



The newsletter information is for those interested in preserving and protecting Pokegama Lake and its environs, together with the wetlands and aquifers, and enhancing the water quality, recreational, and aesthetic features of the lakes for both present and future generations.

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March 2022

NEWSLETTER

<http://www.pokegama.org>

2022 Board of Directors

TERM ENDS JUNE 2022

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TERM ENDS JUNE 2023

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TERM ENDS JUNE 2024

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NEWSLETTER – Linda Skallman
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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Greetings, GPLA.

As I write this column, we are a day and a half into a two-day winter storm where we have already received 10" of new snow, which is currently being cruelly-blown around the lake by 30 mph gusts. But... I am confident that by the time you are reading this, the longer days and higher sun will have changed the lake landscape yet again.

The board has been busy this winter working on different projects that we will share in these newsletters and communications as the year progresses. Two of the projects I am personally excited about include:

- 1) the reinvigoration of the Smith Creek Spawning Riffle Project – the GPLA is actively working with the DNR and local Conservation Officers on this project to improve walleye spawning habitat on Smith Creek
- 2) A GPLA family picnic on a Thursday in August on the lake to socialize and have some fun.

Volunteers will be needed for both these projects/events so please reach out to me if you are interested. Much more information to come!

- Sam

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CALENDAR

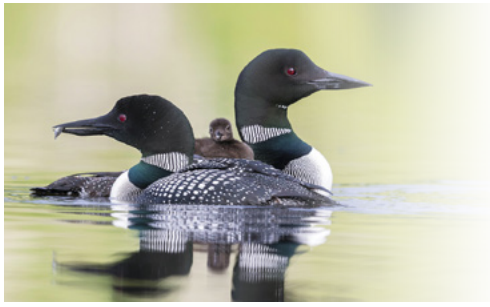
Board of Director's meetings are typically the 4th Monday of January, April, and October with **Membership meetings** in June and July.

Any member is welcome to attend the Board's meetings.

Contact any board member for specific time and place of meeting(s).

Me, all ready for **spring** and **warm weather**.





Minnesota Loon Restoration Project

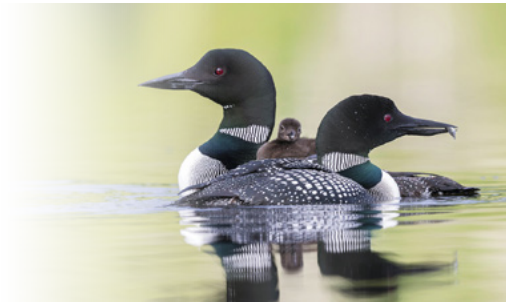


PHOTO BY BRIAN LASENBY/ADOBE

(Loon Preservation Funding from BP Oil Spill Settlement)

The MN Loon Restoration Project (MLRP) is a joint DNR, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and MPCA effort to address loon conservation in light of the 2010 British Petroleum Deepwater Horizon oil spill. The objectives of the MLRP are to reduce loon mortality and increase the number of young loons produced in 8 counties in MN, including Itasca. MN was allotted \$5.5 million initially. Under an additional portion (Open Ocean) MN would get \$7.2 million to use to buy conservation easements or critical loon habitat to ensure quality nesting areas.

Restoration activities include: acquisition and/or easements of shoreline to protect common loon nesting and forage habitat, enhancing loon productivity via artificial nesting platforms and engaging MN lake associations in loon conservation activities. Lake Associations involvement would include having a Loon Liason (LL) from the membership that would work with MN DNR to help facilitate the outreach portions of the MLRP. The LL would enter the lake in the Loon-Friendly Lake Registry, assist DNR in drafting a loon friendly portion to their lake management plan. The LL would also keep membership informed, work with MPCA on the "Get the Lead Out" program and work to include their lake association in the MN DNR Loon Watcher Survey program. Periodically GPLA members have wondered about our loons and how they were affected by the oil spill.....here is a chance to work on a loon friendly project with settlement money available.

Rob Rabasco, DNR Brainerd, is leading this program, he currently does not have a Loon Liason for Pokegama Lake. If you are interested in this project, Rob's contact information is 218-203-4321 or rob.rabasco@state.mn.us GPLA is hoping Rob could attend the June or July meeting when they are scheduled. Additional information may be found at: <https://www.acclakes.org/hot-topics/loon-habitat-restoration> or coming soon to DNR website.

In Memory of...

Godfrey "Nick" Larsen

1932 – October 15, 2021

Nick was the first president of GPLA, in 1971 and a founding member of the organization. He was Associate Director/partner owner of Camp Mishawaka from 1963-1991. He guided development of Mishawaka Shores Townhomes on the old girls camp property of which he was quite proud. Hunting, fishing, and camping were his loves as well as being an active involved community member. He and Sonia spent countless hours mentoring campers on the shores of Pokegama.

Nick was preceded in death by Sonia, his wife of 63 years, and son David. He is survived by daughter Kristan, son Jim, 5 grandchildren and 1 great-grandchild.

Willett N. Gorham

June 21, 1934 – October 20, 2021

Willett and wife, Judith, spent summers at the family cottage near the golf course and have been members of GPLA since 1992. They wintered in La Crescent, MN. He enjoyed a life well lived, spending time with friends and family.

He is survived by his wife of 60 years, Judith Mullins Gorham, and daughters Sue and Sandra as well as 7 grandchildren and one great-grandson.

