

HLWA Board Meeting Notes, 3/22/22

The zoom meeting was called to order by President Jan Wilkins at 6:35 pm. Present: Board members Geoff Harvey, Will Neal, Gil Rossner and Shawn Hathaway. Also present: Member Mary Ann Stoll and Rebecca Stevens.

Input from the attending Public: Rebecca Stevens spoke for the concerns of the Coeur d'Alene tribe about construction projects near lakes and waterways that put plumes of sediment into those waterways. The tribe is aware of the erosion from the Wildcat subdivision. She indicated that IPDES is engaging the EPA and County to try to prevent or mitigate these problems. She affirmed that the tribe wants to help HLWA and others protect our precious lake resource.

UPDATE FROM THE HAYDEN LAKE WATERSHED IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT:

Geoff Harvey, Mary Ann Stoll and Todd Walker: Kristin Lowell, Sr Water Quality Analyst from DEQ made a presentation to the WID on March 21. DEQ has jurisdiction over 1) construction that is 1 + acres in size and has the potential to impact surface waterways. IDPES office issues a general construction permit, 2) sediment-laden runoff events into surface waterways (event must be in progress, not potential,) and 3) cyanobacteria monitoring, (not remediation or prevention.). Kristin urged communication with the IPDES office in Boise until the local officer returns from leave.

Board discussion followed and it was approved that we authorize Geoff Harvey to file a PRR to determine what action DEQ is taking in the north arm, as Kristin could not speak to current enforcement actions.

Leo Simpson of HLWA'S ad hoc water level committee has also been in touch with DEQ in Boise about property close to him north and east of Lancaster Road that is eroding into a creek that contributes directly to the lake. Todd had been in touch with the county enforcement officer and determined that the contractor Mr. Eula has been tagged. There was discussion about the size of the affected property and whether a Forest practice permit was applicable and if so had it been issued? Geoff explained that there is often a disconnect after IDL issues a conversion permit to suspend replanting requirements, and when the county takes over enforcement when it becomes a building project. Todd will follow up.

Rebecca mentioned that there is a 25 foot buffer on class II streams and that IDL supervises "Woodland foresters." She said that Diane Partridge is addressing the issue of contractors logging with the intent to build and how that falls through the cracks of enforcement agencies. Her organization has initiated an education/outreach storm water education program (SEEP), and that 1,000 contractors have been certified. She want us to encourage it to everyone that we can recommend.

There was further discussion of Eula the contractor and his dismal record of lake pollution and non-compliance with county regulations. We considered that the HLWA should join a suit filed by Geoff's neighbor whose property was damaged by Eula's illegal building practices. Geoff will look into it when his neighbor returns for the season. The county is no longer interested as Eula completed the project and got a C.O.

Mary Ann Stoll reported that she wrote a Honey Badger view shed article and view shed graphic on behalf of the Watershed Improvement District that was published by CdA Press.

The Watershed Improvement District will host its annual ISDS weed meeting by zoom again this year. It will be scheduled for the end of April after the ISDS people have determined what if any spring weed treatment there will be. There is the impression that the native weed population is holding its own against the invasive species and treatment may not be necessary.

The dock and debris removal program underwritten by the Watershed Improvement District will start the first of May and close the end of June. A permit obtained from the WID website will be required.

Plans for an additional 17 buoys are moving ahead. M Ahmer and R Miller have indicated support and for the WID holding the permit in lieu of the County. Next step: meeting with Nick Snyder of the County to keep him in the loop.

The subject of the community in general and the north arm in particular not understanding the difference between native and invasive weeds was raised. Gil confirmed and said most people don't care, they just want the volume of weeds to go down. Since that will not happen due to the shallow level of most of the water in the north arm, education should be undertaken to manage peoples' expectations. Rebecca suggested a public event at the Sportsmans launch site and other marinas which may include our local ISDS rep Kim Holzer and possibly someone from fisheries.

We discussed residents taking weed control into their own hands, including various types of polluting poisons and/or dragging the lake bottom, which in fact just spread broken weed fragments and made the problem worse. Todd said that we should promote weed prevention mats instead.

REGULAR BUSINESS- Treasurer's Report: Barb Neal was not present, but had submitted her report prior to the meeting. There is a steady stream of members renewing their memberships and sending additional contributions. Barb is keeping a log of the positive comments we are receiving.

