

- President: Bill Gamble
- Vice President: Terry Gorlick
- Secretary: Lisa Behrens
- Treasurer: Dave Malo
- Member at Large: Ben Tew
- Member at Large: David Haggard
- Member at Large: Jodi Riddell



PO Box 520931  
Big Lake, AK 99652-0931

**General Membership Meeting – May 9, 2023, 7:00 PM  
Big Lake Lions Recreation Center**

**MINUTES – DRAFT**

**1.) Call to Order/ Determination of Quorum**

By: Bill Gamble

Quorum: Yes

Time: (minutes produced from recording – no time-stamp available)

**2.) Pledge of Allegiance**

**3.) Agenda Approval**

Motion: Jodi Riddell      Second: Ben Tew

**4.) Previous Meeting Minutes Approval – April 11, 2023**

Motion: Terry Gorlick      Second: Dave Haggard      Copy signed: Bill Gamble

**5.) Presentation(s)**

1. Jill Jablonski: Habitat Programs Director, Tyonek Tribal Conservation – Elodea impact information, and Task Force update.

Elodea is an invasive plant first identified in Big Lake, 2019. It can crowd out and eliminate native plant species, negatively affects salmon and other fish habitats, hamper lake navigation (boats as well as float planes), and adversely affect property values. Treatment with herbicides was attempted in the past. Elodea does not die out in winter.

Elodea Task Force is comprised of over 40 individuals, and partner organizations. Task force works closely with DNR.

Mats of elodea have been identified at various locations in Big Lake. Task force will be mapping the locations of elodea growth. Local volunteers with boats are encouraged to assist with this effort.

Elodea spreads by clinging to boat propellers, airplane floats, etc. Boating travel through areas with visible elodea is not advised. Small fragments of plants clinging to boats and planes will develop into new plants and spread. Float planes can transfer elodea to other previously uncontaminated waters. It is recommended to cycle flight controls after takeoff to clear plant fragments and avoid transfer.

2. Daniel Coleman: Invasive Plant Coordinator, DNR Division of Agriculture – AK Plant Materials Center

Additional information (photos and flyers) for identifying elodea, in comparison to similar native plants. Elodea likely came from water out of pet fish tanks encountering bodies of fresh water. Plants break easily and spread from even small pieces. Survives in water up to 30' deep and multiplies rapidly in shallower/warmer water environments. Elodea grows up to, but does not reach above, the surface of the water. Slow-moving current with warm water is the ideal environment.

## **Presentations – cont'd**

### Daniel Coleman

The only successful eradication efforts to this point have been via use of aquatic herbicides. These substances have been developed to be safe for use, without damaging the freshwater environment, humans, or animals; therefore, they are expensive to use. 90-day threshold concentration of the herbicide is required for effective eradication. Elodea Task Force has effectively treated around 20 lakes in Alaska. Example: Lake Alexander elodea burden reduced from 700 acres to 5 acres at last survey. Two types of herbicides intended for use in Big Lake.

Elodea was first identified at the far west end of Big Lake near Mud Lake channel in 2019 and has moved east along the north shore. Likely source of the infestation was floatplane traffic between Big Lake and Lake Hood in Anchorage. Initial herbicide treatment was successful. Note: treatment kills the plant, but not the roots, so re-treatment is needed at intervals. Successful eradication in Big Lake is possible, but vigilance is required to identify growth recurrence and notify of need for re-treatment.

### Nicole Simpson: Invasive water mussel update

So far, none identified in Big Lake, but there is a need to monitor for growth. Asking for 10 volunteers with docks on Big Lake and other lakes in the area to place monitoring tubes.

## **6.) Treasurer's Report (Dave Malo)**

Checking: \$26,766.43      Savings: \$1,943.30

## **7.) Membership Report (Terry Gorlick)**

50 paid members for 2023, updated list to come

## **8.) Reports**

### 1. Legislative (State House & Senate)

#### Senator Shower:

Update on final 7 days of the legislative session. Not sure if budget will be complete. Session may be extended. Working with Governor to make sure priority projects are completed. Questions? None.

#### Representative McCabe:

Lynn McCabe provided greeting from Rep. McCabe, and brief update on bills in progress.

### 2. Assembly (District 5)

Member Tew: Not available – in attendance at MSB Budget meeting

### 3. Fire Service (West Lakes Fire Department)

#### Chief Hightower:

Wildfire preparedness day was a great success. This was 3<sup>rd</sup> year – each year attendance increases. 500-700 in attendance this year – goal for next year is 1000. Information on “How to keep the ‘ignition zone’ around homes clear.” Brush chipping day is coming up soon. Wildfire danger is increasing as things are drying out this time of year. Call for on-call fire responders – West Lakes Fire Department needs members.

