

TEAL, LOST LAND AND GHOST LAKES IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

MINUTES OF SUMMER 2017 GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

TIME & PLACE: The 157th meeting of the Teal, Lost Land and Ghost Lakes Improvement Association was held Saturday, July 15, 2017, at Boulder Lodge on Ghost Lake. The meeting was called to order by President Bob Dale at 9:06 am.

ROLL CALL: Board members Bob Dale (President), Norm Bratteig (Vice President), and Gayle Little (Treasurer) were present. MEMBERS PRESENT: Linda Bratteig, Sue Dale, Gail Nicholson, Orlin Johnson, Chris & Kay Callaway, Bruce Shackleton, Dan & Jane Brandenstein, Jim & Donna Nickel, Chris & Gene Aichele, Margaret Law & John Gouze, Bart Shanley, Ray & Kay Schafer, Doug & Janet King, Rick Zaksas, Art Miller, Jim Dooley, Bridgett Bowen, Connie Leopold, Bryan Neuswanger, Bob & Rita Capes, Tom Igowsky, George Miller, Jeff Post, Carole & Dick Dumovic, Barb Clevenger, Dave & Sandy Neuswanger. NON-MEMBERS PRESENT: Blaine Ehrmantraut, Mark & Candy Ramsey (+3)

AGENDA AND INTRODUCTION (Bob Dale)

A big thank you went out to Terry and Michelle Conroy, proprietors of Boulder Lodge, for once again graciously hosting the Quiet Lakes Association (QLA) General Membership Meeting.

An introduction of board members was provided by Bob Dale, outgoing president of the Board.

Bob Dale also presented the Secretary's Report for the July 16, 2016 meeting for Shari Peterson, who was not present for today's meeting. A motion was made and seconded for approval of the minutes. Members voted and approved the minutes of the July 2016 Association meeting.

The next order of business was the unanimous election of new officers for the upcoming year. The following new board members were elected for 2017-2018: Dave Neuswanger, President; Gail Nicholson, Secretary; Steve Fiala, Director at Large. Norm Bratteig will continue as Vice President, and Gayle Little will continue as Treasurer.

Dave Neuswanger, incoming president, provided information about his background: Dave was a Fishery Biologist and a Supervisor for the Missouri Department of Conservation for 23 years; and he went on to become a Fishery Supervisor for a six county area (including our local area) with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources from 2002 until his retirement in 2014.

TREASURER'S REPORT (Gayle Little)

Balance: As of 7/12/2017, we have a combined balance of \$15,493.92. This is after the expenditure for the second half of the herbicide treatment on Lost Land Lake this year. Jim Imse's bequest of \$8,858 to our association has really helped in giving us a cushion to fund our expenses as we deal with the Hybrid Eurasian Water Milfoil. Some additional funds will likely be reimbursed by the DNR to the association for time spent by AIS (Aquatic Invasive Species) committee members.

Membership & Membership Communications: Our Association currently has a total of about 170 members, including 30 new members in 2016. Some members have not paid dues for several years, and about 60 haven't yet paid for 2017.

Bob Dale said that there are about 360 property owners. Fewer than half are members of the Association. He asked that everyone talk to neighbors about membership, and try to get folks involved to have an active Association. Our new website, www.quietlakes.org, has forms for new and returning members, copies of the minutes from previous years, and many features of interest to all members

ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT (Dave Neuswanger)

In order to be eligible for certain types of grants from the DNR, our Association must have an ongoing approved Aquatic Plant Management Plan. The previous plan was completed in 2012. The latest update, as revised by the Aquatic Invasive Species Committee and approved by the Association Board in May of 2017, is found on the Association website at www.quietlakes.org.

Despite Association efforts to educate the public and avoid invasive species in our lakes, in 2013 the Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission found Hybrid Eurasian Water Milfoil in Lost Land Lake.

In 2015, the Association contracted to have the invasive weeds treated with 2,4-D herbicide with limited success. As a spot-treatment, this type of chemical has some limitations, including maintaining an effective dosage for an adequate amount of time in the area of treatment; the expense of treating large areas; and concerns about the unknown long-term effects of such treatment. There are publications on the website www.quietlakes.org that provide information related to the decline in property values where Eurasian Water Milfoil (EWM) or Hybrid Eurasian Water Milfoil (HEWM) obstructs waterways around lakefront properties.

On June 20, 2017, the Board contracted with Cason and Associates to treat the worst patches of HEWM totaling 9.9 acres (mostly Wilson and Landing Camp bays) with Reward herbicide (Diquat dibromide). This chemical non-selectively kills the stems of leaves of all aquatic plants on contact, including EWM/HEWM in the treated area. Because plant roots are not affected by the chemical, we expect EWM/HEWM and native plants to regrow eventually, but a follow-up survey is needed later this year to determine the extent to which invasive or native plants return to the treated areas.

