



*Fall 2015*

**Invasive Species Alert**

These waters are designated as **INFESTED WATERS** and contain:

**Eurasian Watermilfoil**  
(12-21 pairs of leaflets)

**Mature plant**

**Zebra Mussels**  
(common size: 1/4 to 1-1/2 inch)

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

The Mussels Are Here!



*Bubany's Fishing Contest*



*The Winners!*

# Fall NEWSLETTER, 2015

---

Lake Washington Improvement Assn.  
PO Box 68 Dassel, MN 55325  
[www.lakewashingtonassn.com](http://www.lakewashingtonassn.com)  
Email: [info@lakewashingtonassn.com](mailto:info@lakewashingtonassn.com)

---

## Contact Us

General Issues:  
[info@lakewashingtonassn.com](mailto:info@lakewashingtonassn.com)

Cormorant Issues  
[cormorants@lakewashingtonassn.com](mailto:cormorants@lakewashingtonassn.com)

Watercraft Inspection Program  
[inspections@lakewashingtonassn.com](mailto:inspections@lakewashingtonassn.com)

Membership Changes  
[membership@lakewashingtonassn.com](mailto:membership@lakewashingtonassn.com)

Lake Alerts  
[alerts@lakewashingtonassn.com](mailto:alerts@lakewashingtonassn.com)

Invasive Species Program  
[invasive@lakewashingtonassn.com](mailto:invasive@lakewashingtonassn.com)

Watershed Project  
[watershed@lakewashingtonassn.com](mailto:watershed@lakewashingtonassn.com)

Lost and found  
[lostfound@lakewashingtonassn.com](mailto:lostfound@lakewashingtonassn.com)

The Lake Washington Newsletter is published three times a year (Spring, Summer and Fall) by the Lake Washington Improvement Association. It is distributed free to lake property owners and friends around Lake Washington.

4



Zebra Mussels have arrived!

6



Watershed Report

8



Watercraft Inspection Ambassadors needed.

9



Cormorant Report

10



Oak Blight

10



Fishing Contest

11



Tree/Plant Sale

13



Water Quality Sampling

14



Committee Reports

# End of the Dock

Ron Bubany, Editor



Every month we receive news of additional lakes being infested with eurasian water milfoil and zebra mussels. A new invader, starry stonewort, has just been announced in Lake Koronis. Now just this summer, the DNR confirms that zebra mussels have been found in Lake Stella! Read more about this development on page 4.

We are pleased that we have eurasian water milfoil finally under control. Yet we still hear ongoing concerns about the amount of vegetation remaining in our waters. This is native vegetation which we are not allowed to remove. It can be controlled, however, by reducing the nutrients present in the lake. Reducing nutrients can be accomplished by filtering runoff water coming into Lake Washington. In this issue, you can read about the dramatic impact our Watershed Committee is beginning to have on controlling drainage entering the lake. Skip Sustacek reports.

There is an urgent need, both here and throughout the state, to educate the public on the need to clean boats and equipment entering and leaving our lakes. Read Dave Rathe's report on this need and how he is forming a team of volunteers to inspect boats/trailers at the public landing and to educate visitors about aquatic invasive species. Please find time to help Dave by volunteering your time for this effort.

Once again our cormorant arguments go unheeded. Read Rick's article on the latest meeting with the DNR.

If you have oak trees, they may be suffering from oak blight currently occurring around the lake. Read Steve Ullom's article describing this condition and how to deal with it. If you have, unfortunately, lost some trees, move on to Steve Grotbo's information about obtaining and planting bare root trees which can be obtained from Meeker County.

Fish flop. So did my fishing contest. See who the winner is further on in the newsletter.

Finally, see Ken Klehr's report on water quality sampling and also our regular set of committee reports on financial, membership and social information.

There is a lot of interesting and good solid information in this issue of the newsletter.

Enjoy!



# The Mussels Are Here

By Ron Bubany on behalf of Ron Bubany, Pat Hanson, Cathy Klehr, Ken Klehr and Bill Ooley.

After several years of treating for Eurasian Water Milfoil, we are now in a position to declare a victory. Milfoil abundance over the past few years has been significantly reduced. In fact, this past summer it appears to have been totally eliminated. It probably will come back, but we can safely say we have it under control.

