

Windigo Lake Area Newsletter Fall/Winter 2014

(For property owners and friends of Windigo Lake, Lake 27, and Hub Lake)



Windigo, an Island Lake with Natural Shoreline

Desk of the President

Dick Steininger

When it is time for the fall newsletter, I know my stay on Windigo comes to an end until I return next Spring. As a board member or committee member, it doesn't take too long before one starts thinking about WLPOA's needs to prepare for next year.

For the first time in a long time we have filled the chairman's committees with non-executive board members. We have over twenty homes that have a volunteer working to help preserve Windigo.

I personally want to thank all volunteers for your time and talent. I encourage those that are not presently involved, to join a committee. I know we all come up to Windigo to relax and get away, but as an association we are able to keep items in check to maintain our beautiful lake.

I do think about those who came before us and what they did to help preserve Windigo. We are not just property owners but feel we have a stewardship responsibility to protect our lake for future generations. Windigo is not a throw away item that can be replaced.

I want to encourage all of you to get a copy of the Wisconsin boating rules. This summer we have noticed that some boating rules have been ignored. Please make sure your guests are aware of the rules. There have been several complaints about people not observing the "No Wake" in Portage bay. Please obey the signs.

Any questions? Any concerns? Contact me or any board member by phone or e-mail. Thanks.

Regards,
Dick, December 2014

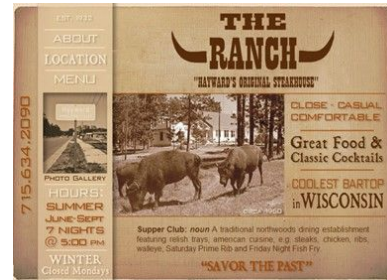


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Hold the date for the Spring Dinner: Saturday April 25, 2015

Barb Pjevach

Last year we moved the spring dinner to the weekend before the fishing opener so that we could more easily hold the dinner at a local restaurant. (Many restaurants are reluctant to reserve a room for our dinner on the weekend of opening fishing). We received great reviews from most people, so we are doing the same this year. We are still working on the speaker and program, but please mark your calendar and consider joining us at the Ranch on the evening of April 25th!



Membership Report

Gary Hartmann

I have served as Membership Chairman and Treasurer for the past eight years. I'm pleased to welcome Maryalice McHugh who was approved by the membership as the new Treasurer. I will continue as Membership Chairman. 'Thank you' to everyone who supports our lake association. Your support is critical and it is very much appreciated.



As we close out 2014, I'm happy to report we had 82 renewals which exceeds last year's total. This is outstanding participation! In addition, there are 10 'Friends of Windigo'. Here is a breakdown of our membership by lake:

- **Windigo Lake (94 owners; 77 have paid)**
- **Hub Lake (6 owners; 2 have paid)**
- **Lake 27 (5 owners; 3 have paid)**

Dues Reminders for next year will be sent out in February. WLPOA serves property owners on Windigo Lake, Hub Lake, and Lake 27 by promoting communication and cooperation among

lakeshore owners and by working with the DNR and local government to maintain lake quality and protect our lake from invasive aquatic weeds. WLPOA, Inc. is a nonprofit 501(c) (3) organization so your membership donation is tax-deductible as provided by law.

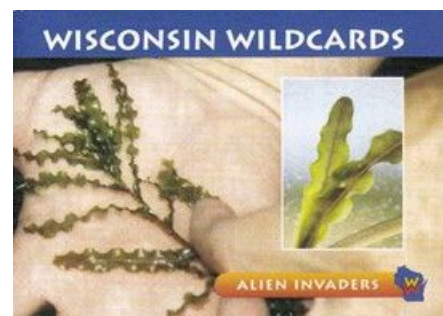
Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) and Clean Boats, Clean Waters (CBCW) Updates

Barb Pjevach

Thanks to everyone for your continued interest and vigilance in looking for Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS)! As a reminder, there are 2 major AIS that are prevalent in other area lakes and which we are working to keep out of Windigo: Curly Leaf Pond Weed and Eurasian Water-Milfoil.

Special thanks to Colleen Graham who continues leading our efforts to stay on top of regional information and helping us with AIS prevention activities and grant communications!

As a reminder, these two invasive species show up at slightly different times of year. If Curly Leaf Pond Weed is present in a lake, it is viewable in Spring and then dies back by the end of June. Thus lake monitoring must be done during this time.



Eurasian water milfoil is visible throughout summer. Plants usually extend 3 to 10 feet, but can reach as much as 33 feet in length. The stems are reddish-brown to whitish-pink. It forms dense mats on the surface of water bodies, and new plants that may emerge from each node on a stem root on contact with mud. It regenerates mostly from rhizomes, fragmented stems, and axillary buds that develop throughout the year. Eurasian water milfoil can be found in nearly 400 WI lakes



More detailed pictures and instructions for how to look for AIS are on the AIS page on our website: <http://www.windigolake.org/aquatic-invasive-species-prevention/>.

