

Pickereel Crane Lake  
P&R District  
Spring, 2017

**FROM THE CHAIRMAN'S DESK CHUCK SLEETER**

This past winter I had the time and opportunity to sit down and think about our Lake District and how fortunate we all are. Take for example Mr. Jim Huss our Weed Boss, who not only volunteers his time but also allows us to dump the truckloads of harvested weeds on his property and lets us park all our harvesting equipment there as well. Speaking of harvester equipment, let's not forget Steve Bailey of Bailey's Services who we can always count on to do the major repairs on our equipment. Thanks to Steve our District saved over \$6,000 on the last repairs. And how about Phil Hollman and the Pickereel Tombstone Sno Club who transport our harvester and elevators to Pickereel and Cranes Lakes and back to the Huss property. Without these good folks and all the volunteers the harvester program would not be possible.

I then think about our Aeration system and Jerry (Hot Dog) Hietpas, the systems lead man. Jerry is another "go to" person when we need help with a project. I truly believe the word "no" is not in his vocabulary. Whether it's the aeration system issues, harvester program or bullhead extraction, he gives his all for the Lake District and for the Lake. Speaking of the aeration system, we would like to thank the Smith-Hill family on Pickereel Lake for allowing our District to have the system on their property. Without their support we would not be able to have the aeration pumps in the proper location. Again, we are so fortunate for all the support and volunteers that make the aeration effective.

We are especially thankful for our new Lake District Secretary Mike Zelinski from Crane Lake. He was gracious enough to volunteer for this important position and our district folks appreciate his help. "You're the Man", Mike.

I also thought about all the assistance we get from Greg Matzke, the Fish Biologist from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. We are grateful that he has taken an interest in our lakes fish management program and we want him to know how thankful we are for all the time and effort spent on our lakes. In addition, we are also thankful to the Sokaogon Chippewa Community for their generous donations and

allowing Mike Preul, their Fisheries Biologist, to assist Greg Matzke and the WDNR in the many P/C Lake District fish management projects.

One of the most forgotten projects in our District is the putting in and taking out of our docks. Lots of our folks never think about how the docks appear in the spring and then just disappear in the fall. So let me take this opportunity to thank Danny Welhouse and his volunteers for doing that job year after year.

I'm sure I can speak for all of us when I say we are truly fortunate in many ways to have all these great volunteers who keep our projects operational. Without them we could not afford to do as much for our lake as we do.

Finally, and with deep sadness, we recently lost one of our greatest volunteers and a good dear friend of our Lake District. Walt Ferguson passed away suddenly in April. Walt's contributions to our Community and Lake District are a testament to this wonderful man. When a job needed doing he was the first to offer. He never missed a Lake District Meeting and always had good common sense ideas. He served on our Audit Committee and as a Lake District Historian, naming just a couple of his many contributions. Walt and his wife Sally spent many hours gathering history from families around the lakes and then shared with all of us these wonderful stories and interesting facts by displaying them individually in frames along the halls of the Community Center so that they would be preserved for years to come. Walt also served as a member of the Town of Nashville's Zoning Committee and a member of the Building Committee. Many of you probably met Walt and his wife Sally when they volunteered to raise money for the Community Center by selling the memorial family plaques that hang in the hall. It's hard to look around this town and not see something that Walt didn't help inspire, build or lend his expertise and talents too. He will be greatly missed and we send our thoughts and prayers to Sally and her family.

Have a Great Summer!

Chuck

## **Wisconsin DNR Fisheries Update – Greg Matzke**

By now most of you should be aware that there has been a pretty intensive “bio-manipulation project” on Pickerel and Crane Lakes going back to 2012. This has truly been a joint effort between your Lake District, WDNR, and the Mole Lake Chippewa Community. The goal of this project has always been to re-establish a quality walleye fishery in the two lakes, with the ultimate success being the return of a naturally reproducing walleye population within the lakes. Natural reproduction has not occurred in these lakes in a very long time, and to be honest, we are not sure that regaining natural reproduction can be attained, but we sure have been trying hard.

