

DATE: August 8, 2005

TO: Rest Lake Dam/Manitowish River Work Group

FROM: Jim Kreitlow

SUBJECT: Minutes of our July 14, 2005 meeting.

I want to thank all the group members who attended our sixth meeting on July 14, 2005. The purpose of the meeting was to present the DNR's results of the modeling work conducted on the Manitowish River and to review proposed options for change in the operation of the Rest Lake Dam. I feel the field data has been collected to allow us to make management decisions. The overall goal is to reach an agreement on a selected option (involving all stakeholders) that can be tried, evaluated and tweaked (Adaptive Management) over a five year period. Our intent is to utilize an adaptive management process outlined in the actions below:

1. Assess
2. Design
3. Implement
4. Monitor
5. Evaluate
6. Adjust

I will summarize the meeting following the order of the agenda that was presented.

1. Power-Point Presentation (Jim Kreitlow).
 - A. Results of the physical habitat modeling.
 - B. Spring flow goals for the Manitowish River.
 - C. Proposed options to reach those flow goals.
 - D. Summer minimum flow goal.
 - E. Fall draw down/downstream flow fluctuation.
 - F. Results of structure evaluation on the Manitowish Chain (October, 2004).
2. Position of the Manitowish Waters Lakes Association (Jack King).
3. Open Discussion (All)
4. Decision?

Participants

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5. John Hansen, Town Chairman, 217 Spider Lake Road, Manitowish Waters, WI. 54545 Jlhjih@centurytel.net 543-2438.
6. Les Jacobson, Friends of the Manitowish River, PO Box 202, Manitowish Waters, WI. 54545. 543-2501

7. Helen Townsend, Friends of the Manitowish River, 73 River Access Road, Manitowish Waters, WI. 54545. Bhtownsend@yahoo.com 543-2166.
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11. Carl Sevey, Alder Lake.
12. Don Rayala, Manitowish Waters Alliance, 325 Alder Lake Road, Manitowish Waters WI. 54545. 543-2225.
13. John Bates, Friends of the Manitowish River, 4245 North Highway 47, Mercer WI. 54547 476-2828.
14. Arlen Wanta, Turtle Flambeau-Trude Lake Property Owners Association, 2795 North Flowage Road, Park Falls, WI.
15. Greg Holt, Friends of the Manitowish River, holthorse@centurytel.net
16. Eleanor Butler, PO Box 157 Manitowish Waters, WI. 54545. Enzymes@centurytel.net
17. Jack King, Manitowish Waters Lakes Association, PO Box 286, Manitowish Waters WI. 54545. Jgroveking@aol.com or jgrovking@yahoo.com
18. Calvin LaPorte, PO Box 58, Manitowish Waters, WI. 54545.
19. Bill and Ticki Lambrecht, Manitowish Waters Alliance, 284 Point O'Pines Road, Manitowish Waters, WI. Clk28a@aol.com
20. Tom Bashaw, WDNR, 107 Sutliff Avenue, Rhinelander, WI. 54501.
21. Tom Jerow, WDNR, 107 Sutliff Avenue, Rhinelander, WI. 54501.
22. Gale Wolf, Dead Pike Lake, 715-543-2439.
23. Pete Guzzetta, Dead Pike Lake, 715-543-2594.
24. Tom Schluetter, Turtle Flambeau Flowage.
25. Jim Mucci, Turtle Flambeau Flowage.
26. Francis Podrin, Little Manitowish Lake, 715-423-8200.
27. Robert and Adrienne Hurt, Island Lake, 715-543-2033

Members Absent

1. Pete Rasey, Manitowish Waters Lakes Association, 543-2176.
2. Ronald Gaa, Manitowish Waters Alliance PO Box 9, Manitowish Waters, 54545. 543-2505 Fax 543-2188.
3. Judi Schmidt Arnold, Manitowish Waters Alliance, PO Box 98, Manitowish Waters, 54545. Judisa@shrealty.com 543-2300.
4. Mona Weichmann, Manitowish Waters Lakes Association, 543-2562.
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7. Jim Leever, Turtle Flambeau-Trude Lake Property Owners Association, 4792 West Franks Lane, Park Falls, WI.
8. Rita Mazer, Manitowish Waters Lakes Association, 288 Highway 51, Manitowish Waters WI. 54545 543-2538.
9. Mark Charon, Friends of the Manitowish River, parasustema@hotmail.com
10. Tom Mowbray, Turtle Flambeau-Trude Lake Property Owners Association, TFTLKassoc@aol.com
11. Steve Gilbert, WDNR, 8770 County Highway J, Woodruff, WI. 54568 Gilbes@dnr.state.wi.us 358-0229
12. Jeff Scheirer, WDNR, Park Falls, WI. Scheij@dnr.state.wi.us 762-4684 (extension 131).
13. Jim Klosiewski, WDNR, Rhinelander, WI. Klosij@dnr.state.wi.us 365-8992.

