

Lake Washburn Association

Newsletter

Working to Protect our Beautiful Lake and its Environment for Future Generations

Summer 2007

Important Dates:

Next Newsletter Deadline: 1/5/08

The "Winter 2008" issue will include upcoming 2008 meeting dates.

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From the President's Desk...

Reflections on the summer...

I am sitting at my desk looking out through the trees at the at mist rising off North bay as the sun rises on to the peninsula. A sumac on my hillside is already red and the crisp air underscores the end of the summer. What a privilege to experience a quiet Sunday morning like this.

I am amazed at how seriously some individuals take their stewardship responsibilities toward the lake. I suppose it is a natural grateful response to their good fortune of what the lake has given to them. Quietly those people contribute thousands of hours of their time to being good stewards.

I was also struck by the results of a survey of over 1,100 Pine River Watershed property owners which overwhelmingly found that water quality and responsible land-use were the most important issues to our friends and neighbors. A similar study survey in Crooked Lake Township yielded almost identical results. There is a relatively silent majority when it comes to protecting our lakes and waters—or at least that is what the numbers say.

On the Association we continue to work on protection. For example, we will begin much more vigorous boat monitoring to prevent invasive exotic species, we continue to test water four times a year at four different locations. We closely monitor fishery data and work with the DNR to manage the fishery. We should do more, and certainly we could with help from those who want to give back a little. Anyone who wants to help let us know! We have volunteer opportunities ranging from working on the board to boat monitoring for 2 hours.



There will be various photos throughout this newsletter from John Kallas' visit with the Skalbecks the 4th of July holiday.

New Outdoor Warning Siren for Washburn Lake

By Jane Gaskill

At the June General Meeting, Jamie Prax and Sarah Fairbanks invited the Lake Washburn Association (LWA) to help support the purchase and installation of outdoor warning sirens for the Washburn Lake and Outing areas. LWA MEMBERS RALLIED TO THE CAUSE! By the end of August, 77 families who live or vacation on Lake Washburn had donated a total of \$3,255. LWA "matched" members' donations and contributed \$6,510 to the siren fund in September.

At the time this article was written, the installation on the new outdoor warning system was planned to begin in late September. The siren on Washburn Lake will be located on Peninsula Road, approximately 0.7 miles north of county road 48. The Outing siren will be located by the fire station.

THANK YOU to the many LWA members who, along with the Chamber, the township, Sentry Siren and other supporters, have provided the funds and volunteer services needed to make Jamie and Sarah's vision a reality. The outdoor warning system will alert residents and visitors to potential danger and make Washburn Lake a safer place to live and vacation.

Minnesota Seasonal Recreational Property Owners (MSRPO)

Jeff Forester, Executive Director of the Minnesota Seasonal Recreational Property Owners Coalition (MSRPO) spoke to the Lake Washburn Association at the June General Meeting. MSRPO's main tasks are communication with Minnesota law makers and to advocate for fair taxes for our lakeshore cabins and homes. The LWA membership voted to join MSRPO as an organization member and provide a \$250 donation. Jeff invited LWA members to join MSRPO and said a donation of \$10 with individual membership would be appreciated. For more information, you may go to the MSRPO web page at www.mrspo.org or call the office at 952-854-1317.

Lake Washburn Association 2007-2008 Board:

POSITION	NAME	E-MAIL ADDR/	PHONE NUMBERS	COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENT
President:	Ted Johnson	ttjohnson@comcast.net	218-792-5958 / 952-926-3610	Sustainability, / Water Testing
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"	Gary Gabel	gabelggsg@aol.com	218-792-5709	Water Patrol
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"	Marv Hildreth	mrvhild@aol.com	218-792-5297	Membership
"	Debbie Skalbeck	sdskalbeck@msn.com	218-792-5789 / 952-942-6438	Membership, Highway 48
"	Mel Metz	-	218-792-5052 / 763-441-0661	-
"	Richard Nelles	habitat@brainerd.net	218-792-5892	Loons, Bouys
"	Jim Patterson	patterson@p&slaw.com	218-670-5307 / 612-827-7156	Healthy Lakes
"	Rollie Hirman	-	218-792-5528 / 239-297-6644	Boat Monitor. / Exotic Invasive Spe.
Publisher	Ted Johnson	ttjohnson@comcast.net	(see above)	
Editor	Bonnie Lee Johnson	bonjohn2@brainerd.net	218-792-5763	

2006 Lake Vegetation Survey

By Harold Cazier – Fisheries Committee

In July of 2006, the DNR Ecological Services Division completed a survey and study of the aquatic vegetation in our lake. The survey was rather extensive and the resulting report presents a number of observations and conclusions concerning our lake.

