

Windemere Lake and Landowners Association

www.minnesotawaters.org/windemerelakes



WINDOW

“If you want information, just open a window”

Spring 2016

Thirteen Years of Eurasian Water Milfoil (EWM)

Can you believe it has been thirteen years since Eurasian Water Milfoil (EWM) was found in Sand Lake? And seven years ago, in 2009, Sturgeon Lake Landowners discovered EWM had spread to their waters.

I remember the Windemere Lake and Landowners Association (WLLA) meetings of those summers—crowded with lakeshore owners who were pretty concerned about the water quality of their lake, envisioning a thick, green mat of weeds growing at the end of the dock and worried that the discovery of EWM might decrease their property values. Well, we have come a long way from the “panic mode” we experienced with the discovery of EWM in 2003. We’ve learned to manage EWM; we can’t eradicate it but we have successfully controlled it! Our proactive lake association has done an excellent job dealing with EWM - from monitoring its growth, obtaining funds from grants, collecting membership dues and private donations, applying treatments to control weed growth, and educating our members. Treatment for water quality management is expensive. In 2014 and 2015 we spent \$35,000 for treatment in Sand and Sturgeon Lakes, and in 2015 we also continued to investigate the source of high phosphorus levels in Island Lake.

The WLLA will continue to write grant proposals requesting funds to treat and maintain water quality, however, those funds don’t completely cover the treatment costs. The property owners and WLLA members can and should do more to help defray the cost of treating EWM. Donating \$.50 to \$1.00 per foot of frontage you own to the WLLA would equitably cover treatment costs. If you own 60 feet of frontage then the suggested donation is \$30.00 to \$60.00, and for property owners on Sand and Sturgeon Lake this is a bargain! Private treatment of weeds covering 60 feet of shoreline can easily cost hundreds of dollars. Our family has made just such a contribution to the WLLA for several years, and we consider it an investment in our lake and protection of the value of our cabin. Please donate to the WLLA (in addition to your membership amount) so that we can continue to control EWM, treat algae, and care for our precious waters!

Sharron Fitzgerald, WLLA Member, Sand Lake
Randy Herman, WLLA Member, Sand Lake



GET THE KIDS INVOLVED....

Have you ever asked yourself how can I help my lake stay healthy and not spend endless hours doing so? Or, how can I get my kids interested in ways to keep the lake clean and sparkling for the future? Well, we have some suggestions:

1. One way to help is to report your lake's water clarity to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA). The clarity of the lake is recorded using a Secchi disc which is an 8" flat metal circle with a very long calibrated rope attached to it. The rope is marked in 6" and 12" marks. During the summer months you go into your boat to a pre-selected spot on the lake and lower the Secchi disc into the water until you can no longer see it. Remember to hang on to the rope! Then draw it up and count how many feet and inches it was down. This can be done every week or every other week in the same selected spot. Then in the fall, you send the information to the MPCA.
2. Another way to help is to monitor the level of the water changes in your lake. If you give the DNR Waters Division an OK to plant their leveler stick in your lakeshore each spring, they will come and set the stick. Then all you have to do is read it once a week and keep track until it's time to report your numbers.
3. You can also help the scientists in recording the dates of ice-on and ice-off on your lake. This is a simple record that when provided to the DNR can tell us a lot about our climate.
4. Finally, keep your eyes open for invasive species and report anything suspicious such as an unrecognized plant suddenly growing crazy or a new creature you've never seen before. Reporting this to the DNR or your local board member can go a long way in helping to prevent these species from further invading your lake.

All of these are simple but very important things we all can do to help understand lake usage and climate changes that may affect the overall health of our precious lakes. And it's easy enough for kids!

DID YOU KNOW....that a female Zebra Mussel can expel 1 MILLION EGGS in a single season and they are so, so tiny they are almost invisible? After the eggs are fertilized, the larvae or "Veligers" emerge in 3-5 days and are free swimming for up to a month. At this point they are looking for an object to attach to like a dock, your trailer, or the bottom of your boat. One way to detect these muscles early on is to hang a rope over the shady side of your dock. The rope should include 3 to 4 tiles (like the ones on your bathroom floor) with holes drilled into the center of each tile, threaded on the rope with a knot between them to hold them apart. Then every so often run your hand over the tile surface. If it feels rough instead of smooth, chances are you may have zebra mussels.



VOLUNTEERS Wanted...volunteers from Sturgeon Lake to take Secchi disc readings and to have the lake leveler stick planted in their lakeshore. If you are interested in one of both of these jobs, please contact Pauline Dee at 218-485-8578.

Remember to: Clean Drain & Dry!

MPCA Monitoring Our Lakes in 2016

Each year the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) monitors a select group of lakes within particular watersheds. This helps the MPCA and local communities determine where restoration and protection activities are needed across the state to improve or protect the quality of Minnesota's lakes. Sturgeon, Sand, and Island Lakes are on the monitoring schedule beginning in May through September for the next two summers. This summer you may see MPCA staff out on the water on a monthly basis collecting water quality samples and taking temperature and dissolved oxygen readings. If you see them at the boat landings or on the water, ask questions and thank them for the great job they are doing. The Secchi disc readings we take are part of this program. Keep your eyes open!

2016 Lake Association General Meetings: All general meetings are held at the Hope Lutheran Church-204 Elm Avenue-Moose Lake at 9:00am. Mark them on your calendar now. We hope to see you at these meetings next summer. Coffee and cookies will be served!

June 11-Fisheries

July 9 - Heidi Kroening, Chair of Windemere Township Board

August 13 - Rich Rezanka, DNR and Caleb Anderson, Pine County Aquatic Invasive Species Program

Windemere Lake and Landowners Board Members			
Sturgeon Lake	Sand Lake	Island Lake	Passenger
Sandy Schumann 218-390-1141	Pauline Dee 218-485-8578	Chip Wells 218-485-8254	Laurie Patrick 651-429-3700
Tom Landsberger 218-372-3358 or 651-770-3067	Jerry Blazevic 218-626-1651	Ron Hansen 218-485-8567	
Dennis Huddleston 651-900-9085	Janette Muller 218- 485-8048	Gregg Hetznecker 651-249-3912	
Ron Goettsch 651-423-1991 or 651-675-8648	Barb Krig 952-474-2041	Clair Strandlie 218-485-8868	
Tara Prachar 218-372-8492	Rita & Richard Menke 218-485-8071		
Terry Peterson 218-372-3459			

Check out our website @ www.minnesotawaters.org/windemerelakes