

Jessie Lake Watershed Technical Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
November 28, 2007



J L W T A C

Upstairs conference room, DNR office Grand Rapids, MN

The Jessie Lake Watershed TAC met on Wednesday, November 28, 2007 at the DNR Regional Office in Grand Rapids, MN with the following present: Karen Evans(MPCA), Karl Koller (MN DNR), Noel Griese (Itasca SWCD), Harold Goetzman(Jessie Lake Watershed Assoc), Don Carlson(MPCA), Chantel Cook(USFS), Tom Schaub(MPCA), Tim Larson(MPCA), Jim Gustafson (Itasca SWCD), Rian Reed(MN DNR), Erika Herr(MN DNR), Nolan Baratono(MPCA), Don Dewey(Itasca County Environmental Services)

1. Agenda reviewed and approved.
2. Draft minutes of the October meeting reviewed and approved.
3. Nolan Baratono introduced the final paleolimnological report completed by NRRI staff. Summary: Most common diatoms present in modern sediments were in the lake prior to European settlement and indicate Jessie Lake was a mesotrophic to eutrophic lake prior to European settlement as it is today. However, during the past 50 years diatom shifts indicate increased nutrient loading to the lake (accelerated eutrophication), and sediment accumulation/deposition rates clearly show an increasing trend linked closely to anthropogenic (human) disturbance within the watershed.
4. Nolan Baratono introduced the basic requirements and format of a TMDL study. Questions focused on the load formula, how it is computed, the contractor role in TMDL work and implementation plans, and the listing status of a water body once a TMDL is completed.
5. Tim Larson, MPCA technical unit supervisor presented information specific to lake TMDL studies, based on his experience with the Lake Independence TMDL study. He discussed the Clean Water Act requirements and standards that are the basis of impairment studies, the various types of modeling that are typically used in studies, provided guidance or tips on thinking about implementation projects up front or early in the process, discussed climate change as a TMDL issue, discussed margin of safety needs in a TMDL and how much data is enough.
6. Don Dewey, Itasca Environmental Services joined the group at 12:30 pm. A short lunch break was taken and discussion resumed.
7. Implementation plans were discussed in some detail. Tim stated it was important to ask for the assistance to do a plan in the TMDL, along with some general projects like reducing shoreline or upland erosion, repairing/correcting failed septic systems, building rain gardens, grass buffers/swales or other stormwater management improvements and so forth. Implementation plans can be viewed on the MPCA websites.

8. Site specific standards as they apply to lakes was discussed in detail – what they are – and the various levels of data that must be provided or developed to prove that the condition is “truly” a natural issue.
9. Noel summarized a handout that listed all of the various studies and data that has been collected to date on Jessie Lake water quality. Most of the data pertains specifically to Jessie Lake with watershed data collected on tributaries and upper watershed lakes primarily during CWP years. Noel also described the water budget that needs further investigation, due to the large unaccounted for outflow volume (attributed to groundwater in the CWP). Noel presented several graphs and requested further assistance with chemistry and water quality trend analysis. Noel concluded by stating that it appeared there was adequate data to proceed with a TMDL study. There was discussion and comment regarding the contractor role in identifying any data gaps and discussion on types of models for TMDL data processing
10. Tim Larson concluded by suggesting to the group that as they move toward defining the contract needs to complete the TMDL that the TAC should think about what is known and what they’d like to have accomplished as it relates to TMDL needs, rather than trying to identify too many specifics (i.e. type of models and specific research). Tim shared a handout on TMDL required elements – the “EPA checklist.” Six master contractors are available via MPCA contract. The RFP can be short and direct – i.e. describe the work they would do to complete a TMDL for Jessie Lake, or more complex with more detail. Tim reviewed again the TMDL formula and it appears Jessie Lake will have zero waste-load allocation, meaning the primary load is non-point sources. Reasonable assurance will need to be discussed so it will be important to have a good mix of land managers and resource partners working through the TMDL – federal, DNR and county who will all work together on various BMP’s along with private landowners. A monitoring plan, implementation plan, and public participation component will all need to be included in the TMDL study.

Action Items:

1. Noel G and Don C will produce a draft scope of work for review by group.
2. Nolan B and Bruce Wilson will provide modeling guidance for TMDL contract proposal
3. Noel G will complete website postings of all Jessie Lake data
4. Noel G will contact Paul Schreiber MPCA and retrieve stream data from tributaries
5. Group members will return to next meeting with feedback relative to their roles, future commitment to TMDL completion, contract concerns

Next meeting date: Thursday February 28, 2008 10 am – Noon

Location: Upstairs conference room DNR offices Grand Rapids MN