

Big Sandy Area Lakes Watershed Management Project  
Executive Council & Technical Team Meeting Minutes  
April 11, 2018

Attendance: Melanie Bomier, Carlton County SWCD; John Cyrus, City of Tamarack; Barb Dahl, Carlton County SWCD Supervisor; Ray Gurske, Tamarack River Watershed Team; Ramona Hooper, McGregor Township Supervisor; Dianne Knoblen, SWHIM; Pat McGinn, Lake Minnewawa; Bill Pratt, Aitkin County Commissioner; Pat Rath, Lake Minnewawa; Al Rinta, Tamarack Sno-Flyers; Carmen Rinta, Tamarack Sno-Flyers / Round Lake; Janet Smude, Aitkin County SWCD; Bill Zelazny, Island Lake Cromwell; Sharon Zelazny, Cromwell Island Lake.

1. The meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m. by Chairperson Barb Dahl. The agenda was approved with the addition of an update from Brian Goldner, Kennecott Exploration Company. M/S/C Pat McGinn / Ray Gurske.

Special Presentation: Kennecott Exploration Company Update, Brian Goldner: Brian introduced himself to the group. He has worked with Kennecott since 2006 and began managing the Tamarack project last year. He is a resident of Cromwell. Kennecott has been in the Tamarack area for 18 years. 7 years of drilling and 42 holes have been drilled to identify the main mineral intrusion. Last winter they had one drilling rig in operation. 4 holes were drilled. Samples are out for analysis now.

Wetlands are protected through the use of mats to cross them in summer. Baseline water sampling has been conducted for several years and will begin soon, weather permitting.

A recent article in the Aitkin Independent Age highlighted their work and benefits to local communities. 1.4 million dollars has gone to local school districts from the mineral lease fees. Local units of government also benefit from distribution of these fees.

Future exploration / mining is uncertain. Many factors including the global economy, mineral needs, quality of the mineral deposits, and difficulty/ease of extraction all contribute to the decision.

Brian was thanked for joining the meeting and sharing this information.

2. The March meeting minutes were reviewed and approved as presented. M/S/C Carmen Rinta / Ray Gurske.

3. A financial report for the month of March was shared. Expenses totaled \$ 820.17 from the EPA 319 Grant. The report was approved as presented. M/S/C John Cyrus / Dianne Knoblen.

4. Old Business:

4.1 Spring Newsletter: Janet Smude shared that the newsletter has just finished being printed. The Aitkin SWCD will be working on getting them labeled and mailed. All landowners in the watershed should receive a newsletter before the next BSALWMP meeting.

4.2. 2018 Aitkin County AIS Grant Application: This grant application has been approved. Funding was received for AIS Placemats, AIS Insert in the spring newsletter, and an education event with the Cromwell School. A total of \$ 3,684 was received.

Carmen Rinta will coordinate the AIS Placemat order at McGregor Printing. A few typos were noted on the placemat from last year. She will work to have these corrected.

Sharon Zelazny is working to set a date with the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade teacher in Cromwell. She has been receiving ideas / input from friends in another lake association. Plans are to hold the event soon, before the class gets busy with end of the year activities.

4.3. Lake Association / Lake Advocate Sharing Session: A survey was sent to lake association representatives asking when they would like to hold this session. Right now it is looking like a Saturday morning in June would work best, although there are a few more surveys to be completed. A draft agenda has been prepared. The session would include

time for a watershed / WRAPS discussion, sharing time between associations and a presentation on media relations. Melanie Bomier offered to help with ideas and input for the event. The McGregor Community Center was noted as a potential location. Carmen Rinta shared that the Tamarack Sno-Flyers Clubhouse is also available.

## 5. New Business:

5.1. 2018 Rain Barrel Distribution Program: Funding remains in the EPA Section 319 Grant for approximately 25 Rain Barrels. Groth Lumber in Wright will assist with distribution again. This discount program was advertised in the Spring Newsletter. The program will also be promoted at the Rivers and Lakes Fair in June. A rain barrel will be displayed and given away. A drawing will be held and the winner announced at 1:30 pm. A barrel will also be displayed at the Tri-Community Food Shelf. It is hoped that these promotions will sell a few more barrels. A motion was made approving the promotions at the Rivers and Lakes Fair and the Tri-Community Food Shelf M/S/C Gary Peterson / Ray Gurske. Janet Smude will contact Groth Lumber for these purchases, and coordinate with Al Rinta and Dianne Knoblen.

5.2. 2018 AIS Bag Distribution Plan: There are approximately 600 AIS bags remaining. The group discussed giving them to Big Dollar and the Wright Co-op for distribution. Rintas have given 200 to the McGregor Chamber of Commerce for their summer fishing contest. Key chains were given as well. The group was asked to keep the bags in mind, if other fishing contests are scheduled and could use the bags. The bags will be useful at the Rivers and Lakes Fair and will be shared at that event.

5.3. Proposed Water Quality Monitoring 2018: The remaining grant funding for water quality monitoring was reviewed. Janet Smude suggested monitoring on Big Sandy Lake, as it is the receiving water for the entire watershed. She has been in touch with John Pilney of the Big Sandy Lake Association. He is willing to help with sampling again this summer. Funds could cover 3 samples for Total Phosphorus and Chlorophyll a at the three established sites on Big Sandy, plus one quality control sample. A motion approving this plan was made M/S/C John Cyrus / Pat Rath.

## 6. Working Session:

### 6.1. Sub Watershed Project Reports:

6.1.1. SWHIM: Pat Rath shared that it looks to be a late ice out date for Lake Minnewawa. The average ice out date is April 20<sup>th</sup>.

6.1.2. Sandy Lake: No report was shared.

6.1.3. Sandy River: No report was shared.

6.1.4. Tamarack River: This group will begin meeting again in June. Ray Gurske has been assembling information bags to share with lakeshore property owners. He offered to include some of the floating keychains. There is still significant snow and ice on Tamarack Lake.

6.1.5. Prairie Lake / River: No report was shared.

### 6.2. New Project Submissions: There were no new project submissions.

7. Agenda Additions: Gary Peterson shared that he has spoken with Senators Bakk and Eken regarding a proposal for beaver control funds. Damage to roads, culverts, and ditches was noted as a concern. A small amount of funding was included in the Bonding Bill proposal.

Bill Pratt has also spoken with Senator Ruud and Representative Lueck regarding beaver damage. The Association of Minnesota Counties has also been discussing the issue.

8. The next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, May 9<sup>th</sup>. It will be held at the Cromwell Park Pavilion, if a room is available. The meeting was adjourned at 3:10 pm. M/S/ Pat McGinn / Dianne Knoblen.