

# RALALA LAKES ASSOCIATION

## MESSAGE FROM BOB EDDY, RALALA ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT

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TO BE MORE INFORMED



## FALL/WINTER 2022

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I want to start the newsletter off with a sincere thank you to Linda Van Straaten (Past President) and Mikie Walker (Secretary), who both retired from the RALALA board this year. Linda and Mikie were long term board members and have contributed significant time and energy to many RALALA efforts. We have highlighted many of Linda's accomplishments in a special article in this newsletter.



Looking back on the 2022 lake season, I can easily say we had a busy and productive year. We kicked off the summer with the Lake Season Launch held at Crooked Lake Township Hall featuring the DNR specialist highlighting their Loon Restoration Program, the Cass County Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) specialist with current information and Prairie Restoration specialist explaining shoreline restoration and it's importance to water quality. We continued a wide range of activities through the summer and into fall. Here's a partial list:

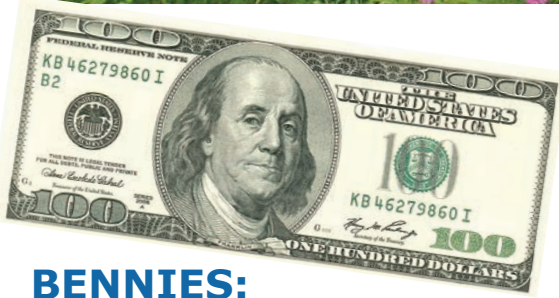
- Monthly Water Quality testing from May through October on North and South Roosevelt, Woods Bay, Leavitt, Lawrence and Smokey Hollow water bodies.
- Seasonally installing, maintaining and monitoring the launch sites (Roosevelt and Lawrence) with the ILID monitoring devices.
- Participating in the Adopt a Highway program on Hwy 6 with many volunteers this year.
- Installing informational signage regarding the importance of shoreline management at the Outing Dock area.
- Collaborating with the DNR and the Cass County Sheriff's Department on new signage at the entrance of Woods Bay.
- Conducting an informative annual meeting in August.
- Participating in "Get the Lead Out" (GTLO) activities, this year at the Corn Feed.
- Appointing a Loon Liaison (Shelia Langer) to work with the DNR's Loon Restoration Program which is funded with BP Deep Water Horizon disaster settlement money.
- Promoting and supporting our POL (Protecting Our Lakes) Program and the Lake Steward Program.
- Working in conjunction with the Cass County Sheriff's Department providing youth boat safety training this year.

I also wanted to point out two other critically important issues we support and continue to focus on. First, we continue our association with Minnesota Lakes and Rivers Advocates (MLR).

*Continued on back page*



# BUILDING AWARENESS • ENCOURAGING ACTION



## **BENNIES: \$100 "Benjamin" for Projects that "Benefit" Our Lakes Awarded**

Two lakeshore property owners reached out to RALALA seeking information and support for shoreline restoration projects. One had a steep bluff and wanted to establish an access to the lake and prevent current and future erosion. The other needed assistance correcting significant erosion and loss of shoreline which has been accelerating with increasing wave action on the lake. They were encouraged to contact the Crow Wing Soil and Water Conservation District (CWSWCD) and given contact information. They both requested and received a site visit from a CWSWCD technician who prepared an extensive written report and recommendations to remediate their properties that would improve and sustain water quality. They each qualified and received a \$100 reimbursement BENNIE from RALALA supporting their lake stewardship.

## **LAKE STEWARDS RECOGNIZED**

RALALA continued its Lake Steward partnership with Minnesota Lakes and Rivers Advocates (MLR) and awarded two additional qualifiers in 2022 with signs to post along their lakeshores. Their properties exemplify shoreland management strategies that capture and filter 90% of the pollution than can runoff into our lakes causing a degradation of water quality and algae blooms. Look for these signs along the lakeshore and see the shift away from traditional landscaping towards lake-based landscaping. Congratulations and thank you to Gary and Sheila Langer and Bob and Diana Lee, our newest Lake Stewards. Six additional lakeshore owners took the Lake Steward Quiz found at [mnlakesandrivers.org](http://mnlakesandrivers.org) and four chose to participate in site visits. With the support of RALALA, they are working to improve their properties, concentrating on native plant shoreline buffer zones and striving to become designated Lake Stewards.

