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JANUARY 2022

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RALALA LAKES ASSOCIATION

MESSAGE FROM BOB EDDY, RALALA ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT

As you all probably know, the Enbridge pipeline is now operational and transporting petroleum products on a 24x7 basis. Why is this important to know? The pipeline is less than a thousand feet from Roosevelt Lake and it also runs under the creek that feeds the north end of the lake.

Some members believe the pipeline provides value to the community; some members believe the impact of a local leak would be catastrophic to the area. In fact, Enbridge and their engineering consultants identified Roosevelt Lake (and three other lakes) as a high-risk impact area if there was a leak.

Now with that said, the probability of a leak is very low. However, if a leak occurs there is a high risk of significant impact to the area.

So why is RALALA concerned about this? Our lake association has a mission "to preserve and protect our lakes and the watershed for ourselves and future generations" and since Roosevelt Lake is identified as a high-risk impact area, we felt obligated to act.

Continued on p.2



BANDED LOONS ON LAKE ROOSEVELT *by Sheila Langer*

On September 30, while I was monitoring the loons on Lake Roosevelt for the MN DNR Loon Watch, a large group of loons had gathered at the very south end of the lake to preen, practice their take offs and socialize before beginning their migration. I was photographing one individual as she was preening her feathers when I noticed a bright orange band on her leg and photographed it thinking it might provide helpful information. I use a 70-300 zoom lens so I am able to keep my distance and still get good photos.

I forwarded my photos to Jon Mobeck, Executive Director of the National Loon Center, Crosslake. On one of my stops at The Nest in Crosslake during the summer I learned that loon banding had been done on Lake Roosevelt. Jon forwarded my photos on to Dr. Walter Piper, scientist for the National Loon Center, to see if he would be able to identify the bird based on the single leg band pattern. Dr. Piper is also Professor of Biology at Schmid College of Science & Technology in Orange, California.

Continued on p.7

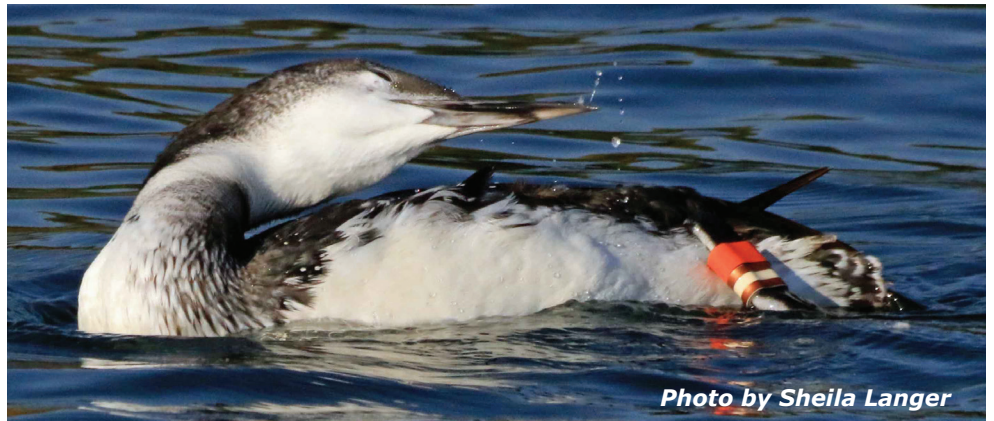


Photo by Sheila Langer

BUILDING AWARENESS • ENCOURAGING ACTION

Message from BOB EDDY continued from p.1

As a first step we have established a series of discussion and information exchange meetings, starting in November of 2021, with Enbridge.

These meetings are focusing on the following:

- Communication processes to report a suspected leak
- Enbridge response time if a leak is reported
- Enbridge clean up methods that will be deployed if a leak occurs
- Suggested water testing procedures as an early warning system
- Enbridge provided training for first responders and concerned citizens

We anticipate that our meetings will continue for the next few months. We will keep you informed as to the status of our progress via the newsletter.

