

Letter from Trustees of DD#37

March 14, 2022

Dear Landowners of DD 37,

We are two months past the trustee election in which Rod Dillard, Bill Gerdeman, and Allen McGranahan were elected to one-, two-, and three-year terms, respectively. We are currently considering how to accomplish the goals set out for us. As the efficient functioning as a drainage ditch is our primary duty, each trustee agrees that we want Pickerel Run to operate, at a minimum, as it was originally designed. We are starting out more than \$491,000 in the red, primarily due to the engineering study for the unwanted repairs and improvements proposed, and the court costs associated with gaining the trusteeship from the county supervisors.

We have determined that a much less costly repair program can be implemented than was presented to us a few years ago. Removing trees that threaten the function of the ditch and addressing problematic main tile lines will be sufficient. We are not considering other types of improvement, although some dirt work may be necessary to give contractors access to the trees. Only trees with the potential to impede the free flow of water need to be removed. In the case of other trees in the right of way, we intend to work with the adjoining landowners regarding specific tree removal.

We hired a contractor to remove trees that are down in the ditch channel. We had concerns that this material could cause flooding problems if we had high water flow and it became lodged in the culverts or bridges. We want to thank Carter Gerdeman and Luke Langner for walking the ditch and providing us with photos and geo-referenced details that enabled us to make that decision. That work is largely done. The contractor was able to work on the ice and get most of the major trees and large branches. The workers commented on the large amount of wildlife they saw. They mentioned seeing turkeys, deer and river otters along with many birds such as eagles and hawks. We want to preserve that aspect of the ditch as much as possible while allowing it to function properly.

The previous engineering report did not sufficiently address the specifics of the tree clearing, at least not enough for a contractor to bid on; it simply called for complete tree removal. We want

to target only those trees which will present a problem for the functioning of the ditch. On the advice of our attorney, we are seeking out an engineering firm to supervise the contractor that

submits the winning bid. We have also considered an alternative approach, in which work might proceed in short stages that would not require an engineer or competitive bidding. But we have

concluded that it would be most efficient to complete the maintenance as one project.

Please contact the trustees, either in person or through the Pickerel Run email, if you have any questions or comments. We intend to keep the landowners informed to the best of our ability.

Thanks for your patience,

Trustees of DD 37