

the vermilion sportsman



*"Published quarterly by The Sportsmen's Club of Lake Vermilion, Inc.,
A non-profit lake association, founded in 1968 and dedicated to the
preservation and improvement of Lake Vermilion"*

Vol. 35, No. 3 2000 MEMBERS COOK & TOWER, MN AUGUST 2009

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE...

Spring has arrived, it was just a little late this year — like a month or so! It has definitely affected the fishing on the west end of Vermilion. Reports are that the catch is spotty and not very many keepers. According to the DNR Fisheries Specialist, this could be due to several reasons such as poor year classes in 2005 and 2006, weather anomalies and possibly some other factors. Whatever it is, the eastern end doesn't seem to be affected. The problem is there seems to be too many walleyes caught in the slot limit size. You just can't win, it seems, and the DNR experts are perplexed.

There is no change to report about the State Park land acquisition. There is still a little ray of hope that agreement can be reached, but it is slim right now.

After almost eight years, The Vermilion Plan was adopted by the County Commissioners in April and became effective July 1, 2009. Now come the ordinance changes and updates that we'll follow closely.

We sponsored a meeting on April 29 with Jesse Anderson, MPCA scientist with whom the club worked last summer testing Lake Vermilion. He presented the results in the "Lake Vermilion CLMP+ Water Quality Report" and explained the significance of the data collected. It appears that the lake condition has not changed appreciably from the previous testing done in 2000. We were hoping for some indications of improvement, but this shows we must continue our efforts to improve conditions. One major concern is that the sulfate level is higher, 10.6 mg/L, just exceeding the water quality standard of 10 mg/L. US Steel is supposedly working on a method of reducing their contribution of sulfates into the Pike River from their holding ponds. The Pike River watershed is the major inflow source of water into Vermilion.

Apparently, some legislators proposed that the Pike River Hatchery be removed from the DNR and privatized. We will fight to keep the hatchery in the DNR.

My wife, Marcie, and I finished serving with the advisory committees dealing with Nondegradation Rules Update for the MPCA and with the Shoreland Management Rules update

for the DNR. Both committees have been dissolved and the results are being incorporated into reports to the Legislature and rules writers. There will be changes coming, but they will be going through more hoops on their way to becoming laws and rules.

In early May, Marcie and I attended the Minnesota Waters "2009 Lakes and Rivers Conference" in Rochester, Minnesota. This was a very impressive conference that was organized along seven major tracks. I spent two full days on the "Aquatic Invasive Species" track that covered Ecology, VHS, Prevention, Control, Management Plans and Legal/Regulatory Framework plus additional topics. The gist of this topic was that prevention is the only sure way of preventing the spread of invasive species. The easy transporting of boats from lake to lake is the major cause of the spread. If the spread is not controlled voluntarily, laws restricting that practice will eventually be enacted. Marcie spent most of her time on the "Shoreland Management and Land Use" track that covered Land Use Battles, Development Impacts on Shoreline, Reducing Impact of Impervious Surfaces, Conservation Design, Blue Thumb, Protecting from Road Salt and Shoreland Rules Update plus additional topics. The main problem appears to be controlling effects from Storm Water Runoff, especially from impervious surfaces. Having native plantings on the shoreline provides buffering abilities that lawn grasses do not have! These plants have roots that reach down as far as 14 feet compared with three inches for lawn grasses. A new website called "Blue Thumb" at www.bluthumb.org is an excellent source of things to do and sources of plants to use to keep the lake "blue."

Hope it will warm up again soon and cause our garden to catch up! Here it is the end of June and our garden is just barely in the ground and the Mayflies are becoming July flies.

No matter how much we may complain, there's nowhere we'd rather be than right here on Vermilion and I'm looking forward to another great year! Enjoy!!!

Walt Moe, President

Sportsmen's Club of Lake Vermilion, Inc.

41st ANNUAL DINNER MEETING

***Saturday, August 8
Fortune Bay Resort
Social Hour at 5 pm -- Buffet at
6***

Adults-\$16

Children-\$8 (12 and younger)

***Reservations necessary by Monday,
August 3 to one of the following:***

COOK

***Gary and Marlene Lundquist, 666-2756
Dale and Nan Lundblad, 666-2316 or
lundblad@accessmn.com***

TOWER

***Paula Bloczynski, 753-2107
Jeff and Kathy Lovgren, 753-2413 or
lovgren@frontiernet.net***

***"Iron Mike" Hillman, boundary waters
broadcaster, Iron Range historian and
author, will be our featured speaker.***

Sportsmen's Club's 41st Annual Meeting is Saturday, August 8 at Fortune Bay Resort

Our Sportsmen's Club's 41st Annual Meeting and Dinner is set for Saturday, August 8 at Fortune Bay Resort. This is the 13th year we have had the dinner meeting at Fortune Bay and, as in past years, the meeting will be held in the resort's 2nd floor ballroom.

The featured speaker this year is Mike Hillman, Ely radio personality, who is also well known as an Iron Range historian and author.

Please make your reservations by Monday, August 3.

The following board members will take your reservations: COOK-Gary and Marlene Lundquist, 666-2756 or Dale and Nan Lundblad, 666-2316. TOWER-Jeff and Kathy Lovgren, 753-2413 or Paula Bloczynski, 753-2107.

We're planning a social hour at 5 pm, followed by the buffet at 6. Dinner prices are the same as last year -- \$16 for adults and \$8 for children age 12 and younger.

After dinner the business meeting agenda will include reports from board members and officers, along with election of board members. The nominating committee will present a slate of board candidates at the annual meeting. Board nominations can also be made from the floor, with the nominee's permission.

Also featured at the meeting will be the ever-popular door prize drawings, plus the opportunity for members and guests to talk about matters of personal concern regarding club business or problems around the lake.

The club's annual dinner meeting is always casual -- come as you are in vacation attire. This is our one big get-together of the year, and we all look forward to meeting old and new friends from around the lake.

We hope to see you on **Saturday, August 8**. Please mark your calendar, phone in your reservation and plan to join us at Fortune Bay Resort for the Sportsmen's Club's 41st annual dinner meeting.

-- Paula Bloczynski, Secretary

We remember Patty Borgstrom and Virginia Daggit ...

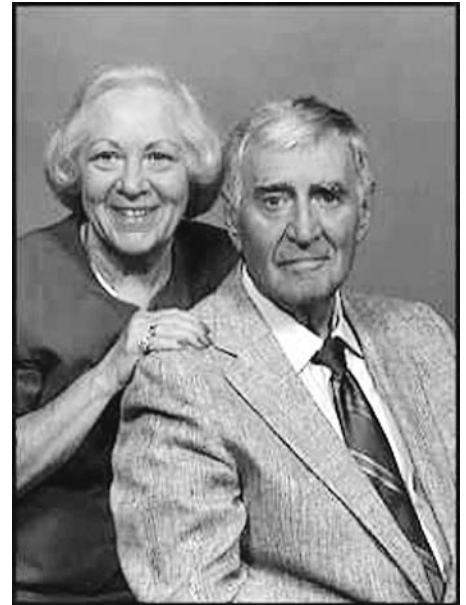
During the month of April 2009, the club and Lake Vermilion lost two good friends, Patty Borgstrom on April 13 and Virginia Daggit on April 21.