DNR Grant Update

Our grants are 75% funded by the Wisconsin DNR with a 25% match provided by WLPOA. Our match can be satisfied with cash or by supplying “in-kind” donations (volunteer labor and boat use). We have been approved for an additional grant for 2015 of \$3000 for our work

monitoring our landing and other Clean Boats, Clean Waters (CBCW) activities. Our total estimated project cost is \$4000 including volunteer monitoring hours.

Thanks to everyone for reporting your volunteer hours. We will be using them to apply for receipt of funds under our grant. As a reminder, shoreline monitoring for invasive weeds can begin after ice-out and continue into the fall. Please continue to send an email with your name, time spent, when you monitored and whether or not a boat was used to info@windigolake.org.

Treasurer’s Report

Marylalice McHugh

To date we have received \$2,050 from dues, \$50 from Friends of Windigo, plus donations of \$635 to the Invasive Species Fund and \$260 to the Fish Crib Fund. As of October WLPOA currently has the following account balances:

Account Balances - October, 2014	Amount
General Fund (Checking)	\$4,864
Dedicated Fish Crib Reserve (Savings Acct)	\$802
Dedicated Invasive Species Reserve (Savings Acct)	\$6,942
DNR Grant	-\$1,705
Total on deposit	\$10,903

Note that the negative DNR Grant balance is a result of our spending on expenses for monitoring the landing which have not yet been reimbursed from available grant funds. We receive an advance from the DNR and then beyond that receive reimbursement from them for money and volunteer hours spent.

Note that our annual budget is very similar from year to year. Projected expenditures are approximately \$1,800 in similar categories as previously reported (mailings, WI Lake Association dues, regional conference attendance by WLPOA Board, picnic and spring dinner supplies, liability insurance, PO Box, etc.)

Fishing and Wildlife Committee

Dan Pjevach

Over the years, the Committee has expressed concern about the overharvest of crappie from the lake. Current regulations allowed anglers to harvest 25 panfish a day (The term “panfish” is defined as any of the following species: bluegill, pumpkinseed, black and white crappie, yellow perch, green sunfish, warmouth and orange spotted sunfish). We had explored working the system to change this level for our lake but the process required a lot of documentation and support as the regulation change went from the proposal stage to formally being adopted as a regulation. In our earlier meetings with the DNR, we were told that they were working on Panfishing and that we should wait and see what was proposed. We are happy to report that the DNR is proposing 3 different sets of panfish regulations that would be applied to 110 test lakes across the state. The suggested new regulation that would be in effect for Windigo is 15 panfish but no more than 5 of any one species. The committee supports this change because we think that it will have a positive effect on restoring the population of large crappies in the lake. We will work to keep the property owners informed about the developments as the proposal works through the Conservation Congress meetings.

The fishing committee also met with Max Wolter, Scott Braden and Russ Warwick of the DNR in October. Here are the highlights from that meeting:

1. Dave Neuswanger, the speaker at our Spring Dinner and Max Wolter’s supervisor retired this year and will be replaced at some point in the near future.
2. The reduction in the panfish bag limit noted above is moving forward and has had very little feedback from the public thus far. They are planning to present at the Spring Conversation Congress meetings. If approved they would be effective in 2016.
3. The group discussed the potential for adding fish cribs or dropping trees to create more a more protective fish habitat. The DNR does not believe that fish cribs are effective and they now recommend dropping trees as a more natural solution to provide protective and productive habitat for small fish to grow. They suggested that to avoid creating a fishing “hot spot” around a dropped tree, it would be best to coordinate an effort with the DNR and residents so there are many different locations and not just a few “hot spots”.
4. There may be another fish survey of Windigo and when they plan on doing it, they will let us know to see if any volunteers from our lake want to assist.
5. If people see unusual fishing activities (such as the observation of off-loading fish to another person to enable continued fishing) people should immediately call 1-800-847-9367 (1-800-TIP-WDNR) and the nearest warden will be dispatched. This is the BEST way to report a potential problem as all calls to this number are investigated.



As discussed at the Annual Meeting, the committee has proposed that the Fish Crib Fund be renamed the Fishery Management Fund. Since the fund has a current balance of \$802, we would like to know if any WLPOA members object to the change. Please let the committee or any board member know if you have any concerns. The contact information is on the last page of this newsletter.

Annual Picnic and Membership Meeting Recap

Barb Pjevach

We held our annual WLPOA meeting and picnic on Saturday August 2nd. Thanks to the Pydos for again hosting us at their property. Thanks to Sandy Bender and other volunteers for helping with all of the arrangements and food. Thanks to all members and guests who came and brought a dish to share!

Marilyn Konkler reported about Loon activity on our lakes. Nesting was minimal on Windigo this year. There was a nesting and a baby loon on Lake 27, but the baby loon did not survive. There were also minimal large groups of loons this year on the lake called a “circle dance” or “rafts”. Others reported potential baby loons, but area eagles have or perhaps snapping turtles have been active predators. Others in the group reported some groups of loons on Portage Bay and frequent “floaters” (visiting loons not nesting on our lakes). There was some discussion about whether there was anything we could do as property owners to help protect the loons and we discussed the possibility of use of loon floats with grass in it but there are pros and cons to any type of possible intervention and there was no resolution to the question.



