

# Lake Detroiters

## ASSOCIATION

Spring 2003

**Annual Meeting: Sat. June 7 9:30 a.m.**

**SPEAK EASY RESTAURANT - 1100 North Shore Drive**

**Coffee, juice and rolls will be served!**

**Mission statement:** The Lake Detroiters Association shall have as its overall purpose, the promotion, education, beautification and protection of the water quality of Big and Little Detroit Lakes, including waters running into and therefrom. This nonprofit Association shall work to monitor and report water quality conditions, as well as participate as a member of the Becker County Coalition of Lake Associations. The Lake Detroiters Association supports the city and county enforcement of laws, ordinances and regulations.

**2002-2003 Board of Directors:**

President: Judy Stowman 847-6570

Vice President: Bob Nelson 847-7539

Secretary: Bev Dobrenski - 847-4760

Treasurer: Gina Blake 847-0958

COLA rep: Gene Bamby 847-5164 and Jim Langemo 847-1227

Board Members: Dick Champion, Becky DeProe, Kim Fuhs, Dave Gohman,

Ginny Imhoite, Scott Melhaff, Ed VanHal

**You are represented on the**

City of Detroit Lakes Planning Commission

Becker County Planning Commission

Pelican River Watershed District

Becker County Coalition of Lakes Associations

**Where you dues money goes:**

COLA membership dues (\$3 each)

Becker County Dive and Rescue

Water Testing

Various beautification projects around the lake

**Please plan to attend this important meeting. Your lake association needs your input!**

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### **Governor's Fishing Opener**

Detroit Lakes is the host community for the 2003, 55th annual Governor's Fishing Opener. Our new Governor, Tim Pawlenty is looking forward to being a part of this annual event that celebrates fishing in Minnesota as well as kicking off a fun summer tourism season. Please visit the web site at [www.mngovernorsopener.com](http://www.mngovernorsopener.com) for details of the 3-day event. Click on the bobbers on the home page for information.

As a part of the celebration, the public is invited to a "Community Parade and Picnic" on Friday, May 9, 2003 from 4:00 - 7:30 p.m. Everyone is invited to attend and celebrate the Governor's Fishing Opener by attending the community picnic to be held at the City Park on the Shore of Detroit Lake. Children's activities, entertainment, a short parade and a free picnic dinner is planned. Governor Pawlenty is scheduled to participate. Help celebrate our kick-off to summer -- mom's, dad's, kids, teens and Grandma and Grandpa, too!

### **Highway 10 Redevelopment**

Is the Highway 10 Realignment still a possibility due to the large budget deficit? How does this project affect us as property owners and the water quality of Big and Little Detroit? First, yes, the Highway 10 project will happen. The time frame is up in the air due to the budget. However, due to the fact that a lot of the initial planning has already been completed, Highway 10 has been recommended as a priority by MNDOT. If the governor's bonding bill becomes reality, construction will begin in 2004. If not, construction could stretch into 2012 or beyond.

The Highway 10 project will provide a wonderful opportunity for the city of Detroit Lakes to beautify the corridor from Highway 59 to East Shore Drive and eliminate the curve through downtown. This development will also require changes to be made to the drainage plan. The Pelican River Watershed has been working with MNDOT to make sure the current situation of direct run-off is eliminated. The final plans are not completed at this time. If you have an opportunity, please thank Tera Guetter and

## STREET PICK UP OF WEEDS 2003

Street pickup of washed up lake weeds begins after June 2, 2003. The Pelican River Watershed District will pick up early in the week - perhaps on Monday. On calm days, the priority will be to have the employees running harvester machines. Place weed piles *well off the road and bike path*, where a bobcat can easily pick them up.

## DUNTON RAPIDS

The paved path to Dunton Rapids is now complete all the way from the bowling alley to the fish hatchery. This is such an enjoyable walk, run, roller blade or bike ride along the Pelican River. Watch for the Blue Heron rookery in the old elm trees north of the river, listen for the trumpeter swans, watch for snapping turtles laying eggs, check out the naturalized landscape at Dunton Rapids. This short pathway is a true treasure connecting Little Detroit to Muskrat, Sallie and Fox Lake Drives. ENJOY!

