

THE CULLEN CURRENTS

Winter, 2019

Important notice to all Cullen Lakes property owners

Areas of the aquatic invasive species curly-leaf pondweed (CLP) will again be treated this spring in all three Cullen Lakes using the DNR approved herbicide Aquathol K. This will be the tenth year of CLP management.

If you DO NOT WANT this treatment to take place within 150 feet lakeward of your shoreline, YOU MUST NOTIFY the Cullen Lakes Association in writing via email (beaver@uslink.net) or U.S. mail (PO Box 466, Nisswa, MN 56468) no later than April 1, 2019.

If you have an irrigation system for your yard that uses lake water, it would be wise to have it turned off until a week after the CLP treatment has taken place. The exact timing of the treatment is hard to predict, since it is dependent on spring ice out and the lake water warming into the 50s. When CLA learns of the intended treatment date, we will post it on the CLA web site: www.cullenlakesassoc.org.

CLA membership

by Carol Lindahl, Membership Committee chair

As of January 28, 2019 we have 178 paid members. Of these, 11 are associate members (former owners, family members of owners, or owners of property in the Cullen Lakes watershed). We also have six complimentary members (new property owners). Membership letters for 2019 were mailed in early December to allow for those wanting to use a donation for 2018 tax purposes to do so.

If you haven't already sent in your \$25 membership dues (and hopefully a contribution towards the treatment of curly-leaf pondweed), please take the time now to write your check, make any necessary corrections to your personal data on the membership letter you received, and mail them both to CLA, PO Box 466, Nisswa, MN 56468.

Please help us keep our membership records current by sending the newsletter editor any changes in your mailing address, email address, or change in ownership of your property. We encourage all co-owners of a property to become members of CLA. Doing so will ensure they are kept informed of all important news around the lakes.

Curly-leaf pondweed (CLP) management donations update

The CLA Board of Directors heartily thanks all who have already contributed to the 2019 CLP treatment fund. The very positive response is truly impressive.

Here are some of the statistics as of January 28:

141 property owners and family members (there are 178 dues paying CLA members so far this year, so that's 79%!) have made a CLP donation.

*57 contributed the \$250 suggested in the membership mailing.

*19 contributed more than the suggested \$250.

*Contributions have ranged from \$25 to \$975.

*Contributions total \$28,144.

We are thankful for all donations, no matter the amount! If it were not for the generous donations of our members each year, the lake association would quickly run out of funds for CLP management and the lakes would become less suitable for boating, fishing, and water sports.

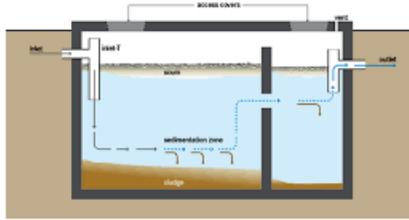


A lake is a complex living system whose health depends on you to understand and properly care for it.

Onsite sewage treatment systems maintenance: Why and how often?

Onsite sewage treatment systems are a major investment for many of the people who own property on the lakes. This investment needs to be protected. One of the best ways to protect it is by having regular maintenance done. You would not think of driving your car without regularly changing the oil. Just like a car, an onsite system needs

r e g u l a r
maintenance to
maximize the
performance and
life of the
system. Regular
maintenance for
an onsite system
is having the
solids removed
from the septic
tank. This needs



to be done on a regular basis and will determine the useful life of your system.

The maintenance timing for each system is different. Generally, it should be done about every two years. However, there are a number of things that may take place inside a home that could make that interval shorter. One of the quickest is to add more solids to the system by using a garbage disposal. Garbage disposal use will cut the approximate interval for maintenance in half!

Water use also affects the maintenance timing. For example, a large Jacuzzi in the house will increase how often the system needs to be maintained. Laundry use can also affect the system's performance. By spreading loads of wash over several days instead of doing them all in one day allows time for your septic tank to separate the solids from the liquids and keeps the solids from flowing into your drainfield where they will eventually cause the drainfield to fail.

Proper septic system maintenance must be done by a professional who will pump all the solids and liquid from the tank and inspect the tank and baffles to make sure there is no leakage or corrosion.

Your onsite sewage treatment system can last up to 40 years with typical use and proper maintenance. Since many seasonal lake property owners live in towns and cities serviced by municipal sewage collection and treatment systems, here are a few tips on the proper "care and feeding" of an onsite sewage treatment system.

Conserve water

- *Repair leaky plumbing fixtures.
- *Take short showers instead of baths.
- *Install low volume toilets and low flow shower heads and faucets.

