



TIMBERLINES

W. J. Breckenridge Chapter
Izaak Walton League
March 2017

www.breckenridgeikes.org



COMING EVENTS

MARCH

- 14 Board of Directors Meeting 7 pm
- 28 Social/Educational Meeting 7:30 pm
Champlin Mill Pond Update
Todd Tuominen, Asst. Champlin City Engineer

APRIL

- 11 Board of Directors Meeting 7 pm
- 25 Social/Educational Meeting 7:30 pm

MAY

- 7 Annual Pancake Breakfast
- 9 Board of Directors Meeting 7 pm
- 23 Social/Educational Meeting 7:30 pm

Social/Educational Meeting:

Todd Tuominen:

Champlin Mill Pond Update

Tuesday, March 28, 2017

Todd Tuominen, Assistant Champlin City Engineer will explain plans to dredge the Mill Pond above the Dam on Elm Creek in Champlin to re-instate a clean water environment for fish and hopefully other wildlife. Funding is to come from the City of Champlin, LCCMR, State Legislative Bonding Bill and Elm Creek Watershed Authority. He may also touch on the building of a new bridge on Highway 169 crossing Elm Creek and the reconstruction of Highway 169 from Elm Creek to the Anoka/Champlin Bridge, including adjacent intersections.

The public is welcome to this social/educational meeting of the Izaak Walton League on Tuesday, March 28 at 7:30 p.m. at the Breckenridge Chapter House of the Izaak Walton League of America, 8816 West River Road, Brooklyn Park. For more information call 763-421-6781.

Belated best wishes

All of our very best wishes go out to Dave Steiskal, who underwent quadruple bypass surgery last month. He's the husband of our regular editor Marlys Carls-Steiskal, and he's finally recovering at home now. Marlys should be back editing next month's issue in spite of their missing their 2 month vacation traveling out West.

Barb Franklin, Guest Editor

Walter J. Breckenridge Chapter of the Izaak Walton League

February 7, 2017

Board of Directors Meeting Notes

IWLA Member Pledge: “We strive for the purity of water, the clarity of air, the wise stewardship of the land and its resources, to know the beauty and understanding of nature, and the value of wildlife, woodlands, and open space, to the preservation of this heritage, and to our sharing in it.”

February 7 th	Board of Directors Meeting
February 28 th	Social/Educational Meeting
March 14 th	Board of Directors Meeting
March 28 th	Social/Educational Meeting

Attendees: Steve Schaust, Patrice Lindgren, John Fraley, Jim Arnold, Karen Ostenso, Joe Klohs, Dick Brown, Tim Johnson, Wes Hendrickson, Barb Franklin

Events/IssuesDick/Larry/Jim

- Social/Education Meeting Speakers
- February – Nick Snavely, DNR, Asst. Area Wildlife Manager
- March – Todd Tuominen, Asst. Champlin City Engineer – Champlin Mill Pond Update
- April - TBD
- The Winter Gathering & Board of Directors Meeting was attended by Dick Brown and Larry Kennebeck.
There is still a push to get Chapters and churches connected to a solar energy resource. Discussions continued around how to strengthen chapter membership numbers. Reports were given by the Chapter Directors at Large, National Directors and Treasurer. There was discussion on reorganization of the State IWLA Board.
- There will be a Watershed Summit on March 11th, at Normandale Community College, from 8:30 am to 4:00 pm. Registration is required.
- Don Arnosti is inviting members to join him at Water Day at the Capitol on April 19th.
- A motion was made by Jim Arnold, to make a donation of \$150 to the Raptor Center on the behalf of our January speaker, Frank

Taylor, the motion was seconded. Motion passed.

Chapter House & Ground Joe/Jim/Steve

- 2017 – Projects
 - Boulevard Low voltage lighting
 - River walkway erosion
 - Create a Resource Center for cleaning supplies
 - Explore lighting options for front room

Newsletter Barb

- If you have any articles for the March Timberlines please send them to EditorBreckIWL@msn.com

Treasurer’s Report John

- The 2016 General Ledger was distributed to the Board for review and discussion.

Scholarships Jim

- The materials for the Chapter’s Scholarship Program have been sent out to all of the local schools.

Webmaster Barb

- The 2017-18 scholarship application has been posted to the Breckenridge Chapter website.

Rentals Tim

- There are 10 rentals in the month of January.

Membership Mary Ellen

- Welcome to our new members, Karen Jacobson, Susan deLaittre, Thomas Grue. There are just a few outstanding member renewals.



Update on Sand Dunes State Forest management plan

By Tim Johnson

Back in our August issue, *Timberlines* included an article about the Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG) listening sessions the Minnesota DNR was holding as required by the law that Rep. [Jim Newberger \(15B\)](#) (R) was able to get passed last year. Chapter members, Dick Brown, Tim Johnson & Larry Kennebeck attended several of the sessions. The sessions have been completed and as required, the DNR presented a revised draft proposal which made many changes to the management plan seeking to address the complaints of a group of nearby residents led by a recently retired forester.