Now, new threats appear. Our neighbor, Lake Koronis, has been found to have large quantities of another plant pest - Starry Stonewort. This stuff is bad enough that the DNR is proceeding to treat a significant area of the lake near the public access on Highway 55. They are using copper compounds (herbicides don't work). The idea is that there will be less chance of boats picking it up as they enter and depart via the public access. More on this at a later time.

Our next battle here at Lake Washington is this year's mini-invasion of zebra mussels. This summer three were found at the east end of Lake Stella. The DNR, in their wisdom, have concluded it is only a matter of time until they migrate into Washington. You can now admire their new infestation sign just installed at the Ellsworth Landing.

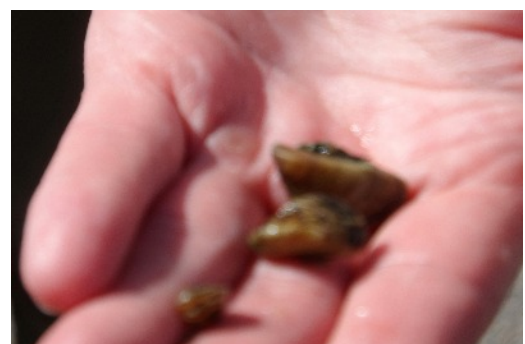
Your AIS committee was quick to do a survey of Lake Washington near the inlet from Stella. We surveyed docks for about 1/2 mile along the shoreline. No mussels were found.

In September Allison Gamble, Invasive Species Specialist for the DNR, brought in a survey team to perform extensive surveys of both Lakes Stella and Washington. Lake Washington was clear, but they found some more mussels in Stella - most in boulders off the large point of land on the north side. One was found clinging to a weed in the southeast corner of the lake.



In response to this development a joint meeting of representatives from Lakes Stella, Washington, Minibelle, and Ripley, plus the Meeker County AIS Committee and the Crow River Organization of Waters was conducted. We gathered to share information and begin development of a plan to attack the problem. Since there is currently no effective treatment for the mussels we determined that the next best approach will be to invoke an aggressive education plan in an effort to keep invasive species from spreading. Work on this is under way and we will advise you as developments occur.

Here is what the DNR found in their survey. The image is blurry due to the tears in my eyes.



## The Mussels Are Here (continued)

Here is a picture of Starry Stonewort.



Joint meeting of Lake Associations to develop an approach for dealing with AIS.

# Watershed Committee Report

By Skip Sustacek on behalf of Rick Fernstrom, Ken Klehr and Skip Sustacek

Good news.

On Sep. 12, 2015 the holding pond on the south side of Lake Washington received an improvement to the drainage areas that flow into it.

