



Briggs Lake Chain Association

Remembering the past Improving the future, promoting the care, improvement, and general welfare
of the

Briggs Lake Chain (Julia, Briggs, Rush, and Big Elk) and the adjoining and connecting watersheds

MAY 2023 LAKE REPORT

THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Brad Kipp email: bradkipp1@gmail.com cell: 612 810 6738

Greetings and Happy May Day,

I see a lot of activity around the lakes. Some of you are chasing dock tops and floating chairs. Those of you who are new to the lake are wondering do we always have high water flooding in the spring? I have been on the lake since 2000. Most years the water goes up a bit but does not overflow the banks. Spring 2022 and 2023 are the record setting exceptions.

The "snowbirds" are making their way home to open up their cabins for the season. All of us are tired of the recent gray cloudy cold rainy days and looking forward to some spring cleaning. The lakes area **garage sales are Thursday May 11th (early bird day) - Sunday 14th**. Let's all purge our stuff and hope our neighbors will buy some of it. Then we can go to their sale and find the treasures they are parting with. Have fun. I checked the **Palmer Township website and saw that clean-up day this year is Saturday May 20th 7:00AM - 12:00PM**.

We are still in search of a treasurer. Diane Tiegs let us know she is retiring as our treasurer effective May 1st. She is retired from working. She wants more flexibility and time to do all those things retired people never seem to have the time to do. I can relate to that. Sometimes I wonder, "How did I ever have time to go to work?"

Diane has done a terrific job as treasurer. Our finances are in order and on budget. All the records are on spreadsheets that are easy to read and understand. It should be an easy transition for the next treasurer to take over. She has volunteered to train and assist her successor. I know the Treasurer position does involve some time and we all appreciate everything

she has done for the BLCA. I asked her " On average how many hours a month she spent doing treasurer stuff". She thought it was around 8 - 10 hours.

Anyone know of a good candidate we should reach out to. I think the board is open to any and all suggestions or recommendations. Please contact any board member or call or email me directly.

The BLCA Healthy Lakes committee has organized our first [Youth Paddle Event](#). It is planned for Saturday morning June 3rd from 9:00 - 11:00. The purpose is educating kids around the lake to have fun and on the water and be safety conscious. See more details later in the Newsletter. **A BIG THANKS** to Ruth Thom & Naomi Kimball for planning and organizing this event. Another example of what volunteers are doing behind the scenes.

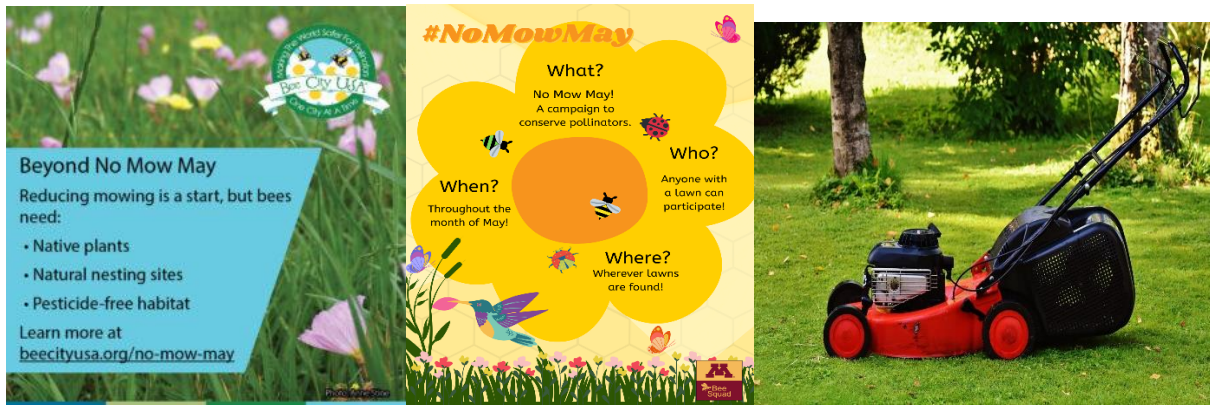
The semi- annual Highway 25 ditch clean-up is planned for Saturday May 27th. Meet at the townhall at 10:00am-- **WEATHER PERMITTING**. We sponsor a 3-mile section of Highway 25 and pick up the litter in the ditches once in the spring and again in the fall. Please contact Ruth & Brad Thom, event co-chairs, rathom@frontier.com for more information and to volunteer.

