



DRAFT Minutes of Meeting

April 19, 2021, 10-11:30 am

Members Present: John Pearson, Jake Janski, Bob Janzen, Dianne Jacobson, Janet Smude, Perry Bunting, Chad Weiss, Barb Eller

Members Absent: Dave Oslin, Laurie Westerlund, Angie Moen, Margaret Vos, Mike Macioch, Barb Macioch, Lynn Galice, Allan Close, Doug McCormick, Bonnie Finnerty, Harmony Maslowski, Susan Shaw

1. Bob called the meeting to order at 10:02 am

2. Agenda approved M. Barb 2nd John

3. Consent Agenda:

3.1. Approved March 15, 2021 Meeting Minutes. M. Jake 2nd Janet

3.2. Approved Financial Report. M. Jake 2nd Barb.

- Janet noted balance of general funds is \$1219.36. No expenses Jan-Mar.

4. Discussion and Action

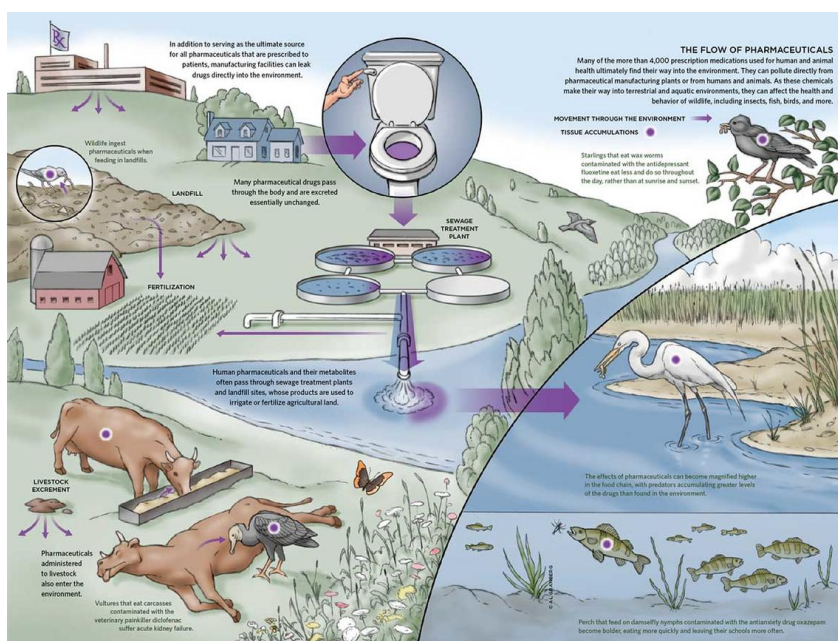
Project Water quality trends and reporting

4.1 Summary report for website (Perry Bunting): Perry & Chad working. John noted that current summary is sufficient for website. Perry & Chad liked that, but will clean up the draft/topic of the month. **Chad will do.**

4.2 Survey of current monitoring activity (Barb Eller):

- Answer to last month's query r.e. how Pharmaceuticals and Personal Care Products (PPCPs) are getting into ground and surface waters courtesy of

USGS: https://www.usgs.gov/special-topic/water-science-school/science/pharmaceuticals-water?qt-science_center_objects=0#qt-science_center_objects



Noted that USGS found effluent

from pharmaceutical manufacturing facilities has 10-1000 times the concentration of pharmaceuticals found in sewage treatment facilities without manufacturing facilities. Also, pharmaceuticals used in livestock farming enter the environment via several routes. More info at above link.

- Group recommends posting of water quality monitoring in smaller, slower, regular info-bytes on Facebook (**Barb in coordination with John**).

- MPCA is monitoring PPCPs on ecoregion basis. See summary, Minutes 3.15.21
- 4.3 Chloride management at county level (Margaret Vos): Per John work is complete Thank you letters were sent to County crews. Group recommends facebook posts toward fall prior to salting season with targeted group lake dwellers/resorts who do their own salting. “Smart Salting” trainings are geared toward County staff, but for resorts/smaller road maintenance crews we can put on our facebook. **(Barb).**

5. Outreach and education efforts planning

5.1 Informational Topics of the Month : See John’s summary of our past work categorized by topic (attachment 1) for use on our website. Group approved.

