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# RALALA LAKES ASSOCIATION

## MESSAGE FROM BOB EDDY, RALALA ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT



As we have finally put a tough winter into the rear view mirror and as we look forward to another beautiful lake season, I thought it would be important to reflect on the activities that RALALA sponsored in 2022 and what we have targeted for 2023.

### We had so many positive things happen:

- We continued to move forward with the Protecting Our Lakes program (POL), providing incredible information about helping to keep our lakes and watershed clean and our shorelines intact to act as good water filters and buffers.
- The number of Lake Stewards continued to grow in 2022
- The number of shoreline restoration projects grew in 2022
- Volunteer members helped with water testing and Adopt A Highway cleanup
- RALALA sponsored the Enbridge Risk Mitigation Group who submitted a risk mitigation plan to Enbridge, and we toured their Emergency Response Center in Hill City.
- Milfoil management has been effective; we have been able to reduce the volume of treated areas on Roosevelt Lake. However, for the first time, milfoil was found on the north end of the lake.
- Our newsletters have provided a wide array of important information for all lake and community members.

### These programs will continue into 2023.

We also had a number of challenges that came our way in 2022 that we need to address in 2023 and going forward every year.

- We saw the continued expansion of AIS (starry stonewort and zebra mussels) in one of our neighbor lakes, Thunder Lake. The close proximity is a definite cause for concern.
- The Enbridge pipeline, located just 600 feet away from the north end of Roosevelt Lake and the watershed, is a risk.

### The RALALA board has approved funding and programs to start to address both of these issues.

- Addressing the continued expansion of AIS, we will be expanding the number of launch site inspector hours for Roosevelt and Lawrence Lakes this year. We will also be adding an informational kiosk to the Roosevelt Lake boat launch site. Roosevelt and Lawrence Lake launches are the most heavily used sites in the area.
- We will be adding monthly water testing (year-round) near the Enbridge pipeline. This testing will be conducted by an independent lab and results will be provided to RALALA. The principle concept of the test is to catch the first sign of a pipeline leak (small leaks proceed, typically by many years, large scale releases of petroleum products).

*Continued on back page*

# BUILDING AWARENESS • ENCOURAGING ACTION

## PROTECTING OUR LAKES (POL) SHORELINE INITIATIVE

We are now in the third year of RALALA's focused efforts to bring people along toward healthy land management to sustain our lakes' water quality. Our plans include the continued maintenance and enhancement of the demonstration buffer zone and no mow, let it grow site at the Outing public dock on Roosevelt Lake. Watch the beauty and progression of the native plants as they come into their full glory this season. Along the sidewalk a special blend of bee and pollinator friendly grass seed will be planted. It needs no, or only occasional, mowing, and no fertilizing, making it a desirable lake friendly option.

We strive to continue to share information and support individual efforts to maintain, or restore, naturalized shoreland and upland spaces through our **Lake Steward Program**, financial reimbursement **BENNIES**, and collaboration with other agencies. This is essential work to sustain the water quality of our lakes as they receive more pressure from development, heavy use, and climate change.

Our founding documents state our mission is both to preserve our lakes for ourselves and future generations but also to find a BALANCE between recreational use and environmental protection. **If everyone owning property surrounding our lakes maintained 75% of their shoreline and upland spaces in a naturalized state without impervious surfaces—buildings, sidewalks, driveways—runoff could be effectively filtered, keeping phosphorus and other detrimental elements from degrading our water quality.** RALALA hopes to support everyone's efforts to achieve that goal.

### BENNIES

**\$100 reimbursement**

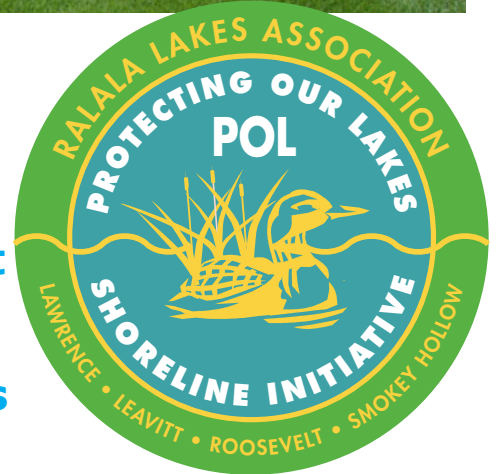
for Soil and Water Conservation Site Visits [cwsacd.org](http://cwsacd.org)

**\$500 reimbursement** for shoreline and upland restoration projects that BENEFIT our lakes

For more information email: [ralalalakes@gmail.com](mailto:ralalalakes@gmail.com) Subject: **BENNIES**



## 10 Ways to Protect and Preserve Our Lakes



1. Allow native plants and vegetation to flourish in a 25' deep buffer zone along the lakeshore
2. Maintain septic systems according to best management practices  
<https://www.pca.state.mn.us/news-and-stories/keep-your-septic-system-healthy>
3. Reduce the amount of impervious surfaces on your property
4. Pick up pet waste and keep fire pits at least 25' from the shoreline
5. Allow fallen trees and branches to remain in the water
6. Store docks and other equipment away from the shoreline
7. Avoid the use of riprap and allow native plants to emerge
8. Allow aquatic plants to flourish along the shoreline
9. Avoid the use of broadcast fertilizers and pesticides
10. Allow natural vegetation to grow everywhere

## GET THE LEAD OUT COLLECTION BOXES

There will be a collection bin at the RALALA Lake Season Launch on June 17, bring in your lead sinkers as you freshen up your tackle box and pack away your ice fishing gear. In return, the MN Pollution Control Agency will be giving out some lead-free jig & sinker samples.

