
THE CULLEN CURRENTS



Summer, 2018

CLA Annual Meeting is August 11 Dan and Kay Long, Lower Cullen, are guest speakers

The 36th Annual Meeting of the Cullen Lakes Association will be held **Saturday, August 11** at Lutheran Church of the Cross in Nisswa.

The meeting will begin at 9 a.m. for your convenience in attending and still having a full day for lake activities and recreation. Come early, anytime after 8:15, to get your name tag and annual meeting booklet, enjoy rolls and coffee, view the exhibits, and chat with Board members and your fellow Cullen Lakers.

This year's meeting will feature a presentation by Lower Cullen summer residents Dan and Kay Long on the history of their property on the south shore of the lake.

Following the Longs' presentation, the CLA business meeting will include an update on aquatic invasive species on the Cullens. The annual meeting booklet will contain 2018 financial information and reports from the CLA committees for your information. Members will be asked to approve the 2019 budget and elect members of the Board of Directors.

Your attendance and participation in the Annual Meeting are encouraged. No reservations are needed.

Zebra mussels and you

Reports of zebra mussel sightings show this invasive species is working its way around the shores of Lower Cullen, most recently all the way to the east shoreline. This fall, when you take your lake related equipment out of the water, be sure to check for zebra mussels and scrape them off onto land when you find them. They do the most harm to water intakes, both on watercraft and on lake pumps, because they can clog openings.

Algae, an essential for a healthy lake

by Mary Blickenderfer, retired MN Extension educator

At the base of the food web, algae support nearly every aquatic creature. They are essential to a diverse and productive fishery and the overall health of our lakes. Many species of algae occur in lakes. The exact species and their population within a given lake reflect the available nutrients, water clarity, temperature, acidity, time of year, and abundance of algae grazers.

Many Minnesota lakes have algae "blooms", the mats of vegetation or pea soup green water that occur on hot, calm days, especially from mid summer on. On rare occasions blue-green algae blooms can produce toxins that are harmful to fish and other animals, including dogs.

Algae blooms occur under conditions that favor algae growth or when algae grazers are scarce. Turn up the water temperature and add some phosphorus and you have the perfect recipe for algae soup! The small amount of phosphorus that naturally occurs in lakes is usually insufficient to support large algae blooms. However, phosphorus entering the lakes from the surrounding watershed or resuspension of phosphorus that was settled on the lake bottom will fuel algae blooms.

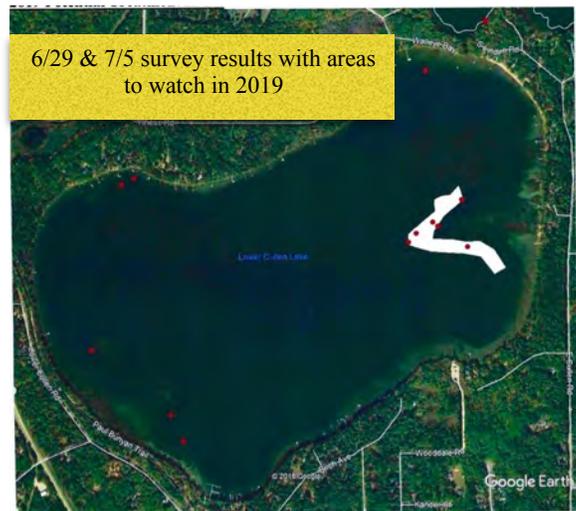
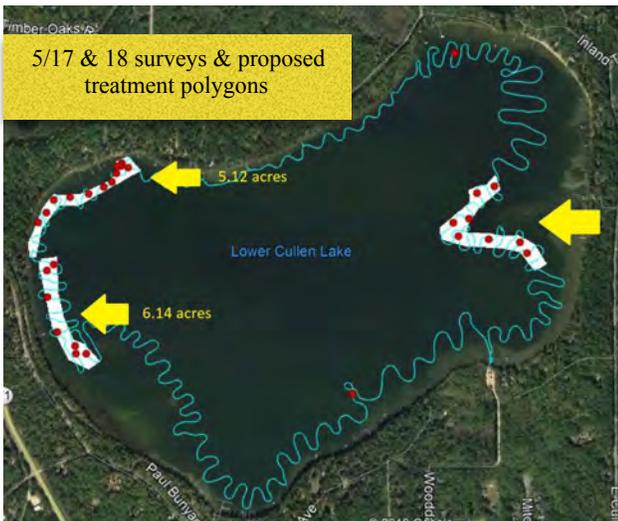
Fishing pressure on a lake can add to the problem. Excessive removal of northern pike, walleye, bass, and other game fish from a lake affects populations of small fish and grazers and can ultimately lead to a greater abundance of algae.

