The Loon Call

Newsletter of Pipe and North Pipe Lakes Protection and Rehabilitation District

SPRING 2013

What's Inside...

www.pipelakes.org

Bloodroot, *Sanguinaria canadensis,* emerges from the forest floor in early spring, the single leaf at first enwrapping the flower stem and bud. The clear white blossom opens in the sun and closes at night, lasting just a few days. The red juice from the underground stem has been used by Native Americans as a dye for baskets, clothing and body paint, as well as for insect repellent.

PHOTO: KAREN ENGELBRETSON

Last Chance

Have you been thinking about improving your property? Have you been wondering if there is anything you can do to help Pipe and North Pipe Lakes stay healthy and desirable for future generations?

Right now you have the opportunity to invest 30 to 60 minutes of your time to get a professional review of your land and its relationship to the health of our lakes. The District has been using our DNR grant funds since 2009 to offer a free consultation with Cheryl Clemens of Harmony Environmental to every Pipe and North Pipe Lakes waterfront owner.

These consultations provide you with a written report that identifies possible ways to reduce runoff and erosion on your property while enhancing the environment for desirable wildlife and healthy water quality. There is no obligation or expectation that you will implement any recommendations, but, if you do decide to follow-up on one or more recommendations, the District has matching funds available through 2013 for qualified projects.

Our grant period is coming to a close soon, so this is your last opportunity to participate.

Many of your neighbors have already received their reports and some have implemented measures that add value to the lakes for all of us.

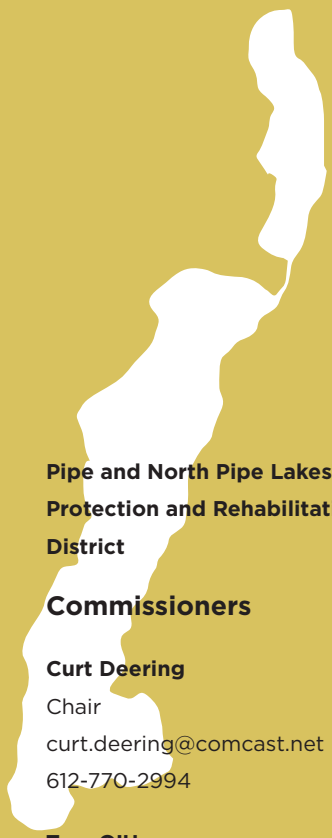
Don't wait! You can sign up for an appointment now by contacting Carol Vantine at carolvantine@gmail.com or calling 612-750-8785. Appointments (one hour) are available on three Saturdays:

- May 25, from 12-4 p.m.
- June 8, 8:30-12:30, 1-4 p.m.
- June 22, 8:30-12:30, 1-4 p.m.

Interested in knowing more about how lakes work and how to protect them?
Attend the Lake/River Management Workshop this spring, presented by Polk County Association of Lakes and Rivers and the Land and Water Resources Department. You'll meet and learn from experts from DNR and UW Extension, area consultants, and scientific services providers.

Go to pcalr.org for information and online registration.
Early bird registration rate available until March 31 !

An early morning walk is a blessing for the whole day. — Henry David Thoreau



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Pipe Lakes Rapid Response Program

by Greg Warner

Each of us has a responsibility to keep our lakes free from aquatic invasive species (AIS) and to be on the constant look out for suspects.

Over the years many individuals have volunteered their time and talents to preserve the water quality of Pipe and North Pipe Lakes. Theses efforts resulted in the establishment of the Pipe Lakes Protection and Rehabilitation District. It is incumbent up on each of us to be familiar with the many activities that occur on a regular basis to preserve the water quality of our lakes. Many of the activities and their results are available on our website, www.pipelakes.org

Prevention is always easier and much less expensive than trying to eradicate an invasive species — if it's possible to fully eradicate it at all. When it comes to eradicating or attempting to minimize the spread of aquatic invasive species such as Eurasian Water Milfoil, we could expect costs ranging from $200 to $2,000 per acre. And, then we may only be preventing its spread.

As mentioned, prevention is worth much more than a pound of cure in this situation. Our *Clean Boats, Clean Waters* program has been largely responsible for preventing the introduction of AIS into our lakes. Unfortunately, this is not fool proof since we do not have continual monitoring 24/7. We provide some monitoring and education on the busier days and will be expanding the hours of operation this summer.

Our AIS grant is currently being renewed. A new component of this renewal is a Rapid Response Plan which outlines steps for early identification of AIS and rapid initiation of a treatment plan. Wisconsin DNR provides up to 75 percent of $20,000 for a rapid response treatment on a first come-first served basis.

