

Big Sandy Area Lakes Watershed Management Project
Executive Council & Technical Team Meeting Minutes
June 13, 2018

Attendance: Melanie Bomier, Carlton County SWCD; Jim Carlson, Big Sandy Lake; John Cyrus, City of Tamarack; Barb Dahl, Carlton County SWCD Supervisor; Ray Gurske, Tamarack River Watershed Team; Ramona Hooper, McGregor Township Supervisor; Dianne Knoben, SWHIM; Patti McPhail, Cromwell Island Lake; Gary Peterson, Carlton County Commissioner; Bill Pratt, Aitkin County Commissioner; Eimy Quispe, Carlton County SWCD; Al Rinta, Tamarack Sno-Flyers; Carmen Rinta, Tamarack Sno-Flyers / Round Lake; Janet Smude, Aitkin County SWCD; Frank Turnock, Aitkin County SWCD Supervisor; Norbert Wollak, Cromwell Island Lake; Sharon Zelazny, Cromwell Island Lake.

1. The meeting was called to order at 2:05 p.m. by Chairperson Barb Dahl. The agenda was approved with the addition of the Dick and Kathy Beatty new project submission. M/S/C Carmen Rinta / Patti McPhail. Eimy Quispe was welcomed to the meeting and introduced herself. She is a Conservation Corps Apprentice working with the Carlton County SWCD.

2. The May meeting minutes were reviewed and approved as presented. M/S/C Ray Gurske / Dianne Knoben.

3. A financial report for the month of May was shared. Expenses totaled \$ 2,467.08 from the EPA 319 Grant and AIS Activities Grant. Expenses were related to the rain barrel discount program, education activities, AIS Placemat, and 3rd Grade AIS Education Event. The report was approved as presented. M/S/C Bill Zelazny / Ray Gurske.

4. Old Business:

4.1 2018 Aitkin County AIS Grant Implementation Update / Financial Summary: Implementation of this grant has continued. Rintas have worked on distribution of the placemats. The newsletter and 3rd grade education event have been completed. There is still funding remaining to reimburse Rintas for their mileage preparing and delivering the placemats. The placemats and the education event came in under budget. There is approximately \$ 870.00 remaining. This may be used for other education activities, if the group agrees on another project. The Group discussed another placemat with a map of the Big Sandy Watershed and large maps of the watershed that may be used for presentations/meetings. Everyone was asked to consider these and bring ideas to the next meeting.

4.2. Lake Association / Lake Advocate Sharing Session: This workshop / session will be held on Saturday June 30th at the Tamarack Sno-Flyers Clubhouse. A flier for the event was shared. The session will include time for a watershed / WRAPS discussion, sharing time between associations and a presentation on media relations. Melanie Bomier and Janet Smude will be coordinating the event. The Group suggested promoting this on the "What's Happening in Aitkin" facebook page and on the radio.

4.3. Summer Education Efforts: Several summer education events were discussed. A watershed tour should be held. Frank Turnock shared that the peat plant is reluctant to commit due to recent rains. The Prairie Lake and Round Lake areas were also noted as potential tour areas. Approximately \$ 2,000 remains for mailings. Topics that could be included in a mailing were discussed and included water testing results, zoning regulation, education for new landowners, water quality impairments. There are 1,200 property owners on Big Sandy Lake. Mailing to other smaller lakes may be a good way to utilize these funds. Melanie Bomier and Janet Smude will talk to the county zoning offices and see if they have a flier relating to zoning issues that we could distribute. The Aitkin County Rivers and Lakes Fair will be held next Saturday. A rain barrel will be given away at the booth. The Group discussed purchasing a rain barrel to give away at the Harvest Fest as well. A motion approving this purchase was made M/S/C Frank Turnock / Jim Carlson.

4.4. EPA Section 319 Grant Completion: The Group was reminded that the EPA Section 319 Grant will be ending on August 31, 2018. Plans for spending the remaining funding were discussed. Septic system inventories will be worked on. Seminar funds will be used for the Lake Association / Lake Advocate Sharing Session. Water sampling funding will be used up by August.

5. New Business:

5.1. WRAPS Ambassador Meeting: The meeting is scheduled for Tuesday June 26th from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm. It will be held at Long Lake Conservation Center. Everyone is welcome to attend and learn about water quality restoration strategies being developed for the Mississippi River Grand Rapids Unit Watershed, which includes the Big Sandy Area Lakes Watershed.

5.2. Grant Funding Opportunities / Focus: The list of priorities for future work that was developed last fall was shared. We have worked on some of these issues, but some remain to be addressed. The Group was asked to consider the list and suggest additions if needed. Janet Smude shared that the recently submitted 319 grant application was not funded. She has proposed the Big Sandy Watershed for a revised Section 319 Small Watersheds Focus program. This would support selected watershed for several years with funding targeted to bring impaired waters back to meeting state water quality standards. The Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources Clean Water Fund Grant program should be opening in July too. This is a very competitive program. Options were discussed.

5.3. July Annual Meeting: The July meeting will include items for the annual meeting and the regular business meeting. It will be held on Wednesday July 11th. The positions of Chairperson and Secretary / Treasurer are set to be elected at this meeting.

6. Working Session:

6.1. Sub Watershed Project Reports:

6.1.1. SWHIM: There was nothing new to report.

6.1.2. Sandy Lake: No report was shared.

6.1.3. Sandy River: No report was shared.

6.1.4. Tamarack River: This group held their first meeting of the summer. Donations are being requested for weed treatment at the public access on North Island Lake. Snails have been a concern. Ray Gurske is working on visiting new landowners on Tamarack Lake and sharing information. The presentation of the AIS t-shirt to 3rd graders was well received.

6.1.5. Prairie Lake / River: Joe Beaupre updated the group via email. This association held their spring meeting on May 27th. Prairie Lake is listed as Impaired for mercury. There is an enormous amount of large snails in the lake again this year. Solar lights will be placed on top of the buoys marking dangerous spots on the lake.

6.2. New Project Submissions: Dick and Kathy Beatty live on the north side of Big Sandy Lake. They are interested in adding native shrubs to their shoreland area. These will help to stabilize the soil and improve wildlife habitat. A motion approving \$ 680 in cost share assistance, not to exceed 50% of the total eligible project costs was made. M/S/C Frank Turnock / Ray Gurske.

7. Agenda Additions: There were no agenda additions.

8. The next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, July 11th. It will be held at the Cromwell Park Pavilion, if it is available. The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 pm. M/S/ Jim Carlson / Bill Zelazny.