

Windemere Township Lakes Association

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



WINDOW

"If you want information, just open a window"

Fall, 2022

Island Lake Water Quality Update

By Chip Wells, Board Member WTLA

Island Lake has elevated levels of phosphorus compared to other lakes in our association. The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) has determined that it is close to being an impaired water. Often during the summer, the water is green and occasionally there is a green scum of algae on the surface. Over the years the association has tried to determine the source of the elevated level of phosphorus. Two years ago, the board of directors contracted with an environmental engineering company, Stantec to determine the source of the phosphorus and what could be done to reduce it. Two board members from Island agreed to collect data and water samples from the lake, Little Island Lake and the two major tributaries. The water samples were analyzed by a laboratory in Duluth and provided to Stantec. Stantec concluded that 58% of the phosphorus was in the sediment in the lake, 3% from the atmosphere, 33% from the tributaries and 6% from runoff. The complete report can be found on the association's website at <http://windemere.mnlakesanddrivers.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Island-Lake-Diagnostic-Study-Technical-Memo-Revised-07152022-FINAL.pdf>.

The best way to reduce the phosphorus from runoff is by maintaining good vegetation buffers along the lake shore. Assistance for this is available with grants administered by Pine County Soil and Water Conservation District (PSWCD). For further information call SWCD at 320-372-0077. Regarding the two tributaries, we should be reviewing any road construction or culvert replacements that might release more phosphorus into the two streams. The major source of the phosphorus is the sediment in the lake. The traditional method of control is to inject alum into the water. The alum settles to the bottom and encapsulates the phosphorus. This treatment only lasts about ten years and would cost hundreds of thousands of dollars. It may be possible to get a Clean Water Grant for the alum treatment and the board will be working with the county SWCD to explore that option. One activity that limits release of phosphorus from the sediment is keeping large boat wakes in the center of the lake and leaving the shoreline areas for no wake travel. In summary we now know where the algae are coming from but have no easy, cost-effective solutions for long term reduction. We are best to focus on the sources we can change by maintaining shoreline vegetation, keeping our boat wakes in the center of the lake and monitoring construction projects to minimize runoff.

"Get the Lead Out" Program

Ingestion of lead is a significant cause of death for loons and other water birds. Minnesota would like anglers to stop using lead tackle and bait shops to provide more alternatives. Please consider changing your old tackle to save these great MN birds. Noah Cashman will have alternatives at general meetings to exchange for your lead tackle.

AIS Update

By Loren Radtke, Board Member WTLA

Many thanks to everyone who supported the 2022 efforts of our association to manage invasive Eurasian water milfoil on Sand Lake and Sturgeon Lake. The list of contributing stakeholders includes YOU, lakeshore property owners, Windemere Township, Pine County, the DNR, the University of MN, and other third parties who specialize in lake ecosystems. We aggressively treated the identified acreage within these two lakes with the DNR recommended herbicide which is showing positive results. We also worked with the state as part of our grant program to survey and collect data about native plants in our lakes. Such information will help improve aquatic invasive species treatment and prevention programs throughout MN. We are well positioned to continue this work thru 2023. Although Eurasian milfoil treatment appears to be the current AIS priority of our association, there are other relatively common risks out there that have not affected us, i.e., zebra mussels, curly-leaf pondweed, and starry stonewort to name a few. It is our associations intent to also focus on prevention by increasing education and awareness about these other target invasive species. Let's preserve our lake assets together! Thank you again for your financial contributions to our AIS fund.

To learn more about AIS please visit:

University of MN > AIS Research Center <https://www.maisrc.umn.edu>

MN Department of Natural Resources > AIS <https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/invasives/ais>

2022 in review

* Started "Get the Lead Out" program in conjunction with the State of MN.

* Initiated a water lake study with Stantec regarding island Lake's high phosphorus levels.

* Shared information about 2-year grant by Pine County Soil and water Conservation District to improve water quality.

* Aided in the distribution of country compost bin/rain barrels.

* Updated "No Wake" and WTLA brochures.

* Picked up trash along our township's country roads.

* Received grants for treatment of Eurasian Milfoil.

* Contracted with Freshwater Scientific to perform native plant surveys to assist in future AIS work across the state.

* Continued work with Houston Engineering on Sturgeon Lake's high-water situation.

* DNR, MN Aquatic Invasives Research Center and Area Fisheries shared information at general meetings.

* Managed the brush pile on the 3rd Saturday of every month from April - October.

* Started process to become a 5013C Non-Profit.

* Contracted with Lake Management for Sand and Sturgeon Lake Eurasian Milfoil treatment, completed in July.

* Donated to U of M Wake Boat Study.

* Continued to monitor and report lake levels and clarity to proactively identify association areas of focus.

