

# THE VERMILION



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*To Protect  
and Improve  
Lake Vermilion*

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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Ice out! Loons return! Fishing opener! By the time you read this, all three of the above may have occurred on Lake Vermilion. At the time of my writing this, while there is still ice on the lake, the ice houses have been pulled off and the snowmobile stakes pulled out in preparation for the thaw. This I know from Facebook! We have been fortunate to have spent the month of March in New Mexico, right at the edge of the Organ Mountains-Dripping Springs National Monument. While it is naturally



Lori Ptak  
VLA President

“dark sky” in this area, the neighborhood where we are staying has voluntarily conformed to dark sky principles (Dusk till Dawn, turn off unnecessary outdoor lighting, use motion sensors, amber bulbs, 3000K or less, cover and aim lights downward). With migration season being April 15-May 31, these principles are best practice for migratory birds, including our loons.

Speaking of loons, now is the time to watch for our loon cam once again (<https://www.vermilionlakeassociation.org/>). Last year was successful, and we are hoping for more of the same this season! If you are loony for loons, our VLA board is still

looking for a loon program leader volunteer. See our Spring 2025 newsletter for details and/or email at [volunteercoordinator@vermilionlakeassociation.org](mailto:volunteercoordinator@vermilionlakeassociation.org). Our annual loon count will again take place on July 13 (July 15 alternate bad weather day). So don't be concerned if you see a boatful of people with binoculars trained on the shoreline. They aren't casing the joint.

Last, and certainly not least, is our fishing opener! My husband and I are finishing up the walleye in the freezer and look forward to the fresh ones. Our VLA board continues to monitor the news on mercury in our waters and fish. The Minnesota Department of Health has released updated fish consumption advisories, with revisions geared specifically for lakes in northeastern Minnesota [www.health.state.mn.us](http://www.health.state.mn.us) and search for "fish consumption." Walleye under 19" are considered safe to eat from Lake Vermilion once a week (once a month for sensitive populations- children under age 15; girls, women, and people age 15 and older who may become pregnant; and people who are pregnant, breastfeeding or planning to breastfeed). On a side note, my husband decided to get his mercury level tested at his last wellness check. He was happy to hear that his mercury level was “undetectable.” Good news indeed, considering we've been eating walleye from Lake Vermilion for over 36 years!

Before I close, a reminder to sign up for our Annual Meeting on August 1 (see invitation on next page). It's a great venue, great speaker, and great food! Space is limited, so get your RSVP in ASAP!

Have you forgotten to renew your membership? There's still time! We request an email address if you can share it please. And remember, “Be like Bob” and invite your neighbors and friends to join our lake association!

Take care and enjoy the water!

**Lori Ptak**

**VLA President**

**The Vermilion Lake Association newsletter is published quarterly and mailed to members.**

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**Content Editors: Terry Grosshauser, Fisheries Leader, and Lori Ptak, VLA President**

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**Cover photo Sue Larson, VLA member and volunteer.**

**We welcome your contributions! Have a "legend of the lake" to share? Is there a topic you would like to see covered in a future issue? Send story ideas and photos to Jessica at [communications1@vermilionlakeassociation.org](mailto:communications1@vermilionlakeassociation.org).**



You're invited...

to join your lake neighbors and friends!

What: Vermilion Lake Association's Annual Meeting

Where: Camp Vermilion, 2555 Vermilion Camp Road, Cook, MN

When: Saturday, August 1st, 2026.....from 4-7pm

4-5 pm - browse program information tables

5-6 pm - buffet dinner

(\$20/adults, \$5/under 10)

6-7 pm - a brief meeting and our speaker,

Jeff Forester, Executive Director, Minnesota Lakes and Rivers,  
and VLA member, presenting "Lake Protection in Minnesota:  
Lake Associations on the Front Lines, but How to Do More?"

**RSVP Required by Wednesday, July 22 to:**

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# It's Time for Spring Cleaning

## ...to protect our Lake Vermilion



By Noel Sederstrom, VLA Volunteer

The harsh winter wind is a distant memory, and when the lake ice melts away our loons will rush back to their favorite places on Lake Vermilion.

Just like their human friends! We can't wait for the open waters either.

Those of us on the VLA's Live LoonCam team are getting ready to deploy our sophisticated Axis P1465-LE camera, our sensitive parabolic mic, and all the ethernet cables and switching gear. This will be our sixth year livestreaming a loon family's almost every move from their nest on Lake Vermilion. Wish us luck.

### *Calling All Procrastinators*

While we're waiting for the Fishing Opener, there's something important some of us need to do right now—a tackle box spring cleaning. There's been proof for 40 years that a lot of loons are dying because of what some of us do when we go fishing. Nearly a third of the loons that don't survive the summer months were poisoned by ingesting tangled fishing tackle, sinkers and jigs made of lead. Yes, you've heard this song many times before. But in spite of all the public awareness campaigns to "Get the Lead Out" waged over the past three decades, loons are still being poisoned.



Left: VLA loon cam

Above: Carrol Henderson

When Mardy Jackson sent the results of our Loon Survey to the DNR in 2001, members of the Sportsmen's Club of Lake Vermilion got the first direct appeal. We were asked to protect our loons by stopping the use of lead sinkers and split shot on our fishing lines.

"Please help us eliminate this hazard to our precious wildlife," urged Carrol Henderson, then the Non-Game Wildlife Supervisor of the Minnesota DNR. Let that sink in for a moment—that was 25 years ago.

Since then, in this very newsletter, the same plea—in 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009. Then new pitches, in 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022. From Mardy Jackson, John Myers, Bob Pearson, John Yocum, Lori Ptak. This may well be "preaching to the choir" but I'm going to reach out to all those who just don't get it yet.

Calling all procrastinators: this year's top spring cleaning task is to sort through all the old tackle boxes and get rid of all the sinkers and jigs manufac-



Spring cleaning day

tured with lead. We are all good at putting things off. Without a resolute personal decision to get this done, it's not going to happen. Even with good intentions, it's quite confusing!

How exactly is a person supposed to go about this? Let's dive in; I will take you past the PR slogan and show you how to start. We begin with a look in the mirror.

## Those Old Tackle Boxes

I somehow have collected four old tackle boxes on a shelf in the garage. When my kids would gift me a new Rapala, it always went in the newest one that I take to the cabin. Then 12 years ago, I inherited my dad's old tackle box when he passed away, along with one that appears to be my grandfather's. Really old. There's also an old rusty metal tackle box full of random stuff I picked up for a song 25 years ago at a garage sale. I know some of the old sinkers inside are made from lead, because it says so right on the outside of one package. But 99% of this stuff is unmarked. It's high time to go through this.

