

## Deep Creek Lake Policy and Review Board

### Meeting Minutes

Monday July 26, 2021

In Attendance : Chairman Bob Browning, Patty Manowan Mash, Bob Sutton, David Moe for Delegate Wendell Beitzel, Robert Kelly, Jim Bailey, Commissioner Paul Edwards, Dr. Jim George, Larry Iden DNR: Eric Null, Emily Vainieri Sgt. Mike Friend, Julie Bortz

#### **Action Agenda**

Chairman Browning asked for a roll call, Mr. Null preformed the roll call at the request of the Chairman. A quorum was confirmed. Minutes were approved and posted on the DCL NRMA website in June 2021.

#### **Old Business**

##### Canada Geese

Mr. Null stated that he sent the Board the NRP statement on the Agrilazer. The Chairman stated that he received the letter and stated that DCL is a NRMA not a park and that some COMAR regulations that fit parks may not fit the NRMA. The Chairman stated that regulations such as no alcohol in a park does not apply to the NRMA. Mr. Kelly stated that homeowners at the lake have to clean up after the geese every time they come to the lake to enjoy the lake. He stated that the deterrents that the people and the state have been using are not working to a satisfactory degree. Mr. Kelly stated that the NRP statement was illogical. He suggested that professional hunters could be employed to reduce the goose numbers on the lake. Chairman Browning stated that he agrees with the NRP statement but that doesn't mean that Board can not request an alternative to the laser.

Mr. Sutton suggested that DNR extend the season or hunting opportunities on and around the lake. Mr. Null stated that HOAs with ample land can allow goose hunting and possible discuss having blind hunts. He stated that in the fall the geese leave the lake to feed in the cut farm fields where they can be targeted all goose season. Mr. Iden suggested that a roundup be done at night, Mr. Null stated that this event would be loud, and people would still notice the roundup. He stated that public perception and money are the deterrents to a round up. He stated that people voiced opinions against the hunt when the hunt when the hunt started and that public opinion would be loudly voiced in opposition of a round up.

Mr. Kelly stated that the County Commissioners should be addressed for help. Commissioner Edwards stated that even though it is in Garrett County the State is in charge of the wildlife regulations. He stated that the County would support any effort by the State to control the population.

Ms. Manown Mash suggested that Mr. Null open the conversation with Director Peditto again.

#### Lake Management Budget

Mr. Null stated the budget for this fiscal year is good. He stated they have been approved for the office repairs from the winter ice damage. He stated that after this fiscal year that the budget will be question due to the increase in minimum wage that was supposed to be in full effect in 2024. This year DNR increased the minimum wage of park seasonal employees to \$15.00 per hour in 2021. He stated that without the State Lakes fund funding hydrilla treatment, and the increases in wages will deplete the Lake Management Budget. Mr. Null stated that the Budget will need general funds, or a dock fee increase to sustain operations. Mr. Sutton asked if the dock fees were split between the County and Lake Management. Chairman Browning stated that the County receives payment in lieu of taxes from the dock fees.

Chairman Browning stated that the State has been doing a good job with supporting the lake, but needs to contribute more funding, since the homeowners are paying for the bulk of the operation where the public are not paying for hardly any of the operation. He stated that it's a fairness issue that the property owners pay for the lake, but the general public does not. Mr. Null stated in the next two years it will be a choice to continue projects or cut staffing if the budget remains the same. Mr. Sutton asked how long its been since a fee increased, Mr. Null stated 2006.

#### Water Quality Monitoring

Julie Bortz stated that the water quality monitoring program is continuing. She stated that the donations of meters from the Watershed and the POA has given great support for the program. She stated that the water quality remains good. Chairman Browning stated that this project is a requirement by the watershed management plan. The Chairman stated that the SAV was growing good this year. Ms. Bortz stated that the SAV community is a reason that we have good water quality.

#### Water Level Request

Dr. Jim George stated that there was a meeting with Brookfield several months ago. The topic of the meeting was discussing draw downs on the lake to aide in projects such as erosion control. He stated that Brookfield was resistant to draw downs due to their permit not having drawdowns as a requirement. Dr. George stated that he formed a proposal that suggested cyclic drawdowns every two to three years. He stated that any draw down needs to be advertised to the public so proper planning can take place.

Chairman Browning stated that draw down was discussed in the permit review meetings and is within the scope of the permit. He stated that usually the lake has no issue with refilling in the spring, and that in the past the level would go a lot lower. Dr. George stated that there are projects that do not need a large draw down. Mr. Null stated at elevation 2456.5 most projects can me completed unless you are in the northern end of the lake since the topography is very steep. Mr. Sutton stated the MDE secretary stated that the permit could be reopened if there was a change. Dr. George stated that Brookfield would not want the permit reopened, he stated that Brookfield wanted MDE to be compliant with the draw

down decision. He stated that Brookfield should have a technical report to ensure that they would not have any problem refilling the lake.

#### Publicizing Deep Creek Lake Projects

Mr. Null stated that the first reef balls have been installed at the Discovery Center. He informed that they would be working with the high school bass clubs to install more fish habitat. Mr. Null informed Mr. Sutton that BAAC informed him that the Sky Valley minimum wake zone will be codified in COMAR on October 18, 2021.

#### County Commissioner Update

Commissioner Paul Edwards stated that Arrowhead Cove is in the permitting process. He informed the Board that the DNR Secretary met with the Commissioners. He stated that the commissioners informed her that the state needs to fund their land and resources better. He stated that the delegation suggested that DNR fund the State Lakes Fund with general funds from the DNR budget. The Commissioner stated that Gary has resigned from his position as Watershed Coordinator. He stated that Parks could make State Lake part of the maintenance line item in their budget.

#### Correspondence to DNR

#### Attorney General Office Update

No Update at this time but Ms. Vainieri suggested that the Board may want to update their bylaws, since Covid-19 hybrid meetings have been introduced. Chairman Browning stated that the current bylaws have been in place since the first ever PRB meeting. He stated that the bylaws should be updated.

#### Public Comment

John Friel stated that wake surfers get to enjoy their recreation, but the activity is damaging his property. He suggested that the wake boats operate between the two bridges. He requested that the Board do something about wake boats. The Chairman stated that it has been a past practice to not limit areas for recreational activities. Mr. Kelly suggested that the Board discuss this issue at the October meeting.

Gary Love stated that the size of wake boats and the weight of wake boats are getting much larger. He stated that a ski boat is around 3500lbs the new Air Nautique has a total weight of operation of 12900lbs.

Brian O'Brian stated that he was attending to represent the Watershed Foundation. He stated that the shoreline erosion is increasing all around the lake. He stated that wake boats were swamping boats at docks.

Mr. Kelly made a motion to adjourn, Ms. Manown Mash second the motion all were in favor.

The next meeting will be October 25, 2021, at 6:00pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Eric Null

Lake Manager