



# *Sheboygan County*

## *Planning & Conservation Department*

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### **Sheboygan Marsh Update – September 2019**

Since 2017, Sheboygan County has been trying to drawdown the Sheboygan Marsh. Needless to say, it has been too wet to accomplish this goal. In addition to the drawdown, there are also a number of projects being planned. They are listed below in greater detail.

#### ***Bypass Gate***

The 5' bypass gate failed in the down position in spring of 2018. Crews removed it on July 3, 2018. In fall of 2018 and winter of 2019, the County entered a contract to complete a design and the associated permitting for the project. The gate replacement project was bid in mid-summer 2019. No responses were received. The project was then rebid in mid-August and thankfully, three bids were received. The County is currently working with the contractor on a timeline for the install of the new gate. It appears the gate manufacturers are 18-20 weeks out on the delivery of a new gate. Unless there are heavy rains that fill the marsh, it may lead to disruptions in the various hunting activities that take place in the marsh. The new gate should be installed by spring of 2020 barring any unforeseen delays.

#### ***New Dam***

Sheboygan County and the WDNR have been working with the engineering arm of the Ducks Unlimited to plan for a new dam design that will allow the passage of more water. The first step in this process was to complete a feasibility study which calculated how much additional water could be passed downstream without flooding downstream properties. After this step, an alternatives analysis was completed which weighed the pros and cons of different dam designs. Once a potential design was selected, a detailed cost estimate was produced. Fundraising for the new design is currently taking place. Sheboygan County has committed \$1.5 million +/- in their 5 year capital plan (2022/2023) and the Sheboygan County Conservation Association has generously pledged \$100,000 thus far. The project estimate is between \$2.5-\$3.0 million depending on inflation and certain options. The current dam was installed in 1938. The bypass tube (a separate project from the gate project mentioned above) was installed in 1968. The tube is also scheduled to be replaced during the dam construction.

#### ***Other Projects***

Once the water is finally low enough, the County would like to complete a number of additional projects. One, is the removal of the middle cement pier at the boat launch to provide easier access. The second, is repairing and replacing the wooden platforms at the pier. The third is repairing the culverts at the South Ditch. In addition, and though not related to the drawdown plans, there will likely be a lot of tree removal in the different campground areas this winter. Unfortunately, there is a lot of ash in these areas (over 160 trees) and the Emerald Ash Borer has taken its toll.

Please do not hesitate to call if you have any further questions.