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# THE CULLEN CURRENTS

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*Spring, 2018*



## Care of our loons

by Anne Kostreba

Minnesota has roughly 12,000 loons, more than any other state except Alaska. Threats to loons include human disturbance, pollutants such as lead and mercury and oil spills. In the fall, Minnesota's loons travel to their winter home along the Atlantic coast from North Carolina south to Florida or on the Gulf of Mexico. Since the Deepwater Horizon oil spill on April 20, 2010 in the Gulf, the Minnesota DNR has been tracking and studying our loons to see what the short and long term effects of the oil spill has had on them. They gathered their data from dead loons that lake dwellers alerted them to and also by collecting loon eggs that did not hatch after the nest had been abandoned.

Three years ago the DNR collected 29 eggs that did not hatch from around the state. One of those was from a platform on Lower Cullen Lake. It turned out to be 1 of 4 (of the 29) that showed high levels of PAH, a petroleum contaminant that can cause cancer, mutations, and disturbances to embryo development. Due to the cost (\$300 per egg) and the fact that they now have sufficient information to connect our loons to the oil spill, they will no longer be collecting abandoned loon eggs. However, they are still interested in collecting dead loons. Please contact



Kevin Woizeschke at the DNR – 218-203-4371 — if you find a dead loon.

The good news – with the information they have gathered it appears that Minnesota will receive nearly \$7,000,000 over 3 years from the wildlife damage remediation fund to protect and help our loons.

## Remember: Don't give zebra mussel hitchhikers a ride!

With the open water recreation season starting, it is imperative that we do all we can to prevent zebra mussels, in the adult form and especially in the basically invisible veliger form, from hitchhiking from Lower Cullen into Middle Cullen via the channel. This invasive species can't make the trek on its own, since the stream's current flowing into Lower Cullen is too strong.



Please be sure there are no visible zebra mussels attached to your boat or other water related equipment as you travel from one lake to the other.

And just as important, do your utmost not to transport Lower Cullen lake water into Middle Cullen. That is the only way zebra mussel veligers can get from Lower Cullen into Middle Cullen.

*Save the date!*

**2018 CLA Annual Meeting**  
**Saturday morning, August 11**

## Picture of health: clear water, vegetation and lots of fish species

excerpted from an article by Dan Determan in the Echo Journal's Love of the Lakes 2018 edition

The abundance of lakes in this area are a main attraction for both residents and tourists. Luckily, healthy lakes - ones with clear water, vegetation and an abundance of fish species - are mostly present in the lakes area.

In determining a lake's overall health, the DNR looks for a wide variety of indicators. Vegetation - particularly white-stem pondweed, water marigold, Illinois pondweed and water celery - are often some of the best indications that a lake is healthy.

"When we see those four species along a water shoreline, we will say that's a really good spot," DNR Research Scientist Paul Radomski said. "It has clear water and is providing excellent habitat."

Indicators of lake quality do not stop at flora, however, as a number of animal species are said to be present when a lake is healthy.

"We have two species of frog - the green frog and the mink frog - that are really dependent on good conditions along the shore," Radomski said. "When people remove the wildlife habitat along the shore, they disappear."



Another common lake quality indicator is none other than the state bird.

"Loons nest in very specific habitat, and they are sight feeders so they need clear water," Radomski said. "They need adequate forage - much of it - for small fish and invertebrates. They are very good indicators. Their nesting habitat is really critical for their life stage and they are really dependent on having some protected areas with shoreline vegetation and shallow sloping areas. They really like to nest on islands if they are available."

Of course, some indicator species spend their time under the surface as well. Insect-eating species are often looked for in a quality lake, including sunfish and the oft-overlooked shiner. Jacquelyn



Bacigalupi, DNR Fisheries Lake IBI Program Supervisor, said her office looks for 15 different fish community metrics to determine quality, but a lake does not need to meet every one of those standards to be considered of a high quality.

"Lakes are different," Bacigalupi said. "Biology is complicated and lakes are complicated, so you are going to have so much variability among lakes."

Bacigalupi also indicated that water quality is largely driven by the watershed in a given area. If a watershed is primarily forest or natural grasslands, it is likely that most of the lakes in the area are healthy.

She added, "Particularly in lakes that have low shoreline complexity - maybe a really simple-shaped lake with everything kind of the same around the whole lake - activities on those lakes can really impact the near-shore fish community. If you have more removal of vegetation and woody habitat, and putting in sand blankets, it seems to have an impact on the community as well."

When a lake's quality begins to deteriorate, the DNR looks at two main stressors: shoreline disturbance and



watershed disturbance. Development along a shoreline can greatly affect those two stressors, but it can also be done in a way that minimizes issues.