The old gray sinkers and old painted heavy jigs are undoubtedly made of lead, cheap and malleable, still a manufacturer's go-to today.



**Old Rapala made of balsa wood**

The Rapala lures declare they are "Made of Balsa" so that's a relief. The metal spoons, I'm guessing, are steel because they jump on to my large magnet. The plastic lures and wood bass plugs should be OK...no? How can you tell? Look for

dull gray metal.

That's the first clue—lead is not magnetic, so it's easy to verify my suspicions on sinkers and jigs with my big magnet, and start a box for the County Hazardous Waste Collection Site. There may be some larger trolling lures with zinc, brass or lead in them, but the experts say the real danger to our loons is with those smaller weights that resemble small pebbles. If all of us could just focus on replacing these with non-toxic sinkers and jigs made from tungsten, tin, bismuth or



**Using a magnet to test for lead**

steel, we will have done our part.

I also found lead sinkers built into long metal stringers; those will have to go too. For anyone who hasn't heard why... I will go through it with updates on all fronts.

## A Massive Problem that Hasn't Gone Away

The Michigan DNR estimates that 470-million lead sinkers are produced each year for anglers in the U.S. That's an estimated 2,700 tons of lead. It takes just one lead sinker or jig to kill a loon after it mistakes it for a pebble on the lake bottom. Loons use pebbles in their gizzards to help grind up their food. By instinct, they will seek out small pebbles (or swallow a sinker or jig on or near the lake bottom).

In February 2026, at the Tufts Wildlife Clinic in Massachusetts, veterinarian Dr. Mark Pokras completed the 5,000th loon necropsy he's performed since 1987. Over nearly four decades, Pokras found 28% of the

**Continued on next page**

## Tackle...from page 5

dead loons had been poisoned after consuming lead sinkers or jigs. Researchers are finding the rate of poisoning is similar across multiple northern states including Minnesota.

Dr. Pokras' conclusion: if we can convince people to stop using lead sinkers and jigs, we can *significantly improve the survival chances* of our loon population.

Fishermen want to get their bait down where the fish are swimming, and for decades, lead sinkers and weights have been their perfect solution and have been the industry standard. Experts estimate we are spending \$87.5-million each year in the U.S. on lead sinkers. Even though there has been an urgent push encouraging sportsmen to switch from lead to non-toxic weights like tungsten or tin or bismuth for decades, it has been slow going. That's because lead is cheap.

Lindy Tackle moved to the front of the crusade in May 2024 by pledging to go lead-free with all of its tackle products by 2027. Northland Tackle of Bemidji is also in a transition away from lead, and now features a lot of products made from tungsten, which is non-toxic. For a manufacturer, tungsten is four times more expensive than lead, so prices at retail are going to be higher. The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) now has a website list of 157 manufacturers and retailers with links to help you find new lead-free tackle. You can buy replacements on-line.

### *New Sinkers and Jigs*

Let's say you really prefer to do this in-person, so you head to the store intending to go non-toxic. Can a person actually find a sinker or jig that doesn't have lead in it? I phoned ahead to a couple of retail clerks near Lake Vermilion to ask about their inventory. (This is what you'd call an unscientific survey.)

At the Y Store south of Lake Vermilion, the clerk on duty said "I honestly have no idea" if the sinkers on the shelf there were lead or tin or tungsten. After going over to look at what was for sale, he said "there's no labeling at all" other than the description in English, followed by a version in Spanish.



At Odegaard's (Fuel & Food) in Tower, a clerk said he knows the store has "tried to move in that direction" to get rid of fishing tackle products with lead. "But I'm sure some of the older stuff back there might have lead in it." This is why.

If you're one of those people who head to their local big box store hoping for the best prices, this is what you'll find. Dozens of bags of inexpensive jigs and lures of all kinds, and virtually every one of them had a warning that it either contained lead or a substance that might cause cancer.

Some of the jigs were simply balls of lead with hooks attached.

But in a far corner, there was an area featuring sinkers made of tin and steel, made by Eagle Claw. This is real progress!

Even many of the more elaborate lures came with cancer warnings. My big takeaway—lead tackle is pervasive in our stores. A retailer like Cabela's or Bass Pro Shops might have a better selection of tungsten, tin or steel tackle on display.

Searching online is less frustrating. VMC Rapala offers tungsten jigs and the typical range is \$7.49-\$11.99 each. Cabela's offers a 72-piece case of split-



**Kris Winkelman & Steve Renneberg, Arrowhead Outdoors, Ely**

bismuth is better, but expensive.

“I use tungsten jigs myself because they are non-toxic and I think they work a little better than lead,” Hanson noted. “The smaller profile to weight ratio lets them go a little deeper with less size. They also show up well on a depth finder, so I can see where my bait is. This holds true for tungsten bullet weights for Lindy rigging as well. It’s not easy to get people to spend more money, when lead is a tried-and-true cheaper option.”

What do we have to do to get lead sinkers and jigs out of our stores? Because lead is so much cheaper, evidently it will require novel ideas or tough laws. In 1987, Great Britain banned lead sinkers under one ounce in fishing tackle, and since then the endangered mute swan population has doubled.

Circling back to that Minnesota MPCA program Hanson mentioned. It literally has been paying retailers to help them make the switch to offer tungsten tackle, with 45% rebates, up to \$3,000 per location. It’s funded by the Deepwater Horizon oil spill settlement of 2016. In the Cook-Virginia-Tower-Ely region, only one store had taken advantage of the rebates offered in the 2022-2024 program cycle—Arrowhead Outdoors of Ely. In all, 13 businesses benefited from the rebates to switch.

“We try to guide people to lead-free tackle,” said Kris Winkelman of Arrowhead Outdoors. “It is more expensive. We try to explain why we’re doing it, fish health, loon health, other birds’ health. And we do get positive reaction. But it’s been difficult. It’s mainly the price.”

Kris, a cousin of renowned Minnesota Fishing Hall of Famer Babe Winkelman, said as an outfitter for people heading into the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness, it helps there’s an awareness that lead tackle is strongly discouraged in adjacent Quetico Provincial Park in Ontario.

