



Newsletter



Spring Edition, 1993

Dedicated to the Preservation and Improvement of Ten Mile Lake and its Environment

MPCA Gives Ten Mile Excellent Rating; Says Comprehensive Management Plan Next Step

By Jim Schwartz

TEN MILE'S LAKE ASSESSMENT "report card" has been delivered by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and the "grades" we received are very good indeed. In fact, if one word could summarize what the MPCA concluded about Ten Mile Lake that word would be "superior."

You may recall that the MPCA selected Ten Mile for one of its Lake Assessment Program studies in 1991. As part of that evaluation the agency:

- Carried out a series of sampling tests that measured water clarity, analyzed water chemistry and determined the lake's trophic status.

- Studied watershed boundaries.

- Took into account the lake's ongoing preservation activities.

- Reviewed fish management goals.

- Rated recreational qualities.

- Considered a range of other indices of the lake's relative health.

TERMING TEN MILE'S water quality "excellent," much better than the vast majority of other lakes in the region, the report went on to emphasize that a relatively low phosphorous concentration is the primary factor contributing to the lake's generally good health.

While that certainly is favorable news, the study warned that Ten Mile is vulnerable to even a minor increase in nutrient loading rates from its watershed. If that happens, says the report, lake residents will see a steady decline in water quality, an increase in aquatic plants and in other algal forms.

THE REPORT ALSO RECOMMENDED that the association:

1. Begin immediately to develop a comprehensive plan that (a) involves local government, MPCA and MDNR staffs, extension agents

and sporting or citizen groups. The purpose would be to share resources and expertise in applying land use and zoning ordinances to preserve Ten Mile water quality and overall health.

2. Continue participation in the Citizen Lake Monitoring Program (weekly readings of water clarity) and the volunteer lake level gauge reading program. (Both will continue.)

3. Maintain periodic monitoring of on-site septic systems around the lake and encourage replacement of non-complying installations.

4. Assure that future development around Ten Mile occurs in such a manner as to minimize any adverse impact on the lake's water quality. Among other things that means seeking representation on boards and commissions that administer land use and management provisions. Some of that already has happened (see related story elsewhere in this issue).

5. Undertake a new study of excess nutrient loadings that examines run-off sources from forested lands, wetland input, the effects of lawn fertilizer, road construction, and poorly functioning septic systems. Defining nutrient sources in more detail will help the Association determine what further lake protection efforts are needed.

6. Cooperate with the MDNR to prevent the introduction of Eurasian water milfoil or other exotic species into the lake.

THE REPORT CLOSED with the observation that Ten Mile Lake "has the unique opportunity" to begin developing a plan that will address water quality, fisheries management, recreational use and shoreland development. The TMLA is working closely with the North Central Regional Office at Brainerd in preparing such a plan. MPCA staff members involved in the two-year project were Steve Heiskary, Jim Hodgson and Craig Schaffer.

Long's Bay Wetland Given to Association

A PARCEL OF WETLAND adjacent to the Bailey Shores development on upper Long's Bay has been given to the Ten Mile Lake Association in memory of Maxine and Ray Bailey. The gift was made by the families of Theron S. and G. Bryan Bailey. Mr. and Mrs. Ray Bailey were long-time summer residents of Ten Mile Lake.

The donors said their purpose was to make sure "the area is preserved in its natural state and dedicated only to such use as is consistent with husbandry of the wildlife and natural vegetation" found there.

IN ACKNOWLEDGING THE GIFT, President Al Hoover thanked the Bailey families, pledging that the Association will designate the area as a wildlife preserve. "We are working on keeping green belts around the lake," he wrote, "and gifts such as yours are making this goal into a reality."

Responding to a suggestion from the families that the area be appropriately marked in memory of Mr. and Mrs. Ray Bailey, President Hoover said the Association would do so using signs similar to ones placed on other gifts of property, such as the tract located on County Highway 71 that was donated by the heirs of the late Opal Roby. Plans are to place the Bailey markers early this summer.

THE GENERAL AREA IS HOME to a rich variety of aquatic plants and wildlife. A pair of bald eagles was reported last summer to have a nest in the vicinity.

The area is road accessible by going north on Hiram 10 (off County Highway 6) to Johnson Lane and thence to the development. Anyone interested in exploring the possibility of making a similar gift of property to the Association is invited to visit with Steve Chase or Jim Miller about procedures.

