

Leech Lake

ASSOCIATION



The Voice of Leech Lake

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,

Quite a contrast from last spring when the lake was so high that no-wake zones were imposed to protect erodible shoreline. This spring the lake was so low that difficulties existed at some boat landings and the Sheriff was warning boaters to be particularly vigilant while navigating about the lake. We now anticipate that the spring rains that began on Opening Day will soon bring lake levels back to normal.



Sunrise May 23rd, 2015

The low water took a particular toll on the Roosevelt Canal. The Leech Lake Association, the Sheriff's office, and the Leech Lake Tribe undertook an emergency dredging operation this spring to deepen the canal, but dredging was made difficult on the Traders Bay entrance because of the early spring and open water on that end of the canal. The Traders Bay entrance is thus somewhat narrower than before. It was also shallower than desired and required us to dredge the Traders Bay entrance deeper in mid May.

During the past few weeks members of our Board have been working with the DNR and Cass County to implement programs to prevent/delay the introduction of aquatic invasive species – particularly zebra mussels and spiny water fleas – into Leech Lake. This includes making sure that arriving boaters have convenient access to local decontamination stations and inspectors at major boat landings. We are also attempting to implement a program, through the DNR, that would require fishing tournament sponsors to ensure, though some kind of written affidavit, that their tournament participants arrive with certifiably clean boats. Muskies Inc already requires their tournament partici-

pants to do this. Board member John Eaton reports later in this newsletter on some on the specific steps being taken (Page 10-11).

As the DNR's Matt Ward writes later in this newsletter, the lake contains healthy numbers of walleyes of all sizes and this is supported by 2014 lake survey and creel census results, and also by the good fishing which has prevailed on the lake since Opening Day. Perch numbers are down and this is a concern. Some of the reasons for this are included in Matt's report.

Timm Rennecke, who has managed water levels at Federal Dam for many years, and writes the COE report for this newsletter, has been undergoing treatment since last fall at the Mayo Clinic for some uncommon cancers. Timm has been recovering nicely from his several surgeries, and the Mayo is confident that their treatment plan will effect a complete cure. With the low water levels, we need Timm back at his post at Federal Dam as soon as possible to fix things. Timm always gave Mother Nature the credit for Leech Lake water levels, but we know Timm had plenty to do with it.

Wishing all of you a safe and enjoyable summer.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

July 4

Fireworks – City Park

July 16-18

24th Moondance Jam

July 30

Leech Lake Association
 Annual Meeting & Picnic

August 7-10

Leech Lake Regatta

August 13-15

Cajun Fest, Northern Lights Casino

September 11-13

Muskies Inc. Int'l Tournament

September 12

Ethnic Fest

September 19

Walker North Country Marathon

November 27-28

Festival of Lights Activities

November 28

Kids Christmas Party Activities

December 17

LLA Christmas Party



Leech Lake Update, July 2015

Walker Area Fisheries Office
07316 State Hwy 371
Walker, MN 56484
218-547-1683



2015 WALLEYE FRY STOCKING DECISION

- Stocking was one of four tools used to rebuild the Walleye population over the past decade. Other tools included conservative regulations, cormorant management, and habitat protection
- The Walleye population has fully recovered and regulations were relaxed effective 2015 Walleye opener to allow increased harvest opportunity
- The spawning population has been providing sufficient amounts of fry to sustain the fishery
- Higher fry stocking rates have not resulted in more Walleyes surviving to catchable size (Fig. 1)
- Higher fry stocking rates have resulted in slower growth rates for young-of-the-year Walleyes (Fig. 2)
- Higher growth rates for young-of-the-year Walleyes have resulted in more Walleyes surviving to catchable size (Fig. 3)
- Higher Walleye fry abundance has led to increased predation on young-of-the-year Perch, resulting in lower abundances of Perch surviving to age-4 (approximately 7 inches; Fig 4).
- As Perch are the primary prey of Walleyes, lower Perch abundances have resulted in below average adult Walleye condition (plumpness) and growth rates
- Perch abundance is currently at record lows
- Managing the fishery requires a delicate balance between predator and prey populations