# BUILDING AWARENESS • ENCOURAGING ACTION

## JOIN US Everyone is Welcome!

### RALALA LAKE SEASON LAUNCH Saturday, June 17 9 am to Noon

#### Crooked Lake Township Town Hall

Come enjoy refreshments and reconnect with friends, neighbors and fellow lake lovers.

The program begins at 9 a.m. featuring speakers presenting updates on important lake impacting information.

#### Topics include:

- Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) updates and prevention strategies
  - Loon Friendly Lake Management Plans
  - Get the Lead Out (GTLO) Efforts
- Cass County Sheriff Boat and Water Safety Department Question and Answer Session
  - Manganese Mine Update
  - Enbridge Pipeline Initiative Update
- Protecting Our Lakes, Shoreline Initiative programs to support property owners and sustain our water quality

Speakers will have display tables where you can collect materials and information as well as have time to visit with the experts and ask them questions.



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### MAY

- 10 RALALA Board Meeting
- 20 RALALA Hwy 6 Adopt A Highway
- 20 Emily Spring Fling
- 21 RALALA Water Testing

### JUNE

- 6 CLT Clean Up Day
- 10 Over the Hills Gang Pork and Ride Log Cabin Bar
- 14 RALALA Board Meeting
- 15 Boater Safety Class Channel Bar and Grill
- 17 RALALA Lake Season Launch: CLT Town Hall 9-Noon
- 18 RALALA Water Quality Testing

### JULY

- 1 Lawrence Lake Fireworks
- 2 RALALA Boat Parades
- 12 RALALA Board Meeting
- 15 Emily Day and Fireworks
- 16 RALALA Water Quality Testing

### AUGUST

- 5 RALALA Annual Meeting CLT Town Hall
- 16 RALALA Board Meeting
- 19 Lions Corn Feed Pickled Loon Saloon
- 20 RALALA Water Quality Testing

### SEPTEMBER

- 13 RALALA Board Meeting
- 16 RALALA Hwy 6 Adopt A Highway
- 17 RALALA Water Quality Testing

### OCTOBER

- 21 Biggest Meat Raffle in the world: Log Cabin Bar

### DECEMBER

- 30 Fireworks over Lawrence



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## ENBRIDGE UPDATE

As you are probably aware, the Enbridge pipeline (Line 93, historically called Line 3) has been operational since October of 2021. Initial pumping volume was 760,000 barrels per day. The pipeline travels within 600 feet of the north end of Roosevelt Lake.

**As we have stated previously, RALALA is not anti-pipeline or anti-petroleum.** Our mission is to preserve and protect the lakes and watershed. RALALA became involved with the Enbridge pipeline to help ensure that we have a reasonable plan to mitigate the possibility of significant impact to the lakes and watershed which will negatively affect the fantastic communities in this area.

In 2022 we had many positive meetings with Enbridge, the most recent was the First Responder training conducted at the Emily City Hall on November 16, 2022. Members of the Emily and Crooked Lake Township Fire, First Responders and a number of elected officials were in attendance. Enbridge presented their emergency response procedures, responsibilities of the local community and fielded questions.

**Here's a quick update on 2023 activities regarding open issues from 2022:**

### WATER TESTING

The most pressing issue is water testing for products that pass through the pipeline. RALALA and Enbridge believe in a principle that pipelines leak, typically for extended times, before they break. So, using that principle, RALALA believes that testing for small leaks is a good risk mitigation tool. We formally asked Enbridge to do this and they have declined. RALALA believes that the testing is critical and we have established a budget for 2023 to start the testing process. The full year budget estimate for doing this testing is about \$10,000 for 2 sites on a monthly basis, with the target start date July of 2023. The plan is for these tests to be conducted year-round. We will continue to express our strong desire to have Enbridge participate in the testing process with us. **Funding for this is key. We will be relying on grants where possible, but also asking our members to help us out with donations to the EQPI fund.**

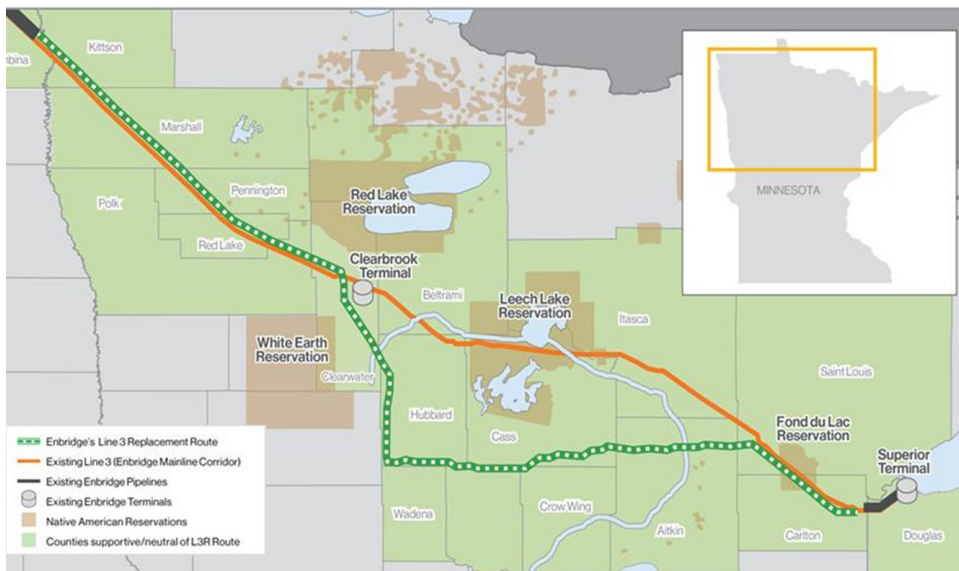
### OPEN COMMUNICATIONS

We have also asked Enbridge to provide a communication procedure so that community members can ask them questions and get direct and timely answers.

