
THE CULLEN CURRENTS



Winter, 2014

Gearing Up for the 2014 Spring Treatment of Curlyleaf Pondweed

It may be mid winter and colder than average in many parts of the country (and downright frigid in Minnesota), but a few CLA board members are doing their winter homework in preparation for this spring's treatment of the aquatic invasive species curlyleaf pondweed (CLP).

This will be the sixth year of CLP treatment in the Cullen Lakes. The first year's treatment showed very good control, but the results in the ensuing three years were less than satisfactory. Our multi-year contract with our former applicator, PLM, expired December 12, 2012 and, since the Board of Directors was not happy with PLM's work or ethics, it decided to seek bids from other companies. Last year CLA entered into a one year contract with Clarke Aquatic Services. This company has proven very easy to work with and the results of its 2013 CLP treatment were very good. CLA has entered into another one year contract with Clarke and expects to see continuing good results from its spring treatments of CLP.

In Clarke's post treatment report it stated, "A Post-Treatment Survey was conducted on 6/19/13 by two Clarke Technicians. The technicians both Bio Based (an aquatic vegetation mapping system) the treatment zone as well as threw a double-headed rake to visibly observe the state of the CLP. The technicians noted all the CLP in the treatment zone was either dead or dying and lying on the bottom of the lake. The CLP outside the treatment zone was vibrant. They also noted many native plants were growing in the treatment areas and flourishing."

Clarke also conducted an October survey of the treated areas to determine how much new growth had begun. The results of this survey will be used along with last year's treatment data when applying for the 2014 treatment permits from the DNR.

CLA will again be applying for DNR grants for all three lakes to treat the CLP. Last year CLA received a total of

\$10,040 in DNR grant money. This year's funding availability has not yet been announced.

The CLA Board of Directors will continue to work closely with DNR staff to control CLP in the Cullen Lakes to the greatest extent possible.

Along with the DNR grant money CLA has received in past years and the funds generated by the very successful 2009-11 fund raising campaign, the generous donations to help control CLP that many CLA members send in with their dues each year continue to provide the funds needed for this annual treatment of the only invasive aquatic species found so far in the Cullen Lakes.

Note to CLA Members

For those of you who receive the newsletter via U.S. mail, included in this issue should be your 2014 update of the map/guide of the Cullen Lakes. Those of you who receive the newsletter electronically will receive the map/guide in a separate mailing. Non CLA members do not receive the map/guide. If you find errors in the map/guide, please notify Ann Beaver. With the increasing number of lake properties in joint ownership, please also inform her of your preference as to how the property is listed in the map/guide.

Save the Date!

2014 CLA Annual Meeting
Saturday morning, August 9

Membership

by Charlie Boudrye, Membership Committee chair

There are three types of membership in the Cullen Lakes Association (CLA). Except for category #3, membership requires the payment of annual dues.

#1 “**Members**” -- People who own property on the lakeshore. Some lakeshore properties have multiple owners; however, only those owners who pay CLA dues are “Members”.

#2 “**Associate Members**” – People who are either family members of current lakeshore property owners, previous owners of lakeshore property, or owners of property within the Cullen Lakes watershed.

#3 “**Complimentary Members**” – People who are new owners of lakeshore property. They receive up to one year’s membership free.

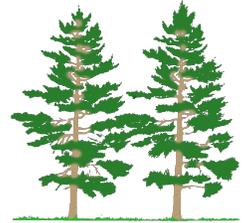
CLA’s database includes all three types of members as well as non-members. Whenever possible, it also includes all co-owners of lakeshore property and any adult family members of lakeshore property owners who have expressed an interest in the Association. It is the hope of the CLA Board of Directors that all of these people will consider joining the Association.

Membership summary

We closed the year 2013 with 223 property owners as Members, 18 Associate Members, and 3 Complimentary Members, for a total of 244 CLA members. Our database also shows 46 non-member Cullen Lakes property owners.

Membership needs to be renewed annually. Your membership letter was mailed in late January. If you haven’t already done so, please take the time now to write your check, complete the membership form, and mail it back to CLA, P.O. Box 466, Nisswa, MN 56468. You may also use the form below.

Crow Wing Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD)



Order Trees Now!

