

Ten Mile Lake Association



Newsletter



Summer Edition, 1996

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

Morning Session for August 3 Annual Meeting; Doug Sandstrom is Speaker

THE ASSOCIATION'S annual meeting routine is being revised this year. Instead of gathering during the evening of the first Saturday in August, the usual practice, the TMLA Board decided to schedule this year's meeting from 9:30 a.m. to noon. The date is Saturday, Aug. 3, at the Senior Citizens Center in Hackensack.

Another innovation: At the meeting's conclusion, those who wish may adjourn to Arthur's Ten Mile Lake Inn where a buffet lunch (soup and sandwiches) will be available.

THE TIME WAS changed to find out whether a morning session would attract more members than the 125 to 150 or so who have appeared in the past. The idea first surfaced and won general approval of those present when about 60 Ten Milers met at Arthur's in late April

for a "season opener" get-together dinner.

Doors will open at 9:30 a.m. The first 30 minutes is to allow members to visit friends and neighbors, with association officers, or to circulate around resource tables hosted by committee chairs and government agencies.

THE FORMAL BUSINESS session begins at 10 a.m. and will include a presentation by Doug Sandstrom, of Longville, a popular speaker on outdoor topics. He will talk about black bears, eagles and other wildlife typical of the area.

At the close of his remarks there will be brief committee reports, with time allotted for questions and answers. The session will conclude with election of officers and directors.

Have Your Well Water Tested Sunday, Aug. 4

A LAKEWIDE WELL WATER testing day was approved by the TMLA Board at its June 7 meeting. The testing date is Sunday, Aug. 4, beginning at 9 a.m. and concluding at 4 p.m. Purpose of the event is to make it easy and affordable for residents to determine whether their drinking water is safe.

As has been the case previously, you will go to one of two sites to pick up your testing kit: Buzz Converse's workshop on Highway #50 (North Shore) or the former Woock Store on Highway #6 (South Shore).

INSTRUCTIONS FOR DRAWING the water sample will be contained in the kit. Read the instructions carefully and follow them to the letter. Once you have the sample, return it to the pickup site and pay a \$12 fee for the

laboratory procedure. Results of your test, which examines the sample for nitrate levels and fecal coliform bacteria, will be mailed to you within a few days.

On the previous two occasions when the Association sponsored a like event, about 160 wells were tested. Only a few proved to have problems and most were easily correctible.

IF YOU CANNOT participate or prefer having your well water tested at another time, kits are available at the Environmental Services Department, Cass County Courthouse. The fee is \$20 per sample.

Safe drinking water is essential to your physical well-being. Having your drinking water supply tested regularly is a sensible way to insure its continuing purity.

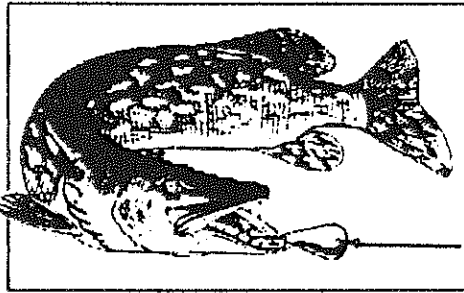
DNR Plans Northern Pike Test for Ten Mile

By Julie Gran

DNR Fisheries Research Biologist
Area Fisheries Headquarters, Walker

THE DNR HAS CHOSEN Ten Mile Lake to participate in a statewide experiment involving special regulations designed to increase fish size. The experimental regulation proposed for Ten Mile is a 20-inch maximum size limit for northern pike.

This means that all northern pike 20 inches or larger must be returned to the water immediately. This particular regulation was selected after analysis of data



collected by fish sampling and through the 1995 creel survey. DNR biologists believe that it has the best chance of substantially reducing harvest and increasing northern pike size.

IF THE PROPOSED regulation is approved by the DNR's experimental regulations committee and supported by the public, it will go into effect on May 10, 1997 (walleye and northern pike opener date) and remain in place for 10 years. After the 10-year period, the northern pike population will be evaluated to determine if restricting harvest was effective in increasing fish size.

