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## UPCOMING EVENTS

**September 7-9**

*Muskies Inc. Tournament*

**September 8**

*20th Annual Ethnic Fest*

**September 10**

*Leech Lake Association Meeting*

**September 17**

*30th North Country  
Marathon and 10K*

**November 12**

*Leech Lake Association Meeting*

**November 24**

*Festival of Lights*

**Our Mission:** To be good stewards of Leech Lake and its environs, recognizing the vulnerability of the lake, and the need for citizens -- both individually and collectively -- to assume responsibility for its care.

## Letter from the President,

Summer may be winding down but the activities of the Leech Lake Association (LLA) have been ramping up. With the Walker DNR fisheries office shorthanded, LLA volunteers have been assisting DNR biologists with seining, trapping, and electro-fishing operations. These methods are used to capture young walleye fingerlings to determine which were stocked as marked fry and which are the result of natural reproduction. Growth rates and hatch rates of these young fish are both important to future walleye numbers. Later this fall, larger fish of all species will be captured to determine the size structure and numbers of fish taken compared to prior years. LLA volunteers will be assisting with all these efforts.



Your Leech Lake Association Board, with the help of expert consultants, has just completed an update of its Leech Lake Management Plan which will be mailed to all members and every Leech Lake property owner this fall. The revised Plan provides a wealth of information regarding the current state of Leech Lake and our recommendations on how to maintain the lake in its present relatively pristine condition. Since our previous Plan was published in 2004, many important steps have been taken on Leech Lake

which have improved fishing, reduced cormorant numbers, identified sensitive shorelands around the lake, and mapped the entire lake's aquatic vegetation. All of these efforts are detailed in the revised Plan.

Another major effort this spring and summer has been directed at preventing the spread of Aquatic Invasive Species – particularly zebra mussels – into Leech Lake.



We have sponsored training seminars and also trained some of our own staff and membership in boat inspection and AIS prevention. We welcome the participation of our membership in this endeavor, and ask that you contact the DNR or any of our Board Members if you have the time and inclination to participate.

Finally, I thank all of you who attended our Annual Meeting and Picnic at Horseshoe Bay on July 26. We thank also Bruce Anspach, DNR Region 1 Water Inspection Supervisor, for his talk to attendees on the importance of keeping Leech Lake free – for as long as possible – of zebra mussels and other invasives, which seem to be moving inexorably north as hitchhikers on boats, docks, planes, and other conveyances.

Thank you

Robert Gisvold, President



# Exciting NEWS!

LLA HAS AN UPDATED WEBSITE

Engaging in all activities necessary to preserve the environment of Leech Lake and the surrounding watershed.

Welcome to the....

...Website!

Our mission is to provide stewardship of Leech Lake and its environs, to preserve and continue the viability of Leech Lake as vital to area residents, vacationers, seasonal residents, sportsmen, lovers of nature and the entire community.

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This Leech Lake Association website is hosted by Minnesota Waters, as part of its mission to help citizens protect and improve our lakes and rivers. Minnesota Waters spreads the water conservation message by providing cost effective website hosting for many citizen groups working toward the same purpose.

Our LLA website has been hosted by Minnesota Waters for several years. This past spring, Minnesota Waters announced that they were ceasing operation due to lack of funds. They later announced that they will be joining forces with Conservation Minnesota and will continue their work as one organization. Details are still being worked out, but the good news is that the merged groups will continue to provide website hosting services for lake associations.

LLA will continue to keep their hosted website up to date and expand to include current news and management plans. We encourage you to visit our site as follows:

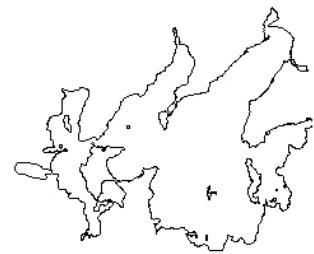
- 1) Go to: mnwaters
- 2) Click on “Lake and River Groups”
- 3) Under “View By County” select “Cass”
- 4) Scroll down and click on “Leech Lake Association”
- 5) You are now at the site. Click on any “menu” topic on the left side.

## SUMMER FUN AT WALKER 4TH OF JULY PARADE





**LEECH LAKE UPDATE**  
**Walker Area Fisheries Office**  
**07316 State Highway 371 NW**  
**Walker, MN 56484**  
**(218) 547-1683**



Greetings!

