



President's Notes

As we begin 2017 we have significant challenges for our lakes that require all of us to get involved in the Association. To assist the Board in working to strengthen the Association a survey was conducted Nov. – Dec. 2016. These results were analyzed by the Board at a winter Board meeting held on Jan. 5, 2017. The survey emphasized improving annual meeting attendance to obtain a broader base of policy and personnel input.

Other information was gleaned from the survey results and Board action is being taken. The survey had a very good response rate and excellent comments and suggestions were also received. Thank you to all those who responded!

ELRA's MISSION & VISION

A general concern from the comments received on the survey is an indication of some uncertainty over the mission of ELRA. Some important points:

1. ELRA is incorporated as a non-profit organization comprised of voluntary members who pay annual dues.
2. ELRA is governed by a seven member Board of Directors elected by membership at the Annual Meeting. Each Director serves a 3-year term as an unpaid volunteer.
3. ELRA's primary mission is educational and as a vehicle for private-public cooperation for certain lake improvement projects.
4. ELRA is funded by member dues – not taxes, and is not a government organization, and therefore has no regulatory or enforcement authorities.
5. The MN DNR is the lake management authority as the waters are public waters of the state. Crow Wing County, City of Emily and ELRA programs must all be in compliance with the MN DNR.

Membership

Your membership dues for 2017 are now due in the amount of **\$35.00**. Membership runs with the calendar year. Checks should be sent to ELRA, P.O. Box 111, Emily, MN 56447 or you can pay online at www.emilylakes.org. If paying on-line a credit processing fee of \$1.50 is added.

Donations

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 now to donate.

Survey Results

Question 1 – In which month should the ELRA annual meeting be held to increase your ability to attend?

- May – 17.3%
- June – 17.3%
- July – 21.2%
- Aug – 23.1%
- Sept – 7.7%
- Other – 13.5%

Question 2 – What is the best time of day for the annual meeting to be held?

- 9-11 a.m. – 62.8%
- Noon-2 p.m. – 17.7%
- 2-4 p.m. – 5.9%
- 7-9 p.m. – 9.8%
- Other – 3.9%

BOARD ACTION: *The Board has set this year's Annual Meeting for Saturday, July 29, 2017 beginning at 9:00 a.m. A registration/social period will start at 8:30 a.m.*

Survey Results (con't)

Question 3 – Check all of the following that would increase your odds of attending the Annual Meeting.

- Outside Guest Speakers – 56.5%
- No Guest Speakers – 8.7%
- Door Prizes – 10.9%
- Lunch/Dinner/Breakfast – 36.9%
- Other – 32.6%

BOARD ACTION: *For this year's Annual Meeting, an outside guest speaker will be obtained and a light breakfast of rolls, juice and coffee will be served.*

Question 4 – If you have not attended the annual Meeting in the last 3 year it is because?

- Scheduling Issues – 62.8%
- My input isn't important – 2%
- Meeting isn't interesting – 0%
- Might get an ELRA assignment – 0%
- N/A – have been attending – 17.7%
- Other – 17.7%

Most of the other comments referenced schedules as the major issue.

BOARD ACTION: *The Annual Meeting date was selected at the Jan. 5, 2017 Board meeting and will be included in every notification between now and the Annual Meeting. This date was selected after consideration of local festivals and events so as not to conflict with these.*

MEMBER ACTION: PLEASE PUT THIS MEETING ON YOUR CALENDARS TODAY!

Question 5 – The most important issue facing Emily, Mary, Dahler and Little Pine River property owners is:

- Fish Stocking – 5.8%
- Eurasian Water Milfoil Control – 25%
- Water Levels and the Dam – 36.5%
- Boat Inspections – 0%
- Improving Water Quality – 21.2%
- Monitoring/Inspecting for Other AIS – 1.9%
- Other – 9.6%

Question 5 (con't)

Most of the other comments made reference to all of the above.

