

Wild Rice Advisory Committee Meeting

October 14, 2014

Crandon City Hall Building, 698 W. Washington St., Crandon, WI 54520

Committee Attendees: Rick Olson (WCC), Jason Fleener (WDNR), Don Kirby (Wisconsin Waterfowl Association), Kelly Crotty (WDNR), Bob Willging (USDA-Wildlife Services), Peter David (GLIFWC), Ryan Magana (WDNR), Chandra Harvey (WDNR), Kevin Gauthier (WDNR), Shelly Allness (WDNR), John Gozdziński (WDNR), Bob Ellingson (WWF), Dan Eklund (USFS-CNNF), , Tracy Hames (Wisconsin Wetlands Association), Eddie Shea (WDNR), Chris Spaight (WDNR)

Guest Attendees: Jim Kreitlow (WDNR), Alyssa Gove (WDNR), Brian Poupart (Lac du Flambeau Rice Chief), Frank Mitchell (Lac du Flambeau Voigt rep.), Lisa David (GLIFWC), Mike Bablick (USFS-CNNF)

Meeting began at 10:15 a.m.

Introductions

Shelly Allness opening remarks

- Happy to see the advisory committee continue to take shape
- Important to establish a protocol in order to add structure to the committee

Don Kirby suggested adding the protocol to the website as an education tool

Chandra Harvey presented on wild rice in Wisconsin

- Chandra covered the basic statutes for wild rice, rules and regulations, licensing, aquatic plant management, origins of Ojibwe treaty rights, the VOIGT case.
- Treaties are “not a grant of right to the Indians but a grant of rights from them.” – U.S. v. Winans, 198 U.S. 371 (1905)

Rest Lake

- Drawdowns now occur to protect structures; downstream disrupts downstream activities (i.e., spawning)
- Plan is to change to a 1 ft. drawdown as opposed to a 3 ft. drawdown at about 1”/day
- Concern exists about not having enough flexibility with management of water levels that would impact rice over time.
- Public comments on the drafted order went through Sept. 5, 2014.

Lunch Break through 12:45

Peter David presents on wild rice ecology

- Many formally important rice beds severely depleted

- Lakes of great interest
 - Upper Nine Mile Flowage (maintained by a beaver dam), Mulligan Lake (Douglas Co.), Spur Lake (Oneida Co.), Clam Lake (Burnett Co.), Black Brook Flowage (Washburn Co.)

Early Blue-wing Teal Season

- No reports of hunter—wild rice harvester conflicts reported to or observed by DNR staff
- Others have heard of a youth group that reported shots taken in their vicinity while they were ricing.
- Posting signs was thought to have helped alert and educate regarding multiple user groups.

Wild rice webpage

- Working to develop a user-friendly webpage to attract more interest in wild rice
- Suggestions by committee:
 - Make it a shared resource, warm and inviting, with linked stories about wild rice harvest experiences
 - Incorporate educational opportunities through the website, such as wild rice camps.
 - Guidance documents for wild rice seeding
 - Information on finishing rice and how to locate finishers
 - Provide tools such as maps or lists of known wild rice waters
 - Access points to rice waters where access may be difficult or limited
 - FAQs

Wild Rice Topics and Issues for future Committee and DNR leadership consideration

- Jason presented a preliminary list of known issues/topics
- Committee members still have an opportunity to send in potential topics/issues and indicate which they or their constituency feels are the top priority issues.
- Committee recommendations will be sent to the sponsors, and input will be sought as to which issues or topics they would like the committee to prioritize and focus on.

Non-member comments

- Desire for a more diverse advisory committee – Tribal, university scientists

Meeting adjourned at 2:45 p.m. and a short field trip to Little Rice Lake followed

Little Rice Lake Field Trip

- Jeremy Holtz (Wildlife Biologist) discussed the dam renovation project on the flowage and the importance of rice on the lake.