This update is part of a series of reports the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is sending to Leech Lake area resorts, businesses and others interested in DNR activities on Leech Lake. The goal of these messages is to keep you up to date with our findings and current activities on the lake. Earlier updates are available by visiting <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/areas/fisheries/walker/index.html>. Feel free to contact our office if you have any questions or comments, would like copies of previous updates not posted on the website, or if you would like to be added to the mailing list.

### Recent Changes

- Doug Schultz, previous Large Lake Specialist on Leech, was promoted to Area Fisheries Supervisor, in November, 2011. Since the retirement of Harlan Fierstine in December 2010, Scott Gustafson was Acting Area Fisheries Supervisor and has now resumed his previous responsibilities as Walker Assistant Area Fisheries Supervisor.
- Matt Ward was promoted to Large Lake Specialist on Leech in February 2012, after spending the previous 8 years working as a Fisheries Specialist for Duluth and Lake Superior Area Fisheries. Matt received a B.S. degree from University of Wisconsin, Stevens Point in 1999 in Biology/Water Resources – Fisheries/Limnology, and a M.S. degree from South Dakota State University in 2003 in Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences.
- Calub Shavlik was promoted to Assistant Area Fisheries Supervisor for Park Rapids Area Fisheries. Calub was a Fisheries Specialist with Walker Area Fisheries since September 2002.
- Carl Pedersen was recently hired as a Fisheries Specialist and will start on August 22, 2012. Carl received a B.S. degree from University of Wisconsin, Stevens Point in 1991 in Biology/Water Resources – Fisheries Emphasis, a B.S. degree from Southwest Minnesota State University in 2004 in Biology Education, and a M.S. degree from North Dakota State University in December 2010 in Natural Resources Management. Carl has previously worked for the U.S. Forest Service, Idaho Power Company, Wisconsin DNR, and was a science teacher at Hibbing High school.

### 2012 survey work completed and to be completed on Leech Lake

- With volunteer assistance, 7.5 million walleye fry were stocked from May 7-10, 2012 (see table below). Fry were distributed throughout all major bays; bay-specific amounts were determined based on proportion of total littoral acres ( $\leq 15\text{-ft. deep}$ ).
- Under the supervision of the Division of Resource Management, Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe, double-crested cormorant control is ongoing to the management goal of 500 nesting pairs.
- A lake wide night time electrofishing survey for bluegills, bass, and crappies was conducted from mid-May through mid-June in which 49 20-minute stations were sampled. Boy, Headquarters, Steamboat, and Shingobee bays had the highest catch rates of bluegills and bass.

(DNR Report continued on page 4)

(DNR Report continued from page 3)

- Monthly sampling of zooplankton at five locations lakewide was initiated in 2012 and will occur from mid-May through mid-September.
- Standard shoreline beach seining was cancelled again this year due to staffing limitations. Last year's seining was cancelled due to the State shutdown during July.
- Standard trawling will be conducted from August 23-31.
- The annual gill net survey will be completed from September 3-14.
- Shoreline night time electrofishing for young-of-year walleye will be completed from September 24-28
- As in other years, volunteers are welcome to assist. Contact Matt Ward ([matt.ward@state.mn.us](mailto:matt.ward@state.mn.us)) if interested.



<b>Area</b>	<b>Total Stocked</b>
<b>Main Lake</b>	
Boy/Hdqtr's Bay	1,344,833
Portage Bay	1,222,202
Sucker Bay	1,231,744
Stony Point	849,391
Whipholt	807,077
Trader's Bay	741,200
<b>Western Bays</b>	
Steamboat Bay	730,904
Walker Bay North	365,452
Walker Bay South	104,415
Kabekona Bay	52,207
Agency Bay	52,207
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,501,632</b>

If you have questions, comments, or requests please contact:

Matt Ward ([matt.ward@state.mn.us](mailto:matt.ward@state.mn.us))  
or  
Doug Schultz ([doug.w.schultz@state.mn.us](mailto:doug.w.schultz@state.mn.us))



## **US Army Corps of Engineers**

**St. Paul District  
Leech Lake Dam**

### **LEECH RESERVOIR WATER LEVELS**

On August 10th, 2012, the water level on Leech Lake was 1294.95 feet. The current discharge from the dam is approximately 550 cubic feet per second (cfs). The desirable summer target is 1294.70. All elevations are referenced in 1929 NGVD.