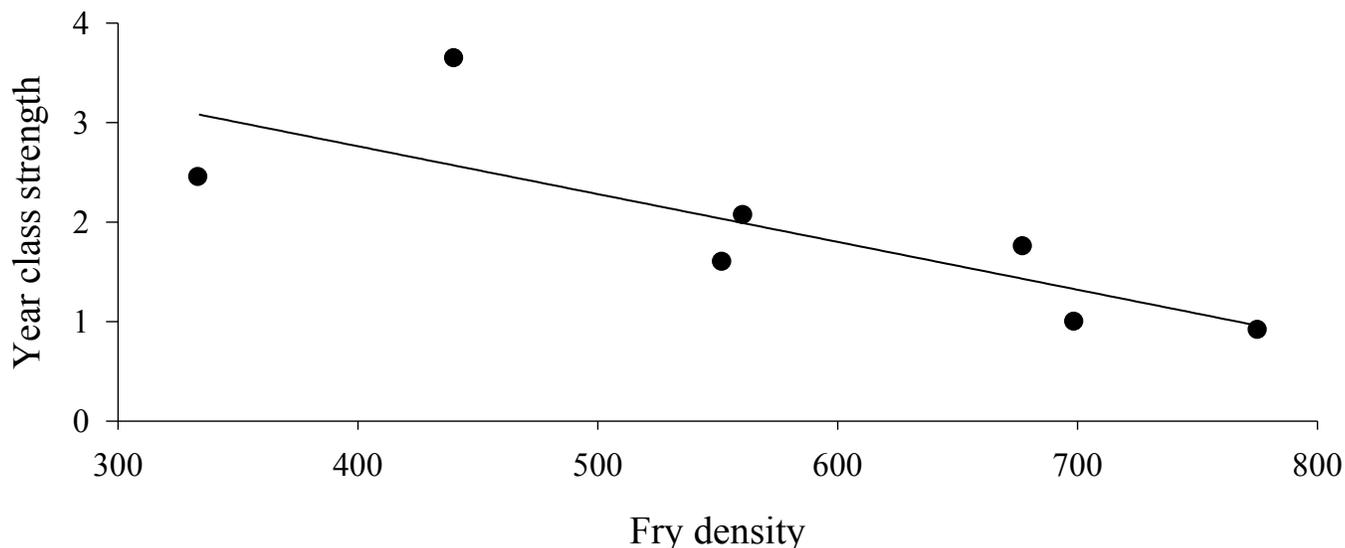


Figure 1. Walleye fry density (fry/littoral acre, i.e. depths ≤ 15 feet) and the resulting year class strength (relative abundance of age-3 walleyes) at Leech Lake, 2005-2011. Age-3 Walleyes are approximately 15 inches by mid-September.

(DNR Report continued on page 3)

(DNR Report continued from page 2)

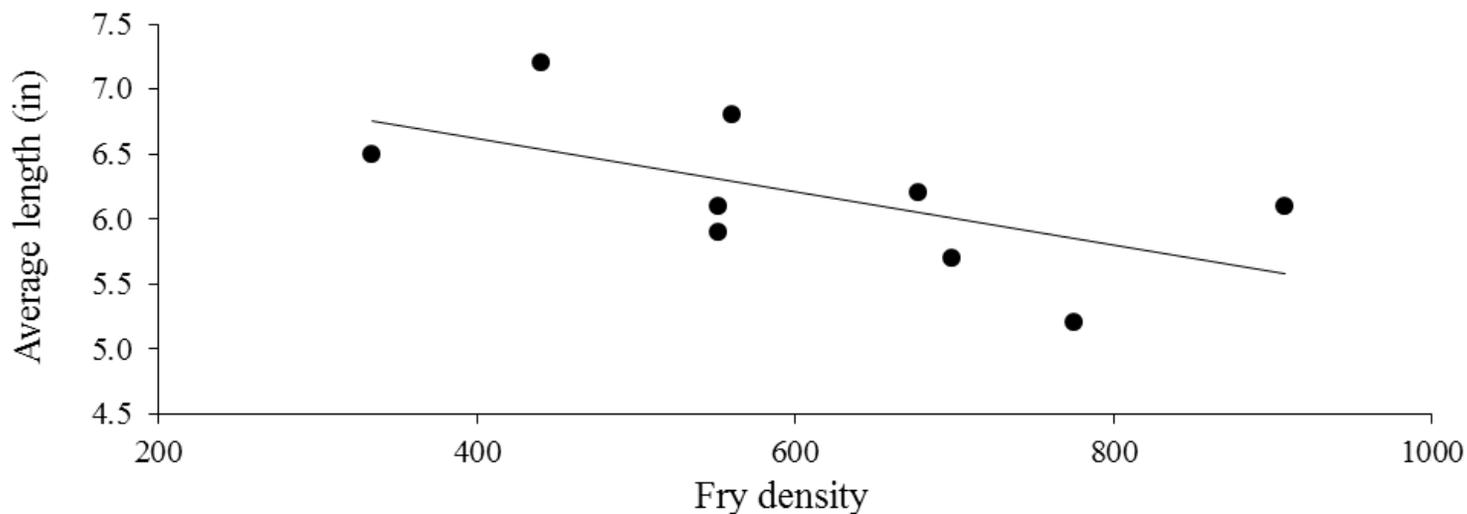


Figure 2. Walleye fry density (fry/littoral acre, i.e. depths ≤ 15 feet) and the average length (inches) of young-of-the-year Walleye sampled in mid-September at Leech Lake, 2005-2014.

