



NORTHERN LIGHTS IN EARLY SEPTEMBER



THE Aerie

A NEWSLETTER FOR MEMBERS OF THE BIG MANTRAP LAKE ASSOCIATION

September 2022

In this issue:

- 2022 Loon Report
- Letter from the President
- Treasurer's Report
- Hubbard County COLA
- AIS Update, Treatment Plan
- Hubbard County SWCD
- Membership Registration
- Board of Directors
- Who Lives Where
- Forever a Mantrapper

2023
BMLA meetings
Saturday, June 10 &
Saturday, August 19

2022 Loon Report

STEVE MAANUM

In 2022 the entire lake was free of ice on May 8. In 2021 ice-out occurred on April 6 and in 2020 ice-out was on April 25.

The later spring delayed the nesting season by approximately two weeks. In 2020 the first egg appeared May 5 and in 2021 the first eggs were documented May 1. This spring we did not see the first egg until May 16. Over the following days the numbers grew steadily and on the surface 2022 looked like a good year.

The lake was dotted with 22 nests (17 artificial rafts and 5 natural nests) that produced 41 eggs and those eggs resulted in 25 new chicks being added to the loon population on the lake. That means the hatching rate was 61%. By anyone's standards, that is a successful year, but it doesn't tell the entire story. Mantrap is capable of more, so what happened?

Some of the established territories from the past failed this year. The Home Bay pair laid eggs and then abandoned them. They did not re-nest. The Loon Bay pair sat on their eggs for 65 days, not realizing they were not going to hatch. The same thing happened in Pine Bay. The pair of loons in the River did not nest at all and neither did the pairs in Hoodoo Bay and Turtle Point.

Lower Deadhead laid an egg and then abandoned it. No re-nesting occurred. The Mirror Bay pair laid two eggs on the Type B raft and then abandoned them after about ten days. They did build a natural nest in the rushes by shore and laid two more eggs. Both of those eggs hatched.

The eggs at Lady Slipper West, the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Narrows, and Needle Point disappeared. The causes included storms with strong winds and possible predation.

Nest abandonment and infertile eggs contributed to the downside. There was very little egg loss due to predators and the continued success of the artificial rafts contributed to the upside.

What are the causes of nest abandonment and infertile eggs? Are there ways we can remedy these factors that led to the downside?

The nest abandonment could again be due to the large number of black flies that cause loons to seek relief away from the nest. Egg infertility may still be the result of the 2010 BP oil spill in the Gulf. Our loons continue to winter in those waters and their daily diet consists

of the fish and other food sources that may still contain toxic chemicals.

So, what about the loons that did not nest at all this year? One possible explanation is that a new loon has replaced an old mate and it just takes time to establish a new nesting site. Hopefully next spring will prove or disprove that theory.

I can not conclude this report without taking time to acknowledge Lyle Laske for his contributions to the Mantrap Loon project dating back to the 1980s and for his friendship. The variety of loon raft designs that are used around the lake are due to Lyle's many hours of drawing and constructing models of each design. The dedication and efforts of Lyle, Warren and Arlis and other

Mantrap loon volunteers have resulted in a very successful, grassroots loon management program and its outreach is widespread. Other lakes have purchased Mantrap's older rafts as we replace them with Lyle's newer designs. Carol Henderson (MN DNR non-game supervisor, retired) has applauded the Mantrap project calling it the "Gold Standard" for loon conservation. Kevin Kenow (USGS) chose Mantrap as one of the lakes for capturing loons as part of his migration study and National Geographic and the Smithsonian chose Mantrap for filming loons in 2017, 2019, and 2021.

The founders of the Mantrap Loon Project may have set out to help the loons of Mantrap Lake, but in doing so they have helped the loons beyond our shores, as well.



THE BIG MANTRAP PARADE THIS JULY WAS FUN!



