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Nelson Lake Association a 501(c)3 Non-profit Organization

2009 Annual Meeting

By Hank Koch



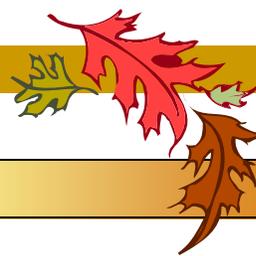
The Nelson Lake Association 27th Annual Meeting took place on June 13, 2009 at the Hayward Veterans Center in downtown Hayward. There were informational displays about the lake and association for the well attended meeting. Key note speaker Kristi Maki gave a very informative talk on Eurasian Milfoil, Curley Leaf Pond Weed and Purple Loosestrife. She brought samples of Natural Milfoil and Invasive Milfoil as well as Curley Leaf Pond weed, so everyone could see the difference.

Frank Pratt from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and a fish biologist and expert on walleye was also a speaker. Everyone was anxious to find out why the Walleye limit has been raised to 3 in possession instead of 2 like last year. He explained that the DNR has a formula that they go by that determines the limits and the formula for Nelson Lake showed that the limit should be raised to 3 for this year. Frank also stated that he cannot change this but did say that he may be able to protect the smaller size walleye for this year.

There were several board members/positions that were up for election, Bill Wilcox, Duane Arndt, Diane Cooper and Bob Terry. Luckily for the NLA they all agreed to stay on the board and serve another term and were all re-elected.

Keith Cottington was the lucky winner for the 50/50 Raffle.





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FROM THE PRESIDENT

by Bill Wilcox

My wife and I were driving back home across Nebraska this fall and since there wasn't much to see except a lot of corn rows and the 18 wheeler in front of us on the Interstate, it gave me some time to reflect back over all the activities of the Association this past year.

I began to think about all the people who had volunteered their time and energies in support of the annual meeting, the garage sale, the cook book sales, the gun raffle, the picnic, the silent auction, Winter Rama, fish stocking, water quality monitoring, shoreline inspections, boat launch inspections, swan banding, the newsletter, the membership drive, and keeping track of all the finances. That is a pretty impressive list and I suspect I have missed one or two. Those activities were only possible because of a long list of volunteers and I want to take this opportunity to say thanks to all of you who helped. I also want to say a special thanks to the resorts on Nelson Lake for the support they have given to the Association.

Now for a short update on two important risks to the lake:

- There were no new aquatic invasive species introduced into the lake last year and we will continue an active program of prevention and early detection.
- Sawyer County is attempting to hire a college student to conduct the septic survey on Nelson Lake during the summer of 2010. As more information is available we will share it.



Nelson Lake Goes Electronic

by Diane Cooper

This year, the Fall Nelson Lake Newsletter will be sent to members by e-mail as well as hard copy normal mail. We will also use e-mail to send out event announcements and other information. Eventually, we will not mail the newsletter to members that would like to receive it electronically to save on postage.

Please be sure to send your e-mail address to Casey Strangle at caseystangl@charter.net if you have e-mail and did not receive an e-mail notice. Please make sure if you change your e-mail address, you also send your update to Casey.

Visit our website at www.nelsonlakeassociation.org



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE by Harold Burton

During this past year several very important bills were passed into laws that will allow a better quality of water into Nelson Lake. In July GOV. Doyle signed a bill that designated the Totogatic River as a "Wild River" only the 5th river in Wisconsin to obtain that rating. This designation will protect the Totogatic River upstream from Nelson Lake by specifying what land and water activities may be done. On this same day SB12 was also made into law---known as the "Slow No Wake" it creates a statewide slow no wake law of any shoreline. This S-N-W law will prevent boating activities too close to shore which often contributes to erosion problems and reduces water clarity by stirring up sediments which often release phosphorus which causes Algae Bloom. On 04/17/09 Gov. Doyle signed into law "The Phosphorus Ban" regarding lawn fertilizer which prohibits the display, sale or use of fertilizer which contain phosphorus. Two other bills were passed concerning Invasive species---one deals with identification, classification and control of them. The second bill deals with the transportation of invasive species. With the previous it was only illegal to LAUNCH a boat with Invasive Species---with the new law it will be illegal to leave the lake/boat landing with-out removing invasive species. This new law allows ALL law enforcement officials to enforce this and to require the removal of all invasive species prior to further movement. For additional info concerning invasive species please Contact Kristy Maki---715-634-6463

FROM THE TREASURER By Casey Stangl



Membership:

This has been a very successful year for the NLA. We have 263 members this year, 43 of these members are new to the NLA. We wish to Thank all of you for your great support.

Financial:

At the end of the 2nd quarter, September 30, 2009, we have \$2,582.02 in the checking account and investments (Capitol One Money Market) of \$9,716.81. This gives us a total of \$12,298.83.

General Fund	\$10,272.30
Fish & Wildlife Fund	(\$685.08)
<u>Invasive Species Fund</u>	<u>\$2,711.61</u>
Total	\$12,298.83

The Fish & Wildlife Fund will get much healthier in October. The town of Lenroot will donate \$2,000.00 to the walleye fund.