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15. Joe Stengele, 321 Point O' Pines Road Manitowish Waters WI. 54545.
16. Lloyd Boneck, Manitowish Waters Alliance, fatnbarb@yahoo.com 543-2511.
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18. Gabriel G. Hloch, 210 Fawn Trail, Manitowish Waters, WI. 54545.
19. Bob Krause, bbkrause@centurytel.net 543-2086.
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21. Kathy Drennen, k.drennen@ett.net 847-336-1350.

Agenda

1. Power Point Presentation. The Power Point presentation is available on the webpage to review (<http://dnr.wi.gov/org/gmu/upwis/restlakedam/workgroup.htm>)

- A. Results of physical habitat modeling for Lake Sturgeon.

The model results showed that suitable sturgeon habitat is available at water flows between 75 and 150 cubic feet per second (cfs) (Xcel flow estimates).

- B. Spring flow goals for the Manitowish River.

BASED ON THE MODELING RESULTS THE FOLLOWING RANGE OF FLOW GOALS SHOULD BE CONSIDERED DURING THE MONTH OF MAY OR WHEN WATER TEMPERATURES ARE SUITABLE FOR STURGEON SPAWNING.

1. **An adaptive flow regime between 75 and 150 cfs should be considered.**
2. These target flows are based on habitat suitability and variable water years (water entering the chain).
3. If it is a low water year, 75 cfs should be maintained.
4. If it is a high water year, provide 150 cfs or more.
5. Careful consideration should be given to ramping rates (drastic changes in flow).

- C. Proposed options to meet those flow goals.

1. Extend the fill period beyond Memorial Day (**Proposal 1**).
2. Reduce the winter draw down by up to 1.0 foot or more, to provide additional storage to augment spring flows (Help to improve late fall navigation and fish stranding issue, potentially improve musky and northern pike spawning habitat, improve chances of filling the chain by Memorial Day)(**Proposal 2**).
3. Begin filling the chain sooner (before complete ice out) to capture run-off that is normally passed (**Proposal 3**).
4. A combination of all 3 above.
5. Propose a 5-year trial period to fine tune (**Adaptive Management**).

- D. Summer minimum flow goal to protect fish and wildlife and provide for recreation.

1. Maintain a minimum flow of 50 cfs.
2. To maintain a minimum flow of 50 cfs or higher during dry conditions in the summer months, a draw down below the 8'. 4"- 8'. 6" summer target elevation may be required.
3. Maintain summer minimum pool elevation of 7'. 3" (or other agreed upon minimum).

4. For example (assuming no precipitation), one inch of storage will provide about 5.8 cfs of flow over a month's period. So if flows drop below 50 cfs (i.e. 24 cfs), we would have to drop the chain 4.5 inches that month to maintain a flow of 50 cfs.

E. Fall draw down/downstream flow fluctuation.

1. Total water level fluctuation range was 28 inches between flows of 30 cfs and 416 cfs (Measured at Townsend property over a 7-month period).
2. When possible implement a ramping rate to reduce major swings in water flow.
3. An option to consider reducing major changes in river flow in the fall is to extend the draw down period over 6 weeks or two months instead of one month as has been done.

F. Results of structure evaluation on the Manitowish Chain (October 2004).

Summary of October 27, 2004 field survey of structures (Indicates if structure is wet or dry at different water level elevations).

