

## Lake Washington Improvement Association Board Meeting June 7, 2021

Board Members Present: Mike & Sandy Wosmek, Lyle Walker, Pat Hanson,  
Ron Bubany, Steve Grotbo, Steve Ullom, David Rathe, Sharon Daniels,

*Board members please let someone know if you are unable to attend.*

**Treasurer Report:** Invasive Species Fund \$43,835.47 General Fund \$78,004.24

**Paid Memberships: 159**

1) **Call Meeting to Order** 7 PM- Pres. Steve Grotbo with Zoom meeting for some.

2) **Secretary's May Board Meeting Report** approved for publication on the website.

3) **Treasurer's May Financial Report** – Lyle W reported all ads for the Spring Newsletter have been paid. He has 10 more memberships since the end of June. Lyle reported Capital One cut the interest rate they have been paying LWIA. He proposed and the Board approved buying a CD at Perrenial Bank for \$50,000.00 at .45% interest rate. The Board approved the year-end financial report prepared by Peihl, Beckman, Hanson and the filing of the State (\$25) and Federal forms.

Income for June: \$2000 memberships, \$480 donation to invasive species fund, \$8.61 interest, \$215 DFD donations, \$80 for Spring Newsletter ads.

Expenses: \$1116.67 Spring Newsletter, \$275 garbage can at Ellsworth Landing, \$124.99 printing of newsletter.

Total Funds - \$121,839.71

4) **Board officer elections** – The following LWIA Board officers were elected - President: Steve Grotbo, Vice President: Mike Wosmek, Treasure: Lyle Walker, and Secretary: Steve Ullom

5) **Lake Survey** – Laurie J placed <https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/sv/7QQwSTS/LWIA> link on Facebook and website. Ron B will send out a link via email. She reported some surveys have been 83 people started it, only 12 submissions.

6) **Culvert replacement** – Steve G has received a lot of feedback from both Stella and Washington via Facebook and email. Ron B sent out a note wondering if a bridge might be an option, because we are asking for a 12 foot culvert. The DNR seems to be ok with 10 foot and would consider a 12 foot wide culvert. Steve G has sent these ideas to Phil Schmalz (Meeker Co. Engineer). Steve G has also been talking to the Stella Board about this project and has agreed to be the lead for LWIA Board in ongoing discussions for the design and shape of this project. FYI for all:

Phil Schmalz, P.E.

Public Works Director/County Engineer

Meeker County

422 South Johnson Dr. Litchfield, MN 55355

Phone: 320-693-5360\

7) **Ellsworth landing parking** lot - Bonni H. received the following feedback on May 24<sup>th</sup>.

Hi Bonni,

Just wanted to follow up on our conversation from this afternoon regarding the Lake Washington Ellsworth Access site. I have added paint striping to our project list for the summer. I think we can get to it by mid to late June. Please let me know if you have any other questions or concerns

Thank You

Kristy Rice

MNDNR Parks and Trails

Acquisition and Development Specialist

20596 Highway 7

Hutchinson, MN 55350

(320)753-0326

8) **Fishing competitions** –

Bonni had following email exchange with Scott Mackenthun (DNR) on May 12<sup>th</sup> / 13<sup>th</sup> timeframe.

Hi Scott,

My name is Bonni Halverson, I am reaching out from the Lake Washington Association. This past year there have been some serious concerns by Lake Property Owners on the amount of Fishing tournaments that were held on the Lake. Sometimes there were 3 per weekend and multiple per day. Residents are concerned about the negative effects of to much fishing pressure. We are aware that the DNR regulates fishing tournamnets of 50 Boats or more. So due to multiple fishing tournaments being held the same day in addition to leagues, what

can the DNR do to control this issue. Obviously we love people being able to enjoy fishing, fishing leagues, fishing tournaments, but we want to keep our Lake stocked and our Lake safe. Thanks Bonni Halverson

Hi, Bonni.