During these efforts and working sessions RALALA has partnered with the Lake Washburn Association and we have the support of the City of Emily and the Crooked Lake Township Board.

Thank you to all of them.

2022 Plans for PROTECTING OUR LAKES (POL)

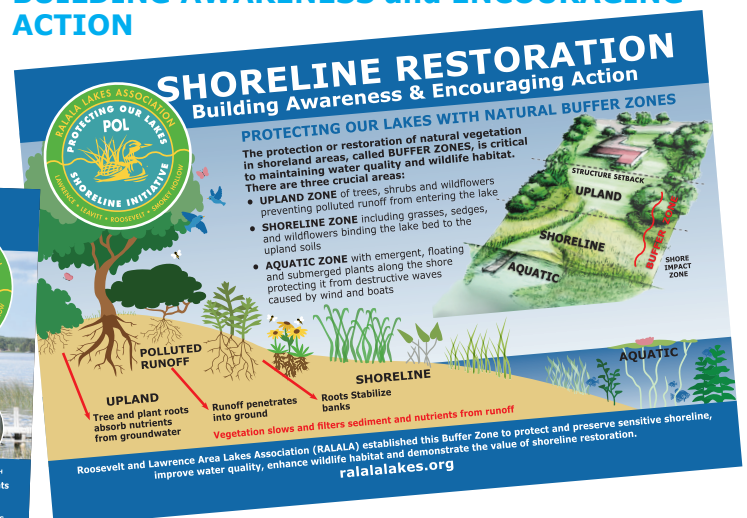
We're all hoping 2022 will bring a more "normal" year—adequate snow and rain to fill our lakes and reduction in Covid infections and overall anxiety about gathering together. RALALA is forging ahead meeting and planning our 2022 initiatives and activities. The Outing Dock Buffer Zone planting and supporting Shoreline Initiative projects will continue to be a major focus.

In May 2022, three permanent interpretative signs will be installed along the sidewalk next to the 2021 planting of native seeds and plants adjacent to the Outing Public Dock. They will share information about the lake enhancing value of buffer zones, information about native land and aquatic plants, and emphasize the necessity of understanding our individual impact on the bigger picture—our Pine River Watershed.

The Buffer Zone will be continued to be maintained with timely mowing and hand weeding to eliminate invading weeds and allowing the native plants to become well established, which takes a few years. Please don't be discouraged when the planting first looks rather scraggly. Our patience will be rewarded with deep rooted, beautiful blooms that are a haven for bees, dragonflies, and butterflies as well as filtering runoff and protecting our lake.

RALALA plans also include future **educational events** to implement the next important **POL** phase **property owner support** as we work together:

BUILDING AWARENESS and ENCOURAGING ACTION



Above three permanent interpretative signs that will be installed in the spring along the sidewalk next to the 2021 planting of native seeds and plants adjacent to the Outing Public Dock.

BUILDING AWARENESS • ENCOURAGING ACTION

LAKE STEWARDS HONORED

A healthy lake is a functioning ecosystem. The water is safe for swimming and fishing. The aquatic habitat supplies food, cover, and spawning areas for fish. Good fishing doesn't just happen. It's the result of clean water and abundant spawning habitat found in lakes that still have plenty of natural shoreline. Natural vegetation also supports songbirds, small mammals, and other wildlife. Throughout the lake's watershed, land management activities are planned to do as little harm as possible to water quality.



A healthy lake doesn't just happen. It comes about when shoreline property owners and others living in the watershed take steps to ensure the lakes' ecological health. Only if lakeshore owners manage their shoreline in natural condition can fish and wildlife populations on our lakes stay healthy and abundant.

RALALA is proud to partner with Minnesota Lakes and Rivers Advocates (MLR) in the statewide LAKE STEWARD PROGRAM by honoring our additional recipients of this prestigious designation.

CONGRATULATIONS LAKE STEWARDS!

Bonnie McGowan



Jim and Deb Nicholson



Chris and Mike Sandusky



Plans are underway to continue this successful program in 2022 designed to support and encourage land management practices that enhance rather than harm our beautiful lakes.

