

Big Sandy Area Lakes Watershed Management Project
Executive Council & Technical Team Meeting Minutes
March 9, 2016

Attendance: Barb Dahl, Carlton Co SWCD Supervisor; John Cyrus, City of Tamarack; John Grones, Voyager Press; Carmen Rinta, Tamarack; Al Rinta, Tamarack; Ray Gurske, Tamarack River Watershed Team; Dianne Knoblen, SWHIM; Lindsay Lally, Cromwell Lake; Scott Lucas, MPCA; Pat Rath, Lake Minnewawa; Janet Smude, Aitkin Co SWCD; Bill Zelanzy, Cromwell Lake.

1. The meeting was called to order at 2:40 pm. Introductions were made. The agenda was approved as presented. M/S/C Pat Rath / John Cyrus.

2. The February meeting minutes were reviewed and approved as presented. M/S/C John Cyrus / Ray Gurske.

3. A financial report for the month of February was shared. Expenses totaled \$ 3,600. The report was approved as presented. M/S/C Pat Rath /Carmen Rinta.

4. Old Business:

4.1. Upper Mississippi River River (Grand Rapids) WRAPS Update: Scott Lucas updated the group on the meeting held on February 29th, at Long Lake Conservation Center. The meeting focused on the Zonation model that will be used to highlight priorities for protection and restoration in the watershed. Thanks to Carmen and Al Rinta, Frank Turnock, and Merritt Linzie for joining this meeting. Community input will be needed as this project moves forward.

4.2. 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. Dianne Knoblen offered to ask the restaurant in Cromwell if they would be willing to use them. 2016: Ideas for a new grant application were shared. The application could include floating keychains, bobbers, laminating placemats, plus mileage to distribute materials. It was noted that a decontamination station will be at Willey's during the week, but out at lake accesses on the weekends. A motion approving an application including the items noted above, including 1,000 bobbers, and 1,000 key chains was made M/S/C John Cyrus / Dianne Knoblen. After more discussion the motion was amended to include 1,000 key chains and 200 small fishing kits in the grant application M/S/C Pat Rath / Dianne Knoblen. Janet Smude will draft the application form. Carmen Rinta and Dianne Knoblen offered to be the contacts for the grant. The deadline for a 2016 application is March 31st.

4.3. Watershed Wide Newsletter: Janet Smude shared that newsletter is at the printer. The address list for Aitkin County property owners is being updated.

4.4. The State of Water Conference: A request for \$ 800 was made to the Aitkin County AIS Committee for 2 members to attend the conference. They approved half of the requested funding. Barb Dahl was able to get approval from the Carlton County SWCD to cover the rest of the expenses. Barb Dahl and Patti McPhail will attend the Conference. Pat Rath shared that he will also be attending.

4.5. Governor's Fishing Opener: The group discussed this event. Friday will include a community picnic in McGregor. Saturday will be up at Big Sandy Lake. We may be able to contribute 525 AIS cards to the gift bags that will be distributed. John Grones shared that the people receiving the gift bags may not be our target audience, and efforts might be best spent elsewhere. The Take A Kid Fishing event might reach more of our local people. The McGregor

Chamber of Commerce and Nicole Eld would be good people to contact regarding the Governors Fishing Opener. Scott Turner is the contact for the Take A Kid Fishing event.

4.6. Spring Educational Workshops: Aquatic Vegetation Management will be the topic of our first spring workshop. This will be held at the opening of our next meeting on April 13th. A workshop on aquatic vegetation could include ID of vegetation, treatment options, allowable limits, what vegetation should be protected, etc... Bill Zelazny has scheduled the company that sprays aquatic vegetation for the Cromwell Area Lakes to present this topic. A DNR speaker will also be sought. The large room at the Pavilion in Cromwell will be reserved. A second workshop will focus on harvesting rainwater. Jim Ravis, Aitkin County Master Gardener will speak on stormwater impacts, rain barrels, filter strips, and rain gardens. Janet Smude will also talk about cost share availability through the BSALWMP. May 21st at 9am was suggested as a potential date. This will be confirmed before the next meeting.

5. New Business:

5.1. Watershed Project Tour Brainstorming: There is funding in the 319 Grant for an educational tour. Ideas discussed included old / previously installed cost share projects and the Prairie River project site. The benefits and drawbacks of a boat tour were mentioned.

6. Working Session: 6.1. Sub Watershed Project Reports:

6.1.1. SWHIM: Dianne Knoben noted that folks are still ice fishing on Island Lake. Pat Rath shared that the Lake Minnewawa Lake Improvement District conducted a survey asking lakeshore owners for their input on lake management and lake usage issues. The results are in, but have not been tabulated yet.

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 April or May.

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

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

7. Agenda Additions: Brush piles / rows on Horseshoe Lake were questioned. It was felt that these were likely to create fish habitat.

8. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday April 13th at 2:30 pm at the Cromwell Park Pavilion, if a room is available. This meeting will feature the speaker on aquatic plant management. The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 pm. M/S Pat Rath / John Cyrus.