

Minutes of the

48th ANNUAL MEETING OF THE

MINNESOTA ASSOCIATION OF CONSERVATION PROFESSIONALS

(formerly the Minnesota Fish & Wildlife Employees Association)

9 March 2007

The Initiative Foundation

Little Falls, MN

Business Forum

Annual Report – President Jeanine Vorland

- a letter was sent in support of dedicated funding
- the Board sent a letter to Commissioner Merriam regarding OHV issues and concerns
 - the letter received thoughtful consideration from the Department's OHV policy team, and resulted in a meeting with the Directors of the Divisions of Fish & Wildlife and Ecological Services
- a morale survey is in the process of being mailed out
- several new proposals are on the agenda

Treasurer's Report – Tim Brastrup

Balance (as of 3/8/2007) = \$1264.85

savings = \$167.30

checking = \$1097.55

- a detailed financial statement was submitted by Tim
- expense to continue website is \$220
- room rental for today's meeting is \$75
- the second dues payment for the F&W Legislative Alliance was sent to the wrong address and not received (and also was not yet cashed), so the check was stopped
- motion to accept the Treasurer's Report was made, seconded, and carried
- an audit committee was formed to review the books during the meeting
 - committee members included Steve Kittelson, Brad Bolduan, and Tim Brastrup
 - the audit found no errors or discrepancies

FWLA Report

It was reported that the dedicated funding bills are moving along; the Senate version has arts attached, while the House version is more focused.

There was discussion about the Association continuing membership in FWLA. There is no sliding fee scale, the voting membership fee is \$1000 per year. A benefit is that both FWLA and the Minnesota Conservation Federation (MCF) can be there all the time to address legislative issues.

It was suggested that membership in both FWLA and MCF be dropped. The suggestion was tabled for the later as part of the workplan and membership discussion.

Issues Forum

membership expansion

Two resolutions (2007-01 and 2007-02) were put forth regarding expanding and increasing membership: one resolution called for expanding membership to the Division of Waters, the other resolution called for expanding membership to the entire Department of Natural Resources.

There was much discussion of the pros and cons of both resolutions, the potential interest from various groups, the need to expand membership to survive as an organization, and the need to recruit younger members, and the need for people to make either of the two resolutions work.

As a result of the discussion, resolution 2007-02 was modified and proposed as a third resolution (2007-04). The revised resolution called for expanding membership to current and retired natural resource employees of the State of Minnesota.

The resolution was seconded and discussed. Motion passed 15-8.

The passage of the resolution resulted in a name change of the organization from the Minnesota Fish & Wildlife Employees Association to the Minnesota Association of Conservation Professionals.

by-law changes

Needed changes to the by-laws were discussed. A motion was made to adopt the by-law changes developed for resolution 2007-02 (expanding membership to the entire Department of Natural Resources), as interim by-laws for the coming year, while by-law changes to fit resolution 2007-04 are being developed. Said by-law changes will be brought to next year's annual meeting for final approval. Motion was seconded and carried.

A motion was made to approve the mission statement as published in the recent newsletter. Motion was seconded and carried.

Guest Speakers

Andrea Hanks and Allen Richardson from the White Earth Land Recovery Project (WELRP) spoke about "Genetic Engineering and the Cultural Significance of Wild Rice"

- wild rice is very significant to the Ojibiwe people
- wild rice is also unique to and important to Minnesota
- the U of MN has begun genetic research on wild rice, which could set the stage for patenting and engineering of wild rice
- the speakers shared 2 high profile cases of engineered genes escaping test crops and contaminating wild plants through cross-pollination
- WELRP has started a "Keep It Wild Campaign" to "prevent natural lake and river grown wild rice from being contaminated by engineered genes"
- they are specifically asking for a 2-year moratorium if and when a request is submitted to introduce genetically engineered wild rice outside of a laboratory
- 2 bills are being proposed and WELRP is asking for support
- Bill 1662 – calls for the DNR Commissioner to prepare a management plan for native wild rice

- Bill 1663 – calls for requiring an Environmental Impact Statement before any permit is issued allowing for the release of genetically engineered wild rice

Director of Ecological Services – Lee Pfannmuller

- gave an overview of several of the natural resource bills moving through the legislature
- talked about some specifics of Ecological Services' new regional structure

Director of Fish & Wildlife – Dave Schad

- overview of new funding requests for various initiatives in the budget bill
- issue of inequity of funding between Fisheries and Wildlife, as perceived by some conservation groups
- the Governor's Conservation Legacy Council, and the possibility of the creation of a commission or board to oversee state resource work
- mentoring & workforce planning
- wolf management authority transferring from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to the State
- declines in the moose population & resulting changes in the hunting season

Directors Pfannmuller & Schad then answered questions from the membership, including:

- bovine tuberculosis & deer baiting
- constitutional amendment for dedicated funding & the proposed distribution of the funding
- budget erosion from within the Department

Awards

Outstanding Contribution to Fish and Wildlife Management – Huon Newburg

for supporting staff, supporting personnel development, and providing guidance without micromanagement.

