



Morse Waterways Association Newsletter June 2022

IMPORTANT NEWS FROM CITIZENS:

Citizens issued a News Release asking customers to conserve water during this hot weather period. This was issued as a result usage exceeding Citizens processing capacity. **IT WAS NOT DUE TO A SHORTAGE OF SOURCE WATER.**

NOTE: THE TOPICS IN THIS NEWSLETTER WERE DISCUSSED AT THE MWA GENERAL MEETING IN MAY.

Morse Waterways Board History

For those residence who are new or unfamiliar with the MWA:

The MWA was founded in 2005 to support the approximately 1,400 property owners on the reservoir. The bylaws specify a 15-member board of directors who serve 3-year terms. The members are approved by a vote at the fall general meeting. Board meetings are held every two months beginning in January and are normally held at the Cicero Library.

Some of the projects that have been initiated by the board of directors have been the following:

1. Restoration and continuing maintenance of "Party Island".
2. Safety Awareness Days which usually occurred on a weekend near July 4th. During that weekend, board members would pass out a copy of the State Boating Rules as well as information regarding the Morse Reservoir to people putting their boats into the water at the Morse Marina Ramp.
3. Dock numbers were implemented in 2008, with the help of the sheriff's department and funds raised through local municipalities. The Dock signs are provided at no cost but, of course, the MWA is happy to accept donations.
4. The board helped to facilitate additional dredging by securing L.A.R.E. (Lake and River Enhancement) Grants from the DNR. These included a \$75,000 grant for Hinkle Creek and \$100,000 for Big Cicero. These were made possible thanks to 20% matching funds raised by the affected property owners.
5. The board has provided support to a collaboration of lake associations throughout Indiana, directed by the Lake Wawasee Association to pass a law requiring boater training for Indiana waterways. The effort is currently in the lobbying stage and is expected to see action next year.
6. The most significant, on-going project is the annual Lake Cleanup that happens on the third Saturday of July every year.
7. Current projects include support for the White River Alliance RAFT (River Assessment Field Teams) program and the possibility of locating a sign near the boat ramp with appropriate general, safety, and emergency information for boaters.

The MWA is a Not for Profit, 501c3, organization that is supported by donations from those who use the reservoir. Donations can be made to Morse Waterways Assoc., P.O Box 422, Cicero, IN 46034 or by using PayPal as found on the website (morseh2o.org).

Lake Cleanup

Dave Vanette gave a short presentation regarding the July lake cleanup and identified some of the things that are needed, in particular, the volunteers.

Please mark your calendars for the 2022 lake cleanup, which will be on **Saturday, July 16th**. Several notices have already been sent with the details. An added feature for this year is an effort initiated by a local Eagle Scout and his group to use heavy magnets to remove metal from the bottom of the lake. Details are still being reviewed but, if successful, it could become an integral part of the annual cleanup effort.

Dredging and Other Projects

Rogers Goings, who is on the Service Advisory Board for Citizens Water (Vice Chairman) provided an update on the dredging plans for Big Cicero Creek.

The next phase of dredging is schedule to start at the end of June.

- Phase 2: End of June-August 31. (This is the end of the 2022 fiscal year for Citizens)
- Phase 3: September 1- November 30. (Sept. 1 is the beginning of the 2023 fiscal year.)
- Dredge the channel from the bridge to the railroad tracks.
- Remove the east end of the island
- Dredging is planned to continue until the \$300,000 in each phase from Citizens and \$100,000 from the LARE grant have been exhausted.

Roger also reported that, completed by Citizens in 2021 were:

- Replacement by dam on White River. Rock dam. Five-foot elevation.
- Quarry reservoir on Geist which will provide an additional 3 billion gallons of water.

Update on the Cover Crops program:

- Donations for farmers. 96 farmers last year.

White River Alliance RAFT Program

Very Special Guests, Kelly Brown and Jill Hoffman from the White River Alliance (WRA) came to give a presentation on the new **River Assessment Field Team** (RAFT) Program.

The River Assessment Field Teams are individuals, family members, or small groups of friends, colleagues, or neighbors that are willing to donate time to help strategically assess local water quality.

