



# ELRA Today

Tales and Travails from Our Members

from the president's pen . . .

## New Year, New Officers!

Another season has come and gone for all our friends and members of ELRA. It has been my pleasure to serve as President.

Just as the seasons change, our association leaders change their roles. Beginning January 1, 2012, the newly elected officers for ELRA are: **Jane Schulte**, President; **Steve Kolkind**, Vice President; **Tom Hintz**, Treasurer; and **Becky Gromek**, Secretary. Other members include **Wayne Gapsiewicz**, **Chuck Proshok**, and yours truly.

Our website will be maintained by **Mark Drewitz** (Mark.Drewitz@msn.com) and communication efforts will be handled by **Ken Scribner** (graphics@scribnergraphics.com) which includes the eBlasts and newsletters.

### read and learn . . .

ANSWERS and MORE IN THIS EDITION!

WHO are your 2012 ELRA Board member volunteers?

WHAT is the name of the ELRA website?

Have YOU sent in your current contact information for our records?

We encourage everyone in the area to become a member. It is our members who make the association work. Will you join us? Would you like to volunteer for a special project or do you have an idea to share? We would love to hear from you! Please contact one of our Board members.

Membership notices will be sent out around March for 2012 dues of \$25 per property. Benefits include one vote at our annual meeting and any special business meetings as deemed necessary.

We sincerely appreciate your continued support. Our mission is to educate and to find solutions for the issues that affect the quality of the Emily area lakes and river.

Please feel free to email our newly elected President, Jane Schulte. You will find Jane ready to help you and get your questions and concerns addressed.

Sincerely,

Ken Scribner, ELRA President, 2010-11

# Did You Know That There Is a 25-mile Mountain Bike Trail System Just 18 Miles from Emily?

The DNR teamed up with the Cuyuna Lakes Trails Association, International Mountain Biking Association (IMBA), local chapter Minnesota Off-Road Cyclists, Minnesota Parks and Trails Council, Quality Bicycle Products, and Bikes Belong Coalition to create one of only five IMBA ride centers in the country specifically built, or “purpose-built,” for mountain biking. Construction began in the spring of 2010 to create the mountain bike trail system that now stretches across 800 acres of the recreation area. The trails weave across the undulating landscape developed during 70 years of iron mining. The trail system’s reputation has increased tourism to the area. Visitors can enjoy breathtaking views overlooking the white and green expanse of aspen and

birch, the deep-red soil exposed by the trails, and many lakes including 15 turquoise mine lakes. Popular activities include scuba diving, canoeing, kayaking, camping, boating and fishing. In addition to the six-mile Cuyuna Lakes State Trail, other nearby paved biking opportunities include the 47-mile Heartland and 112-mile Paul Bunyan state trails. Campsites are available at the recreation area and nearby state forests on a first-come, first-served basis. For more information on Cuyuna Country State Recreation Area and the grand opening schedule, visit [www.mndnr.gov](http://www.mndnr.gov) or call the DNR information center at 651-296-6157 or toll-free at 888-646-6367 between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Submitted by Jan Pope

## 2012 board members

**Jane Schulte**, President  
jschulte@emily.net

**Steve Kolkind**, Vice President  
stevenrk27@emily.net

**Becky Gromek**, Secretary  
beckygromek@yahoo.com

**Tom Hintz**, Treasurer tdbait@emily.net

**Chuck Proshek** cproshek@aol.com

**Ken Scribner**, Communications  
graphics@scribnergraphics.com

**Wayne Gapsiewicz**  
wayne0678@hotmail.com

## volunteers

**Mark Drewitz**, Webmaster

**Ken Scribner**, Newsletter/Eblasts



## DID YOU KNOW...

During the 2011 legislative session new laws were passed concerning aquatic invasive species (AIS). One of these new laws makes it mandatory for “individuals or businesses hired to install or remove water-related equipment or structures from waters of the state” to obtain a permit. They must attend an AIS training session and pass a test on the material presented. Is your provider licensed? Go to <http://minnesota.waters.org/content/aquatic-invasive-species-training>

To find a summary of the other new AIS laws, go to [http://files.dnr.state.mn.us/eco/invasive/summary\\_ais\\_laws\\_2011.PDF](http://files.dnr.state.mn.us/eco/invasive/summary_ais_laws_2011.PDF)

Submitted by Jane Schulte

# Emily Ordinance Revision

The City of Emily is considering a revision to the screening requirement found under the Performance Standards (SR) section of the Shoreline Ordinance.

Performance Standard A. currently reads: "Screening consisting of native trees and shrubs covering a minimum of 75 percent of the area (leaf on conditions) is required in the shore impact zone, bluff impact zone and wetland setback in order to retain the scenic beauty and rural character as viewed from lakes. To obtain a construction permit in this district, a re-vegetation plan shall be required for existing properties that do not meet this standard." The 75% screening is difficult to evaluate so the current re-vegetation standard has not been enforced.

The Emily Planning and Zoning Commission invited the area lake associations to meet with them in order to get the associations' input on rewriting this part of the ordinance. Public hearings will be held in the Spring/early Summer allowing lake property owners to voice their opinions on the proposed revision. After the public hearings, a final draft of the ordinance revision will be presented to the Emily City Council for action.

The Planning and Zoning commissioners will discuss the revision at their December meeting. Then the commissioners and the lake association reps will meet again later this winter. My personal opinion is that any revision should require some type of re-vegetation clause as the standard now does. Almost all permits (building, sand blankets, riprap, etc) have a negative impact on our waters. Therefore, some type of re-vegetation should be required to counteract that negative impact. Keep in mind, this standard only affects those property owners who request a permit. Regardless of my opinion, please contact me with your questions/concerns at [jschulte@emily.net](mailto:jschulte@emily.net), so I can best represent our association.

