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RENEW YOUR
MEMBERSHIP HERE:**

[https://
cedarlakeconservancy.
org/membership/
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ANNUAL MEETING

SATURDAY,

JUNE 08

CEDAR LAKE FACTS

- **1,725 acres**
- **Located in Aitkin and Crow Wing Counties**
- **28 miles shoreline**
- **28' mean depth**
- **105' maximum depth**
- **460 approximate number of property owners**
- **215 paid memberships in 2023**

COLLISION WITH WATERCRAFT IS A COMMON CAUSE OF LOON DEATHS ALONG WITH LEAD POISONING

Adapted From the Gull Chain of Lakes Association Website

- Please stay at least 150' away from loons, if possible.
- Young chicks are unable to dive or get out of the way of boats. If struck by a boat, they will die.
- Do not separate loon families by boating between them. Loon parents are not able to protect their chicks when separated.
- Do not pursue loons. Let them decide how close they wish to come to your watercraft.
- Do not circle loons with your watercraft. This is harassment and is subject to a fine from the MN DNR.
- When pulling tubers, wake-boarders or skiers, do not allow them to get close to or separate loon families.
- Do not feed loons! Loons will start chasing baited hooks; this will endanger their lives.
- Do not cast towards loons. Remember, the best way to observe loons is at a distance with binoculars.
- **Fish with lead-free tackle.** Lead weights and lures can be ingested by loons when they take up gravel to store in their gizzards. Autopsy data has shown that lead poisoning is a common case of death for loons.



Who We Are

The Cedar Log is published by the Cedar Lake Conservancy. The Conservancy is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting, preserving and enhancing the quality of the environment in and around Cedar Lake.



Get In Touch

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THE PRESIDENT'S MUSINGS

Mark Miller

What a winter or lack thereof! No snow, thin ice, swans returned the first day of February, and we were making maple syrup the third week of February. I noticed open water in our bay on at the south end of Cedar on March 4th. At that time nearby Hamel Lake had more open water than ice.

Paulette and I started tapping some of our maple trees in the middle of February. Fifty gallons of sap usually yields six quarts of syrup. Some years we are more successful than others. It's a labor of love, but oh so tasty.

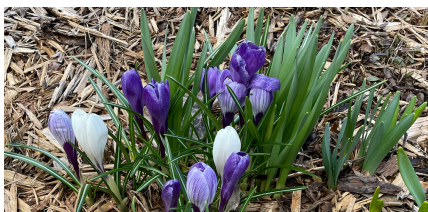


This link to a short **Star Tribune** article published on March 8 discusses the negative impact of using lead tackle. Please consider switching this year to unleaded tackle and help save our wildlife. <https://www.startribune.com/swans-are-dying-in-vadnais-heights-sucker-lake-channel-and-county-leaders-have-figured-out-why/600349442/>

You may recall Curly-leaf Pondweed was discovered in two locations on the lake last year. Joe Klucas, our Shore Land Committee Chair, will be working with a professional herbicide applicator to combat this invasive weed. With no snow on the lake this winter, it will have been growing all winter requiring an even earlier application to contain it. There are 20 lakes out of 365 in Aitkin County with curly-leaf pondweed. As with all AIS, education and prevention is crucial to halting the spread. I look forward to helping Joe and his Committee this summer searching for any other invaders within our lake and shorelines.

Our Social Committee has another fun year planned. Always a highlight for the season is our annual meeting. Please mark your calendars for Saturday, June 8, and watch for further details. There are two Board seats being vacated this year. Please consider volunteering for a position. The burden is not onerous and technology has made it easy to attend meetings. Contact me if you're interested.

Finally, it's time again to renew your membership or join, if you haven't in the past. Your support and contributions allow us to maintain the lake for all to enjoy.



CONSERVATION

Bob Karls

Kelsey Klucas

No doubt, the abnormal winter weather caught your attention this year. As we move into spring, there will be additional "attention grabbers" we'd like folks to be prepared for.