The specific objectives for the regulation are to double the current catch rate of northern pike 20 inches or larger, and to increase the percent of northern pike which are 29 inches or larger from about 50% to 65% or greater. If objectives are met and public support remains, the 20 inch maximum may be made a permanent special regulation.

IT MAY ALSO BE modified to allow limited harvest of large size northern pike. If the experiment fails, the rule would be modified or returned to the state-wide regulation.

Public meetings will be held in Hackensack and the Twin Cities in the fall of 1996 to gather comments about the proposed 20 inch maximum regulation. Until then, DNR biologists are available to take comments or answer questions. Contact Harlan Fierstine or Julie Gran at the Walker Area Fisheries Office (218/547-1683).

What Began as a Massive Ice Block Now is Our Lake

TEN MILE LAKE is one of the deepest lakes in the state with a maximum depth of 208 feet. The basin was formed by ice blocks deposited in till along a preglacial valley. At the deepest point the valley evidently received little glacial deposition. In fact, part of the basin at this point may actually be in the precambrian bedrock. — Reprinted from Basin News, a publication of the Tri-County Leech Lake Watershed.

Ninth Fishing Derby Scheduled Aug. 9-10

THE NINTH ANNUAL Ten Mile Lake Fishing Derby will be August 9-10. As usual, eligibility is limited to Ten Mile Lake Association members and their guests. The

tournament begins at 4 p.m. on August 9 and ends at 4 p.m. on August 10. Prizes will be awarded for the three heaviest walleyes and the three heaviest northerners.

THE OFFICIAL WEIGH-IN station will be at the Ted Mellby cabin, Plainview Beach (Box 442, Fire No. H2677). The station will close at 4 p.m., August 10, with award ceremonies beginning at 4:30 p.m. Brats and refreshments will follow. Official Minnesota fishing regulations apply, and catch-and-release policies are encouraged.

Entry fee is \$10, including refreshments. Forms may be mailed to Ten Mile Lake Fishing Derby, HC 75, Box 442, Hackensack, MN 56452. Deadline is 4 p.m. on August 9.

SPOUSES OR FRIENDS of participants are invited (\$5 per person) to join the group for the food and socializing. All proceeds less expenses go to charity. If there are questions, call 675-6911.

REGISTRATION FORM

Name _____

Address _____

_____ Tel. _____

Make checks payable to: Ten Mile Lake Fishing Derby

Two Waste Water Treatment Plans Under Study for Ten Mile

THE HACKENSACK CITY Council heard a preliminary feasibility report June 3 on extending sewer and water lines to serve lake residents on the south shore of Ten Mile and north shore of Birch.

Hackensack presently supplies such facilities to 354.5 units. The proposed extension would add another 240 units and require that the current 8.4 acres of treatment ponds be expanded by at least another 10 acres. Cost of the project is estimated at \$4,100,000.

LES MATTEFY, City Engineer, indicated that grant money would be sought to fund both expansion and renovation. He said he felt the city would have a better chance to qualify for grants if its proposal included extension plans for lakeshore homes now served by individual septic systems.

Complicating the matter is the fact that the city's waste water treatment system has been exceeding its 52,000 gallon capacity by an average of 22,000 gallons per day for the eleven month period from July 1995 to April 1996. Whether the extension plan goes ahead or not, the overage problem will have to be addressed.

THE COUNCIL DECIDED to meet with Hiram and Birch Lake Township boards and the relevant lake associations to decide what course to take on long-term upgrades and expansion of the city's waste water treatment facility, which the community must do in any case.

When (or whether) the proposed extension will become a reality is anyone's guess. At least two to three years would be the likely minimum as funding sources are explored. If it is approved, affected residents on Ten Mile and Birch Lakes would pay hookup, installation and annual fees for the service. Those are estimated at approximately \$500, \$21 per running foot (multiply \$21 times the width of your lot) and \$92, respectively.