## meet BECKY GROMEK

Hello! My name is Becky Gromek, and my husband Donny and I own a lake home on the south side of Lake Emily since November 2004. I am employed as an Account Manager for a healthcare solutions company, and my husband is a Salesman for a wholesale lumber company. We've been married 33 years and we have two grown sons. As a family, we love to fish and enjoy the waters on beautiful summer days, and then, when those Minnesota winter days arrive, pull out the fish house and find some good ice fishing holes! I am looking forward to joining the lakes association and to contribute what I can to help preserve, promote and improve the water quality of the Emily area lakes now and for years to come.

Submitted by Becky Gromek

# Minnesota's Breeding Bird Atlas: Help Write the Book on Minnesota's Breeding Birds!

This is a great opportunity to 'bird with a purpose' by participating in the Minnesota Breeding Bird Atlas, the largest, most comprehensive bird conservation project ever conducted in Minnesota. In 2009, Minnesota began this 5-year project to document every breeding species in the state and where they nest. If you ever needed a reason to get outside and go birding, this is it.

2011 was our third of five seasons. There is still time, but only 2 more years left to join the project and make a lasting contribution to bird conservation. Results from observations submitted so far show changes to many species ranges. Since 1975, preliminary reports show that Red-bellied Woodpeckers have expanded their breeding range well north of Stearns County.

## Red-bellied Woodpecker Breeding Range, 2009 - 2011 Two Ways to Help

**1. Surveyors select and sign-up for a critical (priority) block.** Blocks are available throughout the state. Surveyors spend about 20 hours between March and August driving, walking, paddling, or biking through different habitats within their survey block to record what they see. The goal for every block survey is to record as many species as you can find with the

strongest evidence of breeding observed for each species. Evidence includes: seeing a pair in suitable habitat, an adult carrying nesting material or food, or seeing fledglings. Participants do not need to be experts but need to be sure the species they report is correct. We do not count birds and you don't have to find nests, although by watching bird behavior you will definitely find them.

**2. Field Observers document evidence of breeding species** the same as surveyors, however, you can report breeding observations as you bird anywhere throughout the state or from your backyard or favorite birding site.

Please join us! Your observations will help us learn more about our breeding birds and you will improve your bird identification and observational skills. Results from the Atlas will map the distribution of every breeding species we find and support local, county, state, and regional conservation planning.

To learn more about this project, how to participate, or see Atlas results to date, check out our project website, [www.mnbba.org](http://www.mnbba.org). Review the 2011 Handbook, under the Materials tab, for important survey information then use the Easy Guide to get started.

Still have questions? Contact the Project Coordinator, Bonnie Sample at [bsample@audubon.org](mailto:bsample@audubon.org), or 651-739-9332, ext 20. This project is supported by the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund and the MN DNR with Audubon Minnesota, the Bell Museum, Minnesota Ornithologists' Union, Natural Resources Research Institute at UMD, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

# Minnesota Laws

It is unlawful to:

- transport aquatic plants, round goby, zebra mussels, or other prohibited species
- launch a watercraft with aquatic plants, zebra mussels, or prohibited/regulated invasive species attached
- transport water from designated infested waters
- transport water from lakes or rivers in boats, livewells, and bait containers
- transport watercraft and water-related equipment that hold water from a water access site or riparian property without draining them by removing the drain plug and opening water-draining devices
- Inspect all watercraft, trailers, and water-related equipment; remove any visible aquatic plants, zebra mussels, and other prohibited invasives species before leaving any water access.
- Drain water from boat, livewell, bilge, impellor, bait containers and other equipment holding water before leaving any water access. If you want to keep your live bait after draining bait containers, you must replace water in bait containers with tap or spring water.

## REQUIRED ACTIONS

- Dispose of unwanted bait in the trash. It is illegal to release live bait into a waterbody or release aquatic animals from one waterbody into another.

## RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

Some species are small and difficult to see at the access, so to remove or kill them before transporting your watercraft to other waters, either:

- Rinse your boat and boating equipment with hot tap water (over 120° F); or
- Spray your boat and trailer with a high-pressure sprayer. (The hot water sprayers at a car wash can be used); or
- Dry your boat and equipment for at least 5 days.

REPORT new sightings of aquatic invasive species. If you suspect a new infestation of an invasive plant or animal, save a specimen and report it to a local natural resource office.

## ADDITIONAL STEPS

Recommended for the following activities:

- **Shore and fly-fishing:** Remove aquatic plants, animals, and mud from waders and hip boots. Drain water from bait containers.
- **Personal watercraft:** Avoid running engine through aquatic plants. Run engine for 5-10 seconds on the trailer to blow out excess water and vegetation from internal drive, then turn off engine. Remove aquatic plants and animals from water intake grate, steering nozzle, watercraft hull, and trailer.
- **Sailing:** Remove aquatic plants and animals from hull, centerboard or bilgeboard wells, rudderpost

cont. on page 6

## EMILY LAKES & RIVER ASSOCIATION

PO Box 111

Emily, MN 56447

### Minnesota Laws

cont. from page 5

- **Scuba diving:** Remove aquatic plants, animals, and mud from equipment. Drain water from buoyancy compensator (bc), regulator, tank boot, and other containers. Rinse suit and inside of bc with hot water.
- **Waterfowl hunting:** Remove aquatic plants, animals, and mud from boat, motor, trailer, waders or hip boots, decoy lines, and anchors (elliptical and bulb-shaped anchors can help reduce snagging aquatic plants). Cut cattails or other plants above the waterline when they are used for camouflage or blinds.

**Look for your 2012  
membership reminder  
this spring!**

If you do not receive one,  
please send a check for

\$25 to:

**ELRA, PO Box 111,  
Emily, MN 56447**