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DEAR POLLY *(Protecting Our Lakes Local Yokel)*

Dear Polly,

I know leaving a buffer strip of natural vegetation along my shoreline rather than mowing to the water's edge can reduce runoff and erosion, help maintain water quality, and provide habitat and travel corridors for wildlife.

I want to do my part, but native seeds and plants are expensive!
Any suggestions?

Sincerely,
A Believer, But On A Budget

Dear Believer, But On A Budget,

You are absolutely correct and are applauded for understanding the value of buffer zones as well as being financially conscientious. Remember mowing and fertilizing groomed lawns are costly too. A natural shoreline management approach represents a significant reduction in maintenance time and costs. The adage "Rome wasn't built in a day" applies. Have an overall plan in mind and start small, and implement your vision for a lush buffer zone in installments.

For example:

- **Year One:** Simply stop mowing to the water's edge. Mark the area with stakes the size of your planned buffer zone (a minimum of 10 feet from the water's edge, at least 75% of the linear shoreline). Taking into account you might not be able to realistically accomplish this all in one year, plan expansion over multiple seasons.

- **Year Two-Five:** Observe what native plants emerge from the dormant native seed bank or creep in from surrounding vegetation, and allow them to grow and flourish.

Weed out invasives such as Canada thistle.

- **Year Three-Ten:** Purchase desired seed mixtures, plant plugs or bare root plants for targeted areas to nurture plant diversity.

Sincerely, Polly

To learn more read A Deeper Dive into DO IT YOURSELF Shoreline Buffer Zones P. 5



A Deeper Dive Into DO IT YOURSELF Shoreline Buffer Zones

We are very fortunate to have extensive information provided online by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, MNDNR www.dnr.state.mn.us/rys/st/bufferzone.html

Click the tabs to learn about:

- Planning Your Buffer Zone
- Reading *Your Shoreline* which includes a Site Assessment Worksheet
- Identifying Your Objectives
- Lakeshore Design Process
- Implementing Your Project
- Transferring Your Plan onto the Land
- Preparation
- Maintenance

The best advice is just jump in and get started. Crow Wing Soil and Water Conservation District personnel are available to make site visits for a fee, contact them at CWSWCD.org

They provide extensive reports and guidance that can be a valuable planning tool. Cost sharing may also be available for projects but must be **pre-approved** before any work begins.

PLAN SHORELINE RESTORATION PROJECTS NOW

NOW is the perfect time to order native plants and seeds for spring and summer projects. Seed catalogues will arrive in your mailbox or can be requested and/or found online. Don't procrastinate, many desirable seed mixtures and seedlings sell out very quickly, so pre-order for spring delivery, the sooner, the better.

The DNR website www.dnr.state.mn.us/gardens/native-plants/suppliers.html has a list of vendors of native plants but does not make individual recommendations.

Vendors should be able to provide answers to your questions and the support you need to guide your decisions. Plants that will be the most successful will be native plants from Minnesota and preferably grown within 100 miles of our area.

You should plan in advance:

- Budget
- Location of your desired planting
- Square footage of the plot
- Growing conditions:
 - Direct sunlight, shady, partial shade
 - Dry, wet, well drained
 - Soil type

CROW WING SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT ANNUAL SEED AND PLANT SALE GOING ON RIGHT NOW! January 1-February 25, 2022

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AIS UPDATES FROM DANA GUTZMANN



Do I have to worry about aquatic invasive species (AIS) in the wintertime?

In winter months we have a few less concerns with AIS movement than the heat of the summer. Used docks and lifts being sold are kept out of the water the required 21 days by law because most people aren't cutting holes in the ice to launch equipment. Zebra mussels and their microscopic larvae (called veligers) go dormant in colder water and Eurasian watermilfoil and starry stonewort die back like the native submerged aquatic vegetation. This is no reason to slack on our AIS prevention methods though!

Spiny waterflea eggs can survive freezing! This is one reason to continue to the practice clean, drain, dry, and dispose.

