



14 Mile Creek Watershed Joint Committee Q2 2020 report 5/11/2020

Unfortunately, our world has been impacted by the Covid-19 epidemic and in many ways, our lives have been put on hold. While our 14 Mile committee has not been able to meet in recent months, I want to assure you that progress continues towards identifying and correcting our water quality issues thanks to the efforts of our members, our advisors, and our program managers at the DNR and EPA.

At year-end, we introduced a more comprehensive water testing plan in the upstream watershed, and within our lakes in Rome. In addition, we launched a program to better share information with all of you, and promote the things we and our upstream neighbors can do to reverse the declining water quality in our lakes within the 14 Mile Creek Watershed. These are all steps that support the proposed EPA plan to improve our watershed. And, we have really good news to share regarding that plan.

After nearly three years, our initial request for a Nine Key Element Plan to improve our watershed is about to be realized with approval by the EPA expected at the end of May. Our DNR facilitator, Andrew Craig, tells us “we are on the 2-yard line”, with just three final changes requested by the EPA which are being communicated to our Adams County Conservationist, Kason Morley, and Christina Anderson, Program Initiatives Coordinator for WI Land and Water. They’ve been the primary contributors to the unique plan, with assistance from County Conservationists in the three other counties in our watershed and countless others, including our own 14 Mile Creek Water Joint Committee. This plan includes all 38 miles and over 50 stakeholders in our watershed. Through a resolution passed by the Town of Rome and TriLakes, this plan will determine the actions we take within our own lakes in Rome. In support of that resolution, here are the key things we are planning for this year:

Promotion, Education, and Communication - Karen Knotek has brought focus to this area, initially by establishing our Facebook Page, contributing to the development of our new website, then leading the charge with our promotions workgroup. We now have a new logo, backdrops, table skirts, and display materials to better represent our committee's activities and to educate everyone around us so we can all be working to improve our lakes. Karen and her fellow workgroup members are chomping at the bit to begin showing off their "booth" when the "stay at home" order is lifted.

Upstream Water Testing – John Endrizzi has now done 29 months of in-stream flow and nutrient testing up into our watershed, under the direction of our DNR advisor, Scott Provost, and Adams County Conservationist, Kason Morley. In fact, it's largely his work that's allowed us to even be considered for awarding of the Nine Key Element Plan. We've changed some of the test locations to better focus on high reading areas and added to the test criteria at UWSP, using the Kjeldahl Nitrogen method to better identify potential sources.

In-Lake Water Monitoring/Testing – Phil Rockenbach is leading this group, establishing lakes monitoring teams on each of our three lakes within Rome. We'll be testing for Nitrates as well as the Phosphorous and Chlorophyll in the state-sponsored lake monitoring program, and response testing for e coli as needed. He still needs a team for Camelot, so we need your help. Contact TriLakes: lakedist@wctc.net. Citizen Lake Monitoring is on hold at least through the end of May. We hope to conduct training sessions when the lock-down is lifted.

Healthy Lakes Program- Dave Trudeau continues to lead this workgroup utilizing the state's program to fund citizen projects for lakes and shoreland improvement. Through this program, we've been able to help fund Lake Camelot's fish habitat program, including fish drops and aquatic vegetation replanting to encourage fish growth and Phosphorous reduction. In addition, Dave has led a "Fish Sticks" program over the past three years to increase fish habitat on Lake Sherwood. Numerous lake property owners have done funded shoreland restoration projects through this program, and we've been awarded \$7,000 for Healthy Lakes projects in 2020. You can apply for a 2021 project through Dave at dtrudeau@wctc.net

Most of you know that this committee's activities have been funded by TriLakes, with assistance from the Town of Rome. Our annual costs since 2017 have been about \$5 per TriLakes member. All committee members from Lakes Petenwell, Arrowhead, Camelot, and Sherwood work for free, as do our advisors from the DNR, Adams County, Rome, and TriLakes. Think about that; over the past four years, it's cost each of us TriLakes members a total of 20 bucks to support a committee responsible for the work

behind the expected granting of a 10 year, \$8 million EPA sponsored plan to improve our 14 Mile Creek Watershed and the lakes we love.

In addition to the people mentioned above, you may recognize the names of others who serve this committee; Carson Heinecke, Ron Foster, Scott Bordeau, Jerry Wiessinger, Rick Georgeson, Rick Antin, Bob Benkowski, Joe Greco, Wayne Johnson, John Haugen, Gary Gross, Barb Herreid, Gina Combs, John Kolinski, Dan Gohman, Jennifer Bergman (DNR), Taylor Hasz (DNR), Pat Oldenburg (DNR), Dr. Paul McGinley (UWSP), Jami Gebert (Rome), Dr. Steve Oberle, and Sam Peterson (Adams County). Forgive me if I've forgotten anyone.

So, we continue to move in a positive direction and look forward to the expansion of this watershed improvement project when the 14 Mile Creek Nine Key Element Plan is launched. We then become one of many stakeholders working toward a common goal. I hope you are all with us on this. And, I hope that you all remain safe and healthy.

Don Ystad
Chairman 14 Mile Creek Watershed Joint Committee
