

September 2010 Lake Report

Secchi readings- Secchi readings were not taken in August. I will be looking for more help again next year in taking Secchi readings. The Environmental Services Unit requires and does the training for taking the Secchi readings. This training takes about 2 hours and they will come out to our lake to train. It would really help me out if a few other people could assist with this, my kids are getting older and are taking more of my time and this is getting harder and harder to do by myself. The county would like to see the samples or readings taken twice a month. This information is vital in order to determine changes in the water quality and tracking changes. The information from these readings are also valuable in terms of acquiring grant money for water quality improvement projects. It will become all the more important if and when the Washington St. expansion project gets under way.

The staff gauge was ordered and received. It will be installed at the outlet in order to make measuring the lake's water level easier. This is also a part of the Secchi readings. Water temperature has been decreasing and with that the annual plants are beginning to diminish. I will be taking Secchi readings this week and also installing the staff gauge.

Creel surveys- I have received a dozen creel surveys. The majority of the fish being caught would be Bluegills followed by Largemouth bass, northern pike and catfish. There were zero walleyes reported caught. At this point I would like to know if any walleyes are being harvested. In '04 we stocked 400 walleye @ 5"-7", in '05 we stocked 500 @ 5"-7" and another 50 @ 8"-10" and the most recent walleye stocking in '08 of 425 @ 5"-7". Over the years walleyes have been stocked at a rate similar to L.M. Bass. I have been told by the DNR fisheries biologist that Walleyes will not reproduce in our lake and they generally figure a 50% mortality rate per stocking. If you are catching or have caught walleyes fill out a creel in order for us to try to determine if walleyes are being actively fished for, the stocking has been effective or if we are experiencing high mortality rate. If we get more information we can follow up with the DNR Fisheries biologist and find out what kind of catch rates we should be experiencing based on our stocking rates.

Riparian workshop- On 9/18 there was a Riparian workshop held in Winthrop Harbor. The subject was how to implement shoreline improvements that contribute to improving water quality. I had signed up but was unable to attend due to family matters. A notice was posted regarding this workshop but I had no replies and am unaware of anyone from the community attending. This is a topic that directly affects our lake water quality.

Lake surveys- We will be drawing up a "Lake surveys" to be sent out with the annual dues notice. This survey would provide us information necessary in making future management decisions regarding usage of the lake. Management decisions will then be based on the outcome of the survey of the community. It is not the responsibility to try to "read the minds" of what the community wants. We are depending on your input.

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Permission to treat- Along with the dues letter I would like to attach a form for permission to treat lake bottom. This will be sent to “deeded lake bottom owners” only. We will use the map provided by the soil and water district that outlines the deeded lake bottom. This way in the future that if it is decided that treatments are necessary we will only be affecting the properties that we have permission to treat. Currently we have more than a dozen revocations of permission to treat. One of the applicators that I have had out to look at our lake (Lyle Erickson of McCloud Aquatic) will not work on a lake unless he has permission from all of the deeded lake bottom owners. This was the gentleman that came out to our lake last fall and provided us with list of recommendations. His recommendation was “whole lake” treatment of the lake in order to control the Curly Leaf Pondweed and Eurasian Water Milfoil.

Lake treatment- Currently there are no plans to treat or execute any type of plant management procedures. Any type of whole lake treatment is out of the question due to the revocations of permission currently filed by numerous lake bottom owners. Spot treatment is something that might be considered in order to keep some of the natives, namely the Sago pondweed and possibly the coontail by the inlet from becoming invasive. This would be done in order to open up some “boating/ swimming lanes” to the deeper water. This was an option that was suggested by the DNR fisheries biologist. In order to do this we would need to know which properties have given or revoked consent to treat lake bottom in order to avoid unauthorized treatment. I am currently in the process of discussing this option with another application company. I would like to have this option available next year if for instance the plants grow to the point of restricting or impeding usage of the lake by some of our residents, particularly the West shore due to the morphology of the lake. I will have more information regarding this topic in the next few weeks.

Plant mapping- I have not had time to do any more plant mapping. I am currently about 40% complete with mapping. I have made trips out looking for exotic species such as Eurasian Water Milfoil and have not seen anything visible from the surface. I did however see Curly Leaf Pondweed growing by the inlet. This plant (CLP) becomes dormant during the warmer months and will start growing again when the water cools and continue to grow under the ice during the winter. It will show up early again in the spring and reach the surface before many of the natives, in turn out-competing them for light and other nutrients. This is an “exotic invasive” that needs to be monitored because at times it can become a nuisance. It spreads by turions, which are seeds that resemble a small pine cone about the size of a marble. The turions will be dropped in late June, therefore it is removed by hand early in the year, before the turions are dropped. Once that plant is pulled out the plant will not return. This plant is not spread by fragmentation.

Plant id - I hope that people have visited the website to view the plant presentation there. If you haven't please try to set aside 10 or 15 minutes to check it out. I have not had the time to press the various plants that I was hoping to get done. This could be done at a future “SLC” meeting. It's a great way to learn to identify the different plants by actually seeing and touching them, it's not really that hard, but there are a few tricks

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to it. You'll be able to impress your friends and family by being able to properly name the different plants that we have growing

I have received from the Illinois Sea Grant Invasive Plant "baseball cards" that show some of the various exotics. I will have them for the October meeting. At the recent September meeting I brought samples of Sago Pondweed, Chara, and Eurasian Water Milfoil to the September board meeting so that the people in attendance would be able to actually see the difference between these species.

Rain Gardens- This is a concept that the SLC has been discussing for a while now and it is great to see this being put to use in our parks. It is such a common sense idea that it is remarkable that it is not being used more frequently. I spoke with Tom Brust briefly about the design of the rain gardens and he said that he would be more than happy to keep us in the loop in regards to the design of the gardens. I suggested that we used started native plants vs. seed mix. That way the plants would not have a completely random or native appearance but patterns could be established more closely resembling the garden style or design one typically sees in a person's yard. The difference being that the native plants have a far larger "root mass" allowing to absorb and filter far more water than the perennials typically used in ornamental gardens. This superior root mass also allows these plants to be far more drought tolerant whereas perennials require watering in order to survive dry periods. There is a link to a picture of a rain garden that was "built" with started natives at the community site. This is a picture of a garden growing in Minnesota.