



Ripples

CROW WING COUNTY
LAKES AND RIVERS ALLIANCE
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Get the Lead Out!

By Mike O'Brien, LARA co-president

Carrol Henderson, 72, has been the only director of the Nongame Wildlife Program of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources since its inception in 1977. He's helped spur recovery efforts for peregrine falcons, trumpeter swans, river otters, bald eagles and other lesser-known species.

Henderson proposed the Minnesota tax form Chickadee Checkoff, also called the Loon Line, where taxpayers can donate part of their state tax refund,

or pay extra taxes, which has raised millions of dollars for nongame wildlife projects.

His research showed lead pellets from shotgun shells were poisoning birds feeding in fields and shallow water, leading to a state and eventually federal ban on lead shot for waterfowl hunting.

We need to be more effective reducing the use of lead in both hunting ammo and fishing tackle. Lead poisons loons when they swallow pebbles and small lead jigs and sinkers on lake bottoms. (Loons need the pebbles to help digest their food.) All it takes is one jig or sinker to kill a loon. There are a variety of nontoxic jigs and sinkers available but anglers need to ask for them. We also have at least 30 or so bald eagles (turned into the University of Minnesota Raptor Center) poisoned by lead every deer season after consuming lead fragments in the deer gut piles. Undoubtedly many more eagles perish and are never found. These deaths are unnecessary. Non-toxic ammunition is available in most calibers for rifles, shotguns and muzzleloaders. The prices are now comparable to better quality lead ammo. ... Of even greater concern is that tiny lead fragments penetrate venison and are consumed by deer hunters, their spouses, children and friends. From 10-15 percent of the venison that is donated by hunters to Minnesota food shelves must be destroyed because the packages contain lead fragments. ... (That translates to roughly 1 million) pounds of lead-tainted venison that was consumed by Minnesotans last year. This is not a criticism of deer hunting. It is a wake-up call ... that we should not be feeding lead to our families. It can cause cognitive issues in older adults and can decrease the IQ of young children and harm developing fetuses." -- Brainerd Dispatch

At one of the sessions presented in Cross Lake this summer dealing with the construction of the National Loon Center to be housed in Cross Lake Professor Wefalden from Minnesota Southwest University spoke about loons and their habitat. He also stressed how important it is that we remove lead from the

President's Message

By Phil Hunsicker

This article is being written before the elections on November 6th, so by the time this appears in the LARA newsletter, choices will have already been made. LARA did its part to make sure the environment was part of the conversation. We partnered once again with other environmental organizations working in the region to sponsor the Candidate's Environmental Forum, which took place on October 24th. One of our goals was to show the candidates vying for our votes that people deeply care about the environment. For many of us, a healthy environment is a priority issue. I think we demonstrated that by filling the upper meeting room at the Northland Arboretum with 70+ attendees anxious to hear candidates respond to environmentally related questions posed by our non-partisan moderator, Larry Kellerman. Some candidates did better than others. And unfortunately, some – like Josh Heintzeman, Dale Sova, and John Poston – decided not to show. Message received.

I'm always a bit disappointed that our elected representatives don't have more than a superficial knowledge of environmental issues, but what we really need are candidates who are willing to listen and learn, and who understand that there are times when they need to seek out environmental experts with specialized knowledge so they can make more thoughtful, informed decisions. When it comes down to it, that's all we really want – leaders who take in the facts (not alternative facts), discuss the options with recognized experts (not just those who support them), and then make an informed decision for the benefit of more than just those who support them.

One final observation from the evening: There were no female candidates at the front of the room answering questions. I'm an "older"

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Interview with an AIS Filmmaker

By Phil Hunsicker

On LARA's website (www.crowinglara.org) we feature links to six short, humorous AIS videos that were done by a filmmaker based out of Detroit Lakes, MN. Erika Gilsdorf had an idea to use her filmmaking skills and apply them to a series of AIS public service announcements (PSAs), but she wanted to do something just a little bit different, something that a viewer would watch and remember. Erika shopped her idea around and received funding from numerous counties and lake groups around the state. LARA liked the idea, so we contributed funds to the effort. We think it was money well spent. Watch the videos and we think you will agree.

We posed a few questions to Erika about her background as a filmmaker, and the AIS videos, in particular. We thought our members would be interested in our conversation.

LARA: Tell us a little about yourself as a filmmaker?

Erika: I've been in video production officially since 2007. I've traveled internationally to shoot environmental stories for such entities as National Geographic Wild Chronicles, The Nature Conservancy, United Airlines and The World Bank. I do my international work through my company South Shore Productions (www.southshoreproductions.net) and do my local and regional work, like the AIS series, through Leighton Broadcasting and LB Video Productions based in Detroit Lakes, MN.

LARA: Why were you inspired to create videos about AIS?