2011 weather included a snowy winter and cool wet spring but in July 2011 a sudden and dramatic shift brought on what could have been a very serious drought for our area. Then in February 2012 the area began receiving moderate snowfall and eventually received record rainfall to the Aitkin and McGregor area of our watershed. The city of Aitkin reached major flood stage; that meant the upper reservoirs, Pokegama, Leech and Winnibigoshish, all needed to limit their outflows to prevent severe flooding downstream. Pokegama Lake, near Grand Rapids, was 3 to 4 feet above normal and many structures were inundated around Sandy Lake near McGregor. Leech and Winnibigoshish, while still recovering from 2011 drought effects, received high rainfall totals but not record amounts like further down our watershed. Leech Lake levels only exceeded the desirable summer level by about 6 inches.

### **OPERATING FOR FLOOD DAMAGE REDUCTION**

When operating headwaters reservoirs for flood control at Aitkin, each of the reservoir levels are moni-

tored along with the stage at Aitkin. A guide curve has been developed that --when followed -- the damages at the reservoirs are balanced with the damages at Aitkin. Operating the Headwaters Reservoirs is a system-wide operation and each event can produce different results, so the guide curve is used to help, but can not always be followed. This summer, because of the unique weather conditions explained above, Leech Lake, was able to perform its flood control storage duties without harshly exceeding the top end of its desirable summer range.

### **WHAT IS THE “DESIRABLE SUMMER RANGE?**

Leech Lake has several different operating limits and targets contained within its operating plan. These limits and ranges vary in accordance with climate conditions and time of year. For example the desirable summer range of 1294.50 to 1294.90 is simply a desirable target that we strive to achieve within the total operating limit of 1292.70-1297.94.

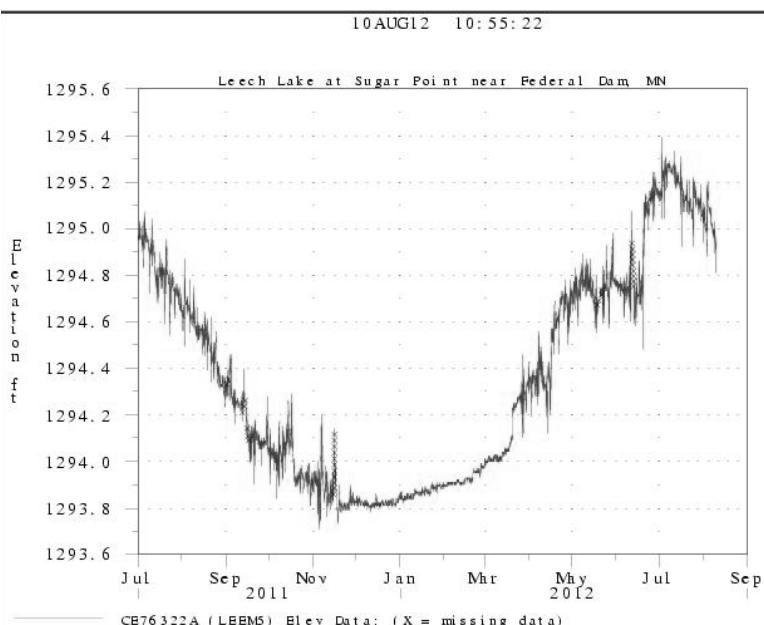
### **WILD RICE PRODUCTION**

Wild Rice is important to Native Americans, hunters, and anyone wanting to enjoy a change to their usual diet but do you know that wild rice depends on proper water levels for survival? It prefers lower water in spring as it germinates and takes root. Eventually it broadens out into the floating leaf stage and is at risk of being uprooted by rising water levels. Then suddenly, it emerges from the floating leaf stage and grows upward similar to our vast fields of grain grown by farmers. Now it's susceptible to tipping over by falling water levels or high wind. Anyone familiar with Leech Lake readily recognizes wild rice growing along shorelines; however, there are many bays that propagate large beds of wild rice. Of high importance within the Leech Lake Indian reservation is the MN DNR Mud/Goose Lake Wild Life Management Area downstream of Leech Lake Dam and is often dependent on Leech Lake Dam for suitable water conditions. Anyone familiar with hydrology of dams will know how difficult it is to balance upstream AND downstream water levels to suit both areas but much coordination with MN DNR and a little luck, most years have been successful.

