

Spring Lake Association

Spring 2021



SLA 2020 Photo of the Year | Submitted by Tara Lauren

2021

SLA CALENDAR

Annual Meeting (Zoom)

Sunday, April 18

Paddle Parade

Monday, May 31

NEW - Kids Fishing Contest

Saturday, June 19



NEW - Ice Cream Social

Saturday, July 3

Concert on the Lake

Saturday, August 7

Pick Your Paddle

Monday, September 6

S'mores / Light up the Lake

Saturday, October 16

2021 Joint Fish Stocking Plan

The following is the fish stocking plan for Spring Lake. This plan is the result of discussions with the Prior Lake-Spring Lake Watershed District (PLSLWD); its Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC); its fisheries consultant, WSB; the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources; and Spring Lake Association.



Walleye

The proposed walleye stocking is planned for fall of 2021 and will include stocking 6-inch walleye fingerlings matching up to the rate that the DNR is planning for. **Funded by:** Spring Lake Association, PLSLWD, Prior Lake Rotary and Edina Realty.



Bluegills

Given the results of the carp assessment of three carp nurseries located in the Tadpole Pond, Desilt Pond and Geis Wetland (located near highway 13), the PLSLWD will stock bluegills there to eat carp eggs. The proposed stocking is planned for Spring of 2021 after initial Bluegill population surveys take place. Carp cause serious damage to native fish populations because they out-compete other fish for food and space. While searching for food, Carp reduce water

clarity by uprooting aquatic vegetation and stirring up bottom phosphorus-containing sediments, which contributes to algae blooms. **Funded by:** Spring Lake Association and PLSLWD.

Stocking for Bluegill and/or Walleye is dependent upon a successful permit request. PLSLWD will purchase the bluegill and Walleye from a commercial firm.

Carp Management | Thanks PLSLWD

The Prior Lake-Spring Lake Watershed District (PLSLWD) was recognized and honored to have been awarded the **Best Program of the Year Award for Carp Management** at the 2020 Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts' (MAWD) annual conference.



- PLSLWD conducted multiple Carp Management fishing missions in 2020 which resulted in removing nearly 12,000 pounds from Spring Lake. So far in 2021, PLSLWD has removed 7,500 pounds of carp.
- They use a variety of methods including commercial netting, baited box traps, electrofishing and specialized traps to capture these wily fish.
- In September 2020, the PLSLWD installed an improved carp barrier and maintenance deck at the District's Ferric Chloride Treatment Center near Highway 13 ditch. The new structure will prevent carp from accessing the upstream wetlands for spawning, is safer and will allow easier maintenance.

Carp management activities have been funded in part by a state BWSR Watershed Based Funding Grant as well as a federal 319 grant through the MPCA. Please email us at KKeller-miller@plslwd.org if you would like to volunteer to be a part of the Carp Management Program at PLSLWD?

Visit our website at www.SpringLakeAssociation.org

- Check for updated details regarding our events!
- Pay your 2021 SLA Membership!

Spring Lake Water Quality | Abstract Research | By Olaf Morkeberg, Youth Leader & Denver Link

Spring Lake met all three of the water quality standards for a healthy lake in 2020. Water clarity (Secchi disk depth), total phosphorus concentration and chlorophyll-a concentration are the three main standards used to determine water quality.

It is increasingly common for lakes surrounded by agricultural and residential areas to be labeled as hypereutrophic (very low water quality). Several water quality indicators are measured to determine how healthy a lake is including phosphorus, nitrogen, Secchi depth, oxygen, and chlorophyll. Spring Lake was listed as an impaired waterway for recreational use in 2002. Since then, several internal and external lake conservation strategies have been implemented to improve lake quality.

