

OPII

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

East Troy and water. The two are inextricably linked. No resource is more vital to our prosperity today, nor more steeped in controversy.

Over the next few months, the East Troy Village Board will provide area residents with short overviews and updates of current water issues facing the community. We believe there is a need for a fair and balanced portrait of this critical topic because decisions on water affect everyone.

We want to set the record straight on the controversial issues surrounding Well Number 7, where misinformation and false accusations have confused the debate.

While we do have disagreements, few who live in this area will dispute the fact that our Village water system is inadequate and needs to be addressed immediately. As your elected representatives, we have a legal obligation to meet all state and federal water standards to protect human health and safety. We also have a moral obligation to provide a safe and reliable water system.

The bottom line is that we work closely and cooperatively with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to achieve the best possible outcome for the Village, and we will continue to rely on their expertise.

We are saddened and more than slightly dismayed that some have chosen to ignore our obligations as we responsibly address our critical water needs. In particular, the Lake Beulah Management District and some individuals have engaged in a disingenuous campaign and have circulated a lot of misleading information to convince area residents that Well Number 7 would harm Lake Beulah and the area's water table. One district spokesman even said the well would "pull the plug on Lake Beulah" and would only serve the development needs of our growing Village.

Neither of these charges is true.

Well Number 7 is not simply an option or a luxury for the Village, it is a necessity. The DNR has threatened the Village with enforcement actions and penalties of up to \$5,000 per day under the Federal Safe Drinking Water Act (NR 809) if our water supply issues are

not addressed. That law exists to protect the health and safety of Village residents, and this Board takes that responsibility seriously.

State and federal regulators establish standards to ensure there is an adequate water supply and pressure for drinking water, sanitation and fire protection. Given the age of the Village's existing wells, their reduced performance and its current water usage, the Village needs a new well to meet those standards.

So in October 2000, the Village Board began the well siting process. We hired a team of hydrologists who completed a survey of the area's water table and recommended several sites in the same area. Subsequently, we contracted with several other independent hydrologists to review the study and each concluded there would be NO negative effects to the lake. Armed with that information we applied for a well permit in June 2003.

We received the approval for Well Number 7 from the DNR in September 2003. Regrettably, since that time the Village's efforts to site the well have been tied up in litigation initiated by the District.

The DNR standard states the Village must be able to meet the highest demand period of the year with our highest capacity well out of service. We are currently unable to meet those criteria. Two months ago, the DNR evaluated the Village's current water supply situation. Thaninitr T. Tatarasard, a DNR Drinking Water Engineer from the Southeast Fox Basin, concluded:

"Adequate firm capacity and storage are necessary to provide adequate amounts of water, pressure and to protect human health and safety...The recent inspection indicates that the need to address the firm capacity and storage issues has reached the critical stage."

--February 11, 2005

We respect and appreciate the legitimate concerns of area residents, and we continue to welcome input as this process continues. However, we have done our homework. The environmental experts have reviewed our plans and the DNR is demanding action. We believe it is time to move forward and act.

Sincerely,
The East Troy Village Board

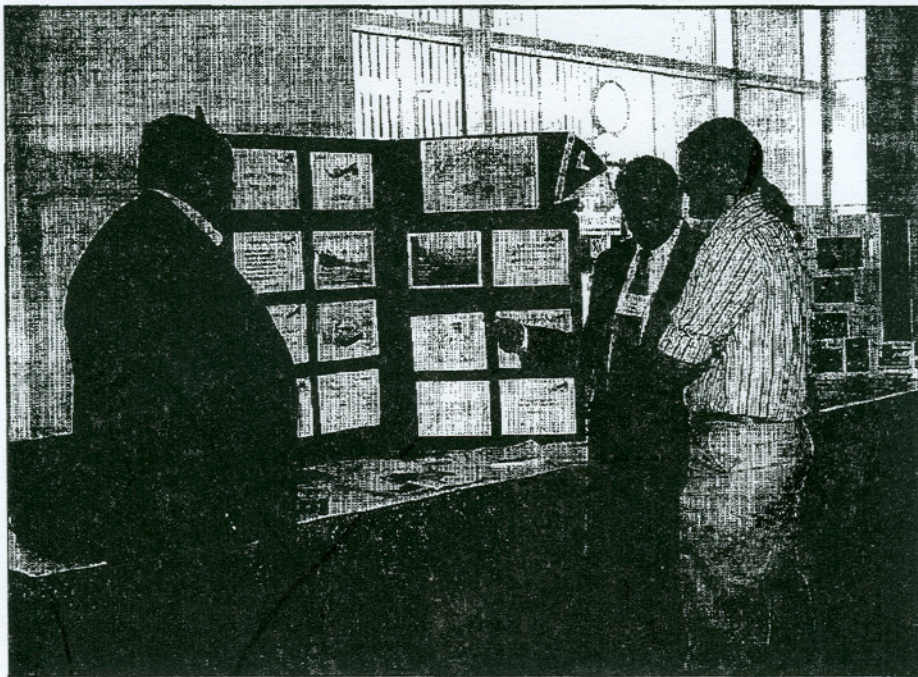


Photo submitted East Troy Times

Bob Burmeister (left) and Paul Didier (right) discussed lake issues with Ezra Meyer, education specialist of the Wisconsin Association of Lakes at the 2005 Wisconsin Lakes Convention. Burmeister and Didier of the Lake Beulah Protective and Improvement Association set up a booth at the convention with information about the proposed high capacity well near Lake Beulah.

Lake Beulah Reps Attend State Lakes Convention

submitted by Paul Didier, president, Lake Beulah Protective and Improvement Association

Threats to Wisconsin lakes, both natural and man-made, were the topics of discussion this past weekend at the 2005 Wisconsin Lakes Convention, which was attended by representatives from Lake Beulah.

The 27th annual convention sponsored by Wisconsin Lakes Partnership, UW Extension, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and the Wisconsin Lakes Association was held from Thursday, April 28 through Saturday, April 30 in Green Bay.

"I remain concerned about the potential effects on our navigable lakes and streams from high-capacity well pumping of our groundwater," said attorney general Peg Lautenschlager to a room of several hundred lake representatives.

"One such case is in the Town of East Troy on Lake Beulah. We are monitoring this action carefully, and are cognizant of the state's public trust duty to protect lake water from the adverse effects of high-capacity well pumping," added Lautenschlager.

High-capacity wells along with non-native species, insufficient state regulation, mercury emissions, and pollution were identified by many of the speakers as threats to Wisconsin lakes.

The "Groundwater Protection Act" became law in Wisconsin last year in a bi-

partisan effort to regulate the impact of some high-capacity wells. Among other things, it requires greater oversight of high capacity wells located near trout streams and natural springs. State representative Scott Gunderson (R-Town of Norway), chair of the Assembly Natural Resource Committee, praised the new law to the crowd. However, he went on to say that he would like to see follow-up legislation to address related problems like municipal wells that tap into the shallow aquifers that replenish our lakes and streams.

Representing Lake Beulah at the convention were representatives from the Lake Beulah Protective and Improvement Association, Friends of Lake Beulah and the Lake Beulah Management District. Paul Didier and Robert Burmeister from the Lake Beulah Protective and Improvement Association set up an exhibit displaying details of the proposed high-capacity well near Lake Beulah and the surrounding environment, and also gave a presentation at the meeting. Representatives from nearby lakes including Phantom and Eagle Springs are facing similar high capacity well issues and expressed strong support for the Lake Beulah effort to inform and educate the public regarding the underlying scientific and engineering principles of groundwater and surface water interactions.