



President's Message By Bob Eddy



I would like to thank all RALALA members for your continued support of preserving and protecting our lakes and watershed. I would also like to send a special thank you to all who

generously donated additional funds. If it wasn't for you, we would not be able to address the many issues affecting our lakes.

AIS Activities Since 2024

As you may recall, in 2023 and 2024 we had a huge crop of Eurasian watermilfoil (EWM) on Lake Roosevelt. To put more focus on addressing this, RALALA conducted an aquatic invasive species (AIS) round-table meeting last winter. We brought in AIS specialists from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, lake surveyors, treatment providers and RALALA board members to discuss our approach in treating EWM. The goal was to take a hard look at our processes to determine if we could make improvements.

Continued on back page

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RALALA LAKES AREA ASSOCIATION

It's a Quasquicentennial Kind of Year

By Jan Mosman

This year, the City of Emily celebrates its 125th birthday, also known as its quasquicentennial.

It is difficult to fathom the grit and skill required in 1900 to build a new life in the lakes area. Farming in the lakes area was challenging due to thin rocky soil and a short growing season, but lumber was abundant and proved lucrative.

Both large company crews and individual loggers felled the original white pine and spruce trees during the winter. Sledges, also called drays, pulled by horses, brought logs along carefully iced roads to the banks of lakes and rivers.

In the spring, the loggers rolled the logs down the banks and into the water. They guided the logs through the connecting lakes and streams to Crosslake and then onto Brainerd. Heavier species that didn't float, such as red pine, were moved over land.

Sawmills cut the timber into usable boards and sent the lumber by train to Minneapolis and Saint Paul. The area's lumber was in great demand. For example, the Sears home building kits that were used around the country relied on white pine boards. Meanwhile, solid logs were needed to expand the railroad lines to developing cities.

According to the Minnesota Historical Society, Lawrence and Leavitt lakes were named after lumbermen who worked in the area. Logging in the area continues today, with some operations using better methods that plan for forest regrowth.

Continued on page 2 and back page.



Early Emily residents load logs.



In the spring, loggers rolled logs down the banks and into the water and guided them through connecting lakes and streams.

The Narrows Bridge in Outing was a wooden structure until the 1990s.



As trees were cleared from the area, early residents built homes and other buildings by hand. The first Emily post office was also a general store. One-room schools, churches and service businesses opened as the population grew.

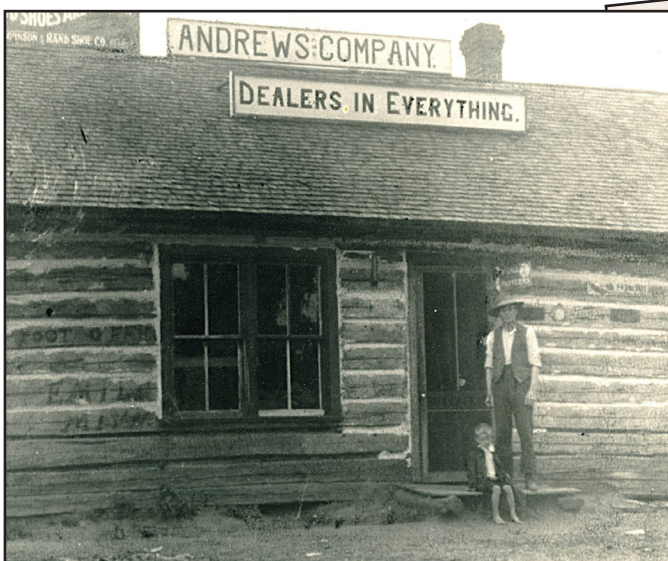
Emily's first baseball team played in 1905—a foreshadowing of the area's future. Eventually, outdoor recreation replaced logging as the dominant economic driver. Family-operated resorts and businesses catered to visitors. Tourists stayed for longer than a weekend, having traveled several days over marginal roads with extra tires strapped to the car frame to get here

from the Twin Cities, Iowa and even Chicago.