“The reason we used the rebates to stock lead-free

**Continued on next page**



**Fishing tackle**

shot sinkers with four different sizes for \$8.99, and they are made of non-toxic tin.

If you’ll be staying at one of Lake Vermilion’s resorts this year, ask them to help you find non-toxic lead-free sinkers and jigs. In past seasons, some had their own tackle and bait shops, including Muskego

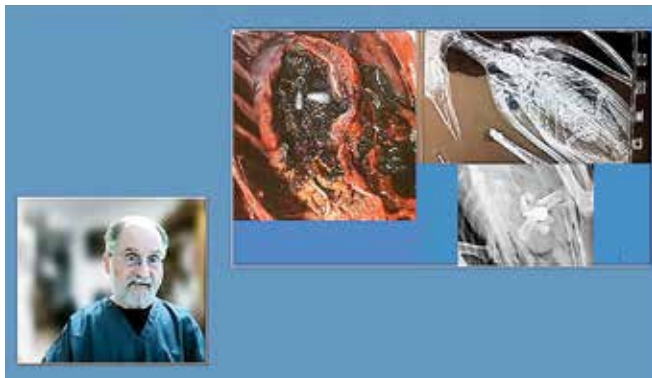
Point Resort, Fortune Bay Marina, Gruben’s Marina & Resort, and Pehrson Lodge Resort.

“We have a few tungsten jigs and sinkers in our tackle shop,” said Eric Hanson, the owner of Pehrson Lodge Resort. “They do not sell well due to the high price. We get free samples from MPCA periodically which we give to people to help make them aware of non-lead options.”

Hanson said he takes part in the MPCA’s program to help tackle shops reduce the wholesale cost of non-toxic weights. His own observations: tungsten is still expensive, tin is a less appealing option because “it is much lighter than lead, but it does work.” He said

## Tackle...from page 7

tackle, is that our customers were asking for it,” said Steve Renneberg. “They had seen it on the news, that loons had been dying.” Renneberg noted however that most stores won’t carry a product if they can’t move it in large volumes. And that’s why some stores don’t even carry lead-free tackle at all. There’s still not enough demand for it in 2026.



**Dr. Mark Pokras.** Image from YouTube courtesy of [fishleadfree.ca](http://fishleadfree.ca) and Tufts University/Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine

## Warnings, Bans, Buy-back Programs, Tackle Exchanges

As Dr. Mark Pokras observes, we have known for 3,000 years that lead is toxic to living things. But there are different ideas on how best to confront this danger. California led the way with warnings on packaging about cancer-causing substances, but there’s resistance there to an outright ban on lead tackle.

New Hampshire, Maine, Massachusetts, Vermont and New York have all taken steps to ban small lead sinkers and jigs but they have different approaches.



### Lead warning on a lure

Vermont and New York have outlawed small lead pieces weighing 0.5 ounces or less. The other three have all targeted sinkers and jigs one ounce or less. Maine has been allowing the use of painted lead jigs so far but a total ban on them will begin September 1.

Maine Audubon is partnering with other groups to hold “tackle exchanges” to help get the lead weights out of tackle boxes. New Hampshire has been staging lead tackle buy-back programs, giving out \$20 vouchers using donations from the Loon Preservation Committee.

Minnesota has tried that approach too. Using funds from that Gulf of Mexico oil spill legal settlement, the MPCA is again this year offering to help organizations willing to host tackle exchanges. Old lead tackle is collected for disposal, and sample kits of non-toxic sinkers and jigs are given out. Even this idea is not new—back in July of 2006, Northwoods Bait & Tackle in Cook held a lead tackle exchange. But alternatives to lead tackle have not won out—even there. “People don’t want to pay that crazy price (for tungsten),” said one fisherman in Cook.

## Climbing a steep hill

Loon protectors face a steep uphill climb on the threat posed by lead in fishing tackle.

It’s a marathon. We can’t see the finish line. But we can put one foot in front of another.



# Vermilion

By Molly McGlennen

**The red eye  
of a loon  
for vision,  
depths of water**

**who can say  
what will pass  
as, protection  
reeds**

**edges of place  
are only  
temporary,  
circling**

**filters the blues  
and greens  
as they have  
always done**

**dives for minutes  
crayfish, light  
refracted, what could  
be slowed**

**just enough  
to catch a meal  
or your eye,  
indelible flash,**

**a crimson ribbon  
ablaze, crossing  
the lake  
where you stand**

**watching  
just then  
with the grasses  
from shore.**

*“The lake was originally called Onamaniig which means ‘ochre’ because it was remembered by Anishinaabeg as a place that the people of the Red Ochre culture lived.” — Margaret Noodin*

## *About this poem*

“Vermilion is one of the largest lakes in northern Minnesota. Official state documents boast its capacity for settler recreation, the ‘lake of the sunset glow.’ The lake was already named, however, before French fur traders ever translated what they deemed discovery. As Ojibwe language scholar, poet, and friend Margaret Noodin told me, the Anishinaabeg knew and named the place in a storied and cartographically rich way. For Native peoples, the land is carefully remembered and related to. Those are the stories that I am interested in telling through poetry, the ones that orient our relationship to places on Indigenous terms.” – Molly McGlennen

Molly McGlennen is a poet of Anishinaabe descent and the author of *Our Bearings* (University of Arizona Press, 2020); *Fried Fish and Flour Biscuits* (Salt Publishing, 2010); and *Creative Alliances: The Transnational Designs of Indigenous Women’s Poetry* (University of Oklahoma Press, 2014), which won the 2015 Beatrice Medicine Award for Outstanding Scholarship in American Indian Studies. Originally from Minneapolis, Minnesota, she is an Associate Professor of English and Native American Studies at Vassar College in Poughkeepsie, New York, where she currently lives.

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Humans have inhabited Minnesota for over 12,000 years, and the Red Ocher people lived in the Great Lakes area between 1000 BCE and 400 BCE. To learn more, check out:

<https://www.uwlax.edu/mvac/pre-european-people/woodland-tradition/red-ocher-culture/>.