"Development is not necessarily a problem on shorelines," Bacigalupi said. "It's the decisions that landowners make and how they do that development. Do they have a buffer? Have they removed all the trees on the shoreline? Have they put in artificial structures and docks across a large portion of land? We see some relationship with the fish community and the decisions that are made as a part of shoreline development."

Likewise, Radomski recommends property owners consider how they manage water runoff and have their septic systems pumped regularly, as those two factors can greatly affect a lake's appearance.

"As the water moves along the ground, it picks up soil particles and attaches to those soil particles, then things like phosphorus get into the water and reduce water clarity," Radomski said. "If you add phosphorus to the water, it doesn't take much to produce a lot of algae."

"We all recognize people like to swim and recreate in the water, but just minimize the places you alter for those activities," Radomski said. "If you can keep that impact zone fairly small, that would be really good for the in-water stuff."

## CLA membership update

As of May 16, 2018 we have 250 paid members. Membership letters for 2018 were mailed in early December to allow for those wanting to use a donation for 2017 tax purposes to do so. A second dues notice was mailed in late March/early April to those who had not yet sent in their 2018 dues. This brought in dues and donations from 27 more people. However, there are still 19 past CLA members who have not sent in their dues yet.

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.

For those lake properties that are co-owned, we encourage all owners to have their own membership in CLA. This not only provides additional support for the lake association, it also guarantees all owners will receive important information concerning the lakes.

Please help us keep our membership records current by sending any changes in your mailing address, email address, or a change in ownership of your property to either Ann Beaver, newsletter editor, or to Carol Lindahl, Membership Committee chair. Their contact information is on the last page of this newsletter.

## Curly-leaf pondweed (CLP) management donations update

Again, the CLA Board of Directors heartily thanks all who have contributed thus far to the 2018 CLP treatment fund. The very positive response is truly impressive.

Here are some of the statistics as of May 16:

\*193 property owners and family members (there are 250 CLA members so far this year, so that's 77%!) have made a CLP donation.

\*67 contributions were the \$250 suggested in the membership mailing. This does not include the co-owned properties whose owners split the donation among themselves. (We don't expect co-owners to each contribute the suggested amount.)

\*39 contributions were more than the suggested \$250.

\*Contributions have ranged from \$10 to \$1,250.

\*Contributions total \$39,155.

THANK YOU!

## Lease of a residential unit

Responses received by the newsletter editor to the article in the winter newsletter by Dawn Bittner, Pequot Lakes Zoning Specialist, indicate that at least several properties on the Cullen Lakes are being offered/used as rental properties, sometimes causing disruption to the neighboring property owners. The following is a summary of the land use ordinance requirements of the three jurisdictions that regulate land use on the three Cullen Lakes.

Pequot Lakes: a maximum of four leases per dwelling per year. Nisswa: a maximum of three leases per dwelling per year. Crow Wing County: no regulations on residential leasing.

If a rental property near you is causing a problem, please contact the owner of the property to let them know.

## Fourth of July boat parades



Each of the three Cullen Lakes will once again have a Fourth of July boat parade informally organized by its lakeshore property owners.

Participants should gather at the east end of their lake on July 4 shortly

before 2:00 p.m. and plan on making one entire trip around the lake.

Please send photos you take of your parade to the newsletter editor to be included in the summer newsletter.

## 2018 CLA annual meeting

The 36th annual meeting of the Cullen Lakes Association will be held **Saturday, August 11** at Lutheran Church of the Cross in Nisswa.

Coffee and rolls will be available and exhibits will be ready for viewing starting at 8:30.

The meeting will begin at 9:00 and will feature Dan and Kay Long sharing their family's history on Lower Cullen Lake. The regular business meeting will follow their presentation. The meeting will be over by 11:00, leaving you the rest of the day to enjoy lake activities and other recreation.

## Catching northern pike? Check the new regs.

by David Schueller, DNR information officer  
*excerpted from the Minnesota Conservation Volunteer,  
May-June 2018 issue*

It's one of Minnesota's biggest fishing regulation changes in decades. The state-wide three-fish possession limit for northern pike, in place since the 1940s, will be replaced this season with limits customized for three different management zones.

"The three-fish bag limit was not designed to meet any specific management objectives," says Gary Barnard, Bemidji area Fisheries supervisor. "But these zone regulations are geared toward specific objectives for different population characteristics of each zone."



L a k e s i n  
n o r t h -  
c e n t r a l  
M i n n e s o t a  
(*editor's  
note: this  
includes the  
Brainerd  
Lakes area*)

are teeming with small northern pike, often disparagingly dubbed "hammer handles," that frustrate anglers with their overabundance. In other parts of the state, the story changes. In the northeast, pike grow large but they take a long time to get that way. In the south, pike grow fast but overall there are fewer of them.

