

**Minutes of the
Iron County Watershed Coalition**

**September 30, 2026, 4:00 pm
Conference Rm., West Iron District Library**

"ICWC works to ensure the highest possible water quality in Iron County lakes, streams and wetlands by educating and engaging our communities in projects that will restore and preserve our watersheds for future generations."

Call to Order at 4:00

Attending: Bette Premo, Rich Sloat, Doug Felger, Dodi Felger, Maggie Scheffer, Don Litner, Becky Jorgensen, Dave Martwick, Jim Fogarty, Dorian Howe

Approval of August meeting minutes; moved by: Dodi supported by: Dave; motion passed

Approval of Treasurer's report; moved by: Dodi, supported by: David; motion passed.

Approval of Agenda; Maggie added two items. moved by: Jim, supported by: Doug; motion passed.

Old Business:

- **Cooks Run:** At the September meeting of Iron County Board of Commissioners Don provided a powerpoint presentation to a packed room. Nine members of the public gave comments supportive of the Friends proposal. A motion was made to accept the proposal ; defeated, 3-2. Mr. Tinti raised concerns about the Friends lacking legal stature; and F.P.S.D.'s 'Reverter on a Reverter'. The issue was tabled until legal counsel works on both of those issues.
Laney and Steve Sauter visited Cooks Run on Sept. 23rd. Laney spent childhood years living in the cabin when her father, ___Bilkey was the caretaker of the rearing ponds. She was very pleased to go inside the cabin again. They are following the county's deliberations over management of the site and are hopeful that it will come under the care of the Friends of Cooks Run.
Oct. 5th Forestry Field Day by Brock Van Oss: 8:30 - 2:00; 20 'vendors' will be demonstrating and presenting to 500 + students from both school districts. Don created a video presentation emphasizing values of riparian ecosystems and career opportunities which we previewed; Bette reported on what White Water Associates will be presenting on the value of the riparian area and invited DNR fisheries biologist Brad Shucha to demonstrate fish inventory procedures.
Rich shared a letter that was sent to resident neighbors of Cooks Run, from Brock Van Oss, informing them of the field day and restricted road access.

Concerns about the planned event have been expressed, as well as the logistics of having 500+ people, buses, vehicles, and porta potties on site.

- Friends of Cooks Run: is filing for 501c3 and will be incorporated as the Friends of Cooks Run by October 6th..
- Miskwaamaagamiwiziibi work: signage and takeout/launch have been installed by Dave and Rich. A workbee is planned for the last week of October.

New Business:

- Wild River Road Culvert Replacement: Bette met with Sara Topp, Trout Unlimited; Gust Juntala, U.P. Engineers; and Brad Toivonen, Iron County Road Commission on Sept. 24th. The estimate remains at 1.2 million dollars and the project is on the books to be bid out in January for construction in 2027. Extensions on funding have been honored and breaks down as:
 1. NFWF SOGL grant,\$122,000 for partial payment on the culvert, to UP Concrete Pipe Co.
 2. MDNR Fish Habitat Grant: \$373,200 - has been extended to October 2027
 3. Iron County Watershed Coalition: \$10,000 cash donation
 4. Trout Unlimited: \$4,800, cash donation held at ICWC
 5. Iron County Road Commission: \$50,000 cash donation
 6. Trout Unlimited NOAA Grant \$500,000
 7. Trout Unlimited will have access to additional funding if needed.
- Website update: Doug and Bette received an email scam appearing to be from Marla at North Country Website Design. They were notified by Marla of its' dishonest intent and it has been reported.
- Highline Fiber Optic Installation has resulted in microplastics being left along the installation route. It was reported and concerns communicated to local units of government. Bette will be sending a letter of concern to Highline.
- Freshwater Future: Grants and non-profits "Fund-Raising Best Practices". Bette will attend.
- Roadless Rule: period to submit comments ends Oct. 6th.
- Silver Branch Project: 80,000 acres of Ottawa National Forest, including northern Iron County is scheduled to be clear cut and select cut.

Meeting adjourned at: 5:45

Next meeting: November 11th