

I hope DLA's Spring Newsletter finds you well, optimistic, and looking forward to the coming Deer Lake spring and summer seasons! – John Davis

Beautiful Deer Lake

Deer Lake is special. Maybe it's the mournful call of loons near sunset on a calm summer evening, the clear blue-violet magnificence of the lake itself, or the striking natural beauty of the Boreal Forest remnants that surround us. Maybe it's because Deer Lake is central to family life, a place for family to gather, a place where it's possible to encounter both the presence of loved ones from an out-of-time past and the unbridled joy borne by family and friends new to the lake.

Water clarity is among the reasons Deer Lake is so beautiful. When we look around the lake, we see maybe 70% of Deer Lake shoreline remains forested despite the fact that Deer Lake is highly developed. This is unusual. We also notice in-place shoreline Ice Ridges created naturally over generations or longer. What many do not realize, however, among other reasons, **Deer Lake water is as clear as it is because property owners have kept forested shorelines and ice ridges in place.**

Forested shorelines and ice ridges act as a natural filter. They filter phosphorus and other nutrients from rainwater before it runs into the lake. It's **phosphorus** and other nutrients that reduce water clarity and drive the growth of green algae and undesirable weeds. Forested shorelines and ice ridges also act to stabilize the shoreline itself, preventing storms, high water, and wave-action from eroding soil and nutrients into the lake. It's against the law now to remove forested shoreline and ice ridges, but if your shoreline was cleared or your ice ridge removed by previous owners, **it's possible to add an attractive buffer, low-berm, rain-garden, or similar landscape feature** that will filter runoff and prevent shoreline erosion.

For generations, Deer Lake water quality has served as a foundation for family life and lakeshore property values. People often associate lake water quality problems with large-scale agriculture, or forestry, urban development, or industrial practices. But the truth is that **property owner actions have a significant impact on Deer Lake water quality.** The impact of land use decisions on one lake lot may be relatively small, yet the cumulative impact of small decisions on many lake lots can result in significant water quality decline.

Recent Deer Lake Water Clarity

Unfortunately, since 2014 Deer Lake has experienced a decline in water clarity. During this time Deer Lake has lost on average between 4-8" of clarity annually, resulting in an average total clarity loss of around 2-4'. This decline is caused by increasing amounts of phosphorus running into the lake from sources including **rainwater runoff, shoreline erosion, and ineffective septic systems.** DLA asks for your help to arrest and reverse this decline.

Deer Lake is highly sensitive to additional phosphorus. Additional phosphorus loading causes a disproportionate decrease in water quality. Astoundingly, *just 100 lbs. of additional phosphorus would decrease Deer Lake water clarity by 9" throughout the entire lake.* The good news is that this sensitivity also means that *if we reduce the amount of phosphorus entering Deer Lake, water quality will increase disproportionately.*

What We Can Do

DLA invites property owners to learn more about which actions improve, harm, or are neutral to Deer Lake water quality. *There are numerous ways to accomplish recreational goals while preserving lake water quality.*

1. DLA's **Shoreland Initiative** encourages Deer Lake property owners to learn how their shoreline affects Deer Lake water quality. Best Deer Lake water quality results when property owners repair shoreline erosion and leave in-place forested shoreline and natural ice-ridges, or, for those properties where ice-ridges have been breached and/or forested shorelines removed, to add a natural buffer and low berm near the shoreline. There are multiple low-cost ways to meet recreational goals while preserving water clarity.

