



President's Notes

Greetings to all members and prospective members as we start the 2016 ELRA year. We need your support to tackle the challenges that face our favorite waters.

The control of Eurasian Water Milfoil (EWM) continues to be a top priority for 2016. The treatment that was completed in 2015 utilizing the \$5,000 available from Crow Wing County appeared to show positive results. However, to have maximum effect, more acreage of EWM infested areas will need to be treated in 2016. This must be considered an ongoing process to achieve control much as you would weeds in your garden or fields. ELRA will be pursuing all options to attempt to obtain the necessary funds to treat the infested areas.

There are other areas as well that require attention in addition to EWM. The ELRA Board is seeking volunteers to effect positive change for our waters. The following committees are in need of additional members:

- Eurasian Water Milfoil Control/Management - Research control options/treatments, conduct training sessions for hand-removal, negotiate with providers for Board approval, monitor and report results. Recommend further actions/treatments as needed.
- AIS - Continue zebra mussel veliger monitoring, inspect lake for AIS twice per year, monitor/coordinate boat inspections as possible, outline/conduct informational/educational campaigns with Board approval.
- Fisheries - Conduct fish stocking in coordination with MN DNR, Board approvals, research results as possible, research to determine species, research other Association/Member actions to improve fisheries.

Notes (con't)

- Membership/Social - Conduct membership drive via mail, email or other means. Develop membership promotion materials, participate in local events as possible. Examine other means to promote the social aspects of the Association.
- Fundraising - Examine non-grant options to raise funds, primarily for EWM control, plan, organize and conduct activities with Board approval.
- Water Level/Quality - Monitor actions by State/City in water level area, take water samples for testing, research results of testing, report actions Association can take to improve water quality.

Your consideration of serving on a committee is appreciated. Please contribute your time and talent to help your lakes and river.

Membership

At the annual meeting for 2015 members voted to increase dues in 2016 to **\$35.00**. These funds will aid in the work of the association including milfoil control and prevent a negative budget. The 2016 budget is posted at the web site. Click here to join today or to renew your membership for 2016.

Donations

If you wish to make a targeted donation to ELRA for specific projects, please use the donation option from the ELRA web site. Targeted areas for EWM Control, Boat Inspections, Fish Stocking or Other are available. Go to the web site to donate.

ELRA Eurasian Water Milfoil Inspection Plan

Since the discovery of Eurasian Water Milfoil (EWM) in Lake Emily, the ELRA board has been working to combat the infestation. The lake has been divided into 64 sections requiring inspection for the invasive plant. YOUR HELP IS NEEDED!

There are 35 sections that still need volunteers. We would like to continue an inspection regimen to assess the effectiveness of the control actions taken and be alerted to any spread.

Anyone can volunteer to help. TRAINING WILL BE PROVIDED to properly identify the plants.

Please go to www.emilylakes.org, check out the Milfoil Plan and sign up for one or more sections. If you have questions before committing, please contact the ELRA board at elra@emilylakes.org.

2015 ELRA Fish Stocking Report

ELRA completed stocking of Mary Lake in October. Members stocked 100 pounds of fingerlings or about 2500 four to eight inchers. 2016 should be an off year for stocking with none planned to coordinate with the MN DNR requirements.

The DNR plans to be netting in 2017 to determine fish sizes and the success of the stocking programs on both Mary and Emily. The DNR stocks Emily with walleye fry.

Doug Tarasar



Lake Living in the Winter? It can be done!

Yes, Emily Lakes and Rivers are inhabitable in the winter months, even at times fun! Though it can get cold, the ice and snow covering the lakes, rivers, woods, and roads make a beautiful, winter wonderland scene right outside your lake home door. The quiet sound from the insulating snowfall is really profound at night. We have resident otters on the lakes and they are sooo much fun to watch playing on the ice. Ice fishing, snowshoeing, sledding, ice skating, cross country skiing, broomball, and snowmobiling are activities that 'year round residents' enjoy participating in. There are even ice golf and ice bocce ball games that occur on our frozen lakes.