## AQUATIC PLANT HARVESTING

Ginny Inhulte, PRWD board member 847-4236

The Pelican River Watershed Project 1-C covers aquatic plant harvesting and related activities within Big and Little Detroit Lakes and in Curfman/Danaholm Bay. The 2003 levy is set at \$74,900.

\$6,212 will offset the past land deficit.

\$4,000 is earmarked for a possible Flowering Rush herbicide spraying program.

\$19,000 covers equipment usage, fuel, repairs.

\$34,000 covers harvesting wages.

\$10,688 covers office, insurance, permits, engineering/levy preparation.

There are no additional dollars for equipment replacement.

High repair costs are anticipated in the next years. Most equipment is aging.

The deficit resulted from the dramatic increased harvesting activity without an accompanying levy increase during years 1998-2000.

A spraying permit has been applied for from the DNR for Flowering Rush. The most appropriate new herbicide, Imazapyr, now has EPA approval and awaits approval from the State of MN for use in the public waters of the state. If permitted, test plots will be chosen in summer 2004 to assess the effectiveness of chemical control of Flowering Rush.

The DNR permits allow harvesting of Flowering Rush in order to control the spread of an exotic plant. All other emergent plants (reeds and cattails) are protected. Another exotic, Curlyleaf Pondweed has been harvested in May before the vegetative are released and throughout June when it floats around the lake.

Northern Mollusks also float into mats June 28th and August 8th.

Harvesting of nuisance submerged vegetation from June 7 - August 31 is intended to increase lake usage for boat navigation, swimming and fishing.

Aesthetics is not a criteria for a harvest permit. Harvesting is restricted to 3 - 8 foot of water.

Char. a heavy bottom algae cannot be cut and lifted by the current equipment.



## SUCKER CREEK PRESERVE UPDATE by Sally Hausken

"The mission of the board of Detroit Lakes, Minnesota's Sucker Creek Preserve is to restore, preserve and maintain the native biodiversity of Sucker Creek Preserve for the education and enjoyment of all visitors."

Two years ago, the City of Detroit Lakes added a new dimension to their park system with the acquisition of 61.24 acres of natural woods, a remnant of the post-glacial maple-basswood forest which wove through Minnesota, southeast to northwest.

Sucker Creek Preserve's circular parking lot will allow 3 buses, 6 cars and a handicapped vehicle. A handicapped accessible path will guide the visitor to a cul-de-sac at which will be an amphitheater built into the hillside.

Brochures at the entrance will free individuals to make a self-guided tour through the park's bounty. Groups of visitors will enjoy a backdrop of small meadow encased by woods as they sit at the amphitheater for a presentation on Minnesota's natural environment.

Total funds needed for restoration are estimated at \$175,300. A DNR Outdoor Recreation grant for 50% of the cost has been applied for. Outcome is expected sometime in June. The other 50% (\$87,650) is to be raised locally. As of now:

Cash on hand	\$ 29,220	
Accounts receivable	<u>6,200</u>	
Total cash		\$ 35,420
In-kind offers		27,080
Total match money		\$ 62,500
<b>Additional cash needed:</b>		<b>25,170</b>

Throughout the year, the Sucker Creek Preserve Committee has had welcome successes. Last summer Committee member Cy Brock and aspiring Eagle scout David Henke with supporters braved heat and humidity to forge a "perimeter" footpath. Winter 2002-2003, Northwest Tech's Civil Engineers under the instructorship of Bill Neuhauser created a sophisticated 10 page topographical map.

Sign committee text author, Janet Bee, and illustrator, Dana Emory met with Sally Hausken to launch ideas for fiberglass embedded as well as plant identification signs. The Committee's next meeting will be to review and select the various quotes.

Among committee members, momentum is there today! After July 1, restoration *will* begin. Contributions to **Sucker Creek Preserve Restoration** are welcomed and are tax deductible. Money can be sent to the City of Detroit Lakes, 1025 Roosevelt Avenue, Detroit Lakes, MN 56501.

Once restoration begins, we request your patience.

END

This would facilitate the use of equipment moving up and down the beaches picking up the weeds. The equipment needs about 10 feet of beach to accomplish this task. The homeowner need not move the dock. Call Lake Detroiters' Bob Nelson for questions: 847-7539

### **Pelican River Watershed Report:**

The 2002 Summary is available at the meeting or you may pick one up at the Watershed office.

