

Minutes of Aquatic Invasive Species Committee Meeting

Monday, August 14, 2023

The meeting was called to order by Chris Webb at 8:30 am. Roll call of committee members verified quorum was present. We met at the Barnes Town Office and via Zoom Video Conferencing.

1. Roll call:

Members Present: Sally Pease, Marcia Wellnitz, Diane Menard, Chris Webb, Doug Stearly, Julia Lyons, Mauve Gagne, Cris Neff (Liaison for FOECLA), David Blumer (LEAPS LLC), and Fred Kawell (Conservation Club). David and Fred attended via Zoom Video Conferencing.

Members Absent: Ingemar Ekstrom, Barb Clements, Eric Neff (Liaison for the Town of Barnes), Andy Teal (Bayfield County AIS Coordinator), and Tyler Mesalk (DNR Water Resource Management Specialist).

Verification of Public Notice: Public notice of meeting was posted on August 9, 2023 at 10:00 am by Judy Bourassa, Interim Clerk/Treasurer.

2. Approval of Agenda: A motion was made by Marcia and seconded by Sally to approve the agenda. A voice vote was taken and the motion carried.

3. Approval of last month's minutes: A motion was made by Julia and seconded by Doug to approve the minutes of previous meeting, held on July 10, 2023. A voice vote was taken and the motion carried.

4. County AIS Activities and Educational Opportunities: Andy Teal, Bayfield County A.I.S. Coordinator
Andy Teal was absent from our meeting, therefore, there was no report.

5. Current Year Activities:

a. Tomahawk and Sand Bar Lakes:

i. Results of Treatment:

David Blumer discussed two documents that he sent out by email and also presented on the TV screen at our meeting. Both documents showed the herbicide applications and concentration testing results on Tomahawk and Sand Bar Lakes.

Document #1, Tomahawk Lake: We used the limno-curtain to block off the handle end of the lake, and we used 2,4D herbicide to treat the Eurasian watermilfoil. The testing showed that the concentration was high for the first 8 hours, then testing through the next 4 days showed concentration levels above the effective rate to kill the targeted milfoil plants. Testing is expected to continue through August. The limno-curtain remained in the lake for a 2 week period. Presently, the milfoil is gone and native plants remain fine and strong. This area will be surveyed again in the fall.

Document #2, Tomahawk and Sand Bar Lakes: We treated 3 areas along the north shore of Tomahawk and 1 area on Sand Bar with ProcellaCor herbicide. At 8 hours, the herbicide level was at its peak concentration. This concentration was effective to kill the milfoil plants. ProcellaCor is a systemic herbicide, meaning that the plant takes it through its entire structure and roots. Testing in other parts of the lake showed no evidence of the herbicide and native plants were not affected. In summary, our chemical treatment plans worked well and the milfoil was killed in the treated areas. However, there is still milfoil in other parts of the lake that were not chemically treated.

ii. BAISS Operations:

There are 2 weeks left for harvesting milfoil with the BAISS boat operation on Sand Bar. There is plenty of milfoil for the divers to pull. Lots of milfoil is growing along the shorelines in the areas that have dead trees (left from the high water period of several years ago). These areas are impossible for the divers to work in. Our only options to kill milfoil in these areas are hand pulling or chemical treatment. Our grant next year may include more of both of these two options.

iii. Surveys and Mapping:

Matt Berg of Endangered Resources Services, LLC will be doing surveying and mapping work in the fall.

B. Upper and Middle Eau Claire Lakes:

i. BAISS Operations:

BAISS operations have been completed in Upper Eau Claire Lake with 5 weeks of work there. However, there is still lots of curly-leaf pondweed left in several locations. We do not have data on the numbers of bags collected, nor the hours of volunteer hours recorded. We briefly discussed the possibility of chemical treatment for this invasive plant. It seems that the infected area would need to be over 5 acres in size and the limno-curtain would be needed to contain the herbicide. This option may be looked at more completely at a later date.

ii. Surveys and Mapping:

Surveying and mapping have been done, but the results have not been received yet from Matt Berg. This data is also needed to complete the Aquatic Plant Management Plan (APM).

Shunenber Lake (part of the Upper Eau Claire Lake chain) has curly-leaf pondweed also. We will be applying for a Rapid Response Grant in 2024 for Smith, Shunenber, and Sweet Lakes. This would allow us to plan, get permits, map, survey, and manage the plants in Shunenber and any other areas that may be infected in this chain of lakes that leads into Upper EC Lake.

