

THIRTY LAKES WATERSHED DISTRICT

2001 ANNUAL REPORT

This annual report is made pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 103.D. It outlines the business matters, financial condition and activities of the Thirty Lakes Watershed District for the calendar year of 2001.

INTRODUCTION

The Board of Managers of the Thirty Lakes Watershed District hold regular meetings on the second and fourth Monday of each month. The change in meeting schedule to two meetings each month was approved by the Board of Managers December 17, 2001. All regular meetings are held at the new District office located at 17064 Commercial Park Road Brainerd, MN 56401, telephone number 218-828-0243, email: lakeswsd@brainerd.net. The Thirty Lakes Watershed District moved to the new location in June 2001. All meetings are open to the public and proper notice of special meetings is published in the prescribed manner.

The Annual Election of Officers for the Board of Managers was held during the regular June meeting. The Managers and Officers are as follows:

Richard Beeson, President
12195 Eagle View Trail
Nisswa, MN 56468
218-963-7828

Bruce Yund, Vice-President
9055 Breezy Point Drive
Breezy Point, MN 56472
218-562-4443

Ray Wilson, Treasurer
19343 Soder Road
Brainerd, MN 56401
218-833-8166

Martha Peisch, Secretary (Resigned 7/23/01)
5211 Ojibwa Road
Brainerd, MN 56401
218-963-4359

Richard Howard, Secretary (Sworn in 9/10/01)
24299 County Road 3
Merrifield, MN 56465
218-765-3146

Tom Ebnet, Manager
7401 Crabtree Lane
Nisswa, MN 56468
218-963-2318

Michelle Anderson, continued on as the regular part-time employee of the District, and was responsible for the clerical duties, billing, assisting with grant projects and general administration of the office. She attended all regular and special District meetings as the recording secretary.

Mary Lou Cody continued to do the accounting and financial record keeping. As a normal course of business, the accounting firm of Mathias Justin, C.P.A. of Pequot Lakes, completed an annual audit.

ADVISORY BOARD

The Thirty Lakes Watershed District Advisory Board, established in July of 1995, met with the Board of Managers April 9, 2001, June 11, 2001 and November 12, 2001. The Advisory Board members were called upon throughout the year when the Managers required their expertise.

The Board of Managers has been grateful to have the following individuals comprise the Advisory Board:

Stan Droogsma
12215 Eagle View Trail
Nisswa, MN 56468
(218) 963-3811

Robert F. Albrecht
22 Third Street N.W.
Crosby, MN 56441
218-546-6633

Martha Peisch
5211 Ojibwa Road
Brainerd, MN 56401
218-963-4359

Gilbert B. Dewes
8744 County Road 127 North
Nisswa, MN 56468
218-829-2058

Duane Blanck
6457 Clark Lake Road
Nisswa, MN 56468
218-963-7660

BACKGROUND

The Minnesota Water Resources Board created the Thirty Lakes Watershed District in 1971 for the purpose of preserving the balance of nature as related to the ecology of the lakes. In addition, the District would be a means of preventing or retarding the deterioration of water resources due to increased lakeshore development as well as conserving and making provident use of water and other natural resources.

This was the 30th watershed district to be established, hence the name “Thirty Lakes”. Actually there are some 55 lakes within the 70 square miles of the Watershed boundaries. The entire District lies within Crow Wing County and 60% of the total area is covered with surface water. Portions of the cities of Nisswa, Merrifield and Breezy Point are within the District, as well as portions of the townships of Lake Edward, Pelican, Mission and Unorganized. The largest lakes inside the District are Pelican Lake, Lake Edward, Lake Hubert and North Long Lake.

2001 PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES

The Board of Managers conducted Twenty (20) official meetings and three (3) workshops during 2001. Thirty Lakes Watershed District is a member of the Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts (MAWD) and was represented by Managers Bruce Yund and Tom Ebnet at the annual meeting. Manager Richard Howard and office staff, Michelle Anderson attended the Manager and Staff training session at the annual meeting. Ebnet attended the MAWD Legislative breakfast as well.

Tom Ebnet continued to serve as a District Representative to the MAWD State Board of Managers.

The District continues to work in cooperation with Crow Wing County Planning & Zoning, Crow Wing County Planning Commission, Crow Wing County Board of Adjustment, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Crow Wing County Board of Soil & Water District, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, Crow Wing County Solid Waste Agency, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

The District continued to monitor water quality in twenty-three lakes within the District. Streams and ditches were also checked periodically for water flow, nutrient loading and water quality. Lake levels of twenty-three representative lakes were monitored regularly. A routine “fly over” was conducted by A.W. Research, which produced photographs of environmental concern and possible illegal activities, which would later be ground-truthed by the Managers.

The District was awarded a grant of \$15,600.00 from BWSR to be matched by the District for updating the Overall Plan. Managers have until May 2003 to complete the “Revised” Overall Plan. The District will include individualized Lake Management and Implementation Plans for each lake as well as historical data.