Patty loved Vermilion, living first with her family at the Murphy homestead on Birch Point and later with husband Richard and daughter Danielle on Partridge Drive. Her mother, Ruth Murphy, was an early



Sportsmen's Club board member, so Patty was involved early-on with club volunteer projects. In later years, Ruth, Patty and Danielle worked on every volunteer project, from cleaning the portage to working at the hatchery. Patty joined the board in 1991 and provided leadership in our scholarship program, at the hatchery and in our fundraising efforts. She retired from the board in 2003, but continued to lend a hand whenever she could.

Virginia moved to Vermilion and Birch Point with her husband, Bob, in 1974. When Bob joined the Sportsmen's Club, we were fortunate to get Virginia, too. She helped Bob with his volunteer work and functioned as club secretary and membership chairman during Bob's years on the board and from 1983 to 1986 when Bob was club president. After Bob's death in 1998, Virginia moved to Forest Lake, but returned for several years to help with the annual dinner meeting.



These two were very special ladies. We miss them and we extend our sincere sympathy to their families.

--- Paula Bloczynski

BOARD OF DIRECTORS and OFFICERS 2008-2009

(All phone numbers are Area Code 218)

COOK (55723)

Jack McCarthy..... 8629 Wakemup Shores Road..... 666-6081
Dale Lundblad..... 9082 Little Sweden Road. 666-2316 (B.I.C. 666-5352)
Gary Whitenack... 9140 Hibbing Point Road..... 666-2153
Ed Tausk..... Vermilion Dam Lodge 666-5418
Judy Moline..... 8780 Raps Road..... 666-5716
Gary Lundquist PO Box 236 666-2756

TOWER (55790)

Walt Moe, **Pres.**..... 3331 Nisen Drive 753-3816
Mel Hintz, **Vice Pres.**..... 6119 Pike Bay Drive..... 753-2401
Paula Bloczynski, **Sec.**..... 4443 Big Rock Road..... 753-2107
Bob Wilson, **Treas.**..... 1501 Echo Point 753-5544
Jeff Lovgren (Member Records).... 2113 Birch Point Road 753-2413
Mardy Jackson 2065 County Road 77 753-3549

SCLV Board Meetings are held monthly on the second Wednesday, and are open to all SCLV members. Check with a board member for time and location.

Your SCLV... more than just a club

BY: Mel Hintz

No doubt some of you have seen the T-shirt with the humorous slogan "Minnesota carp...more than just a breakfast food." Similarly, your Sportsmen's Club of Lake Vermilion (SCLV) is much more than just a club, but instead has evolved into an organization that functions like many other lake associations in Minnesota that have formed to improve and protect their lake. If you are an internet user, check out the websites of other lake associations and compare their mission statement and current activities to those of the SCLV and you will find that they are very similar. In fact, in many cases it becomes apparent that we are involved in more programs than other lake associations.

The SCLV Mission Statement which is part of our official by-laws is printed elsewhere in this issue of the **Vermilion Sportsmen**. This Statement provides the general direction for SCLV programs and activities. Following is more specific information on some of the current and past SCLV activities during our 41-year existence:

- Your SCLV has monitored water quality under the MPCA Citizen Lake Monitoring Program for over 30 years. Last year, we completed an advanced water quality assessment of the Lake.
- Your SCLV has a very active program aimed at preventing the further introduction of invasive species into the lake. Working with the DNR we have provided training for volunteer boat inspectors and have conducted inspections at boat landings lake wide at least three times each summer for the past several years. We have also sponsored a "Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers" billboard on major highways leading to Lake Vermilion. More recently we printed and distributed several thousand placemats containing the invasive species message to

area restaurants. We are also sponsoring a DNR intern this summer who conducts boat inspections at public landings on Lake Vermilion.

- Your SCLV has established and maintains a series of night navigation aids (flashing yellow lights) to assist boaters in traveling safely during night time hours. These are separate from the white hazard buoys and red and green channel markers that are set under a private contract with the St. Louis County Sheriff's Department. We have also sponsored boating safety training sessions open to the public.
- Your SCLV has assisted the DNR since 1968 in the annual rough fish removal known as the spring sucker sale at the Pike Bay Hatchery. We have also assisted with the Sunset Creek northern pike spawning project. In past years we have purchased a 16 foot boat w/25 HP motor for use by the DNR in conducting the summer long creel survey that is done every two out of six years. We meet annually with the DNR to receive information about the state of the fishery and provide input on program or regulation changes.
- Your SCLV has conducted an annual lake wide loon count in mid-July for over 30 years. This is the longest running loon count in the state. Each year's results are reported to the DNR.
- Your SCLV has a state of the art website (www.sportsmensclublakevermilion.com) that contains a wealth of information about current and past activities as well as links to other sites aimed at improving and protecting the lake.

- Your SCLV has established and maintains six shore lunch sites on state and federal lands throughout the lake. These sites are equipped with a dock, picnic table, fire grate and open air latrine. They are intended for short term use only so others may also stop and have lunch. Our website has a downloadable map showing their location.
- Your SCLV has served as a liaison with local, state, and federal agencies on issues important to the lake such as the Vermilion Dam repair, scheduling fishing tournaments to protect spawning fish, and delaying the fall removal of docks from public landings as well as the hazard buoys from the lake.
- Your SCLV has either served on committees or been proactive on land use issues that potentially affect the lake such as the recently adopted Lake Vermilion Plan, the proposed Vermilion State Park, and the Minntac tailings basin discharge into the Lake Vermilion watershed.
- Your SCLV publishes a quarterly newsletter that is packed with information pertinent to Lake Vermilion.

So you can see that your SCLV is a very active organization supported by countless volunteers who give of their time solely to give something back to this great lake we are privileged to live on. We are much more than just a club. In every sense of the word based on the scope, the extent, and the longevity (more than 40 years) of our activities and programs, we have evolved from a club to a very active 2000 member lake association.

The perch swallows the grub-worm, the pickerel swallows the perch, and the fisherman swallows the pickerel; and so all the chinks in the scale of being are filled.

Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862)
American naturalist, poet and philosopher

MISSION STATEMENT of The Sportsmen's Club of Lake Vermilion, Inc.

