

Western Region RC&D Council
Meeting Minutes: February 3, 2005
UPPCO Building, Houghton

Discussion of gift to recognize Roland Sweeney's many years on the Council. Bruce Petersen will get information on a copper plaque to the new Western Region treasurer, Dave Anderson, for payment. Estimated cost approx. \$25. Paul/Candace will find out from Randy how many years he served, and send that to Bruce for inclusion on the plaque. Motion to approve costs: Paul Luoma; Marsha Klein support. Motion carried.

Motion to approve Dave Anderson as the new treasurer of the Western Region RC&D Council, and to recommend Mr. Anderson to treasurer position with U.P. RC&D Executive Board: Brian Aho; Paul Luoma support. Motion carried.

Motion for Bob Larson to take on the position of Western Region Chairman (as per Roberts Rules of Order): Dave Anderson; Don Keith support. Motion carried.

Nomination of Paul Luoma to take on position of Vice Chairman of the Western Region: Dave Anderson; Don Keith support. Motion carried.

Motion to approve meeting minutes: Paul Luoma; Don Keith support. Motion carried.

New web site updates. Domain name will be www.uprcd.org. Paul Van Ryzin requests suggestions from all Counties and Conservation Districts in the Western Region for noteworthy projects to be featured on the site, including a map showing where the project is located. Contact Paul to give suggestions, or email info on projects including digital photos.

Motion to approve treasurers report showing a balance of \$406.75: Paul Luoma; Brian Aho support. Motion carried.

County Reports:

Bruce Petersen reports on a suggestion from Steve Albee to approve a new project with Trout Unlimited on the Otter River at the end of Aspen Road. Seeking technical and financial assistance. Bruce suggests stabilizing the eroding slope with rock rip rap at the toe. Total bank area is about 280 ft x 30 ft high. Suggests also stairway access for recreational users and lunger structures for fish habitat. Evan McDonald suggests that this kind of project, helping to obtain public recreational "access easements", is the "wave of the future" for many environmental organizations, and could represent a fruitful niche for UP RC&D Council. In this case, TU could hold the easement; Mr. McDonald also suggest that the Keweenaw Land Conservancy may have an interest if TU does not.

Motion to approve "Otter River Critical Area Treatment" with condition that the two adjacent private landowners in question agree to a permanent public access easement for the site: Don Keith; Paul Luoma support. Motion carried.

Bruce Petersen discusses a new project idea for Seneca #3 mine in Keweenaw Co. He has contacted LP in Sagola, since they are the landowners. Will potentially construct a parking area with sign including past history and use of the mine by bats; will potentially include a bat closure to restrict public access for safety and reduce bat disturbance, provide habitat.

Dave Anderson discusses his experience in locating adits, shafts for ventilation, etc. in Gogebic Co. Many of these holes are unmarked and known by older residents. This local knowledge may soon disappear. Suggests we need to find more funding to address safety of the public, including water quality. Dave suggests appealing to State for funds. Other members suggest that Lori Hauswirth with WUPPDR is working with a grant to identify natural and human hazards in the Western Region. She may be able to help identify the need through hazard mitigation planning process, which makes local entities eligible for FEMA or other funding to address these problems. Discussion of getting County Mine Inspectors, WUPPDR, UPRC&D members, CD's etc. together for a planning meeting to address this issue. Possibly also USGS, USFS. Need to public awareness campaign. Include all Western Region counties plus Dickinson, Menominee, and Marquette, which also have abandoned mines. Other partners to contact: Rich Whiteman, DNR's Marty Nelson, DEQ, Emergency Management Coordinators (e.g. Jack Dewicky), legislators. Possible use of thermal imaging to find additional abandoned mines? Academic uses of this technology should be researched. Motion to approve a multi-county effort to identify and address this issue: Brian Aho; Paul Luoma support. Motion carried. Candace and Paul will try to schedule a meeting (group thinks Marquette is most appropriate location) to bring partners together, sometime in April or May.

Extension: Mike Schira is new County Extension Director for Houghton-Keweenaw. Candace will put him on the email list.

KBIC: none present. Todd Werner is the Natural Resources Director, replacing Mike D'onofrio. Paul will try to schedule a meeting and send info on UP RC&D.

