

We are sending you this packet on behalf of C.L.E.E.R. (Citizens League for Environmental and Economic Responsibility). Enclosed you will find a copy of the signed Petitions we have gathered thus far voicing our opposition to the proposed CLRSD sewer project. As more petitions come in they will be forwarded to you. Following is a recap of our concerns:

ENVIRONMENT IMPACTS:

We cannot locate any MPCA or DNR information that indicates our lakes and waterways have or are deteriorating since 1990. Conversely, the information that is available indicates water quality and clarity (SECCHI) has improved. Between July 1986 and July 2006 the clarity has increased almost three feet. We believe this is due to the elimination of direct discharge into the lake and the updating of septic systems. According to Douglas County Zoning Lake Miliona has a septic system compliance rate of 93%. Instead of putting pressure on the 7% non-compliant systems we are looking at a \$53,000,000 (for Phases 1-3) sewer project. This course seems to have little basis in common sense.

According to the CLRSD EAW submitted to the MPCA, the discharge plant will be discharging .34 million gallons per day into the Long Prairie River, putting several freshwater muscles in peril (according the MN DNR). The Black Sand Shell Muscle is present at the discharge site in the Long Prairie River. This muscle is named as one of North Americans most imperiled group of animals. The supposed clean water discharging of phosphorus is to be “mitigated” by trading with another source in the Lake Pepin Water Basin. In other words, we are surpassing the recommended limits of phosphorous discharge into the Long Prairie River and “sending it down river.” This does not seem like good environmental practices. Additionally, one of the rare features that were identified that may be affected by this project is the Pug-Nose shiner. These shiners are found in Lake Miliona and Lake Irene. The DNR notes that this species is intolerant to environmental degradation, especially turbidity and siltation. We believe the massive excavation around these bodies of water would definitely bring about turbidity and siltation. The reports from the DNR Natural Heritage and Non Game Research programs state specifically that “the project itself will not permanently displace wildlife while others less tolerant may BE PERMANENTLY DISPLACED.” All of this “research” was obtained by CLRSD for less than \$300, yet the project progresses.

ENCONOMIC IMPACTS:

According to the USDA Rural Development the current benchmark’s set forth for “affordable sewer projects” assessments should be 1.5% of the median household income. This benchmark formula should be used on year round, voting residents. We believe if this was taken into account, the current sewer assessment is two times the USDA benchmark. When this project was initially approved by the legislature the costs were within acceptable parameters. With loss of funding, the exorbitant cost falls solely on the landowner. We cannot hold up under the huge increases in project costs.

As citizens we are asked to vote on many referendums (i.e. schools/jails, etc.) that have far less impact financially on our household budgets. We did not go to the voting booth on this proposed project. We believe our township board voted for this project without a CLEAR majority concensus. It was based on a survey. Any non returned surveys were tallied as “yes, move ahead with the sewer project.”

The costs of the project as of 1/1/08 are up to \$53,000.000. We want you to know that these costs do not include the out of pocket additional cost to the property owners for hooking up to the sewer system. These costs will run between \$6,000.00 - \$10,000.00 with no estimate for replacing blacktop driveways or priceless trees.

WE REQUEST THAT THE PROJECT BE TABLED UNTIL FEDERAL AND STATE FUNDING BECOMES AVAILABLE AGAIN TO OFFSET ECONOMIC HARDSHIP IN THESE ALREADY FINANCIALLY STRESSED TIMES. WE ALSO REQUEST THAT THE ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES WE’VE ADDRESSED BE THOROUGHLY INVESTIGATED THROUGH AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT SURVEY (EIS).

WE REQUEST AND ENCOURAGE YOU TO ATTEND OUR NEXT PUBLIC MEETING AUGUST 2, 2008 AT 10 A.M. AT THE MILTONA COMMUNITY CENTER.

Respectfully submitted by The CLEER Group (Citizens League for Environmental & Economic Responsibility)

Petition Pages 1 through 12 are enclosed.

Phase 2 Petitions Pages 1 through 23 are enclosed.