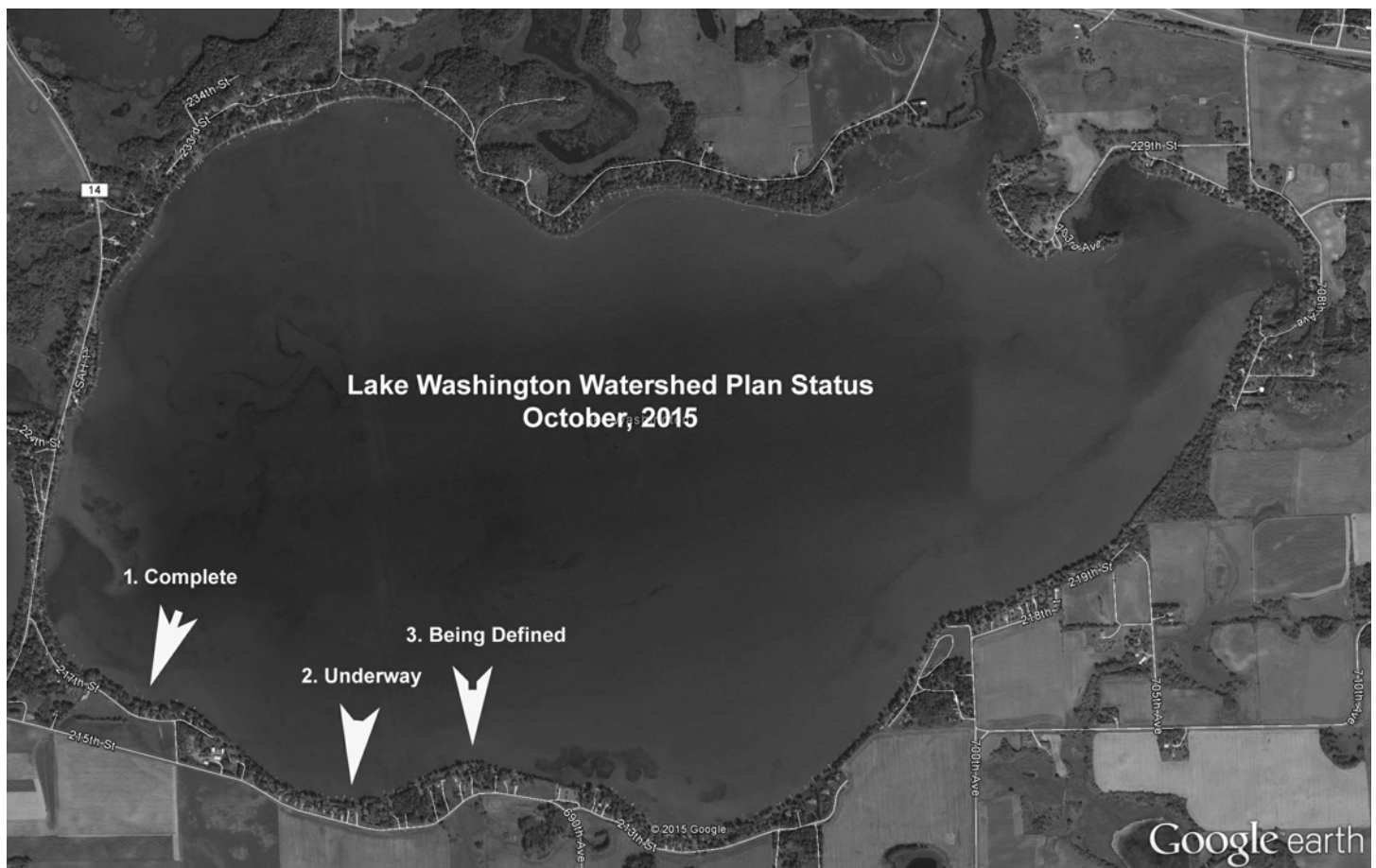
There are four intakes on the Ahlgren farm that feed the pond. The existing surface intakes have been removed and replaced with a five foot by five foot hole. The hole is connected to a 12 foot trench containing a wrapped tile line and is filled with pea rock covered on the surface by 1.5 inch rock. This system allows water to be filtered as it heads to the tile below.

With the holding pond and the improved intakes we should be improving the quality of the water entering the lake (point 1 on the map) by 50 to 60 percent.

It's been about one year since we started this project. We all have enjoyed working with the farm, contractor, and Lake Association to make this happen.

But we are not done! We are presently inspecting additional runoff areas on both the south and north side of the lake. Points 2 and 3 on the map are being addressed next.

More things will be happening and we will keep you informed.



# Weir Inspection Report

By Skip Sustacek on behalf of Rick Fernstrom, Ken Klehr and Skip Sustacek



Here is an update on the dam located on the north side of Lake Washington.

The DNR inspects the dam every 10 years. The last inspection was in 2007 and at that time the dam was in good condition. Ethan Jensen is the person in charge of the inspections, which are done in the winter months. Our dam is a low profile dam because it doesn't receive a lot of water pressure.

We will stay in contact with Ethan and keep you all in the loop.

## Nick Brown Moves To Fergus Falls DNR Office

By Ron Bubany



We regret to see Nick Brown leave the DNR Office in Hutchinson, but are very happy to see him move on to a new opportunity in Fergus Falls. Nick has helped our AIS Committee by mapping out our way points, identifying plant species and supervising/conducting a number of Lake Washington surveys.

Nick has also helped us each year with our requests for treatment permits and our requests for grant money. All the best for you, Nick!

# Aquatic Invasive Species Ambassador Volunteers Needed

By Dave Rathe on behalf of Tom Hauer, Dave Rathe and Skip Sustacek

There are many unwanted aquatic invasive plants and animals at high risk to infest Lake Washington. These include flowering rush (out-competes bulrushes and cattails), stary stone wort (creates heavy mats of vegetation), flying carp (can jump 10 feet out of the water and injure boaters), spiny water fleas (can clog eyelets of fishing rods and prevent fish from being landed), etc. These aquatic invasive species can out-compete the native species and degrade our water sports, just like Eurasian Water Milfoil.



