



## September 2023 Newsletter

### **Annual Meeting**

Little Rice Lake Association had its annual meeting on September 9, 2023 at the Town Hall in Crandon. We had 15 members, including board members, at the meeting. Below is what was discussed at the meeting.

### **Aquatic Plant Survey**

This past fall the board applied grant requesting a new Plant Survey and Plant Harvest Plan to update our original Lake Plan. Unfortunately, the grant was not approved by the DNR. The board felt it was important for the us to move forward with a plant survey so they voted and approved the funding to contract with Tiffiney Kleczewski from Flambeau Engineering to conduct an Aquatic Plant Survey.

Most of you will remember that Tiffiney conducted the survey back in 2019 for our Lake Management Plan. Tiffiney contacted Mike Braunreiter on September 9<sup>th</sup> letting him know that she has completed the survey. She reported that she did not locate any invasive species in the areas that she was able to access via boat and would be sending us her full report within a few weeks.

### **Invasive Species – Purple Loostrike**



The DNR recently placed signs by the Flowage Ln., and Allen Ln., landings regarding Purple Loosestrife.

Tom Carlson (DNR wildlife biologist) reported that Purple Loosestrife was located at the north end of the lake near where the river enters the lake. Loosestrife is a wetland invasive plant that tends to outcompete native vegetation and reduces wetland plant and wildlife diversity in the process.

It is on the NR40 list of restricted species, meaning that it can't be transported or sold within the state.

The DNR started control efforts last year and released beetles this year that are used as a biological control method. They feed only on loosestrife leaves and stems and help to keep it in check and reduce its invasive tendencies. We will continue with control efforts to try and eliminate it or keep from spreading.

## Purple Loosestrife Overview

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### **Appearance**

*Lythrum salicaria* is a tall, multistemmed (30-50 per plant), perennial forb that can grow up to 10 ft. (3 m) in height.

### **Foliage**

The opposite or whorled leaves are dark-green, lance-shaped, sessile, 1.5-4 in. (3.8-10.2 cm) long and round or heart-shaped at the base.

### **Flowers**

Flowering occurs in July to October, when pink to purplish flowers develop in 4-16 in. (10.2-40.6 cm) long spikes at the tops of the stems. Flowers have 5-7 petals and twice as many stamens as petals.

### **Fruit**

Fruits are capsules that are enclosed in the hairy sepals and contain several reddish brown seeds.

### **Ecological Threat**

*Lythrum salicaria* is a serious invader of many types of wetlands, including wet meadows, prairie potholes, river and stream banks, lake shores, tidal and nontidal

marshes, and ditches. It can quickly form dense stands that completely dominate the area excluding native vegetation. This plant can spread very rapidly due to its prolific seed production; each plant can produce up to 2.5 million seeds per year. It can also hybridize with native loosestrife species, potentially depleting the native species gene pool. *Lythrum salicaria* is native to Europe and Asia. It was first introduced into North America in the early 1800s for ornamental and medicinal purposes.

Additional information can be found page on the DNR website.

<https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/Invasives/fact/PurpleLoosestrife>

## **Water Level**

The information regarding the water level was also provided by Tom Carlson who also over sees the dam and lake levels.

It's safe to say that we have been very dry this summer. That has impacted my ability to maintain the water level in the flowage near the maximum of 30" down form the benchmark on the dam. I typically see a loss of about ¾" to 1" per week in level during extended periods of dry/hot weather, even when running minimum flows. Most of the loss is likely due to evaporation as there is a lot of surface area to the flowage, 52,000,000 square feet. I really notice it during the dog days of summer when temps are high.

- April through end of August rainfall totals down about 42% from last year
- 2022 was drier than average, about 25% less rain than the long-term average for the summer months
- Average summer (June-Sept) rainfall in Wisconsin is about 4.12" per month
- 2023: July was average but June and August were well below average (about 1/3 of normal)

## **Aerator Updates/ Oxygen Levels**

Oxygen data was collected 3 times this past winter around the aerator location. The oxygen numbers continue to show the aeration system is working well - dissolved oxygen levels stay high in the area providing a place for fish to replenish their oxygen needs.

The aeration system has been turned on monthly, oil has been changed, and the parts in need of repair have been fixed or replaced so the system is ready to go once the ice returns. Help is always needed for the installation - contact any board member for more info

## **Finance Update**

Financial Report as of 9/7/2023:

2023	Income	Expense	Cash on Hand
	\$1,103.00	\$3,583.82	\$15,213.00

We want to thank members Marty, Jay & Lorenzo for donating 27.5 hours to the Crandon Raceway for some independent contracting work they completed for them. The Crandon Raceway in turn made a donation to our association of \$555.00 in their name.

The June race volunteers from the association pulled in a respectable \$142.00 in tips for working the concessions in the pavilion.

The most recent Labor Day weekend race/ concert volunteers from the association raked in an impressive \$438.00 in tips for working the concessions in the pavilion.

## **MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL**

We currently have 60 voting members. This is down from 2022 where we had 65 members.

New membership forms will start to go out in October/ November via email and will be available on the Website. Payment by check mailed to our PO Box or via PayPal on the Website. If paying electronically there will be a \$2.00 convenience fee.

## **Open Discussion**

Members are encouraged to volunteer for either or both of the events at the race track. All members that volunteered stated the work was hard but it was a fun time and is definitely good for the Association.

The subject of raising the water level of the lake was brought up. It was decided that all Little Rice Lake, lakeshore property owners would be surveyed. It will be similar to the survey that was conducted approximately 6 years ago. That survey asked the owners if they would agree to ask the DNR to raise the level of the lake one foot (12 inches) as measured at the dam.

The new survey is being worked on and will be sent to all lake shore owners as soon as it is completed.

The topic of navigational lanes was brought up with mixed results. Some members wanted the lanes, others wanted their lake frontage and views restored. Further discussion on this topic is needed.