A PRELIMINARY ENGINEERING study for a proposed community waste water treatment system that would serve 22 of Ten Mile Lake's North Shore properties was presented June 29 at a meeting in Hackensack.

The study was sponsored by the Leech Lake Tri-County Watershed Project. The proposed system is designed to provide approved waste treatment for properties where circumstances may prevent installation of individual conforming units or whose owners may want to upgrade existing facilities.

AT PRESENT, six of the properties are inhabited year-round and the rest are seasonal residences. The land being considered as a drainfield site is owned by Cass County and is located east and north of the properties in question. The effluent would be delivered to the treatment area by means of collection and pumping devices.

Depending upon the configuration decided upon, estimates are that initial costs per property would range from about \$9,000 to \$10,500, plus \$127 to \$170 annually for operation and maintenance. In addition, wells closer than 50 feet from a septic tank or sewer line would require a variance or might even have to be replaced. The study was conducted by Ayres Associates of Madison, WI.

THE NEXT STEP for affected property owners is to form a Subordinate Services District, a necessary preliminary to moving ahead with the project. That process is under way and was expected to be voted on by the Shingobee Township Board sometime in July.

Once the district wins approval, specifications can be completed, bids solicited and a decision made as to the project's economic feasibility. What that suggests is that it will be next spring or summer before a final determination can be made as to whether the project should become a reality.

Early Season Clarity Readings Reassuring

WE'RE OFF TO ANOTHER good start this year in the water clarity department. Our first readings were taken in mid-May: 18' in the main lake and 15' in Long's Bay. One week

later the figures were 23' and 18' and by June 21 we posted real spectaculars: 27' and 20'! On July 3, the warmer weather was beginning to have its effect, Still, the readings were 23' and 21', respectively -- very good indeed. What's in store for the rest of the season depends upon rainfall and temperatures: Heavy rains and prolonged heat usually bring a decline in clarity.

Addresses to Change Under New 911 System

By Jim Schwartz

IF EVERYTHING PROCEEDS on schedule, county residents, including Ten Milers, will have new permanent addresses next season. The familiar HC route and box numbers are on their way out. In their stead will be a new system of streets, avenues and house numbers, all part of an enhanced 911 emergency system now being developed.

Once technical details have been worked out, all Cass County residents will receive a questionnaire asking for specific information. The more accurate and complete the material you provide, the better your chances for quick response in case of an emergency.

ALL DATA WILL BE computerized and used by dispatchers to direct law enforcement, fire department and ambulance personnel to an exact location in an emergency situation.

Here's how it is supposed to work: When a resident dials 911, the general area where the caller is located pops up on the computer screen. Next the picture shifts to the township and, finally, to a highlight of the precise problem site, all in only a few seconds. The dispatcher then knows specifically where to direct the relevant emergency crew. The entire process is set into motion by the 911 call: No telephone no service.

What is to become of your fire number? As of now there's no clear answer to that question. Since fire numbers are a creation of the townships, the town boards will have to decide whether to remove them or let them remain in place. What is certain is that the dispatcher's office no longer will be using them to direct emergency crews.

Recognize Bill Macklin For 28 Years as Editor

BILL MACKLIN III, who, along with his family, has owned properties on Batcheller Bay for more than 50 years, was recognized May 15 for his 28 years as editor of the *New Ulm Journal*. A charitable fund named the "Bill Macklin Fund" was unveiled that day by the Mickelson Media Foundation.

The Mickelson family owned *The Journal* from 1938 to 1980. In honoring Bill's tenure with the newspaper, the Foundation Board offered up to \$100,000 in matching grant money

to the New Ulm Area Foundation, which has a goal of raising an additional \$200,000 over three years.

TEN MILE RESIDENTS will recall the columns Bill used to write regularly for *The Pilot-Independent* (Walker) and the many contributions he made over the years to this Newsletter. Bill is now a resident at the Masonic Home in Bloomington,

His wife, Judy, and his three children, Bill IV, Tom, and Sue Paveson, were present for the announcement of the Macklin fund. He (Bill) was described by his former publisher as "Mr. Nice Guy," and by his son, Bill, as one who "did not seek the spotlight," but rather "was content to write about those in the spotlight."