- **Janet –do Spiny Water Flea for May opener of fishing season**
 - **Barb—do PPCP summary for June.**
 - **Jake –do ‘Get the Lead Out’ for July.** Mille Lacs SWCD office can be drop point. John notes that shoe box size kits are available from MPCA. Kit has info, samples of lead-free tackle. Just need to ask MPCA for it. Facebook post & ask Mille Lacs Tourism to share.(Barb) Lead collected is sent to Hazardous Waste at Counties/if not, St. Paul MPCA will accept. **John will email info to group.** Folks who bring in lead, get sample of lead-free tackle.
 - **Barb- do facebook post r.e. Lead Tackle prior to fishing opener.**
- 5.2 Healthy Land, Healthy Lake conference approach for 2021.
- Spring Plant truck sale: **Jake will share list of available dates this week.** Truck is booked up on Saturdays. Could do Sunday for permanent residents /Friday afternoon. John, Margaret (in absentia), Barb volunteered to help staff for questions.

5.3 Outreach to lake associations and resorts: **Progress report needed from Dave & Laurie.**

5.4 **Compass Program activity:** Thanks to Lynn for summary (attachment 2.)

- 5.4.1 **Group, please review and send questions to Jake for the next meeting.** Jake noted that outreach is the most time and funding intensive activity for current staff and is major role of this group. Group suggests we invite current Compass members to the spring plant truck sale and provide i.d. stickers, e.g., “Ask me about Compass”, or some such.
- 5.4.2 Recommend MLWMG presence/ plants at new Isle Flea Market- **Jake will look into details.**

5.5 Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Program activity

5.5.1 Aitkin County AIS Education Grant: Janet & John completed application for \$2625 for Healthy Land, Healthy Lake event promotion and hosting, for website domain registration & social media advertising. Approval pending.

5.5.2“Stop Spiny” effort by Minnesota AIS Research Center: Janet explained UMN campaign to stop the spread of this AIS. Current infestations are along the Canadian border (MBWCA at risk) and Mille Lacs Lake (only lake in southern MN). The Goal is to not transport water of any kind from lake to lake. Aitkin SWCD has graphics and Swedish dishtowels used to wipe fishing lines and gear. Aitken office have a few to give away around Mille Lacs. Can do custom graphics with our logo to use/ share on facebook, website. Focus on fishing guides and resorts. Ask Mille Lacs Tourism to share. Group approved use of materials.

5.5.3 Perry noted the the MN AIS Center group, Kretchen Carlson et.al., are starting a 2 year study this summer to determine the utility of eDNA (environmental DNA) testing to identify AIS including in Mille Lacs Lake. Noted also that Chad is getting the CD3 unit and 2 mobile units ready for operation and will be using eDNA testing to study if the CD3 removes spiny water fleas and zebra mussels from its water.

5. Updates

5.1 Media & Communications:

5.1.1 Website topics organization: See attachment 1. We have much information available and John has organized according to topic areas. Will help folks find on website and improve searchability. Group agrees.

5.1.2 Workplan format proposal: John used previous grid workplan and the 10 Year Plan to adopt priorities, goals, due date, who responsible, and next steps. This format is useful for the record, guide for work in progress, summaries of work done, future grant proposals. Barb noted that Project Implementation/Compass is Priority #1, although monitoring water quality remains the foundation on which implementation is based. Group agrees with format, priorities and use. See attachment 3. Abbreviated version can be used for website.

5.2 Fundraising / Grant Writing / Membership: Evangeline Moen is new member.

5.3 Rum River One Watershed, One Plan : John represented us at the Implementation Committee meeting last week. Reviewed projects and strategies for: 1) ground water quality; 2) surface water quality; and 3) natural resources. Provided feedback to Technical Committee. Perry is on the Technical Advisory Committee and work nearing completion by geographic implementation zones. Noted that Chad is working on the Snake River Watershed plan. John noted that our work/ 10 Year Plan dovetails/integrates into 1W1P around the Compass program. The Implementation Work Plan will be circulated this June for multiple organizations to agree, establish Joint Powers Agreement, and implement.

5.5 New Business:

- MPCA Earth Day event, Thursday April 22, 6-7 pm explores how increasing extreme weather due to climate change is impacting communities and how Minnesotans can and are preparing. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9l6MhADvXf0>
- The Mille Lacs Area Community Foundation, a partner fund of the Initiative Foundation, will be putting out press release and RFPs in June. Eligible organizations include nonprofits, LGUs, schools. Group should consider applying. **Barb will provide more details.**

6. Public Comment: No further

7. **Meeting Evaluation and Next Steps : See homework & action items.**

8. **Next Meeting Plan :**

Via Zoom June 21, 10-11:30 a.m.

