



News from the Lake Management Board

June 23, 2006

Issue 3

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Mission Statement

The mission of the Grand Lake Area Association is to restore and preserve the Grand Lake watershed, returning Grand Lake to its mesotrophic state, creating the finest lake experience in central Minnesota.

There were many challenging and exciting events over the winter months, and we would like to provide you with an update on a few of them.

“Grand Meadows” By now, all of you should be aware that development pressures in Rockville are alive and well, although temporarily on hold. Decisions to install city sewer services from the Rockville city core to Grand Lake (along County Road 8) have resulted in the proposed “Grand Meadows” development, a 304 home development just to the north of Grand Lake.

As many of you can guess, the board and members of the Grand Lake Area Association did not play dead, nor did the citizens living in the city of Rockville. While we might not be able to stop development, we recognize the importance of working with the city to establish developments that are compatible with our mission to “restore and preserve the Grand Lake watershed” and the city’s comprehensive plan to preserve and maintain the rural character of Rockville. In a nutshell, we want to maintain a high quality of life with clean water and an abundance of open space.

So . . . What is being done?

A petition initiated by the Grand Lake Area Association resulted in the city council approving a moratorium that effectively pro-

hibits new development in the shoreland overlay (1,000 feet of the ordinary high water mark) until the city adopts a shoreland ordinance. This moratorium pertains to Grand Lake, Pleasant Lake, the Sauk River (within the city limits), and all bodies of water within Rockville that fall under the protections of a shoreland overlay.

Thank you to everyone who supported the work of the Grand Lake Area Association in making sure that our voices were heard, and thanks to those who showed up at the City Council meetings, wrote letters, and attended the special lake association meeting this past winter. In addition, the developer has put the project on hold for 2-5 years, which means we still need to keep our eyes and ears open.

The city has also created a task force to work on developing the shoreland ordinance and our Lake Association president, Scott Palmer, is participating on that committee.

Lake Management /Aquatic Vegetation Management Plan

Over the winter months, the board worked on developing and completing a lake management plan and an aquatic vegetation management plan. These strategic plans contain many ambitious goals that will improve water quality, manage aquatic vegetation, improve our fisheries, and

provide information and education. The plan will be available on our website for those of you who would like to read it.

Initiative Foundation Grant

A grant application was made to the Initiative Foundation as part of the Healthy Lakes Partnership, and the Grand Lake Area Association received a \$5,000 grant to be used towards projects in our watershed.

Fish Fry/CRP Promotion

Approximately 100 property owners in the Grand Lake watershed were invited to attend a fish fry at the Catholic church in Rockville to hear experts from the Soil and Water Conservation District and Pheasants Forever talk about available buffer zone and Conservation Reserve Programs (CRP). About 50 property owners attended; 4-5 of them are proceeding with projects that range from wetland restoration, creation of buffer zones, and making improvements in an ag waste system. We’re very grateful to our neighbors and excited about this new effort to further enhance the water in Grand lake and the surrounding watershed. A HUGE thank you to the lake association volunteers and the Grandview staff for all the work in making the food. It was *awesome!*



Last year's spectacular fireworks on Grand lake! Show your appreciation and support by contributing to the fireworks.



Fun in the Sun

In addition to all the skiing, tubing, fishing and just hanging out, we have several other fun events on the lake again for the 4th of July:

1. Join us for juice, coffee, and donuts at the annual **flag raising ceremony**, hosted this year by Do-reen and Al Kern, 10926 Grand Lake Road, beginning at 9:00 am.
2. The **Grand Lake flotilla parade** will begin at 7:00 pm.

3. The grand finale to the day will again be the spectacular **fireworks** by Dave Lenhardt and Monday Pyrotechnics. If you have not yet contributed to the fireworks, please send your donation to:

**Monday Pyrotechnics
Dave Lenhardt
2823 23rd Ave. S.
St. Cloud, MN 56301**

4. The third annual **Rock Fest** will take place from Friday, July 7th to Sunday, July 9th. The festivities include a parade, food court, kickball tournament, beer garden and street dance. The lake association will be selling glow-in-the-dark necklaces and bracelets instead of a food booth.



Looking for challengers to beat the nine skiers seen here!

Proposed Lake Improvement District?

The Grand Lake Area Association board has been exploring a variety of funding alternatives as we complete the water quality goals of our Grand Lake Management Plan and our Aquatic Vegetation Management Plan. What are our options?

1. We could increase dues.
2. We could continue raffle sales and other fundraisers.

The problem with this approach is that it puts the fundraising responsibility (raffles) on those who are active in the lake association, often missing other property owners who want clean water and a wise management of our aquatic vegetation. The major question is this—**How can the costs of keeping our water clean and managing the aquatic vegetation be spread out among all who use and enjoy Grand Lake?**

Other options under consideration:

1. We could contract with the Sauk River Watershed District to manage our aquatic vegetation management plan and other clean-water projects.
2. We could create a Lake Improvement District.

What is a lake improvement district?

A lake improvement district is a tool that is being used by many forward-thinking lakes, eliminating the need for fundraisers and membership dues. Instead, a Lake Improvement District assesses each homeowner an additional tax on their annual property tax statement. Forming the lake improvement district means slightly higher taxes for each of us but offers several crucial advantages:

- Every penny of tax money would be spent on Grand Lake improvements.
- Every property owner will contribute to the health of the lake.
- It allows us to spend our time

implementing improvement projects rather than spending our time fundraising.

