



Van Etten Lake Association (VELA)
JUNE GENERAL MEETING
June 3, 2023 – 10:00 AM, Robert Parks Library

MINUTES

- I. Call to Order – 10:03am. Six board members presents, Frank Rainey, Victoria Targosa were excused. Twenty-five stakeholders present.
 - Pledge
 - Introductions
- II. Approval of Minutes (September 2022 General Meeting) – Celeste Creger – unanimous approval
- III. BOD Presidents Comments – Rick Copland
 - **General Comments and Updates**
Rick thanked everyone for attending the meeting.
Rick asked members to verify their email address if they are not receiving VELA email correspondence. Contact Diane Banks for any email address updates.
 - **Volunteer Opportunities**
 - **Board Members (Elections at July 8 Annual Meeting)**
Five board member's terms are up this July. One vacant position due to the Vice President selling his home and no longer living in the area. Please consider becoming a board member.
 - **Committees**
VELA always needs volunteers. It is a great opportunity to meet new people and learn more about our beautiful lake.
- IV. Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) Presentation (Mark Henry– WAFB C-RAB co-chair)
 - RAB - Required by law, is local officials, residents that meet regularly with State and Federal Government (EPA, EGLE) and the Department of Defense (DOD) to discuss the environmental investigation and cleanup efforts on Air Force Base property and surrounding areas.
 - Need Our Water (NOW) is an activist group co-founded by Tony Spaniola and Cathy Wusterbarth. The group inter acts with the public, Senator Gary Peters and Congressman Dan Kildee. Tony has reported 3-foot PFA foam mounds along his shoreline which is across the lake from Ken Ratliff Park.
 - Mark is a U of M graduate; he started working as an Environmental Engineer for the State of Michigan at Wurtsmith AFB in 1993. He also worked for the Michigan DNR Fisheries Division and DEQ.
 - Bob Delaney is a Retired Site Manager with EGLE and now an Environmental Geologist. Bob first discovered PFAS on the base in 2010.
 - Mark and Bob have many years of Wurtsmith AFB environmental knowledge.
 - The firefighting foam the Air Force used at the base firefighting training Pad seeped into and contaminated Clark Marsh, Van Etten Lake. The firefighting foam used at other sites in the area has also contaminated nearby ground water and surface waters.
 - Clark Marsh has the highest recorded level of PFAS in literature history.
 - Local RAB/Health Department contamination maps and the DOD site/cleanup maps are not in total alignment. The local map has more contaminated sites (plumes) that need to be cleaned up. The DOD is in charge of the cleanup efforts, therefore follows the DOD map.
 - The Air Force has installed interceptor wells and granular activated carbon (GAC) units near Clark Marsh, and along a portion of F-41. These GAC units can pump 500 gallons of groundwater per minute. More of these units are needed to complete the cleanup process.

- Local RAB members want the DOD to investigate and remediate the plumes at the YMCA Camp and Pierce's Point. There is also a plume at the old township dump north of Van Etten Lake.
- Local RAB members, State of Michigan is pressuring the DOD to investigate the area between Van Etten Lake and Lake Huron for PFAS. AuSable township residential wells have also tested positive with high levels of PFAS.
- Rick thanked Mark Henry for a great and informative presentation.
- Mark stated the Van Etten Lake cleanup process should be complete by 2028.

Questions for Mark

Is the fire department still using foam? I do not know

Is Oscoda a brownfield location? No

Is the fish in the area safe to eat? Follow the Michigan eat safe fish guide

Is it safe to swim in Van Etten Lake? Yes, do not swim near the foam. Avoid foam areas.

Comments from Mark

Come to Quarterly RAB meeting, usually held on Wednesday evenings.

Join the NOW group, attend the NOW meetings.

Write letters to local, state representatives.

Participate in the PFAS Blood testing program. This program test for 197 different chemicals.

- Rick thanked Mark Henry for a great and informative presentation.

