

# 2017 Lake Onalaska Protection and Rehabilitation District Annual Meeting

## Meeting Minutes

Lake Onalaska Protection and Rehabilitation District

Tuesday, September 12, 2017

Budget Hearing 6:45 p.m.

Annual Meeting 7:00 p.m.

### USFWS Visitor Center

W8582 CTH ZB, Brice Prairie

Onalaska, WI 54650

PRESENT: Marc Schultz (Chairman LORPD), Sue Schultz, Kathryn Lammers, Gary Kately, Steve Miller, Chad Knapmiller, Larry Pierce, Paul Jahimiak, Ray Marinan, Mike Wellik, Randy Schiesser, Marian Schiesser, Anita Lemke, Brenda Kelly, Mike Schultz, Amy Cooper, Scott Cooper, Vickie Burke, Tom Ready, Chuck Vogel, Ben Lachecki, David Heath, Shawn Giblin, Jim Fischer and Barbara Friell

**Call to Order** – by Marc Schultz, Lake Onalaska Protection and Rehabilitation District Chairman

Chairman Marc Schultz called the Budget Hearing to Order at 6:50 p.m.. Chairman Marc Schultz presented the following 2017 **Proposed Lake Onalaska District Budget 2017-2018**. Steve Miller made a motion to adjourn the Lake Onalaska Protection and Rehabilitation District's Proposed 2017-18 Budget Hearing, Gary Kately seconded the motion. The Lake Onalaska Protection and Rehabilitation District's Proposed 2017-18 Budget was unanimously approved.

### Proposed Lake Onalaska District Budget 2017-2018

#### INCOME

##### 2016-2017 actual

Interest	-0-
Maps	\$140
Donations	\$200
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$340</b>

##### 2017-2018 proposed

-0-
\$800
\$200
<b>\$1000</b>

#### EXPENSE

##### 2016-2017 actual

Admin	-0-
Annual Meeting	\$232.01
Newsletter	-0-
Social	\$339.46
Pontoon Tour	\$367.82
Pesticide Signs	\$120.00
Maps	-0-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1059.59</b>

##### 2017-2018 proposed

-0-
\$150
-0-
\$200
\$150
-0-
\$500
<b>\$1000</b>

**Item 1:** The Annual Meeting was called to Order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman Marc Schultz.

**Item 2: Minutes of 2016 Annual Meeting** – Mike Schultz made a motion to approve the minutes, Scott Cooper seconded the motion. No discussion. Minutes were unanimously approved.

**Item 3: Treasurer’s Report** – The Treasurer’s Report was presented by Kathryn Lammers. Vickie Burke made a motion to approve the Treasurer’s Report, Steve Miller seconded the motion. No further discussion. The Treasurer’s Report was unanimously approved.

Lake Onalaska Protection and Rehabilitation District  
**Treasurer’s Report-annual meeting**  
 September 12, 2017

BMO Harris Bank for District  
 M&I Bank changed ownership to BMO in 2012-2103

	Description	Sub-totals	Totals
Income	Sale of Maps	0	
	Donation (to be deposited)	\$200	
	Interest	0	
Expenses			0
	Balance		<b>\$3,258.26</b>

River Bank for the Fred Funk Landing Donations

	Description	Sub-totals	Totals
Income	Donations deposit	\$125	
	Interest(2.86+2.86+2.76)	8.48	
Expenses			0
	Balance		33,724.13

Submitted by Kathryn Lammers Treasurer

Commissioners August 2016:

- Marc Schultz, Chairperson
- Barb Friell, Secretary
- Kathryn Lammers, Treasurer
- Ben Lachecki
- Rick Cornforth, County Board Representative

**Item 4: Lake District Activities over the last year** – A Social was held at The Castaways located on French Island. This Event was well received. Several agencies were on hand with displays and materials and a tremendous amount of knowledge to share with those interested. This Social provided a great educational experience, as well as an opportunity to meet new people interested in learning more about the Lake Onalaska Protection and Rehabilitation District. A Pontoon Tour was offered in

July. This year we met and departed for the tour from the Sail Boat Club located on French Island. Again, the staff from the government agency's joined us and provided an excellent educational tour. We greatly appreciate their willingness to share with us their expertise. There was discussion regarding lake friendly practices, Pesticide-Free Zone signs (\$20 each), developing travel routes through areas with heavy vegetation, dock and owner participation, fees for cutting around private docks, cost of a Harvester and Safety.

