

Notes from the Chairman Paul Gettelman

This is our 41st year that the LPPRD has been in existence. In 1977 when we started we had established a Mission Statement for the District. I think it is good to review this Statement from time to time. So as a reminder to us all, here it is:

The Mission of the Lake Puckaway Protection and Rehabilitation District is to:

- Protect and enhance the quality of Lake Puckaway's fish and wildlife values;
- Promote ecologically balanced water levels, water clarity, and shore-line habitat;
- Preserve the recreational and economic value of the resource for the enjoyment of its residents and visitors, now and into the future;
- Promote the history and proper management of the lake;
- Promote the education, research, and information sharing between organizations, individuals, government bodies and the general public for the protection, preservation and improvement of Lake Puckaway.

This past year was a pretty unique one at that. We started with higher than normal water levels that last through July. Then the water level took a turn and headed to the low end of the spectrum. We passed our Lake Management Plan and began planning on our first and 2nd goal of the plan. As part of the first goal the Management Action was to “Implement Lake Puckaway Water Level Management Plan”. This is referred to by many as the lake draw down. This course of action is scheduled for 2 years and was originally connected with the 2nd Management Goal of “Improve Dam Operation Safety at Princeton Dam” or the reconstruction of the Princeton Dam.

At the time of this writing we (LPPRD & DNR) are planning on implementing the first goal and start with the first year of the draw down.

As far as the 2nd goal, “Improve Dam Operation Safety at Princeton Dam” or Princeton Dam Reconstruction, there is a new contractor working on this. The latest information we have is the earliest construction could start is October 1 of this year. We are still waiting to see if the bidding process has started. The good news is that the Princeton Dam Reconstruction will happen, if not this year then next year. As long as there are no outside interferences with the process it should be a go.

MORE LATER IN NEWSLETTER ON THE DAM

The Lake Management Plan can be found at our web site or by going to:

<http://www.lakepuckaway.com/updates/photos.pdf>

The Lake District is also working with the WDNR, FWS, Army Corps of Engineers and Ducks Unlimited in pursuing a Grant for possible dredge bank work, Island construction and dredging on the east end of the Lake. This is in the beginning stage and more will be coming out on this as the meetings progress.

I hope that all our projects are successful for the benefit of the Lake. It is our intent to continue to make Lake Puckaway a quality lake for current and future generations..

2017 Lake Puckaway Endangered and Threatened Species Monitoring Project Final Report to the Lake Puckaway Protection and Rehabilitation District

For the 8th consecutive year, endangered and threatened water-bird species were monitored from spring arrival dates to fledging dates for those nesting in the Lake Puckaway proper. Endangered species monitored included Black, Caspian, Common and Forster's Terns. Threatened species included Great Egrets. Because of on-going management programs for Common and Forster's Terns, the emphasis was directed to these two endangered species. Black Terns were also intensively monitored in 2017.

Nesting site protocols were changed for 2016 and continued in 2017 due to the increasing numbers of nesting pairs of Forster's and Common Terns, to minimize human disturbance at the two sites.

Summary: In spite of a late start, gale-force winds and predation by Turnstones, nesting success on the two Common Tern rafts proved very successful with the banding of 67 chicks making Lake Puckaway still the 2nd largest colony in the state. A drop in Black Tern numbers reflects a downward trend at other local sites with the exception of increased numbers at Grand River SWA. Statewide, nationwide and globally the Black Tern has been steadily declining over the past 40 years. In 2016, Lake Puckaway had the largest Forster's Colony in the state. Abnormally high water levels on the lake in 2017 resulted only a few chicks being fledged. Fortunately, these birds are long-lived and site-faithful and high recruitment will continue to occur if water levels stay normal during their nesting season. Great Egrets did well in spite of some habitat loss, crowding onto the few trees remaining on the Dredgebank.

Recommendations: The Common Tern raft project should continue. Based on an almost even split in nest numbers on both rafts, it appears that Common Tern pairs have pretty much maxed out the rafts. The only way to increase production would be to add an additional raft which can be added to the existing site area.

Forster's Terns will return to their historic site at Pancake Island in 2018. Hopefully, water levels will remain at normal pool for them. High water at other state sites this year also resulted in poor or no recruitment. As an endangered species, this bird can ill afford another poor nesting season.