Lake Advocate Plan To Have Trial Run

CASS, CROW WING AND TODD counties have joined forces to implement a pilot Lake advocate Program that could become a model for the entire state, and even beyond. Heading the program is Dave Neiman, who will headquarter at Minnesota Pollution Control Agency offices, Brainerd. Two more counties may still be included in this initial phase of the project.

Lake associations will be invited to nomi-

nate at least two individuals who will then receive 20 hours of training to assume "lake advocate" responsibilities. The instruction will cover county zoning requirements; MPCA and Department of Natural Resources rules, including shoreland regulations and what is being termed Best Management Practices; the State Health Department's well code, and any other standards affecting lakeshore owners. Early June is the target date for producing a lake advocate manual and for scheduling training sessions.

WHEN LAKE RESIDENTS HAVE questions about what is permitted and what is not, when land use (building) permits are required, how to prepare a variance application, or are not sure about other water related issues, they may call their Lake Advocate, outline the nature of the question, and get information on how to go forward.

The purpose is to simplify procedures for lakeshore owners when they must negotiate with governmental agencies in making changes on their properties. It is important to understand that Lake Advocates are not to provide technical advice. That must come from the relevant government agency.

THE ADVOCATE'S TASK will be to acquaint property owners with required procedures, where information can be obtained and what sorts of data will be asked of the lakeshore owner. Essentially, it will be a facilitator's role.

When Ten Mile Lake's Advocates have been selected and trained, we'll let you know who they are and how to reach them. Watch for that information in forthcoming newsletters.

Ten Mile's Water Worth Millions to Area Economy

HOW MUCH IS TEN MILE LAKE worth to the local economy? That's anyone's guess, to be sure, but a recent study of the economic impact of Minnesota's fishable lakes tried to assign some dollar figures to that question.

The study estimated that each 1000 water acres create 16.5 jobs while each water acre translates to \$687 in consumer spending and to \$50 added value to the geographic area.

ON THOSE BASES, Ten Mile's 4640 acres create 76.6 jobs, generate \$3,187,680 in consumer spending, and contribute \$232,000 in added value to Cass County and its economy. And all of this is just the value of the water, to say nothing of the worth of the lake properties. -- Jim Schwartz.

Steering Group Seeks Environmental Study

THE CITIZEN STEERING COMMITTEE formed last year to oppose the proposed new public water access on Lower Long's Bay and suggest possible alternatives has had an active winter. Led by Ted Mellby, chair, the committee:

1. Filed a petition in late April with the state Environmental Quality Board asking for an environmental assessment of the project. The petition also requested that the question be referred for decision to the State Hearing Examiner's Office rather than to the DNR, on the grounds that the latter agency has a conflict of interest in the issue's outcome.

2. Based its petition on: (a) the threat such an installation will pose to the lake's last remaining dependable loon nesting site, (b) the susceptibility of the access site to

Thanks to Contributors!

The Steering Committee thanks everyone who contributed to the fund backing its campaign of opposition to the DNR access proposal. More than \$5000 was raised as a consequence of the committee's appeal, a level of support that is sincerely appreciated.

eurasian water milfoil infestation, (c) the implications of such an invasion for the 16 downstream lakes on the Boy River, (d) the possible negative effect increased boating activity will have on the bald eagle nest next to the channel leading from Long's Bay to the main lake, (e) the traffic hazards that will be created by locating the access where sight distances on Highway 371 are so limited, and (f) the fact that Ten Mile already is served by a more than adequate number of public and private accesses (7).

3. Included with the petition a statement from Cass County Sheriff Jim Dowson opposing the proposed access because of problems associated with traffic control, illegal parking, traffic and pedestrian congestion in the area, sanitation and trash accumulation, security considerations, and the probability of excessive alcohol consumption by both under age and adult users of the facility.

4. Conferred with interests in Hackensack about seeking location in that community of a staging area for Paul Bunyan Trail users. DNR plans are for the staging area to be lo-

cated at the proposed public access site.

5. Offered to purchase the access site from the DNR for \$31,000 (cost to the DNR was \$28,500), pointing out that the revenue could be used to improve the existing state public access on the southwest side of the lake. (An accompanying document estimated the existing access could be re-developed at a cost of \$7,500 to accommodate an additional 20 car/trailer units without harming any trees other than aspen.)

