



**Lake Washington
Improvement Association**
of Meeker County



Spring 2021

*The Lake Washington Improvement Association
kicks off the 2021 Summer Season!*

*Grant Activity
Water Quality
Invasive Species
Watershed
And More!*

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SPRING NEWSLETTER, 2021

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Contact Us




General Issues:
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Membership Changes:
membership@lwiaonline.com

Lost and Found:
lostfound@lwiaonline.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.

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End Of The Dock

By Steve Grotbo, President

We are seeing signs of returning to a normal life by end of the summer with Minnesota's two largest events (State Fair and Uptown Art Fair) being planned for August. With that, we are canceling the annual May pork chop meeting and focusing on the annual August one. Look to the summer newsletter for details. The Fourth of July boat parade is on again, be sure to read the article for the details.

Skip Sustacek, Lyle Walker, Steve Ullom, Mike & Sandy Wosmek, and Brett Rasmussen are up for re-election this May. Skip has decided not to run again, and we thank him for his great service since May 2013. Skip's key focus area was with the watershed, but was also involved with a number of other committees. Bonni Halverson has put her name in the hat for joining the board. Please reach out to any board member if anyone else has interest in joining the board or helping out on one of the committees.

A big thanks to the Boy Scouts again this year for cleaning up the ice at the end of ice fishing season . This is the second year in a row that the Boy Scouts organized the event. I really hope this continues as an annual event.

As I am writing this at the end of March I am starting to see some open water. So by the time you are reading this, some boats and docks will be in the water and lake season will be well under way. It will be interesting to see if we have another relatively bug free season like last year.

I do like seeing all the ads in the newsletter, it makes it look more like a professional publication. Be sure to support our advertisers and let them know you saw their ad.



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- Enhance your lakeshore views
- Increase recreational use of your lake
- Eliminate submerged weeds and algae
- Eurasian Watermilfoil and Curlyleaf can effectively be controlled
- Fish and wildlife are protected with the use of approved aquatic herbicides



*Enjoy a beautiful
lakeshore... without
unsightly lake weeds!*

Fourth Of July Boat Parade

By Steve Grotbo, President

Last year's boat parade was announced too late to make the newsletter, but yet we still had 25+ boats take part in the event. I am forecasting another perfect weather day this year, same guarantee that the weather people give.

Celebrate the 4th of July on Lake Washington with a Boat Parade starting at 1 PM. Meet in front of the Dassel Rod and Gun Club landing. The parade will be going counterclockwise around the lake, so you can join along the way as well. Or be a spectator and watch the parade from shore. Decorate your boat, pontoon or jet ski.

Contact Sue Schwinghammer (sueschwinghammer@yahoo .com) for any additional information. Sue and George will be leading the parade. No need to sign-up, just show up!!

Note that this is just for fun, no prizes.

Zebra Mussels

By Dave Rathe

Mike Wosmek plans to install the zebra mussel "hotels" (settlement plates) in the same locations as last year. Last summer we saw mostly immature mussels. It will be interesting to see how mature the mussels are this year. We do clean the hotels every fall, so all zebra mussels on the hotels should be this year's crop. We expect to see a larger population of zebra mussels this year on the hotels, docks, and equipment. It might be another few years before the zebra mussel population flattens out in Lake Washington. It will depend on food availability and colonizing habitat. The hotels are installed Memorial Day weekend and picked up Labor Day weekend.

Unfortunately there is currently no zebra mussel management approach applicable to Lake Washington.

Planned Zebra Mussel "Hotel" Locations



2021 Grant Funding Programs

By Sharon Daniels, Grant Coordinator

Minnesota weather is certainly one of a kind... from Winter freezing cold, to March warmth, to Springtime freshness and then to Summer heat... But we all love it!

Receipts and invoices were sent in for 2020 Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) and Meeker County Association of Lakes (MCAL) expenses. MCAL reimbursement for 2020 to LWIA was \$1,645.83 for mapping, and sediment control projects. AIS reimbursements for 2020 were: Project # 1) \$1,729.53 for management of the I-LIDS; Project #2) \$8,000.00 for Milfoil treatment (Actual cost of treatment was \$38,301.00), and Project # 3) \$1,357.03 for expenses of education and professional services.

MCAL granted funds to LWIA for 2021 for \$4,000 for Mapping/sediment Control Projects.

