

LAKE MINNIE BELLE MESSENGER

A Newsletter from the Lake Minnie Belle Improvement Association

Spring 2019

Message from the Board

A BIG thank you to all of our LMBIA members. Your financial support has allowed us to complete the first part of the Bees & Butterflies project on the southwest side of the lake. The volunteer trees are gone and the seeding will be done this summer or possibly in the fall. We are actively working on dredging the wetland that is part of our outlet (MBO) phase One work and have started phase Two which would prevent any back flow into the lake from that site. We will complete a whole lake survey of our underwater plants and be able to tell if we are doing any good with the chemical treatment of Curly-Leaf Pondweed (CLP) and Eurasian Water Milfoil (EWM) or if we are doing damage to the native plants. All of these projects, and others that are in the works, were made possible by your contribution in the form of membership dues and donations.

We do get grant money from state and local agencies but we have to match those grants with our own dollars. Grants are usually a 50/50 match.

It doesn't make sense to apply for grants if we can't match them.

Our Chairman, Cliff Willhite retired from the board leaving a Director position open. If you're interested in being a more active member and/or the possibility of running for a board position in July, please email the LMBIA email address or a board member before the June board meeting, 6/25. As always, candidates can be added at the annual meeting. We still have a number of challenges to work on.

Hope you have a great summer on the lake.



Lake Minnie Belle Outlet Update:

Work continues on our lake outlet. We did get permits from the Army Corps of Engineers and the DNR to dredge a channel through the Christensen wetland which would help with the water flow. The contractor started work this winter but the rain in early March resulted in watershed runoff flowing from the fields so they couldn't complete the work. One of their skid steers went through the ice and it took hours just to retrieve it. If we have a dry summer, the work could be completed then or we may be able to modify the permit and dredge around the edge of the wetland. We are still working those details.

The 2nd phase of our plan is to divert some of the farm tiles around the wetland in order to prevent back flow into the lake. The estimates for that work are about \$40k because the runoff often has high levels of nutrients and e.coli. We will be treating Lake Minnie Belle for curly leaf and Eurasian milfoil this spring and summer.

Who Writes your Newsletter?

Kristin Jaquith

We are missing Marilyn Buboltz who helped out with the newsletter for years. Although, not a board member, Kristin Jaquith is now our editor and we have asked her to put a few words together so we can share with you the effort she is putting forth:

Hello! I am a newish LMBIA member, my husband and I moved to the West Side of Lake Minnie Belle in 2017. We have three children, Kali is a sophomore at Bemidji State, our son Achillez is a Jr at LHS and our youngest Xyla is a 3rd grader at the School of St Philip. I have actually been lake resident most of my life, my parents moved to Lake Minnie Belle when I was a child. Being a part of an association that cares for the health and cleanliness of our Lake is a huge interest of mine. I recently started the training in AIS detection. I look forward to keeping all of you all informed in our seasonal Newsletter and on our Facebook page. I attend all our LMBIA board meetings, so I keep up with what the board is working on and can update you on the projects, issues or concerns at the given time. I would love to feature some history/spotlight articles so please feel free to email or FB me. Pictures and stories of interest for future publications are always welcome. Our Ice went out on April 20th, it's such an exciting time of year, as docks & boats start to appear, our kids break out the kayaks and our seasonal neighbors are starting to return. Happy Spring to you all!

Kristin Jaquith

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Lake Water Quality

Stan Kittelson

Winter is now behind us. However, thick ice and heavy snow usually means late-ice-out in the spring. This can slow the growth of plants and algae because the snow-covered ice blocks out the sun from the depths of the lake where the plants form.

We are happy to report that Lake Minnie Belle will be having an Aquatic Native Plant and AIS Plant Survey done this summer by a lake management company. This survey will cover the entire lake Littoral area (plant growth area) of about 170 acres. We have not done a complete macrophage survey for several years. This survey will have a two pronged mission: 1. It will give us a more complete picture of the density of our AIS plants (Curly leaf & Eurasian Milfoil) 2. It will allow us to compare our present native aquatic plant species to the last survey done several years ago. It will also be of interest to know if several years of Lake Owner use of non-selective herbicides, and commercially applied specific target treatment for AIS has impacted in any way our native aquatic plants.

Lake Minnie Belle is a unique lake in that we have seventeen different species of native aquatic plants in the lake. This species number is well above the average for other area lakes. This diversification of aquatic plants helps to make Minnie Belle the quality lake it is. This new survey will be a welcome tool for good proactive lake management.

Summer is arriving. Enjoy the lake. See you on the water.



Annual LMBIA meeting

The 2019 Annual LMBIA Picnic and membership meeting will be held on Saturday July 20th at 10 am, at the Beckville Church picnic grounds. Coffee and rolls will be served.

Q & A with Board Members & Annual elections will take place.

