



Chain of Lakes

SUMMER 2022

ANNUAL MEETING @ LUTHER CREST

Saturday, July 30th @ 9:00 a.m.

Come Join Us – Breakfast Will Be Served!

A WILD START TO OUR MINNESOTA SUMMER:

Heavy snow during the winter and plenty of spring rain resulted in the highest lake levels recorded by the lake association over the past twenty years. In addition to high water, two huge storms blew through during May causing significant tree loss and damage, especially on the southwest side of Lake Carlos. Other parts of the lake also sustained significant wind damage. Not unlike what we often experience in Minnesota, our high water and storms were followed by some great weather. Though dock and lift installation was delayed, boating has returned to our beautiful Lake Carlos.

LCAA WORKS WITH DCLA AND THE CHAIN OF LAKES:

The Lake Carlos Area Association (LCAA) regularly works with the Douglas County Lakes Association (DCLA) to accomplish important tasks throughout the year. All of the major lakes in Douglas County are members of, and participate in, DCLA to track important issues that impact all of the lakes.

Joined by other lakes on the Chain including Carlos, Darling, LeHommeDieu, Geneva and Victoria, we complete this newsletter and publish articles of interest to all of us living on the Chain. LCAA, in cooperation with the other lakes on the Chain and DCLA, work with governmental agencies including the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), Douglas County Land and Resource Management, and the City of Alexandria Zoning Department. This collaboration allows us to accomplish important matters for Lake Carlos residents.

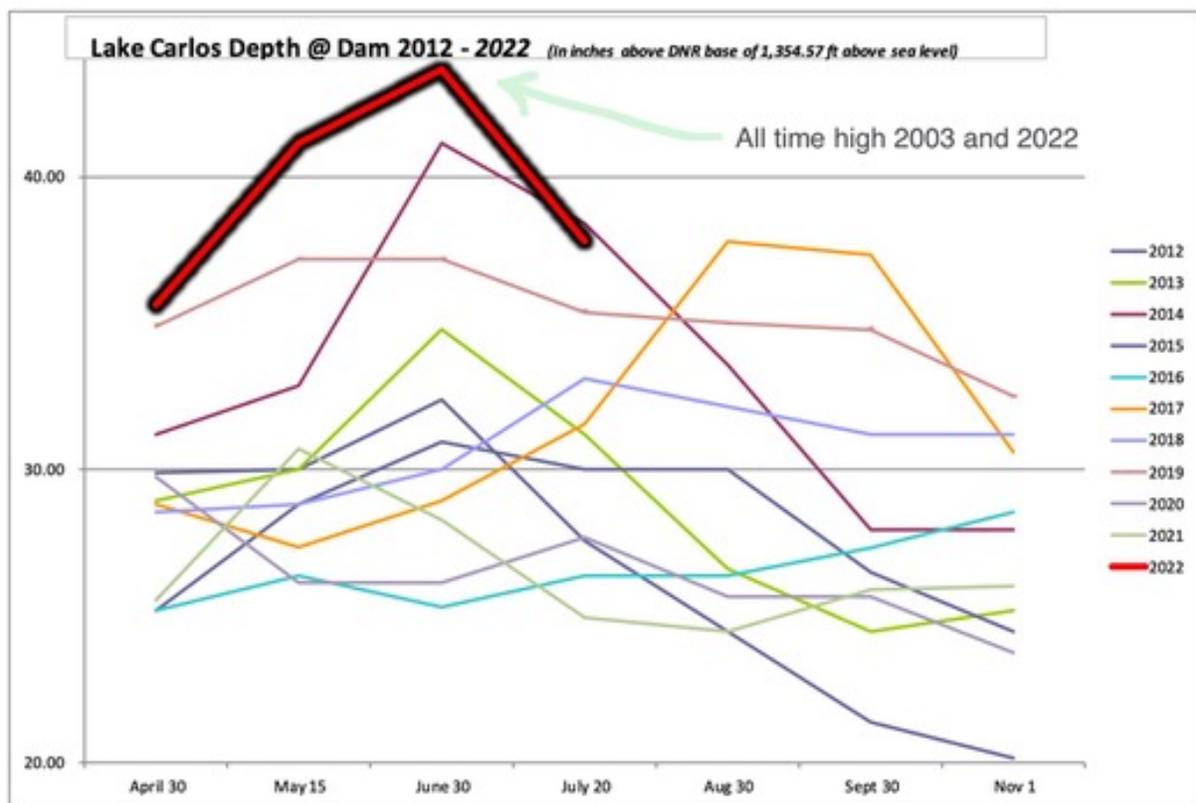


HISTORIC HIGH-WATER CHART

As we all know, the lake level is high! The DNR has records going back to 1925 on the level of Lake Carlos. The previous all-time high was in July 2003. On June 5, 2022, the level equaled the all-time high. Since then with little rain, the level is dropping as it does every summer but remains at a higher than normal level.