— To promote and enhance the outdoor experience of Lake Vermilion for present and future generations by

- Maintaining and improving the Lake Vermilion fishery
- Promoting "Catch and Release"
- Promoting safe boating practices
- Establishing and maintaining a "Night Navigational Aid System"
- Establishing and maintaining shore lunch/picnic sites
- Monitoring and protecting area wildlife

— To protect and improve the water quality of Lake Vermilion by

- Monitoring water quality in cooperation with interested government agencies
- Promoting shoreline preservation and re-vegetation
- Monitoring exotic species and preventing their spread
- Promoting sound conservation practices in the Lake Vermilion watershed

— To educate club members and the public regarding issues which impact Lake Vermilion by

- Publishing a periodic newsletter and distributing it to club members and the public
- Maintaining an internet website containing previously published newsletters and other information about the club and Lake Vermilion
- Publishing news releases and articles pertaining to club activities in other publications

Sportsmen's Club Shore Lunch Sites on Vermil-

by Bob Wilson

Tell the truth, now how many of you have actually picnicked at one of our six “shore lunch” sites spread across the Lake? You folks living on the lake during the summer season or full time should give it a try. You don’t know where they are you say? We have provided another map and with GPS coordinates, for you techies, in this issue so you have no excuse. Keep in mind that these are supposed to be a breakfast, lunch or dinner site and not for overnight camping or houseboat parking. We are trying to make them available to as many people as possible every day. In order to keep them attractive we insist you haul out your trash as you leave. Each site has a hinged lift up dock courtesy of the “Club” and a picnic table, camp latrine and a fire ring or fire grate courtesy of the U.S. Forest Service or the DNR. Yes, these are wilderness sites so don’t expect electrical plug-ins, room service or a telephone and yes, there could possibly be a mosquito or two, maybe three, but, if you are a picnic type (you should be) try it. These sites have some very nice views of the lake.

One of the missing ingredients at our sites is a sign indicating you are actually there and you haven’t accidentally

parked your boat at a private dock. We will be attempting to work with the Forest Service and the DNR this summer to rectify this situation. They will want to use earth tones and not be too intrusive with the signs, but hey, we can do that. We are very proud of this service to lake boaters and hope you will take time to enjoy a picnic at any of the six sites.

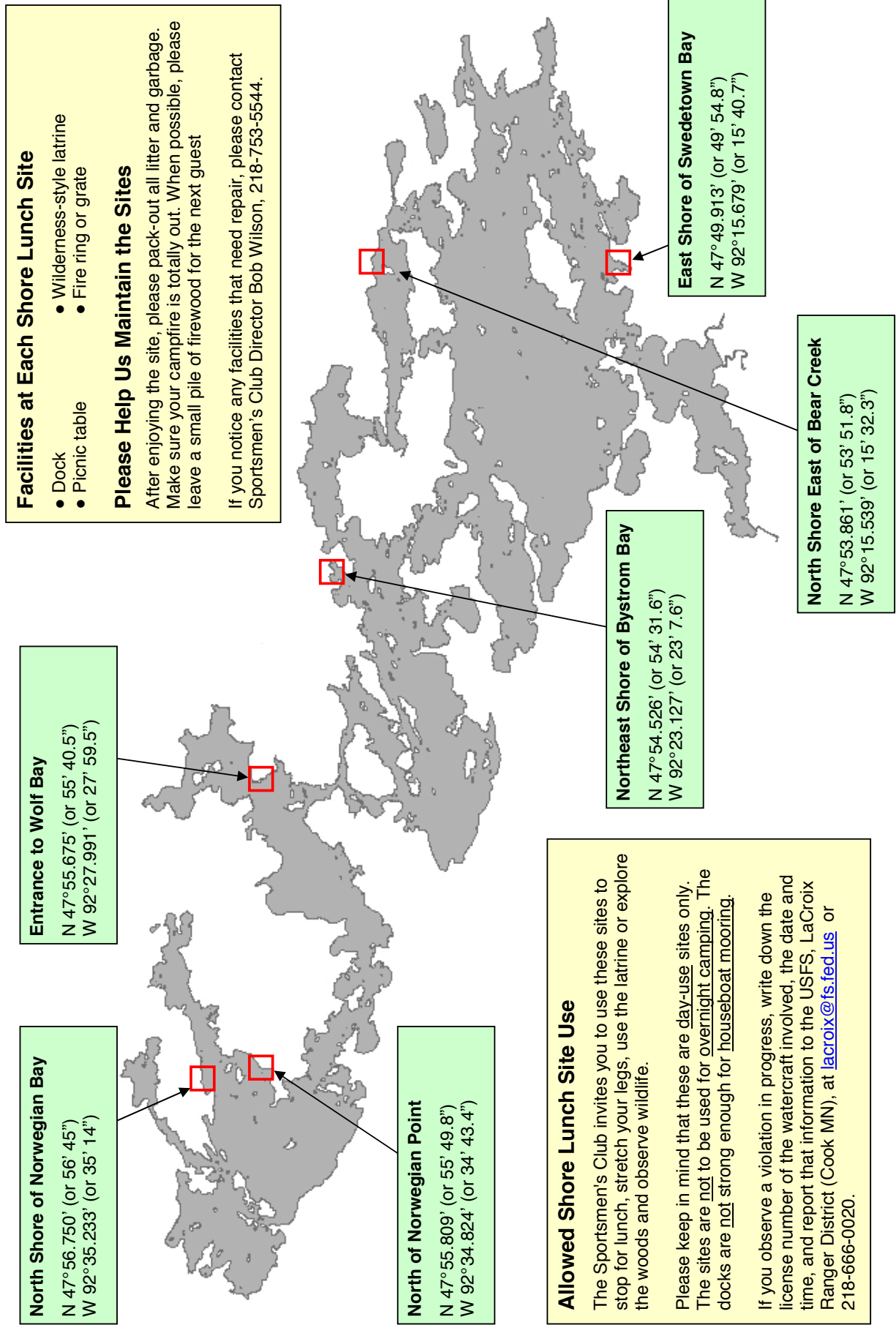
Like Invasive Species boat inspectors we need people to help us check out these sites semi-monthly to make sure the area is clean and nothing has gone awry like a tree down on the path to the latrine. Want to help? Give me a call on 218-753-5544 or call John Zwieg at the Cook end on 218-666-5008.

In this issue we are showing a picture of the approach to our Bystrom Bay site, the newest member of our picnic site family. I’ll call it “The Picnic Site of the Summer” (and the only picture of a site in this issue). All of the rest of the sites are equally beautiful, but this one has a brand new picnic table, raised fire grate, new dock and latrine. How can you miss? Take a look.



The approach to our Bystrom Bay picnic site.

Shore Lunch Sites on Lake Vermilion





OUR SUMMER INTERN Josh Gillson has been working on several club projects around the lake. He has been coordinating his efforts with board members Bob Wilson and Gary Whitenack, participating in boat checks for invasive species. And, Josh is monitoring the day-use picnic sites and campsites, taking pictures of the sites and their equipment so that we will have a pictorial inventory of each.