Another important way AIS can spread in the wintertime is through the release of live bait. Not only can live bait host pathogens that can spread to other fish, but there is a risk that live bait may have carp mixed in. Many carp can look very similar to legal baitfish, and with the small size they can be especially hard to tell apart.

	Inspections	Inspection Hours	Plug Compliance	Water/Plant Compliance
Roosevelt	1482	743	98.7%	98.3%
Lawrence	386	260	99.2%	99.2%
Washburn	471	349	99.6%	100.0%

Adjacent is the 2021 watercraft inspector survey hours and inspections for Lakes Roosevelt, Washburn, and Lawrence.

So, what can you do? If you're drilling in shallow water, make sure you clean the mud and weeds off your auger. Take care to clean mud and weeds off your spear and any tackle as well. Wipe down your fishing lines. Don't release live bait into the lake, throw it into the trash! I recommend keeping your bait bag for the end of your fishing adventures, dump the water out away from the lake where it won't drain in, and put the bait into the bait bag. This way you can tie a knot in the bag, so it doesn't stink up your vehicle before you get to a trash bin.

2021 aquatic invasive species (AIS) watercraft inspector season wrap-up

In Cass County we had a total of 34 inspectors stationed at 36 accesses on 30 bodies of water. They completed 26,653 watercraft and boat lift inspections. There was 99% compliance with Minnesota's drain-plug law, which is up from 98% last summer. We were happy to have inspectors stationed at Roosevelt, Washburn, and Lawrence lake accesses again this season. We even had the Cass County Volunteer Dive Team survey locations at Roosevelt and Lawrence lakes this summer. No new AIS was reported from their dives.

Law enforcement was called on a couple of occasions for boaters attempting to evade inspection, but overall, we had a great season with most boaters being cooperative and understanding of the need for AIS inspections. The number one complaint the inspectors heard was anglers not wanting to drain their live wells and bait containers.

A success story from the summer is the inspector at Roosevelt Lake stopped a pontoon from launching with zebra mussels attached! He sent them to the watercraft decontamination station located at the Crooked Lake Town Hall in Outing for a full decontamination. 116 decontaminations were completed at that location for the summer. Decontaminations are free so we encourage you to use that station for any of the following reasons: if you can't dry your boat for 5 days, if you find mud, plants/weeds, or zebra mussels attached to your boat, or if there is water you cannot drain. Ballast tanks are notoriously hard to empty so decontaminations are strongly encouraged. **Decontaminations are free.**

I wish to thank all the RALALA members and lake property owners for your support of the Clean Drain Dry Dispose initiative, and I look forward to seeing you at the accesses in the spring. If you are interested in learning how to become a watercraft inspector for the upcoming 2022 season, please feel free to email or call me for more information. Dana Gutzmann, Cass County Lake Technician Office Phone: 218-547-7324 Email: dana.gutzmann@co.cass.mn.us

LOONY BEHAVIOR

By Sheila Langer

On June 2, 2021, we were on Roosevelt Lake with friends and observed a single loon exhibiting very strange behavior. This loon also had several bites on his head which led me to believe there may be a predator at work. He was rolling in the water, even bottoms up at one point. My first thought was that he might be exhibiting signs of lead poisoning or I imagined some large fish was attacking from the deep water below him. It turns out, this was not the case.

According to Walter Piper, scientist for the National Loon Center (and Professor of Biology, Schmid College of Science and Technology, Orange, California), this loon was doing some intense preening, referred to as “freaking out”. Dr. Piper went on to explain that this type of behavior is rare and scientists really don’t know what its function is. The bites and roughed up feathers on the nape are from black flies. Loons spend many hours incubating their eggs so they simply have to tolerate the horrible bites of the flies. The skin gets badly inflamed in the nape region.



Lead is dangerous to loons, swans and any water birds that pick up small stones on the lake bottom to aid in their digestion. Just one split-shot sinker ingested can kill a loon.

Lead poisoning is the most significant cause of mortality in adult loons.