The DNR has determined an “Ordinary High Water Level” (OHWL) for each lake, which would typically be reached in the spring. As of early July, 2022, the level is still above that. The county has instigated a “no wake” restriction until the level drops below this level.

Please comply with the restrictions to prevent shoreline disruption. **“No person may operate a watercraft at any time less than 300 feet lakeward of the shoreline exceeding slow-no wake speeds.”**



RECORD HIGH WATER

HIGH WATER BRINGS NO WAKE IN DOUGLAS COUNTY

Our high water has caused lakeshore erosion, and, to help limit the problem, the Douglas County Board passed a “no-wake” ordinance, which remains in effect. **Boat wakes are not allowed within 300 feet of the shoreline.** Please discuss the matter at home so everyone realizes that boat wakes cause erosion damage on the lake shore. Keep boat and jet ski wakes away from the shoreline.

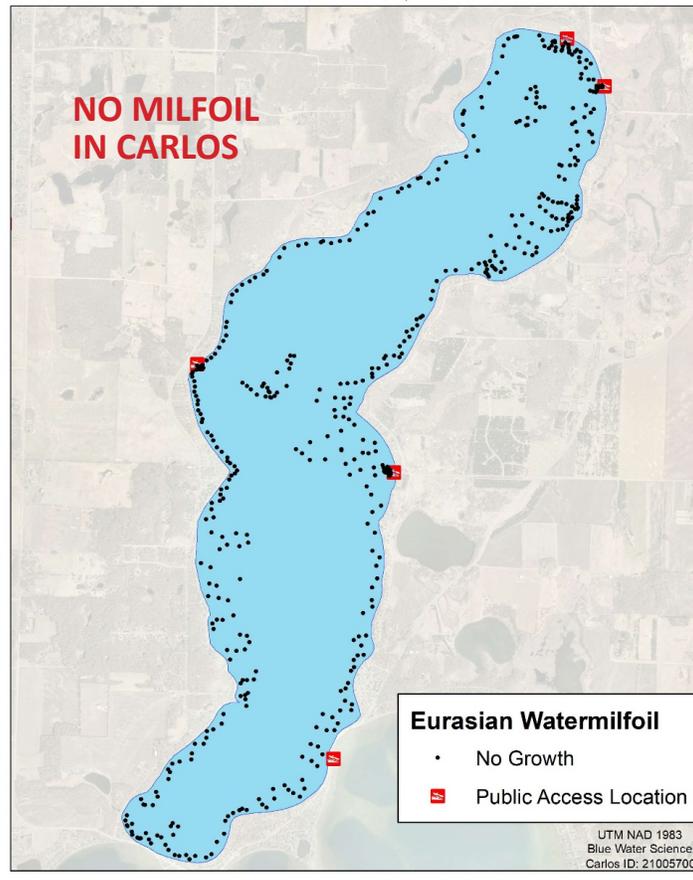
LAKE CARLOS SURVEY

For the third consecutive year, LCAA has conducted a lake survey to determine the existence of Eurasian Milfoil and other invasive species. **No areas of infestation of Eurasian Milfoil were found this summer from the recently completed survey.**

In 2021, three small areas of Eurasian Milfoil were identified and treated. These three areas were sampled again this year to ascertain the effectiveness of last year's treatment. The results showed that the Milfoil had been eradicated.

LCAA will continue yearly monitoring of Lake Carlos for invasive species, and if detected, will take action to curb and eradicate any growth.

Lake Carlos Eurasian Watermilfoil Growth
June 14-15, 2022



DIM YOUR BRIGHT "WHITE" SECURITY LIGHTS

One of the joys of living on the lake is to be able to walk down to the dock at night and look at the stars. The serenity of lake life can be ruined if you or your neighbor has a bright white security light.

We continue to have a few property owners with these "white" security lights. Neighbors, and those residents across the lake that are impacted by this light pollution, have contacted LCAA for help. We are trying to get this problem resolved. The County and City may engage with a new ordinance if need be.

If you have a bright "white" security light, please get a "shade" to reduce light pollution or contact your electrical contractor and get a light that is not "white".