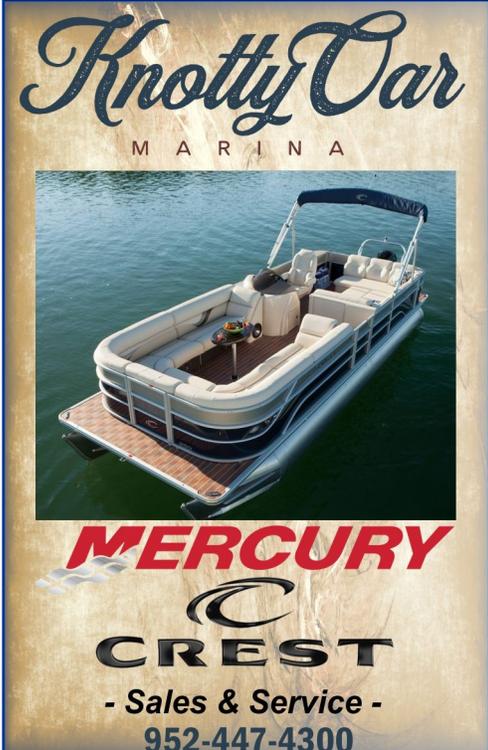
Internal lake strategies include Aluminum (Alum) Sulfate Treatment and removal of invasive species such as carp and curly leaf pondweed. External lake strategies included ferric chloride treatment, lakeshore restoration, conversion of septic systems to city sewer, wetland restorations, agricultural best management practices, and modifying drainage ditch architecture.

We assessed the effectiveness of these strategies by analyzing chemical and physical variables. We found that years with our predicted indicators of low water quality (high temperature, dissolved phosphorus (SRP) and nitrogen) were correlated with higher chlorophyll-a, reduced Secchi depth, and decreased oxygen. We also found that there was improvement in Secchi depth, phosphorus, and chlorophyll numbers during years with Alum Treatment (2013, 2019 & 2020).

We also analyzed trends in fish populations using DNR data. Since 1990, bluegill populations have decreased but are currently stable at a low number. Bluegills are beneficial as they eat carp eggs. Northern pike populations remain stable, and walleye populations are good, most likely due to stocking of walleye by the DNR.

Lakes that have too much phosphorus can have excessive algae growth, that can grow out of control thus creating imbalances which destroys other life forms and produce harmful toxins. Ferric chloride and alum have both been shown to reduce the amount of available phosphorus in the lake. The Prior Lake-Spring Lake Watershed District (PLSLWD) operates a Ferric Chloride Treatment Facility near Highway 13 ditch and is also proud to announce that after a third Alum Treatment in May 2020, Spring Lake and Upper Prior Lake were measured to have the best water quality in many years.

Despite these encouraging data, there is more work to be done in order to sustain these results. Currently the watershed is planning more external projects upstream of Spring Lake to decrease pollution and control flooding. Lake systems serve large ecological and economic roles in local communities. Spring Lake demonstrates the importance in understanding ecological drivers of water quality to promote the sustainability of lake dynamics overtime.



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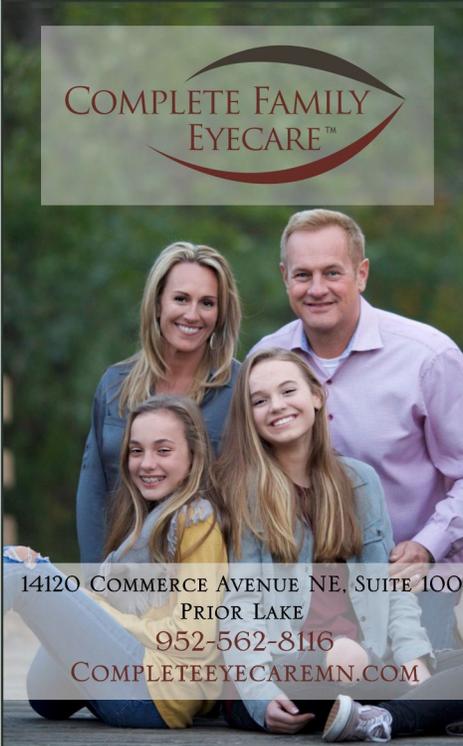


