

Big Sandy Area Lakes Watershed Management Project
Executive Council & Technical Team Meeting Minutes
August 11, 2021

Attendance: Bill Reed, Big Sandy Lake; Clarence Badger, Tamarack River; J. John Cyrus, City of Tamarack; Carmen Rinta, Round Lake, Tamarack; Al Rinta, Tamarack Sno-Flyers; Ray Gurske, Tamarack River Watershed Team; Brian Napstad, Aitkin County; Jeff Budwick, City of McGregor; Frank Turnock, Aitkin County SWCD; Gary Peterson, Carlton County; Dianne Knoblen, SWHIM; Lindsey Lally, North Island Lake, Cromwell; Ramona Hooper, McGregor Township; Tom Johnson, Cromwell; Sharon Zelazny, Island Lake; Bill Zelazny, Island Lake; Norbert Wollack, North Island Lake; Barb Dahl, Carlton SWCD; Melanie Bomier, Carlton SWCD

1. The meeting was called to order at 2:00 pm. Introductions were made. The agenda was approved as presented. M/S/C Carmen Rinta / Al Rinta.
2. The June 2021 meeting minutes were reviewed and approved as presented. M/S/C Frank Turnock/ Ramona Hooper. The July 2021 meeting minutes were reviewed and approved as presented. M/S/C Al Rinta / Bill Reed.
3. A financial report for the months of June & July 2021 was shared. The only change from last month was the addition of \$465 from Carlton County AIS to support purchase of the youth fishing tackle packages. M/S/C Gary Peterson / Al Rinta.

4. Old Business:

4.1. MPCA / EPA Section 319 Small Watersheds Focus Program: Tom Johnson gave a presentation on the history of the Cromwell sewer system. It was built in 1991, replacing a community mound system. A combination of USDA and Army Corps of Engineers grants were used to fund various sewer projects over the years. The system consists of two treatment ponds west of town which cycle every 180 days. The system is discharged into Flower Lake (a part of the Tamarack River) and must be under the MPCA limit of phosphorus and bacteria. Alum is used to reduce phosphorous if needed. The system works very well and has improved water quality on Upper and Lower Island Lakes.

4.2. Cromwell Stormwater Runoff Management Projects Update: Melanie Bomier reported that she and Sharon Zelazny met with the engineers designing the project. The plan is to have final designs complete by December with bidding to occur in February. The goal will be to construct in April/May to avoid the busiest use of the Pavilion.

4.3. 2021 Aitkin County AIS Education / Prevention Grant: Melanie Bomier reported the additional funds from the Carlton County AIS program. Carmen Rinta provided an example of the tackle packages to show the group. The group approved the purchase of the tackle packages through McGregor Printing. M/S/C Sharon Zelazny / Lindsey Lally.

5. New Business: No new business was reported.

6. Working Session:

6.1. Sub Watershed Project Reports:

6.1.1. SWHIM: Diane Knoblen noted that cows have been noted in the Tamarack River. Melanie Bomier reported that working with livestock producers was a priority in the 319 grant.

6.1.2. Sandy Lake: Bill Reed reported that lake levels are very low due to construction at the dam.

6.1.3. Sandy River: Ramona Hooper shared that beaver dam removal work is ongoing.

6.1.4. Tamarack River: Ray Gurske reported that fishing has been slow and weeds have been high this summer. Norbert Wollack reported that a recent Pine Knot article reported swimming restrictions on Upper and Lower Island Lakes and asked that we look into it. Bill Zelazny reported that the DNR conducted a fish survey on Upper Island Lake due to a recent winter fish kill. DNR found a healthy fish population. Because of a healthy crappie population, DNR plans to stock Lower Island Lake and let the fish migrate to Upper Island Lake when they are larger.

6.1.5. Prairie Lake / River: No report

8. The next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday September 8th, at 2:00 pm. The meeting will be held at the Tamarack Sno-flyers. The meeting was adjourned at 2:55 pm. M/S/ Frank Turnock / Al Rinta.