



Established in 1967

Making Waves—Spring 2012

President's Message

By Ed Jacobsen

I am looking forward to our annual meeting on July 7. This is where the board can get direct feedback from our members on a variety of concerns and opinions. We invite comments on what we are doing right as well as where we could improve our performance. The 14 board members donate hundreds of hours each year and we enlist volunteers who donate over a thousand more hours in our attempt to keep the chain the way nature intended it to be. This is your time to tell us if these many hours are being directed at the core issues that concern you and your neighbors.

Of the issues which garner most of our attention the matter of invasive species is at the top of the list. We are one of the very few associations in the State which initiated a preventive program to combat these invaders before there was an infestation. So far our efforts have been fruitful in that we have spotted two battle zones, one in the channel leading to the Dam and one in Virgin Lake, and we have controlled both. That is not to say there could not be another lurking somewhere in this vast waterbody.

Our volunteers who work on the Adopt A Shoreline and Clean Boats, Clean Waters programs are getting tired. Most of these generous neighbors have been doing their work for the 8 years these programs have been up and running. We have been less than successful in recruiting new volunteers over the past two years. Perhaps there is a perception that there is no problem. Nothing could be farther from the truth. With the beauty of our chain and the pristine condition of the water the Three Lakes chain is attracting more and more visitors from infected lakes. This of course makes the threat of invasives even closer to our chain. This threat and lack of new volunteers have caused us to take another direction in our battle.

We have hired student interns from the University of Wisconsin, Oshkosh environmental program to act in the place of our dwindling core of volunteers. The two are Cody Jones, St. Norbert's

College, and Jay Olson, UW Oshkosh. Both are juniors and majoring in environmental studies. No doubt you'll be seeing them at several of the boat launch sites on the Chain. Say hello to them if you have the chance. We tried this last year and it was very successful so we upped our game this year. We have hired two full time students to work exclusively on our landings. This was made possible by the coordinated efforts of the Vilas County A I S coordinator, Ted Ritter, and our own TLWA secretary, Elmer Goetsch. Elmer has agreed to house these two students for the summer at his house which made the whole program possible. This is the "above the call" attitude we see on our board, thanks Elmer.

Just a personal note here, I am relatively new to this Association and the job of being president would be overwhelming without the help and expertise of Norris Ross and Elmer Goetsch and I thank them both for all the work they have put into the running of the TLWA.

Our website, WWW.TLWA.org has been expanded and very much improved. The architect of this program has been Paul Wussow so please visit the site to keep up to date between newsletters. There are also articles there that will not appear in the newsletter due to space restrictions. It is now possible for us to send your newsletter via email. This option would save us mailing costs as well as extra paper in the recycle bin so if you would prefer to receive this letter via email please indicate so in the return portion, thanks. You can also access the webcam which we installed at the Sunset Grill where you can observe the lakes and weather conditions from your home away from your real home in Three Lakes.

The landing at Town line will be under construction from about June 1st to about July 1st, and the results should be spectacular. This very popular landing will be paved and graded so the debris from boats will not drain back into the lake but be directed to a natural collection area where nature will diffuse their harmful effects.

Since there was DNR money involved in this costly project the Town was instructed to charge a fee to launch at this greatly improved landing. The details of the fees are not yet available but will be announced in the paper as well as posted at the landing.

In closing, it has been a challenging and busy year. We orchestrated a survey which is detailed in this

newsletter, we have conducted and attended work - shops, we have applied for and received grant monies and hired outside consultants to handle the complex job of mapping our entire chain. It looks like the coming year will require even more work but we are ready. Please consider assisting the board by becoming a director or committee member. We can use all the help we can get. ◇

Clean Boats / Clean Waters CB/CW Program Eight Years

The eighth season of the Clean Boats/Clean Waters program is underway, and remains one of our most important programs. Depending on volunteers, this is one of our frontline defenses against invasive species. This year we will be monitoring the Burnt Rollways Dam, the Townline landing, Big Stone, and to a degree Big Lake, Medicine and Laurel.

