

Deep Creek Lake Policy and Review Board

Regular Quarterly Meeting

Deep Creek Lake Discovery Center

Monday January 25, 2016

In attendance: PRB Board Members; Greg Snook, James Bailey, Bob Browning, Steve Green (for Sen. George Edwards), Bob Hoffman, Larry Iden, Robert Kelly, David Moe (for Delegate Beitzel), Marta Schroyer, Kevin Null (for Commissioner Paul Edwards), DNR staff; Eric Null, Al Preston , and Bruce Michael

Chairman Snook asked the individuals on the board to introduce themselves, since there are now four new PRB board members. Everyone introduced and provided the board with a brief personal background.

Mr. Snook asked for a motion to approve the October 2015 minutes, Mr. Hoffman made the motion and Mr. Browning second. All were in favor and the motion passed to approve the October minutes with no changes.

Mr. Snook extended a personal thank you to former Chairman David Myerberg for his work on the board and willingness to bring Mr. Snook up to speed on the workings of the PRB.

OLD BUSINESS

Watershed Management Plan

Mr. Snook indicated that the plan had been submitted to the County Commissioners for consideration. Mr. Kevin Null announced that on Thursday evening, January 28, 2016 the Commissioners will have a public meeting at Garrett College room 224 to discuss the plan. Mr. K. Null commented that the public comment period would be open until February 5, 2016.

Canada Goose Hunt

Mr. Eric Null of the Lake Management Office reported that the hunt was held the Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday before Thanksgiving and there were nine permits available for hunting locations. Only four of the permits were used by hunters. There were no shots fired, no geese harvested and no negative public comment.

Mr. Snook asked what Lake Management attributed to the lack of geese harvested. Mr. Eric Null indicated that it was the time of year. Most of the geese on Deep Creek Lake are in the cut crop fields around the lake and populated coves this time of year. Safety zone rules only allowed for three hunting sites, unfortunately these sites did not correspond to the areas that the geese inhabited this time of year. Mr. E. Null indicated that Wildlife and Heritage Service was exploring a partnership with the county for a managed hunt on Broadford Lake, where the DCL geese over winter. There may be an opportunity to partner with area farm owners to have managed hunts in the fields where the DCL geese feed this time of year.

Mr. Hoffman asked if DNR would still be oiling the goose eggs as they have been. Mr. E. Null confirmed that DNR would continue the egg oiling. Mr. Hoffman stated that the next step on DCL would be a roundup when the geese were molting. Mr. E. Null agreed. Mr. E. Null also stated that another option was more managed hunts and partnerships with land owners where the DCL geese feed.

Mr. Iden asked Mr. E. Null if there was a going to be a goose hunt this year. Mr. E. Null responded that there would be some kind of goose hunt but the hunting area may change.

The board inquired about the possibility of a round up for the geese when they are molting. Mr. E. Null indicated that this would be a long process to start due to the social and political implications of a control method like this. Mr. E. Null stated that the state will be reviewing other options in 2016.

Sediment Review Committee

Mr. Hoffman stated that the committee has not met since October due to the PRB board change over and holidays. Mr. Hoffman had nothing to report on the sediment review committee.

Mr. Kelly stated that he had read and reviewed all of the documents on the sediment topic and agreed with the DNR sediment study that dredging was not an ecological or economical option. Mr. Kelly proposed that the board excuse itself from the sediment issue since it is not a crisis on the lake. Mr. Kelly also suggested that the board recommend another use for the remaining 190k available from the waterways improvement fund.

Mr. Snook stated that his intention for this meeting was to review the topics with the new board but not make any decisions on major items until the board has had a chance to discuss the issues thoroughly. Mr. Snook asked if the waterways money was a state grant. Mr. Kelly stated it was separate money that the Delegate and Senator were able to procure. Mr. Bailey stated that it would be premature for the new board to vote on an issue such as this one and suggested that another committee meeting be held.

