

Lake Currents

Lake of the Woods Improvement Association

Lake of the Woods Special Assessment District for Weed Control by President Roy Pearson

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All Lake of the Woods property owners have been paying an annual fee for weed control for the past ten years under a Special Assessment District (SAD), which was established by a petition drive signed by lake lot owners and approved by Hamilton Township and Decatur Township. The SAD expires in 2014. The amount collected has a balance of approximately \$140,000 and can only be used for weed control. The LOW board as well as the municipalities were of the opinion that these funds would be used for an additional 5-7 years without any additional assessment.

All of us learned recently (October, 8, 2014) from PLM Lake & Land Management (the company contracted to treat the lake weeds) that the Michigan DEQ will not issue a permit without a SAD legally in place. As a result of this development, the Hamilton Township board discussed the issue at their October 16, 2014 meeting. Warren Grosvenor, township attorney, explained options with input from Andy Tomaszewski of PLM Lake & Land Management Corporation. LOW board members Roy Pearson and Sandy Eich were also present. In addition, Kevin

Kusmack, supervisor of Decatur Township was present. Tomaszewski stated that Lake of the Woods is probably in his top 3 most successful management programs in regards to long term control of Eurasian water milfoil. Another lake he managed did not get a SAD renewal and went from just a few acres of milfoil in the spring to 100+ acres in September. The consensus was that Lake of the Woods will need permanent treatment every year to control invasive plant species. The option to return the collected money to property owners was discussed and deemed a poor option as properties have changed hands and it would be administratively expensive thus reducing the amount owners would receive. In addition, a new SAD would need to be established with an assessment to continue weed treatment.

Attorney Grosvenor explained that townships have the legal authority to establish a SAD without petitions. He recommended Craig Rolfe, a Kalamazoo attorney who specializes in lake management to represent the townships. It appears that the townships are interested in proceeding though no formal action has

been taken. Public meetings to explain the SAD would be held as required by law. The intent would be to use existing funds for treatment of the lake without any assessment so long as funds remain. There are funds to continue treatment for an additional 5-7 years.

The LOW board strongly believes the quality of the lake has never been better and that continued treatment is essential. To use the funds already collected for their intended purpose makes sense. We will have further information for publication in our January newsletter which is mailed to each member.

Did you know:

Fishing Report

The LOW walleye stocking initiative has paid off this year. We had many reports of big fish caught in the 21+ inch range, also numerous reports of 18 and 19 inch fish caught this year. Let's not forget about the bass fishing, we also had some 5 & 6 pound bass caught this year. Over all it was a very good fishing year.



Summer sunset on
Lake of the Woods



Annual Meeting and Picnic

On Saturday, July 19th, the annual Lake of the Woods Association meeting and picnic was held at Red Woolfe Park with 44 members in attendance. The meeting was called to order by President Roy Pearson at 1:06 PM. This year's meeting focused on general updates.

The membership report was given by Secretary Sandy Eich. Sandy reported 129 current paid members which is up 14 from last year. Wayne Potter reported that the lake water was in good shape and he will continue as contact between the Association and PLM Management. It was also noted that the special assessment will be ending at the end of this year.

It was reported by Bill Kiss that only 11 students attended the 2014 Boating Safety Course sponsored by the Lake Association. He announced that this was the last year that the Van Buren County Marine Division will be presenting classes as they will be available online and the charge is

\$29 to get the certificate.

Elections for three Board seats with terms ending in 2017 were held. Nominees included Dan Buenz, Dominick Panicko, Bob Richter and Sharon Neubauer. 44 ballots were issued and tallied. Dan, Dominick and Bob were elected as new board members for a 3 year term.

Many thanks were extended by Roy to:

All the picnic workers and those that brought food and dessert dishes to pass.

All the board member for their efforts in running the annual meeting/picnic.

With your support, Lake of the Wood will continue to be a safe, clean and beautiful community for many generations to come. Hope to see you at next years annual meeting and picnic.

4th of July Boat Parade Results

The annual Lake of the Woods 4th of July boat parade was enjoyed by many onlookers on water and shore.

This years parade had 9 boats with a variety of themes including the traditional patriotic red white and blue.

All entrance were eligible to win one of four prizes donated by High's Marine and the Lake Association.

- 1st place: Wayne Potter family
- 2nd place: Kelly Younker family
- 3rd place: Sharon Neubauer family
- 4th place: Maggie Candy family

The Lake Association would like to congratulate the winners and thank all those that participated and High's Marine for donating half the prizes. It's not to early to start planning for next year's parade.