Photos by Sheila Langer

BANDED LOONS ON LAKE ROOSEVELT *CONTINUED*

Dr. Piper said that normally they would need to see the bands on both legs of a loon to identify it with certainty, but we were lucky in this case. There was only one loon banded with orange over copper cream on the left leg in the upper Midwest. Dr. Piper identified this bird as a female from East Fox Lake-North where she was banded on July 19, 2021, along with her mate and chick. Dr. Piper had suspected that this would be one of the two loons banded on Roosevelt during the summer, but that was not the case. He explained that this kind of information is of great value because it verifies that a banded individual is alive or has moved from one territory to another. According to Dr. Piper, Lake Roosevelt will be added to their study area in 2022.

An interesting fact: daily preening is necessary in order to maintain the waterproofing of waterbirds’ feathers and keep them aligned. When preening, loons take oil from the base of their tail into their bills and use it to coat their feathers.



Listen to the calls of our Common Loon

www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Common_Loon/sounds



RALALA Adopts a Highway

This fall, a group of RALALA members cleaned up a 2 mile stretch of MN Hwy 6, starting just north of Emily and running to a point just south of Blue Lake Road. We are excited to support such an important program.

Adopt a Highway enables residents who are environmentally conscious to make a personal contribution to a cleaner environment.



Go to the **RALALA WEBSITE** www.ralalalakes.org to volunteer for the spring clean-up

PLEASE SUBMIT ARTICLES OR PHOTOS FOR THE RALALA NEWSLETTER

President: Bob Eddy 612-961-8513 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
djwepscheid@earthlink.net

www.ralalalakes.org

LOCAL ATV CLUB PROPOSES TRAIL CHANGES TO PROTECT LITTLE EMILY LAKE

The Over the Hills Gang (OTHG) ATV Club of Emily and Outing is proposing a limited trail change to protect Little Emily Lake from water pollution due to storm-water run-off. The OTHG's objective is have MNDOT (the MN Department of Transportation) close a section of the right-of-way ditch area to the use of any All-Terrain Vehicles (ATVs) & Off-Highway Motorcycles (OHMs) and to facilitate effective restoration of damaged areas. The ATV traffic in this narrow ditch along Little Emily Lake is the primary cause of local top-soil erosion and run-off into Little Emily Lake.

The section being referenced includes both the east and west sides of the MN Hwy 6 right-of-way, beginning at Mill Road and extending north 2 miles to Papoose Road. This proposed closure would include the re-routing of ATV traffic to existing Grant-In-Aid ATV trail routes slightly to the east of MN Hwy 6.

The OTHG is actively soliciting community support to have MN-DOT proceed in this limited action by the Spring of 2022.

The RALALA Board supports this proposal. This action is a modest yet important step to eliminate erosion-creating ATV traffic within and through this tightly constrained shoreline area. Also, it is consistent with our commitment to preserve and protect our lakes and this watershed for ourselves and future generations.

This change of ATV routing is also expected to enhance safe travel for the ATV riders between Outing and Emily and to provide other broader community values as well.



AS WINTERS WARM, MINNESOTA LAKES LOSE ICE COVER

Minnesota Public Radio News: "In our own backyard, climate change is chipping away at the lake ice season," said Katrina Kessler, commissioner of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. Based on data collected by state agencies and volunteers, since 1967, ice-in dates have moved about nine days later on average, while ice-out dates have moved about four to five days earlier.

An ice season shortened by two weeks could have far-reaching impacts on beloved Minnesota traditions such as ice fishing, snowshoeing, snowmobiling and cross country skiing, and hurt local businesses that depend on winter tourism and recreation, officials said.

Besides recreation, warmer water and a shortened ice season also can have an impact on a lake's ecosystem, leading to more toxic algae blooms and invasive species, while causing fish populations to shift. Walleye, for example, prefer colder water and no longer thrive in warmer lakes.

Lake ice changes are also a good way to measure the impacts of climate change because they are not as variable as weather conditions. "It takes a lot of heat to melt the ice, and it takes a lot of cooling to freeze the ice, so it's not like day to day weather," said John Magnuson, professor emeritus at the University of Wisconsin-Madison's Center for Limnology (the study of the biological, chemical, and physical features of lakes and other bodies of fresh water).

