

HALF MOON LAKE IMPLEMENTATION TASKFORCE

January 31, 2013

Persons Present: Jodi Lepsch, Bill James, Pat Ivory, Steve Duffenbach, John Genskow, Bob Von Haden, Penny Von Haden, Susan Kaul, Christine Schaaf, Katherine Mikelson, Buzz Sorge, Joe Knight, Phil Fieber, Dan Zerr.

Review of October 23, 2012 Minutes: The previous Taskforce meeting minutes were reviewed, with no changes submitted.

Update on Water Quality Monitoring: Bill James reported on water quality monitoring done during the summer of 2012 at the lake. The alum applied to the lake in 2011 appears to be well-distributed throughout the lake, settling as it was designed to, at the top of the sediments at the bottom of the lake. In late May of 2012 there was a small algal bloom. Although cause is hard to determine, it appears that part of the reason for the bloom was the increase in phosphorus (P) content in the water being pumped in from wells near the Chippewa River in Owen Park. More testing will need to be done to find ways to mitigate this problem.

The storm in late May of 2012 uprooted much of the native *Elodea canadensis* in the lake, and led to a spike in P concentrations. Much of the loose plant matter was removed by the City's aquatic plant harvester, and P levels in the lake moderated over the rest of the year. Chlorophyll a spiked after the storm as well. Another spike in algae growth appeared in late August, though not nearly as intense as in years past before chemical treatments. Secchi disk readings showed clarity was better in the lake this year, with some exceptions following the storm, and again in late August.

Overall there has been a 50% reduction in P levels since the chemical treatments began, along with a drop in chlorophyll a. Secchi depth was less than 1 meter before treatments, and is now about 1.5 to 1.6 meters.

Aquatic Plant Distribution: Jodi Lepsch (formerly Swanson) of WDNR gave a presentation about the status of aquatic plants in the lake, very similar to the summary she gave at the previous meeting. Even with the considerable amounts of *Elodea canadensis* ripped from the lake bottom during the bad storm this past summer, this plant is still the dominant species in the lake, with densities increasing over 2011. *Potamogeton crispus* (curly leaf pondweed), an invasive species, showed small occurrences in 2012, with a slight increase shown in August versus June. This was common in other area lakes during 2012 as well. *Ceratophyllum demersum* (coontail), a native plant that was mostly killed off by herbicide treatments to the lake (intended for invasive species), is still very rare in the lake but showed some gains in August. Overall plant diversity seems to have decreased a bit in the lake, mostly due to the dominance of *E. canadensis* and the fact that many sensitive species were killed by the chemical treatments. It's hoped that these species will eventually return as aquatic plant succession takes place. The invasive

Eurasian water milfoil (*Myriophyllum spicatum*) has been eradicated from the lake and has shown no signs of reintroduction.

City Public Works: John Genskow from the City of Eau Claire Public Works Department reported that cost-effective ways of getting P out of the well water are being investigated. He also said the City was exploring ways to keep the lake from leaking through seepage to the Chippewa River at the southeast portion of the lake.

City Parks Report: Phil Feiber with City Parks and Recreation reported that the pumps moving well water to the lake have been refurbished and are all in working order, and are back to a rotating schedule of two pumps on and one off. Phil also talked about methods being explored to remove P from the well water coming in. He also showed pictures of the corrosion and iron bacteria accumulation in the well pipes. These were replaced with stainless steel pipes to allow better flow of make-up water to the lake.

Other items from City Parks and Rec; funding is in place for herbicide treatments this summer and those will be conducted as in recent years; 40 trees were felled into the lake and anchored over the winter to help improve fish habitat; the City is moving forward with the plans for a handicapped fishing pier south of the causeway near Lakeshore Park, and it may be finished this year; a privately-owned house and property were purchased by the City on the northwest side of the lake, just west of the Clear Channel radio building.

Friends of Half Moon Lake: Friends of Half Moon Lake submitted a report and discussed many of the items in this report with the group (for details, see the report attached at the end of these minutes).

Next Steps: The next Taskforce meeting will likely be held in May.

Compiled by Dan Zerr, 2/4/13