

Briggs Lake Chain Association

The Lake Report

Remembering the Past – Improving the Future...promoting the care, improvement, and general welfare of the Briggs Lake Chain [Julia, Briggs, Rush and Big Elk] and adjoining and connecting waters...

December 2013

Volume XX, Issue X

Mark your calendar...

- Dec 5 Healthy Lakes— 6:30 PM
Palmer Town Hall
- Dec 9 Palmer Twp Board—7 PM
- Dec 14 BLCA Board Mtg—8:30 AM
Palmer Town Hall
- Dec 17 Clear Lake Twp Board—
7 PM

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(There is no Green sheet)	

Snow, Ice, Winter Wind and Shoreland Restoration? What's up?

We've had snow, brisk fall winds and lake ice that has formed, disappeared and most certainly will form again. Christmas and New Years are coming up fast. Ice fishing starts soon. This is usually not the time to make a pitch for shoreland restoration and other conservation projects.

But here it is: **now is the perfect time to get going on your plans for a rain garden, berm, buffer strip or shoreland restoration!** Why? The BLCA has a Shoreline Habitat Restoration grant for \$20,000 that is good until June 30, 2013. What the BLCA calls SERP [Shoreland Education Restoration Project] is the 3rd such grant received by the BLCA. The SERP grants that the BLCA administers are good for up to \$2500. For this grant period there are already 3 projects in the ground and several more with plans to be completed in the winter and installed in the spring.

Why do we make the pitch now? Grant funds are limited, and those who get their plans approved in the winter will be ready to go in Spring 2014. *First come, first served.* The lake association's flyover project and groundtruthing activities have greatly increased requests for funds for berms, rain gardens, buffer strips and restoration projects, all covered by the SERP grants.

Other SERP news:

* A relatively new product is now available to be used in SERP projects. **Biotic Earth** is designed to be used in rip rap shorelines and on poor and compacted soils. **Biotic Earth** is a mulch-like product scattered in the cracks of your rip rap, then planted with native shoreline plants and seeds. It is very easy to install and maintain, anchors your shoreline [adding to the benefit of your rip rap], filters runoff and adds some natural beauty and native habitat to your shoreline. One SERP project using **Biotic Earth** was installed on Briggs in 2013, and several projects in the planning stage are including it. This is a great way to make the best use of your rip rap while cutting erosion and adding to the efforts to improve water quality.

* The BLCA has submitted another DNR grant proposal for additional SERP projects for July 2014 through June 2016. Notification of acceptance/rejection will come early in January. We are obviously hoping for another DNR Shoreland Habitat grant.

For more information contact kenziephelps@gmail.com or danmerchant@frontiernet.net

PHOTO CONTEST

The BLCA is again holding a photo contest to find a picture for the cover of the 2014 Palmer Community Directory. The contest is open to all BLCA members -Limit of 3 images. Please submit your photos in a jpeg format and no larger than 1 mb to smerchant@frontiernet.net. The deadline is February 1st.



President's Letter

The holiday season is upon us!. Thanksgiving, Hanukah and Black Friday kicked it off and Christmas and the New Year are just weeks away. I hope your holiday season is joyful, safe and fun-filled!

This is the time of the year that BLCA volunteers lay the groundwork for attaining our goals for the following year. As an organization, it is important to increase our membership. We rely on membership support. Membership packets are being prepared so they can be mailed out in January. Groundwork for getting permits, surveys, grants, donations and a company to apply the chemicals to control the invasive aquatic weed, curly-leaf pondweed that infests our upper three lakes is underway. So is an action plan to reinforce the Rush Lake dam and the shoreline around it so the area can withstand high water events and the integrity of the water level in Briggs, Rush and Julia is maintained. The fundraiser materials for walleye and blue gill stocking in Big Elk Lake are being prepared for January mailings. Volunteers are placing labels and stamps on envelopes and folding inserts as they are printed to make sure the mailings are on schedule.

