

**LAKE MINNETONKA CONSERVATION DISTRICT
AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES (AIS) TASK FORCE MEETING
MINUTES**

8:30 a.m., Friday, February 18, 2011

LMCD Office, 23505 Smithtown Road (Suite 120), Shorewood, MN 55331

Present: Kelsey Page, LMCD Board; Debbie Siakel, LMCD Board; Herb Suerth, LMCD Board; Chip Welling, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MN DNR); Sean Sisler, MN DNR; Brittany Hummel, MN DNR; Jay Rendall, MN DNR; Heidi Wolf, MN DNR; John Barten, Three Rivers Park District (TRPD); Dick Osgood, Lake Minnetonka Association (LMA); Udai Singh, Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD); Jay Green, Anglers for Habitat; Gabriel Jabbour, Tonka Bay Marina; Dick Woodruff; Lisa Whalen; Greg Nybeck, LMCD Executive Director. Also present: Representative John Benson, 43B; Mark Washa, MCWD Citizens Advisory Committee.

Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved as submitted.

Minutes

Welling stated that he had a few minor changes that could be forwarded to Nybeck in writing.

Woodruff proposed that the name "Welling" be changed to "Woodruff" in the first paragraph under "Update from the MN DNR on the use of Weevils" on page three.

The minutes from the 1/14/11 AIS Task Force Meeting were accepted as amended, including the proposed changes by Welling and Woodruff.

2010 Lake Minnetonka Watercraft Inspection Program Report

Nybeck stated that the project in 2010 was more complex compared to past years because inspectors were utilized from the MN DNR, Volt Workforce Solutions (Volt), TRPD, and Minnetonka Power Squadron (Power Squadron). He made the following comments:

- An overview of the methodology used. This included: 1) 4,096 inspection hours by the MN DNR and Volt, 2) 864 hours by the TRPD at the Lake Minnetonka Regional Park, and 3) volunteer inspections by the Power Squadron.
- Contracted hours included 2,898 with the MN DNR and 1,198 with Volt. 87% of the contracted hours were covered by Volt (2,532), with 86% of the contracted hours covered by Volt (1,033).
- He provided further background of the in-kind hours provided by the TRPD and the volunteer inspection hours provided by the Power Squadron.
- Funding sources for this project included the LMCD, a \$7,500 contribution from the MCWD, and a \$6,720 grant from the MN DNR.
- He reviewed a project conducted by the LMCD in 2010, in conjunction with the MN DNR, to document the number of car/trailer launches through the public accesses during a boating season. One of the goals of this project was to assist future AIS management and prevention efforts on Lake Minnetonka.
- He stated that Heidi Wolf was in attendance to provide further background on the MN DNR efforts in 2010.

Wolf made the following comments:

- 2010 Expectations- A prevention grant of 560 hours by the MN DNR was awarded for this project, with an equal amount of inspection hours to be covered by the LMCD. The LMCD also chose to cooperatively

hire with the MN DNR for an additional 1,778 hours of inspections. Public accesses covered by the contract with the LMCD included: 1) Carsons Bay, 2) Grays Bay, 3) Maxwell Bay, 4) North Arm, 5) Spring Park Bay, and 6) Wayzata Bay.

- 2010 Results- 2,813 inspection hours were completed for all of Lake Minnetonka, with 13,884 inspections conducted. 2,532 inspection hours were covered by the MN DNR at the six peak public accesses that were contracted with the LMCD.
- Inspections and Hours During Peak Times- A summary was provided for these six public accesses based on: 1) the number of inspections conducted, 2) the number of inspection hours, and 3) the number of inspections per hour. The highest number of inspections per hour was Grays Bay (10.27), with the lowest being Wayzata Bay (2.35 inspections per hour).
- Survey Results- 586 boaters inspected came from zebra mussel waters, compared to 432 in 2009.
- Invasive Species Results- No zebra mussels were found on inspected watercraft. 308 watercraft (2.7%) had attached vegetation before entering Lake Minnetonka, compared to 40 in 2009. 786 watercraft exiting Lake Minnetonka before inspection, compared to 198 in 2009.
- Decals- an overview of the decal system used by the MN DNR was provided.
- Boater Knowledge- An overview of watercraft user knowledge of invasive species, Eurasian watermilfoil (EWM), zebra mussels, and transportation laws was provided.
- Recommendations- For future inspection programs, she recommended removing inspection hours from Carsons and Wayzata Bay public accesses and re-allocating these inspection hours to the Grays and Maxwell Bay public accesses.