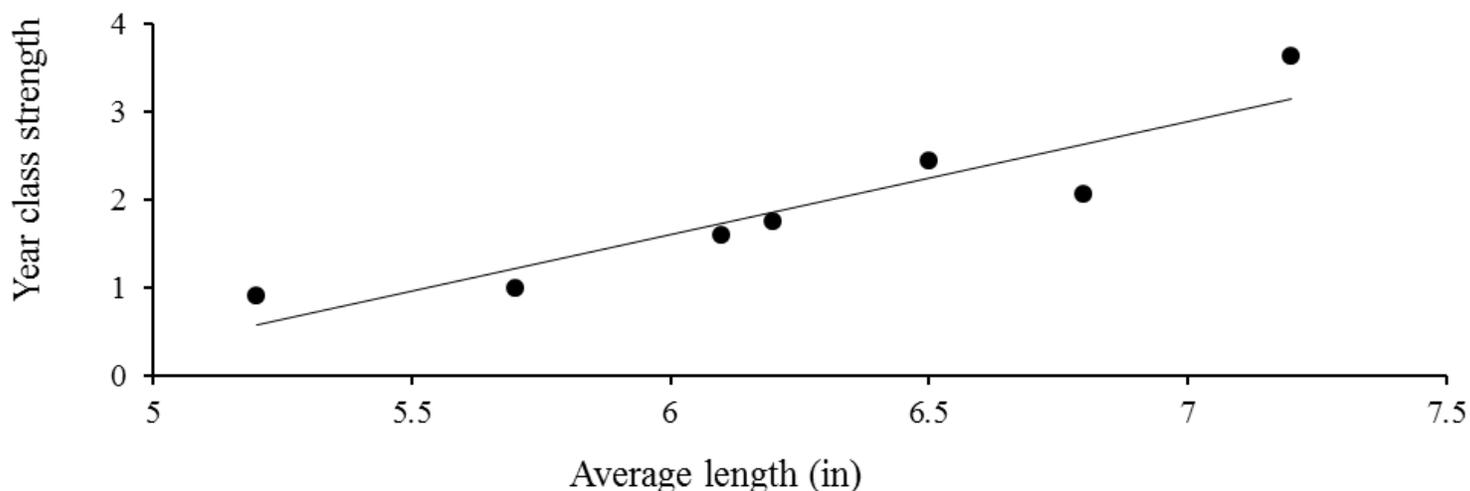


Figure 3. The average length (inches) of young-of-the-year Walleye sampled in mid-September and the resulting year class strength (relative abundance of age-3 Walleyes) at Leech Lake, 2005-2011. Age-3 Walleyes are approximately 15 inches by mid-September.

(DNR Report continued on page 4)

(DNR Report continued from page 3)

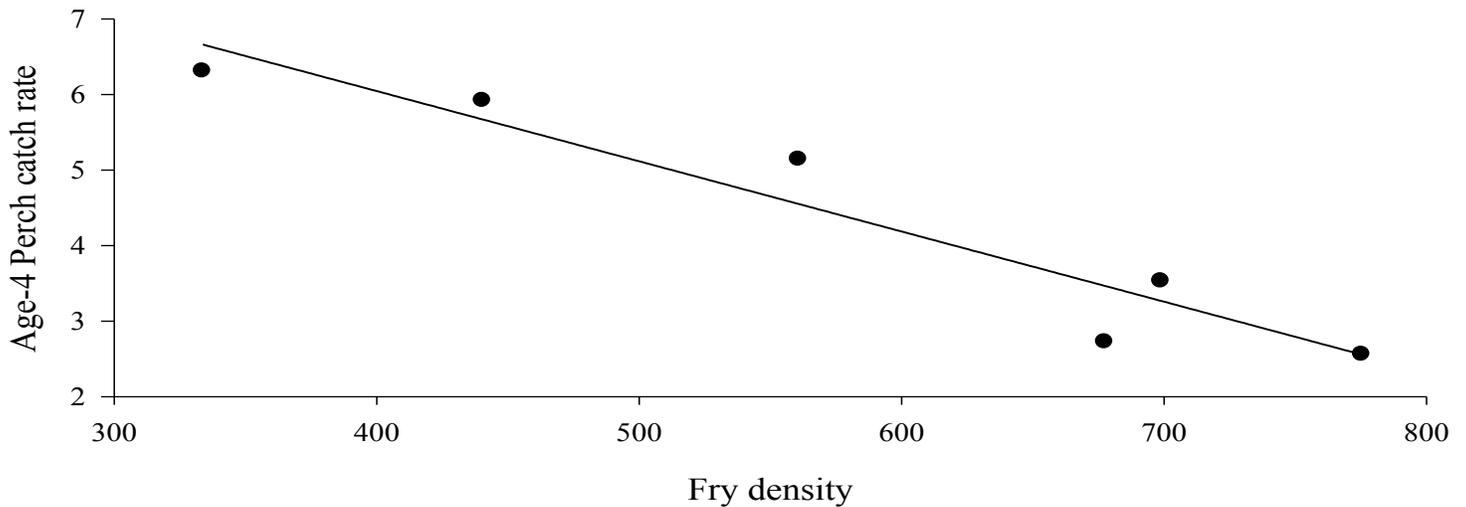


Figure 4. Walleye fry density (fry/littoral acre, i.e. depths ≤15 feet) and the resulting number of Perch from the same year-class that were sampled with gill nets at age-4. Age-4 Perch are approximately 7 inches by mid-September.

2015 FISHING OUTLOOK

- Another good Walleye fishing season is expected on Leech Lake. At the beginning of the 2015 fishing season, Walleye produced in 2011 will be 15-17” long, the 2012 year class will be 13-15” long, and the 2013 fish will be 10-13” long. With the current regulation (20-26 inch Protected Slot), approximately 20% of the Walleye caught by anglers will be protected (Fig. 5).