The AIS committee has also been investigating a mechanical method involving the use of an EcoHarvester that can be used to pull the HEWM by the roots and remove it from the lake. If done in early spring when HEWM is taller than native plants, we may be able to selectively remove the HEWM without loss of native plant species diversity. Unwanted plants are offloaded onto a cart/dump trailer and taken away from the lake to be composted offsite. Pictures and a video of the EcoHarvester at work are shown on the Association website at www.quietlakes.org.

Norm Bratteig has offered his dump trailer and off-season storage facilities for Association use if the EcoHarvester is purchased for removal of HEWM. The cost of the Eco Harvester and custom trailer is somewhat more than \$65,000. Including costs for operations and maintenance, the Board is expecting that a total of \$70,000 would be required to make the project a reality. The Board is considering whether a pledge drive in the Association community would result in our ability to purchase the EcoHarvester so that the EWM/HEWM could be removed mechanically on a yearly basis, as needed.

Whatever method is used, a permit from the DNR is required in order to remove the EWM/HEWM from the lakes. A suggestion was made to mail a flyer to property owners to notify them about the pledge drive for an EcoHarvester if chemical control efforts prove ineffective or too costly. Mailing would help with the notification process for property owners who are not members of our Association and for those who are not connected to the Internet.

BREAK: 10:43 - 10:58

FISHERIES REPORT (Dave Neuswanger) While introducing Dave, Bob Dale reported that DNR planned to stock 6300 extended-growth (6-8") walleyes in Lost Land Lake in fall of 2017; and it was his understanding that 5100 EG walleyes would be stocked into Teal Lake (5/acre in both lakes).

EDITOR'S NOTE: Since our Annual Meeting, many changes were made to these plans – all reported on the QLA website.

MUSKIES - The DNR hatchery in Spooner has decided to use Teal Lake and Lost Land Lake as the source for muskellunge brood stock, rotating every third year with egg-taking activity on the Chippewa Flowage and Lac Courte Oreilles.

WALLEYES - Dave Neuswanger provided an overview of some factors that may influence the number of walleyes in area lakes:

1. **WATER CLARITY** - When there is little rain (little filtration by wetlands acting as a large "tea bag"), the water may be too clear (not as stained) for walleyes, which function more effectively under low-light conditions. Juvenile walleyes do not survive as well in extremely clear water because their ability to see and avoid predators is compromised. About six feet of Secchi disk visibility is optimal for walleyes, which is the long-term average summertime water clarity at Teal and Lost Land lakes.

2. **LARGEMOUTH BASS** - Local studies show that largemouth bass have grown slowly due to high numbers and are living longer than anticipated. The clear water conditions in our lakes provide a more successful habitat for largemouth bass, and they feed on juvenile walleyes. The largemouth bass' burst suction method of feeding allows them to prey effectively on walleyes, even in dense aquatic plants. **Fall stocking of six to eight inch extended growth fingerling walleyes combined with increased harvest of largemouth bass (now legal to keep at any size) may help to increase the survival of young walleyes.**

3. **SMALLMOUTH BASS** – This is a totally different species from largemouth bass. Generally smallmouth bass do not eat or compete with walleyes. Smallmouth bass bite and reposition their prey before swallowing – an inefficient method for capturing walleye in weeds, but very effective for capturing crayfish along rocky shorelines. **Catch-and- release angling is more appropriate for smallmouth bass (mandatory for all fish less than 14 inches long), which live in harmony with walleyes.**

4. **YELLOW PERCH** - An abundance of young perch is important for the growth and survival of juvenile walleyes and would help to increase the walleye population. We need more big female perch in our lakes in order to increase egg production. Bob Dale indicated interest in starting a “fish sticks” project that would provide some fallen trees in shallow water – perfect habitat for yellow perch to drape their egg strands in early spring.

5. **BLACK CRAPPIE** - Crappies tend to stay in open waters (away from near-shore vegetation) until they are at least 3 years old and 6 inches long. Walleyes are far more effective than largemouth bass at preying upon large schools of young crappies in open water. With our currently low walleye populations, there is an abundance of small crappies that are growing slowly due to competition for limited food, and thus not achieving the size desired by most panfish anglers.

6. **TRIBAL SPEARING HARVEST** – Relatively few walleyes have been harvested by the Bad River and LCO bands of Lake Superior Ojibwe since 2010. Tribal harvest totals less than one-tenth of a walleye per acre on Lost Land Lake and less than two-tenths of a walleye per acre on Teal Lake. According to the data, less than 5% of the adult walleye population has been speared annually on Lost Land and Teal Lakes, and none have been harvested on Ghost Lake because the water is too dark, and the fish are too hard to see.