Spot Light Lake - Lake of the Woods

Lake of the Woods is a 301 acre lake located outside of the Village of Decatur in SW Michigan. Like many lakes in the area that have public access, Lake of the Woods is dealing with the exotic plant species Eurasian watermilfoil. In 2004, PLM Lake and Management was contracted by the association and asked to provide management

recommendations to address the milfoil issue. Based on milfoil levels at the time (31.05% cumulative cover), it was recommended that Sonar A.S (fluridone) be used in year one of the program to achieve lake wide milfoil control. In 2004/2005 the Lake Association worked very hard to obtain signatures

on a petition of more than 51% of the land area around the lake for the purpose of establishing a Special Assessment District (SAD). Since the lake resides in two

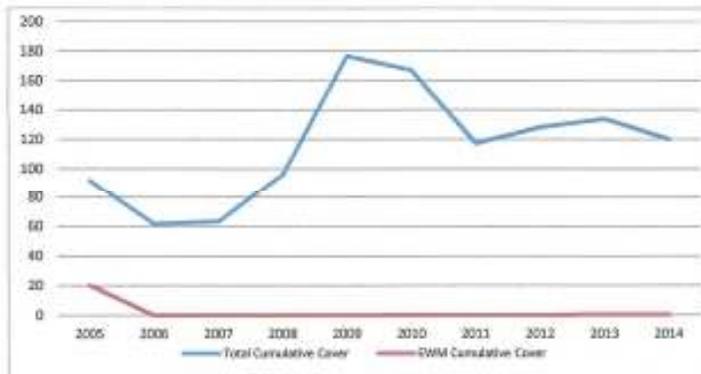
townships, the process had to be completed in both. By fall of 2005, the SAD process was complete and management began the following spring with a whole lake Sonar A.S. treatment. That treatment was very successful. Milfoil cumulative cover decreased from 20.28% in 2005 to .01% by August of 2006. From 2006 to

present milfoil has been kept in check through spot treatments. The average milfoil cumulative cover is August/September of each year for the past 8

years has been .16%. In addition, we have seen an increase in the number of native plants on the lake. Before the 2006 treatment, we were only able to find 19 native plant species on the lake. Over the past 8 years, the lake has had an average of 20.25 species. Remarkably, the total cumulative cover (all plant species) on the

lake is higher now then it was pre-treatment. While his suggests that the lake is "weedier" now, it is important to note that the species present are desirable native plants. These plants do not typically grow to nuisance levels and although there numbers are high, they do not completely dominate/infect bottom to surface like milfoil.

Lake of the Woods has been one of the more successful management programs in regards to extended milfoil control. Most programs tend to experience a resurgence of milfoil at some point 2-3 years after treatment. Eight years of milfoil being virtually non existent is quite uncommon.





Ever wonder about that foam that comes to shore on windy days at Lake of the Woods?

While the foam that washes up on shore may look like the foam in your kitchen sink, lake foam is usually a naturally occurring phenomenon and not caused by pollution. Foam is created when the surface tension of water (the attraction of water molecules for each other, which gives a drop of water its round shape) is broken down and air is mixed in, causing bubbles. Surface tension can be reduced by natural organic compounds as well as pollutants, such as soaps and detergents.

Natural organic compounds are released into the water by live and decomposing algae, plants materials (Dissolved Organic Carbon - DOC) and fish. As wind stirs the water, air is mixed in with the water because of its reduced surface tension, and

foam is produced. Foam will often collect in large quantities on windward shores which is where we usually see them collect on Lake of the Woods. Natural foam will usually have a dirty brown color, and will smell earthy or fishy. In addition to causing foam, DOC provides energy and performs many additional functions important to aquatic ecosystems. The foam caused by these circumstances is not toxic.

Foam from detergents and soaps (synthetics) is now uncommon as most are now biodegradable (able to be broken down by bacteria) and unable to produce the long-lasting foam found on shorelines. Foam from detergents will be white and sweet smelling or scented.

More commonly, human activities like the introduction of nitrogen or phosphorus fertilizers can cause increases in algae or aquatic plant growth. These can cause plant and algae blooms and an increase in foam production along with the removal of oxygen as these plants decompose.

This is why limiting the use of these substances around Lake of the Woods is also important.



Fall colors on Lake of the Woods

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