

**ITASCA COALITION OF LAKE ASSOCIATIONS
ITASCA WATER LEGACY PARTNERSHIP JOINT MEETING**

**Wednesday, June 18, 20143
7:00 p.m. -- Itasca County Board Room**

Attendance:

Tom Nelson, ICOLA President/Deer Lake Association
Stephanie Kessler, ICOLA Vice-President/Johnson Lake Association
Jan Sandberg, ICOLA Secretary/ Greater Pokegama Lake Association
Michelle Brauner, ICOLA Treasurer/Turtle Lake Association

A partial list of others in attendance:

Pat Davis, Greater Pokegama Lake Association
Dick Sandberg, Greater Pokegama Lake Association
Harold Goetzman, Jessie Lake Association
Marn Flicker, Jesse Lake Association
Sue Swanson, Johnson Lake
Helen Ahlbrecht, King Lake
Bill Grantges, Siseebakwet Lake Association, Itasca Water Legacy Partnership
Tom and Barb Ryan, Suomi Area Lakes Association
Jim Brauner, Turtle Lake
Harold Dzuik, Turtle Lake, Itasca Water Legacy Partnership
Dave Lick, Wabana Lake, Itasca Water Legacy Partnership
Shirley Loegring, Itasca Water Legacy Partnership, Izaak Walton League

Terry Snyder, Itasca County Commissioner
Davin Tinquist, Itasca County Commissioner
Leo Trunt, Itasca County Commissioner
Don Simons, Itasca Soil and Water Conservation District Board
Darre Lauber, Itasca Soil and Water Conservation District Board
Jim Gustafson, District Manager, Itasca Soil and Water Conservation District
Garrett Ous, Itasca County Land Commissioner
Tim Wotzka, Itasca County Surveyor
Rich Rezanka, Department of Natural Resources
Julie Miedtke, University of Minnesota Extension

CALL TO ORDER: Tom Nelson called the meeting to order at just after 7:00 pm at the Courthouse. This is a joint meeting among those with AIS prevention experience to discuss some preliminary thoughts for ideas to be shared with the county commissioners.

1. AGENDA

Tom reviewed the draft agenda that was distributed at the beginning of the meeting (Attachment #1). The two attachments were language for the legislation providing funds to the county and slides from a webinar held the afternoon of June 18.

Tom introduced Dan Swenson who introduced a number of county staff and commissioners. Dan said that the funding level is still in flux but will be set on July 1.

2. NUTS AND BOLTS

NOTE: The notes in this section reflect wide-ranging discussion at the meeting without any attempt to organize by topic. While in most cases individual speakers are not identified, representatives from all of the groups at the meeting spoke.

Tom first reviewed the legal language about the use of funds (Attachment #2). The wording is loose – at first it appears limited to boat access activities but others suggest that more can be done, such as education. The county sets broad guidelines and there appear to be a number of different entities that can be involved.

Question--are there some things being done now that would fit these guidelines and could be implemented immediately? Tom said that we could develop a list of what is being done now. Another comment that the shallow wells at access could be done right away although there may be liability issues.

Tom reviewed a list of funding/volunteer partners (there is no watershed district limited to Itasca County). He also mentioned an additional \$400,000 given to DNR to fund inspector training.

Dave Lick mentioned the collaboration between IWLP and ICOLA and work with the county. County ETF money is being used to provide inspections at Bowstring and Pokegama that is in addition to inspections funded by Wabana Township and Deer Lake Association for major events. He has spoken to DNR which is not excited about the shallow well at access idea. Dave described other IWLP projects focusing on education. Bill Grantges mentioned that they need to move quickly for the 2014 dollars. 2015 dollars will require a county plan although it is not clear who will approve that plan.

Julie Miedtke, U of M Extension, provided an update on the Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area (CISMA). A strategic plan was developed and a list of targeted species developed. They are working on a database to map species location although funding for that work and a website was not received.

