

Advocates for the Knife River Watershed (AKRW)

February 3, 2022 , Board Meeting Minutes

Board Members Present: Shary Zoff - Chair, Julie Johnson – Secretary, Corlis West- treasurer, Rodney Johnson, Leo Babeu, Paul Trygstad, Peg Zahorik - recorder

Information from Invited Guests:

The meeting began with our three invited guests: Lori Steele - Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area (CISMA), Tara Solem - District Manager from Lake County Soil and Water Conservation District (LCSWCD), and Gail Trygstad our Website master. The following is a summary of information from each guest.

Lori Steele- Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area (CISMA)

Lori provided us with a brief background of CISMA, their mission, current projects, and vision for the future. Below is a brief outline of information shared at the meeting.

- CISMA started with the city of Duluth's Park and Recreation Dept. Their work now covers south St. Louis County, north St. Louis County, a small portion of Lake County, and a part of Carlton County.
- CISMA mission: Help citizens and communities to protect land from invasive species.
- They work with a large collaborative including and not limited to city, county, community, 1854 treaty, etc. Judy Gibbs is on the leadership team. The list of partners is on their google site as well as the list of 21 informal partnerships.
- A current focus is to expand knowledge and support rural townships. They work on both private and public land and like to think across property lines, not in silos. They are currently looking for ideas as to how they can provide support.
- Examples of how they've supported areas have include public service announcements (such as WDIO), monthly newsletters from their educational team subcommittee, etc.
- Possible future grant monies were noted, some of which are funneled through Forest Service. Lori noted some money restrictions in certain areas. She also stated there being a current focus on the Knife River Watershed, adding that she does both education and outreach.
- Further mapping of target invasive plants needs to be done as well as more survey work with Ed Maps.
- CISMA meets bi-monthly. She identified the group as very fluid adding that, as desired, one could join a project area of interest or a subcommittee.
- They are easily looked up on Facebook. If interested one can sign up to receive email communication. Their next meeting is March 15th, 9-11 AM. Their meetings are flexible but are generally held on Tuesdays.

The board discussed various questions and ideas with Lori throughout the meeting. Shary volunteered to be a delegate with CISMA for AKRW.

Tara Solem – District Manager for Lake County Soil and Water Conservation District (LCSWCD)

Tara gave us updates from LCSWD. The information provided here was graciously submitted to us from Tara. Here is her summary of information she presented to us at the meeting.

From Tara:

It was good to see everyone from the Advocates of Knife River Watershed yesterday afternoon on the AKRW Board meeting Zoom. You all are a great group of people! Below is my summary of items I brought up at the meeting. Let me know if you need clarification or more information.

- Mac's position duties are being assessed and re-assigned since his resignation

- Tim Byrns is Lake SWCD forester and will be taking Mac's forestry projects and handling all forestry related work
- Liz Anderson is our Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) staff person and she can assist with GIS and Eddmaps (app/program to assist with tracking terrestrial invasive species)
- Our terrestrial invasive species coordinator position is currently vacant and not posted for hiring as of yet. Since SWCDs are grant funded and get very little baseline funding, I need to assess long term funding for the position. In the past, the terrestrial invasive coordinator position was partially funded by a Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) grant and I need to check to see when the next round of grant applications will be accepted and when the funding would be available. We have partial funds for rehiring this position but as I mentioned I want to ensure we have long term dedicated funding. I also need to assess what funds I can move around from other categories. My hope would be that by late spring/early summer we could have a staff person to cover the terrestrial invasive species duties but I can't make any promises yet
- The DNR CPL grant request for proposals was released in December and Mac was unable to apply for it before he left.
 - The buckthorn thankfully wasn't very prevalent on the KRRC trail - it wouldn't warrant a grant in and of itself
 - The tree planting needs more information as far as how many trees would need to be planted, protection, species, cost for incorporation into a grant if we decide that in the future
 - The Nature Conservancy has a riparian tree planting grant and they identified the Knife River Watershed as one of their focus areas. I mentioned to them the need for tree planting in the KRRC area and they said they were interested in possibly collaborating and are looking for a contact name. You mentioned Steve Betzler (sp) but I can't find his contact information anywhere. If you could forward that to me - it would be greatly appreciated! I can have the Nature Conservancy get in touch with you and Steve about this potential project.
- Education and Outreach
 - Lake SWCD is coordinating a fall workshop in collaboration with Cook SWCD to meet objectives in the Lake Superior North One Watershed One Plan. Topics may include erosion, tree planting, native plants, terrestrial invasive species, cost share funding, forestry, spruce budworm, Eddmaps, stormwater, etc
 - Cook SWCD doesn't have time to plan for a spring workshop so myself and Emily Nelson (Lake SWCD Education and Outreach Coordinator) will be working on hosting a workshop this spring as well. We would be happy to collaborate and coordinate a workshop with Knife River folks. Emily and I discussed on Wednesday so we don't have all the details yet, however we would plan on holding this workshop late April.

