



SPRING IS SPROUTING AND SUMMER IS ALREADY SMILING!

June 2020



*"Water is the most critical resource issue of our lifetime and our children's lifetime.
The health of our waters is the principal measure of how we live on the land."
~ Luna Leopold ~*

WELCOME SPRING AND SUMMER!

Message from MWLA President Greg Holt

Trees are budding, birds are singing, and we are again able to experience familiar up north warm weather activities that we enjoy and that also help to ground us, even in unsettling times. Whether it is being on the water, relaxing on the shore, biking the paths, walking the woods, watching children at play or meeting with friends we are happy to return to activities that bring us pleasure, in part, due to their familiarity.

Yet the way in which we enjoy our activities and how we get together with others likely will be different this year. The nearly ever-present news of COVID-19 and the way we have altered our behavior over the past few months has tuned us into the understanding that some things for now have changed.

The Board of Directors of our Association has already modified some summer plans and more changes are likely. Due to social distancing concerns the Board reluctantly made the decision not to hold the popular annual July 4th Trout Pond. We look forward to the return of the Trout Pond in 2021. The MWLA was also happily anticipating beginning free monthly pontoon rides skippered by MWLA Vice President Dennis Wilm. For now, those plans are unfortunately on hold. Please continue to check our website and future newsletters and Chamber of Commerce communications to keep yourself up to date on other possible modifications to planned activities.

But the woods and the waters have not changed. They continue to be here to enrich our lives and to nourish us. And they continue in turn to provide opportunities for us to be stewards of these amazing resources. Shoreline monitoring remains critically vital in controlling aquatic invasive species and our waters benefit from our individual and collective efforts. The Clean Boats Clean Waters Program, water clarity and chemistry monitoring, fish habitat enhancement, Purple Loosestrife control, and maintaining healthy shorelines are activities we can involve ourselves in while promoting our environment and our community. Be safe, enjoy, and continue to maintain, protect, and enhance the waters and our Northwoods area.

THANK YOU MWLA MEMBERS

Being a member of the Manitowish Waters Lakes Association communicates to everyone that you love and care for the quality of the water in our lakes, rivers, and streams. Thank you for your membership and for all the volunteering that you do to help protect our waters. We can all pitch in to monitor for invasive species, protect our shorelines, be considerate with shoreline lighting, become aware of boating safety measures, involve yourself in citizen science efforts, plant native species, and stop the use of pesticides and fertilizers that eventually end up in the water.

Perhaps most important of all is spreading the word to your friends, family, and neighbors about how they can become members and all the activities in which they can become involved. Make it your personal goal to convince at least one person to join the MWLA this year. Make copies of the membership form at the end of this newsletter and give them to friends to fill out and send in!

The MWLA invites volunteers to help with other activities such as manning our July 4th booth, helping with the annual meeting, and Cran-a-rama. **The status of COVID-19 will play a huge part in any decisions made about whether these events will take place this year. We will keep you informed through our email alerts, Facebook page, newsletters, and website.**

Memberships can be renewed by filling out and sending in the renewal membership form included in this newsletter. Annual dues are \$25.00 from June 1 to May 31 of the following year. When filling out your renewal form, please read the list of the many ways you can help, and check those which you are most passionate about. With your generous donation of time and money, we can accomplish our mission to “Maintain, protect and enhance the quality of the Manitowish Waters Chain of Lakes and other Township waters”. The money from memberships and other donations is used for a variety of great causes such as AIS projects, the restoration of Dead Pike Lake, Skiing Skeeters for AIS and water safety announcements, NLES Outdoor Education Field trips, Healthy Lakes grants (shoreline restoration and fish habitat), and stocking the July 4th Trout Pond.

2020 MWLA ANNUAL MEETING

Planning for our 28th Annual Meeting continues to be an ongoing process as we consider all the unknowns regarding COVID-19. The MWLA board will decide at the June 15 board meeting whether to hold our Annual Meeting at the **North Lakeland Discovery Center on Saturday, July 25, from 9:00 a.m. to noon.** **For now, please save the date on your calendar.** If the decision is made to have our annual meeting this summer, we have already decided that we will **not** be including a raffle.