While we depend on volunteers, we have found it necessary to hire two student interns from the University of Wisconsin at Oshkosh. These two students will monitor the Burnt Rollways Dam and Townline, working a 40 hour week, mostly on

weekends. Their area of study at the university is compatible with our goals. They are paid with membership funds, and we in turn get credit towards future grants. We have had fewer volunteers every year and our matching dollars are shrinking with the DNR so we need help. This year we are offering a fun way to help our cause. We are asking for volunteers willing to spend two hours on a Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday at one of our landings. We realize that weekends are demanding for area residents so weekdays may be more appealing to you. This is a great way to get out into nature, talk with boaters and help the Association.

If this appeals to you please call me -- Bob Agen at 715-546-3893. Thanks. ◇

TLWA Annual Scholarships

Since 1989, the Association has offered a scholarship annually to a Three Lakes High School graduate. The scholarship is open to a student enrolling in college and intending to pursue a career in the field of natural and/or environmental sciences, or education in those fields. Initially, the amount was for \$500, more recently for \$1,500. Half is paid in each of two semesters. Since first awarded, 21 scholarships have been granted totaling \$23,000.

TLHS students must apply for the scholarship and submit an essay explaining their plans for college and career. The TLWA board of directors makes the final decision based on the student's school record and the essay. Occasionally, no scholarship was awarded for lack of a qualified applicant and that was the case this year. Last year, as an exception, the board granted two scholarships. ◇

TLWA Summer Interns

Again this summer the TLWA is fortunate to have two college student interns to help with our Clean Boats Clean Waters program to keep exotic invasive species, especially Eurasian Water Milfoil, out of the Chain. The two are Cody Jones, St. Norbert's College, and Jay Olson, UW Oshkosh. Both are juniors and majoring in environmental studies. No doubt you'll be seeing them at several of the boat launch sites on the Chain. Say hello to them if you have the chance.

Cody and Jay will be supervised by Director Bob Agen and staying for the summer at the home of Secretary Elmer Goetsch. They are available through cooperation and assistance of Ted Ritter, Vilas County Invasives

Coordinator. Thanks, Ted. ◇





2012 Annual Meeting for members and anyone interested

Saturday, July 7, 2012
coffee & pastry at 9 am, meeting 9:30 am
Reiter Center, Three Lakes

Meet your officers, volunteers, college summer interns!

Hear a presentation of detailed results of the stakeholders' survey!

Get a report on lake planning for the Chain!

Discuss the water quality of our lakes!

Hear about the Clean Boats, Clean Waters and Adopt-A-Shoreline programs!

Plus election of directors, boating safety on the Three Lakes Chain, updates.

Adopt-A-Shoreline - 2012 Season

The early ice-out this year is providing aquatic plants with a head start on their growing season and also will result in a longer growing season. Because of this, shoreline monitoring for invasive plant species will be even more important this year.

As you know, our Adopt-A-Shoreline objective is early identification of any aquatic invasive species (AIS) and in particular Eurasian Water Milfoil. The program is organized by recruiting Lake Captains for each lake. These captains in turn recruit volunteers from their respective lakes to do the shoreline monitoring. Volunteers inspect about half a mile of shoreline four times between the end of June and the middle of September. The time for each inspection runs about an hour. Should a suspect plant be found, a sample is taken and turned in at Jokin' Joe's Bait shop. If the plant specimen is deemed suspicious, it is given to the DNR lab for analysis. If the suspect sample is found to be an AIS plant, we will take steps to remove the plants or have the area treated.

It has been an ongoing challenge to recruit and retain Lake Captains for all of our 20 lakes. Last year's captains are being contacted to make sure they are willing to continue in this very important responsibility. Currently, we are looking for Lake Captains to recruit volunteers on Range Line, Townline, Deer, Dog and Crystal lakes.