These Invasive Species get into our lakes via watercraft, trailers, bait, basically anything moving from waters having invasive species. The factors affecting infestation are:

- Distance to an infected area,
- Climate/environment,
- Ease of access,
- Education,
- Laws and enforcement.

We cannot do anything about the distance to an infested area and climate/environment, but we can provide education and assistance at our lake accesses via the DNR Aquatic Invasive Species Ambassador program. These areas, particularly Ellsworth landing, provide easy access to Lake Washington and experience high use during fish openers and holidays. Volunteers are needed to take the DNR Ambassador training courses and staff Ellsworth Landing during high use periods. Volunteers would only be asked to staff

Ellsworth Landing in teams of two once per year for no more than 4 hours.

To become an Ambassador, the DNR will provide training in two sessions of approximately 3 hours and 2 hours, respectively. Training topics included: watercraft inspection, Ambassador process, working with boaters and the public, MN invasive species laws, and in-depth invasive species & watercraft inspection. The training will be scheduled with the DNR following volunteer sign-up.

With the recent infestation of zebra mussels in Lake Stella just upstream from Lake Washington, it is more important than ever to take steps to prevent further aquatic invasive species infestation.

If you are willing to volunteer to help protect Lake Washington, please sign-up before November 30<sup>th</sup>. To sign up electronically, please click the target below.

For non-electronic signup, please call or e-mail Dave Rathe at 612-875-0410 [skrathe@aol.com](mailto:skrathe@aol.com).



**ELECTRONIC  
SIGN UP!**

Coupon    Nightly Specials Available Wednesday Thru Saturday    Coupon

Coupon

**10% OFF  
Food Order**

**A BLUE MOOSE**



**See Our  
Nightly  
Specials**

Coupon

311 1<sup>st</sup> N., Darwin, MN  
320-693-9161

Coupon    Good Through December 1, 2015    Coupon



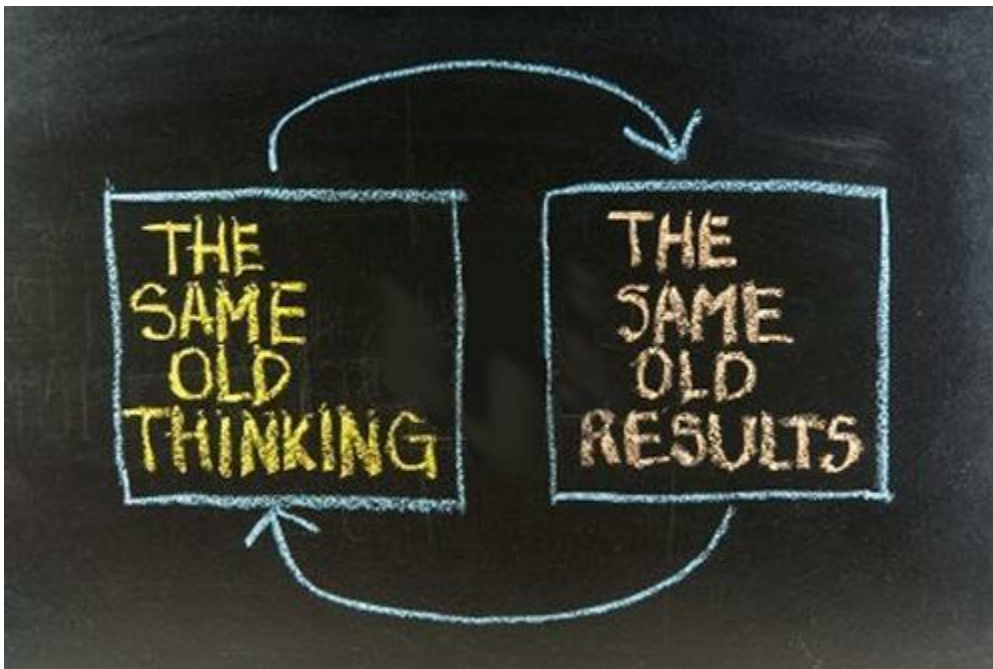
# CORMORANT/PELICAN IMPACT COMMITTEE

*By Rick Fernstrom on behalf of Rick Fernstrom, Ray Haugland, Ken Klehr, George Kramer, Dean Shaner*

On Monday September 21, the DNR held a meeting in Hutchinson to cover the recent fish survey results and further the discussion regarding cormorant and pelican impact on areas lakes surrounding the Pigeon Lake rookery, also known as the “halo of lakes.” The meeting was attended by Ken Klehr, Dean Shaner, and Rick Fernstrom, all representing Lake Washington and seven DNR resources. The DNR group included Lee Sundmark, Hutchinson Supervisor and three other Hutchinson resources, Mike Worland, newly appointed Non-Game Wildlife Specialist, Joe Stewig, Wright County DNR Supervisor, Jack Lauer, DNR Area Manager, and Brian Schultz, Southern Regional Fisheries Manager.