Josh will be starting his senior year at the University of Minnesota-Duluth this fall with environmental studies as a major focus of his college work. He is student president at UMD. Josh is a graduate of Cook High School and was our 2006 scholarship winner. His family owns and operates Life of Riley Resort on Norwegian Bay.

The club is fortunate to be the recipient of Josh's volunteer hours through his UMD summer internship. He has been active in club projects for many years, and has always been a strong advocate for the preservation of the lake for future generations. **THANK YOU, JOSH!**

Between newsletters, stay connected with Lake Vermilion

www.sportsmensclublakevermilion.org

Volunteer Opportunities

Editor's Note: This new column will run on occasion to highlight volunteer opportunities for our members.

Website Editorial or Technical Support

We're looking for a couple volunteers to help keep our lake news and activity pages up-to-date. Tell us how we can improve our website. And then help us make it happen.

We're also looking for a volunteer with moderate computer skills who'd be comfortable using Microsoft Expression Web to update our web pages at the HTML level. Includes periodic link testing and compatibility testing with popular browsers.

For more info, contact Jeff Lovgren at 218-753-2413 or lovgren@frontiernet.net.

Shore Lunch Site Monitors

Wanted: Seasonal or permanent residence people with access to a boat to monitor the condition of the Sportsmen's Club picnic sites during the summer season. There are six such sites spread across Vermilion and each could use a person(s) to inspect it on a semi-monthly basis. The task would be to see that the condition of the site is clean and usable with no trash lying around and to report major problems, such as trees down. For the location of the sites, check the map in this issue. Claim a site for your own and let us know you're interested.

For more info, contact Bob Wilson at 218-753-5544 or rwilson2@frontiernet.net (east end), or John Zwieg at 218-666-5008 or jczwieg@lcp2.net (west end).

Invasive Species Boat Inspectors

Help your club inspect incoming boats for invasive species such as zebra mussels, Eurasian watermilfoil, curly-leaf pondweed and spiny waterflea four times a season during holidays and the fishing opener. A shift is usually two hours in length. It is not difficult and you will receive some on-the-job training. To do a better job of protecting the lake, more people are needed.

For more info, contact Bob Wilson at 218-753-5544 or rwilson2@frontiernet.net (east end), or Gary Whitenack at 218-666-2153 or aaw1947@aol.com (west end).

2009 LOON REPORT

Mardy Jackson, Board Member

Remember that song Julie Andrews sang in "Sound of Music" — "I must have done something good"? Well, I felt that way at 5:30 the morning of the Loon Count when I peeked out to look at the lake in the early morning sunshine just as calm as the reflected sky. Now, I rush to assure you I do realize that isn't on the same plane as Julie Andrew's life-changing fortunes, but nevertheless, I had a wonderful feeling of relief. No need to make the early morning calls to all our fully-prepared observers waiting to see if it was a "go" or not. So I whispered a few rapid-fire "thank yous" and got myself in gear. It's always with anticipation, and in the case of this beautiful day, a joyful anticipation that we have a high count and maybe exceed last year's.

So, at 9:00 that morning, Monday, July 13, 65 volunteer counters started in the 22 territories we divided the lake into. Their surveying began. I've selected the second week in July because the chicks that hatch in the normal course of events by the end of June are big enough to be off their parents' backs and, therefore, easier to be observed.

One word here concerning our volunteers. They not only set aside Monday in the middle of July, but also the following Wednesday, our alternate day in the event of bad weather on Monday. They bring honor to the Sportsmen's Club of Lake Vermilion in that the hours they give to our project (56 hours this year), the Nongame Wildlife Program in Minnesota receives additional federal matching dollars for those hours. We are proud of them for this additional contribution of their time.

Dick and I finished our territory shortly after noon so time to get to the phone as the other 11 territories called me with their results. Claire Zwieg called with the results of the 10 territories she oversees from the west end of the lake. In compiling our totals, west end with the east end, the total figure absolutely blew my socks off. The total was EXACTLY the same as last year! How often would that happen?! It was 281. So I used the adding machine; and a quirk of mine, I added the figures myself to check on the adding machine. They all checked out. Unbelievable!

Below is a table to show the details:

Total Volunteers = 65 Total Hours Spent = 56

Area	Pairs	Chicks	Singles	Total
East	41 (82)	20	85	187
West	21 (42)	9	43	94
Total	62 (124)	29	128	281

Total Adults = 252

Total Chicks = 29

GRAND TOTAL = 281

CONCERNS OVER WEST END WALLEYE FISHING

Since the opening of the fishing season in May, Sportsmen's Club board members have been receiving comments from anglers, bait shop owners and resort owners regarding walleye angling on the west end of Lake Vermilion. Specifically, anglers have been pleased with the quality of the fishing experience with many beautiful, larger walleyes being caught. Many are quite concerned, however, by low numbers of "eater" fish being caught below the 17" - 26" slot. There are a number of factors converging this year which have contributed to this situation. Duane Williams, Large Lake Specialist with DNR Fisheries, discusses the structure and outlook for the walleye fishery on the west end of the lake in the following article:

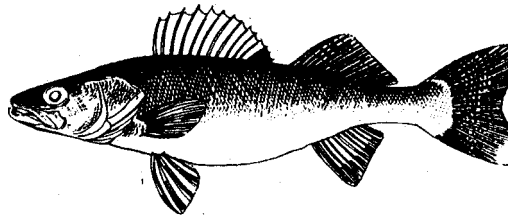
Why is walleye fishing poor on the West end of Lake Vermilion this summer?

The DNR Fisheries office at Tower has been receiving complaints this summer about poor walleye fishing on the West end of Lake Vermilion, especially for eating-sized fish. The SCLV and local resorts and bait shops have also had complaints about poor walleye fishing. I wanted to take this opportunity to explain why walleye fishing has been poor on the West end of Lake Vermilion and what the DNR is planning to do about the situation.

The primary reason anglers haven't been catching many eating-sized walleye this summer is because of poor reproduction in 2004 and 2005, which has resulted in low numbers of 13-17 inch walleye this year. Poor reproduction in 2004 was due to unusually cool weather that spring and summer, which resulted in very slow growth of young-of-the-year-walleye. We have learned from our sampling program on Lake Vermilion that small, slow growing young-of-the-year walleye have poor over-winter survival and usually produce a weak year class. Poor year classes of walleye were also produced in 2005 and 2006. The 2006 year class initially appeared to be fairly strong but seemed to suffer unusually high mortality as age 1 fish. One possible explanation for poor reproduction and survival of the 2005 and 2006 year classes is year class suppression. This occurs when fish from strong year classes compete with and prey on following year classes. Strong year classes of walleye were produced in 2002 and 2003, and may have had a suppressive effect on the 2005 and 2006 year classes.

While fishing has been poor for eating-sized walleye, some anglers have been having good success on larger walleye. Most of these fish have been within the 17-26 inch protected slot limit and were required to be released.