**Item 5: Commissioner's Election** - Ben Lachecki's three year term is ending. There were no additional nominees from the floor. Gary Kately made a motion to approve Ben Lachecki for a second term. Mike Schultz seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

**Item 6: Budget Adoption for 2017-2018** – A copy of the proposed 2017-2018 Budget (see below) was provided to all attendees. A motion to approve the Budget was made by Vickie Burke and seconded by Mike Schultz. The Budget was approved. An email list was created to use for potential future mailings regarding Socials, notices and meetings to reduce mailing expenses.

**Lake Onalaska Protection and Rehabilitation District Proposed 2017-18 Budget**

**INCOME**

2016-2017 actual		2017-2018 proposed
Interest	-0-	-0-
Maps	\$140	\$800
Donations	\$200	\$200
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$340</b>	<b>\$1000</b>

**EXPENSE**

2016-2017 actual		2017-2018 proposed
Admin	-0-	-0-
Annual Meeting	\$232.01	\$150
Newsletter	-0-	-0-
Social	\$339.46	\$200
Pontoon Tour	\$367.82	\$150
Pesticide Signs	\$120.00	-0-
Maps	-0-	\$500
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1059.59</b>	<b>\$1000</b>

The **Item 7: Practical approaches to shoreland management and protection** – This year 2017 saw high water again and intense rainfall events that damaged quite a few shoreland owners banks, yards, docks and steps. Practical approaches that can be used to control runoff and protect shoreland was discussed. Marc Schultz prepared a Lake Onalaska Shoreland Owners Resource List that he shared with attendees. Fritz Funk obtained materials and seeds from Prairie Moon that were made available to those at the meeting. Scott and Amy Cooper offered to meet with or speak with anyone that would be interested in the work that they have done to protect their shoreline. They can be reached at 608.780.3156 and are located on County Road ZB. Please contact them for their address if you are interested in seeing what they have done in the area of shoreland management and protection.

**8: Fund Raising for Lake District** Discussion regarding the history of the Lake District and funding occurred. Marc shared that in 1975 a tax was implemented and lasted for just one year. There may be some interest in looking at fundraising.

Marc had shared in the 2017 Annual Meeting Notice the following - Lake Onalaska is a backwater of the Mississippi and Black Rivers created when Lock and Dam 7 was built in the late 1930's. It is a

shallow reservoir and part of the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge. Every season and year brings about different water levels, plant growth, fish and wildlife and a variety of opportunities to use the lake and river for boating, fishing, hunting, trapping, bird watching, camping, water sports and other traditional outdoor activities. The Lake Onalaska Protection and Rehabilitation District is a special purpose unit of government specifically entrusted with enhancing and protecting Lake Onalaska.

Mike Schultz, Chad Knapmiller, Ben Lachecki and Barbara Friell expressed interest in discussing further fundraising for the Lake District. If you are interested in participating a simple notice will be announced once a date has been scheduled.