* Scholarship donations to Willow River and Sturgeon Lake Schools, Class of 2022.

* Participated in the Moose Lake 4th of July parade representing the WTLA.



What can **YOU** do?

- Homeowners and Rental Property Owners: Remind your family and guests of boating rules to keep everyone safe and prevent erosion. For copies of the "Own Your Wake" brochure please contact a lake representative or pick up a copy at the summer meetings. Top 3 points to remember:

Always operate 150+ ft away from shorelines and docks

Minimize repetitive passes in the same area

Personal watercraft may only be operated between 9:30 am and 1 hr before sunset

- Remember to **Clean, Drain & Dry.**
- Be aware of yard/hill runoff, do not use fertilizers, weed killer or other chemicals that may be detrimental to the lake.
- When completing shoreline restoration projects ensure rocks are clean and correct silt barriers are used to prevent lake contamination.
- Utilize County experts to assist with shoreline preservation plans and identification of native plants for shorelines and lake buffer zones. Further information available from Caleb Anderson, county land and resource manager at 320-591-1657 or Zach VanOrsdel, county SWCD water resource tech at 320-216-4242.
- Prior to starting any activity within 100 ft of the shoreline contact Dennis Genereau, Windemere Zoning Administrator to verify if a permit is required. Phone: 218-576-7654 or email: dennis.genereau@windemeretownship.com
- Be aware of township activities impacting our lakes: Updated ordinances, short term rental permits, camper / trailer restrictions, road maintenance, etc. Township meetings and minutes can be found at this site: <https://windemeretownship.com>
- Update your communication preference: The most cost-effective method to communicate with our members is via email which many of you have already provided. If you, or your friends and neighbors, are not receiving communications and wish to do so please provide your email and/or mailing address with your membership form or via email to windemerelakes@yahoo.com. We will not share your information with anyone.
- **Be involved! Become a member, attend meetings, volunteer, share information.**

2023 Lake Association General Meetings: General meeting space has been reserved at the Social Hall in Holy Angels Catholic Church, 60 Hartman Dr, in Moose Lake, at 9:00 AM. A new format is being discussed to reduce the time you are away from your lake we look forward to seeing you. Presenters are being finalized. If you have any suggestions, please reach out to one of your lake representatives below.

June 10th – Speaker TBD
July 8th – Speaker TBD
August 12th - Speaker TBD

A BIG THANK YOU! To Terry Peterson, Bruce Jacoby and Patty Stasson for your years of dedication to the lake association. Your participation, input and leadership were greatly appreciated!

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Russ Rechtzigel is a 2nd generation owner of his home on Sturgeon Lake. His parents bought the property in 1969, he bought it in 1993. He has enjoyed spending time with his kids and grandchildren who have all enjoyed the area immensely. “The water activities and the camaraderie have been fantastic for over fifty years. I just felt it was time to give back whatever I can so that future generations will be able to enjoy it as well.”

Joann Murphy is very excited to be on the Lake Association Board, protecting and improving the quality of our lakes and communicating and promoting lake safety. She and her husband took ownership of the family cabin on Sand Lake, which her parents owned for 25 years, 6 years ago. “We enjoy year-round use of the lake, boating, fishing, snowshoeing and skiing and look forward to enjoying and protecting our gorgeous natural resource for many years to come.”

Chris Birkholz shares his family’s cabin on Passenger Lake, built by his father in the mid 1950’s, with his siblings. He enjoys fishing on Passenger and surrounding lakes. “Having seen the negative impacts of overfishing, milfoil and increasing boat wakes, I wanted to see what could be done to bring our lakes back to the way they used to be. Joining the lake association is my way of staying involved”

Windemere Township Lakes Association Board Members			
Sturgeon Lake	Sand Lake	Island Lake	Small Lakes
Noah Cashman - Vice Chair Cell 612-618-8273 cashlaw@charter.net	Jerry Blazevic Home 218-626-1651 Cell 218-213-2797 Lake 218-485-4026 jmcb Blaze@chartermi.net	Dan Benzie - Treasurer Cell 218-485-4667 danislandlk@gmail.com	Laurie Patrick - Chair Cell 651-336-1024 lauriep430@gmail.com
Loren Radtke Cell 218-348-1077 loren.radtke@outlook.com	Paula Engstrom Cell 612-269-7219 biz2019biz@gmail.com	Chip Wells - Secretary Home 218-485-8254 Cell 218-380-0409 fawells3@gmail.com	Chris Birkholz Cell 612-743-0142 cbirkholz59@gmail.com
Bill Yechout Cell 651-247-5470 yechoutb@gmail.com	Joann Murphy - Membership Cell 651-452-2595 hunamurphy@gmail.com	Clair Strandlie Home 218-485-8868 cjstranflie@gmail.com	
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