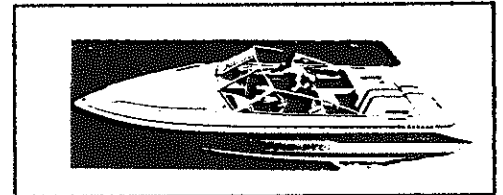
Water Skiing Accident Leads to Death of Loon

BOATERS, JET SKIERS and water skiers have an obligation and responsibility to protect wildlife on Ten Mile from harm. An incident occurred along the east shore where a water skier hit and killed a loon.

It should never have happened because the young woman piloting the speed boat made no attempt to avoid four loons swimming in its path. Rather than making a swing away from the loons, she split between them. The boat missed the loons, but the skier behind it hit and killed one.

TEN MILE RESIDENTS and guests: While enjoying your boating activities, please be aware of the wildlife that share the water with you. This is particularly critical at this time of year,

Ducks with their broods and loons with their chicks swim out on the lake from their usual shoreline safety zones and become vulnerable to boating activity. Therefore boaters, keep your attention on the water ahead of you and give our wildlife friends a wide berth. -- Contributed by an East Shore resident.



CORRECTION

The item reporting the sale of Swanson's Bait Shop that appeared in the Spring issue had the names of the purchasers, Jim and Lisa Tuller, misspelled. Our apologies.

From the Notebook By Jim Schwartz

IT WAS NOT EASY to decide just when the ice "went out" of Ten Mile this year. By Mother's Day, the bays and most of the main lake were clear. But the matter was complicated by a large icy shoal grinding its way onto the south and east shores and, in the process, creating huge crystalline mounds. As Ray Helsman found when he ventured beyond the banked ice, a 2-foot thick floe perhaps 100 yards wide remained on the lake, awaiting conditions that would put an end to winter's grip. Not until almost a week later did that happen. On May 18, Ray reports, the last of the ice disappeared. It was the latest "ice out" date in recent memory.

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OPENING DAY of the walleye/northern pike fishing season was certainly no winner. Not only was it unseasonably cold, but the wall-eyes were ignoring whatever anglers had to offer -- on Ten Mile, anyway. Scouts report no limit catches; most had to be satisfied with small northern pike or nothing at all. Not even panfish were cooperating, apparently in a snit over the 40° water temperature, give or take a few degrees. By way of confirming the whole miserable business, Grand Rapids public radio reported on May 14 that the region was a month and five days behind the usual seasonal changes. The fish clearly were tuned in.

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HIGHWAY BEAUTIFICATION is important to Ten Mile residents. For the past several years, volunteers, responding to the able organizing efforts of Sally Helsman, have routinely swept ditches clean of debris along the two paved roads bordering the lake: Nos. 6 and 50. Each safari produces bags and bags of litter, some of whose character you probably would prefer not knowing. Is it possible, I am led to wonder, that the popular Adopt-A-Highway program sends the wrong signal? Does it, in effect, say: "Don't worry about litter; volunteers will pick it up."

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A CASE IN POINT: John and Phoebe Alden's daughter, Sarah, collected 17 aluminum cans and other assorted debris in the half mile stretch along County 71 from her home to that of Steve and Elinor Chase. And this was in May -- well before the tourist season had

begun! Now it's true that #71 is not part of the county's Adopt-A-Highway program, so no signs notify motorists that the roadsides are being policed. But the littering story is much the same where the formal program exists. We all sincerely appreciate the efforts of those who monitor our roads to keep them free of thoughtless persons' cast-offs. What I simply cannot comprehend is the mentality of those miscreants who gets rid of unwanted trash by lowering their car window and giving the stuff a heave. What sort of psychological disability is at work here?

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ONE OF NATURE'S more fascinating creatures is the otter, a playful, strong swimming animal not common around here in recent years. Toni and I were pleased, therefore, to spot one in early May, gliding past our home with a good-sized fish clamped between its teeth. When it caught sight of us, the otter turned on its back, thrust its head upward, eyed us intently, then headed down the beach and out of sight. We haven't seen it since.

