

**FOREST ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT
OCTOBER 7, 2025**

Langlade County Board: Forestry & Recreation Committee

DATE: October 7, 2025

TIME: 5:00 p.m.

PLACE: Highway Department Conference Room

- 1. Call the meeting to order**
- 2. Please silence all cell phones**
- 3. Conduct Roll Call**
- 4. Recite the Pledge of Allegiance**
- 5. Approve previous meeting minutes of September 8, 2025**
- 6. Correspondence for Committee- Handout Only**
- 7. Partner Reports (DNR, Economic Development, Trail Partners)**
- 8. Forest Administrator's Report – Written Report to be carried through Agenda**
- 9. Elimination of Permanent Part Time Maintenance Position within Office-** note that this discussion was cut short at the last meeting due to the additional public comments. The item was placed on this agenda near the top of the agenda to allow the employees the time to explain and discuss their concerns.
 - a. **Discussion with Office Employees on transition of Fairgrounds and Maintenance Duties** to other program areas and/or Committees- Karalee and Amie will be present to discuss their duties as well as how duties have changed over the last 3 to 4 years.
 - b. **Possible Job Description Updates to add Maintenance Department duties and highlight accounting responsibilities-** New draft job descriptions are in the packet. The Forest Administrator worked with the employees to ensure that all duties performed by the two positions were included in the job descriptions. Neither of the two existing position descriptions include work on maintenance or the fairgrounds. No other Forestry, Parks and Recreation departments have positions which handle the accounting, intake and deposits of revenue directly into the County accounting systems. That duty is normally handled by the Finance department and most counties have a program that solely tracks timber sales. No other Counties have a Forestry, Parks and Recreation department which includes tracking and arrangement of fairgrounds events. No other County has a Forestry, Parks and Recreation Department which also includes direct work with the County Maintenance Department. The position descriptions are in the packet and include title changes(promotions) which will provide fair comparisons with positions in other Counties. The descriptions should allow the positions begin near their current wages but provide for growth into the future and allow for increases based upon the 2026 compensation plan. **Forest Administrator recommends Committee Action to approve the position descriptions to be sent to the HR Department to ensure the proper formatting and grading of the positions in the current grading system.** The descriptions should then be shared with the Public Property Committee for possible approval of the Maintenance duties. If approved by both Committees the descriptions would require approval of the Personnel Committee. Increases in wages of the positions will only result if the 2026 employee compensation plan changes the wages for 2027 based upon the grade and classification of the positions within that plan.
- 10. Concerns with Areas Closed to Motor Vehicles-** Don Lutzow and others will be present to voice their concerns about areas that have been closed to motor vehicles. Mr. Lutzow provided maps of his areas of concern and the Forest Administrator mapped those areas in GIS to allow for a better representation and overlay of the road classifications in those areas. The areas will be discussed at the meeting but a majority of the areas closed to motor vehicles were closed over 6 years ago. All but one of those areas have only class 4 or class 5 roads in them which can only be used in very dry or frozen ground conditions without damage to the road bed, which in the end results in bulldozer cost to ensure that there is no associated erosion or gully

washing resulting from recreational vehicle travel. Two of the areas are areas with substantial garlic mustard populations (a very invasive species) that were designated to be closed by past Committees to limit the potential spread of the garlic mustard. The other remaining area is designated as sled dog trails, the closure of that area occurred when the County was responsible for annual leveling of the roads due to injury of a young sled dog enthusiast resulting from ruts in the trail ground surface from vehicle travel. That area is also designated as hunter walking trail system. Other than the sled dog/hunter walking trail area, none of the areas which Mr. Lutzow identified have points that are farther than ¼ mile walking from the closest road that can be driven. The revised forest road policy which was approved by committee in 2024 is also in the packet. The Forest Administrator will discuss the planning related to the forest road policy and how that policy has allowed the Department to plan and prioritize road improvements, seek grants and best utilize limited funding to improve roads for access of the public to the forest. **No recommendations for Committee action on this item from the Forest Administrator unless the Committee wanted to recognize the Forest Road policy and its purpose.**

11. Moose Lake Property- Revisit Park Establishment- Representatives of Friends of Moose Lake will be to discuss their request to reinstate the Moose Lake Property as a park and request the County take the lead in construction of park facilities on that site. The former Moose Lake Park was changed to general forest area with changes in the 15 year plan in 2023. Other areas were also removed from the park listing due to the elimination of dangerous outhouse structures and lack of water supply for sanitary park settings were also removed. This resulted in lowering the cost of maintenance and garbage collection in areas with little demonstrated use. That was shortly after the decision of the County Board not to sell the lots at Moose Lake. In the packet is the action taken by the Board and the request from Mr. Persen for the County Administrator and County Forest Administrator to work with the Friends of Moose Lake and/or the Town of Norwood if they chose to acquire the land from the County. Since that time the Forest Administrator provided information to some members of Friends of Moose Lake including potential for them to utilize a Knowles Nelson Stewardship Grant for acquisition and also contacts for them for the Ice Age Trail National Office to see if IAT may be interested in that property. To the knowledge of the Forest Administrator, the Town of Norwood has no interest in acquiring an additional property for a park. To the knowledge for the Forest Administrator Friends of Moose Lake has not taken any action to acquire the property in which could develop and maintain the property as they wish. The County Forest Administrator has issued a special use permit for Friends of Moose Lake to utilize the open area in the past two years, allowing them to have their annual meeting at that site. The Forest Administrator recognizes that the site would make an excellent Town or Local park but has little potential for high use from the public due to the remote location, small area, and limited access to the Lake. **No recommendations for Committee action on this item from the Forest Administrator unless the Committee wanted to recognize that the opportunity still remains for Friends of Moose Lake to become a recognized non-profit, propose acquisition of the 4 lots from the County, and provide an actual plan of what would be developed, whom would develop it and whom would maintain it.**