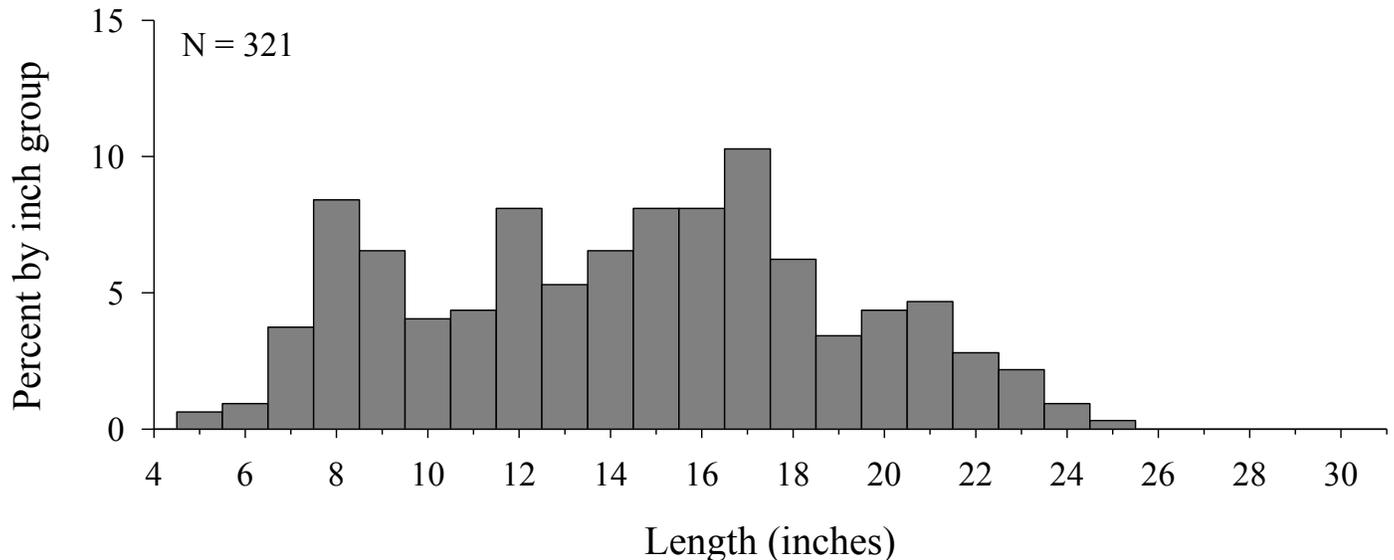


Figure 5. Length-frequency distribution of Walleye sampled with gillnets in Leech Lake, 2014.

(DNR Report continued on page 5)

(DNR Report continued from page 4)

2016-2020 FISHERIES MANAGEMENT PLANNING PROCESS

- A new Leech Lake Fisheries Input Group (LLFIG) was formed in February 2015. The purpose of the LLFIG is to provide input to the DNR for updating the Leech Lake Fisheries Management Plan for the next five years (2016-2020).
- Eight organizations are represented on the LLFIG: Leech Lake Association, Leech Lake Fishing Task Force, City of Walker, Leech Lake Area Watershed Foundation, Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe, Statewide Walleye Input Group, Statewide Northern Pike and Muskellunge Input Group, and the Statewide Bass Input Group
- In addition, eight additional members were selected from an on-line application process. Seats include two resort owners, two local business owners, a local guide, local angler, statewide angler, and a Fisheries professor from Bemidji State University.
- Six meetings were scheduled monthly from March through August, 2015
- Meeting topics include: (1) Background of previous plan, data collection, analysis, and interpretation, (2) Walleye and Perch management, (3) Walleye stocking, cormorant management, gamefish regulations, (4) management of other gamefish, (5) habitat and aquatic invasive species, and (6) final review of proposed 2016-2020 Fisheries Management Plan
- There will be a 30-day public comment period during early fall, 2015.
- The 2016-2020 Fisheries Management Plan will be finalized shortly thereafter.
- The 2016-2020 Fisheries Input Group will meet annually each spring to review the previous year's results.

2015 SURVEY PLANS

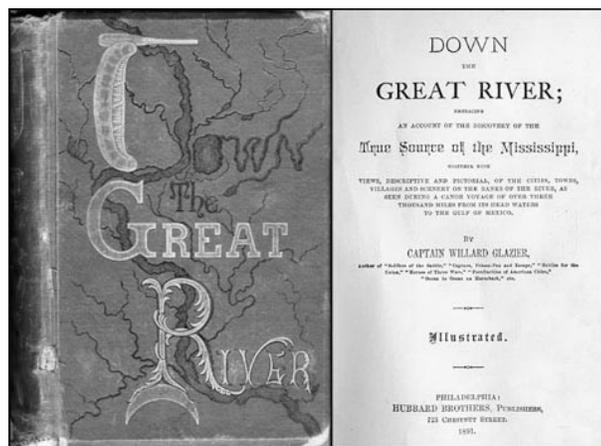
- A spring assessment will be conducted for bass, bluegill, and crappie via electrofishing in May. Juvenile walleye and perch will be sampled seining in July, trawling in August, and electrofishing in September. Adult gamefish will be sampled with gillnets in September. Zooplankton will be sampled monthly from May through October. Water quality samples will be collected in July, and water temperatures are monitored hourly throughout the year.
- If you would like to volunteer this year to assist with any of the assessments just described, please contact: Matt Ward (matt.ward@state.mn.us) Leech Lake Fisheries Biologist at 218-547-1683.
- Additional information including various past Leech Lake reports are available on our website at: <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/areas/fisheries/walker/index.html>



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 (IN THE WORDS OF CAPTAIN GLAZIER)

All were up and going at daylight. The Lagards hurried off to the potato field, while George and Chenowagesic made a rousing fire in which to roast the potatoes. Having some tobacco, we placed a small quantity in a conspicuous place in the wigwam, concluding that when the strolling Chippewa occupants should return they would find acceptable payment for the potatoes confiscated by their white brothers.

As soon as breakfast was over, tents were struck, blankets rolled, and by six o'clock we were again in the canoes pulling vigorously for Lake Winnibegoshish, our next destination. The river looked very beautiful that morning, rippling over its gravelly bed and flecked with the cool shadows of bluffs and trees, its surface varied now and then by small rapids. Further along the rapids ceased and the river flowed between waving meadows of wild rice.



