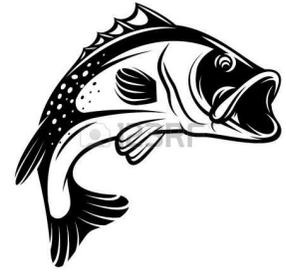




Mission Lakes Association

Spring 2018



Dear Neighbors,

It is spring, spring, spring! The ice is off the lake, the birds are singing, and the grass is greening. This is what we live for! Lake property owners have immediate access to the beauty of nature, and we all are called to be good stewards of this gift.

As we have stated in past annual letters, we continue to battle aquatic invasive species (AIS), and according to the lake association board records, we've been waging this battle for over 16 years. The two species that have invaded Upper and Lower Mission Lakes are Curly-leaf pondweed (CLP) and Eurasian Watermilfoil (EWM). We cannot eradicate these weeds, but we can, with your help, manage them. To date, no veligers which are the immature Zebra mussels, have been found in either lake. Tom and Alex Janochoski, volunteers from the Upper Lake, have been testing for this for the past few years. Ron Hedlund, Nick Bernier and other volunteers will map the AIS patches this year as they have in the past. This will allow the board to determine where the greatest needs are for treatment.

Here is the part you need to know... No money is available from the DNR to combat the AIS in our lakes. The county grants up to \$4,000 per lake for EWM treatment. No money is available to treat CLP from either entity. Your association dues and contributions underwrite our efforts. It costs up to \$1200 per acre to treat depending on size of weed bed and depth. There are many acres of weeds in the Mission lakes.

Curly-leaf pondweed and Eurasian Watermilfoil are the greatest threat to our lakes. Uninhibited growth of these AIS would eventually render the lakes unusable for any recreational purpose. Our beloved waters could not support all the things we do now and want to continue into the future for ourselves and for our heirs. In practical terms, the value of our properties would also suffer. We all are the solution to keeping our lakes viable. Each and every one of us is an integral piece of the Mission Lakes collaboration.

Membership in the Mission Lakes Association is not compulsory, but we encourage you to consider becoming a member if you are not already one. We also hope that you might consider contributing additional funds to help mitigate the damage done by AIS. By joining the Adopt-an-Acre program and donating a suggested \$300, you will significantly contribute to the treatment for an acre of AIS. Any donated amount to secure the health of the Mission Lakes is greatly appreciated. Another way to help is to volunteer for various tasks on and around the lakes. Contact Nick Bernier at 218-765-3387, if you are interested.

Page 2 of this letter outlines DNR rules for draining bait containers to safeguard against introducing aquatic invasive species to the waters of the Upper and Lower Mission Lakes. Please remember to follow these guides and to remind visitors to do the same.

Thank you for your care of these precious natural resources. Together, we can keep the Mission Lakes beautiful for future generations.

The Board of Directors of the Mission Lakes Association

**Please join us for our annual Mission Lakes Association meeting at 9:30 on Saturday, May 26, 2018.
Center Township Hall, 24491 County Road 19, Merrifield, MN 56465.**

Q & A: Boat Draining, Drain Plugs, and Bait Container Draining (This is a portion of the rule. A more complete explanation is available on the DNR website)

Q. What does the 2012 version of the “Drain Plug” law require?

A. The 2010 Minnesota Legislature passed a boat draining law that took effect on July 1, 2010. This law was created to reduce the risk of boaters spreading fish diseases (e.g., VHS) and life stages of aquatic invasive species (e.g., spiny waterfleas and zebra mussel larvae) that are not easily observed or detectable in water and could be transported to other waters. Often new infestations are not detected immediately, so there are risks of transporting water from **all waters** including from those in other states. In 2011 and 2012, the law was modified (Minnesota Statutes, 84D.10, Subd. 4) and as of July 1, 2012 it currently states,
(a) When leaving waters 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 off the water access site or riparian property.
(b) Drain plugs, bailers, valves, or other devices used to control the draining of water from ballast tanks, bilges, and live wells must be removed or opened while transporting water-related equipment.

Q. What do people need to do with water in bait containers?

A. *The law requires all water to be drained from portable bait containers before leaving the water access or riparian property including bait containers that haven't been placed in lake or river water.*

Q. Do the drain plugs need to be removed from pontoons on pontoon boats?

A. *No, pontoons are air holding compartments and not intended to hold water. Plugs do not need to be removed from pontoons when transported, unless they are damaged and contain water.*

Q. How long do the drain plugs need to be removed?

A. *Drain plugs must be removed and water draining valves or devices in watercraft must be open the entire time that a watercraft is being transported. The one exception is for emergency response vehicles, such as boats used by law enforcement officers, only after the boats are drained.*

Q. What should personal watercraft operators do to expel water from the impellers?

A. *Personal watercraft operators should turn on the engine for 5 to 10 seconds after removing the watercraft from the water to expel the water and organisms inside the impeller.*

Q. Are there exceptions for boats that are difficult to drain?

A. *The DNR is aware that many different drain plug locations and styles exist, as well as assorted draining systems for livewells and ballast tanks. Even with those differences, all boats are subject to the law and there are no provisions in the law to allow waivers for specific boats or types of boats. Boaters with unique drain plug locations or other difficult draining situations are encouraged to consult with their local marine dealer or a local boat repair shop to resolve those situations by installing alternate drain plugs or valves.*

Q. If a boat does not have a drain plug can you get a ticket for not removing it?

A. *No, there is not a state law that requires a drain plug. Boats must still be drained if there is no drain plug (e.g., using pumps, sponges, or turning over small boats and canoes)*