

Update on Lake Restoration Initiative – May 2009

Good news! Both Coloma and Watervliet Townships have recognized the signatures collected over the summer. Although they likely will not officially verify them, they are impressed with the numbers and recognize they send a strong message to the township boards.

As you were informed earlier, the township boards are now in control of everything. They have agreed to move forward but not necessarily going with the language on the petition. That means they will decide what lake interventions will happen, what money will be needed and how that assessment is distributed.

Both townships have appointed a committee of two board members and one citizen from the LRI committee to look into what needs to happen next. From Coloma, the committee will be Jim Fulton and Brian Duffield, both Coloma Township Board Members and Rick Rasmussen, a Coloma lakefront property owner. Joe Stepich and Bob Wallace, both Watervliet Township Board Members and Mary Spessard, will represent Watervliet.

This committee along with both township supervisors met on April 29th to identify our goals. We will be seeking proposals on vegetation studies and dredging assessment studies. We will study the possibility of a sediment basin and wetland for the Branch and Derby drain.

Recognizing the additional studies need to take place prior to any decisions on lake projects, this committee will review options and return to the boards with recommendations and costs. Townships will then explore the funding necessary to complete the studies required to establish a SAD.

The results from the additional studies will give us direction on what are the best methods for an entire lake weed control program. The committee will also study the viability and potential benefits of spot dredging. After the “best methods” are determined, bids will be required from vendors to determine costs. The townships will then have hard data to determine the assessment costs and can move forward with public hearings.

We will keep interested parties informed and plan to have several meetings during the summer for interested parties.

As you can see, this process is going to take some time. Therefore, do not expect the lake to have any special treatments this summer. If you have been doing weed control, you may want to continue for the 2009 summer.

We will be meeting again May 12th to review studies and costs.

Rick Rasmussen, Coloma LRI

Mary Spessard, Watervliet LRI