

Sustainable Natural Resources Funding for Iowa

Tuesday, October 21, 2008 -- Committee Meeting Summary
Wallace Building 3rd Floor Conference Room – Des Moines, IA
Wallace Bldg, 502 East 9th Street, 3rd Floor, Des Moines, IA 50319

Committee members:

Mark	Ackelson	Absent	Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation
Jane	Clark	Present	Sierra Club
Dan	Cohen	Present	IACCB
Dick	Dearden	Absent	IA Senate-D
Barbara	Finch	Absent	Iowa Farm Bureau
Jim	Gillespie	Present	Secretary of Agriculture
Tom	Holm	Present	Izaak Walton League of Iowa
Jon	Kruse	Present	Ducks Unlimited
Richard	Leopold	Proxy: Ken Herring	IA Dept of Natural Resources, Chair
Mary	Lundby	Absent	Iowa Senate - R
Sean	McMahon	Absent	The Nature Conservancy
Eric	Palmer	Present	IA House of Representatives-D
Jerry	Peckumn	Proxy: Roz Lehman	Iowa Rivers Revival
Henry	Rayhons	Present	Iowa House of Representatives-R
Leo	Rieken	Absent	Land Improvement Contractors Assoc.
Marian	Riggs-Gelb	Present	Iowa Environmental Council
Deb	Ryun	Present	Conservation Districts of Iowa
Marvin	Shirley	Present	Farmers Union
Dave	Van Waus	Present	Pheasants Forever
Julie	Vyskocil	Absent	Iowa Renewable Fuels Association

Welcome, Opening Remarks, Introductions

Ken Herring provided opening remarks and asked for introductions and any comments from those attending.

Roz provided a Sustainable Funding (SF) Coalition update. SF educational forums held across the state resulted in legislator turn out and many “choir” members. Similar questions and comments were occurring which will provide the Coalition direction in their campaign. Overwhelmingly every candidate and legislator was supportive of SF for natural resources. The Coalition is working to present to local groups such as the Lion’s Club, Rotary, etc. Dan reported prior to the forum there were one-on-one meetings with legislators in his area and after the forum there were full write ups in all of their local papers with no negative editorials. The Coalition, Committee, and legislators need to continue to be bold in letting Iowans know about this issue and the benefits. Dave shared there were approximately 50 people at the Mahaska County forum. There were individuals who, once informed by the presentation and discussion, understood the value of this effort. Jon reported that, at Fort Dodge’s forum, there was a candidate who did not have background regarding SF and after the forum he was solidly behind the

effort. Representative Rayhons noted the biggest discussion was how soon SF for natural resources could happen.

Discuss Funding Vehicle Details

The Committee reviewed the seven funding vehicles (REAP, Local Conservation Partnership Program, Watershed Protection, Lake Restoration, Trails, Natural Resources (IA DNR), Agriculture and Land Stewardship (IDALS) and discussed how funding would be distributed and submitted edits to text to provide clarification. Discussion was held regarding land acquisition opportunity within the LCPP funding vehicle. Comments noted that the infrastructure, management, and education aspects of the LCPP funding were identified as high need based and, due to the natural bias of land acquisition projects, deferring funds may pull from the other areas. It was also noted that, with increased funding through SF, there is opportunity for land acquisition needs to be addressed in some of the other funding vehicles and programs such as REAP, Watershed Protection, and programs within DNR such as Habitat Stamp Grant Program.

Completing the Legislative Report

The Committee discussed the report content and the *legislative charge under HF2580*:

1. The committee shall study how to provide one or more sustainable sources of funding for natural resources and outdoor recreation needs in Iowa.

Since August 2006, the Committee has evaluated and vetted viable options for sustainable funding for natural resources. The Committee agreed to:

- continue to support and recommend the 3/8 of 1 cent sales tax as the sustainable funding mechanism and
- continue to support and recommend the percentage of breakdown of funds into the funding vehicles.

2. The advisory committee shall advise members of the general assembly in efforts to establish or administer sustainable funding sources.

In their deliberations since August 2006, the Committee carefully identified funding vehicles, when possible, that have established methods of funding administration with the intent of utilizing these systems and minimizing bureaucracy. The Committee discussed administration details, management, and oversight ideas and recommendations as well as the difference between an audit and an annual report. It was noted that who the funding goes through is not necessarily who the funding would go to (ie: REAP - funding would go to REAP but be distributed to the resource related projects). A draft report will be created and distributed to the SFC for review and input.

Upcoming SFC meetings:

11/24/08	8a-5p (tentative)	Wallace Building - DSM
12/17/08	8a-5p (exact time tbd)	Wallace Building - DSM