

June 21, 2007

Analysis/Editorial Opinion of Sawyer County Management of Carlson Dam over last year.

There are no boards in Carlson Dam at this time supposedly to maintain required minimum flow requirements to comply with the [Wisconsin Public Trust Doctrine](#).

It would take about two 5.5" wide boards or a total of 11" to get the Round Lake water level to its authorized level assuming sufficient rain fall.

There is no water flow thru the Carlson Dam at this time. The water level is a few inches below the dam sill which is covered by decades of sediment.

The infamous Beaver Dam upstream of NN has a low elevation of 1344.8 but is not reliable and leaks-see [SEH Hydraulic Control Evaluation 7.2 Recommendation page 11](#) . Does Sawyer County believe that these beaver dams should control the Round /Little Round/Osprey Lake water level where hundreds of millions of tax property are?

Without having any boards in the dam now there is no chance whatsoever of having controlled sustained "minimum" water flow from Round Lake. If there was sufficient rain fall to raise the lake level to have water flow the water will all flow out of Round Lake fairly quickly down to the sill (silt covered) level of the Carlson Dam. There would be a relatively short time where water would flow out of Round Lake under current Sawyer County Management even assuming normal rain fall. This is because the beaver dam upstream of NN is not effective or reliable/leaks like SEH Engineering states.

Thus Sawyer County Land & Water Conservation Department responsible for the Carlson Dam has eliminated all storage capacity of water from Round Lake by not having any boards in the Dam. It is the opinion of this observer that this significantly reduces the chances of having sustained long term controlled minimum water flow from Round Lake and is not following the Wisconsin Public Trust Doctrine. It is also in non compliance with the 1941 PSC order.

It is my opinion that Sawyer County Land & Water Conservation Department with WI DNR acquiescence has compounded the low water conditions on Round Lake and is not using competent management to comply with any purported minimum flow requirements during this drought period.

Sawyer County apparently put a single board in the Carlson Dam sometime in March of 2007 to capture spring runoff. Unfortunately the [single board](#) that was placed in the dam at that time was not put flush with the sill and there was a several inch gap below the board consequently making the board ineffective during the peak time of the spring runoff. All of the water just flowed under the board! This is unacceptable "management" to this observer.

In addition Sawyer County Land & Water Conservation Department stated at public meeting on 7/6/07 that they have only put boards in dam 3 times in last 12 years and this is why we have been having very low water in late summer and fall over the last 12 years.

Recently Sawyer County removed this single board in Carlson Dam which in the mean time had been made more effective by beaver activity. Consequently removing the single board from the Carlson Dam recently by Sawyer County is more of a symbolic gesture and an apparent statement that the County appears to want lower water levels on Round Lake and does not want to store any water on Round Lake for later controlled release.

In addition it is our opinion that there were no boards in the dam all of last year thus allowing all of the water to “rapidly” flow out of Round Lake down to the sill level of the dam which is about a foot below the [1941 authorized Round Lake Level](#). It is my opinion Sawyer County is in effect controlling Round Lake to have a peak level of about 1344 feet or one foot below the authorized 1941 level and does not want to have sustained long term controlled minimum water flow from Round Lake. This Round Lake level will depend upon how effective the “beaver dam” is upstream of NN.

If Carlson Dam had been properly managed over the last year or so the Round Lake Water Level would be several inches higher now and we would be able to have more water flow to our downstream friends from Round Lake. Round Lake would be just like the Chippewa Flowage and Lake Hayward with almost normal levels now.

Does Sawyer County believe that the Carlson Dam channel will remain open (from beavers and debris) if the dam is abandoned?

Does Sawyer County believe that the natural currently obstructed southeast drainage channel from Little Round Lake is adequate to protect Round/Little Round Lakes from high water?

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Comments and questions welcomed!