MEANWHILE, A CHECK WITH DNR headquarters in St. Paul confirmed that plans for the new public access are moving forward. Engineering design for the facility is in its final stages of development. As soon as that is completed, probably late May or early June, it will undergo an internal review and a period for public comment. At that time residents of Ten Mile and other interested parties will have an opportunity to react to the proposal.

According to the DNR Trails and Waterways Division, construction is to begin in late summer or early fall.

Board Okays Mapping, Ground Water Projects

TWO PROJECTS DESIGNED TO extend our knowledge about Ten Mile Lake and its land use were approved at the February board meeting. Both were proposed by John Alden, co-chair of the Environment and Ecology Committee.

The first project involves detailed mapping of lake properties and environmentally sensitive areas. Its success will depend on the cooperation of property owners since it will involve an on-the-spot visit from someone representing the TMLA. Scale drawings of each lot will be used to locate buildings, waste systems, wells (active or abandoned), fences, wetlands, and the like. The Board authorized up to \$4,000 for the project.

JOHN CRANDALL, a graduate student from Bemidji State University, has been hired to do the study. He was scheduled to begin work

A SPECIAL NOTE TO PROPERTY OWNERS: When John Crandall calls on you, please welcome him and offer whatever help you can in completing your property survey. -- TMLA Board.

about mid-May. "Gathering this information," Alden said, "will be of great value to both property owners and the Association, especially as plans unfold (Continued next page)

Two Lake Projects (Continued)

for implementing the county's new Lake Advocate Program (see related story in this issue)."

The second study will determine directional flow and chemical composition of ground water. Joe Wagner, a hydrologist with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, is expected to start work on the project in mid-June. Ground water samples will be taken at several locations around the lake. "By conducting these tests," Alden said, "we'll get a much clearer picture than we now have of what effect ground water flow has on the lake and whether its content poses any kind of contamination threat."

OTHER MATTERS CONSIDERED at the February board meeting included approval of Association membership in the Minnesota Lakes Association and in the North American Lake Management Society, approval to purchase 3 or 4 more Secchi disks so clarity readings can be shared by several persons during the summer months, a report from Heidi Hoppe that paid membership was 688 to that point, and a report from Jim Schwartz that the DNR stocked some 50,000 walleye fingerlings last fall.

Statewide Organization Voice of Shore Owners

AN ORGANIZATION CALLED the Minnesota Lakes Association is actively working on behalf of lake residents on several fronts. For example, the MLA has:

>Lobbied the state legislature to correct what it sees as a property tax system that is unfair to lakeshore owners.

>Introduced legislation to provide funding for the Citizen Lake Monitoring Program, improve enforcement of DNR rules prohibiting the transport of eurasian water milfoil and other exotic species, provide for expanded random inspections of watercraft, earmark a portion of any gas tax increase for the DNR Water Resources Account.

>Engaged in a statewide campaign to raise matching funds for research efforts to control or eradicate such exotics as eurasian water milfoil, the spiny water flea, purple loosestrife and other unwanted species.

>Sponsored annual statewide two-day sessions and occasional regional one-day meetings for lake residents emphasizing local management initiatives, lake improvement and restoration techniques, lake monitoring ac-

tivities, latest research findings and other topics.

>Worked with the *Focus 10,000* publisher to provide readers with information designed to help preserve and protect the state's water resources and to familiarize them with MLA's goals and activities.

THE MLA MEMBERSHIP FEE OF \$15 includes a subscription to *Focus 10,000*, an opportunity to contribute ideas to the magazine and to participate in state and regional conferences. Interested parties should mail dues to the MLA, 26 East Exchange Street, Suite 507, St. Paul, MN, 55101.

Your Bucks Will Help Fund Research

YOU CAN HELP THE MLA campaign to raise matching research funds for biological control of eurasian water milfoil. With your MLS membership fee send a contribution of at least \$3 (the equivalent of a bucket of minnows). If enough money is raised it will be matched and go to the University of Minnesota for research.

Landfill Closed, But it Will Still Take Garbage

NEW GARBAGE DISPOSAL PROCEDURES are in effect for Ten Milers now that the Hackensack landfill site has been closed to customary operations. Here are your alternatives:

1. **For those who wish to handle their own garbage** you may still go to the Hackensack landfill and use a "cannister station" located there. For a fee of \$2 per bag or per item, you may deposit regular garbage. There also will be a facility for accepting materials such as scrap wood, metal pipe, tires, mattresses, bed springs, stoves, refrigerators and the like. The fee will be \$4 per yard, or about \$10 to \$15 per pickup load. If you have any questions about what will be accepted, you may call the Cass County Solid Waste Officer, Paul Fairbanks, at 547-3300.