The District received a second grant of \$20,500.00 from BWSR to also be matched by the District for the Development of an Automated Stormwater Planning System for the Thirty Lakes Watershed District. The purpose of the project is to determine current and future Stormwater loading to the fifty-five lakes in the District. The Stormwater loading will be based on current land use, current zoning and loading generated from projected zoning. The project will provide an interactive web page for resource, managers, agencies, contractors and homeowners and assist in planning for Stormwater management. Managers have until July 31, 2003 to complete this project.

Monitoring of the "Deacon's Lodge" golf course continued and there were two meetings of the Citizen's Advisory Committee. Water will continue to be tested and lake levels monitored for two more years, as outlined in the permit issued by the Watershed District.

Clow Stamping in Merrifield constructed a new on-site sewer system, which will address the "heavy metals" previously measured in the waste water. Clow also built a day care center as part of their complex.

"Ditch 13" which is a drainage system made up of streams, creeks and a man-made ditch, running from Lake Edward, connecting with drainage from Mollie Lake, and continuing south to North Long Lake was periodically checked by the District. When necessary, the Crow Wing County Sentence to Serve work crews and the Crow Wing County Highway Department assisted in breaking up the beaver dams or other debris restricting the water to keep the flow moving. As the level of Lake Edward has been relatively high, DNR was consulted with regard to the device installed in the culvert next to the Y-Store and its restriction of flow out of Lake Edward. The Watershed District received many requests from property owners for some type of action to be taken to lower the lake level. The Watershed District hosted a meeting on July 9, 2001 to address concerns about the high water level of Lake Edward.

Bay Pointe/Dan Marrin ~ The Watershed District has been, and continues to be, concerned only with the stormwater runoff of the proposed buildings and parking lots.

The Watershed District issued eleven stormwater permits in 2001 as well and renewed several other permits.

The Luciow/Anderson property on Highway #371 near Brainerd International Raceway was significantly cleared of trees before a "Cease and Desist" order could be given by Crow Wing County. The owner had failed to obtain permits from any of the regulatory agencies. No further development followed the clearing of the land.

The "Colonel's Brainerd International Raceway" presented plans for Trackside and Victory Circle "villas" as well as a 125 unit motel. However, both permits expired in 2001 with no new construction. Considerable effort was made to convince the developer that the property would be best served by a Central Sewer System.

Parts of the Colonel's Brainerd International Raceway had never been included in the Watershed District. The owner was approached and convinced that it would be to BIR's advantage if the entire property were a part of the District. The Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources approved the boundary adjustment on September 26, 2001.

Lodgetel, a three-story motel in Breezy Point, was completed. Heavy rains seriously challenged the stormwater run-off system. The system is in its final stage of completion.

Whiteb Birch, Inc. began only limited construction of the proposed 101 time-share town homes in Breezy Point. The District had been involved in the planning process and had shared its stormwater concerns with the designing engineer.

Representatives of the Watershed District attended many meetings of the "Nisswa Navigators", a group established to plan for development in the Nisswa area. Managers also attended meetings concerned with the plans for development of Highway 371 Corridor from Brainerd to Pequot Lakes, as well as the meetings of various lake associations and the Lakes and Rivers Association. The District is on record as of an 8/14/01 writing to the City of Nisswa that they support and require a 100-year rain event stormwater plan as is applicable to the 371 corridor and areas within the Thirty Lakes Watershed District.

Development of the Sewer Project continued. The Watershed District explored the possibility of connection to the Brainerd Municipal system as well as other independent treatment facilities. Consideration was given to expanding one small residential collection system on North Long Lake to serve a much greater area. Brainerd International Raceway was in the planning stage for a treatment system to serve their property, and the Watershed District gave thought to having that system expanded to include residential properties surrounding the racetrack.

The Sewer Project Assessment Maps were presented to the Board of County Commissioners, who indicated their support. Thirty Lakes Watershed District and Crow Wing County formed a Joint Powers Board on 8/13/01. Each entity has two representatives on the Joint Powers Board. The Thirty Lakes/Crow Wing County Joint Powers Board plans to have a Feasibility Study completed in 2002. Other goals of the Joint Powers Board are the development of an Implementation Team and a Public Relations program to further inform the public of project progress.

PROJECTIONS FOR 2002

Following several years of preparatory work, the Watershed District hopes to see the plans for establishment of a Sewer District become a reality. This will require the consent and cooperation of not only the Crow Wing County Commissioners, but also the County Staff.

The Watershed District Managers have had the goal of attaining a simplified permitting process for many years, and continue to do so. However none of the regulatory agencies have been ready to alter their permitting processes yet.

The District will maintain its pro-environmental health position in situations regarding setbacks from wetlands, solid waste situations, and enforcement of non-conforming sewer systems and development of large parcels for residential or commercial use.

