

## **F&WQ Meeting Minutes 12/12/2020**

### **(Meeting notes highlighted and italicized)**

#### **MEETING AGENDA: Fishery & Water Quality Committee plus interested Fish Stick Project volunteers**

*Attendees: Tim Sprink, Mike Heim, Roy Conrad, Jim Wienser, Jake Wincapaw, Ed Mullaney, David Schlitz, Ryan Siggelkow, Jeff Turriff, Steve VanGrinsven, Jim Zach-chair. Unable to attend: Joe Heilmann, Matt Steeno, Pete Davison, and Rick Hermus.*

This meeting will be virtual. Starting 9 am December 12, 2020 with possible continuation at a later date TBD. Jim Wienser will make virtual meeting arrangements.

*Meeting started at 9, ended around 11:30 am*

1) Review and discuss overall fish stick design plan.

*Fish stick permit approved for 5 years. 50 total — 46 on south end, 3 on north end, 1 mid-east shore. Over 300 hardwood trees available, if built all units would need 250 trees. Permit: Not required to build all units, but makes it possible. Trees were selected last fall from understory of Anthony Island, trees selected to be optimal size for fish sticks. From discussion with DNR staff, best design is 1 cross brace parallel to shore and placed under 4 trees perpendicular to shoreline with butt ends in 2-3 ft of water.*

2) COVID concerns discussion.

*Chair's advice: Discussed that as project coordinator and as a family physician, we are in the midst of a worsening pandemic. Most documentation of spread is in indoor environments, lesser risk outdoors but possible. Keeping distance important, aerosol particulates documented to spread well beyond 6 ft usual recommended zone of distancing from others. This is an outdoor project and tasks will allow people to work individually and at a distance from each other. Moisture condensation occurs when using masks outdoors in winter. Discussion followed, all were comfortable with perceived level of risk.*

3) Discuss insurance questions/limitations

LLAA general liability insurance policy — \$1000 medical injury or for property damage if volunteer workers and if LLAA members and volunteer would have to initiate

litigation (It's liability insurance)

*Discussion — understanding that general liability insurance is of very limited value to individual volunteers. D&O insurance protects LLAA Board members performing their responsibilities as board members for consequences of decisions made if someone were to initiate litigation against LLAA.*

WI Lakes Association — Directors and Officers liability insurance.

4) Update on cables/anchors  
(Joe Heilmann, unable to attend due to work commitment.)

Phone discussion Dec 8 — Materials ordered and arrived at his home. Anchors came with pre-attached 3-4' cables, some of which will need to have an additional cable added. Estimates the cables will be ready by end of January. He'll communicate with Greg Matzke/Katie Renschen regarding needed modifications. Total cost ~\$2300.

*Discussed.*

5) Ice roads will likely be necessary, are they feasible?

A south end loop?

*Most likely feasible option. Necessary to have 12-15" minimum ice depth, will require some ice monitoring of route. Discussed possible staging area at DNR boat landing but would require Town to get permit from DNR and do the plowing, Jim Z had discussed with Larry Sommer prior to meeting. Tim S offered his property as vehicle and equipment staging area with easy access to lake. He and Novak family are planning to create an ice road from Sprink's to west side of Anthony as soon as ice conditions permit this winter. Additional parking and access available at Brian Cundiff's property near Sprink's.*

To north end?

*Possible but very long distance and uncertain ice conditions. Discussion of alternatives of towing trees through water, transporting via storm trucks, or dragging over roads — each option has potential problems. Will need to assess ice/snow conditions as winter progresses.*

Monitoring of ice conditions.

*Novak family and Tim S will be checking ice to create ice road to the island. If they find conditions of 12-15" ice they will begin their ice road. We will then need to check conditions along a route from Anthony Island over to Mitchel's/Chmielewski area and complete loop back to Anthony past north side of DNR islands. Just this loop alone could potentially allow access to approximately 30 of the fish sticks. Bays can collect*

*deep snow, if conditions favorable to access, most of remaining fish sticks would be on the south side of DNR islands.*

Who will plow?

*Considering doing portions of ice road: Jim W, Tim S, Jake W?, others?*

Compensation?

*Consensus was fuel reimbursement would be appreciated, not essential.*

Steve VanGrinsven reports long ice-fishing history of variable ice thickness along east shore due to springs. I have also seen small open water areas in ice ~30' off NW shore in early winter.

6) Equipment — what do we have available, what do we need to acquire?

Tractors:

*Tim S and Roy C own tractors.*

*Steve VG has a friend with one.*

*Tim/Jeff T (their friends Randy Huben and Kirk Kennedy have one.*

4WD trucks:

*Jim W, Tim T, Jeff T, Jim Z*

Towing cable or chain chokers:

*(Best Practices Manual recommends 3/8" cable in an 8' length)*

*Roy C and Jim Z have towing chains.*

Skidding cones

*No one familiar with them, Manual recommends for winching situations.*

UTVs

*Pete D, Jake W and his uncle Robert Pfeiffer*

Winches, capstan winches/posts:

*Consensus attempting to move trees manually in a project of this size too laborious and impractical.*

12" concrete blocks

*Forgot to discuss. Will be useful fish stick anchors if we attempt deeper water fish sticks on north/east sites.*

Ice augers

*Jim Z, Steve VG, Tim S*

7) Does someone have, or know someone who has, a skid steer with tire chains and a hydraulic grapple?

Proposal based on initial discussion: This is a specialized task, expensive heavy equipment operated on ice, and potentially riskier work for volunteers— I think this should be contracted out and have an option that will need a budget discussion.

