

# Big Marine Lake Association

12614 182<sup>nd</sup> St. N. Marine on St Croix, MN 55047



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NEWSLETTER

RICH BURTON, EDITOR

## Message from the Board

### **EWM NEWS**

Celebrating good BMLA news is pretty insignificant compared to the daily news cycle. However, we do have good news at this time. Jeff Dahlberg and Brad Bergo surveyed BML for EWM in mid-May and couldn't find any EWM in the spots treated in 2019 and previous years. The first thought was that maybe it was too early in the season. Then Jeff, Brad and Mike Blehert repeated the survey of the entire lake (except for the east bay which has only been spot treated in the past years) on May 31. This survey timing corresponds to initial surveys in past years.

On May 31, only four small spots of EWM were found in or near the areas treated in 2019 and other areas treated in previous years. One spot is on the west shore of the main lake at the entrance to the north bay, another spot was by the Girl Scout Camp main beach, and two spots were west and southwest of the island. Most encouraging of all is that the four spots were small, under 0.5 acres total. EWM was rare to none in the 8.2 acres treated last year with Procellacor, in about 1.5 acres of small spots treated by the BMLA, and rare to none in most of the 2.4 acres treated with Diquat August 30, 2019. As previously reported, Diquat is a contact herbicide that was applied to kill the EWM green fronds (leafy structure) and rootlets. Rootlets are the primary method EWM employs to spread. Killing the fronds in late summer stops photosynthesis in the months prior to winter. Since EWM grows under the ice, it was hoped that the EWM rootballs would then starve and die due to lack of that photosynthesis normally generated by the fronds. This seemed to be confirmed by the fact that the only EWM raked up in the May surveys in almost all of the small spots treated with Diquat were a few small limp mostly brown pieces from the bottom of the lake. WHAT DO THE EXPERTS SAY? Mike Blehert talked to Steve McComas (Bluewater Science Consultant) and Patrick Selter (of PLM, our licensed herbicide applicator). Both complimented the BMLA, saying that our lake association has been on the water and knows the lake and that the 2020 survey results so far prove that our aggressive approach has beaten the odds. They suggested waiting until late June to map the EWM

treatment areas. Neither thought that the relatively few brown and brownish green limp strands of EWM in some of the areas would take root, but we probably won't know for sure until mid-July or August.

At the end of 2019 Jeff and Mike Blehert mapped an estimated worst case scenario of 4.43 acres of EWM in 2020. That estimate was based on the assumption that Diquat might not work and that some new patches of EWM would pop up. If fall 2019 treatments were about 50% effective, the nominal estimate for 2020 treatment was 2 to 3.5 acres. Based on this estimate and a survey done by Steve McComas on 6/26/2020, a best guess is 3 to 4 acres to be treated in 2020.

Our goal was to reduce EWM to less than 10 acres by the end of 2019 **WAS MET AND EXCEEDED!**

### **MORE GOOD NEWS**

Additional good news came in a message from the Carnelian Marine St. Croix Watershed District:

"Congratulations! At the April 8, 2020 regular meeting the CMSCWD Board of Managers approved your request for cost share not to exceed \$3,561 for your continued treatment of Eurasian Water Milfoil on Big Marine Lake. The Managers also thanked the Lake Association for their exemplary efforts.

Additionally, Board Managers approved a 2020 Boat Ramp Inspection agreement with the Washington Conservation District for a total not to exceed \$23,000 (\$15,000 from CMSCWD levy funding and \$8,000 from partners). The remaining 2020 funds of \$5,182 are planned to be held in reserve for future rapid response efforts when needed."

### **IDENTIFYING EWM**

Another issue to mention is that there are people reluctant to support the BMLA because they think they are seeing too much EWM in BML. The fact is that what is likely being seen is not EWM but BML's normal healthy native vegetation. The east bay in particular, because of its average shallower depth, has always been subject to occasional floating clumps of vegetation which can interfere with boat propellers and water recreational activities. These floating clumps are in no way the kind of dense propeller-stalling mess you will experience with a patch of EWM. If you see patches of vegetation which you

think are a problem, please report it to a Board member. We will check it out to confirm whether or not it is EWM.

What is attempting to be said here is that our surveys find EWM, we treat EWM, and we have been successful in minimizing EWM. We would be glad to take anyone on a tour and show them EWM.

### **FISH KILL**

Numerous BML folks have questioned the proliferation of dead “keeper-size” blue gills and crappies which have appeared along the shoreline this spring. A story connected to this was covered by a Star Tribune article in 2015 and confirmed by the DNR this year. The 2015 article is attached to the 20200630 newsletter e-mailing. For those who still do receive the newsletter by U.S. Mail, here is a brief summary of what this is all about:

#### From the DNR:

DNR researchers visited Big Marine in mid-May and picked up some fish from an angler who called in a fish kill report. The specimens were brought into the DNR Fisheries Pathology lab. Here is the response from the lab:

*Definitely dealing with columnaris. The gills were loaded with the bacteria. We also isolated Aeromonas hydrophila from the gills and kidney but in this case Aeromonas would be a secondary bacteria to columnaris in this case.*

Fish kills are pretty common this time of year and are usually due to this bacteria called columnaris. It's nature's way of thinning out the population and at times can contribute to a healthier population.

#### From the Carnelian Marine St. Croix Watershed District:

Mike Isensee of the CMSCWD is 99% sure this is a “natural fish kill” given the species of fish involved. The exact bacteria that causes the kill is Columnaris... an infection that affects fish. The water temperatures are warming up and the bacteria becomes very active this time of year because fish are in close proximity to each other. We have had rapidly warming water temperatures coupled with many of these species either finishing spawning or currently spawning (making them more vulnerable) throughout the Upper Midwest.