Group recommends outside meeting under cover for July to discuss Healthy Land, Health Lake Conference and MLACF RFP. Under roof at Garrison VFW?

Meeting adjourned 11:27

Respectfully submitted,

Barb Eller (Temporary Secretary)

Attachment 1. Summary of Topics of the Month

“Learn More” Topic Organization on Website – Group approved.

Alternative to listing by date; some stories listed under multiple headings; some topic areas and stories would also be listed on relevant web pages.

Plantings

- Salt-Tolerant Trees, Shrubs, Perennials, and Herbaceous Grasses (January, 2021)
- Start Enjoying the Benefits of Native Trees! (February, 2021)
- Native Shoreline Plants (April, 2019)
- Ready to Plant? (June, 2019)
- Is it Time to Think About Spring & Summer Flowers Yet? (January, 2018)
- Trees – Partners in Watershed Health (October, 2018)

Shoreline restoration

- Do-It-Yourself Projects To Protect Your Shoreline (July, 2020)
- Avoiding the Tumble of Rip-Rap (March, 2020)
- Native Shoreline Plants (April, 2019)
- Adopt-A-Shoreline (May, 2019)
- Along with Spring Comes Ice Heaves (May, 2018)

The COMPASS Program

- Join the Mille Lacs Lake Watershed COMPASS Movement (2019)
- Healthy Land, Healthy Lake (2018)
- Meet a Silver Compass Member (2018)

- Thank You, COMPASS Members! (November, 2018)
- Watershed Tour (October, 2017)
- Mille Lacs' Circle of Influence (2018)

Managing Runoff

- Why Should I Care About Runoff? (2019)
- Five Ways to Reduce Nutrients in Lakes & Streams

About Watersheds

- Watershed Comprehensive Water Planning (2020)
- What Is the Deal with Wetlands? (2018)
- What Is a Watershed?

Understanding and Conserving Our Natural Environment

- Giving Thanks for our Lakes (2019)
- A Visit to Mille Lacs Moraine Scientific and Natural Area (2019)
- God's Work – Our Hands – Mille Lacs Lake Clean up (2019)
- Watershed Comprehensive Water Planning (2020)
- Wild Rice and Water Levels (2018)
- RIM Conservation Easements (2019)
- God's Work, Our Hands (September, 2017) [lakeshore cleanup]

Reducing Nutrients and Phosphorus

- Don't Let Your Septic System Freeze (December, 2018)
- Managing a Healthy Septic System (February, 2018)
- Following the Phosphorus in the Fall (October, 2019)

Controlling Chloride

- Smart Salting Protects Minnesota Waters (February, 2019)
- Salt-Tolerant Trees, Shrubs, Perennials, and Herbaceous Grasses (January, 2021)
- Smart Salting Tips (December, 2017)

Managing Aquatic Invasives

- The Spiny Waterflea Invasion (February, 2020)
- New CD3 Boat-Cleaning System (September, 2020)
- Twenty-nine sites hold "Starry Trek" (August, 2019)
 - Aquatic Invasive Species (What Can We Do?) (April, 2018)

Surface Water Quality

Goal 1: Protect
clean, healthy,
wetlands, lakes,

MORE

- A Plan for Your Forestland (April, 2017)
- Educate Yourself! Opportunities Coming! (June, 2017)
- Silvopasture for Water Quality (November, 2017)

Attachment 2. Summary of Compass Program to date. Questions to Jake for next meeting.

Objective B –Identify & implement tools, programs and opportunities to enable and incentivize citizens to protect privately owned and managed land.

Compass Lake Stewardship process for organizing active citizens – COMPASS is an active



community of people dedicated to protecting the overall health of Mille Lacs Lake. Compass membership is voluntary and participants get recognized for their conservation role and best management practices. These are landscaping techniques that promote lake health, manage runoff, and stabilize erosion. The COMPASS program is implemented by the Mille Lacs and Aitkin SWCDs in collaboration with the Mille Lacs Lake Watershed Management Group.

