

Lake Puckaway Protection & Rehabilitation District Board Meeting

Wednesday, October 4, 2023 | 6:30 P.M.

Virtual – Google Meet

Board Members Present

- Willy Stalker, Chairman
- Jaimes Johnson, Treasurer
- John Harter, Commissioner
- Dustin Esselman, Commissioner
- Maddy Wergin, Secretary/Town of Mecan Appointee

Board Members Absent

- Bob Schweder, Green Lake County Appointee

Guests

- Lance Paden, Cason Land & Water Management, LLC
- Brandon Oberleitner, Cason Land & Water Management, LLC
- Ted Johnson, DNR

Call to Order/Roll Call

- Meeting called to order by Willy at 6:32 pm. Roll call taken as reflected above.

Agenda Review

- Jaimes wanted to make a note/add on the fact that there will not be a tax levy increase this year because we are not required to make a payment on the loan until March 2025. Jaimes urges that rates are likely to go up so need to decide on total loan amount.
- No other changes or additions to the agenda.

Approval of Minutes from August 12, 2023 & August 17, 2023

- Dustin makes motion to accept the August 12, 2023 minutes and August 17, 2023 minutes as presented on the website. Seconded by John. Motion passed.

AIS

- Dustin states he is in favor of doing as much ProcellaCOR as possible next year and asks Ted what amount would likely be permitted. Ted states this is a complicated problem set and states that there should have been a fairly distinct proposal going into those public comment/informational meetings. Ted states he received an email from Lance today (10/4) stating we are going to need to do multiple years at large amounts; however, we only have year of treatment for the pilot project. Ted states the pilot project area looks good, but any herbicide is going to look good on year of treatment. Ted questions what happens when it all fills back in with milfoil the next year or so. Ted states that the “proof is in the pudding” for a pilot project two to three years out from initial treatment. Ted states that if we wanted to do multiple years of large treatment areas, that this should have been in the plan and presented to the public. Willy states that this was stated at the public informational meetings. Ted states that looking at long term results (2 to 3 years out) will dictate the success of the pilot project – not year of. Ted’s recommendation is to focus on the densest areas that cause the most user conflicts. Dustin asks, if money is no option,

what amount will the DNR allow for ProcellaCOR. Ted states that capacity needs to be shown for grants.

- Willy asks Lance what he has seen for year two on ProcellaCOR treatment on other lakes. Lance states they have seen success, but those are smaller lakes because ProcellaCOR at high doses has not happened on 5,000 acre lakes. Ted states all we can do is spot treatment – you cannot do the whole lake – Ted questions if that is sustainable money wise. Dustin states that’s up to LPPRD to decide. Ted states however that for grants, districts need to demonstrate capacity in the application – do you have the means to raise that money. Ted states that the grant application needs specifics and exactly what the plan is moving forward and as of now this is not in the application. Lance states we need to know what percentage of the lake can be treated and then we can move forward with the plan and more specifics. Ted states we cannot treat the same area two years in a row with ProcellaCOR. Ted states the plan is very arbitrary – there is no acreage total, how many years, and not able to demonstrate capacity. Ted states user needs will not be met with just ProcellaCOR treatment because you are still going to have native weeds. Dustin asks how many acres are we able to do regardless of grants? Ted states we need a specific proposal of what we are planning to do. Ted states that if the plan states a whole lake treatment and it’s dosed right and no money is no object, then the DNR would probably permit that. However, the label limits you to two years in a row of treatment, but when grants come into play you need to be able to demonstrate capacity. Lance states the reason they do not put specific acreage amounts in the plan is so they can see what happens in the years prior. Ted states you can be somewhat non-specific, then the plan needs to state that you are going to do large scale treatment for “x” number of years and needs to state how it will be funded.
- Ted states that you can put a lot of money into this and not see results in three years because of native weeds and milfoil growing back. Ted states that SePro rep said that even if successful with herbicide treatment, harvesting is still going to be needed. Ted suggests LPPRD is likely going to need a minimum of three harvesters.
- Jaimes asks if Ted would be comfortable with 200-acre treatment area plus the one harvester that we currently have. Ted states he cannot guarantee a grant, but he will try to help us the best he can. Jaimes asks if the acreage matters for grant purposes. Ted states it’s more about what you’re trying to accomplish. Ted says one harvester is a good start, but it is likely to be viewed as unsuccessful until more harvesters are acquired.
- Ted’s final thoughts/recommendation – he supports a healthy combination of herbicide treatment and harvesting (see Ted’s written recommendation on www.lakepuckaway.com under Important Information and Links → 2023 APM Update → Update from Ted Johnson or see below). Ted’s recommendation pertaining to grants is to start with a one-year approach because it might get complicated to do multiple years and it’s late in the game. Need approved plan in order to apply for grant. Integrated Pest Management, where you’re trying different things – like harvesting and herbicide – gets you more points. Plan needs to be approved and needs more specificity. Ted suggests focusing on the north and south shores and harvesting the middle.
- Willy asks if Ted would be okay with ProcellaCOR treatment as pier treatments. Ted states he would be okay with it, but people probably don’t want to have any plants around their docks, and ProcellaCOR only would likely target the milfoil. Suggests a contact herbicide would be better suited for pier treatments. Ted supports pier treatments and

states ProcellaCOR is likely the wrong tool for the piers. Lance states ProcellaCOR would not be recommended for pier treatments as well.