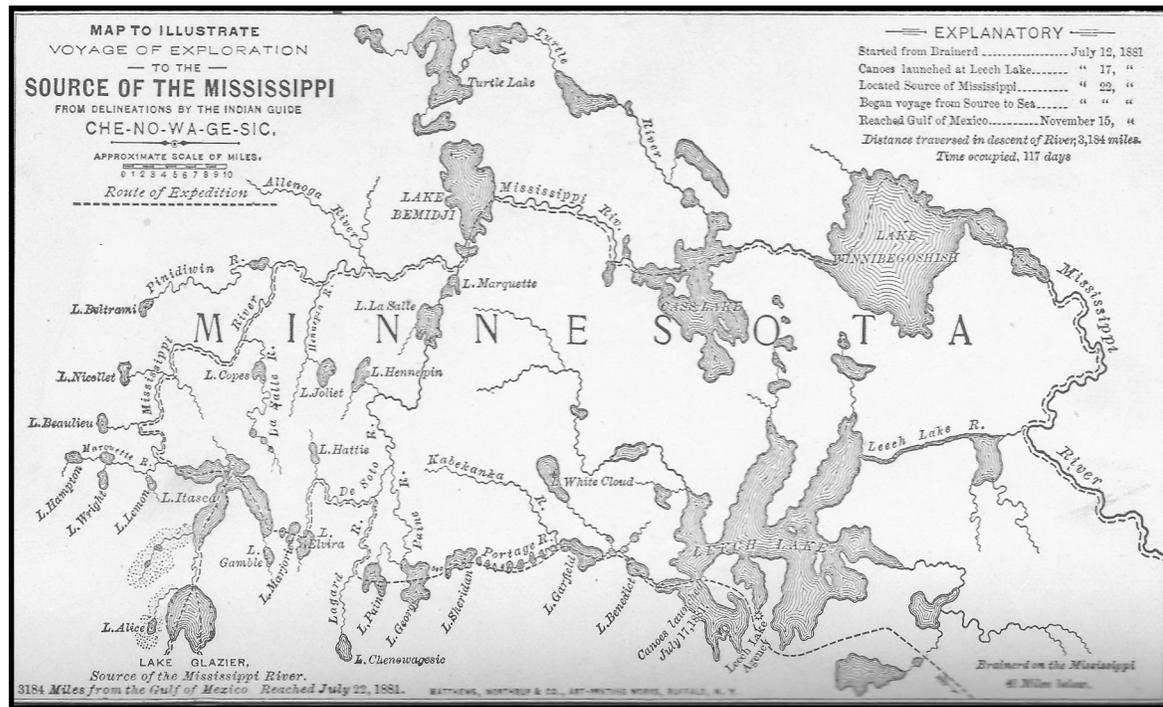
We met several Indians in canoes at nine o'clock. Halted and parleyed with them for dried fish, but failed to accomplish anything, as they barely had enough for their own use. Tempted them with tobacco but they would not part with their fish. Later in the forenoon we disembarked and ascended the bank of the river, where we found a squaw and her children at work drying berries. Having some dried venison at her wigwam nearby, she generously divided with us, receiving money in payment. Hurried back to our canoes and continued the descent of the river, eating venison and berries as we urged our little fleet toward Winnebegoshish, the largest and grandest of all the lakes of the Great River.

Our arrival was at a time when a strong south wind blew its waters into white-capped waves, and it was at the imminent risk of swamping that the canoes were forced along the western shore and into the little bay upon which the Indian village stands. I shall not soon forget

(Leech Lake in Antiquity continued on page 7)

(Leech Lake in Antiquity continued from page 6)

1880'S MAP: HEADWATERS OF THE MISSISSIPPI



the peculiar sensations experienced when I realized that I was in a frail canoe in a heavy sea two or three miles from land. I would have given a good deal at this time

For nearly two hours we pulled right lustily for our destination, sometimes riding upon the topmost waves, and again struggling in the trough of the sea.

if I could have suddenly placed my feet upon a firm foundation.

Although my proposition to cross the lake was stoutly opposed by the guides there seemed to be no alternative, as we were again without food and felt sure that something of an eatable character could be secured at the Chippewa village on the opposite side of the lake. For nearly two hours we pulled right lustily for our destination, sometimes riding upon the topmost waves, and

again struggling in the trough of the sea. I felt several times that to get out of such a fix I would willingly fast six months. I would have given every dollar I had in the world to have been safely landed anywhere on the face of the earth. Finding that my pilot coveted such a hat as his captain wore, I promised to keep him well supplied with hats for some years to come if he landed me safely in the village towards which we were paddling. Our canoes soon became detached by ponderous waves which tossed us about quite at their pleasure, and no opportunity was found to discuss the situation; but I sincerely wished that all birch canoes had been consigned to perdition before we saw Winnibegoshish. We struck the beach an three o'clock in the afternoon, heartily glad that we stood once more on terra firma.

On disembarking we were very cordially received by a large number of Chippewas, headed by Kitchinodin, an Indian missionary, who welcomed us to their village, the missionary extending to me the courtesy of a bed in his cabin, and suggesting a favorable place for pitching the tents of my companions, These



(Leech Lake in Antiquity continued on page 8)

(Leech Lake in Antiquity continued from page 7)

were the first civilities shown us in the descent of the Mississippi, and the three days that we were wind-bound at their Chippewa village gave me an excellent opportunity for studying Indian character and habits. When told that we had been many days without regular food, Kichinodin promptly supplied us with such meat and vegetables as he could procure, and insisted that I should feel at home in his cabin.

Having been duly installed as the guest of Kitchinodin, I looked forward with considerable interest to my dinner, which I soon discovered was in the course of preparation. When everything was ready, Kichinodin took me by the hand and led me into his cabin and placed me by the side of a plain wooden table opposite his wife. He seated himself at the end of the table, and in serving the few simple dishes which constituted our repast was assisted by a young Indian girl who carried a juvenile Kichinodin in one arm and waited upon the table with the other. Dinner consisted of dried fish, potatoes, green corn, and red raspberries, which are found in abundance wherever there is a clearing in the neighborhood of the lake. Before proceeding with dinner, my host indicated, by raising his right hand and bowing his

Dinner consisted of dried fish, potatoes, green corn, and red raspberries, which are found in abundance wherever there is a clearing in the neighborhood of the lake.

head that he wished to ask a blessing. This was invoked in the Ojibway dialect, and with all the fervor of a true Christian.