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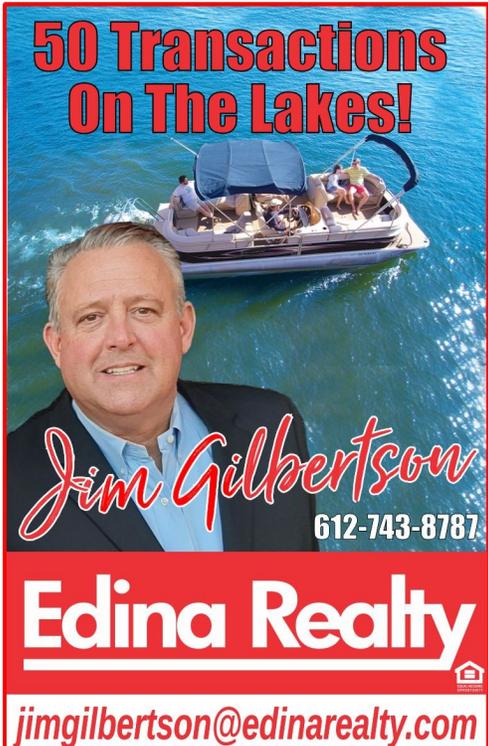
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SLA Vergus Avenue Residents

Sign up to Help Save the Bees!

By Shelby Roberts Scott SWCD Outreach Specialist



The Scott Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), Scott Watershed Management Organization, Prior Lake-Spring Lake Watershed District, and the Lower Minnesota River Watershed District have all partnered together and were

awarded funds from the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) for the Lawns to Legumes Program. The program's goal is to make residential pollinator plantings accessible for all Minnesota residents, and to restore habitat for the Rusty Patched Bumblebee.

The Rusty Patched is Minnesota's state bee, and the first bumblebee to be placed on the endangered species list. Scott SWCD Natural Resource Specialist, and Lawns to Legumes Coordinator, Meghan Darley elaborates, "the Rusty Patched Bumblebee has seen a remarkable population decline over the last decade, and part of the reason for it is the loss of critical pollinator habitat. Contemporary turf grass lawns are taking away space that previously held wildflowers and prairie grass."

Lawns to Legumes wants to bring habitat back and educate homeowners in the process by means of a "Demonstration Neighborhood," or rather, a series of pollinator plantings in close enough proximity of each other so that each connects and serves a greater reach for pollinators.

"Spring Lake is importantly positioned as an area we want to establish pollinator plantings in first. The bees already want to make their habitat there, we just want to make it a little homier" Darley comments.

Last year, the Scott Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) sent out a call for volunteers because they had new grant funds for planting pollinator habitat. The Spring Lake neighbors on Vergus Avenue rose to the occasion, pledging to add beauty, stability, and protection for the habitat. The pollinator plantings will be installed this spring and summer. Keep an eye out for Lawns to Legumes signs and thank your neighbors for helping to protect endangered species and for planting locally.

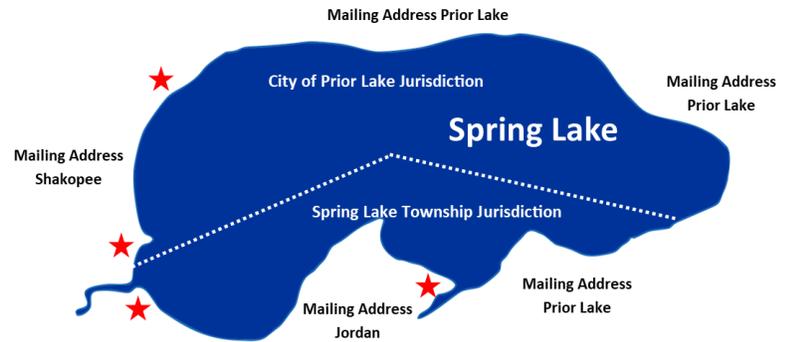
"In a year full of isolation and distancing, it was inspiring to witness the partnership among the Vergus Avenue neighbors. The people around Spring Lake have a strong bond not only with the lake, but with each other," Darley observes.