We have retained Clarke Companies again this year to assist us with lake survey, analysis, permit applications and the treatment process. The exact acreage and areas of treatment will be determined after Clarke has completed the pre-treatment survey early in May. The costs of treatment will be \$640 per acre for curly leaf and \$ 395 per acre for Eurasian milfoil; plus the survey and permit applications fees. Estimated area of coverage is about 20 acres. Clarke will be responsible for posting notification signs and/or buoys in the treatment areas. Minnesota DNR treatment signs will be posted on those properties that are within 150 feet of all treatment areas. It will be the responsibility of the shoreline owner to remove the notification signs on their property. Signs can be removed approximately 10 to 14 days after treatment for curly leaf and 21 days after treatment of milfoil.

IF YOU WISH TO OPT OUT OF THE TREATMENT ON YOUR LAKESHORE YOU MUST COMPLETE AND RETURN THE INSERT FORM IN THIS NEWSLETTER

If you are considering treating a part of your lake shore for vegetative growth you must receive a DNR permit. Clarke Companies and Midwest Aquacare have been used in the past. These companies will assist you with the permitting and treatment.”

Newfound Pines

If you are driving along 193rd Street by the southwest portion of the lake, you may see some “new” pines south of the road. Those are actually a labor of love by current/past residents from 15 years ago. The pines are on the border of 16 acres of land that LMBIA purchased in 2001 for a berm retention project. That area had been flagged as a major contributor to poor water quality in the form of soil and phosphorus contamination running into the lake. The berm acts as a settling area for runoff before it enters the lake reducing it to an 8-inch stream. From 2003 to 2006 Larry Hlavka, Roger Jergens, Rich Peterson, Denny Herzog and Tom Hess purchased trees and shrubs to plant in the grassland. Larry had a water tanker that he, Roger, Dan Fitterer and others used to water the trees all summer for 5 years.

Since LMBIA is not a government entity the property was deeded to the county where the county gave us control on a 10-year recurring contract. Part of this contract included a stipulation that we had to maintain it in its natural state taking care to control weeds and overgrowth. Three years ago this maintenance obligation was addressed resulting in the Bees and Butterflies project. With the overgrowth gone, we can see the beauty of the pines! The next step will be the planting of the monarch butterfly seed mixture and an adjoining area of honey bee seed mixture creating a habitat that will help wildlife for generations to come. We would like to thank all of those who took their free time to assist with this area. The remaining evergreens are a living testament to your dedication!

Ice Out

With such a crazy winter, when will the ice be out on the lake? The earliest ice out date recorded for Minnie Belle was in 2016 – March 15. The DNR tracks Ice Outs for lakes using Citizen Observers. This year, there have been 5 lakes reporting Ice Out by the end of March. Our Ice went out on April 20, 2019. We held a

fun contest on our Facebook page to Guess the Date! Jeremiah Jaquith guessed and won a T-Shirt! The DNR website has records for many lakes over the decades with information on how you can record Minnie Belle’s data each year. Check the LMBIA website for the actual dates of our lake for the past 35 years.

Adopt a Highway Program

Lake Minnie Belle Improvement Association is participating in the Minnesota Adopt a Highway program. You may have noticed the signs on Highway 22.

What is Adopt a Highway Program? It is a program that enables a group or organization to help keep our environment clean. Participating in the program shows LMBIA is concerned about a clean environment, wants to make a contribution to the environment and saves the taxpayers money. LMBIA is looking for volunteers to help with this effort.



Safety for the participants is the #1 concern during the cleanup. High visibility vests and bags are supplied. There will be a short safety meeting with all participants prior to embarking on the cleanup. There are several safety considerations along with vehicle traffic, such as poisonous plants, needles, weapons, hazardous chemicals, etc...

What do I need to bring? It is recommended you bring gloves, sunscreen, and insect repellent.

What is expected? Depending on how many volunteers, we divide up the 2 miles into sections, so at least 2 people are in each section and on each side of the road. You must be able to walk the road ditch, pick up trash and put it in supplied bags.

Who can participate? Anyone 12 years of age or older.

Where? About a 2 mile stretch between 190th st. and CR 28 on Highway 22, about 5 miles south of Litchfield.

When? May 2nd starting at 5pm and again in the fall, (September / October).

How to sign up? Contact Don Kotila: donrk58@yahoo.com or one of the other LMBIA board members.

Information on details will be forthcoming on the LMBIA website and Facebook page.

For those that have helped in the past, thank you!

Hopefully some of you can help us in the spring or fall, or both! (We might have a cold beverage after the cleanup)

Minnesota Fishing Regulations

Can I use bait in Minnesota waters? You can fish with a variety of live or dead bait including worms, night crawlers, insects and larva. If you are fishing with minnows or leeches, a number of restrictions apply.