Phosphorus commonly enters a lake attached to soil particles, dissolved in runoff, in seepage from failing septic systems and through resuspension of lake bottom sediments. On-land strategies to reduce phosphorus loading to your lake include maintaining septic systems, planting vegetative buffers along streams and lakes, and rerouting runoff into rain gardens and stormwater ponds. In-lake strategies to reduce phosphorus resuspension include maintaining or restoring the native aquatic plant population, reducing motorboat speed in shallow water and eliminating other activities that stir up sediments.

Spring treatment of curly-leaf pondweed (CLP) did not take place

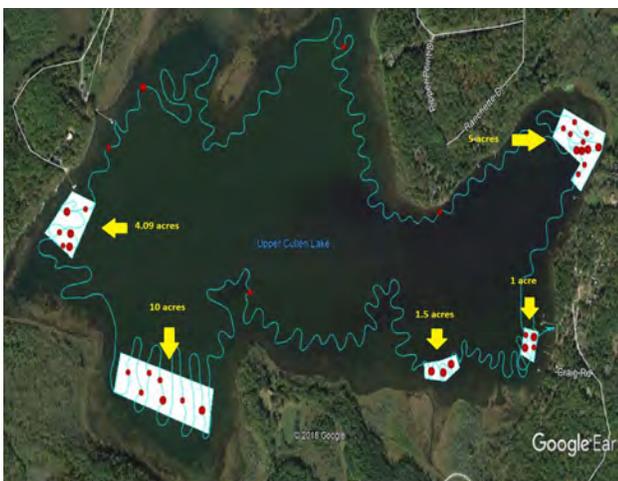
In mid May, Clarke Aquatic Services surveyed the three Cullen Lakes for curly-leaf pondweed. The lakes had been free of ice for only 2 1/2 weeks, but the water temperature was already well into the 60s. The heavy snow cover on the ice for much of the winter stunted the usual winter growth of CLP and the fast lake warm up gave the native aquatic vegetation an early growth spurt.

The pre treatment surveys did identify areas in each lake for treatment of CLP, but much of the CLP found was very immature and sparse. Allowing the treatment to take place would have had a very negative affect on the native vegetation, which was already abundant and healthy. After conferring with Tim Plude, the DNR Invasive Species Specialist in Brainerd, CLA decided it was in the best interest of the lakes to forego the CLP treatment this year. Plude encouraged us, however, to have Clarke conduct another survey of the lakes in late June/early July to determine the extent of CLP growth and guide us in determining areas to have treated in 2019. Although Clarke did conduct these surveys, the CLP growth had already peaked by the time of the surveys and much of it had died back. This was likely due to the unusually warm June and early July weather.



Red dots indicate CLP found.

White areas are treatable polygons of CLP.



Membership update

CLA membership currently is 265, with 260 paid memberships and 5 complimentary memberships (new owners). There are eight 2017 members who have not yet renewed their membership. The total of non CLA members is 29, most of whom have never been members of the lake association.

If your name is highlighted on this newsletter's mailing label or if you have been notified by email, you are one of the eight 2017 members who, as of July 20, had not yet sent in dues for 2018. This will be your last newsletter until your membership becomes current.

Be a good lake neighbor

by Ann Beaver

The lakes are public waters. They do not belong to us lakeshore property owners. However, we are allowed to put docks, boat lifts, swimming rafts, and the like in the lake immediately in front of our property. We are not allowed to obstruct the use of the lake by others with our equipment, though.

For instance, we are not allowed to mark off a swimming area with buoys and ropes. We do not have the right to prevent anglers from fishing near and casting under our docks or kayakers and canoeists from paddling close to our shoreline.

As a common curtesy, however, lake users of all kinds should be respectful of lakeshore property owners by not approaching too closely when people are on their docks or using their swimming rafts. And lakeshore property owners should be respectful of lake users by not abusing the right to put personal property out into the lake.

