# PRAIRIE LAKE IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

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**May 2015**

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**

**Attend a meeting, meet some lake neighbors, have some coffee, learn what is going on and share your ideas.**

 **THANKS to 85** out of **167** owners that joined in **2014**

**BUOYS** are placed and removed by the Scott Moncur family. **THANKS** for doing such a great job. All the lake users really appreciate this service. Contact Scott to report any problems or suggest additional locations: **moncur@frontier.net**.

**CABIN OWNERSHIP** of 10 properties changed since last year. WELCOME to the new owners!

**DNR** staff from Grand Rapids reviewed the **Prairie Lake vegetation** last year and advised there are **NO nonnative species** in or adjacent to the lake**!**

**Minnesota Pollution Control Agency** plans a comprehensive water quality survey of Prairie Lake this summer.

A research suvey of **second homeowners** by U of M, Extension displayes a profile of second homeoners in central and west central MN (Aitkin, Becker, Cass, Crow Wing, Douglas, Hubbard, Ottertail and Pope Counties).

**Second Homeowners** are well educated (65% with college degrees), above average income (59% earn $100,000 or more), have owned their property more than 10 years (65%), primarily in their 50’s or 60’s and nearly 40% retired.

For a complete report of the research, go to:

 [**http://www.extension.umn.edu/community/research/reports/docs/2014-2nd-homeowners**](http://www.extension.umn.edu/community/research/reports/docs/2014-2nd-homeowners)

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

 **ckmoncur@gmail.com**

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

* **Northern Pike** regulation is being discussed by DNR professionals. Special regulations, such as slot limits, has worked well in some cases and not so well in others. Legislation has limited the number of lakes for special Northern regulation limiting pike management on lake-by-lake basis. There has been some discussion about having 3 different “zones” for pike management as a compromise between individual lake management and a single statewide regulation**.** There are complexities. Some want a consumptive harvest. Others want trophy opportunities. Also there is ecological diversity of lakes. Southern lakes are highly productive with intense angling pressure and watersheds that are highly disturbed limiting pike recruitment. Northern lakes have low productivity, less pressure for pike and largely in-tact watersheds where pike recruitment is consistent. For all these reasons, a single statewide regulation for pike may not be working. The DNR is beginning to address this issue. Any proposed new regulations will have a public review process where people will have an opportunity to be heard. It is not yet clear what will happen to lakes with special regulations like Prairie Lake. For now, the limit is one northern 30 inches or greater**.**
* **Prairie** has a low abundance of Northern Pike, below average compared to other Minnesota lakes of a similar type. Any predation by Northern Pike on Walleye is likely negligible.
* **DNR** will conduct a **5 year fish assessment** planned for **August 31**through **September 4**. Abass electrofishing survey will be conducted one night in early June. Results should be available next year.
* **Walleye** fry (1,275,000) were stocked last summer (in even numbered years).
* **LEAD FREE** fishing tackle are strongly encouraged to avoid lead poisoning of loons, eagles and other wildlife.

### 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 July 2015 after the owner passes online education.

**CHECK the DNR website as there are legislative proposals to change or delete this new trailer decal requirement: http://www.trailers.mndnr.gov/**

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.

**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**](http://www.stlouiscountymn.gov)**.**

**Both Islands** are owned by the US Government according to St. Louis County records.

**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
**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.

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

Joanne Dawson is the Clerk and Ron Malecki, Treasurer.

 Watch for a **township gathering** sometime this summer.

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

![MCAN00573_0000[1]]()***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.

**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. About 100 out of 400 lake associations also belong. 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. MLA is currently supporting elimination of the State property tax on cabins (and businesses).
* Supported proposed “blue waters” legislation to protect shore land through incentives.
* Supported funding to develop and enforce a statewide plan to slow and stop the spread of aquatic invasive species like zebra mussels.
* Individuals are encouraged to join MLA.

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

**Clean water tips for cabin owners**

* Keep your shoreline in a natural condition. Leave an unmowed buffer at the shoreline.
* Avoid fertilizing the lawn. Nutrient runoff is a primary source of water pollution.
* Take care of your septic system.
* Use lead free fishing gear.
* Backyard garbage burning is illegal even for cabins. Get a permit for approved vegetation
* Don’t drain old gas onto the ground; use it by mixing with fresh fuel.
* Join your lake association.

 **Prairie Lake Improvement Association Officiers and Directors:**

**President:** Merritt Linzie (2015) **Vice-President:** Scott Moncur (2015),

**Treasurer:** Sandy Fontaine (2015) ,**Secretary:** Bob Sanft (2015),

**Directors:** Bob Stemwedel (2017), Ken Hallberg (2015), Richard Collman (2016)

Elections are held at the Memorial Weekend meeting. Participation is encouraged.