Dinner being over, Kitchinodin invited me to walk with him through the village, after which we sat down in the shade of his cabin and looked out upon the lake.

To be continued...



US Army Corps of Engineers



As of June 1, 2015, the water level on Leech Lake is 1294.87 feet and steady. The current discharge from the dam is approximately 200 cubic feet per second (cfs). The outflow will be increased this coming week (after June 1). The narrow desirable summer range is 1294.50 to 1294.90. All elevations are referenced in 1929 NGVD.

After an abnormally dry winter and spring, plentiful precipitation occurred during May. Project personnel recorded 6.35 inches of precipitation for the period of May 1 through May 28.

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. Last winter Leech Lake was drawn down to make room for spring run off and flood water storage. Winter conditions are moni-

(US Army Corps of Engineers continued on page 9)

(US Army Corps of Engineers continued from page 8)

tored throughout the watershed. Data includes snow depth, water content, frost depths, ice thickness, daily snow fall amounts with moisture content, ground water conditions prior to freeze-up, and observations of conditions between survey sites for uniformity. All that data is then considered in regards to historical and predicted climatological data. If too much drawdown is performed without enough moisture content within the watershed; Leech would not attain its minimum desirable summer level. Conversely, not enough drawdown would cause high water. After our unusually dry winter and spring, the May rains were timely in restoring Leech Lake to its desired summer levels.

WHAT DOES ALL THIS MEAN?

Sometimes the climate simply exceeds the operating ability of the dam and downstream river capacity causing Leech Lake to suffer from above or below levels of the desirable summer range. Nature ultimately still has control; we can only manipulate it a little bit and so far in 2015 we've received enough precipitation to give us some control.

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

MORE INFORMATION

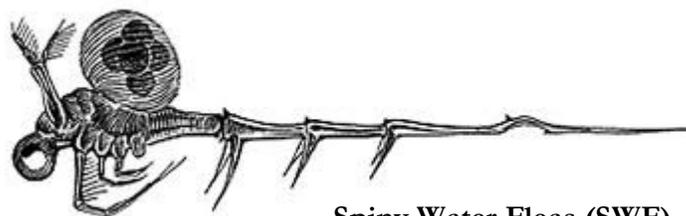
You can visit the Corps of Engineers Water Control, Web site at <http://www.mvp-wc.usace.army.mil> for more information on the regulation of Leech Lake Reservoir.

A SUMMARY OF AIS PREVENTION ACTIONS ON LEECH

Things have been happening on several fronts in hopes of slowing the spread aquatic invasive species (AIS), particularly zebra mussels (ZM) and spiny water fleas (SWF). These two species are known to become extremely abun-



Zebra Mussels (ZM)



Spiny Water Fleas (SWF)

dant in just a few years in lakes they invade and to consume large proportions of the phytoplankton and zooplankton that make up the base of the food pyramid supporting most fish populations in those lakes, including game fish. Unfortunately, Leech Lake is now pretty much surrounded by lakes that have become infested with one or both of these organisms, but efforts have likewise intensified and resources increased on many organizational levels to keep them out of Leech.

An initial step in these activities was the development in 2013 of a comprehensive Cass County AIS Management Plan. This plan helped Cass County qualify in 2014 to receive \$500,000 from the state as its share of a \$10 million legislative grant to counties for work on AIS prevention objectives. Expenditure of these funds is being administered through the Cass County Soil and Water Conservation District. The county AIS program for inspection of boats and trailers at launch ramps initially consisted of individual lake associations paying for at least part of the cost of inspection hours on those lakes. However, starting last year, funds from the legislative AIS grant to the county are now covering the cost of most of these inspections. For 2015 the county program will entail 62 days of inspections on 24 lakes by 27 Level 1 or Level 2 inspectors under the supervision of newly-hired, full-time Cass County AIS Coordinator Rima Smith-Keprios. Leech Lake Association members have been involved in the development of the Cass County AIS Management Plan, been a party to the ongoing Cass County AIS

A Summary of AIS Prevention Actions on Leech (continued on page 10)

A Summary of AIS Prevention Actions on Leech (continued from page 9)

There will be two sizable walleye tournaments early this summer on Leech, both drawing boats from areas known to have lakes or streams containing ZM's and SWF's: the Leech lake Walleye Tournament on 5/30-31 with 155 boats, and the Cabela's National Walleye Tour on 6/13-14 with 125 boats. As part of an effort to reduce AIS concerns, the sponsors of both tournaments will require inspection and, if necessary, cleaning of boats coming from infested or possibly infested waters. Personnel and sites for these actions will be provided largely by Cass Co. AIS program employees and local businesses (e. g. Northern Lights Casino, Walker Marine). A form indicating compliance with this requirement must be signed and submitted to the sponsors in order for anglers to compete. We strongly encourage sponsors of all other tournaments on Leech, including the many smaller ones, to employ equally strong measures to check and clean boats coming here for fishing tournaments. More information on these participation requirements can be obtained from the tournament web sites or steering committee members.

We strongly encourage sponsors of all other tournaments on Leech, including the many smaller ones, to employ equally strong measures to check and clean boats coming here for fishing tournaments.