**Submit your Enbridge questions to**  
[RALALA.Lakes@gmail.com](mailto:RALALA.Lakes@gmail.com).

**Include "Enbridge Question" in the Subject Line**

Questions and Enbridge responses will be distributed to our members in the newsletter or via an email.





# REPORTING LAKE CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS

Photo by Trista Snapko-Collision Pictures

RALALA often receives questions and requests for assistance when issues arise on our lakes. Common concerns have been expressed about individuals placing buoys, reckless boating, excessive wakes and waves, loud music, disturbance of loon nesting areas and requests to institute no wake or reduced speed zones. We, as a lake association, have no authority or jurisdiction, but would like to help find solutions by sharing information.

## PLACEMENT OF RAFTS AND BUOYS

Both Cass and Crow Wing Counties charge a fee and require permits consistent with Minnesota State Statute which requires **"All temporary structures left in the water between the hours of sunset and sunrise to obtain a permit from the Sheriff's Office in the county in which the structure will be located."**

The forms can be found at: <https://www.casscountymn.gov/> under the tab Permits & Forms

<https://www.crowwing.gov/Search?searchPhrase=Water Structure Permit Application>

## REPORTING CONCERNS OR COMPLAINTS IN CASS COUNTY:

The person witnessing the concerning incident should directly contact the Sheriff's Department as soon as possible. Calling immediately when the event is occurring with an accurate description and photos (of the boat, the license, videos of the behavior, for example) gives the officers the most actionable information. Calls may be made anonymously but they are more difficult to follow-up effectively.

**Call the non-emergency line: 218-547-1424**

The call will go directly to a dispatcher who writes a report that will be followed up by a deputy.

Cass County has two or three full time recreation deputies in the Boat and Water Safety Division who patrolled six or eight times in the summer of 2022 in the Outing area as well responded to several concerns and complaints and helped resolve those situations.

Reporting Concerns or Complaints in Crow Wing County:

**Call the non-emergency line: 218-829-4749**

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**STEVE HUSS • OWNER**



# THE BIRDS OF RALALA LAKES

## THE GREEN HERON

*Photos and article by Trista Snapko-Collision Pictures*



When you discover your first Green Heron, you've discovered a secret. These small elusive herons are so secretive, experts have a difficult time conducting accurate population counts. It will occasionally allow

a lucky observer a glimpse while holding still as it hunts along the shorelines. I've been fortunate to spot these skittish birds along the shoreline on the south end of Roosevelt Lake and on Lawrence Lake with my husband.

The Green Heron is the second smallest of all the heron species nesting in the U.S. and have a wingspan of 20-26 inches with a lifespan of up to 8 years. Physically similar in size to a crow, their wing flapping can resemble that of a Pileated Woodpecker.

This heron, with its blueish green back, rust colored neck, dark cap, and yellow eyes, prefers the concealment of dense vegetation. The "green" on these birds' backs is actually iridescent in color. It may look brown or dark from a distance.

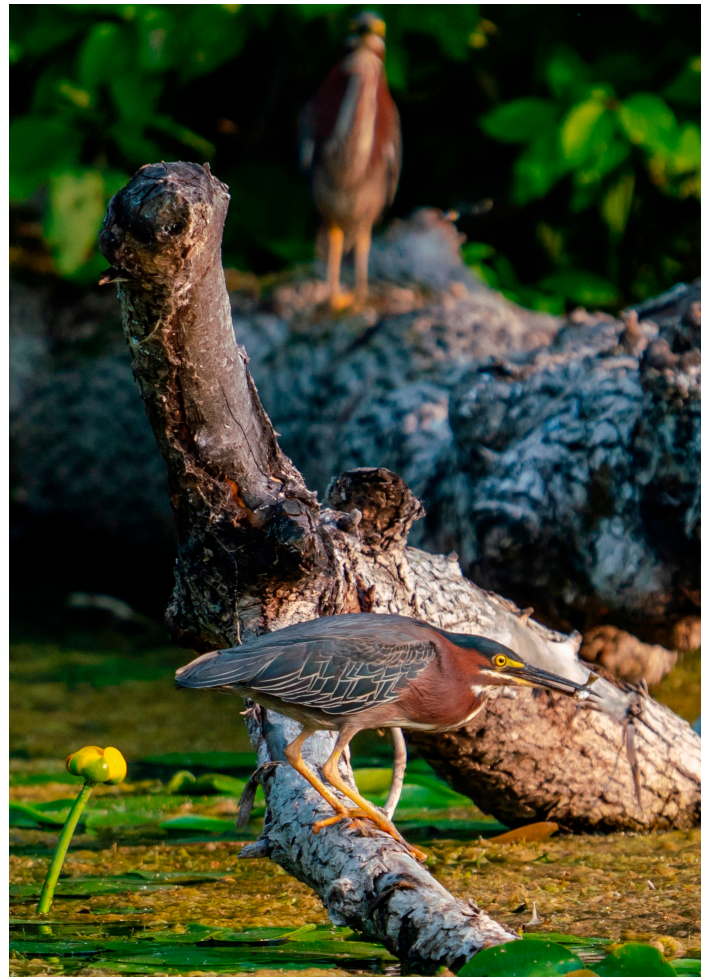
The Green Heron is also unique in that they use tools to catch their prey. Utilizing a feather, stick, leaf or insect as "bait", these intelligent birds drop their tool of choice in the water much like a fishing line. When a curious fish comes to investigate, they strike. This makes them one of the few tool-using species. They are also able to hover briefly to catch prey.