For more information about different types of pollinator plantings, or for more information on the Lawns to Legumes Program, visit <http://bwsr.state.mn.us/121>. If you are interested in participating in this program and utilizing Lawns to Legumes funds, please contact the Scott SWCD office at 952-492-5425.



Spring Lake | Community & Responsibility

By Maureen Reeder, Resident



There is no doubt, living on Spring Lake has given me a strong feeling of community as well as a sense of responsibility for the health and future of the lake. We all can play an important part to ensure good governance by keeping informed about how laws are passed and enforced for Spring Lake. At times, the process can be tricky because Spring Lake falls under the jurisdiction of two governing bodies: part of the lake lies within Spring Lake Township and part within the City of Prior Lake.

It can be a rather complex process to sync up the governance of Spring Lake but citizens have been attentive to the challenge and have swooped in from time to time to ensure we have consistent rules and regulations for the lake. This is important because what happens on one part of the lake impacts all of the lake and uneven laws may be ineffective and hard to enforce. Staff and elected officials from the city and township have helped coordinate consistency in law changes and the Spring Lake Association has played a role in providing information about public hearings so all perspectives can be heard.

For example, when the City of Prior Lake proposed an ordinance in 2016 to establish a no wake zone on Spring Lake, some township residents took a peek over the fence and said, "we better get involved," knowing that it would be confusing for boaters if half the lake had a no wake zone and the other half did not. Township residents provided input into the development of the city ordinance. They testified at hearings and before the city council. Once an ordinance was passed by the city, city residents stepped up to support township residents who sought passage of a similar ordinance at the township. The result was that no wake is allowed within 150 feet of shore on Spring Lake no matter where you are boating.

More recently, when a new housing development was proposed in 2019 near Spring Lake with a 100-slip marina, township and city residents again joined forces. This time to challenge adding a marina with multiple boats to the lake. The City of Prior Lake considered an ordinance to limit slip rental and moorings facilities; township citizens participated early in the city process knowing that whatever the city passed would likely be brought to their township board. Once the city passed an ordinance, citizens from the city and township worked together successfully to gain support for a similar ordinance in the township. In this case, the goal was to ensure one part of the lake didn't become a zone for unchecked slip rental growth while another part prohibited it. The result is Spring Lake prohibits the rental of personal boat slips.

By working together, Spring Lake residents and officials have navigated these and other important issues in partnership to achieve clear and consistent citizen-driven ordinances for all! This partnership has resulted in an active community with a common vision for being a great place to live and recreate! I am confident that the Spring Lake residents will handle any future issues with the same commitment and passion!

Maintaining a Healthy Shoreline | Contributor: Prior Lake-Spring Lake Watershed District Staff



Water Lily: Because of its value as fish habitat and a decorative plant, the native white-water lily is usually best left along your shore. Removing lilies allows more light to reach the lake bottom and typically results in less desirable plants moving in.

One of the many benefits of living on a lake is the abundance of wildlife; bald eagles soaring above, mallards diving for food, sunfish swimming under your dock and the sound of loons. The goal is to have a lake with enough vegetation for wildlife to thrive while still allowing humans to have fun too.

The carp management activities on Spring Lake, along with the three alum treatments, have made significant improvements to the water quality in recent years. These improvements are anticipated to lead to increased native plant growth along the shoreline which is an indication of a healthy lake!

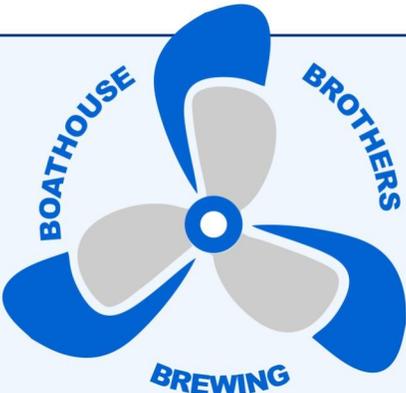
A healthy lake relies on a healthy community of native aquatic plants to sustain its clear waters. The more native vegetation in the water, the better the water quality. Research has shown that lakes can naturally sustain water clarity when at least 40% of the lake bottom grows vegetation. In June 2019, native aquatic plants were estimated to cover only 17% of Spring Lake, so it is important that we understand what plants are good and what are bad.