In addition to the Website <https://briggslakechainassociation.com> and Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/groups/BriggsLakeChainAssn/> we are now on Instagram [healthylakes_blca](#) Check it out and follow the BLCA

A big THANKS to all those who volunteer for events, projects, committees, and more to support our lakes. Later in the newsletter is the 2023 BLCA Committee Structure list of chairs for various events and committees. Please become involved and active in the BLCA.

Thanks, and Happy Mother's Day to all the Moms out there Brad





The Healthy Committee is promoting and encouraging all residents of the four lakes to participate in **NO MOW MAY**.

The goal of No Mow May is to **allow grass to grow unmown for the month of May, creating habitat and forage for early season pollinators.**

The main purpose of **No Mow May** is to encourage people to let spring flowers in their lawns bloom before mowing. Flowers you can commonly see blooming in lawns.

No Mow May doesn't just help pollinators, it can help your lawn for the better. By reducing the frequency in which you mow, your lawn can become more resilient to drought. Plus, it won't require as much watering.

Leaving our lawns unmown encourages a greater number and diversity of bees, researchers say. 'No Mow May' calls for people not to cut their grass for the entire month of May. The movement supports bees coming out of hibernation to find nectar by letting wildflowers grow on people's lawns.

Benefits of No Mow May:

Participating in No Mow May supports all of Minnesota's pollinators - Minnesota pollinators include native bees, butterflies, ants, flies, beetles, birds and more! Avoid mowing in early spring and during the month of May to protect overwinter habitat for threatened bee populations and other pollinators, while allowing flowering plants to grow rich in nectar and other key nutrients that serve as food for our pollinator friends during a time when needed most. By joining No Mow May, you can help support the health and diversity of native pollinator populations by providing the resources needed for pollinators to thrive.

In May, many bees are coming out of hibernation and need flowers to feed themselves and their babies.

The main purpose of No Mow May is to encourage people to let spring flowers in their lawns bloom before mowing. Flowers you can commonly see blooming in lawns in May include dandelions, white clover, and

creeping charlie. While many people view these flowers as weeds, some pollinators view them as food. Ideally, you can add to the mix and provide food for more pollinators by adding native plants. Early spring blooming native plants like violets and pussy toes can be a part of your bee lawn. **Plant diversity is key to supporting bee diversity**, so if you can, plant a wide variety of native spring blooming flowers, trees, and shrubs, like pussy willows, serviceberries, and bluebells. For blooms in your lawns after May, add self-heal, ground plum, lance leaf tick weed, or calico American aster.

Please consider being part of this program/project that Healthy Lakes is sponsoring.



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Do you have a French drain on or near your property????

Healthy Lakes is trying to identify the location of all storm drains around the lakes so that we can recruit volunteers to make sure they remain clear of debris and can function as intended. These drains were installed many years ago to prevent flooding, erosion, and excess run-off to our lakes.

Brad and Ruth Thom have volunteered to find and make a map of their locations. Please contact them if you have any information.

rathom@frontier.com

RECREATIONAL ENFORCEMENT

The Recreational Enforcement Division is responsible for the promotion of safety and the enforcement of laws, rules, and local ordinances related to recreational activities within the County. This includes the use of off-highway vehicles, watercraft, snowmobiles, and other specialized vehicles and equipment to carry out division duties, whether on land, water or ice. The division is responsible for law enforcement, safety instruction and promotion of safe-riding habits on the county's lakes, rivers and snowmobile trails.

