Dublin Conservation Commission

Meeting Minutes
August 18, 2010

In Attendance: Jack Lewis, chair; Rusty Bastedo, Sterling Abram, Louisa Birch, Jerry Branch, John Morris, Tom Warren, Sue Yarger

The July 14 minutes were accepted. The meeting began at 7:00 p.m.

Dublin Lake (John Morris gave the report):

Weed Watch - July 20 – Amy Smagula contacted Karen regarding a report that had come to DES from a boater who thought he saw milfoil in Clark Cove. Karen determined that it was nitella, a noninvasive plant. July 23 - there was a weed watch (the third one this season, not counting July 20) from the boat landing with 4 volunteers. No invasives were found. One plant specimen was sent to Amy Smagula for identification; it was Quillwort, a noninvasive plant. There will be one more check of Cemetery Cove before the end of the season. Dublin Lake has gone approx. 3 years without any invasives sighted on weed watches or by the NHDES divers.

Lake Host Program – No aquatic plants have been found on boats entering or exiting so far this season. Bill Goodwin will be submitting an article to the Advocate on the program for the September issue.

Dublin Lake Water Testing – Aug. 5 Karen and Felicity did a “deep water plus 2 beaches” session. The results have just come back with phosphorus reports of “None Detected” at the deep spot and very low E.coli results at the 2 beaches.

Howe Reservoir Water Testing: Nancy Markuson plans to do another round of sampling this week.

Dublin Lake Preservation Committee – The group met on July 22, with these items brought forward:

Karen and Felicity met with K. Horgan, Dublin Health Officer. July 15 and discussed Dublin Lake items that relate to her job.

A shoreline spot just west of Barney Road was discussed. A new path has been opened up to the lake with bathers’ access to the water. Felicity will follow up to learn more about the situation.

On July 8, NH Dept. of Environmental Services collected 2 water samples at the boat landing. They had been contacted by a concerned citizen who spoke of a visible scum and concern about a possible cyanobacteria bloom. Anna Sullivan of DES took the samples and reported that cyanobacteria was present and that the level was well below any concern about danger. The two readings were 170 and 217 cells/ml. Specifications for closing public beaches are 4,000 cells/ml in VT; 20,000 – 40,000 cells/ml in CA and
70,000 cells/ml in MA. Sullivan also explained that cyanobacteria are natural components of water bodies. A similar problem was reported at the boat landing last July with the reading in that case far below any level of concern as well. Any future scum sighted should be reported to the cyanobacteria hotline at NHDES 603-419-9229.

The Shoreland Impact Permit from NHDES for the Skyleau site was discussed, and concern was expressed about any construction. The scope of the permit involves a well and septic system for the existing bath house, construction of house and parking area. The DLPC understands that the permit does not relieve the applicant from the obligation to obtain other local, state or federal permits that may be required, and it will appreciate being informed if further action takes place. Increased phosphorus and turbidity from a construction project could provide nutrients that enable unwanted plant and algal growth and impair water quality.

The group prepared a list of discussion topics for a visit from Doug Graham, District 04 Engineer of the NH Dept. of Transportation. This meeting took place on Aug. 11., at the intersection of Rte. 101 and Meryman Rd. with the following in attendance: Jill Lawler, John Morris, Felicity Pool, Tom Warren and Karen Bunch from DLPC; Brian Barden Town of Dublin Road Agent and Bill Raymond, Dublin Town Administrator. Water quality test results from Dublin Lake inlets affected by Route 101 were reviewed, and it was noted that of the 9 tested sites that Route 101 impacts, 4 of them had high or excessive phosphorus readings, and these sites were in the Meryman Road area. Also discussed were several high turbidity and high conductivity readings along Route 101. High conductivity may indicate pollution from road salting, and Graham explained the Winter Maintenance Snow Removal and Ice Control Policy of NHDOT, giving the group a handout and pointing out that the policy is available on the NHDOT website. Other topics included the cleanout schedule for the catch basins and whether a snow fence along the beach at Cemetery Cove might be installed again after several years of going without it. The water that sits in the bottom of the catch basins was discussed relative to the potential for E.coli levels to increase in those sumps in hot weather. Graham will contact NHDES about this. Graham plans to check with his crews about the catch basin cleanouts and to make them aware of the concerns about water quality for water exiting the culverts in the Meryman Rd. area so that they can give special attention to that area during the winter. He will get back to Jill Lawler about any findings on these topics as well as the snow fence issue.

Classification of Hwy 101:

There was a discussion of Hwy 101 and its classification relating to salt application. Rusty will draft a letter to determine the correct classification to ultimately determine if salt application can be restricted.

Asian Longhorned Beetle update:

Sue was invited to accompany members of the Dublin Garden Club to Worcester MA to view their planned replacement tree project from the ALB destruction. Worcester is fortunate to have a park with an area large enough to plant tree clusters which are not on the ALB’s highly favored meal list. Sue and Louisa discussed the Asian Longhorn Beetle and the devastation it causes. It was noted that 75 percent of beetle spread is with the transportation of firewood. Planting experiments are underway to determine
trees that the beetle does not like. It was suggested that Beech Hill might be an area that could be used for a planting experiment.

Galerucella Beetle effectiveness:

It’s difficult to tell this year, but it seems that in some areas (Monument Rd) there are better results than others (Mud Pond). Louisa, Karen, Shealyn (Sue’s granddaughter) and Sue dug up what they thought was a relatively small patch of Purple Loosestrife alongside 101/Cemetery, but it turned out to be larger than anticipated and they filled quite a few large garbage bags with the weed. It appears that the immediate areas where the beetles are released are showing progress, but the little guys seem to travel slowly and are not moving to the larger Purple Loosestrife beds.

Status of Galerucella Beetle distribution:

On Wednesday, July 28, Sue received our first shipment of 1000 beetles. Louisa and David Birch, Karen Bunch and Steven Stanley accompanied her on the beetle distribution. The beetles were released along Rte 137, between the boat launch and Goldmine Rd where we could see the beginnings of Purple Loosestrife blossoms. Sue and crew then released more on East Harrisville and the balance on Monument Rd by the culvert. They did not release along 101 by Webbers and might with the upcoming shipment. Another shipment of 1000 is expected next week (around the 25th).

Date for Japanese Knotweed spraying:

We do not have a confirmed date yet. It will be in September.

Howe Reservoir:

A ten foot wide strip across the entry meadow has been cut for planting wildflowers but for several reasons, they have not been planted (one being the dry conditions which would yield very poor results).

Rusty moved and Sue seconded the motion to cut the grass every year in Mid October. The motion was approved.

Jerry is investigating signs for the Park. It was suggested that a visit with the manager of Schilling Forest regarding signs would be worthwhile.

Jack raised the question of when we should have a formal opening of the park. If Jerry’s Rotary grant application for signs is approved, they have to be completed and installed by the end of May. With that as a guide, June might be a good time.

Mud Pond inspection:

July 25 was set to inspect the town land behind Life Safety on Hwy 137.

Beech Hill inspection:

An inspection of Beech Hill was scheduled for July 20.

Invasive Species Information:

Louisa proposed that we summarize our efforts on invasive species and share it with other groups that are doing similar work. One group suggested was the New England Wildflower Society in MA. Louisa will summarize our efforts on the subject in a letter that
will be sent to like minded groups in the hope that a large database of shared information will benefit us all.

Next Meeting:

Our Next meeting will be Wed., September 15 at 7:00 p.m. at Dublin Town Hall. Rusty will be the acting Secretary.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 PM, August 18, 2010.