

## Deep Creek Lake Policy and Review Board

### Meeting Minutes

Monday July 24, 2023

In Attendance : Chairman Bob Browning, , Bob Sutton , Bob Kelly, Larry Iden, Marta Schroyer, Jim George, Senator Mike McKay, Steve Green, Bruce Michael (for the County Commissioner), Patty Manowan Mash DNR: Eric Null, Emily Vainieri , Tom Parham

#### **Action Agenda**

Chairman Browning asked for a roll call, Mr. Null preformed the roll call at the request of the Chairman. Meeting minutes for the May meeting were approved and posted on July 5, 2023.

#### **Old Business**

##### Canada Geese

Mr. Null stated that last week there was a meeting with Wildlife and Heritage Service, the hunt will expand to land sites and allow HOAs to establish shoreline hunting sites. The HOA sites would have to meet safety zone requirements. The HOAs would manage the hunting sites and allow permission to hunt them. Wildlife and Heritage is developing a survey for goose hunters in Garrett County to assess how many hunters are hunting within the lake area. The original sites will expand from 3 days to 5 days of hunting in the November season. He stated that the land sites will be open for hunting until the lake freezes. Mr. Kelly asked how many resident geese are on Deep Creek Lake? Mr. Null stated that there was not a current estimate of how many geese were on the lake. Mr. Kelly stated that the goose population is increasing every year. Mr. Null stated that participation in hunting on the farms around the lake is that best way to decrease the population. Mr. Steve Green asked if Wildlife and Heritage could promote farmers to allow people to hunt their farms. Mr. Null stated that Wildlife and Heritage currently promotes farmers and landowners to allow hunting. Ms. Schroyer asked how much of the shoreline can be hunted. Mr. Null stated that there are 16-18 sites throughout the lake that meet the requirements for hunting.

Senator McKay stated that he would contact Bill Myles with the Waterfowl Hunters of Maryland to ask if they could promote goose hunting in Garrett County. Mr. Iden asked if there was a chance of a round up in molting season. Mr. Null stated that because it would have to be done the July 4 week, which would not be acceptable to the tourists recreating on the lake.

### Lake Management Budget

Mr. Null stated the budget is still good, and the mini excavator has been ordered. Chairman Browning asked if they had received the legislative request for the reserve fund. Mr. Null stated that he has not seen any update on the reserve fund. Mr. Null stated that Matt Jones, a senior technician at Lake Management, took a position with the Department of Agriculture. He stated with the loss of Matt he would not be able to do the 10 in 10 this fall. He stated that if Lake Management loses any more experienced technicians more programs will have to be dropped due to lack of manpower.

### Water Quality Monitoring

Mr. Tom Parham stated there will be a SAV survey done by drone in September. He stated this survey would be performed on the whole lake. The water quality monitoring program will continue as it has in previous years. He stated that the funding for the survey is being paid for by the State Lakes Fund.

### Water Level Request

The Chairman and stake holders met with the new MDE secretary. Chairman Browning stated that it was a productive meeting, and that the Secretary was very receptive to the stakeholders ongoing request to Brookfield Renewable for lowering the water level in the winter for shoreline projects, SAV control, and the Arrowhead Dredging Project. The Chairman asked Mr. Ed King to speak on the topic. Mr. King stated that he supported that request of the stakeholders, and the lake has never had a problem refilling in the spring, even when there was no rule band to govern water levels.

Chairman Browning stated that the Board received a response from MDE about the water level request. The response stated that the Board can address the issue when the permit is renewed in nine years. Chairman Browning was upset with the response, since this issue was mentioned several times during the last permit renewal and Brookfield stated then, that they can perform the drawdown because it did not violate the permit. Mr. Sutton stated that the POA informed the MDE Secretary that it appeared that MDE was being controlled by Brookfield.

Mr. Kelly asked if MDE addressed the projects and problems the Board has concerns with in the permit. Chairman Browning stated that they did in the review but currently are not addressing them. Senator McKay stated that the County has sent a letter to MDE about their concerns over the water level for the dredging project. He stated that he was told that MDE had called him, but the Senator had not received any messages from MDE at this time. Mr. Bruce Michael stated that the County sent a letter to Brookfield requesting a meeting with the legislators, Brookfield stated that they were already working with the legislators. Senator McKay restated that he nor the Delegate have been contacted. The Senator informed that Board that if Brookfield is unwilling to work with the stakeholder's, legislation may be submitted to mandate the water level drawdown. Mr. Green stated that Brookfield had a public affairs individual but that individual seems to change every couple months. Senator McKay stated that Brookfield will appoint an individual if they face legislation.

### AIS Regulations

Chairman Browning stated that the regulation committee met and discussed possible changes to the AIS regulations. The Chairman stated that several good ideas came from the meeting and Emily will be drafting some changes for the Board to review.

### Publicizing Deep Creek Lake Projects

Mr. Null stated that the State Lakes Fund is still funding Hydrilla control, shoreline erosion control and the 10 in 10 but the fund needs to be reallocated to keep these and other state programs intact. Senator McKay stated that it was going to be a very tight fiscal year next year. He stated that the county will make the State Lakes Fund a priority for permanent state funding.

Mr. Null state with the loss of Matt Jones that he would be taking over SEC program for the year.

### County Commissioner Update

Mr. Michael stated that the Arrowhead project is moving along, and they hope to notify the contractor that won the bid. The bid should be awarded in August. He stated that they needed more funding and DNR gave the County the funding within a very short period. He stated that they have most of the required permits. The project should start in early October.

### **New Business**

#### DNR Secretary Visit

Mr. Sutton stated that stakeholders will be taking the DNR Secretary, legislators, and other DNR hierarchy on a Boat Tour and lunch meeting at Aces Run.

#### Correspondence to DNR

No correspondence but Mr. Null stated that due to the dry conditions there have been multiple wildfires on the Buffer Strip.

#### Attorney General Office Update

No update at this time.

### Public Comment

Morgan France stated that watershed model in development by the Watershed Foundation will be able to assess and predict the lakes fill rate, which will allow Brookfield to lower the water level with confidence of refilling the lake. He stated that the Foundation is in the process of installing a USGS river gauge upstream of the dam to determine water coming out of the lake. He stated that this gauge will also allow the whitewater recreation to see if the top Yough has sufficient flow for rafting.

A motion was made by Mr. Sutton to adjourn the meeting, Mr. Kelly second, all were in favor.

The next meeting will be October 23, 2023 at 6:00pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Eric Null

Lake Manager