Letter from the President

RICH HALVORSEN

Whether your measure for the end of summer is astronomical, meteorological, the Minnesota State Fair, Labor Day ... or like me when the furnace turns on ... by the time you're reading this all of these milestones have passed for 2022 with draining the pipes for some of us right around the corner. Where did the time go?!

In 2022 the hot topic of the summer remained the Eurasian Water Milfoil. Not surprisingly it was found again, migrating slowly downwind from the original find. More details in the AIS update, but one major takeaway for me was the plants remain sparse and that our healthy native vegetation is providing a fair amount of competition for it. If between the lake and treatment we can keep it this way we may never otherwise know we have it, which is pretty good to me.

Brian Livingston, Kraig Narr, and I are working to increase our AIS reach as well to better address inspections/

prevention, surveying, and response. Again more info can be found in the AIS update but I would strongly encourage anyone who is able to help out with upcoming plans to survey and ensure we don't have anything invasive hiding out elsewhere in our lake we don't know about.

And as is true with most area lakes, short term rentals are also gaining more attention. Obviously the association has nothing to do with the management of these but we'd like to ask everyone who has visitors or guests of any kind to remind them to make sure their watercraft are clean of foreign water and vegetation, respect quiet hours, take it slow on our narrow, winding roads and generally be good neighbors. (The association also has visitor packets available!)

Speaking of good neighbors, it saddens me to see more of our long time fellow "Mantrappers" are no longer with us. Some were fixtures on

the lake as well as major contributors to our association and loon projects. They will all be dearly missed.

Lastly, as our loon numbers thin and migrations south are underway, if you have Disney+ or access to the National Geographic Channel you can still get your fill – Our loons are supposed to be featured soon! Watch for a National Parks series where our loons will be subbing in for Voyageurs National Park!

The BMLA board will continue to meet over the winter so if you have any thoughts, concerns, ideas, history to share, anything(!) please reach out to one of us. I know I always enjoy an excuse to take a break and talk about the lake – especially in the colder months!

Stay cozy on those long winter nights and keep eye out to the north, the aurora borealis shows are only going to get more frequent as we approach the solar maximum in 2025.

Treasurer's Report

LINDA ZAWACKI, TREASURER

From October 2021 to August 31, 2022:

- We have 51 members
- There were 37 donations to AIS, 2 memorials to AIS
- Loon fund balance: \$8,437.91
- There were several memorials for Lyle Laske, Mike Dunn, Ron Peterson, Jim Harborg and Pat McArdle.
- General fund balance: \$14,908.86
- Ais balance: \$35,939.47
- Expenses for our AIS inspection and control efforts exceeded our income by \$2,500.
- I informally asked members how far they come to be on Mantrap Lake. Alaska, Florida and Texas are the three farthest.
- Are you interested in Big Mantrap Lake merchandise? All we have left are aprons and note cards! If you have merchandise ideas please email me!

Thank you all for your donations and support for keeping Mantrap a beautiful lake!



Hubbard County Coalition of Lake Association updates

BURNEY FISCHER

The monthly HCCOLA meetings are open to attendance by anyone. The meetings are hybrid – in-person at the Park Rapids Calvary Lutheran Church and Zoom (register in advance at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84562845628>). The first portion of the meetings is always an educational speaker and should be of interest to anyone. Sue Ryan has volunteered to be the Big Mantrap Lake Association's alternate representative for Burney Fischer.

MAISRC's Stop Spiny campaign:

Educating boaters and anglers about invasive spiny water fleas and prevent their spread

Did you know that not a single Minnesota lake has been added to the infested waters list for spiny water flea since 2016? While it would be great if this reflected reality, given what we have learned about spiny water flea spread, it is possible that they are in more lakes than we think. Few entities currently conduct systematic or even targeted surveillance for spiny water fleas, and we think this might have

something to do with the lack of recent detections. We are working to change this by developing a surveillance monitoring program that can be implemented by volunteers and local managers. Spiny water flea surveillance does not require advanced sampling skills, and unlike zebra mussel veliger testing, does not require laboratory analysis. Our 2022 pilot program will provide local volunteers with protocols, guidance, and other support to conduct surveillance on lakes in their communities. To learn more, please visit the program flyer at <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1jtNGaOG6zzocm0FJR04RezWCzkHKYWw1WkuXYF2ODdl/edit>



BML Ice Out

Our official lake ice out for 2022 as reported by Sue Ryan for the South Basin was May 7. That is later than the average ice out ~April 25, but not a record for recent history (May 13, 2013).

