

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

8:30 a.m., Friday, March 14, 2014

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

Present: Jeff Morris, LMCD Board; Kent Carlson, LMCD Board; Jay Green, LMCD Board; Rob Roy, LMCD Board; Tony Brough, Hennepin County Environmental Services (Hennepin County); Josh Leddy, Lake Minnetonka Association (LMA); Dick Osgood, LMA; Craig Dawson, Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD); Eric Fieldseth, MCWD; Chip Welling, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MN DNR); John Barten, Three Rivers Park District (TRPD); Dick Woodruff. Also in attendance: Greg Nybeck, LMCD Executive Director.

Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved as submitted.

Minutes

The minutes from the 2/14/14 AIS Task Force Meetings were approved as submitted.

MN DNR, review of draft Lake Vegetation Management Plan (LVMP) for Carmans, Grays, North Arm, and Phelps Bays

Morris asked for background on this agenda item from Welling.

Welling made the following comments:

- This agenda item was requested to allow comments from the Task Force on a draft LVMP submitted by the LMA.
- This version of the LVMP, which is for herbicide treatments in four bays, is 80% to 90% complete and includes key elements in the proposed treatment protocol. He clarified that there are other LVMP's for treatments of other bays on Lake Minnetonka.
- The main item of interest for this meeting is to provide feedback on the amount of control allowed per bay. He provided background on the whole bay treatment projects, which were initiated by a meeting with Congressman Jim Ramstad in 2005 (a resident of Grays Bay).
- He provided a distinction, based on feedback from the Army Corps of Engineers, on the effectiveness of large scale treatments on closed bays vs. open bays. He reviewed treatments proposed by the LMA on the four bays, including feedback from the MN DNR.
- He stated that the current LVMP process is more concise and succinct than the prior LVMP prepared for Lake Minnetonka by this Task Force.
- He entertained questions or comments.

A summary of some of the Task Force comments were as follows:

- The justification on North Arm Bay for large scale treatments (to provide recreational and ecological benefits) and whether this was supported by the plant survey data.
- What is planned for treatment of curlyleaf pondweed (CLP) on North Arm Bay.
- Clarifying that North Arm Bay was identified as one of the eight suitable bays on Lake Minnetonka for whole bay or large scale herbicide treatments in the comprehensive plan.

- The harvesting strategy on North Arm Bay should a herbicide treatment occur in 2014. The public access on North Arm will continue to be used while mechanical harvesting is done on Crystal Bay by the LMCD (in particular the west end). With regards to harvesting on North Arm Bay, this could be considered if the LMA were to support it. Without this support, Nybeck questioned whether this could be done because he was concern of finger pointing by residents if the herbicide treatment was not effective. There was discussion of further defining a strategy that would involve both herbicides and mechanical harvesting.
- The duration of the proposed LVMP is five years,
- Setback distances for herbicides from native species (i.e., bullrush and water lilies) and whether this has changed.
- North Arm Bay (whether it is open or closed).
- Private harvesting companies and whether they need a permit from the MN DNR.
- Survey follow-up methods available in 2014 on North Arm Bay (point intercept and possibly hydro-acoustics).
- Planned involvement by the Army Corps of Engineers in 2014.
- Costs associated with aquatic plant management (APM) permits (including interest by some legislators to increase fees associated with these permits). One concern associated with this is that some residents may conduct the work and not secure the necessary APM permit if the costs increase too much. It was suggested that communicating to the residents that securing the necessary APM permits needs to be done and is relatively inexpensive (in particular for self applications).
- The prevalence of coontail on North Arm Bay and whether there are management plans on other bodies of water where this also occurs. This discussion included the navigational problems coontail can create.
- A discussion of combining and synchronizing the LVMPs on Lake Minnetonka.

Welling thanked the Task Force for their feedback.

Update of February 26th West Metro AIS Committee Meeting

Morris asked for background on this agenda item from Barten.