Rich Rezanka, DNR, mentioned that there are active management projects currently underway in the county – i.e. Dixon Lake curly leaf pondweed. Itasca is fortunate that there are relatively few infestations and we are in more of a protection than abatement.

It might be helpful to list the realistic threats to the county, differentiating accesses as a source vs. other sources. CISMA has some of these data as do DNR.

Another suggestion -- set up an education budget for lake associations--each would need to have a plan. But not all lakes have an association. Bill noted that he has put together AIS information kits that will be available for use at public access sites or meetings. It was suggested that another source might be the township organization. Bill thought that there should be someone to coordinate efforts throughout the county—inspectors, education, eradication.

Could the county use some of this money to hire a coordinator? Yes, but funds would not be available until July 20. There seems to be a lot going on but not much coordination. It would also be helpful to develop a plan of action for lake associations to work with their members. Question—are inspections done for boats going in or coming out?—answer that it is both. Question—how are boaters reacting? The reaction has been positive and we need to take care to focus on the education side.

These funds might allow covering most accesses within the county. To build the manpower, another idea is to hire and train veterans to create a bigger presence. Last year, IWLP explored working with veterans as ambassadors at the launches. This might help reduce possible conflict at launches. But there was no money available to pay them at that time.

Bill described his inspection program—DNR hires interns with specific qualifications and IWLP works with folks hired through Personnel Dynamics (about half have other jobs). It is tough to find people as the focus is on high-volume days—weekends and holidays. Bill thinks there is also a need to train law enforcement just in case there is a need for help. General discussion about where to take infested boats and how to process them with hot water pressure washers.

Marn diagrammed the progression of boaters from lake to lake within the county. He feels we should identify the key lakes and make sure to catch boaters leaving a known contamination lake—don't worry so much about the less popular, smaller lakes. This would require a good relationship with the resorts

on those lakes. Comments that there is a need to focus on higher risk lakes but also do something for other lakes.

Dave noted that even for those lakes that are infested, the residents are still concerned, but about different risks.

Concern about what proportion of boaters are going in at public landings vs. resorts or private locations. The proportion using public accesses may be relatively small. Also, those at a resort may only home base there but go to lots of other lakes. Or those who live on a lake may go to use other lakes.

Could there be a grant application process for lake associations to implement their own programs, e.g. \$2,000. This would funnel some money to those who could use it.

Important to note that this can't be done haphazardly. There could be a targeted inspection program paired with an education program. What do we want our lakes to look like in ten years.

Some associations are doing good things but we need coordination.

Terry Snyder—the county has over 20 open positions and hiring will not happen quickly. He sits on Mississippi Headwaters Board (<http://mississippiheadwaters.org/>) and they have obtained money to hire an executive director. The organization includes parts of eight counties that have half of the accesses. One idea is to hire a coordinator/overseer through this organization for the eight counties. If it is kept in the county, who will make decisions about who gets how much and sets priorities and budgets.

Tom suggested that the next step is to get together a working group to come up with priorities and a plan. But there needs to be a point person to get things moving. Julie suggested that this could be combined with a coordinator for the CISMA although Jan thought it might be taking on too big a task too early.

Bill asked how a decision would be made or plans entertained to spend the money. They could hire a contract person quickly and possibly put on a six month basis. The county could provide technical assistance to the contractor.

Leo Trunt said that the County Board is looking for a job description/tasks for their July 8th meeting with a possible hire in August. There may be technical requirements as to the resolution or plan in place before the funds can flow.

Can ICOLA put together a request to county for monies to be used for short-term projects. Perhaps multiple agencies should be considered as possible recipients of funds—Leo suggested IWLP, ICOLA and SWCD.