Susan J. "Sue" Rohloff

1942 – November 2, 2021

Sue and Dick came to Grand Rapids in 1978 and Sue continued her nursing career, teaching nursing at ICC, retiring as Program Director and also serving on the board of the Grand Itasca Clinic and Hospital. Sue and Dick enjoyed activities and family life on Pokegama, living in the Tioga Beach neighborhood. They have been members of GPLA since 1994.

Sue is survived by her husband Dick, and sons, Kurt, Jon and Todd as well as 10 grandchildren.

DNR

SEEKS COMMENTS ON GRAND RAPIDS AREA FISHERIES MANAGEMENT

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources invites anglers and others to comment on fisheries management in several waterbodies in the Grand Rapids area through March 15.

The DNR will be using comments and suggestions from the public as it updates fisheries management plans that identify specific activities planned for designated lakes and streams over the next five to 20 years. These plans include a variety of fisheries information: summaries and evaluations of past management activities and regulations; background information such as water chemistry characteristics; water temperature information; and species presence, stocking, and historic catch rates from previous fisheries surveys.



The plans also can identify biological and social factors that might limit a fishery's potential and seek to address these limiting factors by prescribingscience-basedmanagement tools when biologically, fiscally and socially appropriate.

"Comments and suggestions from the public are important because good management plans consider angler values and include social considerations," said Dave Weitzel, Grand Rapids area fisheries manager.

Public input helps identify values and concerns and is most useful before plans are finalized in late March. Anyone can request information and share thoughts about fisheries management by contacting the Grand Rapids Area Fisheries Office via email at GrandRapids.fisheries@state.mn.us or by phone at 218-328-8835.

The DNR Grand Rapids Area Fisheries Office is currently reviewing management strategies and will be updating lake management plans for the following lakes in Itasca County (except where noted, the new plans will have updated fisheries information including a review of walleye stocking): Bass (near Deer River), Bowstring – only updating fisheries information, not walleye stocking, Busties, Clubhouse – only updating fisheries information, not walleye stocking, Grave, Island (near Northome), Jessie, Little Bowstring, Pokegama, Rush Island, Spider, Tioga.

Comments and suggestions for managing other lakes and streams in the Grand Rapids work area are welcome at any time and will be considered when those plans are due for review.



BOAT-GENERATED WAVES

The long awaited study of the impact of waves generated by boats has recently been released. The board of directors will discuss this at a future meeting.

[Click here](#) to access the study.

The conclusions can be found beginning on page 98.

In addition, the Itasca Coalition of Lake Associations provided the following link to a YouTube Webinar discussing the study. [Click here](#) to view webinar.

HAS YOUR EMAIL OR PHYSICAL ADDRESS CHANGED?

If your email address changes or you move, please send Pat Davis the new information so that you don't miss our newsletter. The May edition is mailed using the addresses in the Itasca County Property Records system. To be sure that is correct and to get your property tax statements you need to notify the county.

Ripples . . .



- On December 1 there were reports of people skating on Pooles Bay. Meanwhile there were pictures of open water near shore on Wendigo and Sherry's Arm. People were kayaking under the causeway.



- A member saw a bobcat cross the Wendigo Road in December which was a first for him.



- If you thought this winter was cold – Justin Liles, Meteorologist with WDIO TV in Duluth reported on 1/24/22 that the coldest average January temperature for Duluth was -7.2 in 1912. The warmest average was 23.7 in 2006. Normal is 11.2. The average in 2021 was 17.9. As of 1/24/22 it was 4.2. So assuming Grand Rapids is similar, January was as cold as I thought.





U.S. Army Corps of Engineers



RESERVOIR WATER LEVELS

As of February 22, 2022, the water level elevation on Pokegama Lake is 1271.67 feet (1.39 feet below the middle of the summer band) and has very slowly dropped during the last several weeks. The outflow from the dam is currently 1000 cubic feet per second (cfs). Typically, Pokegama Lake is drawn down to elevation 1270.42 feet, which is 3 feet from the middle of the summer band (el. 1273.42 ft). This drawdown is targeted to be completed by the first of April.

The snow and SWE (snow water equivalent) measurement recorded on February 6, 2022 at the Pokegama dam was 16 inches, with approximately 3.25 inches of SWE. At Winnibigoshish

Dam, the snow depth was 13 inches, with approximately 2.67 inches of SWE. These measurements will continue to be taken weekly throughout the remainder of the winter season.

The annual snow surveys of the watershed will be completed at the end of February or early March. These snow surveys give a better estimate of the conditions throughout the basin. The National Weather Service also provides snow data at the following website: <http://www.noahrs.noaa.gov/interactive/html/map.html>

There is a 50% chance that the stage at Aitkin, MN will reach 14.3 feet according to the National Weather Service's initial forecast. Minor flood

stage is 13 feet and the guide curve for Pokegama starts at stage 14 feet. Look for updated NWS outlooks on February 14, February 28, and March 14. The current plan is to evaluate the basin conditions, continue the drawdowns, and communicate any increased flood risk.

MORE INFORMATION

You can visit the Corps of Engineers Water Control websites at <http://www.mvp-wc.usace.army.mil> for information on the regulation of Pokegama Lake Reservoir. Questions on regulation can be directed to Jim Noren at (651) 290-5626 or Jeff Cook at (218) 326-6128 at Pokegama Dam.