There are unusually high numbers of 17-22 inch walleye in the population at this time. These fish are from the strong year classes produced in 2002 and 2003. In fact, the 2002 year class is one of the strongest ever produced on West Vermilion.



Some anglers are blaming the 17-26 inch protected slot limit for the current size imbalance in the walleye population, however most of what happened to cause this situation happened before the slot limit was implemented in 2006. Poor reproduction in 2004

and 2005 could not possibly be related to the slot limit. It is possible the slot limit may have contributed somewhat to poor survival of the 2006 year class by protecting fish from the strong 2002 and 2003 year classes after they started entering the protected slot limit in 2007. It is important to remember there are many lakes in Minnesota that have slot limits and walleye fishing remains very good on most of these lakes. In fact, the walleye population on East Vermilion is close to normal with lots of small fish, and fishing has been fairly good there.

Stocking has not been a factor in the current situation. Lake Vermilion has been stocked annually for many years and the number of walleye fry stocked has not changed significantly in recent years. Increased stocking would not be helpful to correct the situation, because the problem is not related to low numbers of walleye eggs or fry.

The effects of weak or strong year classes in walleye populations generally diminish as these fish move out of the population and new year classes come into the population. The DNR will closely monitor the walleye population

(Continued on Page 12)

CHARTING THE FUTURE OF LAKE VERMILION'S BLM ISLANDS

At the Sportsmen's Club's June board of directors meeting, Derek Strohl, Natural Resources Specialist with the Bureau of Lake Management (BLM), Milwaukee Field Office made a presentation to the group regarding the current status and future planning for some 70 small islands on the lake. He asked for our input and assistance in developing a new management plan. A summary letter to our Club follows:

I had been told, and I found out for myself early this past June, that Lake Vermilion is indeed a beautiful lake.

I came to Lake Vermilion to see, for my first time since I took a job with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) last August, some of the 70 islands that BLM manages in Lake Vermilion, along with 16 others in several smaller lakes to the north. I came also to meet several generous,

dedicated people who have been keeping watch over these tiny gems for the last several years.

The BLM, part of the U.S. Department of the Interior, manages millions of acres of public land in the United States, mostly in the west. In the eastern portion of the U.S., BLM manages hundreds of small parcels that were omitted from the original survey that took place in
(Continued on Page 12)



Charting the Future of Lake Vermilion's BLM Islands

Continued from Page 11

the early- to mid-1800s. These small parcels, including many of the islands in Lake Vermilion, were not surveyed and therefore could not be sold to private homesteaders or transferred to the newly-forming states. Many such parcels have since been patented – meaning transferred to non-federal owners, but a law passed by the Shipstead-Newton-Nolan Act of 1930 set aside many federal islands in northern Minnesota to be forever preserved in their natural condition and for their scenic beauty.

These small islands are scattered among several of the places that are familiar to people like you – Norwegian Bay, Wakemup Narrows, Big Bay. Most of them are barely, if at all, visible on a map of Lake Vermilion, and if they are, they're not labeled with names like the bigger islands – Taylor's Island, Oak Island, Comet Island. Yet people like you, who know the Lake well enough to navigate it from memory, people who know where the fish are and where the waters are calm, know these islands and quite possibly have names for them.

These are your public lands, and that is why we invite people like the SCLV to help us keep a watchful eye on the islands. The nearest BLM field office is in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, but lakeshore groups, the Minnesota DNR, and the Bois Forte Band of Lake Superior Chippewa are close enough to check on several of the islands throughout the boating season. They visit the islands and note their general condition and signs of public use. They pick up garbage and repair the signs that mark the islands as federal public land. We welcome SCLV to join us in protecting these beautiful places.

Beyond our normal island monitoring, the time has come for BLM to update its Coordinated Resource Management Plan, completed in 1993, that defines general management goals for the islands. This is a public process, and we welcome your participation as we ask ourselves: What do we have here to protect?, How can we ensure that the public can enjoy these islands while preserving them for our grandchildren's grandchildren?, Which islands are best suited for various types of public use?, and other important questions.

I had the pleasure of having this conversation with the leaders of SCLV at their meeting on June 9th, and I look forward to talking further with you about how we can

work together to enjoy, manage, and protect these islands. Please contact your Board of Directors if you would like to join this conversation. You sure have a beautiful lake, and we thank you for the work you are doing to care for it.

Derek Strohl, Natural Resources Specialist
Bureau of Land Management, Milwaukee Field Office
626 E. Wisconsin Ave., Suite 200
Milwaukee, WI 53202-4617

derek_strohl@blm.gov

Concerns over west end walleye fishing... Continued from Page 10

in 2009 and will especially be looking for younger strong year classes coming into the population. Netting during the 2008 population assessment indicated the 2007 year class may be stronger than average, especially in the Niles Bay area. However, it sometime takes a couple of years to get a good idea of how strong a year class will be. The DNR recently started a project to mark all stocked walleye fry going into Lake Vermilion. This will allow us to determine the amount of natural reproduction in the lake and see if there is something unusual happening in the early life history of walleye affecting survival. As stated earlier, most of what happened to cause the current situation on West Vermilion, occurred before the slot limit began in 2006. However, if we feel the slot limit is contributing to poor reproduction and survival of small fish, we would consider dropping or changing the slot limit regulation. The DNR has no interest in seeing the walleye population remain as it currently exists on West Vermilion. It is likely the current state of the walleye population on West Vermilion was caused by the unusual confluence of events I have described and the walleye population will recover as new strong year classes move into the population. If anyone has questions about the walleye population on Lake Vermilion, please feel free to contact me.

Duane Williams, Large Lake Specialist
MN Dept. of Natural Resources
218-753-2580 ext. 224
duane.williams@dnr.state.mn.us

“Invasive Species”

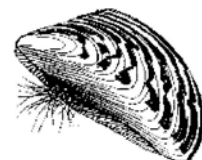
by Bob Wilson



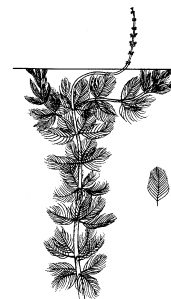
So how is Lake Vermilion doing you should be asking? Do we still have a clean lake? If you happen to be paying attention to what is going on in the rest of the state and the nation you know that various forms of Invasive Species continue to proliferate and travel from lake to lake primarily by boat and trailer. We need to have you readers and all you lovers of Lake Vermilion on-board with this problem and what each one of us can do about it. First let's take a look at some of the *HEADLINES* that exemplify the *BAD NEWS*. A big gasp is permissible at this point! No kidding!

