# PRAIRIE LAKE IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

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**May 2016**

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 $20 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 theier home address and phone.**

**THANKS to 102** out of **167** owners that joined in **2015**

**VOLUNTEERS are needed to Adopt-a-Buoy**. We cannot find anyone interested in placing and removing all 9 buoys so we are seeking volunteers to each be responsible for a single buoy. Four volunteers were identified at the fall meeting. **Five more volunteers are needed**

Scott Moncur has all 9 buoys stored on the shore at his cabin and GPS coordinates for each location (also at his cabin). Scott also has 3 extra buoys and can answer questions.

General guidance for volunteers is to place the buoy in May, preferably before fishing season or Memorial weekend. Remove the buoy after Labor Day weekend and before early October. The buoy can be stored outside at your cabin. **PLEASE contact:**

Merritt Linzie OR Scott Moncur

651-776-7895 651-238-6247

[merrittlinzie@aol.com](mailto:merrittlinzie@aol.com) [smoncur@outlook.com](mailto:smoncur@outlook.com)

**VOLUNTEERS are also needed to continue Adopt-a-Highway along highway 73 between Mile Posts 30 to 32.** Litter pick-up should be scheduled near Memorial Day and again near Labor Day. Please contact the above if you are willing to coordinate or assist in this activity.

**BEAVER** control was approved by the Prairie Lake Improvement Association at the 2015 Labor Day weekend meeting. Wayne **Thom’s Nuisance Wildlife Control** will initially focus on the outlet dam and lodge this spring and is authorized to spend up to $500. Beaver population has increased on Prairie Lake due to very low market prices and they have damaged lake shore trees.

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

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**PLEASE GIVE US SOME COMMENTS< IDEAS OR SUGGESTIONS FOR THE PRAIRIE LAKE IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION>**

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

**The 2015 fish survey resulted in historic high catches of northern pike and black crappie.**

**Northern Pike** average sample size was 24 inches and 3.4 pounds. The numbers of northerns are now greater than any past surveys beginning in 1952. But their numbers are still low compared to other lakes in the Duluth area.

**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.**

**Black Crappie** numbers are at a historic high for Prairie Lake and above average compared to other Minnesota lakes. Average length of surveyed crappie was 8 inches with fish sampled up to 10 inches. Anglers should expect good catches of black crappie over the next couple of years.

**Bluegill** numbers were average with some increase since 2010**.**

**Yellow Perch** numbers were up from 2010 and above other similar lakes.

**Walleye** numbers were below average compared to other similar lakes. The average sample was 15.1 inches and 1.5 pounds. Walleye fry are stocked every even numbered year. The ages of 57% of walleye sampled related to stocked year ages.

**Large Mouth Bass** were not detected with electrofishing although several small bass were later detected while seining in 2015.

**Tullibee** numbers appear to be stabilizing after decreases over the past 20 years.

A painted turtle with “**TYLER**” painted on it’s back was found when the DNR sampled for the fish survey. **Does anyone know where “TYLER” the turtle came from?**

The **Governor’s fishing opener** will be held on Big Sandy Lake this spring.

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

**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.

**Prairie Lake Improvement Association Officers and Directors**

**President:** Merritt Linzie (2016)

**Vice-President:** Scott Moncur (2016),

**Treasurer:** Sandy Fontaine (2016) ,**Secretary:** Bob Sanft (2016),

**Directors:** Richard Collman (2016), Bob Stemwedel (2017), Ken Hallberg (2018)

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

. **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

**About $125,000 was used to assist 21 landowners repair eroding shorelines and replace vegetation lost during the 2012 floods**.

**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.

**LOOK for a newsletter mailing this spring from BSALWMP**. **Included in the newsletter is a $40 coupon for a Rain Barrel at Growth Lumber in Wright.**

Multiple watersheds of the Upper Mississippi River (between Grand Rapids and Palisade) are joining together in a water study. The Big Sandy Area Lakes Watershed, including Prairie Lake, is within this study.

**WATER QUALITY** sampling results by MN Pollution Control Agency in 2015 and by BSALWMP in 2016 should be available next year.



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

**An AIS “affirmation” that owners understand AIS laws will be required before obtaining a watercraft license or a non-resident fishing license.**

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.
* **A decontamination station will be available at Willey’s, Highway 65 north of McGregor during the week. T**he decontamination station will be moved to various boat landings during weekends.

**MN Lakes & Rivers Advocates mission is to protect Minnesota’s lake and river heritage for current and future generations by forging powerful links among lakes, lake advocates, and policy makers.**

Current topics of state legislative interest are:

* Remove or reduce cabins from the State Business Property Tax
* Increase fines and penalties for AIS violations.
* Introduce and discuss a “sustainable incentive act” to protect shore land.
* Support Governor’s Water Summit recommendations.

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

The Prairie Lake Improvement Association annually contributes to MN Lakes & Rivers Advocates. Individuals are encouraged to explore this group’s activities and consider individual contributions.

**AQUATIC PLANTS** were also extensively surveyed in 2015 by DNR. Prairie Lake has a diverse and species richness tending to be the greatest in the protected bays of the lake. Forty plant species including 19 submergent, 14 emergent and 4 floating-leaf species were documented at 286 stations. Three free floating species were also sampled. The most frequently found plants were filamentous algae (21.3%), clasping-leaf pondweed (10.5%), and bushy pondweed (7.7%). Hardstem bulrush was found at 5.2% of the stations and largely confined to two main clusters on the southern half of the lake**. No aquatic invasive plant species were found. Emergent and floating-leaf aquatic plant forms are particularly important for fish and wildlife habitat and must be preserved to sustain high quality** **fisheries.**

**NATIVE MUSSELS are different from ZEBRA MUSSELS.** Minnesota has about 50native mussel species and they are specially adapted to benefit our aquatic ecosystems. Some native mussels can live for decades, while zebra mussels live only a few years. Native mussel larvae must attach to a fish host for early stage of life as compared to zebra mussels that simply release larvae into the surrounding water. Zebra mussels attach to native mussels or other under water objects, while a native mussel uses a foot to burrow into the river or lake bottom. Both native and zebra mussels can form large colonies, but their effects on the surrounding ecosystems are quite different. Invasive zebra mussels filter out food that would ordinarily be consumed by fish. Native mussels primarily filter out bacteria and fungus without intercepting food for fish. Native mussel colonies create biological “hot spots” that favor other macroinvertebrates, which in turn provide food for fish.

**ALGAE** grow in all bodies of water when light and nutrients are sufficient. In many lakes, algae abundance is determined by the amount of phosphorus present. The more phosphorus present, the more abundant algae become and the greener the water gets.

There are many different types of algae. During mid-summer one group, called blue-green algae, are often particularly abundant and may have a strong musty or earthy odor.

Cooler fall conditions often favor specific types of algae that tend to give the lake or pond a brownish hue due to yellow and brown pigments in the algae.

**Because algae abundance strongly depends on the amount of phosphorus available, the best long term strategy to prevent algae blooms is to improve land-use and waste management practices. This helps prevent phosphorus and other nutrients from getting into our surface waters.**

**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 app you should go to the appropriate app store for your mobile device and search for **ArcGIS** by Esri. Links to download the apps are also available on the **MAPS** tab of the county website: **stlouiscountymn.gov.**

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

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

Joanne Dawson is the Clerk and Ron Malecki, Treasurer. Township meetings are usually the first Tuesday @ 7PM,