

# Windemere Township Lakes Association

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



## WINDOW

If you want information, just open a window"

Spring 2025



### Talking on Water

By Dan Benzie, Chairperson

I am watching the ice blacken and anticipating the singing of ice crystals against the shore, nature's chimes announcing, "the lake is open for the season". Hoping you all had a wonderful winter whether traveling in warmer climates or enjoying the nice snow and good lake ice we had in Windemere this winter.

Since our last summer meeting lots has happened within the lake association. You will see in Loren's update our switch to a new vendor for EWM (milfoil) last Fall. This has helped us learn more about the science of EWM treatment and will lead to a more aggressive approach again this year. We do have to be continuously monitoring for other invasives as well. It is important to always clean, drain and dry when leaving the boat landing to protect our other lakes. Another project underway is the

identification of purple loosestrife in the township. Keep your eyes open for those purple flowers and report to your lake representative for recording in the DNR database.

WTLA application for 501c3 status was filed last December and an update will be provided at our June meeting. As the costs of lake treatment rise and the funding options become threatened, your donation dollars to combat invasives and monitor lake quality are even more critical.

Our sign project was a great success last summer and we will continue with that this year. Make a note on your membership form if interested in a sign and when installing, encourage your neighbors to join WTLA. A stronger lake community will lead to higher water quality.

Noah's article will briefly review the Windemere Township Shoreland ordinance that was adopted this Spring. It differs significantly from the county ordinance.

This is a great time of year to begin planning what lakeshore improvements you can make this summer. How about making a new rain garden or installing a rain barrel to slow runoff. The sediment and phosphorus washed into the lake promotes algae growth and turns the lake green in late summer. Maybe 2025 is the year to plant a couple of trees along the shore with your grandkids and together watch them grow. Use this opportunity to talk with the grandkids about the value of trees, and how the water they absorb helps control

our lake levels, slows the runoff, and keeps our lakes healthy and clean.

Perhaps this will be the year to turn more of your shoreline into native plants which will not only control the geese and improve shoreline aesthetics but provide a natural filter zone as well. A very useful DNR shoreland restoration guide can be found at <https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/rys/index.html>. If considering a buffer project, check out the WTLA website for information on our buffer grants or contact Pine County SWCD for more details.

Welcome back to the lake and see you on the water!



## **Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS)**

By Loren Radke, Board Member

During the past Winter, the association met with PLM Lake & Land Management regarding initial planning for the expected treatment of Eurasian Milfoil. The association also applied for, and received, two AIS grants which will supplement the association's AIS fund. Our DNR representative will perform the

annual lakes survey in late June. The survey results for Milfoil will determine the course of action(s) needed during the remainder of the season. Also, the association will continue the activities begun in the last two years regarding Purple Loosestrife biocontrol and monitoring for any infestation of the Spiny Water Flea. Thank you for your continued support.

The most effective methods for prevention of additional invasive species, i.e., Zebra Mussels, in Windemere Township are: 1) education, and 2) the best practice of cleaning, draining, and drying your watercraft when transporting between lakes. There are many free resources available for identifying aquatic invasive species that are considered high-risk in Minnesota waters, as well as some common native lookalike species.

An AIS Identification Guidebook is available from the University of MN bookstore <https://www.maisrc.umn.edu/guidebook>. The University of MN > AIS Research Center can be researched here <https://www.maisrc.umn.edu>. The MN Department of Natural Resources (DNR) > AIS can be researched here <https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/invasives/aids>. Looking forward to further discussions with you!

## **Township Revises Shoreland Ordinance**

**By N. Cashman, Vice Chair**

Windemere Township drastically revised its 2015 Shoreland Ordinance, effective March 13, 2025. It is significantly more restrictive than the Pine County Shoreland Ordinance. It is also very controversial, generating dramatic public comment, and two Star Tribune articles.