It cannot be over stated that the more "eyes in the water" we have, the better chance for early detection of any new AIS infestation. **So, if you can spare the time, contact me at (715) 546-4291 or at emartens1@yahoo.com.** And, if you need training, let us know and we can provide that along with all the needed Adopt-A-Shoreline materials. ◇

Property Owner's Survey

by Jerry Schiedt

The Three Lakes Waterfront Association (TLWA) recently sent approximately 1,700 surveys to owners of lakefront property on the Three Lakes chain. Over 600 were completed and returned, for those math majors out there, that is statistically significant.

There were 31 questions covering topics from fishing quality to major concerns of lakefront property owners on shoreline erosion, boating safety and boating restrictions. There were some interesting answers such as the most common types of boats were canoes and kayaks.

The data is being analyzed by the board and will be discussed in detail at this year's annual meeting, July 7, 2012 at the Reiter Center starting at 9:00 A.M. The data being presented will include detailed information on all of the lakes in total as well as information on each lake on the chain. Please join us and find out how you and your neighbors feel about the condition of your lake and the chain. ◇

Three Lakes Chain of Lakes

Management Planning Project

Update: May 2012

Submitted by: Dan Cibulka, Onterra, LLC

There have been a number of projects conducted upon the Three Lakes Chain that are in various stages of completion at this point in time. The purpose of this update is to provide information on each of these inter-related projects in terms of the study results, project implications and completion status. These projects include:

1. A comprehensive management plan for Long Lake and the Eagle River Channel.
2. A project that will lead to the creation of management plans for Virgin, Whitefish, and Big Lakes (Phase I study lakes), as well as management plans for Big Stone, Dog, Deer, Crystal and Laurel Lakes (Phase II study lakes).
3. A recently acquired grant from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) that will support studies, and eventually management plans, for Fourmile and Big Fork Lakes (Phase III study lakes).

While these projects are being completed in separate phases, they are all being undertaken to protect the Three Lakes Chain either through management actions that are being implemented or through the development of management plans that will lead to additional management actions aimed at protecting and enhancing the chain as well as building the capacity of the Three Lakes Chain Waterfront Association (TLWA).

Long Lake and Eagle River Channel Management Planning Project

Spurred by the discovery of Eurasian water milfoil within the Eagle River Channel near the Burnt Rollways Dam, the TLWA successfully applied for grant funds in 2009 to not only cover the cost of the group's on-going aquatic invasive species (AIS) education and prevention program, but also the costs of completing the planning effort on Long Lake and the channel. The Long Lake and Eagle River project officially started in the spring of 2009. On September 2, 2010, Onterra ecologist Tim Hoyman met with a planning committee to deliver the results of the project studies. While continued Eagle River Channel Eurasian water milfoil monitoring occurred in 2010 and 2011, Onterra staff and Long Lake planning committee members developed a series

of management goals that would aim to protect the Long Lake ecosystem as well as enhancing stakeholder's enjoyment of the lake. This was done in the form of an Implementation Plan, which also specifies actions to be taken in order for Long Lake stakeholders to reach their given goals.

The Implementation Plan along with a draft of the full Management Plan, was reviewed by the Long Lake planning committee in late 2011. In early 2012, a draft of the Long Lake and Eagle River Channel Management Plan was sent to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) for review. Upon acceptance by the WDNR and Long Lake planning committee, the plan will be completed.

Three Lakes Chain Management Planning Project – Phase I & Phase II

The TLWA has, for some time, expressed interest in completing comprehensive management plans for all lakes located within the Three Lakes Chain. This is a tremendous undertaking, both financially and considering the time necessary to conduct field studies. The TLWA has since decided to complete the management plans in phases over the course of several years. Phase I includes the studies and planning efforts for the lakes furthest upstream in the chain - Virgin, Whitefish, and Big Lakes, along with aquatic plant studies on the Thoroughfare and the association's AIS education and prevention efforts. These studies were completed in 2010-2011. Phase II includes studies on Big Stone, Crystal, Dog, Deer and Laurel Lakes. Fieldwork was completed on the Phase II lakes in 2011-2012. Additionally, a stakeholder survey was created in October of 2011 as a part of this project and distributed to stakeholders along the Three Lakes Chain lakes. The results of the survey were analyzed by Onterra in winter of 2012 and submitted to the TLWA in early spring of that same year.