What can you do with common aquatic plants near your shoreline?

Cattails: Cattails are native and can only be removed from the water with a DNR permit. Only a small area may be removed to provide boat access to deeper lake water. Floating cattails that land on your shoreline can be moved to an existing cattail colony on the lake or can be left to create a new colony along your shore. **Helpful tip:** cutting cattails below the water surface after first frost provides good control.

Curly-leaf Pondweed: One of the most common undesirable plants present in Spring Lake is curly-leaf pondweed (CLP) (*Potamogeton Crispus*) which is non-native and invasive. It grows quickly early in the season, sometimes smothering native plant growth. The plant releases its seeds and then dies back during mid-summer. The decomposing plants contribute nutrients to the water which then fuels algae growth. The best time to treat for invasive CLP is in the spring before the lake temperature surpasses 60°F and when plants are 1-2' tall because native plants start to grow once the lake temperature reaches 60°F.

Treatments: If you would like to treat other plants along your shoreline, determine if you will hire a company or do it yourself and if you'd like to treat with chemical or manual pulling. There are companies you can hire to do either. Whether you hire a company or do it yourself, chemical treatments require a DNR permit that will allow up to 2 treatments per year. If you choose to do a chemical treatment yourself, Hydrothol 191 Granular is a recommended product that can be used to treat both invasive and native plants. The Prior Lake-Spring Lake Watershed District (PLSLWD or District) treats areas of CLP farther than 150' from the shoreline, when plants are expected to reach nuisance levels. The District cannot manage invasive plants alone and is supportive of landowners taking steps to control CLP along their shoreline. Visit website PLSLWD.org and DNR.State.MN.us for more information regarding native and invasive plants as well as treatment options and required permits.



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As I write my farewell article and look out at the lake and reflect on my 6+

years as the president of the Spring Lake Association (SLA), I feel a lot of different emotions but one that stands out is pride!

I am proud that the SLA membership has grown from only 12 members to over 60% (148) of the lake being active/engaged members and still growing!

I am proud that we have a number of local businesses that support SLA each year!

I am proud that we donate funds each year toward lake efforts and Spring Lake is healthier than ever!

I am proud of the partnerships we have created with other organizations that help serve/support Spring Lake Community!

I am proud that we have a driven/passionate/motivated board that will ensure that SLA will continue to make a difference!

I am proud of the amazing events we hold each year and the growing attendance!

Most of all though I am proud of the community we have helped create on Spring Lake for us to enjoy for years to come!

Spring Lake is a great place to call home | See you on the lake!

My Life on Spring Lake | Reflection by Jim Weninger

I grew up in Highland Park in a home that was shared with my grandfather, mom, dad and 5 siblings with one phone and one bathroom. My family was introduced to Spring Lake in 1947 when my family rented a cabin on Sunset Beach on the east side of the lake. I celebrated my first birthday at the cabin that summer and continued to celebrate almost all of my birthdays on Spring Lake! Traveling to the cabin was an adventurous trip because back then Highway 35E through St Paul didn't exist, Highway 13 was a dirt road in places and the main way for us to cross the Minnesota River was the Mendota Bridge by Ft. Snelling.



Our family enjoyed our summer vacation so much that summer, that the next summer my parents bought lakeshore property on Sunset Avenue on the west side of the lake. They built a pre-fab cabin complete with an outhouse, an outside pump, and a party line phone. For the next 17 years, my family enjoyed our cabin every summer during my father's vacation.

In the early 1950's I remember playing outside with my friend and hearing the sound of the cow bell, which meant it was time to come home. The clouds in the sky were darkening and the winds got stronger. My mother counted all of the kids as they entered the house. My father was waiting for me at the front door and as I arrived, a burst of wind came up and I am told I flew about 10 feet in the air. My father quickly grabbed me and brought me to safety! My family huddled around the radio to hear the tornado warnings! The tornado sent out-houses and trash cans flying and destroyed two houses on our block. We felt fortunate because the only damage our cabin sustained was that it was thrown off the foundation.