Whether we go through the Sauk River Watershed District or a Lake Improvement District, a majority of the homeowners on Grand Lake will need to approve the plan through petition to actually move forward. The amount of the assessment is set by the board and must be submitted with a budget each year. We expect the tax to be \$90 or less.

The lake association members present at the Spring 06 meeting made a motion to move forward with investigating the creation of a lake improvement district. The board will continue to work on this over the summer and will bring a recommendation to the membership at the fall meeting. Please attend the fall meeting and hear more about this very important issue for our lake.

All property owners on the lake would be contributing to the health of the lake through the lake improvement district and the improvement district would eliminate the need for fundraisers.

Grand Lake in the News

An excerpt from the Waite Park **Newsleader** dated Friday, June 16, 2006:

Partnerships improve water quality, wildlife habitat

In 2004, the Stearns County Soil and Water Conservation District took one step further and initiated CRP promotion partnerships with several local groups. The Stearns SWCD and Pheasants Forever Inc. now have agreements with the Sank River Watershed District, North Fork Crow River Watershed Dis-

*trict, South Two River Watershed District, Clearwater River Watershed District, and the **Grand Lake Association** to promote and implement CRP within their respective areas of the county.*

“These partnerships allow us to pinpoint high priority areas of the county, said Jason Selvog, Pheasant Forever farm bill biologist.”

The Stearns SWCD and Pheasants Forever extensive partnerships have helped enroll more than 2,400 acres of new land into the various conver-

sation programs in Stearns County. Staff estimates they are on pace to achieve 5,000 acres by the end of the fiscal year.

Way to go! Our efforts will make a difference in the long term health of the lake and the surrounding watershed.

Farm the best—buffer the rest.



Aquatic Plant Workshop to be Held at Grand Lake

Aquatic plants are vital to the health of our lakes and rivers. Yet, sometimes they can choke our lakes – especially aggressive, exotic species. Learning about what these plants need to grow, how to identify them and the ‘communities’ they occupy in lakes can help you learn more about your lake and what management challenges or options are available.

You will also learn how you, your lake association or other interested folks, can develop a sampling plan to monitor the health, abundance and diversity of plants in your lake.

The evening is classroom and the day is a hands-on workshop. We really will be checking out plants and identifying them so you will walk away with more than just a plant key.

Aquatic Plant ID Agenda
Evening of July 28th from 6-9 classroom session:

- Aquatic plant communities
- Intro to plant terminology
- Use of Aquatic Plant Key
- Native and Exotic species identification
- Who regulates aquatic plants?

From 9 AM until 2PM, July 29 on **Grand Lake:**

- Aquatic plant sampling
- Plant sample identification
- Use of plant press to preserve samples

Please join us for this workshop which will take place on

Grand Lake in the Rockville area (just south of St. Cloud).

Registration is required! The cost of the workshop (both days) is \$20/person for anyone living in the Sauk River Watershed, \$40 for all others.

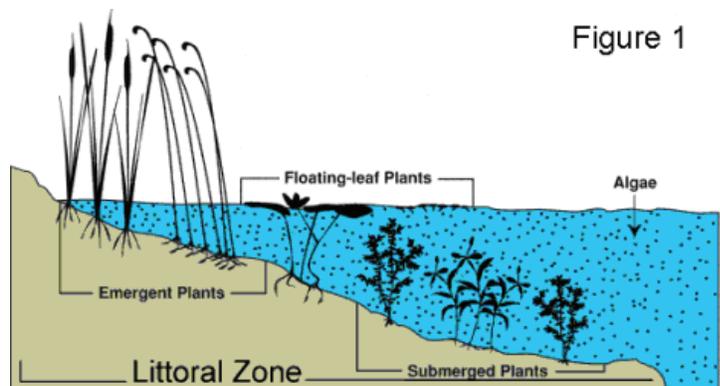
For registration information contact the Sauk River Watershed District at 320-352-2231 or check out their website at www.srwdmn.org and view the “Shoreland Education Workshop Series”.

Hmm...

You'll hit a two-acre fairway 10% of the time and a two-inch tree branch 90% of the time.

Join us for this hands-on workshop and learn to identify the native and aggressive, exotic plant species in our lake!

Figure 1





Lake Management Board

<i>Scott Palmer, President</i>	<i>Jeff Hagen, Past President</i>
<i>Bob White, Vice President</i>	<i>Susan Dean, Board Member</i>
<i>Jim Hall, Treasurer</i>	<i>Paul Ludwig, Board Member</i>
<i>Sue Palmer, Secretary</i>	<i>Pat Sell, Board Member</i>
	<i>Jim Pflapsen, Board Member</i>

Scott's Phone: 253-8191

Scott's E-mail: sspalmer@clearwire.net

<http://www.grandlakeassociation.org/>

Visit Our New Web Site

Thank you so much to Karen Mainz for all her work on our new website. It looks amazing! The website address is www.grandlakeassociation.org.

Please take some time to browse the site—it contains a ton of information including past newsletters, meeting minutes, the lake management plan and the aquatic vegetation management plan, lake map, photos, a history of the lake (thanks Ed), environmental links, links to the City of Rockville and a “contact us” site.

Please check it out and let us know what you think. A few sections are still under construction so please bear with us. It will also be a place to go and check for current news.



Have a great summer!