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AGAIN THIS YEAR we have hooded mergansers and goldeneye ducks occupying our two nesting boxes. The houses were built and mounted in the hope that wood ducks would be attracted to them. And they were -- for one season. So it goes. We're happy with our current tenants.

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THE ANNUAL SPRING songbird migration was a spectacular success, in our view. Among the species we sighted: American redstart, scarlet tanager, indigo bunting, rose-breasted and evening grosbeaks, purple finch, goldfinch, rose-breasted nuthatch, hummingbird, tree and barn swallows and, of course, warblers: Myrtle, yellow, blackburnian, black and white, Tennessee, nashville, magnolia, orange-crowned, chestnut-sided and more. It was a great show.

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OFF-SEASON BURGLARIES are an almost yearly occurrence somewhere on the lake. In April, three homes along the west shore became targets, the perpetrators making off with electronic equipment, guns and other items, most of it the sort that can be turned quickly. Having been victimized ourselves a few years ago, Toni and I can empathize with those who feel violated by this greed-motivated crime. Once one's home has been invaded by sneaky-thieves things are never quite the same. The problem is that little can be done about it, although crime prevention experts say alarm systems appear to be a deterrent.

Kane Finds Lake Level "Comparatively Stable"

By Walt Kane

THE LEVEL OF Ten Mile Lake continues to be comparatively stable and predictable. At the beginning of summer, June 21, the level was 1379.47'. That's just eight hundredths of a foot (1") lower than it was a year ago.

The lake rose from 1379.62' on May 1st to 1379.68' on May 21st, but had dropped .21' (2.5") to 1379.47' at the time of this reading.

HOW DOES THE current measurement compare with levels in recent years at this time?

1995	.....	1379.55'	1991	.....	1379.74'
1994	.....	1379.46'	1990	.....	1379.81'
1993	.....	1379.69'	1989	.....	1379.47'
1992	.....	1379.17'	1988	.....	1379.11'

Hats off once again to those waging the dam war with the beavers in the area on the Boy River between Ten Mile and Birch Lakes. The "River Runs Through It" very well due to their efforts.

Fishing Creel Census Now in Second Season

By Julie Gran

DNR Fisheries Research Biologist
Area Fisheries Headquarters, Walker

IN AN ATTEMPT to better understand fishing on Ten Mile Lake, DNR biologists are conducting a survey of Ten Mile Lake anglers. Anglers are counted and interviewed, and the species and sizes of their catch are recorded.

The survey is running during the 1995 and 1996 open water seasons (from walleye opener through September 30). Here are some highlights of the 1995 results:

- There were 50,877 angler hours of fishing effort.
- Anglers fished mainly for walleye (38%), anything that bites (18%), walleye and northern pike (9%), largemouth bass (8%) and sunfish (6%).
- Anglers caught a total of 85,849 fish; 63,383 were released.
- Anglers harvested 22,466 fish, weighing in at 16,666 pounds.
- Of the harvested fish, the top five species were: bluegill (24%), rock bass

(21%), walleye (12%), largemouth bass (11%) and yellow perch (10%).

- While 74% of sunfish were released, anglers released only 15% of the walleyes they caught.
- A substantial amount of fishing takes place at night, and anglers are fishing almost exclusively for walleye. DNR biologists are studying the night fishing on Ten Mile Lake more closely in 1996.
- During the day, it takes one angler an average of 15.6 hours to catch one walleye; at night, it takes only 3.3 angler-hours to catch one walleye.
- Fishing accounts for 70% of recreational use. Other popular activities are touring (12%), water skiing (7%) and jet skiing (4%).
- Of all anglers, 53% accessed the lake through private property, 32% came via a resort and 9% used the public access.

Your TMLA Board of Directors has a copy of the 1995 report, and a one-page summary of the results also is available. If you have questions or comments call Julie Gran at the Walker Area Fisheries Office (218/547-1683).