Chris Smith, of the Minnesota Wildlife Society and a member of the SAG summarized saying, “the new draft plan calls for only 200 acres of restoration, resulting in over a 97% reduction in area to be restored (albeit it is somewhat more nuanced than that because this plan only covers the next 6 years whereas the original Operational Plan covered 50 years via a long-term vision for the forest). Looking at the same 6 year period the new plan still results in over 60% reduction in the number of acres slated for restoration.”

Even before seeing the draft proposal, Newberger wrote up a new bill, which he introduced in the House last week. This new bill greatly impedes conversion to oak savannah. It would mandate that prescribed

burns must receive approval of 90% of the residents within ¼ mile; a doctor’s note can stop a prescribed burn. Language on “recreational opportunities” will result in more forest fragmentation. It hijacks the current, pending Sand Dunes State Forest planning process, substituting in place a House Representative’s non-professional micro-management of one of our forests. Newberger’s original bill, an unfunded mandate, forced the DNR to spend over \$100,000 (DNR’s estimate) of our scarce taxpayer’s money to hold the SAG sessions. It seems he won’t be satisfied unless he gets everything he wants regardless of the negative environmental impact.

Please consider signing this petition:

<https://www.change.org/p/minnesota-department-of-natural-resources-protect-habitat>

For more detail and links to the proposed bills visit [Friends of Minnesota Scientific and Natural Areas website](#).

LITTLE PRAIRIE ON THE HOMESTEAD

Report on the “Experiment”
by Dick Brown

In 2014 we conceived the idea of resurrecting a small but reasonable simulation of the original natural area of most of Champlin before settlement. Many of the 100-200 year old Oaks on our property still remain from the original patchy Oak Savannas before Champlin Township was conceived. These are mostly on north slopes protected somewhat from historic prairie fires. The flat areas where our garden and sheep pastures were, no doubt were part of historic open prairie. This area is of a sandy loam texture with gravel further down. Ideal for construction sites, but hopefully not ever!

So far 87% of an acre has been restored to prairie, but next year another 17% of an acre will be “restored”. This part has been our

garden for many years. Total prairie area will be slightly over one acre. Would we do more? If we had more! From the first year's planting (Fall 2015) most species (over 30) did not show themselves in bloom. They are perennials and will probably bloom next year. The predominant species blooming the first year were Brown and Black Eyed Susan and a scattering of Anise Hyssops, Partridge Pea, Side Oats Gramma and native Asters. The rest we have hopes for the next 2 years. (So the experts say)



The garden area will be fallowed in the fall of 2016 and summer of 2017, sowed in late fall 2017 and with partial results in year 2018 if all goes well. Maintenance of our prairie may be difficult as prescribed fire (duplicating historic fires) every 2-4 years may be prohibited by City rules. Only selective mowing, hand pulling and spraying individual invasive plants may be the options to control. If we are allowed to burn it may be in sections intermittently per year to allow certain species survival that winter over in stems of some plants. The intent of all this is to aid Bees, Birds, Butterflies, Beetles and other pollinators in their struggle for survival due to habitat loss.

There are two ancient Indian Mounds in the midst of our prairie area, verified by Scott Anfinson of the MN. Historical Society. Perhaps their ancient lingering souls will appreciate the return of their burial surroundings similar to what it was when they were laid to rest. The last blooms that remained (week of Dec. 6) were ready themselves to return to the soil. The dwindling hue of the Susans resemble Leopold's description of October Tamarack's change to "smoky gold." Those interested in surveillance are welcome to stop by, check the results and let us know if we are on the right track.

TO DANCE O'ER PRAIRIE INDIAN MOUNDS

When our prairie blooms again,
We'll float above this sacred ground
We know approximately when;
Without a single telling sound,
I hope we'll still be there
When moon and stars do shine at night
To watch the blossoms flare.
It will instigate our soul's delight.
And when it's time for us to go,
With campfires burning all night long
When moon and stars are all aglow;
No human beings will hear our song;
We'll dance with Indian maids and braves
We'll leave no treads upon the snow,
O'er mounds of blooms and spirit graves.
We'll tread not on the blossom's glow.
And as we dance on through the night
Unlike those beneath the ground,
Our fire's smoke drifts t'ward the light,
We'll be sprinkled all around;
And friends we'll make at last
We are of Earth and Sky instead,
From history's cruel and dismal past
We'll join the spirits of the dead.

Dick Brown

Gazebo moving project

The Breckenridge Chapter is now the proud owner of a gazebo, donated to us by Peter and Louise Clyde. His mother's property adjoins the Ikes'. She died last year, and anxious to move it off her property in preparation for moving they offered it to us.

Tom Reid and one of his sons were able to lift and move it to the IWL site. Joe Klohs, Jim Arnold, John Fraley, Ron Merkel & Tom Gale provided "ballast" and diverted traffic around the short procession out the road and in our driveway.

The Clydes have talked about placing a plaque in the gazebo honoring Maurice and Juliana Nord, Peter's parents. Thanks for a nice place to visit for some time in the woods!