In brief, the lake was sampled on a grid basis with a total of 819 sample sites. Samples were taken at depths ranging from the shore line out to depths of 24 feet, However, vegetation was most commonly found from shore out to a 15 foot depth. 82% of the sample sites contained plants. Common submerged plants included bushy pondweed, flat stem pondweed, muskgrass, wild celery and coontail. The east basin contained a higher number of vegetated areas. The west and north basin often contained a higher number of individual species per site.

The good news coming from the survey is that

at that time there was no evidence of our lake containing any non native invasive species such as Eurasian Milfoil or Curley-leaf Pondweed.

In hopes of keeping our lake free of invasive plants and mussels, we remind our members to talk to their guests that bring a boat or jet ski to our lake and ask that they inspect their boats and trailers BEFORE launching their boats into the lake. This should also include the draining of live wells and sumps.

For any one interested in reviewing the full DNR report; it can be found at:

www.dnr.state.mn.us/ecological_services/pubs_aquatics/veg_reports.html *Note: underscores appear in the breaks above in the address.* If you do not have internet access and would like a copy, contact Harold Cazier 218-792-5430.

The report is really worth reading if you want to learn about our lake’s structure, makeup and the relationship between our lake's clarity and vegetation.

Sustainability Committee Report

by Ted Johnson, President

Currently the sustainability is working with several property owners around the lake to help them achieve their objectives for their land, and the lake.

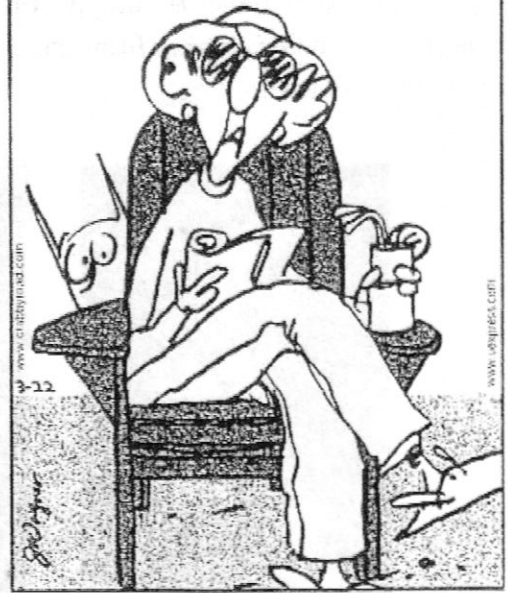
We have identified approximately 10 projects which have over three miles of shoreline, and over 300 acres of land.

The goal when we work with a property owner is to help them achieve their objectives, which means looking at their tax situation, long-term desires for their land, and their plans for future generations (including estate tax considerations).

However, the committee’s role will be as a facilitator or resource. We are partnering with the DNR, the Leech Lake Area Watershed Foundation (LLAWF), and other organizations.

Editorial Comment

*It's International Goof-Off Day!
One of about 365 on my calendar.*



Washburn Lake 2007 Boat

Monitoring Summary

By Bob Holman

Another year of boat monitoring has past. Boats were checked on 3 occasions: Opening Fishing, Memorial Day and Fourth of July - 3 days each. The total number of boats checked is as follows:

Fishing opener - 37 total: 24 from Washburn; 11 from other lakes; and 2 new.

Memorial Day - 42 total: 33 from Washburn; 8 from other lakes; and 1 new.

Fourth of July - 34 total: 16 from Washburn; 18 from other lakes.

At the LWA General meeting in August, a question was asked about the percentage of boats checked that came from other lakes. For the 3 weekends, 33% were from other lakes. Lake Minnetonka and White Bear Lake were two lakes that have Eurasian Milfoil.

An updated list of lakes containing these exotic species will be obtained from the DNR this fall. From this list, a report will be generated to summarize the 2006 and 2007 boat monitoring efforts and identify those outside lakes that contain milfoil and/or zebra mussels. This list will also be provided to the boat monitoring volunteers to emphasize the importance of taking extra precautions for boats coming from these lakes during 2008 boat monitoring.