12. Concerns with Use of County S Gravel Pit for Shooting- After a referral from Supervisor Buck, a neighboring property holder, KDT Holdings, contacted the Forest Administrator to request discussion about the possible closing of the County S gravel pit for shooting during the gun deer season. He may be present to discuss his safety concerns related to that time frame. That gravel pit is not designated as a shooting range is shooting there is actually in violation of the ordinance, however the site as well as some other gravel pits are highly used by the public as an area for shooting. Just having the pits excluded within the ordinance provides some liability protection to the County as the users are violating the ordinance. Staff does regularly need to stop in and clean up some of the gravel pit sites due to targets, shell boxes and debris left by shooters and others in the gravel pits. **Unless the Committee choses to fully enforce the ordinance and close all gravel pits to shooting, the Forest Administrator recommends no action on shooting within the gravel pits. In essence shooting in the gravel pits limits targets on trees across the forest and provides a safer area for recreational shooting rather than shooting in the forest.**

13. Fall Projects

- a. **Perch Lake Hand Pump Well-** RFP- September 23,2025 there were not bids received. As per discussion with contractors, the high capacity well requirements on County Forest lands results in DNR delays of projects by 4-6 months and completion by December 31,2025 as bid could not be achieved. This

project will be rebid with requirements of the project completion being extended until September 15, 2026. The project funds from 2025 will require carry forward of the funding into 2026, approval of carry forward will be processed at the December meeting

- b. **Jack Lake Shower Building**-Opened September 23,2025, single proposal was Heinzen Plumbing and Heating at \$21,898.00, Department is awaiting actual design installation information before issuing a contract. This work is required to be completed prior to December 31, 2025.
- c. **Lyle Building Roof Repair**- RFB- Opened September 23,2025, single bid received from Durable Roofing for a total of \$36,330. Contract has been processed and work is scheduled to begin April 12, 2026. The project funds from 2025 will require carry forward of the funding into 2026, approval of carry forward will be processed at the December meeting
- d. **Gartzke Bridge Replacement**- RFB- Opened September 30. 2025, two bids received Eby's Portable Welding and Fabrication- \$129,240.00 and Radke Contractors, Inc.- \$478,148.98. Apparent low bid was Eby's Welding at \$129,240.00 however the Department is reviewing design to ensure the bid meets bid specifications before a contract will be issued. The project funds from 2025 will require carry forward of the funding into 2026, approval of carry forward will be processed at the December meeting
- e. **Veteran's Memorial Park**- Krueger and Steinfest started construction on September 29th. Additional updates will be provided at the meeting. The project funds from 2025 will require carry forward of the funding into 2026, approval of carry forward will be processed at the December meeting
- f. **Fronek Farms Recreation Area**- Parking area is complete and the sign structure is installed. Wording for the information side of the sign as discussed with the family will read as follows:

History and Purpose of the Fronek Farm Recreation Area

In 1887 Vaclav Fronek and his family emigrated to this area from Bohemia. In 1906, Vaclav and his family purchased 90 acres of this property to farm. Through the years Vaclav and his son John operated the 90 acres as a small subsistence farm. In the 1940's, John's son, Ray Fronek purchased the farm and additional acres creating a 200 acre family dairy farm. Ray his wife, Carley, along with their children operated the dairy farm until their retirement in 1985. In the early 1990's Ray and Carley, who loved to experience nature amongst the trees, started planting trees on the marginal farmland. This tree planting resulted in 100 acres of wooded property.

In 2024 the children of Ray and Carley Fronek donated this area, now known as the Fronek Farm Recreation Area, to Langlade County in memory of their parents. Through this donation, Langlade County will, within budget constraints, forever retain, develop and maintain the property for public recreational use with goals of a process to provide hunting and nature observation opportunities for mobility limited people through a permit system. This site will also commemorate the generational history of "Family Farming" which is common within Langlade County.

14. **Wolf River State Trail**- Forest Administrator recommends Committee Action to request an update from the Wisconsin DNR on status of mitigation potential for "all use conversion" for the December 2025 Committee meeting.

15. **Next Meeting Date**- Possible miss November and plan on December?

16. **Adjourn Meeting**