### **CONGRATULATIONS!**

*Sheila and Gary Langer*

*Bob and Dianna Lee*



**PLEASE SUBMIT ARTICLES OR PHOTOS FOR THE RALALA NEWSLETTER**

**President: Bob Eddy 612-961-8513 [bob.eddy@hotmail.com](mailto:bob.eddy@hotmail.com)**

**Roosevelt and Lawrence Area Lakes Association**

**RALALA P.O. Box 139, Outing MN 56662-0139**

**For membership information contact: Darril Wegscheid 651-503-8414  
[djwegscheid@earthlink.net](mailto:djwegscheid@earthlink.net)**

**[www.ralalalakes.org](http://www.ralalalakes.org)**

# BUILDING AWARENESS • ENCOURAGING ACTION

## LAKE STEWARDS RECEIVED GRANTS FOR SHORELAND IMPROVEMENTS



**Deb and Jim Nicholson (left) and Bart Olson and Cyrus Malbari (right)** all qualified for the Lake Steward distinction in 2021. They were highly motivated to continue their efforts to protect the quality of our lakes and reached out to the Crow Wing Soil and Water Conservation District (CWSWCD) for aid and support. After collaborative planning and receiving bids, they chose vendors serving our area specializing in native plant restorations to complete extensive projects. CWSWCD provided cost sharing and RALALA was able to secure a generous grant from the Land and Waters Preservation Trust, an endowment fund, jointly supported by Whitefish Property Owners Association (WAPOA) and the Pine River Watershed Alliance (PRWA) for additional financial assistance for their projects.

**RALALA is committed to supporting property owners in water quality enhancing efforts. Contact us at [ralalalakes.org](http://ralalalakes.org) for information, guidance and support.**



*On a spectacular November third day, the Conservation Corps arrived at 8 AM and worked hard installing large stakes to stabilize the coir logs completing Nicholson's shoreline restoration project.*



*Native plants whose deep roots stabilize the soil and prevent erosion which carries damaging phosphorus into the lake were planted.*



*Embankment was re-contoured to create a ramp for ice movement and stabilized with coir logs and the planting of native plants and trees.*



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## THANK YOU TO LINDA VAN STRAATEN FOR YEARS OF DEDICATION TO RALALA

**Linda Van Straaten** has been a dedicated RALALA board member for 16 years. Linda had a gift for creative fund-raising. Early in her board tenure, RALALA had a project which involved a fly over, by AW Labs, of the two Roosevelt Lake basins to assess lake quality. This wasn't a budgeted item so Linda developed a very innovative approach to raising funds for that project. She had cutout components of an aircraft which she auctioned to members and friends attending the project meeting. People could bid on one or more components of the aircraft. This resulted in a very successful fund raiser which fully funded the project.



In 2009 RALALA moved towards having a greater impact in the lake community and was seeking fund raising ideas to further enhance annual income. Linda organized and chaired a RALALA silent auction as one component of multi-effort fundraising. The silent auction was not only very successful, it was continued for six years, each year raising around \$3,000 for the organization. There were almost no expenses associated with the silent auction so all the proceeds were profit.

Linda was a key player in the establishment of the 105 acre Roosevelt Lake State Aquatic Management Area in Woods Bay. Her parents, Charlie and Judy Eggers, wanted to preserve this special place as protected public land to be managed for fish and wildlife and public recreational opportunities. She, along with her two siblings, made this happen in 2017.

For almost any RALALA project or activity, Linda could be counted on to volunteer and provide assistance. Initially, she served as the Membership Chair, went on to serve as Vice President 2012-2018, President, an office she held until summer 2021, and remained on the board until August 2022. She continues to be actively involved assisting with RALALA's newsletters.

Linda is a long-term summer resident on Roosevelt Lake and spends winters in Tucson, Arizona where she is very involved in volunteer projects. She loves spending time with her family, especially her grandchildren Johan, Alexa, Lizzy and Brooke, and looks forward to that.

**Thank you, Linda, for your years of leadership and service to RALALA!**

# LEAD TACKLE COLLECTION BOOTH AT THE LAKERS LIONS CORN FEED

On August 20, 2022, the Crooked Lake Township (CLT) Lakes and Shores Committee along with the Lake Washburn Association (LWA) and the Roosevelt and Lawrence Area Lakes Association (RALALA), collected 47 pounds, 14 ounces of lead tackle, exceeding the amount collected last year by almost 20 pounds - a fantastic result and according to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), this result set a new record for a single-day lead tackle collection event!