I wish to thank all the members that made donations this year. The donations amounted to \$2,335.00. Having this many generous members makes my job of paying bills much easier.



Linda Welter of Nelson Lake Landing presents Casey Stangl with a check for \$2,000.00 for walleye stocking from the Nelson Lake Resort Owners Association.

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TRUMPETER SWANS

By Marlene Gavin

In 2004 three beautiful Trumpeter Swans came to Nelson Lake to spend the summer. The banded swans were identified by the DNR as father and two daughters and the rest is history. This year marks the fifth year for the "Banding" of signets on Nelson Lake.

The volunteers in pontoon boats, motor boats, and kayaks, all converged at the north end of Nelson Lake the morning of Sept 2nd, at Tagalder Landing to meet up with Pat Nanthey and her crew all from the DNR on the capture plan. From the sky, the DNR airplane pilot had located the flock up near the mouth of the Totogatic River. The DNR chase boat located the flock and started driving the birds out into open water and the kayaks and motor boats assisted in keeping them away from shore. The pilot guided everyone using a PA system keeping track of boats and birds.



The DNR chase boat armed with a large landing net and 2 men pursue each signet like cowboys during a calf roundup. Catching each bird in a net at full speed is tricky. The birds



can maneuver very fast across the water flapping wings and feet pushing hard against the surface of the water to escape capture. A few signets were excellent divers and several times would escape the net. Once netted, the bird is placed into a large dog kennel aboard a waiting pontoon boat. The process was repeated until all seven of this years' hatch were aboard. Anxious parents would stay a safe distance away, all the while calling to



their young to follow.

With all seven signets aboard, the pontoons headed to shore for the banding and weighing of each bird.



In past years the DNR took blood samples from the young birds to test for lead poisoning and swabbing of the mouth and tush to test for Bird Flu and other diseases. Lucky for the birds this year, the DNR decided those tests were not necessary.



After placing a numbered band on the necks, both legs and recording their weight the signets go back in the crate. Then volunteers carry the crates to the water's edge for the release. It is very important all birds be released at the same



time so as to insure that they stay together as a family/flock. As the gates flew open, the birds scampered into the water and immediately one parent landed to take charge of the

flock and direct them to safety.

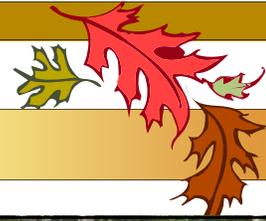
It was a warm, sunny day and we all felt very lucky to be a part of a very successful 2009 Swan roundup. We hope to see the Trumpeters back on Nelson Lake again next year.

We did experience one rather humorous moment during the banding process. A signet while being held down for banding, stretched out its long neck and proceeded to look closely at the



volunteer and then grasping the tab of a zipper on the man's shirt, began pulling and tugging at the zipper tab and at the shirt as if trying to get some attention. The volunteer smiled but seemed a little uneasy about the whole affair maybe wondering if his face would be the next target of interest.





NLA ANNUAL SUMMER PICNIC

By Diane Cooper

This year our annual picnic was held at Park Island Resort. The weather was very nice and there was a great turn out as usual. We had a cookout of burgers, brats and everyone did a great job of bringing all of the side dishes and great deserts. Everyone had a great time visiting. We had some newcomers this year. We look forward to seeing everyone next year at the picnic. It's always a good time for socializing and good eating.



Brrr It's a cold job but someone has to do it, and the NLA has many wonderful volunteers that are willing to help out. The fall job of changing out the buoys in Nelson Lake is a **COLD** one, but Eric Verhoeven, Jim Enfelt, Al Minar and Bill Wilcox made sure it was done.

The buoys must be changed out for when the lake freezes over, to prevent damage to the "summer" buoys. The "winter" buoys will be pounded down under the ice once the weather has been cold enough to allow travel on the ice. Thanks guys !



Eric Verhoeven and Jim Enfelt are bundled up to keep warm while changing out the buoys.



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WALLEYE STOCKING by Bob Terry Fish and Game Committee

Boy, do five years fly by. Seems like just yesterday the Nelson Lake “stakeholders” had their meeting with the Wisconsin DNR at the Veteran’s Center in Hayward to decide what direction the fisheries should take. In keeping with the history of Nelson Lake, it was voted on that the lake would assume a fairly high walleye density, a trophy Northern Pike fishery and an attempt to increase the size of the panfish.

So in the ensuing five years things have happened. There is now a one fish, 32 inch minimum size on Pike. The panfish bag is now limited to ten fish per day in total. Last but not least, a considerable amount of extended growth walleye stocked into the lake. I do mean considerable amount of walleye stocking, summarized below.

Walleye stocking since the stakeholders meeting:

2004-991 EGW (extended growth walleye)

2005-8888 EGW

2006-14,810 EGW

2007-10,693 EGW

2008-12,075 EGW

2009-23,000 EGW

To total 70,523 extended growth walleye.

Where did they come from?