**Please see the hydrograph on the following page for more information.**

*(CORPS Report continued on page 6)*

(CORPS Report continued from page 5)



*Referenced Hydrograph*

## US ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS, LEECH LAKE DAM

### 2012 KIDS' FISH DERBY



On July 21, the Leech Lake Army Corps of Engineers conducted its 22nd annual kids' fishing derby at Federal Dam. A total of 150 kids registered for the free contest, which took place below the dam. The annual event is held

every third Saturday in July and is free for kids 14 and under. Volunteers handed out hot dogs, chips, soda, water and ice cream for the kids and their families, as well as bait and numerous prizes provided by local businesses, including the Leech Lake Association.

Throughout the day staff and volunteers stressed the importance of water safety and proper catch-and-release techniques with help from the MNDNR and Cass County Sheriff's Boat & Water Safety Division. "Bobber" the

### LEECH LAKE DAM

Leech Lake Dam is located on the North East corner of Portage Bay and forms the Leech Lake River. The Leech flows into the Mississippi south of US HWY 2 downstream of the MN DNR Mud/Goose Wildlife Management Area. The Corps of Engineers provides recreation facilities such as boat ramps, campgrounds, picnic areas, trails and other services within the grounds at Leech Lake Dam.



Check us out and click on "recreation" at [www.mvp.usace.army.mil](http://www.mvp.usace.army.mil)

water safety dog was on hand to meet and greet the participants. Fish of all types were reeled in during the hour long contest including Rock Bass, Northern Pike, and Bullheads. The US Army Corps of Engineers at Leech Lake Recreation Area would like to thank all those merchants and organizations who donated and made this annual event possible.

#### THIS YEAR'S WINNERS:

##### 1-4 Age Class

Tamara Burnett, Sugar Point  
Colton Barker, Grand Rapids  
Skyler Barker, Grand Rapids

##### 5-9 Age Class

Gage Eckman, Little Falls  
Connor Dicks, Walker  
Spencer Dicks, Walker

##### 10-14 Age Class

Alicia Neururer, Forest Lake  
Leighton Sorteberg, Grand Rapids  
Liberty Blaine, Grand Rapids

## LEECH LAKE TERN POPULATION: AN UPDATE



Little Pelican Island has long been famous as a nesting site for the Common Tern, a graceful waterbird a little smaller than a gull. Leech Lake is one of only four places in Minnesota where these birds nest. During the 1990's their population fell so low that they were added to the State and Tribal Threatened Species List. Steve Mortensen, a Tribal Biologist, reports that competition with co-nesting species, mainly gulls, continues to be an issue for common terns as the terns are much smaller and arrive back to the nesting island later than other species. Over the past four years or so we have been averaging around 75 young fledged per year.

The Caspian Terns are doing well. This is a larger tern, about the size of a small gull. Up until recently, Caspian Terns had never nested successfully in Minnesota. Then, in 2007, a small colony of Caspian Terns was discovered on Little Pelican Island. Numbers have gradually increased over the past six years and it looks like over 150 young will fledge this year.



Double-crested Cormorant numbers have been down the past couple of years. It is uncertain if this is a result of control efforts or just a natural decline. Some colonies that have had no control have also experienced declines. Approximately 1640 cormorants were taken as part of control efforts or for disease testing on Leech Lake this past spring and summer. The goal is to maintain the cormorant population at no more than 500 nesting pairs.



### REMINDER: TIME TO RENEW MEMBERSHIPS FOR 2012-2013



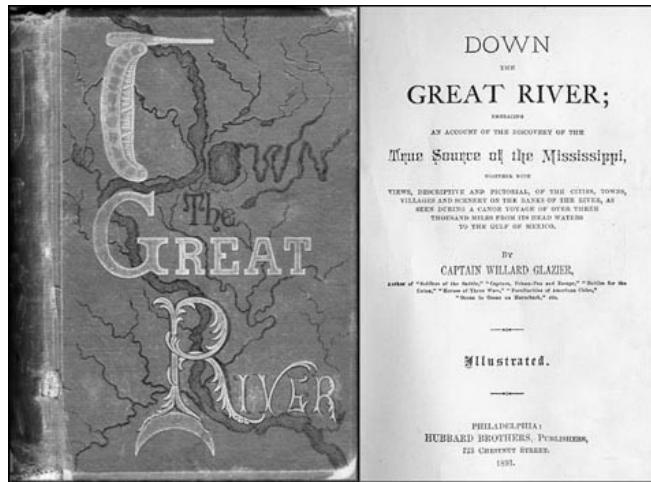
Because our fiscal year runs from July to July, the date of our Annual Meeting is when memberships expire and dues are collected for the coming year. The notation '12' beside your name on the mailing label means that your membership has expired in July of this year. Those with a 10 or 11 beside your name means your membership has expired in the previous year(s). Those with expired memberships will receive a self-addressed envelope and renewal form along with this newsletter. We sincere-

