

Big Marine Lake Association

12636 182nd St. N. Marine on St Croix, MN 55047



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NEWSLETTER

RICH BURTON, EDITOR

Message from the Board

Since the Washington Conservation District (WCD) has been mentioned in recent BMLA communications, more explanation is in order. WCD is a special purpose local unit of government created in 1942 to protect and conserve natural resources in Washington County. The WCD is a Soil and Water Conservation District per State Statutes 103C and has an elected board. It does not have its own taxing authority. Funding comes from a variety of sources: Federal, State, County, and local. Currently, around 60% of funding comes from local partnerships (mostly with Watershed Organizations), 20% from the County, and 20% from the State. This funding varies from year to year. The total budget is a little over \$2.2 million with a focus on providing technical and educational services as well as financial incentives to implement voluntary conservation practices. Main program areas are Watershed and WCD Administration (two watershed administrators are employees of the WCD), Water Monitoring, Education/Outreach, Planning and Prioritization, Conservation Technical Assistance, Invasive Species Management, and BMP (Best Management Practices) Maintenance.

The County received \$140,000 in funding in 2020 from the State for Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) work. Of this, WCD was granted almost \$75000. It was spent on education and outreach (\$5000); inspection (\$50000); rapid response (\$4500); enforcement, oversight, and other areas (\$13000). Parking stalls at public accesses dictate how inspection \$ are allocated. Inspection is done per a formal agreement between Carnelian Marine St. Croix Watershed District (CMSCWD) and WCD. Total inspection hours completed by WCD were 1115 at BML. A grant from CMSCWD to WCD covered 500 hours of added inspection at BML. A portion of these added hours was covered by a donation by BMLA of \$2500 which CMSCWD matched. For 2021 funding to WCD from CMSCWD (including the 2021 match from BMLA) could cover about 350 hours of inspection more than in 2020 – estimated 1450 hours total.

All watercraft inspections for AIS at public accesses within Washington County are done under the auspices of WCD.

Inspectors must be authorized. The only way a person can be a volunteer inspector is to be trained by the DNR to become an “AIS Ambassador” (AA). A negative of AA volunteers is that they cannot be overseen by the WCD. Also, an AA does not have authority to prevent a watercraft from launching. Oversight is necessary for the WCD to be able to track hours worked, schedule work hours, and collect data. Another option for a private individual to do inspection is to train with WCD to be a paid inspector. The problem in that case is that assignments cannot be guaranteed to always be at BML public accesses. Conclusion: Volunteering to be an inspector by a person representing the BMLA is not just a matter of going to a BML public access and looking for AIS on watercraft.

Further details about WCD are:

Countywide local unit of government in Washington County responsible for conducting water quality monitoring on lakes and streams; educating and assisting landowners in installing lake-improvement projects like shoreline plantings and raingardens; conducting watercraft inspections in Washington County and public education about AIS.

East Metro Water Resource Education Program: Angie Hong, 651-330-8220 Ext.35, angie.hong@mnwcd.org
www.mnwcd.org/emwrep

Watercraft inspections and lake monitoring: Matt Downing, 651-330-8220
Ext.29, matt.downing@mnwcd.org

The East Metro Lakes Network conducts workshops and publishes information on such things as shoreline protection through their Water Resource Education Program.

Eurasian Water Milfoil (EWM)

The maximum AIS treatment area the DNR permits in any lake is 15% . For those concerned about the effects of herbicides on fish and plant life in the lake, we have seen no obvious negative effects due to treatment in BML. Surveys done by the DNR every year or so have found BML native plants to be extremely healthy. A healthy lake is

one with at least 12 species of native plants, BML has at

least 28. The fact we have reduced treatment from as much a 40 acres (0.2 % of BML area) to under 5 acres has dramatically reduced any possible negative impact of herbicides. Dilution is the solution.

Membership

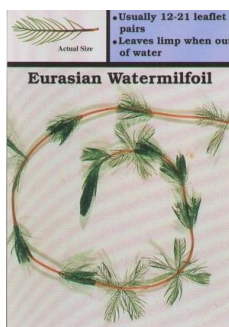
Please help keep Big Marine Lake the continuing jewel it is! Join the BMLA! Membership donations fund important AIS projects for our lake and help us connect with our neighbors and our community. The more members we have, the stronger our voice and the more that can be accomplished. Whether you live on the lake or just want to be a supporter of it, you are welcome to join.

The BMLA is a non-profit State of Minnesota 501c(3) organization. Donations are tax-deductible for federal income taxes.

Membership donations should be sent to the BMLA – 12636 182nd St. N. Marine, MN 55047. Thanks to everyone who has donated already for 2021. But, many more donations are needed. As was the case for 2020, the suggested minimum donation is \$50.

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.



Our Neighbor

Brad Bergo has been a resident of BML for 33 years. He has been an active member of the BMLA Board since the BMLA's inception in 2009. Brad has helped on the AIS survey team, leads cleanup of the ice before ice-out as winter ends, and has put in time at each of our BMLA garage sales. One of his pleasures of being on the lake is fishing. The following photo shows him with a catch (and release) last December just after the ice was thick enough.



BMLA WEBSITE

Website: BigMarine.org

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

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