The Narrows Bridge, which is on Highway 6 as it crosses over Lake Roosevelt in Outing, used to be a wooden bridge. In the 1990s, it was rebuilt to be more substantial and to make the channel more navigable. When the project started, Native American artifacts from when the lakes were used for generations as winter camps were discovered on both banks.

Today, the area's clean water and forested land is still a major draw for the area. The higher-than-average percentage of publicly owned and undeveloped land adds to the area's appeal and creates a desirable habitat for both people and wildlife. RALALA and other lake associations have evolved from social clubs to organizations that also provide education and support about preserving water quality.

A man and boy pose for the camera outside of one of Emily's earliest businesses.



Two women from the Eggers family enjoy south Lake Roosevelt recreation in 1951.



Participants of the 2025 Youth Boat Operator Training Class pose with deputies from the Crow Wing County and Cass County sheriffs' departments after a successful day of classroom instruction and on-the-water training at the Channel Bar and Grill in Outing.

Youth Gain Skills and Safety Knowledge At 2025 Boat Operator Training

By Dave Johnson

Dozens of young boating enthusiasts gathered at the Channel Bar and Grill in Outing, Minnesota, on June 19 for the 2025 Youth Boat Operator Training Class—a hands-on educational event focused on boating safety, responsibility and real-world skills on the water.

Jointly sponsored by the Roosevelt and Lawrence Area Lakes Association (RALALA) and the Washburn Lake Association, the class was conducted by officers from the Crow Wing County and Cass County sheriffs' departments. Deputies provided classroom instruction and brought patrol boats for on-the-water demonstrations, giving students the opportunity

to practice operating a boat in real conditions.

The Channel Bar and Grill generously provided room for the classroom portion of the training. As part of the day's hospitality, RALALA and the Washburn Lake Association provided free lunches for all participants, offering a choice of burger baskets or chicken strips.

Open to youth ages 12 to 17, the course covered Minnesota boating laws, navigation rules, equipment requirements, emergency procedures and environmental awareness. The day concluded with a written test and hands-on boating exercises. Upon passing the course, each

participant earned their Minnesota Watercraft Operator Permit, enabling them to legally and safely operate watercraft under state guidelines.

This kind of program not only teaches critical safety skills, but brings the community together around our shared love of the lakes. RALALA is grateful to the local businesses and law enforcement officers who helped make this event a success.

The training continues to grow in popularity each year. Organizers, who are committed to lake safety and youth education, hope to see even more participation in future events.

Share your RALALA Lakes Experience

Are you interested in submitting articles or original photos to the RALALA newsletter? We want to hear about the area's history, social events, boat parades, wildlife, preservation efforts and more. If you would like to share information or photos, please contact Communications Director Betsy Skagen at bskagen@gmail.com.

Make sure to note RALALA Newsletter in the subject line.

MPCA Suggests How Property Owners can Help Protect the Pine River Watershed

By Carolyn Gallagher, RALALA Board Member

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's (MPCA) responsibilities include protecting Minnesota's water and restoring water in degraded conditions. Falling under this protection are the lakes and rivers in the Pine River Watershed, which covers more than 500,000 acres in Cass, Crow Wing, Aitkin and Hubbard counties.



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Scott Lucas, an environmental specialist from MPCA, said the Pine River Watershed has an advantage over other Minnesota watersheds to the south due to the large amount of native forest that exists in this area. He said lakes in this area have good water quality, which can impact the type of fish species that exist in lakes and the health and type of vegetation in lakes.

While the water quality is good, property owners must be vigilant in protecting the watershed. According to Lucas, the most important actions people can take center around water that drains

into lakes. He suggested that property owners evaluate their shorelines. A buffer zone of native plants and trees help stabilize shorelines, filter runoff and provide habitat for fish and other species. In addition, creating rain gardens and minimizing impervious surfaces also helps reduce flow directly into lakes and rivers. For more information on buffer zones, visit [Shoreland \(ralalalakes.org\)](http://Shoreland(ralalalakes.org)).