7. **ANGLER HARVEST** - Illegal harvest of walleyes could be an issue, but there is not any definitive information on this problem. New regulations protecting all walleyes less than 15 inches long and those 20-24 inches long should help to rebuild our populations, provided that anglers comply.

8. **WEATHER** - There is not enough information on whether climate change may have had any impacts on our walleye populations. A multi-year drought during the mid-2000s increased the water clarity in our lakes (particularly Teal), which provided an advantage to largemouth bass over walleyes. But droughts in our geographic region are not directly attributable to global warming, and the slight increase in average water temperature to date would not have conferred any significant advantage to largemouth bass over walleyes.

PROPERTIES REPORT (Bob Dale)

BOAT SPEEDING - According to Bob Dale, under Spider Lake Township Ordinance Number 12, the Sawyer County Sheriff's Office will come out and discuss boat speeding issues with a boat owner if someone calls because that particular boat is blatantly out of control or is speeding on the Quiet Lakes. **EDITOR'S NOTE:** This has emerged as a significant problem the Board will need to address in the upcoming year.

DAM REPORT - Teal River has a “rock roller” dam structure (no gates or control valves) that our Association has managed since 2006 under Special Use Permit #HAY166 with the U.S. Forest Service as recommended in a 1955 decision by the Wisconsin Public Service Commission. It is located approximately one mile downstream (south) of Teal Lake – accessible off County Road S from a gravel entrance road on the National Forest. This dam regulates water levels on Teal and Lost Land lakes. We are responsible for the maintenance of that dam, including removal of debris. Water levels can be altered by moving rocks, but there has been little need for movement of the rocks in recent years.

BUOYS – Four buoys mark the entrances to the thoroughfare between Teal Lake and Lost Land Lake, and six others mark dangerously shallow locations or other hazards on the lakes. For some years, John Gouze has put in and taken out the buoys. The Association was looking for someone to take over for John. EDITORS'S NOTE: Since the meeting, Bryan Neuswanger has agreed to assume annual buoy placement and retrieval duties.

PICNIC AREAS – The Raspberry Island picnic area is clean, and looking good. Some tarpaper came off the shelter at the McKnott Island picnic area, but Mike Brant will take care of fixing that as soon as he gets the materials.

WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT (Dave Neuswanger)

In May of 2017 the Quiet Lakes Association launched a new website in order to facilitate communication among our members about aquatic plant management, fishery management, social events, and other topics of community interest. For a modest fee, Tim Gavigan of oldcabin.net created the template for our website and continues to work with us to populate it with useful content.

The Association's new website is located at <http://www.quietlakes.org>. The new website includes articles, pictures, and information that can keep everyone informed about our lakes. An events calendar will provide information to members. The latest news will be updated as information becomes available. In addition, the blog that was used in the past will be moved onto the website.

Bryan Neuswanger will coordinate and manage the photographic components of the website. He will organize and format as necessary to put the photos on the website.

Donna Nickel will serve as the writer/editor/coordinator of social content for the website.

Dave Neuswanger will continue to provide and/or edit technical content regarding fisheries, aquatic plants, and general Association business.

INVASIVE SPECIES COMMITTEE REPORT

Dave Neuswanger is removing himself as a member of the Invasive Species Committee. Ann Feicht has also removed herself as a member of the Committee. The on-going AIS committee includes Norm Bratteig as Chairman, Bryan Neuswanger, Jim Nickel, Gail Nicholson, and Scott Johnson. They worked with Tiffiney Kleczewski on the aquatic plant survey that formed the basis for our 2017 revision of the Aquatic Plant Management Plan (available on our website), and the committee arranged and supervised the June 20, 2017 spot-treatment with Reward herbicide to set back Hybrid Eurasian Water Milfoil. The next task will be to evaluate the effects of that treatment and determine whether we need to move forward with raising funds to purchase an EcoHarvester to mechanically control the invasive plant species in our lakes.

SOCIAL/PICNIC REPORT

The Lake Association picnic will be held on Saturday August 12, 2017, at Reel Livin' Resort, at 11:00 AM; and food will be served at noon. There is no charge, but donations/contributions are certainly welcome and appreciated.

LEGISLATIVE ISSUES REPORT

Historically, when important legislative issues that affect our lakes arise, our Association receives the information from the Wisconsin Lakes Association. When such information surfaces, it will be posted on the QLA website.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Incoming President Dave Neuswanger thanked Bob Dale, who is retiring as President of the Quiet Lakes Association after eight years of dedicated service; and Shari Peterson, who was our outstanding Secretary more than six years.

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting, and a unanimous vote was held. The meeting was adjourned.