2. **For those who prefer having their garbage picked up**, a weekly service is available out of Walker (City Sanitary Service). Fees are \$2.50 plus tax for each red bag (available at grocery stores), or \$13 per month for one regular garbage can per week, \$16 for two cans and \$19 for three. We understand there also is a garbage pickup service operating out of Deer Lake, but were unable to get details.

NEW NEIGHBORS? ENCOURAGE THEM TO JOIN TMLA!

From the Notebook

by Jim Schwartz

IT WAS MY PRIVILEGE last year to serve on a committee charged with the task of preparing a new land use plan for Cass County. We completed our work late last year, submitted the plan to the Board of Commissioners, and were pleased to have it accepted. The next phase, of course, is implementation, probably a far more difficult challenge than writing the document in the first place. Among other things, integration with the county's long-range water management plan, preparing new zoning requirements, moving toward county-wide zoning, encouraging appropriate development, protecting agricultural business, and preserving the county's rich water resources are priorities. You'll be hearing more about the plan and how it affects you as time goes on.

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A HOST OF OTHER TEN MILERS either are serving or have served on a variety of committees, boards and agencies whose work affects us in one way or another. A few who come to mind are Patty Larson, Lorraine Stromquist, Bill Macklin, Bob Nelson, Willa Shonkwiler-Martin, Lois Sandell, George Brandt, Bob Crabb, Dick Grant, Earl Holle, Walt Kane, Stan Skaug, Joanne Roberts, Warren Goss, Katy Hoover, Ross Melgaard, John Alden and many others. Find some way to let them know you appreciate their efforts.

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ACCOMPANYING THIS NEWSLETTER is a survey form about your perceptions of Ten Mile that we hope you will complete and return as soon as possible. It's part of our continuing effort to assemble information about lake residents, to find out what they are thinking, to detect what they regard as important or not so important, to discover whether, according to their observations, they believe lake quality is improving or deteriorating. You may think the exercise will take too much of your time; I hope not, because your cooperation will provide invaluable guidance to your governing board.

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PRESIDENT AL HOOVER has been carrying out

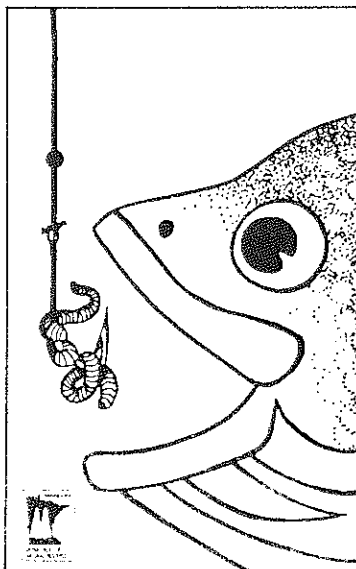
a fascinating experiment over the past three years. He has been measuring the amount of snowfall that accumulated from the season's first snow (2" Oct. 16) to the last (1.5" April 11). The monthly tally: Oct. 5", Nov. 17.8", Dec. 23.5", Jan. 26.55", Feb. 3.2", Mar. 6.5", Apr. 1.5". Total: 84.05", well above our 64+" average. Al chalked up the heaviest snowfall on January 23 when 8" of winter's decoration fell.

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JOHN ALDEN REPORTS a late March sighting of a bald eagle in a tree in front of his home and a great blue heron perched at the edge of the gravel pit just off Highway 50. Last November 9th, approximately 50 trumpeter swans landed on Ten Mile, resting overnight and leaving about 10 a.m. next day. In late April, Al Hoover spotted 26 trumpeters.

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EVERY NOW AND THEN someone asks us why the



MDNR doesn't stock Ten Mile with lake trout or some species of salmon. Well, it has been tried and the experiments were, to be quite blunt, a spectacular failure. At some point between 1909 and 1945, two separate stockings of lake trout were made. They apparently did not "take" since no one that we know of has reported catching one. In '71, '72 and '73 the TMLA, with an okay from the DNR, bought and stocked 1,000 rainbow trout in each of the three years. Only a few anglers reported landing trout a year or so after introduction. That has been the end of it. The speculation is that the fingerling size fish were devoured by predators, swam downstream to Birch Lake or, for other reasons, found Ten Mile inhospitable.