The SWCD is selling low cost native tree seedlings, flowers, grasses, rain barrels, tree cages, and seed mixes.

Order forms are available for download on the 2014 tree/plant sale page of the SWCD web site (www2.co.crow-wing.mn.us/swcd) or by request at 218-828-6197 or by email at tasha.lauer@crowwingswcd.org.

Pre-Order Forms will be accepted until March 1, 2014.

Tree/plant/etc. pick-up will be May 1-3 at the Northland Arboretum in Baxter.

Name(s) _____

Mailing address(es) _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Please check one:

____ Current owner/co-owner of a Cullen Lakes shoreland property
co-owner’s name: _____

____ Family member of a current Cullen Lakes shoreland property owner
Owner(s): _____

____ Previous owner of a Cullen Lakes shoreland property

____ Owner of real property within the Cullen Lakes watershed

2014 Dues \$25.00

Contribution to support programs _____

CLP treatment contribution _____

TOTAL _____

Cullen Lakes and Nisswa Memories

(second installment)
by Mary Ryan

There was a small bait store that sold minnows and worms and a very minimum of groceries, mainly milk and eggs. It was owned by Jimmy and Pauline Johnson. It was named Jimmy's and was on old 371 just south of the channel to Lake Nisswa. They also sold ice which was in sawdust in the garage out back of the store. We often bought ice on Friday to augment our small propane gas operated refrigerator. We put the ice in a wash tub, covered it with gunny sacks and a rubber mat. It was our basement fridge. Why the propane fridge? Crow Wing Power Electric did not come to Wilderness Road until 1940 or 41. We had an Onan electric power machine on the hill operated by kerosene. We ran it sparingly, mainly to run our water pump. The telephone line went in about 1958. The first lines were party lines with one to three parties on a line. Each party had a different number of rings.

The real grocery store was Mahlum's, where Lundrigans is now. It was small, about 20 x 25 feet, with the family home behind the store. They sold milk, bread, eggs, a minimum of canned goods and had a penny and nickle slot machine. The Rite Spot came much later, where Zaiser's is now. Swanson's store was across the railroad track, behind where the turtle races are now, and they sold next to nothing. We usually went to Brainerd on Thursday afternoon to do major grocery shopping and buy meat at Schaefer's butcher shop, the forerunner and start of the present Schaefer's grocery store.

Martin's gas station was where the shops are now, including the Chocolate Ox. Jim and Ted Dullum worked at the station. Ted was about five years old and always wore a baseball cap. The boys' dad's first name was Martin. Gas was 25 cents a gallon and the boys checked the oil and tire pressure as routine service. Their mom, Florence Dullum, ran a small ice cream store and served five cent ice cream cones. Ice cream came in only three flavors: vanilla, chocolate and strawberry.

The Nisswa post office is where Adirondak is now, the same dark brown building. Vera Parks was the Post Mistress. Her husband was Dick Parks. He owned the propane store. The post office was like the front room of their home.

Eva and Bill Moran owned a full service, very nice restaurant with dinner and dancing music, located where Martin's Sports is now. Morans also owned a couple of small cabins on Lower Cullen Lake, east of the Stone Container Corporation property, formerly Lennans. I think that they housed their orchestra there. Howard Wallentine, the original turtle race master, was Eva Moran's nephew and owned the Totem Pole.

On old highway 371 there was a long white building called Wildwood Acres. They had a sign on the road that said Lake Street. On occasion we would boat over, tie our boat to a tree, climb the hill and buy a five cent ice cream cone. Once we bought a cone for our mother and it was completely melted by the time we got home. On Middle Cullen, just east of Walleye Bay, was Brown's Resort, later sold to Werner. Old man Werner drove an old pickup truck and he drove it fast. Our mom's warning, "Watch out for Werner!" was given as we left for town. Werner sold the land and cabins individually.

The resorts had their name on their boats, but even boats with no name we could identify as to whose they were. Boating has really changed. Now fast speed boats, jet skis, and the leisurely family pontoons are at almost every dock. In 1936 and for many years, a Johnson nine horse was the biggest motor on the lake.

