The Nature Conservancy
Protecting nature. Preserving life.

Mukwonago River Watershed Project
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August 18, 2020

Booth Lake Management District
P.O. Box 778
East Troy, WI 53120

Dear Booth Lake Board of Directors:

Over the past two weeks, The Nature Conservancy (TNC) staff has had the opportunity to visit your project's proposed discharge site and consider some of the environmental impacts of diverting surface water from Booth Lake to a wetland on the Camp Alice Chester property. After careful consideration of the factors involved, TNC's conclusion is that diverting Booth Lake surface waters to the proposed wetland will have significant impacts on a high quality wetland in a natural area of statewide significance. For that reason, TNC would suggest this project not go forward as currently proposed.

We've observed that the BLMD has posted our previous communication dated August 3, 2020 to its website. This letter should also be included on your website as an addendum to reflect TNC's current understanding of the project, and potential for environmental impacts, after conducting a site visit to the proposed discharge location.

The location of the proposed outlet of the diversion pipe is a diverse, high-quality sedge meadow and calcareous fen. The wetland species present include calciphiles, which are sensitive to changes in hydrology including changes to water level, chemistry, flow rate, and frequency of inundation. The sedge meadow grades into a high-quality tamarack swamp, featuring tamarack, bog birch and poison sumac, and then into an emergent marsh featuring bull rushes, sedges and cattails. In short, this is a very high-quality, sensitive wetland, with plant communities that are globally rare. It is also designated by SEWRPC and Walworth County as a natural area of statewide or greater significance (NA-1).

Even with the best engineering, diverting surface water from Booth Lake to this wetland would have significant consequences for the natural communities present. The health of this wetland depends on mineral rich, cold groundwater that seeps into the wetland. Diverting surface water will significantly change the temperature, chemistry and volume of the water in the wetland, and endanger a rare wetland community.

Thank you for your consideration of nature as part of this project and we look forward to further conversations with the District.

Respectfully,

Brian Miner, M.N.R.
Southeast Wisconsin Land Steward

Sarah Gatzke, MS, P.E.
Director of Water Conservation

CC: Michelle Goetsch, Girl Scouts of Wisconsin Southeast
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