

Windemere Township Lakes Association

<http://windemere.mnlakesanddrivers.org/>



WINDOW

"If you want information, just open a window"

Spring 2020

WTLA High Water Committee - Sturgeon Lake Update

By Mark Dunanski, Board Member WTLA

The lack of recent precipitation and the slow thaw are good news for lakeshore owners on Sturgeon Lake. However, the lake is still likely at a record high level and that is contributing to some significant damage due to "ice jacking" on parts of the shoreline.

Members of the Association have tried to stay engaged with local, county, and state representatives regarding the high water and its impact on lakeshore owners. In addition to personal outreach, a special meeting of the Windemere Board of Supervisors was held in December to review the Association's report outlining the results of our lakeshore owners survey as well as other facts regarding the record high water on Sturgeon Lake. In addition to numerous concerned citizens, also in attendance were:

- State Senator Jason Rarick
- State Representative Mike Sundeen
- Pine County Commissioner John Mikrot
- Pine County Engineer Mark LeBrun
- Pine County Land and Resource Manager Caleb Anderson
- MN DNR Regional Hydrologist Heidi Lindgren
- MN DNR State Flood Plain Manager Ceil Strauss

The meeting was informative with a number of lakeshore owners sharing their personal losses and challenges. Bill Yechout gave a presentation including photographs depicting lakeshore damage as well as historical photos for comparison of various levels of the lake. There was discussion about why or what has caused the lake to reach its high level as well as possible solutions. All of the officials present agreed the high water is a significant problem but also indicated that it would be expensive, time consuming, and challenging if anything could, in reality, be done at all.

Pine County Engineer LeBrun suggested that a feasibility study be commissioned to get an idea of the scope of the project, recommendations, projected costs and outcomes. Mr. LeBrun estimated that such a study would probably cost around \$30,000. The township board agree with the concept of a study and wondered if Pine County could share the cost. They asked County Commissioner John Mikrot if he would bring the request up to the Pine County Board of Commissioners. At a subsequent county board meeting Commissioner Mikrot brought forth the proposal, however, the Commissioners did not want to commit funding and wanted to know more about the issue. The commissioners suggested a board meeting in Windermere Township in order for them to hear more about the situation. The township board and the county commissioners are working to schedule that meeting. As a reminder to members, the Sturgeon Lake High Water report is posted on the Windemere Township Lakes Association website.

No Wake Zones in Minnesota

No-wake defined: Slow no-wake speed means the slowest possible speed to maintain steerage, but no greater than 5 mph.

High lake water levels were on everyone's mind last summer and the need for a possible no-wake ordinance was discussed at our WTLA membership meetings. Currently there is no law governing when and where no-wake zones should be established, however, when prudent to do so, counties can work with local sheriffs to establish no-wake guidelines. The WTLA Board discussed this issue last fall and decided that before any action was to be taken that we would survey our members for thoughts and concerns. The survey form has been completed and approved, so please take the time to complete it and return it with your membership form. We will then tabulate the results and present them at one of our membership meetings this summer. In the meantime, if you would like to know more about the current Water Laws and Rules regarding wakes, please refer to the below link to the DNR Minnesota Boating Guide 2020 (pages 35-42).

<http://files.dnr.state.mn.us/rlp/regulations/boatwater/boatingguide.pdf>



“Meet the Board”

Chip Wells- Island Lake: In the mid 1980's tired of sleeping in tents my wife Michy and I decided to buy a “cabin up north”. We looked for a year or so for one that was within two hours of the Twin Cities. In 1987 we purchased a cabin on top of a boathouse on Island Lake. For the next twenty years we left after work on

Friday and spent the weekend at the cabin. In 2006 we both retired from our jobs with government and decided to move to the lake. I have served on the lake association board for 10 years. I have also served on the township planning commission, volunteer at Osprey Wilds in Sandstone and take sech disc readings for the lake. We, our children and grandchildren have greatly enjoyed swimming, fishing, sailing and other activities on Island Lake.

Water Quality Report

By Chip Wells, Board Member WTLA

Every ten years the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) assesses the water quality of lakes and streams in different watersheds of the state. A draft Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategy (WRAPS) report for our area has been created. None of the lakes in our association are impaired, but Island and Eleven are close to being impaired and are considered “vulnerable” due to high levels of phosphorous. The following is the amount of phosphorus (measured in parts per billion) in each of the lakes in our association that were tested: Sturgeon 14ppb, Dago 16ppb, Eleven 25ppb, Passenger 12ppb, Island 31ppb and Sand 18ppb. The source of the phosphorus is not known. A copy of the draft report can be found on the WTLA website http://windemere.mnlakesandrivers.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Kettle_USC_WRAPS_DRAFT_020520.pdf

The board will be discussing the report at their meeting this spring to determine what additional steps might be taken.



Eurasian Milfoil Research for Windemere Township Update

By Sherry Lahti, Board Member WTLA

Greetings fellow Windemere Residents! We have had a busy off season in the AIS world. As most of you know, the research into whether or not our lakes have hybrid milfoil came back negative. In other words, currently, our lakes are only infested with Eurasian milfoil. So that is good news. But the question remains, why isn't our treatment of the Eurasian Milfoil more effective?

Working closely with our DNR AIS expert, Rich Renzanka, we submitted a grant proposal to the state and county to help with funding for treating the Eurasian Milfoil in Sturgeon and Sand Lakes. I am pleased to report that both grants were fully funded, and we now have money to pursue treatments in 2020. With the additional funding from the state, which we haven't had in the past, we may be able to pursue more costly treatment, depending on the recommendations from the DNR. Stay tuned for more updates and the ice melts, and summer begins.

Remember to: Clean, Drain & Dry!

RE M I N D E R: Brush pile site will be open on the following dates from 10:00 am - 1:00 pm: 5/16, 6/20, 7/18, 8/15, 9/19 and 10/17. If you have questions, please contact Bill Patrick @ 651-336-3487.

2020 Lake Association General Meetings: General meetings will be held at the YMCA Camp Miller, 89382 E. Frontage Road, Sturgeon Lake at 9:00AM. Mark them on your calendar now. We hope to see you at these meetings. Coffee and cookies are served!

Please note: As we are all aware by now, the 2019 Coronavirus is among us and it can be spread from person to person through close contact with someone who has the virus. Until this virus can be contained, the WTLA may have to cancel some or all of our general meetings. If that should happen, we will do every thing we can to make sure you are notified by posting the closures on our website at <http://Windemere.mnlakesandrivers.org/> and sending out email notifications to those of you with addresses.

June 13 - Presenter to Be Determined
 July 11- Presenter to Be Determined
 August 8 - Presenter to Be Determined

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