# PRAIRIE LAKE IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

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**May 2014**

Prairie Lake Improvement Association priorities support **responsible lake use, water quality and shore land management.**

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**Prairie Lake Improvement Association Meetings**

**Memorial Day Weekend**

**&**

**Labor Day Weekend**

**Sunday, 1:30 PM**

**Fine Lakes Town Hall**

 **JOIN the Prairie Lake Improvement Association NOW!**

Make **$10** checks payable to **Prairie Lake Improvement Association** and send to**:**

**Sandy Fontaine, Treasurer**

**3372 Stark Junction Road**

**Duluth, MN 55810**

**Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Home Phone\*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Email\*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**\* Please list if you want this information included in the Prairie Lake Directory.**

**JOIN and receive an updated directory of all cabin owner names, address, phone and their home address and phone!**

 **THANKS to 78** out of **167** owners that joined in **2013**

**Eric Collman** has retired from managing the buoys for almost 20 years.The **Scott Moncur** **Family** volunteered to place & remove the buoys in 2013 **THANKS** for doing such a great job. All the lake users really appreciate this service.

**CABIN OWNERSHIP** since 2004 has included 43 sales and over 14 transfers within their family. Almost 60 cabin owners have changed their home address during the past 10 years.

***FINE LAKES TOWNSHIP*** Supervisors are Bill Dawson, Bill Kinnear and Bonnie Hall

Joanne Dawson is the Clerk and Ron Malecki, Treasurer

***THE PUBLIC LANDING*** is under Moose Lake DNR management:218-485-5410.

**LAND RECORDS** **in St. Louis County** are now available as a mobile application or accessible on your personal computer. The interactive map allows users to view and search land records by address, parcel identification number (PIN), and other methods. To download the free application you can go to the appropriate application store for your mobile device and search for **ArcGIS** by ESRI. Links to download the applications are also available on the **MAPS** tab of the county website: **http://www.stlouiscountymn.gov.**

**PUBLIC LAND** information and maps are available from a new DNR website called **Mobile Recreation Compass**. Users can see where they are in relation to 5.5 million acres of state and federal land in MN. The new website**, http://mndnr.gov/mobile/compass**, shows public boat landings, canoe routes, lake depth maps, boundaries of wildlife management areas, walk-in-access hunting areas, walking trails, waterfowl production areas, and state parks and their events. Users can watch themselves on-screen as dots moving along the terrain and be able to see when they are approaching the edge of public lands. The DNR website requires at least a 3G cell phone signal to operate smoothly. The DNR avoided the licensing and management demands of apps sold specifically for iPhone and Android operating systems by using a mobile **website:http://www** **mndnr.gov/mobile/compass**.

**VISIT** the **Prairie Lake** web site at[**http://www.prairielake.org**](http://www.prairielake.org)**. Corinne Moncur** is the siteeditor

at **http://www.****moncur@frontier.net**.

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***LOON*** monitoring is regularly supported through an annual contribution to DNR non-game wildlife program.  **Please** don’t use your boat or jet ski to chase or bother Loons. **Do not** go within 100 feet of nesting Loons.

**LAKE MINNEWAWA** property owners have established a Lake Improvement District (LID). The goal of the LID is to equalize the payment of weed harvesting and lake management activities. The Lake Improvement District is a special taxing district in which all effected property owners pay a fair share of costs of maintaining the lake. Each property owner is assessed $65 per year. The funds are collected by the county and transferred to the Lake Improvement District. The first half of the 2014 collected funds will be about $18,000. The LID is a separate entity from the Lake Association.

**BIG SANDY AREA LAKES WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PROJECT** (BSALWMP)

BSALWMP’s main purpose is to reduce phosphorous and suspended solids in 49 lakes and 5 rivers in the 413 square mile watershed that drains to the Mississippi River. Programs include information, education, technical assistance, citizen water quality monitoring, shore land revegetation and protection, conservation easements and improved agricultural practices.

Best management practices are encouraged:

* Shore land revegetation
* Lakeshore protection – erosion & runoff control
* Rain Gardens and rain barrels
* Forest Stewardship Plans
* Conservation Easements

![MCNA02446_0000[1]]()**Information and education** is also an important activity:

* Watershed wide newsletters
* Lakeshore Homeowners Guide
* Big Sandy Water Institute
* Lake association newsletters
* Participation in information fairs
* Small neighborhood meetings

**Compliance with state and local regulations** are reviewed:

* Special permits ▪ Comprehensive Plans

In 2008, Minnesota voters approved the **Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment** to the Minnesota Constitution**.** The Legacy Amendment increased the state sales tax by 3/8 of 1% beginning on July 1 2009 and continuing until 2034. This revenue is distributed into 4 funds: 33% to the clean water fund; 33% to the outdoor heritage fund; 19.75% to the arts and cultural heritage fund; and 14.25% to the parks and trails fund.