PRWD revised its rules to incorporate a permit system. The substance of the rules (to protect lakes from further water quality damage) has not changed; however, the managers feel that a permit system is necessary in order to ensure that District rules are followed, and fairly and consistently applied.

Other major news for Lake Detroiters is that the District has entered into agreements with Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Agricultural Research Service, both agencies of the US Department of Agriculture. These agreements are aimed at pinpointing the origins of the nutrients which are discharges to Big Detroit from the huge wetland complex (known as Rice Lake). It is planned that the project would provide federal and cost-share funds for whatever costs are associated with controlling these nutrient discharges.

### ***WHY Join Lake Detroiters Association?***

Enclosed in this spring newsletter you will find an envelope, inviting you to join Lake Detroiters Association. If you haven't already joined us, please read on to see why it is important to do so and why the organization is worthy of your membership.

Formed in 1945, Lake Detroiters is one of the oldest organized lake groups in this area dedicated solely to maintaining the quality of life in and on the waters of Big and Little Detroit and Dead shot Bay. If you are fortunate enough to live on the lake, you have inherited a responsibility to maintain and oversee these beautiful waters and shoreline. As more vacationers and boats use these waters each year and as more development takes place in and around the lakes, the impact on the water quality is evident. There are more weeds in the lakes from phosphorous run-off, more shoreline erosion, more sediment coming into the lakes (making a more shallow lake, thus a warmer lake) and a host of issues concerning the lake.

Lake Detroiters Association concerns itself with these issues and addresses them. It works closely with the Pelican River Watershed District, the DNR and the Coalition of Lakes Association. This organization is here to represent the land owners of the lake shores and without your membership and input, representative voices cannot be heard.

Lake Detroiters Board of Directors meet once a month and each board member gives what time they can to make the organization successful. It is a moral commitment made on a personal level to ensure the quality of life of Detroit Lakes for now and for future generations.



Active Membership is \$20 per year; the Lake Detrainers Association Constitution and by-laws are being studied to include other possible types of memberships for those persons and businesses who are also concerned about the lake and would like to voice opinions to Lake Detrainers. There are only two general meetings per year : one Spring and one Fall Social. A Spring and Fall newsletter is sent to each of the 600-plus lake shore property owners, regardless of their being a paid member or not. You are not asked to work unless you choose to do so. You protect your property values by protecting your lake. You have a voice in your concerns regarding the lakes. You have available to you a variety of information such as: shoreline landscaping education, erosion control, water quality information, resources and answers to any question regarding lake living. Ask a Board Member!

### **MINI 'TO DO' LIST FOR LAKE PROTECTION AND ENJOYMENT**

#### **1. Practice good lawn maintenance -**

- Limit fertilizing. Use zero-phosphorus fertilizer and do not fertilize within 50 ft. of the lake.
- \* Keep grass clippings, leaves and pet waste out of the lake.
- \* Reduce or eliminate pesticide use on the lawn and garden.

#### **2. Maintain or establish a shoreline buffer zone of natural vegetation -**

- \* Buffers prevent erosion and infiltration of nutrients into the lake.
- \* Buffers should be a minimum of 30 feet.
- \* Encourage woody vegetation and tall grasses to stabilize the shoreline.
- \* Slow shoreline runoff with gentle sloping and terraced landscaping.

#### **3. Prevent the spread of exotics, such as Eurasian Watermilfoil and Mussels**

- \* Check your boat before and after launching in the water; encourage others at public accesses to do the same.

#### **4. Use phosphorus-free dish washing detergents -**

- \* Phosphorus from dishwasher detergents is a major contributor of phosphorus to Minnesota waste waters.
- \* Removing phosphorus at wastewater treatment plants is very costly for local communities.
- \* Available phosphorus-free dishwasher detergents: Basic D Dishwashing Concentrate (Shaklee), Bi-O-Kleen, Earth Friendly Wave, Ecover, Enviro-Links, Life Tree, President's Choice, Seventh Generation, Ultra Citra-Dish

#### **5. Be a safe boater -**

- \* Follow boating regulations and safety rules and respect the rights of others.

everyone at the Watershed who is working diligently to seize the opportunity to reduce direct flow of run-off into Detroit Lake.