NEW "RIPRAP" REGS

Douglas County Commissioners approved a new zoning ordinance in December, 2021. According to Dave Rush, Douglas County Land and Resource Director, amendments were added to address issues related to land alteration adjacent to lakes and rivers, which can negatively impact water quality and habitat. The following provisions are now part of the ordinance:

- Natural rock "riprap" may be allowed in situations where active erosion exists. It shall only be used for the stabilization of an active erosion problem and must be consistent with MN DNR standards.
- Riprap may be placed within the lakeshore use area (where dock, beach, deck patio, or other amenities are located) comprising not more than twenty-five percent of the length of the owner's shoreline.
- Riprap may be permitted for use outside the lakeshore use area to address active lakeshore erosion if the standards outlined in the county ordinance are met. (see Douglas County Shoreland Ordinance revisions – Natural Rock Riprap and Clearing.)

The Ordinance raises basic policies to encourage lakeshore owners to appreciate the best way to protect our lakes. Development puts a lot of pressure on the lake causing run-off problems and resulting pollution. Please note the following:

- The combination of riprap and vegetation together can help stabilization while maintaining the benefits of runoff prevention.
- Lakeshore needs a natural shoreline with erosion protection. This allows a filter to prevent pollution from entering the water.
- Green lawn extended to the lakeshore is not healthy for the lake.
- Fertilizers, even without phosphorus, and the use of herbicides and pesticides can drain into the lake. Planting a buffer strip not only stabilizes the shoreline but provides this natural filtration.

Homeowners must apply for permits, which include a detailed plan applying for lakeshore alterations.



CONCERN ABOUT SEWER PLANT “IN-LAKE” DISCHARGE

LCAA remains concerned about wastewater discharge. Drainage from the sewer plant goes into Lake Winona and from there flows downstream through Lakes Agnes, Henry, and then into LeHommeDieu and Carlos.

Though the Alexandria Lakes Area Sanitary District (ALASD) was created to benefit the lakes by providing central wastewater collection, the downside is that the discharge is directed back into the lakes. With ALASD, septic systems around the lakes were no longer necessary, thereby reducing pollution. Unfortunately, the wastewater discharge into the lakes, with our ever-increasing population and volume of discharge, causes pollution that continues to be a serious problem.

LCAA and the LeHommeDieu Association are encouraging ALASD to consider alternatives to in-lake wastewater discharge. With respect to this issue, the ALASD Wastewater plant is not in compliance with state and federal environmental laws.

Sewer plant discharge is a serious concern for our community and in particular for the lakes impacted with the wastewater. Unfortunately, “in-lake” discharge was started many years ago and the lake associations will continue to monitor the situation and press ALASD to rethink “in-lake” discharge.

RESEARCH ON WAKE-SURFING IMPACTS:

Wake surfing has grown substantially in recent years. The sport relies on boats that move relatively slowly but churn up large wakes that a person surfs on a shortboard without the use of a towrope.

Two years ago, the MN State Legislators proposed a ruling that wake surfers need to stay 200 feet from shores and other boats/docks, based on research commissioned by the Water Sports Industry Association.

Last fall, University of Minnesota researchers launched a study of wakes created by recreational boats, hoping to provide insight into their impact on Minnesota lakes and shorelines. The researchers will try to address concerns that wake surfing waves can damage property, erode shorelines, and churn up lakebeds, while disrupting fish habitat.

As reports are produced and regulations considered by government agencies, LCAA will share information with membership to make our recommendations as lakeshore residents.



LAKE LIFE TIPS

JET SKI REGULATIONS

- Jet skis must operate at closed throttle (no wake speed) when within 150 feet of a dock, shoreline, swimmer, raft, or a non-motorized or anchored watercraft or through emergent or floating vegetation.
 - Operation is allowed between the hours of 9:30 a.m. and 1 hour before sunset.
 - Life jackets must be worn.
 - No one under 13 years old may operate a PWC and those under 18 must have a permit or be accompanied by an adult.
- The “no wake” regulations apply to jet skis too. 300 hundred feet from the lake shore including channel areas.

WAKEBOARD OPERATION

- Stay to the center of a body of water, and avoid narrow channels or thoroughfares, if possible.
- Always stay at least 150’ away from shorelines (300 feet during “no wake” restrictions), docks, or fixed objects.
- Respect the shoreline and leave immediately and graciously if the property owner requests it.
- Avoid “working a shoreline,” in which repeated runs bombard the shoreline with waves.
- When possible, present the non-surfing side of the wakeboard boat to the closest shoreline.
- Avoid gradual turns close to shore.