At the same time board members are busy selling ads in our Palmer Directory to raise funds. We can use your help in this fundraising effort. For details, please refer to the [Palmer Directory Ad Campaign](#) article elsewhere in this issue. Other volunteers are very busy with the creation of a Lake Improvement District (LID), an additional structure apart from the lake association to help fund what we need to accomplish with water level stabilization, water quality and invasive species. We are planning on hosting several informational meetings to spread the word about the LID, why it's needed, provide details about how it works and answer questions. You will be notified of the events.

We are very lucky to have so many active volunteers who donate their time and effort in behalf of the BLCA, which is all about: *"Remembering the Past – Improving the Future...promoting the care, improvement, and general welfare of the Briggs Lake Chain [Julia, Briggs, Rush and Big Elk] and adjoining and connecting waters..."* Everyone living on, or using the lakes benefits from the activities of BLCA volunteers and members. Please consider giving us a helping hand by becoming actively involved yourself! You will get to know neighbors better, have opportunities to make new friends, have fun and your personality and skill sets will be put to good use! Just call a board member to offer your help. The Healthy Lakes Committee meets the first Thursday of each month at 6:30 PM at the Township Hall. Any member is welcome to join this committee and attending the meeting will give you insight into how things work and what issues are being dealt with. These meetings are somewhat informal so you will get to ask questions and get to know other members better. It's a great place to find out more about our lakes and how we can fix them.

Dan Merchant, BLCA President

Palmer Township

The Palmer Township Board meets the 2nd Monday of each month at 7:00 PM in the Township Hall. Let **Kathy Miller** know of agenda items by email at: palmertwp@gmail.com by noon on Tuesday before the meeting or call her at 743-2100. Our website is: www.palmertownshipmn.org

Clear Lake Township

The Clear Lake Township Board meets the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 7:00 PM in the Township Hall. Let **Mary Mathison** know of agenda items by Thursday morning before the meeting. To contact Clear Lake Township, please call 320-743-2472 or email the Township Clerk at: clearlaketwp@hotmail.com Our website is www.clearlaketownship.org

Please attend your respective Township meeting and voice your concerns about matters relating to our lakes.

Part 2: Lake Legacy Threatened By Chronic Water Problems; Solution Available

The October/November Lake Report featured an article entitled ***Lake Legacy Threatened by Chronic Water Problems; Solution Available***. It highlighted the chronic problem areas we face [water quality, aquatic invasive species, and water level stabilization]. It focused on lake property owners desire to leave a positive legacy for following generations, and that property owners basically want to do the right things. It cited the reasons why the BLCA, as a membership organization, is not the most effective organization to address these chronic water problems. And the article introduced the Lake Improvement District [LID] as a more effective way to address these chronic problems.

First of all the benefits of a LID:

The state of Minnesota created a **Lake Improvement District [LID]**, a structure specifically designed to address chronic water problems at the local level. This structure:

- Provides predictable and sustainable funding to address water issues
- Addresses the three issues as “chronic” rather than “acute”
- Protects our economic assets: *cleaner, stabilized water means higher property values* [See article on website related to water quality and higher property values briggslakechainassociation.com]
- Provides for shared financial responsibility as well as shared benefits for all property owners, and requires property owner participation.

Now the structure:

- A LID is created by our county commissioners in one of two ways: The county [commissioners](#) can declare a need for a LID and create it by resolution, or
- The county commissioners can act on a petition, signed by at least 51% of the property owners in the district, requesting the commissioners to create a LID, which the commissioners are required to accept or reject.

Both methods have been used in Minnesota. County commissioners in Morrison County have created several LIDs by resolution, while many of the LIDs in the Brainerd lakes area have been created by petition and then accepted by the county. Once created the LID is managed by an elected board of 5 – 9 directors. The first board is appointed by the Sherburne County Commissioners, and after that board members are elected by LID members at the annual meeting. All directors must be property owners on the chain of lakes, and a majority must reside in the district. This means **local control**, and is an important piece of **citizen participation**. The terms, qualifications and number of directors are determined by the county commissioners.