Outing Chamber of Commerce has an annual ice fishing contest, but due to warmer conditions this year, it was cancelled. There are still nearby winter festivals in Crosslake, Breezy Point, and Pequot Lakes that include food, drinks, fireworks, and plenty of fun. Of course, it wouldn't be winter without the Brainerd Lakes Fishing Extravaganza, where every year literally thousands of fishermen gather on Gull Lake to try to get the first fish, the biggest fish, etc... to win fabulous prizes. The site of so many people out on the frozen lake is amazing. This year, the event was delayed by 3 weeks, due to the ice not being thick enough for all those people expected to attend. Outing has a fireworks show around New Year's Eve every year, which is always a great show.

Although winter hours are not as long, the local stores, bars, and restaurants remain open. There are exercise and yoga classes that continue at the Emily City Hall. The Emily Library is open to borrow a good book for those really cold days-like the -25 below or lower days. Quite surprisingly, school, church, and club meetings/activities are rarely cancelled or closed due to the weather. Everyone gets bundled up, boots and gloves a must, and keeps going. Many of us can truly say "if you are lucky to live on a lake, then you are lucky enough" applies ALL YEAR!

Get out and enjoy the rest of your winter!

Tami Froidcoeur

City of Emily Lake Study

The Lake Emily Outlet Modification & Lake Plan Analysis study is complete. The study evaluated four scenarios for the dam. The following information is from the conclusion section of the study:

1. At the current level concerns are overtopping of Dam Road and navigation difficulties of the Little Pine River during low water levels. Options to mitigate these concerns are to raise the level of Dam Road, to adjust the culverts east of the dam, to modify the dam to prevent unauthorized adjustments, to dredge the inlet and outlet of the river and/or to create a public access on Lake Mary.
2. With a 6" raise of the dam level concerns are increased adverse flood impacts to private property, a decrease in the strength and integrity of Dam Road and Hwy 6 across from Dahler Lake and shoreline erosion. Mitigation options include, further study of Hwy 6 embankment, compensation for property loss, erosion control installation plus the same options as #1.
3. Raising the dam 12" would present the same concerns as with a 6" raise but to a higher degree plus potential flooding out of wild rice on Dahler Lake. Mitigation options are the same as for a 6" raise plus wild rice could be planted in the new shallow water created by the higher dam level.
4. Removing the dam would result in the Little Pine being unusable, no public access to Lake Mary and none of the lakes could support recreational use. No mitigation options were given.

The conclusion also states there would be no significant change in water clarity if a 6" or 12" raise in the dam level occurred. Under the water quality section it states, "Data (for Lake Emily) from 2003 through 2010 show water clarity decreasing at a rate of 0.5 feet per year." It also states this 6" drop in water clarity per year is insignificant.

Docks, septic systems, aquatic vegetation and zoning were mentioned in the study but were not addressed in the conclusions.

The lake study committee met to review the study and to make recommendations to the city council. Three recommendations were made:

- 1.) determine if modification of the dam to prevent unauthorized adjustments is necessary, 2.) investigate possible changes to the culverts east of the dam and 3.) investigate costs of dredging, possible adverse effects of dredging and permit requirements.

Lake Study (con't)

The committee did not recommend raising the dam because the DNR requires 100% of the property owners to approve of a dam elevation change before a permit would be awarded and the costs of the required studies are very high.

The complete study is available on the www.cityofemily.com at bottom of announcements page.

Jane Schulte

2016 Crow Wing County AIS Plan

Crow Wing County has developed an AIS plan for 2016. Because of the infestation of Eurasian Water Milfoil (EWM) in Emily Lake, the lake access is now classified as "very high risk" by the county. Under the plan, 400 hours of boat inspections will be provided by the County at the Emily Lake access which is the same as was done in 2015. \$5000 will also be available for EWM control, \$250 for educational materials and payment of lab fees associated with monitoring of zebra mussel veligers.

The 400 hours of boat inspections will provide the Emily access about 21 hours of coverage each weekend from opening fishing through Labor Day. In 2015 this covered inspections until late August. ELRA had targeted funds from previous donations that provided additional hours.

ELRA is participating in the zebra mussel veligers monitoring.

Emily Lakes and Rivers Protection Fund

In this year's City of Emily budget \$14,000 was included for the first time to fund the Emily Lakes and Rivers Protection fund. This was adopted at the Dec. 2015 city council meeting. These funds are available actions for the protection of the lakes and rivers in the City of Emily. Applications for grants from these funds will be necessary. More information on this will be forthcoming as the City develops the policy and process for this program.

ELRA and other lake associations have been working with Jan Mosman, Emily City Council on this issue.