## 2022 COLLECTION BREAKDOWN:

- **RALALA: 17 pounds 8 ounces**
- **LWA: 10 pounds 6 ounces**
- **Other/Township: 20 pounds**

RALALA won the friendly tackle competition with LWA and received the traveling trophy. The amount of lead tackle collected in 2021 was 27 pounds 12 ounces making the two year lead collection amount an impressive 75 pounds 10 ounces.

Again this year, anglers were encouraged to safely wrap and bring in lead fishing tackle to the Get the Lead Out (GTLO) booth at the Corn Feed where it was weighed and placed into hazardous waste bins for disposal. In exchange for turning in lead tackle, raffle tickets were given out for drawings that afternoon. Prizes included fishing rods and reels, and gift certificates for lead free tackle. A Minn Kota trolling motor was the Grand Prize.

Research has shown that lead is toxic to loons, swans and other water birds who pick up small stones on the lake bottom to aid in their digestion. Just one split shot sinker - which to a loon may look like a pebble - can kill them if it is ingested.

*The Crooked Lake Township Lakes and Shores committee consists of area residents and lake association members who are focused on continued efforts to raise awareness of AIS, shoreline restoration, water safety and water quality.*

Photos by Sheila Langer



The CLT Lakes and Shores Committee and the MPCA are grateful to all anglers who participated in the tackle exchange, and to everyone who stopped by the GTLO booth to pick up packets of lead-free tackle, learn about Aquatic Invasive Species, or create a water safety T-shirt like the kids in the photo above.

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# AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES STARRY STONEWORT CONFIRMED IN THUNDER LAKE

## Starry Stonewort (*Nitellopsis obtusa*)

### Characteristics:

- Macro-alga
- Bright green branchlets can be highly variable in length and are arranged in whorls around stem
- Star-shaped bulbils attached to clear root-like filaments

### To report invasive species:

Wrap plant in wet paper towel, place in sealed plastic bag, chill or refrigerate, and contact the Minnesota DNR at [www.mndnr.gov/ais](http://www.mndnr.gov/ais) or 651-259-5100.



The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources has confirmed the invasive algae starry stonewort in Thunder Lake, between Outing and Remer in Cass County.

DNR staff conducting a survey of algae in Thunder Lake found starry stonewort. Funding for this research was provided by the Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund as recommended by the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources.

Follow-up surveys are being conducted to determine the extent of starry stonewort distribution in Thunder Lake. If surveys confirm that starry stonewort is in localized areas of the lake, removal in those areas might be pursued. Such a response could include hand pulling, herbicide applications and other methods as appropriate.

Starry stonewort has never been eradicated from any U.S. lake or river, but treatment or careful removal can help reduce the risk of spread and relieve associated nuisance impacts on water-related recreational activities. Early detection is key to effective management.

Starry stonewort has now been confirmed in 23 water bodies in Minnesota. It was first confirmed in Minnesota in 2015.

In late summer and early fall, starry stonewort's small white star-shaped bulbils become more visible, making it easier to distinguish from other aquatic plants. Information on how to identify starry stonewort can be found on the DNR's website. If people think they've found starry stonewort or any other invasive species new to a lake or river, they should report it to the DNR by contacting their area invasive species specialist.

Starry stonewort is an algae that looks like native aquatic plants and can form dense mats, which can interfere with recreational uses of a lake and compete with native plants. It is most likely spread when fragments have not been properly cleaned from trailered boats, personal watercraft, docks, boat lifts, anchors or other water-related equipment.

### Whether or not a lake has any invasive species, Minnesota law requires people to:

- Clean watercraft, trailers and equipment to remove aquatic plants and prohibited invasive species.
- Drain all water and leave drain plugs out during transport.
- Dispose of unwanted bait in the trash.
- Never release bait, plants or aquarium pets into Minnesota waters.
- Dry docks, lifts and rafts for 21 days before moving them from one waterbody to another.

### These additional steps reduce the risk of spreading aquatic invasive species:

- Decontaminate watercraft and equipment – find free stations on the courtesy decontamination page of the DNR website.
- Spray with high-pressure water or rinse with very hot water (120 degrees for at least two minutes or 140 degrees for at least 10 seconds).
- Dry watercraft and equipment for at least five days before using in another water body.

**More information is available on the aquatic invasive species page of the DNR website.**

[www.mndnr.gov/ais](http://www.mndnr.gov/ais)

## EXAMINE BOAT LIFTS AND DOCKS FOR EVIDENCE OF ZEBRA MUSSELS

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources confirmed a report of **zebra mussels** in **Thunder Lake**, between Outing and Remer in Cass County in 2021.

