

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

8:30 a.m., Friday, April 8, 2011

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

Present: Kelsey Page, LMCD Board; Dan Baasen, LMCD Board; Bill Olson, LMCD Board; Debbie Siakel, LMCD Board; Chip Welling, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MN DNR); Sean Sisler, MN DNR; Heidi Wolf, MN DNR; John Barten, Three Rivers Park District (TRPD); Dick Osgood, Lake Minnetonka Association (LMA); Eric Evenson, Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD); Kelly Dooley, MCWD; Jay Green, Anglers for Habitat; Gabriel Jabbour, Tonka Bay Marina; Dick Woodruff; Lisa Whalen; Greg Nybeck, LMCD Executive Director.

Page stated that he had been recently appointed Co-Chair to the AIS Task Force. With Co-Chair Herb Suerth being absent, he stated that he would be chairing this meeting.

Evenson stated that Dr. Udai Singh had represented the MCWD at these meetings for some time. Dr. Singh is leaving the MCWD, which will be big shoes to fill. The MCWD is seeking a replacement and Dooley will be attending these meetings representing the agency.

Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved as submitted.

Minutes

The minutes from the 3/9/11 AIS Task Force Meeting were accepted as submitted. It was noted that the minutes from the 2/18/11 AIS Task Force Meeting had not been finalized and that they would be presented at the next meeting.

LMA, update on herbicide applicator(s) to be awarded contract(s) for 2010 Coordinated Herbicide Treatment Project

Osgood stated that the LMA had awarded the contract for all five bays to Professional Lake Management (PLM). PLM, which was one of three contractors that submitted proposals, was chosen based on pricing and a performance guarantee offered. This decision was made in consultation with the bay captains.

The Task Force discussed the following:

- The performance guarantee offered by PLM on Carmans, Grays, and Phelps Bays.
- Possible cost savings with the contracts also being awarded to PLM for Gideon and St. Albans Bays.
- An update on the fundraising efforts by the LMA on Carmans, Grays, and Phelps Bays.
- The Final Report has been received by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Army Corps) for 2010.
- More monitoring is planned by the Army Corps in 2011 than expected.
- An interest in pre-treatment surveys, although a question remained as to how this would be funded. This was estimated at \$1,500 to \$2,500 per bay.

Discussion of components for 2011 AIS Prevention and Management Project

Nybeck stated that he had recently met with Evenson, Osgood, Wolf, and Luke Skinner to discuss MN DNR watercraft inspection plans for the 2011 boating season on Lake Minnetonka. At least 4,000 hours are planned by the MN DNR, with the LMCD currently coordinating a supplemental program for 2011. Recommendations are

planned for the April 13th LMCD Board meeting, in consultation with a number of possible partnering agencies. Questions that he asked for feedback from the Task Force included:

- What level of watercraft inspections should be considered in light of the zebra mussel infestation in 2010?
- How do you rank priorities for watercraft inspections (incoming, outgoing, or both)?
- How might you financially be able to contribute to this project? He referenced the \$30,000 budgeted by the LMCD, a possible contribution by the MCWD of \$7,500 for AIS educational purposes, and a possible MN DNR Prevention grant up to \$7,500.
- What are your thoughts on volunteer inspections?
- Are there components outside of watercraft inspections that should be considered?

He stated that structured watercraft inspection coverage could be a greater challenge because of the greater flexibility of the MN DNR interns in 2011. Additionally, a supplemental program with Volt Workforce Solutions (Volt) is being negotiated for 2011 for the coverage of two, three, and four public accesses. He believed that four public accesses could be covered from Memorial Day weekend through Labor for approximately \$40,000.

The Task Force discussed the following:

- One change in 2011 will be random checks by the MN DNR on weekdays.
- If the pending legislation were to be adopted, a whole new classification of inspector will need to be created by the MN DNR.
- The ability for the inspectors (paid and volunteers) to pass out AIS educational materials.
- The inspection component in 2011 will be moved in front of the educational component. It was estimated that the educational component could range from two to five minutes per watercraft.
- Training for the watercraft inspectors is planned for April 15th and 16th, with a second session planned for May 6th and 7th. Volunteer training is also offered for lake associations on other lakes.
- An update was provided on the number of interns needed by the MN DNR, including a hiring status.
- The consensus was that a comprehensive volunteer program in 2011 was too late. However, a second pilot program in 2011 is a possibility. A number of Task Force members agreed to assist in looking further into this. Possibilities included high school students and senior citizens.
- Inspection of both incoming and outgoing watercraft is planned by the MN DNR. In most instances, this can be done. A higher priority will be placed by the MN DNR when there is both incoming and outgoing watercraft.
- The consensus of the Task Force was to recommend to the LMCD Board for supplemental Volt watercraft inspectors to cover four additional public accesses in 2011. An emphasis of these inspections will be both incoming and outgoing watercraft, with a higher priority on incoming watercraft.

Update on MN DNR AIS legislation (S.F. No. 847 & H.F. No. 1162)

Whalen provided an update on committee hearings that were scheduled for April 12th. She stated that the MN DNR's preference is to add a surcharge to the watercraft license, approximately \$5 per year. This seems to be a concern to some of the legislature and could be problematic for some of the programs envisioned because there would not be long-term funding source.

Wolf stated that there are three different funding proposals by Governor Dayton, the Senate, and the House. There are two issues currently being considered by the legislature (the bill and funding).

Whalen encouraged Task Force members to attend the committee hearings to testify to the importance of this legislation.

Osgood stated that he believed the committee hearings scheduled for April 12th would be discussing the bill rather than the funding of it.

Jabbour encouraged that efforts at the Lake Minnetonka area need to be better coordinated, in particular with the fishing lobby group.

Green stated that he believed the fishing lobby group was not opposed to the proposed legislation.

Jabbour stated that he could coordinate the commercial stakeholders on Lake Minnetonka to testify if that would be beneficial. He believed it would be beneficial to know the committee schedule, including which legislators serve on these committees.

Baasen stated that he believed it would be beneficial for the various Lake Minnetonka stakeholders to communicate that they support increase to the watercraft license surcharge as proposed by the MN DNR.

Osgood stated that the legislature appears to be considering creative ways to fund this bill that does not include an increase in a fee. One example is LCCMR funding.

Page stated that he believed the LMCD would be sending the MN DNR a letter supporting the legislation to the MN DNR Commissioner.

Future direction of AIS Comprehensive Plan Concept

Woodruff stated that an AIS prevention plan document was created within the last year by the Task Force for Lake Minnetonka. This document had implementation projects and the Task Force did not discuss it further after the zebra mussel infestation last summer. An AIS Comprehensive Plan is part of the LMCD's Strategic Plan and he questioned what should be done with this document.

The consensus of the Task Force was to take this document to the LMCD Board to verify whether an AIS Comprehensive Plan should continue to be included in its Strategic Plan.

Update on Zebra Mussel Action Items

The Task Force received an update on Action Items established at the January 14th AIS Task Force Meeting. The following attachment provides further details on this discussion.

Next AIS Task Force Meeting

The next AIS Task Force Meeting was scheduled for Friday, 6/10/10, at 8:30 a.m. in the LMCD office.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:12 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Greg Nybeck
Executive Director