The Big Sandy Area Lakes Watershed Management Project has recently completed a Clean Water Fund Grant that was received in 2010. The following projects were installed using some grant funds:

 \* Runoff management & shoreland revegetation project at Cromwell City Park on Island Lake

 \* Two shoreland Stabilization Projects-both on Lake Minnewawa

 \* One Snowmobile Access Stabilization Project on Big Sandy Lake

 \* Five Shoreland Revegetation Projects-4 on Big Sandy & 1 on Horseshoe Lake

 \* Three Rain Gardens-Lake Minnewawa, McGregor & Tamarack

**Technical and Financial assistance is available for revegetation of shorelines with native trees, shrubs, and/or flowering plants. For more information or assistance, call Aitkin County SWCD at 218-927-6565.**

Watershed meetings are usually held the second Wednesday of the month. The location varies so call 218-927-6565 for times and place.

**INCREASED CONIFER MORTALITY** is drought related. Eight of the last 11 years have been very dry during the summer and fall, plunging many forested areas of MN into severe drought.

Spruce, fir and tamarack growing along the edge of lakes, wetlands, and ditches have been victims of fluctuating water tables over the past few years. When water is overly abundant, root systems are flooded for weeks and lose their lowermost roots. Then, when water is scarce, these root systems don’t extend down far enough to reach the low water table. With too much or too little water, tree health and vigor suffers as photosynthesis shuts down and reserve sugars and starches are used up. In a few droughty seasons, these trees, especially balsam fir and white and black spruce, die of starvation.

The situation is similar for red, white and jack pine except that root death due to fluctuating water tables is not involved. Photosynthesis was shut down for days and weeks during droughty growing seasons in the past decade. To make up for this, the trees used up their reserve sugars and starches in order to remain alive. They couldn’t resupply their reserves in the following years because they were also draughty. Eventually, reserves were drawn down too far and they also died of starvation.

For most of MN, the 2013 spring and early summer were wonderful for tree growth and restoration of sugar and starch reserves. However, the summer and autumn were hot and dry, leaving a prolonged drought in several forested areas of the state.

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**People and Businesses** who install or remove water recreation equipment (boats, docks, boat lifts, etc.) must be trained, certified and permitted by the DNR.

**Boat decal** is no longer required. **Trailer decal** required in 2015 after the owner passes an online education course.

Inspect your boat, trailer and equipment and remove plants, zebra mussels and mud before leaving water access.

* **Drain** water from bait buckets, live well, bilge, transom and motor before leaving
* **Dispose** of unwanted live bait and worms in the trash
* **Spray/wash** your boat, trailer and equipment with high pressure or hot water before going to other waters, or
* **Dry** everything for at least 5 days.

**FISHING --** Information from Dan Wilfond, DNR Fisheries Specialist, Duluth, MN

* **Tullibee** assessment with vertical gillnets was conducted the week of **June 24, 2013**.This a new assessment of cold water fish.
* **Walleye** stocking of 1.3 million fry is scheduled for 2014. Fry are just hatched fish that are immediately stocked into lakes. Walleye fingerlings are 4-6 inch fish that are reared over the summer and stocked in the fall. Fingerlings are much more expensive but can have a higher survivor rate and are reserved for lakes with a lot of top level predators or a high abundance of bluegill. Walleye stocking of fry in Prairie Lake is scheduled for every even numbered year.
* **Northern Pike** special regulation will continue at least through 2021 based on 2011 legislation**;(97C.0071). The limit is one northern 30 inches or greater.**

**MN Lakes & Rivers Advocates** (MLA) mission is to **protect Minnesota’s lake and river heritage for current and future generations by forging powerful links between lakes, lake** **advocates, and policy makers**. MLA is a nonprofit (501c4) organization that is solely supported by volunteer contributions from citizens and lake associations. MLA is active informing and influencing elected officials in support of water related improvements and, as such, donations are not deductible for tax purposes. There are about 300,000 lake cabin or home owners in Minnesota and MLA has about 6000 members. PLIA has been a member for the past few years

MLA monitors state legislative proposals working for tax fairness, control of Aquatic Invasive Species and strong incentives for shore land and forest habitat protection. During the last state legislative session, MLA:

* Defended cabins from being subjected to school district “excess operating tax levies”. This provides some relief for cabins.
* Supported proposed “blue waters” legislation to protect shore land through a property tax incentive.
* Supported funding to develop and enforce a statewide plan to slow and stop the spread of aquatic invasive species like zebra mussels.