Lastly, the residents of Detroit Lakes will benefit from the proposed frontage road which will allow access around the lake without driving on Highway 10. This will be accomplished by moving the entrance to East Shore Drive to the East of Petro Plus, demolishing Custaway Motel and narrowing the lanes of Highway 10 between East Shore Drive and the Holiday Inn.

### **NEWS: Bring Back the Lake Committee**

Over the past 15 years, Big Detroit Lake's north and west shorelines have become dramatically shallower. This is due to silt coming in through the inlet and from the sediment caused by decaying vegetation, uncontrolled landscaping (removing natural shoreline vegetation), and new housing development. Exacerbating the problem is a high amount of phosphorous in the water which is encouraging even more weed growth.

Some measures have been taken to improve the water quality, but water levels remain a serious concern. Even during recent years, where we have experienced high water levels, pleasure boaters, fisherman, and skiers have had to use extreme caution to prevent damaged props. This is particularly frustrating to visitors and those less familiar with the lake's varying depths. Again, the water levels have been relatively high, but the actual depth levels have reduced, due to increased sediment on the bottom of the lake.

The Lake Detroiters Association formed a formal committee last year and it is currently investigating possible solutions to restore the depth, one option they are considering is to dredge areas of the lake. They are looking to both association members and concerned citizens for other possible solutions. We encourage you to attend the annual meeting on June 7th. For your input in advance, please contact Edward Van Hal by e-mail, [edvanhal@dett.net](mailto:edvanhal@dett.net), or by phone, 701-277-5905. The current members of this committee are listed below:

Ed Van Hal  
Rob Kost  
Don Busker  
Robert Wood

### **Water craft "Rules of the Road" -- *do you know them?***

Minnesota's boating laws and regulations are contained in a comprehensive booklet entitled **Minnesota Boating Guide**. Details are explained for licensing, required equipment, general operation, safety tips and other important subjects. FREE copies are available at the Becker County Licensing Office, 821 Lake Avenue, Detroit Lakes.



**COALITION OF LAKES ASSOCIATION REPORT:** Training for Water Chemical Testing & Secchi Disk readings will be held Tuesday May 20 at 7:00 PM at Northwest Technical College. Testing & Secchi Disk readings are to start the first week in June and run through September. The Secchi Disk readings are used for a measurement of the algae in the water. Water Chemical Testing measures the nutrients in the water.

The word "Eutrophication" means too much/many nutrients. EUT=too much and trophic=food. When water becomes eutrophic there is an abundance of weed growth.

COLA web site can be found at: [www.mn.lakes.org/beckercola](http://www.mn.lakes.org/beckercola)

Lake Detroiters Association chose not to participate in "Restore the Shore" program this year; however, trees were picked up April 26th for those associations participating.

Becker County COLA continues to assist member lake associations in insuring proper development of lake shore, including variance, conditional use permits and zoning change (subdivision) applications. In 2002, COLA processed 70 public notices.

### **Pelican River Survey April 12, 2003**

A visual survey of the Pelican River was done from T. H. 34 to the inlet at Big Detroit Lake. The river travels through housing, a trailer park, the industrial park, businesses, from 8th Street to D.N.R.R., under US Hwy. 10, behind more businesses (Pamida, old A & T building, etc.) and additional residential areas until entering Big Detroit. There are box culverts which need attention to clean off trapped brush and debris. Plastic bottles, plastic bags, cans and a barrel were noted along the river. Most in need of cleaning up is from US Hwy. 10 to Corbet Road (behind Pamida and the old A & T building).

In conclusion, the amount of debris, etc., in the river was less than the author expected. Most of the channel has grass, cat tails or brush on the banks, which prevents most debris from flowing down into the lake. There are several areas that should be cleaned up and it would look much better.

### **North Shore Drive Beach Weed Removal:**

Summer prevailing winds come from the south, which blows many weeds to the north. Along with these 'extra' weeds, North Shore Drive residents cope with the exotic Curly Leaf Pond weed. This information is for those property owners who need to have weeds removed from their beaches on North Shore Drive. Last year, pick up was done once. If equipment and/or funds become available, it will be done again this year. It is suggested that docks be put in the lake so the sections touching the sand can be easily moved for the week pick up.