Harvester

- John talked with Bill Hunter about the conveyor he has that he acquired from Buffalo Lake. He will sell it to LPPRD for \$2,500.
- John states might be good for north shore/south shore conveyor or as a break down conveyor. Jaimes questions the price – how do we know this is a good price point? Maddy states that two conveyors might be beneficial even if you had two on one shore – it will increase cutting time and decrease off-loading time.
- John makes motion to purchase the conveyor from Bill Hunter for \$2,500. Seconded by Jaimes. Motion passed.

Adjourn

- Meeting adjourned at 8:08 pm.

From: Johnson, Ted M – DNR

Sent: Friday, October 6, 2023 3:32 PM

To: Lance Paden; Dustin Esselman; Willy Stalker; John Harter; Madeline Wergin; Jaimes Johnson; Brandon Oberleitner; Monica Gunderson

Cc: Kolasinski, Christopher E – DNR; Hudak, Andrew J – DNR

Subject: RE: 2023 Lake Puckaway APMP/LMP

The aquatic plant management (APM) program is a regulatory program and is responsible for the review and permitting of proposed APM activities. I need to be careful to not be overly prescriptive in what I recommend to the district. With that said, here are some requirements along with general recommendations for both your APM plan and aquatic invasive species (AIS) control grant.

Minimum Requirements

1. Your APM plan and grant application need more specificity regarding what the goals are for herbicide use on Lake Puckaway. Adaptive management principles can still be used, but there should be some stated goals for the next three years.
 - a. Some example goals could be:
 - i. Target the densest EWM stands near shore to provide navigational opportunities to the lake stakeholders.
 - ii. Consider picking a general area to treat in the deepest part of the lake to create a recreational zone for people to potentially use over time to waterski, recreate, etc. Again, you would only treat the densest EWM areas. A recreational zone could be split into different sections with only one section being treated per year.
 - iii. Establish clear success versus failure criteria. How will you evaluate the effectiveness of any herbicide treatment? What monitoring methods will be used to evaluate effectiveness? How many years should EWM be controlled for to constitute success?
 - iv. Capacity. If a multi-year treatment plan is the goal, how will it be funded?
2. **Buffalo Lake has 4 harvesters** running on a 14-mile-long lake. Currently they harvest about **284 acres**. The travel distances to unload aquatic plants after being cut is far longer on Buffalo than Puckaway. Consequently, harvesting on Puckaway should be more efficient and thereby more effective. As we've discussed, you likely will need to have 3-4 harvesters to effectively harvest the lanes and potentially top cut some EWM on the lake. Even if the EWM treatments are effective, coontail and other native plants will be present which may make navigation difficult. The SePRO representative said that you would need to implement mechanical harvesting in combination with ProcellaCOR, given the large size of the lake and current extent/density of plant growth.

- a. What is your timeline / plan to initiate an effective harvesting program? How will you acquire at least three harvesters (financial capacity)? How long will it take?
 - i. For example, in the future when people call to complain to me or the board that they can't get around on the lake what are we going to tell them? The plan should provide a timeline such that the public will have some assurance that a plan is in place and that it is actively being worked on etc.

Recommendations

The ruling principle for aquatic plant management is Integrated Pest Management (IPM). Here is the definition of IPM from our grant code.

Taken from NR193.65(1): Integrated pest management is an ecosystem-based management strategy that focuses on long-term suppression of pests or their damage and considers all of the available pest control practices. Integrated pest management projects shall be informed by current, comprehensive information on pest life cycles and the interactions among pests and the environment. A project that employs an integrated pest management strategy shall include more than one management practice.

I recommend not to put all or most financial resources into any one management technique. Herbicide use is one tool, but over time it will not provide enough navigational opportunities to meet the needs of the lake stakeholders. Again, there needs to be BALANCE between harvesting and herbicide use such that reasonable and realistic goals can be met for both management techniques.

A good example of why herbicides cannot provide adequate navigation are the campgrounds on the north side of the lake. They have been losing a lot of money due to fewer boat rentals. Herbicide use may provide some limited navigation relief in about 7-10% of the west end of the lake. How does herbicide use alone allow a boat on the Northshore to travel all the way to the south shore or the Fox River? How easy will it be to navigate in the herbicide treatment areas if they fill in with native plants (coontail, water celery, elodea, etc.)?

Lastly, if only one harvester is to be used on the lake, we need to be very realistic about our expectations for this practice. I would recommend that you pick an area no bigger than 30-60 acres and focus harvesting efforts within this one area. It would be a better to evaluate what it looks like to harvest one area well versus too large of an area infrequently.