Project funded: Myllyla Road CAT. NRCS funding provided: \$30,000. Total project cost is \$118,000.

Project Update: Historic Construction Trades Training Center. Ron Welton lost his position with NPS, and he was the project director for this RC&D project. Paul asks what we should do with the project. Suggestion is to contact Frank Fiala and Joe Baker with NPS to see if there's still interest in pursuing this project.

MINUTES

Western Regional RC&D Council
UPPCO Building
Houghton, MI
May 12, 2005

Call to order at 10:02 a.m. by Bob Larson, Chair. Opening remarks and introductions were made. New Administrative Assistant with U.P. RC&D Council is Darcy Rutkowski

Present: Paul Luoma, Houghton County
Bruce Petersen, NRCS
Steve Albee, Houghton-Kew CD/UPRCD
Bob Larson, Baraga CD
Don Keith, Keweenaw Co.
Paul Van Ryzin, NRCS, RC&D
Bill Menge, Baraga Co
Justin Murawski, WUPPDR
Sue Haralson, Houghton-Kew CD
Rick Miskovich, Ontonagon CD

Minutes of the Previous Meeting: Accepted as mailed on a motion by Luoma/Albee. Motion carried.

Business Items

Annual Plan: Van Ryzin reviews the Annual Plan for 2005; including upcoming committee actions; project prioritization criteria; chart of current projects by goal addressed. General discussion. Petersen notes that RC&D has historically tried to stimulate new projects in every County as opposed to following criteria established by the Executive Board, which has decided that a balance of projects across all Goals is more important than starting new projects in every County. Albee suggests that partnerships with organizations undertaking efforts under current Goals A and B (see Annual Plan) would be one way to meet those goals. This would be a better way to utilize resources of staff. Van Ryzin discusses current project with Forest Landowner Cooperative as an example of a partnership that can address those goals while not requiring significant staff time.

Comments: Miskovich remarks that it is important to keep services in the area so we can keep the population here, and not just retirees. This is an area we need to get into more. Petersen suggests teaming up with Farm Bureau for ag-related business entrepreneurialism assistance. Sally Nari/Palosaari in Houghton area (Pelkie or Chassell) would be a place to start. Discussion of direct marketing of products from farms/forests and the new web site; could be a way to assist these landowners and meet Goals A and B. Northern Hardwoods is a possible

business that would use the web marketing assistance, in Houghton; they make specialty wood items and stock.

Kevin Harju is the new Road Commission director in Houghton Co. Add him to the email list for future involvement. Petersen and Albee approached him regarding Otter River C.A.T.

County RC&D representatives and alternates are: Gale Eilola, alternate, Baraga Co. Al Slye, Ontonagon CD alternate; Kevin Harju, Houghton Co alternate (?)

Reports

Treasurer's Report: Dave Anderson was unable to attend; busy with new building. He said all CD's are paid in full and no expenses this past quarter.

Progress Report: Van Ryzin updates group on current projects and pending grant proposals, including biomass utilization project, M-28 Visual Enhancement in Ontonagon; bioengineering DVD; Gay Location historic site; Mr. Keith considers this to be the most visible landmark on the South Shore, very historic, and worthy of preservation; Also used as a navigational aid by boaters. Review of new and pending projects; Petersen discusses WHIP bat closure in Keweenaw Co; EPA Superfund (Torch Lake) final phase, Scales Creek and North Entry, approx. \$1.3 M; 42 acres at Stanton Twp park and 23 acres at Scales Creek; these are the last Superfund dollars administered through NRCS; only superfund project that came in under budget in the entire US.

County Reports

Iron Co: None present.

KBIC: Sand point brownfield grant, \$450,000; NRCS to provide engineering and construction oversight; locating potential borrow sites for soil capping of stamp sands. Walleye pond design nearing completion. Presented costs for copper plaque; decision to go with \$38 medium size plaque, 'for you many years of service to the UPRC&D Council's western region'

Houghton/Keweenaw Co: July 9 dedication of CD purchase of Bete Gris; Sue will send invitations to partners. \$705,000 Coastal Zone Management grant; Keweenaw Land Trust to hold easement, CD will own deed to property. Two watershed projects pending: Eagle River and Bay de Gris, funding from DEQ anticipated.

