

Rogue River Watershed Board of Directors Meeting
December 8, 2021

Attendees:

Board of Directors: Jessies Schulte, Bryce Spencer, Gretchen Zuiderveen, Bill Otten

Other: Steve Steenwyk, Aiden Meyer, Karina Sieber, Michelle Cataratte, Jamie Vaughn, Martha Gabrielse, Nichol deMol, Dana Strauss

1. Nichol and Jamie gave update on various initiatives that TU will be pursuing for the next year:
 - The grant for planting trees runs for another year, so that will continue.
 - The grant for Stream Girls continues for another year.
 - Jamie is working with Kentwood Public Schools, partnering with Groundswell, in environmental education.
 - Jamie teaches after school classes there in fly tying, etc.
 - Jamie continues to meet with landowners and provides contacts and info to them for dealing with invasives species, run-off control, etc.
 - There is a new tree planting guide for landowners in the watershed and beyond.
 - The Stream Girls program is a week-long camp at Blanford Nature Center, Camp Newago, the Wittenbach/Wege Center, and the Girls Scouts Camp, for kids in grades 5-8. Jamie says some of these camps are starting to run without her as the adults have gained the knowledge and confidence to continue on their own.
 - Jake Lemon will still be working in the Watershed with stream monitoring and community science.
 - Jamie will not be applying for new grants to be used in the RRW.
 - She also said that the Green Team that worked in the Rogue Watershed will no longer be operational because projects have been completed, and no new ones are planned. The Plaster Creek Green Team will continue, and that TU will provide more wild and rural experiences for this team, due to the lack of recreational activities on Plaster Creek due to polluted waters.
 - Jamie thanked the RRWP for the recognition and gift certificate.
2. Dana Strauss said the Land Conservancy of West Michigan has submitted a 319 Grant to pay for an easement on Ranger Steve's property at Ody Brook Nature Preserve. She also said that Ranger Steve is selling and/or giving away his collections and equipment because his treatments for cancer are no long effective.
3. Jessie Schulte gave a brief overview of the grant proposal we just submitted, and shared some of the finished product with the group. Dana told us that our grant is one of nine submitted in the Grand Rapids area. last year, there were 19 grants submitted in the area. Dana said we should hear whether or not we're chosen by end of March or April.
4. Martha Gabrielse from Bills Lake said she is submitting a mini-grant for \$5,000.00, to provide signage and boat washing equipment at the launch site(s) on Bills Lake. She has requested that someone from RRWP do a presentation about the watershed to the Bills Lake group, and wants it to be streamed on Youtube. She wants the talk to highlight the importance of Bills Lake to the watershed, and why sound environmental practices are necessary.

She mentioned that the no till drill might be of interest to the muck farmers in the Grant area.

She mentioned that there is a VFW Camp for kids on Bills Lake, the only VFW Camp left in the country. (I think she said country) It's called Camp Trotter for Kids, and serves many kids who have never had a chance to spend a week on a lake. Tuition is \$200.00, and no kid i ever turned away for lack of funds.

Martha also said they're looking for a biologist to assess the health of the lake and detail some of the organisms living there.

Steve Steenwyk: He suggested to Martha that she consider a colleague from Calvin, Keith Grassman, a biology prof, who has a boat, and does summer projects at various places, including a yearly stint in the Adirondacks.

Michelle C: suggested a contest for signage designs for the Bills Lake elan water campaign. Martha said that a local technical school, N C Reesa has already been asked to come up with designs.

5. Other:

- Steve Steenwyk asked if anyone know about *Didymosphenia geminata* aka "rock snot", a nuisance algae, that has been detected in Michigan.
https://www.michigan.gov/invasives/0,5664,7-324-68002_71240_73848-370916--,00.html
Outside of a recent report on local media no one had heard of this being in the RRW. The media reported finding it in the Upper Manistee River.
6. Finances Bryce Spencer reported that there are 3 new memberships as a result of the 70 letters sent out to businesses in the watershed, and that we've received a gift of \$3,000.00, from an anonymous donor, via Kamminga and Roedvoets. The current balance is \$6,751.28.