for approximately one year but was voted down in the General Assembly.

Legislation - Deborah Stone - Deborah passed out a list of bills the Agency is following; list is included in board packets. These are not DNR initiatives but could impact DNR. They include: HB3571-Changes language in existing law & part of a federal audit finding; will prevent the conversion of funds. HB1768-sets a fine for non-compliance of the OHV sticker law. HB5860-Extends free camping/hunting/fishing benefits for vets who serve overseas for the amount of time they served overseas, as long as they reside in Illinois; HB2088-prohibits DNR from dredging or cleaning Waukegan harbor unless the harbor is maintained as commercially navigable; this is a local dispute. HB3387-Creates a female only hunting season; bill is expected to be dropped. HB5205-Requires DNR to evaluate levees statewide for adequacies. SB2750-increases boat registration fees for a new fund for water rescue purposes for local fire departments; this could decrease revenues. SB2407-unfunded mandate, helps control Asian carp. SB2652-States that firearm permits are not valid if you are a felon; individuals can be charged with perjury and licenses can be revoked up to 5 years. SB2906-Benefits military personnel on active duty to hunt without a license. HR1027-Urges Congress to enact a strong ballast program. HR117-Urges the continuation of DNR controlled pheasant hunting program. HB5310-Creates a task force on the conservation & quality of the Great Lakes for the protection of water quality & supply. HB5519-Intends to remedy previous legislation that took away a historic protection from liability for property owners who opened their land to the public for recreational purposes. Chairman Blackford asked Joyce to let him know when the next meeting is.

Richard Mark asked about the Pheasant program. Leslie added that there will be some pheasant hunting in the fall, that many options are being looked at and more information will be available in the near future. There has also been discussion of increasing the pheasant hunting fees.

Randy asked about the opposition of the boat safety fee increase. Jack Price added that this piece is tied to a group of metropolitan fire departments, mostly in northeastern Illinois, that are trying to capture all monies from a fee increase.

Chairmanship/Vice Chairmanship - Deferred until the June 2008 meeting.

Location of June 25 meeting - Dickson Mounds Museum/Emiquon - Deborah Stone - The June 25 meeting will be at Dickson Mounds Museum. Along with the meeting, The Nature Conservancy has offered to host a canoe ride/tour of the Emiquon. Chairman Blackford expressed his interest and hoped that we would have good representation from the board. Details will follow.

Joyce O'Keefe asked if the Coastal Zone Management program is moving forward. Deborah stated that it is a tremendously intensive process but that DNR is working on it.

Joyce also asked for an update of the Natural Areas Inventory - John Wilker joined the meeting and provided the Board with handouts and an update on this process; handouts are included with these minutes. INAI update is a \$4.5 million commitment from IDNR with help from Lincoln Land Community College to conduct the Illinois Natural Areas Inventory. 5 regional ecologists have been placed and will go through extensive training to prepare and to look for new, high quality natural communities for the INAI. The original INAI was first conducted in the mid 70's and has been used for planning and land preparation efforts. This new commitment will allow DNR to find and document new communities for protection and stewardship purposes.

Public Comments - None

Adjourn - 3:45