To open the meeting, the LWIA repeated the position that area residents continue to be concerned by the drop in fish per net shown in the 2014 fish survey which is paralleled by a stable or rising cormorant/pelican population on Pigeon Lake. The LWIA also repeated the position that the DNR should support and pursue a depredation order to reduce cormorant populations on Pigeon Lake. The DNR stated, despite compelling trend data on bird populations, they do not believe the data support cormorants as a problem. Lee Sundmark covered data that pointed toward northern pike as impacting other fish populations within the area. Increased take limits or relaxed slot limits may be implemented to intentionally reduce northern pike density.

The DNR continues to focus on a broad approach in understanding reduced fish per net counts on Lake Washington. This is a complex situation and catch rates may be impacted by predatory northern pike, statewide yellow perch population declining trend, Eurasian Water Milfoil habitat changes, and eventually zebra mussels. The DNR does not have a concern with cormorants and despite compelling trend data, does not see the need to reduce or control cormorants. LWIA representatives pressured the DNR about cormorant fish consumption impact by repeating the question, “Would recreational fishing improve if cormorant populations were reduced?” The answer to this question is obviously YES. Brain Schultz, DNR Southern Regional Fisheries Manager responded “Cormorant reduction would be an ethical situation if done to improve fish populations.” Gene Jeseritz, DNR Assistant Supervisor followed by stating “Anglers are like cormorants, they are opportunists and they go where the fish are. When they fish out one lake they go to another.”



In summary, the DNR position remains the same, cormorant control is not an option. The next fish survey on Lake Washington will be 2016 which is every two years. We expect an increase in information on cormorants with the addition of Mike Worland and will schedule future meetings through Jack Lauer with the announced retirement of Lee Sundmark.

# Burr Oak Blight

By Steve Ullom on behalf of Ron Bubany, Rick Fernstrom, Steve Grotbo, Tom Hauer and Steve Ullom

In the past few years, some Bur Oak trees around Lake Washington have been diagnosed with Bur Oak Blight (BOB).

This is a fungal disease caused by an apparent mutation of a native fungus. Symptoms begin to show by early July with leaves developing brown lesions that are wedge shaped and the veins turn brown. Leaf symptoms are usually more severe on the bottom of lower branches and can eventually spread to the crown. Leaves may start dropping during the growing season, but unique to this blight is that some of the infected leaves may remain on the trees throughout the winter months.

The fungus appears to spread through rain fall, but not all trees in a stand are necessarily affected by the blight. Leaves left on the ground carry the fungus but do not appear to be a major factor in the spread of BOB. Trees affected may be ones that are stressed or affected by changing weather patterns, such as earlier and wetter springs. Over time the trees will most likely die due to insect infestations weakening the trees natural defenses. Infected trees have been found in Nebraska, Iowa, southwest Wisconsin, and into central Minnesota.

BOB appears to be treatable, but to this point is not curable. Treatment programs using injections of fungicides have shown good results controlling the symptoms over time. At this point in time, treating for both fungal and insect infestations seems to be a viable and practical solution



---

# Bubany's First (Possibly Last) Annual Fishing Contest

By Ron Bubany



One member submitted two fish for the contest. That's it.

Results:

1<sup>st</sup> Place: 13.3 oz. Small Mouth Bass by Frank Daly

2<sup>nd</sup> Place: 6 oz. Sunfish by Frank Daly

Pictures are on the cover page. Nice going Frank!

You ask whether there will be a contest next year?

I quote Percy Dumbdog after chasing the skunk:

**“It seemed like a good idea at the time...but I ain't doing it again!”**

¡Adios amigos!

# Meeker County Tree/Plant Sale

*By Steve Grotbo on behalf of Ron Bubany, Rick Fernstrom, Steve Grotbo, Tom Hauer and Steve Ullom*

The Meeker Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) offers bare-root trees every year for \$1.50 each. The catch is they need to be ordered in bundles of 25 of the same variety in the January / February timeframe with pickup in the April timeframe. Those on the Lake Washington email distribution received an email this past January announcing the offer.