Their diet mainly consists of small fish, tadpoles, crayfish, small snakes, insects and sometimes small rodents. They mate with one partner per breeding season. A pair of Green Herons will usually nest alone compared to the Great Blue and Black Crowned Night herons who usually nest in large colonies called rookeries.

When they feel threatened or alarmed, the Green Heron will raise their crest, hold their neck still and flicker their tail. They are territorial and do not tolerate intrusions. They will fly ahead of anyone who sees them, often vocalizing while in flight.

**Habitat loss is the greatest threat to the Green Heron. Wetland protection is especially important to this species. Keeping our lakes clean by reducing pollution and pesticides are essential. Removal of vegetation along the shoreline also does a disservice to this heron as they rely on dense vegetation to nest and hunt.**

So, when you're out on the lakes this Spring, see if you can catch a glimpse of these colorful clandestine birds. It will even make a non-birder feel special!



# REMINDERS FROM CASS COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

## EARLY SEASON BOATING PRECAUTIONS

This time of year the water is dangerously cold with water temperatures not much above freezing, falling in will likely trigger cold water shock. Numbness will set in quickly, swimming or calling for help will be difficult and it can quickly turn tragic. **Wearing a life jacket is the easiest and simplest way to protect yourself from tragedy.** The cold-water season isn't the time to boat alone, either. It is always a good idea to let others on shore know where you are going and when you plan to return. Keep the floor of the boat free of clutter to avoid tripping or falling and check your safety equipment prior to boating.

## LAWS REGARDING OPERATING WATERCRAFT

Boater regulations, restrictions and information:

<https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/safety/boatwater/education.html>

DNR personal watercraft informational brochure:

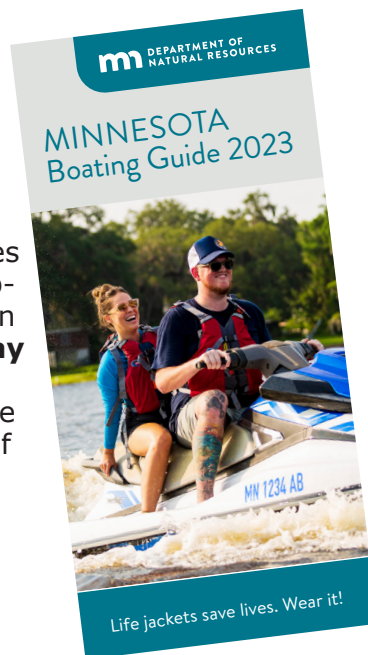
[https://files.dnr.state.mn.us/education\\_safety/safety/boatwater/pwc-brochure.pdf](https://files.dnr.state.mn.us/education_safety/safety/boatwater/pwc-brochure.pdf)

## OPERATOR SAFETY CLASSES REQUIRED FOR MANY ATV RIDERS

Lt. Brad Rittgers, Cass County Sheriff's Office Boat and Water Safety Coordinator, praised ATV riders and clubs in our area for their exemplary, responsible, respectful riding behavior. However, county-wide, he stated, "There are two to three times more ATV issues than boating issues and 95% of those involved in ATV injuries, crashes and fatalities have not completed the safety training class."

ATV safety training requirements:

<https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/safety/vehicle/atv/index.html>



## GET THE LEAD OUT

### ATTENTION FISHERMEN Help Save our LOONS and other Waterfowl.

The Crooked Lake Township Lakes and Shores Committee is again participating in the state-wide GET THE LEAD OUT program. The Lakes and Shores Committee is an environmental action group focused on Aquatic Invasive Species prevention and management, water quality preservation and protection, and threatened wildlife. Representatives from Lake Washburn Association (LWA), Roosevelt and Lawrence Area Lakes Association (RALALA), and local area environmentalists are members of the committee.

This year the committee has obtained approval from the Crooked Lake Town Board to accept and properly dispose of toxic lead fishing tackle **BUT, only during hours that an attendant is present**, at the Town Recycle Station at 6200 Woods Bay Drive. This is just north of Outing on the west side of State Highway 6, in the Town Complex. Please place the lead items in the container provided by the attendant. As a toxic material, it must be secured after it is received.

The attendant will be present to accept lead tackle at the following hours:

### Summer Hours (Memorial Day to Labor Day)

Saturday 9:30 to noon

Sunday noon to 4:00

Monday 10:00 to noon

Wednesday 4:00 to 6:00

### Winter Hours

Saturday 9:30 to noon

Monday 10:00 to noon.

