



Upper Hay Lake Association

P.O. Box 769
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Summer Newsletter

July 2014

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Greetings From Your President!

Upper Hay Lake has a lot to celebrate! We were recently awarded a \$14,500 grant for the 2014 Shoreline Restoration Project from the Crow Wing Soil and Water District. The application was reviewed by an interagency team that included the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, University of Minnesota Extension, The Nature Conservancy, Mississippi Headwaters Board and the Crow Wing SWCD. We have already had several Upper Hay Lake property owners apply for the Shoreline restoration grant. I am encouraged as this is the beginning of the effort of Upper Hay Lake property owners to help reduce the amount of phosphorus in our lake. Thank you for your interest and participation.

In 2015, the Crow Wing SWCD will have a second round of competitive grants to award in the amount of \$40,500 so hopefully we will have continued interest in shoreline restoration. Together we can make a difference!

Please remind your guests to watch for the loons as they boat on Upper Hay Lake.

We look forward to seeing you at the annual UHLA picnic on August 2 at Hay Lake Lodge. Come prepared to participate in games and lots of fun!

Claire Steen

Rain And More Rain

This year has seen a deluge of rain on Upper Hay. As of July 12, my rain gauge shows almost 2 feet of rain. Every spring we hear "the lake is the highest I've ever seen!" But THIS year I believe that is true. Combine the high levels with the wind and we are seeing record beach loss due to erosion. Our challenge is to prevent runoff from our properties. That is most likely the major source of phosphorus in the lake. The Association has stressed the

importance of runoff control via shoreline restoration for years at our annual meetings and in the newsletter. This year is no exception. If you experienced erosion this spring, and you want to help prevent runoff, you may feel inspired to do something about it. The opening paragraph from President Claire and the next paragraph offers a suggestion.

Shoreline Restoration Grant Received

The Crow Wing County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) received money from the Legacy funds made available by the State Legislature. As you hopefully read in a special mailing sent out in June, the Upper Hay Lake Association applied for and received a grant of \$14,500 to help fund shoreline restoration projects. Everyone on the lake should have received this letter, either by email or the USPS. If you have questions contact our President, Claire Steen at 218-330-7059, or Claire.steen@charter.net

Please note that the **application deadline is near: July 21**. You will need to act quickly to get a survey of your property and a get a formal plan written by either a contractor or SWCD. If you are interested in completing a shoreline restoration project, but there is just not enough time for you to react, we will apply for another grant next year if money is available. So, if you get your survey and plan drawn up this year, you can turn it in for next summer's program. (Again, assuming we get another grant.) WAPOA gets these grants annually and they would be another source of monetary assistance. Remember that the Upper Hay Lake Association also offers \$600 grants as mentioned in previous newsletters. This is separate from the SWCD grant.

Zebra Mussel Update

This will be short. Not much to report. That being said, we were told that the DNR will be conducting ongoing surveys of the affected lakes to see if the

infestation is growing or not. At the WAPOA Annual Membership meeting, Dr. Michael A. McCartney, Research Assistant Professor, Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center, University of Minnesota Department of Fisheries, Wildlife and Conservation Biology was the featured speaker. This is the individual who will be concentrating on the Zebra Mussel. The goal is to understand the organism and find ways to control it.

We talked to Dr. McCartney after the meeting and impressed upon him the fact that when control practices are developed, our lake would be an ideal “test bed” as it offers a “controlled environment”. The water entering UHL is NOT from other lakes or rivers. It is simply runoff from adjacent farmland. He expressed interest in the idea but says that work is likely at least 3 years away. We will be inviting him to speak at next year’s annual meeting. If we can arrange that, you will definitely want to attend. For now, Whitey Larson bought material for about 6 or 7 spots on the lake to check for zebra mussels. It is a piece of PVC pipe that is anchored beside the dock and can be checked periodically for mussels. Hopefully, the tests will be negative. We will keep you informed.

Ditch 9 Update

Cass County has completed the cleanup of Ditch 9. For those who missed earlier information, Ditch 9 is a drainage ditch built in the early 1900s to drain farmland northwest of Upper Hay. It feeds into Hay Creek (aka Jenkins Creek) that enters Upper Hay. The Association sent representatives to informational meetings, talked to Cass County officials and expressed our concern about contamination of our lake. They were very understanding and agreed that all precautions should and would be taken to protect our lake. Last fall and winter, the beaver dams along the ditch were cleaned out, beavers were trapped and the ditch was dredged to remove vegetation. Silt nets were installed to stop the flow of vegetation and silt resulting from the dam removal and dredging. Thus far we have seen nothing that would indicate our lake being negatively affected. We will, however, continue to watch it. Some history of what transpired: one property owner on the ditch

approached Cass County with a request to clean out the ditch due to water from the blocked ditch flooding his farmland. According to state law, if someone wants ditch work done, the county is required to comply. The cost, however, is charged to adjacent properties that drain into the ditch and who would also benefit from the cleaning. Several farmers along the ditch are now required to pay a very large amount of money to cover the cost. Many of them are NOT happy. It is likely that although many beavers were trapped, others will come back into the area and rebuild the dams. The problem will return. However, after seeing the cost involved, it would be unlikely that another request (demand) to clean the ditch will be forthcoming. So, hopefully this will be the only time we are forced to react to such a project. Time will tell.

Sandpiper Pipeline

On November 8, 2013, North Dakota Pipeline Company LLC (Enbridge) applied to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (PUC) for a permit to construct a pipeline traveling 612 miles from the Bakken oil fields near Tioga, North Dakota, across the lake districts in Hubbard, Cass and Aitkin counties to terminals in Clearbrook, Minnesota and Superior, Wisconsin. This project is known as the Sandpiper Pipeline.