A committee composed of both constituents and representatives from organizations that oversee the Pine River Watershed recently updated the watershed's comprehensive plan. The plan outlines goals, issues and implementation plans and includes three high level areas of focus:

- 1) Surface waters—reducing the amount of phosphorus in targeted/at risk lakes, reducing stormwater and agricultural runoff and eliminating invasive species.
- 2) Groundwater—maintaining high quality drinking water by managing septic systems and capping unused wells.
- 3) Forests and habitat—protecting existing undeveloped riparian lands and restoring lakeshore and riparian lands when possible.

Recent updates to the Pine River Watershed plan can be found [here](#). To see the complete plan go to [One Watershed, One Plan](#).

RALALA Needs Volunteer Help

Adopt a Highway. Six to eight volunteers are needed to help clean two miles of Highway 6, just north of the City of Emily. It begins at 9 a.m. and takes about 90 minutes. Garbage bags, high visibility vests and pickup tools provided.

- Fall clean-up: September 20
- In case of bad weather, the clean-up will be moved one week later



If you are interested in helping shape efforts to preserve and protect our lakes, please send an email to ralala.lakes@gmail.com.

This newsletter was brought to you by the work of RALALA volunteers:
RALALA Art Director: Kim David RALALA Communications Director: Betsy Skagen



Supporting RALALA

Local organizations help protect Lawrence, Leavitt, Roosevelt and Smokey Hollow lakes

Businesses who help preserve and protect RALALA lakes deserve our attention and gratitude. Please show your appreciation of these area businesses by shopping with them and using their services whenever possible.