<https://mn.gov/admin/archaeologist/the-public/mn-archaeology/prehistoric-period/>

# Status of the Lake Vermilion Fishery

## *2026 Angling Prospects*

**Authors: Matt Hennen, Large Lake Biologist - DNR Tower Area Fisheries & Dave Weitzel, Assistant Regional Fisheries Manager – NE Region**

### *Management Summary*

Lake Vermilion is managed to support a high-quality, multi-species fishery driven largely by strong natural reproduction for most species. The lake is intensively monitored and managed by the Minnesota DNR through long-term annual surveys, periodic creel surveys, stocking programs for Walleye and Muskellunge, ecological monitoring, outreach, and management planning activities. Harvest for most species is regulated using statewide seasons and limits except for Walleye, which has a four-fish limit with a 20–26-inch protected slot. Northern Pike are managed with the northeast zone regulation that allows a two-fish limit with a 30–40-inch protected slot.

Like many large lakes, Vermilion is dealing with aquatic invasive species. Zebra mussels are now considered established, based on the presence of larvae, even though adult mussels have not been documented. Keith Reeves, Tower Area Fisheries Supervisor states, “From a fish management perspective, we see continued signs of a strong Lake Vermilion fishery. Given that the Lake Vermilion fishery is in great shape and zebra mussels don’t do so well in low-calcium lakes like Vermilion, we optimistically anticipate no major effects to the fishery.” Rusty crayfish are also well established, particularly in East Vermilion, where they have altered habitat by reducing aquatic vegetation. Finally, spiny waterfleas may be encountered especially when trolling. For anglers, this means potential changes in fish location and an increased responsibility to prevent further spread. Cleaning boats and gear is not just a rule—it’s part of protecting the fishery.

### *2026 Angling Outlook*

Lake Vermilion stands out as a destination where anglers can target multiple species in one trip—and realistically succeed at several. Whether you’re after a meal of Walleyes, a trophy Muskie, or steady bass action, the lake offers a wide range of experiences. Lake Vermilion is composed of two major basins, East Vermilion (east of Oak Narrows) and West Vermilion (west of Oak Narrows). Each basin is slightly different in terms of habitat and fish communities. Lake Vermilion’s two basins can create distinct fishing experiences. West Vermilion generally offers higher fish numbers across several species, making it a strong choice for action and consistency. East Vermilion, on the other hand, often produces larger fish on average, appealing to anglers focused on size. The opposite is generally true when it comes to Walleyes, as East Vermilion generally has higher numbers, but West Vermilion produces a larger average size. Understanding this split can help anglers tailor their approach depending on whether they want numbers, size, or a mix of both.

### *Walleye*

Walleye fishing remains the backbone of the Vermilion experience. Survey data from 2025 showed one of the highest catch rates in over four decades. The 2026 season should be especially rewarding for anglers looking to harvest fish. Strong numbers of Walleyes in the 13–20-inch range mean plenty of legal fish under the protected slot. Fish in the 12–15-inch range are particularly abundant, providing good harvest opportunities.

At the same time, larger Walleyes are common enough to provide big fish opportunities. Fish over 20 inches are widely available, giving anglers a shot at memorable catches even while targeting smaller fish for harvest. The current regulation requires release of fish from 20 to 26 inches, with a four-



**Be aware of these standard 24-hour MN DNR gill-net sets on Lake Vermilion from late August through early September.**

fish limit and only one over 26 inches allowed. For anglers, that means a balanced fishery featuring good harvest opportunities without sacrificing the chance at bigger fish.

## *Muskellunge*

Muskies provide a world-class sport fishery on Lake Vermilion with the potential for trophy fish. Muskies are second only to Walleyes in terms of popularity for Lake Vermilion anglers. Recent surveys show an average size just under 45 inches, with over 40% of fish exceeding that mark. Fish over 50 inches are present in sufficient numbers to provide trophy opportunities. For anglers, this creates a classic Muskie experience: fewer strikes, but every one of them matters. Vermilion has earned its reputation as a world-class destination because those rare encounters can turn into truly exceptional fish.

## *Smallmouth Bass*

Smallmouth Bass are found throughout Lake Ver-

milion, and the population provides an important fishery. They are typically the third most sought after species by Lake Vermilion anglers behind Walleyes and Muskies. Results from the 2025 spring electro-fishing survey suggest numbers remain high which continues the upward trend over the last three decades. Anglers can expect steady action with fish in the 10–17-inch range, along with the occasional larger bass. The lake's two basins offer slightly different experiences. West Vermilion tends to produce more fish overall, while East Vermilion gives anglers a better shot at larger individuals. For anglers looking for numbers, action, and aggressive strikes, Smallmouth Bass are a dependable option throughout the season.

## *Largemouth Bass*

Largemouth Bass are not a primary draw on Vermilion, but they do offer a quiet alternative for anglers willing to seek them out. They are found mainly in West Vermilion in specific habitats. Numbers are

**Continued on next page**



**Former Tower Area Fisheries Specialist Kamden Glade takes in the view while electrofishing last fall.**

low, but the population appears stable or increasing. Most anglers treat them as a catch-and-release bonus rather than a target species.

## *Northern Pike*

Northern Pike are found in low abundance in Lake Vermilion, but anglers seeking them can find higher numbers in West Vermilion. Northern Pike are less abundant than in the past, but the fish that remain are generally larger. Regulations protecting mid-sized fish have shifted the population toward bigger individuals. Anglers can expect a lower catch rate, but with the possibility of occasional trophies. In 2025, sampled pike length averaged almost 27 inches with the largest fish measuring about 36 inches, suggesting anglers and spearers can find fish with a solid average size.

## *Panfish and Perch*

Yellow Perch numbers are currently below average,

but size is good. Anglers willing to search can still find fish over 10 inches, which are well worth keeping.

Black Crappies are generally a minor component of the Lake Vermilion fishery that can provide good fishing opportunities at certain times. Black Crappies are not abundant, but they run large. Fish average around 10 inches, with some exceeding 14 inches. West Vermilion holds more fish overall, though both basins can produce quality catches.

Bluegills can provide catch and harvest opportunities for anglers fishing Lake Vermilion. Typically, very few anglers come to Lake Vermilion seeking Bluegills, but they tend to be one of the most caught and harvested species in terms of total numbers. Fish over 9 inches are available throughout the lake, with higher numbers in West Vermilion.

# The Importance of our Team of AIS Sentries

Early detection of an invasive aquatic vegetation is an important strategy to contain or plan mitigation strategies. Starry stonewort is the most recent invasive species that has spread to over 30 waterbodies in Minnesota. Though an algae, it looks very similar to some of our native aquatic plants. It can form dense mats which can interfere with recreational use of a lake and compete with native plants. Its spread most likely occurs when fragments have not been properly removed from trailered boats, personal watercraft, docks, boat lifts, anchors, or other water-related equipment. Though it has never been eradicated from a U.S. lake



Nancy Watkins  
VLA Board Member/  
AIS Co-Leader

or river, early identification can lead to containment, reducing the risk of its spread.

