

MINUTES

ECOLOGY COMMISSION MONTHLY MEETING

Cordry Sweetwater Conservancy District

6 April, 2023

- A. The monthly meeting of the CSCD Ecology Commission was called to order by commission chair, Herb Benshoof, on 6 April, 2023, in the CSCD conference room.
- B. Members Present: Herb Benshoof (Board), Sunny Leerkamp (CSLOA), Randy Brumfield, Shena Johnson, and Jim Donnell (Recorder).
- C. Members Absent: Brenda Maulden & Ty Cooper,
- D. Others in Attendance: Nick Johann (Director of CSCD Operations) + 1 Guest
- E. (6:05 P.M.) *Shena Johnson moved to approve the Minutes of the 2 March, 2023 meeting of the CSCD Ecology Commission; Randy Brumfield seconded. This motion was unanimously approved.*
- F. (6:10 P.M.) **FREEHOLDER CONCERNS**: None
- G. **OLD BUSINESS** :
1. (6:10 P.M.) **CSCD OPERATIONS REPORT (Nick)**: Nick Johann provided progress reports on myriad projects of interest to ECOLOGY including:
 - a. **New Playground Equipment** is installed at Sweetwater beach.
 - b. **Cordry Lake Spillway Repair** - Final engineering refinements are expected to be delivered to us in May, then the project can go out to bid.
Much new rip rap has been added to the Cordry Dam shoreline. Work was done “in-house.”
 - c. **Goose Roundup** – A permit for the annual “Canada Goose Roundup” is being processed.
 - d. **Erosion Control-Eagle Drive** The extensive logging project underway out the back gate is off CSCD property, but poses an erosion concern to CSCD property down the north slope, behind the property being logged. IDEM has been notified and asked to assess the project for possible improper erosion control measures.
 - e. Additional **rip rap** has been added to the shoreline of the **Sweetwater beach** peninsulas, both north and south, and 2 loads of new **sand** has been dumped and spread at the SW beach.
 - f. Aquatic Control will be on our lakes to conduct the annual **Aquatic Weed Surveys**:
22 May for eurasian milfoil; 26 June for curly leaf pondweed. Lake treatments will follow.
 - g. **Sweetwater Lake Spillway** has been cleared of debris and reconfigured, as much as possible, to conform with the recommendations of freeholder Sharon Grimm’s son, an engineer, last June. This was done in an attempt to increase the outflow capacity of the Sweetwater lake spillway.
 - h. To address questions regarding the **high water boating restrictions** periodically put in place by CSCD, Nick Johann provided the following criteria: “Normal pool” for both lakes is measured at the 1 foot mark on a water depth gauge located at each marina. When lake water is measured at 18 inches on that gauge, the lake “goes yellow,” i.e. no wake; when the lake water measures 24 inches (2 ‘) on the gauge, the lake “goes red,” i.e. no boating.
 2. (6:20 P.M.) **DEER HUNT UPDATE**: Shena Johnson briefed that the post-card-to-freeholder mailout, to determine which properties are cleared for hunting and game retrieval for the 2023-2024 hunt, will be mailed out by the end of April. The desired “return date” for all freeholders to indicate their desires is 31 May. She will work with Rusty Fields to coordinate the plan for hunting next winter.
 3. (6:25 P.M.) **CORDRY SWEETWATER ANGLERS CLUB “TAGGED FISH” EVENT**: Randy Brumfield briefed the commission on the approval, by the CSCD Board, of the “Tagged Fish Tournament” he proposed last month. The date of this tournament, as well as all Anglers Club tournaments, can be found online at <https://cordrysweetwateranglers.com> . Catching one of the 2 tagged fish (1 pan fish and 1 bass per lake) will be rewarded with a cash prize. More details to follow in the Anglers Club website.
 4. (6:30 P.M.) **JOINT (Ecology/Security) WAKE BOAT STUDY COMMITTEE UPDATE**: Sunny Leerkamp reported that the “Wake-Boat Study Committee” has met 3 times (next meeting scheduled for Wed., 12 April at 6:00

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P.M.). Extensive discussions revolved around at what distances from a boat a large wake begins to dissipate, with the apparent goal of seeing if big-wake-boats can feasibly operate in the middle of our lakes without causing damaging waves reaching our shorelines. More study and discussion is planned. A target date for committee recommendations to the CSCD Board is planned to be determined at the 12 April meeting.

5. (6:40 P.M.) **ZEBRA MUSSEL PREVENTION PROGRAM**: Nick Johann briefed the commission that he has advertised the paid, part-time position for a CSCD Boat Steward on the CSCD website, with no one hired to date. A boat steward on the payroll is deemed imperative to organize a team of volunteer boat stewards for our 2 boat launch sites this spring and summer, and to manage the overall CSCD Zebra Mussel Prevention Program put in place last year.

H. **NEW BUSINESS**:

1. (6:50 P.M.) **DREDGING APPLICATIONS**: Sunny Leerkamp requested reconsideration and re-approval of her nearly 1-year-old dredging application due to several changes since the original application approval. A new contractor, Jeremiah Percival, will do the work which will now include more cubic feet removed and rip rap installed on the shoreline. ***“Randy Brumfield moved to approve all changes to Sunny Leerkamp’s dredging application; Jim Donnell’s seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.”***

2. (6:55 P.M.) **FREEHOLDER CONCERNS**: Carrie Vavul asked permission for a Babe Ruth youth baseball team that her son is associated with, to use the CSCD ball field in Centerlake Park for baseball practice sessions periodically as they have had trouble locating a ball field nearby for their practice use. The commission granted her approval by consensus.

3. (7:05 P.M.) **COMMISSION MEMBER CONCERNS**:

a. It was learned from recent Security Commission Minutes that they are considering connecting credit card readers to the gas pumps at the marinas. While this is viewed as a welcome convenience for CSCD boaters, it can pose a detriment to the lakes if boaters are allowed to pump their own gas, 24/7. It was the unanimous agreement of the commission members that if credit card readers are added to the gas pumps, it should **not** be for the purpose of 24/7 do-it-yourself gas pumping by boaters. Even with credit card readers, gas should only be pumped by trained and qualified marina attendants, exclusively, to prevent fuel spills into our pristine lakes. Herb Benshoof has agreed to communicate this ecological concern to the Security Commission and CSCD Board.

b. Herb Benshoof suggested all shoreline freeholders seriously consider rip rap or some other form of shoreline stabilization measures to mitigate shoreline damage from recent high wave action on our lakes by big wake boats.

4. The next meeting of the CSCD Ecology Commission is scheduled for Thursday, **4 May**, at 6:00 P.M. in the CSCD conference room. A draft Agenda for that meeting was developed.

5. (7:30 P.M.) **STRATEGIC PLANNING/BUDGETING WORKSHOP**: Jim Donnell’s facilitated a Strategic Planning / Budgeting workshop which focused on gathering commission member perceptions of WHAT-IS-GOING-WELL and WHAT-IS-GOING-NOT-SO-WELL in CSCD from an ecological point of view. These inputs will be the basis of next month’s workshop to create both an FY 2024 Ecology Budget Proposal and a 5-Year Plan for the commission.

- I. **ADJOURNMENT**: ***Jim Donnell’s moved to adjourn the 6 April, meeting of the Ecology Commission. Sunny Leerkamp seconded. The motion passed.*** The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted:

JIM DONNELLS
Commission Recorder
(801) 361-8791
opajimd@gmail.com