On lakes across the Northern Hemisphere, Magnuson's research found a similar trend of ice loss. Less ice cover could cause physical and ecological changes in a lake. Ice and snow reduce the amount of light that can penetrate to the water below, which affects how productive plants and algae are.

It also could change patterns of thermal stratification—when lakes separate into different layers of density after the sun warms the surface—and the natural mixing, or turnover, that occurs in the spring and fall. That process is important for distributing oxygen that living organisms need to survive.

The trend toward shorter ice seasons also has a human impact. "In Minnesota, the use of lake ice plays an important cultural role and it ties to people's sense of place," said Lesley Kroll, associate director at the University of Minnesota's Itasca Biological Station.



Ice carousel on Lake Roosevelt 2020 photo by Randy Strobush

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Anne Bonnerup, RALALA Board Member was recognized in the Pine River Watershed Newsletter

Anne Bonnerup was recognized for her organization of the RALALA shoreline tour. The parade of properties showed how to filter rainwater, manage runoff, stabilize slopes and shorelines, prevent erosion, and create a buffer zone to manage storm water. "Anne curated information about each property and a folder was provided to everyone who registered for the shoreline tour."

Minnesota DNR finds zebra mussels in Cass County lake

Minnesota wildlife officials say they have found zebra mussels in a Cass County lake.

According to the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), two of the agency's K9s trained to detect zebra mussels were brought in for a search of Thunder Lake, located near Remer.

The K9s, as well as their conservation handlers, checked nearly two dozen properties as well as 50 pieces of equipment and found four zebra mussels attached to equipment next to the site of the original report. The report was made to the DNR in late October by a lake property owner who stated they found the invasive species on a boat lift being removed from the water for the season.

State law requires docks and lifts to be out of the water for at least 21 days after being removed from a body of water before being put into a different waterway.

The law also says anyone who moves a dock or lift from a shoreline property to an off-site location for storage or repair may need a permit.

Click www.dnr.state.mn.us/invasives/ais/infested.html to find more tips on how to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species.



Photo: KSTP. Zebra mussels

A BOOKKEEPING HERO!



For 15 years, now retired board member John Rowell served as Treasurer of RALALA. And he served on the board for years prior to that!

His main career was food science but he found time to volunteer for us, the Boy Scouts for 20 years, giving AARP tax help, all the while creating beautiful wood creations. John can build and create anything...his work is often found in gift shops in our area. He did work for H&R Block doing tax returns for 20 years, so that did relate to all the number crunching he has done for RALALA.

As RALALA grew over the years, so did the tasks at hand. In the early years, taking the membership dues was mostly the only responsibility, but as we grew as an organization, so did his responsibilities. He wrote thousands of thank you letters to you for your membership and donations, he kept track of years of Raffle fundraising tickets and sales. He created separate accounts for our accountability for various projects to fulfill our mission statement. Of course, this involved filling out many reports and annual statements, IRS forms, etc. This was a year round job and he excelled at it. We can't thank John (and spouse Bonnie) enough for all the time and effort that they have put in during those years!

The Ralala Lakes Association board wishes you a

Happy New Year!
RALALA BOARD MEMBERS 2022

BOARD MEMBERS



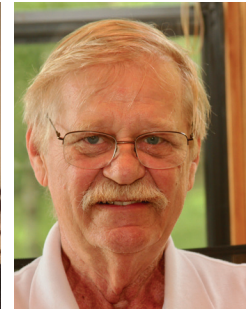
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Linda Van Straaten