DLA offers to pay for an expert to come to your property to provide a no obligation assessment and options for you to consider. DLA also offers to pay for an expert who will produce a design for you if you decide to move forward and implement a solution. If you are having a specific problem with shoreline erosion or rainwater runoff, or if you're new to the lake or simply want to understand more about how you can accomplish your recreational goals while preserving or improving water quality, DLA's Shoreland service can help with that too. More info on our website <http://deerlakeassociation.org/index.cfm?pageid=282027>

2. DLA's **Septic Initiative** encourages Deer Lake property owners to learn more about how our septic systems may impact Deer Lake water quality. For best Deer Lake water quality results:
 - a. Most septic systems have a filter that must be cleaned regularly (usually annually)
 - b. Accumulating solids must be pumped from your septic tank regularly (usually every three years)
 - c. Septic systems are only designed to function properly for 20-30 years and then must be replaced. Over time, the filtering soil under your drain-field becomes saturated and ineffective. Once your septic system is 20+ years old, order a septic compliance inspection every 5-10 years. **On average, at 20 years of age 40% of septic systems are contributing to Deer Lake water quality decline and need replacement.**

How can you know if your 20+ year-old septic system is ineffective filtering effluent before it runs into the lake? Order a septic compliance inspection. A septic compliance inspection is different than the simple inspection performed when a septic service technician pumps your tank. It's the same inspection required by law when you sell your property or apply for a building permit. A Septic compliance inspection is a simple procedure including only hand-drawn soil-borings near your tank and drain-field, performed by a licensed private inspector.

DLA offers to pay for your voluntary septic inspection if your 20+ year old system is eligible.

DLA has also arranged for the availability of zero-interest 10-year-term loans for septic replacements on eligible properties.

These are available *now* but only for a limited time, so best to act *now*. To learn more, contact beautifuldeerlake@gmail.com
Your individual action could make the difference.

DLA Membership Renewal 2022

*All property owners can unite around a goal to maintain and improve water quality. Is Deer Lake water quality important to you and your family? If so, please **join DLA or renew your membership for 2022**. It's only \$25. Join DLA even if only to support DLA's water quality work. DLA is a 501(c)(3) MN all-volunteer non-profit so your membership payment is tax-deductible to the full*

extent of the law. We're not political. We have no employees and no member gets paid to work. That means your \$25 membership fee goes directly to our water quality and other important Initiatives. **DLA revised our membership procedure to make it easier for you to join or renew. See enclosed Membership insert for how to join or renew for 2022.**

FiveStar Initiative

DLA asks property owners to move our business to a FiveStar dock installer this spring to help prevent Deer Lake from becoming infested with invasives. FiveStar lake service providers that install/remove docks/lifts seasonally on Deer Lake:

- **Grand Rapids Marine** 218-326-0351
- **Thousand Lakes Dock & Lift** 218-398-7553
- **JJ's Barge Service** 218-244-5194
- **Northland Lake Svcs/Chad Schumacher** 218-256-9691
- **Matt Almquist/38Outpost** 218-259-9997
- **Paul Grooms/Grooms Property** 218-259-2157
- **Lake Home Helpers** – 218-969-5028

Dock installers can unwittingly infest Deer Lake with invasives (AIS) when coming here from infested waters. FiveStar providers are DNR-certified, sign a contract agreeing to apply additional AIS safeguards, and agree to help us disseminate best practices. Learn more about FiveStar at our website <http://deerlakeassociation.org/index.cfm?pageid=262011>

Help Prevent Aquatic Invasives in Deer Lake

- Know which waters are infested <https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/invasives/ais/infested.html> or search "MN infested waters"
- Practice **Clean, Drain, Dispose and Dry** – remove drain plugs, then remove mud, weeds, and standing water when exiting any landing.
- Know whether your or your guests' owned or rented boats and gear have been in infested waters prior to launch in Deer Lake. If you don't know for sure, *assume waters are infested*.
- **Drain and dry boats and trailers in the sun for at least 5 days.** If you don't have 5 days, decontaminate. *See below for more information about decontamination.*
- **Dry lifts/docks for at least 21 days** before moving from one lake or river to another.
- **Don't let others use your private launch** unless you know where their boats have been. Owners can many times prevent unauthorized private ramp use when absent by strategically placing docks, lifts, and trailers so that others can't use the launch.
- Patronize **FiveStar** service providers when you:

- Install/remove dock/lift
- Service boat and engine
- Rent trailers, boats, and gear
- Purchase used gear /equipment

<http://bit.ly/FiveStarLSPs>

Free Boat/Trailer Decontamination Service

If your boat or your guest's boat have been or may have been in infested waters, **dry boats, trailers, and gear in the sun for at least 5 days before launching into Deer Lake**. If you don't know or can't find out, *assume waters are infested*. If you or your guest do not have 5 days, then **decontaminate**.

