

Response to [County Minutes of Round Lake Management Meeting April 19, 2007](#)

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I don't recall any mention at the Round Lake meeting on April 19, 2007 that Mr. Olson will convene a sub-group of the task force to prepare material for presentation. No disclosure was made at the Task Force Meeting that “select” members of the workgroup would preview the public presentation material. RLPOA so far has not been asked to participate in either one of these Sawyer County “specially screened” groups. This reinforces some opinions that RLPOA is not a real “partner” as we are erroneously called in the County authored [Round Lake Chain Management Plan](#).

In paragraph 2 of the [Sawyer County Minutes](#) of the Round Lake Management Meeting on April 19, 2007 it is stated: “Lenz noted that if the beaver dams are not removed then they will be the controlling factor in the water system and construction of a new structure or weir would not substantially increase flows during high water scenarios.”

This above statement is not accurate and seriously misleading. Now maybe this is just an honest misunderstanding by Jan Eck the Land & Water Conservation Secretary but Shirley Riedmann did seem to be trying to make this unsupported case at the Round Lake meeting on April 19, 2007. The County is trying to suggest that since the LCO Tribe may not support removal of the beaver dam above Highway NN that a new wider weir or dam will not be effective. A critical objective analysis of the SEH report does not support this County hypothesis.

The opposite is true. The Beaver Dam upstream of NN impacts low water control with its current elevation at 1344.80 feet. A lot of people but not all believe that 1345.0 (top of 1941 PSC Order) Round Lake surface elevation is still too low and very few people would call this “high” water. The beaver dam helps Osprey Lake during droughts and also helps Round Lake because if the County continues NOT to comply with the 1941 PSC order it provides some low water protection for Round Lake. The best Round Lake low water protection would be two or three boards in the present dam (in the spring) or the sill elevation of any new dam being at 1345.0 which is above the 1344.80 elevation of the Beaver Dam above Highway NN. 1345.0 is also the top range of the 1941 PSC Order. The USGS has normal Round Lake surface elevation at 1346.0.

SEH basically says that at Round Lake elevations above 1345.15 the Beaver Dams upstream of Highway NN have only a minor impact if left intact at current height of 1344.8 feet. The Beaver Dam is not a significant high water control for Round Lake according to SEH as long as their present height does not increase much.

Please refer to SEH Hydraulic Controls Evaluation Report from March of 2007 (HCE).

“High water” is not defined in the County statement/minutes.

The [1941 PSC order](#) for Round Lake is 1344.75 to 1345 feet or (77.0 to 77.25 local datum)

The proposed new Round Lake 100 year flood level submitted by SEH is 1346.98 feet. See **page 2 of HCE** table 1.

The present Carlson Dam sill elevation is 1343.7. See **page 2 HCE**.

The elevation of the Beaver Dams above Highway NN is 1344.80 at its lowest point. See **page 7 of HCE**.

On **page 10 Table 3** Mr. Lenz reports the USGS (United States Geological Survey) says the “normal” Round Lake surface elevation is 1346 feet. It is believed by many that Round Lake water levels have been above 1345 on the average over the last 25 years. This is supported by evaluating high water marks at the Carlson Dam, County B Bridge and other locations on Round Lake. A special report on high water elevations will be coming out soon on this.

Please refer to **page 7 table 2** of the SEH Hydraulic Controls Evaluation (HCE) March of 2007. This table summarizes SEH and Mr. Lenz’s report concerning Round Lake Controls-Lake Elevation and Associated Flow.

The beaver dams that the County in their minutes are referring to are believed to be the ones above Highway NN. **With no boards in the Carlson Dam and beaver Dam intact:** These beaver dams according to table 2 are the hydraulic control only from Round Lake elevations 1344.80 to 1345.15 and with associated flow rates from 0 to 9cfs. This is when the lake is slightly above or within the [1941 PSC order](#) levels and below the normal USGS level of 1346 feet. This is NOT “High Water”! This is also under very low flow rates.

With Boards in the Carlson Dam set at 1345 feet the weir/boards are the controlling hydraulic factor for all flows from 0 to 80cfs. The same Beaver Dams have no control. This is in table 2 page 7 of HCE.