**Item 9: Potential future projects on Lake Onalaska** – The

**Item 10: Agency Reports** – Presenting Reports were as follows:

**U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service – Tim Miller**

**Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge**

#### **REFUGE UPDATE**

*Presented at the Lake Onalaska Protection and Rehabilitation District*

*September 11, 2017*

*Biology/Management projects*

- **Chronic Wasting Disease** workshop in Prairie du Chien: Refuge staff will meet with partners and experts in October to discuss the current status of this wildlife disease in states bordering the Refuge.
- **Forest Inventory:** Staff and volunteers have been hard at work collecting forest inventory data in August and will continue through October.
- **Black Terns:** Biologist Erin Adams and Biotech Rachel Kromrey have been summarizing data collected on Black Terns nesting on the Refuge and Trempealeau National Wildlife Refuge. A status report will be ready soon.
- **Slow No Wake Posting and other sign maintenance** - It's that time of year to get out and make sure refuge signs are visible and the "slow no wake"/"voluntary avoidance areas" are marked before the start of the hunting seasons.
- **Wild Celery Sampling:** Staff, agency partners, and volunteers worked to collect data about wild celery and other aquatic vegetation on Lake Onalaska in early August. These surveys collect information about aquatic plant abundance and diversity. Wild celery is a very important food source for canvasback ducks and other migratory waterfowl during the fall migration; the winter buds of wild celery provide them with the carbohydrates they need to sustain their energy on their long journeys! This is one of the longer-term annual studies conducted on the Refuge. Data summaries from this year are in progress!
- **Die-off of invasive faucet snails.** In mid to late July and early August staff and other biologists discovered many dead faucet snail piling up in areas around islands and below Lock and Dam 7. Several snails were tested for bacteria by the WIDNR and samples were taken by the USFWS Fisheries office to determine the cause of the die off. Note these snails are

invasive to the Mississippi River and can cause mortality to waterfowl that consume them.

- **Wildlife Biotechs:** Posting, Posting and more Posting!!! Staff have been tasked with the critically important job of protecting our “Closed Areas” by posting regulatory signs in the these areas in the water – the post pounder and their muscles get a good workout! They use boats to post miles of closed areas that protect and provide resting areas for migrating waterfowl and waterbirds.
- **Root River Hydrologic Restoration Project:** Our last and final contract for the Root River Restoration was finally let this month. Contractors will be completing land grading and will finish work on the ditch plugs, constructing rock crossings, site rehabilitation and seeding. Another forestry contractor has been completing site preparations for tree planning and seeding on the tract. We may need some volunteers this fall to help plant trees, so stay tuned.

#### *Wildlife update!*

- Least weasels were spotted on the entrance road in late August – a first glimpse here for awhile!
- Indigo buntings continued to grace visitors with their presence throughout August.
- Narrow-leaved milkweed was spotted on our August 24<sup>th</sup> Prairie walk on the east side of the 0.3 mile paved loop. Monarch caterpillars and milkweed tussock moth caterpillars have been seen on the common milkweed in the VC gardens by the bluebird box!  
[Photo: Milkweed tussock moth caterpillar]



#### *Visitor Services projects*

- **Duck Bag Checks** – Staff and volunteers are planning to go out on the opening days of the Wisconsin and Minnesota waterfowl hunting seasons to talk to hunters about their first impressions of the season and gather age/sex data on the birds they bring in. Information from these meetings helps estimate how many birds hunters are bringing home in comparison to the time they spend hunting. Car counts are also conducted to better understand visitor use of boat landings and walk-downs during the hunting seasons.
- **Environmental Education** – Students from Melrose-Mindoro High School and second graders from St. Paul’s Lutheran School will be visiting this

month. Sand Lake Elementary school chaperones will meet to prepare for upcoming visits.

- **Friends Group** -The Friends bookstore has had over \$8,000 in sales since July 1<sup>st</sup>, reflecting the success of the Friends' initiative to offer 10% to seniors on the day they get their senior passes! Thanks to all who have helped keep things going in the bookstore!
- **Interpretive Programs -Saturday programs:** Jamie Bertram led an "Ecological Bike Tour" from 9am-11:15 on Sat. August 12<sup>t</sup> and our first ever "Night on the Prairie" hike on Saturday, August 2<sup>nd</sup>.