Technology and Communications Report- Will Neal: Our recent communications regarding the City of Haydens boat launch relocation planning prompted the highest numbers of visits to our website since it began.

OLD BUSINESS- Honey Badger Update- Geoff Harvey: We are encouraged by the Forest Service's continuing discussions to address the problems created by FSR437. There is discussion of a temporary closure (which could last up to 5 years.). Stakeholder and other public input would be obtained during this period. Geoff is going to push for an initial stakeholders meeting, and will try to get key personnel into the field to view current conditions and begin water and soil testing. We feel an urgency due to fire season coming up when many employees are diverted for fire fighting efforts.

System to track code violations of County and IDL regulations: Geoff feels that we should propose that the county should require more elaborate barrier protection to the lake than they currently require. R TANKS, which are very successful stormwater detention devices are large "egg crate" containers that fill with debris before it can reach a water way. They would be superior to what the county is currently mandating, which frequently fail.

Another big problem with the current system is that contractors do whatever they want and then beg forgiveness when the project is complete. Eula, for example, has now moved up lake and appears to be even more destructive than in previous projects.

WE need to convince the county that something different than the status quo needs to be done. Geoff thinks we should appeal to the conservatives in the community that are concerned that property values will be affected if the lake's water quality declines as a result of these violations. A subcommittee was formed for going to the commissioners. We may also include other organizations like CdA Property Owners Association, River Friends, KEA, and the CdA tribe.

Geoff also gave a short report on sediment transport and stream sedimentation. He indicated that coarse sediment is episodic in transport-it takes a major event, such as the 6-8 hours of heavy rain that we experienced recently, which moved large quantities of alluvial gravel from the stream bed of Yellowbanks into the lake at O'Rourke Bay. The deposits were caused by decommissioned forest service roads higher in the watershed failing at stream crossings. It literally takes decades for that material to wash out. In the extreme, excessive sedimentation can lead to ruining a fishery. We have to watch Honey Badger's buildout closely to make sure that these dangerous conditions are not repeated.

Hayden Lake Water Level Inquiry: Geoff reported that current water levels are now 30" below the typical high water mark, and still rising.

The board authorized Geoff to file a PRR to State Water Resources for Dalton Gardens' water records. We need to understand why no one seems to know if they are exceeding their entitled water withdrawal. It will be particularly important if we are in a drought cycle and last summers withdrawals are repeated.

Hayden Days: We need to figure out if we can get power at our booth to keep a tv running with the video of the adverse conditions of FSR 437. Gil is managing the creation of a poster with our mission, perhaps a combination of the "make your waken the middle of the lake" signs that we had on the lake last year. Barb has been urging us to update our brochure, and it would be useful to have that done to handout. We should be using the QR code for our website on every piece we produce.

Boat Launch Relocation Proposal: Shawn Hathaway says that Hayden's mayor recently resigned. Staff is unsure about when plans will be presented to the city council. Jemma told Barb that they are still collecting information.

HLSD update- Barb Neal: Thanks to diligent efforts by Barb, Will and Tina the administrator, crucial documents proving co-ownership of the buildings and property used by the city of Hayden Lake and the HLSD were found. It is unclear why they were never recorded, but they will be now, eliminating years of confusion. The Board expressed its appreciation to Barb for all her hard work.

Spring mailing and publications- Jan W: We plan to have a mailer for review by the next meeting. Any education materials sent out or put on windshields should remind boaters that they should slow down and move over when a sheriff's boat has stopped another boat on the lake, just as you would on the road. Sheriff's officer R. Miller reported that they had some close calls on the lake last year.

Gloria Lund Bench: Todd was told that They Hayden Lake Marina, (previously Toblers), would be happy to have the Bench on their property. The board agreed that with the city plans so up in the air, a bench at the marina would be an excellent alternative. Todd will speak to management again.

Emerging Issues: Houseboats on our Lake? R. Miller is making efforts to develop ordinances to prevent houseboat proliferation on Kootenai waterways. The IDL has not issued permits for permanent dockage, but apparently does not have any regulations about anchoring these boats on our waterways indefinitely. The board is concerned about human waste disposal, abandoned boats, and navigational interference.

The next meeting of the board will be via zoom on Tuesday May 3 instead of April 26 at 6:30.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 pm.