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DNR FACTOID: Fishing pressure on Minnesota lakes is so great it's estimated that 70% of the fish that will be caught during the entire year are landed by mid-June. No wonder the pickings get so slim by fall!

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RICK AND LEAH CROW, owners of Happiness Lodge on Long's Bay, report their children found a dead loon just after Christmas. It apparently became entangled in monofilament fishing line. Lesson? Never discard fishing line into the lake. And if you find any, salvage it and dispose of it in a safe spot.

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FALL AND SPRING ice over and ice out dates were: December 7 and April 24.

TREASURER'S REPORT
Five-Month Period Ended December 31, 1992

	Total	First National Walker	Piper Jaffray Prime Account	Kemper Government Portfolio Unrestricted	Portfolio Restricted
INCOME					
Dues & Contributions.	\$ 11,276	\$ 11,086	\$ 190		
Dividend income	2,838		269	\$ 2,569	
FMV change	(1,588)			(1,588)	
Total Income	\$ 12,526	\$ 11,086	\$ 459	\$ 981	
Expenses					
Projects	\$ 2,077	\$ 2,077			
Secretarial	1,129	1,129			
Annual Meeting	91	91			
Contributions	730	730			
Meetings	337	337			
Memberships	0	0			
Newsletter	620	620			
Office Supplies	541	541			
Postage	474	474			
Telephone	0	0			
Miscellaneous	0	0			
Total Expenses	\$ 5,999	\$ 5,999	\$	\$	
Income Over (Under) ...	\$ 6,527	\$ 5,087	459	981	
Transfers In (Out)		(4,000)	4,000		
Beginning Balance	101,122	876	19,551	30,041	\$ 50,654
Ending Balance	\$107,649	\$ 1,963	\$ 24,010	\$ 31,022	\$ 50,654

-- Jim Miller, Treasurer

Leech Watershed to Undergo Pilot Study

IN A "FIRST" OF ITS KIND the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources is undertaking a comprehensive study of the entire Leech Lake watershed, a project that will include the Ten Mile Lake area.

John Steward, DNR specialist stationed at Walker, has been appointed project coordinator. He will be guided by a steering committee made up of area members. Ten Mile's representative is John Alden, chair of the Association's Environment and Ecology Committee.

THE REGION INVOLVED, according to Steward, runs from Bemidji to Remer and from Bena to Hackensack, a total of nearly three quarters of a million acres. It will include all the lakes on the Boy River chain as well as more than 250 other lakes and about 100 miles of streams.

The goal is to develop a management plan

for the area that will "provide natural resource protection, guide growth and address cumulative impacts."

IN OUTLINING THE PROJECT at the February TMLA Board meeting, Steward said the initial stage of the study will involve setting what he called "desired future conditions." It will then go on to devising strategies for achieving them.

Part of the task will be to improve inter-governmental coordination on issues relating to managing the watershed. Steward said the DNR has other studies of this nature on the drawing boards, but the Leech Lake project is the first to get under way.

AS THE STUDY PROGRESSES, a wealth of baseline data will be collected, much of it the sort that Ten Mile has amassed over the past 20 years or so. Our information will be made available to the steering committee.

Land uses in the watershed are as follows: Forested, 71%; lakes and streams, 9%; wetlands, 9%; cultivated/pasture/open, 8%; urban/residential, 3%; transportation, less than 1%. -- Jim Schwartz.

IN MEMORIAM

Chester D. (Chick) Lee

Chester D. (Chick) Lee, 89, died February 4 in Ames, IA. He and his wife, Betty, had been spending their summers on Ten Mile Lake since 1931, first by renting a cottage for a number of years and then buying one on the south shore.

Mr. Lee was born in Salt Lick, KY. He was graduated from Merrill, IA, high school and attended Morningside College in Sioux City, IA, for a year before transferring to Iowa State University, where he earned his degree in veterinary medicine in 1927. He served on the College of Veterinary Medicine staff until 1972, when he retired.

He is survived by his wife, Betty; a son, Bill, of Skaneateles, NY; two daughters, Ann Harris of Plymouth, MN, and Peggy Koch of Atlanta, GA; eight grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren. Mr. Lee was preceded in death by his parents and a grandson.