The Woog grandchildren, Harley Woog and Rich Gustafson came down from Middle Cullen and always ran out of gas in front of Ryanland, an excuse to see our sister Patty. One day they came with a homemade surfboard. Our dad wanted to try it and did. Just as they got up to speed the rope broke and the board hit and bloodied Dad's nose. So that gave us an idea for our dad's 4th of July birthday. We bought him a surfboard, with a bit of dollar help from our mother. I don't know if Dad ever tried it, but we sure did! I got it out of storage last summer and our grandkids laughed at it and went back to their wake boards and knee boards.

Waterskiing followed the surfboard, then tubing and double tubing. In 1972 the MacGibbon crew of Baileys, MacGibbons, Conroys and the Ryanland crew of Ryans, Hurleys and Hufnagles skied 10 skiers pulled by Chuck Bailey in the Bailey boat. In 2011, the Ryanland 75th year celebration, our ski crew broke the record of 10 skiers and pulled 13 skiers all around the lake. Two of the 13 also were part of the 10 skiers in 1972. And can you believe it? We have three guys that barefoot ski and one gal, Dan's daughter Kerry, in training.

You Middle Cullen folk listen up! How many of you are familiar with the Witches' Castle, a "Who can spy it first?" as we excursionsed to Middle Cullen. Last year it was hard to spot as the trees have nearly covered it over. We learned that it had been a gas station in Elk River. Maybe one of you owns it and doesn't even know that it is the Witches' Castle.

An excursion road was the road past the turn to Wilderness Point, a narrow rutted road that ended at the drivable bridge across the channel between Middle and Upper Cullen. We called it the excursion road because we always got stuck in the sand. The road has been closed to motorized traffic these last few years.

Editor's note: Mary's tale will be finished in the spring newsletter.

Cullen Lakes Water Quality Report

by Ann Beaver, Water Quality Committee chair

Water samples were collected by committee members in 2013, as in previous years, from May through September and analyzed by a certified laboratory for **total phosphorus (TP)** and **chlorophyll *a* (chl. *a*)**. Secchi disk readings for **water clarity** were also taken. These are the three most commonly used parameters in assessing a lake's water quality.

TP indicates how much phosphorus is available for algae and aquatic plant growth and reproduction.

Chl. *a* is a pigment found in algae, so it indicates how much algae is present in the water.

Secchi disk readings measure water clarity, which also indicates, among other things, the abundance of algae present.

Using these three parameters, we are able to calculate a lake's **trophic status index (TSI)**, a **uniform measure used to describe the overall health of a lake.**

The TSI classifies lakes into four categories. **Oligotrophic** (relatively nutrient-poor, clear, deep, with bottom waters high in dissolved oxygen); **mesotrophic** (nutrient levels high enough to cause temporary algae and aquatic plant problems); **eutrophic** (nutrient-rich, usually shallow, "green", with limited oxygen in the bottom waters); and **hypereutrophic** (extreme algae and aquatic plant problems and well on their way to being "dead").

Most of the lakes in our ecoregion (the north central part of Minnesota) are in the mesotrophic TSI range, although some of them have an occasional foray into the eutrophic range, usually in late summer or early fall. This holds true for the three Cullen Lakes, although usually only Upper Cullen, the shallowest of our three lakes, has periods when it is slightly eutrophic.

Looking at the last six years' data, the average TSI of each lake places Lower Cullen in the mid mesotrophic range, Middle Cullen in the mid mesotrophic range, and Upper Cullen in the upper mesotrophic range.



vegetative buffer along your shoreline and ensure your septic system is working properly!

Not bad, considering the extremes in weather we have had for the last several years. While we can't do much about the weather, we can control what washes and seeps into the lake from our shorelines. Kudos to those of you who maintain a

from the

DNR Question of the Week

Q: How does the winter cold and snow affect deer, and how do they survive Minnesota's winter weather?

A: Wildlife in Minnesota must be able to withstand a wide variety of environmental conditions, which provides a niche for cold-adapted species that may otherwise be outcompeted by species that cannot survive the winter. White tailed deer are found throughout North America and Central America, but also exhibit some winter adaptations. The heavy fur on the outside of a deer's coat is hollow. The air stored inside each hair serves as an insulator that buffers the deer's warm body from colder outside temperatures, much like the insulation inside a house's wall traps warm air.