[Photo: Ranger Jamie Bertram at the Lytles Landing covered bridge, scouting the trail for her Sat. Ecological Bike Tour program]. Ranger Katie led a prairie walk for members of the Wild Ones Driftless Chapter on Thurs. August 24<sup>t</sup>

- **Outreach:**
  - Tim Miller and Katie Julian attended the Brice Prairie neighborhood celebration on Thurs. August 17<sup>th</sup>.
  - **Non-lead initiative:** Following the timeline created by the Regional Office, we've begun weekly postings on our Facebook page to encourage deer hunters to voluntarily use non-lead shot - comments on the posts thus far have mostly positive. Rack cards will be arriving to provide at key launch-points for deer hunters.
- **Other**
  - **Wisconsin Public Radio** covered forestry work going on at the Root River Tract, featuring Forester Andy Beebe!  
<https://www.wpr.org/programs/newsmakers>
  - Kyra Neal created a half sheet **guide to dragonflies and butterflies** for visitors to borrow at the front desk!
  - The University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point will be hosting the **Federal Duck Stamp Art Competition** this year on Sept. 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> and are looking for Friends who might be interested in attending; check out the "other news" section below!
- **Signs:** Hallie Rasmussen continues to work with Malone, Inc. and Graphic Images LLC to try to figure out how to fabricate a new entry sign; the current sign was badly hail damaged early this summer. Signs have been completed for a single panel kiosk at Mosey's landing. Kyra Neal and Jamie Bertram continue to work on McGregor District sign inventory.
- **Special Events:** Planning has begun for the 4<sup>th</sup> annual Creepy Critters to be held on October 11, 2017 - David Stokes has agreed to present several

interpretive programs during the evening with a feature program from 7pm-8pm dispelling myths about “unhuggable animals.” A note has gone out to agency and non-profit partners who helped lead outside activities last year as well as a “Save the Date” for Friends and volunteers.

- **Volunteers** -We are very thankful to all the Friends and front desk volunteers who have helped tremendously with the senior pass rush! Eric Barnier, Delaney Dahl, and Suzanne Ryan joined the front desk crew this month. Volunteers have also assisted with wild celery sampling, forest inventory, and river sign maintenance and posting. The volunteer banquet will be held on Wed. Sept 20th from 5:30 - 7:30 in the multipurpose room at the VC - the theme is “A Night with the Stars” and will feature a presentation by Dr. Bob Allen of the University of Wisconsin - La Crosse Planetarium.
- **Wildfire** - Hallie Rasmussen went out on a two-week fire detail to lend support as a public information officer to crews battling fires at Inyo National Forest near Bishop, California and at Yosemite National Park in California. Katie Julian has been detailed to Lolo National Forest in Montana. Refuge LE Supervisor has been detailed to Texas to assist with the recovery efforts from hurricane Harvey.

#### **Other News:**

#### **Federal Duck Stamp Art Competition Looking for Friends to Attend:**

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is partnering with the University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point to host the 2017 Federal Duck Stamp Art Contest Sept. 15-16 in Stevens Point, WI. Contest activities will begin at 10 AM Central Time on both Friday and Saturday, and we invite you to join us. More information about the contest and other fun activities planned for the weekend can be found at: <https://www.uwsp.edu/cnr/Pages/Federal-Duck-Stamp-Contest.aspx>

This national event will feature judging of artwork submitted to be selected for the 2018-19 Federal Duck Stamp. Each \$25 stamp sold results in 98 cents per dollar (or \$24.50) returned to habitat conservation benefitting waterfowl and other wildlife. Since its inception in 1934, the Federal Duck Stamp has generated \$950 million in sales to hunters, bird watchers, outdoor enthusiasts, and collectors and has resulted in the protection of nearly six million acres.

The Federal Duck Stamp Contest is the nation’s oldest continuing federally sponsored art competition. Its winners become instantly noteworthy among wildlife artists and stamp enthusiasts.