When sorting your tackle box in preparation for this year's opener, remember to remove the lead-based tackle, especially split shot sinkers which are particularly deadly for the birds, and drop it off at the recycle station.

**Non-toxic tackle is available from local sports shops like My Store in Outing and Redding's Bait in Emily, at a reasonable price and has been shown to perform as well as toxic lead tackle.**



# AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES (AIS) AND LAUNCH SITE MANAGEMENT INITIATIVE

**RALALA plans to fund additional watercraft inspector hours at Roosevelt and Lawrence Lake public water accesses and install educational signage this summer.**

## Historical efforts to prevent and manage Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS):

- 2013 Crooked Lake Township (CLT) Board provided watercraft inspectors at the Roosevelt and Lawrence Lake public water accesses
- 2015 Cass County AIS Task Force assumed responsibility for the watercraft inspectors
- 2016 Eurasian watermilfoil discovered in Roosevelt Lake
- Subsequent years RALALA financed the survey of Roosevelt Lake and chemical treatment of Eurasian watermilfoil

Crooked Lake Township, City of Emily and RALALA have combined resources spending an average of \$12,000 each year for those surveys and treatment. Eurasian watermilfoil is being effectively managed and progress has been made to reduce its spread. Lawrence, Leavitt and Smokey Hollow Lakes have been surveyed on a yearly, or an every other year basis and all remain AIS free at this time.

## We Must Remain Vigilant!

- Fall of 2021 Zebra Mussels discovered in Thunder Lake
- Fall of 2022 Starry Stonewort discovered in Thunder Lake
- January 6, 2023 – Outdoor News Weekly Newsletter profiled Roosevelt Lake as “Muskie Destination Lake” likely causing an increase in fishing and recreational boating pressure on Roosevelt and Lawrence Lakes. Fishing enthusiasts typically travel from lake to lake, many of which are AIS infested.

**According to Professor Phelps at the University of Minnesota AIS Center, the only current methods of preventing the spread of AIS at this time are watercraft launch site inspections, decontamination and education. Dr. Phelps also noted that lakes near contaminated lakes, such as Thunder Lake, are statistically more prone to becoming contaminated.**

## RALALA PREVENTION ACTIONS

This year RALALA will pay for additional AIS Inspector hours at Roosevelt and Lawrence Lakes public water accesses.

### 2022 Cass County Funded AIS Watercraft Inspections

Lake	Inspector Hours	Watercrafts Inspected	Days Inspected
Roosevelt	677	1488	Fri., Sat., Sun.
Lawrence	312	468	Most Sat. & Sun.

### 2023 Cass County AIS & RALALA Funded Watercraft Inspections May 12 – September 21

Lake	Inspector Hours		Total Hours	Days Inspected
	Cass Co.	RALALA		
Roosevelt	600	280	880	Thurs. Fri. Sat. Sun. Plus 8 add'l days on Major Holidays
Lawrence	320	80	400	Sat. & Sun.

## PREVENTION THROUGH EDUCATION

An AIS prevention educational effort by the Steamboat Lake Association (SLA) was highlighted at the January Cass County AIS Task Force meeting (see photo). RALALA plans the May installation of a similar informational kiosk at the Roosevelt Lake public water access.

**Anyone interested in helping with the installation of the kiosk contact Gary Langer (612-254-4329)**





## YOUTH MINNESOTA WATERS OPERATOR'S TRAINING

**RALALA, in partnership with the Crow Wing County Sheriff's Department, plans to host a Youth Minnesota Waters Operator's Training.**

A certificate will be awarded after successful completion of the course. There is no cost to participate in the training. This is a great opportunity for your kids, grandkids, and friends to learn about safe boat operation and have a great lake experience.

The training is available to 12 to 17 year olds, or those turning 12 this summer. Adults are also welcome to attend.

The class will be held on **Thursday, June 15, 2023** at the **Channel Bar and Grill** in Outing, beginning at **9 a.m.** with approximately 3 hours of classroom instruction, followed by another hour of training in the boats on the water, and ending with **lunch provided by RALALA.**



**TO REGISTER: email the following information to [dpjohn53@gmail.com](mailto:dpjohn53@gmail.com)**

- Name and Age of youth attending
- Address
- Name of Parent/Guardian and Phone number and Email address
- Grant or decline permission to use photo(s) of your child for publicity purposes

**If you have questions contact Dave Johnson, [dpjohn53@gmail.com](mailto:dpjohn53@gmail.com) 320-894-5903**

## LAKE STEWARD PROGRAM

RALALA continues its partnership with Minnesota Lakes and Rivers Advocates (MLR) participating in the Lake Steward Program. This program encourages natural shoreline preservation and restoration by offering support for, and education about, sustainable land management strategies to improve water quality and lake health.

Those meeting the Lake Steward criteria are awarded a sign to post on their property. It is recognition of the personal efforts and the responsibility they are taking for the environment and the preservation of natural resources in Minnesota.

*Right: Bonnie McGowan*

## BECOME A LAKE STEWARD

**Take the Lake Steward Quiz at the link below:**

<https://mnlakesandrivers.org/lake-associations/lake-association-programs/lake-steward/>

Record RALALA as your lake association. A member of our support team will contact you for a follow up visit to share information and guidance.





