

**LAKE REDSTONE PROTECTION DISTRICT PARTNERS MEETING**  
**Tuesday, November 7, 2023**  
**Room 213 West Square Building, 505 Broadway, Baraboo, WI**

**MINUTES**

**1. Call meeting to order, verify compliance with the Open Meeting Law**

Board chair Mike Mittelstadt called the meeting to order at 10 am. He verified compliance with open meeting laws.

**2. Approval of agenda**

Sullivan made a motion to approve the agenda, second by Mittelstadt. The motion carried.

**3. Introductions**

Those in the room included: Mike Mittelstadt, Pat Sullivan, Brad Horner, and Al Baade from the LRPD; Melissa Schlupp, Mitch McCarthy, Serge Koenig, and Will Christensen from Sauk County; Dustin Ladd and Jon Field from Juneau County; Arthur Watkinson, Mike Sorge, Pat Oldenburg, and Jake Dickmann from the WDNR; Peter Kinsman, representative from the Sauk County Board to LRPD.

Those who joined virtually included: Ken Keegstra and Dave Crockett from the LRPD, Sara Hatleli from APHS (Aquatic Plant & Habitat Services), Justine Bula from Sauk County, and Nathan Nye from the WDNR.

**4. Discussion with representatives from LRPD, WDNR, USGS, Juneau Co., and Sauk Co. regarding the following issues (but not limited to them):**

**A. Status of 9-key Element Plan Implementation (10 minutes)**

Mittelstadt provided participants with a brief update. He first reviewed the goals of the 9-key element plan. He emphasized the importance of our partners, and this meeting, to the successful implementation of the plan. He briefly reviewed the progress during the past year; his report was organized around the activities of the 4 committees formed to implement the various objectives and to monitor progress toward achieving them. It covered some of the same information that was presented at the LRPD Annual Meeting in August.

The summary of E&O committee activities led to a discussion with Mitch McCarthy regarding his shoreline improvement activities. Sauk County has become an entity that can handle Healthy Lakes grants from the WDNR. McCarthy has 12 Healthy Lakes grants that will be submitted to the WDNR for the November 15 deadline.

**B. Reports/discussion of activities proposed during plan implementation (~80 minutes)**

1. Activities assigned to the Plan Integration Committee-Mittelstadt
  - a. Transect surveys to monitor cropping practices in watershed.

Mitch McCarthy from Sauk County reported on the transect surveys that he and LRPD volunteers have performed during 2022 and 2023. He briefly described the process used in the transect surveys and what information is learned. Pat Oldenburg mentioned that the WDNR is estimating agricultural practices using satellite imaging and that it might be valuable to compare the results from the 2 strategies.
  - b. Increase the use of BMPs in the watershed.

Mittelstadt asked the Sauk County and Juneau County staff about progress toward increasing the adoption of various BMPs in the watershed. Mitch McCarthy and Serge Koenig from Sauk County and Dustin Ladd and Jon Field from Juneau County described progress in adopting cover crops, no-till practices, and conversion to grassland. They agreed to provide LRPD board members with data regarding changes in the use of these practices.
  - c. Results of comprehensive fishery survey in Lake Redstone

Once a decade, the WDNR performs a comprehensive survey of the fishery in Lake Redstone. The last survey was performed in 2010, but COVID delayed the most recent survey which was performed in 2022-2023 with several netting and electrofishing events used to gather the field data. Nate Nye, the WDNR fish biologist responsible for Lake Redstone presented a summary of the results from the most recent survey. He presented a large amount of data that will be included in the final report that is currently under review and will be released early in 2024. The summary reported on the status of the fishery by species. Crappies and muskies were found to have excellent abundance and size distribution, one of the best in the region. Other species, including bass and walleyes were more average in both categories, while blue gills and yellow perch were below average. Among the nuisance species, gizzard shad are very abundant while carp are not. For most species, no changes in management practices are needed, but they are considering changing the size limit for walleye from 15 to 18 inches in Lake Redstone.

d. Shoreline zoning enforcement

Will Christensen and Arthur Watkinson stated that Sauk County has responsibility inland from the ordinary high-water mark, whereas the WDNR has responsibility on the water side of the ordinary high-water mark. Both emphasized the importance of providing all necessary information when reporting a complaint. Watkinson mentioned that the WDNR gets more complaints than they have staff to deal with them, so they need to prioritize responses.

e. Sauk County NRCS grant

Melissa Schlupp reported that the recently awarded NRCS grant will provide a full-time position for almost 4 years. Sauk County has advertised the position and received 18 applicants. They will interview 6 candidates beginning next week and hope to have the new person on board by the end of the year. The person will work on several issues in Sauk County, including helping LRPD with implementation of the 9-key element plan.