Kathy Kramer: Information about how to utilize the Burn Permit information number. Reminder, this is a recording with information about burn safety information.

## **Reports – cont'd**

4. Road Service (all boards reporting)

Bill Haller:

Attended RSA 21 meeting previous night. Update on current projects for 2023. Ride-around scheduled for June 17, to view impassible roads in the area. \$130,000 budgeted for calcium chloride this year. Hoping it will be applied ASAP before roads completely dry out.

Darren Zimmerman: Comment regarding RSA budget and road project priority list.

Pat Daniels: Will make public info available on the Big Lake RSA forum page. Meeting schedule is adjusted to 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of each month, to facilitate information dissemination to BLCC during the following night's meeting.

Audience question: Re: study to determine effectiveness of calcium chloride dust treatment.

Bill Haller: No results produced.

Dan Mayfield: responding to question about borough dust-control budget, it was eliminated in 2008 and changed to a formula that distributed funds equally among the 16 RSA boards.

5. Valley Recycling (no one available)

## **9.) Correspondence**

1. Parks Highway Alternative Corridor (Wasilla Bypass) project – Open house May 25
2. Enstar – price and fee changes

## **10.) Unfinished Business**

1. Committes:
  - ByLaws – due for update. Sign-up sheet on back table.
  - Grants – volunteers needed
  - Capital Improvements – need community input
3. Gravel ordinance – no comments, legislation is currently on hold
4. Lake setback ordinance – still being worked on
5. Lake management plans – Big Lake plan on hold for Mat Su Borough Comprehensive Plan completion
6. Grant Committee Volunteers needed – nearly \$30,000 available for community grants. Only committee member so far is Terry Gorlick. More volunteers needed to help Terry. Update on status provided by Terry.
7. RSA 21 Road Improvement Project (RIP) list & Additional Maintenance list  
General information covered during RSA report and discussion.  
Terry Gorlick: update on potential CIP funds and Rural CAP grant

## **11.) New Business (none)**

## **12.) Persons to be Heard (3 Minute Maximum time per person)**

Big Lake Library Representative: Report on Big Lake library summer reading program – starts June 7. Also, information on grants available to improve access to the library. This year the library signed up for participation in the Pick-Click-Give program – please donate.

Lois Parker: Big Lake beautification project update. Will apply for BLCC grant. Big Lake roundabout does not yet look like the drawings – need a nice Big Lake sign there.

**Persons to be Heard, cont'd**

Jim Faiks: Call for interest or comment re: Big Lake Chamber of Commerce reinstatement. Update on the evolution of the Big Lake community. Questions? Bill Gamble: Can individuals be members of the chamber, as well as businesses? (Jim: Yes)

Margaret Billinger: Will provide Big Lake Chamber of Commerce sign-up sheet at next BLCC General Membership meeting. Working on process to reinstate the organization.

**13.)Announcements**

Bill Haller: Looking for volunteers for community cleanup days next week. Bags available for pickup at Post Office coffee shop. Please place filled bags along edge of main roads vs on side roads or bike path, for pickup. June 17<sup>th</sup> is Big Lake Mud Volleyball tournament. Lions Club Indoor Summer Fun Club: Miniature golf, Pickleball, Bocce, Inflatable obstacle course, Cornhole, etc.

Dan Mayfield: Correction to previous comment – Calcium Chloride budget and formula changes were finalized in 2017.

**14.)Board Member Closing Comments**

Bill Gamble: It’s so nice to be back from Juneau. To agree with Ben Tew’s point about Big Lake ice road maintenance, letting the council know that Representative McCabe is working to include Big Lake in the State of Alaska Ice Road Maintenance program. There should be funding for this in the future.

Terry Gorlick: Will put in for grant for BLCC to have projector and computer for meeting presentations.

Dave Malo: Hope people will volunteer for grant committee

Dave Haggard: (recording not clear enough to tell – sorry Dave)

Ben Tew: Capital projects – we need community input. Will initiate call for community input via social media, and will involve the Big Lake Chamber of Commerce when it is up and running again. Will help with clean-up around the roundabout. We need to find serious funding for other projects like foot bridges to the school, and funding to support the volunteers who spend their own time and money to maintain the Big Lake ice roads.

Jodi Riddell: No comment

**15.)Adjournment**

Motion: Jodi Riddell      Second: Ben Tew      Time: (no time stamp on recording)

President Signature – Approved minutes \_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature) (Date)

(Note: There may be a quorum of RSA / FSA members in attendance at the meeting)