A lake property owner contacted the DNR in October 2021 after finding zebra mussels on a boat lift being removed from the water for the season. A subsequent DNR shoreline search did not reveal additional zebra mussels. Two DNR K9s trained to detect zebra mussels were brought in, with the cooperation of lake property owners, to search lake properties and equipment. K9s Storm and Brady, and their conservation officer handlers Hannah Mishler and Julie Siems, checked about 20 properties and 50 pieces of equipment. They found four zebra mussels attached to equipment adjacent to the site of the original report.

"Lake property owners and lake service provider businesses play an important role in detecting invasive species, by carefully examining boats, docks and lifts when they are being removed from the water at the end of the season," said Heidi Wolf, DNR invasive species unit supervisor. "The initial report from a lake property owner and the cooperation of others were crucial in detecting zebra mussels in this lake."

As a reminder, Minnesota law requires that docks and lifts remain out of the water for at least 21 days after removal from a waterbody before they can be placed into another waterbody. In addition,



anyone who transports a dock or lift from a shoreline property to an off-site location for storage or repair may need a permit to help prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species.

### IMPORTANT PREVENTION CONSIDERATIONS FOR LAKE PROPERTY OWNERS:

- Look on the posts, wheels and underwater support bars of docks and lifts, as well as any parts of boats, pontoons and rafts that may have been submerged in water for an extended period.
- Anyone paid to remove boats, docks, lifts and other water-related equipment must be DNR trained and permitted. A list of [DNR-permitted lake service provider businesses](#) is available on the DNR website.
- Contact an [area DNR aquatic invasive species specialist](#) if an invasive species is discovered that has not already been confirmed in that waterbody.

## Association of Cass County Lakes (ACCL) Honored for AIS Research Support

Created in 1988, the **Association of Cass County Lakes (ACCL)** is a member organization of lake associations in the Cass County area. RALALA is one of those members. ACCL helps their member lake associations by providing lake-related information and a forum for exchanging information with other members. ACCL is highly engaged with Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center's (MAISRC) Stop Spiny campaign, including participating in a spiny water flea surveillance program. ACCL also brought the AIS Detectors Core Course to Backus twice, which together created 39 certified AIS Detectors in the county. ACCL members have been significant contributors to the over 1500 hours of volunteers in Cass County.

For those efforts, ACCL was the recipient of the **2022 Research Partnership Award** presented by the Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center for "Going above and beyond to contribute to their mission: advancing aquatic invasive species knowledge, and inspiring action to protect and restore Minnesota's cherished lakes, rivers, and wetlands."

# COMMON LOONS PREPARE FOR MIGRATION

*By Sheila Langer*



By fall, adult loons start molting their body feathers. The tattered black and white plumage worn during the breeding season fall out and are replaced with white and gray feathers of their winter plumage usually in September and early October. Even their eyes change to a deep drab reddish brown.

Loons are territorial when they are nesting and raising chicks. But starting in mid-summer, groups of non-mated loons or loons that were unsuccessful with nesting begin to gather and move around between lakes. The social gathering of loons is an impressive event. Sometimes the loons will circle and actively interact. As the summer wanes, these groups get larger and blend into the pre-migratory behavior of gathering on larger lakes. Loons do not typically migrate together. At this time of year, loon pairs usually migrate separately and do not spend the winter together. In families with chicks, one parent will leave first while the other parent remains to care for the chicks for another week or two before also migrating. The chicks are then on their own to fend for themselves, and eventually take off on their own migration. Don't worry if you see loon chicks on their own – by this point, they are old enough to provide 100% of their own food and care for themselves. Adult loons travel to their winter home along the Atlantic coast from North Carolina south to Florida or on the Gulf of Mexico.

Because loons are not well built for life on the land, loons typically sleep in the water. They take short naps. To sleep, a loon turns its neck and folds its head down to rest on its back.



Listen to the calls of our Common Loon [www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Common\\_Loon/sounds](http://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Common_Loon/sounds)



# SUMMARY OF 2022 LOON NESTING ACTIVITY ON LAKE ROOSEVELT

By Sheila Langer

Summer weather came late to our area, with ice still covering our lakes the first week of May. In addition, we experienced two large storms, one on May 30 that was strong enough to flip docks and pontoons and another on June 24 that brought approximately 5 ½ inches of rain just a few weeks before loon chicks were about to hatch. Loon nests can easily be lost when waters rise this much since nests are built right on the water's edge.