Decontamination includes applying verified 140° hot water for 10 seconds or 120° hot water for two minutes. **If you or your guest need or want a hot-water decontamination, call 218-256-4243 or request a decon from the inspector at Deer Lake public access.**

Depending upon staffing that day, the inspector will perform the decon for you at Deer Lake Station or will call for a trained professional to be sent over to Deer Lake Station to perform the decon. Otherwise we'll direct you to the nearest staffed mobile decon station. **218-256-4243**

Deer Lake Station

Deer Lake Station is open for your use 24/7. The Station provides self-service tools to help arriving and departing boaters perform Clean, Drain, Dispose, and Dry as required by law. Fresh rinse-water and hand-tools help boaters clean and flush the mud, weeds, and standing water from boats, trailers, and gear that transport invasives from one lake or river to another. Lights enable Station operation at night. The Waders Rack makes it easy to rinse gear. The Station also provides tools for use only by the Itasca AIS Inspection Program, including 140°+ decontaminating hot water. Deer Lake Station is located at the Deer Lake public access and was engineered, designed, constructed, and is funded and maintained by DLA.

<http://deerlakeassociation.org/index.cfm?pageid=312044>

FiveStar Landscape Firms

Landscape firms performing Permitted work along our shorelines must be careful to avoid transporting invasives (AIS) via barges and other machinery and gear when they move from one lake or river to Deer Lake and our shoreline. **FiveStar landscapers** are DNR-certified, apply additional AIS-prevention safeguards, allow us to review their operations, and agree to help identify and disseminate AIS best practices. If you're hiring a landscape firm this year, **please request bids from FiveStar Landscapers:**

- [Lange Nursery & Landscape](#) 218-380-6939
- [McNeil Excavating](#) 218-259-6364
- [J.V. Tree and Landscaping](#) 866-232-5183

Learn more info about Landscapers, the Itasca FiveStar Initiative, and other FiveStar providers:

<http://bit.ly/FiveStarLSPs>

Compensated Conservation Easements

Do you own 20 or more acres of land that includes at least some Deer Lake shoreline? Would you like to receive payment of 60 - 80% of the *current fair market value* of your land to conserve it forever? This is possible through an initiative created by the Minnesota Land Trust (MLT). It's called a *Compensated Conservation Easement*. DLA recently applied this MLT program in an innovative way to purchase 435' of Deer Lake shoreline and 43 acres of unimproved land that serves as a critical natural buffer for Deer Lake. An MLT representative will speak about Compensated Conservation Easements at the 10am Sat June 11 DLA Membership meeting at Camp Hiawatha.

2022 DLA Events

June 11, Saturday

DLA Membership Meeting

10AM at Camp Hiawatha, Baldwin Commons. Our featured guest speaker is **Ruurd Schoolderman** from the **Minnesota Land Trust**. We'll talk about *Compensated Conservation Easements*, and DLA's recent land purchase. We'll also feature a *June Phenology* presentation from **Courtney Kerns** of **KernsEco** <https://www.kernseco.com>

July 15, Friday

DLA Spaghetti Dinner/Annual Business Meeting

5pm DLA Business Meeting, 5:30pm Spaghetti Dinner. At Camp Hiawatha. Free-will offering at dinner for DLA.