Our individual and collective responsibilities:

- Become familiar with invasive plants and animals that may be introduced into our lakes. Our website, www.pipelakes.org, has information and pictures to assist with this.
- Clean your boat and remind your visitors to do the same before entering and upon leaving Pipe Lakes.
- Watch for suspicious looking plants or animals when on the water or near shore.
- If you identify or are suspicious of a plant or animal that may be an invasive species, please call Dick Hollar at 715-822-5317 or, if he is not available, Tom O'Hern at 651-428-5532. One of these individuals will initiate the process to collect the sample and submit it to the DNR for identification.
- The complete process is provided as an attachment to the AIS Grant.

We all value the water quality we have in our Pipe Lakes. One plant could ruin it for us all. Thanks for taking time to familiarize yourselves with the information on our web site and please keep a watchful eye out for anything you might suspect as an AIS. Thank you. ■

Pipe Lake Boating Submerged to a Whole New Level

Save the date!

April 27, 2013	8 AM	Commissioners' Meeting, 2172 West Pipe Lake Ln.
May 25, 2013	9-11 AM	District Meeting, Christ Lutheran Church
July 6, 2013	1 PM	Boat Parade (Rain date July 7)
July 20, 2013	8 AM	Commissioners' Meeting, 242 - 220th Ave.
August 10, 2013	8 AM	Commissioners' Meeting, 2172 West Pipe Lake Ln.
August 17, 2013	Noon	Annual Picnic, County Line Tavern
August 31, 2013	9-11 AM	Annual District Meeting, Christ Lutheran Church

Welcome Committee Volunteers Needed!

To continue to build a strong sense of community on Pipe Lake, we are looking for volunteers interested in welcoming new lake residents!

If you are interested or know of new Pipe Lakes property owners please contact Stephanie Boysen at 651-433-5707

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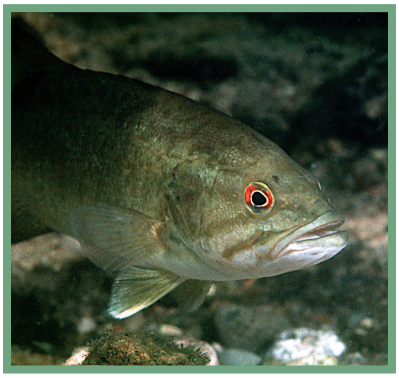
Impervious Surfaces – How They Impact Fish, Wildlife and Waterfront Property Values



Smallmouth bass. PHOTO: BOB KORTH

Concrete porous paving blocks allow water to soak in when installed on a bed of sand or gravel. Sandy topsoil can be added to the top inch or two of the voids to plant grass, if desired.

Plastic porous paving blocks are installed on a 6-inch layer of sand, filled with 1 to 2 inches of sandy soil, then planted with lawn grass. They are strong enough to use for temporary parking areas.

When we develop our shoreland lots, trees and native plants are often replaced by impervious (hard) surfaces. Driveways, rooftops, walkways and other hard surfaces decrease the ability of the shoreland area to serve its natural functions. Water can no longer soak into the ground, which increases stormwater runoff that carries sediment and pollutants into lakes and streams. Removing trees and native plants eliminates the food sources and shelter on which wildlife depend. Fish eggs die when they are covered in a blanket of silt from runoff and erosion.

Waterfront Property Values

A decline in water quality often lowers property values and our enjoyment of lakes. Often, people choose a waterfront property based on how they plan to enjoy the water – the peaceful, natural setting or fishing, swimming, or boating opportunities. In fact, a UW-Extension survey found that peace and quiet, natural beauty, and hunting and fishing opportunities were the top three reasons people chose to live on a lake.

While many opinions exist over what the perfect shoreline looks like, most of us agree that clear water is desirable. Water clarity can be influenced by impervious surfaces. First, runoff from impervious surfaces can increase erosion, carrying soil into the water. Second, this runoff carries phosphorus and other nutrients along with it. An unfertilized, developed waterfront lot that has 20 percent impervious surface carries six times more phosphorus to the lake than an undeveloped lot of the same size. Excess phosphorus fuels algae growth in our waters, which lowers water clarity and overall aesthetic appeal.

A recent study that tracked over 1,000 waterfront property sales in Minnesota found that when all other factors remained equal, properties on lakes with clearer water commanded significantly higher prices. A similar study conducted in Maine found that changes in water clarity of three feet can change lakefront property prices by as much as $200 per frontage foot.

Fish

Runoff that carries sediments, nutrients and other pollutants into lakes and streams leads to decreased fish populations. This is because: 1) more nutrients result in less oxygen in the water which fish need to survive; 2) more sediments and algae growth make it difficult for some predator species that hunt by sight to find food; and 3) increased sediments can cover spawning beds of smallmouth bass, walleye and crappie, potentially inhibiting reproduction.