Protection of the Boy River lake chain from infestation by zebra mussels was given a high priority in the Cass County AIS Management Plan. This system consists of about 20 interconnected large to medium sized lakes, starting at Ten Mile and ending at Leech. Dr. Patrick Welle of Bemidji State Univ. is conducting a project funded through the legislative grant money that will involve reaching out to resort owners and guides, a total of 71 in the Boy River chain, to enhance and coordinate actions to prevent the spread of AIS. Dr. Welle will be assisted by an advisory team of ACCL, LLA, and 4 re-



sort owner representatives, two of the latter from Leech. In addition to conducting interviews on attitudes of owners and guests, opinions on support being provided by various agencies, and prevention techniques being employed, an extensive array of educational and prevention-promotion materials will be distributed. Another project on the Boy River chain will investigate the currently-existing or baseline biota and water quality conditions in the river. The study should also provide information on the suitability of this system for habitation by ZM and SWF.

While measures are being employed by several organizations to prevent watercraft and other structures from carrying AIS to uninfested waters, most often it will be solely up to the individuals who are moving these potential carriers from one waterbody to another who will have to do this. There just aren't enough resources available for it to always be someone else's job. Please do your part.

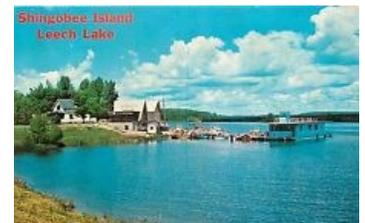
John Eaton, Board Member

DNR RETURNS FISHING PIER TO SHINGOBEE ISLAND

During the summer of 2013 DNR Parks & Trails removed the 20-year-old fishing pier from Shingobee Island. The pier was nearing its end of life, and its access path did not meet requirements of the American with Disabilities Act. The DNR removed the pier while updating the Shingobee Island boat access, and – a big surprise to us – had no plans to replace it.



Once we discovered that the pier would not be replaced, the Leech Lake Association began writing letters to the DNR asking that they reconsider their decision. Dave Laursen, Secretary/Treasurer of the Leech Lake Association, who was also recently elected to the Shingobee Township Board of Supervisors, brought the matter to the attention of the Shingobee Township Board, which



DNR Returns Fishing Pier To Shingobee Island (continued on page 11)

DNR Returns Fishing Pier To Shingobee Island (continued from page 10)

also began corresponding with the DNR in regard to replacing this popular amenity -- particularly now that Shingobee Island had been upgraded with a new boat access, parking area, and bike trail. The DNR had been considering other sites for a fishing pier, but it seemed quite obvious to us local residents that Shingobee Island was a superior site.

In April of 2014, Cass County became involved when Commissioner Jim Dowson arranged a meeting between stakeholders regarding the fishing pier. At this meeting The DNR agreed to provide Shingobee Island with a new pier if the DNR did not have to be responsible for building or financing an ADA compatible ramp.

At its May 2014 meeting, the Shingobee Township Board agreed to pay for a ramp design and hired Northern Engineering & Consulting to do the work. In July 2014, the Jarman Trust, through the Walker Area Foundation, offered to contribute \$15,000 toward construction of the ramp to the pier. On May 27 of this



year the new fishing pier was delivered to Shingobee Island.

This was a long process, with a lot of people involved in making it happen. The Leech Lake Association is very grateful to Shingobee Township for driving the final design and construction of the access ramp, and also to Steve Bilben, whose experience and contacts acquired over many years building bike trails was invaluable in restoring the fishing pier to its 20 year-old home on Shingobee Island.

DNR PROPOSING NEW PIKE REGULATIONS

The Department of Natural Resources is proposing new pike regulations for Minnesota which would allow significantly more liberal bag limits. In the North Central Zone, which includes Leech Lake, the DNR is proposing up to a 10-fish bag limit and a 22-26 protected slot, two of which could be over 26 inches. The details of this proposal, which includes a video and PowerPoint presentation, can be seen on the DNR website at

<http://dnr.state.mn.us/pike/index.html>.

COLONIAL WATERBIRD AND CORMORANT REPORT



Colonial Waterbirds --The colonial waterbirds start to return to Leech Lake about the time of ice out and they commence nesting shortly thereafter. With the exception of cormorants we have not conducted counts yet, but it appears that numbers will be similar to recent years. Common terns are the last to start nesting, and typically they have a difficult time securing good nest sites. The Leech Lake Band has secured funding from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service to conduct some shoreline stabilization work on the islands to provide common terns a more reliable nest site. This project is slated to start the winter of 2015-2016.



Cormorant Conflict Management -- Early counts of cormorants indicate that the overall population is down a bit from last year and as of late May we have removed about 850 birds. We have also started to do some testing of artificial cormorant eggs as a way of reducing reproduction and over the long term the overall population on the lake. As of this time we do not know if this technique will be successful as we are very early in the testing phase.

Steve Mortonsen

ONIGUM ROAD OSPREY NEST UPDATE

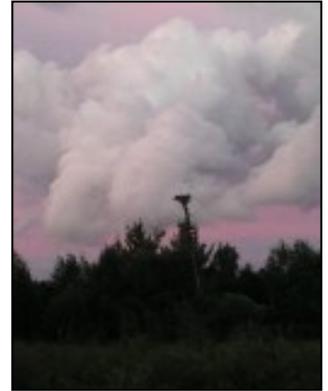
A 30 year-old Osprey nest destroyed by high winds the summer of 2014 killing the two young of the year Osprey was successfully re-established March 11th on the Onigum Road next to the old nest site.

Thanks to the combined efforts of Lake Country Power, the Leech Lake Reservation Division of Resource Management, the Leech Lake Association and Agency Bay Association the new nest is now home to a pair of Osprey.

Steve Mortensen of the Leech Lake Reservation Division of Resource Management and a member of the Leech Lake Association donated the new platform and the bird perch, while the donation of the pole and its installation was done through Lake Country Power.

Thanks to the efforts of Lake Country Power supervisors Jim Hill and Jim Wimmer along with lineman Paul, Joel and Shannon and land owner Greg McComas the new nest will be there for thousands to enjoy for many years to come.