Elections

President – Paul Stolen

Treasurer – Lee Sundmark

Fisheries Rep. – Jim Lillienthal (succeeding Doug Kingsley)

Ecological Services Rep. – Doug Norris (succeeding Ann Kuitunen)

Wildlife Rep. – Nick Reindl (succeeding Martha Minchak)

president-elect – vacant at this time

All nominations were unopposed. A motion was made to pass the unanimous ballot, and was seconded and carried.

Issues Forum – Part 2

Personnel Issues Task Force / morale issues

The organization is pushing to re-visit personnel issues, and the topic was brought to Directors Pfannmuller and Schad at the last Board meeting. The Directors requested the Board bring forward the top 2 issues as a starting point.

The members were asked to individually list their top 2 issues and submit them before the end of the meeting. The top 2 will be brought forward at the next meeting with the Division Directors.

website

A resolution (2007-03) was proposed to update and expand the website, and find a website manager. A motion was made to approve the resolution as is. Motion was seconded and carried.

FWLA dues that were paid but never received

A motion was made to pay the past dues (\$500). Motion was seconded and carried.

renewing MCF membership

A motion was made to renew the MCF membership (\$250), and was seconded. There was discussion about if the organization could afford it with membership renewals down, and organization proposals that would need money. Motion failed.

DNR owned tax-forfeited land

The DNR acquired 2 pieces of property in the 1970's, that were condemned due to tax-forefeit. The son of the original owner has since requested the land back, claiming that it is not being used and the DNR has not posted it. The individual has met with the governor on the issue. The Commissioner has said the Department will stand firm and go to court if necessary.

A motion was made to send the Commissioner a letter of support. Motion seconded and carried. The Board will work on a letter as part of the larger work plan.

dedicated funding

It was suggested that DNR operational expenses need to be part of the dedicated funding discussion. It was stressed to not confuse pointing out staff needs for increasing assets and initiatives with asking for dedicated funding solely for basic operations. Dedicated funding is being proposed for accelerated and additional projects, not day-to day operations.

A motion was made that the Board resurrect the letter supporting dedicated funding and re-send it, without suggesting the money go to the DNR. The motion was seconded and carried.

award for John Huber

A motion was made to nominate John Huber for a special award for all his work on the website over the years. Motion seconded and carried.

Resolution 2007-01

A Resolution to Expand Membership Eligibility of the Minnesota Fisheries, Wildlife and Ecological Services Employees Association to include Current and Retired Members of the Department of Natural Resources Division of Waters and Change the Name, Bylaws, and Mission Statement.

Whereas, it is the mission of the Minnesota Fish and Wildlife Employees Association to promote stewardship of fish, wildlife and native plant resources and the environments upon which they depend.

Whereas, stewardship of water resources is integral to the stewardship of fish, wildlife and native plant resources and the environments upon which they depend.

Whereas, the purpose of the Minnesota Fish and Wildlife Employees Association to provide a forum for the gathering and exchange of information leading to the improvement of natural resource management.

Whereas, employees and retirees of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Division of Waters could contribute as members to the mission and purpose of the Minnesota Fish and Wildlife Employees Association.

Whereas, membership in the Minnesota Fish and Wildlife Employees Association is presently limited to employees and retired employees of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Division of Fish and Wildlife and Division of Ecological Services.

Whereas, employees of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Division of Waters have no association similar to the Minnesota Fish and Wildlife Employees Association.

Therefore be it resolved, that the Minnesota Fish and Wildlife Employees Association change the Bylaws of the organization to expand membership eligibility to current and retired employees of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Division of Waters and expand the board to include two additional members representing members from the Division of Waters.

Therefore be it further resolved, that the name of this organization is changed to The Minnesota Association of Conservation Professionals (MACP) and the mission statement is to be changed accordingly, to include the terms ecosystems, and land and water resources.

Resolution 2007-02 (alternative to 2007-01)

A Resolution to Expand Membership Eligibility of the Minnesota Fisheries, Wildlife and Ecological Services Employees Association to include Current and Retired Members of the Department of Natural Resources and Change the Name, Bylaws, and Mission Statement.

