

Peoria Lakes Basin Alliance

“A Unified Voice for the Restoration and Preservation of the Peoria Lakes”

For further information regarding the Alliance, please contact the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission 309-673-9330



**Heartland Water
Resources Council
of Central Illinois**
416 Main St. Ste 828
Peoria, IL 61602
(309) 637-5253

Representatives
Executive Director:
Tom Tincher

Board Members:
Wayne Ingram



Protecting nature. Preserving life.™

301 S.W. Adams St.
Ste. 1007
Peoria, IL 61602
(309) 673-6689

Representatives
State Director:
Michelle Carr

Board Members:
Chris Ryan
Ken Katch



**Tri-County Regional
Planning
Commission**
456 Fulton St., Suite 401
Peoria, IL 61602
(309) 673-9330

Representatives
Executive Director:
Eric Miller

Board Members:
Russ Crawford
Michael Phelan
Roy Bockler (Alternate)

PEORIA LAKES BASIN ALLIANCE

AGENDA

Wednesday, November 13, 2019 at 3:00 pm
456 Fulton Street, Suite 401
Peoria, Illinois 61602

1. Call to Order
2. Public Comment
3. Approval of Meeting Minutes for 09 October 2019
4. Old Business
 - a. PLBA Dashboard (See attachment)
5. New Business
 - a. Peoria Heights Illinois Valley Mayors Meeting Debrief
 - b. Spring Bay Development Debrief
6. Member Reports
 - a. Tri-County Regional Planning Commission
 - b. The Nature Conservancy
 - c. Heartland Water Resources Council
7. Other
 - a. Next scheduled meeting
 - i. 11 December 2019
8. Adjournment

PEORIA LAKES BASIN ALLIANCE
Wednesday, October 9, 2019 at 3:15 pm
456 Fulton Street, Suite 401
Peoria, IL 61602

MINUTES

1. Call to Order

Ingram called the meeting to order at 3:18 p.m.

Attendees:

The Nature Conservancy:	Jason Beverlin
Heartland Water Resources Council:	Tom Tincher, Wayne Ingram
Tri-County Regional Planning Commission:	Eric Miller, Reema Abi-Akar, Michael Bruner, Russ Crawford, Ray Lees

2. Public Comment

No public comment.

3. Approval of Meeting Minutes for September 11, 2019

Miller moved to approve the September 11, 2019 minutes and Beverlin seconded.

4. Old Business

Bruner touched on some Old Business items from the agenda. He said that the IDNR engagement is ongoing, floating islands and the PAS study are on pause, and that we are waiting for more information from stakeholders to move forward.

Lees discussed the BUDM workshop. He said that he and Chuck Theiling are working on the whitepaper that outlines findings from the workshop, and that he will email a copy to others who are interested in seeing it. Theiling is contacting publications to potentially publish the findings.

For the McClugage Bridge Sediment Removal, Lees is talking to those who are building the bridge. He said that they need to dispose of 40,000 to 200,000 cubic yards of material on IDOT's dime. A site will be needed to deposit this material. Ingram asked if this material has been tested, and Lees said that John Marlin did some core samples. The material will need to be placed sometime in January-February 2020. Beverlin asked if all of the material is coming out of the river, or if some of it is coming out of the bluffs/other areas around the river. Lees said he is not sure. Tincher mentioned his relevant experience with Stewart Spreading, north of Ottawa. Miller said that this is a big opportunity since IDOT will pay for the transportation costs. He said we need to give them a firm answer in the next couple weeks. Someone asked what Decatur did for their dredging. Miller said that their disposal site was 500 acres, 40 feet tall, and held 10.7 million cubic yards from Lake Decatur.

Regarding the ADM dry dock dredging, Lees said that Chuck Burlingame had three bucketfuls of sediment tested at PDC, then took them to Steve Vaughn at the Ag Lab to understand the material components. Apparently the results were positive. They are working with Paul Rosenbohm to see how much it would cost to transport it to Better Earth. There is 5,000 tons of material, which would normally

cost \$50,000 to move. Crawford mentioned the agenda format, that it was necessary to create a tool to monitor the status of projects.

5. New Business

a. Plan Comparison: Heartland Water and PLCCP

As Bruner began going through the document created by TCRPC staff, Crawford said that for the sections marked "N/A," other agencies may possibly be interested in looking into them; for example, the Greater Peoria Economic Development Council.

Tincher said that it is important to set a vision. Bruner introduced the "Summary of PLCCP Overlap" section. Abi-Akar said that the conditional studies would be required to be completed before any work is done in their respective areas, as listed in the chart.

Miller said that there are other projects floating around the region, such as Alfresco Park. Crawford said that projects should be completed when and where possible. Ingram said that in some places, the hydrogeomorphic study should or shouldn't be in place for certain projects. Bruner and Abi-Akar said that staff created this chart directly based on what was explicitly written in the plan. Beverlin said that if anything needs to be changed in this chart, we then have to change it in the actual plan as well.

Crawford asked what we should do now. Miller said that the studies would be the first things to tackle, but we do not have funding. Crawford mentioned Alfresco Park again, and the group discussed this briefly.

Tincher began to present about his plan. He said land uses around the lake need to be examined. He says the top priority regarding deepwater habitat location is the west side of the river where most marinas are located. He said that the east side has larger conservation areas. Although he also said that the entire lower lake should be a deepwater habitat/recreational development area with tourism and entertainment. This process will ultimately pave the way for a secondary channel, Tincher said.

Miller asked for details about some of the dots portrayed on Tincher's handouts. Tincher said for 9-10 projects, he could provide a summary and show concept plans for them. Miller said that TCRPC spoke with Todd Hubmer, who is an engineer in Minnesota that helped Marty Long navigate the technical issues to create the Minnesota Mulch program. Miller said we need an expert to give the group a better idea of scope, time, and other logistics regarding such a project.