The water levels as we are starting out this spring will be at the lowest level most of us have ever seen. Virtually no snow this winter has resulted in no runoff this spring over land and the various streams that normally boost our spring water levels are bone dry. There are several implications to be aware of for the next few months:

1. The "normal" decline of water levels over the summer will likely drop the lake levels even further than where we are now. We can likely expect levels to drop to the level of the overflow lip on the concrete control structure on the stream leaving Cedar Lake early in the year. This would limit or eliminate surface outflow in the stream that flows to the Mississippi River.
2. Evaporation from lakes in our area of Minnesota varies from about 23" to 29" per year which will further reduce lake levels. Some natural groundwater inflow will replace some of this evaporation, but not all. How low will levels go? We don't know; we haven't been here before.
3. There will be impacts on the weed growth. It is likely that we will see more weeds due to greater sunlight penetration of shallower waters over a longer "ice free" season. Weeds, like terrestrial plants, typically thrive with more sunlight.
4. As boating season begins, we may see more boats grounding and props being "decorated" by rocks that you may have skimmed over in past years with higher water levels.
5. Lower water levels will mean docks and lifts will need to be moved out further to reach "deeper" water.
6. Hard to reach areas will become even harder. For example, the Little Cedar to Big Cedar channel may be tougher to navigate under power.

Heavy spring rains could mitigate some of the above, but normal rain likely won't do much due to drier soils and wetlands in our watershed surrounding Cedar Lake limiting their contribution.

With our jumpstart on spring, you might also be motivated to get a jumpstart on your lawn work. Before we get too far into that season, let's revisit the impacts of runoff.

One of the reasons we encourage shoreline buffers and natural landscaping is to prevent nutrients like phosphorus, nitrogen and sediment from running into Cedar Lake. Have you heard the adage, "One pound of phosphorus can produce from 300 to 500 pounds of algae"? Where did it come from, and is it true? It is much quoted in articles and during presentations when the "greening" of our lakes is discussed. As with anything it is a one size fits all adage. But yes, it is true!

It means a pound of the nutrient phosphorus entering Cedar Lake from stormwater runoff over our lands, lawns, driveways and roads can promote growth of up to 500 pounds of pea soup algae. For those curious souls, the rationale for it is laid out in a section titled "*Effects of Phosphorus Concentration on Lake Productivity*" (Second Edition, page 285). A main reference for the section is J.R. Vallentyne's book *The Algal Bowl - Lakes and Man* (Ottawa Department of the Environment, 1974).

Here is the important takeaway! Core to the rationale is the "law of the minimum", that is, the nutrient that is in the shortest supply in relation to a plant's needs will control the growth of that plant. The law of the minimum can be illustrated using a baking example: Let's say that baking 4 cakes takes ten pounds of flour, a pound of butter, a pound of sugar and four eggs. If you have ten pounds of flour, butter, and sugar, but only one egg, you can only bake one pound cake. The eggs are the limiting factor to baking more.

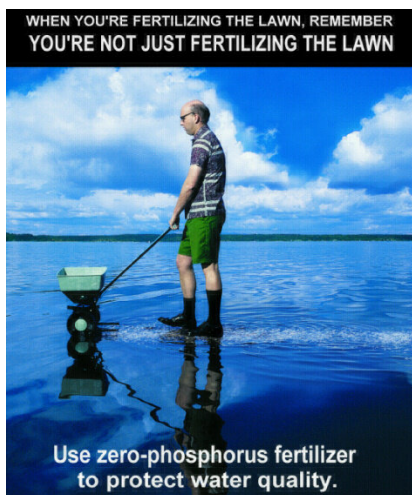
Continued on Page 4

Conservation continued from page 3

The limiting factor for algae growth in most Minnesota lakes *is the nutrient phosphorus*. It is not limiting because algae need so much of it, but rather because it is usually in very short supply. The average ratio of the phosphorus needs of algae to what is available in water is 80,000 to 1. According to J.R. Vallentyne, a 500 pound batch of wet algae requires: 1 pound phosphorus, 7 pounds nitrogen, and 40 pounds carbon. Since there are usually more than adequate levels of nitrogen and carbon in lakes and rivers, for every pound of phosphorus added, *another* 500-pound batch of wet algae can be produced. Since 500 pounds is the theoretical maximum that can be produced, the range of 300 to 500 pounds is typically used when the adage is quoted. The 300 to 500 pound range is wet weight algae; in dry weight the range is 60 to 100 pounds.