Lakes are Common Pool Resources

Things to know and consider about protecting the resource

A common-pool resource is a hybrid between a public and private good in that it is shared (non-rivalrous) but also scarce, having a finite supply. Lakes and the fish contained within are examples of common pool resources. Common-pool resources are subject to the tragedy of the commons, where everybody acting for their own benefit actually over-consumes the resource, depleting it for all. Common-pool resources are found in the example of overfishing and water-management issues, among many others.

Lakeshore residents and lake users (fisherman, recreational boaters, and others) must all work in concert to protect their lakes. A common list of steps that everyone can take to protect our lakes would include the following:

- **Give wildlife space** – Stay at least 200 feet away from wildlife nests and marked breeding areas.
- **Keep the shoreline natural** – Leave logs and submerged vegetation in place. Keep shoreline vegetation intact.
- **Observe no-wake zones** – Slow to no-wake within 200 feet of the shoreline and wildlife
- **Prevent the spread of invasive species** – Before leaving the water access, clean, drain and dry all gear.
- **Practice conservation fishing** – Think catch and release rather than keeping your catch. Keep enough fish for a meal if desired but don't be a fish hog. Throw the biggest fish back – it is good for future species reproduction – and instead keep the smaller one.

AIS Update and Treatment Plan

BRIAN LIVINGSTON, KRAIG NARR, RICH HALVORSEN

Additional areas of Eurasian Watermilfoil (EWM) were located late this summer during the annual survey. We want to provide an update on the status and plan for treatment.

In August 2022 the contracted survey company (PLM) searched and found additional areas of EWM near the public launch. The AIS team researched options and the board agreed to hire a company that would hand pull the current infestation. The team reached out to the DNR to update our plan at which point the DNR graciously agreed to hand pull on our behalf.

Once on site, the DNR determined that hand pulling was not an option. A couple of issues came up. It would have been very difficult to locate and pull all the EWM in the heavy native vegetation; and an additional EWM plant was also found outside the original survey area. The DNR recommended a chemical treatment. The board hired PLM (the survey company) to complete the treatment which will occur early fall. Typically, the treatments remove the infestation for 2-3 years, but we will re-evaluate next summer to monitor the effectiveness.

The board is still looking for volunteers to be the “eyes on the

water” to search for and report any other suspicious vegetation. Early detection is the best defense to assist in keeping EWM and other potential invaders in check. Please reach out to any board member if interested and we will schedule a time to train the team.



INVASIVE SPECIES

Eurasian Watermilfoil
(Myriophyllum spicatum)

Characteristics:

- Submerged, limp aquatic plant
- Whorls (circles) of four delicate feather-like leaves around stem
- Usually 12 to 21 leaflet pairs per leaf

To report invasive species:
Wrap plant in wet paper towel, place in sealed plastic bag, chill or refrigerate, and contact the Minnesota DNR at www.mndnr.gov/ais or 651-259-5100.

Whorl

12 to 21 leaflet pairs

mn
DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES

NATIVE SPECIES

Beneficial to the environment

Northern Watermilfoil
(Myriophyllum sibiricum)

Characteristics:

- Submerged, stiff aquatic plant
- Whorls (circles) of four rigid feather-like leaves around stem
- Usually 5 to 10 leaflet pairs per leaf

Prevent the spread of invasives:

- ✓ **Clean** aquatic plants and invasive species from watercraft.
- ✓ **Drain** lake/river water from all equipment. Keep drain plugs out during transport.
- ✓ **Dispose** of unwanted bait in the trash.

