

HORSEHEAD LAKE PROTECTION & REHABILITATION DISTRICT NO 1



September 1, 2006

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District Members

Beavers affected the lake level recently when approximately 6 inches of rain could not easily escape from the lake due to a large number of branches they placed near the dam. The lake level reached levels we haven't seen for several years. Some like the water level high while others are not so pleased when they begin to lose their shoreline. We urge residents to keep an eye on the dam and report obstructions to the Town of Lake Tomahawk so they can remove branches before we have a serious problem.

No rain was recorded in the area for over a month, producing drought conditions and an extreme fire hazard. The good side

of that was, of course, NO MOSQUITOES! So it just goes to show that nothing is all bad. Keep your fingers crossed.

Many members have reminded me that no summer is the same on Horsehead Lake. Perhaps that's what makes living on or near a lake so fascinating. Something is always different.

As we drift slowly into fall, and begin to see the seasons change, sit back and appreciate the biological "symphony" that is "playing" for our enjoyment.

Annual Meeting Notes

- Despite the moderate fish kill over the past winter, our aerator did work to protect many fish and prevent a more drastic result.
- Statistically, the DNR reports our lake's chemistry is virtually the same as last year, with only a very slight decrease in quality of the water. (see web page link to DNR)
- Noted that 81 loads of vegetation were removed from our lake by Schmidt's Landscaping representing

about 25,000 cubic feet of weeds at a cost of \$9,000.

- Passed our 2006-'07 budget calling for a \$13,500 levy, 60% of last year. This will allow for 80 hours of weed cutting compared to 56 hours this year.
- Budget maintains \$6,000 to cover our portion of DNR grant proposal.
- Voted to continue membership in Wisconsin Association of Lakes & Oneida Co. Lakes and Rivers Association.
- Voted to allow commissioners to decide whether or not to cut weeds next summer.
- Voted to authorize inspection & maintenance of aerator in the fall.
- Voted to create a \$500 Contingency Fund to cover unanticipated expenses.
- Voted to alter by-laws to improve gender-specific language & formally

disallow mail-in nominations and balloting.

- Elected Beverly Fagan to another term as commissioner.
- Dennis Batchelet, Linda Houghton-Bowen & Beverly Fagan renewed as Chairperson, Secretary, and Treasurer, respectively.
- Announced next Annual Meeting date on August 18, 2007.

Our new web site

There have been 795 "hits" on our web site since it debuted in January. Stay connected to what's going on by checking it out; the site is updated regularly.

Donations Welcomed

If you like the new web site and want to help defray the costs (\$8/month web host fees), you might consider making a donation to the web page fund.

Curly-Leaf Pond Weed

It's the only invasive Horsehead Lake has, so be on the lookout for it. Watch for the curly (wavy) leaves in your swimming area and carefully pull it out by the roots. You must dispose of it on land. You can also see the small "turions" in the shallows. They are somewhat sharp and shaped like a small pinecone.

Eurasian Water Milfoil

So far, this invasive weed is NOT in Horsehead Lake, but we must be vigilant. Learn what it looks like and urge your neighbors to do the same. REPORT ANY DISCOVERIES to a commissioner.

If you have had your boat in an infected lake, BE SURE TO WASH IT WITH SOAP & WATER before re-launching in Horsehead Lake. This cannot be emphasized enough!

Columnaris Bacteria

After Memorial Day, residents began seeing large numbers of dead fish floating near their docks. The fish were afflicted by bacteria named Columnaris. Joanne Erickson and Jack Houghton have researched this disease and have provided information

they gained from DNR fish biologists.

Fortunately, the disease is not harmful to humans, but it affects primarily Bluegill, Crappies, Yellow Perch, Bullheads, Bass, and Northerns to a lesser degree.

It happens shortly after spawning time when the fish are in a weakened condition and the water temp rises rapidly to 65-70 degrees in May-June. During that time, bacteria levels rise after major rainfalls have washed nutrients into the lake, which the bacteria thrive on.

Though large numbers of fish can be affected in just a few days, it usually does not have a catastrophic effect on the overall fish population of a lake. Unfortunately, it can be a big mess to clean up.

If you would like more information, contact DNR fish biologist, John Kubisiak, at (715) 365-8919.

Weed Cutting

We will apply for another weed cutting permit next year, just in case it is needed. Under new DNR rules, lakes will be permitted to cut weeds only three times without a Lake Plan on file and we've used at least one of ours already. That's one reason why we need our lake study grant so we may develop our plan. We have contracted with Schmidt's Landscaping again to cut weeds during the 3rd week in July, unless we cancel. Watch the web page for more info.

DNR Tree Harvesting

Within the past month, we have learned, through Don and Carol Niebler, of a DNR plan to continue harvesting trees on the NW area of the lake, up to Kania's property. We are investigating the reasons for the cutting and will report in the web page what we find out.

We will be urging the DNR to allow us some input on the process so as to minimize the impact on our residents.

Web Reference

UW-Stevens Point has a web site that explains all the details of the current WI laws regarding lakes. It is very well written and easy to understand. Click on www.uwsp.edu/cnr/uwexlakes/ "People of the Lakes: A Guide for Wisconsin Lake Organizations". It's an excellent reference for your questions on lake organizations and how they operate. You may also look on our web page for the hyperlink to connect directly to the site.



From the Chair

By Dennis Batchelet

Thanks to all who came to the annual meeting to help guide our District through the coming year. Again, we had terrific cooperation in listening to others' views and crafting motions that are sensible to improve the lake for our enjoyment. While there are often dissenting

views, there is an abiding willingness to do what is best for the lake and others. This is particularly encouraging since, after we have our lake plan in place, we will all need to cooperate to uniformly put into operation the recommendations. Without that cooperation, our plan will be just a few pieces of paper. Knowing each other, staying in touch with our plan, and communicating in non-threatening ways will be crucial to realize the benefits we hope to achieve in the lake.

We are very hopeful, based on our conversation with Kevin Gauthier of the DNR, that our lake grant request will be awarded. We will keep you posted through the web page on how that's going.

Even though we all feel the need to get out the pitchfork, occasionally, weed cutting this year has been a success and the lake looks good in most areas. We do need to be mindful of how to

reduce the wave action close to shore that can damage our shoreline. Maintaining a 100-foot buffer near piers would help in that regard. There has been an increase in the number of larger boats with bigger motors. Since early spring, there have been fewer fishermen on the lake.

As we move from late summer into fall, I hope the weather continues to be favorable for those visits from family and friends and that your good times keep rolling on.

Did you know?

Years ago, before Horsehead Lake had a name, locals used to call it "Snake Lake". [Perhaps St. Patrick made a stop in this neck of the woods, since we've seen very few of the slithering reptiles.]

Meeting Minutes

Minutes are available by request to Linda Houghton-Bowen, our secretary, or on our web site.

Let's be safe out there.

Sincerely,
Dennis Batchelet,
Beverly Fagan,
Linda Houghton-Bowen
Tom Rudolph
Gary Sowatzka