“INVASIVES SPECIES” HEADLINES

- A. Zebra Mussels discovered in Prior Lake, MN - May 2009.
- B. Live Zebra Mussel just found in Lake Le Homme Dieu in Alexandria, MN a popular boating and recreation Lake.
- C. Recent announcement - Pike Lake, near Duluth, MN. infested with zebra mussels. Could have been there for two years!
- D. Eurasian Milfoil plaguing Minnesota Metro Lakes earlier than usual. The dry spring cut down on run off keeping lake water clear. But, all the extra sunshine has been good news for Milfoil.



ZEBRA MUSSEL



EURASIAN MILFOIL

These are just a very few of the headline examples appearing in local and national publications, the “web” and TV outdoor shows throughout the year. It's absolutely essential that we on Lake Vermilion take note of these infestations and resolve to take precautions ourselves when bringing a boat, trailer, bait and tackle into Vermilion from another lake. Prevention is an absolute must.

KEEP A CLEAN BOAT

Here is what you must do *BEFORE LAUNCHING* and/or *BEFORE LEAVING* a lake or river water access. Help spread “the word.”

- 1. Remove – aquatic plants, fish, animals and mud from Boat Motor and Trailer.
- 2. Drain – water from Boat, Motor, Bilge, Livewell and Bait Bucket.
- 3. Dispose – of unwanted live bait, fish parts and worms in a trash container.
- 4. Rinse – Boat and equipment with high pressure hot water (if possible) on your way home or at home OR
- 5. Dry – everything for at least five days before the next launch.

BOAT INSPECTION TRAINING

The Resort Association and the Sportsmen's Club put together an inspection training session for club volunteers and resorts on April 22, 09 in the Tower DNR parking lot. There was a great turnout with 64 people participating. Heidi Wolf, DNR Boat Inspection Program Coordinator from St. Paul, was the guest speaker. Five different boats from 77 Marine were used as examples to explain where to look, what to look for and what to do about it when finding exotics on a boat/trailer combination. The lunch caterers were Nancy and Pete Yapel, well known folks in Tower, serving filled croissants and other goodies. Many thanks to Heidi, Nancy and Pete and the Tower DNR for the temporary loan of their premises. You really should be and can be a boat inspector you know. See page 14.

(Continued on Page 14)

INVASIVE SPECIES... *Continued from Page 13*

BOAT INSPECTIONS

On the Opening of the fishing season and again on the Memorial Weekend our volunteers were out inspecting boats at five different public ramps across Vermilion. On "Opening" 94 boats were inspected and 24 volunteers were out. On Memorial weekend 65 boats were checked by 28 volunteers. These volunteers give their time and effort to help protect Vermilion, your shoreline to be personal about it, and to keep our boating friends aware of the tremendous threat to Vermilion even one "dirty" boat and trailer could cause. We need more inspectors to increase the number of ramps we can cover and the time we can be on the job. A typical shift for a volunteer is usually two hours in length. That should not be too much time to give to help protect Lake Vermilion. By the way, no exotics have appeared on any boats we have inspected so far this season. Let's hope our boating visitors keep up the good work.

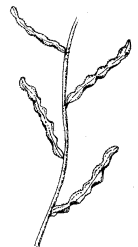
While our plans for the 4th of July weekend will be old news by the time you read this we will pull inspections again on the 3rd of July and once more on Labor Day weekend. If you are interested in helping and you are on the east end of the lake please call me on 218-753-5544. On the west end call Gary Whitenack on 218-666-2153 or John Zwieg on 218-666-5008. We need you.

A TABLE PLACEMAT MESSAGE FOR RESTAURANTS

In the last issue we showed a picture of the placemats we designed for a free handout to restaurants, the objective being to spread the invasive species message to local restaurant visitors with an attractive map of Lake Vermilion pictured on it to boot. Approximately ten restaurants from both the east and west end participated in this test. Initially we printed 3000 copies at a cost of \$560.00 or about 18.5 cents apiece as a test run. Not cheap. But, they were attractive with a good message as I said and all of the restaurant mats we supplied are now almost depleted. Next year we are thinking about printing more. While we can't know for sure it appears there has been a good deal of interest in the placemats with many people taking them home and even some having them laminated with a plastic cover. If you didn't see them or you would like a couple to grace your living room table (I would expect you to have it displayed in a prominent place) let me know. Thanks to Judy Moline and Jody at the Timberjay for a great job.

CURLY-LEAF PONDWEED

A quick note on the Invasive, Curly-leaf Pondweed (CLP) in Vermilion. Yes, unfortunately CLP has been discovered in Lake Vermilion and has apparently been present for several years. Under some circumstances it can spread very rapidly and in other situations seems to linger and grow in essentially the same area year after year. Richard Rezanka, a CLP specialist from the MN DNR, has been assessing our situation and will give us a report on how serious it is and maps to outline its spread sometime this summer. At this time we can only say we will keep you updated or possibly you may read the results of the analysis in the local papers first.



**CURLY-LEAF
PONDWEED**

See you at the ramp or on the beautiful waters of Lake Vermilion.

Invasive Species are a very serious, nationwide costly problem.

HELP PROTECT LAKE VERMILION



**STOP AQUATIC
HITCHHIKERS!**

Prevent the transport of nuisance species.
Clean all recreational equipment.
www.ProtectYourWaters.net

Potential Geologic Hazard — Highway 169 Realignment near Lake Vermilion

The scheduled realignment of Highway 169 in the Sixmile Lake area east of Soudan may pose a serious geologic hazard. Sixmile Lake is located in the Vermilion Lake watershed approximately 1.5 miles east of Armstrong Bay. The geology in the Sixmile Lake area is very unique. Geologic publications from the Natural Resource Research Institute, the Institute on Lake Superior Geology, and open filed US Steel data specifically identify the Sixmile Lake area as having excellent potential for massive sulfide deposits. A 1976 DNR lake sediment survey shows the lake to have an extremely high level of the heavy metals copper and silver. A 2004 geologic field trip guide states the lake sediment samples contain the highest copper anomalies in the state. Economic geologists say the rocks in this area have been altered and exhibit characteristics associated with massive sulfide deposits. Sulfide minerals of pyrite, chalcopyrite and bornite have been identified in volcanic rocks near the lake. The iron formation near the lake has also been noted to contain beds of pyrite.

Sulfide minerals when exposed to air and water become unstable and generate acid runoff, which in turn can leach heavy metals out of rock, carrying them into streams and lakes. Heavy metals can have a detrimental effect on aquatic life and safe drinking water. Normally this weathering reaction occurs slowly in undisturbed sulfide bearing rocks. Unfortunately, Sixmile Lake is already experiencing natural acid rock drainage as evident by the high copper and silver anomalies. The effects of exposing fresh sulfide minerals through road construction

excavation and blasting will greatly increase the surface area of sulfide mineralization to water and air, thus increasing the reaction rate by orders of magnitude.

