

**Lake of the Ozarks Watershed Alliance (LOWA)
Public Meeting Minutes
Escollo Room, The Lodge of 4 Seasons
April 19, 2010**

The LOWA public meeting was called to order at 6:30 by LOWA Executive Director, Donna Swall, welcoming everyone to the meeting. Introductions were made round robin.

Committee Reports

Recycling Gaye Belloir, Chair, announced another Household Hazardous Waste Reclamation Day in August.

Education Outreach Caroline Toole spoke for Cathy Jackson, LOWA's new Education Outreach Chair. LOWA is gearing up for several classroom presentations about healthy watersheds and water quality monitoring, as well as a recycling field trip coming up around Earth Day and the end of the school year. LOWA is also preparing for having booths at various festivals and events and will need volunteers to help out at LOWA booths and tables.'

Water Quality Greg Stoner, Chair, announced the 4th year of the DNR Cove Study for LOZ. This year they will be sampling the entire Gravois Arm and the Osage Arm from Hurricane Deck Bridge, around the 34 mile marker, to Rainy Creek, around the 60 mile marker. We still need a team at the upper end of the Gravois Arm – call Greg at the MDC office. We'll sample the Gravois one month and the Osage the next month. June 1 is the first sampling date. Training will be May 4 at the Camdenton MDC office on Thunder Road.

Lake Safety Carroll, Chair and liaison with the Lake of the Ozark Water Safety Council, managers of the Designated Captain Program and the Think Before You Sink campaign, said WSC will be visiting restaurants and bars throughout the lake area, introducing and promoting the Designated Captain Program which discourages drinking while driving a boat. The WSC will be updating the brochure that shows where all the establishments are that recognize the Designated Captain Program. The Coast Guard is responsible for putting up the mile marker signs on the lake. These are for safety and for being able to more accurately give a location if you see something happening and you call in to report it. These signs are disappearing, so if you see someone taking one or if you see that one has disappeared, please report it to AmerenUE or to the Coast Guard.

Recycling Gaye Belloir, Chair, announced (again) that LOWA is trying to put together another Household Hazardous Waste Reclamation Day because the last one was such a success and because there is a great need for it at the lake. This one will be scheduled for August to try to service the weekenders at the Lake.

Wastewater Jim Rogers, Chair, said that the biggest challenge the lake faces is the issue of wastewater treatment. The quality of the lake is good. Last summer's bru-ha-ha was more political than health-related and brought a lot of negative publicity to LOZ. At present, the water quality at LOZ is good, but over the next 10 years lots of baby boomers are going to retire to the lake and occupy houses full time that have septic systems barely adequate for weekenders. Some of the homes have grandfathered septic systems – what to do about these systems and what to do about the systems that are not adequately treating wastes? A lake wide sewer authority is needed. Many studies have indicated that something needs to be done about the septic along the lake's shore. An engineering

firm, HNTB, was the most recent to be commissioned to report on wastewater treatment at LOZ, and that was in the late 1990's. That study even proposed a hub and spoke system with 25 major treatment plants (hubs) that smaller collecting systems could hook into (spokes) and placed the 25 plants. To say a 20-year project doesn't need to be looked at now is not responsible. Finding the \$\$ is very difficult. Finding a legal entity is necessary. About 25 WWTPs (wastewater treatment plants) need to be built – the hubs – and then the communities will be the spokes to hook to the hubs. We need to be able to take care of people without hook up money. There are many facets to the issue. The first step, probably, is to make a legal entity for a lake-wide sewer authority. E coli is an indicator bacteria – has anyone tested to see whether it's human or animal origins? Not that we know of. We need to get the ball rolling now because this is a long-term effort. DNR will be tightening regulations for septic. And, they will require testing once per week for all permitted facilities. This spring, DNR is just retesting ones that had problems last October. DNR has been doing sweeps for many years and they do keep a regular eye on the permitted facilities.

Presentations

A Watershed Management Plan for the Lake of the Ozarks Caroline Toole, LOWA Recording Secretary and MO Clean Water AmeriCorps Program member partner with LOWA. Caroline presented the major features of LOWA's Lake of the Ozarks Watershed Management Plan, with focus area of Lick Branch and Buck Creek, 12-digit HUCs. The PowerPoint slides used in the presentation and the Watershed Management Plan can be found on LOWA's website at www.sosLOWA.org. Questions can be directed to Caroline at ckingtoole@yahoo.com or through the LOWA website.

Low Impact Landscaping DeDe Vest, NRCS (National Resources Conservation Service), working through the Soil and Water Conservation Districts. DeDe is an Urban Conservation Resource Manager and is affiliated with Springfield's Show-Me Yards and Neighborhoods (SMYN) program. The end goal of Low Impact Landscaping is to have a beautiful yard, and it's all about the water. When the landscape is wooded, rain water absorbs into the soil (infiltration) even though storms bring varied amounts of water. When it rains, and when an area has more impervious surfaces (rain water cannot go through it so rain water runs off), the area gets more runoff and less infiltration. We want to do as much as we can to let the rain soak into the ground.

With an end goal of a beautiful yard, we are also looking for: a benefit to the environment, use of native plants, on-going management, conserving water, promoting good air quality and not being a source of air pollution, and promoting good water quality. SMNY promotes rain gardens because rain gardens reduce runoff and let the rain water soak into the ground. Rain gardens do not hold water and they can be very beautiful. Factors to take into consideration when planning a rain garden are location, soil amendments, size, depth, and plant choices – native plants grow best, have deep roots, and are already adapted to this climate and so are hardy. Rain gardens are a storm water management mechanism and they do need maintenance, especially right after planting and for the next few years until well established.

Permeable surfaces (do let rain water soak through to the soil underneath) are also low impact landscaping and are good for patios, walkways, parking lots, and driveways, as well as other surfaces not subject to a lot of regular or heavy vehicular traffic.

One very low maintenance turf grass is Buffalo Grass which is native, only grows to 5-8 inches, only needs mowing once or twice a season, if at all, and is drought hardy. More than 60% of lawn problems are poor watering and mowing related. If people will mow when temperatures are lowest, less moisture will be lost. And, don't cut too short; set your mower to 3 inches and only mow 1/3 of the blade (so don't let the grass get too long between mowings). Longer grass will shade the surface of the soil so you get less weeds. Use a sharp blade because a clean cut will produce less disease, the grass recovers faster, and there is less moisture loss.

Water lawns infrequently, but deeply. Deep watering promotes deep root growth. If in doubt, don't water. Always do a soil test before fertilizing. Mulching helps plantings maintain moisture and makes plantings look nicer. Composting and using the compost boosts plant health and makes for less stuff going to the landfill. Using native plants is advantageous because they are more deeply rooted, need less water, and helps rain seep into the soil better. GrowNative is an organization that promotes using native plants and provides information and places where one can obtain native plants and/or seeds.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45.

These minutes respectfully submitted by C. King Toole, LOWA Recording Secretary.