The "Golden Rule" is as appropriate today as it was when our parents first drummed it into our heads. Don't do anything that affects others that you wouldn't want others to do affecting you (my paraphrase).

Currents on the Cullens

New owners

Brad DeMay, Lower Cullen (L28)
Julie Leeman, Middle Cullen (M11)

Deaths

Norm Carpenter, Lower Cullen (L31,33)

Cullen Currents open forum

We have owned our cabin on the northern bay of Middle Cullen for over 25 years. Back when we bought it, the lake and surrounding area had an abundance of wildlife and trees. It seems inevitable that people would want to be a part of this and have their own little piece of heaven.

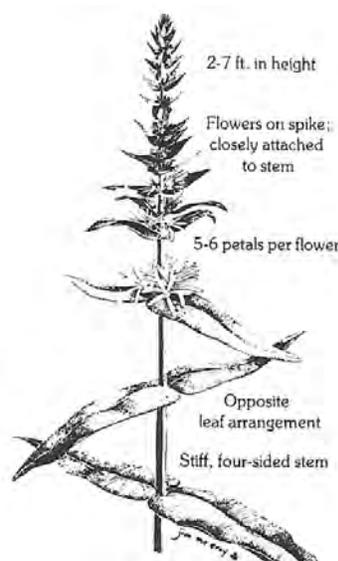
One thing that we have noticed in the past few years is the number and use of jet skis on our lakes. Some of the folks that use them are very respectful and travel from point A to point B like other boat owners that fish or water ski. There are others, however, that drive their jet skis in circles, back and forth, round and round, over and over again to the point of scaring wildlife in these areas. Since our lake is small and very narrow, the noise from this repetitive behavior is very loud and annoying, somewhat like a fly buzzing around your head. The noise quality is similar to a high pitched leaf blower.

Please be considerate of your neighbors and the waterfowl, especially the loons. If you need to do the repetitive driving please move on after a while to another part of the lake to spread out the noise evenly.

Thank you.

Tom Beckey and Pat Kraemer
fellow residents of the Cullen Chain

Is Purple Loosestrife Growing Along Your Shoreline?



By law, you must kill or remove any purple loosestrife (PL) on your property. If the PL is not too plentiful, the best method is to dig or pull it out by the roots. If the infestation is heavy, cut the blossoms off, being careful not to spread the seeds, and bag them up for disposal in the garbage. Then cut the plant off at ground level to

inhibit future growth. You can also hand spray the plants with poison. Contact the DNR for more details on spraying and to apply for a permit to do so.



Independence Day parades

Up until the actual parade start time, the parades even taking place was in question and shoreline observers didn't really know what to expect until the parade reached them. However, the rain didn't materialize and many decorated boats with

optimistic participants made the circuit around their respective lake.

Upper Cullen Lake had a record ten watercraft participating this Fourth of July. This writer can remember when the "parade" consisted of one decorated pontoon taking an evening cocktail cruise.



photos from Debi Oliverius

Lower Cullen had 37 various types of watercraft in its parade, down a bit from past years but still a good parade.



Photo from Denny Opsahl

Middle Cullen's parade had 18 participants. A few of the participants contacted blamed the low number of watercraft in the parade to the iffy weather right up until parade time



photos from Ann Beaver



Still a great hike!

by Patty Hicks, Middle Cullen

In the past, Tom Beaver has written great articles about the trails between Upper and Middle Cullen Lakes, including the Upper Cullen Memorial Forest. Volunteers have maintained these popular trails with permission from the DNR and Crow Wing County. The trails are enjoyed by area residents, lake property owners, and visitors — spring, summer, and fall hiking, winter cross country skiing and snowshoeing.

The trailhead begins off Wilderness Road, accessed from Hwy. 371, with a parking lot and a posted map of the area. The trail winds through the woods past a wetland area. A small creek runs out of the north side of the marsh, under the trail, and eventually flows into Reed's Bay in Middle Cullen Lake. Along with the main trail there are several adventurous loops to choose from.

This area had been timbered out sometime around 1900. I have pictures of my great uncle hunting deer in 1929 when the trees were between 15 and 20 feet tall. Since then, the forest has filled in and matured. Late last fall



the County harvested the trees from a large part of the Upper Cullen Memorial Forest. They left the old growth Norway pines and some birch, but now that part of the hike has a very different look.