The MWLA asks that you please support our local businesses during this difficult time. This is a great way to thank them for generously donating to our past annual meeting raffles, food, and beverages.

AIS NEWS

by Emily Heald, Water Program Coordinator at the Discovery Center, water@discoverycenter.net (715)543-2085

Summer Field Season Update from the Discovery Center

Due to the ongoing effect of the COVID-19 virus on the safe and ethical conduct of NLDC programming for both staff and the community, the NLDC Executive Committee and Executive Director, with guidance from the Vilas County Health Department, have made the difficult decision to allow for only one seasonal Water Program staff this summer to assist me. Please know this was a very difficult decision in an unprecedented time. Because the NLDC Water Program normally functions with 3 interns plus me during the summers, and also the complications of the virus, you can easily see that our usual programming will need to be adjusted. We ask for your patience and understanding during this time, as we are working very hard to ensure our programs will be as successful as possible while working through these uncharted territories.

Work on the Manitowish Chain, and inflowing/outflowing rivers, will be a top priority for our summer season due to the continued presence of curly-leaf pondweed (CLP) and purple loosestrife (PL). CLP continues to grow in several locations on the Chain – northern Rest Lake, the Spider-Island Channel, Island Lake, Rice Creek, Stone Lake, and, most recently, Fawn Lake (discovered by Discovery Center staff in 2017).

CLP is a difficult invasive species to control due to its means of reproduction – turions. Turions are small reproductive buds that form along the stem of the plant and fall off around July 4th. Many of these turions sink to the bottom right away, but some also float with the currents to different areas. *Turions are viable for over seven years.* So, if we find a patch of CLP, we can be pretty darn sure there is a seed bank of turions below it! This is why CLP treatment takes multiple, vigilant years of attention. This year is no exception!

We will also continue our purple loosestrife work – monitoring, clipping flower heads, and releasing beetles which eat only purple loosestrife.

Due to the virus, our normal educational programming is being modified and updated monthly. Please check our website www.DiscoveryCenter.net, or simply email or call me, and I can let you know the status of AIS identification trainings. Attending one of these trainings is one of the best ways to help out with AIS! You will also still be able to report any potential AIS sightings to me. Make sure to grab a sample (put it in a container with a little water) and take detailed notes (or ideally a GPS coordinate) on where you found it. Starting May 27, I will have a cooler located outside the Discovery Center office for folks to drop off suspect samples in a no-contact method.

Please continue to keep track of your volunteer monitoring hours and turn them into me. Volunteer hours are required for the grants that fund our efforts. Active volunteers are KEY to the long-term health of our waters. Remember that once you know what to look for, ANY time on the water keeping your eyes open counts as monitoring – cruising around on the pontoon, fishing, walking the shoreline, etc. Forms are available at the NLDC or online: <https://discoverycenter.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/MW-Volunteer-Form-2018.pdf>



Call for Volunteers: Clean Boats, Clean Waters

Due to the lower number of NLDC interns this year, we will have a decreased presence at Rest and Clear Lake boat landings. In a normal year, we would complete 200 hours of Clean Boats, Clean Waters (CBCW) surveys between the two lakes. The CBCW program is where volunteers or paid staff are stationed at boat landings to inform boaters on best practices in regard to AIS. It is a very rewarding and educational program and has been shown to be truly effective in our efforts to stop the spread of AIS. If you are interested in volunteering for the program, all you need to do is attend a short training (we can do it online via Zoom or Skype) to learn the in's and out's! Your volunteerism would be greatly appreciated by ALL those who utilize our waters!

Online Learning Opportunities

Interested in learning more about the natural world around you? Looking to impress your friends and family with your vast knowledge of topics such as lakes, old growth forests, and bears? Head on over to the Discovery Center website or Facebook to check out our new series, Discover at Home: <https://discoverycenter.net/discover-at-home/> During the closures we were posting two free educational videos each week!