Barten stated that the next committee meeting is March 21st. Based on the discussion at the first two meetings, he questioned whether a coordinated regional watercraft inspection program could occur. Each jurisdiction attending these meetings has its own policy makers to report to (the pooling of resources to the locations of greatest need within the regional does not appear that it will happen). He believed that the general consensus was that the concept of inspecting and decontaminating 100% of the watercraft and trailers is not realistic (although there are various opinions on this). He believed that topics of discussion at the next meeting will include goals and focus of the committee. Two thoughts that he believed all parties could agree to include: 1) the need for a consistent regional AIS educational message, and 2) better focus on where this committee goes and who takes ownership. He stated that he and Nybeck had conducted a great deal of the committee work to date (these efforts are somewhat duplicating the efforts of this committee).

The committee had a brief discussion on this agenda item and the consensus was that Barten would keep the Task Force up to date.

Feedback on Draft 2014 AIS Educational Brochure

Morris asked for background on this agenda item from Green.

Green stated that he had prepared a first draft of a brochure. A great deal of information was available that was utilized for this brochure (including a current MN DNR pamphlet). The draft pamphlet focuses on Lake Minnetonka (including what invasive species are here and what are threatening Lake Minnetonka) and the necessary inspection procedures. He hoped to be further along in the preparation of this pamphlet in the next few weeks.

A summary of the Task Force discussion was as follows:

- Whether the MN DNR had any best management practices to be included in this pamphlet (in particular coping with zebra mussels).
- The concept of using a water flow prototype for zebra mussels as an alternative to purchasing a boat lift.
- Whether a distribution plan for the brochure had been established (i.e., city halls, commercial marinas, etc.).
- The 21 day requirement, per state law, to move water related equipment from an AIS infested water body.
- A review of AIS related materials handed out by Hubbard County in 2013.
- A discussion of whether state law requires a permit for trash hauling companies that haul milfoil from residential properties from Lake Minnetonka (in particular with attached zebra mussels). There was consensus that further research on this was merited and that Woodruff would check further into this (BFI, Randy's Sanitation, etc.).

Task Force Member Reports

Brough stated that Hennepin County would be reprinting the Lake Minnetonka map next winter for the 2015 boating season. As part of this reprint project, the back of the map will be changed to document the top five or six boating behaviors on Lake Minnetonka that need to be addressed. Based on this feedback, these top five or six behavioral changes will be staged during the 2014 boating season (identifying correct and incorrect behavior).

Welling stated that a meeting with stakeholders was coordinated locally on March 12th. He believed that the meeting was productive and effective (less adversarial). A number of questions were raised, in which he summarized. A similar meeting is planned for mid April in St. Cloud.

Fieldseth circulated hard copies of 2013 AIS Risk Assessment Reports for Lake Minnetonka and the MCWD. One of these reports was an update from the February 14th meeting, in which he elaborated on the changes (in particular errors for incoming watercraft that needed decontamination and a MN DNR decontamination unit was not available). A zebra mussel study by the MCWD is planned for Lake Minnetonka for 2014 (third consecutive year).

Green stated that he would be hosting, with Gabriel Jabbour, an AIS roundtable discussion at the Lafayette Club on March 18th. This is an opportunity for informal discussion with the presenters at the March 19th MCWD AIS Symposium in St. Paul.

Roy stated that progress was being made to establish a lake improvement district (LID) on St. Albans Bay (to raise an estimated \$25,000 annually). A petition is currently being circulated to establish a LID for invasive species (including vegetation), water clarity, and lake levels. An application to establish a LID will be submitted to the MN DNR should a large majority of the signatures come back in favor. He provided further background on how the LID would be established.

Barten stated that the TRPD was currently finalizing an agreement with the City of Plymouth for watercraft inspections in 2014 (Medicine Lake). Parkers Lake, which is in Plymouth, will not be covered by inspectors in 2014.

Dawson reminded the Task Force of the MCWD AIS Symposium on March 19th.

Schedule Next AIS Task Force Meeting

The next Task Force Meeting was scheduled for Friday, 4/11/14, at the LMCD office.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:15 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Greg Nybeck
Executive Director