John L. Alden

John L. Alden died November 11, 1992, in Lincoln, NE, at the age of 80. Survivors include his sister, Alice, of Lincoln; son, John, of Ten Mile, and six grandchildren, four of whom live in Utah and two who live at Ten Mile. He was preceded in death by his wife, Marge, and a daughter, Pris.

Mr. Alden joined Bankers Life of Nebraska (now Ameritas) in 1936. He remained with the company for 37 years. During World War II, he left Bankers to join the U.S. Army and became a captain in the Signal Corps. After the war he rejoined Bankers Life and after many years of friendship with fellow employees, retired in 1977 as Vice-President for Data Processing.

During his career, Mr. Alden became involved in civic as well as professional organizations. These included the Lincoln Community Chest, the Chamber of Commerce, Gateway Sertoma and the Heritage Presbyterian Church.

Mr. Alden and his family first came to Ten Mile in 1959 on a two-week vacation stay at Grandma Burn's cabin on the north shore. The Burn's cabin became part of their summer family lifestyle, as did later the Becher/Schmidt cabin at The Knoll. Because of their appreciation for these earlier vacations on Ten Mile, the Aldens purchased a cabin on Park Point in 1974 as their summer retirement home.

No Agreement Yet on Highway 71 Upgrade

AS THIS NEWSLETTER was being prepared, the long-standing controversy over the proposed improvement of County Highway 71 was still being negotiated between Cass County and the United States Forest Service. Main points of contention at this writing were: (a) Right-of-way width through Forest Service lands, (b) speed limits, and (c) mitigation measures. We expect to have a more detailed summary of developments in our next issue.

Lake Level a Bit Higher than '92

AIDED BY GREATER THAN NORMAL snowfall and early rains, this year's spring lake level was just a tad higher than was the case 12 months ago.

Walt Kane, keeper of lake level records, reports that as May was getting under way the reading was 1379.35" above sea level. That's 7" higher than on November 1, 1992, and 1.4" higher than it was on May 1, 1992.

ALTHOUGH BEAVERS CONTINUE to maintain dams on the Boy River between Ten Mile and Birch Lake, water was flowing over the Hackensack dam throughout April and on into May.

Lighted Buoys in Place at Two Sites

MARKER BUOYS WERE PUT in place as usual in April and May, but this time there is a difference. Two lighted buoys join the others to warn boaters of possible hazards.

One of the lighted markers is at the entrance to Long's Bay and the other is at the extreme north end of the island reef. The lights are a blinker type that cycle every 2 seconds and are energized by batteries that are supposed to last four months.

Membership Tops 700, New Directory is Out

HEIDI HOPPE, TMLA Recording Secretary, reports membership has topped 700 once again, with more returns still coming in.

You also are receiving your new Directory, prepared by Heidi this winter.

Exotics Pose a Threat To Lakes' Well-Being

By Jim Schwartz

WE HAVE ALL HEARD MORE than we probably wanted to know about eurasian water milfoil and the damage it can do to a lake or river, once it gains a foothold. But milfoil is not the only exotic to create problems. A number of others are lurking in and around the state that may be at least as threatening.



FOR STARTERS CONSIDER the zebra mussel. It is no larger than your fingernail, but it is so prolific that it can cause all sorts of problems. Among them: Clogging water intakes on outboard motors leading to overheating; fouling boat hulls to the point where performance can be seriously impaired; outcompeting other more beneficial marine life for available food; colonizing docks, breakwaters and other structures until they become a nuisance.



THEN THERE ARE THE RUFFE and white perch, fish species that are becoming well-established in the Great Lakes. The ruffe resembles the yellow perch, while the white perch is similar to a white bass. Both are fierce competitors for food and habitat, thus representing a threat to native fish species.



NEXT ON THE LIST IS the spiny water flea, a large zooplankton found in all the Great Lakes. Less than half an inch long, the critter has a spiny tail that makes it unpalatable to possible native predators. I saw a demonstration video showing panfish ingesting the flea, then spitting it out immediately as the bristly spines pricked sensitive tissues. Like the ruffe, the spiny water flea also competes with small fish for food and can disrupt the ecosystem. It takes only one adult or egg to infest a lake or river.



NOT THE LEAST OF THE invaders is the rusty crayfish, an aggressive and prolific tyrant that threatens to crowd out native crayfish species. It also pinches swimmers and can eat its way through and destroy natural vegetation. Although it probably is too early to predict just how damaging the rusty crayfish may become, the potential appears to be great.