The results of the studies on the Phase I and Phase II lakes were presented at an April 19th planning meeting. Overall, there was much good news presented at this meeting. The general take-home message is that these lakes are very healthy in terms of their water quality and aquatic plant communities. Besides the minor occurrence of Eurasian water milfoil on Virgin Lake, which has been monitored and hand-removed

aggressively since 2010, and a few occurrences of purple loosestrife throughout the chain, there were no other aquatic invasive species found in the Phase I and Phase II lakes.



During the meeting, discussions were had regarding the watersheds on the western side of the Three Lakes Chain, and attendees revealed to Onterra staff that changes had occurred in the area that may be affecting several lakes within the chain. This issue will be looked into by Onterra staff in the coming months.

While the field studies have been completed and data presented regarding the Phase I and Phase II projects, there is still work to be done. The next step is for Onterra to distribute reports to the planning committee so they may digest the information fully. The information Onterra distributes will include a Chain-wide report, as well as reports for each of the Phase I and Phase II individual lakes. The results of the stakeholder survey will be presented on a chain-wide and individual lake basis as well. The Planning Committee, consisting of representatives from each of the Phase I and Phase II lakes, will review these documents. This upcoming late summer/early fall, Onterra staff will once again meet with the planning committee to discuss the documents and address questions or concerns the lake representatives have. From here, the planning committee will develop management goals and actions for the Phase I and Phase II lakes, which will be based off of the scientific studies and stakeholders concerns that were revealed through this project. Eventually, following a review by the planning committee and WDNR, the Phase I and Phase II lakes will have completed comprehensive management plans.

for over \$54,000 in WDNR grant funds to complete management plans for Big Fork and Fourmile lakes, as well as continue town-wide educational efforts and Eurasian water milfoil monitoring on Virgin Lake (discussed further below). This is Phase III of the effort to complete management plans for all of the Three Lakes Chain lakes. During the spring, summer and fall of 2012, Onterra ecologists will conduct water quality and aquatic plant surveys on Big Fork and Fourmile Lakes. Watershed delineation, stakeholder surveys and fisheries data integration have already been completed for these lakes as a part of the Phase II grant. The information obtained through these studies will be presented to representatives from these lakes at a later planning meeting date.

The February 2012 grant application also contained funding to continue Eurasian water milfoil monitoring activities on Virgin Lake. In 2012, Onterra staff will visit Virgin Lake twice to monitor this aggressive non-native plant. With the first visit, the known location of Eurasian water milfoil will be surveyed. It is most likely that the colony has not gotten larger in size, so hand removal efforts with snorkeling gear will be conducted to remove all visible plants. A second visit will occur in the late summer. During this visit, hand removal via snorkeling will occur should any additional plants surface in the known area of infestation. Additionally, a full-lake sweep will occur to determine if Eurasian water milfoil has spread to other areas of the lake. Should additional infestations be located, they will be dealt with appropriately. ◊

Three Lakes Chain Management Planning Project – Phase III

In February of 2012, the TLWA successfully applied



Internet Resources:

Wisconsin DNR - <http://dnr.wi.gov/invasives/classification/>

Invasive Plant Association of Wisconsin (IPAW) - <http://ipaw.org/>

Midwest Network of Invasive Plants (MIPN) - <http://mipn.org/>

White-nose syndrome in Bats - <http://www.fws.gov/WhiteNoseSyndrome/>

Emerald ash borer - <http://datcpservices.wisconsin.gov/eab/index.jsp>

Emerald ash borer - <http://dnr.wi.gov/forestry/fh/ash/>

Gypsy moth - <http://gypsymoth.wi.gov/>

Oak wilt - <http://dnr.wi.gov/forestry/Fh/oakWilt/>

Wisconsin Headwaters Invasive Partnership (WHIP) - <http://www.whipinvasives.org/>

Oneida County Land & Water Conservation Department - http://www.co.oneida.wi.gov/localgov_departments_details.asp?deptid=15&locid=135



Terrestrial Invasive Species

Could they be lurking and looking for a home on your property?

