



Ripples

CROW WING COUNTY
LAKES AND RIVERS ALLIANCE
P.O. BOX 53, PEQUOT LAKES, MN 56472

June 2015

In This Issue

Best Management Practices

President's Message

Annual Meeting Date - Mark Your Calendar

CWEPA Fund

Profile of a Lake

Zebra Mussel

Veliger Testing

Speakers Available for your next Meeting

Current LARA Members Listing

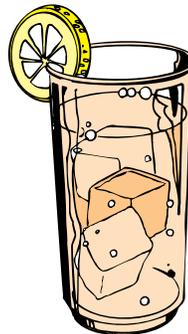
LARA Membership Update

Get To Know Your Board Members

A Best Management Practice: Do Nothing

By: *Phil Hunsicker*

Many of us experienced ice ridges this winter like never before. Ice that froze, thawed and froze again, pushed against the shoreline and created mountains of sand that were close to becoming the highest elevations in Minnesota. For many of us, our first impulse was to get out there with a shovel or a contractor and show that ice and sand just who was boss. And just to show Mother Nature that we wouldn't take this kind of behavior lying down, we threw a ton or two of rip-rap down, too. Take that! We bought ourselves one year of feeling superior until next winter when the ice and sand says, "You really think you're the one in charge? Watch me move these expensive boulders around like they're marbles."



Here's an idea that our parents, teachers and guidance counselors never told us: do nothing. Leave the ice ridge alone. Let nature have her way while we sit back in a comfortable chair, sip ice tea, watch the ballgame, and spend that rip-rap money on things like college funds for our grandchildren. That ice ridge, which may not fit into our current vision of what a desirable shoreline should look like, provides a natural barrier that protects the lake from runoff coming off our lawns. Our lawns. There's another expensive time-consumer we should talk about. Maybe next time. This time, I want to recommend that instead of attacking our ice ridges, why not embrace the low maintenance appeal of a sand dune in our very own yard. Why is it that a sand dune found on Cape Cod or along the shores of Lake Michigan is viewed as a beautiful wonder of nature, but here on our lakes, it is viewed as the enemy?

Nowadays, a full glass of ice tea is my enemy, and I will annihilate it any chance I can get. And I don't care if an unattended ice ridge sees me do it.

If you have any other low-maintenance or no-maintenance best management practices to share, let us know and we'll compile a list for those of us who no longer have the time or the energy to fight Mother Nature. I'll share them with you... unless I'm busy sipping my tea. 🐾

President's Message

By: *Mike O'Brien*

Crow Wing County has released its 2015 AIS plan. The focus again will be on inspections. Allocation of inspection hours will be based on risk of each landing: 400 hours for very high risk, 200 for high risk. For those with moderate risk landings, the county did not allocate any hours. However, lake associations are free to purchase inspection hours through the county's program. If you are a large association and manage inspectors on multiple lakes, you can spread your overall allocation around to all your lakes as you best determine.

Crow Wing County has partnered with Employment Resource Center (ERC) to provide staffing for the AIS watercraft inspectors. If you or someone you know is interested in becoming a Level I inspector, visit www.ercstaffing.com or in person at 607 Washington St. in Brainerd. If you have any questions contact Employment Resource Center at 218-824-9675 and ask for Chad or Tyler. More information on the county's AIS program can be at <http://www.crowwing.us/1004/Aquatic-Invasive-Species-AIS>.

LARA will continue to represent area lake associations and assist in finding solutions to AIS problems at the local level. Grant monies and other assistance can be accessed through our web site: CrowWingLARA.org. 🐾

Mark Your Calendar for the LARA Annual Meeting!

Location: Lake Edward Town Hall

Date: Monday, August 10, 2015

Time: 7-9 p.m.

CWEPA Grant Applications Available August 10

By Ann Beaver

The Crow Wing Environment Protection Advised Fund (CWEPA



Fund), administered by the Crow Wing County Lakes and Rivers Alliance (LARA), makes grants to support projects, programs, and activities that lead to protection, restoration, and preservation of natural resources and environmental assets within Crow Wing County.