The Vermilion Lake Association is fortunate to have a dedicated team of 12 volunteers known as sentries, who have volunteered their time monitoring 25 public and private watercraft launch sites for invasive vegetation. Screenings involve a rake toss to collect and inspect weeds. They are conducted monthly during the summer, beginning in the latter part of June and ending in late August or September. The VLA wishes to thank the following sentries who have participated in vegetation screens: Larry Clines, Rob Bryers, Byron Jackson, Frank Siskar, Bob McNamara, Paul Oberstar, Robert Ulseth, Jeff Heinmann, Dick Peach,



Rick Patterson, Sandy Ziglar, and Jack Marxhausen.

As Vermilion covers over 40,000 square acres, with multiple public and private launch sites, more sentries are always welcomed. Training is provided. Volunteers who wish to assist are given a rake and training materials from the University of Minnesota. We can never have enough eyes surveilling the lake for aquatic invasive species (AIS).

**Information on how to identify starry stonewort can be found on the DNR website**

<https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/invasives/aquaticplants/starrystonewort/index.html>

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Jessica Templeton, Communications Leader, Frazer Bay, [communications1@vermillionlakeassociation.org](mailto:communications1@vermillionlakeassociation.org)

Nancy Watkins, AIS Co-Leader, 320-291-2363, [2bitfarm@gmail.com](mailto:2bitfarm@gmail.com)

John Yocum, Fisheries Leader, Daisy Bay, 407-873-3883, [snootman@aol.com](mailto:snootman@aol.com)

# Planting to Keep Our Lake Healthy

In the springtime, our thoughts turn to the outdoors and we look forward to our time at the lake. Spring is a great time to start planning to improve your property to help preserve our beautiful lake. Whether you are new to lake property ownership or part of a family history on the lake, small improvements can make a big difference. Maybe this is the year to install a rain barrel and use the water to maintain your flower baskets. Or, perhaps increase the plants and bushes along your shoreline to absorb runoff and discourage geese from wandering onto your property.



Sara Bright  
VLA Board Member/  
Lake Steward Program  
Leader

As you plan your improvements, you may need to think about the wildlife that will also enjoy your new plants. Deer can be an especially frustrating impediment to the success of a new garden area because they may see it as a dining opportunity. While a temporary high fence or 'deer off' application to make the plants taste bad can be effective, you can also choose plants and bushes that are not a favorite part of the whitetailed deer diet. In the spring, deer are focused on eating the new growth of grasses and



Red Osier Dog-  
wood, iNaturalist

leafy plants. It can be very tempting to install plants which we are familiar with from 'city gardening', such as hostas and day lilies. However, these can be deer candy when the plants are young in the spring. There are better choices which are native to our part of Minnesota and both helpful to pollinators and wildlife while also being deer-resistant.

If you have a sunny area to plant, consider some of these deer-resistant plants for your shoreline area: yarrow (*Achillea* spp.), columbine (*Aquilegia canadensis*), coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea*), pearly everlasting (*Anaphalis margaritacea*), red osier dogwood (*Cornus sericea*) and nannyberry (*Viburnum lentago*). The more variety you have in your garden, the less likely the deer will eat it all because they have more to choose from.

In part shade or shady areas, some choices include: spreading dogbane (*Apocynum androsaemifolium*), bristly sarsaparilla (*Aralia Hispida*), wild sarsaparilla (*Aralia nudicaulis*) and Canadian wild ginger (*Asarum canadense*), which is a great ground cover.

## Resources to get started...

The North St. Louis County Soil & Water Conservation District has an annual native plant and tree sale, as well as information about tree and native plant care:

<https://www.nslswcd.org/programs-services/annual-tree-sale/>

*Whatever plants you choose, try to take the long view. It may take a couple of years for plants to become firmly established in the short growing season we have. Be patient and willing to try something different if your first choices don't work out.*

University of Minnesota extension provides a good list of both native and non-native plants which are deer-damage resistant.

<https://extension.umn.edu/planting-and-growing-guides/white-tailed-deer-damage#deer-resistant-plants-1880560>

Northwest Michigan Invasive Species Network has a more extensive list:

[https://www.habitatmatters.org/uploads/9/5/0/6/95066352/deer-resistant\\_plants.pdf](https://www.habitatmatters.org/uploads/9/5/0/6/95066352/deer-resistant_plants.pdf)

Wildflowers of Minnesota website (<https://www.minnesotawildflowers.info/>) is a great resource for finding plants for our area.

Wild Ones Arrowhead (<https://arrowhead.wildones.org/>) also has a wealth of information relating to plants in the arrowhead region of Minnesota. Click on 'resources' for information and regional sources for native plants.



# Get Ready for the 34th Annual Lake Vermilion Antique and Classic Boat Show

**I**t's never too early to start planning for the 34th annual Lake Vermilion Boat Show! This annual event is held on Labor Day Weekend, on Sunday, September 6 this year.

We are always delighted to have the Vermilion Lake Association as an honorary sponsor. Their presence at the show allows the Association to display and educate the public about its achievements, goals and future projects. We are fortunate that Lake Vermilion has an organization that is so dedicated to the welfare of the lake. Visit with them at their booth to learn how to become a lake steward and learn how to “get the lead out.”

This event is open to the public and we encourage everyone to come and see the beautiful boats and chat with the owners. Vote for your favorite boat. Stay for the awards presentation at 4 p.m.

We are always looking for those interested in displaying their antique or classic boats, whether they're wood, fiberglass, handmade or homemade, in the water or land display, or perhaps you have boat-related gear you are looking to sell. Please contact us for more information.

Happy boating and see you at the show!

