

TEAL, LOST LAND AND GHOST LAKES IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION MINUTES OF GENERAL FALL MEETING 2012

TIME & PLACE: The 149th meeting of the Teal, Lost Land and Ghost Lakes Improvement Association was held Saturday, September 22, 2012 at Boulder Lodge. The meeting was called to order by President Bob Dale at 9:07 am.

ROLL CALL: Board members Bob Dale (President), Shari Peterson (Secretary), Rex Clevenger (Treasurer), John Gouze (Properties/Fisheries), Norm Bratteig (Environmental) were present.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dan and Connie Perritt, Chris and Kay Callaway, Bruce Shakleton, Audrey Divilbiss, Marj and Jim Cahoon, Rich and Anita Wilson, Dan and Barbara Dernbach, Jim Dooley, Joe and Dorothy Gallina, Dennis and Connie Leopold, John and Julie Trombello, Rex and Barb Clevenger, John Gouze, Bob Dale, Max Wolter, Tom and Bonnie McLeod, Shari Peterson. Guests were Jim and Donna Paddock, Blaine Ehrmanstraut, Kaitlin Schnell, and Craig Kelling.

PRESENTATION: Today we have 3 speakers: DNR Fisheries Biologist Max Wolter, Craig Kelling and Kaitlin Schnell.

Max Wolter is the new Fisheries Biologist for Sawyer County. Max is originally from Chippewa Falls. He received his undergraduate degree from Stevens Point, and then worked for Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks. He then received his masters degree from the University of Illinois. Most of his Masters work dealt with muskies but was also involved with the Asian carp issue, bass and blue gills. In April he began his job in Sawyer County. Max gave the following information in his presentation.

Teal Lake is one of the brood sources for muskies in northwest Wisconsin. Every 3 years a crew from the Governor Thompson fish hatchery in Spooner sets nets to catch large male and female muskies. They "milk" the fish, then mix the milt and eggs together and take the fertilized eggs back to the fish hatchery and rear them up in ponds. Typically they will produce between 30,000 - 40,000 fingerlings each fall. Those fish are stocked all throughout northwest Wisconsin. Teal Lake is on a 3 year rotation, with the other sources being Chippewa Flowage, and Lac Courte Oreilles. No other genetic sources of muskies are being introduced into these 3 lakes. Teal Lake muskie fingerlings are put back into Teal Lake keeping the strain pure which is part of the genetic brood stock management goal.

Over the last couple years a large scale pit tagging project has begun. Pit tags are small radio frequency tags about the size of a grain of rice that are implanted into the body of a fish. When that tag is excited by a wand it transmits a unique numerical identity for the fish. Data can be collected on individual fish during their lifetime. DNR biologists as well as a number of fishing guides have been equipped with wand readers. For instance, if a fish is caught by a fishing guide that guide can get the number of the fish, it's length and location, then send that information to the DNR office to be recorded. This information gives a very accurate growth curve of individual fish instead of setting a net and then trying to calculate mean length and age of fish. It also tracks fish movement.

One other project Max wanted to tell us about is the "Fish Sticks" project. Basically it is a tree drop into the lake. The trees are cut down, tethered with steel cabling onto another tree on shore, and dragged out onto the ice. It provides woody habitat for fish in shallow areas. Woody habitat has been lost from almost all of our lakes. The natural density of wood in a lake is 600 - 800 trees per mile. We don't have any lakes that look like that due to logging practices and the development of lakes. Lakeshore owners typically remove dead trees near the lakeshore which alters the natural habitat it once had. Nelson Lake dropped 400 trees last winter and will drop another 200. Landowners are able to conduct their own fish stick project with a general permit through the waters department, the same as when putting in a fish crib. If it meets the project guidelines you can do it as a single land owner, a group of land owners, or as a lake association.

Craig Kelling and Kaitlin Schnell are students from the University of Stevens Point. They are working under the guidance of Dr. Daniel Isermann, Assistant Professor of Water Resources & Fisheries at the University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point. Craig is studying large mouth bass in northern Wisconsin and the factors regulating recruitment and potential dietary interactions with walleye as part of his Masters thesis. Craig acknowledged his funding sources as the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources as well as the United States Geological Survey. They would like to thank Ross's Teal Lake Lodge for allowing him the use of their boat landing. Craig and Kaitlin have been collecting and studying fish on Teal Lake this past summer well into the early morning hours. Residents on Teal Lake may have seen a pontoon boat with flood lights and a generator running at night. That would be Craig and Kaitlin gathering more data for their fish research. Their study will continue through 2013 so they will be out collecting fish into the wee hours of the night next summer. Craig and Kaitlin gave the following information in their presentation.