I like to think of this project as having 4 main parts. The first of which, establishing a better understanding of the fishery, took place in 2012. We measured and assessed the main fish communities of the two lakes, those being bass and pan fish species. This information will be very valuable going forward as we gained strong “baseline” data that will allow us to track changes within the fishery. The 2<sup>nd</sup> phase was to do everything in our power to increase the abundance of adult walleye in the system. We focused our efforts at stocking large fingerling walleye, rather than the small fingerling walleye that have been stocked by WDNR in the past, and showed little success. Since 2012, your Lake District, WDNR, and the Mole Lake Community have stocked a total of 47,108 of these larger walleye into the two lakes, with Crane getting the majority of the stocking (55%). During the 2012 fish surveys, we documented an incredibly high abundance of large bullhead in the lakes. This is what created the 3<sup>rd</sup> phase of the project, a plan to reduce the abundance of bullhead to increase the survival of stocked walleye and make room for the increased abundance of walleye. So far we have put in 2 years of directed effort at removing bullheads equating to a total of 20,638 fish weighing approximately 13,040 pounds. The 4<sup>th</sup> phase of the project is one that we hope to accomplish this year, to assess the success of the project, provide a survival rate of juvenile walleye to adulthood, and assess whether the lakes still possess the ability to naturally produce walleye.

The start of what we consider a “comprehensive survey” of Pickerel and Crane Lakes will be immediately after ice-out. Nets will be set around both lakes targeting spawning walleye and northern pike (during this survey we will also assess yellow perch and black crappie populations). During spring netting we will give adult game fish an identifiable mark, which will allow us to conduct another survey about a week after ice-out with our electrofishing boat to gather another sample of both species and use the ratio of new fish to recaptured fish (those captured during the netting survey) to estimate the abundance of walleye and northern pike. A few weeks after our walleye and northern pike assessment, we will again set a large number of nets to conduct yet another bullhead removal on the lakes, and electrofishing surveys will take place to assess the largemouth bass population. Nets will again be deployed in late May/early June to assess summer spawning pan fish, and the survey will eventually culminate with a fall electrofishing survey to assess the level of natural reproduction of all game fish.

So you will be seeing our nets, electrofishing boat, and our crew on the lake quite a bit this year. If you see us feel free to stop by to get a better understanding of what we are doing, and we can likely give you a quick update as to how the fishery is looking. I ask that you pay attention for buoys on the lake, which will mark the locations of our nets (which run from the buoy to the shoreline). We will be down there enough that you will likely get sick of us by the end of the survey, but just remember the nets are only in the lakes temporarily and they will provide valuable insight as to the success of this project.

## **Weed Harvesting Notification**

Just a reminder, please remember to place a green flag at the end of your dock if you would like your dock area weeds harvested.

## 2016 Year - End Treasurer's Report

Expenditures	2016 Budget	2016 Year-End	Over/Under
Administrative	200.00	167.21	\$32.79
Aeration	3,600.00	875.40	\$2,724.60
Boat Landings	2,000.00	382.88	\$1,617.12
Capital Purchases	3,000.00		\$3,000.00
Dues	150.00	75.00	\$75.00
Insurance	4,000.00	2,596.10	\$1,403.90
Lake Monitoring	500.00		\$500.00
Meetings/Mileage/Phone	2,000.00	1,847.99	\$152.01
Misc./Contingency Fund	4,000.00		\$4,000.00
Postage	1,000.00	371.66	\$628.34
Printing/Ads	700.00	289.82	\$410.18
Rent	3,000.00	3,000.00	\$0.00
Walleye Restoration Project	10,000.00	10,000.00	\$0.00
*Walleye Restoration Reserve		6,461.30	<b>\$6,461.30</b>
Webpage/Newsletter	1,000.00	512.82	\$487.18
Weed Harvesting	5,550.00	6,502.08	<b>\$952.08</b>
	<b>\$40,700.00</b>	<b>\$33,082.26</b>	<b>\$7,617.74</b>
<b>Revenues</b>	<b>2016 Budget</b>	<b>2016 Year-End</b>	<b>Over/Under</b>
Boat Landing Donations	200.00	260.00	<b>\$60.00</b>
Credits	0.00		\$0.00
Donations	0.00	3,000.00	<b>\$3,000.00</b>
Interest	800.00	1,166.96	<b>\$366.96</b>
Tax Levy	27,800.00	27,800.00	\$0.00
Variable Rate/Contingency Fund	5,000.00	1,000.00	\$4,000.00
Walleye Restoration Reserve	6,900.00	6,461.30	\$438.70
	<b>\$40,700.00</b>	<b>\$39,688.26</b>	<b>\$1,011.74</b>

## **Aeration Report 2016-2017**

*Dec 31, 2016* - Installed barriers, started both blowers

*Feb 16 2017* – due to warmth fence was repositioned

*Mar 27, 2017* - shut down the entire system.

*Apr 2, 2017* - removed all the stacks from the lake.

