

Big Sandy Area Lakes Watershed Management Project
Annual Meeting July 19, 2014

Attendance: Barbara Dahl, Carmen Rinta, Curt Sparks, Lindsay Lally, Dianne Knoben, Frank Turnock, Gary Peterson, Pat Rath, Mark J. Johnson, Al Rinta, Ray Gurske, Janet Smude.

The meeting was called to order at 9:05 am. Chairperson Barbara Dahl welcomed everyone to the meeting. Introductions were made. The meeting agenda was approved, with the addition of Pat Rath Project Review. M/S/C Frank Turnock / Al Rinta.

1. 2013-2014 Activity Summary: Activities undertaken during the past year were supported by two different grant programs. The Minnesota Recovers (Flood Recovery) Grant assisted with 5 shoreland restoration projects, all of them on Big Sandy Lake. We also completed a Clean Water Fund Grant in December of 2013. This grant assisted with the installation of 3 water quality improvement projects.
2. Financial Report: Expenses during the past year totaled \$ 10,882.32 and were from both of the two grant programs mentioned in the activity summary. Funds were used for cost share payments made to landowners, and a small amount for technical services and administration provided by the Aitkin County SWCD. It was noted that all of the funding we currently have is for “on the ground” restoration projects. The report was approved as presented.
3. Election of Officers: The positions of Chairperson and Secretary-Treasurer were scheduled for election. A motion nominating Barbara Dahl for the position of BSALWMP Chairperson was made M/S Frank Turnock / Ray Gurske. A white ballot was cast for Barbara Dahl for the position of Chairperson. The motion was approved and Barb was thanked for her past service and for accepting the post again.
A motion nominating Pat Rath for the position of Secretary-Treasurer was made M/S Frank Turnock / Ray Gurske. A white ballot was cast for Pat Rath for the position of Secretary-Treasurer. The motion was approved and Pat was thanked for his willingness to accept this position.
4. EPA Section 319 Grant Application: Janet Smude shared that an application for this grant program was recently submitted. The total application was for \$ 86,100. If funded, this will support 5 objectives including – Watershed Restoration Activities, Education Activities, Water Quality Monitoring, Implementation Coordination Services, and Administration. We should hear before the end of the year if the application is selected for funding.

5. Sub Watershed Project Reports:

Sandy Lake: Mark Johnson reported that this has been a busy month for the Big Sandy Lake Association. They are educating themselves regarding the proposed Sandpiper Pipeline, and are opposing the proposed route. They are also watching developments regarding mineral exploration in the Tamarack area. An investment report indicates that significant amounts of copper have been discovered, however it is located very deep.

Sandy River: No report was provided.

Tamarack River: This subwatershed group meets on the first Monday of each month. A permit to remove aquatic vegetation blocking the access on North Island Lake was recently received.

Prairie Lake / River: No report was provided.

SWHIM: The Minnewawa Lake Improvement District received their first payment from Aitkin County. The Lake Minnewawa Association is starting boat inspections for aquatic invasive species. Training for this is being conducted by the Minnesota DNR. A company has been hired to survey the lake for invasive species.

6. Project Review / Cost Share Payment Approval: Johansen Project: This project on the north side of Big Sandy Lake has been installed. Native plants were added to an existing buffer strip to replace vegetation killed during the floods of 2012. A motion approving reimbursement of \$ 1,695 was made. M/S/C Pat Rath / Mark Johnson.

Rath Project: Pat Rath provided a summary of his project on Lake Minnewawa. Coir (coconut: logs were placed along the shoreline to control soil erosion. Native plants were added in and above the logs. A motion approving reimbursement of \$ 4,474.76 was made. M/S/C Al Rinta / Lindsay Lally.

Cost share funding for these projects was provided through the Minnesota Recovers Grant.

7. Agenda Additions: Aquatic Invasive Species Control Funding: The Minnesota Legislature approved funding to support the control of Aquatic Invasive Species. Funding will be coming to Aitkin County. A plan for how to best utilize this is being developed.

Curt Sparks addressed the group. He has been working with a couple of potential contractors for his shoreline stabilization and revegetation project, and hopes it will be installed before the end of the year.

The Big Sandy Lake Foundation is hosting a fundraising / social event and tour at the new East Floe Plant. The tour will focus on the thermoforming equipment at the plant. This will be held on September 12th from 7:00 – 8:30 pm. RSVPs are required. This Foundation is developing a fund to support ecological, social, and economic resources in the entire area – not just Big Sandy Lake. Youth education will be a focus of the fund.

The next meeting will be the project tour on Lake Minnewawa. It will be held at 1:00 pm on August 13th. We will discuss walleye stocking, see the weed harvester in action, and visit several project sites. Enbridge will be asked to join us for the September meeting. A motion was made to adjourn the meeting. M/S Mark Johnson / Frank Turnock. The meeting was adjourned at 10:35 am.