

**Chippewa County
Land Conservation & Forest Management Committee
Regular Meeting
February 18, 2026
Chippewa County Courthouse, Room 302
11:00 AM**

1. Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 11:00 AM

2. Roll Call

Members Present:

Charles Bomar, Matthew Peterson, James Flater, Jason Bergeron, Rocky Kempe, Ken Schmitt

Members Absent:

Joel Seidlitz

Agency staff present at times throughout the meeting were A. Albarado (Co. Administrator), N. Luoma (APHIS-USDA), C. McTaggart and T. Shively (DNR), C. Straight (WCRPC), K. Clow, M. Hansen, J. Larson, J. Puig, L. Richardson, L. Schweikert, E. Theiler, and J. Schemenauer - Recorder (LCFM).

3. Members of the Public Wishing to Be Heard

(Comments will be limited to 5 minutes per speaker.)

There was no public wishing to be heard.

4. Consent Agenda

(Unless separation of an item is requested, all items will be adopted under one motion.)

Motion:	Approved
Result:	Passed (6 - 0)
Mover:	James Flater
Second:	Matthew Peterson
Ayes:	Charles Bomar, Matthew Peterson, James Flater, Jason Bergeron, Rocky Kempe, Ken Schmitt
Nays:	None
Absent:	Joel Seidlitz

1. Approve the Agenda
2. Approve the Minutes - January 21, 2026
3. Schedule Next Meeting Date - March 18, 2026

5. Reports

1. Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program Update - Charles Bomar

C. Bomar presented an oral report. He gave a brief update of the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Fund, to date, and changes made as it proceeds through the legislature.

2. Ash Parasitoid Report - Tim Shively (WDNR Forest Health Specialist)

T. Shively, WDNR Forest Health Specialist, presented an oral report. The report was supported by a presentation handout, distributed to the Committee at the meeting, titled: Parasitoid Releases to Suppress

Emerald Ash Borer Populations, (DNR - copy on file & attached). The report provided information on the Emerald Ash Borer in WI, the three (3) different parasitoid wasps released in WI, as well as when and where they were/will be released.

There was general discussion. Discussion focused on ash regeneration and parasitoid establishment.

3. Review Draft Chippewa County Comprehensive Plan, Agricultural Resources & Farmland Preservation Chapter 6 - Chris Straight (West Central Regional Planning Commission)

C. Straight, West Central Regional Planning Commission Senior Planner, presented an oral report. The report was supported by a section of the draft plan titled: 6. Agricultural Resources & Farmland Preservation Plan, (Working Draft 1/12/26), (Distributed 2/11/26 – copy on file & attached). This chapter serves as the agricultural resources element of the County's Comprehensive Plan as well as the Chippewa County Farmland Preservation Plan.

There was general discussion.

Supervisor Bergeron indicated that a public hearing will be held on 2/23/26 at 5:00 p.m. regarding the draft comprehensive plan.

6. Business Items

1. Wildlife Damage Claims - Nicole Luoma (Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service - United States Dept. of Agriculture)

N. Luoma, (APHIS – USDA), presented and the Committee reviewed the following materials:

1. Worksheet outlining three (3) Chippewa County landowners request for appraisals for wildlife damage in 2025, which have been approved, and claim amount after deductible, (Distributed 2/11/26 – copy on file & attached).
2. Worksheet titled: County Budget/Financial Plan, Chippewa County (Cooperator), (Distributed 2/11/26 – copy on file & attached). The worksheet outlines the cost element, price charged to cooperator & paid to APHIS, additional WDNR funding, cost share, full cost, and approved funding for 2026.
3. Worksheets titled: Wildlife Damage Claim, (Distributed 2/11/26 - copy on file & attached). The worksheets provide detailed information on the three (3) individual claims filed in 2025 and approved.

There was general discussion.

Motion (Flater/Peterson) to approve the Chippewa County wildlife abatement claims, as presented. Motion carried 6-0 by voice vote.

Motion:	Approved
Result:	Passed (6 - 0)
Mover:	James Flater
Seconder:	Matthew Peterson
Ayes:	Charles Bomar, Matthew Peterson, James Flater, Jason Bergeron, Rocky Kempe, Ken Schmitt
Nayes:	None
Absent:	Joel Seidlitz

2. Annual 2026 Matching Grant Criteria; Chippewa County Stewardship Fund - Lynda Schweikert

L. Schweikert presented the 2026 annual stewardship fund criteria titled: Criteria for Evaluating and Selecting Projects Submitted to the Chippewa County Stewardship Fund Local Match Grant Program (LCFM 2/9/26 - Distributed 2/11/26 – copy on file).

There was general discussion.

Motion (Kempe/Bergeron) to approve the 2026 Matching Grant Criteria for the Chippewa County Stewardship Fund. Motion carried 6-0 by voice vote.

Motion:	Approved
Result:	Passed (6 - 0)
Mover:	Rocky Kempe
Second:	Jason Bergeron
Ayes:	Charles Bomar, Matthew Peterson, James Flater, Jason Bergeron, Rocky Kempe, Ken Schmitt
Nays:	None
Absent:	Joel Seidlitz

3. Discuss Process for Public Notification Regarding Trail Expansions - Matt Hansen

M. Hansen presented an oral report. At the 1/21/26 LCFM Committee meeting, the Committee requested discussion on adjacent landowner notifications.

There was general discussion regarding the current notification process.

Motion (Bergeron/Flater) to notify adjacent landowners when improvements are made to infrastructure within the County Forest.

Motion:	Discussed
Mover:	Jason Bergeron
Second:	James Flater
Ayes:	None
Nays:	None
Absent:	Joel Seidlitz

Motion (Bergeron/Flater) to amend to change the word "improvements" to "expansions". Motion carried 6-0 by voice vote.

Motion to Amend:	Approved
Result:	Passed (6 - 0)
Mover:	Jason Bergeron
Second:	James Flater
Ayes:	Charles Bomar, Matthew Peterson, James Flater, Jason Bergeron, Rocky Kempe, Ken Schmitt
Nays:	None
Absent:	Joel Seidlitz

Motion (Bergeron/Kempe) to notify adjacent landowners when expansions are made to infrastructure within the County Forest. Motion carried 6-0 by voice vote.

Motion:	Approved
Result:	Passed (6 - 0)
Mover:	Jason Bergeron

Second:	Rocky Kempe
Ayes:	Charles Bomar, Matthew Peterson, James Flater, Jason Bergeron, Rocky Kempe, Ken Schmitt
Nays:	None
Absent:	Joel Seidlitz

7. Agenda Items for Future Consideration

The Chair indicated that if anyone has a future agenda item, to contact himself or L. Schweikert.

8. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn: Kempe/Schmitt. Motion carried by voice vote at 12:12 PM.

Result:	Passed (6 - 0)
Mover:	Rocky Kempe
Second:	Ken Schmitt
Ayes:	Charles Bomar, Matthew Peterson, James Flater, Jason Bergeron, Rocky Kempe, Ken Schmitt
Absent:	Joel Seidlitz