2. Sediment Control Committee activities-Sullivan

Sullivan described the recent activities of the sediment control committee. He reported that LRPD has secured grant funding from WDNR and Sauk County to make repairs on a weir in the valley above Martin-Meadowlark Bay that was damaged in the 2018 floods.

The committee has focused on identifying and prioritizing gullies and culverts around the lake that are responsible for sediment entry into the lake and on limiting runoff from shoreline properties. Sullivan described ways that Sauk County staff and WDNR staff are assisting with these efforts. Serge Koenig from Sauk County mentioned that conversion to grassland for the McWilliams farm is now complete. Pat Oldenburg from WDNR has provided stream power index information that helps in identifying problematic gullies in the watershed. This led to a brief discussion about how to improve communications in the future.

3. Water Quality Projects Committee-Keegstra

a. Stream monitoring program-with USGS

Keegan Johnson from the USGS was not able to attend the meeting, so he sent a recorded report. The report covered the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of monitoring the sediment and phosphorus that entered the lake via the two branches of Big Creek and that exited the lake via the outlet stream. The past year had even lower precipitation than the first 2 years, which were also below average, leading to lower amounts of sediment and phosphorus entering the lake from the watershed. The three years of monitoring the inlet streams provides a solid baseline for understanding nutrient and sediment entry from the watershed at the beginning of the 10-year 9-key element plan that can be compared with similar studies at the end of the 10 years to see if best practices in the watershed made a difference. The

program will be modified in the coming year to monitor smaller tributaries that flow directly into the lake to determine the nutrients and sediment loads from them.

b. Lake monitoring program

Keegstra provided a summary of the results from the long history of sampling water in Lake Redstone. The lake continues to be eutrophic. As phosphorus entry from the watershed is reduced through the activities of the 9-key element plan, the management issues will switch to a focus on reducing phosphorus levels in lake water. Watkinson summarized the recent discussions of LRPD representatives with himself and Richard Lathrop, a retired DNR limnologist with extensive experience in these topics.

c. Revised aquatic plant management plan (Sara Hatleli)

Sara Hatleli summarized the results of the whole lake plant survey performed in 2022 and compared the results to the last such survey done in 2012. The comparison revealed that plant populations have declined significantly in the past 10 years, which is a cause for concern. Thus, the focus of the updated aquatic plant management plan will be to protect native species in Lake Redstone and to perform control of invasive species only when necessary.

4. Education and Outreach activities-Horner

a. Recap of 2022 LRPD survey

Horner summarized the results of the survey of LRPD residents that was performed as part of the grant to create a new aquatic plant management plan. He mentioned that 92% of respondents were concerned or very concerned with runoff from agricultural farmlands. This led to a brief discussion of the point that this view by lake residents is a result of an older stereotype that needs to be address by educational activities.

b. Joint field days with producer-led cooperative

Dustin Ladd reported that the cooperative is now 5 years old and just received funding for 2024 activities. The funding provides support to producers who use cover crops. With support from Juneau County and other groups including the LRPD, a no-till drill was purchased and can be rented by producers. Ladd provided a summary of the activities of the cooperative, including field days and pasture walks and talked briefly about plans for 2024.

c. New shoreline/runoff improvement program

Horner reported on the new LRPD program that will reimburse property owners for certain shoreline improvements. Combined with the Sauk County program and the DNR Heathy Lakes program, property owners have multiple financial incentives to improve their shoreline. Encouraging the use of these program will be an emphasis in the future.

d. Educational workshops for property owners in the district

Horner described the "Take a stake in your lake" program that was held in June. It provided residents with about a dozen exhibits, including a demonstration of the rainfall simulator by Sauk County and a demonstration of the no-till drill by Juneau County. He indicated that this program would not be repeated, but would be replaced by other educational activities, possibly a shoreline showcase that highlights improved shorelines.

e. Possible activities joint with other lakes in Sauk County

While no activities are planned this is an idea that should be pursued.

**C. Other topics of mutual interest**

**5. Next LRPD board meeting: November 14, 2023, 6 pm at La Valle Town Hall**

**6. Adjourn** The meeting was adjourned at 12:05 pm.