In the north-central zone, the vexing issue with small pike stems in part from the way people enjoy the area's many lakes. Numerous anglers fish these lakes, and northern pike are notoriously vulnerable to angling. Over the years, the large and medium-size pike went on the stringer and the small ones went back into the lake. As the density of small pike increases, growth slows, so small pike stay small longer. Further compounding the problem is that those larger fish are no longer around to eat the small pike.

When left to overpopulate, the small pike eat a greater share of a lake's available food supply than larger pike relative to their size. In other words, 10 pike weighing 1 pound each will in total eat more than one 10-pound pike. And small pike feast on small fish, including important forage fish, such as perch, which can have wide-ranging effects on other fish populations.

Under the new regulations, nothing changes for anglers who don't want to keep pike. Anglers in the north-central zone will be able to keep up to 10 northern pike, but no more than two pike larger than 26 inches, and all pike from 22 to 26 inches must be released. The objective is to reduce small pike abundance by shifting population size structure back to more medium to large pike.

Special regulations will still apply for northern pike on some water bodies. If the possession or size limit on a special regulation lake or stream is different from the new zone limit, the special regulation limit applies.

### In case you need to be reminded ...

\*Four easy things to help prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species (AIS):

- #1 **Leave the water at the lake.** Drain water from your watercraft, motor, live wells, and bait buckets before leaving the lake.
- #2 **Clean up your rig.** Remove plants, mud, and other debris from your watercraft and trailer.
- #3 **Dry it out.** Do not move docks and lifts from one body of water to another without sufficient time to dry enough to kill any AIS attached to them.
- #4 **Spread the word, not the species.** Unless it came from that body of water, don't put it in there. This includes anything from your aquarium.

\*If you use a fire pit near the shoreline, remove the cold ashes and dump them inland to prevent the phosphorus they contain from seeping or blowing into the lake.

\*Don't burn your yard waste without first checking to see if there is a burning ban in effect and getting a burning permit (free or at a minimal cost) from the local hardware store.

\*Burning household waste is illegal. It sends harmful chemicals into the atmosphere.

\*If you need a refresher on boating and personal watercraft rules, be sure to get a copy of them at an area store or from the DNR web site.

### *Currents on the Cullens*

#### **Deaths**

Ken Perry, Upper Cullen (U9)

Please make the following corrections to the 2018 CLA map/guide list of map locations.

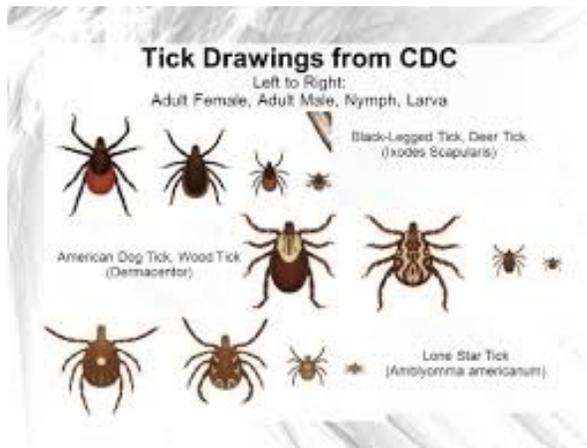
Barry Burda — change M4 to M43; MN DNR — add M69 to M96 and L46.

## Worried about ticks? Try tick tubes.

from the North and Round Lake Associations'  
spring 2017 newsletter

Ticks are becoming more and more of a problem around our lakes. According to the Minnesota Department of Health, we are in a "high risk" area for tick borne diseases, including Lyme disease and Ehrlichiosis.

Deer ticks are increasing in Minnesota and wet weather keeps them "out and about". Most of us know to use repellents containing DEET or Permethrin and to check our body and clothing for ticks when we come indoors. But our pets can bring the ticks indoors as well.



There is a way to reduce the tick population around your cabin or lake home. It seems that ticks reproduce in mice nests and spend at least part of their life cycle on mice before latching on to deer, dogs, and - yes - you. Kill them in those mouse nests and they'll never find their way to you and your family. There's a relatively simple way to do that - tick tubes.

Tick tubes are small cardboard tubes with cotton laced with Permethrin. Permethrin is deadly on insects but in proper dilution does not affect mammals (including humans). The mice find the cotton balls in the tubes and take the Permethrin-laced cotton to make a nest where it kills the ticks. You place the tick tubes just past the edge of your yard, in woods or tall grass, about 10 feet apart. It's best to put them out when the mice are actively nesting in spring and mid-summer.