Structure (#)	5.0 elevation	6.0	6.5	7.0	8.0	8.5
	Dry Wet	Dry Wet	Dry Wet	Dry Wet	Dry Wet	Dry Wet
Boathouse (45)	38 7	19 26	13 32	11 34	6 39	5 40
Walls (30)	29 1	26 4	24 6	17 13	0 30	0 30
Docks/piers (13)	6 7	1 12	1 12	1 12	0 13	0 13
Rock Riprap (5)	5 0	4 1	2 3	1 4	0 5	0 5
Wood/Stone Bldg. (1)	1 0	1 0	1 0	0 1	0 1	0 1
Foot Bridge (1)	0 1	0 1	0 1	0 1	0 1	0 1
Shed (1)	1 0	1 0	1 0	0 1	0 1	0 1
Deck (1)	1 0	1 0	1 0	1 0	1 0	1 0
Total (97)	81 16	53 44	43 54	31 66	7 90	6 91

2. Presentation by Jack King (Jack's read statement is available on the WebPages to review (<http://dnr.wi.gov/org/gmu/upwis/restlakedam/workgroup.htm>)

Jack King read the following statement:

Dam Meeting - 7/14/05

The Lakes Association is opposed at this time to any change in the drawdown - as a test, or otherwise, because up to now, the DNR has failed to give equal attention to several other important issues, including:

The confirmed presence of spawning sturgeon in at least one area of the River below the dam (Vance Lake).

The absence of empirical evidence that flow rate is the sole reason for lack of sturgeon reproduction.

The expectations of riparian homeowners and prospective buyers' after 65 years of consistent yearly dam operation.

The DNR's actions have given the impression that there is a predetermined plan to convince us that a change in flow rate is the only way to achieve your mandate.

Predation, stream reconfiguration and alternative scenarios deserve the same kind of attention you have given to flow rates.

Referring to predation - The DNR has used the fact that redhorse coexist with sturgeon in the Wolf River and therefore can't be the reason for lack of recruitment in the Manitowish. Considering the number of sturgeon spawning in the Wolf vs. those in the Manitowish, isn't that comparison invalid? Is there any evidence that fungus, creek chubs, shiners and the like, might be a predator of sturgeon eggs? Give us more than a two-line answer as a reason not to consider these and other predation possibilities.

Referring to stream reconfiguration - a principal reason, stated in one of our meetings, for not considering stream modification to create greater depth and flow -- and new, rocky spawning areas -- was that because of the nature of the sandy streambed, the new areas would likely fill in. Of course, the same could be said of your proposed increased flow over existing spawning beds. A certain amount of this is desirable because as Jeff Scheirer said a year ago March, "Periodic high river flows are needed to re-suspend and distribute sediment and scour river channels." And after all, this is what has happened, during drawdown, every Fall for the last 65 years. Stream modification has been effective elsewhere. Why not here?

Referring to alternative scenarios - one alternative would be releasing fingerlings, raised from Upper Flambeau eggs, in the Manitowish River above Island Lake. Jim Kreitlow has said there are some good spawning areas there. The Lake Sturgeon Management Plan is non-specific as to location, i.e. "The Upper Flambeau - Manitowish River System". Fish returning to those spawning beds some Spring would have the full benefit of Spring rains and good water flow without the necessity of tortured, artificial enhancement, a significant hit on the Township's economy and extreme unhappiness (not to say, anger) among an overwhelming majority of our riparian owners.

Ironically, the DNR has used the consistency of dam operation over 65 years as a reason to propose changes. That's a little like being penalized for just standing here.

You have spent an enormous amount of time and resources travelling down a pretty narrow road. I would hope you could give us some alternatives to "Public interest flow regimes".

3. Open Discussion

There was good open discussion. Jim Kreitlow felt that the flows needed and options to meet them were reasonable. It was stressed that we would like to try an agreed upon option and implement an adaptive management plan/strategy over a 5-year period. The department has the responsibility to protect the resource and public interest. The department also has regulatory authority to request changes to the existing operating order.

There was support from the downstream user groups to adopt the adaptive management strategy. The Manitowish Waters Lakes Association was reluctant to agree to any changes for reasons stated in

Jack King's statement and the perception that property values will be significantly reduced if we implement changes. The Manitowish Waters Alliance supported re-evaluating and tweaking some of the options to be evaluated at a future meeting. John Hanson also supported continued evaluation of the options. No consensus was reached. Xcel Energy is reluctant to make any changes in operation unless ordered by the department but is willing to work with the group to evaluate options.

4. Where do we go from here?
 - A. Jim Kreitlow was asked to review the options proposed to see if he can come up with other proposals that may satisfy all parties. He would then present these at a future meeting. Proposals would involve combining those presented into something more palatable.
 - B. Work with Jack King to address Lake Association concerns.

Thank You