## MINNESOTA LOON RESCUE NETWORK

Articles and photo by Sheila Johnston

The Common Loon is Minnesota's state bird and it is beloved for its haunting calls and dramatic beauty. Minnesota is home to an estimated 12,000 loons! Alaska is the only state with more loons.

With 12,000 loons in the state, it is no surprise that some of them succumb to illness and injury. The three leading causes of loon deaths are human caused: lead poisoning, fishing line entanglement or hooking, and boat strikes. Explosions from private lakeside fireworks displays also pose a grave danger to loons and can injure or kill them.

Chicks can be lost after separating from parents in the chaos.

Loons will chase fishing tackle. Note the jig hooked into this loon's neck.

Minnesota has excellent wildlife rehabilitation clinics that are well prepared to care for sick or injured loons, and orphaned chicks. However, finding skilled help with the rescue of a sick or injured loon can be a challenge. The new Minnesota Loon Rescue Network is here to help!

The Minnesota Loon Rescue Network is a network of trained volunteers assisting with the capture and transport of sick

or injured loons to Minnesota DNR certified rehabilitation clinics.

Our goal is to have teams of trained volunteers in all areas of the state with loon populations. There is also a team of volunteers that can travel to areas without loon rescue volunteers.

### Volunteers are needed and lake associations can help!

- Follow our public Facebook group, Minnesota Loon Rescue Network, where you can find information on loon rescue and report sick or injured loons
- Share the news about the Minnesota Loon Rescue Network with your lake association and friends.

### There are many ways to get involved:

- 1. Loon Watcher:** observe and report loons in your area exhibiting signs of illness or injury to the Minnesota Loon Rescue Network
- 2. Spotter:** help locate injured or sick loons for the rescue team
- 3. Provide and/or drive a boat** for the rescue team
- 4. Operate the spotlight** for a nighttime water rescue
- 5. Rescue:** capture sick or injured loons

Transport sick or injured loons to the rehabilitation clinic Minnesota Lakes and Rivers Advocates (MLR) will be hosting a training webinar for Minnesota Loon Rescue Network volunteers in the spring of 2023. If you are interested in volunteering, contact [sheilafjohnston@me.com](mailto:sheilafjohnston@me.com).

**If you encounter a sick or injured loon, call 612 226-6571 or 816 516-0759.**

Or visit us on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/Minnesota-LoonRescueNetwork](https://www.facebook.com/Minnesota-LoonRescueNetwork)

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Photo by Sheila Langer

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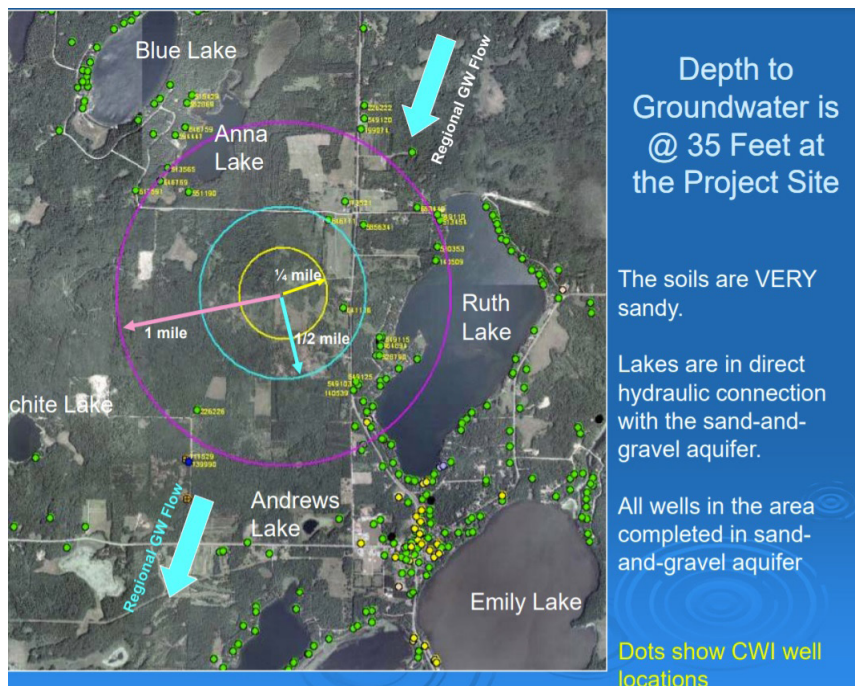
# NORTH STAR MANGANESE MINING UPDATE

Every time another group proposes extracting manganese in Emily, they drill more holes to see if mining will be lucrative. The current company, North Star Manganese, drilled seven test holes in February, 2023 and more are expected. Many test cores have been done over the last 80-plus years by mining operations, but each new proponent wants proof. One "prophylactic assurance" companies give local landowners is that all these holes are poked carefully, that they won't cause a leak or contamination in the different aquifers supplying private wells and underground waterways connecting lakes. United States Geological Survey (USGS) maps show layers of aquifers, not just one. Recent data indicates greater interconnectivity of underground water throughout the state than had been previously understood. Outing, Emily, Fairfield, Little Pine and Fifty Lakes all rely on private wells for human consumption, so we really hope they get this right.

Minnesota DNR is still considering the application for test borings on state-controlled land bordering the company-held parcels. The recommendation (for or against) then goes to the Minnesota Executive Council for a decision. The initial deadline in October 2021 for public input may mean this project is being considered seriously.