A study of 47 streams in southeastern Wisconsin found that when impervious surfaces covered 8-12 percent of the total watershed area, the number of fish species was reduced. Above 12 percent, the number of fish species plummeted.

Wildlife

Impervious surfaces can be thought of as biological deserts where animals cannot find food or shelter, making them easy prey. Disturbed open spaces

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Imperious Surfaces, continued from page 4

increase wildlife mortality rates and decrease their chances of successfully raising young. How many of you enjoy watching and listening to loons. Do you know that loons do not exist in southern Wisconsin because of the influence of people? How about otters, swans and other wildlife? Our property development and impervious surfaces can drive them away.

An undeniable connection exists between the decisions we make about our shoreland property and the health of our lakes and streams. Each property is part of a bigger picture – a living waterfront of plants, wildlife, fish and people that are all interconnected.

Here's what can you do to minimize the effects of impervious surfaces:

- Minimize hard surfaces like rooftops and driveways on your property by sharing driveways, minimize building footprints, or remove unneeded hard surfaces areas such as extra parking lots.
- Use pervious materials such as mulch or permeable pavers for walkways.
- Capture runoff in rain barrels, redirect gutters and downspouts away from the lake and into your adjacent wildlife area, or create a rain garden.
- Minimize fertilizer use—have your soil tested to see if fertilizers are needed and use as little as possible. Use phosphorus-free fertilizer (the middle number in the formula on the package should be zero). The use of fertilizers containing phosphorus in shoreland areas is prohibited in Polk County.
- Maintain or restore native shoreline trees, shrubs and grasses to slow runoff and provide wildlife habitat. ■

Source: WDNR publication WT-990 by Lynn Markham and Ross Dudzik

"Fish Sticks" Project

Early in 2013, the Lake District participated in a new DNR project to improve fish habitat in Pipe Lake. Ten donated trees from the Mears-Wilson property were cut and transported two miles and placed on the ice on the south of Pipe Lake. Landscapers from Hayward, under the guidance of the DNR placed five trees, fifty feet in length, in a triangle configuration on the south east corner of the big island. The other structure is off the very small island on the south end of the lake adjacent to the Clark property. The project is part of a lake restoration near-shore eco-system. The logs are bound together and anchored to the shore by cables, waiting now for the ice to go out. The benefits of the project are four fold: to provide protective habit from predators, provide a quality spawning and nesting habitat, provide critical cover for fish and protect shorelines from wind and wave erosion. The two sites will be marked with buoys. More information will be provided at the spring meeting.

SUMMER HELP WANTED

The Pipe Lakes P&R District is looking for a Boat Landing Monitor to supplement the efforts of our current monitor, Art Ringsven. The new Monitor will provide additional coverage at the landing to talk with and educate boaters about invasive species and inspect watercraft for attached aquatic plants and animals.

Hours: The Monitor is expected to work weekends, including Fridays, an estimated 100 hours over the summer months. Eventually the new Monitor will take over the entire program accumulating 250 hours over the summer.

Training: A training session is required, provided at the District's expense. Starting salary is $8.00/hour.

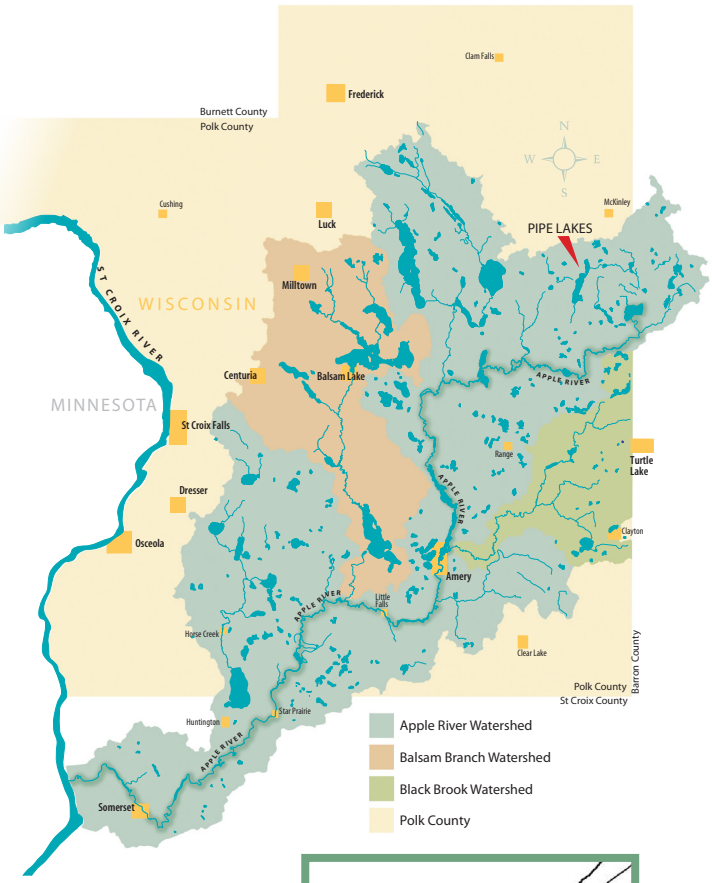
Qualifications: The Monitor will have a passion for keeping our lakes clean, ability to relate to people in a friendly and persuasive manner, and to pay attention to detail. Anyone over 18 is invited to apply. This is a great opportunity for anyone looking for part-time work including retirees and recent high school graduates.