Snow affects deer in many ways. Like the hair on a deer's back, fluffy snow can also trap air and provide good insulation for any animal that beds down in a deep snow drift. Snow can also be a detriment to deer because it can make food more difficult to find. In winter, deer often shift from typical grazers feeding on grasses and herbaceous plants to browsers that feed on buds and rely on fat reserves gained during the summer. Deep snow can also make travel more difficult for deer, meaning that they may alter their movement patterns or try to find areas where food and cover from wind are nearby one another. This can cause deer to "herd up" in winter as they congregate near an available source of food or a windbreak.

by Charlie Tucker, assistant manager, Red Lake Wildlife Management Area

Currents on the Cullens

New owners:

Lee Doucette -- Middle Cullen (M51)
Jeff & Ann Hess and Ted & Tammy Benson -- Lower Cullen (L39.5)
Steven & Joann Marti -- Lower Cullen (L65)

Winter Bird Feeding Tips

adapted from an article by Carroll Henderson,
DNR Nongame Wildlife Program Supervisor

Winter is the time to change the composition of bird foods offered and perhaps the arrangement of your feeders. This will aid in the birds' survival, as well as increase your viewing enjoyment in the snowy months ahead.

Permanent residents, such as chickadees and cardinals, are dependable every year. Some winter visitors are birds of boreal regions. Their feeding patterns are unpredictable and tend to be cyclic. Numbers can peak at three to four or nine to ten year intervals, or they can be "irruptive," meaning periodic appearances of unusually high numbers. If seeds are in short supply, some species, such as Red-breasted nuthatches, Common and Hoary redpolls, Pine siskins, Red and White-winged crossbills, and Pine grosbeaks, may wander far from their normal ranges in search of food.

Foods

It is relatively easy to plan for winter bird feeding. There are three main choices of food: large seeds, small seeds, and suet. Large seeds include black-oil sunflower, striped sunflower, safflower, peanuts, shelled corn, ear corn and cardinal mixes that contain sunflower, safflower and peanuts. About 80 to 90 percent of seed I use in Minnesota is comprised of black-oil sunflower seeds and cardinal mixes.

One More Way to Prevent the Spread of Aquatic Invasive Species

Is the company/person you hire to put in your dock, boat lift, and perhaps your boat a DNR permitted Lake Service Provider? These people have received training from the DNR that will help prevent the inadvertent introduction of aquatic invasive species (AIS) into the lake. It is important that you hire only DNR permitted people to do this work for you.



The list of DNR permitted Lake Service Providers is much too long to include in this newsletter. To find out if the people you hire have completed the requirements to gain this certification, please check the DNR web site. Go to www.dnr.state.mn.us/lsp and click on "Hiring a Lake Service Provider".

If the company/person you use is not listed, please encourage them to get this training and permit and do not use them again until they have done so. Do your part to prevent the introduction of AIS into the Cullen Lakes.

These have the greatest appeal to the broadest variety of winter birds and contain a high energy content. If you provide sunflower seeds on your deck or patio, you may wish to try sunflower hearts to avoid the mess that occurs in spring when you discover several inches of sunflower seed hulls under your feeders. Peanuts provide a nutritious diet for birds, including Black-capped chickadees, nuthatches, woodpeckers, and Blue jays. Even Northern cardinals will come to a peanut feeder.



Seeds and mixes

Cracked corn or milo (sorghum) is so attractive to House sparrows and starlings I recommend not using them. Niger seed—thistle—is an excellent all-winter staple for American and Lesser goldfinches, Common and Hoary redpolls, House and Purple finches, and Pine siskins.

Suet

Many wintering birds benefit from the high energy nutritional benefits of suet, suet mixes, and peanut butter. Suet can be fed in onion sacks, wire mesh feeders, wooden dowel (cage) feeders, or placed on open platforms that are secure from dogs and other "suet robbers." Pileated woodpeckers seem to prefer their suet on solid platforms instead of suspended feeders. Conventional suet feeders sometimes attract European starlings, another nuisance exotic species that drives native songbirds from your yard and from nesting cavities in the spring. If starlings are a problem, use a "starling-proof" feeder that forces the birds to feed upside down. Chickadees, woodpeckers, and nuthatches have no trouble feeding this way, but starlings have weaker feet and are not able to feed in such an awkward position.

