

HALF MOON LAKE IMPLEMENTATION TASKFORCE

Meeting Minutes

October 12, 2016

Persons Present: Bill James – UW-Stout; Susan Kaul, Penny Von Haden, Tinka Mikelson, Diane Paulsrud, Christine Schaaf – Friends of Half Moon Lake; Phil Fieber, John Genskow, Todd Chwala – City of Eau Claire; Buzz Sorge – WDNR; Greg Wilson – Barr Engineering; Dan Zerr – UW-Extension.

Update on Aquatic Plant Distribution: Buzz Sorge of WDNR provided an update on the aquatic plant communities in the lake.

In the sampling of the lake done in June 2106, only one site showed the presence of curly-leaf pondweed (CLP). Looking back over the recent past, CLP showed the ability to increase in presence in years when herbicide treatment of the lake was not done. So the consensus is to continue to treat the lake for this invasive species to keep it under control. Elodea, which is a native plant, was showing unwanted dominance of the plant community over the last few years. It appears that this plant has given up some space to some other natives, but is still the most dominant plant in the lake. Greater diversity is desired, and time (along with continued treatment for CLP) may improve this situation.

Outcomes: The group decided that further annual treatments using herbicide to control CLP will continue.

Buzz also talked a little about the history of work that has been done on the lake, and the accomplishments to date. He also commented on the fishery in the lake. Bass have become very common and limits, etc., have been modified to try to reduce these numbers in order to increase the number of pan fish and species diversity in the lake.

Update on Water Quality Monitoring: Bill James provided a report of water quality and sediment data collected in 2016.

Work was just finished sampling the lake, so not all data has been analyzed for 2016. Available data shows that the alum applied to the lake in 2011 is mostly still on top of the bottom sediments, and not in contact with much of the phosphorus (P) contained in those sediments. Also the alum is slowly becoming less reactive with P, as the alum has begun binding to itself. Generally, the alum seems to be doing a substantially better job binding P in the east arm of the lake versus the west arm, even though the west arm was treated with a greater amount of alum. Secchi disk data shows generally good water clarity throughout the lake in the spring of 2016, with the Secchi disk visible all the way to the bottom of the lake (about 9 meters) in parts of the lake. But this Secchi depth decreased to 1 m by summer. Chlorophyll also showed higher values in the summer compared to

spring. Total P in the lake is high in the summer as well, but looking at this value since the alum treatment shows that total P values generally are lower in the summer since the alum treatment in 2011 compared to before. However these values each year since 2011 are slowly rising (more in the west arm than the east).

Outcomes: Bill will refine the data from 2016 and have a full report available next year. The group discussed alum treatments, and the need for smaller treatments more often, compared to one large treatment. The City of Eau Claire has budgeted \$100,000 each year in 2017, 2019, and 2021 for this purpose. Barr Engineering is studying the P budget for the lake and should have more to say about that as work continues.

Update on Geese Issues on the Lake: Goose eggs were oiled with corn oil in the spring of 2016. This method prevents them from hatching, and also dissuades the nesting adults from returning to that nest. 520 eggs were oiled and only a handful of goslings were seen thereafter.

Outcomes: Oiling of eggs will be done every year, and a roundup of adult geese will be done every 3 years. This should help keep P from goose droppings out of the lake. More education of the public to not feed ducks and geese at the lake is always necessary.

Other Items Discussed: Friends of HML brought up the issue of runoff coming through an appliance recycling area near the lake, and the possibility of pollutants being picked up by that runoff. The City will investigate.

Various ideas for helping decrease water loss from the lake...which is likely coming from both a surface stream moving out of the south end of the lake, and through leakage underground following the old buried channel to the Chippewa River...were discussed. No immediate work will be done on this, but it may need to be addressed in the future.

Next Meeting: The next Taskforce meeting will likely be held sometime in 2017 when the 2016 sampling data has been analyzed, and more information is ready to be presented by Barr Engineering. Both Buzz Sorge and Phil Fieber will likely be retiring from their respective positions before the next meeting. Their work on HML issues over the years is greatly appreciated.

Compiled by Dan Zerr, 10/13/16