Thanks for writing. Washington and Stella have become very popular with bass anglers. The lakes have long been popular with anglers since they offer both smallmouth and largemouth bass, and with the rise in popularity of bass angling in high schools and colleges, increases in fishing leagues, and a pandemic that had/had people scrambling to get outdoors, the lakes have seen more visitors in the last couple years. Washington and Stella's ecology is changing with the introduction of zebra mussels; the lakes are clearer and warmer, are more conducive to aquatic plant growth than in the past, and as such may be better habitat for and more hospitable to largemouth and smallmouth bass. The habitat changes could conceivably have increased the lake's preferred habitat for bass, and anglers could pick up on it with better bass angling. Certainly in the 2019 angler survey (creel), we saw a big increase in anglers targeting bass.

The state of Minnesota was one of the first in the nation to regulate tournaments. Presently, a tournament does not need a permit if the number of boats is under 25, is not limited to specific waters, contestants are 18 or younger, the contest is limited to rough fish, or total prizes are \$500 or less. For permitted tournaments, the number held on a waterbody is limited based on that waterbody's size. For Washington, it's no more than 3 permitted tournaments per month, which we have and continue to stringently follow. All of these rules are right out of state statute: <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/97C.081> There's no level of limitation we have beyond what is in statute about permitted tournaments.

I imagine what you are observing is a general increase in fishing activity and fishing pressure. Our creel from 2001 when the lake was a walleye factory showed we used to have a lot of boats chasing walleyes. In the 2019 creel, we saw many fewer boats but much more interest in bass. As mentioned earlier, we are seeing a lot of club level fishing and league fishing - all of which fall below permitting thresholds. There's nothing we in DNR can do to limit this level of participation. It could happen organically from any group of anglers. I think with Washington's proximity to St. Cloud and the Twin Cities and the growing reputation as a good to great bass fishing lake, it's seeing more bass anglers, particularly in evenings and on weekends. That might come as a surprise to residents who have been on the lake 10 years or less and who didn't see a lot of boats but for those around in the late 90's and early 2000's when the walleye fishing was good, it's probably very similar.

My best advice might be to reach out to the Meeker County Sheriff's office. They might be able to reallocate water patrol hours and have more people on Washington if boating safety and increased use becomes a concern.

Have a safe and productive fishing opener,  
Scott

**9) Mugs for retiring members** - Sharon D ordered 8 mugs and the Board approval reimbursing her \$239.40 (\$29.93 per mug). Ron B volunteered to deliver a mug to Skip and personally thank him for his years of service to LWIA.

#### **10) Committee Reports:**

##### **Aquatic Invasive Species:**

**A. Water Quality Testing** – Dave R reported the first sample was taken on May 17 in the middle of the lake and the seechi disk reading was 8.5 feet. On June 7<sup>th</sup> he did another water sample with the seechi reading at 3-3.5 feet. Dave wonders if the lower reading could have been the results of higher winds and lower water levels. He will be checking this again in June.

**B. Vegetation Survey** – Ron B, Mike W, and Mark J completed a vegetation survey at many waypoints around the lake. They did NOT find any signs of milfoil on the vegetation sampled. The area we treated last year looks very good and the treatment was affective. Limnopro did an AIS early detection survey of Lake Washington about 3 years ago and the Committee is recommending we have a survey completed by them this year. The Board approved going ahead with an AIS Early Detection Survey on Lake Washington this year at a cost of about \$1500.00

**C. I-LIDS/Watercraft Inspection** – Dave R reported the unit is working fine, but he still may do some minor tweaks. Mike W and Dave R. reported there have been lots of water craft inspectors at the landing on the weekends.. The DNR has had a decontamination station running several weekends.

They have been requiring all watercraft coming out of the water need to be sprayed down.

**D. Cormorants & Pelicans** Steve G received the following response sent to him by Gary Nohrenberg, MN State Director regarding hazing of cormorants.