The Task Force made a number of comments and asked a number of questions, in which Wolf responded to.

2011 Coordinated Herbicide Treatment Project

Welling made the following comments:

- There was an interest in this project dating back to 2006 in trying to manage problems with EWM on baywide basis. A Lake Vegetation Management Plan (LVMP) was created for this project, with baywide herbicide treatments commencing on Carmans, Grays, and Phelps Bays in 2008.
- The desire is to control EWM on a baywide basis, while protecting native plants because of the various benefits they provide. Because there is not 100% certainty or confidence in providing this control, this is considered a pilot project. Technical and monitoring assistance has been received on this project from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the MCWD.
- The hypothesis used in the LVMP was that there would be large treatments in the first three years (2008-2010), with spot treatments in the fourth and fifth years (2011 and 2012). The patterns seen for this have been substantially different than this hypothesis, which is why monitoring is so essential.
- In 2007, the percent of occurrence of EWM prior to treatment on Grays Bay was 86%. This percent of occurrence was reduced to 54% in September of 2008 after the first baywide treatment. In 2009, the percent of occurrence was reduced to 1% in September, although the MN DNR was concerned about the substantial decrease in native plants. In 2010, spot treatments were only done and the percent of occurrence increased back to 57% in September, although the native plants increased substantially.
- For 2011, the MN DNR has been working with the LMA and the Army Corps on target concentrations of herbicides, including when they should be applied. One of the changes considered by the MN DNR is the planning and evaluating of outcomes for the objectives in an approved LVMP. For example, one of the objectives in the original LVMP was that the number of native species would remain the same or increase. However, the treatment on Grays Bay documented that the native species decreased the first year of baywide treatment, although these natives would increase more rapidly the year following the treatment than the EWM. This result is not surprising and the MN DNR would be agreeable to amend the

LVMP to reflect this as an amended hypothesis. This would be more in line with work done in Michigan, where lakewide treatments are done every three or four years.

- This treatment protocol has been included in a Request for Proposal (RFP) by the LMA, which were sent to potential contractors on February 17th. Due to the timing of when the RFP was sent out, proposals have not been received.

The Task Force discussed a number of topics. A summary of some of these topics were as follows:

- Possible impacts on a various number of native species.
- The percent of frequency on curlyleaf pondweed, including the possible impacts on water quality.
- A discussion on whether there is a need for a point intercept survey prior to the herbicide treatment, including possible funding and staffing options.
- The RFP includes herbicide treatments for Gideon and St. Albans Bays, although it is not under the supervision of the LVMP and the technical assistance of the AIS Task Force.
- A review of the herbicide treatment protocol on Carmans, Grays, and St. Albans Bay. The deadline for proposals on the RFP sent out by the LMA was February 25th. The consensus of the Task Force was to schedule a special AIS Task Force Meeting to review these proposals in early March. The purpose of this meeting will be for the Task Force to discuss the proposals received to ensure compliance with the goals and objectives spelled out in the LVMP.
- A brief discussion on possible changes to the LVMP, which will need to be refined and discussed at an upcoming Task Force Meeting. There was general consensus that the LVMP needed to amended, although there was feedback that the final Report for this five-year project should acknowledge that some of the objectives spelled out in the original LVMP were not achieved (in particular native species).
- Possible impacts on the fisheries on Carmans, Grays, and Phelps Bays. It was noted that the treatments on these three bays provided benefit and introduced an acceptable level of risk

MN DNR, Report to MN Legislature on AIS Prevention Measures

Rendall stated that the MN DNR conducted a series of four stakeholder meetings statewide relating to this topic. As a result of these meetings, a smaller work group was assembled to review the prevention and containment ideas to: 1) prioritize the proposed ideas, 2) to identify partners for potential actions, and 3) to identify needs (resources and approvals). From this list of proposed ideas, eight recommendations have been made by the work group, which he summarized in greater detail. A Final Report of this Work Group is currently being prepared and should be finalized in the near future. These recommendations will need to be approved by Governor Dayton's office prior to legislation being introduced to the legislature.

The Task Force made a number of comments and asked a number of questions, in which Rendall responded to.

Next AIS Task Force Meeting

The next AIS Task Force Meeting was scheduled for Friday, 4/8/10, at 8:30 a.m. in the LMCD office.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:05 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Greg Nybeck
Executive Director