

**MEETING OF THE ELK RIVER  
LAKE ORONO WATER QUALITY COMMITTEE  
HELD AT THE ELK RIVER CITY HALL  
WEDNESDAY, November 16, 2006**

Members Present: Mark Basiletti, Patrick Plant, Ed Buttweiler

Staff Present: Rebecca Haug, Nicki Blake-Bradley

Members Absent: Cindi Edwards-Plant, Vance Zehringer, James Tacheny,  
Ed Bury, John Weicht

1) Approve 11/16/06 Agenda

Rebecca added an item to Other: an update on Canada Geese control on the lake.

2) County Water Plan Advisory Committee

Mark gave an update that the implementation plan was covered in the last meeting. He discussed stormwater rules. Mark stated that there was opposition to one of the changes that he made. He had put wording in concerning no net volume increases for runoff.

Patrick questioned what Mark used as a template. Discussion followed that Wright and Carver may be working on one, but there is uncertainty there. Mark may want to sit in on a meeting with Rebecca and the engineers for the City. He added that John Weicht would probably be interested in sitting in on that meeting as well.

3) Elk River Watershed (ERWA) Board Report

Vance Zehringer was not available for an update. Mark commented that this is an appointed position and people can contact Arne Engstrom (County Commissioner) if interested in serving on the Board.

The ERWA has grant funds through 2010 to do projects like those that have been done so far. Educational initiatives and monitoring could be done. Unfortunately, storm water stenciling cannot qualify for funds because permit requirements cannot be satisfied with these funds. Basically anything done on private land can be funded... home or business, as long as the criteria are met. For example, a rain garden on a private parcel is fine to be funded under this grant, but one on City property cannot be funded.

Rebecca expressed her frustration concerning this. The city struggles to meet permit requirements because there is no funding!

Mark will check into the situation. He stated that 319 grant funds were okay to use on feedlots, and feedlots are permitted so he's wondering what the difference would be.

4) Results from Braun and Reach tests

Mark distributed graphs and charts concerning the test results. Two locations were tested and graphed. Number 206 is on the east shore, close to the dam (water is 10 – 12 feet deep) and number 202 is at the bridge.

A spike in the chlorophyll-A and phosphorus occurred at the end of June. Discussion followed regarding the chlorophyll-A and secchi disc readings. The spike may have been caused by contamination of the sample. There was no spike in August with the same secchi disc reading at the same location.

Rebecca commented that there was no significant rainfall this summer to flush the lake. Patrick confirmed that there were pockets of algae in the lake.

Mark used the site near the dam for the Trophic State Index (TSI). He stated that it seems to be consistent over time. The earliest records that he was aware of were from 1994. Since then, there has been a slight decrease in TSI, meaning the water quality has gotten better over time.

Fecal coliform counts were generally not as high this year. The amounts looked a lot better, but it was reiterated that there weren't a lot of precipitation events. Each time it rains, the numbers spike. He has information from 2005 and 2006. Next summer the TMDL list will be re-assessed for impaired waters. Therefore, Mark feels the lake should be monitored again next year.

5) Education Plan

The 319 grant funds from ERWA can be used for association letters and the annual dinner. Discussion of article/letter topics included non-phosphate fertilizers, minimizing streets and sewer inputs.

Patrick stated his opinion that there should be more people present to discuss this topic. He suggested that it would be possible to discuss this at the annual meeting and get ideas on what residents want to hear about as well (to get more of a focus).

Rebecca mentioned the Energy Expo to be held in April, 2007 which will also have water discussions.

Mark commented that the watershed board needs a proposal for using the funds for brochures, etc. He suggested investigating what is available through the Extension office.

Patrick commented that Cindi does graphic work in case a brochure is developed. She may be interested in assisting or working on that.

The education plan will be added to the grant opportunities.

6) Goals for 2007

Goals were discussed. Education, reach tests (and results), continuing stream fecal coliform monitoring (and lake level monitoring), as well as setting a threshold for curly-leaf pondweed were all identified as goals for the new year.

Discussion followed regarding offering a rebate on zero phosphorus fertilizers to all city residents through an Initiative Foundation grant (if awarded) with a maximum number of rebates available. Ed commented that one dollar per bag would likely be reasonable. If offered, the rebate will be available to all city residents and will be advertised in all available areas... website, cable, newspaper, City newsletter, etc.

7) Action Plan for Curly-leaf pondweed

Rebecca confirmed that Wendy Crowell can make the January 17<sup>th</sup> meeting date.

8) Grant Opportunities

The City will apply for a GPS grant as the fiscal agent. Cindi has the forms. Rebecca will work on filling out the application.

9) Silting measurements

Initial discussion centered around how much time to give Wendy to answer questions. Rebecca stated that she felt one hour should be enough for Wendy to field questions. This will be a long meeting so Rebecca will supply pizza and pop for supper.

Rebecca commented that she discussed the situation with John Anderson from engineering. He informed her that the “hole” is working as a sediment trap. It is filling in and should be cleaned out (eventually).

Patrick questioned whether an independent firm should be hired to do modeling. Mark commented that the rate of sedimentation could be determined using sounding maps. A contour map could be constructed and adjusted to the “old information” on the dredged area. A picture of the lake (1999 to present) could be formed.

The most recent sounding would be used and a new grid of soundings could be done to see how the lake basin has changed. This would help answer the question of what the net volume of sediment since dredging occurred has come back (the percentage).

Discussion followed regarding where the spoils would be placed if the lake is dredged again. Rebecca considered Wapiti. Discussion turned to permits. Wenck and Associates was involved in the first dredging. Dale Holmuth from the DNR and the Army Corps of Engineers were involved as well.

10) Other Updates

Rebecca discussed the goose information. A total of 83 geese were trapped and relocated this year.

11) Decide Agenda Items and Time for Next Meeting

The next scheduled meeting for the Lake Orono Water Quality Committee will be held on January 17<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 p.m. There will be NO meeting in December.

12) Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 7:17 p.m.