Instead of the dense forest, it is wide open and you can see the rolling hills.

In the past when state and county land had been timbered out, they jump started regrowth by planting pine seedlings. They will probably be doing this again, but already aspen and oaks have begun to grow and are a few feet high.

There are still large wooded areas to walk through, but now in places they open up to vistas of hills dotted with tall pines. On our hikes through the years we have seen many deer, an occasional porcupine, fox, many different bird species including ruffed grouse, and even turkey. During this time of year, be mindful of Minnesota's other wildlife — ticks, mosquitos, and deer flies.

I hope you take some time to enjoy this trail system. It is peaceful and filled with the natural beauty we love about this great part of Minnesota. It's still a great hike!

Midsummer loon reports



These are the loons reports as of July 15.

Upper Cullen has three loon pairs, two of which each have one chick, making a total of two chicks.

Middle Cullen's report is a bit more complicated due to the lake's configuration and bays. There was a pair at the east end of the lake and three chicks (very unusual) were spotted at one time in June. However, they have not been seen since. The west bay of the lake has one pair with one chick. The center area of the lake has two pairs, one with one chick and one with two chicks. Thus, there is a total of four known chicks.

Lower Cullen's east end pair of loons had two eggs, but neither hatched. The northwest pair of loons had two eggs, one of which hatched but the chick was taken by predators shortly thereafter. The Paul Bunyan Trail loons hatched two chicks, both of which survived.

Review the personal watercraft (PWC) laws

Most PWC users are aware of Minnesota's laws regarding their use, but observations over the busy Fourth of July week pointed out a need to review a few of the basics.

*PWC must travel at slow no-wake speed (5 mph or less) within 150 feet of non motorized boats, shore (unless launching or landing skiers directly to or from open water), docks, swim rafts, swimmers or any moored or anchored boat.

*Operation of PWC is allowed only from 9:30 a.m. to 1 hour before sunset.

*If you tow a person on water skis or any other device, there must be an additional person on board the PWC to act as an observer. However, factory-installed or factory-specified wide-field rearview mirrors are allowed instead of an observer when pulling a skier or other device.

*You may not chase or harass wildlife.

*You may not travel through emergent or floating vegetation at greater than slow no-wake speed.

CULLEN LAKES ASSOCIATION
P.O. BOX 466
NISSWA, MN 56468

To protect, preserve, and enhance the three Cullen Lakes and their environs in order to ensure the continued vitality of the lakes, high quality fish and wildlife habitat, safe and healthful family living, and the survival of these natural gifts for future generations.

CLA BOARD 2017-2018

Beaver, Ann (Lower Cullen)
218-839-0593
beaver@uslink.net

Beilfuss, Paul (Lower Cullen)
218-963-6028
boomer284@charter.net

Boudrye, Charlie (Middle Cullen)
218-963-7494
eagleye@nisswa.net

Burrell, Jim (Lower Cullen)
218-568-5363
cullenlake@gmail.com

Bylander, C.B. (Upper Cullen)
218-828-4929
cb_bylander@hotmail.com

Hicks, Patty (Middle Cullen)
405-974-1656
pondering49@att.net

Hurley, Dan (Lower Cullen)
612-481-3766
longoose15@aol.com

Johnson, Rich (Lower Cullen)
218-330-2655
rhdbjohnson@yahoo.com

Knutson, Joel (Middle Cullen)
218-963-0561
knutson.jc@gmail.com

Kostreba, Anne (Lower Cullen)
320-333-2426
jakostreba@gmail.com

Lindahl, Carol (Lower Cullen)
651-206-1330
lindahlc Carol@hotmail.com

MacGibbon, John (Lower Cullen)
612-860-5864
jmacgibbon@mactek-inc.com

McNamara, Jack (Lower Cullen)
651-307-9754
jmac237@comcast.net

Oliverius, Debi (Middle Cullen)
952-261-7980
debioliverius@mac.com

Opsahl, Denny (Upper Cullen)
651-271-5522
djopsahl@gmail.com

Officers

President: Ann Beaver
Vice president: John MacGibbon
Secretary: Carol Lindahl
Treasurer: Jack McNamara

Newsletter editor: Ann Beaver
CLA web site:
www.cullenlakesassoc.org
Webmaster: Dan Meixner