FINALLY, WE HAVE TWO DECORATIVE exotics, purple loosestrife and flowering rush. The former has been around a long time. In appearance it is similar to fireweed, having a

purplish crown of flowerlets that, unfortunately, is quite attractive to the eye. It thrives in wetlands and can displace native wetland flora. The plant can be controlled, even killed, by using an approved herbicide. The trick is to identify it before it can spread to a large area.

THE SHOWY PINK BLOSSOMS of the flowering rush add a splash of color to lakes, rivers and wetlands where it grows. While it's not as aggressive as purple loosestrife, it can outcompete beneficial native vegetation, reducing both the quality and quantity of fish and wildlife habitat. No effective long term control is yet available.

THE CRUCIAL QUESTION, of course, is this: What can we do about these exotic invaders? Since most of them can be spread as hitchhikers on boating rigs, the obvious rule is to keep your boat/trailer rig totally clean -- free of any trace of vegetation or marine organisms. The same principle applies to boats owned by relatives and friends visiting Ten Mile: Check them carefully before launching.

Purple loosestrife and flowering rush are, however, are a different story. Nature does a good job of spreading these species. If you think you have spotted a loosestrife or flowering rush bed in a wetland, take a sample to the nearest DNR office for identification. If the result is positive, a control strategy can then be developed.

ONE PRINCIPLE IS CLEAR: We all have a huge stake in preventing these exotics from gaining a foothold in and around our lake. Vigilance on everyone's part will help mightily in our efforts to protect Ten Mile from an unwelcome invasion.

Quagga Mussel . . .

One More Big Headache?

STILL MORE BAD NEWS: Researchers say a new mussel, larger and hungrier than the zebra mussel, is now in the Great Lakes system. Its name? Quagga.

A Cornell University scientist reports the quagga was found in 1991 in the cold depths of Lake Ontario and has spread to Lake Erie. Genetically, it has been traced to the Black Sea region of southern Russia.

The quagga lives two to three years and has no known predators. They vary in size but can be much larger than the zebra mussel.

Here's a Quick Review Of Zoning, Other Rules

OVER THE YEARS WE HAVE HAD many questions from members inquiring about zoning regulations, state shoreland provisions, and what the best practices are for managing a lake lot. What follows is a series of questions and answers designed to provide the sort of information our members appear to want. The material is drawn from a variety of sources: The Cass County Environmental Services Department, other lake association newsletters and DNR publications.

>When do I need a land use permit? You must have a land use (building) permit for any permanent, non-portable structure that you intend to build. That includes, but is not limited to, additions to existing buildings, storage buildings, decks, patios, lot line fences, and so on. If you are in doubt, pay a visit to or call (547-3300) the Environmental Services Department at the Courthouse in Walker.

>Do I need a permit to modernize my sewage treatment system? Yes. Any change in your existing system requires a permit. Also, if your system is non-conforming and you wish to do any building on your property you will need a permit.

>How do I know whether my system conforms to code requirements? If your system was installed before 1972, is closer to the lake than 100 feet, does not have a drain field, is constructed of steel, plastics, concrete blocks, or any other non-durable material, it probably is non-conforming and should be replaced.

>If my system is non-conforming, how long do I have to replace it? Your system should be replaced as soon as possible to keep lake and land contamination at a minimum. Any individual sewage treatment system must be brought into compliance with the Cass County Sanitary Ordinance upon sale or transfer of title of the property. The seller must ask the county to determine the conformance or non-conformance of the system. If it is non-conforming, thirty days prior to completion of the sale of the property, the seller shall apply for a permit for whatever is required to bring the system into conformance. The permit shall specify the time allowed for the system to be brought into compliance.

>What are the setback requirements for Ten Mile? Structures must be 75 feet back from the ordinary high water mark (OHWM). Waste

treatment systems (septic tanks, collecting tanks, holding tanks, drain fields, etc.) must be at least 100 feet back of the OHWM.

>How far should my drain field be from a well? A minimum of 50 feet from a deep well (deeper than 50 feet and cased), and a minimum of 100 feet from a shallow well (less than 50 feet deep and cased).

>What treatment does a waste treatment system need? To prolong the useful life of a waste treatment system and to keep it working properly you should have it pumped and backwashed every 2 to 4 years, depending upon how heavily it is used.