Red Cliff Indian Reservation hatchery- 1861 fish.

NLA 34,199 fish.

Wisconsin DNR- 34,472 fish.



A lot of fish, for sure. In addition to the stocking, the largemouth bass minimum size limit was taken off of Nelson, with the idea that a huge LMB population, which we had, was helping to cripple any walleye reproduction. Indeed, this LMB vs. walleye concept, while new when we made plans for the lake, is gaining more acceptance throughout Northern Wisconsin, including several Sawyer County lakes.

Do we need to keep up stocking efforts? I get long, furtive stares when I pose this question to Nelson Lake folks. We don’t have the answer yet. More monitoring needs to and giving the young ‘eyes a chance to get to catchable size.

I don’t want to get into thanking all the people that

made this huge effort possible, for fear I’ll forget a group or person, we’ll come up with proper recognition for those folks in a future article. What I will say is, look at what we’ve accomplished for the lake, as outlined above. Truly a team effort, and hopefully with lasting results.

Walleyes aside, I thought I’d share some info I’ve gleaned lately on the “Rodney Dangerfield” of fish, the bullhead. The first fish I ever caught was a bullhead, and I remember my Dad rolling his eyes when I insisted on him cleaning and me eating the thing. It hit me this past summer when my ten year old, Simon was fishing off our dock, and after a pretty good battle between him, his pole and an invisible fish, he plopped a good sized bullhead up on the dock and exclaimed “Its just a bullhead”. I went into “stick up for the bullhead” mode. We went to the internet and found out some interesting facts on Mr. Bullhead.

There are three types of bullhead, brown, black and yellow. Nelson Lake holds the state record for yellow bullhead at 3 lbs 5 oz.

They are closely related to the catfish, referring to the whiskers on their face.

The whiskers or barbells, don’t sting, the front lateral and pectoral fins have sharp barbs that the “butter cat” holds erect when alarmed.

They are great table fare. People think they are bottom sucking worthless fish, when in fact they assimilate essentially no mercury into their flesh and are rarely on any eating advisories. Similar to panfish, they are not predator fish like Musky, Northern and Walleye.

They have an incredible sense of smell, their dominant sense.

They love night crawlers, but can be caught on any stinky bait, including corn. A good way to fish them is to cast out a crawler several times along the shore and slowly reel the worm back in to leave a scent trail leading to the spot you are soaking a crawler on the bottom, preferably muck bottom.

Bullheads can live in low oxygen waters and even out of water for a few hours, if its skin is kept wet. They have no scales.

The ancient Ojibway called the bullhead wawaaziisi, and are an important part of American Indian Heritage.

It is widely felt that the bullhead is the first fish caught by young anglers and could be influential in recruiting new anglers to the sport. (Iowa DNR newsletter)

So next time someone catches one, don’t be so “bullheaded”, and toss it into the fry pan, it may surprise you.



INVASIVES

By Bob Mayer



STOP AQUATIC HITCHHIKERS!

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I had the opportunity this summer to help give the message to boaters at Gerlach Landing each Saturday morning the importance of clean boats in Nelson Lake. I was dressed with a reflective vest and an Australia-Tilley hat, making me look official. Most boaters were very

receptive to an inspection of their boat before launching in the lake, and many thanked me for being there, especially local residents. It was a great experience for me to be able to talk to the boaters about what needed to be inspected on their boats, and equipment to help stop the spread of forms of lake aquatic growth.



MORE ABOUT INVASIVES

By Bill Wilcox

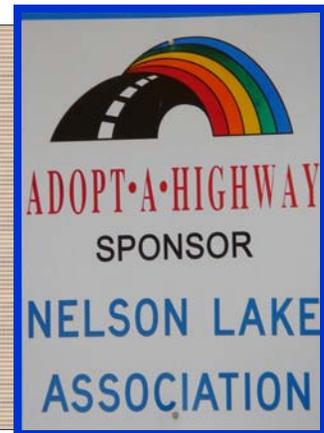
In addition to Bob Mayer, Dallas Jacobs and Jackson Terry did inspection at the Tagalder Landing. A total of 216 boats were inspected by the three inspectors and only 3 boats had vegetation that was removed. There was only one case of a boater who gave the inspectors a hard time. Most people have gotten the message and are trying to be careful.

Thirty-one families signed up to check a section of the shoreline in the spring and fall. Following is the report from Rose Minar: No invasives have been found by the monitors. Those who signed up to monitor are doing an excellent job, and the lake association appreciates their efforts in keeping our beautiful lake free of invasives. The fall monitoring has concluded. We will begin again next spring. We hope more people will sign up for monitoring in the spring. Anyone who is interested can contact Al Minar at 634-7836 or at al-rose@centurytel.net.

Adopt-A-Highway

by Bill Wilcox

Many of the roads around Nelson Lake are kept clean of trash by members who want to keep our roads free of litter. If on your travels, you should happen to spot a can, bottle, or other litter, please take the time to stop and pick it up. Thanks





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WINTER RAMA

January 2, 2010
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