BOARD ACTION: *Multiple actions on these issues were needed:*

1. *Eurasian Water Milfoil control will continue to be handled directly by the Board utilizing ELRA funds, City of Emily participation funds and Crow Wing County participation funds. These participation funds are ONLY available via partnering with ELRA. Treatment is costly but determined essential to maintain/improve the viability of Emily Lake and reduce the chances of spreading into adjoining waters.*
2. *The existing Fish Stocking Group will report at the Annual Meeting any 2017 fish survey results or contacts with the MN DNR.*
3. *The monitoring program for other AIS, primarily zebra mussels will continue as the sampling is done at low cost and minimal expenditure of time.*
4. *The Board is seeking volunteers for 1 – 3 people each for a Water Quality Group and a Water Level Group. As a volunteer organization we need additional members who indicated these were their top priorities to come forward. The respective Groups will investigate the issues and report findings and recommendations at the Annual Meeting.*

MEMBER ACTION: VOLUNTEER FOR THE WATER QUALITY GROUP OR THE WATER LEVEL GROUP TODAY. EMAIL ELRA AT ELRA@EMILYLAKES.ORG. WITHOUT YOUR HELP, THESE TWO AREAS WILL LIKELY NOT BE ABLE TO BE LOOKED INTO AS NEEDED.

Fundraising

ELRA is seeking ways to obtain additional funding for various projects, primarily milfoil control, through fund raisers. This also helps keep your annual dues low.

This year's fund raisers will include:

- Golf Tournament at Emily Greens – date to be determined
- Silent Auction at Annual Meeting – You may donate items for auction.

Other events are contemplated and additional volunteers are needed. Email us today to indicate your willingness to serve at elra@emilylakes.org

Thank You!

ELRA sends a big **THANK YOU** to the Fifty Lakes Property Owners Association (FLPOA) who donated \$450 to help with the cost of Eurasian Water Milfoil control. This will be used for treatment that is planned in 2017. Please be sure to thank any FLPOA member in person when you see them.

Condolences

ELRA sends condolences to the family of Doug Rhode who recently passed away. Doug was a valued past Board Member and long-time member of the Association. He will be missed.

2017 Crow Wing County AIS Plan

Crow Wing County has developed an AIS plan for 2017. Because of the infestation of Eurasian Water Milfoil (EWM) in Emily Lake, the lake access is 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 2016. \$5000 will also be available for EWM control. While substantial, this amount is insufficient to cover the treatment needs for Emily Lake. The AIS plan also has \$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.

Tasty Fish Recipe

Ingredients

- 5 slices bacon cooked and chopped
- 3 tbsp butter
- ½ cup celery, chopped
- 1 large yellow onion, chopped
- ¼ cup all-purpose flour
- 4 cups cold milk
- 2 cups cubed red potatoes (approx.. 2 potatoes)
- 2 (8 oz) walleye fillets (or other) cut into chunks
- Freshly ground salt and pepper to taste
- 2 tbsp chopped fresh parsley

1. Heat the butter in a large stock pot over medium-high heat. Add the celery and onions, sauté until softened.
2. Stir in flour to form a roux. Slowly whisk in the milk.
3. Add the potatoes and bacon and stir gently. Reduce heat and simmer for 30 minutes, or until potatoes are cooked through.
4. Add fish chunks and cook for an additional 6-8 minutes, or until fish is cooked through.
5. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Garnish with parsley and serve.

Member Action Plan Summary

- Pay your ELRA dues today either online (\$36.50) or by mailing a \$35.00 check.
- Mark Annual Meeting date and time of July 29, 2017 at 8:30 a.m. on calendar and plan to attend.
- Volunteer for work on Fundraising Group.
- Volunteer for work on Water Quality Group.
- Volunteer for work on Water Levels Group.

Trivia Question

On the front page banner of this newsletter a winter scene is pictured. Is this Emily, Mary, Dahler or the Little Pine River? Extra credit if you can identify where the picture was taken!!

Answer in the summer newsletter.