



The

# Loon Call



Newsletter of Pipe and North Pipe Lakes Protection and Rehabilitation District

SPRING 2012

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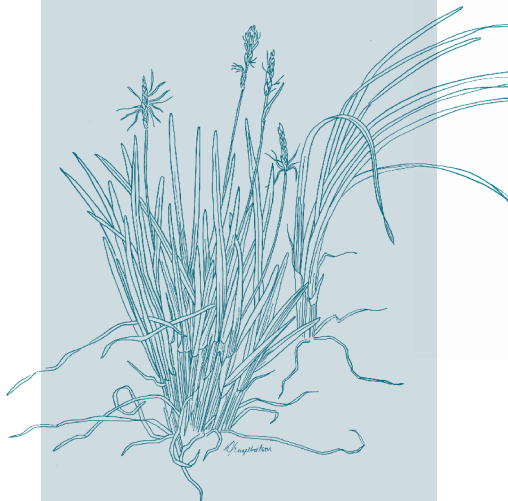
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## Retention basin suffers breach on March 14

The phosphorus retention basin installed in 2011 on the northeast end of North Pipe Lake worked for several days and then suffered a breach on March 14. It will be repaired when the soils around it have dried.

We have been monitoring the situation daily and have been working with the county engineer and Erickson Excavating. We can not repair the basin until the soil dries out, so it will be several weeks before we can start work. We have been assured that the road is not in danger, but Commissioner Dan Paulson is monitoring the condition of the basin and the road daily.

Polk County Land and Water Resources Department (LWRD) was made aware of the issue on March 15. Scott Geddes and Peter Dejardin were on site to inspect the damage. At that time, water was flowing on both sides of the outlet pipe, with the majority of it coming from a sizable hole on the north

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Left: March 12: Outlet pipe with water flowing out of the basin

Below: Outlet pipe on March 29.



“Like winds and sunsets, wild things were taken for granted until progress began to do away with them. Now we face the question whether a still higher ‘standard of living’ is worth its cost in things natural, wild, and free.” — Aldo Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac*

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side of the pipe. The top of the embankment was still held together by frost, so the opening occurred where the ground was no longer frozen.

Possible causes may be many factors, including (in no particular order):

- Excessive storm runoff
- Lack of vegetation/ground cover
- Insufficient embankment compaction at the pipe interface
- Embankment material not suitable for pond construction (too porous)
- Embankment width not wide enough to contain hydraulic pressure from pond
- Outlet structure (elevation) improperly designed or placed

In any event a small hydraulic channel occurred between the earth and concrete materials. Once that happens, it is only a matter of time before the water finds a way to enlarge the opening and the pressure behind the water to force open a bigger hole. Travis Erickson of Erickson Excavating has agreed to fix the problem. The County will work with Erickson Excavating to evaluate the most likely causes, and a plan for permanent repair. We will let the area dry so that a proper repair can be made.

Since the breach has already occurred, and the threat of excessive runoff from snow melt has passed, there is no immediate danger for either the pond nor any properties downstream. The area may erode further if we get some heavy rains, but will eventually equalize once it reaches the level of the cross road culvert. Scott Geddes (LWRD) does not see any immediate threat to the roadway. A temporary fix could cause more damage than good by allowing hydraulic pressures to build in the area of the structure which would eventually fail again in a similar fashion, possibly taking more of the outlet structure with it.

### Questions can be directed to Carol Vantine

[email carolvantine@gmail.com](mailto:carolvantine@gmail.com), or call 612-750-8785

*The basin was installed to reduce the amount of unwanted nutrient, mainly phosphorus, running into North Pipe Lake from a stream draining the north and south sides of 230th Avenue. A 58.6 percent reduction in the phosphorus load is expected. That reduction would, in turn, reduce the overall phosphorus load in North Pipe Lake by 13 percent. The structure is a key deliverable of our five-year Wisconsin DNR matching grant for 2010-2014. More information and photos of the project are at [www.pipelakes.org](http://www.pipelakes.org).*



How amazing! A mother bear and two cubs seem to be enjoying the culvert near the retention basin.

## Pipe Lakes fisheries

In January, Wisconsin *Outdoor News* published a “Lake Profile” about Pipe and North Pipe Lakes with an interesting insight into why Pipe Lakes used to be a better walleye fishery than it is today.

Pipe Lake may have never contained walleyes until the first stocking efforts were made in 1933, explains Wisconsin *Outdoor News* editor Dean Bortz. According to Wisconsin DNR fisheries technician Brian Spangler, sporadic walleye stockings took place through 1974, after which natural reproduction sustained the fisheries until the early 1990s. Stocking of small fingerlings in odd-numbered years began again in 1999 and continued through 2011 when DNR switched to large walleye fingerlings in hopes of getting the population “back on its fins.” The walleyes are healthy, but the population is low, explains Spangler. No other fish are stocked in Pipe Lake.

On the other hand, both Pipe and North Pipe basins have quality bluegills, rock bass, and crappies, and a high-quality smallmouth population. Smallies numbered 1,172 in 2004, or 3.4 fish per acre and half of those were longer than 13.9 inches.

A 2004-05 survey revealed largemouths as the most common game fish caught and kept by anglers. Adult largemouths were estimated at 8.9 fish per acre, 87 percent of those less than 13.9 inches. In 2004, walleyes were estimated at 1.2 fish per acre, compared with 2.1 fish per acre in 1989.

You can find the original *Outdoor News* article at our website [www.pipelakes.org/news](http://www.pipelakes.org/news).

## Save the date!

April 27, 2012	9-11 AM	2198 West Pipe Lake Ct. Commissioners' Meeting
May 4, 2012	9-11 AM	2198 West Pipe Lake Ct. Commissioners' Meeting
May 26, 2012	9-11 AM	Special District Meeting, at Christ Church Join your neighbors for rolls, coffee, and an update of District activities
July 7, 2012		Boat Parade
July 20, 2012	3 PM	2198 West Pipe Lake Ct. Commissioners' Meeting
August 10, 2012	3 PM	2198 West Pipe Lake Ct. Commissioners' Meeting
August 25, 2012		District Friends and Family Picnic
September 1, 2012	9-11 AM	Annual Meeting, at Christ Church

**TREES!** Polk County Land and Water Resources Dept. still has trees left for the 2012 tree sale. Tree availability is being updated daily at the LWRD website [www.co.polk.wi.us/landwater/tree-program.asp/tree-program.asp](http://www.co.polk.wi.us/landwater/tree-program.asp/tree-program.asp)

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## Choose natives for lakeshore plantings

### Chokecherry

*Prunus virginiana*

This 12-25 ft. shrub tolerates a wide range of moisture conditions. Showy clusters of white flowers in early spring give way to dark purple berries in summer. Berries attract and sustain more than 43 different bird species. Leaves are food for butterflies including the tiger swallowtail. Red foliage in fall.