V. Reports

• Treasurer - Leonard Brockhahn

○ Current Financials

Savings \$18,665.81

Checking \$11,055.12

Total \$29,720.93

- **Endowment Fund** - Total assets \$34,457.38 Spendable amount \$10,459.38. Leonard and Rick plan to have discussion with the Endowment Fund representative to answers questions concerning this type of fund.

• Weed Committee – Leonard Brockhahn

- Committee recently met with Paul from Lake Pro. New Consultant named Mark.
- The week of June 5th, Lake Pro is scheduled to survey and Clarke Company to treat the north cove.
- Lake Pro is scheduled to survey the entire lake mid-June
- Survey to treatment process takes 2 weeks. Signs will be posted the day before treatment.
- SAD has a yearly budget cap of \$70,000. The cost of chemicals has increased.

• Lake Monitor – Dan Stock

- 2022 average weekly clarity measurements were 4.9 ft which is down from an average of 6.5 ft over the past 10 years. 2021 average was 6.6 ft. The average mid-lake water temperature was 71.4 degrees F.
- Ice-out was April 13, 2022
- On April 24, 2022 the spring overturn phosphorus concentration sample was taken, as reported by the state laboratory the result was 32.0 parts per billion (ppb). 2021 concentration was 20.5 ppb. The 10-year average is 24.4 ppb. The spring result is thought to be a good estimated average.
- The September 8, 2022 reported summer concentration sample was 34.0 ppb. 2021 concentration was 63.0 ppb. The 10-year average is 40.0 ppb.
- Five chlorophyll samples were taken in 2022. The results were a median of 15.0 ppb with a maximum of 21.0 ppb and a minimum of 7.0 ppb. The 2021 median was 6.5 ppb.
- Ice-out was April 6, 2023. Spring phosphorus sample was taken April 14, 2023. Monthly chlorophyll samples will be taken through September. The results will be available in the fall.
- **Sampling help is needed for the July 15- August 15 period. Please contact Dan Stock, Phone 989-739-4239 or email: dstock4239@charter.net**

- Membership – Diane Banks
 - 305 members. Diane mailed out forms earlier this year. Many members have paid their dues.
 - Diane would like to have social gathering nights possibly at Ratliff Park, get to know lake the community.
- Picnic Committee – Diane Banks
 - Helen and Bonnie volunteered to help with the picnic. Diane would like more volunteers, especially on the day of the picnic.

VI. VanEtten Lake Dam update – Greg Cole (Dam Operator)

- Controlling the lake level is not an exact science, not for fishing or dock purposes.
- Greg decreases the lake level for spring snow melt, rain and Lamprey treatments.
- The dam's yearly maintenances included tree removal and more fencing around the dam.
- The dam's three-year maintenance/inspection will be done in 2024,
- Greg stated he thinks the Ken Ratliff boat dock should be longer for safety reasons.

VII. Comment/Question Period

- PRVEL member Carol Plunkey would like volunteers to help with the macro invertebrate sampling on June 5, 2023 at 9am. at the Buhl Dam site. Carole also mentioned that 300 trees were planted along the creek near Barlow Road north of Kings Corner Road. Volunteers are always welcome to join PRVEL
- Oscoda Township Supervisor Bill Palmer thanked VELA for the donation towards the wash station at Ken Ratliff Park. Bill also thanked VELA for the donation towards the handicap access ramp at Ken Ratliff Park. Bill stated that Rowe Engineering has donated their services to this project. The township was unable to secure any grant money, so Bill hopes to use American Rescue Fund money to fund the rest of the handicap access ramp project. He hopes the project could start this fall and finish in the Spring of 2024.

Meeting adjourned at 11:47

Respectfully submitted by Celeste Creger, Secretary

Upcoming Meetings:

Annual Meeting: Saturday, July 8, 2023 – 10:00am,
Robert Parks Library

General Meeting: Saturday, September 9, 2023 –
10:00am, Robert Parks Library

Annual Picnic (Mark your Calendars):

Saturday, August 5, 2023 – 6:00pm

Ken Ratliff Memorial Park – Warrior Pavilion