Cabin life also included boating to Ed Schmidt's Tavern where they sold ice cream, penny candy, soda pop, burger & fries and had a seasonal fish fry! There was also a tub of live turtles on the patio and the owner would pay kids, mostly in candy, for any turtles that they caught and put in the tub. The turtles were later used for a Turtle Soup Feed that became a yearly treat for cabin owners around the lake!

My rite of passage also occurred at the cabin when my older brother and I were able to take the fishing boat by ourselves and camp overnight on a farmland across the lake.

I enjoyed water skiing and was one of many groups of kids who put a ski jump in and out of the water over the years. I was part of four guys who are remembered for going over the ski jump at the same time and I am also remembered for being able to do hand-stands while water skiing. Things that I certainly am not able to do today!

In 1965, after the death of my grandfather, my parents changed the cabin into a year-round residence and sold their Highland Park home and moved to the lake. I graduated from high school that year and spent the next five years enjoying the lake while attending the University of Minnesota as well as helping to rebuild the cabin. We finished the upgrades to the cabin the year that I was married and moved out.

In the late 1960's Prior Lake Ski Club started using Spring Lake for their ski club. I met my now wife Liz when she was practicing with the Prior Lake Ski Club. Liz and I married in 1972 and rented a duplex on the lake. Three years later, we bought the duplex, moved to the "larger" section and we continue to live there today!

I also have been involved in Spring Lake Association for most of my adult life. I served on the board many times over the years and was the President of the Association in the early 70's when Highway 13 ditch was identified as a problem for Spring Lake.

There is no better place than Spring Lake and I feel very fortunate to have lived my life here. My wish for the lake's future is to ensure that our children, grandchildren and their grandchildren are able to have a healthy Spring Lake to enjoy. My advice to Spring Lake residents | Listen, learn and take action to ensure that Spring Lake remains a great place to live and enjoy life!



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SLA Youth Leaders

We are excited to highlight a few youth leaders who are making things happen around Spring Lake!



Allie Ketelsen | We are excited that we have found a youth leader who is technical and creative! Allie created the “2020 Year in Review Video” and helped produce the Raymond Park Video that will be shown at

this year’s Annual Meeting. Allie is in 8th grade and attends Twin Oaks Middle School. She enjoys surfing, ice skating, water skiing and the tree fort her dad built that overlooks the lake. She loves having friends over to go swimming and have bonfires. But one of her favorite things to do is go for sunset boat rides; they are so relaxing and the best way to wind down after a long sunny day on the lake.



Charlie Malecha | Charlie is our Eagle Scout who conducted a zebra mussel test on Spring Lake for his Eagle Scout Project in 2020 which resulted in No Zebra Mussels on Spring Lake!

Charlie will be featured at this year’s annual meeting with a video of his study! Charlie is a freshman at Prior Lake High School. He enjoys boating and swimming in the summer on Spring Lake.



Olaf Morkeberg | Like his father Christian, Olaf follows the science in an effort to educate us about water quality and preserving this natural resource. See Olaf’s great article in this newsletter. Olaf attends St. Olaf

College and is majoring in biology and exercise science. He enjoys the outdoors and his best memories include relaxing on his paddle board in the sun in calm blue water enjoying the bird life and the clouds floating by.



Camille Will | Camille has been the SLA’s photographer and has worked at the Spring Lake Landing as a Watercraft Inspector. She will be featured at this year’s annual meeting with a video of her experience!

She attends Gustavus Adolphus College and is majoring in Biology with a minor in English. Her favorite thing about growing up on a lake is the sense of community. Through events like flotillas and the SLA’s summer concerts, she has had a blast getting to know other kids and adults around the lake.

Spring Lake Association 2021 Membership Drive
Please visit our website if you haven't paid your 2021 Membership dues. Yearly dues are only \$30 per household!
www.SpringLakeAssociation.org



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