

Pulaski Lake Improvement District

**P.O. Box 332
Buffalo, MN 55313**

November 21, 2022

Commissioner Sarah Strommen
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
500 Lafayette Road
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Dear Commissioner Strommen,

We are writing you today on behalf of our constituents living on and around Lake Pulaski. In the mid-1980's, the Pulaski Lake Improvement District (LID), in cooperation with the City of Buffalo, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, and Army Corps of Engineers, constructed a pumping system to control Lake Pulaski water levels and prevent flooding. Lake Pulaski does not have a natural outlet and the system is necessary to protect property and maintain recreational amenities. During times of high-water levels, water is pumped from Lake Pulaski into nearby Buffalo Lake. The pumping system, including the storm water infrastructure, is maintained by the LID and City.

On May 16, 2022, we were notified that zebra mussels were found in Lake Pulaski and the DNR directed us to suspend all pumping operations until pumping could occur without the transport of zebra mussels. Following this announcement, we began working on a solution to prevent the transport of zebra mussels from Lake Pulaski to Buffalo Lake. We have had several meetings with DNR representatives to discuss the rules, regulations, processes, and potential solutions surrounding this issue. Ultimately, it was decided the best long-term solution was to install a filtration system. The estimated cost of the filtration system ranges between \$1.2 million - \$2.4 million, depending upon the type of system installed. The LID, City and Wright County have all committed a portion of funding to the project.

Recently, we received the unfortunate news that zebra mussels were found in Buffalo Lake. We discussed this discovery with DNR staff and were informed that an approved zebra mussel filtration plan is still required before we are allowed to operate the pumping system. We are respectfully requesting reconsideration of this decision.

This request stems from two reasons. First, prior to 2003, the DNR required screening of the pumping system to prevent the transportation of Eurasian watermilfoil from Lake Pulaski to Buffalo Lake. This requirement was administratively removed from the permit following the discovery of milfoil in Buffalo Lake. The letter documenting this decision is included as an attachment. This previous action provides a strong precedent that supports a similar decision in this case.



Second, filtration of zebra mussels from Lake Pulaski is costly and, with the discovery of zebra mussels in Buffalo Lake, we no longer see the purpose. It is our belief that our limited financial resources would be better invested in actions and measures (e.g., decontamination station, inspections, etc.) aimed at preventing the spread of zebra mussels and other aquatic invasive species into, and out of, Lake Pulaski.

It is our hope the DNR will allow continued operation of the pumping system without an approved zebra mussel filtration plan. Because spring is right around the corner and filtration systems have substantial lead times, timing is important when determining our next steps; therefore, we would appreciate a response by December 16, 2022. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Jon Tank
President
Pulaski Lake Improvement District



Teri Lachermeier
Mayor
City of Buffalo

Christine Husom
District 1 Commissioner
Wright County

cc. James Bedell, Area Hydrologist

Attached: Administrative Amendment, Amended Permit 87-3002, Lake Outlet and Water Level Control, Pulaski Lake (86-53P), Wright County – Letter dated January 16, 2003



Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

DNR Waters
940 Industrial Drive S., Suite 103, Sauk Rapids, MN 56379
320/255-2976

January 16, 2003

Judy Rose, Chair
Pulaski Lake Improvement District
1487 Pulaski Circle
Buffalo MN 55313

Dear Ms. Rose:

Administrative Amendment, Amended Permit 87-3002, Lake Outlet and Water Level Control, Pulaski Lake (86-53P), Wright County

Amended Permit 87-3002 is being administratively amended to remove operational condition number 8 which required screening of all water discharged through the system. Please note that all conditions and provisions of the existing permit remain in effect.

If you have any questions please feel free to call me at the number listed above.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Patricia L. Fowler".

Patricia L. Fowler
Area Hydrologist

c: Dale Homuth, Regional Hydrologist
City of Buffalo
Chip Welling, DNR Ecological Services
Brian Mies, Conservation Officer
Fisheries, Montrose
Wildlife, Sauk Rapids
Amended Permit File 87-3002

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