Whorl

5 to 10 leaflet pairs

EWR_428_18

BML water quality

Another season of BML water quality monitoring began in May. We take weekly Secchi Readings (water clarity) at various predetermined locations (~8 sites across the whole BML) for water clarity samplings from May through October. The location's data that is actually entered into the statewide database (MN Pollution Control Agency) is at our deepest point (69') in the South Basin. We take monthly (May-September) water quality samples at our deepest location and send them to a lab for analysis and entry into the statewide database. These data collections on water clarity and water quality have been done for more than 25 consecutive years and the trend for both is improving, which is great.

At the BMLA Annual Meeting in August at the Mantrap Valley Conservation Club there was a question from the audience regarding the aquatic weed growth that always is a problem in August – Has it become worse in recent years. I answered that with the combination of continuing improvement in water clarity over the past 25 years, which is documented by our long record of water clarity monitoring, and the drought over the 2011-21 time period (i.e., lower lake water level) the resulting outcome is more weed growth. After the meeting I was reminded that when the BMLA was formed in 1956 the first principal issue was excessive aquatic weed growth. BML is classified as a mesotrophic lake, meaning a medium transparency, water has moderate amounts of plant nutrients, moderate primary/plant productivity and trending over a long time toward a eutrophic condition – less clarity, more plant growth, etc.

Get a no-cost site visit from the specialists at Hubbard SWCD

The Hubbard County Soil and Water Conservation District received a grant from the Midwest Glacial Lakes Partnership to help educate people on and promote shoreline stewardship across the Mantrap Chain of Lakes (Mantrap down to Belle Taine). This lake chain was chosen because a major goal is to protect water quality in high value fisheries and the Mantrap Chain is home to some unique species



HUBBARD COUNTY
Soil & Water
Conservation District

like Muskies and Cisco. So far during the grant we have been focused on meeting and getting to know the Lake Associations and landowners along the chain. Since late June we have conducted around 60 no-cost site visits to assist landowners in protecting the lakes they live on through education on

water quality smart landscaping, buffers, rain gardens, and a variety of stormwater practices. We want to conduct more site visits this fall or next summer for those who would like to learn more about how they can protect their lake. These site visits are focused around addressing questions landowners have on protecting the lake, reducing shoreline erosion, planting buffers, storm water, and any other concerns the landowners may have. If you wish to learn more but do not wish for a site visit, we also have a variety of documents related to shoreline stewardship. Those who wish to have a site visit or receive additional information can reach out to Jake at jake.hcswcd@gmail.com or 218-732-0121 ext 112.

We also have a variety of other programs that may be of interest such as nitrate clinics, tree sale, and forest stewardship programs. On the first Friday of each month you can bring in samples of your well water to have them tested free of charge for nitrates. Our county's groundwater is susceptible to nitrates due to the highly porous sandy soils so regular testing is recommended for people with elevated levels and those who haven't tested recently. If you want to add more trees to your shoreline or lot we run a tree sale every spring where you can order native species in bulk. If you wish to order smaller numbers look into the Hubbard County COLAs restore the shore program which allows for purchase in smaller quantities. Keep an eye out later this year for us to publish the full tree list! If you have existing forest there are a variety of programs to help keep forest forested which in turn protects water quality. Our office cost shares forest stewardship plans which can inform you on how to meet your management goals. Having a Forest Stewardship Plan and 20 acres of forest qualifies you for the Sustainable Forest Incentive Act which can provide a per acre incentive payment for keeping your land forested and can help offset the cost of owning forest land. Feel free to reach out to our office with any questions on these topics 218-732-0121.

Follow us on Facebook!!!

Check out the Big Mantrap Lake Association Facebook page! We are trying to use it as a communication method to share what is happening on the lake. We will post meetings, items of interest, pretty pictures, and whatever. Feel free to post your own interesting items also. It is a public page. Find us by searching on Big Mantrap Lake Association in Facebook, or go to <http://www.facebook.com/BigMantrapLake>



Big Mantrap Lake Association Membership Registration, AIS Watercraft Inspection Donation and Loon Fund Donation.