Mr. Snook asked Mr. Hoffman who was on the Sediment Study Review Committee. Mr. Hoffman stated that Mr. Browning, himself, Ed King, Paul Weiler, Richard Matlick, and Morgan

France were the members of the committee. Mr. Snook asked Mr. Bailey if he would like to sit on the committee, Mr. Kelly expressed his interest with serving on the committee.

Hydrilla Control Update

Mr. Michael stated that DNR had four Hydrilla treatments in summer 2015. All of the treatments were successful. In 2014 DNR performed five treatments but only four were needed in 2015. Mr. Michael was pleased with the results of all of the treatments and stated that DNR will be treating again in 2016. Mr. Michael mentioned that a new invasive SAV was found in 2015, curly pondweed. He stated that DNR treated the pondweed by harvesting the beds. Mr. Michael stated that another historic possible invasive species watermilfoil died back from previous survey years. Mr. Michael stated that DNR will continue their SAV monitoring program. Mr. Snook asked how DNR monitored the SAV. Mr. Michael described the SAV transect monitoring and also mentioned the water quality monitoring program that DNR has on DCL.

Mr. Snook asked where the money for the monitoring and treatment comes from. Mr. Michael stated that the money comes from the Park Service.

Mr. Browning stated that the initial funding for Hydrilla control came from multiple sources but now it relies on the Lake Management Budget. Mr. Michael confirmed that there were multiple sources the first year and now the funding comes from the DCL budget. Mr. Browning encouraged the board to discuss this matter.

Mr. Michael stated that the cost of the Hydrilla program is between 210-230k and that other states spend millions of dollars on invasive species control. Mr. Hoffman asked Mr. Eric Null how much came from the Lake Management Budget in 2015. Mr. Null stated that between 238-242k was used from the Lake Management budget for Hydrilla. Mr. Hoffman asked what Lake Management functions have the Hydrilla control limited. Mr. E. Null responded that the HB-860 workgroup assembled a report with that information contained within the report.

Mr. Hoffman asked if the two sources of money to the Lake Management fund were dock fees and launch fees. Mr. E. Null stated it was from dock fees, utilities and land leases. The launch money was collected by Deep Creek Lake State Park. The fees collected at the launch ramp do not offset the cost of operating the boat ramp for Lake Management.

Mr. Hoffman suggested setting a budget committee meeting for the near future.

Mr. Iden asked if the funding would stay the same every year. Mr. Michael stated probably. Mr. Michael also stated that the AIS program proposed for HB 860 will address all state lakes and that Rocky Gap State Park's lake also has Hydrilla. Mr. Snook asked how much was spent at Rock Gap. Mr. Michael stated that DNR has not spent anything at Rocky Gap. DNR just found Hydrilla at Rock Gap in 2015 and have prepared a budget. Mr. Snook asked if that was separate from the DCL control budget. Mr. Michael stated yes.

Mr. Iden commented that it would rare to have boats come from Rocky Gap to DCL. Mr. E. Null stated that many bass fishermen fish both lakes.

Mr. Snook asked when the last time dock fees were increased. Mr. E. Null believed it was in 2005.

Mr. Bailey asked what was the targeted use of the new Buy Down funds. Mr. E. Null stated that they were supposed to come to the Lake Management Fund but so far only three people have participated.

Mr. Green suggested that Assistant Secretary Mark Hoffman be invited to a Budget Committee meeting.

DNR Purchase of Turkey Neck Estates Property

Mr. Snook stated that he thought it had been closed and the state was not purchasing the property. Mr. Eric Null stated yes you are correct.

Petition of Changes on PWC Time Regulations

Mr. Parker Jacobs was in attendance in place of Mrs. Carol Jacobs, who developed the petition. Mr. Jacobs's stated that is was not expected for the board to come to a decision on the issue but to have the board submit a recommendation to the Boat Act Advisory Committee to study the proposal. Mr. Browning said that he was informed that this would be a yearlong process. Mr. Jacobs stated that the initial start of the review could be at the April meeting of the BAAC if the board approved of the study. Mr. Green asked if Mr. Jacobs was asking the board to ask the BAAC to investigate the issue. Mr. Jacobs suggested a board could form a subcommittee to review the proposal. Mr. Browning was concerned that there was much more information needed before the board could ask the BAAC and DNR Secretary to study the issue. Mr. Browning also suggested that a subcommittee be formed to address the proposal. Mr. Jacobs suggested that some of the livery operators be allowed to sit on the subcommittee.