In spite of the odds, two loon families were successful. One pair hatched two chicks on North Roosevelt's loon island. Unfortunately, very soon after hatching only one chick remained but was able to grow to adulthood.

Southwest Roosevelt was also home to a nesting pair that successfully hatched two chicks. Both of these chicks also made it to adulthood.

One unusual phenomenon that occurred was that a nesting pair on a small pond next to Lake Roosevelt decided to move their two newly hatched chicks across a dirt road and through a yard making their way to Lake Roosevelt. Although loons have a difficult time navigating on land, this determined pair was able to relocate to upper southwest Lake Roosevelt where we watched the family flourish and grow. Loons need ample space for a runway when taking to the air. They also need to teach their chicks to dive in deeper water and the larger lake provided an abundance of food. Loon chicks begin to catch small prey when they are 4-6 weeks old.

*Loon chick feeding with banded adult*



With the help of these three territorial pairs, Lake Roosevelt became home to five new loon chicks which will hopefully return back to this area three years after they migrate south and reach maturity.

According to a Loon Watch reporter, Smokey Hollow Lake was also home to a nesting pair of loons, with a successful hatch and two chicks made it to adulthood.

If you have kept a watchful eye on loons on Lake Roosevelt, Smokey Hollow, Leavitt or Lawrence, I would love to hear from you about your observations, number of chicks hatched, count of those who made it to adulthood and any other comments or concerns you might have. My email address is [sheilalanger22@gmail.com](mailto:sheilalanger22@gmail.com).

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## ANNUAL NATIVE PLANT, TREE AND SHRUB SALE

Every year the **Crow Wing Soil and Water Conservation District** holds its annual plant, tree and shrub sale taking pre-paid orders beginning in January (until supplies run out) with pick-up at the Brainerd Fairgrounds in May. This is an excellent opportunity to purchase reasonably priced, excellent quality native plants.

**Plant plug kits** are a wonderful way to start building a lake friendly yard:

- Monarch kit
- Lakeshore or rain garden kit
- Shade garden kit
- Shoreline stabilization kit
- Woodland kit

**Seed mixes** are also available:

- Songbird seed mix
- Steep Slope/Bank Stabilization seed mix
- Pollinator seed mix
- Wet Prairie see mix
- Lakeshore seed mix
- Septic Mound or Buffer seed mix
- Upland Dry Shortgrass seed mix
- Savannah Mixed Height seed mix
- New Lawn seed mix
- Wild Meadow seed mix
- Woodland seed mix

Contact: [CWSWCD.org](http://CWSWCD.org)



## OUTING PUBLIC DOCK BUFFER ZONE

The planting at the Outing Public Dock buffer zone used similar plant plugs and seed mixes and by the second year has become a beautiful, vibrant haven for pollinators as well as a filter keeping water damaging pollutants out of the lake.

RALALA encourages you to spend the winter planning your lake protecting shoreline and upland projects. Many nurseries selling native plants have catalogues available the first of the year for pre-ordering and may run out of stock by summer.

To ensure plants and seeds are **truly native and suitable for growing in our area**, **Crow Wing Soil and Water Conservation District (CWSWCD)** provides this list of native plant nurseries and native vegetation consultants within 100 miles of Brainerd, MN.

### **Minnesota Native Landscapes (MNL)**

(native plants, trees & shrubs)

14088 MN-95, Foley, MN 56329

(763) 295-0010

[mnlcorp.com](http://mnlcorp.com)

### **Prairie Restorations Inc. (PRI)**

(native plants, trees & shrubs)

31646 128th St NW, Princeton, MN 55371

(763) 389-4342

[prairieresto.com](http://prairieresto.com)

### **PRI Cloquet Retail store** (plants only)

3943 Munger Shaw Rd. Cloquet, MN 55720

218-729-9044

### **Sunshine Gardens**

(native plants, tree & shrubs)

11286 Shady Shores Dr. Pine River, MN 56474

(218) 947-3154

[sunshinegardens.tripod.com](http://sunshinegardens.tripod.com)

### **Landsburg Landscape Nursery**

(native plants, trees & shrubs)

16460 Hwy. 371 N. Brainerd, MN 56401

(218) 829-5519

[landsburgnursery.com](http://landsburgnursery.com)

### **Itasca Greenhouse**

(native trees & shrubs only)

26385 Blackwater Rd. Cohasset, MN 55721

(800) 538-8733

[itascagreenhouse.com](http://itascagreenhouse.com)

# RALALA Thanks Volunteers Completing Adopt a Highway Fall Clean-up



In 2021 across Minnesota, over 1,500 Adopt a Highway groups volunteered more than 70,000 hours to collect more than 29,500 bags of litter and trash from roadsides and ditches.