Links to rules and regulations

[Minnesota Department of Natural Resources regulations on hunting, fishing, recreational vehicles](#)

[Sherburne County snowmobile regulations](#)

[Sherburne County ATV regulations](#)

Applications for special events and temporary structures (no fees for below services)

[Special Event Guide and Application](#)

[Temporary Structure Guide and Application](#)

[Watercraft Inspection Request](#)

Additional Duties

Other duties carried out by the Recreational Enforcement Division include:

- Investigation of recreational vehicle accidents
- Issuance of permits for temporary water structures and special events
- Participation in Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Firearms Safety, Snowmobile Safety, and ATV Safety classes
- Placement of navigational aids (buoys) in County waters
- Removal of navigational hazards
- Rental watercraft inspections
- Search, rescue, and recovery operations

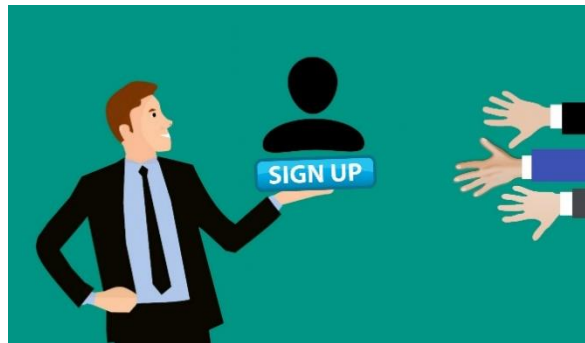
Seasonal weight enforcement (spring load restrictions)

The Sheriff's Office actively enforces seasonal weight restrictions that are imposed by the State and local units of government. During the spring months, roadways are weakened due to the freeze/thaw cycle and are damaged by overweight loads.



HAPPY MAY!!!

Still waiting for membership/sponsorship forms to come in. It's important to support the BLCA so if you have not sent in your form, please do so as soon as possible.



Early Detection of Aquatic Invasive Species Provides Profound Results and Good Return on Investment

By Jeff Forester, Executive Director, Minnesota Lakes and Rivers Advocates

Washburn Lake Eradicates Eurasian Watermilfoil (mostly)

In about 2007, I received a call from Ted Johnson, the President of the Lake Washburn Association (LWA) about Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS). Ted was concerned that Lake Washburn was susceptible to AIS following the construction of a MN DNR water access site.

I could offer little comfort.

This was before MLR had successfully lobbied the legislature to create the annual \$10 million in County AIS Prevention Aid, so there were no county AIS programs then. There was almost no watercraft inspection program from the MN DNR, no decontamination services for the public. It was not until 2012 that MLR was able to successfully lobby the Minnesota legislature to establish and fund the creation of the Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center (MAISRC) through the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund.

So, there were almost no resources available to lake associations for AIS prevention or management.

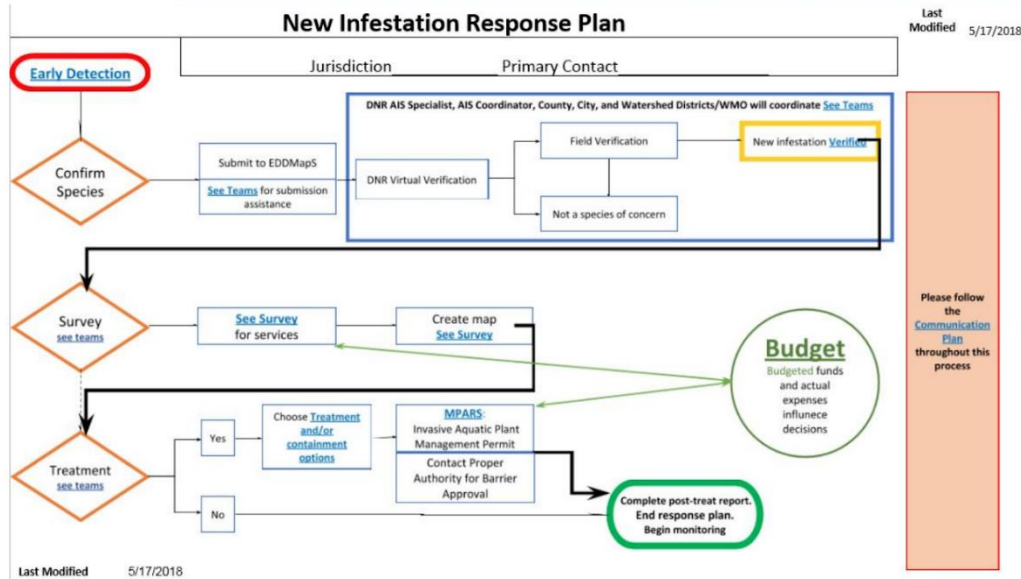
Ted and the Lake Washburn Association had to go it alone. The LWA looked at the most likely AIS they would face. They reached out to the private sector to get a quote on what a treatment might cost, and then asked members to contribute to an AIS fund so that they would be able to move quickly when/if an AIS was discovered. They brought in a DNR expert to teach the lake association members how to identify Eurasian watermilfoil, curly leaf pondweed and other AIS.