Hello Scott, Doug and Edie. I'm not sure how many different non-lethal hazing/harassment methods have been utilized in MN but there has been a wide variety of methods attempted nationwide with varying degrees of success. Stocked ponds/hatcheries/raceways that aren't too large could benefit from the use of everything from grid wires over the pond or raceway to pistol launched pyrotechnics, propane canons, mylar tape, kites, owl or eagle effigies, scary man devices, scary eye balloons and human presence. A number of those things are available through companies such as Reed Joseph or Margo Supply company to name a couple. If you're talking more open water situations or larger ponds/lakes it's a little more difficult but cracker shells, pistol launched pyros can be effective. However there use requires a lot of time and persistence/presence to exclude those birds from where they want to be. In both scenarios, the birds can become acclimated to those non-lethal methods so often some sort of lethal reinforcement to take a limited number of birds can be helpful. Of course, the use of your louder type frightening devices can annoy nearby neighbors, livestock, etc so the selection of what method you may want to employ should be considered for those reasons. You would need to check but I believe there are current state statutes that prevent the use of motorized equipment e.g. boats, etc to harass wildlife so that may require a state permit even though DCCO are not a state-protected species in MN. In my experience, boat harassing can work but again it requires a lot of effort/persistence and more time than most people have to conduct. If someone were to consider that method they'd want to start conducting those activities when the cormorants first start returning usually in April. While cormorants are not a state-protected bird, they are a federally protected migratory bird but a federal permit is not required to conduct non-lethal hazing in most cases. If harassing or hazing is taking place on or near a nesting colony which often contain other bird species, most activities would not be permitted once chicks are present in the nest, which is occurring right now. Let me know if you have any questions or want to discuss this further. Best to reach me on my cell at 651-304-0403.

Thanks,

Gary Nohrenberg  
MN State Director  
USDA, APHIS, Wildlife Services  
644 Bayfield St., Suite 215  
St. Paul, MN 55107  
W: 651-224-6027  
C: 651-304-0403  
Fax: 651-224-4271  
[gary.nohrenberg@usda.gov](mailto:gary.nohrenberg@usda.gov)

There was a discussion by the Board to set up a volunteer sign up for individuals to use boats to harass the cormorants when they are on the lake. This process would need to look at an early start time and some way to document the results from such actions. Steve G was going to talk with Gary N about the permit needed to use boats as a means for harassing the cormorants.

**E. Zebra Mussels** – Steve G reported Friday's U of M online coffee break session ended up discussing the zebra mussel topic extensively at the end. A whitepaper has been published at [https://www.maisrc.umn.edu/sites/maisrc.umn.edu/files/zebra\\_mussel\\_treatment\\_white\\_paper.pdf](https://www.maisrc.umn.edu/sites/maisrc.umn.edu/files/zebra_mussel_treatment_white_paper.pdf) for treatment of Zebra Mussels. There are four options that are talked about in this paper. Presently there has been a pause on treatment strategies. Our lake is too large and widespread to do treatments. Pelican lake is the next chosen test lake where a 25 foot trailer is going to be parked on a person's property (Susan is her name) for the summer with hoses running into the water. This sucks in and removes the zebra mussels and puts water back clean. Relies on a lake with a lot of veligers (tiny ones). Steve G wondered if we have a spot to put trailer on Lake Washington? There was a discussion about how this might work. That led to many questions, but if this were an effective method, we believe

we could find a place on the lake to set up a trailer. Mike W reported the Hotels were put out on Memorial Day.

**F. Watershed** – Mike W reported on the status of the work that needs to be done on the holding pond on the southwest corner of the lake. He has been working with Joe Norman, Meeker Soil and Water. The official name Meeker County has for it is Sediment Holding Pond FY13-09. Mike W and Gary Daniels fixed the hole in the berm. Because of the design of the pond it is very difficult to get close enough to dredge. Specialized equipment is needed for this job. Mike has experience with Jay Richert Excavating that has the equipment to dredge the pond. He has arranged for them to do this project. It will cost about \$2900.00 and the Board approved. They will dump each scoop in separate piles outside the perimeter of the pond. These piles need to be spread out in the area they are dumped at. Mike W and Gary Danielson volunteered to spread out the piles of dirt. Joe Norman is not concerned about this sediment washing back into the pond, in fact he believes the pond may not need to be dredged again. Mike has contacted the property owner Scott Hagge and confirmed the area around the pond is classified as a wet land.

Mike W also clarified that the Nelson Farm, draining into the bay just west of the outlet has no open field tiles running into the culvert going into the lake. Joe Norman would like for us to do some testing of the water coming into the lake in this area. Mike will do a water sample before a big rain is predicted and then 8-10 hours after the storm test the water again.