AIS granted funds to LWIA for 2021 for Project #1) \$1,750.00 for I-LIDS management; Project # 2) \$8,500.00 for Milfoil treatment; Project # 3) \$2,250.00 for Education.

Conservation MN/Molson Coors granted funds of \$1,000.00 to help offset the cost of water testing for all inlets on the lake to help determine the runoff into the lake.

MNDNR grant application has been applied, not approved yet, for \$5,000.00 for Milfoil treatment 2021.

Without membership dues, the "in-kind" hours of volunteers and the grant funds, our lake association would be faced with a very large payout each year, thus depleting our funds needed to keep our water safe for all. Check your Spring Newsletter for information on paying your dues for 2021.

If you do any volunteer work for LWIA, whether it be shoreline captain duties, or in a boat, going to meetings, etc., please keep track of your hours, food and or gas receipts, mileage driven to do a project, etc. You can email me at sdaniels@grdaniels.com with all your "in-kind" hours, or any receipts or info you may have. I keep track of all the info for the year in a report, and then I send this report to the county at the end of the year. This report reflects how and why our lake is kept in as good of condition as it has been. I also use this report when working on grants for each new year. I use receipts sent to me to request reimbursement for the projects. Reimbursements will not happen unless we have documented receipts to show for projects completed, meetings attended or whatever the need was. Save your receipts, keep track of your hours, and send them to me on a monthly basis if possible.

THANKS to all that help in any way to keep our lake safe, fun and usable!



Nuisance Vegetation

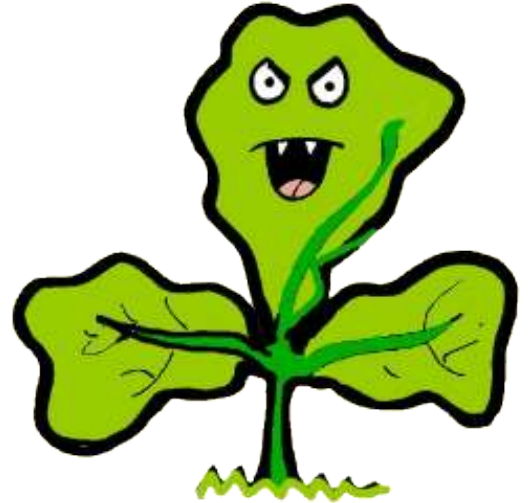
By Steve Ullom

Aquatic Plants When They Become Weeds/Nuisance Vegetation

There have been numerous inquiries over the past year about the many weeds in Lake Washington. An article talking about the variability of the vegetation growth in our lake over the past 40 years is in the Fall 2019 Newsletter. Snow-pack, water levels, and rainfall are all factors contributing to cycles of vegetation growth. With the low water levels last year, the vegetation was much more apparent and of a greater concern for many using the lake.

The DNR tells us: We often call aquatic plants "weeds," but they are a natural and essential part of our lakes. Aquatic plants provide benefits for fish, wildlife, and you – no matter how you enjoy the Minnesota's beautiful lakes. We encourage property owners to minimize the destruction of aquatic plants. Ask yourself: what is really needed to access your property and recreate?

Some activity with low ecological impacts can be done without a permit depending on the type of vegetation. You are able to find information about rules and regulations on the DNR's Aquatic Plant Management (APM) page (<https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/apm/index.html>). A list of commercial aquatic pesticide applicators and near shore vegetation removal companies is also on the DNR website. The following activities require a permit:



- Destruction of any emergent vegetation such as cattails, bulrushes and wild rice.
- Cutting or pulling by hand or mechanical means submerged vegetation in an area larger than 2,500 square feet or greater than 50 feet along shore.
- Applying chemical pesticides such as herbicides and copper sulfate.
- Moving or removing a bog of any size.
- Transplanting aquatic plants into public waters.
- Use of automated aquatic plant control devices such as the Crary WeedRoller.
- Physical removal of floating-leaf vegetation from an area larger than a channel 15-feet wide extending to open water.
- Hiring someone to mechanically remove aquatic plants or doing it yourself. Contact the APM program coordinator.