Members are requested to respond to legislative alerts and contact their legislators via email or better yet personal letter.

**LAKE CONTOUR MAPPING --** updates may be requested from private providers of lake maps through their web sites. The more requests, the more likely to get attention. **Lakemap.com/requestalake.asp** or **Navionics.com/LakeCatalogFavoriteLakes.asp**

**LEAD FREE** fishing tackle are strongly encouraged to avoid lead poisoning of loons, eagles and other wildlife.

  **Prairie Lake Improvement Association Officiers and Directors**

**President:** Merritt Linzie (2014) **Vice-President:** Scott Moncur (2014),

**Treasurer:** Sandy Fontaine (2014) ,**Secretary:** Bob Sanft (2014),

**Directors:** Bob Stemwedel (2014), Ken Hallberg (2015), Richard Collman (2016)

Elections are held at the Memorial Week end meeting. Participation is encouraged



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**PRAIRIE LAKE WATER QUALITY: 1996-2013**

The main nutrient of concern is phosphorus. Phosphorus enrichment of a lake can result in a variety of negative impacts, such as excessive plant growth, algae blooms, and lowering of oxygen levels.

**Total Phosphorus, ug/L**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **1996** (Date) | **1997** (Date) | **1998** (Date) | **2007** (Date) | **2008** (Date) | **2012** (Date) | **2013** (Date) |
| **May** |  |  |  |  |  |  | **44** (5/20) |
| **June** | **16** (6/16) | **20** (6/4) | **26** (6/8) | **32** (6/10) | **37** (6/8) | **28** (6/17) | **32** 6/17) |
| **July** | **17** (7/15)  | **18** (7/8) | **22** (7/13) | **28** (7/8) | **32** (7/13 | **39** (7/9)\* | **23** (7/29) |
| **Aug** | **35** (8/19) | **25** (8/6) | **37** (8/17) | **43** (8/5) | **27** (8/12) | **47** (8/19)\* | **26** (8/19) |
| **Sept** | **40** (9/16) | **20** (9/3) | **46** (9/21) | **62** (8/26) | **27** (9/15) | **54** (9/16)\* | **32** (9/15) |
| **AVG.** | **27** | **21** | **33** | **41** | **31** | **42** | **31** |

Chlorophyll a is the main pigment in algae. The concentration of this pigment is used to estimate the quantity of algae found in the lake. Algae is a normal component of water bodies, however

high concentrations can result in low levels of dissolved oxygen and reduced recreation suitability.

**Chlorophyll a, ug/L**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **1996** (Date) | **1997** (Date) | **1998** (Date) | **2007** (Date) | **2008** (Date) | **2012** (Date) | **2013** (Date) |
| **May** |  |  |  |  |  |  | **7** (5/20) |
| **June** | **3** (5/20) | **1** (6/4) | **6.7** (6/8) | **7** (6/10) | **3** (6/8) | **5** (6/17) | **4** (6/17) |
| **July** | **2** (7/15) | **1** (7/8) | **6.4** (7/13) | **9** (7/8) | **7** (7/13) | **7** (7/9) | **7** (7/29) |
| **Aug** | **24** (8/19) | **9** (8/6) | **22** (8/19)  | **20** (8/5) | **6** (8/12) | **31** (8/19)\* | **15** (8/19) |
| **Sept** | **10** (9/16) | **12** (9/3) | **19.7** (9/21) | **26** (8/26) | **5** (9/15) | **21** (9/16)\* | **14** (9/15) |
| **AVG.** | **10** | **6** | **14** | **15** | **5** | **16** | **10** |

(Note: \* About 9 inches of rain on June 20-21, 2012 raised the level of Prairie Lake 4 feet 10 inches to its highest level ever recorded. The June 2012 rains followed frequent rains in late May that increased lake level on May 29, 2012 to match the previously recorded high water level of 1,274.5 feet. The new high water level in June 2012 approached 1,278 feet. Subsequent high levels of phosphorus and chlorophyll a lasted through all of 2012 into 2013.)