If you choose to keep your bait when done fishing, you must exchange water in bait buckets with tap or bottled water prior to leaving any water body, except when you are fishing through the ice.

You can't dispose of unwanted minnows and leeches in Minnesota waters. Unused bait, including worms and night crawlers, should be disposed of in the garbage.

Do I have to bring in fresh or bottled water to transport minnows from a water body? Yes. You can't transport water from a lake or stream at any time in Minnesota.

After I've kept minnows, leeches or bait, can I dispose of what I don't want back into the lake or stream?

No. You can't dispose of unused or unwanted minnows or leeches in any Minnesota water. Dispose of unused bait, including worms, in the trash.



Ariel View of the Lake just prior to Ice Out 4/16/19, Robert Hantge

Minnesota Statute

84D.10 WATERCRAFT AND WATER-RELATED EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS AND PROHIBITIONS.

Subd. 4. Persons transporting water-related equipment.

(a) When leaving a water of the state, a person must drain water-related equipment holding water and live wells and bilges by removing the drain plug before transporting the water-related equipment. For the purposes of this paragraph, “transporting” includes moving water-related equipment over land between connected or unconnected water bodies, but does not include moving water-related equipment within the immediate area required for loading and preparing the water-related equipment for transport over land.

(e) A person must not dispose of bait in waters of the state.

84D.01 DEFINITIONS

Subd. 18a. Water-related equipment.

“Water-related equipment” means a motor vehicle, boat, watercraft, dock, boat lift, raft, vessel, trailer, tool, implement, device, or any other associated equipment or container, including but not limited to portable bait containers, live wells, ballast tanks except for those vessels permitted under the Pollution Control Agency vessel discharge program, bilge areas, and water-hauling equipment that is capable of containing or transporting aquatic invasive species, aquatic macrophytes, or water.

Will Lake Minnie Belle get Zebra Mussels?

From our last risk assessment it is very likely. What can we do to reduce the risk and hold them off? The board, in cooperation with the MN Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Research Center and other agencies and companies, has identified the areas of possible infestation. A plan was developed to address each area of concern and steps are being taken to shore up our defenses. Some of the actions are controversial and even a bit radical but if we don't make every effort now, we will later have to answer

the question, “Why didn't we do something?”. The following is a breakdown of what we know about the worst AIS threatening our lake.

Some Background:

There is no treatment for Zebra Mussels (ZM). There are experimental treatments, Zequanox and Copper Sulfate, but it's almost impossible to detect them early enough to treat them within a confined area under the 30 acres permitted by the DNR and the cost is multiple thousands per acre.

Starry Stonewort (SSW) is a little different in that if it is detected early enough, it can be kept under control or even eliminated. The key is early detection and we check our lake every two weeks and put divers down to inspect the sediment for any signs of their presence. Just the inspections cost thousands each year and the treatment is done by hand picking using scuba gear followed by a chemical overlay that must be repeated every year.

Some Statistics:

Last year ZM's were found in 9 new lakes in Kandiyohi County. They are up in arms trying to halt their migration and asking for resources that we wanted to use in our county. Here are the number of lakes in the 5 county area that are infected. This list only includes ZM and SSW (all these lakes except one have been infected within the past 5 years):

County	ZM Lakes	SSW Lakes
Kandiyohi	14	0
Stearns	11	3
Wright	5	2
Meeker	2	0
McLeod	0	0

What is our risk:

We are the highest risk lake in Meeker County and we are the last “premier” lake in the 5 county area that does not have ZM's, SSW or both.

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What are the risks that we will get either one? There are a few ways to calculate that risk. The best is a guideline put out by the state that adds up known risk factors (total boat units and infestation routes). We have updated the numbers with accurate data that we have been collecting over the past 2 years:

1 Number of boats using the landings	2250
2 Number of homes on the lake	225
3 Boats from fishing tournaments	140
4 Shore fishing bait buckets & used lifts	115
<i>Total</i>	<i>2730</i>

For comparison here are 10 other popular lakes in Meeker County and their risk rating:

Lake	Risk Rating
Minnie Belle	2730
Washington	2120 (has ZM)
Stella	1870 (has ZM)
Manuella	1595
Belle	1150
Francis	1140
Ripley	1115
Jennie	915
Collinwood	915
Clear	810
Erie	320

The DNR has stated that about 7% of the lakes in Minnesota are infected with AIS. Meeker County has 114 lakes. Below are the 8 lakes (7%) with AIS. Belle Lake just got EWMF last year. Other than that, there haven't been any new infestations in the past 3 years. The county watercraft inspection program, education, and prevention have helped in reducing the spread.