Durel Carstensen (durel.carstensen@state.mn.us) 507- 233-1218 is the APM specialist for our area and he would be the one issuing any near shore permits. Contact him with additional questions. The following link is to the DNR APM site that provides needed information regarding what shoreline owners can do to "clean up" their beaches. <https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/apm/aquatic-plants-faq.html>

Some important information to remember – from the ordinary high water level out into the lake is public property, Aquatic Plant Management permitting allows limited destruction of nuisance aquatic plants, APM permits – for a fee - allow property owners to reasonably recreate and access the water adjacent to their property. Beaches void of any vegetation are not natural nor feasible. Any plants pulled or cut cannot be left in the water and must be disposed of on land. There is more detailed information on the DNR APM website.

Take note that when it comes to lake vegetation issues the Lake Washington Improvement Assoc. can only be involved with the management of Aquatic Invasive Species i.e. Eurasian Water Milfoil and Curly Leaf Pond Weeds.

Nuisance Vegetation (continued)

Lake shore property owners may cut or pull submerged vegetation to create or maintain an area adjacent to their property along with a navigation channel without a DNR permit provided:

- The area is less than 2,500 square feet.
- The area extends less than 50 feet along the shore or one-half the length of your shoreline, whichever is less.
- The channel is 15 feet wide or less.
- Plant removal does not significantly alter the lake bottom.
- All plants are disposed of on land.



Any removals greater than described above will require a permit.

Submerged plants have stems and leaves that grow entirely underwater, although some may also have floating leaves. Flowers and seeds on short stems that extend above the water may also be present. Submerged plants grow from near shore to the deepest part of the littoral zone and display a wide range of plant shapes. Depending on the species, they may form a low growing "meadow" near the lake bottom, grow with lots of open space between plant stems, or form dense stands or surface mats.

Cormorants And Pelicans

By Steve Grotbo, President

In their "Management of Conflicts Associated with Double-crested Cormorants" the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service issued a "Final Environmental Impact Statement" in December last year. The report implies that we can get a permit to remove up to 4,539 birds. The report was followed by double-crested cormorant public webinars on February 22nd and March 2nd to explain the findings.

Some highlights from the webinar included:

- 121 thousand per year take is allowed over lower 48 states
- Egg oiling is counted at a 0.75 factor, but that varies for each situation.
- Shooting cannot use decoys and must use non-toxic bullets
- You need to have a plan for measuring results over the long term
- Canada had a large take, so perhaps population will be less in USA
- A national report comes out every five years

The actual permit process is being clarified on whether the lake association does this or if it comes from the DNR. Part of the application indicates for you to list what non-lethal methods have been attempted so far. Unfortunately I am not aware of any non-lethal methods that make sense for our lake. Other lakes in Minnesota have used ribbons and sound cannons, so I am trying to get details on how this was actually done and if it was successful.

I certainly do not like the idea of a sound cannon near my house. Are there any takers on the south or east side of the lake up for having one installed in their yard?



U of M Seminars

By Steve Grotbo, President

The University of Minnesota has adapted to this COVID pandemic situation in a good way in that many of the seminars are now free or at very low cost. They are done via Zoom, so you can attend from anywhere. The Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center (MAISRC) website is at <https://www.mai.src.umn.edu/>.

Upcoming and previous sessions can be found under the "Webinar" menu of the "AIS Detectors" menu. You can sign up to receive email invites for any future webinars.

The first Friday of each month at 10 AM is an hour long coffee break session via Zoom. The forum normally includes one expert on the topic of the month along with a few of the U of M staff. They call the sessions "The Detector Connector!" under the AIS Facebook page which can be found at

<https://www.facebook.com/AISDetectors>.

Basically it gives us Minnesota lake owners a chance to have question and answer sessions with experts and connect with other lake owners. The April 2nd topic was on Zebra Mussels, something that is relevant to us on Lake Washington.



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Water Quality

By Dave Rathe

Lake Water: This summer we are again planning to take lake water samples once per month starting in May and running through September. The samples will be taken from Site 101, which is one of the deepest parts of the lake (approximately 17 feet). Each sample will measure the amount of algae (Chlorophyll-*a*) and nutrients (Total Phosphorus) in the water. The analysis will again be performed by RMB Environmental Labs out of Detroit Lakes, MN. RMB has a nice website, RMBEL.info, where you can view Lake Washington past test results as well as other Minnesota lakes. Our data can be found under Lakes Monitoring Program in the Lakes & Streams drop-down menu. Then under Lakes Database.