Whereas, it is the mission of the Minnesota Fish and Wildlife Employees Association to promote stewardship of fish, wildlife and native plant resources and the environments upon which they depend.

Whereas, stewardship of all of Minnesota's natural resources is integral to the stewardship of fish, wildlife and native plant resources and the environments upon which they depend.

Whereas, the purpose of the Minnesota Fish and Wildlife Employees Association to provide a forum for the gathering and exchange of information leading to the improvement of natural resource management.

Whereas, employees and retirees of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources could contribute as members to the mission and purpose of the Minnesota Fish and Wildlife Employees Association.

Whereas, membership in the Minnesota Fish and Wildlife Employees Association is presently limited to employees and retired employees of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Division of Fish and Wildlife and Division of Ecological Services.

Therefore be it resolved, that the Minnesota Fish and Wildlife Employees Association change the Bylaws of the organization to expand membership eligibility to current and retired employees of the Department of Natural Resources.

Therefore be it further resolved, that the Minnesota Fish and Wildlife Employees Association change the Bylaws of the organization to expand the board membership eligibility to include two additional members representing at large members from the Department of Natural Resources.

Therefore be it further resolved, that the name of this organization is changed to The Minnesota Association of Conservation Professionals (MACP) and the mission statement is to be changed accordingly, to include the terms ecosystems, and land and water resources.

Resolution 2007-03

The by-laws state the Past-President is responsible for publishing the newsletter. However, we have been experimenting with a volunteer editor to maintain a website and publish the newsletter. This provides some consistency to the newsletter, but more importantly has allowed us to maintain a website. The Board discussed how the website is an effective way of communicating about current resource issues and management in Minnesota and can be a vehicle for members to participate in these discussions. Web pages have become the norm as a communication tool for organizations such as ours. A website provides an efficient vehicle for members and others to participate in the organization even as we are spread out over Minnesota. **The Board discussed establishing an editorial policy, and an editorial procedure for people to submit proposals, debate resource issues of the day, and so forth using a web-based forum. Resolution 2007-03 seeks to formalize the role of a website as a communication tool for the organization.**

Whereas, the purpose of the Minnesota Fish and Wildlife Employees Association to provide a forum for the gathering and exchange of information leading to the improvement of natural resource management.

Whereas, a website is an effective way for the Minnesota Fish and Wildlife Employees Association to provide a forum for the gathering and exchange of information leading to the improvement of natural resource management.

Therefore be it resolved, that the Minnesota Fish and Wildlife Employees Association The Board is authorized to maintain a website, seek a website manager as needed, and to seek funds for expansion of the site to become more interactive.

Therefore be it further resolved, the president to appoint a subcommittee on web-based communications to provide recommendations to the Board.

Resolution 2007-04 (alternative to 2007-01 & 2007-02)

A Resolution to Expand Membership Eligibility of the Minnesota Fisheries, Wildlife and Ecological Services Employees Association to include Current and Retired Natural Resource Employees of the State of Minnesota and Change the Name, Bylaws, and Mission Statement.

Whereas, it is the mission of the Minnesota Fish and Wildlife Employees Association to promote stewardship of fish, wildlife and native plant resources and the environments upon which they depend.

Whereas, stewardship of all of Minnesota's natural resources is integral to the stewardship of fish, wildlife and native plant resources and the environments upon which they depend.

Whereas, the purpose of the Minnesota Fish and Wildlife Employees Association to provide a forum for the gathering and exchange of information leading to the improvement of natural resource management.

Whereas, natural resource employees and retirees of the State of Minnesota could contribute as members to the mission and purpose of the Minnesota Fish and Wildlife Employees Association.

Whereas, membership in the Minnesota Fish and Wildlife Employees Association is presently limited to employees and retired employees of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Division of Fish and Wildlife and Division of Ecological Services.

Therefore be it resolved, that the Minnesota Fish and Wildlife Employees Association change the Bylaws of the organization to expand membership eligibility to current and retired natural resource employees of the State of Minnesota.

Therefore be it further resolved, that the Minnesota Fish and Wildlife Employees Association change the Bylaws of the organization to expand the board membership to include two additional members. Eligibility is not tied to discipline.

Therefore be it further resolved, that the name of this organization is changed to The Minnesota Association of Conservation Professionals (MACP) and the mission statement is to be changed accordingly, to include the terms ecosystems, and land and water resources.

Proposed By-Law Changes concerning a proposed name change and expansion of membership eligibility to employees and retired employees of the Department of Natural Resources. (*Resolution 2007-02*)

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE and By-LAWS

The Minnesota Fish and Wildlife Employees Association (MFWEA) Association of Conservation Professionals (MACP) is an independent, external organization. Opinions and positions represented are not the official opinions or positions of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.