Clear	EWMF	2014
Erie	EWMF	2014
Minnie-Belle	EWMF	2010

Little Mud	EWMF	2009
Manuella	EWMF	2006
Wolf	EWMF	2006
Ripley	EWMF	2004
Stella	EWMF	1999
Washington	EWMF	1999
Stella	ZM	2015
Washington	ZM	2015

How are they transported and what should we do:

Almost all new infestations are located at or near the boat landings. For Minnie Belle, the boat landing is a connection between a popular lake and a major highway. New infestations are along a water pathway - Boats or equipment from an infested lake moving to a non infested lake.

ZM's are moved in water when they are in their early development stage (veligers). In the veliger stage they can't be seen with the naked eye. This is the reason that MN Fishing Regulations do not allow transporting water from lake to lake. Adults attach themselves to weeds, anchors, hull and motor. After the water warms up to 60 degrees F. adults spawn 30 to 50 thousand eggs every two weeks.

Actions to prevent the spread:

- Drop the motor and let the water drain.
- Pull the plug and empty the bilge.
- Drain the live well and empty the bait buckets of all water.
- Drain all ballast containments.
- Inspect anchor rope / anchor, hull and motor.
- Remove all weeds from the boat and trailer.
- Inspect the boat & trailer for attached mussels.

Draining all water as listed above and removing all aquatic vegetation will aide in preventing the transport of ZM's and Starry Stonewort.

The details and hard decisions to be made:

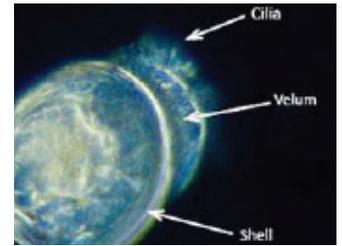
The identified routes for infestation are listed below along with actions that can be taken to contain that risk.

DNR Landing on the northeast side of the lake. This is our number one priority and highest risk location. The county will provide boat inspections on the weekends (Fri-Sun) from 7am until 5 pm. We would like to have 7 day a week inspections so we are working towards hiring inspectors for Mon – Thur as well. AIS volunteers can be available during special events such as fishing tournaments and to extend hours of inspection during periods of high traffic.

West Side Landing: The Greenleaf Township Board voted to close the West landing to boat launches. In an interview with the Hutch Leader, Dan Barka, Greenleaf Township board supervisor, stated the reason for the closure was to help with AIS control, however people who live near the lake may request access. “If someone from the public wants access through, they can come to the township and apply for access”. Boats will be directed to the DNR Landing. Lake residents are encouraged to become Members of the Lake association and receive AIS training.

East Side Landing: Ownership of this landing is still being researched. It is either the county or the township. Further action will not occur until ownership is determined. Signs will be posted at both East/West sites stating the DNR bait bucket rules requiring water to be removed before and after accessing the lake. Exact verbiage is still to be approved.

Beckville Church Property: Shore fishing was identified as a risk for the spread of aquatic species thru the transfer of water by bait buckets. Stephanie Karl, Beckville Lutheran Church Council President stated they put many hours into deliberation in making their final decision to leave the Picnic grounds Open to the public for shore fishing. Their intention and motivation has been



and will always be sharing this beautiful lake with the community as well as educating the public about the threat of AIS.

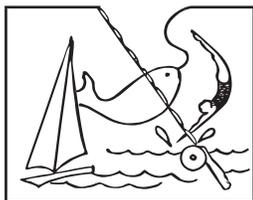
They have a well available located next to the shelter to swap out bait bucket water. They plan to post signs on bait bucket water transfer education. This property will remain open for people to enjoy.

South Side Access and AMA Fishing Pier: We have requested and received approval to place signs at both locations stating the legal requirements of dumping bait bucket water both before and after using the accesses.

Privately Sold Docks & Lifts: We are asking all property owners to be aware of the 21 day “dry” requirement if they purchase used equipment. We will be self-policing on this and will publish additional information in future publications.

Education and Training: We will continue to inform and educate by publishing articles in the newsletter, posting information and resources on our website and Facebook page. We have a number of volunteers who will be taking the AIS training course and will monitor the lake accesses and help out at the DNR landing.

Licensed Service Providers (LSP’s): These are local dealers that sell boats, docks, lifts, live bait and provide services such as dock removal. Most are licensed by the state and have taken the AIS training. We are meeting with the local LSP’s to verify their license and training is up to date. They are required to keep all used docks & lifts out water for 21 days or have them thoroughly decontaminated.



LAKE MINNIE BELLE
IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION
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Check Us Out!

LMBIA website:
www.lakeminniebelle.org (under construction)

LMBIA on facebook:
www.facebook.com/lmbia

LMBIA Email:
info@lakeminniebelle.org

DNR website:
www.dnr.state.mn.us

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LAKE MINNIE BELLE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Board meetings are held the 4th Tuesday of each month (except December), at the Bonfire Bar & Grill at 7:00 PM.

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