>How much clearing am I allowed to do on my lot? Best management practice is to leave your lot in as natural a condition as you possibly can. If you feel you must do some clearing, 25% of the mature trees and shrubs as well as cutting, pruning and trimming is allowed to provide a view to the water from the principal dwelling site. Such controlled removal also is allowed to accommodate the placement of stairways and landings, picnic areas, beach and watercraft access areas and permitted water-related accessory structures or facilities. There is a proviso: Cutting and thinning activity must not substantially reduce the screening of structures, vehicles or other facilities as seen from the water, assuming summer, leaf-on conditions.

>What should I do about bulrushes and other emergent vegetation? The best practice is to do nothing. Such vegetation is a natural spawning area for bass, crappies and other panfish. If the vegetation becomes a problem, you must obtain a permit from the DNR.

>Should I fertilize my lawn? The short answer is that you should not. Usually, adequate watering is all that is needed. And remember that any nutrient which makes your lawn green also will make the lake green because runoff enrichment encourages algae growth. If, however, you feel you must use fertilizer, select one that is low in phosphorous and apply it sparingly.

>What do I do with tree leaves? Whatever you do, don't burn them and don't rake them into the lake. Gather your leaves and use them to fill low spots on your lot, compost them, or dispose of them at an acceptable location well away from any body of water. You also are encouraged not to burn anything near or at the lakeshore edge. The resulting high nutrient ash can wash or blow into the lake and encourage excessive weed growth.

More questions? Visit or call the Environmental Services Department, Courthouse, for additional information (547-3300).

Septic Tank Merits Tender Loving Care

WE KNOW THAT SEPTIC TANKS aren't exactly your number one topic for interesting conversation. But the fact is that it will pay you to know everything you can about your waste disposal system and how to care for it. Doing so, and acting on that knowledge, will prolong its useful life and keep it from spilling harmful contaminants into the soil and, eventually, into the lake. Here are some tips:

1. Don't put additives into your system. They do no good and might, in fact, actually do harm. They can liquefy solids that will then move into the drain field, eventually clogging the distribution pipes and rendering your system useless.

2. Never flush common household chemicals down the drain. They can kill useful bacteria and, in effect, poison the soil that is supposed to absorb the treated effluent from your system.

3. Have your system cleaned and inspected at least every three years, oftener if you are a year around resident. That means removing all sludge and solids, back flushing the system and subjecting the tank(s) to a visual inspection for cracks or breaks.

4. If you have a garbage disposal, you'd be wise to stop using it. Ground up garbage can be flushed out of the septic system before there is an opportunity for the material to be properly treated. Eventually, that will clog the soil treatment system. A much better alternative is to compost whatever you can of your garbage and to take the rest to an appropriate disposal facility.

5. Use as little water as possible. Shut off faucets while brushing your teeth, take showers instead of baths, install water-saving faucets and fixtures, flush toilets only when necessary. You get the idea.

6. If you have a pumping station, install an alarm device to alert you in the event of a pump failure.

7. Use a good quality white toilet tissue, one that breaks up easily when wet. Facial tissue should not go into a septic system.

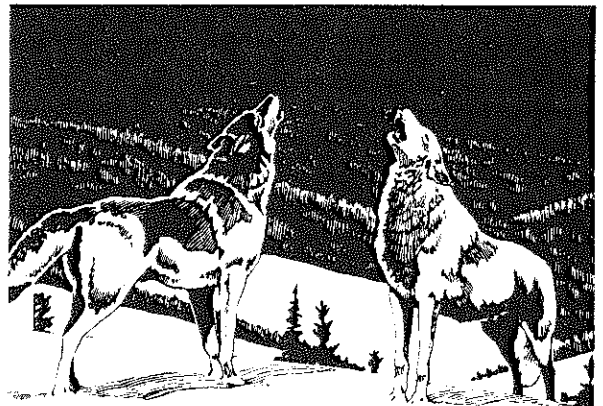
FOR PROFESSIONAL HELP when you need it, call your installer or pumper. Nothing is more important to the health of the lake, or to your peace of mind, than having a sound waste disposal system that is working as it should. Your state certified professionals can help you keep it in top shape.



...In wildness is the salvation of the world. Perhaps this is the hidden meaning in the howl of the wolf, long known among mountains, but seldom perceived among men."

-Aldo Leopold,

A Sand County Almanac, 1949



--From a Department of Natural Resources Publication