There is proposed legislation in St. Paul this session to transfer economic consideration of mining away from the DNR. The agency would continue prioritizing preservation of clean water, wildlife and forest resources contributing to recreation in the state. The 'lakes area' in Central Minnesota contributes \$1 billion per year from the recreation/hospitality/tourism industry to the state's economy. That means a lot of jobs.

**By Jan Mosman, resident**



# BEFORE REMOVING WATER "WEEDS" LEARN THE FACTS

**In attempts to remove vegetation from your waterfront, fragments are easily broken from Eurasian watermilfoil plants which can be carried by wind and water currents to spread this Aquatic Invasive Species**

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Aquatic Plant Management Program (APM) strives to balance aquatic plant conservation and lake user needs.

A healthy lake relies on a healthy community of aquatic plants. These near-shore plants – commonly referred to as “weeds” – often are perceived as a nuisance. However, aquatic plants are a natural part of most lake communities and provide many benefits such as:

- Improving water clarity and quality
- Protecting shorelines and lake bottoms
- Providing fish and waterfowl food and shelter
- Enhancing economic value

As a natural component of lakes, aquatic plants support the economic value of all lake activities. Minnesota has a huge tourism industry centered on lakes and the recreation they support. Residents and tourists spend more than \$1.5 billion each year to hunt, fish, camp, and watch wildlife on and around the state’s lakes. The wild rice harvesting industry alone is worth at least \$2 million to Minnesota’s economy.

The purpose of the DNR’s aquatic plant management program (APM) is to balance native plant conservation with the desires of lakeshore residents to recreate and access their property. State law establishes what property owners can do to control aquatic plants. DNR fisheries APM staff administer those controls via a permitting system.

Selective control of invasive aquatic plants within an entire lake is managed by the DNR’s invasive aquatic plant management program.

## *Are you thinking of destroying aquatic plants? Is it necessary?*

If so, any of the following activities require a permit:

- Destruction of emergent vegetation such as cattails, bulrushes and wild rice.
- Cutting or pulling by hand or mechanical means submerged vegetation in an area larger than 2,500 square feet or greater than 50 feet along shore.
- Applying chemical pesticides such as herbicides and copper sulfate.
- Moving or removing a bog of any size.
- Transplanting aquatic plants into public waters.
- Use of automated aquatic plant control devices such as the Crary WeedRoller.
- Physical removal of floating-leaf vegetation from an area larger than a channel 15-foot wide extending to open water.
- **Hiring someone to mechanically remove aquatic plants or doing it yourself. Contact the APM program coordinator.**



**DNR Aquatic Plant Management Program** <https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/apm/index.html>

**DNR permit information** <https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/shorelandmgmt/apg/regulations.html>

**Value of aquatic plants** <https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/shorelandmgmt/apg/value.html>

# VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

## Water Quality Testing

We need 2-3 people to help with monthly water quality testing efforts on Smokey Hollow and Lawrence Lakes. The testing takes about 15-20 minutes and is completed from a boat, that you must provide, at a designated location on the lake. Water Quality Testing starts in May and runs through September. Your recorded test results are dropped off to a RALALA Water Quality Coordinator. **Volunteers will be fully trained.**

## Adopt a Highway

6-8 volunteers are needed to help us clean 2 miles of the ditches along both sides of Highway 6 just north of the city of Emily, starting at 9 AM and taking about an hour and a half.

**Spring Clean Up: May 20**

**Fall Clean Up: September 16**

In case of rain or bad weather, the clean up will be one week later.

## Roosevelt and Lawrence Watercraft Inspector Ambassadors

RALALA members are needed to periodically stop and visit with the Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) inspectors at the Roosevelt Lake and/or Lawrence Lake public water accesses to provide a friendly greeting, support, and offer a "thank you" to them for helping keep our lakes free of AIS.

## Loon Watcher Support

Volunteers are needed from Lawrence, Leavitt, Smokey Hollow and North and South Roosevelt Lakes to collect data on loon nesting, chick survival, number of loons, and problems that might negatively impact our loons, at least once a month, from May to August, and report that information to our [Loon Liaison, Sheila Langer](#) at the end of the breeding season.

**If you are able to help, please send your contact information and where you choose to volunteer to [RALALA.Lakes@gmail.com](mailto:RALALA.Lakes@gmail.com) Subject: VOLUNTEER**

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Keith Findlay

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

Website:  
wigwamlodge.com

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




**Larson Haynes**  
Owner

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## BE A LOON FRIENDLY ANGLER

Photos and article by Sheila Langer

Fishing and loons can both be a part of the perfect day at the lake – but not if a loon mistakes your lure for lunch. To cut down on the risk of that happening, try to avoid fishing in loons' territories where a pair hang out together. If you are fishing and you see a loon, be sure it's above the water before you cast, then toss your line in the opposite direction. If the loon is underwater, avoid casting until it surfaces or moves to another spot. If you see a loon chase your lure, stop reeling or trolling until it goes away.



Loons like to put their nests very close to the water level because their feet are very far back on their body, which allows them to be excellent swimmers, but terrible at walking on land. Wave action from boating can disturb nests. If you have ever been on a paddleboard when a boat passed by, you know first-hand about wave action. You can help by limiting wave action near known nests (or when near the shoreline) and by not disturbing loons which could cause them to abandon their nest. Young loons can't dive or swim fast, plus they tire easily, so they can be vulnerable to fast moving watercraft. You can help loons by giving these birds the space they need to feed. It is recommended to stay 200 feet away from loon families.