We are also offering fee-based programs to those who want a little more in-depth knowledge on specific subjects. You can learn about that program, Discover on Demand, here: <https://discoverycenter.net/discover-on-demand/>

Water Program Assistant: Jarod Scheff

Hello, my name is Jarod Scheff, and this will be my second summer at the Discovery Center. Last year I interned with Emily, and I am very excited to be back this summer! I just wrapped up my senior year at Denison University in Ohio, where I majored in Biology and played football. In my free time, I enjoy fishing and being active in any way possible. After this summer, I hope to work on the East Coast, helping to improve the wetlands out there. I look forward to another fun-filled summer in the Northwoods!



WATER SAFETY PATROL

by Dan Cardinal, IOC

I hope everyone had a safe and healthy winter. With the COVID-19 virus out there, to date it has had little impact on the Manitowish Waters area. But... It appears that the water activity will increase this summer as whole families will be out enjoying what the Manitowish Chain offers due to restrictions of other activities.

This year your boat patrol has two new faces. We are fortunate Leah is back with us, but she also has a full-time job and her availability is limited. The Town was fortunate to add Phil Horter to our team. An experienced officer from southern Wisconsin who is currently working boat patrol on Pewaukee Lake down near Waukesha WI and wants to get to know the Manitowish Chain and our boaters better. Our second addition is Dan Perry. Dan worked for the DNR as a ranger in the Northern Highland American Legion State forest for almost 20 years. Both his law-enforcement experience and administrative skill will be greatly appreciated. Your boat patrol team will be more available to meet and assist the needs of boaters.

Phil Horter



Leah Alexander



Dan Perry



While there have been little or no boating law changes this year, your Chain has experienced an increasing number of wake-surfing activities behind the larger boats. This is a permitted activity, but I need to remind the operators, as well as all boaters, that they are responsible for that wake as it continues across the lake. In some cases, it may swamp smaller craft such as canoes, kayaks, sail boarders or paddle boats. This beautiful Chain was once a meandering series of rivers before the Rest Lake dam was built. The current shoreline is very fragile and vulnerable to boat wake erosion. Please keep this in mind when boating.

Your boat patrol team is looking forward to a fun, safe summer as in the past. The MWLA board of directors also encourages you to please boat courteously and be aware of the property of others: fishermen, those swimming, canoeing, paddle boarding and kayaking. **And remember to observe slow no wake rules within 100' of all shorelines and other boaters, in channels and anywhere buoys indicate a slow no wake area.** Please share this information with your neighbors, friends, and guests. Everyone is encouraged to read the Handbook of Wisconsin Boating Laws and Responsibilities to familiarize yourself with the rules and regulations. It is available at the MW Chamber of Commerce office located in the Community Center or by clicking this link <http://dnr.wi.gov/files/PDF/pubs/LE/LE0301.pdf>

TOWN WATER SAFETY COMMITTEE

By Greg Holt

Last September the Town Board established the Water Safety Committee to address safety concerns on the waters of our Township. Seven community members serve on the Committee chaired by Town Supervisor Bob Becker. That committee has met multiple times over the fall and winter and is continuing to make progress on addressing water safety issues that were voiced by community members at Town Board meetings earlier last fall.

You may have already seen two of the early outcomes of the work of the Water Safety Committee. In May the Chamber of Commerce included in its annual spring mailing a one page flyer from the Committee reminding everyone to "Enjoy Our Waters Safely" and to use common sense, courtesy and respect while enjoying being out on our waters. The flyer also included the reminder for boaters traveling faster than "slow, no wake" speeds to stay at least 100 feet from all shorelines, docks, rafts and occupied anchored boats, swimmers, skiers, tubers, and surfers. A reminder was also included for those using Personal Watercraft to stay 200 feet from shore when traveling at faster than "slow, no wake" speed.

You may also have seen and hopefully filled out the survey from the Water Safety Committee that was sent out in May through the Chamber of Commerce. The results of that survey will further guide the members of the Committee as they work to implement the Water Safety Committee Education and Strategy Plan.

