

Tri-Creeks Land Use Committee Meeting
Thursday, February 03, 2022 – 2:00 - 4:00 PM
Virtual via WebEx

Those in attendance were: Roxie Anderson, Kris Murphy, Eric Epstein, Dick Thiel, Bob Micheel, Ben Anderson, Kurt Rasmussen, George Johnston, and Ron Luethe.

Roxie Anderson provided an overview of the existing plan documents and next steps for the group to provide updates and further develop narratives for the draft plan. She noted Chapter 2 needed additional work on wood turtle management; Chapter 3 concerning beaver management, and recreation including outdoor classroom potential opportunities needs to be developed.

Bob Micheel provided an update on the current management practices the LCC has applied to manage the Tri-Creeks property. They include installed buffers along the cropland edge adjacent to the stream using the federal CREP program and retired the “doughnut hole” cropland to permanent vegetative cover. PL566 dam is a high hazard structure. An updated flood warning system will be installed at the dam site.

Future management practices under consideration include:

Forestry – white ash harvesting, UWSP student forestry management planning.

Stream Corridor – minimal management needed to maintain the natural state with attention to wood turtle habitat needs.

Watershed – encourage upstream and watershed protective practices.

Road access and parking lot maintenance.

Fishery resource – maintain brook trout fishery.

Wildlife management – DNR pheasant program, maintain alder environment that favor wood turtle habitat needs.

Kris Murphy stated his concerns about the Norwalk Pond water quality, invasive species, beaver dam and damages in that area (NOTE: Please see Brad Murphy’s notes on the draft plan that are part of the meeting minutes below). It was noted the current draft plan is concentrating on the resources on the county property south and east of the Norwalk Pond property. The county property around the Norwalk Pond will need its resources further assessed and management recommendations incorporated into the resource management plan.

The next meeting of the Tri-Creek Land Use Planning Committee is scheduled for **Thursday, March 31st, 2022 virtual meeting via WebEx beginning at 2:00 PM** Call-in information will be sent out prior to the meeting.

At the next meeting we will provide progress on the draft plan updates and next steps.

Respectfully Submitted,
Ron Luethe

Bradford Murphy

Tri-Creek Land Use Plan Draft

Page 3 - The technical description of the property should make clear that 79 acres that includes most of the dam, water and surrounding land are private property with access only via the Kermit Avenue Road and the SW corner of the dam in accordance with the Easement Agreement signed in 1975. The private property is fenced and posted to reflect access restrictions.

Page 4 - The impoundment was 23 acres when built in 1975-76 and the current maximum depth is about 8 feet. This has changed dramatically since construction due to unabated silt inflows that filled in much of the open water. Current navigable acreage (by kayak or canoe) is estimated at about 15 acres.

Page 7 - "Access is currently cumbersome..." Should be restated as "Access is restricted by the Easement Agreement between the current private owner of the land and Monroe County. Access is only available via the Kermit Avenue Road and the SW corner of the impoundment in accordance with the Easement Agreement signed in 1975."

Page 7 - I suggest a "Water Quality Plan" rather than merely water quality monitoring. It is quite obvious the water quality is extremely poor and getting worse every year.

Page 8 - A major infestation of Emerald Ash Borer has decimated nearly all White Ash trees in the forest in this location. Dozens of trees are now dead and dying. This has only become obvious in the last two years.

Page 9-13 - Discussion of the forest in the wetlands feeding into the impoundment should take into consideration the major damage now evident by the heavy population of beavers occupying this area. Most of the small, and many of the medium, trees have been cut down by the beaver and their dams have expanded the wetlands significantly. It is no longer possible to walk from the County land to the impoundment. Most of this damage has occurred in the last three years.

Page 15 - It is not clear where "trails for use by hikers, hunters and others are possible without intruding on the private land.

Page 17 - As a first step in establishing a Water Quality Management Plan, I suggest visiting the impoundment and testing the water quality to establish the baseline issues.

Page 21 - The prevalence of poison ivy on the island in the impoundment has made this land unusable.

Thanks for your consideration of these comments.

Brad Murphy