3. NEXT STEPS

Who: Bill Grantges, Tom Nelson, Jim Gustafson, Rich Anderson, Catherine McLynn, Dan Swenson, Julie Miedtke. Others interested should contact Tom

When: Called by Tom Nelson via emails to set date

What: develop a job description and short term plan

4. APPROVAL OF ICOLA MINUTES:

Motion to approve the minutes of February 19, 2014, as submitted. Stephanie Kessler, Michelle Brauner . M/S/U

5. TREASURER'S REPORT:

Tonight's report spans the period February 19, 2014 to June 18, 2014 due to the cancellation of the April meeting. There were no deposits.

Beginning Balance as of 2/19/2014 (<i>April 16, 2014 meeting was cancelled</i>)	\$ 4,049.81
Check #1393 = Itasca SWCD = Envirothon donation	\$ (200.00)
Check #1394 = Marcell Town Hall = 7/16/2014 Annual Meeting Reservation	\$ (25.00)
Check #1385 = Sugar Lake Lodge = 6/19/2013 was never cashed & still outstanding. In discussion with Bill Grantges, the check will not be used and to clear it from the books. It was payment for the use of Sugar Lake Lodge for the MN COLA annual meeting	\$ 112.86
Check #1395 = Michelle Brauner = 6/18/2014 Reimbursement for postage stamps, envelopes, ICOLA mailings to Tom Nelson/State Fair Application and Kathy Loucks/Envirothon donation.	\$ (16.96)
Ending Balance as of 06/18/2014	\$ 3,920.71

6. OLD BUSINESS

None

7. NEW BUSINESS

A. County Fair Booth

This year the ICOLA/IWLP booth will be located near the 4-H booth. Catherine McLynn will work with Bill Grantges to coordinate the booth logistics. Jan circulated sign up sheets—we will try to get more volunteers from IWLP and at the annual meeting. Bill suggested that the booth have a more targeted focus than last year. He would like to put together a kid activity. He has a number of give-away items.

Motion to spend up to \$500 on the County Fair booth project for water education materials. Stephanie Kessler, Jack Adamson. M/S/U

B. Treasurer Opening

Michelle’s term is up this year and she cannot continue to serve. She prepared a detailed job description that is attached to the minutes. Patty Gould St Aubin has expressed interest but this needs to be confirmed at annual meeting.

C. Annual Meeting July 16, 2014 in Marcel

The meeting is scheduled to be held at the Marcell Town Hall with the potluck supper beginning at 5:30 pm. The key speaker is Paul Radomski who will address sensitive shoreland issues. He is a co-author on a book with Kristof Van Assche, a Belgian landscape architect, on lakes and designing lake places. The title of this book is *Lakeshore Living*.

Get a copy by:

1. Asking for it at your local library or bookstore;
2. Contacting Michigan State University Press online at: www.msupress.msu.edu
3. Buying online at Amazon, Barnes & Nobles, etc.

Michelle is not sure that she will be at the meeting but will contact key persons about what needs to be done—she has a list that she developed over the past few years. Michelle will coordinate news releases including KAXE. Tom will pick up the meat and bring a charcoal grill and Jan will bring a gas grill. Bill suggested we invite some of the Level 1 inspectors to meet members and provide a

visual presence (vests, banners and similar). Catherine reminded us to leave adequate time for individual lake association reports on the agenda for the meeting.

Motion to spend up to \$200 on food and similar items for the annual meeting. Stephanie Kessler, Jim Brauner. M/S/U

8. OTHER

Bill Grantges asked what lake associations are doing about AIS. Bill would be happy to share ideas and help coordinate an AIS event. His new AIS Public Event Kits that will be available for loaning starting in July. An AIS Public Events Kit will be available for use/display at the ICOLA annual meeting in Marcell. Contact him at bill@grantges.net

9. ADJOURN

Adjourned at 9:06 pm

Future meetings:

July 16, 2014, Annual Meeting Marcell (the meeting schedule for 2015 will be proposed at this meeting)

October 15, 2014, County Courthouse ITV Conference Room

Respectfully submitted,
Jan Sandberg, Secretary

Attachment 1: Agenda for June 18, 2014 Joint Meeting

Attachment 2: New Funding for AIS Prevention via Minnesota Laws Chapter 308 Article 1 Section 11.