Sandy Jackson

Jeff Larson and Dana Hein

Mark Ludlow

Contact us at: [lakevermilionboatshow@aol.com](mailto:lakevermilionboatshow@aol.com)

# PIT Tags Provide Information on Vermilion's Muskellunge

By Kamden Glade, Minnesota  
Department of Natural Resources

Lake Vermilion is widely considered a world-class fishing destination for several species, and muskellunge (musky) might just be at the top of that list. The population was established through stocking by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) beginning in the mid-1980s. This newly developed fishery ultimately gave anglers the opportunity to catch a fish of a lifetime in a picturesque setting that would normally require crossing the border into Canada. A combination of a maturing population, increasing fishing pressure, and variability in stocking resulted in angler reports of decreased satisfaction with the musky population in the 2010s, which led to an increased emphasis on ensuring consistent stocking in the 2017 Lake Vermilion Fisheries Management Plan. This updated plan established an annual quota of at least 3,000 musky fingerlings stocked every year with the opportunity for surplus stocking when extra fish are available. That quota has been filled every year except 2020 when the COVID-19 pandemic prevented DNR staff from collecting any musky eggs statewide.

Simultaneously, advances in fish-tagging technologies were starting to provide biologists with new ways to evaluate stocking strategies and learn more about



**Mike Riggs, a musky angler and cabin owner in Richie Bay, uses a scanner to check his catch for a PIT tag.**

fish populations. Starting in 2017, every musky stocked in Lake Vermilion was given a Passive Integrated Transponder (PIT) tag before it was released. These small tags are essentially the same as the microchip that's in your cat or dog. The tags are implanted under the skin near the dorsal fin of the fish, making it impossible to know if a fish is tagged or not without a specialized scanner that uses radio waves to activate the tag and retrieve the unique number. DNR staff will check fish for tags during a targeted musky population assessment starting in spring 2027, but we also recognize that dedicated anglers are on the water throughout the fishing season every year and could help provide useful information. To start learning more about stocked musky

in Lake Vermilion, we purchased PIT tag scanners with funds provided by a Hugh C. Becker grant administered by the Twin Cities Chapter of Muskies, Inc. and donations from private individuals. These scanners were distributed to musky fishing guides, resorts, seasonal cabin owners, and local anglers in an effort to work together to collect additional information on the Lake Vermilion musky population. Initial returns were promising, with 124 tagged fish reports throughout the 2025 fishing season. These reports represented 69 fish that were tagged and stocked from 2017-2024 and 46 fish that were tagged during the last netting assessment in 2019, with 10 of the individuals caught and reported twice over the course of the summer.

## Stocking Insights

Fish that were stocked as recently as the fall of 2024 were reported during the 2025 fishing season, but the vast majority were stocked between 2017 and 2021. On average, these stocked fish were reaching lengths of 26 inches during their age-3 summer, 33 inches at age-4, 38.5 inches at age-6, 40.5 inches at age-7, and nearly 42 inches by age-8. Reported fish ranged from 8-14 inches when they were stocked with an average of around 11 inches, nearly a full inch larger than the average of all fish stocked since 2017. This isn't surprising, as recent research in Minnesota and neighboring states shows that stocking larger fish tends to improve survival. That said, additional data collected in the coming years will paint a clearer picture on the relationship between size at stocking and survival for musky in Lake Vermilion.

Another interesting tidbit was insight into how much these stocked fish were moving throughout the lake. While PIT tags do not provide detailed information on location or fish movement, we do record general locations for each capture event to look at broad patterns. Of the 69 stocked fish that were reported, only 5 moved through Oak Narrows to a new side of the lake between when they were stocked and when they were caught. In fact, the vast majority of these fish were caught relatively close to where they were stocked, with several anglers reporting that they could see the stocking location from the spot they caught the fish!



**So far, most of the stocked musky have been caught fairly close to where they were stocked. Keagan Glade caught this 33-inch fish in Wakemup Narrows last September. The fish was 10.9 inches when it was stocked at the Muskego Point resort access in October 2021.**

### *Natural Reproduction*

In addition to the 124 tagged fish reports, anglers also reported another 130 fish that did not have a tag, with lengths ranging from 24-54 inches. Of these fish, 15 had a fin clip, indicating they were

stocked prior to 2017. The origins of the remaining fish are difficult to determine for sure, but we can use clues based on the growth rate observed for the tagged fish to make a good guess.

**Continued on next page**

## *Musky...from previous page*

As mentioned previously, fish that were stocked in 2017 and recaptured in 2025 had an average length of nearly 42 inches. Individual growth rates varied, but most of the fish from that age-class were at least 40 inches by the end of the summer. Since these are the oldest stocked fish that were PIT tagged, and since previous research shows PIT tag retention is nearly 100%, we can assume that fish under 40 inches without a tag are the result of natural reproduction. Of the 115 untagged fish without a fin clip, 40 were less than 40 inches. Most of the musky observed in netting assessments since 2001 have not had clipped fins, providing further evidence that both stocking and natural reproduction contribute to the musky population on the lake. Determining how much of the population comes from each source will be a major objective of upcoming work and will play an important role in determining future stocking and management decisions.

### *Next Steps*

DNR staff will be dedicating significant time and resources over the next several years to learn more about the Lake Vermilion musky population. In 2026, we will redistribute PIT tag readers to anglers before the fishing season starts to continue gathering information on captured fish, and a creel survey will provide insights on angler demographics, fishing pressure, and catch rates. In 2027 and 2028, we will be conducting a targeted netting assessment of the musky population with several goals in mind, including further evaluating the stocking of PIT tagged fingerlings, determining recruitment, growth, and mortality rates, and estimating the number of adult musky in the lake. If we can get enough anglers involved, we hope to incorporate angler reports of both tagged and untagged fish with the information we gather during spring netting. We also plan to work with other DNR and university researchers to study musky diets and the Lake Vermilion food web. This project cannot be completed with live fish, and we are hoping to get enough fish from angling, natural, and other incidental mortalities. But we need your help! If you happen to see a dead musky of any size, please let us know as soon as possible. Any informa-



**Since PIT tags are implanted under the skin, they can only be detected with specialized scanners. Anglers who fish for musky on Lake Vermilion are encouraged to purchase a scanner or borrow one from MN DNR to help gather information on these tagged fish.**

tion will be helpful, but waypoints or GPS coordinates give us the best chance of locating the fish in a timely manner.

If you are a musky angler, or a resort that caters to musky anglers, and would like a PIT tag scanner, please reach out. We may have extra scanners available for you to borrow, or we can help you find a scanner that would work for less than the cost of most musky lures. You can also contact me with information regarding dead musky locations, or any questions related to ongoing or upcoming musky research.