"Large mouth bass have increased in some northern Wisconsin lakes. This has potential effects on fish communities. Most people are concerned with the increase in large mouth bass coinciding with reduced walleye abundance. The point of this management program was to increase the walleye population, boost natural reproduction and promote harvest of large mouth bass. There are countless reasons why large mouth bass are increasing. Harvest regulations have become more stringent and large mouth bass are general regarded as a catch and release sport fish. Both of these coupled together could result in an increase in large mouth bass abundance. However, what we want to focus on is the potential effect that long-term changes in climatic patterns could have. An issue we are studying is if large mouth bass and walleye interact in a way which one suppresses the other. A couple possible hypotheses are 1) predation by adult large mouth bass on juvenile walleye, and 2) competition through significant diet overlap. Our study included 12 lakes distributed throughout Wisconsin, the majority of which are located in northern Wisconsin. Large mouth bass are/will be collected periodically from May through October 2012 and 2013. The age of a fish can be determined by looking at the ear bones of a fish called the otoliths. Rings can be seen in the otoliths similar to the rings of a tree to determine age. Scales and spines can also be used to determine age but are not as accurate. We also examine the stomach contents of large mouth bass as well as walleye through a non lethal procedure. Right now there have been no indications of predation by adult large mouth bass on juvenile walleye. However, we are seeing a substantial diet overlap especially with perch and blue gill as prey items. If large mouth bass are largely determined by environmental variables then changes to harvest regulations may not reduce large mouth bass abundance. However, if we can determine that large mouth bass interact negatively with walleye we may be able to adjust current stocking strategies. In either case new options for management would be available."

BREAK: After a short coffee break the meeting resumed. Thanks to the Ross's, Clevenger's, Dale's and Peterson's for bringing treats to share and Michelle and Terry for providing coffee.

SECRETARY (Peterson): Minutes from the Summer General Meeting were approved.

TREASURER (Clevenger): Rex reported that we have collected about \$1,000 this year for the walleye fund giving us a total of around \$2,800. Between the dues and picnic raffle we brought in \$3,600 this year and our expenses were \$2,500. We added about \$1,100 to our treasury this year. Today we have a little over \$6,000 in the bank. We received \$30,000 in DNR grants. As part of the grant we paid \$6,000 for an Aquatic Plant Study. That study was fully funded by the DNR with matching for volunteer work and will be completed this year. That leaves \$23,000 for ramp monitors wages, of which we spent about \$4,000 this year. We should have enough money to fund boat monitors for 2 more years.

MEMBERSHIP (Little): Gayle was not able to attend but Bob reported that the membership levels have remained steady. The number of past due members are down.

ENVIRONMENT/BLOG (Bratteig): Norm reported that all three quiet lakes were tested by Tiffany Kleczewski for invasive species during the Aquatic Plant Study this summer. Tiffany also did the initial Aquatic Plant Study five years ago. We don't have the full report yet but no invasives were found in the Quiet Lakes. Norm needs anyone who has volunteered in the aquatic study by looking for invasive species to report their hours so he can give the total hours to the DNR. The volunteer hours are part of our commitment in the DNR grant program. Three boat inspectors put in 258 hours on the three ramps. The three ramps being Ghost Lake ramp, Larson Road ramp on Teal River, and Lost Land Lake public landing. On the three landings 104 boats were checked, and 243 people were informed of the serious threat of invasive species. Lost Land Lake landing had the majority of boat inspections. Ghost lake landing followed with only a few, and Larson Road landing only had 1 boat inspected. Currently the water level is only .25 inches above the authorized water level. Norm represented the Quiet Lakes Association, along with two representatives from the Spider Lake Chain of Lakes Association, before the Spider Lake Town Board in discussions regarding aquatic invasive species. They discussed what preventive measures we can take and the high costs of managing a lake with an invasive species. Spider Lake Township chose not to create a committee on their town board, but there are many areas within the town board that keep invasive species in consideration. We have a partnership in the works. Act 170 is still being evaluated as to how it will affect our township. A question was asked if there will be boat inspections during the musky tournament. The monitors we hired for the summer will be back in school so there will not be anyone inspecting boats at that time of the year.

FISHERIES (Gouze): John reported that we have a goal of \$18,000 for the walleye fund to pay for a full stocking of extended growth walleye per recommended levels by the DNR. Walleyes for Northwest Wisconsin will match a percentage of the donation total. We are a ways away from our goal but the good news is that the DNR did release extended growth walleye into Teal Lake last year.

PROPERTIES (Gouze): John reported that all the picnic sites look good. Any ideas on ways to improvement the island sites are welcome. John thanked Jack Wellauer for his time and dedication in monitoring the dam and the water levels.

PROGRAM/SOCIAL (open): Bob thanked Michelle and Terry our hostess and host for our meeting at Boulder Lodge on Ghost Lake. The Vice President position is open and Bob would be happy to discuss the role with anyone that might have an interest. This position is primarily to coordinate the general meetings and the Quiet Lakes Picnic. Anyone that enjoys picnics would be a fabulous Vice President.

2013 Membership Meeting Dates (All meetings begin at 9:00 am)

- Saturday, May 25th at Boulder Lodge on Ghost Lake
- Saturday, July 20th at Town of Spider Lake Town Hall
- Saturday, September 21st at Boulder Lodge on Ghost Lake
- Picnic - Sunday, August 18th at Reel Livin' Resort, 11:00 am.

BLOG: The blog site is up and running, and the address is:
<http://quietlakeswisconsin.blogspot.com>. There is a list of Quiet Lakes ice-out dates going back over 50 years on the blog.

MOTION TO ADJOURN: Meeting adjourned at 10:55 am.

Respectfully submitted,
Shari Peterson, Secretary