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TUESDAY: Fajita Night

WEDNESDAY: Pasta Night

THURSDAY: Beef Chimichangas

FRIDAY: All you can eat Crab Legs

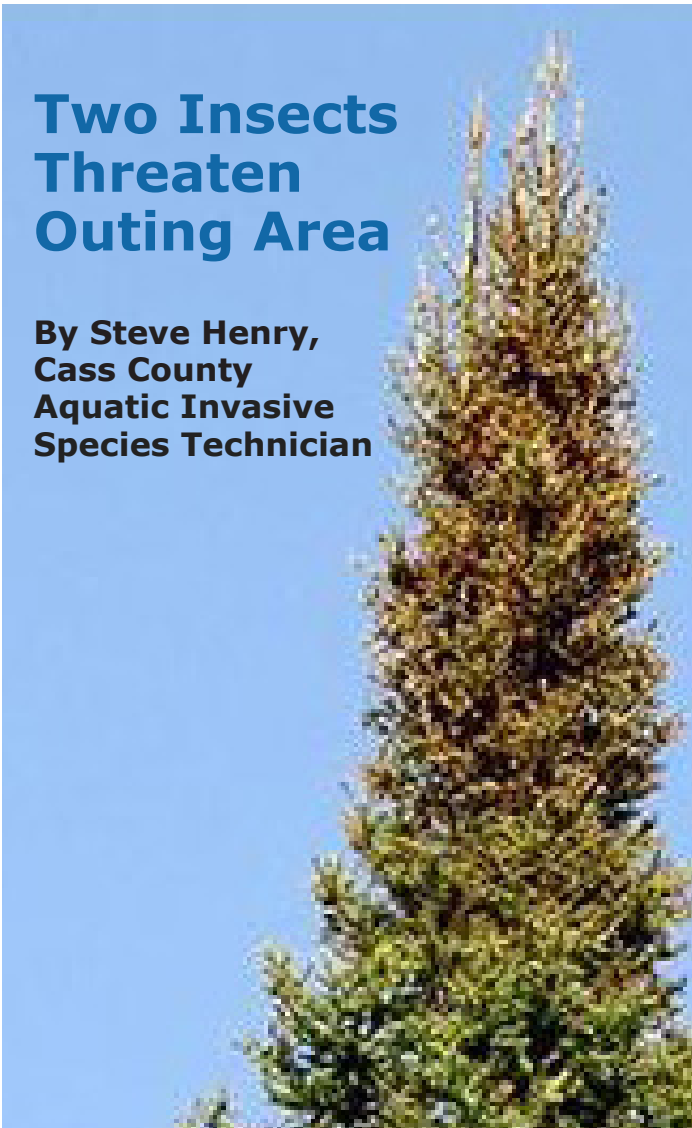
SATURDAY: Prime Rib

SUNDAY: Chef Special

OUTDOOR SEATING

Two Insects Threaten Outing Area

**By Steve Henry,
Cass County
Aquatic Invasive
Species Technician**



A balsam fir in late July shows a scorched top from spruce budworm feeding. Photo provided by the Minnesota DNR

Natural resource managers have noted two destructive insects expanding into the Outing and Emily area. These pests, one native and the other invasive, are known for their dramatic impacts on Minnesota's forests. Both pests have been featured in nationwide news in recent years and will certainly impact not just our forests, but also our lakes and communities.

Spruce budworm has recently been in the news due to the destructive Brimson Fire in northeastern Minnesota. This native caterpillar cycles in population with outbreaks noted every 30 to 40 years. The 665,000 acres of damage observed in 2023 was the highest amount since an outbreak in the 1960s. Spruce budworm primarily feeds on balsam fir and white spruce, causing tree tops to appear scorched as the new growth is chewed off. Initially damage is limited to the tree top, but eventually the entire tree is infested.

Repeated years of defoliation will kill the tree and this is being observed in some balsam fir in the Outing and Emily area. Thick stands of balsam fir, which are rare in the area, present an explosive fire risk a few years after they die from budworm pressure and this contributed to the Brimson Fire's rapid expansion. Any accumulation of dead trees, especially fir and spruce, can present a wildfire risk.

Thinning balsam fir and white spruce stands now will reduce the chance that spruce budworm will build up the population level sufficient to kill the trees. Removing fir and spruce within two years after they die reduces the risk of wildfire, especially if they are near structures or roadways. While spruce budworm can be treated with some commercial pesticides by a licensed applicator, it is difficult for homeowners to adequately treat this infestation. Visit the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) website for [additional information](#).

Another significant pest, which will have an even more immediate impact, was recently found in the Outing area. Emerald ash borer was noted north of Outing in the fall of 2023 near Big Rice Lake. In 2024, Emerald ash borer was found on the east side of Highway 6 across from the Lake Roosevelt access. This invasive pest attacks all types of ash trees and kills over 99 percent of them within six years. If you drive by these locations, you will see that the infestation is fairly obvious since there are many dead ash trees, with bark that has been partially stripped off by woodpeckers. The impact in the area has been dramatic—trees that appeared healthy in 2024 were dead by July 2025. A quick drive through the Lake Roosevelt access will give you a good idea of what to expect across the Outing area over the next six years.

Emerald ash borer hitchhikes on firewood, so Outing and Emily area residents should abide by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture quarantine that prohibits the movement of firewood and other wood products from this area unless they have been heat treated or Minnesota DNR Certified. Ash trees that threaten structures or electrical service lines should be proactively removed by a professional prior to infestation. Once ash trees have been killed by emerald ash borer, they become extremely brittle, making removal hazardous and difficult. The tops of the ash trees in the picture above snapped off over the past year.

Ash trees that are significant due to shade or cultural benefits can be treated by a licensed professional, but must be treated regularly at a significant cost. Consider planting replacement

trees now in anticipation of the loss of thousands of ash trees in our area. Good replacement trees in the RALALA area are sugar maple, red maple, paper birch, red oak, bur oak, red pine, white pine and basswood. For more information visit the [Minnesota Department of Agriculture](#) or the [Minnesota DNR](#) web sites.

