



Minutes of the October 4th, 2011 Steering Committee meeting

Chairperson Jahns called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. at the Stephenson Annex Conference Room, Stephenson Michigan.

Hruska motioned to approve the agenda. Supported by Peterson, D.

Hruska moved and Jahns supported the approval of the Minutes of the August 2nd meeting, with minor corrections.

Introductions included: Anna Jahns (WDNR), Dick Peterson (Shakey Lakes Association, Menominee Co.), Melissa Simpson (USFS Ecologist, Eagle River/Florence Ranger District), Ann Hruska (Dickinson Conservation District), Bob Ruleau (Marinette County AIS Coordinator), Bob Dejarlais (Lake Township), Lloyd Mathis (affiliation?), and Rhonda Gerlach (Menominee Conservation District)

Ongoing Project Updates

- **Zebra Mussel Project:** Simpson noted that Maureen Ferry had visited several lakes in the area and reconfirmed the presence of quagga mussels in Fortune Pond in Iron County. Hruska stated the Zebra Mussel Extravaganza held in Iron Mountain on August 18 had a good turnout and was well received. Ruleau mentioned that SCUBA divers were a difficult group to reach and that Ferry would continue to outreach to that user group throughout her graduate project. It was also suggested to work with the Sherriff Dept. Dive Teams and discuss disinfection techniques they use. Ruleau will follow up with Ferry to see if she has already contacted this group. Hruska mentioned that local sheriff's departments often work with local divers, so it would be a good group to contact. The committee agrees that a disinfection protocol for SCUBA gear is needed and will look into what is already out there and bring it up for discussion at a future time. Since we didn't receive project funding through the Zebra mussel grant, Hruska confirmed that our time towards the project counts as match. Ruleau suggested to have Dean Premo speak at the Annual Meeting and update everyone on the project.
- **RAC Boat wash Recap:** Simpson and Hruska received the final report from Annie Polaske. 12 lakes were visited, 19 volunteer hours contributed, 363 staff hours used, 66 boats washed. The boat washer was staffed at the National Musky Tournament in Eagle River, WI. The truck was damaged the last weekend in use, so with the repairs and the lease costs, it made sense to purchase the vehicle, so Hruska purchased it through Dickinson Conservation District to be used next summer for the boat wash and for other projects. We learned a lot and will delegate supervisory duties among several people next year to have a more clearly defined point of contact for the employees. Trailer backing training will be provided by Jahns.

- **Summer Education and Outreach Recap:** 2,385 people contacted at fairs, boat wash, etc. 81 contacted at presentations. Together with the boat wash project, 4,957 total contacts made. Hruska used remaining education funds to purchase an additional sidewalk sign; grant has been submitted for reimbursement. Annie Polaske suggested we have more newspaper articles next year, which is a good project for the new WRISC coordinator to work on early in the year so they are ready to go.
- **Tools- Purchases and Needs:** Jahns bought 3 storage totes for the tools. Hruska created a tool inventory sheet that she will circulate to the group so we can track our supplies. It was suggested to submit a newspaper article to inform the public about what tools we have available. Simpson will provide a list of tool requests to Todd Miller from ATC.
- **NRCS Presentation Potential:** Melissa will contact Michael Steinbrink to host a public workshop for the WI counties; Hruska will help organize a meeting with Paul Tikusis for the Michigan counties. A suggested time was January or February on a weeknight. It was also suggested to put this on the agenda for the annual meeting.

Project RED Workshop Recap: Ruleau and Brenda Nordin (WDNR) hosted a workshop on Tue Aug 30 in Dunbar, WI. Turnout was low, will do another workshop next year. Dejarlais suggested the Conservation Congress meetings as a place to distribute brochures. Ruleau and others will continue to outreach to paddle groups and trout fisherman.

Subcommittee Updates

- **Aquatic Invasives:** Ruleau said Phragmites has been sprayed on over 1500 acres of shoreline in Oconto, Brown, and Marinette Counties and “Sparky” the plot has done a great job and the media has done a great job of publicizing the GLRI funded project. Ruleau will assist C. and D. Peterson in an aquatic survey for Myriophyllum heterophyllum in Shakey Lakes.
- **Terrestrial Invasives:** Jahns informed that the DNR sprayed the Phragmites in Florence county and cut and treated the Japanese knotweed on Hanson Rd in Florence County. She will follow up with a spring treatment. Jahns been mapping and treating thistle and knapweeds in Spread Eagle Barrens SNA. May treat honeysuckle, buckthorn, and autumn olive later in fall/winter. It is suggested we do a presentation on herbicide use as part of a presentation series.
- **Grants:** Hruska informed of a Buckthorn Control Project in the Sturgeon River Watershed. It is a 3 year grant that will also be used to treat autumn olive and Japanese barberry.
- **Development/Finance/Legal:** Hruska suggested we look into having another entity be our fiscal sponsor starting in 2013 because all of our current grant projects will be complete in 2012. Hruska found out that insurance to perform weed control was cheaper than insurance to advise landowners on how to control weeds.
- **Outreach and Education:** The group agrees that we should host a series of evening workshops on various topics, including herbicides and NRCS cost share programs. Simpson will lead a Smart Prevention Workshop for high school students on November 1 as part of the Resource Center’s Natural Resource Education Series. Everyone is invited to the RRIP-it UP meeting on November 10 in Marquette, MI from 9-3 Eastern Time at the Masonic Lodge. MIPN conference is in Milwaukee the week of Dec 12 with the annual IPAW meeting being jointly held on Dec 14-15. Jahns and Simpson plan to attend if funding and time allow. It was discussed to develop a standardized monitoring form to be used for WRISC activities.
- **Monitoring:** Hruska and Gerlach enter data into the Midwest Invasive Species Information Network (MISN) website.

Annual Work Plan: Jahns suggested we decide what our goals are then plan what we need to do to accomplish those goals and make that our work plan for next year. Also add our daily work to the plan like we did this year.

Other Action Items: Peterson, D. mentioned stream monitoring that was taking place in Lake Township by Dr. West of UW-Marinette. He is performing macroinvertebrate sampling and also finds buckthorn most years.

Adjourn: With all business addressed, Hruska motioned to adjourn at 12:09 p.m., supported by Jahns. Motion carried. The next WRISC meeting date is scheduled for December 6 at 10:00 a.m. at the USDA Service Center, Dickinson Conservation District Office in Kingsford, MI.

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