The board is comprised of eleven ~~thirteen~~ members. There are three presidents; president elect, president, and past president. There are six ~~eight~~ board members directors; ~~;~~ four from the Division of Fish and Wildlife, and two from each ~~division (Fisheries, and Wildlife, two from the Division of & Ecological Services and two from other Divisions or Bureaus of the~~ Department of Natural Resources (“at large”). A secretary and treasurer round out the board.

A president serves a three-year term and a president is elected each year. One board representative from each Section or Division or “at large” is elected each year and each serves a two-year term. The secretary and treasurer are elected every other year and serve two-year terms. The ~~MFWEA~~ MACP is a member of the Fish and Wildlife Legislative Alliance (FWLA) and the Minnesota Conservation Federation (MCF). There are one or more liaisons to the FWLA and the MCF. One liaison sits on the board of each affiliation, representing the ~~MFWEA~~ MACP. These are volunteers and are not elected but serve an important role in the mission of this organization.

Responsibilities

The three presidents are the officers of the board and are responsible for writing resolutions/ position statements and representing the organization at meetings with the commissioner, legislators, division directors etc. The six ~~eight~~ board members are the contacts for the membership and carry their input back to the board. The 1st year elect board members are responsible for soliciting nominations for candidates to run for vacant board positions. The 2nd year board members are responsible for soliciting nominations for and approving group and individuals awards. The Secretary takes notes at the board meetings and submits them to the editor after they are approved. The Treasurer collects dues, issues payments and keeps track of the financial status of the organization. The liaisons to the FWLA and MCF are voting members on those organizations board. They attend board meetings and report back to the ~~MFWEA~~ MACP board. The information is provided to the editor for inclusion in the newsletter.

Membership

All current and retired employees of the MN Department of Natural Resources in the ~~Fisheries, Wildlife, and Ecological Divisions~~ are eligible with full privileges.

~~All retirees of the MN Department of Natural Resources from the Fisheries, Wildlife, and Ecological Divisions are eligible with full privileges.~~

MINNESOTA FISH AND WILDLIFE EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION OF CONSERVATION PROFESSIONALS BY-LAWS

Section 1. Any current or retired employee of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) divisions of Fisheries and Wildlife, and Ecological Services, upon payment of dues for the year, or portion of a year ending the following February 1, may become a member of the Association. Subsequent reorganizations of the DNR shall not affect these Bylaws until such time as the bylaws are changed. Such changes shall be made by no later than the second annual meeting after any such reorganization. Retirees are eligible to be members of the Board of Directors subject to the provisions of Sections 6 and 7.

Section 4. . . . Meetings of the Board of Directors may be called at any time by the president or any ~~three~~ four directors. ~~Six~~ Seven members shall constitute a quorum of the Board.

A Special Meeting of the general membership can be called by a vote of at least ~~7~~8 of the ~~11~~13 Board members. . . .

Section 6. Regarding the membership of the Association, and the make-up of the Board of Directors, it is intent of the Association to have a Board representative of present and retired employees of the Divisions of Fisheries and Wildlife, and the Division of Ecological Services, and the remainder of the Department of Natural Resources. Not more than four ~~at-large~~ members ~~directors~~ of the Board ~~of Directors~~ shall be present or retired employees of the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, ~~and~~ two present or retired employees of the Division of Ecological Services, and two present or retired employees of other Divisions or Bureaus. unless there are no candidates available. Retired employees cannot constitute a majority of Board members.

Section 7. The Board ~~of Directors~~, besides officers described in Section 5, shall consist of ~~six~~ eight ~~at-large~~ directors according to the provisions of Section 6. These directors will be elected to staggered two-year terms. Current directors when these by laws are adopted shall be considered senior directors until the next annual meeting after adoption, and new directors elected at the time of adoption shall be junior directors; thereafter, ~~three~~ four such directors shall be elected at each successive Annual Meetings for two-year terms.

Section 15. Nominations for the ~~three~~ four at-large director's positions described in Section 7 shall be made as follows:

Two director's positions will be assigned to the Division of Fish and Wildlife, with one current employee from fisheries, and one from wildlife, or retired employees of these units. One director position will be assigned to current or retired employees of the Division of Ecological Service. One director position will be assigned to current or retired employees of other Divisions or Bureaus. Association members who are currently employed in or retired from each of the corresponding units described in Section 15a shall nominate candidate(s) employed or retired from that unit for the assigned director's position.