In 2009, one of the LWA members found a fragment of Eurasian watermilfoil (EWM) on the shore. The MN DNR confirmed the milfoil. The LWA set the goal of eradication, but the MN DNR cautioned them that the best they could hope for was “control” of the invasive species. But LWA was one of the very first to implement an early detection and response program.

Within days Ted had contracted James Johnson at Freshwater Scientific Services to survey the lake and determine the exact location and size of any EWM infestations in the lake.

Johnson found that there was an area of about 4 acres near the public water access where EWM was growing. Ted then contacted Patrick Selter, [PLM Land and Lake Management Corp](#) to chemically treat the area. In addition, Ted, who had become SCUBA certified, hand pulled the milfoil that had survived the treatment.

In subsequent years, the LWA continued to hire Freshwater Scientific Services to survey the lake and then used a combination of hand pulling and chemical treatment from PLM. Over time the size of the EWM infestation declined. Last year, after an exhaustive survey of Lake Washburn using both a rake and diving, only one EWM plant was discovered.



Since then initiating a New Infestation Response Plan has had further success, and shown the strategy to provide a significant Return On Investment (ROI) for lake associations. It may be possible to eradicate some AIS if it is discovered early:

- Weaver Lake – during a survey of Curly Leaf Pondweed, they found a single EWM plant. Further survey found 200 plants. Volunteers helped dig out the root balls and remove the EWM. They currently survey 3 times a year and have found no more EWM.
- Crookneck Lake – was infested with EWM and began treatments. During a EWM survey, a single zebra mussel shell was discovered. The lake association and Lake Improvement District began a regime of spring and fall surveys and treatments. In 2021, the survey found no EWM, and no zebra mussels.
- Ruth Lake – In 2015, 20 – 30 zebra mussels were discovered in the lake. The MN DNR initiated a pilot project, curtained off the infested area and treated it. Surveys in 2022 found no zebra mussels.
- Lake Sylvia – In 2016 starry stonewort (4 – 5 acres) was discovered during an AIS survey. The Lake Association brought in Dr. Rogers, a starry stonewort expert from Clemson University. They initiated an aggressive treatment program. In 2022, Steve McComas, Blue Water Science, completed a survey and found 5 grams, a “teacups worth” of starry stonewort.

As lake associations consider their limited budgets, investment in early detection can save many tens of thousands of dollars, and countless hours of volunteer time down the road.

Given this Return On Investment and the potential success, the MAISRC launched the AIS Detectors program where volunteers can receive training in identifying AIS. Six years ago MAISRC launched the Starry Trek program to search high risk lakes for starry stonewort.

The results so far are impressive. Last year 233 volunteers searched 289 water access sites on 248 water bodies for starry stonewort and other AIS. No starry stonewort was found, but volunteers successfully identified 13 other previously undiscovered AIS.

Lake associations play a critical role in AIS prevention and management. A vigorous early detection effort could be key to the eventual management or even eradication of an AIS infestation.

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Legislative Update from Minnesota Lakes and Rivers Advocates

By Jeff Forester, Executive Director, Minnesota Lakes and River Advocates

All politics may be local, but water is not. It moves through and across our communities, our, and our continent.

The Legislature began on January 3, 2023, and is scheduled to end on May 22, 2023. For the first time in many years, they seem likely to finish their work on time.

