# PRAIRIE LAKE IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

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**March 2018**

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

**Prairie Lake Improvement Association Meetings**

**Memorial Day Weekend**

**&**

**Labor Day Weekend**

**Sunday, 10:30 AM**

**Fine Lakes Town Hall**



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

**Make $20 checks payable to Prairie Lake Improvement Association and send to your Treasurer:**

**…………………………………………………………………………………………………….**

**Mike Bottila**

**160 Erickson Road**

**Esko, MN. 55733**

**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. We will also have this on the Website.**

 **THANKS to 67** out of **181** owners that joined in **2017**

**Prairie Lake Improvement Association Officers and Directors**

**President:** Joe Beaupre (2018)

**Vice-President:** Scott Moncur (2018),

**Treasurer:** Mike Bottila (2018)

**Secretary:** Jonette Kreideweis (2018),

**Directors:** Richard Collman (2019), Bob Stemwedel (2020), Ken Hallberg (2018)

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

Officers are elected to serve 1 year terms, duties include:

**President**

* Preside over 2 meetings each year
* Participate in the Big Sandy Area Lakes Watershed Management Project
* Communicate with the membership and stakeholders.

**Vice-President**

* Act in absence of the President
* Support and assist the direction of the Lake Association

**Treasurer**

* Collect and deposit membership fees
* Verify and pay bills
* Report financial transactions and fiscal status

**Secretary**

* Record and report meeting activities

**Directors** are elected for 3 year terms

* Provide consultation, advice and support at and between meetings
* Participate in activities and decisions between meetings

All of the functions and duties are adaptable to your style, desires and skills.

Please note that Officer and Director positions are made up of unpaid volunteers. No funds are used to reimburse per-diem.

\*\*We invite you to please ask your neighbors to become a member of the Prairie Lake Association if they are not already. Your funds are used to help support the local watershed/water quality support committees, water quality monitoring, and the Mn Lakes and Rivers Advocates organization. Funds are also used to cover the annual cost of the newsletter, updating lake buoys, and membership mailings.

The **ADOPT-A-BUOY** project now has 7 volunteers placing and removing 9 buoys. **THANKS** to **Scott Moncur**, **Mike Baden**, **Joe Beaupre**, **Kris Beck**, **Ed Felien**, **Gene Kelly** and **Tom Sheetz**.

General guidance for volunteers is to place the buoys in May, preferably before fishing season or Memorial weekend. Remove the buoys after Labor Day weekend and before early October. The buoys are stored outside at the volunteer’s cabin. Let Scott know if you have a damaged buoy that needs repair.

**THANKS** to **Scott Moncur** (651-433-4516) for coordinating this activity. Scott has GPS coordinates for each buoy location and he also has 3 extra buoys.

**WATER QUALITY** testing during the summer of 2017 produced the following results:

 Average of tests Impairment level

Total Phosphorus 24.3 30

Chlorophyl-a 5.2 10

Clarity 4.5ft

Sulfate less than 3mg/liter

Calcium 11.7ppb

Water testing has indicated that nutrients of phosphorus and chlorophyll levels frequently exceed their water quality impairment standards. Continuous failure to meet standards would result in an extensive Total Maximum Daily Load study and plan to meet the lake’s recreational uses. This may likely suggest pollutant reductions from developed areas. Prairie Lake is not listed as impaired by nutrients in the MN Pollution Control Agency 2017 list of “impaired” waters.

Prairie Lake, and many others, is listed as “impaired” by mercury. This results in advisories to limit the eating of fish. **THANKS** to **Ken Hallberg** for collecting water quality samples for several years!

Governor Dayton announced a water quality goal to improve Minnesota’s water quality 25% by 2025. Without additional action, the quality of Minnesota’s water is expected to improve only 6% to 8 % by 2034.

***CURRENT PRAIRIE LAKE NEWS*:**

**Beaver** damage to lake property has been a hotly debated topic recently.  In the past, the Improvement Association has used member funds to contract for beaver population management. In the spring 2017 meeting, members present voted to cease using member funds for general management and instead leave population management to individual property owners for a two year period.  At the fall 2017 meeting, members present intensely discussed rescinding that policy; however, the final result was that the spring 2017 vote for a two year period of individual property management was not revocable and the issue would be formally voted on again during the spring 2019 meeting.  The Association wishes for a strong member turnout for the spring 2019 meeting and a general policy can be discussed and voted on by all Prairie Lake Improvement Association members.   Member feedback is encouraged throughout the next year as we will need help from local Townships and the Mn DNR in order to accomplish a result that works for all.

**Lake Country Power** executed a power line clearing plan during the fall of 2017 in the Prairie Lake area.  If your property has overhanging and potentially damaging trees, you are encouraged to call Lake Country Power before winds create an unplanned emergency call.

The **winter ice fishing** communities were back again this year! This year saw at least 3 different area/communities on the lake enjoying winter activities together and making the most of 40” of ice and some very cold temperatures. I know some fish were found, but remember “there are no fish in Prairie lake”…..!

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

**Prairie Lake** fish surveys will move from a 5 year rotation to an 8 year rotation due to DNR budget limitations. The next survey will be in 2023. The Governor has proposed a modest increase in DNR license and other fees. However, if passed, it will only allow DNR to continue operations at the current level and not expand programs or increase monitoring.

**Northern Pike** special regulation continues on **Prairie Lake**. **The limit is one northern 30 inches or greater.** An early ice out trapping of Northern Pike in 2019 will be evaluated to see if changes to the special regulation are warranted.

**Largemouth Bass** range expansion project is underway by DNR in 9 northeastern MN lakes including **Prairie Lake**. Vegetation survey data and water temperature monitoring will evaluate Prairie Lake’s suitability for supporting a natural growth of Largemouth Bass

**Walleye** stocking will continue every other year. The stocking rates will be reduced to rates normal for other lakes. Higher stocking rates over the past have not improved the Walleye fishery in Prairie Lake. An improvement may result from a normal stocking rate of 270,000 fry every other year.

**Lead Free** fishing tackle is strongly encouraged to avoid lead poisoning of loons, eagles and other wildlife.

The large **Chinese and banded MYSTERY SNAILS** are a **“regulated invasive species”** in Minnesota. They are legal to possess or transport, but not legal to introduce those species of mystery snails into a new lake or river. The snails come into shallow water to lay eggs. Property owners can pick them out of the water and dispose of them.

 Other **“prohibited invasive species”,** like zebra mussels, are not legal to possess, transport or introduce into lakes or rivers.

**![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.

**Minnesota** has a stable population of **Loons,** the largest in the U.S., of about 12,000 breeding adults. Loons tend to stop reproducing on lakes where shore land development exceeds 40 buildings per mile.

 **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 from Carlton County 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. The 2018 Spring Newsletter should be sent to all area landowners in June 2018. A copy will be placed on the PLA website when received.

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.

If you would like more information on the **BSALWMP,** please see **Joe Beaupre** and I can get you more information.

 **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
* Protect AIS funding.
* Promote “sustainable shore lands”

The Prairie Lake Improvement Association annually contributes to MN Lakes & Rivers Advocates. 180 lake associations out of about 500 have joined MN Lakes & Rivers.

**www.mnlakesandrivers.org**



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

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.** The decontamination station will be moved to various boat landings during weekends.

13 **PROPERTY OWNERSHIPS changed** this past year and home address changes of 5 other owners.

**VISIT** the **Prairie Lake** web site at[**http://www.prairielake.org**](http://www.prairielake.org)**. Jill Beaupre** is the siteeditor at **jbeaupre@ymail.com**Please send her your pictures and articles that you would like included on **your** website.