Use lead-free sinkers and fishing jigs and encourage others to do the same. Just one swallowed lead sinker can poison a loon. Lead poisoning disrupts a loon's nervous system affecting their ability to fly, forage or breed and the end result is death. Try to recover as many lost lures and as much loose fishing line as you can to protect all wildlife from injury and entanglement.

Crooked Lake Township Lakes and Shores Committee is installing monofilament recycling containers at both Roosevelt and Lawrence Lake boat launch sites (see photo.) As you get your tackle boxes ready for the season, be sure to recycle your lead tackle at the RALALA Lake Launch on June 17. A representative from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency will be on hand to give away lead-free sinkers and jigs to attendees.

Our loons have returned and their calls are echoing across our lakes. We are so fortunate to have so many loons that make this area home.

**Thank you for all you do to protect them.**



Wave action from boating can disturb nests. You can help by limiting wave action near known nests

Crooked Lake Lakes and Shores Committee (AIS) are in the process of adding a white monofilament fishing line collection tube at the Roosevelt and Lawrence Lake Boat Landings.



# MEMBERSHIP REPORT

**Currently, RALALA is at the largest paid membership levels we have ever seen. THANK YOU!**

## ANNUAL AUGUST MEMBERSHIP COUNTS

YEAR	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
COUNT	195	164	200	192	199	221	233	217	256	302

We have all benefitted from the significant number of hours dedicated volunteers have invested in a wide variety of activities to protect and preserve our beautiful lakes for our enjoyment and sustain them for future generations while balancing recreational use and environmental protection.

### Whether RALALA is:

- Helping boaters (especially young ones) with safety
- Supporting stocking our waters with fish
- Educating and engaging lake users about aquatic invasive species and its prevention
- Engaging and supporting property owners in lake enhancing land management that sustains water quality, supports loons, wildlife and enhances fish spawning areas
- Monitoring and engaging in issues that impact our lakes and sharing information

### We depend upon your membership dues and generous donations to fund these efforts.

Our five basins—Leavitt, Lawrence, Smokey Hollow, and North and South Roosevelt—have more than 600 shoreline parcels with dwellings. RALALA has almost reached the threshold of 50% of lakeside parcel owners being members. That 50% milestone level (and higher percentages) demonstrates to grantors, project funders and elected officials that we are committed to our lands, our lakes, our fish, our loons.

### Please help us exceed that level!

Dues raise the essential monies to support the basics of the lake association, but we are implementing many initiatives critical for the current and longterm protection and enjoyment of our lakes which require additional dollars.

**THANK YOU** to the many members and groups for their generous past contributions to Environmental Quality Projects & Initiatives (EQPI) which supports our important efforts.

**We need your help and ask all of you to renew your membership, rejoin RALALA or become a member for the first time. Please consider making an additional contribution to Environmental Quality Projects & Initiatives (EQPI).**



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email: meri@brainerd.net  
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Area Lakes Association  
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Outing, MN 56662-0139

FORWARDING SERVICE REQUESTED



## SPOTLIGHT ON SMOKEY HOLLOW

### *President's letter continued from first page.*

Both of these programs will increase the costs to RALALA by about \$10,000 – \$15,000 per year. Of course, we will be searching for grants and support from outside sources, including Crooked Lake Township and others, to help offset these cost increases.

The question comes down to “How can the members of the RALALA community help?” The answer is twofold:

- Renew your membership. You should have received your renewal notification. Our membership fee is very reasonable and has not been raised over the years.
- Please consider contributing donations to the Environmental Quality Projects and Initiatives (EQPI). This is the fund we use to support RALALA sponsored Programs and Initiatives for 2023 as noted above.
- I would like to thank you for your continued support. Please feel free to reach out to any of the members of the RALALA Board if you have any questions. We will see you on the lake!

Become a member and donate to  
[RALALA at ralalalakes.org](http://ralalalakes.org)

Smokey Hollow is the hidden gem of the RALALA member lakes according to those living on its shores. It is tucked away east of Highway 6 and the Cass/Crow County Wing county line divides it. According to the DNR, it is 125 acres (which is slightly larger than Leavitt Lake) and drains into Roosevelt Lake. It's maximum depth is 25 feet with about 45% of it being less than 15 feet deep. In this littoral zone of shallow water, abundant light and nutrient-rich sediment provide ideal conditions for plant growth which are important habitat for fish, shore-birds and aquatic invertebrates. Each year there is a big display of waterlilies to enjoy. Although there are sunfish, pumpkinseeds and some northern pike, Smokey is known mainly for black crappies and largemouth bass.

At times Smokey has a brownish cast, but that is not uncommon with a lake surrounded by forested land. It is these forests that provide the dense organic material that eventually dissolves in the water, releasing tannin that 'stains' the lake brown. It's similar to the process of a tea bag in a cup of water!

No one is quite sure how the lake got its name. One story is that in the early morning there is often a 'smokey' haze over the lake as it is situated in a 'hollow'. Could it be that the original farm family on the lake named it? Or maybe some long ago fishermen out before daybreak? A 1913 map of Crow Wing County shows the lake as Smoky (no 'e') Hollow, and it is still spelled that way on some maps. **If you have more information, please share with us!**

*By Mary De Hanson*