Although Black Tern nest numbers dropped from 2014, there is plenty of nesting habitat available for these birds. Predation is more of an issue with Black Terns than with Forster's or Common Terns since they nest in areas vulnerable to mink and raccoons. That said, they more easily adjust to fluctuating water levels than Forster's Terns using several varieties of habitat. Management projects for Black Terns have shown mixed results. But decreasing numbers over the past four years at Lake Puckaway is a concern. This bird should be monitored several years in a row to see if nesting success is variable or if it continues to decline.

As always, I would like to thank the LPPRD for their partnership in these programs over these many years and hope that it will continue to do so into the future.

Daryl Christensen
Water bird monitor, 2017

Thoughts on the Lake Management Plan

“It has been a year since we looked hard at this plan. So I asked myself why did I vote for this plan and came up with this. A little back ground about myself and some of the reasons why.

Being on the planning committee here are some of the reasons I voted for the water level management plan. I have been around Lake Puckaway since 1982 and have noticed many changes on the Lake. My education on the lake started when I was asked to be on one the committees for the Comprehensive Lake Management Plan which passed in 2004. After that I was elected a commissioner on the LPPRD and served for 12 years, I was chairman of the Adaptive Management Committee which came into being through the 2004 Comprehensive Management Plan. Our goal on the Adaptive Management Committee was to come up with some water level management because of the research that showed 1950 acres of emergent vegetation has been lost on Lake Puckaway. We came up with the Emergent Plant Stabilization or EPS for short. The MOU for the Princeton Dam stated the boards could go on May 15. The EPS plan stated leave the boards off of dam for an extra month until June 15. This would help the plants to better survive and take off. Mother Nature had other ideas and kept water levels high in the spring past June 15 so EPS never did work.

Many people thought we should do plantings to get more vegetation. We tried planting over 500 willows and dogwoods on the eastern dredge bank to try and stabilize the dredge bank. We also planted over 14,000 plants in the lake at over \$15,000 with volunteer labor and they also did not survive because they were unable to get established.

In 2012 Lake Puckaway was put on the States Impaired Water List because of excessive phosphorus levels, algae growth, and turbidity and degraded habitat and still is on this list. In 2012 when the contractor who was hired by the District to put on the boards fell off the dam, the DNR started talking about reconstruction of the Princeton Dam. While the DNR was pursuing state funding for the reconstruction of the Princeton Dam it was made clear to the board and planning committee that without some semblance of a water level plan an environmental impact statement on the reconstruction of the dam would need to be completed. The District and Planning committee with help from Onterra, LLC hammered out the 2017 Lake Management Plan. This plan explains the management action, specifications, definitions and specific conditions of the draw down and also has protection written in for the District. Such as a Successful Reduction Sequence, specific conditions on attempts and water level modifications or abandonment.

If the Board and Planning Committee would have went the route of the Environmental Impact Statement, this statement would have brought out the deficiencies on Lake Puckaway and water level management would have come to the top. There may not have been an option with protections written in had the board gone this way.

The EPA through the Clean Water Act is currently completing the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) analysis of the Upper Fox River and will further documents that at times Lake Puckaway acts as a nutrient source for downstream waters. The EPA would also expect water level management to be used to correct the Lake nutrient export issue.

The Shallow Lake Workgroup was also born out of this plan. They will look into projects like reconstruction of the east dredge bank as well as reconstruct and stabilize Pancake Island. New Island habitat will also be considered. These projects will produce in-lake barriers to reduce sediment suspension.

I am not an expert but have heard many educated experts speak and they all point to water level management for cleaner waters, fish and wildlife. There are protections written in here for us. We will not keep doing the same thing over expecting different results; if it does not work we will abandon it. This is why I voted for this plan. When I was on the board our goal was to pass Lake Puckaway down to the next generation in better shape than when we were here. I think this is a good start. “

Randy Schmidt

LAKE PUCKAWAY IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

After 54 years the Directors of the Lake Puckaway Improvement Association Inc. moved forward with the Dissolution of the Association. We obtained the services of the Law Firm: Scholz Nonprofit Law LLC to handle the process for the Association to dissolve.

The Directors would like to thank all founding persons, many members, volunteers, and contributors through-out the 54 years. The Lake Puckaway Improvement Association supported and funded the formation of the Lake Puckaway Protection and Rehabilitation District and contributed funds to many of past and current lake projects. Other donations included: Walleye's for Tomorrow and Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources projects on Lake Puckaway.