ly hope that you will renew your membership and encourage your friends and neighbors to do likewise. There is strength in numbers, and your dues allow our volunteers to carry on their work, which is to protect Leech Lake, guard your interests, and communicate with you through press releases and this newsletter.

**Thank you in advance,  
The Membership Committee**

## LEECH LAKE IN ANTIQUITY

In 1884 Captain Willard Glazier, a Civil War Veteran and explorer, traveled by way of Leech Lake to find the “true source” of the Mississippi River. While Schoolcraft had identified Lake Itasca as the river’s source as early as 1832, Glazier had heard rumors that there were waters flowing into Lake Itasca from somewhere beyond, and that this “somewhere beyond” was the “true source.” He believed that discovering the “true source” would make him famous, and also give him material for a book., which he did in fact write. He recounts his adventures in the book titled “Down the Great River; An Account of the Discovery of the



True Source of the Mississippi,” published by Hubbard Publishers of Philadelphia in 1891. His book provides an interesting picture of the Leech Lake country as it was in 1884, before the arrival of the loggers and homesteaders. Excerpts from his book will be included in this Newsletter from time to time. The book also includes an 1880's map of the Leech Lake area, which seems surprisingly accurate for its time (enclosed). In prior issues, Captain Glazier described his trip from Brainerd to Leech Lake, his stay at Agency Bay while awaiting Indian guides, and their arduous journey to Lake Itasca. They have now arrived at Itasca, and points beyond, but their food is gone and starvation begins.

### THE JOURNEY CONTINUES

Our camp opposite the mouth of the (first stream entering the Mississippi below Itasca) will long be remembered by my companions as the place where we first felt the gnawings of hunger, for it was here that the

last of our rations were consumed, and we retired to our tents with our appetites half satisfied after a day of unusual fatigue; add to empty haversacks the tortures of our invertebrate companions, the mosquitoes, and the reader will have some idea of our situation at the close of the first day in the descent of the Mississippi.



