

Big Sandy Area Lakes Watershed Management Project  
Executive Council & Technical Team Meeting Minutes  
October 14, 2015

Attendance: Barb Dahl, Carlton Co SWCD Supervisor; John Cyrus, Tamarack; Al & Carmen Rinta, Tamarack; Pat Rath, Lake Minnewawa, Ray Gurske, Tamarack River Watershed Team; Gary Peterson, Carlton County; Janet Smude, Aitkin Co SWCD; Maggie Leach, MPCA; Jim Carlson, Big Sandy Lake; Merritt Linzie, Prairie Lake; Frank Turnock, Aitkin Co SWCD Supervisor; Dianne Knoben, SWHIM.

1. The meeting was called to order at 2:40 pm. Introductions were made. The agenda was approved with the addition of a Cromwell School request and an Annual Meeting discussion M/S/C Ray Gurske /Al Rinta.

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

3. A financial report for the month of September was shared. Expenses totaled \$ 240.00 and were from the Minnesota Recovers and EPA Section 319 Grants. The report was approved as presented. M/S/C Frank Turnock / Pat Rath.

4. Old Business:

4.1. Cromwell Harvest Fest: Ray Gurske hosted a booth and shared information regarding the watershed. He gave out nearly all of his supplies / handouts. Ray was thanked for organizing this event.

4.2. Aitkin County AIS Activities Grant Workshop: Janet Smude has been in touch with Eleanor Burkett from the University of Minnesota Extension Service regarding a program on AIS for school age kids. Details still need to be worked out. Lori Wester in Cromwell will be leading a unit with her 10<sup>th</sup> grade class in December focusing on AIS. There may be a potential to use some of the grant funding there. The group also discussed purchasing visual aids that may be useful in future educational meetings. Janet will keep working on this topic.

4.3. Minnesota Recovers Grant Wrap Up: This grant expires at the end of 2015. One project remains to be installed. Janet Smude has been working with the landowner to ensure that this is done. Funding also remains for engineering services. This is left because we no longer work with the Technical Service Area Engineers. Engineering is now provided by the Aitkin County Highway Engineer. A motion approving payment of \$ 2,550 to the Aitkin County Highway Engineers for their work on projects funded by this grant was made M/S/C Merritt Linzie / John Cyrus. There is also \$ 124.34 left from projects that came in under budget. Rintas and John Cyrus will try to find a way to use these funds in one of their existing projects.

5. New Business:

5.1. Aitkin County Surface Water Assessment Grant Lake Monitoring Results: Janet Smude shared that three Aitkin County Lakes in the BSALWMP were monitored last summer to assess their water quality.

These lakes included Loon, Savanna, and Shumway Lakes – all within Savanna Portage State Park. Results were generally good, as would be expected for these lakes. They will also be monitored in 2016.

5.2. Lake Monitoring for 2016: The EPA Section 319 Grant includes funding for monitoring of 9 lakes sites in 2016. These include three basins on Big Sandy Lake, two basins on Lake Minnewawa, Prairie Lake, Eagle Lake, and Upper and Lower Island Lakes. Volunteers will be sought to assist with each lake. There is also a potential to add more lake sites. John Cyrus has a friend who may help on Blackface Lake. Other options and ideas are welcome, but are needed in the near future.

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

6.1.1. SWHIM: It was noted that the summer season is ending. Boats and docks are coming out of the lakes. Dale Kratochwill (sp?) is the new president of the Lake Minnewawa Association.

6.1.2. Sandy Lake: Steve Hughes recently reported to the Big Sandy Lake Association on AIS efforts last summer. More than 4,700 boats were inspected in Aitkin County. 25 failed inspection and had AIS violations. One boat tried to enter Big Sandy from Lake Pepin. It had a large patch of attached zebra mussels. They were directed to Willey's for decontamination. The boat owner was fined by the DNR Conservation Officer. The Big Sandy Water Institute has been operating since 2002. This effort has exposed 5,800 kids to the natural world / out of doors. It is a very successful program.

6.1.3. Sandy River: No report was shared.

6.1.4. Tamarack River: This Group will not meet again until next spring.

6.1.5. Prairie Lake / River: Beaver have been a problem on the lake this summer. A trapper has been hired to remove the beaver. Lake association dues have been raised. Membership has increased. Secchi clarity readings have been normal this past summer. The DNR's changing limits on Northern Pike with the goal of encouraging larger fish.

6.2.1. New Project Submissions: A cost share project proposal has been developed for Ed O'Donnell on Round Lake. The landowner experienced a severe ice push, which has loosened his bank and increased soil erosion. This is proposed to be fixed by adding a row of coir logs and repositioning loose rock at the base of the slope. Erosion control fabric and native plants will be placed above the base of the slope to stabilize the raw bank. A motion approving \$1are funding, not to exceed 50% of the total eligible project costs was made. M/S/C Pat Rath / Jim Carlson.

7. Agenda Additions: Cromwell School Request: Lori Wester is planning a trip for the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students to Eagle Bluff Environmental Learning Center in Lansboro. Costs associated with the field trip to the Cromwell School Forest have been covered by the school. She has requested that the funds we have for the school forest trip be shifted to support the other field trip. A motion approving a donation of \$ 150 for the field trip was made. M/S/C Merritt Linzie / Pat Rath. Annual Meeting: It was noted that turnout for the Annual Meeting has been low. The group discussed changing this from the third Saturday in July to a regularly scheduled July meeting. This would involve a revision of the BSALWMP By-Laws. A motion was made to start the paperwork required to make this change. M/S/C Frank Turnock / Ray Gurske.

8. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday November 11<sup>th</sup> at 2:30 pm. It will be held at the Cromwell Park Pavilion, if a meeting room is available. The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 pm. M/S Frank Turnock / Merritt Linzie.