All types of algae can experience periods of rapid growth known as blooms. In Minnesota lakes, however, blooms of blue green algae, also known as cyanobacteria, draw the most notice. They form surface scum, are smelly and occasionally produce toxins harmful to drinking livestock and pets. A little bit of natural algae is fine and expected. But let's not "green" Cedar Lake. Let's all do our part and minimize all nutrients including phosphorus by keeping that buffer zone along the lakeshore, keeping your trees, keeping fertilizer use to a minimum and planting rain gardens to slow and absorb water. Our Aitkin Soil and Water Conservation District (ASWCD) can help with guidelines, recommend plants and seeds and even connect you with grant funds for repairing shorelines naturally and planting native plants along the shoreline. You can reach ASWCD at 218-927-7284 and <https://aitkincountyswcd.wordpress.com>

Credit to Ron Struss, U of M Extension for some of the information and text in this article.



SOCIAL

Steve Haasl & John McIntosh

Welcome to 2024! As this is being written, we're looking at a very early ice-out. After our Cincinnati winter it's tough to predict what summer will bring weather-wise, but we can predict CLC's lineup of social opportunities for the year. So, get out your pencils and mark your calendars.

The Annual Fishing Contest is underway. Prizes are awarded in the following categories: Bass, Crappie, Dogfish, Muskie, Northern, Sunfish and Walleye. Send your pictures and information to Lanae Paaverud at lpaaeverud@gmail.com

First up, we have the County Road 28 Annual Clean Up on May 4th. Plan to meet at Braton's Farm, 33476 County Road 28 at 9 a.m. Besides being a good service, it's a chance to catch up with friends and neighbors.

The 2024 Annual Meeting is Saturday, June 8th at 9 a.m. at the same great location as last year, the Aitkin American Legion. Presenting this year, in addition to our regulars and some general business items, will be an Aitkin County Soil and Water representative speaking to funding available from both Aitkin County and the State of Minnesota for projects that reduce erosion. And, the ever popular food drive will continue. You will want to be there.

The 4th of July will bring the Annual Boat Parade, which was soggy but well attended last year. Fingers crossed for better weather. Time and route will be announced later.

The Annual CLC Picnic is August 10th, and will be on Big Cedar. Long time CLC member, John McIntosh, has graciously agreed to host the event. Similar to 2023, this will be a catered event. Address and time to be announced later.

Watch your snail mailbox/email for more information on all these events or feel free to contact us or any of the Board members with questions or to volunteer.



MEMBERSHIP Heather Rykhus

We are definitely springing into spring this year! Start making plans for fun times on Cedar Lake!

Don't forget to join or renew your membership in the Cedar Lake Conservancy (CLC) for 2024. Please take a minute and use the PayPal option by following the link to the CLC website: <https://cedarlakeconservancy.org/membership/#payonline> The PayPal option is at the bottom. The mail-in membership form can also be downloaded from this page. Or, mail a check with the membership form found on the last page of this newsletter to Cedar Lake Conservancy, P.O. Box 152, Aitkin, MN 56431.

Annual dues are \$25. Become a Loon level member for \$50, a Heron level member for \$75, or an Eagle level member for \$100 or above. The additional donations beyond annual dues go to our Environmental Stewardship Fund (ESF). These funds are used for conservation and education efforts consistent with CLC's mission to protect shoreline and continue our work to identify, treat and help prevent AIS as well as any other emergent issues that may arise on Cedar Lake. Be sure your email address is current so we can send you newsletters and updates during the course of the year. If we don't have your email address, help us save newsletter costs by receiving all communications electronically.

Thank you for your support of the lake we all love!

LOON WATCH Frank Simon

They're back! First sighting was April 5 in Little Cedar. The CLC is doing everything it can to be a loon-friendly lake to loons who return every year and those who may stop by, take a look and decide Cedar's a great place to be and raise a family. The article on page one is so important. Please share with your family members and guests.

Be a part of my team; help with the loon count. Our findings are reported to the DNR every year. Contact me with any questions OR if you spot a nest this spring.

AITKIN AREA FISHERIES Greg Berg, Assistant Fisheries Supervisor

Generally speaking we aren't going to see much winter kill this year, if any. Spawning will likely occur over a longer period of time for most species making it somewhat difficult for egg-take operations and fish sampling in general. Also, with poor ice conditions for most of the short winter, fishing pressure and harvest were probably low on many area lakes.