Most would agree that pipelines are the safest way to transport oil, however, they are also subject to failure and resulting “oil spills”. The oil produced in the Bakken reserves in North Dakota needs to get to Lake Superior for shipping to refineries. The problem is the route. As presently proposed, the pipeline would pass through pristine forests, wetlands, and lake districts. Currently, the pipeline would cross rivers and streams that lead eventually to the Whitefish Chain. A failure of the pipeline in the area of these rivers would be catastrophic to our local lakes. The public comment period is past as of this writing but rest assured local lake associations are very actively working the issue and will continue to do so. We want to be as assured as possible that the environment will be protected and that alternate routes are explored that would mitigate the danger to our area. We will keep on this and let you know what happens.

Annual Membership Meeting Information

Paul Thiede, Crow Wing County Commissioner, reported that there is currently \$202,000 AIS funding available for Crow Wing County in 2014 that came from action by the Minnesota State Legislature to fight AIS. \$450,000 will be allocated to the county in 2015. Paul has suggested that the funds being made available to Crow Wing and 7 neighboring counties be coordinated through the Mississippi Headwaters Board to cut administration costs. The MHB has been in existence for 30+ years and is not new to coordinating efforts of multiple counties. Each county would get its full allocated amount of money but having it administered in one place would save administrative costs and thus more money would actually be available to counties for AIS prevention. The topic was discussed at a recent County Commissioners meeting but no decision was made. The subject will be revisited in the future for possible action.

Darren Mayers, Crow Wing County Soil and Water Conservation spoke on shoreland restoration. Darren is also the person you would contact about conducting a restoration project of your own if you choose to work with SWCD. See the paragraph above about the shoreline restoration grant for contact information.

Board of Directors Election

Bruce Ohland, Steve Scarborough and Judy Murphy were elected to the Board for 3-year terms and Mickey Perwien was elected to complete the two remaining years of John Frober's term. We welcome Judy and Mickey to the Board and thank them for stepping forward.

Summer Picnic

Remember the annual Association sponsored picnic which will be held on Saturday, August 2 at Hay Lake Lodge. We always have a superb time. The picnic is open to all. Company in? Bring them along. We only ask that you bring a side dish to share and perhaps a folding chair. Picnic tables are available, but you may also want a chair. If you desire a beverage other than lemonade, feel free to bring it. Please join your neighbors for a great event. In case of rain, we'll do it a week later, August 9.

Completion of the Paul Bunyan Trail

The Paul Bunyan Trail Association announces the publication of "Celebrate!" This one-time, full-color book/magazine will commemorate the final completion of the Paul Bunyan Trail, the last segment to be paved between Brainerd and Crow Wing State Park. Finally the entire trail from Lake Bemidji State Park to Crow Wing State Park will come to fruition. The original publishers and artists of the Lake Country Journal magazine will produce 15,000 complimentary copies of the publication.

"Celebrate!" will highlight the origination, history, maps, articles and opportunities of Minnesota's longest trail. The publication will be made available through advertising businesses, the chambers of commerce and visitor sites from Bemidji to Brainerd. The publication is available now. On July 27, the completed trail will be officially dedicated.

Yard Lights

Some of the Board members report hearing concerns by some lake residents regarding bright lights in yards around the lake. It's nice to see the warm lights from windows across the water but bright beacons detract from the serenity of the view. Please consider turning off unnecessary yard lights after dark. Much of what we love about this "lake country" is the incredible view. We should all do our part to insure/preserve the beauty of "da woods". Thanks.

Programs at Deep Portage ... FYI

- Forkhorn III Deer Hunting Camp (ages 13-16) July 27-Aug. 1. Includes MN DNR Advanced Hunter Education Training. Sponsored by the Minnesota Deer Hunters Association. \$400.
- Upland Bird Hunting Camp (ages 12-16) July 20-25. Sponsored by the Ruffed Grouse Society and Pheasants Forever. \$400.
- Izaak Walton League Camp (ages 9-16) July 27-Aug. 1. \$400 per camper or \$700 per grandparent/grandchild or parent/child.

For additional information and registration materials call 218-682-2325, e-mail portage@uslink.net, or visit their website at www.deep-portage.org

Water Testing Offered

Pelican Lakes Association and Pelican Lakes Conservation Club (PLCC) are encouraging all area residents to have their well water tested this summer. Water testing instructions and kits will be available at PLCC farmer's breakfasts in Breezy Point on July 12 and August 9.

Private wells should be tested every two or three years for safety. Chronic exposure to elevated nitrates may lead to cancer. Some areas of Pelican Lake are known to have dangerous levels of arsenic. Bacteria in a well can make people sick.

AW Research is offering a reduced rate for Pelican Lakes area residents this year. The firm will test well water for \$48 for nitrates, arsenic and bacteria. The firm's staff will be available at Pelican Lakes Conservation Club pancake breakfasts this summer. They will provide you with a sterile bottle and instructions on how to take a proper sample. Bring the sample back to the breakfast or drop it off at AW Research Lab at the Brainerd airport. All water tests must be pre-paid at the time people pick up the sample kit.

Thanks For Joining

Thanks to all of you who have sent in their 2014 dues. As of this writing, we are at nearly 100 properties who are members. (We have 140 properties on the lake.) We appreciate your financial, as well as moral support in our work to protect Upper Hay. Each of us has a huge investment in our land and it is imperative that we protect the asset that is our lake. If you have not joined, please consider doing so. You can contact Ken Meyer (568-5414) or simply come to the picnic and join at that time. Again, thanks for the support.

Bruce Ohland
Board of Directors
(*Roaming Reporter*)