Sec. 11. [477A.19] AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES PREVENTION AID.

Subdivision 1. **Definitions.** (a) When used in this section, the following terms have the meanings given them in this subdivision.

(b) "Aquatic invasive species" means nonnative aquatic organisms that invade water beyond their natural and historic range.

(c) "Watercraft trailer launch" means any public water access site designed for launching watercraft.

(d) "Watercraft trailer parking space" means a parking space designated for a boat trailer at any public water access site designed for launching watercraft.

Subd. 2. **Distribution.** The money appropriated to aquatic invasive species prevention aid under this section shall be allocated to all counties in the state as follows: 50 percent based on each county's share of watercraft trailer launches and 50 percent based on each county's share of watercraft trailer parking spaces.

Subd. 3. **Use of proceeds.** A county that receives a distribution under this section must use the proceeds solely to prevent the introduction or limit the spread of aquatic invasive species at all access sites within the county. The county must establish, by resolution or through adoption of a plan, guidelines for the use of the proceeds. The guidelines set by the county board may include, but are not limited to, providing for site-level management, countywide awareness, and other procedures that the county finds necessary to achieve compliance. The county may appropriate the proceeds directly, or may use any portion of the proceeds to provide funding for a joint powers board or cooperative agreement with another political subdivision, a soil and water conservation district in the county, a watershed district in the county, or a lake association located in the county. Any money appropriated by the county to a different entity or political subdivision must be used as required under this section. Each county must submit a copy of its guidelines for use of the proceeds to the Department of Natural Resources by December 31 of the year the payments are received.

Subd. 4. **Payments.** The commissioner of revenue must compute the amount of aquatic invasive species prevention aid payable to each county under this section. On or before August 1 of each year, the commissioner shall certify the amount to be paid to each county in the following year. The commissioner shall pay aquatic invasive species prevention aid to counties annually at the times provided in section 477A.015. For aid payable in 2014 only, the commissioner shall certify the amount to be paid to each county by July 1, 2014, and payment to the counties must be made at the time provided in section 477A.015 for the first installment of local government aid.

Subd. 5. **Appropriation.** \$4,500,000 in 2014, and \$10,000,000 each year thereafter, is appropriated from the general fund to the commissioner of revenue to make the payments required under this section.

EFFECTIVE DATE. This section is effective beginning with aid payable in 2014.

Attachment 3: ICOLA Treasurer's Job Description

Term: 2 year position with the option to be re-nominated for another 2 years.

Description: To attend 5 meetings per year. We meet on the 3rd Wednesday of the month in February, April, June, July and October. All meetings are held at 7PM at the Itasca County Courthouse ITV Conference Room *except* for the July meeting. The July meeting is the annual meeting and held within one of our lake associations communities. It has been held for a few years at Marcell Town Hall.

The ICOLA checking account is with American Bank in Grand Rapids. Your responsibility is to balance the account monthly, make deposits (annual dues invoice payments) and write out checks that have been approved by attendees at the ICOLA meetings. At the meetings, you will report the activity in the bank account and current balance since our previous meeting.

Our fiscal year is July 1st to June 30th each year. The treasurer sends out the annual dues invoices to our lake associations (currently 25 lake associations) in June. As paid invoices are received, checks are deposited at the bank. Also, make any necessary changes to the email contact list. If paid invoices are not received back from former members by August, send out a reminder notice and/or contact them directly.

ICOLA's 501C.3 status must be resubmitted online each year during the month of July. It is an online e-Postcard, Form 990-N. It is a simple process that takes about 15-20 minutes only. [I will assist the new treasurer with this process the first year.]

Participate in any special projects, task force committee and/or ICOLA fair booth, as your time permits.

Time Commitment: I normally spend 10-15 minutes balancing the statement each month. It takes about 15-30 minutes to prepare the treasurer's report for the meetings. To complete the annual dues renewal process, it usually takes 3 – 4 hours.