Although applications won't be available until the LARA annual meeting on August 10, it's not too early to begin thinking about and putting together a proposal for a project your lake association would like to undertake next year with some possible financial help from the CWEPA Fund. Each year the CWEPA Fund awards one or more grants using earnings from the principal it has invested through the Initiative Foundation. Any funds awarded must be matched by the recipient of the grant.

Awards are made for the following purposes:

- Building the capacity of lake associations or other nonprofits working in natural resource protection in Crow Wing County. Examples could include skills training, leadership development, membership recruitment, or educational projects which result in measurable changes in behavior.
- Supporting site specific projects which protect or restore natural resources. Examples could include lakescaping or native buffer enhancement projects, fisheries or wildlife habitat protection or restoration, or educational programs to prevent aquatic invasive species spread or introduction (excluding public access monitoring).
- Implementation of projects which address causes (rather than treating symptoms) and promote action. For example, grant funds could not be used to support aquatic vegetation control for nuisance management or aesthetic reasons, but could be used for a project which mitigates nutrient inputs which exacerbate aquatic vegetation growth.

Applicants must be a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. LARA will provide fiscal agent services, at a nominal charge, for its member organizations that do not have this non-profit status. 🐸

Profile of a Lake

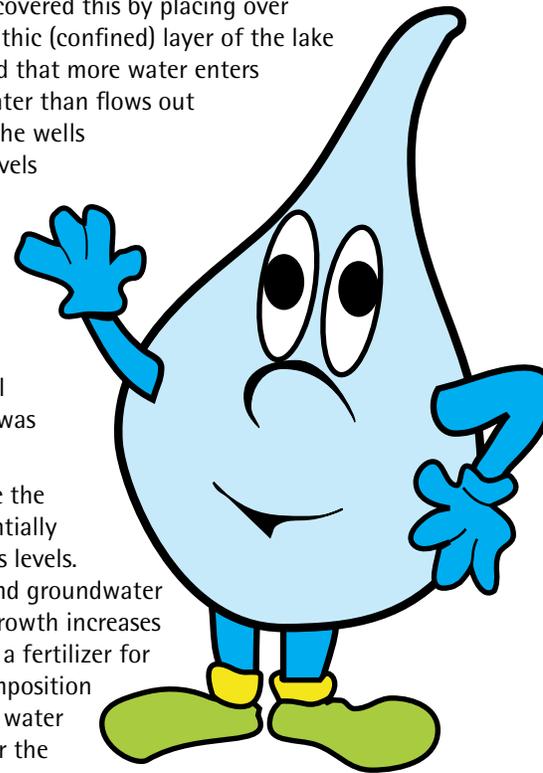
By Tom Beaver

Dr. Bill Maucker, a retired college president, and Ted Soteroplos, a retired florist, had lake places of Lower Cullen Lake, a 500 acre lake north of Nisswa on a branch of the Gull Lake Chain. This odd pair had little in common, with the exception of their love of the lake and their inquisitive minds. Founding one of the first proactive lake associations in the late 1970s, they set out to read the pulse of Lower Cullen. Their two resources were A.W. Research's Alan Cibuzar and Joe Magner, the MPCA's lead hydrologist for nonpoint pollution.

Their first task was to map an annual limnological profile of Lower Cullen every two weeks for an entire year. Included in the chemistry testing was a surface to bottom dissolved oxygen profile. From those baseline data and lake studies, it was clear the phosphorus (P) was increasing in the lake's water even though the lake exchanged, on average, 28% of its water annually. A percentage of the new water was groundwater. They discovered this by placing over 100 wells (lysimeters) through the benthic (confined) layer of the lake bottom near shore. These wells showed that more water enters Lower Cullen in the form of groundwater than flows out through its outlet stream. In most of the wells the water tested at lake benchmark levels – 20 ppb P. However, wells located near old, no longer used lakeshore cesspools had readings as high as 300 ppb P. Another citizen-run water study, under the guidance of A.W. Research, had readings in collected rainfall of over 300 ppb P after several heavy rain events, indicating the rain was collecting phosphorus from the air.