Last year RALALA adopted a two mile section of Highway 6 north of Emily, one of the 830 roadway sections available for adoption, and cleans that stretch of highway in the spring and fall. September 24, 2022 RALALA volunteers completed the fall collection.

“We can’t thank our Adopt a Highway volunteers enough for the service they provide our state and would love to have more groups on our team,” said Anne McLellan, statewide Adopt a Highway manager. **“Volunteers not only help to keep Minnesota roadsides clean, but their work allows our MNDOT crews to focus on other tasks that help keep highways safe. It is a win-win for all involved.”**

**Wigwam Motel**

• Owner: Keith Findlay

• Directions: 43958 State Hwy. 6 Emily, MN 56447

• To Reserve: 218-763-2995 wigwamlodge@gmail.com

Website: wigwamlodge.com

ATV, Snowmobile trails, on site. Shores of Squam Lake

**Larson Haynes**  
Owner

44025 State HWY 6  
Emily, MN 56447  
218-763-4402

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# OUR LAKE AND RIVER SHORELINES ARE AT A TURNING POINT

By Jeff Forester

Executive Director of Minnesota Lakes and Rivers Advocates (MLR)  
Keynote Speaker at RALALA Annual Meeting August 6, 2022



Our lakes are in trouble and the situation is urgent. If we want to manage water, we must manage land. As lake shore property owners we have both a significant opportunity and exposure to negative impacts from water quality decline. According to shoreline specialists at the MN DNR, about half our natural shorelines in Minnesota have been developed. In some areas it is even more.

If we do not protect our natural shorelands, we will risk losing lake and river water quality and the ability to swim and recreate in our lakes. We risk the call of the loon, the spring chorus of frogs, habitat for birds, butterflies and more. We will lose the unique character of Minnesota. **But beyond aesthetics and amenity, we risk significant financial loss, particularly as shoreland property owners.**

Near shore fish habitat is particularly important for fish survival. We risk losing valuable fish habitat, threatening an angling industry estimated to generate \$1.9 billion in direct angler spending, \$3.7 billion in total economic impact, \$948 million in wages and salaries, and over 47,293 jobs in Minnesota.

Loss of shoreline and the water quality dependent on healthy shorelines also threatens Minnesota's boating industry. Minnesota ranks first in boat owners per capita. In 2020 Minnesotans bought \$1.1 billion worth of powerboats, engines, trailers, and accessories. That marked a 14 percent increase over 2019.

But we also risk losing the very basis of our economy, particularly in greater Minnesota. In six counties, the value of lake shore property makes up more than 50% of the tax base. **If water quality declines, property values decline** and property tax revenues will decline, forcing other property owners to backfill the gap or risk losing schools, police, roads, and the human services provided by our local governments.

According to a recent Minneapolis/St. Paul Business Journal article, listings of Minnesota lake property jumped by more than 46% since this time last year. Current listings of lake property in Minnesota reached a value of \$2.9 billion in mid-August, making the state the fourth-largest such real estate market in the nation behind Texas, Florida and Washington. The Minnesota lake property market is also the highest it's been in the past three years, topping previous highs of about \$1.8 billion in 2020 and \$2.3 billion in 2019.

This burst of shoreline real estate activity is not limited to the sale of existing homes and cabins, but also the redevelopment and subdivision of shoreline. The 85 Counties in MN that manage riparian properties issued 8,846 land use permits in 2020, which is higher than last year's total (6,797). In 2012 there were 1,207 permits issued for new development on undeveloped shoreline lots. In 2020 there were 2220 permits issued for new development on shoreline lots. In 2020 the counties created 1,187 new shoreland lots, the majority by lot splits. This is the highest number since 2012. And while the number of variances granted by the counties has been declining over time, in 2020 there were 644 variances granted.

Currently one fifth of counties do not require septic system compliance inspections or upgrades whenever a variance or permit of any kind is granted. **This is a shoreland rule requirement. One fifth of all counties are not carrying it out.**



The first minimum shoreland standards were adopted over fifty years ago, yet still our shorelines have continued to decline. These standards are difficult to enforce, often requiring one neighbor to turn in another neighbor. Aggressive enforcement by a government body can result in significant citizen backlash. Even the best shoreland standards can be undone in the variance process.