Gail Trygstad – AKRW Website

The board had a lengthy discussion about our new website. Some of the discussion topics included

- how to access the website,
- ways board members can most efficiently submit website suggestions to Gail (Google docs was recommended)
- name of webpage and discussion regarding different word search submissions and whether the webpage will pop up (such as entering Knife River, or Knife River watershed, or AKRW, etc).
- questions regarding if there is a way to determine how many people have viewed our page (Gail noted Facebook can track this if people "like" our page)

In addition to managing our webpage Gail also volunteered to manage our Facebook Page.

Julie will write to Eric Mead to let him know Gail will now be taking over and to thank him for his previous and long service in this regard. Discussion about Facebook included:

- board suggestions for submission to our facebook (pics, etc) could also be sent to google doc for Gail
- facebook is a good place for AKRW to submit upcoming events or presentations

There was discussion about Google Doc and how to use it. Gail noted that this will be the best way to submit ideas for both Website and Facebook. Gail volunteered to do a google doc training for all who desired. A Google doc training date was determined to be through zoom at 3:00 on Feb 17th.

Treasurer Report: Tabled

Secretary Report: Tabled

Old Business:

ZOOM:

Leo had been arranging zoom meetings for us and is now retiring from the board. Due to this the board discussed a new way to access zoom or other online meeting options. Points discussed included the price of a zoom account (\$150/year which provides unlimited time limit for 100 people or less) and the fact that many people are now familiar with using Zoom. After discussion Corlis motioned that AKRW purchase a one year subscription to a ZOOM account. Julie seconded. Vote was a unanimous yay.

Rod will speak with Gail about Zoom and will email details and credentials for account.

Presentations/activities

- **Karen Gran** - Julie reported that Karen Gran said she would present info in April or May. We will request a “lay person” presentation rather than scientific emphasis presentation.
- **Julie Etterson** - Rodney noted that Julie said yes to giving a presentation but did not yet give specific details as to when. Rod will call Julie in March to confirm when she will be ready to present. Rod will ask if she could present in May.
- **Ideas for calendar of events:** George Host- March; Karen Gran – April; Julie Etterson – May ; Spring walk – June

Rodney suggested possible topics specific to forestry in the KR watershed that George Host could be asked to present on. Suggested topics included logging in the riparian zone, best management practices, upland and escarpment practices, logging and flashiness of streams.

Paul noted that he could contact Julie Breneman, if desired, who has a list of up to 30 speakers covering various topics.

Annual Membership meeting:

Leo will be resigning therefore one board position is open which needs to be filled.

The board discussed the need for 4 two year terms and 3 one year positions.

After discussion board members (other than Leo) agreed to a willingness to continue on the board as follows:

Julie- 2 year term, Rod- 2 year term, Peg- 1 or 2 year term, Shary – 1 or two year term, Corlis- 2, 1, or no term.

Rod and Julie announced that Mark Osadjan has shown interest in AKRW and in joining the board.

Annual Membership Meeting: February 23rd, 6 PM

Next Board Meeting: March 3rd, 3:00 pm