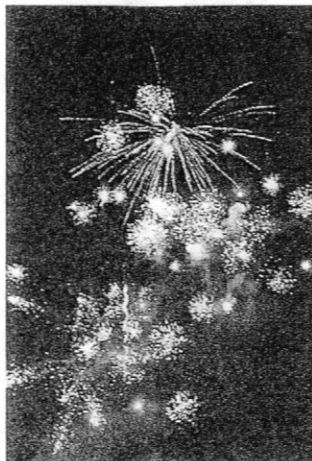
The LWA and all lake residents should thank the following boat monitoring volunteers - true stewards of our lake:

- Richard Nellis
- Ron and Jane Gaskill
- Gerald Ballard
- Mark Hegman
- Ken Reynolds
- Greg Hosch
- Dave Snesrud
- Rollie Hirman
- Stephanie and Darren Strafelda
- Christine Holman
- Dave Judd
- Jerry Hagel
- Pat Johnson
- Keith Ahlquist
- Tike Ballard
- Dick Seelye

I apologize if I have missed anyone.

As an LWA director, I was responsible for the boat monitoring duties for 2006 and 2007. I especially appreciate all the volunteers who dedicated their time for such an important activity.

The willingness of these individuals to volunteer made my job easy.



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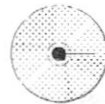
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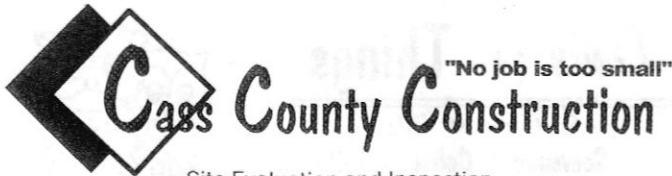
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Reasons why sooner rather than later is good for Conservation Easements and Land Donations

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- Through December 31, 2007 conservation easements will be deductible up to 50% of a taxpayer's adjusted gross income, and a tax payer can continue take a 50% deduction until the value of the donation is used (up to 15 years). After December 31, 2007 percentage will be reduced to 30%.
- Cass County has funds available which can be used for all the costs associated with a conservation easement or land donation. These costs include appraisal costs, legal costs, and closing costs. These funds are limited and will be used on a first come first served basis!
- Easements donated can be used to generate grant funds (Reinvest in Minnesota, RIM) which can be used for other conservation projects. In some cases the families, and individuals holding these parcels will need to take action soon, in many cases they have expressed interest in bargain sales if the land is preserved.
- Estate Tax law is set to change back...in 2011. The exemption on estate tax has been increasing, and the estate tax will be eliminated in 2010—but if no further tax legislation is passed it will return to \$1 million exemption in 2011. That means that larger estates will be taxed at a rate of 55% on its assets in excess of \$1 million. Because a conservation easement reduces the value of your property that would reduce the amount of your estate subject to estate tax, and reducing the risk of needing to sell the cabin to settle the estate tax.

If you want to have a say in how your land is used after your death an easement and other provisions in your will could avoid conflict among relatives, and proactively dealing with the questions helps.

2007 Loon Report

by Richard Nelles

Six adopted loon platforms were put out in early spring of 2007. Three of these platforms produced two chicks each for total of six chicks. Those platforms were the Cartwright and Nelles platforms in east lake and the Sue Estvold platform in west lake. A natural nest on Loon Island (southern most island) east lake produced two chicks. Two other known natural nests didn't produce because of predation to the eggs.

In the early morning hours in July two coordinated boat counts of loons were made by John Ulrich and Richard Nelles. One boat started in south end of east lake and one south end of west lake with the boats then meeting in the west narrows. On 7-19-07, 30 adults and seven chicks were counted. On 7-20-07, 33 adults and seven chicks were counted.

Something of interest, of what we have been experiencing the past years, appeared in the June Journal of Wildlife Management by the Wildlife Society. Volume 71, Number 4, June 2007. Article name: Reproductive Advantages for Common Loons using Rafts. This research was done in Maine and New Hampshire



Exotic Invasive Species Program Approved by General Membership

At the August General meeting the membership unanimously approved an Exotic Invasive Species Prevention Plan, the most substantial part of which was an increase in monitoring boats as they enter and leave Washburn.

Historically we have had people from the Association perform inspections at the boat landing on major weekends. While we plan to continue that program, we determined that more action was needed. The Department of Natural Resources will supply trained interns to perform inspections at the public landing on an expanded schedule.

We have already initiated conversations with other area Associations (Thunder and RALALA) to increase signage, and coordinate our plans with theirs.

Additionally the other parts of the plan include: increased training for volunteers and citizens, and this will be scheduled early next year, and allowing LWA members to create a fund to take care of annual program costs as well as building reserves to react quickly when an exotic species is located, and hopefully reduce or eliminate the problem before it takes over.

At the meeting we looked at the prevention costs compared to the costs of controlling an infestation like milfoil, and the consensus was the prevention dollars are well spent. As an example, Bay Lake (2390 acres), which has had Eurasian Milfoil for 20 years spends around \$140,000 per year on the invasive species problem—all of that is financed from the property owners!

