

MINUTES

ECOLOGY COMMISSION MONTHLY MEETING

Cordry Sweetwater Conservancy District

7 September, 2023

- A. The monthly meeting of the CSCD Ecology Commission was called to order by Commission Chair, Herb Benshoof, initially at 5:30 P.M. on 7 Sept. 2023, at a new coffer dam location on Bass Court (field trip) and then at 6:00 P.M., in the CSCD conference room.
- B. Members Present: Herb Benshoof (Board), Sunny Leerkamp (CSLOA), Ty Cooper, Randy Brumfield, Shena Johnson, and Jim Donnell (Recorder).
- C. Members Absent: Brenda Maulden
- D. Others In Attendance: Nick Johann (CSCD) plus 3 Guests
- E. (6:05 P.M.) **Randy Brumfield moved to approve the Minutes of the 3 August, 2023 meeting of the CSCD Ecology Commission; Shena Johnson seconded. This motion was unanimously approved.**
- F. (6:10 P. M.) **FREEHOLDER CONCERNS:**
1. Tom Quill expressed concern over the amount of vegetation growing in the rip rap of the dams of both lakes. Although the vegetation has already been treated by Aquatic Control, it continues to thrive in places. He was curious to know if the biannual dam inspections look at this aspect of the dams. Specifically, do the inspectors consider the impact of the much bigger waves of today’s boats (e.g. big-wake boats) on the rip rap along the dam shorelines and are those big waves dislodging the riprap, exposing soils that promote increased vegetation? Later in the meeting, Nick joined the discussion and agreed to alert the dam inspection team (Christopher Burke Engineering) of this issue and request their inclusion in our upcoming dam inspections in October.
 2. Katie Starr (Brown County Soil & Water District Director) offered to arrange for Mr. Vince Garman and Amy Spalding, representatives from The Nature Conservancy, to attend our next ECOLOGY meeting in October to educate us on federal funding opportunities from The Nature Conservancy's Forest Bank program to better manage our CSCD forested areas and invasive weed eradication efforts.
- G. (6:20 P. M.) **OLD BUSINESS:**
1. **DEER HUNT 2023-24 UPDATE** (Shena): Hunter and freeholder authorization paperwork packets have been created and distributed. Hunter qualification and safety briefing is scheduled for this Saturday at the Centerlake Park pavilion.
 2. **WAKE BOAT STUDY COMMITTEE** (Sunny): Based on the results of the survey questionnaire sent out to all freeholders last month, the joint ECOLOGY/SECURITY Wake-boat Study Committee plans to develop their recommendations to the CSCD Board regarding the future of wake-enhancing boats on CSCD lakes at next week’s meeting of that committee.
 3. **POLLINATOR HABITAT UPDATE** (Brenda by email):
 - a. Brenda suggests that ECOLOGY Commission form a committee to further direct and manage the creation of the “CSCD Pollinator Habitat,” in the spoils area across from the SW beach. The Commission agreed and 2 members (Shena and Brenda) volunteered to serve on that committee. (Subsequently, freeholder Sue Donnell volunteered to also serve on this committee).

It was suggested that the CSCD “Garden Club” be approached to solicit active membership on this newly formed committee due to their related interests and expertise.

Any freeholder interested in serving on this committee to manage the soon to be established “CSCD Pollinator Habitat,” is urged to contact any member of the ECOLOGY Commission to get involved.
 - b. Randy Brumfield has completed the herbicide application on the 3-acre designated pollinator habitat area (across from the beach) in near-final preparation for seed planting this fall/winter.

(OVER >>>)

- H. (6:50 P. M.) **CSCD OPERATIONS REPORT** (Nick): Nick Johann provided reports on myriad projects of interest to ECOLOGY including:
- a. **Aquatic Weed Treatments**: Aquatic Control Inc. has herbicide-treated the rip rap on the dams of both lakes. Weeds are dying.
 - b. **Cordry Lake Spillway**: We are close to the permitting process which will then lead to bidding.
 - c. **Bollards**: Nick provided a map showing the proposed bollard emplacement locations near the SW beach for Commission approval. He will now seek Board approval for his proposal. Randy Brumfield is assisting with the delivery of obsolete used utility poles from JC-REMC for use as bollard barricade materials. The commission asked Nick to move this bollard emplacement around the beach area forward this fall.
- I. **NEW BUSINESS**:
1. (7:00 P. M.) **DREDGING APPLICATIONS**: NONE
 2. **FREEHOLDER CONCERNS**: NONE
 3. **COMMISSION MEMBER CONCERNS**:
 - a. Ty Cooper commented that the support he received from the beach attendant while renting the pavilion at SW beach for a party recently was exceptional and noteworthy.
 - b. Randy Brumfield commented that CSCD employees can and should do more to mitigate the biting insect problem (especially mosquitoes) by removing items that collect and retain standing water (e. g. old tires) and piles of pallets at Centerlake Park.
 - c. There have been multiple complaints of late re-blooming of aquatic weeds near docks on both lakes. Nick will study the concern for future action as appropriate.
 - d. An anonymous complaint by a freeholder regarding the actions of another freeholder potentially impacting the CSCD environmental health was discussed. Since the Brown County Health Department was involved, no further action was deemed appropriate.
 - e. Randy Brumfield inquired about the seemingly increase in the number of camping trailers and RVs in use around the lakes. He wanted assurances that they are being properly permitted as required by CSCD rules. Further concern was voiced about the lack of enforcement personnel since the departure of CSCD deputy sheriff resources.
 4. **STRATEGIC PLANNING NON-\$\$\$ ISSUE DISCUSSIONS**:
 - # 1: **“BITING INSECT CONTROL”** - Jim Donnell's commented that Neil Crum (invited but not attending) portrayed exciting data at last week's Ox Roast, showing a most positive trend over the last 4 years of a dramatic increase in the population of purple martins, bluebirds, and other migrating bird species that help to keep the biting insect populations under control. The recent annual funding for purple martin “condos” and blue bird houses, together with Neil Crum's engagement of volunteers to regularly maintain those resources and count the births has led to this good news story. A debt of gratitude is owed Neil Crum and his volunteers in this regard. More funding has been proposed.
 - # 2: **“EDUCATION (of Freeholders) ON INVASIVE SPECIES”** - (see next paragraph)
 - # 3: **“INVASIVE SPECIES REMOVAL EVENTS”** – After detailed discussion and funding input from the Brown County Soil and Water District Director, Katie Starr, it was decided that CSCD and the ECOLOGY Commission would host a comprehensive “Invasive Plant Species Educational and Eradication Workshop,” on November 4th at a time and location TBD. This event will be for all CSCD freeholders, to educate them on the huge and growing problem of invasive plants overrunning CSCD and how to eradicate them. Learning that significant funding is available from the BC Soil and Water District office for this purpose should make this educational workshop a very popular event. Randy Brumfield and Jim Donnell's agreed to lead the effort to put this event together for CSCD and all freeholders.
- J. **ADJOURNMENT**: *Shena Johnson moved to adjourn the 7 September, meeting of the Ecology Commission. Randy Brumfield seconded. The motion passed.* The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted:

JIM DONNELLS

Commission Recorder

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