THOMPSON'S TAKE

1/04/2017

(By permission of the Owatonna Ikes and Nels Thompson, author)



My lady and I were out scouting country roads, Sunday (New Years Day). After an unsuccessful search in SW Dodge County for Snowy Owls, we decided to check out the Armstrong Unit (AU) in NE Steele

County for the Short-eared owls that had been seen and reported previously by yours truly and others. As we turned onto the gravel road expecting to see ... another gravel road ... Voila!! There were all kinds of cars! It looked like they were waiting for a parade. They were parked on both sides of the road, people standing by some, others just sitting inside. Then I noticed tripods, telescopes, cameras ... these were a bunch of those goofy birdwatchers similar to what we see at birding hot spots all over the country. It was pretty cool to see that there were other people that would rather get out on a Sunday afternoon and watch wildlife instead of the usual New Years Day football games. Besides ours, there were 6 cars. And the occupants were having fun because ... **there were Short-eared Owls** to see, watch, and photograph. By the time we left **we** had seen 5. One person reported seeing 8 the day before. He was very involved in birding and very knowledgeable. He referred to the area as a **communal roosting** site.

So why all the excitement? Well, it turns out Short-eared Owls (SEOW) are pretty hard to find. Many hard-core birders have never seen one. In my case, after probably 65 years of birding, I had only seen 2 or 3 prior to these at Armstrong. I had seen only 2 or 3 Snowy Owls (SNOW) prior to the "bonanza" that was discovered in SW Dodge County a few years ago. So this area, Steele/Dodge Counties, has developed a reputation for winter owls.

In addition to the SEOWs another birder with a flair for photography shot a picture of a Long-



eared Owl (LEOW) sitting on a post on the Armstrong Unit. Those are even tougher to find than SEOWs. SEOWs prefer a grassland/marshy habitat. They are one of the most cosmopolitan of owls, found all over the world. But, they hunt low in these areas so they are difficult to see even where their numbers are good. LEOWs prefer a conifer woodland to roost in but, like SEOWs, work low over nearby grasslands so, also hard to see. And, LEOWs are mostly nocturnal. I have yet to see a live LEOW though I have heard them. Therefore, I shall return to the AU many times in search of one to see! The trouble is there is not much for evergreens in that area and while they do use

other roosting sites I am afraid the one seen may move on, not to be seen again.

There are 7 owls one could see in Steele County. In order of size they are ...

Snowy Owl (SNOW) ... 23" tall and 4.0 pounds (a real heavy weight!)

Great-horned Owl (GHOW) ... 22" and 3.1 pounds

Barred Owl (BDOW) ... 21" and 1.6 pounds (the only one of these with dark eyes)

Short-eared Owl (SEOW) ... 15" and 12 ounces

Long-eared Owl (LEOW) ... 15" and 9 ounces (the "ears" don't weigh much. They are just feathers.)

Eastern Screech Owl (EASO) ... 8.5" and 6.0 oz.

Northern Saw-whet Owl (NSWO) ... 8.0" and 2.8 oz. (a dust-bunny with talons!)

The two photos were taken at the AU by good friend, birder, and photographer Leanne Alt. Guess which one is the Long-ear.

You may not give a hoot but it's bugging me that this goofy birder has not yet **seen** a live LEOW!

Well, alright, then ...NFT

Update from the Breckenridge IWLA Facilities Task Force

This committee resumed it's task on Thursday, March 2 to recommend and facilitate repairs and improvements to the buildings and grounds of the Breckenridge Chapter. Those present at the meeting were Joe Klohs, Judy Klohs, Diane Sannes, Patrice Lindgren, Barbara Franklin, Jennifer Leslie, Kathy Larson, and Jim Arnold.

The agenda for the meeting included identifying and prioritizing building and grounds needs and establishing subcommittees to address these needs.

The list of these needs includes the following:

1. Basement window removal and wall repair
2. River walkway repair/replace
3. Utilities assessment (environmentally effective lighting for driveway entrance and inside building)
4. Parking lot/driveway surface improvement
5. Perennial gardens at driveway entrance
6. Rain gardens existing and new
7. Bathroom repair/remodel and rental checklist/resource closet update
8. Evaluate and research technology needed to provide capabilities for business group rental (internet, TV, DVD, etc.)

The subcommittees that were formed to address the above needs welcome any additional members interested in being a part of the process to join whatever area you would like. The main job of these subcommittees is to identify and facilitate a process to address each of the needs. Contact Joe Klohs if you would like to be included.

W. J. Breckenridge Chapter
Izaak Walton League of America
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Brooklyn Park MN 55444



If you would like to submit an article for the Timberlines, please send it to
Marlys Carls-Steiskal at: EditorBreckIWL@msn.com
Deadline is the last day of each month.
“All articles in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect the position
of the Breckenridge Board of directors.”

If you can provide light
refreshments for our
Tuesday meetings, please contact
Barbara Franklin
763-657-1907
Or bbfrankli@gmail.com

March 28 - Linda Ericksson
April 25 - ?
May 23 - ?



If you would like to
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electronically, please
contact Barb Franklin at
763-657-1907