Erika: I live on Pelican Lake near Detroit Lakes and have witnessed the impacts zebra mussels and curly leaf pondweed have had on our lake. I want to do what I can to help stop the spread of AIS, and video is a great means to get the word out. About seven years ago I created an AIS PSA series around people doing their part to stop the spread of AIS. It had great reach and was a big success. Also, I was an AIS inspector for two summers recently and was able to get a firsthand sense around reactions to AIS. I saw people starting to 'glaze over' when hearing the message. We also had zebra mussels spread between lakes in our area over a couple summers and people were feeling like the spread of AIS was inevitable and useless to even try. So, I wanted to create a series that would wake people up, engage or 'hook' them through humor, and share the actions we want people to take in a simple, engaging way. I wanted a series that made people feel a part of a movement to help our lakes and to strengthen the message that doing their part was easy.

LARA: What kind of reaction have you gotten from the videos?

Erika: We've been so amazed at the response from the series. It has been picked up by news stations across the state and by wonderful lake associations and organizations who have shared it through their members, within their communities and through businesses and government agencies. It's been incredible. I'd like to mention that this series wouldn't have happened without the leadership of dedicated organizations like LARA who helped launch the project. LARA was the FIRST to support it. Thank you! You've helped spread the word on AIS across Minnesota!

LARA: Do you have a funny (or interesting) story to tell about the filming of the videos?

Erika: It was pretty crazy shooting the six videos with the AIS characters, a crew, extra actors, and a number of boats and props. It got pretty hectic. To make our AIS characters look 'lakey' we kept a bucket of weeds and mud to put on them for different scenes. At first, I let the actors dirty up their own shirts

Lead

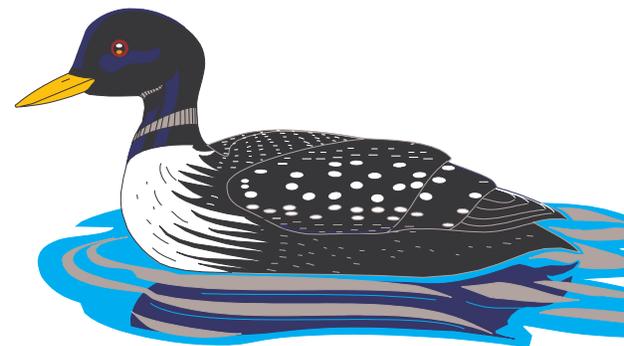
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environment as it is the number one cause of deaths in loons.

"Lead-based hunting bullets fragment a lot more than I'd thought. Lead is a very soft metal, and when fired from a rifle, the extreme velocity makes the bullet almost splash on impact rather than fragment. Tiny bits of lead can be distributed widely throughout a deer or other big game animal, even with good shot placement.

"I also learned it doesn't take very much lead to poison an eagle. And "lead poisoning" doesn't always mean acute sickness and death. Lead is a neurotoxin and even in small doses it can impair senses and cognitive ability, making an eagle, or other bird or animal, more susceptible to other risks such as being hit by a car, starvation, or predation." - Leaving Lead Behind: One hunter's decision to rethink his choice in ammunition September 24, 2018 by Tom Hazelton

At the the local level fishermen and hunters can choose non lead fishing tackle and ammunition. Our lake association is providing lead free tackle to our members on a one-to-one basis when they turn in the the lead tackle. You too can help to "Get the Lead out!" 🦅



President's Message

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white male, and even I am sick of having no other option than voting for yet another older white male. If we really want change in our government, we need different perspectives, different life experiences, and different voices that are packaged in something other than an older white male. We've screwed up enough. Let's give someone else a chance. 🦅

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CrowWingLARA.org

and hair with weeds. But, as we got busier and busier, I just forgot and caught myself at one point just splattering our poor Eurasian watermilfoil actor with weeds before the next scene and had to stop and apologize. He just laughed and said he was already used to it. And because we shot this series in early May, soon after the ice went off, the water was pretty chilly. We had to have our Eurasian watermilfoil actor go in the lake for a few takes. He was shivering so bad we had to stop and go with what we had.

LARA: If a big-budget Hollywood-style film were to be made about AIS, and you were asked to direct it, who would you cast as the zebra mussel? Who would you cast as the starry stonewort? And finally, who would you cast as the hero?

Erika: I can't come up with any big-time Hollywood actors right now. Do you have any ideas I should consider if Hollywood comes calling?

