

Round Lake Management Meeting Summary January 25, 2007

This is a summary of the meeting today and may be incomplete. We also accept that other people present may have different interpretations. We have done the best we can to be accurate.

The SEH (Short Elliott Hedrickson Inc.) engineering work is not complete. All field work/elevations have been done but so called Task 3 Work which includes the Carlson Dam evaluation, other overall Round Lake hydraulic controls, Little Round Lake east diversion channel and NN culvert height adjustment need to be run on their computer model program. They will do this and present the information at the next meeting in March on the 22nd or 29th. They have been paid for one more meeting with the Round Lake management group. There is no more money for anymore studies.

The main engineering data SEH presented today relevant to Round Lake is that the 100 year flood level that FEMA uses could be raised from about 1345.3 to 1346.98 feet above sea level. SEH has submitted these revised flood elevations to the county/state and I believe there is a procedure to have them ultimately approved and made official with FEMA possibly involving the DNR.

There was some minimal discussion about how many homeowners on the lake would be affected by this proposed change. It appeared to me that SEH stated that the maximum level recorded on Round Lake since the 1940's was 1346 and then they assumed a 6 inch rain in a few hours at that 1346 level and did computer modeling to see how high the water would go on Round Lake after this heavy rain. That is how they came up with 1346.98 as the 100 year flood level. I'm not sure if consideration was given to either the passive or active management system and how this would affect the 1% annual 100 year flood plain.

It seems that Sawyer County wants to eliminate the 1941 PSC and go to a so called passive system. This is what the Technical committee is recommending. A passive system means diversion canal & dam abandonment and removing/managing all downstream obstructions. Shirley Riedmann (Land & Water Conservation Committee) wants to get this process done and she believes that The RLPOA is a factor but not the main determinant of their action. She questioned if the RLPOA and their position against a passive management proposal are really what Round Lake owners want.

Sawyer County has already taken out the snowmobile trail berm downstream of NN and pulled all of the boards from Carlson Dam. They would like to eliminate the Placid diversion canal, lower the non compliant NN culverts and actively manage the beaver dams obstructing outflow. They also want to abandon the Carlson Dam and facilitate the Little Round Lake easterly drainage channel. They would like to see if the engineering study supported this position. They want to see if engineering analysis will support that the Carlson Dam does nothing and would make no difference if it was there or not. To me all of these actions may facilitate lowering the Round Lake water level.

Sawyer County has taken all of the boards out from the Carlson Dam and thus they must believe they do have some impact otherwise why bother.

I talked to Dale Olson, County Conservationist in the Land & Water Conservation Department after the meeting by phone. He agreed with me that the 1941 order is still in effect and that he was the one responsible for implementing that order. He said they do have minimal downstream water outflow requirements but could not tell me what they were or how they were measured. Because of the downstream water requirements that is why the dam boards are not there now. But I asked him why they were not there in the spring of 2006 and he said he did not predict the drought. There is nothing in writing that supports Sawyer County's new interpretation of the 1941 order.

I then asked him if boards were going to be put back in the Carlson Dam this spring and he said he would consider it but was not promising anything. He was going to error on the side of low water.

I recommended to him that regulating boards should be put in the Carlson Dam this coming spring (March) when there is excessive spring runoff everywhere. This could build the Round Lake water level up somewhat and provide for additional water for minimal outflow requirements later in the year. I'm not sure if the County will ever put any boards back in the Carlson Dam. They are presently not following their 1941 PSC responsibilities and have nothing in writing to support this new management action.

At the meeting today it was made clear that RLPOA wants to be protected both from high water and low water and is not in support of a so called "passive" management system.

Shirley Reidmann stated she wanted a solution favorable to a majority of people. She says we are still in a "modeling" phase and no final decisions have been made but she seemed to be clearly against an active management system. She is trying to claim that The RLPOA position reflects a minority viewpoint of all Sawyer County people and was even suggesting that we may not be reflecting the viewpoint of Round Lake owners. She stated that only a few dozen people come to our meetings and consequently we may not be relevant. RLPOA stated to her that we have a lot of consensus on this issue.

Mic Isham of LCO supports removing the Carlson Dam and Placid Diversion Canal and restoring wetland drainage.

The DNR said it did not care what was done as long as it satisfies existing WI code and law. To eliminate the Carlson Dam there would have to be a DNR permit for this. The NN culverts also need to be brought into compliance and are too high or a different permit needs to be obtained to reflect their current high level. If they are kept "high" easements from upstream owners if affected by 1/100th of a foot of higher water levels need to be obtained.

The next meeting is scheduled for 3/22 or 3/29/07 at The DNR Office in Hayward at 9AM

Tom Kintzinger
RLPOA Website Admin/Secretary

