Meeting Summary-Judicial Ditch 2 Project Team, May 16, 2022

Jim Stark attended a meeting of the Judicial Ditch 2 Project Team at the request of Representative Poston. The meeting was held at the Sauk River Watershed District’s (District) office in Sauk Center, Minnesota. Richard Kiesling and James Fallon, both representing the U. S Geological Survey, also attended the meeting at Mr. Stark’s request. James Fallon attended virtually. Those invited to the meeting are listed at the end of this message.

***(Jon, could you list those who attended, as I did not get all of the names)***

Jon Roeschlein, District Administrator, opened and facilitated the meeting. He discussed a request, for financial assistance, that the District made to the U. S Army Corps of Engineers. He noted that a response, from the Corps, has not been received at this time.

Dr. Kiesling discussed issues related to Judicial Ditch 2 (ditch) and Lake Osakis. The ditch is a major contributor to the lake’s water budget, and therefore, addressing the impact of the ditch, on the lake, would be important. The ditch contributes a significant part of the sediment and phosphorous loads to Miller Bay. A significant positive issue is that the internal loading, of phosphorous, does not appear to be a significant part of the phosphorous budget to the lake. Richard also described some of the issues related to eutrophication of the lake.

James Fallon described recent extreme high flow and low-flow conditions that rivers in the area have experienced. High flows generally move most of the sediment in rivers and streams. During these high-flow periods, off-channel impoundments would not be affective in capturing sediment from the main channel.

There was discussion about historical conditions involving construction and maintenance of the retention ponds. Sediment basin and ditch maintenance is a significant issue. Questions also were raised about reducing the convenance ditch of the ditch in order to reduce sediment to Lake Osakis. A subject matter expert, on ditch maintenance, may be a good topic for future meetings. I would suggest Tom Gile, from the Board of Soil and Water Resources.

The group decided to focus on several important questions at future meetings. There include:

* The composition and volume of sediments in Miller bay
* The composition and volume of sediments that have been removed from the retention basins
* The composition of nutrients, in sediment, in the retention basins and in Miller Bay
* A plan to measure concentrations and loads of sediments and nutrients being discharged, to Miller Bay, from the ditch
* Options to reduce sediment and nutrients discharge to the lake.

*Jim Stark, Director*

*Legislative Subcommittee on Water Policy*

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These issues will be discussed and refined at the next meeting which will be on June 20.

# Attendees: Invited: Adam Hjelm (SRWD), Adam Ossefoort (Todd County), Alan Larson (Osakis City Council), Bev Guyette (Landowner), Deja Anton (Todd SWCD), Ken Rutten (Douglas SWCD Supervisor), Bruce Magnus (Osakis Lake Association), David Zerr (SRWD Board), Glenn Thunberg (Landowner), Janice Hauri (Landowner), Danielle Anderson (Douglas SWCD), Jerome Haggenmiller (Douglas SWCD), Jerry Rapp (Douglas County Commissioner), Joe Cecko (Landowner), John Maile (DNR), Jon Roeschlein (SRWD), Karl Badger (Assistant to Representative Poston), Kathryn Prince (Minnesota Land Trust), Leah Hall (The Nature Conservancy), Shawn Papon (USFWS), Paul Hartmann (SRWD Board), Randy Neumann (Todd County Commissioner), Representative John Poston, Representative Mary Franson,  Emily Siira (DNR), Susan Capitola (Landowner), Tom Anderson (JD2 Drainage Inspector), Troy Bednarz (Landowner), Wayne Ostlie (Minnesota Land Trust), Tessa Zee (Stearns SWCD), Sarah Boser (SRWD)