**Membership / Shoreline Captains** – Laurie J was not at this meeting. She did have a Shoreline Captains meeting on May 22, and passed out many of the surveys and other information. She is still looking for more Shoreline Captains.

#### **Education & Public Relations:**

**A. Summer Newsletter** – articles are due to Ron Bubany by June 28th

**B. Website, Facebook, and Email Activity** – Steve G reported there is quite a bit of activity on all these sites. A concern was shared that some people think that because there is a posting on our Facebook page that we are sponsoring these different events announced. There have been concerns expressed in the past, that there were events on the lake that some judged as loud and they did not know about these happening. As a good neighbor jester we have allowed those sponsoring events that may go into the evenings to announce them on our Facebook page. It was decided by the Board that when announcing events on or around the lake on Face book we will clearly state that this is not a LWIA sponsored event.

**Social Committee** – It has been decided LWIA will sponsor a Pork Chop Dinner on Saturday Aug. 7. B&B Sports will pay for the pork chops. The schedule will be the same: Social Hour 5-6, Dinner at 6, and then we will have a short question and answer session.

The 4<sup>th</sup> of July Boat Parade is on and we will send out an email blast letting people know, also will be an announcement in the July Newsletter

**Financial – Grants** – Sharon D has been working on the EWM treatment permit for the grant we did get with the State DNR and Eric Katzenmeyer. She is waiting for Mark J and the vegetation committee to share their EWM treatment plan for this year. (Note the committee did not find any milfoil in the most recent vegetation survey). Limnopro will be doing an AIS Early Detection Lake Survey, maybe some of this money can be used for this project.

**MCAL-** Pat Hanson shared via email forward, a Survey sent out by Kim Hempel, MCAL Secretary asking for feedback on a plan that is looking at how all the agencies in the state of Minnesota can work together, coordinate and assign areas of responsibilities with regard to how AIS plans can be implemented in a coordinated way by all agencies. From Local, to county, watersheds, regional, UM research and All state agencies that deal with all environmental issues in the state. It was Labeled as **MISAC Invasive species plan review Survey**

Steve Ullom did review this document and shared the following on his review of the plan.

I have studied the plan (not all 85 pages just the ones they were asking for feedback) and here are some thoughts:

Section 4 – Desired Outcomes, Strategies, and Actions – Should reflect ways Lake Associations and in turn lake shore property owners can be part of the process and are a priority when it comes to identification and desired treatment outcomes for all AIS. Experience has shown us the people identifying AIS or lake water issues, and as a result are the ones providing most of the action with regards to identification, management, and treatments has been the property owners, who have a close relationship

with the waters. When it comes to Coordination and Communication: Lake Associations have the best means of communicating with and providing education to people living on the lake. Most send out Newsletters 1-3 times per year with valuable information about lake water issues. An Outreach Action could be to provide written information to Lake Associations with pictures and strategies that can be shared with property owners. Funding to support the newsletters would go a long way to providing valuable information with regards to lake issues i.e. identification, treatment, management strategies, outcomes, communication, and education.

Another Action when it comes to Funding, could be the streamlining the Grant Application Process – This year we have had to spend nearly double the hours applying for grants that we have been awarded for MANY years. When a grant program is announced, be clear who can apply, including coordination between the different agencies making these awards (County, State, DNR). There needs to be greater trust and more open channels of communication with the people on the local (lake level) that doesn't get bogged down in reporting requirements. We can see a check list versus sending in copies of every action taken or dollar spent.

Section 6 – Priorities for Action – must include specific (one page outline) of who is responsible when it comes to increase communication, outreach, coordination, and collaboration involving AIS species management in MN. Specifically contacts at all levels that can provide leadership, communication, and education specific materials that Lake Associations can use and share with members and lakeshore property owners. These people could better coordinate with different lakes in the same watershed or district. This would better coordinate actions in all waters that are connected.

I did fill out the survey and sent in my 2 cents. The Plan is way to expansive in soooo many areas, I wonder how or who is going to be able to look at all the different aspects of the plan and truly implement it. We will see...

## **11) Open Discussion**

**Next Board Meeting Scheduled for July 1<sup>st</sup> at Dassel Rod and Gun.**