In years past the committee work began with topic overviews, particularly after an election and even more so following a once a decade redistricting. Many of the legislative old guard retired or lost their primary races. About a third of the legislature is serving in a new role or is newly elected.

But this year the committees began hearing bills straightaway. In the 30 years I have been with Minnesota Lakes and Rivers Advocates I have never seen a legislature move so quickly.

Currently MLR is tracking over 25 separate bills. At this writing we do not know final outcomes, but MLR will be putting out action alerts and blog posts to keep you up to date on outcomes. You can sign up for our Citizens Action Network (CAN) at www.mnlakesandrivers.org.

On the CAN page you can see a partial list of all the bills that are currently moving through the legislative process. These will be combined into an Omnibus bill for each committee. The MN House Environment and Natural Resources Policy and Finance Committee, chaired by Rep. Rick Hansen, released its Omnibus package, HF 2310, shortly before Easter/Passover break.

The legislature began with an almost \$18 billion budget surplus, the largest in state history. HF 2310 makes the largest investment in our outdoors, including lake priorities, in state history. The House Environment Omnibus addresses a backlog of capital improvement projects and needs that have been languishing for decades, including updating fish hatcheries, some of which are almost a century old. It funds improvements to boat access sites to include Aquatic Invasive Species prevention efforts, improve traffic flow and replace dilapidated piers.

In 2013, when MLR worked with Dr. Peter Sorensen to create the Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center, Dr. Sorensen predicted that it would take ten years to develop new solutions to Aquatic Invasive Species prevention and management. His predictions were prescient. It has been a decade since the MAISRC was created, and they have a number of applied science solutions that are ready to be implemented. HF 2310 funds these on the ground programs in an effort being called “Lab to Lakes.”

For many years MLR has lobbied to increase the AIS surcharge on three year boat registrations so that AIS programs and grants have reliable and ongoing support. In addition to significant one-time investments in lake and river protection and improvement, HF 2310 provides reliable and ongoing funding for these critical programs.

HF 2310 contains significant proposals-both policy proposals and funding proposals.

Policy proposals:

- Creates a Boaters Education and Certification program for MN Boaters,
- Invests \$1 million for a lead fishing tackle reduction program at the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) and puts a lead sinker ban in place on designated swan protection areas within the 7 county metro area,
- Funds the University of Minnesota to study trends to discern the quantity and quality of Minnesota waters, and make a recommendation on future areas of inquiry and coordinate efforts 50 years ahead,
- Requires the MN DNR to work with partners (counties, lake associations and others) to write and implement a 5 year comprehensive and coordinated statewide plan to prevent the spread of AIS,
- Report on “Rough” fish to learn the ecological roles of previously misunderstood or disregarded fish like the Bigmouth Buffalo,
- Reinstate the Legislative Water Commission,
- Implement the “Keep It Clean” program to prevent waste left on lake ice following ice fishing season,
- Create sustainable Diversion Limits on Groundwater Appropriations,
- Increase DNR Enforcement Authority for Water Laws,
- End Commercial Turtle Harvest in MN,
- Remove County Board Approval requirements for Land Acquisitions,
- Establish Salt applicators training program.

Funding proposals:

- Ongoing funding for the MN Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center (MAISRC) funded with proceeds from an enhanced AIS surcharge on boater registration,
- \$10 million in program funding for Lab to Lakes implementation of MAISRC solutions,
- \$1.4 million AIS Management Grants for Lake Associations Established,
- Enhanced Funding for SWCD,

- Increased funding for Subsurface Sewage Treatment Systems (septic) monitoring and improvement,
- Appropriates Funding for Invasive Carp Deterrents in Mississippi River,



House Environment and Natural Resources Policy and Funding Committee Chair Rep. Rick Hansen, said as he recently described HF 2310, the environment budget bill, "This is a

problem solving bill, solving problems that have accumulated over many years."

In addition, the [bill to renew Minnesota lottery funding](#) to protect our air, water, land, and wildlife before it sunsets in 2025, is still moving through the legislative process too. This funding is the source for MLR's Stop Starry program, which is putting boat cleaning equipment on the accesses of lakes infested with starry stonewort. This containment strategy provides protection for all other lakes in Minnesota.