Four previous artists from the state of Wisconsin have won the coveted title and have had their artwork featured on the stamp: Walter E. Bohl in 1943-44; Owen J. Gromme in 1945-46; Martin R. Murk in 1977-78; and Arthur G. Anderson in 1987-88. Artists in the Midwest hold a long-standing place in the history of the Federal Duck Stamp Contest. Including the four Wisconsin artists, more than 20 Federal Duck Stamp artists have hailed from the Midwest, including James and Joseph Hautman, who share the honor of the most Duck Stamp Contest wins at five apiece.

#### **Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources**

**Shawn Giblin** 608-785-9995 [shawn.giblin@wisconsin.gov](mailto:shawn.giblin@wisconsin.gov)

### WI DNR Water Quality Update:

The WDNR is conducting a comprehensive assessment of bluegreen algae abundance and toxins associated with harmful bluegreen algae blooms. This study is being conducted in the full extent of Wisconsin waters adjoining the Mississippi River. One of the sampling sites is at the Black River Airport Beach-downstream of Lake Onalaska. This site will give an indication of bluegreen algae abundance and associated algal toxins within Lake Onalaska during 2017. A draft assessment will be completed by April 2018.

The WDNR, in conjunction with partners from the Fish and Wildlife Service and the Army Corps of Engineers, has completed an 18-month comprehensive study of the water quality within the Trempealeau Lakes. The objectives of the study were to: 1. Perform a baseline assessment of water quality conditions within the Trempealeau Lakes during winter and summer conditions; 2. Identify areas of winter water quality impairment within the Trempealeau Lakes; 3. Characterize post-project winter and summer water quality conditions within the Long Lake Habitat Rehabilitation and Enhancement Project (HREP); and 4. Provide management recommendations regarding water management at the Long Lake water control structure and general recommendations to improve water quality for biota within the Trempealeau Lakes. The suggested changes to flow rates into Long Lake will result in improved water quality, improved fishing opportunities and improved conditions for fish and wildlife within Long Lake.

The WDNR is also in the process of conducting an 18-month comprehensive study of the water quality within the Pigeon Island Complex near Trempealeau, WI. A report detailing study findings will be forthcoming.

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### **David Heath**

<http://www.mvr.usace.army.mil/Missions/Environmental-Protection-and-Restoration/Upper-Mississippi-River-Restoration/Habitat-Restoration/>

### **Solicitation of ideas, concerns and objectives for a second HREP.**

- 1. Sedimentations in upper Lake and Nelson Park on French Is. Airport culverts are not flowing, need more flow in this system.**
- 2. Accumulation of organic materisl. At Brice Pr. Cha., and Sailboat Club Bay. Can combine this habitat remedy w/ improved navigation.**
- 3. Access is a problem. L. Dist. Survey shows this. Too many mergents. Could be Ok with just a navigation channe.**
- 4. Red Pines, bay in from of silted in. Island is eroding. We talked ab out this about 4 years ago.**
- 5. Do dredging, and use spoils for forestry purposes.**

6. **Need to go to source of sedimentation to remedy this problem. Not on landscape scale but rather places like Tank. Cr., and Sommers Chute. Sediment traps.**
7. **Need to restore pre-impoundment natural flow to Brice Pr., (old Black R) channel. That way can more easily manage sediment. Would have easier access to sediment.**
8. **How has excessive sedimentation affected fish and wildlife? There seems to be less diver duck habitat.**

## **Brenda Kelly**

### **Jim Fisher WDNR**

- 1) Explanation of habitat project program and process (Jim).
- 2) Solicitation of objectives for Lake Onalaska and potential features (dredging, island building, sediment accumulation control, etc.).

### **US Army Corps of Engineers**

### **Ray Marinan**

Many green ash trees are now showing up dead from the emerald ash borer. The Corps still requires a site visit to determine if we would allow the trees to be cut down and everything is on a case by case basis. We had students out this summer conducting boundary inspections in the area and we hope to present a report to the town later this year and discuss the findings.

[www.lakeonalaska.org](http://www.lakeonalaska.org)