C. Lower Eau Claire and Cranberry Lakes:

i. BAISS Operations:

The BAISS boat spent a week and a half on Lower Eau Claire Lake pulling curly-leaf pondweed per our Rapid Response Grant (first year). There were plenty of plants to pull, however, it was too late in the life cycle of curly-leaf to be effective. This late in the season, the plants begin dying back and falling apart easily. Next summer, the BAISS boat may begin the season working at Lower, then moving to Upper to better control the patch on Lower (instead of working on Upper first, then moving to Lower as we did this year).

ii. Surveys and Mapping:

The surveying and mapping have been done. The results have not been received yet.

iii. Biological Control:

As part of our grants, we raised purple loosestrife beetles. The young adult beetles were released on July 11th at several different sites in Bayfield County. We have not received any information on how effective the beetles were in controlling the purple loosestrife plants in these areas.

6. Grant Applications for 2024:

a. Tomahawk/Sand Bar Population Control:

We need a grant for these two lakes. The grants will include chemical treatment and mechanical harvesting of Eurasian watermilfoil.

b. Eau Claire Chain Population Control:

We need a grant for the Eau Claire Lake chain to continue mechanical harvesting curly-leaf pondweed. Using our GPS data, our committee can develop the mapping needed for our grant. Dave Blumer may not need to assist us with this grant.

c. Lower Eau Claire Rapid Response 2nd Year of 3-Year Grant:

This grant is all set – the second year of a 3-year grant.

d. CBCW Annual Application:

We need to apply for this grant for 2024.

e. Consultant Contract:

Dave Blumer, LEAPS LLC, will continue to assist our committee with grants and completing our APMs as needed.

Pre-grant applications are due by September 15th. Christine Webb made a motion to apply for cost-share grants from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) for the purpose of prevention, detection, and control of Aquatic Invasive Species in area lakes. More specifically to include Clean Boats Clean Water (CBCW) grant for prevention of spread; Early Detection Rapid Response (EDRR) grant for detection of newly discovered populations in the headwaters of the Eau Claire Chain of Lakes—Sweet, Shunenberg, and Smith Lakes; Population Control of Eurasian watermilfoil (EWM) on Tomahawk/Sand Bar Lakes, and Population Control of curly-leaf pondweed (CLP) On Upper Eau Claire Lake and Middle Eau Claire Lake. The motion was seconded by Marcia Wellnitz. A voice vote was taken and the motion carried.

7. BAISS Operations and Maintenance Budget:

We have spent about \$800 for repairs and maintenance this year. There a number of issues that need attention soon. A list is being developed, and it appears that a bigger budget will be needed. Things are deteriorating on the boat (console/steering wheel, captain’s chair, nets, and motor were mentioned). Also, we discussed that items needing repairs should be fixed in the fall in order for the boat to be ready early in the spring. In 2024, we will try to develop a schedule to start as early as mid-May, weather permitting. We are still in need of a team of maintenance workers (to be on call) with training on the functioning of the boat.

8. Clean Boats Clean Water Program:

a. Update on YTD Volunteer Hours:

This data was not available. There have been issues with the SWIMS website.

9. Education and Training Planning: September 2023 and April 2024

*Chris Webb recommended that a mass mailing should go out to property owners in the spring to request volunteer help or monetary donations.

*More information should be directed to Douglas County residents on Lower Eau Claire Lake about our programs dealing with aquatic invasive species. We need more volunteers and interested participants.

*We will be sending reminders about shoreline monitoring and the deadline of September 15th to get the forms sent in.

10. Year-to-Date Expenses:

2023 State Grants AIS/CBCW: \$60,277.69

#56903 BAISS Maintenance/Expenses: \$806.57

#56910 CBCW Expenses: \$14,053.19 (\$11,770.50 for boat land monitor wages)

#56911 Tomahawk/Sand Bar Lake Expenses: \$19,413.77 (\$14,187.00 for treatments)

#56913 Upper/Middle Eau Claire Lakes Expenses: \$10,239.35 (\$5,800.50 divers wages)

#56914 Lower EC/Cranberry Lakes Expenses: \$2,247.54

Total Expenses To-Date: \$46,760.42

11. Next meeting Date for Town of Barnes AIS Committee is Monday, September 11, 2023 at 9:00 am. All interested parties are welcome to attend.

Adjourn: A motion was made by Sally and seconded by Marcia to adjourn the meeting. A voice vote was taken and the motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 10:15 am.

Respectfully submitted by Diane Menard
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