

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

8:30 a.m., Friday, December 13, 2013

LMCD Office, 5341 Maywood Road (Suite 200), Mound, MN 55364

Present: Jeff Morris, LMCD Board; Jay Green, LMCD Board; Fred Meyer, LMCD Board; Tony Brough, Hennepin County Environmental Services; Dick Osgood, Lake Minnetonka Association (LMA); Eric Fieldseth, Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD); Chip Welling, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MN DNR); Adam Doll, MN DNR; John Barten, Three Rivers Park District (TRPD); Dr. Ray Newman, University of Minnesota (U of M); Dick Woodruff; Greg Nybeck, LMCD Executive Director.

Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved as submitted.

Minutes

The minutes from the 11/8/13 AIS Task Force Meeting were approved as amended, with three changes. First, the third bullet point on page three under Green's comments was changed to read "The current state statute has an AIS message of "Clean, Drain, and Dispose" while the Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers (SAH) message is "Clean, Drain, and Dry". There was discussion to change the language in the state statute so that it is the same as the SAH message (primarily so that there is a consistent message)". Second, the first sentence in the fourth bullet point on page three was changed to read "The MN DNR, through its legislative agenda, is proposing mandatory boater permitting legislation". Third, the words "AIS Committee" were deleted from the fifth bullet point on page three.

2013 Watercraft Inspection Analysis

Morris asked Green for background on this agenda item.

Green recommended that the Task Force discuss the LMCD watercraft inspection results with the MN DNR results on Lake Minnetonka. He believed that there were some questionable results for LMCD watercraft inspection program when compared to the MN DNR results. For example, the percentage of watercraft that arrived with the drain plug in was 12.77 percentage for the LMCD inspections compared to seven percentage for the MN DNR inspections on Lake Minnetonka. This drain plug percentage increases to 17 percent at Cooks Bay and he questioned whether there were problems associated with the process that these statistics were collected.

Woodruff concurred with Green and he questioned why the large discrepancies on this survey question amongst the four public accesses inspected by the LMCD.

Green provided further research he has checked into this statistic (i.e., type of watercraft, repeat users of the accesses, etc.).

Doll stated that there are two questions on the paper survey for incoming watercraft. The first question is whether the plug was in when inspected. The second question is whether the plug was out when the

watercraft arrived at the public access, which is done on an honor system. For the electronic application used by watercraft inspectors, the second question is asked only in specific situations.

There was a lengthy discussion on this topic. Highlights of this discussion included the following:

- The statistics referenced in the 2013 Lake Minnetonka Watercraft Inspection Report took into consideration the question of whether the drain plug was out when the watercraft arrived.
- There was discussion of further analyzing the watercraft data for these statistics (including whether further educational efforts are needed).
- The 2013 Hubbard County Watercraft Inspection Report.
- Whether certain type of watercraft were skewing the water plug statistics at the four public accesses inspected by the LMCD. The analysis by watercraft type for 2013 MN DNR inspections has not been finalized.
- Whether there was a difference in the performance of the LMCD inspectors compared to the MN DNR inspectors.
- Whether to conduct a trend analysis to compare 2013 results with 2012.
- A discussion of MN DNR watercraft survey data and real time access to this data. This could occur more easily if the survey data compiled was done electronically.
- Clarification that the percentage of watercraft leaving Lake Minnetonka with attached animals and plants was observed by the inspector during the inspection itself (not leaving the public access).
- A question was raised as to the methodology used to collect this data (are the numbers real or are they skewed). This should be addressed for 2014.
- An interest to distinguish between plants and animals leaving Lake Minnetonka.
- Statistics for TRPD watercraft inspectors in 2014 appear to be much lower.
- Statistics for the 2014 City of Shorewood watercraft inspections on Christmas Lake are pending.
- Based on the data, there has been significant social behavioral changes (although there is further work to be done). Special enforcement days should be considered with local law enforcement agencies for the minority of the public that do not comply with state laws. Additionally, the performance of the inspections needs to be audited.
- The consensus was for Green and Woodruff to further evaluate the 2013 LMCD and MN DNR watercraft inspection data (working with Doll).

2014 Watercraft Inspection Program

Morris asked Green for background on this agenda item.

Green stated that he hoped the Task Force would make a recommendation to purchase tablets for the 2014 Lake Minnetonka Watercraft Inspection Program.

Doll provided an overview of his experience with the use of tablets and other devices to collect MN DNR survey data in 2013.

The consensus was that:

- A recommendation should be made to the LMCD Board to purchase of tablets for 2014 (should the LMCD decide to continue as the project manager).
- A recommendation that watercraft inspections need to continue in 2014 at the same level or a greater in number of hours (with further details to be worked out on whether the LMCD or another organization would serve as the project manager).

- An agenda item is planned for the January meeting to continue discussion on the creation of a West Metro AIS Coordinating Committee (a topic is proposed to discuss the appropriate level of coordinated watercraft inspections as an example of how this committee might work).

Access Inventory

Morris asked Green for background on this agenda item.

Green stated that he was working with LMCD Administrative Technician Judd Harper on the creation of an access map for Lake Minnetonka. There were working papers from the 1991 Management Plan where some of this information was identified. This will need to be further updated and he hoped to share this with the Task Force in the near future.

AIS Educational Handouts

Morris asked Green for background on this agenda item.

Green stated that the LMCD secured a right of entry form from the City of Mound to allow the LMCD to conduct watercraft inspections at Cooks Bay in 2013. This form was approved, subject to: 1) providing the Mound City Council statistics and analysis from 2013, and 2) to prepare educational materials for handout at the public accesses should the program continue in future years (preventative steps and how to deal with zebra mussels and other invasive species).

The Task Force had a discussion on how educational materials could be provided to assist Green. In particular, some of the educational materials they have handed out to the public (i.e., MN DNR and Minnesota Sea Grant materials). There was a discussion of the educational materials provided by Hubbard County in 2013.

Green stated that he had some work to conduct on these educational materials, in consultation with the Task Force.

Schedule Next AIS Task Force Meeting

The next Task Force Meeting was scheduled for Friday, 1/17/14, at the LMCD office. This was moved back from 1/10/14 due to the MN DNR Roundtable planned for this date.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:21 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Greg Nybeck
Executive Director