

MINUTES

ECOLOGY COMMISSION MONTHLY MEETING

Cordry Sweetwater Conservancy District

15 May, 2023

- A. The monthly meeting of the CSCD Ecology Commission was called to order by commission chair, Herb Benshoof, on 15 May, 2023, (rescheduled from postponed 4 May meeting) in the CSCD conference room.
- B. Members Present: Herb Benshoof (Board), Ty Cooper, Randy Brumfield, Shena Johnson, & Jim Donnells (Recorder).
- C. Members Absent: Brenda Maulden & Sunny Leerkamp (CSLOA)
- D. Others in Attendance: Nick Johann (Director of CSCD Operations)
- E. (6:00 P.M.) *Shena Johnson moved to approve the Minutes of the 6 April, 2023 meeting of the CSCD Ecology Commission; Randy Brumfield seconded. This motion was unanimously approved.*
- F. (6:05 P.M.) **FREEHOLDER CONCERNS**: None
- G. **OLD BUSINESS** :
1. (6:05 P.M.) **CSCD OPERATIONS REPORT (Nick)**: Nick Johann provided progress reports on myriad projects of interest to ECOLOGY including:
 - a. It has been noted by many freeholders and by CSCD employees that **aquatic weeds** in our lakes seem to be worse this year than in many previous years. Nick reminded the Commission that Aquatic Control Inc. weed control specialists will be on our lakes to conduct the annual Aquatic Weed **Surveys**: 22 May for Eurasian milfoil; and 26 June for curly leaf pondweed. Lake treatments to eradicate undesired aquatic weeds will follow shortly after.
 - b. **Sweetwater Beach** preparations are nearly complete for the season. The swim area limiting rope is to be installed this week. Nick reports that vandals apparently damaged the opaque glass block windows for the men’s restroom with a rock at the beach. An assessment for repair is underway.
 - c. **Deer Hunt Update**: The deer hunt post cards, to determine which properties are cleared for hunting and game retrieval for the 2023-2024 hunt, have been mailed out to all freeholders. The desired “return date” for all freeholders to indicate their desires is 31 May.
 - d. **Cordry Lake Spillway Repair** - The CSCD Board met on Saturday to authorize the use of \$300,000 from the “Rainy Day Fund,” to pay for billed expenses from the ongoing design of the Cordry Dam Spillway which is scheduled for major repair this fall. Final engineering refinements are expected to be delivered to us later this month, at which time, the project can go out to bid.
 - e. **Zebra Mussel Prevention Program**: Nick Johann briefed the commission that we have a hired a CSCD Boat Steward for the season. She begins her employment soon and will need a team of “volunteer” boat stewards to ensure necessary boat steward coverage on both boat ramps, 7 days a week. Nick will soon advertise the need for volunteers to help her with her duties so that concerned freeholders can sign up to be trained and help with our CSCD zebra mussel protection program this boating season.
 2. (6:20 P.M.) **JOINT (Ecology/Security) WAKE BOAT STUDY COMMITTEE UPDATE**: No Update
 3. (6:20 P.M.) **POLLINATOR HABITAT UPDATE**: SCI-REMC employees are expected soon to help mow down the designated “Pollinator Habitat,” (area across the street from the beach) in preparation for anticipated seed planting this fall. A Grant application has been completed and submitted to the office of the Brown County Soil & Water Conservation District with hopes of receiving up to \$7,500 grant money to fund the Pollinator Habitat project.
 4. (6:25 P.M.) **JOINT PROJECT w/CSLOA –EDUCATIONAL PAMPHLET FOR FREEHOLDERS**: No Update

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H. **NEW BUSINESS:**

1. (6:25 P.M.) **DREDGING APPLICATIONS:** None

2. (6:25 P.M.) **FREEHOLDER CONCERNS:** None

3. (6:25 P.M.) **COMMISSION MEMBER CONCERNS:**

a. Randy Brumfield and Jim Donnell's pointed out that the 2019 "Zebra Mussel Prevention Program" Plan (ZMPP Plan), approved by the CSCD Board for implementation, included measures (such as bollards) to keep trespassers from getting around the gates emplaced at both boat ramps. That aspect of the ZMPP Plan has never been completed. In light of the recent trespasser incident at the beach, the Commission agreed that it is time to emplace such restrictive measures at the beach/marina. Fences versus bollards were discussed and the consensus was that bollards, 4' above grade, sunk 4' deep and spaced 6' apart, where they do not currently exist, would be the most effective and visually appealing solution. Randy Brumfield agreed to look into procuring used utility poles from Bartholomew County REMC, at no cost, for use in this project. Nick will brief the CSCD Board on this initiative and begin to pursue this plan of action at the SW beach and Marina area.

b. Randy Brumfield requested that the ongoing revision of the CSCD Rule Book be reviewed by the ECOLOGY Commission before being acted on by the CSCD Board so that any ecological issues relating to either the lakes or the land are agreeable to the commission that is responsible for such issues. Nick and Herb will ensure an ECOLOGY Commission review is arranged before any approval action by the Board is initiated.

c. Randy Brumfield, an arborist, pointed out that there are a multitude of dead trees, especially ash, on CSCD property, that threaten both private property as well as personal safety on CSCD roads and in CSCD parks. He suggested a concerted effort be undertaken to identify those many hazards and to remove those hazardous, dead trees, before they fall. Jim Donnell's pointed out that each year, the Ecology Commission proposes a priority budgetary line item (Priority A-6) for "Hazardous Dead Tree & Invasive Species Removal," for Board approval. Last year, the Board approved \$15,000 for that purpose, of which only \$2,050 appears to have been spent to date. Nick will pursue this recommendation by developing a map of CSCD-owned property within the district and then developing a plan for dead tree identification and removal as time and budgets allow.

4. The next meeting of the CSCD Ecology Commission is scheduled for Thursday, **1 June**, at 6:00 P.M. in the CSCD conference room. A draft Agenda for that meeting was developed.

5. (7:00 P.M.) **STRATEGIC PLANNING/BUDGETING WORKSHOP:** Jim Donnell's facilitated a Strategic Planning / Budgeting workshop which focused on gaining commission member consensus on "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 "Prioritization Workshop" to create both an FY 2024 Ecology Budget Proposal and a 5-Year Plan for the commission.

I. **ADJOURNMENT:** *Randy Brumfield moved to adjourn the 15 May, meeting of the Ecology Commission. Sheena Johnson seconded. The motion passed.* The meeting was adjourned at 7:20 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted:

JIM DONNELLS
Commission Recorder
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