August 18, Thursday

DEER LAKE FROLIC

5pm gather; 6pm-dinner at Camp Hiawatha
Music, food, silent auction, games. It's the best social event of the season! The Frolic is a great opportunity for the entire Deer Lake community to come together, including residents, guests, and visitors both from Deer Lake and the surrounding communities. All are welcome! **Please mark the date & plan to attend!**

DLA Bear Island Trail Maintenance

June 3 – Friday 9:00 AM

July 8 – Friday 9:00 AM

August 5 – Friday 9:00 AM

(In the event of rain - 'Rolex' 24 hours)

Coordinated again this year by Paul Askegaard. Bear Island was donated to the State of MN by DLA, who purchased it with donations from lake residents plus State matching funds. Once a month during the summer, DLA members spend about 1 hour keeping the walking trail open and removing trash. RSVP not necessary, just arrive on the south end of the Island at 9am on the scheduled day. If conditions are questionable, call Paul at 651-230-3361. **Please volunteer, especially if we have a bad storm during the month.** Bring gloves, wear long pants and bug spray, and bring any equipment you have (chain saw, clippers, loppers, small saw and/or garbage bag). Paul will provide coffee/donuts. Hope to see you there!

HELP WANTED: Live-in house and dog sitter. May 17, 2022 to June 5, 2022. Lake home and golden retriever need to be watched. Please call Tom @ 805-541-2732.

DLA Hwy 62 Clean-up:

May 28, Saturday

September 10, Saturday

Coordinated this year by Chad and Amanda Glader. Please join us for DLA Hwy 62 clean-up where we combine community service and fellowship! Gather in the parking lot of the Baptist Church at 9:30 am, corner of Hwys 62 and 177 on the east side of Deer Lake. <https://goo.gl/maps/7fd9J5frm5o> Clean-up takes about an hour. Afterward, you're invited to the Glader cabin for coffee, snacks, and fellowship. Please contact Chad or Amanda if you're able to join us gladerc@gmail.com or 763-516-6589.

DLA is grateful for Barb and Kerry Glader who coordinated DLA's Hwy 62 clean-up for seven years, and who have now retired from that duty. Thank you, Barb and Kerry! DLA also thanks Chad and Amanda for volunteering to serve as coordinators this year.

Need space for a meeting, family reunion, retreat, family celebration or other special event? Want to send your child or grandchild to camp on Deer Lake? Consider **Camp Hiawatha**, a Deer Lake FiveStar steward.

<https://www.northwoodsretreatsmn.com>

DLA "Deer Readers" Book Club

May 31 Zoom meeting (4th Tues), 4pm: The Code Breaker by Walter Isaacson
(Leader: Mary Spratt, Host: Jo Landwer)

We will use Zoom for the first meeting of the season only. We'll start at 4pm on Zoom. At 5pm we'll close the Zoom portion of the meeting and enjoy socializing at Jo Landwer's home. Bring an appetizer to share.

June 28 (4th Tues) 4pm: The Genius of Birds by Jennifer Ackerman (Leaders: Don & Abby Marier, Hosts: Jack & Susie Jones)

July 26 (4th Tues) 4pm: Anxious People: A Novel by Fredrick Backman
(Leaders: Don & Ellen Ardery, Hosts: Ardery's)

Aug 23 (4th Tues) 4pm: The Sun Also Rises by Ernest Hemingway (Leaders: Dick & Joyce Erickson, Host: Jan Hill)

Sept 13 (2nd Tues) 3pm: (earlier start time for Business meeting/voting and book discussion) Marcel's Letters: A Font and the Search for One Man's Fate by Carolyn Porter (Leaders: Don & Abby Marier, Hosts: Mariers)

DLA Golf Scramble

We will be playing our Golf Scramble on one Tuesday of each month. This is a fun time, not a competition. In an attempt to even out the teams we insert in our "Rules of the Day" - fun challenges that make it more interesting.

May, 24th, Tue at Pokegama – Tee Off 2pm
June, 21th, Tue at Blueberry Hills – Tee Off 2pm
July 19th, Tue at Pokegama – Tee Off 2pm
August 16th, Tue at Eagle Ridge – Tee Off 2pm
September 13th, Tue at Pokegama – Tee Off 2pm

New golfers always welcome to join us on the golf course and former golfers, spouses and significant others who don't golf welcome to join us for dinner!!

