

Big Sandy Area Lakes Watershed Management Project  
Executive Council & Technical Team Meeting Minutes  
April 13, 2016

Attendance: Barb Dahl, Carlton Co SWCD Supervisor; Ramona Hooper, McGregor Twp. Supervisor; Carmen Rinta, Tamarack; Al Rinta, Tamarack; Ray Gurske, Tamarack River Watershed Team; Dianne Knoben, SWHIM; Lindsay Lally, Island Lake; Ray Lally, Island Lake; Becky Larson, Island Lake; Maggie Leach, BWSR; Merritt Linzie, Prairie Lake; Patti McPhail, Island Lake; Gary Peterson, Carlton County Commissioner; Pat Rath, Lake Minnewawa; Janet Smude, Aitkin Co SWCD; Stanley Strand, Eagle Lake; Frank Turnock, Aitkin County SWCD Supervisor; Bill Zelazny, Island Lake; Sharon Zelazny, Island Lake.

The meeting began with a special presentation by Mike Norton from Lake Restoration. This company has been working with many lakes in the region, including Island and Eagle lakes. There are many benefits provided by aquatic vegetation – filtering runoff, buffering wave action, providing habitat. Aquatic vegetation can be managed to protect these benefits, while enhancing the lake for recreation uses. The first step is to assess the plants that are present on a site. If removal is needed, mechanical methods may work for smaller sites. Larger sites may benefit from chemical treatments. A DNR permit is required. Lake Restoration offers three service levels and can apply chemical treatments to control the weed / nuisance plant growth. They can also help with snails / swimmers itch. All chemicals are applied with safety and environmental quality in mind. Causes of excessive plant growth could be septic system inputs, fertilizer inputs of nutrients, shoreline erosion, and more. Managing these potential input may also help to control the vegetation. Mike was thanked for speaking with the group about this topic.

1. The regular business meeting was called to order at 3:15 pm. Introductions were made. The agenda was approved as presented. M/S/C Merritt Linzie / Pat Rath.
2. The March meeting minutes were reviewed and approved as presented. M/S/C Patti McPhail / Al Rinta.
3. A financial report for the month of March was shared. Expenses totaled \$ 1,087.69 and were related to the printing of the newsletter. The report was approved as presented. M/S/C Ray Lally /Merritt Linzie.
4. Old Business:
  - 4.1. Aitkin County AIS Grant Activities: 2015: Carmen Rinta shared that she has visited with several establishments about using the AIS placemats. Many will use them, some are not interested. She and Al will distribute before the fishing opener; 2016: An application requesting \$ 4,200 was submitted. If approved this will fund 200 youth fishing kits, and 1,000 floating key chains. We should hear by mid April if this is approved. Thanks were given to Carmen Rinta and Dianne Knoben for helping with this.
  - 4.2. Watershed Wide Newsletter: The newsletters have been mailed and should be arriving in mailboxes soon. Copies were shared. A summary of where the newsletters were mailed was shared. It is interesting to note that nearly half of the landowners in the watershed are from the Twin Cities area.

4.3. Governor's Fishing Opener: The group discussed this event. 32 kids will be participating in the Take A Kid Fishing Event that is part of the Governor's Fishing Opener. They will receive gifts from the DNR MinnAqua program and Cabelas. Our materials might be better suited to local events – like the BSWI, or Rice Lake Refuge fishing events. Our AIS Cards from last year will be given to Steve Hughes to share at the Willey's Decontamination Station over the fishing opener weekend.

4.4. Capturing Rainwater Workshop: This workshop is scheduled for Saturday May 21<sup>st</sup> from 9 am – 11am. It will be held at the Minnewawa Sportsmen's Club on Aitkin County Road 6. Jim Ravis, Aitkin County Master Gardener, will lead the discussion of stormwater impacts, rain barrels, rain gardens, and native vegetation filter strips. Janet Smude will talk about the cost share incentives and rain barrel coupons that the BSALWMP can offer.

## 5. New Business:

5.1. Lake Water Quality Monitoring 2016: Janet Smude shared a summary of the lakes that will be monitored in the watershed this summer. Monitoring of 2 lakes (Blackface and Island) will be funded by the Aitkin County Watershed Planning Task Force. Three lakes will be monitored by the Aitkin County SWCD through a SWAG Grant (Loon, Shumway, Savanna). The 319 Grant will monitor 9 lake sites on Big Sandy,, Minnewawa, Eagle, Lower Island, Upper Island, and Prairie Lakes. Thanks to Melanie Bomier from the Carlton County SWCD for coordinating the Carlton and St. Louis County sites. Sampling will begin in May.

## 6. Working Session:

### 6.1. Sub Watershed Project Reports:

6.1.1. SWHIM: Ice out on Island Lake (Aitkin Co) was early this year – April 3<sup>rd</sup>. It was also earlier than usual on Lake Minnewawa.

6.1.2. Sandy Lake: The BSLA met last Friday. They are also preparing for the Governor's Fishing Opener and working on Aquatic Invasive Species issues.

6.1.3. Sandy River: McGregor Township is cooperating with other Aitkin County Townships, and the Aitkin County Board to work on beaver control issues. They are looking into efforts undertaken in other parts of the State. There is a Bill before the State Legislature relating to beaver control / damage.

6.1.4. Tamarack River: This Group will meet at 2:30 on the first Monday in May.

6.1.5. Prairie Lake / River: Merritt Linzie shared copies of their spring newsletter. Beavers are also a problem in this area. No invasive species were found during an aquatic vegetation survey conducted by the DNR last summer. The 2015 fishing assessment showed an increase in Northern Pike and Crappies. Sunfish numbers were down.

6.2.1. New Project Submissions: There were no new project submissions.

## 7. Agenda Additions: There were no agenda additions.

8. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday May 11<sup>th</sup> at 2:30 pm at the Tamarack Sno-Flyers Clubhouse. The meeting was adjourned at 3:55 pm. M/S Frank Turnock / Dianne Knobon.