Specific SWCD goal – Direct communication with landowners to develop individualized stewardship plans that provide a spectrum of actions the landowner may choose to do that will make an impact to water quality on the lake. This work area can be more involved than project installation because the options and strategies that must be explored with the landowner before they make a decision to do something small, something large, or do nothing at all, is a conversation that spans months or years. This is hands on learning for landowners with the intent that they connect with the role they play in whether water quality can be protected or not. The SWCD is being intentional about building understanding about sustainable actions by landowners not simply “one of” projects.

Overall status - In the last three years the Compass Program has engaged over one hundred people in conversations about how they can take individual action on their property to protect water quality in Mille Lacs Lake. These conversations have resulted in eleven completed Shoreland Stewardship Plans and four completed cost-share projects. Over ten landowners have received technical assistance to work on “Do-It-Yourself” shoreline projects. Three landowners have shared their completed projects via in person and digital public presentations.

Measurable progress this month – Completed 2021 Work Plan for Compass Lake Stewardship Program



2021 Planning - The Compass Lake Stewardship Program has evolved over the last three years to become an outreach technique based on individual conversations with landowners to discover what actions they are willing to take to protect water quality on Mille Lacs Lake. This technique puts us in touch with citizens who are ready and willing to discuss what they can contribute to water quality protection efforts as well as what type of assistance they might need from the SWCD. Compass aims to



work with landowners to find a commonality between individual landowner goals and larger watershed water quality goals. The Compass program has built relationships among landowners that have created a shared willingness to address erosion and stormwater runoff on individual properties. Future work on Mille Lacs Lake should build on this base and continue the Compass Program techniques for encouraging individuals to participate in the actions needed to protect Mille Lacs Lake.

Special Project

One-More-Time Thrift Store Stormwater Management Project:

One-More-Time Thrift Store in Isle, MN is requesting assistance to manage stormwater runoff from a large building in downtown Isle. This property owner is aware that this property has a very large percentage of impervious surface on a small lot. They are interested in innovative solutions that will capture and treat runoff before it reaches Mille Lacs Lake. The property owner has also expressed a desire to work with surrounding property owners to achieve their water quality goal. This project represents an opportunity to build relationships among the SWCD, local business owners and the City of Isle. These relationships may create a group of people who are willing to work together to protect water quality in Mille Lacs Lake.

Measurables:

- Complete an analysis of the site that includes stormwater flow, treatment areas, recommended BMPs, and a cost-estimate.
- Talk to the surrounding property owners about the need for stormwater BMPs to protect water quality in Mille Lacs Lake. These property owners will likely include the City of Isle to the North, and private properties to the south and east.
- Talk to these property owners about recommended BMPs and the costs involved.
- Talk to any willing property owners about the goal of building a partnership to treat stormwater runoff before it flows to Mille Lacs Lake.
- Include this project as part of a CWF Grant to install stormwater BMPs in the neighboring City of Wahkon.

Special Project

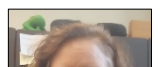
Do It Yourself Shoreland BMPs

Local government cost-share projects require a ten-year commitment, a maintenance and operation plan and usually a 50% cost contribution from the landowner. These projects can be complicated, time consuming and expensive. Landowner action is often dependent on the current resources of the SWCD. However, there are simple things landowners can do themselves that can affect water quality. This project proposes to encourage and assist landowners to install simple BMPs on their shoreland property.

Measurables:

- Check in with all Compass landowners I have worked with in the last three years by phone call, e-mail or site visit.
- Speak to Karrie Roeschlein, City of Wahkon and Jamie Hubbell, City of Wahkon to remind them of SWCD resources.
- Ask Karrie Roeschlein and Jamie Hubbell to put DIY project info from Topic of the Month on their city websites.
- Seven site visits with Mille Lacs Lake shoreland property owners to discuss what actions/simple projects they can do to protect water quality.

Three landowners install DIY BMPs on their shoreland property.



Project lead – Lynn Gallice, Shoreland Technician

14 years experience at the Mille Lacs SWCD doing shoreland work on the Rum River and Mille Lacs Lake. Assistant County Ag Inspector for 14 years.

Attachment 3. New WorkPlan Format – Group approved working document. Short version to be posted on our website.



WORK PLAN

The Mille Lacs lake Watershed Management Group has set the following goals and action steps as priorities for implementation. These are based on the 10 Year Plan 2017 - 2027.