LARA: Sure, my choices would be Javier Bardem for the zebra mussel. He played a great villain in "No Country for Old Men," and like zebra mussels, he was hard to kill. He also played a villain

in a recent James Bond movie. The starry stonewort is a little more difficult. Because it is fairly new to Minnesota, it would have to be an actor less well known. How about Christopher Waltz who was a reprehensible Nazi in "Inglorious Bastards," and he also played a villain in an even more recent Bond film? Any good female villains out there? Roseanne, maybe. How about Kellyanne Conway or Omarosa? I think either one could pull it off. My heroes would, of course, be watercraft inspectors played by Sylvester Stallone, Bruce Willis, and Daniel Craig (just to stay with the Bond theme). Again, sticking with the Bond theme, I might call my film, "The SPECTRE of AIS." The word, spectre, can be a ghost or something widely feared. For those non-Bond fans out there, SPECTRE is also an acronym for the villainous organization that makes James Bond's life dangerous and highly watchable, especially by simple-minded males like myself. It stands for Special Executive for Counter-intelligence, Terrorism, Revenge and Extortion. I'm not sure any of those tactics would work on AIS, but it couldn't hurt getting James Bond on the job.. 🦋

Be on the Lookout

By Phil Hunsicker

A new creature has been spotted in Minnesota. It was first observed in 2014 and since then, it has been seen in almost every county in the State. Thankfully, it feeds on aquatic invasive species (AIS). It's easy to identify because it has 83 heads and even more tails. Most hope it has legs.

This creature is called "County AIS Prevention Aid." Each year, since 2014, \$10 million has been provided by the Minnesota Legislature to 83 of Minnesota's 87 counties to prevent the introduction and limit the spread of AIS. The funds are allocated based on each county's share of public watercraft trailer launches (50%) and each county's share of watercraft trailer parking spaces (50%) at those public launches. The four counties that receive nothing (Dodge, Fillmore, Pipestone, and Rock) have no public watercraft trailer launches. Crow Wing County has a lot of lakes and a lot of public accesses on those lakes, so it gets the 5th largest amount of all the counties – approximately \$443,000 per year. The only counties that get more are St. Louis, Itasca, Cass, and Otter Tail.

The DNR's role in this is:

- to provide technical support to counties, local governments and their partners to develop AIS prevention strategies;
- to receive county AIS prevention plans and resolutions, describing how funds are used each year;
- to facilitate regional workshops to bring local government staff leading their county's AIS prevention program together to share and learn from collective

experiences, support collaborative efforts, and maintain strong inter-county relationships;

- to facilitate learning workshops on subjects in which counties and their partners have expressed an interest, such as invasive plant and animal identification, a review of existing AIS laws, and how to create effective communications tools;
- and to provide required training for counties and their partners to hire competent Level 1 and Level 2 watercraft inspectors.

It is up to each county to make decisions on how their funds are to be used while still abiding by all current state laws and regulations. County AIS prevention programs cover a wide range of AIS activities. For example, counties and their partners have:

- hosted AIS education booths at community events;
- developed AIS curricula for schools;
- hired watercraft inspectors;
- purchased and operated decontamination units;
- built partnerships with local organizations and businesses;
- surveyed lakes and rivers for AIS;
- detected new infestations;
- distributed grants;
- trained volunteers;

- deployed and monitored zebra mussel sampling plates;
- conducted zebra mussel veliger tows;
- developed plans to quickly respond to new infestations;
- managed AIS infestations using chemical, mechanical, or biological means;
- paid for local law enforcement officer staff time to enforce AIS laws;
- and stopped infested watercraft from launching into un-infested waters.

Albert Einstein is credited with saying, "You can't solve a problem on the same level that it was created. You have to rise above to the next level." Many counties are doing that. AIS Prevention Aid has allowed them to experiment with innovative ideas that may become commonplace AIS prevention tactics in the future. For example:

- Cass County created a 2-day supplemental training for their watercraft inspectors, which includes more information about lake ecology and how to deal with conflicts that may arise with disgruntled boaters at a public access;
- Wright County created a pilot mandatory inspection program for three lakes that requires everyone entering one of those lakes to first go to a centralized inspection and decontamination site, get inspected, and get tagged as a clean boat, motor and trailer;
- Big Stone County started an aquatic robotics program through 4-H to educate kids about AIS while building robotic devices that perform functions in the water;
- Aitkin County has partnered with 20 bait shops and resorts to provide customers with a free gallon of water that can be used to replenish bait buckets when anglers move from one lake to another;
- The Vermilion Lake Association in St. Louis County has been working with local resorts to conduct watercraft inspections at their private accesses;
- Hennepin County is addressing the aquarium trade to prevent the sale and movement of invasive plants and animals;
- Sibley County hired the CLIMB Theater group to perform an interactive, entertaining, and inspiring play about AIS prevention with school children and their teachers;
- Itasca County has a field team that is on track to survey over the next two and one-half years all 700-plus lakes in the county for the presence of AIS;
- Kandiyohi County is using what they learned at a DNR-sponsored Community-Based Social Marketing workshop to get boaters to change their attitudes and behaviors to get increased voluntary use of the county's decontamination units;

- Lake County has instituted an aggressive trapping campaign in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area that targets rusty crayfish, which is threatening to wipe out native crayfish populations and reduce aquatic vegetation, including wild rice;
- And the 12 counties that get the most AIS Prevention Aid have been meeting to have conversations about what they can do together that would significantly reduce the spread of AIS throughout Minnesota.