This plan will be reassessed next year looking closely at the data and experience from the first year.

Old Western Saying:

*"When you find yourself in a hole,
quit digging."*

Rest in Peace

Marilyn K. Waters

Waters, Marilyn K. age 71, went home to be with the Lord on May 15, 2007 after an eight year journey with breast cancer. She is survived by loving husband and best friend, Cliff and their four children. Marilyn lived with her husband Cliff on Coon Tail Drive.

LWA Website

The new website is now available and we are adding and updating the content as time allows. We will begin adding minutes of both the Board and Membership meetings in the near future. Take the time to take a look at what Linda Snesrud has done for us. (Thank you, Linda!).

The new website address is:

www.minnesotawaters.org/LWA

The new email address will be:

LWA@minnesotawaters.org



THE INCREASE IN ANNUAL DUES WILL BE USED TO HELP
SUPPORT SPECIAL MILFOIL PREVENTION EFFORTS*

Lake Washburn Association Membership Form

2008 Annual Dues are \$25.00 (Jan. 1 – Dec. 31)

___ 2008 Dues (\$25.00) ___ 2007 Dues (\$15.00) ___ New Member ___ Renewal ___ Contribution Only

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Lake Address _____

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\$ _____ to Milfoil & Other Invasive Species Prevention efforts*

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- Water Quality Testing
- Boat Monitoring
- Buoy Markers
- Milfoil & Other Invasive Species Prevention

Winter Address (if different from above) _____ City _____

State/Zip _____ I will be at this address from _____ until _____

- *LWA intends to contract with the DNR to more intensely monitor public boat ramps to prevent the invasion of Eurasian watermilfoil, zebra mussels and other invasive species. Donations to the exotic species prevention efforts are restricted to that use only.
- Memberships and additional donations are tax deductible. Any additional donations received will be treated as general funds unless otherwise instructed.
- Please check your mailing label for your membership status

Mail Membership Form along with payment to:

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Water Safety Boating Rules and Regulations

1. Water skiing and similar acts are prohibited between one hour after sunset to sunrise of the following day.
2. Operation of personal watercraft (jet skis) is allowed only from 9:30 a.m. to one (1) hour before sunset.
3. Jet skis must maintain 150 ft. separation from all other water craft.

*Rules taken from the 2007 Minnesota Boating Guide ★ pages 34, 36.

Raise LWA Membership Dues to Prevent Eurasian Milfoil

By Jane Gaskill, Treasurer

At the August 2007 Annual Meeting, the Lake Washburn Association (LWA) decided to take additional steps to prevent the invasion of Eurasian watermilfoil, zebra mussels and other exotic species. To offset the cost, dues for 2008 will increase from \$15 to \$25. Next summer, LWA will contract with the DNR to monitor the public boat ramp several days a week. Additionally, DNR will offer training to volunteers from our lake. With the combination of DNR staff and trained volunteers, we hope to maximize our efforts to keep exotic species out of our lake. Your continued membership and donations will help protect our lake.



Lake Washburn Association

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Washburn infected with Purple Loosestrife

By Ted Johnson, President

Just before labor day when two LWA volunteers were out doing water testing, they noticed purple loosestrife on the northeast side of Eastlake. It is well established on about a hundred yards of shoreline. The DNR has confirmed that it is purple loosestrife, and instructed members of the association on a plan of action.

On Saturday, September 8, a group of LWA volunteers removed the seed heads from the plants, and treated individual plants with a herbicide. The DNR has told us that the plant is likely to return and we will need to repeat this for around 10 years!

Purple loosestrife was imported from the Europe and Asia for use in gardens in the early 1800s. It is a beautiful plant, but it eventually crowds out native species, and is of little use to local wild life (since they are also not from Eurasia!)

Please go to the DNR website for more information on Purple Loosestrife, and keep an eye out on your property. Here is some information from the DNR website to help identify Purple Loosestrife:

- **Flower:** Individual flowers have five or six pink-purple petals surrounding small, yellow centers. Each flower spike is made up of many individual flowers.
- **Leaves:** Leaves are downy, with smooth edges. They are usually arranged opposite each other in pairs which alternate down the stalk at 90 degree angles, however, they may appear in groups of three.
- **Stalks:** Stalks are square, five or six-sided, woody, as tall as 6 feet with several stalks on mature plants.

If you think you have Purple loose strife **DO NOT REMOVE IT.** Call Ted Johnson at 218-792-5958 or 612-619- 6533 and we will come by to take a look. **Simply pulling the plants could actually worsen the infestation!**



Useful Links:
Minnesota DNR:
<http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/invasives/aquaticplants/purpleloosestrife/index.html>