

MINUTES of the January 7th, 2010
Woods Bay/Bigfork 440 Working Group
Held at 10:00am Yellow Bay U of M Biological Station, Bigfork

Present are: George Darrow, Tracy Reiling, Bill Myers, Kitty Rich, Clarice Ryan, Verdell Jackson, Jim Frizzel, Kelli Gownley, Paul Rana, Bob Chrysler, Byron Crow, Jack Stanford

Minutes of December 15th were not prepared a short synopsis was given.

Jack Stanford welcomed all to the Bio-station and introduced himself and informed us of the station history. The Bio-station has been part of the university system since 1899. There is 70 acres of forest surrounding the station, 80 acres is Polson Bay and 2 islands. Jack also owns 20 acres above the station personally. Because the holdings are inside of the reservation they have always worked with the tribe. The Research and Education at the station is funded by competitive grants now totaling about 5 million dollars. Most is acquired from private foundations a big portion from the Watkins Foundation (Walmart). Currently buildings and infrastructure are being upgraded.

Greg asked if the university has any non-trust land able to transfer. Jack thought the Lubeck holdings in the Swan would be the only option but did not think the contract would allow it to be broken up.

The Bio-station has been using the 440 for education years and hopes to continue. Tracy asked if the 440 was taken over by the University system in some way would we still be able to accomplish our goal of public access and recreation. Jack tells us the university system owns the public park next to the station so it could be the same with the 440. Kitty asked if the UofM could buy the 440 outright. Jack said because of the deficits in the system this is not likely. What about the lease option? The UofM is willing to work with DNRC in anyway and they do currently lease land from private parties.

Bob asked about the possibility of trading 40 acres of waterfront for the 440. Jack talked of the interest the tribe has in the 40 waterfront acres and maybe something could be worked out in a sale to them and then acquiring the rights to the 440 with DNRC still maintaining ownership/liability. Jack will peruse this and report back.

As always protection from development of the property is one of our goals. Greg thought the Whitefish Neighborhood Plan might be something we could look at for ideas.

Clarice noted that the goal of DNRC is to produce revenue and they have now lost the outlet for revenue. Timber is no longer marketable in Montana with the closure of one of the last mills, Smurfit-Stone. Clarice shared her presentation on the possible Bio-Mass market and the build-up of fuels in the dying forests.

After more discussion it was determined that we need to have an appraisal to determine the value in order to move forward in any meaningful way. More discussion followed on access issues and who would pay for the appraisal. Verdell recounted his conversation with Mary Sexton. She confirmed that the DNRC would follow the rules in place now that call for appraisals to be done as if there is permanent access.

Is there some way to have DNRC come up with a ballpark appraisal figure without going forward with the full cost appraisal? Does anyone know someone who could come up with a second ballpark figure?

For our next meeting Jack will look into the 3-way land sale between the Tribe, UofM and the DNRC and any other possibilities with the collage. He will also see about a possible appraisal. Greg will have the DNRC appraisers come up with a ball park figure.

Our next meeting will be Wednesday February 10th at the Bigfork Chamber meeting room at 10am

**WE WILL NEED ALL OF THE COMMITTEE MEMBERS TO MAKE AN EFFORT
TO ATTEND THESE MEETINGS. PLEASE GET INVOLVED AND RENEW YOUR
COMMITMENT TO THE 440! WE NEED YOUR HELP!**

DRAFT