So if we know that current strategies; top-down control through rules, education campaigns, and enforcement have not been able to protect shoreland and the water quality dependent on them, what should we do?

In my work as MLR Executive Director, I work with many different people and organizations. I have seen presentations on efforts that have failed and those that have made progress. I have learned:

- Engaged lake associations can shift local culture toward a water quality preservation aesthetic.
- Local government resource managers need more technical guidance on shoreline restoration. They also lack the time and/or resources to meet the demand from shoreland property owners for shoreline restoration projects.
- Civic organizing of lake associations and other local civic groups, local government resource managers and state agencies can be effective in providing resources and shifting social norms and perspectives.
- There are programs in neighboring states that might be models to advance Minnesota lake stewardship.
- Incentive payments to lake shore owners that go far beyond current statutes and take significant steps to prevent runoff into the lake.
- Lake Improvement Districts can raise reliable funds for restoration and expertise, apply for government grants, and serve as a conduit for civic partnerships with Natural Resource Departments and Extension Services.
- Lake associations often have members with significant natural resource management experience.

It is true that Minnesota's shorelines and the lakes and rivers dependent on them are being degraded. But is also true that lake shore owners, particularly in Minnesota, have organized themselves into lake associations that have a great potential to change the trends. There are over 500 lake associations in Minnesota, one of the highest numbers in the United States. They are working to educate their members on good shoreline management, connecting members to resources to repair or replace failing septic

systems, run aquatic invasive species programs, drive fish stocking efforts, create "water trails," shore fishing stations and camping sites as well as many other activities to protect and improve Minnesota's public waters. By building effective partnership among these lake associations, local government resource managers, and state agencies there is a great potential to reverse these disturbing trends and ensure our children, grandchildren and great grandchildren can enjoy Minnesota's beautiful heritage of pristine lakes and rivers.

## EURASIAN WATER MILFOIL UPDATE 2022

RALALA continues to monitor our lakes for Invasive Eurasian Milfoil. This year the survey of Roosevelt Lake was completed on July 13, 2022 by Freshwater Scientific Services LLC .

They found 3.3 acres that needed treating, as compared to 4.2 treated in 2021. One key point for 2022 is that we found an infestation on the north end of the lake (near Luschers' bay), it's noted on the treatment chart.

The 3.3 acres were treated on August 15, 2022 by PLM Lake & Land Management Corporation. This year they used ProcellaCOR treatment, it's EPA approved with no restrictions for swimming or fishing after application.

Surveys of Lawrence, Leavitt and Smokey Hallow were conducted on September 08, 2022 as with previous years there were no identified Invasive Eurasian Milfoil found.

### Treatment Areas (Historical)

- 2022 3.3 acres
- 2021 4.6 acres
- 2020 8.1 acres
- 2019 3.3 acres
- 2018 3.7 acres
- 2017 11.2 acres
- 2016 12.1 acres



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In 2022 RALALA received \$133.37 in donations. **With your participation we have the potential to raise even more. Sign up now!**




## A NOTE OF THANKS FROM ONE OF OUR MEMBERS

Dear RALALA Board members,  
It is Labor Day and we have been enjoying this lovely day with its hint of fall and reflecting on how lucky we were to find a cabin here twenty years ago. We wanted to thank you for the \$2000 grant you gave us to help with our Shoreland Restoration Project. We hope this project will contribute to the beauty of Lake Roosevelt and also contribute to the overall health of the lake.

Thank you for all you do for our lake and our community!

Sincerely,

Deborah & Jim Mickelson

## PROTECT YOUR SEPTIC SYSTEM FROM FREEZING

Common causes of septic system freezing during the winter can be lack of snow cover, extreme cold, compacted snow, irregular use of the system, leaking plumbing fixtures, pipes not draining properly, or a water-logged system.

To prevent freezing, follow these guidelines:

- Fix any leaking plumbing or appliances prior to winter.
- In the fall, leave the grass longer over the tank and drain field for better insulation.
- Add a layer of hay or straw mulch (8-12 inches) over the pipes, tank, and soil treatment area.
- Keep ATVs and snowmobiles off the drainfield.
- Spread hot water use (laundry, showers, dishwasher) out over the day and week. If you'll be gone for extended periods, consider having someone stop by to run hot water regularly.
- High efficiency furnaces, water softeners, and iron filters have the potential to cause problems in the winter because of slow and/or periodic discharges of water.
- Talk with a professional before installing heat tapes or tank heaters.