The Sixmile Lake property owners have contacted MNDOT informing them of this hazard and requesting information on how they plan to conduct rock characterization studies along the corridor and what mitigation plans will be implemented if sulfide mineralization is encountered. MNDOT's response acknowledges that this issue will need to be investigated more. The work, which is scheduled to begin in 2011, has not progressed far enough along with the design to know the extent of bedrock blasting; but in all likelihood, the project will involve some rock removal. Typically, the rock removed is crushed and re-used as some type of construction material. The runoff from the project will most likely enter the Lake Vermilion watershed.

The SCLV has been in contact with the MPCA and with Dr. Euan Reavie, Center for Water and Environment, Natural Resources Research Institute, Ely Lab, for their advice and assistance to insure that this highway improvement project does not threaten the water quality of Lake Vermilion. Updated information about the status of this project will be presented in future newsletters.

Want to add a seasonal address?
Want to change your main address?

Contact Jeff Lovgren 218-753-2413
lovgren@frontiernet.net
PO Box 696, Tower MN 55790

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If you want happiness for an hour — take a nap. If you want happiness for a day — go fishing. If you want happiness for a month — get married. If you want happiness for a year — inherit a fortune. If you want happiness for a lifetime — help someone else.

— Chinese Proverb

Five Things You Can Do On Land To Protect The Water

Carrie Maurer-Ackerman, Courtney Kowalczak, Erica LeMoine, Molly Zins

Have you been looking for an opportunity to step up and play a role in long term-water resource protection? Look no further—listed below are five actions you can take to protect and improve our lakes and rivers. The actions are aimed at residents with shoreland property, but they can also be effective in non-shoreland areas, because wherever we live, water flows downhill from our property and eventually ends up in a lake, river, or wetland.

Under each action we've included websites that you can visit for more details. One good general-purpose site is www.shorelandmanagement.org, developed by the University of Minnesota Extension Water Resources Center.

1. Control Pollutants by Reducing, Capturing, and Filtering stormwater runoff

What is stormwater runoff?

Stormwater runoff is water that flows off the landscape as a result of rain or snowmelt. When rain water or snow melt is not absorbed into the ground it becomes surface or stormwater runoff because it can flow into surface waters (lakes or rivers) or into storm drains that dump into lakes and rivers. Stormwater runoff carries dirt, nutrients, fertilizers, pet waste, oil, and any other pollutants it picks up along the way, depositing them into lakes and rivers. Large amounts of runoff can also cause erosion problems.

Is Your Membership Current?

You may have noticed that we've added a date after your name on the newsletter mailing label. We want to make it easy for you to know if your membership dues are up to date.

For example, "Pd 2009" indicates our records show you're paid through calendar year 2009.

What can you do?

Reduce the amount pollutants running off your property by reducing the amount impervious surfaces and the amount of grass lawn on your property. Impervious surfaces, such as pavement, roofs, walkways and roads, do not allow rainwater to seep through to the soil underneath, so instead the water runs, unfiltered, into lakes and rivers. Turf grass also acts as a relatively impervious surface because its roots are short and compacted, and do not allow rain water to soak into the ground as well as native plants and trees. Turf grass also has shallow roots that do not absorb nutrients and water as well as native vegetation. In place of traditional impervious materials that are commonly used to build walkways, driveways, etc., use pervious pavement. Materials such as pavers can be made to be permeable and allow water to seep through into the ground. Reduce the size of your lawn by keeping trees and shrubs and replace a portion of your lawn with un-mowed native vegetation.

Capture stormwater runoff and prevent it from reaching lakes and rivers by installing rain gardens and rain barrels. A rain garden is a shallow depression in your yard that is planted with water-tolerant plants. Rain gardens collect and filter water that runs off from your house and yard. A rain barrel is a large barrel or other large container that is placed under a gutter downspout by a house or building to collect the water that runs off of the roof. This water can be used to water plants in your yard.

Filter stormwater by creating or preserving a natural shoreline and shoreline buffers. Creating or preserving a shoreline that is landscaped with native plants, instead of a manicured lawn or a sand beach, allows water to soak into the ground rather than running off into the lake. One of the easiest ways to create a natural shoreline is to select an area along the shore and leave it alone. Stop mowing it and allow natural vegetation to return. If you have an

area that requires a shoreline restoration, use native shoreland plants for that area and leave ice ridges in place. An ice ridge is a mound of earth that forms when the ice cover on a water body pushes against the shore as it expands and contracts. Ice ridges act as a natural barrier between lawns and the lake. Reduce or minimize the size of sand beaches and replace the rest of the shoreline with vegetation.

For more information please visit the following sites:

Natural Shorelines

http://files.dnr.state.mn.us/publications/waters/shoreland_rules_fact_sheet_natural_shorelines.pdf

Blue Thumb: Planting for Clean Water
www.bluethumb.org

How Can I Create a Rain Garden?

http://www.extension.umn.edu/distribution/naturalresources/components/DD8241_4.pdf

Managing Runoff in Shoreland Areas

http://files.dnr.state.mn.us/publications/waters/shoreland_rules_fact_sheet_managing_runoff.pdf

2. Learn what you can and cannot do on shore lines

Why is it important to know what is allowed and what is not?

Shoreland rules and laws were put in place to help protect lakes and rivers and to protect personal properties along the shoreline. Shoreland rules also help protect shoreland habitat and vegetation that are important for wildlife and fish.

Some activities that shoreland laws may affect are:

- How close you can build a house, shed or garage to a lake /river
- How many trees you can cut down between your house and the lake/river
- The amount of dirt, soil, or sand that is brought in or removed for any purpose along the shoreline
- The size of staircases and boardwalks built to gain access to the lake/river

Where can you find out what is allowed and what is not?

Call your local unit of government: if you live within city limits, call the city offices. If you don't, call your county offices. Some townships also regulate shorelands. The state of Minnesota sets the minimum rules for shoreland management, but your local unit of government writes and enforces the ordinances for your area. Local ordinances must be at least as protective as the state's rules. Check with your local government office and local land use ordinances before starting any building or major landscaping projects within the shoreland area. Remember, it's your responsibility to get a permit, if it is required, *before* you begin the project.

3. Keep and protect native aquatic plants

What are native aquatic plants and why are they important?

Aquatic plants are plants that have adapted to and live in water or wet soil. There are three types of aquatic plant communities: emergent, floating-leaf and submergent vegetation. Emergent plants located in shallow waters with leaves and flowers above the water surface. They stabilize sediments and may reduce the impacts of boat wakes and waves. Floating-leaf plants are located in shallow waters. Submergent plants are located in deep water (20 feet or more) and the entire plant is under water. Floating-leaf and submergent plants provide habitat for fish and wildlife, while also helping increase water clarity. Overgrowth of non-native aquatic plants may harm property values, limit recreation, contribute to toxic algal blooms, and require costly removal.

What can you do?

Learn to identify both native and non-native aquatic vegetation, and monitor your water body. Leave native aquatic vegetation in place, remove non-native vegetation, or if vegetation is absent, contact the Minnesota Department of Natural resources about planting native aquatic vegetation. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources regulates the management of aquatic vegetation.