Kamden Glade, Fisheries Research Scientist

[kamden.glade@state.mn.us](mailto:kamden.glade@state.mn.us)

Phone: 218-328-8806

# In Honor and In Memory

Donations have been made, Dec. 13, 2025 - March 23, 2026, to the Vermilion Lake Association in memory of or in honor of the following :

Allen Williams

Alpha Smaby & Marit Smaby Nowlin

Ann Cownie

Arlene Branwall

Arny Engman

Becky (Love) Elder

Daniel Machacek

Dennis Highby

Doug Wallace & Mike Huseby

Dr. Bayard French

Duane and Darlene Kittelson

Elizabeth Holmes

Grant Hughes Jr.

Helen Hall Marturano

Herman & Agnes Mesojedec

Hulda & Billy Peterson

James E Aysta

Janice Elliott

Jerry Nagorski

Jessica Templeton's Birthday

John & Ruth Stapleton

Keith "Schweiby" Schweiberger

Laurance Kleven

Marilyn Cummings

Marion Dearlove, Tom Oyster & Robert Gould

Mel Hintz

Myrtle White

Ramsis Gobran

Ronald Pecha

Roy & Vi Westman

Thor Levinson

Tim Flanagan

Tim Flanagan and the Bystrom Bay picnic site

Todd Olson

Tom Mageau

Trevor Reichel

William Teeter

## Dock Signs Show Member Support for our Mission.... to protect and improve



The 12x18 inch sign is designed to attach in either corner of a dock front with self-tapping sheet metal screws or stainless hose clamps.

Some members are choosing

to mount them on their boat houses as well, or even at the entrance of a driveway. These striking aluminum signs with UV protection can be ordered at

<https://www.vermilionlakeassociation.org/merchandise/membership-signs/>



## Vermilion Lake Association Caps Now Available

Wear your new hat proudly to show your support for your lake association. The price is right!

Cap prices are \$20, plus \$7 shipping per order. When you order 3 or more, the shipping will be \$9.00. Free local pickup is available.

Order online at [www.vermilionlakeassociation.org/merchandise/caps/](http://www.vermilionlakeassociation.org/merchandise/caps/)

For more information, contact Jerry via email at [leppeje16@gmail.com](mailto:leppeje16@gmail.com)



# 2026 Minnesota DNR Creel Survey

**T**he Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Tower Area Fisheries staff will be conducting an angler creel survey on Lake Vermilion starting on the May 9 fishing opener and ending on September 30, 2026. DNR creel clerks will be traveling the lake



Matt Hennen  
Large Lake  
Specialist DNR

by boat and randomly selecting anglers to interview during the survey. If you are selected, the clerks will ask a few questions about your fishing trip for that day. Interviews will also include creel clerks requesting to take

measurements of kept fish. In total, an interview should take 5-10 minutes. Additionally, Minnesota DNR Enforcement pilots will conduct aerial boat counts to obtain information on angling effort.

Fisheries managers rely on creel surveys to collect information on fishing pressure, catch, harvest, and size distribution of several important fish species in Lake Vermilion. This information, when combined with scientific data collected during standard fisheries population assessments, is used to make informed fisheries management decisions. Angler participation is an essential part of this study, so we ask that you

are patient with the creel clerks and provide information that is as accurate as possible. To aid that we ask anglers to keep mental notes of the time their fishing trip starts each day, the duration of any breaks they take, and any fish they catch ranging from the smallest yellow perch to the largest musky. Since 1984, 13 open water creel surveys have been conducted on Lake Vermilion with the most recent being in 2021.

Requests for additional information or questions can be directed to Matt Hennen at the Tower Area DNR Fisheries Office at 218-300-7810 or by emailing [matthew.hennen@state.mn.us](mailto:matthew.hennen@state.mn.us).

# Thanks to all our business members

Our organization's work to protect and improve Lake Vermilion is a team effort! We appreciate the financial support provided by our business members, their employees who volunteer to help with our community service projects, and our business members' willingness to share our story with their customers.

SPRING BAY RESORT

HEAD-O-LAKE RESORT

THE TIRE SHOP

BROTEN CONSTRUCTION INC

RANGE RELIABLE AGENCY, INC

LAKE VERMILION HOUSEBOATS

HAGEMEYER & CO

PEHRSON LODGE RESORT

RUSSELL HYPPA LTD

JANISCH REALTY

RETREAT LODGE

GRANDVIEW LODGE

EAST DHU RIVER SAWMILL

LAFAVOR HEATING LLC

WHITE EAGLE RESORT

MANICK DOCKS

NORTHERN WATERS COMPANY

PANICHI GUIDE SERVICE

PIKE BAY LODGE

ALS CONSULTING LLC

MUSKEGO POINT RESORT

ARONSON BOAT WORKS

BIC REALTY

CAMP VERMILION

COOK CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

CROSSWATER AT LAKE VERMILION

FOREST LANE RESORT LLC

LAKE VERMILION GUIDES LEAGUE

LAKE VERMILION RESORT ASSN

LORI MELBOSTAD, REALTOR

LUDLOWS ISLAND RESORT

NELSON WILLIAMS LININGS INC

TIMBUKTU MARINA

TOWER-SOUDAN INSURANCE AGENCY

VERMILION LAND OFFICE - TOWER

W.A. FISHER

WASCHKE FAMILY CHEVROLET

WHISPERING WINDS RESORT

ZUPS FOOD MARKET

DENNIE CONSTRUCTION

VERMILION LAND OFFICE - COOK

WHEEL CITY MOTORS INC

YOUR BOAT CLUB

MARTINSON ELECTRIC

EAGLE DOCKS

## Volunteers Needed!

Do you love Vermilion Lake and enjoy connecting people with meaningful opportunities? The Vermilion Lake Association (VLA) is seeking a **Volunteer Coordinator** to continue our mission of protecting and improving our lake.

In this role, you will:

- Join the VLA Board
- Help members find volunteer projects that match their interests
- Support and strengthen our efforts to protect and improve Lake



Vermilion

This is a rewarding opportunity to make a lasting impact, meet engaged community members, and help guide volunteer efforts that truly matter.

If you are interested in volunteering in other capacities, let us know! There are plenty of ways to support the VLA, including leading our loon program, serving as an AIS sentry, contributing to our newsletter, and more.

**To learn more, contact Andrine Lemieux:**

Phone: 218-979-7893

[volunteercoordinator@vermilion-lakeassociation.org](mailto:volunteercoordinator@vermilion-lakeassociation.org)

Your leadership can help shape the future of our lake!