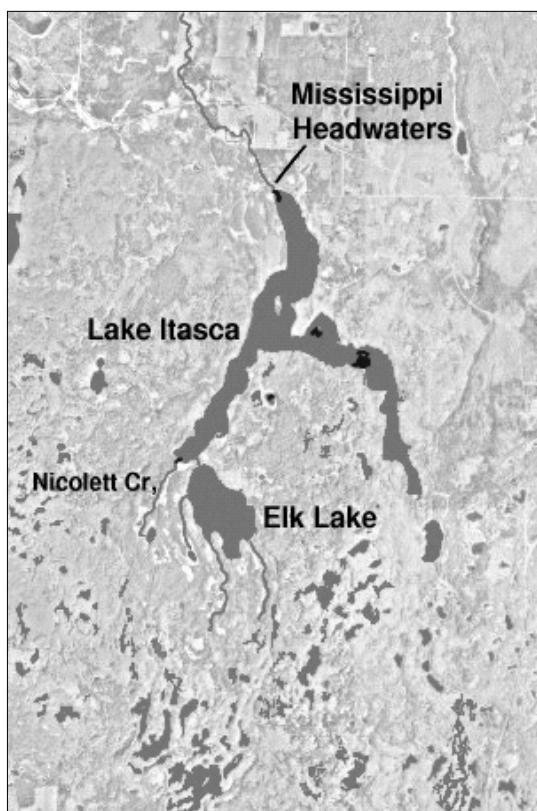
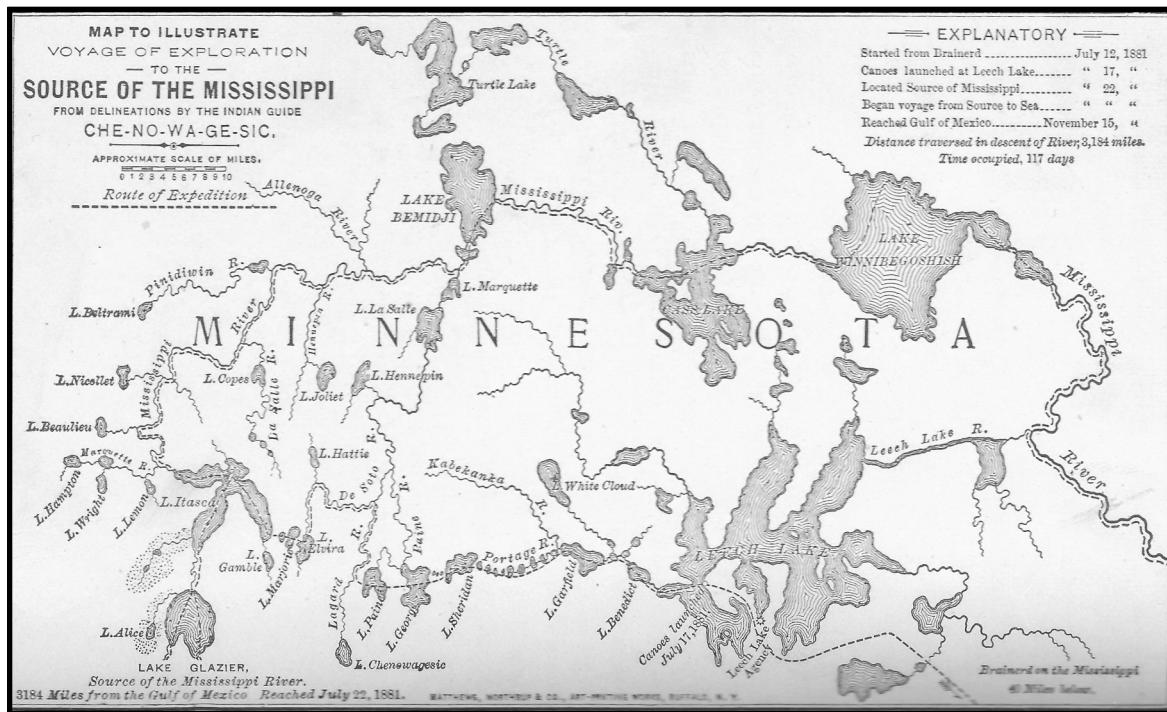
We struck tents at six o'clock in the morning, and a few moments later were in our canoes and again descending the river. I immediately took position in the bow of the leading canoe, with shotgun in hand, ready for game of any description which might appear in our front, for we were now entirely destitute of rations, with but little ammunition, and our fishing tackle in the bogs beyond Itasca. It was at once apparent that for some days at least, our explorations would lie more in the direction of food than the typography of the country. My companions were cautioned to keep a sharp lookout for evidences of animal life on the banks of the river while the guides were instructed to be on the alert for ducks, as the Chippewas are adepts in killing many varieties of waterfowl by means of their paddles.

We had been in our canoes but a few moments when my attention was drawn to a slight ripple on the surface of the water. An instant later I saw a small, black object pointing down stream about twenty yards in advance of my canoe. Moses Lagard cried out at the top of his voice, “Shoot him! Shoot him, Captain!” Suiting the action to the word, I at once fired, and a moment later had the satisfaction of pulling in an otter, one of the finest prizes of our voyage; and, as will soon appear, a rare piece of good fortune at this time. The guides unanimously voted me a great hunter, as is the custom of the Chippewas whenever a member of their tribe kills this animal.

*(Leech Lake in Antiquity continued on page 9)*

(Leech Lake in Antiquity continued from page 8)

## 1880'S MAP: HEADWATERS OF THE MISSISSIPPI



Turning a bend in the river, a brood of ducks next received our attention. A round from the shotguns put two juveniles on their backs and sent the remainder under the surface apparently frightened by the discharge. The crews of both the Alice and Itasca were soon at the scene of action, the Indians screaming and gesticulating in the wildest manner in order to keep the ducks under water. An exciting chase now ensued in which Indian skill in the use of the paddle was fully demonstrated. Eagerly watching for some evidence of the presence of his game, the practiced eye of Chenowagesic readily got his bearings. A few sharp strokes of his paddle brought him in range, and then raising the paddle to a perpendicular, he sent it straight to the back of his prey. Another duck was captured in the same manner by Sebatise, which, with the two brought down by the shotgun, gave us a light breakfast, as all the ducks were young and small. My companions insisted that their leader should have one duck entirely to himself, but to this I objected, saying that whatever fortune had in store for us we should always be equally divided.