Bob Lee



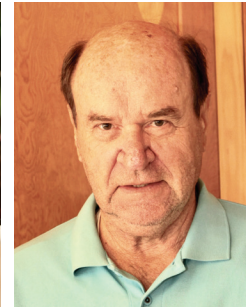
Anne Bonnerup



Mark Mosman



Gary Langer



Darril Wegscheid



Dave Johnson



Kim David



Jeff Caza



David Lawson

NEW BOARD MEMBERS

RETIRED



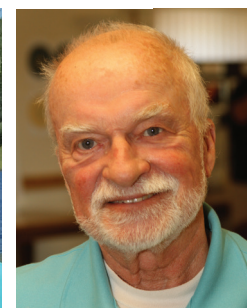
Sara Parke
Treasurer



Cyrus Malbari
CIO & Asst. Treasurer



Lloyd Thyen



John Rowell
Retired Treasurer



Roosevelt and Lawrence
Area Lakes Association
P.O. Box 139
Outing, MN 56662-0139

FORWARDING SERVICE REQUESTED

DNR NOTES *by Dave Johnson*

YOUTH BOATING SAFETY CLASS

We are once again planning to have a **Youth Boat Safety Class** this year. We will shoot for a date after school is out on a Saturday morning. Hopefully we can get a good turnout, watch for more information in the next newsletter.

NOVEMBER 2021 MEETING WITH DNR FISHERIES PERSONNEL

RALALA members Roger Brekken, Lloyd Thyen and Dave Johnson met with DNR fisheries biologists Marc Bacigalupi and Mike Knapp on November 16, 2021 at the Brainerd DNR offices. This meeting has been an annual event but had a hiatus in 2020 due to Covid restrictions.

Marc and Mike brought us up to date on a number of projects concerning the lakes, as well as answering questions from our members.

Fish population and stocking: The DNR goal is to alternate stocking walleye and muskies into Roosevelt Lake every other year. They were not able to stock in 2020 due to Covid, so in 2021 they released into the lake both species: 390 pounds of walleye and 390 ten-inch muskies. The estimate of the muskie population is 300 to 400 and they have not seen any evidence of natural reproduction. Lawrence and Leavitt lakes are scheduled for fish lake surveys this summer.

Water quality: The biologists stated they were not seeing anything unusual regarding water quality. Water clarity was high in many area lakes. This clarity might be attributable to the lack of rain and very little runoff in 2021.

AIS: Spiny water fleas and zebra mussels top the list of aquatic invasive species harming the fisheries.

Loon Restoration Project and Get the Lead Out: Rob Rabasco, the DNR specialist on this subject, provided the following information: The Restoration of Common Loons in Minnesota Project (RCLMP) is a joint project with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), United States Geological Survey (USGS), the Minnesota

Pollution Control Agency's Get the Lead Out Program (MPCA-GTLO) and the Minnesota DNR. Briefly, the RCLMP is funded and supported by the Open Ocean Trustee Implementation Group in response to the 2010 British Petroleum Deepwater Horizon oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico and its potential negative effects on the Minnesota loon population. Many of Minnesota's juvenile loons grow to maturity in the Gulf and many adults winter there.

Rob explained that a goal of the program is outreach with lake associations and coalitions of lake associations via the program Loon Friendly Lake Registry (LFLR). It establishes "Loon Liaisons" within these groups working with Rob to write loon conservation-centric lake management plans, take part in the Loon Watcher Survey Program and coordinate with the MPCA Get the Lead Out Program. Data obtained from the joint USFWS, USGS and DNR 2021, 2022 and 2023 loon surveys will drive decision making and programming. The surveys measure loon productivity on a select series of lakes in Aitkin, Becker, Cass, Crow Wing, Clearwater, Hubbard and Itasca counties. The question was raised of establishing "No Wake" zones in sensitive loon nesting areas. Laws must be on the books and enforcement is the responsibility of the appropriate Sheriff's Department.

We also addressed many other questions and concerns: **DNR cost sharing for lakeshore improvements** and were informed that should fall under county jurisdiction.

DNR completing localized aquatic surveys of areas treated for milfoil to determine the effects on native plants and were told that was the responsibility of the local associations.

Major concerns of the DNR:

Not having enough fish available for the stocking plan. The DNR staff is down 33%. Funding is critical!

Other items:

- Allen Lake is full of bass again which may require a kill and starting over.
- There may be a winter kill on some of the DNR rearing ponds this year eliminating undesirable larger carryover fish.