Terrestrial Invasive Species (TIS)! What are they you ask? Who are they? What can I do? Here's a start: Terrestrial means growing or living on land or on the ground. Invasive Species means not native to and tending to spread widely in a habitat or environment. Ok, that explains "What are they"? So what about "Who are they"?

Before we get into that, let me explain who I am and what I do, just in case you want to know. My name is Jean Hansen and I work for the Oneida County Land & Water Conservation Department (LWCD) as the Conservation Specialist. My position as Conservation Specialist deals with many conservation issues, for instance TIS, but I also work with the County Cost Share program, storm water management, erosion control, native species, rain gardens, local agricultural producers, educational outreach, and more. Any questions, comments, concerns, etc., feel free to contact me: jhansen@co.oneida.wi.us

Terrestrial invasive species (TIS) education and awareness programs have just gotten started, at least here in the Northwoods within the past several years, a bit slower than its cousin, aquatic invasive species (AIS). Oneida County's AIS program has been up and running for 5+ years now. AIS education and awareness programs have made great strides in the past 10 years and I am hoping TIS does the same. I have been involved in both aquatic and terrestrial invasive species, however TIS has been placed on my desk. My counterpart in AIS is Michele Sadauskas (msadauskas@co.oneida.wi.us)

Back to "Who are they"? Ever watch CSI on TV? The song at the beginning of the show has lyrics that say "who are they"? Kinda sticks in my head whenever I ask that. Let's get back to work! TIS can be plants, animals, insects, pathogens, or fungi! What?...you want me to name some? Alright, I can do that; plant... garlic mustard, animal...feral pig, insect...emerald ash borer, pathogen...butternut canker, fungi...white nose syndrome. Any of them sound familiar? As of this date, Wisconsin has them all except white nose syndrome (but experts predict white nose syndrome to show its ugly face here in Wisconsin soon, if not already here!). The list of invasive species is a lengthy one. You can find the list on the DNR website listed under resources below.

Let me explain why we should be aware and maybe concerned of what may be growing, eating, flying, or is just plain ol' hanging out with us on our property. Similar to AIS, there are several reasons, four to be exact, that we should be concerned about invasive species, but these reasons are nothing to sneeze at. The four biggies are ecological, economic, aesthetics/historical consequences and last but not least, ethical implications. TIS can take over

gardens, choke out native vegetation, be harmful and/or toxic to humans and pets, diminish property values, impact local industries such as forests and tourism, and disrupt activities such as hiking, hunting, bird watching, and more.

Not all non-native species are invasive; for example, take tulips, they are not native but hardly a threat to the ecology, economy, or the aesthetics of the Northwoods. All they want to do is sway in the breeze and look pretty. But then, take garlic mustard (I am going to pick on garlic mustard because it starts to grow early in the spring), a rapidly spreading herb that has this "I want to take over this native woodland" attitude and we start having problems. Garlic mustard is rude, stingy, pushy, hoggish, and an early riser. Garlic mustard is an opportunist; they see an opening and bang, they invade!

When garlic mustard enters the woodland, remember those trilliums in the woods?...gone. How about those spring beauties in the woods?...gone. Or those ground nesting warblers?...nesting no more. The acorn that drops to regenerate: not anymore! Garlic mustard like so many other invasive species 'want it all, and want it all to themselves'. Garlic mustard starts growing early in the season, thus crowding out native plants like the spring ephemerals (those plants that have a very short growing season in the early spring). It can completely take over the forest floor within 5-7 years, yikes, that is quick! And that is not all; garlic mustard produces flowers, and then disperses millions of seeds to continue the spread of the plant. Like most invasive species, it lacks the natural control that it has in its home territory, therefore it keeps spreading without anything stopping it but this is where we can help.