Our local forests provide habitat for wildlife, clean water for our lakes, support our forest products industry and frame the beautiful views we all enjoy. Over the next few years we will see

significant changes in the Outing area forests as ash trees are all but eliminated. We may also see extensive mortality in balsam fir and white spruce, but confidence is lower on that since we generally haven't seen as dramatic of impacts from spruce budworm in the past. Proactive forest management—including thinning, replanting and treatment where appropriate—should be considered by every area landowner to help preserve our fabulous forest resources for future generations.



Some of the ash trees killed by emerald ash borer at the Lake Roosevelt access. Photo by Steve Henry

Become a Lake Steward



The land closest to the water has the greatest impact on our lakes, yet many lakeshore homeowners are unaware of how their choices affect water quality, wildlife and our lake heritage. The Lake Steward Program empowers homeowners to evaluate their practices and take incremental steps to protect our waterways for generations to come. Through this neighbor-to-neighbor interactive initiative, we're fostering commitment and pride in the natural beauty of shorelines that absorb runoff, stabilize soil and provide essential habitat for Minnesota's treasured wildlife.

RALALA is continuing its Lake Steward partnership with Minnesota Lakes and Rivers Advocates to promote and support the managing of our lands to improve water quality in our lakes. **It is much easier and more cost effective to prevent degradation of our lakes than to repair them. Please join these efforts!** Start by using this link to take the **Lake Steward Quiz** and find out what you are doing well and how you can improve.

<https://mnlakesandrivers.org/lake-steward/>



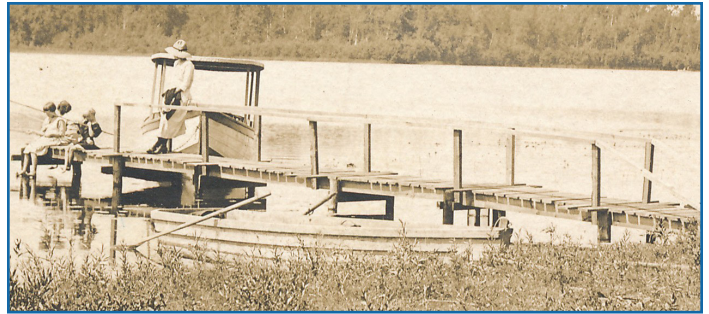
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FORWARDING SERVICE REQUESTED

It's a Quasquicentennial Kind of Year continued from page 1



A young pioneer poses outside a cabin being built in Emily.



Proof that even with today's video game technology, some lakeside recreation remains the same.

President's message continued

The roundtable recommended the following:

- Continue early summer survey of Roosevelt and Lawrence lakes (current practice)
- Develop treatment plans and treat based on survey findings (current practice)
- Conduct a second survey of Roosevelt and Lawrence lakes to assess the treatment (new practice)
- Develop a second treatment plan if needed (new practice)
- Conduct a yearly survey of Leavitt and Smokey Hollow lakes in early fall (current practice).

The AIS roundtable recommendations were presented to the RALALA Board in May 2025 and the board voted to adopt them.

2025 Saw a Remarkable Improvement

Our approach for dealing with AIS this year is based on the recommendations noted above. As we have done previously, we surveyed the lakes that had EWM and assessed the findings.

This year's survey was remarkable. The surveyor

found just one small EWM plant on the southeastern side of South Roosevelt. No plants were found anywhere else on Roosevelt or Lawrence lakes. The survey was conducted on July 8, which turned out to be a perfect day for the survey with calm weather, minimal boat traffic and great lake clarity.

Next steps:

- RALALA will hold off on treating the single EWM plant until the second survey is complete. There is minimal risk that a single plant will expand over the next few weeks.
- We will conduct a second survey, following recommendations from the AIS roundtable, of Roosevelt and Lawrence lakes in late August or early September (based on weather). Once the second survey is complete, we will execute a treatment plan.
- We will survey Leavitt and Smokey Hollow lakes in early fall as we have done in previous years.

Once it is completed, RALALA will post the full survey report on the website, along with any future treatment plans and results. Of course, we will also continue to update members through newsletters, e-blasts and social media about survey results and treatment plans.