- **Jill Hoffman** has been with the WRA since 1999. The WRA mission is to protect water in central Indiana. The WRA covers an area starting east of Muncie and finishing at the top of Monroe County, which includes a total of 15 counties. They pay close attention to water quality and quantity. She briefly discussed the volunteer sampling program, a positive reference from the University of Maryland watershed report card, the values and threats perceived for local waterways, podcast conversations, Paddle Days and the Water Summit.
- **Kelly Brown** discussed the RAFT program in detail. She said that it is intended to assess the quality of the White River watershed and look for pollution hot spots and align IDEM Hoosier River Watch and health departments. Volunteers are trained and sent to 52 active sights. Access to these sights and volunteer safety is always a priority. The sights cover north and south Hamilton County and north and south Marion County.

The sampling includes E-coli, nitrates/nitrites, Ph, temperature, and transparency. The WRA is looking for volunteers. Sampling is done every month on a Sunday from noon to 4 pm. The northern section is Connor Prairie, the central section is Keystone at the Crossing, and the southern section is Fountain Square. The data is shared with the state and the project is partnered with the Marion County Soil and Water Conservancy.

Want To Become A RAFT Volunteer?

RAFT Volunteers are citizen scientists trained to conduct water quality sampling following a specific protocol. With some time and dedication, anyone 18 years of age and older with moderate physical fitness can become a RAFT volunteer. Before becoming a RAFT volunteer, you must first complete the online RAFT training program, by:

1. Fill out the [VOLUNTEER REGISTRATION](https://thewhiteriveralliance.org/programs/river-assessment-field-team-raft/) form (link: <https://thewhiteriveralliance.org/programs/river-assessment-field-team-raft/>)
2. Create an online [TRAINING LOGIN](https://training.thewhiteriveralliance.org/raft-training-registration/) (link: <https://training.thewhiteriveralliance.org/raft-training-registration/>)
3. Complete the 10 Module online [RAFT Training](https://training.thewhiteriveralliance.org) (link: <https://training.thewhiteriveralliance.org>)

This training provides an important foundation for understanding what's involved in water sampling as well as the science behind the various measurements you will take in the field. Once you have completed the training you are ready to sample! You can see all upcoming RAFT sampling events at thewhiteriveralliance.org/events.

Four members of the MWA Board have expressed an interest in volunteering. It would be nice to have good support from residents on the Morse Reservoir.

Report from the DNR

Billy Doss, Conservation Officer for the DNR, and one of our regular featured speakers gave a presentation on the violations that occurred on the reservoir last year, along with other important information regarding the Department of Natural Resources.

- a. Violations 2021
 - 41 Fishing.
 - 6 Hunting.
 - 13 Boating While Intoxicated.
 - 8 Minor Consumption of Alcohol.
 - 24 Idle Zone.
 - 36 Equipment. Lights.
 - 14 Nighttime Speeders.
 - 14 Shoreline Idle Zone. 200 ft.
 - 28 Life Jacket.
 - 9 Drug Arrests.
- b. The DNR is currently short staffed but hopes to be at full force for 2023.
- c. Buoys.
 - Regulatory. 24 buoys, 1 at Hinkle. 3 at Party Cove. 1 at island by beach. 1 at Million-dollar point.
 - Maintain your own buoy,
 - Permanent buoy system at dam, 1 at Hinkle, 3 at Party Cove, 1 at island by beach and 1 at Million-dollar point.
- d. Wake board boats.
 - Not permitted on lakes 500 acres or less. You are responsible for your wake.

- e. Concerts advertised.
 - Permit required for 10 boats or more.
 - No more permits for now.
- f. No boater training required. Currently being legislated.
- g. Don't try to adopt wild animals!

Donate to the Morse Waterways Association

The MWA is dedicated to protecting and preserving the Morse Reservoir so that it can be a source of enjoyment for many years to come. Please consider supporting this mission.

Donations can be made to Morse Waterways Assoc., P.O Box 422, Cicero, IN 46034 or by using PayPal as found on the website (morseh2o.org).

Current MWA Board Members:

Matt Clarke	Roger Goings	Pat Kelleher	John Weis
Andy Sheets	Dean Denhart	Art Hall	Eric Harley
John Myer	Jeff Derda – President	Dave Vanette – Vice President	
Chuck Watkins – Secretary	Jerry Schwier – Treasurer	Randy Clark	

Thank you to Roger Goings, Dave Vanette, Jill Hoffman, Kelly Brown, and Billy Doss for their contributions to the Spring General Meeting.

Thank you to all of those who have contributed to the Morse Waterways Association.

Thank you to the MWA Board Members for their time and commitment.

Jeff Derda, President – Morse Waterways Association