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[Water Connects Us All - The Work You and Your Lake Association Does Benefits Us All](#)

By Jeff Forester, Executive Director, Minnesota Lakes and Rivers Advocates

The 2019 MLR annual meeting in Cass County was our first Water Connects Us All™ conference. That same year we also began publishing the Water Connects Us All™ monthly e-newsletter.

But what does it mean when we say Water Connects Us All™? This phrase is both aspirational and hydrologically accurate.



Celebrating my daughter's 12th birthday with blueberry pancakes in the blueberry patch.

Water is personal. Some of my most cherished memories are buoyed by a Minnesota lake. I remember early mornings rowing my mother over a reef while she jigged for breakfast walleye and crappies. I remember a day spent at the headwaters of the Mississippi with my two young daughters, now grown, the wedding of my niece on a bluff overlooking Lake Vermilion, four generations gathered to celebrate. I remember falling asleep to the call of loons. I remember standing in waist deep water after a sauna with my father, steam rising off our bodies, and watching the northern lights paint the sky.

I'll bet you have similar memories. Water connects us all™.

Most of us see our lake homes or cabins as heirlooms, not assets and want to leave them to children and grandchildren and even great grandchildren. Water connects our pasts with our futures.

As lake association members, we work to protect water in the lakes we love. But water percolates into groundwater reservoirs or flows downstream to other lakes. The work you do to protect or improve water quality, prevent aquatic invasive species from spreading and runoff phosphorus or sulfate pollution benefits everyone downstream. For Minnesotans that means most of the eastern half of North America. Minnesota is the headwaters of three continental sized watersheds, the Mississippi River to Gulf of Mexico, the North Shore through the Great Lakes to Montreal, and from the Red River up to the Arctic Circle. The work Lake Associations do benefits everyone in the northeastern part of North America.

2022 Lake Steward Outcomes – Remarkable Results

By Jeff Forester, Executive Director, Minnesota Lakes and Rivers Advocates

The MPCA reports that 56% of the lakes and rivers in Minnesota are impaired. The sources and reasons for water degradation are both plentiful and complex, but degraded shoreline is a contributor. The simple fact is that if we want to improve water, we must improve land management. Unfortunately, the trends are towards more development of the shoreline. Across the state, we have already lost approximately half our natural shorelines on Minnesota lakes. Degraded shoreline is a problem that we can address.



The state's agencies, like the MN DNR, are very limited in their ability to address the problem. The Shoreland Management Act of 1969 set the minimum standards for the counties. Very little has changed since then, and even these standards are often undone by the local variance process.

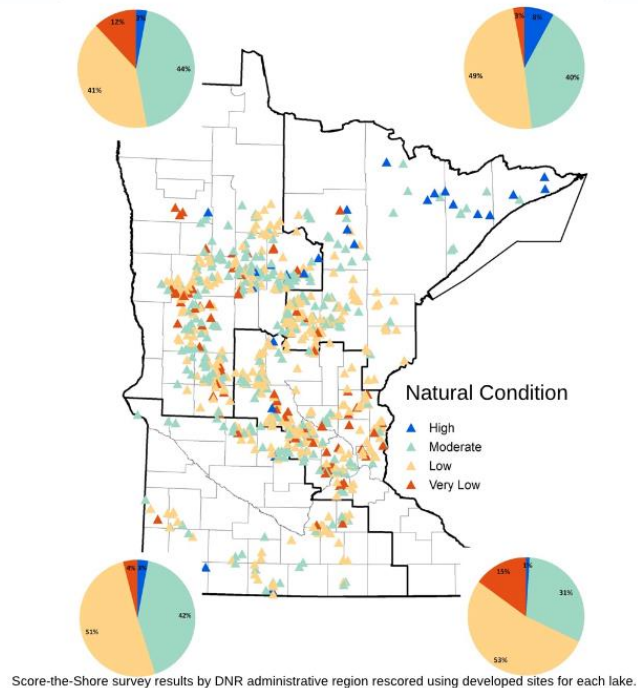
In 2020, Minnesota's counties issued 8,846 land use permits on shoreline property. That was 6,797 higher than in 2019. For comparison, in 2012 there were 1,207 permits issued for new development on undeveloped shoreline lots. In 2020 there were 2,220 permits issued for new development on shoreline lots. In 2020 the counties created 1,187 new shoreland lots, the majority by lot splits. This is the highest number since 2012.