A Muskie assessment may be done this spring. That said, due to the proclivity for such a long-protracted spawn, we may postpone the Muskie survey until next year when things will hopefully be a little bit more normal. Muskies are very hard to sample already in Cedar Lake, and with this early ice-out it will make things even more challenging. Other surveys include Bass electrofishing one night in May and netting the week of August 10.



2024 Openers

May 11	Walleye, Sauger, Pike
May 11 - 24	Bass (Catch & Release Only)
May 25	Bass



ICE OUT

March 13 Bell Bay
March 13 Little Cedar
March 14 Main Basin

SHORELAND

Joe Klucas

2023 was a very busy year!

Zebra mussels continued to spread through most of the main body of Cedar Lake - we have not seen any in Little Cedar.

While the amount in any area of the lake is minimal, we expect an increasing population over the next few years. Currently, there are no treatments that can be used to successfully remove them. The impact to our lakeshore will be seen with sharp surfaces on the lake bottom. Zebra mussels attach to docks, lifts and any hard surface including rocks on the lake bottom. I have also read that boat motors left in the water could see clogging of the water intake systems. You may want to consider tilting the motors out of the water when not in use.

Special care should be taken with boats, docks and lifts when moving from our lake to another lake. Such care includes visual inspection of boats and pontoons for any zebra mussels (or other AIS) and the emptying of live wells anytime you are launching or removing these from our lake. Additionally, by state law when moving docks, lifts, etc. between lakes, they must be left out of the water at least 21 days before placing in new location to ensure zebra mussels are no longer alive.

As you've been informed, Curly-leaf Pondweed was located in the extreme NW and NE portions of our lake. These are not major infestations at this time, but we have decided to aggressively work to remove this AIS and minimize any future impact to our lake. We have contracted with two providers to allow the chemical treatment (small area in the NE part of the lake) and hand removal (scuba divers) this spring. The cost of this mitigation is possible due to generous donations by CLC members and grants that our team has worked to obtain. The cost for this year's treatment and removal is expected to be less than \$7,000 total for both the hand removal and chemical treatment in a small area. We have received a grant from the State of Minnesota to cover \$1,500 of this cost.

While we have not seen a large impact to our lake to date, Curly-leaf Pondweed can overtake native vegetation and impact the ability to boat, fish and swim where large infestations occur. Please refer to the CLC website for the notice we are required to post and additional information on the location of the treatment area.

With the support of our lake stewards, all property owners and Freshwater Scientific Services (an outside contractor), we will continue to be vigilant and remove/mitigate any future AIS infestations.

In the next few months I will be reaching out to our Lake Stewards to continue our monitoring program. If you would like to become a Lake Steward, your assistance would be greatly appreciated.

Thanks for your support! For anyone interested, we will be hosting a AIS training session in the late summer to assist in monitoring our lake. Watch for details.