**What to do if the system freezes?** Unplug your pump and call a septic system professional. Do not add antifreeze, additives, or continuously run water to try to thaw the system.

## CROW WING COUNTY AREA FREE NITRATE TESTING

Nitrate is a compound that occurs naturally and also has many human-made sources. Nitrate is in some lakes, rivers, and groundwater in Minnesota. You cannot taste, smell, or see nitrate in water. Consuming too much nitrate can be **harmful—especially for babies**. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) standard for nitrate in drinking water is 10 milligrams of nitrate per liter of drinking water (10mg/L), a level considered safe for everyone.

**Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) recommends testing your well water every other year.** Well owners are responsible for regularly testing their own well water. MDH recommends using an accredited laboratory to get sample containers and instructions.

### Prevent well contamination:

#### Construct your well in a safe spot

- shallow wells or those in sand aquifers are more susceptible to nitrate contamination

#### Keep nitrate sources away from your well

- Fertilizer
- Septic systems
- Animal waste

#### Regularly inspect your well for damage

- Check that casings are watertight
- Check for damaged or leaking fittings
- Contact a licensed well contractor if you find any damage

**Crow Wing Soil and Water Conservation District (CWSWCD) provides FREE nitrite testing.** [CWSWCD.org](http://CWSWCD.org)

## ICE IS NEVER 100% SAFE

Before you go out, check the ice thickness chart below as a guide, to determine if it's safe! **New ice is usually stronger than old ice.** Four inches of clear, newly-formed ice may support one person on foot, while a foot or more of old, partially-thawed ice may not.

**Ice seldom freezes uniformly.** It may be a foot thick in one location and only an inch or two just a few feet away.

**Ice formed over flowing water and currents is often dangerous.** This is especially true near streams, bridges and culverts. Also, the ice on outside river bends is usually weaker due to the undermining effects of the faster current.

**The insulating effect of snow slows down the freezing process.** The extra weight also reduces how much weight the ice sheet can support. Also, ice near shore can be weaker than ice that is farther out.

**Schools of fish or flocks of water-fowl can also adversely affect the relative safety of ice.** The movement of fish can bring warm water up from the bottom of the lake. In the past, this has opened holes in the ice causing snowmobiles and cars to break through.





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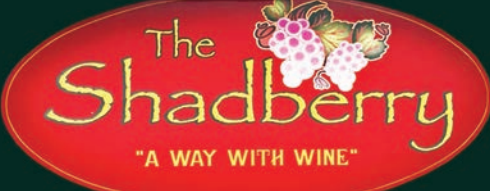



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FORWARDING SERVICE REQUESTED



President's letter continued from first page.

We have included an article by Jeff Forester, Executive Director of MLR. This article focuses on the critical balance between lakes and shorelines and how, as a society, we have a significant impact on the quality of our waterways. Please read and digest his article; it has a lot of important points for all of us to consider.

The second important issue is the Enbridge pipeline, discussed in my message in the January 2022 newsletter found at [ralalalakes.org](http://ralalalakes.org). We have continued our meetings and discussion with Enbridge Management to address the open issues. Here are a few quick updates:



(Left) Sample of Pipeline  
 (Below) Response Equipment  
 (Right) Pipeline Markers: Trespassing is prohibited including ATV and snowmobile traffic on the corridor



- Enbridge conducted emergency training for First Responders, community leaders, fire and police on November 16, 2022 at the City Hall in Emily.
- One of our concerns was how long it would take to move emergency equipment into position to address a leak. On September 7th we toured the Enbridge Hill City maintenance facility where we had the opportunity to view the real equipment and see (on video) how the emergency equipment was used and deployed.

This was a very positive meeting which covered many aspects of pipeline construction, maintenance and management. The Hill City facility is about 50 minutes from the pipeline near Outing.

- We still have a number of open issues that we are expecting Enbridge to respond to in the near future, for example: testing for leaks, 911 training so the 911 operators are aware of calls that come in from the pipeline area, and an open communication process for Enbridge and the local community.
- We will continue to send out updates as things progress.

**In closing, we had a busy year in 2022 taking part in many important activities. During this winter and early spring, we will be conducting a series of planning workshops to ensure we are focusing on the right things for 2023.**