- *Fill the dishwasher to capacity before operating it.
- *Wash full loads of clothes.
- *Don't let the water run while brushing teeth, washing, or washing dishes by hand.

Good septic system habits

- *Use toilet paper that breaks up easily when wet (usually one ply).
- *Don't put coffee grounds, cooking fats, facial tissue, diapers, tampons, paper towels, cigarette butts, or other non decomposable materials down the drain or flush them down the toilet.
- *Don't use a garbage disposal.
- *Use no-phosphate **liquid** dishwasher, dishwashing, and laundry detergents.
- *Use the smallest possible amount of household detergents, bleaches, drain cleaners, toilet bowl deodorizers, and other household chemicals.
- *Spread the washing of clothes over the week and do only one load a day. If this isn't practical when you have a lot of company, do the laundry at a laundromat.
- *Keep household hazardous waste out of the septic system.
- *Don't run the dishwasher and washing machine at the same time.

NURTURE NATURE

Stewardship in your backyard

from the MN DNR web site

Taking care of the state's natural resources, which face increasing pressures and demands from a growing population, is a task that requires everyone to lend a hand at whatever level they can.

One of the best places to begin is right where you live. Whether it's a narrow urban lot or a 40-acre woodland, your "backyard" is an important part of a larger natural community or ecosystem. The large expanse of neatly trimmed turf that's pleasing to some is a very inhospitable environment for wildlife, and the practices necessary to maintain such a landscape often contribute to water quality problems. By making different landscaping choices, property owners can do their part to assure healthier habitat and cleaner lakes and rivers.

Save the date!

2019 CLA Annual Meeting
Saturday morning, August 10

Mayo Lake Nature Preserve offers year-round opportunities

adapted from a 2016 Love of the Lakes
article by Nancy Vogt

In less than five minutes, travelers can leave busy Highway 371, travel a short distance west and find themselves secluded in a peaceful, natural setting.

Mayo Lake Nature Preserve is a relatively new offering on the south side of Mayo Lake. The preserve consists of 67 acres of land in both Crow Wing (11.3 acres) and Cass (55.6 acres) Counties.

The city of Pequot Lakes acquired the land a few years ago and, because of a perpetual conservation easement that had been placed on the land in 2004 by its previous owner, determined the land would become a non-motorized outdoor recreation area with no structures being built. Plans are to keep the land in a rustic, park-like condition.

In the several years since the creation of the Mayo Lake Nature Preserve several trails have been developed and are used for hiking as well as snowshoeing. In future years the city is hoping to be able to offer groomed cross country ski trails. One hiking trail leads to a bench overlooking Mayo Lake.

To find Mayo Lake Nature Preserve: 1) **from the north** turn west off Highway 371 at County Highway 168 near the Timberjack Smokehouse in Pequot Lakes. A blue sign on 168 notes "Mayo Lake Park — 2 miles." Take a left onto Hurtig Road. Go about 2 miles and turn right at the intersection of Ninth Ave. SW and 69th St. SW. or 2) **from the south** turn west at County Highway 29 at the Nisswa/Pequot Lakes border. Turn right onto Ninth Ave. SW and continue north to 69th St. SW. Turn left onto 69th St.

You'll see a Mayo Lake Nature Preserve sign and there is a small parking lot on the right, just after crossing the small Mayo Lake dam built during the Great Depression Era of the 1930s and 40s by the federal Works Progress Administration.



One tree by the lake

Studies using nets to simply capture what falls out (tent worms, ants, spiders, inchworms, etc.) demonstrate that one hardwood tree on the waterfront produces several hundred pounds of fish food per year. Another study performed on lakes surrounded by trees revealed that 44 percent of the annual diet of the fish originated in those trees.

Trees literally stick lakefront property together with roots, keeping soil and sediment from washing into the water. Trees act as filters, slowing the introduction of phosphorus and other pollutants. Trees become homes for kingfishers, frogs, butterflies, wood ducks, and all those songbirds we try to attract with bird feeders. Trees shade the water, moderating temperatures for fish like walleyes and northern pike. Branches and trunks that tumble into the water provide critical habitat for fish and the invertebrates they eat.

All things considered, trees maintain lakefront investments better than people do.

A life philosophy

When things in your life seem almost too much to handle, when 24 hours in a day are not enough, remember the mayonnaise jar and the two cups of coffee.