AITKIN COUNTY SHERIFF

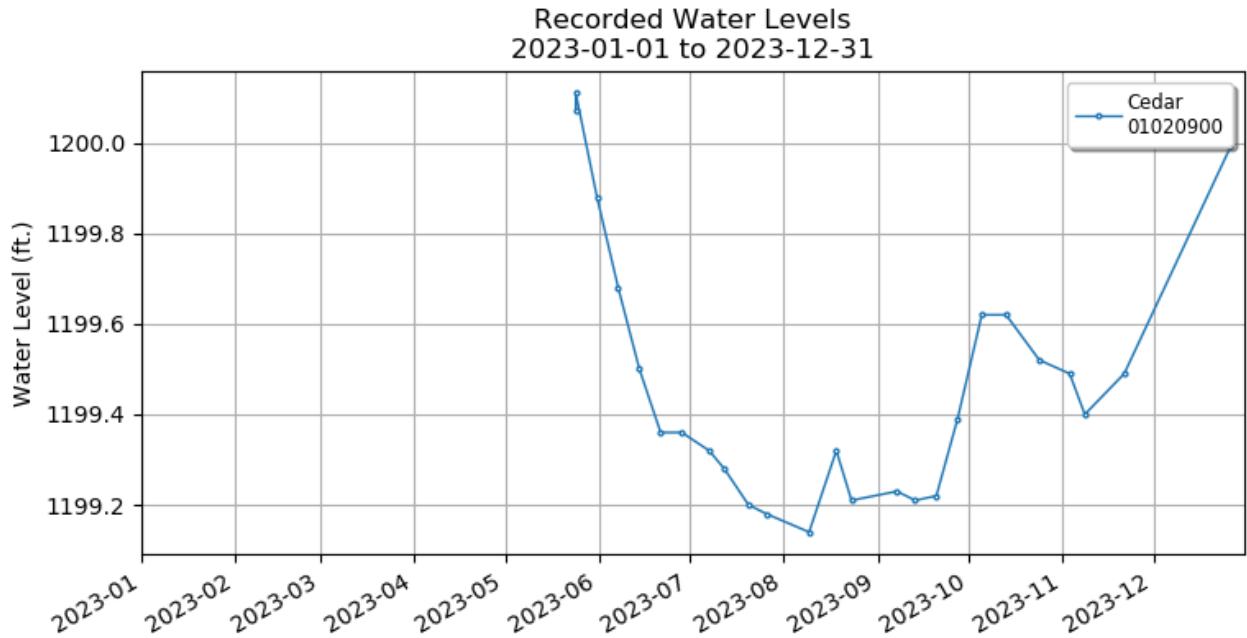
Dan Guida

Greetings! Not sure how many would agree with me, but I am ready for some rain or snow! Last year we dealt with spring flooding. This year we have a low-water draught scenario that is causing major fire concerns. Please use extreme caution around those fun, spring campfires. Let's hope for rainy weekdays.

One fun part of being at the lake is jumping on an ATV or side-by-side and going for a ride. Aitkin County has an ATV ordinance that allows travel on the far right side of county roads, 30 mph, with headlights required. The operator must have a driver's license, ATV safety certificate and with anyone under 18 years, a DOT approved helmet. If you have any questions on these requirements, google Aitkin County ATV ordinance. Be sure you are reading the most current version.

If there are safety issues on the lake, please immediately call our office, 218-927-7435, and we'll dispatch our team to assist. We have several Recreational Water Patrol staff that will frequent Cedar as well as Deputy Dan Asmus, our senior Recreational Deputy. This crew will perform routine safety checks for personal flotation devices, fire extinguishers and any other requirements that exist. If you are unsure of the requirements, check the MN DNR Boating Guidelines. A copy can be obtained at any license center or our front desk.

I want to thank all of you for a great winter. Your calls are always welcome. If you see something say something and we will do our best to solve the problem!



ATTENTION GARDENERS!

The USDA has announced an updated Plant Hardiness Zones map, derived by analyzing twice the amount of climate data across the US using the last 30 years. Last updated in 2012 and 1990, the map is a valuable tool in showing areas where types of perennial plants are more likely to thrive and survive the winter. Most spots in the state have increased at least a half category. The update shows the emergence of Zone 5a across a much larger area in the Twin Cities and southern Minnesota, up from Zone 4b. Pockets of northeastern Minnesota are now in Zone 2a. Check out the interactive map:

<https://planthardiness.ars.usda.gov/>

Before striking for your campfire, check for fire danger and burning restrictions

<https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/forestry/fire/>



KEEP IN MIND...

- May 04** County Road 28 Cleanup
- May 11** ACLARA Meeting
- June 08** CLC Annual Meeting
- June 08 - June 22** CLC Online Store Open
- June 15** Aitkin County Lakes & Rivers Fair
- July 3 - 6** Aitkin County Fair
- July 04** Fourth of July Boat Parade
- July 13** ACLARA Meeting

WE LOVE OUR VOLUNTEERS

Contact a Committee Chair!



JOIN/RENEW TODAY!

Basic	\$ 25	\$25 dues
Loon	\$ 50	\$25 dues plus \$25 tax-deductible donation to Environmental Stewardship Fund
Heron	\$ 75	\$25 dues plus \$50 tax-deductible donation to Environmental Stewardship Fund
Eagle	\$100	\$25 dues plus \$75 tax-deductible donation to Environmental Stewardship Fund

Your check and this form should be mailed to Cedar Lake Conservancy, P. O. Box 152, Aitkin, MN 56431.

Click here to pay online: <https://cedarlakeconservancy.org/membership/#payonline>

Name(s)

Mailing Address

Lake Address

Preferred Telephone Number to Reach You

Email Address - please print clearly

I/We are the property owners Yes No

I/We are making an additional, tax-deductible donation of \$ _____ to the Environmental Stewardship Fund.