Greatly encouraged by the good luck of the morning, it now seemed that if we had sufficient ammunition or if the guides should be successful in paddling for game, we might pull through to the trading post at Lake Bemidji without serious difficulty. But right here was the rub: We had but twenty-three rounds of ammunition left, and while fortune had favored us once at least with the paddles, there was a much larger proportion of chance than certainty for the future..

*To be continued...*

## AIS VOLUNTEER TRAINING PROGRAM

By now most people have heard about Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) but may not be aware of how serious a threat it could be to our lakes. There are many types of AIS but the most serious is the Zebra Mussels.



If they infest Leech Lake, it would affect our fishing, swimming beaches, property values, resorts and our overall local economy. Currently there is not an effective eradication tool once they infest a lake. The only way to keep AIS

out of our lakes is to empty all boat water and inspect boat trailers before launching and leaving the lake. DNR is doing their best to monitor our public accesses but -- with their limited budget -- cannot possibly cover all of the many accesses on Leech Lake. That is why the DNR and the Leech Lake Association together are

encouraging our members and the general public to be AIS Volunteers and assist in this effort to keep our lakes free of Zebra Mussels and other invasive species. Some nearby lakes that have already been infested include Gull, Pelican, Mille Lacs and others around Alexandria.

The DNR conducts AIS Volunteer Training Programs periodically in our area. To participate and learn more about this program, please contact the following:

Bruce Anspach

Region 1 Watercraft Inspection Program Supervisor  
Division of Ecological and Water Resources

Phone: 218-699-7295

Cell: 612-399-9941

Email: bruce.anspach@state.mn.us

or

Chuck Allen

Leech Lake Association

Phone: 218-987-2307

Email: cjallen@paulbunyan.net

## SUMMER FUN ON LEECH LAKE





## PLEASE RECYCLE

Recycling is an important way for us to conserve energy, reduce waste in our landfills and conserve our natural resources for many years to come. Please take a moment to recycle that water bottle, aluminum can, or glass spaghetti jar

instead of tossing it into the garbage. Our earth will thank you for it.

For more information go to  
<http://www.environment-green.com/>



Costs for printing and distribution of the summer edition of the LLA Newsletter have been donated by the First National Bank of Walker, and Hummingbird Press.

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# Leech Lake ASSOCIATION

## WELCOMES NEW SPONSORS



We are very grateful to all those who have chosen to become sponsors of our Association! (\$100 and above). While our renewal period has just begun, several of you have already renewed as Sponsors. For those of you who have not yet renewed, we will include your names in our next newsletter. Our special thanks to:

### 2012-2013 Sponsors:

- ◆ J. Richard Simpson, Chanhassen, MN
- ◆ Dan & Shirley Sheldon, Chanhassen, MN
- ◆ John & May Benedict, Aurora, IL
- ◆ James & Nina Palubicki, Fosston, MN
- ◆ Robert and Patti Gisvold, Walker, MN
- ◆ LeRoy & Marilyn Radermacher, Jordan, MN
- ◆ Oak Point Homeowners Association
- ◆ Isobel Brown, Whipholt, MN
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- ◆ Robert & Nita-Eagle Frink, Rock Island, IL
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- ◆ Ben Tande, Timber Creek Dock, Walker, MN
- ◆ Carl & Mary Peterson, Walker, MN
- ◆ James Thomas, Anamosa, IA
- ◆ Tom & Mary Peterson, Walker, MN
- ◆ Richard & Barbara Burrock, Eden Prairie, MN
- ◆ Ron & Sharon Palmer, Agency Bay Lodge

### **LIFETIME MEMBER (\$1000 or more)**

- ◆ Dale & Harriet Jones, Walker, MN
- ◆ Isobel Brown, Whipholt MN
- ◆ Robert Eddy, Big Lake, MN

A special welcome to all our new members, and to all of you who have continued to support us over the years as the walleye fishery has recovered.

**LLA Board Meetings are the second Monday of each month at 9:30 AM at the courthouse. Members and guest are welcome!**



Leech Lake Association  
PO Box 1613  
Walker, MN 56484

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