

NW Area AIS Grant Discussion
Thursday January 24, 2019
10:00am – 12:30pm

Meeting was started at 10:00am.

On the conference call: Zach Wilson (Iron), Heather Palmquist (Iron), Cathy Higley (Vilas), Carolyn Scholl (Vilas), Katelin Anderson (Polk), Tim Ritten (Polk), Ben Stanley (Taylor), Brent Tessmer (Taylor), Ben Dufford (Bayfield), Andy Teal (Bayfield), Lisa Burns (Washburn), Mary Jo Gingras (Ashland), Dave Ferris (Burnett)

Discussion developed on the models, core services, and supporting documents emailed to group ahead of time. Through the discussion the following questions/concerns/comments for DNR to consider were formulated. The highlighted questions were asked to Ali Mukuluyc and Bob Wakeman when they joined the conversation at 12:00pm. Their answers or conversation on items are included after the highlighted question as a. with the information following.

- 1) What are the DNR Goals for the AIS Grant program restructure?
 - a. Bob went through the goal of the program. Later he emailed a copy of the draft document attached to the minutes.
- 2) What are the grant reporting requirements going to be?
 - a. Bob would like to see simplified reporting, he doesn't want to see pages and pages of reporting. He wants to get rid of the economic match currently required in the grants, to make reporting easier. More of a what were the goals, what was accomplished and for those not accomplished, what happened?
- 3) What happens if/when counties don't take/want the money that would be allotted to them? What happens to that money?
 - a. This is a good question, DNR hopes they can find some entity to take the money and start a program to achieve a program across the entire state.
- 4) Are there going to be additional competitive grants for counties to apply to if they want to do more work?
 - a. There will still be grants to apply for County Lakes Grants (formerly Lakes Classification) \$50K award, grant pot \$200K.
- 5) Who is the money allocated for? Who is eligible? What happens when non-profits, county and RC&D's all apply for the county's allocated money?
 - a. DNR would hope to look at all the applicants and see what makes the most sense, what entity would do the best job at accomplishing the core services with the money awarded. He hopes to go to each county, have a sit down and plan on what is the best approach.
- 6) How did you come up with the matrix/models that were discussed at the AIS Coordinator meeting? Will these matrixes be updated as many of the inputs will change?
 - a. Ali discussed how there are numerous meta data that Ali and Tim Campbell chose to put into the model to see what the output would be, then discuss what seems to capture the state the best and make sense. Obviously DNR won't/can't make everyone happy.

The matrix will be updated, potentially on an annual basis if need be and will have a public comment period for each update.

- 7) What does the # of accessible wetlands mean?
- 8) The human population model – this favors urban areas and would in effect punish rural counties. Need to look at population surrounding the counties – example – Polk County has twin cities where most of their recreationist come from, this is not counted in current model. In addition, the population explodes in the summer, not captured in census data used to create the model. You can't use dwelling numbers, as you would miss the resort users, and many other recreationists that use and threaten northern waters.
 - a. It was asked if you could look at houses. The group felt no, you would still miss a large part of the economic impact of the summer tourism as some stay in campgrounds, some at resorts, air b&b's, etc. This is a complex issue. Could you use the assessed property value for the county?
- 9) Consideration on the amount of the economic value lakes have for an area – in the north our economy heavily depends on our waters. If they become degraded we will lose our economy. Many southern counties have more industry so the economy would not be as greatly impacted.
 - a. There was question on how this could be achieved. Where would that be teased out?
- 10) What are the core services that will need to be implemented to receive funding? Fear is number of core services that may need to be accomplished to receive the funding may not be achievable depending on the award amount.
 - a. Bob said the core services were handed out at an AIS meeting (these were the same that Carolyn provided the group which Cathy had from the Spring AIS Coordinator meeting in 2018). There is not a requirement to do all, more of a conversation and agreement between both entities on what can/will be accomplished.
- 11) Can the core services be chosen by the county? This could be like an ala carte, so counties could pick services to provide that would suite their resource concerns. Project RED is a great program, probably more suitable in SW Wisconsin where they are stream rich, the northern part of the state may have more lakes and not as many streams, CLMN would be more appropriate.
 - a. This would be done to some extent, again through a sit down with DNR and the county/organization to make sure the DNR accomplishes what they want, but in a way that meets the county's resource concerns.
- 12) Is there any way to base funding on need? On many of the rankings, some of the poorest counties consistently fall to the bottom. Without grant funding, there will be no ability to have a program in the poor counties.
- 13) Parking lots/spaces are not good/fair measurements. Lake Namakagon for example has a landing with no parking spaces, boaters park on the side of the road for a long way down both sides of the road. This is very common in the northern counties. Maybe the measurement should just be landings. No parking spaces.
 - a. This could be eliminated?
- 14) Public land/private lands may be a valuable measure or something to consider. In the north where there is more public land there are less people “less of an army” to help with programs. This creates more of a “need” for support to get work done, with more acreage to manage with less help.

- 15) Is there any consideration to previous program/grant participation in the funding matrix?
Demonstration of need a commitment.
- 16) Is there going to be a requirement to have an AIS Strategic Plan or have AIS written into the County's Land & Water Resource Management (LWRM) Plan? DATCP requires every county to have a LWRM Plan in order to receive funding, will DNR require the same to show the county's commitment and planning?
- 17) Should bordering states invasiveness be considered in the matrix? Polk County has major threats to their waters from Minnesota, this isn't in the matrix.
 - a. This would be very difficult, but could potentially be accomplished depending on the states.

There was great discussion, well past the 12:30 time, at 12:49pm Palmquist cut into the discussion, she said she would write up all the notes and send out to everyone. Bob Wakeman had invited any one at any time to contact him to discuss the grant changes more. He offered to come sit down with each county. Burns suggested to have a NW Area sit down with Wakeman to further discuss some of the changes with more time. Palmquist suggested people take Wakeman up on his offer and contact him directly, to be respectful of WI Land+Water, the call needed to end as we ran over our 12:30 time.