



PROJECT OUTLINE

HIGH WATER DECLARATION REVIEW (2020)

05/23/2020 update

Project Definition

Based on experiences and feedback from the high water declaration in 2019, LMCD staff and HCSO Water Patrol wanted to gain additional feedback and review processes and procedures for High Water Declaration. Regulations are in place addressing high lake water levels to protect people from injuries, property from damage, and the lake and its shoreline. Because of the impact to a variety of stakeholders, it is important to have an efficient and effective process and procedures. Many activities can be performed administratively. Other recommendations or suggestions may require Board approval and will be brought forward to the Board for final consideration.

Project Objectives

- To consider best management practices to maximize efficiency of implementation of High Water declarations.
- To review feedback and obtain additional feedback from stakeholders regarding High Water Declarations.
- To enhance communication efforts with the stakeholders and public regarding High Water Declarations, corresponding lake rules, and etiquette.
- To give the staff and Board a summary regarding any recommendations, suggestions, and/or financial implications.

Project Background

During a High Water Declaration, minimum wake areas on Lake Minnetonka are extended to 600 feet from shore throughout the lake or potentially all minimum wake throughout the lake depending on lake water level. Additionally, certain bays are made minimum wake areas in their entirety even during 600 foot declaration. Lake Minnetonka remains open for public access and use.

In 2019, High Water was declared on May 31st and remained in effect until June 12th. In accordance with LMCD Code Article 10 Chapter 1, the LMCD worked with HCSO Water Patrol to give notice to the public and enforce speed restrictions on the Lake. HCSO and others have offered feedback regarding implementation for consideration. LMCD staff received a significant amount of feedback, as well as HCSO Water Patrol.

Review

A significant amount of communication and research has been conducted regarding operations and potential improvements since the 2019 boating season and efforts of a previous workgroup.

Deliverables

Provide a detailed summary for Board consideration regarding High Water Declaration regulations, processes, procedures, etc. An update will be provided to the board for feedback and moving forward with the project.

Key Stakeholders and Communications Audiences

- Hennepin County Sheriff's Office Water Patrol
- Lakeshore owners and associations
- Lake visitors and non-resident recreationists
- Licensees such as marina owners and operators
- Lake service providers and water-related businesses.
- Municipalities and other government agencies

Project Development Steps and Time Frame

The following is a tentative process and timeline for this workgroup project. It is subject to change depending on needs.

1. Gather Existing Information – ***Ongoing since May 2019***
 - Calls to LMCD before, during, and after 2019 High Water Declaration
 - Facebook comments on High Water Declaration handout
 - LMCD staff discussion with HCSO Water Patrol Lieutenant
 - Feedback received from Listserv email (licensees, lake service providers, residents, visitors)
2. Provide Update on Activities To Date and Obtain Feedback from Board Regarding Direction—***May 27, 2020***
 - i. Review stakeholder input, staff observations, and other information
 - ii. Summarize information
 - iii. Identify if any key areas of need for policy change
 - iv. Identify if any key areas of need for procedural change based on gathered information
3. Determine When and Method to Communicate with Stakeholders – ***2020***
4. Provide update regarding any recommendations to Board for consideration. – ***June 24, 2020***
 - Review administrative processes and procedures
 - Determine if board wants additional review related to small bay characteristics related to high water regulations and appropriate timeline.

5. Board Review and Potential Adoption of Code Amendments Ifs Applicable – **July 8, 2020**