Extension Service: None present

DNR: No one present.

WUPPDR: Justin Murawski reports on WUPPDR activities in the region; Van Ryzin will contact Lori Hauswirth to find out about the FEMA funding process for those counties who submitted Hazard Mitigation plans identifying abandoned mines as potential problems.

Farm Services Agency: No one present – no report given.

Forest Service: None.

Rural Development: None

Correspondence: The following was noted and filed.
None

Next Meeting: August 4, Twilley's in Bruce Crossing. Directions: South on 45 ½ block, on West side of Hwy, across from the Post Office; 10 am. Van Ryzin will check availability; Tolppo's is another option if they can't accommodate us.\

Meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m
pvr

**MEETING MINUTES
WESTERN REGION RC&D COUNCIL
USFS KENTON RANGER DISTRICT OFFICE
KENTON, MICHIGAN
THURSDAY, AUGUST 4, 2005**

IN ATTENDANCE: Bruce Peterson-NRCS, Marsha Klein-Houghton/Keweenaw CD, Ralph Miller-USFS, Dave and Marcy Cella-Huron River, Dave Anderson-Gogebic CD, John Pelkola-Ontonagon Co Bd of Comm, Bob Gussert-Iron CD, Bill Menge-Baraga Co Bd of Comm, Bob Larson-Baraga CD, Don Keith-Keweenaw Co Bd of Comm, Paul VanRyzin-UP RC&D Coordinator

BUSINESS ITEMS:

Review of Annual Plan; the Plan is available online at www.uprcd.org at any of the three Regional Council home pages. Plan outlines the criteria for project ranking, which was done to determine those projects that are priorities for 2005.

Web site is up and running, with meeting minutes, agendas, meeting locations, Council documents, application for assistance information, and detailed information on current projects. Paul requests any suggestions for web site updates or changes.

Legislative Update: Both the House and Senate Agriculture Appropriations Committees have recommended funding of the RC&D program at prior levels, or approximately \$52 million throughout the U.S. It appears likely that funding will be restored. Paul cautions that the Administration is not thereby abandoning the approach of removing Federal funding from RC&D areas that are 20 years old and older, or that are not performing according to the Administration's standards. Council members should consider the effort to become more self-sufficient, in case Federal funding is withdrawn in the future.

Paul announces that he has accepted a new position with NRCS in Hawaii, and will be serving the South Pacific archipelago of American Samoa, seven volcanic islands and coral reef atolls near Tonga and Fiji. Will be leaving at the end of September. NRCS will post the position and probably hire a new Coordinator within 4 to 8 months.

Treasurer's Report: All Counties are paid up; Menge moves, Pelkola supports to accept the report. Motion carried.

REPORTS:

Bruce Peterson, NRCS Baraga Co: Doug Mills of Baraga Road Commission is planning to utilize Emergency Watershed Protection funds for the Sturgeon river. UP Engineers and Architects helping with design, riprap will be installed in the Fall. Torch Lake is continuing, with the 44 ac. North Entry completed at \$12,000 per acre. Scales Creek is a road stream crossing, an arch with a natural bottom. Three other sites. EPA now agreeing to fund riprap to stabilize areas that were previously stabilized without riprap, which are eroding due to wave action. Paul will add the project to the RC&D website.

Huron River Watershed Project discussed. A new project proposal is submitted, although this is not in the updated format (which is available on the web at www.uprcd.org). Peterson submits proposal on behalf of the Cellas. The CLSWP has applied for funding for this project already, through the DEQ. Carl Lindquist will know at the end of August whether the project has been funded. Anderson moves, Pelkola supports to approve this project. Motion carried.

Marsha Klein reports on the Bete Gris dedication ceremony, for the 1100 acre wetland, beach, swale and dune conservation easement. Keweenaw Land Trust will hold the easement, CD holds the deed. Also applied for 319 funds for the Eagle River Watershed, and will know soon.

Iron County- Eurasian milfoil surveys underway in local lakes; four lakes are confirmed to have it. Also waiting on a 319 grant for the Lower Paint River.