BRIDGE AND CHANNEL ETIQUETTE

- Take turns in the channels – 3 Boats Max
- Alternating in groups of 3 makes for pleasant travel.

PADDLE BOARDING AND MINNESOTA LAW

- There must be a United States Coast Guard approved life jacket, either worn or on board, for each person.
- Children younger than 10 years old must “wear” a properly fitted lifejacket.
- After sunset, you must at least carry a white lantern or flashlight. This light should be strong enough so that other boats can see it at least two miles away. The light must be displayed in time to avoid a collision with another watercraft.
- Registration is required if your paddleboard is more than 10 feet long. Place the registration decals on the front of the paddleboard if possible. If not, place both decals on the back of the paddleboard.

RIDING ON THE FRONT OF A PONTOON

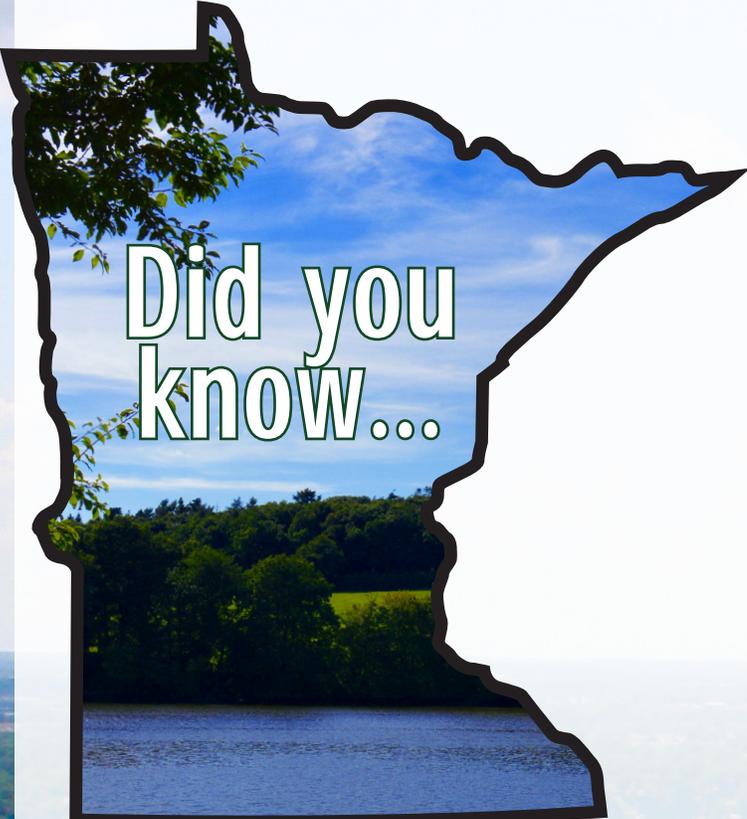
- Do not let “dangling legs” hang in the water when the pontoon is moving forward. The potential of being flipped into the water could result in a run-over with tragic results. It is against the law.

PHOSPHORUS LAWN FERTILIZER LAW

- This law was enacted to reduce over-enrichment of rivers, lakes and wetlands with the nutrient phosphorus. Excessive phosphorus in surface water leads to an overabundance of algae and other aquatic plants.
- Look for the middle number when buying fertilizer. A zero in the middle means phosphorus-free fertilizer.

SWIMMER’S ITCH TIPS

- Swimmer’s itch – a condition that leaves red marks on the skin, similar to a mosquito.
- The cause – By the immature life stage of several flat worms, or “flukes” which are parasites from a variety of birds, waterfowl and even muskrats.
- Solutions – Avoid swimming or wading in shallow water near shore, towel off immediately, don’t swim on days when there is an on-shore breeze
- Pharmacies – All Alexandria pharmacies sell a swimmer’s itch cream.



Did you know...

Douglas county
has 139 lakes

Otter Tail County
most lakes (1048)

Portsmouth Mine Pit Lake
deepest lake at 450 ft.

883 lakes in metro area

Cleanest lake
Caribou Lake

Saltiest lake
Salt Lake

Lake with most fish
Red Lake

Most lakeshore
Lake Vermillion

There were several Indian
Settlements on our chain

There were Indian mounds
On 3 sites on Lake LHD

Biggest lakes
1st Lake Superior
2nd Lake of the Woods

Most common lake name
Mud Lake (261)

More than 90,000 miles
shoreline
(more than CA, HI & FL
combined)

Only 4 of 87 counties
have no lakes



The Chain of Lakes

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even on the lake.***