You can purchase ready-made tick tubes or make your own. Permethrin can be purchased online and locally in garden and livestock departments. It's more economical to purchase higher concentration solutions — at least 30%. Then dilute it to 7.4% and spray it on the cotton balls which are then inserted in cardboard tubes (toilet paper tubes work great). **You can find detailed instructions at [organicdaily.com/make-tick-tubes](http://organicdaily.com/make-tick-tubes).**

## Some CLA merchandise is still available

There is still some stock of Cullen Lakes Association clothing available as well as CLA logo mugs and glasses. Once the stock on hand is sold, the CLA Board will no longer sell lake association merchandise.

If you are interested in purchasing any of the remaining merchandise, contact board member Jim Burrell (contact information on the last page of this newsletter) to see what is available. Photos and information on the original stock available can be viewed on the CLA web site (also on the last page of this newsletter). The article itself about the merchandise has not been updated.

## Calling all lovers of language!

anonymous

Let's face it — English is a crazy language. There is no egg in eggplant, nor ham in hamburger; neither apple nor pine in pineapple. English muffins weren't invented in England nor French fries in France. Sweetmeats are candies while sweetbreads, which aren't sweet, are meat. We take English for granted. But if we explore its paradoxes, we find that quicksand can work slowly, boxing rings are square and a guinea pig is neither from Guinea nor is it a pig.

And why is it that writers write but fingers don't fing, grocers don't groce and hammers don't ham? If the plural of tooth is teeth, why isn't the plural of booth beeth? One goose, two geese, so one moose, two meese? Doesn't it seem crazy that you can make amends but not one amend? If you have a bunch of odds and ends and get rid of all but one of them, what do you call it?

If teachers taught, why didn't preachers praught? If a vegetarian eats vegetables, what does a humanitarian eat? Sometimes I think all the English speakers should be committed to an asylum for the verbally insane. In what language do people recite at a play and play at a recital? Ship by truck and send cargo by ship? Have noses that run and feet that smell?

How can a slim chance and a fat chance be the same while a wise man and a wise guy are opposites? You have to marvel at the unique lunacy of a language in which your house can burn up as it burns down, in which you fill in a form by filling it out and in which an alarm goes off by going on.

English was invented by people, not computers, and it reflects the creativity of the human race, which of course is not a race at all. That is why when the stars are out they are visible, but when the lights are out they are invisible.

**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.

**CLA BOARD 2017-2018**

Beaver, Ann (Lower Cullen)  
218-839-0593  
[beaver@uslink.net](mailto:beaver@uslink.net)

Beilfuss, Paul (Lower Cullen)  
218-963-6028  
[boomer284@charter.net](mailto:boomer284@charter.net)

Boudrye, Charlie (Middle Cullen)  
218-963-7494  
[eagleye@nisswa.net](mailto:eagleye@nisswa.net)

Burrell, Jim (Lower Cullen)  
218-568-5363  
[cullenlake@gmail.com](mailto:cullenlake@gmail.com)

Bylander, C.B. (Upper Cullen)  
218-828-4929  
[cb\\_bylander@hotmail.com](mailto:cb_bylander@hotmail.com)

Hurley, Dan (Lower Cullen)  
612-481-3766  
[lonegoose15@aol.com](mailto:lonegoose15@aol.com)

Johnson, Rich (Lower Cullen)  
218-330-2655  
[rhdbjohnson@yahoo.com](mailto:rhdbjohnson@yahoo.com)

Hicks, Patty (Middle Cullen)  
405-974-1656  
[pondering49@att.net](mailto:pondering49@att.net)

Knutson, Joel (Middle Cullen)  
218-963-0561  
[knutson.jc@gmail.com](mailto:knutson.jc@gmail.com)

Kostreba, Anne (Lower Cullen)  
320-333-2426  
[jakostreba@gmail.com](mailto:jakostreba@gmail.com)

Lindahl, Carol (Lower Cullen)  
651-206-1330  
[lindahllcarol@hotmail.com](mailto:lindahllcarol@hotmail.com)

MacGibbon, John (Lower Cullen)  
612-860-5864  
[jmacgibbon@mactek-inc.com](mailto:jmacgibbon@mactek-inc.com)

McNamara, Jack (Lower Cullen)  
651-307-9754  
[jmac237@comcast.net](mailto:jmac237@comcast.net)

Oliverius, Debi (Middle Cullen)  
952-261-7980  
[debioliverius@mac.com](mailto:debioliverius@mac.com)

Opsahl, Denny (Upper Cullen)  
651-271-5522  
[djobsahl@gmail.com](mailto:djobsahl@gmail.com)

Officers

President: Ann Beaver  
Vice president: John MacGibbon  
Secretary: Carol Lindahl  
Treasurer: Jack McNamara

Newsletter editor: Ann Beaver  
CLA web site:  
[www.cullenlakesassoc.org](http://www.cullenlakesassoc.org)  
Webmaster: Dan Meixner