The complicated Ordinance changes some portions of the zoning map, definitions, design standards, subdivision of property, and zoning of recreational vehicles. First, the Ordinance makes many changes to the Definitions section, redefining permitted activities, and broadening conditional or nonpermitted activities. For example, it eliminates boat houses and further restricts Water Oriented Accessory structures which are your small sheds near the water.

In perhaps the most significant change, it increases the required lot size dramatically to five acres and increases the setback from the lake to 150 feet on recreational lakes, along with a host of other changes. The Ordinance generally provides language allowing repair, restoration, and maintenance on existing lots of records and existing structures but does not reference expansion. The Ordinance also places additional regulations on RV's and Ice Houses including storage, use, and possible permitting in the Shoreland. In one of the more prominent examples, only one RV rather than the current two RV's will be allowed on a Shoreland property. Finally, the Ordinance adds a number of requirements in obtaining minor subdivisions, platting, and work done on existing structures that will add significant expense to individual property owners and administrative burdens to the Township.

In short, if you are contemplating any work on your cabin or shoreland lot, contact the zoning administrator and your legal counsel.

# AIS Funding in Danger at Legislature

By Noah Cashman, Vice Chair

Established in 2014, the AIS program allocated \$10 million annually to local governments, empowering them to implement targeted, science-based solutions to protect our lakes and rivers. Much of this funding has gone directly to Lake Associations, including the WTLA, as county grants that lake associations use to hire inspection hours, decontamination services, do AIS surveys, management and early detection work, install boat cleaning tools at the accesses, and fund AIS communication efforts.

However, the 2025 Governor's budget recommendation proposes reducing this vital program by 50% and phasing it out entirely by 2029. Such cuts could significantly weaken our ability to prevent AIS.

This AIS funding has been instrumental in keeping the Windemere lakes recreationally viable, and a driver in our local economy. Consider speaking with your State officials to provide your input on how this funding is crucial to our local community.

**2025 WTLA 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. Please communicate with your Board by emailing at [windemerelakes@yahoo.com](mailto:windemerelakes@yahoo.com).

**June 14** - Representative Fond Du Lac Tribe  
**July 12** - Conservation Officer Aimee Hand, Minnesota DNR  
**August 9** - Richard Rezanka, Aquatic Biologist, Minnesota DNR

## WTLA Board Members

Sturgeon Lake	Sand Lake	Island Lake	Small Lakes
Noah Cashman-Vice Chair Cell: 612-618-8273 <a href="mailto:noahcashman@gmail.com">noahcashman@gmail.com</a>	Jerry Blazevic Home: 218-626-1651 Cell: 218-213-2797 Lake: 218-485-4026 <a href="mailto:jmcblaze@chartermi.net">jmcblaze@chartermi.net</a>	Dan Benzie-Chair 218-485-4667 <a href="mailto:danislandlk@gmail.com">danislandlk@gmail.com</a>	Laurie Patrick-Membership Cell: 651-336-1024 <a href="mailto:Lauriep430@gmail.com">Lauriep430@gmail.com</a> Passenger Lake
Loren Radtke Cell: 218-348-1077 <a href="mailto:Loren.radtke@outlook.com">Loren.radtke@outlook.com</a>	Joann Murphy-Treasurer Cell: 651-334-2482 <a href="mailto:hunamurphu@gmail.com">hunamurphu@gmail.com</a>	Kathy Burkard Cell: 218-485-4866 <a href="mailto:katburkard@yahoo.com">katburkard@yahoo.com</a>	Bill Lyon Cell: 651-797-3063 <a href="mailto:Billlyon45@gmail.com">Billlyon45@gmail.com</a> Lords Lake
Bill Yechout Cell: 651-247-5470 <a href="mailto:yechoutb@gmail.com">yechoutb@gmail.com</a>	John Tasky Cell: 763-360-4603 <a href="mailto:Tasky9012@gmail.com">Tasky9012@gmail.com</a>	Chip Wells-Secretary Home: 218-380-0409 <a href="mailto:fawells3@gmail.com">fawells3@gmail.com</a>	

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