The beaver dams that the County is referring to are the potential LOW WATER CONTROL but are not reliable. **See page 11 (7.2) of HCE: “The current low water control of Round Lake is dependant on the beaver dams. With the beaver dams near current heights and the assumption they do not leak, the low water control of the current beaver dam would be acceptable. However, the beaver dams in reality leak, and as stated earlier their presence or absence in the system is not reliable. If the current beaver**

dams are leaking or fail, a structural low water control would be needed to reliably maintain the Round Lake elevations near the 1941 ordered normal water surface elevation of 1344.75 (77.0 feet local datum)."

With No boards in the dam and beaver dam intact:

Page 7 Table 2 in HCE states: from elevations 1345.15 to 1346.51 at flows 9 to 78cfs that both the beaver dams and present Carlson Dam constriction are the controlling hydraulic factors. Above 1345 feet when boards are present the beaver dams have no hydraulic control-please refer to **table 2 page 7**. So the higher the water level the less control the Beaver Dams above Highway NN have.

Page 7 Table 2 in HCE states: from elevations 1346.51 and up and flows of 78-80 and up the backwater from NN culverts and Little Round Lake Dam constriction are the controlling factors. This is still about .5 feet below proposed 100 year flood level and this is high water and above the USGS 1346 Round Lake normal level. The present Beaver dams have no effect under this scenario.

So a new wider weir would facilitate Round Lake drainage during truly high water levels above 1346.51 and even help above Round Lake elevation 1345.15. The Beaver Dams are **NOT** a factor when the Round Lake level is above 1346.51 and a minor factor above 1345.15. The constriction at Carlson Dam and the NN culverts are the controlling hydraulic factors according to Mr. Lenz on **page 7 table 2 of HCE above 1346.51**.

On page 11 of the (HCE) SEH states: "To maximize the amount of water leaving Round and Little Round Lake during times of high lake levels, thus increasing the rate that available storage is returned to the system and minimizing the chance of flooding, the Little Round Lake Dam constriction should be eliminated."

Consequently the Counties statement in their [minutes](#) above is not accurate.

There is quite a bit more information in the [SEH March 2007 Hydraulic Control Evaluation Report](#).

A summary of the controls and flow rates with the Beaver Dam removed and no boards in the dam is in **table 2 on page 7**. Under this scenario the hydraulic control above 1345.30 is the Osprey Creek channel, dam constriction and backwater from NN culverts from flows 31-80cfs.

Thus it still appears to this observer that a larger weir even with the present beaver dam above Highway NN would still be worthwhile and effective particularly under real high water conditions as described. For it to be effective during "low water" the elevation of the proposed notch or sill would be critical. If

low water control depends on boards being put in any new dam then management guidelines would be important.

It should also be understood that the present dam is all wood and deteriorating. It will have to be replaced someday.

The present dam has a 10 foot opening divided by a vertical slat into two 5 foot openings which have a high propensity to become obstructed with debris. A wider dam may not be as prone to obstruct with floating debris and thus would require less maintenance. [See this April 21, 2007 picture.](#)

Under drought conditions such as we are currently experiencing no one could legally put any boards into the existing Carlson Dam if the [1941 PSC order](#) is vacated. We could not put boards in the dam in the spring to capture the spring runoff so that we and our downstream neighbors could have more water later in the summer season. So if the Carlson Dam is abandoned and the 1941 order vacated there will be less water for everyone.

If there is better water elevation control on Round Lake property values will be more protected and tax receipts will not be as threatened. There is most likely \$200,000,000 million dollars+ of property on Round and Little Round Lake. With Dam abandonment and vacating the 1941 PSC order marginal water frontage property values could markedly drop. Both Public and Private access to the lake would also be protected.

The "natural" southeastern channel that connects Little Round Lake with Osprey Lake has an obstructing road/driveway with undersized culvert that should be corrected. The road is at elevation 1347.11 and the small culvert is at elevation 1343.97.

It is not reasonable or responsible to manage Round & Little Round Lake Water Levels by depending on beaver dams and using an old undersized wooden dam.

The official RLPOA water level position is as follows: [12/21/2005 position](#); [August 19, 2006 position modification](#). It is believed by many that the average Round Lake level over the last 25 years is above 1345 feet but below the USGS normal level of 1346.

Respectfully submitted,

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