Peanut butter is another good choice for filling log-style feeders and smearing on pine cones.

Water is a critical ingredient of a winter feeding program. Obviously the water needs a heating element and a thermostat. Several excellent birdbaths with heating elements and thermostats are available from bird-feeding supply stores. Don't worry about birds freezing if they bathe on a cold winter day. This is not a problem since the heated water is primarily for drinking. Native songbirds seem smart enough not to bathe when the wind chill is 40 below.

Lake Learning

Boat Motors and Water Quality

by Moriya Rufer
RMB Environmental Laboratories

As Minnesotans, we love cruising along the lakes in our watercraft. Whether we are heading to our favorite fishing spot, waterskiing, or taking a sunset cruise, not much can top the feeling of taking in the fresh lake air.

Yet as the number of motorized boats and size of motors on Minnesota's lakes continues to increase, questions arise about the potential effects these boats have on the lake environment. In the last 20 years, there has been a 36% increase in the number of registered boats of all types in Minnesota. Moreover, the number of motorboats between 16 and 26 feet in length increased 118%, while the number of motorboats less than 16 feet decreased by 27%. Average horsepower went from 46.1 to 74.5 from 1987-2001 according to a DNR survey of west central Minnesota. Our boats are becoming larger and faster, which increases the potential to affect water quality.

So how do boats affect water quality? The Wisconsin DNR did a study on the effects of motorized watercraft on aquatic ecosystems. Boats can affect water quality in a few different aspects. First, they can add metals and chemicals to the water column. A certain amount of the fuel that enters into a motor is discharged unburned and ends up in the water. Two stroke motors can emit 25-30% of their unburned gas and oil mixture into the water. In contrast, four-stroke motors emit 97% less air and water pollution than old two-stroke motors. This pollution can affect the pH and dissolved oxygen in the lake, which can influence the type and abundance of fish and wildlife.

Another main impact by motors is churning up the lake bottom in shallow areas. This action stirs up the lake sediment, re-suspending nutrients (phosphorus) that are at the lake's bottom. When these nutrients reach the surface of the water where the algae are, they can feed algae and cause an algae bloom. This stirring can also decrease the water clarity because of additional particles suspended in the water column.

So what can you do to protect your lake?

- 1) Establish no-wake zones in shallow areas with nesting waterfowl and bulrush stands. "Slow no wake" means operation of a watercraft at the slowest possible speed necessary to maintain steerage, but in no case greater than 5 miles per hour.
- 2) Educate lake users to avoid sensitive areas and drive slowly through shallow areas.
- 3) Upgrade your boat motor from an old two-stroke engine to a four-stroke engine. Four-stroke engines use fuel more efficiently, produce cleaner exhaust, and run more quietly than traditional two-stroke engines.

To reduce your impact while boating, there are other easy changes in behavior we can all practice.

- 1) Keep your boat properly trimmed. An engine in the water makes much less noise and creates less wake.
- 2) Keep your engine well-tuned so that it runs more efficiently, pollutes less and is quieter.
- 3) Be respectful of wildlife and loons, keeping a distance of at least 200 feet away at all times.
- 4) Consider the size of your boat and motor when choosing a lake for recreation. Smaller lakes are not appropriate for large boats or engines.
- 5) Remember that swimmers, canoeists, kayakers, sailors and other non-motorized users always have the right-of-way.

Enjoy the lakes !

Effective Mixing Depth

Effective mixing depth is the maximum depth at which the engine stirs up the water and, in turn, the lake bottom sediment. The importance of these finds is that power boating in shallow areas on lakes is likely to stir up bottom sediments, decreasing water clarity and releasing nutrients from the lake bottom which can feed algae blooms.