Although the work of the Committee was interrupted by the pandemic and the Safer at Home orders by the State of Wisconsin the Committee has again resumed monthly meetings. There is much work yet to be done relative to education and enforcement issues, the use of media and outreach initiatives to increase awareness of safety issues, and recommendations to be made to the Town Board for improving safety on our waters. The Committee has already recommended to the Town the hiring of an additional Water Safety Patrol Officer and this summer Water Safety Patrol Officer Leah Alexander will be joined by the Patrol's newest member, Officer Phil Horter.

The theme of the Education and Strategy plan, "Enjoy Our Waters Safely" addresses the concerns community members raised last fall - for everyone to be able to enjoy activities out on the waters while practicing safe and courteous boating practices.

REST LAKE DAM

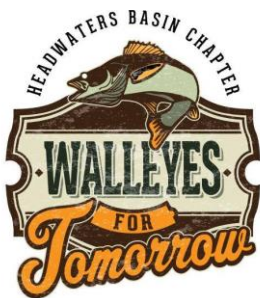
by Greg Holt

Regular, once to twice a year, consultation meetings regarding the Rest Lake Dam have been occurring over the last 4 years. The group that meets includes personnel from the DNR, Xcel Energy, members of the Chain Defense Fund (including John Hanson and Eleanor Butler), and folks representing down river interests (including Jody Miller, myself, and members of the Turtle Flambeau Flowage and Lake Trude Association).

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that guides the operation of the dam was signed in April of 2016 and initially covered the period from April 2016 through April 2020. On April 21st of this year there was a very brief meeting conducted over the phone. The result of that meeting was that the MOU would have a one year extension, signed by Xcel and the DNR. Also decided was that there would be further meetings over the next few months to review and to update the document. Group members were advised to submit information on areas of concern for consideration at the upcoming meetings. The assumption is that another MOU covering several more years will be agreed upon over the coming months.

WALLEYES FOR TOMORROW LOCAL CHAPTER

by Tom Kramer, Headwaters Basin Chapter WFT



Walleyes for Tomorrow was planning on putting their Walleye Wagon (portable fish hatchery) on Alder lake this spring but could not do it due to the Corona virus and accompanying social distancing. The DNR had given us permission to put it on Alder Lake because it is not currently a natural reproduction body of water and its walleye population has been declining for the last 5 years.

We net spawning walleyes and collect the eggs and milt to hatch in the portable hatchery. When the eggs hatch and the fry start to swim, we release the fry into the lake. The fry are released in the deeper part of the lake to feed on zoo- plankton until they are large enough to live in shallower water. When we release them in the middle of the lake, they have a better survival rate than when they swim out naturally because other fish can feed on them.

Walleyes for Tomorrow has portable hatcheries on lakes all over the state of Wisconsin and has had very good success with them, especially at Big Green Lake west of Fond Du Lac The walleye population has increased considerably due to the hatchery being on it.

Our plan is to place the hatchery on Alder Lake next year and beyond to get some natural reproduction back on the lake. I am asking that those who fish on Alder, to catch and release any walleyes to help the walleye reproduction get back to what it once was.

Effective May 2, the Department of Natural Resources has issued a change in walleye fishing regulations for the Manitowish Chain. **The new regulation is that only walleye 15-20 inches may be kept, except one walleye may be larger than 24 inches. The daily bag limit for the entire Chain will be three fish.** You can access the Wisconsin Fishing Regulations 2020-21 pamphlet by clicking this link <https://dnr.wi.gov/files/pdf/pubs/fh/fh0301.pdf> Thank you to everyone who supports Walleyes for Tomorrow, and please use nonlead tackle when you go fishing.

MANITOWISH WATERS GROUNDWATER INITIATIVE

by Greg Holt

The following is information on a *new* 2020 Manitowish Waters initiative to assess the groundwater and drinking water throughout our community.

Our MWLA mission is all about educating the public and protecting, promoting, and enhancing the waters of our area. While we are rightfully proud of the quality of our lakes and rivers, as an Association we have not paid any attention to the water flowing beneath us which provides our drinking water and helps feed our lakes and rivers.