This year they also offered native plants in the form of seed mixes or wildflower plant kits.

We purchased three bundles of trees and were pleasantly surprised on how well the entire process worked and the quality of the trees. We picked up the bundles in April from the Meeker County Fairgrounds in Litchfield. All 75 trees came in one bag.

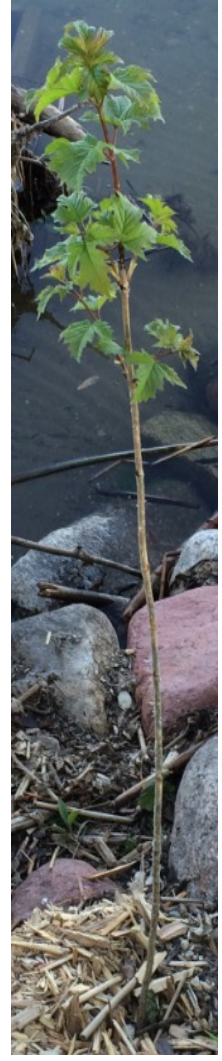
The varieties chosen are Lilac, Crabapple, and Cranberry.



## Meeker County Tree/Plant Sale (continued)

At the time of ordering the plans were to pick them up and plant them right away that same weekend. Well things change and we were not ready for the planting when April came. Luckily the staff at Meeker SWCD were very helpful and showed the technique of “heeling in” which allows the trees to be planted a few months later. Basically it is just digging a trench, put each tree in separately in the line, put the soil back loosely, cover with mulch, and water heavily the one time. You can see in the left picture how it looked with all 75 trees in three rows.

In mid-May we planted the trees and by this time they were all leafing out. All 75 of them survived without any additional care.



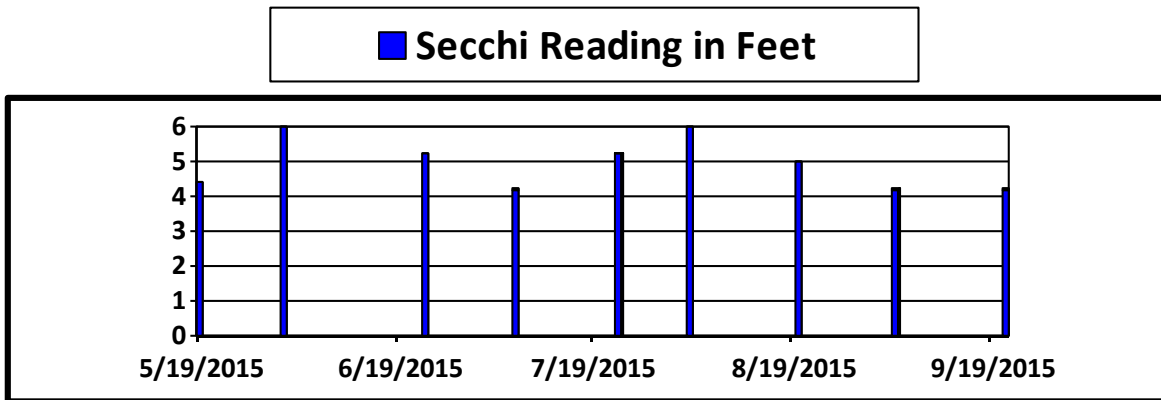
If you are interested in getting the trees for this coming year you can contact Joe Norman at Meeker SWCD at 320-693-7287, visit the Soil and Water Conservation section at [www.co.meeker.mn.us](http://www.co.meeker.mn.us), or stop by the office at 916 E. St. Paul St., Litchfield. The order forms should be coming out in January 2016. Following is link from this year's event [http://www.crowrivermedia.com/big\\_fish\\_lifestyle/events/meeker-swcd-offers-trees-pollinator-habitats/article\\_1ed45ca8-4597-5572-a77a-8e43555e64f4.html](http://www.crowrivermedia.com/big_fish_lifestyle/events/meeker-swcd-offers-trees-pollinator-habitats/article_1ed45ca8-4597-5572-a77a-8e43555e64f4.html)

# Water Quality Sampling & Testing

By Ken Klehr on behalf of Dan Faust, Rick Johnson, Ken Klehr, Dave Rathe and Dean Shaner

We just finished taking the last water quality samples for the year. Sampling consisted of gathering monthly, May-September, water samples at two sites and sending them to a state certified test facility to check for phosphorus and chlorophyll-a levels. At five sites secchi disc readings (water clarity) were taken every other week. These test results reflected Lake Washington's water quality is well within the standards set by the Minnesota Pollution Control agency for our lake class.