Barb Pjevach read the minutes from the previous Annual Meeting and Gary Hartmann made the Treasurer’s report and the Membership report.

The new officers were presented by Barb Pjevach and were approved by membership vote.

- President: Dick Steininger
- Vice President: Patrick Steininger
- Treasurer: Maryalice McHugh
- Secretary & Communications: Barb Pjevach
- Committee Leaders are:
 - Membership Chair: Gary Hartmann
 - Safety/Environmental: Colleen Graham
 - Fish and Wildlife: Dan Pjevach
 - Social: Sandy Bender



Dick Steininger gave the Lake Environment report in Colleen Graham’s absence. 7 people joined Kristi Maki from the local DNR for an annual survey of Windigo. The lake looks clear and good. It was noted that our lake association is a strength for our lakes’ health. We had boat landing monitors working this summer for most weekends and particularly holiday times.

Dan Pjevach reported from the Fish and Wildlife Committee. Dan thanked all members on the committee. We are grateful for the interest and participation of so many people. He reported that the previously discussed introduction of muskies into Windigo is on hold because of state funding focus for Governor Walker’s Walleye initiative. The DNR does not have Windigo on the list for stocking walleye under this program because of Mercury levels in the lake. The DNR wants to develop fishery management plans for area lakes and believes it would be a good idea for Windigo to have one. However, to date, there are only 3 completed plans for all the lakes in Sawyer County so getting one in place seems to be a long drawn-out process. The fishing committee will continue to discuss what they can do to get one going for Windigo. The committee has also been working on better understanding and perhaps influencing the spearing and safe-harvest quotas for Windigo. Regarding spearing, the committee has a contact person for the tribe and will work to get a better understanding of the 181 quota for 2014. Regarding panfish and crappie harvest quotas, the committee feels that the current bag limit of 25 panfish is too high. They have been working with the DNR to support a proposal that could help lower the bag limit. The committee wants to repurpose the Fish Crib Fund to be called the “Fishery Management Fund”. The committee has discussed fish cribs and other methods of creating habitat to help fish grow. One of the most economical and effective ways to create fish habitat is by dropping trees into the water on the shore. After obtaining a permit, a landowner can drop trees every 50 feet. The DNR will drop trees on the state-owned islands. However, the fishing committee does not yet recommend this because the dropped trees also create visible hotspots for fisherman. So, the renaming of the funds would allow different

types of activities to help the health of the fisheries besides cribs, but dropping trees is NOT necessarily the recommended next step based on current fishing committee views. The committee will meet with Max Wolter from the DNR to discuss these topics.

Sandy Bender (Social Chair) thanked everyone for coming and asked the group if they liked the venue of Pydo's garage for the meeting/picnic as compared to some other home or other location. The group liked the idea of continuing to hold the event at Pydo's if the Pydo family continues to be able to host us there. Sandy also noted that we will continue to hold our Spring dinner at the end of April at the Ranch because turnout was good and that location and weekend were liked by the group.

Under old business, Dick noted that Lake Hayward, Winter, Grindstone, and Lac Court Orielles all have Curly Leaf Pond Weed, one of the invasive species that is prevalent in the area and which we are trying to keep out of Windigo through our searching and then if needed, remediation efforts. It was noted that we do not have someone who regularly attends the Bass Lake Township meetings on behalf of our association. Note that the minutes from past meetings can be viewed online.



Under new business, it was noted that some residents are heeding the no-wake zone signs in Portage Bay. Theoretically because the Bay is under 46 acres, if it were a standalone lake, it would be entirely no-wake. It is also only about 300 feet in the long narrow section and is very shallow in the wider section so slower speeds are wise for the entirety of the bay. We also discussed that the DNR regulations for ANY lake are that boats need to have no wake 100 feet from shore and for personal watercraft the no-wake law specifies that they need to be 200 feet from shore before a wake is allowed. PWC also need to slow to no-wake when within 100 feet of another boat. Here is a link to the DNR site: <http://dnr.wi.gov/news/weekly/article/?id=1417> . Please be kind to your neighbors and the health of our lakes by boating at no-wake speeds in Portage Bay.

Website and Communications Reminders

Barb Pjevach

As a reminder, please check out www.windigolake.org periodically for updates. We have our old newsletters on the site as well as instructions, pictures and information about looking for invasive species, fish surveys, and other topics about our lakes area.

If you want to keep in touch, we would appreciate emails from as many lake owners as possible so if you have not already given us your email please consider supplying it, even if you also want a paper newsletter in March and November.

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Email Address

In addition, you can subscribe to any new posts that we make to our website...which we do about 6 times a year. On our home page, just scroll down and you will see the area to subscribe on the right hand side of the web page.



Windigo Lake Property Owners Association

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Secretary/Communication	Barb Pjevach	952-829-9016
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