Once eutrophication of a lake is above the mesotrophic stage there is an exponentially rapid acceleration in rising phosphorus levels. This is not only from the air, runoff, and groundwater contamination, but as aquatic plant growth increases with rising phosphorus levels (P being a fertilizer for plant growth), the annual plant decomposition reinvests its phosphorus back into the water column and lake bottom sediments for the next year's plant growth, ad infinitum.

A study of a Canadian lake showed that if more than 12% of a lake has disturbed shoreline, its phosphorus level is elevated above its natural level. There are no quick fixes to the rising phosphorus levels in our surface waters, but unless phosphorus is limited somehow, more waters will become impaired. We lake folks can't control phosphorus in the air; we can't eliminate phosphorus in the aquatic plant life cycle, unless we want to adversely affect fish and other wildlife habitat; we can't control leachates from old shoreline cesspools we know nothing about; but we can control our current uses of lakeshore. 🐸



Zebra Mussel Veliger Testing

Crow Wing County has contracted with RMB Labs to provide testing for the microscopic zebra mussel offspring (called 'veligers'). The testing is planned for July, which is generally when there is the highest concentration of veligers in the water column. While the County is paying the costs for the lab work, if your lake wants to participate, you need to meet the following criteria:

- **Must be a lake currently not infested with zebra mussels and have a public access (or highly used private access)**
- **Volunteer(s) to attend a training session put on by RMB/Crow Wing County.**
- **Trained volunteer(s) to collect a sample. The volunteer will need a boat and GPS unit or smartphone to take GPS coordinates of sampling locations.**
- **Each lake needs to supply its own 63 micron sampling net. They are currently \$182 and available at: <http://shop.sciencefirst.com/wildco/tow-nets/6465-turtox-tow-nets-12in-mouth-nitex-63m.html>**
- **Each lake needs to supply a bottle of 91% isopropyl (rubbing) alcohol to help preserve the sample. This is available at most drugstores**

If you are interested in participating, please let me know so that we can be in touch as it gets closer to summer. We are hoping to have several training sessions/dates in mid-late June. Currently, we have two slotted for Friday, June 19 with the locations to be determined, but likely one in the Nisswa/Crosslake area and one in the Deerwood/Bay Lake area. If your volunteer(s) cannot make it to the training, our seasonal AIS coordinators can train them afterwards.

Results from the lab analysis will be available within 2 weeks of when RMB is in receipt of the sample. Protocol from DNR will be followed should veligers be found. DNR is currently finalizing these, but generally speaking, everyone will be made aware of the possible infestation and a search for adult zebra mussels will likely commence.

Mitch Brinks, Water Protection Specialist
Land Services Department
Environmental Services Division
322 Laurel Street. Brainerd, MN 56401
Office: (218) 824-1128
Fax: (218) 824-1126
www.crowwing.us 

Looking for a Speaker for your Summer Meeting?

Let's talk about it! What does Clean Water Mean to You? The Crow Wing Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) has teamed up with Crow Wing County (CWC) Extension and Master Gardeners to offer free programs and speakers for community groups, civic groups, church groups, and lake associations.

In these sessions, your group will have the opportunity to view the recently released video: "Pine River Watershed-What Does Clean Water Mean to You?" Local lakeshore owners will discuss shoreland management techniques for clean water and pollinator habitat. Jackie Froemming, Extension Educator, will moderate the sessions and lead discussion questions.

Ron Meyer, Board Chair of the Pine River Watershed Board stated, "The video showcases that the water is the thermometer for what we do on the land. This is a great opportunity to discuss water quality concerns of this area."

According to Jackie Froemming, CWC Extension Educator, "Participants will be able to ask the CWC Master Gardeners questions regarding plant species, what worked on their shoreline, planting locations, and where to purchase the plants."

The session will be tailored to your group's needs. A one hour session is recommended for the complete program. To schedule your session contact Jackie Froemming via e-mail froem022@umn.edu or at 218-824-1068.