Contact: Dick Hollar, 2242 24th Street, Comstock, WI 54826; 715-822-5317 or dickhollar@gmail.com with a resume and to set-up an interview.

Watersheds

Think of a lake as the collection basin for all the water that is flowing downhill from the surrounding land. The land area that "drains" water to your lake is referred to as a *watershed*. A watershed may be hundreds or thousands of acres. The quality of our lake is dependent on the health of its watersheds.

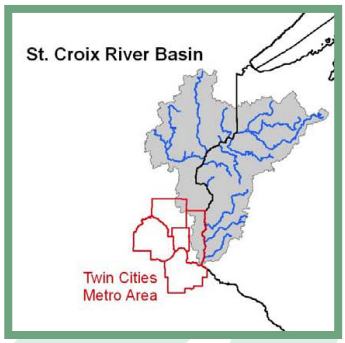
Nothing has a more profound effect on our lakes than the decisions we make on how we use the land that surrounds them. Logging, farming, livestock grazing, development and other land use choices in a watershed, even miles away from the lake, can result in changes in water quality and fish and wildlife habitat.



What is a Watershed?

When it rains or snow melts, water flows over and into the land and makes its way through gullies, streams and groundwater into our lakes and rivers. A watershed is the area of land where all surface water flows off the land and all the groundwater underneath the land drains into common waterways.

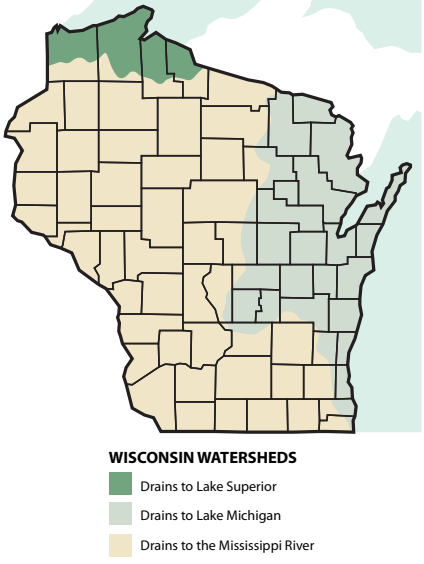
All lands and waterways are within a watershed. Watersheds (and the waters that flow through them) are also connected to each other; smaller watersheds drain into larger watersheds. The maps on this page show Pipe Lakes' watershed in Polk County, the St. Croix River basin, and Wisconsin's three watersheds.



Starting as rain falling on the ground or melting snow, all water in the watershed works its way "downhill" and in Wisconsin ultimately enters the Great Lakes or the Mississippi River. Polk County watersheds drain to the Apple River which flows into the St Croix River and then the Mississippi River.

How Do Watersheds Affect Lakes?

Much of the precipitation that falls on the land is taken up and used by plants. Excess water that is not absorbed into the soil may run off the land quickly into lakes and streams. Precipitation that soaks into the ground can work its way through the soil where, as it continues to move downward, it will ultimately enter groundwater. Depending on the path, the trip water takes from the watershed into the lake can take a few days or many, many years.



The type of trip this water makes to a lake can impact the lake's water quality. A high volume of runoff that quickly flows to surface waters can bring nutrients and pollutants with it. Rapid runoff does not allow water to soak into the ground and recharge groundwater, reducing or depriving the lake of its groundwater water source.

Lakes, rivers, wetlands, and groundwater are interconnected. The waters that fill all of these water sources flow through the same watershed. Forests and wetlands play a significant role in slowing down rain and snowmelt, filtering pollutants from runoff, infiltrating water, and providing important fish and wildlife habitat. As forest land and wetlands are replaced by development (houses, roads, and other hard surfaces), the cumulative effect can change water quality as polluted runoff increases and groundwater recharge decreases. ■

Source: http://www.wisconsinlakes.org/index.php/the-science-of-lakes/23-watershed