Lake Water Sampling Sites



We also plan to conduct water clarity tests twice per month at 5 different sites (101, 205, 207, 208, & 209). I noticed while ice fishing this past winter, the water seemed quite clear. After ice out, we may have another spring with clear water. At the end of the summer all data collected will be submitted to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. They also have a website where you can view our Lake's data at pca.state.mn.us although it takes a bit of "drilling down" in their website.

Water Quality (continued)

Inlet Water: We are planning also this year to test some of the inlet water coming into the lake. These tests will be weather dependent, as we will need enough rainfall during the summer to get sufficient water flow. This year we would like to grab samples following a larger rainfall than last year due to the dry conditions.



We might also monitor the inlet water from Lake Stella (Site 309), since this is the largest volume of inflow into Lake Washington. Note: We didn't monitor this last summer, as the Lake Stella Improvement Association was planning to pull water samples, however, I was unable to find any data from 2020. If Lake Stella Improvement Association takes water quality data in 2021, we will not pull samples from Site 309.

Watercraft Inspection

By Dave Rathe



We plan to install the I-LIDS system (Internet – Landing Installed Device Sensor) again this year. The system will be located on the East side of the ramp at Ellsworth Landing. Installation of the system will take place in May and will be removed in the October November time frame depending on weather conditions.

We believe the I-LIDS system has been effective in improving boater compliance to MN DNR rules regarding boat decontamination prior to launching and prior to leaving the landing. Boaters are reminded via audio messages to clean weeds and debris from their boats, as well as drain their boat, live wells and bait wells, keep all drain plugs out while traveling, and dispose of unwanted bait in the trash.

I have no information about whether or not Meeker County and MN DNR will be doing watercraft inspection and decontamination as they did last year at Ellsworth Landing. Although I think it is likely.

Ice Ridges

Ice ridges are caused by the pushing action of a lake's ice sheet against the shore. Cracks form in the ice because of different contraction rates at the top and bottom of the ice sheet. In addition, ice cracks develop because the edges of the ice sheet are sometimes firmly attached to the shore.

When water rises in the cracks and freezes, the ice sheet expands slightly. Rising air temperatures warm the ice, leading to additional expansion, which exerts a tremendous thrust against the shore. Alternate warming and cooling of the ice sheet leads to additional pushing action, causing the ice to creep shoreward and scrape, gouge, and push soil and rock into mounds (called "ice ridges", "ice pushes", or "ramparts").

An individual Public Waters Work Permit is not required from the DNR to remove or grade an ice ridge if the work meets the following conditions:

- The ice ridge resulted from ice action within the last year.
- The project is either exempt from local permits or is authorized by issuance of a local government permit.
- Not more than 200 feet of shoreline is affected.
- All ice ridge material that is composed of muck, clay, or organic sediment is deposited and stabilized at an upland site above the ordinary high-water level.
- All ice ridge material that is composed of sand or gravel is removed as provided above or graded to conform to the original cross section and alignment of the lake bed, with a finished surface at or below the Ordinary High Water Level.
- No additional excavation or replacement fill material occurs on the site.
- All exposed areas are immediately stabilized as needed to prevent erosion and sedimentation (see Lakescaping information sheet). Removal or grading of an ice ridge must not disturb emergent aquatic vegetation, unless authorized by an aquatic plant management permit from the DNR's Division of Fisheries. (<http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/waters/watermgmtsection/pwpermits/iceridges.html>)

The Board would like to thank all members who support us with their generous donations. If not a member, please join.



Shoreline Captains

By Laurie Johnson, Membership Coordinator

Interested in becoming a Shoreline Captain?

There are areas of the lake that do not have an assigned Shoreline Captain and areas where additional help is needed. If you are interested in becoming more involved, contact Laurie Johnson at lauriegailjohnson@gmail.com. Also, if you are not sure who your Shoreline Captain is, or would like to find out more, contact Laurie Johnson.

What is a Shoreline Captain?

As a way to keep homeowners informed about the lake and their neighborhood, Lake Washington Improvement Association (LWIA) has created an information network called Shoreline Captains. It is the responsibility of each volunteer Shoreline Captain to convey information to approximately 25 of their neighbors-residents that live on the lake, near the lake, or anyone interested in the longevity and recreational use of Lake Washington.