#### From a BML lakeshore property owner:

We called the DNR about it today. They were well aware of the problem and said there are 25 lakes in the metro area experiencing this. They said it's not due to a chemical spill or anything. Because we had a couple hot days, the fish came to the shallow water. Then we had heavy rains. The deluge washed fertilizers newly applied to the lawns into the lake, which, coupled with the bacterial issue, killed the fish in the shallows. They said it's a common problem.

#### From another BML lakeshore property owner:

This spring we had a huge panfish die off. One day we picked up over 120. We usually have Sunnies under our

panfish limits on metro-area lakes highly impacted by fish kill.

### **BMLA SUCCESS**

Last fall the Initiative Foundation did a story on the BMLA regarding the success in our EWM work funded by the IF. Here's the link to the story:

<https://www.ifound.org/community/aquatic-invasive-species/>

Just click on “read more” in the cover photo to get the entire report by scrolling down to “Carnelian-Marine-St. Croix Watershed District.”

On 6/24/2020, John Sumption of the IF told Mike Bleher: I read the 2020 survey results email that was distributed earlier—very impressive. The population (EWM) is now down to the point where annual treatment will be much less expensive and time consuming. Again, you've done a superb job. Don (Don Hickman, IF VP) and I did a presentation for MNCOLA (Minnesota Coalition of Lake Associations) yesterday and lauded your project as one of our brightest success stories.

docks by now but not so this year. I've lived on the lake for over 38 years.

Status: A notice was sent to the BMLA e-mail list asking for comments on a proposal by the DNR for smaller

### **Our Neighbors**

Many of you may already know the manager of the Veteran's Camp, Ken Larson, but here are some facts about him in case you didn't have the pleasure of meeting

him yet. If you haven't met him, put doing so on your bucket list!!

Ken served in the Army National Guard from 1977-1994. He started coming to Big Marine Lake in 1973 with his grandpa and enjoyed many visits with his second cousins who owned the Shady Birch Resort. What he has always loved about Big Marine is that it is such a nice clean lake (and great ICE FISHING). It was Ken's wife who first brought him to the Vet's Camp in 1978. He had thought the place was nothing more than an old farmhouse. Little did he know that he would be on the board of directors for 10 years (beginning around 2002) and then go on to become the manager of the entire camp!

Thanks to Ken's amazing leadership, grants from the State of Minnesota and donations from various organizations, the camp has been extensively remodeled and has come a long way from its inception in 1926! It is now a year-round facility( with HEATED cabins for rent (for those who love ICE FISHING)! Since Ken took over as manager, the annual number of visitors to the camp has soared from 3000 to over 32,000! There are 156 RV sites at the camp. More changes are still coming!! The camp does appreciate its neighbors, so if you would like to visit the camp or cantina, you may use Ken's name as a sponsor when you sign in. There will be live music outdoors in July!!! If you wish to come by boat, please call and talk to Ken first to be sure that he has dock space available.

PS: Ken has 2 sons, 1 daughter. 😊😊



Ken at the Vet's Camp

## **BMLA WEBSITE**

**Website:** [BigMarine.org](http://BigMarine.org)

**Check it out!**

**The website is a source for past newsletters, BMLA Board Meeting minutes, notes on AIS-related conferences, AIS descriptions, AIS news articles, and more.**

**E-mail:** [bigmarinelakeassociation@gmail.com](mailto:bigmarinelakeassociation@gmail.com)

this total, membership dues have been received from 133. Membership in 2019 was 158.

Please send your membership dues donations (minimum suggested annual donation is \$50) to the BMLA – 12614 182<sup>nd</sup> St. N. Marine, MN 55047. We thank everyone who has been a BMLA member in past years and who has already donated for 2020.

Once again, if you have not paid your membership, please do so. **Your support is needed!**

## **Events**

No Board meetings are scheduled until later notice.

## **Mailings**

**PLEASE NOTE!!** In this day of modern communication there are still 100 people on the BMLA mailing list who receive BMLA communications by U.S. Mail. We hope those on the U.S. Mail list will help to reduce this added workload and unnecessary expense by doing one of the following:

- 1) Provide your e-mail address by sending an e-mail to [richardburtonmn@gmail.com](mailto:richardburtonmn@gmail.com).
- 2) Advise that you prefer to be removed from the mailing list.

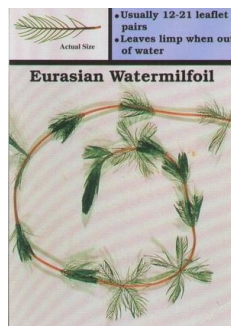
Keep in mind that part of the mission of the BMLA is to keep people educated and informed. And, that is what our various communications attempt to do. It should be important to you and to the local public in general to know what is happening with a prime valuable resource, Big Marine Lake. Meaning: We certainly hope that you continue to want to receive BMLA communications. Whether you are a BMLA member or not, we want to keep you informed.

## **Membership**

At this time, our BMLA mailing list is made up of a total of about 290 lakeshore property owners, lake users who reside close to the lake, and other interested parties. Of

## Mission Statement

The purpose of the Big Marine Lake Association is to educate, inform, and unite BML lakeshore property owners, those with neighborhood private lake access rights, and other concerned parties in an effort to monitor, identify, control, and (if possible) eradicate problematic aquatic invasive species in the waters of the lake.



## BMLA Officers

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