The video is also available on YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WGF6RvxpIVs>.

Please contact the SWCD for a DVD copy: Melissa Barrick at 218-828-6197, melissa.barrick@crowwingswcd.org, or visit www.crowwingswcd.org. 

LARA Current Membership

Bass Lake Association (Mission Township)
Clark Lake Conservation Association
Crow Wing Lake Association
Cullen Lakes Association
East Twin Lake Association
Fifty Lakes Property Owners Association
Friends of Lower Hay Lake
Gilbert Lake Association
Gull Chain of Lakes Association
Lake Edward Conservation Club
Lake Hubert Conservation Association
Lougee Lake Association
Lower South Long Lake Improvement Association
Mission Lakes Association
Mud Lake (First Assessment District)
Pelican Lake Association of Crow Wing County
Pelican Lakes Conservation Club
Portage Crooked Lake Improvement Association
RCCC Lake Association
Red Sand Lake Association
Ross-Stark-Twin Lake Association
Upper Hay Lake Association
Upper South Long Lake Improvement Association
Whitefish Area Property Owners Association

Get to know your Board Members

Mike Simons

What prompted you to become a member of the LARA board?

A deep concern for the quality of our lakes and the potential spread of invasive species. The very best way to protect our natural resources is through education and cooperation.



What lake or river are you most connected to (in Crow Wing County)?

I have a cabin on Upper South Long Lake. I am a member and secretary of the lake association and the LID board.

What lake or river environmental issue is most important to you, and what are you doing to help the cause?

The spread of invasive species. I am in charge of the control of curly leaf our lake currently has. I have attended the State of Water Conference last spring and the U of M's open house for the AIS department. The lake association is proposing a grant to pair both the upper and lower lakes and the township in an effort to make everyone aware of the threat of invasive species and how to help prevent it. We also want to find out what lakes in our watershed are doing.

What can others do to help with this cause?

Learn and follow the steps necessary to clean all lake equipment moved from lake to lake. 🦫

Are You Concerned?

Are you concerned about shoreline wetlands being filled in on your lake? LARA would like to hear from you. Take action now and contact Ann Beaver at beaver@uslink.net.

LARA Membership Update

By: Ann Beaver

As of June 2, twenty-four Crow Wing County lake associations have renewed their membership in LARA and four have even included donations along with their dues. Go to <http://crowwinglara.org/members/member-listlinks/> or refer to the list on page 3. If your association is not on the list of 2015 paid members, it's not too late. Download a copy of the membership form (<http://crowwinglara.org/members/>) or send your membership letter (with updates) and dues check to: LARA Membership, P.O. Box 53, Pequot Lakes, MN 56472. 🦫

Don't Miss The Featured Speakers At The LARA Annual Membership Meeting

August 10: 7-9 p.m.

LARA Annual Membership Meeting
Lake Edward Town Hall
Sara Ahlers and Sarah Fogderud
of A.W. Research Laboratories
will be speaking about water testing
and other water related issues

LARA Board Of Directors 2014-2015

Ann & Tom Beaver
218-568-5904
beaver@uslink.net

Nick Bernier
mnarrows@hotmail.com

Jodi Billy
612-875-8084
Jodibilly@comcast.net

Eleanor Burkett
218-828-2326
burke044@umn.edu

Sharon Herwig
CrowWingLARA@gmail.com
Webmaster and Newsletter Editor

Sandy Holm
218-765-3309
rnsholm@brainerd.net

Phil Hunsicker
218-825-9215
phunsicker@q.com

Mike O'Brien
218-764-2666
mikeobriens@gmail.com

Mike Simons
612-822-2575,
651-231-5829 or
218-764-3312
gmikes130@msn.com

Harold Stewart
218-963-3878 or
507-289-5314
stu5010@juno.com

Officers:
Co-Presidents – Mike O'Brien
Phil Hunsicker
Vice President – Sandy Holm
Secretary – Ann Beaver
Treasurer – Ann Beaver