

# **Three Lake Improvement District (TLID) 2023 Annual Report**

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### **A. Status of All Projects in the District**

The TLID was formed with three overall goals:

- Prevent, control and manage Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS)
- Address water quality issues
- Stabilize water levels

One of the initial issues to be addressed by the TLID was management and control of Curly Leaf Pondweed (CLP) present in the three lakes for over 16 years. In 2023 the TLID contracted again with PLM Lake & Land Management Corp. to treat 42 acres of affected areas on the three lakes of the district. This is our second year contracting with PLM of Brainerd, MN. We are pleased with the results of maintaining control of the spread of CLP.

In 2014 Eurasian Water Milfoil (EWM) was discovered at the south end of Rush Lake near the public landing. In 2023 we again contracted with James Johnson of Freshwater Scientific Services to survey the three lakes for EWM. They did not find any areas of EWM in the three lakes indicating that the past management of hand pulling and herbicide treatment of EWM in Rush Lake has kept it from spreading to Briggs and Julia. This is the fifth consecutive year no EWM has been found on Rush Lake. It is our understanding that five years of no detection is the DNR's definition of eradication.

2023 was the start of the second, five year cycle of point intercept surveys. The Rush Lake survey was completed this year, Lake Julia is scheduled for 2024 and Briggs Lake in 2025. These surveys give us a detailed look at the entire plant community of a lake, helping us track our progress and guide the TLID in caring for our lakes in the near and long-term future.

The TLID continues to work closely with several parties to continue work on desired projects. Water stabilization and water quality improvements are such projects. The SCWD and Mississippi Water Shed have provided much needed input and support. Further support has been

provided by the local Briggs Lake Chain Association (BLCA). They secured a grant to complete an Alum Feasibility Study with the goal of reducing algae in the lakes. Water samples and profiles were gathered all summer and are now in the analysis stage by Minnesota Dept of Health, Stantec and the SWCD. In addition, boring samples were taken to provide further information. Next spring a carp survey will be completed to measure their influence on water quality.

Purple Loosestrife was discovered on the lake chain by a resident in 2021. After identification was confirmed by local agencies a plan was put in place to remove and control this invasive plant. In 2023 the TLID again hired Waterfront Restorations to come in and hand pull all loosestrife plants in identified areas. This method has worked successfully for us in controlling the spread of Purple Loosestrife. More monitoring will occur in the years to come as it will likely be a hard plant to completely eradicate.

## **B. Financial Condition of the District**

At the annual TLID meeting in August 2023 the membership passed the 2024 budget of \$65,370.00. The 2024 budget includes \$2200 for administrative expenses and \$63,170 for AIS projects. The 2024 assessment will be \$80.02 per parcel. The total parcels went from 433 in 2023 to 430 in 2024 after an audit was completed of all the properties in the district. The 2024 assessment keeps the TLID funds at the 2X budget limit. A policy that was requested by members in 2022.

The TLID contingency fund also reached the \$25,000 cap in 2023. The contingency cap is included in the TLID by laws. No monies will be added to the fund in 2024.

The TLID financial report for 2023, as of August 2023, showed expenses of \$46,158.43, deposits of \$38,212.18 and a balance of \$72,672.18.

Deposits include a \$2681.25 grant received from the SWCD. Expenses include \$5000 for the contingency fund.

## **C. Business Transactions**

The 2023 TLID assessment was \$137.76 for 433 parcels.

Insurance coverage for the TLID Directors was \$651.20.

Payments to PLM for CLP treatments was \$27,122.87.

Payments to Freshwater Scientific for CLP & EWM surveys were \$8150

(This amount includes an expense from 2022)

## **D. Discussion of Directors Intentions for Succeeding Years**

The TLID will continue with AIS detection and management activities: surveys, herbicide treatments for CLP and EWM. No evidence of EWM was detected this year, but prudent planning dictates surveys for the coming year. Hand pulling of Purple Loosestrife will be scheduled if found again in 2024.

The TLID continues to explore, in collaboration with Sherburne SWCD, BLCA and the DNR, options on water stabilization of the lake chain. The TLID will continue to monitor progress of phosphorus reduction projects in the county and state. Lastly the TLID will work with other agencies to monitor and prevent the spread of additional AIS in the lake system.

## **E. Other Matters Affecting Interests of the District**

Surveys for EWM include all four lakes in the Briggs Lake Chain, but only Briggs, Rush and Julia surveys are paid by the TLID. Survey expenses for Big Elk Lake are paid by the BLCA, which includes Big Elk Lake. EMW was discovered in Big Elk Lake in September 2020. Through an aggressive treatment method in spring of 2021 all follow up surveys including 2023 have found no EWM in Big Elk Lake.

The TLID will continue to coordinate with the Healthy Lakes Committee of the BLCA on other AIS activities. If additional AIS are found in the chain a written Rapid Response Plan is in place to respond to these situations.

## **Appendices**

- A) Property owners mail notice of annual meeting / newspaper announcement**
- B) 2023 Annual Meeting Minutes (Draft)**
- C) Resolution to certify 2024 assessment**
- D) TLID 2023 Financial Report/ 2024 Approved Budget**
- E) Eurasian Watermilfoil Delineation Reports**
- F) CLP Survey (pre-treatment)**
- G) MN DNR Permits 2023 / PLM Invoices for herbicide treatment**
- H) Grants**
- I) Purple Loosestrife hand pulling invoice**