We have not received the phosphorus and chlorophyll-a results for September from our test lab, RMB Environmental, but here is the result of water clarity using a secchi disc. Chemistry data should be available shortly. I will publish the result in the spring newsletter.



A special thanks to the volunteers Dan Faust, Rick Johnson, Dave Rathe and Dean Shaner. With their help in gathering this data we realized a saving for this year of \$2500 along with a quicker response time to water quality issues. A special thanks to them and hopefully we can count on their help next year. We'll have to steal Dan away from his grilling business.

## **DARWIN MUNICIPAL LIQUOR STORE**

LOCATED ON HWY 12 NEXT TO OUTPOST GAS STATION IN DARWIN

OPEN: MON-THUR 9am-9pm  
FRI-SAT 9am-10pm

**SALE OF THE MONTH**

**BACARDI LIMON & SUPERIOR RUM 1.75**

**\$22.99**

With the Holiday's right around the corner, make sure to stop in our store and see our wide variety of gift packs.

**HOLIDAY HOURS:**  
**THANKSGIVING EVE: 9AM-9PM**  
**CHRISTMAS EVE: 9AM-8PM**  
**CHRISTMAS: CLOSED**  
**NEW YEARS EVE: 9AM-9PM**  
**NEW YEARS DAY: 4PM-10PM**

**LIQUOR OF THE MONTH**

**FULTON'S HARVEST PUMPKIN PIE CREAM LIQUOR**

**\$11.99**

**(320) 693-2586      darwinliquor@darwinmj.com**

# Committee Reports

## **SHORELINE CAPTAINS/MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE**

*By Cathy Klehr on behalf of Ron Bubany, Rick Johnson, Cathy Klehr and Mike & Sandy Wosmek*

Thanks to all who have renewed their membership. To recognize these members we have a listing on our web site and update monthly throughout the year. Currently we have 203 paid members, down from last year's count of 215. Your continued support is appreciated and needed in our effort to keep our Lake Washington clean and healthy for **ALL** to enjoy throughout the year.

If you have not paid dues for this year, you can still do so by mailing in a check for \$50 to LWIA, Box 68, Dassel, Mn. 55325. We all need to work together in supporting our lake needs.

Special Thanks to the Shoreline Captains for all the time and effort they put into reaching out to lake residents:

Sheryl Faust	Jenny Kjell	John Sandstede	Nancy Finkenaur
Jenna O'Brien	Grace Brinkman	Jim Wendling	Mary Jo Lyke
Bob Paulson	Jim Barnes	Cathy Klehr	Sandy, Mike Wosmek
Phil Flores	Sharon Daniels	Christine, Steve Ullom	Steve Knapp
John Bartz	Ray Haugland	Ruth, John Fink	

**For changes of address, phone, e-mail or any other information we should be aware of, please contact us at**  
[membership@lakewashingtonassn.com](mailto:membership@lakewashingtonassn.com)

## **FINANCE / FUND RAISING COMMITTEE**

*By Lyle Walker*

As the summer season comes to a close, the financial condition of the Association is solid. For the second consecutive year, there were no expenditures for lake treatment. Memberships for 2015 number 203, generating \$10,150 for the Association. Seventy-three members have donated \$1,860 to the Dassel Fire Department through the Association. With no unpaid bills on hand, total funds as of September 30 are \$115,113.

## **SOCIAL COMMITTEE**

*By Sandy Wosmek on behalf of Skip Sustacek, Mike & Sandy Wosmek*

As I write the last article for the year the sun shines bright as can be. The calendar says it is fall, but it seems like a beautiful spring/summer day. Hope the summer lake season was good for all. Hopefully a large majority of you were able to join us for the pork chop meal and annual meeting in May or the pot luck in August. The dates to remember for 2016 are ----

- 1st Saturday in May      May 7<sup>th</sup>      Pork chop meal and annual meeting.
- 2nd Saturday in August      August 13<sup>th</sup>      Pot luck

Hope all enjoy the beautiful fall and have a safe winter.

Until next year-----