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• Five Things You Can Do On Land To Protect The Water

(Continued from Page 17)

For more information please visit the following sites:

Managing Aquatic Plants in Minnesota Lakes
<http://www.extension.umn.edu/distribution/horticulture/DG6955.html>

A guide to aquatic plants
<http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/shorelandmgmt/apg/index.html>

4. Enjoy water-based recreation responsibly

How does recreation impact water quality?

Recreation is one of the main reasons people want to live on and use lakes and rivers. Along with the increase in recreation comes the increased threat of degrading our water resources by our actions. Water-based recreation can include boating, swimming, canoeing, kayaking, snowmobiling, fishing, and many others. It not only includes activities that take place directly in the water, but also along the shoreline such as hiking, camping, using a beach, dock or deck. Unfortunately some of the activities we love can negatively impact the quality of lakes and rivers. Water-based activities can still be enjoyed, but we can be conscious of our actions and act responsibly to minimize their impact to water.

Negative impacts to water from our actions can include:

- Increased phosphorous from the ash of campfires located near the water
- Shoreline erosion and disturbance to wildlife habitat as a result of heavy wave action caused by high-speed boating
- Damage to aquatic plants from boat propellers
- Damage to the banks of the shore from snowmobiles, cars and trucks accessing frozen water during the winter
- Water pollution from gas, oil, metals, and other chemicals from motorized watercraft
- Water pollution from humans (soap, sham-

poo, garbage)

- Increased runoff and erosion from sand beaches

What can you do?

Follow the local watercraft rules and noise enforcement ordinances. Make sure that your recreation activities do not create permanent damage to the water and the landscape that surrounds it. When swimming, do not use soap or shampoo in the water. Be sure to maintain your recreational vehicles so there are no oil or gas leaks into your lake or river. Respect no-wake zones and reduce your boat speed. Plan your docks and decks to minimize impact on your water resource. Locate campfires away from the lake or line the bottom of your fire pit so phosphorous from the ash does not absorb into the ground. Enjoy one of the many non-motorized water sports which minimize impact on lakes, streams and wildlife, such as canoeing, kayaking or sailing.

For more information please visit the following sites:

Minnesota Boating Guide
<http://files.dnr.state.mn.us/rlp/regulations/boatwater/boatingguide.pdf>

Limiting impact of Recreation on Water Quality
<http://www.extension.umn.edu/distribution/naturalresources/components/DD6946e.html>

5. Manage Waste Safely

What are septic systems and how do they affect water quality?

Septic systems function to recycle wastewater back into the environment through an on-site filtering system. Septic tanks have bacteria in them that break down solids into a sludge, the sludge settles to the bottom of the tank, and the liquid percolates through the tile, stone, and soil of the septic field that naturally filter out the pollutants. If the septic

system is not properly maintained and fails, the solids clog the septic field, and the liquid comes to the surface as standing human waste water. This human waste water, containing harmful bacteria and nutrients, will run off into the nearest water body, and can make swimmers sick. The excess nutrients will also fuel the growth of algae and lower water quality. Septic systems may also fail if they are improperly installed; located too close to groundwater, stream or lake; and/or are old and not working properly.

What can you do?

Have your septic system inspected to make sure it is working properly and have it pumped at least every three years. Conserve and reduce the amount of water that goes into your septic system. Properly dispose of harmful paints, oils, and other household chemicals instead of dumping them down the drain. Follow the local rules and regulations regarding your septic maintenance to insure it is in compliance.

Other Septic System Management Practices

- Never enter the septic tank.
- Pump/clean solids from tank's manhole (not inspection pipes) regularly.
- Have baffles inspected at time of cleaning.
- Install and insulate risers to manhole access.
- Identify whether your tank has an effluent screen, and service as necessary.
- Do not use septic tank additives or cleaners.

Manage pet, wildlife and livestock waste

Waste from pets and animals contains bacteria, phosphorus and nitrogen that is harmful to humans, fish and wildlife. Human contact with contaminated water can cause gastrointestinal, wound, or respiratory infections. *Scientific American* reported that the reason for 85% of beach closures and advisories is the detection of excessive fecal bacteria. If animal waste is not properly disposed of, it will run off into area water bodies and may cause algal blooms, reduce clarity, and deplete dissolved oxygen levels.

Clean up after your pet, bag it, and put it in the trash. Never place pet waste in a compost, storm drain or waterway. On farms, create a manure management plan that meets the requirements of Minnesota State 7020 feedlot rules.

Discourage waterfowl from using your waterfront property by planting native shoreline vegetation or letting your lawn grow tall. Manicured lawns attract geese because they are able to see predators from a greater distance; and geese may prefer to feed on fertilized lawns because of the increased nutritional value.

For more information please visit the following sites:

University of Minnesota Extension Service: Onsite Sewage Treatment Program
<http://septic.umn.edu/systemoptions/index.html>
<http://www.extension.umn.edu/distribution/naturalresources/DD7040.html>

Animal Waste Management
<http://wrc.umn.edu/outreach/awm.html>

U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service Nutrient Management Planning
<http://www.mn.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/ecs/nutrient/planning/planning.htm>

Managing Crops and Animals Near Shorelands
<http://www.shorelandmanagement.org/depth/bmp.pdf>

EPA Beach Advisory and Notification On-Line Notification
<http://www.epa.gov/waterscience/beaches/>

*In wildness is the preservation
of the world.*

Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862)
American naturalist, poet and philosopher

Sportsmen's Club of Lake Vermilion, Inc.

Jeff Lovgren, Member Records • P.O. Box 696 • Tower MN 55790
lovgren@frontiernet.net • (218) 753-2413

Membership year runs from Jan 1st through Dec 31st

2009 New Member

2009 Renewal

Membership level

\$10.00 Individual

\$20.00 Family

\$15.00 Couple

\$50.00 Business or Organization

Member Name _____

Spouse Name _____

Email (optional) _____

Phone (optional) _____

Main Street _____

Address City _____ State ____ Zip _____

Seasonal Street _____

Address City _____ State ____ Zip _____

Use seasonal address during this period:

Do this every year

Just for upcoming year

Contact me to discuss when to use seasonal address

Please clip or copy this form and send to the address above.

Become a Member

Join those who love Lake Vermilion as much as you do. Help us continue the many activities you've just read about.

Not sure? Check us out at our website www.sportsmensclublakevermilion.org. We're pretty sure you'll like our vision for the future and the work we have under way now to make Lake Vermilion even better.

Please use the form on this page or the form on our website. Make checks payable to the "Sportsmen's Club of Lake Vermilion." The Sportsmen's Club is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

Join us as we work to improve this great lake. Together we can have an even bigger impact!

HELP US MAKE A BEAUTIFUL LAKE EVEN BETTER!



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