

March 30th, 2017 – Prior Lake City Hall CAC (Citizens Advisory Committee)

Attending from SLA: Dan Field, Christian Morkeberg, and Jeff Will

After reviewing the CAC agenda for March 30th, I was excited to attend a CAC meeting filled with relevant Spring Lake initiatives. Top on that list was a review by Mary Headrick of WSB Company that led the successful seining of carp on Spring Lake late this past winter. The good news is that 2,575 carp were removed from Spring Lake which was 34,000lbs or 17 tons. Initial thoughts indicated this was roughly 50% of the carp population of Spring Lake, but WSB finished calculating the results and their new estimates is that 70% of the carp in the lake were removed. A remarkable feat and one accomplished by using electronic tags placed into ten carp. (Note: The SLA contributed \$500 towards this project in 2016. Each \$200 tag will run for three years and the PLSLWD will provide a \$25 reward for returned units.) By tracking these carp, it was determined that eight of them were schooled up in the NW corner of the lake. The only negative comment heard from the seining was that we could have captured 90% of the carp in the lake had the seiners not caught their nets on illegally placed logs weighted to the bottom of the lake for fishing structure. Please contact the Sheriff if you witness anyone creating illegal fishing structures in the lake!

Also of good news, we learned that Spring Lake had a carp concentration of 84.9Kg/Ha (kilograms per hectare). A healthy lake has less than 100 Kg/Ha, which means Spring is in good shape considering the new estimates put Spring Lake at 24.5Kg/Ha after the carp removal. In comparison, Upper Prior Lake has a 284Kg/Ha. Lower Prior Lake is not conducive to carp habitat and was a mere 9Kg/Ha.

Besides seining, carp barriers have been put in place to stop carp from their spawning areas. A specialized poly pipe barrier built specifically for Arctic Lake was put in place. Electrofishing results from years past showed this small lake with a creek access from Upper Prior Lake was a major spawning area. Without access, the females which can lay up to 2 million eggs each, will not have suitable spawning grounds. And more good news on barriers, through our electronic tracking of carp, it was found that our ten carp are frequenting the pond near highway 13 on the west side of Spring Lake. So a drum style barrier will be temporarily placed in this spawning area during the spawn which will further reduce the carp population on Spring.

Another exercise the Watershed District is conducting is on the movement from bodies of water. Of the 10 carp tagged on Spring and roughly double that amount on Prior, none of the fish have moved through the creek between the two lakes. However we have witnessed the migration each Spring, so the Watershed district will be placing a net above the outlet between Spring and Prior this year. They placed \$1 tags into 145 carp in Prior Lake to see if any of the carp are moving into Spring. As the carp pass under the net, they are counted.

The other initiative by the PLSLWD includes purchasing our own net. A grant was applied for with the state towards the purchase of a \$20k net. In the past, when we've located a school of carp, they have sometimes dispersed before the commercial seiners can arrive to net them. The commercial seiners need to dry out their nets before entering our lakes so that they don't transfer invasive species like zebra mussels. By having our own nets, we can eliminate that lost opportunity.

The above comments were taken as notes by Jeff Will. I apologize if I misrepresented any numbers, but they are accurate to the best of my knowledge and were the best estimates of the WSB at the time.