This means that the best way to protect shorelines and improve the water quality dependent upon them is for citizens to decide to change their management of the shorelines in their care. Top down laws, regulations or permits will not meet the increasing need.

Lakeshore Buffers –

We've lost 40-50% of our natural lakeshores

If we fail to protect these natural shorelands, we will lose lake water quality, and maybe even the ability to swim and recreate in our lakes



When MLR learned of Gull Lake's [Lake Steward](#) program we saw an opportunity to have a statewide impact in reducing nutrient pollution in our lakes and rivers. Working with the Gull Lake Association, we took the Lake Steward program statewide. In 2021, COVID 19 limited the statewide rollout of Lake Steward, but in 2022 we saw remarkable growth of Lake Steward.

Lake Steward is a partial solution to reducing nutrient loading, particularly phosphorus, into our lakes and rivers. Reducing phosphorus will reduce excessive aquatic plant growth and algae blooms

This is because phosphorus is a "limiting" nutrient in Minnesota, phosphorus exists in limited amounts in Minnesota's soils and lakes, and so restricts the growth of plants, including algae, in our ecosystems. Add more phosphorus to a lake and plants and algae will respond quickly. Rainwater and snowmelt can carry phosphorus from soils and impermeable surfaces into lakes and rivers. When a shoreline property owner reduces runoff on their property they can have a significant impact on both excessive aquatic plant growth and frequency and intensity of algae blooms in the lakes they love.

Consider that:

- 1 lb of Phosphorus produces 500 lbs of algae in a lake.
- Lots with a lawn that runs down to the water's edge contribute about 0.2 lbs Phosphorus/lot per summer, or about 100 lbs of algae. The cumulative effect is significant. On a lake with 100 lawn to lake lots, this results in about 10,000 lbs of algae.
- Simple strategies, like maintaining at least a 25 foot buffer of deep rooted native plants, directing runoff from impervious surfaces like roofs, patios and driveways away from the lake can reduce phosphorus runoff to 0.03 lbs per lot, or 15 lbs of algae. Cumulatively a lake that converts 100 lots to Lake Steward standards can reduce algae production from 10,000 lbs to 1,500 lbs.

Minnesota Lakes and Rivers Advocates:
**Shoreland Guide to
Lake Stewardship**



Lake Steward helps a lake association volunteer learn how to assess the amount of Phosphorus a lot is contributing to the lake. [MLR's Shoreland Guide to Lake Stewardship](#), available on Amazon, is a solid how-to manual for shoreline owners who want to help protect water quality.

One MLR member wrote about the [Shoreland Guide to Lake Stewardship](#), "*Well written and easy to understand and implement. We bought 10 for our lake association and gave them away.*"

Heard great reviews from those who got one and they plan on implementing the shoreline ideas on their property.”

We created a phone-based App that leads evaluators through the process and captures the data they collect, giving us a statewide database of shoreline conditions.

MLR has been meeting with state policy makers regarding shoreland protection, and funding mechanisms or policies that will drive changes to shoreland management and improve water quality.

Lake Steward Program had significant growth in 2022

In 2022 Lake Steward experienced remarkable growth and has received a great deal of attention from policy makers. State shoreland standards have not been updated since the late 1960s.

- 259 Lake Steward quizzes taken,
- 238 site visits,
- 19 lake associations engaged,
- 6.3 Miles of shoreline Impacted,
- A potential of 28,209 lbs of phosphorus sequestered on shore,
- More than 14 tons of algae prevented,
- More than 1 mile of shoreline restored with more than 1 mile in the planning stages of restoration.



Some of Lake Washburn Association Lake Stewards gathered to celebrate achieving Lake Steward status.