TMLA Board Has Busy June Meeting Agenda

AT ITS JUNE 7 MEETING, Officers and Directors heard reports from:

Rod Owre (Fisheries Committee) on proposed DNR plans to increase the size of northern pike in Ten Mile and results of last year's creel census (see articles elsewhere in this issue).

Jim Schwartz (Environment and Ecology Committee) on this season's lake water testing schedule and on plans for a well water testing day (see article for details).

Bob Kay (Safety Committee) on plans to update and distribute the poster summarizing boating, skiing and other rules and regulations affecting lake activities.

Sally Helsman (Highway Beautification) on volunteer cleanup of Highway 6 and 50 road-sides, and possible extension of the activity to Highway 71.

Jim Miller (Vice-President) on a nonprofit organization, the Minnesota Land Trust, that offers property owners a means of preserving land in perpetuity (see article).

John Alden (President) on map-making activities relating to Ten Mile Lake by a Walker firm, Pro-West; among other things the maps will differentiate be- (Continued Next Page)

--TMLA Board Meeting

tween public and private land as well as indicate land contours, tree types, wetlands and surface and ground-water hydrology.

ALDEN ALSO REPORTED that Heidi Hoppe, membership coordinator and recording secretary, is resigning her post as soon as a successor can be found. The Strategic Planning Committee, chaired by Jack Adams, was asked to interview applicants and recommend a candidate to the Board.

The Board approved payment of annual dues to the Association of Cass County Lakes, and agreed that the TMLA's directory should not be sold to commercial firms.

Land Trust Offers Way To Preserve Property

By Jim Miller, Vice-President
Ten Mile Lake Association

LIKE MANY TEN MILE LAKE members, I've always marveled at the beauty of the Ten Mile Lake area. Ours is one of the most beautiful lakes I've ever seen. Much of the activity of the TMLA Board of Directors is dedicated to maintaining and enhancing the quality of Ten Mile Lake and its lakeshore.

On May 30, 1996, I attended a five-hour presentation entitled "Land Preservation Forum -- Preserving Our Private and Family Lands." The forum was presented under the direction of Minnesota Land Trust, a 501c3 nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving open space in Minnesota. The following were the presenters at the forum:

- Steve Small, attorney from Boston who has written a book titled "Preserving Family Lands."
- Bill Brody, a Minneapolis estate planning attorney.
- Renay Leone, Executive Director of the Minnesota Land Trust.
- Ellen Herman, appraiser.

THE PRIMARY FOCUS of the presentation was placing permanent (usually) restrictions on use of land related to future development through use of a device called "Conservation Easements."

Copies of the "Conservation Easements" brochure will be available at the TMLA annual meeting August 3. A conservation easement is a legally recorded agreement by which landowners may voluntarily restrict use of their lands. Provided that certain conditions are met, donors may be eligible for

income, estate and property tax benefits.

THE LANDOWNER who conveys a conservation easement retains title to the property, the right to sell it, the right to restrict public access and the right to deed it to whom-ever he or she chooses. However, most or all of the rights to develop in the future are restricted or eliminated.

The conservation easement can be an excellent way for a landowner to protect the natural values of the property for today and for future generations. In this way, wildlife habitat, scenic vistas, forested lands and/or wetlands can be preserved.

I'VE READ "Preserving Family Lands" and have ordered a landowners' handbook, in the process of being published by the Minnesota Land Trust. We plan to further discuss this whole area at future TMLA Board meetings.

Any questions you have, or if you are interested in TMLA committee duty, can be directed to me at 547-3337 on weekends or 612-376-4506 during the week.

Two Earn Commendations For MPCA Volunteer Work

TWO TEN MILERS were recognized July 2 for long-term service as volunteers in the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's Citizens Lake Monitoring Program. They are Warren Goss and Jim Schwartz, both of whom have for years taken clarity readings on Ten Mile and reported them annually to the MPCA.

They received certificates citing their efforts in helping the MPCA understand long term trends in the overall water quality of Minnesota's lakes.