A professor stood before his philosophy class and had some items in front of him. When the class began, he wordlessly picked up a very large and empty mayonnaise jar and proceeded to fill it with golf balls. He asked the students if the jar was full. They agreed it was. The professor then picked up a box of pebbles and poured them into the jar. He shook the jar lightly. The pebbles rolled into the open areas between the golf balls. He asked the students again if the jar was full. They agree it was. The professor next picked up a box of sand and poured it into the jar. The sand filled up all the empty spaces. He asked once more if the jar was full. The students responded with a unanimous "yes." The professor then poured two cups of coffee from a thermos under the table. He poured both cups into the jar, effectively filling the empty space between the grains of sand. The students laughed. "Now," said the professor, as the laughter subsided, "I want you to realize that this jar represents your life. The golf balls are the important things: your faith, your family, your health, your friends and your favorite passions — things that if everything else was lost and only they remained, your life would still be full. The pebbles are the other things that matter, like your job, your house and your car. The sand is everything else — the small stuff. If you put the sand into the jar first," he continued, "there is no room for the pebbles or the golf balls. The same goes for life. If you spend all your time and energy on the small stuff, you will never have room for the things that are important to you. Pay attention to the things that are critical to your happiness. Set your priorities. The rest is just sand." One student raised her hand and asked what the coffee represented. The professor smiled and said, "It just goes to show you that no matter how full your life may seem, there's always room for a couple cups of coffee with a friend."

Pequot Lakes develops a short-term rental ordinance

CLA received the following notice from Dawn Bittner, Pequot Lakes Zoning Specialist:

“The City of Pequot Lakes developed a Short-term Rental Ordinance in 2018 requiring property owners who rent their homes for a period of less than 30 days to obtain a permit from the City. Ordinance 18-15 is available for review on the Planning & Zoning home page on the City’s website at www.pequotlakes-mn.gov, as well as the Application form to obtain a permit for short-term rental.”

The following are some highlights of the ordinance.

*The purpose of the ordinance is to regulate short-term vacation rentals within the City for the purpose of allowing property owners to offer their property for rent while mitigating associated negative impacts upon surrounding properties and neighborhoods, as well as water and environmental quality and general public safety.

*Short-term rental means a rental period of less than thirty (30) days.

*No property owner may rent or cause to be rented a dwelling unit in Pequot Lakes for a period of less than 30 days without first obtaining a permit from the City.

*An application for a permit for a short-term rental shall be obtained from the City. In addition to basic applicant information, the following shall also be submitted: 1) a sketch floor plan of the structure, including the number of bedrooms and all other sleeping accommodations not specific to a bedroom; 2) a site plan which shows locations of property lines, the dwelling unit to be rented, septic tank and drain field locations, and specific parking areas that will be utilized by renters for vehicles and trailer parking; 3) a valid Certificate of Compliance for the subsurface sewage treatment system less than three years old.

*The maximum rental period shall not be more than 30 days.

*The maximum occupancy shall be two people per bedroom.

*Properties shall not be rented for more than four rental periods between May 20 and September 10 each calendar year.

*Properties may not be rented to more than one party in any seven day period.

*The applicant shall provide one off-street parking space per bedroom rented with a maximum number of vehicles equal to the number of bedrooms in the dwelling.

*Parking areas must meet the side yard setback for the zoning classification of the subject property.

*The owner shall keep a report detailing use of the home by recording the full name, address, phone number and vehicle permit number of adult guests using the property. A copy of the report shall be provided to the City upon request.

Fishing Middle Cullen Lake

from a Lake Country Journal article
written by Tim Hanske

Middle Cullen Lake is 396 acres, has a maximum depth of 48 feet, and an average water clarity of 15 feet. Walleye, northern pike, crappie, sunfish, largemouth bass, tullibee, and rough fish call this lake home.



Crappies and sunfish

During late fall and winter, crappies and sunfish can be found in and around the three deep basins of the lake. Crappies will roam these basins following schools of baitfish. They

are typically more active during low-light times due to the clear water. During the summer, crappies and sunfish populate the deep weed lines and underwater humps, typically in 12-20 feet of water.

Walleyes and northern pike During the winter months, walleyes and northern pike can be found on the deeper edges, typically around 20-30 feet of water, of the underwater humps located in the middle portion of the lake. In the summer both walleyes and northern pike can be found in the weeds located on underwater points and underwater humps.

Largemouth bass Largemouth bass provide consistent action during the open water months. In the spring, they are shallow and near shore, and as the water warms, they transition to the deeper weed and off-shore structure.

Middle Cullen Lake provides some great fishing opportunities for many different species of fish. Because the lake is smaller than many in the region, it can be a little bit easier to find the fish. As the ice begins to melt and into early spring, fish begin to transition to the shallow bays and channel areas located in the lake.