MLR will work to expand the Lake Steward program to more lake associations. Many who carried the Lake Steward program last season reported that Lake Steward not only increased awareness and further education, but brought new members into the association.

"I am hopeful that in 2023, MLR's lobbyist will be able to convince legislators to provide some state support for our Lake Steward efforts," said Jeff Forester, Executive Director of MLR. If you or your lake association is interested in reducing the Phosphorus entering the lake you love, and reducing the size, intensity and duration of algae blooms in your lake, contact Jeff Forester at jeff@mnlakesandrivers.org or go to [MLR's website](http://www.mnlakesandrivers.org).

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Work at a Lake this Summer as a Watercraft Inspector in Sherburne County!

The job is great for 55+, teachers and students.

This position runs from May until September.

Hours are from 10-40 per week. You tell us how much you want to work!

You must be willing to work weekend and holiday shifts. Most shifts are on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays, but other days are available at some lakes.

General description: Watercraft inspections are an effort to reduce the spread of aquatic invasive species (zebra mussels, milfoil, etc.). Watercraft inspectors educate the public and help to conduct inspections at public water access sites.

Duties:

- Educate the public on invasive species program and issues
- Inspect boats and trailers for invasive species
- Conduct a verbal survey & inspection inventory
- Document and record watercraft inspection activities

Pay starts at \$17/hour!!

For complete position description and to apply, go to: www.WaterGuards.net/employment



Stephanie Johnson

sjohnson@WaterGuards.net

320.249.7550

www.WaterGuards.net

[Book a meeting with me](#)

ADOPT A HIGHWAY

HIGHWAY 25 DITCH CLEANUP

Saturday May 27th

10 am

Meet at Palmer Town Hall parking lot at 10 AM for bags and vests. We will divide into pairs to walk our 3-mile section of Highway 25. Anyone 12 and older is invited to join. Please bring side by sides and track pickers if you have them Gloves are recommended.

Questions?

Contact Brad or Ruth Thom

320-510-1068 or 320-510-1784

BLCA Lake Conservation Program - History



*** Gentle Footprint Program ***

Program and Projects to date:

The BLCA has promoted lake improvement and supported conservation efforts for a long time. We have used our own resources in addition to obtaining grant funding from other agencies to help property owners pay for lakeshore restoration and runoff control projects. This work began in

2000 with a total of 60+ projects completed on the four lakes so far! These have included shoreline restorations, run-off control, and rain gardens. Funding sources have included the Minnesota DNR, Sherburne Soil and Water Conservation District, and Elk River Watershed Association in addition to projects funded solely by the BLCA. We also developed a Plant Bank program to provide replacement plants for property owners who have lost native plants through erosion or winter kill.

All projects have used native (deep-rooted) plants to slow the flow of rainwater and allow it to absorb into the soil to reduce pollutants and nutrients flowing into our waters.

2022-23 Program

Last year in addition to the BLCA-funded Gentle Footprint Program, we were able to partner with the Sherburne Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) in a combined SWCD Cost-Share/BLCA Gentle Footprint program. The SWCD has said they plan to continue the Cost-Share program in the future.

The “ Class of 2022-23” consists of nine projected projects on Briggs, Elk and Rush Lakes – some of which will have joint funding and some are BLCA funded only. Detailed planning is occurring now with planting to follow in early summer of 2023. See future issues of The Lake Report and the BLCA website for updates on these projects.

BLCA Lake Conservation Program - Future

2023-24 Programs

We want to hear from property owners who would like to do conservation projects with planning activities in the fall of 2023 and winter of 2024 and planting in the spring and early summer of 2024. Two funding options are available:

- Contact Shelly at 612-283-8362 sdreimer@frontier.com with questions and indicate interest.

Which program to choose?

It depends... Talk with Shelly and we will compare the two programs and determine which is best for you and your project.

Please note that:

- Participants must be BLCA Sponsors.
- All plant materials must be native species.
- Projects may be rain gardens, shoreline restorations and/or other run-off control and must improve water quality by controlling erosion and reducing sediment.