IN MEMORIAM

Lawrence John Short

Lawrence John Short, 94, for many years a North Shore resident, died on May 9 at Whispering Pines Good Samaritan Home, Pine River. He was born in Wayzata, MN, the son of Frank and Anna Short. Mr. Short was a World War I veteran. He was past president of the Wayzata Rotary and of the Minnesota Water Conditioning Association and was a member of the Zorah Shrine in Minneapolis. He is survived by his son, Donald, of Forest Lakes, AZ; two daughters, Virginia Orescanen, Minneapolis, and Sandra Meadly, Ramsey; six grandchildren, and one great grandchild.

Management Plan Can Use Everybody's Help

By Jim Schwartz, Member

Environment and Ecology Committee

THIS IS FOR all those members, and others as well, who have asked what they can do to help the Association attain the goals enumerated in its long range management plan: 10 choices you can make that will contribute to the beauty and purity of Ten Mile Lake.

- Modernize your waste treatment system if it is 20 or more years old.
- Resolve to maintain (pump) your septic system, at minimum, every two to three years.
- Never introduce additives to your septic system; they do more harm than good.
- Avoid the use of lawn fertilizers; plenty of water will keep your lawn healthy.
- Don't build campfires on the beach; ashes are a rich source of nutrients.
- Never deposit grass clippings, leaves or brush in the lake; either compost them, fill low spots on your property or have them taken to the Hackensack transfer station.
- Be a water miser (water running through your system flushes nutrients into the soil); fix leaky faucets, install low flush toilets, use water saver shower heads, don't let faucets run.
- Don't install (or use) garbage disposal appliances; they are a septic system's worst nightmare.
- Leave a 10- to 15-foot buffer strip of natural vegetation along your shoreline; it helps to prevent erosion and filters nutrients from runoff.
- Don't put into the lake anything that does not belong there (fishing lures excepted; they are legal); bait containers, beverage cans, fast food wrappers, and the like, belong in the trash or recycling bin, not in the lake.

Send in your suggestions. We'll be happy to publish them in upcoming Newsletters.

Here Are State Rules For Jet Ski Operation

GIVEN THE PROLIFERATION of water vehicles known as Personal Watercraft (jet skis, wet jets, wave runners, sea doos, etc.) and the range of comment they generate, it seemed a

good idea to review the new regulations governing their operation. Here they are:

- Anyone operating or riding on a personal watercraft must wear a U.S. Coast Guard approved Type I, II, III or V personal flotation device (PFD or life jacket).
- You may not operate a personal watercraft between sunset and 8 a.m. the following day.
- You may not travel at greater than a no-wake speed within 100 feet of any shoreline, dock, swimmer, swimming raft, any moored or anchored watercraft, or non-motorized watercraft at any time.
- If you tow a person on water skis, or any other device, there must be an additional person on board the personal watercraft to act as an observer. (A factory-installed or factory-specified wide view rear mirror is allowed instead of an observer.)
- If the machine is equipped by the manufacturer with a lanyard-type engine cut-off switch, it must be attached to the person, life jacket or clothing of the operator when under way.
- You may not operate a personal watercraft if any part of the spring-loaded throttle system has been removed or tampered with so it interferes with the return-to-idle system.
- You may not chase or harass wildlife.
- You may not travel through emergent or floating vegetation at greater than no-wake speed.
- You may not operate a personal watercraft in a manner that unreasonably or unnecessarily endangers life, limb or property.
- You may not weave through congested watercraft traffic or jump the wake of another watercraft within 100 feet of that craft. This includes other personal watercraft.
- A person under age 13 may not operate a personal watercraft unless there is a person 18 years or older also on board.
- Persons 13 through 17 may operate a personal watercraft without a watercraft operator's permit if someone 18 or over accompanies them on board.
- A 13-year-old operating a personal watercraft must have a watercraft operator's permit (available from the DNR), AND be under unaided observation by a person 18 or older.
- Any person 14 through 17 may operate a personal watercraft alone, IF they have a valid watercraft operator's permit.