So you say 'what can I do'? Of course, each invasive species can be managed differently but there are basic steps each and every one of us can take to minimize the risk of invasive species.

- ▶ Learn to identify the invasive species most likely to show up on your property. Also learn the tell tale signs that invasive species can leave; for instance, masses of eggs left by the gypsy moth or wilted leaves that oak wilt causes.
- ▶ Take a hike! Walk your property and actively look for signs of invasive species; plants, bugs, egg masses, etc. Take notes, be observant!
- ▶ Sometimes it is difficult to identify some species. If you need help in identifying what you think could be an invasive species, contact the Land & Water Conservation Department or the Department of Natural Resources.
- ▶ Do not leave bare or disturbed soil un-vegetated. Be pro-active and plant native vegetation or non-invasive plants to provide a dense cover to discourage invasive plants from starting.



TLWA Membership and Volunteer Application

Check the mailing label for your current membership status.
If you are not already a member of the Three Lakes Waterfront Association, please join now.
Annual membership is just \$20 per household. You can't afford *not* to get involved!

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____

Primary Mail Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Three Lakes Address: _____

Lake: _____ Three Lakes Phone: _____

Check Newsletter Preference: ___ US Mail Only ___ Email Only ___ Both

Enclosed is \$20 for membership and \$_____ as an additional tax-exempt contribution toward the cost of the invasive species prevention program for a total of \$_____.

Detach completed form and mail with a check payable to:
Three Lakes Waterfront Association, Inc. P O Box 145 Three Lakes WI 54562

Volunteer To Keep Our Waters Clean

___ Clean Boats/Clean Waters ___ Adopt-A-Shoreline ___ Lake Management Planning Team

- ▶ Create a neighborhood network. Talk with the neighbors; are they having problems with certain species? If so, can you identify this species on your property? Is it invasive? Share knowledge, ask questions, stay informed!
- ▶ Be careful of those free garden plants from friends and neighbors (they really do mean well). A beautiful garden flower or plant may not come alone. Oftentimes there are other plants, not to mention insects, attached to and in that clump of soil. Inspect thoroughly and if there are suspicious looking "things" in that clump of soil, respectfully decline their gift. It is tough to do, I know, because I love getting them myself! But if you are confident you are not getting an invasive, then enjoy your new plant(s)!
- ▶ Be careful when you bring in 'top soil'. Top soil is known to carry weed seeds some of which could be invasive. Top soil is just that, soil from the top. A lot of times it is taken from a large field and may not even be from the area. It may or may not be screened which does not do anything to eliminate the weed seeds. Using compost and working it in to the existing soil may be a better choice and could eliminate headaches later.
- ▶ If you have confirmation of an invasive species on your property, don't put the



property up for sale quite yet! There are things you can do!

- Take steps to manage the invasive species as soon as possible!
- Do NOT just go to your garage or to the hardware store and buy some kind of pesticide! That is not always the answer. Pesticides can sometimes do more harm than good. Some invasives can be managed quite well without pesticides, and some must be managed with a certain type of pesticide at a certain time.
- Do some research, ask the experts, learn about the species! The more you know the better you can manage it.
- If you don't have a plan yet for management and you have an invasive plant that flowers and spreads by seed, you can cut the flowers off before they go to seed to prevent any further spread of the plant. You can also pull plants before they go to seed.
- Dispose of TIS properly. Bag up plants, label and take to the landfill. Do not compost!
- Report your find to Oneida County Land & Water Conservation Department. A data base has been started for Terrestrial Invasive Species with a goal of mapping TIS.



2011—2012 Board of Directors

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For information regarding important issues impacting our lakes and
your own lake property, visit the TLWA website at:

www.threelakeswaterfrontassociation.com