Gogebic Co – CD contested case against the DEQ for issuing a permit to reconstruct a dam on the Black River, which is a Wild and Scenic River.

DNR – none present

KBIC – none present

USFS – Ralph discussed the forest plan revision, 1600 comments received. Decision will be made in March 06. Centennial year for USFS; will put on a commemorative program at the UP State Fair, will feature Big Top Chautauqua from Bayfield.

RD – none

WUPPDR – none

FSA – none

Discussion of WUPFID's discontinued services; Don Peterson, forestry consultant, will be hosting a tentative meeting at the Ford Forestry Center in Alberta. Saturday, September 17. The following individuals would like to be put in touch with Don Peterson regarding this event: Dave Anderson, Sue Haralson, John Pelkola, Bill Menge, Bob Larson. Paul will forward contact information.

Next meeting: November 3, 2005; Location will be in Kenton again. Suggested speaker is Frank Fiala from the National Park Service.

Minutes - Western Region RC&D Council
11/3/05
Kenton, MI

Meeting called to order at 10:00 A.M.

Attending: Bob Larson-Baraga Co CD, Steve Albee-Houghton Co CD, John Pelkola-Ontonagon Co Bd of Comm, Dave Anderson-Gogebic Co CD, Ralph Miller-USFS, Bruce Petersen-NRCS, Frank Fiala-NPS, Don Keith-Keweenaw Co Bd of Comm, Dave & Marcy Cella-Lk Superior's Huron River Restoration, Inc.

Minutes from last meeting approved. John/Steve

Business Items:

Bruce Petersen provided updates on the NRCS UP RC&D coordinator vacancy position announcement and related matters.

A Forest Service biofuels grant opportunity was also discussed. There has been discussion of the "White Pine" power plant being fired solely on biomass material. Dave will convey this to power plant administration and possibly Ottawa could be involved to supply the biomass material???

Reports:

Treasurers report was provided and approved. Steve/John

Frank Fiala presented an update on the Keweenaw Historic Park activities and future Mineral History Center located on Quincy hill.

Completion of the covering of mine tailings in Houghton County – North Entry-45 acres covered/vegetated, 3.5 acres planted in beachgrass, fenced and barrow area has been remediated, total cost \$885,476. North Entry work completed on 10/1/05. Scales Creek-19acres covered, 1,200 L.F. of shoreline protection, cost of approx. \$372,000. It too is totally completed.

Houghton/Keweenaw CD received a 319 grant for the Eagle River Watershed in Keweenaw Co. This planning grant will run for 2 years. Civil engineer, Karen Endress, is being hired to be the Watershed Project Manager. The total grant amount is for \$116,464. The only other UP 319 grant was given on the Two Hearted Watershed.

There needs to be a meeting with the mill owners, MDOT and the Mich. DNR to better identify all the land-rights issues for the Twin Lakes Penegor Mill visual/noise/dust barrier construction. A berm very similar to what was done in

the Village of Baraga at the old Conner Mill to screen that mill from the casino will be undertaken.

Completed Design work for the KBIC Sand Pt. remediation project in Baraga County was discussed.

Progress/completion of the Seneca Mine Site in Keweenaw County was discussed. Bat Conservation International will demonstrate their new public “bat closure” display that will be on public view at the Quincy Hoist House.

USFS discussed FS Plan. It is scheduled for final release after all the public comments are incorporated.

A summary was provided of Oct. 4 Michigan Assoc. of RC&D’s meeting.

New Measures – Cancellations – Completions:

Projects and issues discussed included: Historic Preservation Training, and NAWCA completion.

Huron River Watershed efforts – The Cella’s reported that the state non-profit status has come through and they are awaiting the 501(c) designation from the feds. The name of their Watershed Project is “Lake Superior Huron River Restoration, Inc.” Once the federal designation comes through, they will formally call the first meeting of the proposed watershed council.

Otter River CAT – Steve Albee and Trout Unlimited are still involved with this. Not much activity has occurred recently due to a car accident and death at the site. Steve and T.U. will continue to pursue this streambank protection/public access measure in the near future.

Date and location for the next meeting: January 26, 2006, UPPCO Bldg located on the waterfront in Houghton

Meeting adjourned at 12:00 PM.