Since February Gale Wolf, Emily Heald, John Hanson, and I have been meeting to discuss whether it is appropriate to conduct a coordinated assessment of our groundwater and drinking water through testing of private wells throughout our community. In 2019 the Lake Superior Research Institute of UW-Superior completed an assessment analyzing over 700 private wells in 11 northwestern Wisconsin counties. The results of that survey indicated multiple wells with abnormally high levels of metals and substances that can potentially cause health concerns.

The tentative plan is for civic-minded community members to voluntarily test their well water and conduct those tests on a single day in September. The samples would then together be transported for analysis to the lab at UW-Stevens Point which would provide interpretation of the results confidentially to those participating in the testing. In addition, they would also report the overall trends to the community later at an open meeting. While interpretation will be provided by specialists, no State or County regulatory agencies will be involved, and no action will be required as a result of submitting a sample.

During our May 18 board meeting, the board members thoughtfully considered this proposal and voted to include the involvement of the Association. This is an ambitious project that includes testing and education as two important components. It is a great opportunity for the MWLA to further promote the safety of our waters and our community, and for community members to provide a service by taking part in this initiative. It is a project that the full community will benefit from. More details will be available in future newsletters.

VCLRA SHORELAND OWNERS INITIATIVE GREET YOUR NEIGHBOR PROGRAM

Vilas County Lakes and Rivers Association (VCLRA) has launched an initiative to connect with new shoreland property owners. This is an effort to provide resources and contacts to encourage shoreland property owners to become exceptional stewards of their property by providing guidance in doing the right thing for themselves, their lake, and their neighbors.

Shoreline development is the #1 threat to lake health and water quality in Northern Wisconsin. The 19,000 Vilas County lakeshore properties turn over on average every 5 years. The goal of this initiative is to connect neighbors and provide helpful tools and practices to best protect lakes and keep them as healthy as the day you moved there. VCLRA wants to enlist participation of the lake associations to help personally greet new neighbors and provide materials such as welcome letters, business cards, brochures, and talking points, etc. for responsible lake shore living. One on one, neighbor to neighbor connections are most effective. We encourage Lake Associations to create a "Greet Your Neighbor" program of your own! The welcome wagon approach is a friendly way to share your lake community's vision of waterfront living, build a good relationship with newcomers, and invite them to join your lake organization.

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**Check out our website at [www.mwlakes.com](http://www.mwlakes.com) to access board meeting minutes, lakes-related articles, information on aquatic invasive species, past e-newsletters, and many other interesting topics.**



**[Like Us On Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/ManitowishWatersLakesAssociation)** or go to <https://www.facebook.com/ManitowishWatersLakesAssociation>

### **The MWLA Board of Directors appreciates your continued support.**

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**MWLA Membership Application/Renewal**

Annual Dues **\$25.00** (June 1 to May 31 of the following year)  
Make check payable to: Manitowish Waters Lakes Association or MWLA  
**Mail to: P.O. Box 286, Manitowish Waters, WI 54545**

**The Manitowish Waters Lakes Association is a 501(c)(3), not-for-profit organization.  
All donations to the MWLA are fully tax deductible as allowed by relevant law.**

**MWLA does not share its membership list with other organizations.**

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Lake/river you live on or are closest to if off-water \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Manitowish Waters Address \_\_\_\_\_

Indicate when mail is delivered to you in MW (from what month to what month):  
\_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

MW Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Primary Residence Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Please provide an email address so you can receive MWLA e-Alerts and e-Newsletters.

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_  
**(Please print clearly)**

With the awarding of the WDNR Grants, we are especially in need of members who are willing to help offset the in-kind hours required by the grants.

I am willing to volunteer some of my time to:

\_\_\_ monitoring AIS    \_\_\_ 4<sup>th</sup> of July    \_\_\_ Annual Meeting    \_\_\_ Cran-a-rama    \_\_\_ Mailings

If you are unable to volunteer the gift of time, we ask that you please consider making a monetary contribution.

I am including a donation for the following:

\_\_\_ Aquatic Invasive Species Education and Prevention

\_\_\_ Fish Habitat Project

\_\_\_ Annual Meeting Raffle

\_\_\_ Fish Stocking (Walleyes for Tomorrow - WFT)

\_\_\_ Miscellaneous