Last Update: April 19, 2021

PRIORITY 1. IMPLEMENT THE COMPASS PROGRAM AND OTHER PROJECTS TO REDUCE PHOSPHORUS/NUTRIENT ENRICHMENT, CONTAMINANTS SUCH AS CHLORIDE, AND AIS.

Project: Receive Compass Program update on current activities and plan next steps

Due: Spring 2021

Who: SWCD staff (Lynn, Harmony, Janet, or ?) report to group

Status: New

Next steps: DONE: Report from Mille Lacs County distributed to core group

Project: Participate in Rum River One Watershed, One Plan development

Due: Plan completion anticipated 2021 fall; then implementation

Who: Perry, Jake, John and others are on various subcommittees

Status: Meetings are continuing

Next step: Anticipate circulation of plan for review in June

Project: Understand how road crews are handling chloride use and participation in “Smart Salting” effort

Due: Spring 2021

Who: Margaret Vos

Status: Margaret provided report of her findings at the March meeting; crews are actively managing chloride use to reduce water impacts.

Next Steps: DONE: letters of thanks sent to county crews.

Project: AIS grant

Due: April, 2021

Who: Janet Smude

Status: Grant has been submitted

Next steps: Waiting for approval.

Project: Stop Spiny Campaign

Due: TBD

Who: Janet Smude

Status: New project; campaign to education and engage Mille Lacs boaters in cleaning effort; distribution of special towels; postings to website and FB.

Next steps: Decide on participation and tasks

PRIORITY 2. DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A MARKETING AND EDUCATION PLAN.

Project: Healthy Land, Healthy Lake Conference

Due: Fall, 2021

Who: (This project needs lead coordinator)

Status: Options discussed at March meeting including mixing live, in-person sessions with Zoom sessions. Plant truck identified as desirable asset.

Next steps: Determine conference parameters and topics; see if plant truck a possibility for May/early June.

Project: MLLWVG Topics

Due: Ongoing

Who: Writers vary; John circulates and posts to website.

Status: May topic: Stop Spiny (Janet); June topic: pharmaceuticals and personal care product pollution.

Next steps: Post the topic; identify future topics and volunteer writers

Project: Community event presence

Due: Ongoing as opportunities occur

Who: For 2021, individuals may represent MLLWMG as appropriate

Status: No events are currently planned

Next steps: Look into potential presence at Isle Flea Market

Project: Outreach to lake associations and resorts

Due: Spring

Who: Dave and Laurie

Status: No recent action

Next steps: Dave and Laurie to reach out to associates; may use existing MLLWMG materials stored at Mille Lacs SWCD office

PRIORITY 3. MONITOR, ANALYZE, and CONSOLIDATE WATER QUALITY DATA.

Project: Survey current monitoring activity

Due: Spring 2021

Who: Barb Eller

Status: Barb has reviewed many of the monitoring orgs and draft was distributed to MLLWMG in March.

Next steps: Finalize and post report; integrate with other monitoring reports; circulate Topic about PPCPs and DEET.

Project: Create a summary of trends revealed in MLBO DNR data for posting to site and use as a Topic of the Month.

Due: Spring 2021

Who: Perry and Chad are producing content; John will post/distribute.

Status: 2019 report in process; draft copy has been circulated.

Next steps: Finalize report and prepare Topic.

Get the Lead Out

Due: Spring/Summer 2021

Who: John is in touch with MPCA

Status: Obtaining information about lead tackle collection boxes and seeking locations for placement.

Next steps: Get sample box and post about availability from MPCA.

PRIORITY 4. ORGANIZATION

Project: Revise plan of work to improve its utility as a “what we’re working on now” resource.

Due: Spring 2021

Who: John will revise current work plan based on input at December meeting

Status: This document provided for review and comment

Next step: DONE; post “short version” to website.

Project: Create “Annual Report” for MLLWMG to capture outcomes on an annual basis.

Due: Spring 2021

John will fashion a summary report based on materials provided by Maciochs, others and will circulate before posting.

Status: No action

Next step: Draft and circulate

Project: Identify potential funding sources

Due: Ongoing

Who: All/unassigned

Status: The Mille Lacs Area Community Foundation plans press release and RFP June 2021. Barb E suggests we think about which goals would benefit from this \$500-\$1000 grant. Details to follow.

Next step: Continue monitoring opportunities