Stop on out and have a look as Mom is currently on the nest full time. Take some pictures the birds seem to enjoy it.



LEECH LAKE 2014 WATERCRAFT INSPECTION RESULTS

The Cass County Soil and Water Conservation District received an AIS prevention grant in April 2014 for watercraft inspection time on Leech Lake during the 2014 boating season. The contract dates were April 28 through September 15 of 2014. Three DNR watercraft inspectors were hired in Cass County and were assigned to work at Leech Lake as part of their duties. Inspectors were scheduled during peak times as much as possible.



The result of these inspections are described below.

The MN DNR spent 1833.75 hours at various accesses on Leech Lake, completing 4755 watercraft inspections (see table below). This yielded an average of 2.59 inspections per hour throughout the season. The month of May had the highest rate of inspections/hour (4.19) while the month of August had the lowest (1.70). Inspectors inspected 2477 watercraft entering Leech Lake and 2278 watercraft exiting the lake. Of the entering watercraft inspected, 51 (2%) arrived at the access with a drain plug installed. A total of 271 watercraft inspected had last used a waterbody that is designated as infested with zebra mussels. Of those, 64 (23%) were from Lake Winnebigoishish, 49 (18%) were from Lake Mille Lacs, and 37 (14%) were from Cass Lake. Also, 525 boats came from out of state with 154 (29%) coming from Iowa.

During the inspection process inspectors look for plants, water, mud, zebra mussels, and any other items that could pose a threat to the waters of Minnesota. Of the 2477 entering boats inspected, only 24 (1%) were found to have a threat in, or on, their watercraft. Twenty of these items were plants, which can pose a significant risk as invasive plants can be spread by fragments, but also because zebra mussels can be attached to plants. It isn't uncommon for exiting boats to have plants attached to the boat or trailer. This highlights the need for continued education to clean boats prior to leaving any public water access.

Also, during the inspections, watercraft users were asked to voluntarily disclose the last water body visited, as well as the location of the next planned trip. This information can be used in the future to gauge potential risks if multiple boaters report zebra mussel infested waters as their last visited lake.

Access	Number Inspection Hours	Boats Entering	Boats Leaving
Shingobee	81	105	63
Federal Dam	279.5	370	358
Walker	407.75	668	637
Stony Point	217.75	242	235
Ericksons Landing	682.5	979	874
Sugar Point	118.5	80	79
Sucker Bay	41.75	33	10
Totals:	1833.75	2477	2278

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION RESULTS AT 7 LEECH LAKE ACCESSES

Data taken from "2014 Summary Report of Watercraft Inspection Results at Leech Lake," by Mike Bolinski, Regional Watercraft Inspection Supervisor, MN DNR Region 1, Ecological and Water Resources, January 16, 2015

DNR GENERAL PERMIT MAY HELP EXPEDITE STATEWIDE FLOOD REPAIRS



Private landowners, agencies, and political subdivisions throughout the state impacted by flooding who want to repair damaged shorelines, bridges, culverts, roadways, structures, stream channels and other facilities to pre-flood condition may be eligible to quickly acquire the necessary DNR permit by applying online at the Minnesota permitting and reporting system (MPARS) website at www.mndnr.gov/mpars [<http://www.mndnr.gov/mpars>].

When applying online through MPARS, the authorization may be obtained in just days. People without Internet access can obtain a paper permit application from a local DNR or county zoning office.

Before beginning repairs, people working at or below the high water level on lakes, wetlands, and streams need to apply for the permit, pay a small fee (usually \$100), and receive authorization. For repairs above the high water level, contact the local governmental unit to obtain permission.

In-kind replacement (i.e. same kind, size and dimension) may be authorized by this permit. Deviations from in-kind replacement can be authorized if specifically identified in the permit authorization.

Expedited authorization is not available for projects that seek approval for unauthorized construction already started or completed, channelize or realign a stream, take place in or impact a designated trout stream, enlarge a drainage ditch, block, divert or appropriate stream water, alter a water level control structure, convert a bridge crossing to a culvert crossing or excavate fill from public waters without consultation and approval of the DNR.

To use MPARS:

- * Go to the MPARS website www.mndnr.gov/MPARS [<http://www.mndnr.gov/MPARS>].
- * Click the "Open MPARS" button.
- * Create an account.
- * Complete the permit application.
- * Pay the fee online for permit.



For questions about the flood repair general permit, contact the county DNR hydrologist. Contact information is at http://files.dnr.state.mn.us/waters/area_hydros.pdf.

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Leech Lake Association

**Check out our
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Leech Lake Association
P.O. Box 1613
Walker, MN 56484

Check Us Out At: <http://www.leechlakeassociation.com/>

<http://www.leechlakeassociation.com/>

We are so pleased to offer you this enhanced website where we are able to share our mission, committee reports, area calendar of events, current news, membership information, our history, photo's, area maps, links, meeting minutes, feedback and contact information. In the future we will be adding fishing reports and other valuable area information.



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/>



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Leech Lake

ASSOCIATION INC

Reminder!

MEMBERSHIP DUES REMINDER:

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 '15' beside your name on the mailing label means that your membership is up to date through July 2015. Those with an 12, 13 or 14 beside your name means your membership has expired. Those with expired memberships will receive a self-addressed envelope and renewal form along with this newsletter. We sincerely 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 ASSOCIATION SPONSORS

We are very grateful to all those who have chosen to become or remain sponsors of the Leech Lake Association (\$100 and above). Your generous donations, plus the annual dues of all our members, allow us to continue our mission of protecting Leech Lake and environs. A special thank you to:

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



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