*There was complete agreement that a skid steer/hydraulic grapple is an essential component of this project. Manipulating trees is the most laborious aspect of this project, and has the greatest risk for volunteer injury/burnout and LLAA liability. Trees left lying on the ice would be a bad outcome that must be avoided.*

*Discussion regarding hiring Rick Gruel or trying to find someone local.*

*Roy C, Ryan S, and Jim W said they would contact local loggers they know prior to next F&WQ meeting.*

Rick Gruel (Gruel Landscaping in NW Wisconsin) has a winter business contracting to create fish stick projects. He has worked closely with DNR, and has completed hundreds of fish sticks in WI using his skid steer and other equipment that otherwise would be idle during the winter months. Summary of discussion: If we and Novak family create ice roads, clear assembly areas, skid trees to staging areas approximately 30' away from each site, and do the cabling, he'll assemble them for \$250 each. Example — 40 fish sticks for \$10,000.

*Jim Z had this discussion with Rick Gruel, he has orally agreed to be available. Need to follow up with him after next F&WQ meeting.*

8) How do we organize this— if/once we have sufficient ice?

Coordinating with the Novak family.

*Tim S is coordinating with Novak family, he will follow-up.*

*12/14 text from Tim:*

*Have followed up again with Novaks. They are for sure planning to do the logging as soon as ice is thick enough.*

*They have a local logger i know on line to do the cutting and skidding. They will have the logger skid OUR trees to a few designated landings on the ice close to the island, making them available for us to take from there.*

*Between Novaks and myself we will plan to keep the road open from my house to the west side of the island.*

Connecting and dragging trees from Anthony Island to staging areas near fish stick sites where skid steer operator can assemble trees into a fish stick.

*Once cut, trees need to be accessible for dragging, Novak loggers will move cut trees off the island to staging areas south of Anthony Island. Rick Gruel and Scott Toshner have advised that trees not be allowed to sit in slushy ice or deep snow as they can become frozen in-place. Best Practices Manual recommends dragging trees to near fish stick sites that have been plowed approximately 200' out from shore to allow for skid steer to assemble fish stick.*

Attaching cables and anchors.

*This can be done later after fish sticks assembled. Joe Heilmann will have materials available by end of January. (Heavy snow could complicate this task)*

Consecutive or alternate weekends till finished?

*We will have a narrow time window once ice conditions are favorable, and trees available —perhaps mid January through February? Consensus to work consecutive weekends, and during week for those able to do that, till project done. At cold temperatures (<10 degrees F) diesel tractors may not function well, cables can snap.*

Where exactly do the fish sticks go? Will GPS coordinates be workable for volunteers and/or flag sites?

*Steve VG and Jim Z will identify sites using flagging tape attached to onshore trees using map prepared by Greg Matzke once ice is safe.*

9) Consider a virtual “table-top” exercise run through.

*"Measure twice, cut once!"*

10) Develop revised budget and timeline

*Fish stick permit: \$300*

*Cable and anchoring materials: \$2300*

*Contracted fish stick assembly: \$250 per site, 40 = \$10,000 — or less if local skid steer operator identified that will do it for less.*

*Creating ice roads: fuel reimbursements unless this needs to be contracted out—\$2400*

*Reimbursements for heavy equipment use (trucks/tractors): not necessary*

*NOTE: 40 fish sticks is scaled back from the 50 fish sticks that we are approved for in our permit. Also recognizing that we may not be able to create fish sticks on northern sites and deeper in the bays due to ice and snow conditions.*

Current budget approved by LLAA (\$6500) was a “ballpark” proposal I made to LLAA in 2019, based upon DNR info that was from a project done by Greg Matzke in

2017, based upon all volunteer labor, no ice roads, manual assembly of fish sticks, and a few \$500 reimbursements to heavy equipment operators. To proceed we will need to make new budget recommendation to LLAA Board. Original \$10,000 grant was for fish habitat improvement from Potawatomi Community through Town of Lincoln to LLAA. If LLAA Board approves additional funds from LLAA reserves, we can potentially get this project done this winter. If not — several additional variables come into play— *if Novaks decide to proceed with their MFL cut, the fish stick opportunity may be lost or will need to be scaled back. Jim W and Jim Z will investigate if any additional funding available but at disadvantage due to short timeline and being outside of usual DNR grant funding cycles . If ice conditions do not work out this winter and Novaks do not start tree cutting, there might be opportunity to apply for a DNR grant. (Grant applications that are due in the fall of a year are for the following year's funding.) Such grants can be competitive, but might work if we have matching funds in hand, ready-to-go plans, donated trees, and volunteers.*

*12/15/2020 update: Jim Z discussed financial aspect with Steve Kircher, Forest Cty Land and Water Conservation. He will research if can find any additional sources of partial funding for this winter. Ryan S and Roy C have started discussion with 2 local loggers.*

**REQUEST OF LLAA BOARD: UP TO \$15000 TOTAL TO COMPLETE THIS PROJECT THIS WINTER**

11) Additional comments/concerns/ideas

12) Next meeting?

*Saturday, December 26, 2020. 9am.*

*Jim Wienser will arrange for virtual meeting link.*

*Draft meeting minutes prepared and sent out to F&WQ Committee, volunteers, and LLAA Board by Jim Zach, Dec 15, 2020  
Chair, LLAA Fishery & Water Quality Committee*

*Minutes approved by F&WQ Committee Dec 26, 2020*