Common carp arrived by train in Minnesota in the 1880's as part of a federal stocking program that was instigated by the desires of people who had moved from Europe to the United States to find a better life. They had grown up with carp as a steady part of their diet, and they demanded carp be stocked in U.S. lakes and rivers as a desired food source. Curly leaf pondweed followed the common carp to Minnesota a few years later in 1910, possibly as an accident when common carp were brought in. Aquatic invasive species have been in Minnesota longer than anyone currently living in the State. With the help of humans, other invasive species are making their way towards Minnesota. We are still learning about carp and curly leaf, let alone more recent arrivals like zebra mussels and starry stonewort, but one thing we have learned is that it's going to take all of us working together to solve this problem. That is what County AIS Prevention Aid is doing; it is bringing people together to do what we know works and to try what we hope might work even better.

Margaret Mead famously said, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." If you'd like to get involved, talk with your county commissioners. They are the ones tasked with determining how the money should be spent. Another option is to go to the DNR [website](#) and learn about what you, as a thoughtful committed citizen, can do to stop the spread of AIS in Minnesota.



Volunteer Opportunity

If you or someone you know is looking to get involved with protecting our water, Crow Wing LARA is looking for a volunteer to assist with communication via newsletter and website. If you know how to use a computer, you may be who we need!

For more information, email
CrowWingLARA@gmail.com

Quotes Worth Sharing

"Earth provides enough to satisfy every man's need, but not every man's greed." ~ Gandhi

"Save the Earth. It's our only source of chocolate." ~ Anonymous

"If a man walks in the woods for love of them half of each day, he is in danger of being regarded as a loafer. But if he spends his days as a speculator, shearing off those woods and making Earth bald before her time, he is deemed an industrious and enterprising citizen." ~ Henry David Thoreau

"The wealth of the nation is its air, water, soil, forests, minerals, rivers, lakes, oceans, scenic beauty, wildlife habitats, and biodiversity... That's all there is. That's the whole economy. That's where all the economic activity and jobs come from. These biological systems are the sustaining wealth of the world."
~ Gaylord Nelson (U.S. Senator and Governor of Wisconsin – "The Father of Earth Day")

"We're all in the same boat, and we only have one boat."
~ Paul Anastas (Yale University Chemist)

"Environment is all of America and its problems. It is rats in the ghetto. It is a hungry child in a land of affluence. It is housing not worthy of the name; neighborhoods not fit to inhabit."
~ Gaylord Nelson

"Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It's not." ~ Dr. Seuss ("The Lorax")

"If you're not a tree-hugger, then you're what, a tree hater?"
~ Douglas Coupland (Canadian novelist)

"I am at two with Nature." ~ Woody Allen

"You cannot get through a single day without having an impact on the world around you. What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make."
~ Jane Goodall

"For 200 years, we've been conquering Nature. Now, we're beating it to death." ~ Tom McMillan (Former U.S. Rep. for the State of Maryland)

"Looking outward to the blackness of space, sprinkled with the glory of a universe of lights, I saw majesty, but no welcome.

Below was a welcoming planet. There, contained in this moving, incredibly fragile shell of the biosphere is everything that is dear to you, all the human drama and comedy. That's where life is; that's where all the good stuff is." ~ Loren Acton (Physicist and Space Shuttle Astronaut)

"To keep every cog and wheel is the first precaution of intelligent tinkering." ~ Aldo Leopold (Conservationist and author of "A Sand County Almanac")

"I am glad I will not be young in a future without wilderness."
~ Aldo Leopold

"We abuse land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect." ~ Aldo Leopold

"There are some who can live without wild things and some who cannot." ~ Aldo Leopold

"Ethical behavior is doing the right thing when no one else is watching – even when doing the wrong thing is legal."
~ Aldo Leopold

"Joys come from simple and natural things: mists over meadows, sunlight on leaves, the path of the moon over water."
~ Sigurd Olson

"As long as there are young men with the light of adventure in their eyes, or a touch of wilderness in their souls, rapids will be run." ~ Sigurd Olson

"In every walk with Nature, one receives far more than he seeks."
~ John Muir

"Keep close to Nature's heart... and break clear away, once in a while, and climb a mountain or spend a week in the woods. Wash your spirit clean." ~ John Muir

"Everybody needs beauty as well as bread, places to play in and pray in, where Nature may heal and give strength to body and soul." ~ John Muir

"God has cared for these trees, saved them from drought, disease, avalanches, and a thousand tempests and floods. But he cannot save them from fools." ~ John Muir 🦋

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