Mr. Snook asked Mr. Bailey if he would be interested in heading this subcommittee. Mr. Baily stated that he would be glad to be the chair of the subcommittee. Ms. Schroyer and Mr. Jacobs also volunteered to be on the subcommittee.

Mr. Hoffman stated that the POA has not done a survey of its membership yet on this issue. Mr. Eric Null stated that this would also have to be evaluated with the DCL COMAR regulations.

County Commissioners Report

Mr. Kevin Null reiterated that there would be a public meeting to discuss the DCL Watershed Management Plan in the evening on Thursday January 28, 2016.

NEW BUSINESS

Process ORV Permits for Snowmobiles on DCL

Mr. Hoffman stated that he had contacted Mr. Eric Null in reference to the new process to obtain an ORV permit for snowmobiles on DCL. The new application required that a person apply for the permit online. Online applications could be done at the DCL Discovery Center or Bill's Marine but these locations did not have the ORV stickers. The stickers would be mailed from Annapolis.

Mr. Hoffman asked Lt. Preston how the application process was being implemented.

Lt. Preston stated that ORV stickers would not be issued at the park but people could fill out the online application and receive a receipt to indicate that your snowmobile has been registered.

Mr. Hoffman is concerned that tourists would not be able to attain an ORV permit since they may not know that it was an online application now and that they may not be able to get a receipt but now he is aware that you can receive a receipt at park headquarters, the Discovery Center and Bill's Marine.

Lt. Preston stated that the Park HQ is not open on weekends but the Discovery Center is open.

Lt. Preston also stated that the Natural Resource Police would have to physically check a person's receipt rather than the traditional sticker that they could see while the snowmobile was moving.

Mr. Snook asked how many permits are issued per year for DCL.

Lt. Preston said he would locate that information.

DNR Correspondence

Mr. Eric Null informed the new board members that he received a new commercial use application and if the board wanted, he could use the application as a training tool to inform the new members how commercial regulations and applications were processed in the Lake Management Office.

Mr. Snook asked if the board reviewed the permit. Mr. E. Null stated yes and he would review the permit and make comments concerning the COMAR regulations. Mr. Browning stated that the Lake Manager approves the permits. Mr. E. Null confirmed this and stated that Lake Management wanted the board's opinions and comments of such permits.

Mr. E. Null explained that the board reviews and comments on both commercial applications and buy down permits. Mr. Browning wanted to know what had happened with a previous violation on the buy down located in the Marsh Hill area. Mr. E. Null informed the board that the permit holder cooperated and the situation was brought into compliance.

Public Comment

Mr. Richard Matlick stated for the boards information that there is a review of the Brookfield water release permit fast approaching. Mr. Matlick also stated that there is a change to goal 12 in the DCL watershed management plan. He questioned why the plan would be changed before it was even tried. He also commented that sediment removal is not just about sediment removal there are many other factors and that we need to attack this topic professionally and that the all venues that affect sediment must be studied. Mr. Matlick also questioned if there were any board members that lived south of the Glendale Bridge. He asked the board to spend more time in that area to see some of the impacts of boats and sediment.

Ms. Barbra Beelar urged the board to have teleconferencing available for those members of the public and DNR staff that wished to joins the meeting but could not be there in person.

Mr. Lindsley Williams commented on the high water levels negative effects on shoreline erosion. Mr. Kelly agreed with Mr. Williams's comments and Mr. Michael informed the board that there is currently a project under way measuring the impact of shoreline erosion to sedimentation of DCL.

After Mr. Kelly commented about the 190k available from the Waterways Improvement Fund Mr. Snook asked if a special meeting was needed. There was no motion made for a special meeting.

The date for the next PRB meeting will be announced after Mr. Snook contacts Assistant Secretary Mark Hoffman.

Meeting adjourned at 7:49pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Eric Null