Aeration system Boss 'Hot Dog' advises that this was the worst year that he has ever had due to the warm winter and Mother Nature. This unusual winter kept him and his volunteers extremely busy maintaining the system and the safety fence.

## **Completed and Upcoming Projects**

Cleanup activities commenced in October on the stream coming into Crane Lake from the watershed south of Saint John's Lake. Debris was removed on the stretch between Doemel Lane and the lake. Results were immediate and is now provided fresh water confirmed by a lack of freeze up at the entrance to the lake.

At spring meeting Brad Kupfer will be conveying fish habitat recommendations provided by the WI DNR.

## 1st Qtr Treasurer's Report 1/01/17 - 3/31/17

<b>Opening Balance</b>	
CD's Capital Purchases	45,445.05
CD Septic Inspections	13,564.95
CD Invasive Aquatic Plant Control	37,610.47
Savings	20,198.58
Checking	39,616.50
Variable Rate/Contingency Fund	7,379.68
	<b>2016 Year-End Balance</b>
	<b>Balance</b>
	<b>\$163,815.23</b>
<b>Revenues</b>	
Donations/Grant	4,000.00
Interest	300.21
Tax Levy	18,047.80
	<b>1st Quarter Revenues</b>
	<b>\$22,348.01</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>	
Aeration	648.75
Dues	25.00
Rent	1,500.00
	<b>1st Quarter Expenditures</b>
	<b>\$2,173.75</b>
<b>Closing Balance</b>	
CD's Capital Purchases	45,546.22
CD Septic Inspections	13,591.65
CD Invasive Aquatic Plant Control	37,684.48
Savings	31,862.98
Checking	9,570.27
Variable Rate/Contingency Fund	45,733.89
	<b>1st Quarter Balance</b>
	<b>\$183,989.49</b>

*Respectfully Submitted, Kathy Kupfer, Treasurer*

## **A Special Thank You**

The Sokaogon Chippewa again donated \$3,000.00 to the association in recognition of our lake management efforts including weed harvesting.

## **Note from the Secretary (Mike)**

I wanted to drop a quick note of appreciation for the warm welcome my wife Sue and I have received since we joined the P&C family in Aug 2016. We are both originally from the Antigo area and reside in Deerbrook. Since I travel extensively during the week, I look forward to the wonderful relaxation that the north woods provides and the opportunity to develop new friendships. We have a small quiet cottage on the NW side of Crane and visitors are always welcome.

Pickerel/Crane lake P/R District  
PO Box 18  
Pickerel WI 54465

**2017 Pickerel/Crane P&R District Spring Meeting**

May 27, 2017 / 9:30 AM

Town of Nashville Comm. Center & Town Office Building  
1038 CTH "Q" Pickerel, WI 54465  
Phone 715-219-0835

**AGENDA:**

- (1) Call to Order
- (2) Pledge of Allegiance
- (3) Moment of Silence Walt Ferguson Sonny Wrezycki
- (4) Introduce New Secretary and Commissioners
- (5) Welcome New Members to the Meeting
- (6) Reading of the fall 2016 Meeting Minutes
- (7) Reading of Minutes Sept 30, & Oct 22, 2016
- (8) Treasures Report
- (9) Old Business
  - (a) Aeration Report/Information/Discussion
  - (b) Aquatic Plant Harvesting Report 2016 and 2017
  - (c) Brad Kupfer Crane and Pickerel Lakes Walleye Stocking Overview for 2017
  - (d) Pickerel Lake Northside Landing Update
- (10) New Business
  - (a) Discuss statues of our inter-governmental relationship with the town of Nashville
  - (b) Sokaogon Chippewa Lake Protection Award
  - (c) 2017 Bullhead Extraction Project / Thank All Volunteers
  - (d) Pickerel/Crane Fish Survey Update
  - (e) Appoint Nominating Committee
- (11) Public Comment
- (12) Adjourn

**Pickerel/Crane Lake District  
Commissioners & Representatives**

Chuck Sleeter, Chairman	715 219-0835
Rod Sternhagen, Vice Chairman	920 540-4507
Dan Vosters	920 419-0317
Kathy Kupfer, Treasurer	715 484 2520
Mike Zelinski, Secretary	715 338-4343
Jamie Anderson, Town of Nashville	715 478-1038
David Solin, Langlade County Rep.	715 627-4221

In order for us to keep the mailing list current, please notify us if your address has changed. It would also be helpful if you would contact us with the name and address of the new owners in the event your property is sold.

Thank You