

ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

Carol Lindahl, chair

The Administration Committee organized the 2016 Annual Meeting, in conjunction with the full Board of Directors. Each year the organization strives to provide an interesting program and displays. The Committee has compiled a procedures manual for the CLA, as recommended in the Lake Management Plan's goals and objectives.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

John MacGibbon, chair

The CLA Education Committee maintains two major sources of information about the Cullen lakes and the lakes association: Cullen Currents, published quarterly and edited by Ann Beaver, and the Cullen Lakes website: www.cullenlakesassoc.org under webmaster Dan Meixner. Both the newsletter and the website continue to provide essential information on the Cullen Lakes to all members.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES COMMITTEE

Rich Johnson and Jack McNamara, co-chairs

Highway pick up

Due to the highway 371 construction project, highway pick-up will be suspended until the spring of 2018.

Shoreline restoration/preservation

It has been four years since we last were able to present a Most Improved Shoreline Award and again this year we do not have any nominations. We assume that people are making every effort to keep their shorelines environmentally friendly and we appreciate their diligence to help keep our lakes in pristine condition. Also, for the third year there will be no Lake Friendly awards.

Let us hear from you! If the Board doesn't get positive feedback on these programs, we may consider dropping them and pursuing other beneficial plans or programs.

INVASIVE SPECIES SUBCOMMITTEE

Ann Beaver and Carol Lindahl, co-chairs

In mid January we completed DNR permit applications for our spring treatment of curly-leaf pondweed (CLP) and applied for DNR grant funding to help offset the cost. We received DNR grants for the three Cullen Lakes totaling \$7,600. According to the June post-treatment surveys conducted by Clarke Aquatic Services, the results of this year's treatment again appear to be very good. Clarke did find new areas of CLP in Middle and Lower Cullen with densities great enough to merit consideration for treatment in 2017. However, the DNR does limit the total acreage of CLP we can treat in each lake, so after Clarke does its pre-treatment surveys next spring we will likely have some decisions to make as to which areas to treat. Also, we will continue to map known areas of CLP this year. We ask all lake users to notify us of areas they discover when out on the lakes. This knowledge will help Clarke and us effectively define treatment areas in the coming years.

As in the past few years, local DNR personnel are no longer able to map and treat purple loosestrife on the Cullens, as they had so graciously been doing for us, because they have their hands full dealing with the aquatic invasive species in the Brainerd Lakes area. So, we ask you to monitor your own shoreline and either pull out/dig up or poison any loosestrife you find. One mature plant can produce up to 2.7 million seeds annually, so if this invasive species is not dealt with our shorelines can be taken over by it. Please refer to the summer newsletter for methods of control. *If it's on your shoreline, it is your responsibility to get rid of it.*

WATER QUALITY SUBCOMMITTEE

Ann Beaver, chair

This report changes very little from year to year, which is a good thing. The results of our water sampling since the last annual meeting continue to show the water quality of the lakes falls within the normal range for lakes in our ecoregion. Monthly results vary some from year to year, due to weather conditions, but the overall condition of our lakes remains fairly consistent. A more detailed report will be included in the winter, 2017 newsletter. We continue to update the CLA Lake Water Quality Plan for each lake at the end of the testing season so they may be included in our applications for DNR grants for the treatment of curly-leaf pondweed.

LAKE MANAGEMENT PLANNING COMMITTEE

Ann Beaver, chair

Last fall brought the completion of the Lake Management Plan (LMP) update process, something that is done every five years. The Plan's supporting documents were updated and the LMP booklet was assembled and given to CLA board members to guide them in carrying out their CLA and committee responsibilities. It was also shared with appropriate government agencies.

LAND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Ann Beaver, chair

Committee members continue to attend meetings of the Pequot Lakes Planning Commission to represent the lake association's concerns regarding redevelopment aspects of Wilderness Resort Villas. CLA has a representative on the Pequot Lakes City Council/Planning Commission committee that monitors the continuing development of the resort, especially the removal of trees in the structure setback from the lake. There have been no land use applications before the Crow Wing County or the Nisswa Planning Commission/Board of Adjustment that have required our attention, so this past year was again a relatively quiet one for the committee.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Charlie Boudrye, chair

Dues-paying members in the Cullen Lakes Association number 229. A total of 21 former members have not yet paid their dues for 2016. There are 13 complimentary members (new property owners on the lakes) the same as last year. We have 17 Associate Members, meaning they are former lakeshore property owners, a property owner in the lakes' watershed, or a family member of a lakeshore property owner.

FISH MANAGEMENT

Dan Meixner, chair

Data from the DNR lake surveys completed in the summer of 2015 have been compiled and released. It shows mixed conditions as to the status of our 3 lakes.

Bluegill/Sunfish in general are down significantly in number and size. In fact, Middle and Lower numbers are at record lows sampled in the net. Middle for instance, had a high catch per net of 97.6 fish and now has 9.6 fish per net. Upper numbers are similar to Middle and Lower. While the size of the fish remained the same in Upper, Middle and Lower fish were smaller in general and the average size shrunk as well.

Crappie numbers are similar to past numbers. Size structure is about the same to slightly larger as well.

Bass numbers are about the same as the last survey with the exception of Middle. In Middle, numbers per catch are down from 114 in 2003 to 75 in 2009 to 58 in 2015. The size is down in Middle and Lower, while larger in Upper.

Walleye numbers are roughly the same as the 2009 survey. The age class of the walleyes sampled in Upper and Lower match the 3 year interval of Middle Cullen stocking. This indicates at least some of the fish stocked in Middle are moving into Upper and Lower. The size structure

in Middle is up from 18" to 19.5" average lengths. Upper and Lower size structure is down about 4" on average from 22"-18" in Upper and 23"-19" in Lower.

Northern Pike numbers are up in Middle and Lower, but down in Upper. The numbers in Upper are still at or above the numbers sampled in Middle and Lower. The size structure however, shows the smallest fish in Upper and the largest fish in Lower.

- Upper shows size averages below 24" for most fish sampled. Last survey, 19% were over 24" and in the latest survey there were only 13% over 24". The DNR recommends releasing all fish 22" and over, and only keeping fish under 22".
- Middle shows size structure dropping from 26.6" to 24.2" average length. In this survey, only 41% were over 24" in length while in 2009 64% were over 24". The DNR recommends releasing all fish 24" and over, and only keeping fish under 24".
- Lower has larger fish sampled this survey. The average size is up from 24.3" to 25.9". 55% of the fish are over 24" now while in 2009 only 35% were over 24". The DNR recommends releasing all fish 22" and over, and only keeping fish under 22".

Because many of the lakes in MN now have smaller Northern Pike average lengths, the DNR has proposed changing the limits and sizes that may be taken. The goal is to increase the average size and number of larger fish in our lakes. To do this, in 2018 the DNR is proposing a possession limit of 10 fish with no more than two over 30". The protected slot would be from 22"-26" where all fish caught would have to be immediately released.

Please see our website for more detailed information on the above summaries. Links to the expanded articles and DNR information are on the **Lakes** page and the **Fisheries Committee** page under the **Board Member** page. Links to these are also at the top of the **News** page.