Big Mantrap Lake Association's purpose is to preserve and protect Big Mantrap Lake and its surroundings. BMLA will work to enhance the enjoyment of wildlife, fishery, boating, safety, economic and aesthetic value of Big Mantrap Lake for our members and the public.

Today's date _____ / _____ / _____

____ **Renewing member** ____ **New member: please complete all information.**

Contact member: _____

Mailing address: _____

Lake address: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Other members: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

I have enclosed the following payment:

Membership dues \$25 per property. Please pay between January 1 and June 1.

AIS suggested donation \$300. Loon donation, any value is appreciated.

_____ Check, (preferred) made out to Big Mantrap Lake Association, for \$25 along with completed form.

_____ PayPal accepted, bmlamn@gmail.com please complete form and send to address below

_____ A donation of \$ _____ payable to BMLA AIS Fund.

_____ A donation of \$ _____ payable to BMLA Loon Fund.

Send completed form and/or check to Treasurer, Linda Zawacki, 5104 Sundial Lane, Woodbury, MN 55129

Or email form to: bmlamn@gmail.com

Anyone interested in volunteering or being on the board of directors contact any current board member.

Visit our web page for info about our meetings and current events:

www.mantraplake.org and/or Facebook page: [Big Mantrap Lake Neighbors](https://www.facebook.com/BigMantrapLakeNeighbors)

Board of Directors

President	Rich Halvorsen	612-245-9391	rich.halvorsen@gmail.com
Vice President	could be you!		
Treasurer	Linda Zawacki	651-246-3844	LZboutique@comcast.net
Secretary	Julie Mickelberg	218-699-3004	jmickelberg@sio.midco.net
Aerie coordinator	Barb Fischer	765-414-4197	barbf49@aol.com
AIS coordinator	Brian Livingston	507-263-6102	bdlivingston@icloud.com
Board member	Kathy Nevins	605-695-2959	knevins62@gmail.com
Board member	Kraig Narr		narrkraig@gmail.com
Board member	Andy Baldwin		baldysmuskysguideservice@gmail.com

web site
www.mantraplake.org

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www.facebook.com/BigMantrapLake
public site

**[www.facebook.com/
groups/1076808002386929/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/1076808002386929/)**
private site, contact Rich Halvorsen for access

Barb Fischer
618 W Soutar Drive
Bloomington, IN 47403

Who lives where

We lost an important resource when Rick Johnson died. The maps and list of residents you used to receive were created and maintained by Rick. Rick was an early adopter of computers and kept the map on hardware and used software that was lost with his passing. I sometimes wonder who lives where on our lake; and I expect that many of you are also curious. There are resources to find that information. A general outline of how to access that information is below:

The Hubbard County website for access to this information is <https://maps-hubbardcounty.opendata.arcgis.com/>
You don't need to sign-in to this tool to view the Public Property Viewer Application
<https://hubbardcounty.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=405588666bba4397982b98b3fd382f62>

Once on the site, you can zoom in/out to look at the maps and pick out properties to look at more closely. Once you get to a large enough scale, you can click on a property and find the owner and other information. You can search by name, address, pointing to a location on the map and lots of other ways.

Forever a Mantrapper

We lost a couple of long-term Mantrappers in the last few months. The ones I know about are listed below. If there are others I should include, please let me know: Barb, barbf49@aol.com.

Lyle Laske was a long-time resident, former president of the lake association and leader of the loon program for years. <https://www.brenny.com/obituaries/lyle-laske>

Ron Ryan Sr. was a long-term friend of many for more than 40 years. <https://sports.yahoo.com/ron-ryan-sr-longtime-st-012900226.html>
<https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/twincities/name/ronald-ryan-obituary?id=36412608>