Tincher said there are "a dozen" potential early action projects that we can begin working on. Tincher said that there is a need for a central organization to provide technical and management expertise. Crawford said that an organization structure is not needed until there we have a project and some lessons learned. Tincher insinuates that TCRPC, TNC, and others exist as the staff expertise. Miller said regardless, it is important to have buy-in up and down the river. Key players include Chris Setti and Tony Rolando, who not only could help within the region, but can also connect to other areas around the state if needed.

Tincher said that most of the projects he has put together for his plan are privately driven, and do not need public investment and lots of planning, just enough to track development.

6. Member Reports

a. Tri-County Regional Planning Commission

TCRPC had their strategic planning session last Saturday the 5th. One of the major action items that came out of it was continuing to work on the Beneficial Use of Dredged Material project.

b. The Nature Conservancy

N/A

c. Heartland Water Resources Council

Tincher discussed the status of Heartland and the potential of reorganizing it.

7. Other

There will be a relevant meeting on Wednesday, October 16 at 5:30 p.m. at the IVY Club in Peoria Heights.

a. Next scheduled meeting(s)

November 13, 2019

8. Adjournment

Wayne adjourned the meeting at 5:05 p.m.

PLBA Meeting Dashboard - Old Business

Category	Topic	Point Person	Status
PLCCP	IDNR Engagement	Ray	Ongoing
	Floating Islands	Chuck Theiling	Ongoing
	Additional PAS Study	Michael	Paused
	Plan Comparison - HWRC & PLCCP	Michael & Reema	Completed
BUDM	BUDM Workshop	Ray	Completed
	McCluggage Bridge	Ray	Ongoing
	ADM Dry Dock	Ray	Ongoing
HREP	Participate in group	Michael & Reema	Paused
Admin	Agneda Format	Michael	Completed
	Dashboard	Michael	Ongoing

Glamping and trout fishing resort planned for Spring Bay

**By Scott Hilyard
of the Journal Star**

Posted Nov 1, 2019 at 9:46 AM

Updated Nov 1, 2019 at 6:56 PM

SPRING BAY — Developer Kim Blickenstaff made news last month with his proposal to turn the long-abandoned riverfront site of Al Fresco amusement park in Peoria Heights into a new tourist eco-destination.

Now he has set his sites on property across the river in Spring Bay — the San Diego-based entrepreneur's hometown — for a project that will be 20 times bigger than the new Al Fresco.

“Al Fresco is a place where people can go for the day,” Kim Blickenstaff said. “This is a place where people can go for the weekend or the week.”

The Sankoty Lakes Resort and Retreat is a joint initiative from Blickenstaff and Spring Bay native Dwayne Atherton and will be constructed at 1583 Spring Bay Road, on the river side of Illinois Route 26. On more than 200 acres, with three aquifer-fed 60- to 75-foot-deep lakes on the site of an old gravel mining operation, plans include a mile-long, man-made trout stream, 20 glamour camping sites (for “glamping,” as it is called) and an RV park.

It will be a four-season event venue featuring fishing and off-site hunting, bird watching, kayaking, canoeing, swimming, scuba diving and more. Hiking trails will be a mainstay, including elevated boardwalks through a 40-acre wetland area. Guides and outfitters will be available to enhance those experiences.

This is a multimillion-dollar investment that will be implemented in phases with long-term possibilities of a lodge, spa and restaurant.

Much of this is the brainchild of Atherton.

“It’s been in my head since I was a little kid,” said Atherton, whose family first bought into the property about 20 years ago. “Ever since I hunted and fished this property, I’ve had the idea of creating something like this.”

Herman Brothers Lake and Land Management, which owns and operates Giant Goose Ranch in Canton, is helping design and build the resort and will manage the facility.

“What we’re doing is helping them create one of the greatest fishing destinations here in Illinois, or the entire Midwest, really,” said Nate Herman. “It’s close to the city, but you feel like you’re miles and miles away. You’ll feel like you’re out West on a trout stream.”

The lakes have been stocked with walleye, pike, muskie, largemouth bass, crappie, bluegill and other native species.

The trout stream will be joined to one of the lakes and essentially combined into one ecosystem, with a pump system that will bring cold water up to the surface and circulate it horizontally to create a current. That and the fact that the water will stay between 50 and 65 degrees year-round means not only that it will never freeze, allowing all-year fishing, but also that you won’t see algae developing like on many central Illinois ponds and lakes.

A small crowd gathered at the site Wednesday afternoon, in the shadow of the soon-to-be-dismantled stone crusher. It included Spring Bay Mayor Dave Tilley, who learned just this week of the plans for the gravel pit in his town.

“It was a welcome surprise,” he said. “It’s going to benefit the people who live in Spring Bay, not just with the possibility of jobs but with providing residents with a place in town they can be proud of. River towns have been in a slow decline for 40 years. Growth has been stagnant, sort of in hibernation. But with this development, I think, comes the reinvention of the river town and all of the possibilities.”

Tilley called it “the biggest development in the history of Spring Bay.”

Blickenstaff and Atherton are working together on Al Fresco Park in Peoria Heights. They see the two projects as complementary, with ferries or water taxis transporting visitors back and forth.

The Sankoty Resort and Retreat should begin taking visitors next spring, though there could be ice fishing opportunities yet this winter. More information, including 2020 season packages, is available at its website, sankotylakes.com.

“It’s going to be like Wisconsin, but you don’t have to drive six hours to get there,” promised Blickenstaff.

Blickenstaff has several projects in the works, mostly in Peoria Heights that, include a hotel, condominiums and the already completed Betty Jayne Brimmer Center for the Performing Arts.

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