The annual meeting is a very important event for the LID. By law it must be held in July or August unless changed by a majority of members at the previous annual meeting. The directors present recommended projects [such as a water stabilization project] and the members at the annual meeting decide on the projects and their budgets for the following year. In other words, the LID does nothing without the approval of the membership. **Local control, citizen participation**. This is important when we discuss in the next Lake Report what a LID can do and how a LID is funded.

The members of a LID are generally property owners with property directly on the water, referred to as littoral properties. The exact boundaries of the proposed Briggs Lake Chain LID have not yet been determined, but will most likely be littoral property owners on Big Elk, Rush, Julia, Briggs and the bayou.

The LID assumes all legal responsibilities for the activities of the LID. The Briggs Lake Chain LID would also be responsible for preparing an annual report to the county and the DNR. Like the BLCA, the LID will maintain close working relationships with the county, DNR, Sherburne Soil and Water District, the Elk River Watershed Association, and Palmer and Clear Lake Townships.

Stay tuned for Part 3: Lake Legacy Threatened By Chronic Water Problems; Solution Available that will explain what a LID can do and how it is funded.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!





The Lake Report

Briggs Lake Chain Association

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<https://www.briggslakechainassociation.com>

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The Lake Report is published for the benefit of BLCA members and lake residents. Please submit articles and feedback by the 20th of the month for inclusion in the next issue. Email or snail mail copy to the Editor.

This 'n That

Please send news about BLCA members to **Marilyn Humble** so that a card may be sent for such things as illness or a death in the family. Call her at 743-2741 or email her at: imhumble@midco.net

For those of you with shoreline restoration projects, Sherburne County will come out and help answer your questions about maintenance, etc., free of charge!



PARKING NOTICE

Ordinance #110 was approved and signed on October 10th, 2011.

This Ordinance regulates parking along Township roads and regulates a parking ban in effect from November 15th of each year which shall remain in effect until April 15th of the following year. During a parking ban, no vehicle shall be parked on any portion of a street or highway.

In addition to the restriction above, no person shall park a vehicle on any portion of a street or highway for a period exceeding 24 hours. After 24 hours the vehicle may be towed away and impounded at the owners expense.

Under no circumstances shall a person park a vehicle on any portion of a street or highway in such a way as to create a hazard for the traveling public or interfere with maintenance of the road right-of-way.

The Sherburne County Sheriff's Department may issue a parking citation and sign a towing order.

A copy of the complete Ordinance #110 is available from the Township Office on Tuesday's between the hours of 9 a.m. To 4 p.m.

Township Office 743-2100
Mike Ganz, Chair 743-3479
Richard Larson 743-2800
Steve Demeules 743-4749



Dam Donation

In my president's letter, I mentioned that plans are underway to reinforce the Rush Lake dam and the shoreline around it so the area can withstand high water events and the integrity of the water level in Briggs, Rush and Julia is maintained. This will happen next spring and the DNR is on board with applying the riprap on the Rush Lake Landing side of the dam as well adding rocks to the front of the dam as far as their backhoe can reach. The catch is, the BLCA will have to pay for the materials, which will run close to \$1,000 depending on how much rock is needed and if a membrane needs to be applied before the rocks are added. BLCA volunteers will need to apply the rock along the part of the dam the backhoe can't reach and the shoreline opposite the landing.

This is vital to protecting the dam and the water level in Briggs, Rush and Julia Lakes. It's a financial burden for the BLCA and not budgeted. Since the BLCA is a 501C3 charity, donations for projects like this are tax deductible. How about it? Make a dam contribution before the end of the year and deduct it from your 2013 taxes! Even if you don't claim deductions, a donation to the dam cause would be deeply appreciated.

Make your check out to the BLCA with memo "Dam Donation" and mail it to:

BLCA, Box B / 4180 105th Ave / Clear Lake, MN 55319

Thanks in advance for your generosity Dan Merchant, BLCA President

We would like to thank CAROL KUFNER for 8 YEARS of dedicated service in managing the Green Sheet items for us. You will be sorely missed and we wish you all the best!! Thank you!