As part of the process, the Association reached a transmittal agreement with the District for the remaining funds of \$6,915.00. As a part of this agreement the Association stated limitation for the use of these funds to support navigation buoys along the dredge bank toward Village of Marquette, support public boat launches on the North and South Shore in Green Lake and Marquette Counties and support the LPPRD Fish Hatchery maintenance expenses. Thanks

Board of Directors
Lake Puckaway Improvement Association, Inc

LPPRD WALLEYE HATCHERY 2018 PAUL GETTELMAN

This is our 9th year of the LPPRD hatchery. During this time we have released over 11 million fry back into the Lake. Have we been successful? Well if you were around this winter and saw the amount of folks fishing on the ice you would think we had something to do with their success. There were reports all over of the excellent Walleye fishing on Lake Puckaway. Even the DNR wardens took notice.

During the course of our 9 years we have had excellent years and some not so good. 2018 is looking like it is going to be one that doesn't reflect the positive efforts of the volunteers that work at the hatchery. It seems that Mother Nature has played some games with us in the weather and the production of the spawn this year.

This year finished out as a poor year for the hatchery. We released 176,000 fry. Not sure what all the difficulty was but this is what we got. We are still studying the issues/problems. Hopefully Mother Nature had better luck.

PRINCETON DAM PROJECT

The State is working to get the project started as soon as possible.

The dam repair is not dependent on a drawdown of Lake Puckaway so the two items remain separate efforts. However, doing them concurrently can result in both being successfully completed.

The State's design engineer is working on finishing the plans and specifications for the repairs to the Princeton Dam. The plans will include replacing the lock channel gates, adding a fish passage, raising the fixed crest by 16.5 inches with a concrete cap, and breaking the downstream hydraulic by placing extra heavy rip rap immediately downstream of the dam.

Once the plans are completed, the State will begin the permitting process through the DNR Dam Safety & Water Regulation Programs and with the US Army Corps of Engineers for temporary wetland impacts.

The Department of Administration's Division of Facilities Development (DFD) staff and DNR project staff will complete final reviews and work with the design engineer to finalize the bidding documents and publish them for bidding. Public bidding may start as early as July 2018 with bids opened 45 days after initial posting.

Following the acceptance of bids, DFD staff will initiate a contract with the low bid contractor if their bid is within the project budget. This process requires documentation by the contractor and contract signature by the Governor's Office. Based on other projects, the signed contract and Notice to Proceed can take at least six weeks.

Construction may start in the fall of 2018 if timing of the Notice to Proceed and forecasted weather allow

Lake Puckaway Protection & Rehabilitation District Commissioners

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W6202 Lakeview Dr
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608-792-8489

Roger Swanke Term 2017-2020
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920 394 3098

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Kurt McCulloch Term 2016-2019
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Open- Green Lake County Appointee

ANNUAL MEETING AND BUDGET HEARING
LAKE PUCKAWAY PROTECTION AND REHABILITATION DISTRICT

Pursuant to Sec.33.30 (2) of Sec.65.90 (3) Wisconsin Statutes, the Lake Puckaway Protection and Rehabilitation District Annual Meeting and Budget Meeting will be held;

Date: Saturday June 2, 2018
Place: Marquette Village Hall
Marquette WI.
Time: 10:00 AM

SUMMARY OF THE PROPOSED BUDGET FOR 2019

ANTICIPATED REVENUES	ANTICIPATED EXPENSES
Projected Unexpended Revenues	Administration.....5,000
From FY 2018.....11,000	Lake Management 23,000
Anticipated Donations.....100	Hatchery 2,000
	Rough Fish 10,000
Anticipated Interest.....500	Dredge Bank Restoration 5,000
	Tern Raft & Survey <u>1,500</u>
Tax Levy Recommended.....34,900	Operation 41,500
TOTAL REVENUE 46,500	TOTAL EXPENSES 46,500

2018 ANNUAL MEETING AGENDA

1. Call to Order Chairman Paul Gettelman
2. Certification of Open Meeting Notice
3. Adoption of Agenda
4. Secretary's Report; Paul Gettelman (June 3, 2017)
5. Treasurer's Report: 2017
6. Election of two commissioners term
2018-2021 Gene Weber & Paul Gettelman
7. LPIA-Dave Ferge
8. Ted Johnson--WDNR
9. Fish Hatchery Report; Paul Gettelman
10. Commissioners Report;
11. Open Public Comment; (30 Minutes)
12. Proposed 2019 Budget and Tax levy
13. Budget Hearing and Adoption of the 2019 Budget
14. 15 min break
15. Return to meeting to act on any topics from Annual Meeting and elect officers for 2018-19
16. Adjournment

LAKE PUCKAWAY PROTECTION
& REHABILITATION DISTRICT
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ANNUAL NEWSLETTER**