Always remember to practice catch and release or selective harvest so the fish populations can remain strong for many years to come.

Currents On the Cullens

New Owners

Jeffrey Rehwaldt, Middle Cullen (M71)

Paul & Belinda Reier, Upper Cullen (U12)

Jane Soukup & Marti Schroepfer, Middle Cullen (M97)

Matt & Kim White, Lower Cullen (L81)

Deaths

Gene Reed, Middle Cullen (M95)

Richard Arbuckle, Middle Cullen (M25)

Verdie Ellingson, Upper Cullen (U7)

CLA 2018 fiscal year end report (9/30/18)

by Carol Lindahl, treasurer

Note: This report covers financial activity from 1/1/18 to 9/30/18. Last September the Board changed the fiscal year from the calendar year to October 1 - September 30.

INCOME

CLP Donations	\$18,695.00
Membership Dues	3,175.00
Interest	598.41
Crow Wing County Grant	230.17
Merchandise Sales	271.70
Legacy Fund Donations	50.00

TOTAL INCOME **\$23,020.28**

EXPENSES

Administration Committee

Annual Meetings/Supplies	\$447.56
LARA Membership	75.00
Soteroplos Scholarship	250.00
Subtotal	\$772.56

CLP Treatment (surveys only) **\$5,343.76**

Water Quality Monitoring **\$602.00**

Education

Guide/Map Update / Web Site	\$138.35
Newsletter Postage	141.00
Newsletter Printing	586.27
Web Site Management	0.00
Subtotal	\$865.62

Membership **\$766.05**

Other

Board Liability Insurance	\$873.00
CLA Merchandise	136.93
Misc.: Postage, PO box	63.00
Subtotal	\$1,072.93

TOTAL EXPENSES **\$9,422.92**

CURRENT ASSETS

Checking Account	\$ 4,405.10
Business MM — Legacy Fund	47,660.37
Business Money Management	105,731.36
TOTAL	\$157,796.83

Cullen Lakes water quality report

by Ann Beaver, Water Quality Committee chair

I'm going to start this year's report with the same information as last year's for two reasons: 1) It bears repeating and 2) We have quite a few new property owners who haven't heard/read it before.

What we do on the land around a lake has a big effect on the water quality of the lake. I can't emphasize enough how important it is to leave a buffer of natural vegetation to the greatest extent possible along your shoreline to impede nutrient-rich run off into the lake and to leave or plant trees and shrubs along the shoreline to help prevent erosion of soil into the lake. It is also very important to ensure your septic system is functioning properly and to have it pumped by a septic company every 3-5 years, depending on its usage. If you have a lakeside fire pit, please remove its ashes once they're cold and deposit them well inland so the phosphorus they contain cannot wash or blow into the lake and promote more growth of the aquatic vegetation off your shoreline. And finally, if you pull or rake aquatic vegetation along your lakeshore, be sure to remove it from the lake to prevent it from "fertilizing" the water as it decomposes.

As most of you know, the water quality of a lake is determined by sampling three parameters June through September: water clarity (Secchi disk reading), total phosphorus, and chlorophyll *a*. A lake is then categorized as oligotrophic (clear), mesotrophic (moderately clear), eutrophic (green), or hypereutrophic (very green). Most lakes in the Brainerd Lakes area fall into the mesotrophic category.

Over the last twenty plus years, Lower and Middle Cullen Lakes have consistently fallen into the mid mesotrophic range. Their water clarity is very good for this range of lakes, their total phosphorus is usually in the middle of the range, and their chlorophyll *a* is in the high part of this range. Over the same time period, Upper Cullen has fallen into the high mesotrophic range. Its water clarity is in the middle of the range, its total phosphorus is in the high part of the range, and its chlorophyll *a* is in the eutrophic range.

This year's water testing results are consistent with those of past years and, in comparing them to the last ten years, they are somewhat better. There are a lot of factors and variables that affect water quality, but as I boat around the lakes I notice more and more shorelines with at least a small native vegetation buffer. I like to think that your individual efforts are paying off.

I want to thank our water quality monitors (and their family members who often assist them) for their dedication to the job: Denny Opsahl, Upper Cullen; Debi Oliverius, Middle Cullen; and Jim Burrell, Lower Cullen.

CULLEN LAKES ASSOCIATION
P.O. BOX 466
NISSWA, MN 56468

To protect, preserve, and enhance the three Cullen Lakes and their environs in order to ensure the continued vitality of the lakes, high quality fish and wildlife habitat, safe and healthful family living, and the survival of these natural gifts for future generations.

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