Summary of responsibilities:

1. Welcome new owners to the lake and inform them of the Lake Washington Improvement Association (LWIA).
2. Visit homeowners in the assigned area to encourage annual participation in becoming a LWIA member and to keep addresses and phone numbers updated.
3. Help inform neighbors about events and issues that impact the lake and be available to answer questions. Refer them to a board member if needed.
4. Monitor the shoreline area in your neighborhood and report any concerns to a board member.
5. Be the eyes and ears for your area. Provide feedback to the board on concerns of property owners in the assigned area

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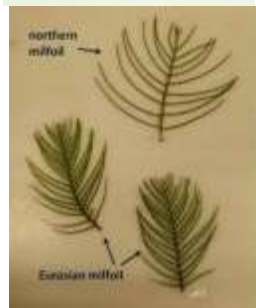


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Aquatic Invasive Species

By Mark Johnson, AIS Coordinator



Be on the lookout this summer for the invasive Eurasian Water Milfoil.

So how can you identify?

- Look for feather-like leaves found in whorls around the stem.
- These leaves will have 12 or more pairs of leaflets.
- Native Northern Milfoil will have less than 12 pairs of leaflets.
- If the plant is removed from water, the leaves will collapse around the stem.

If you think that you have identified Eurasian Water milfoil or have questions, please contact Lake Washington Improvement Association at info@lwiaonline.com.

Last year we treated 77 acres for Eurasian Water milfoil and this year we anticipate that we will find more.

Our plan is to focus our vegetation surveys near the shorelines in search of new growth clumps. In addition, we will survey waypoints where we have identified traces previously. Ron Bubany and I will be busy! Eurasian Water milfoil is becoming more frequently found on the lake and will most likely require additional treatments over the next few years. Treatment of invasive species is costly and is paid thru your donations and grants from the State of Minnesota.

Thank you for your support!
See you on the lake!



Committee Reports

Social Committee

By Sandy Wosmek

As I sit to write this article it is a bright sunny mid-March morning. We've had some nice warm days and some nasty days (typical March weather). It's soooooooooo Minnesota.

But ---- we are still under some COVID restrictions. So, as of this writing, it looks like we will not have the annual meeting and pork chop meal in May. Hopefully we can all get together later in the year (summer) to meet and discuss issues and questions.

Always feel free to contact any board member with questions or talk to your shoreline captain with questions. Watch the summer newsletter or the website for more information.

Welcome back to the snowbirds and cabin neighbors. Have a Safe and Great year on the lake.

Finance Committee

By Lyle Walker

There has been little financial activity since the end of the season last fall. Membership renewals for 2021 should be mailed in using the membership card in this newsletter. The Board thanks you for your continued support. We begin this 2021 season in a strong financial position with total funds of \$111,889.

Pat's Corner

By Pat Hanson

A Tribute To Skip Sustacek

My first and most important article I wish to send is about a diligent, hard working, soft spoken board member. Our Lake Washington board member has been on our board since 2013! He has worked well with board members and knows whom in Meeker County can help us do the job. Skip Sustacek was on the I-LIDS/Water Inspections, Water Quality Testing, and Social and Watershed committees.

I learned so much at our board meetings about our Lake. Skip knew how to get the jobs he worked on (especially the Watershed committee) done. Skip, you have our thanks for giving us your expertise and labor to improve our lake. I (we) thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Next time I see you I will thank you in person. For now, I am missing your smile and kindnesses.

Sincerely,
Pat (Skip gave me the nickname Mary) Hanson

Acrostic Poem called Pandemic

People being outside planting butterfly friendly plants.
Annual 4th of July Boat Parade was awesome and is coming back again!
Neighbors still are helpful, sharing and friendly.
Dandelions still popping up!
Every adult is able to get the vaccine(s) for free.
Meetings are switching from Zoom to some in person now!
Lice out early this year (2021).
Can we appreciate so many birds singing daily!

LAKESHORE IMPROVEMENTS

Out with the old in with the new. We'll make your lake view easy on the eyes.

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Now is the best time while the ground is frozen and the ice is thick to:

REMOVE

- Dead trees, leaning trees, brush and stumps
- Old buildings and debris

DELIVER

- Natural rock/riprap
- Beach sand blanket
- Natural rock for boat ramps