<u>Horsepower</u>	<u>Mixing Depth</u>
10	6 feet
28	10 feet
50	15 feet
100	18 feet

Septic System Tips

- *Do not use antibacterial soaps and cleansers. They destroy the bacteria needed for your septic system to function properly.
- *Limit the use of bleach-based cleansers and detergents, for the same reason as above.
- *Shut off the water while shaving and brushing your teeth.
- *Do not flush medications down the toilet. Take them to a local pharmacy for disposal.
- *Do not use a garbage disposal.
- *Use water conserving dishwashers and washing machines.
- *Use gel or highly degradable dish washing detergents.
- *Never use a septic system additive. They are not needed.
- *Don't flush "flushable" wipes down your toilet.
- *Have your septic tank pumped at least every three years, more often if your septic system is heavily used.

CLA Treasurer's 2013 Year End Report

by Charlie Boudrye

As of December 31, 2013 we had the following balances in our accounts.

Cash and Bank Accounts

Operating Checking account	\$ 3,975.61
Project Savings Account	\$ 8,244.41
Operating Savings Account	<u>\$ 3,553.07</u>
Sub Total	\$15,773.09

Certificates of Deposit

CD-403520	\$15,000.00
CD-21794	\$48,000.00
CD- 23115	<u>\$42,168.50</u>
Sub Total	\$105,168.50

Total Assets \$120,941.59

2013 Ordinary Income/Expenses

Income

CLP Donations	\$ 3,331.00
DNR Grant	10,040.60
Membership Dues	5,950.00
Support Donations	2,080.00
CD Interest	3,184.48
Savings Interest	6.57
Sale of CLA Merchandise	<u>1,335.35</u>

Total Income \$25,928.00

Expenses

Administration	\$ 205.00
Annual Meeting	402.04
Committees	692.35
CWEPA Grant	76.70
Merchandise purchase	666.52
Education	1,838.65
CLP control	21,885.81
Membership	326.63
Officers' postage/printing	53.20
Insurance, Liability & D&O	950.00
Other	<u>68.10</u>

Total Expenses \$27,165.00

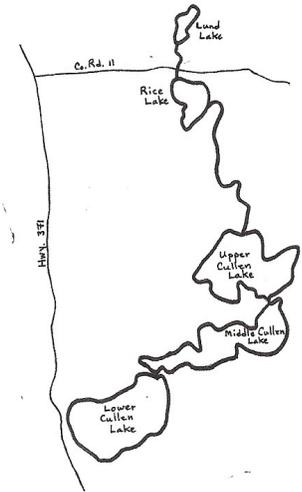
Total Deficit (\$1,237)

An audit of the CLA accounts is planned for spring, 2014.

Cullen Lakes' Headwaters

Most of us think of Upper Cullen Lake when we think of the beginning of the Cullen chain of lakes. But where does Upper Cullen's water come from?

The answer is that it comes from several sources. The most obvious are the chain's two headwater lakes -- Lund Lake to the north of County Highway 11 and Rice Lake to the south of the highway, both lakes are fed by groundwater.



If you know where to look, you can just make out tiny Lund Lake from the highway. Rice Lake is very easy to spot, although from mid summer on there isn't a lot of open water. If there has been enough rain, you can even see the tiny stream that flows under the highway, connecting the two headwater lakes.

Rice Creek, known by some as Cullen Brook, flows out of Rice Lake and meanders south through privately owned undeveloped land and wetlands, through Crow Wing County Memorial Forest, until it flows into Upper Cullen Lake. During its journey the stream is augmented by groundwater. Upper Cullen Lake also receives abundant groundwater, as do all the Cullen Lakes.

There is also a large wetland area to the west of Upper Cullen Lake that, in non drought years, has a stream flowing from it to the lake. Through the years, beavers in that area have built some fairly substantial dams to back up the stream water and form pond habitat for themselves and various waterfowl. At one time there was a large heron rookery in one of the ponds. Two of the trails in this area, maintained by volunteers, lead to these wetland ponds, although there hasn't been a lot of water in them during the last several years of drought.

If you are interested in learning more about the Cullen headwaters and feeder wetlands, visit Rice Lake, part of the 156 acre Lowell State Wildlife Management Area. You can also hike the Memorial Forest trails on the southwest side of Upper Cullen Lake (accessible from Wilderness Road) or forge your way through the woods on the north shore of the lake (accessible from Ranchette Drive) and see the area where Rice Creek flows into Upper Cullen Lake.

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 2013-2014

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