# Let's Celebrate YOU!

Every June the VLA Board hosts a dinner to honor and thank all of our amazing and generous volunteers. Without our volunteers, the VLA would not be able to achieve our mission to protect, improve, and enhance our lives as visitors, homeowners, and businesses on Lake Vermilion.

This year, as in past years, we will meet at Camp Vermilion's Voyageur Dining Hall for a spectacular meal prepared by the camp's chef. The dinner will be held on Wednesday, June 24. We will meet at 4 p.m. for some time to touch base with friends and fellow volunteers. Dinner will be served at 5:30 p.m., and your volunteer coordinator will review last year's achievements and describe new summer 2026 goals. The dinner is free for volunteers.

Please note that we need an accurate count of attendance to support our chef's planning of the meal. RSVP is mandatory and can be done by emailing [volunteercoordinator@vermilionlakeassociation.org](mailto:volunteercoordinator@vermilionlakeassociation.org) or



by phone at 218-979-7893. Watch for emails in early June with additional information. We look forward to seeing you there!



## Summer Job Opportunity

### Watercraft Inspectors Needed!

The North St Louis Soil & Water Conservation District will be hiring up to 18 Watercraft Inspectors to assist in the areas Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) prevention program during the summer of 2026

**Position Title:** Aquatic Invasive Species Watercraft Inspector (Level 1 & 2)  
**Position Status:** Seasonal  
**Duration:** May – September/October (Flexible)  
**Starting Pay:** \$16.25 per hour (Level 1 Inspector) / \$17.25 per hour (Level 2 Inspector)  
**Hours:** Flexible, 40hrs max per week (average 16-32 hrs/week)  
 Primarily working weekends and holidays

**Position Role:** Inspect watercraft entering and exiting lakes around areas of Northern St. Louis County; Teach watercraft users how to self-inspect their watercraft; Utilize tablets to conduct and record survey information; Educate the public about aquatic invasive species and issues they create; Distribute information and promotional materials to watercraft users; Conduct watercraft decontaminations using hot high-pressure water (level 2 inspectors only)

**Minimum requirements:** At least 18 years of age; Valid Class D drivers license and reliable transportation; Ability to complete MNDNR Watercraft Inspector trainings; Ability to travel to various water accesses around North St. Louis County; Must be willing to work outside in various weather; Available to primarily work weekends and holidays starting May 2026

## HURRY, LIMITED POSITIONS AVAILABLE!

Apply Online or Stop By The Always There Staffing Office Before May 22<sup>nd</sup>

[www.alwaystherestaffing.com](http://www.alwaystherestaffing.com)  
 (Search for Watercraft Inspector)

Always There Staffing Office  
 3131 1<sup>st</sup> Ave. / Hibbing, MN  
 Call: 218-440-1022



**Always There Staffing, Inc.**

**Questions? Please contact: Jon Utecht,**  
 NSL SWCD AIS  
 Program Coordinator  
[jon@nslswcd.org](mailto:jon@nslswcd.org)  
 218-288-6142

# SHORE LUNCH SITES LAKE VERMILION



The Vermilion Lake Association (VLA) developed and maintains these shore lunch sites in cooperation with the US Forest Service and the Minnesota DNR. For additional copies of this map or for information about other VLA activities, go to [www.VermilionLakeAssociation.org](http://www.VermilionLakeAssociation.org).

By Mike Ptak, VLA Volunteer

Before you know it, we'll be back on the water of Lake Vermilion. Just a quick reminder: there are nine shore lunch sites available to enjoy for day use (see the map for locations). Please get out and use them! They make a good rest stop for lunch and a bathroom break when you're out enjoying the lake. Remember the "Leave No Trace" principles:

- Plan Ahead and Prepare: Bring firewood and lighters; toilet paper (dispose in latrine).
- Dispose of Waste Properly: Take your garbage with you (including food waste). Do not put garbage in the latrine.
- Leave What You Find: Do not cut firewood at the site.
- Minimize Campfire Impacts: Use the provided grates and douse the fire thoroughly before leaving the site.

- Respect Wildlife: Do not feed wildlife or leave left-over food at the site. We don't want to attract bears.
- Be Considerate of Others: Sites are meant for short-term use; do not monopolize the site all day. Many sites have more than one picnic table and extra long docks. Share the site with another group if possible.
- We have many volunteers who help keep these sites clean and comfortable. If you ever notice any issues or have concerns, or would like to volunteer to help, don't hesitate to call the shore lunch site leaders. (East end: Mike Ptak, 612-986-7984; West end: Rick Teeter, 763-360-6728).
- One word of caution: When visiting the Bystrom Bay site, be aware of some hazards in the bay. There are a dozen or so 8' deadheads that move around during the summer season. Rarely are they all visible so be careful when heading to the dock. If anyone knows of other shore lunch site hazards, please let one of us know and we'll get the word out to boaters.



Vermilion Lake Association  
PO Box 236  
Cook, MN, 55723

## Volunteers Make the Difference

The Vermilion Lake Association has been fortunate over the years to have a dedicated group of leaders and volunteers to staff our important activities. We are grateful for their help.

Please consider joining this team. We have needs for both workers and leaders, for those with only a few hours to spare, and for those who can make a larger time commitment.

If you think you may be interested, please contact Andrine Lemieux, VLA Volunteer Program Leader, at 218-979-7893 (cell) or [volunteercoordinator@vermilionlakeassociation.org](mailto:volunteercoordinator@vermilionlakeassociation.org).

### Vermilion Lake Association

Lisa Tamte, Member Records • P.O. Box 236 • Cook MN 55723  
ltamte@gmail.com • 612-475-3064

Membership year runs from January 1st - December 31<sup>st</sup> 2026

New Member    Renewal    Gift Membership

Membership level

\$20.00 Household  
 \$50.00 Business or Organization

Member Name \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse/Partner Name \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address:

Street \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email (requested) \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (requested) \_\_\_\_\_

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 [VermilionLakeAssociation.org](http://VermilionLakeAssociation.org). We're pretty sure you'll like our vision for the future and the work we have underway now to make Lake Vermilion even better.

Please mail a check with the form on this page or join at our website using PayPal or a credit card.

The Vermilion Lake Association is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

## Yes, You CAN Become a Member

You do not have to be a property owner, resident, or an angler to become a member of the Vermilion Lake Association. Anyone who cares about improving and protecting our lake for future generations to continue to enjoy Lake Vermilion can join. You will get four colorful newsletters sent to your home per year, informing you of volunteer opportunities, protection efforts, and other current happenings at the lake.