

# The Nebagamon Lake Association Newsletter

Spring/summer 2014

Ann Parker, Editor

**Note:** If you would like to get this newsletter by email, send your email address to [lakenebagamonwisconsin@yahoo.com](mailto:lakenebagamonwisconsin@yahoo.com). It's in color by email and on the web. Our web site is [www.nebagamonlakeassociation.com](http://www.nebagamonlakeassociation.com). On Facebook search for Nebagamon Lake Association.



**President's Message**  
By Erik Takkunen

Wow! What a remarkable winter we had at Lake Nebagamon this year. No matter where you call home, chances are your winter was long and wet. Officially, 98 inches of snow fell at the Brule Ranger Station through April, which is about 50% more than average in our area. Perhaps most remarkable was the fact that the heavy snow we received in early December never really melted all winter long. Unfortunately, this led to the demise of many roofs and buildings in the area. At one point in late winter, I had about 8 inches of solid ice as a lower layer on my roof, along with 4 feet of heavy snow on top of that! Snowmobiling was spectacular; however ice conditions put a significant damper on the ice fishing community that usually calls Lake Nebagamon home.

The winter weather has led to another challenge this spring – high water. The ice didn't clear the Lake until May 6, and when it did, the water was extremely high. Take a look at the pictures in this newsletter. You could have waterskied over the Honeymoon Point peninsula!

Now that the water has warmed up, we look forward to another great season on Lake Nebagamon. The Nebagamon Lake Association continues our mission of lake enhancement and protection through our Walleye Enhancement Initiative and Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) boat monitoring. We will have our annual social in August again this year, this time at Norwood Acres golf course. In the background, we are hard at work growing our membership base, maintaining

budgets, and working with State and local resources to better our great lake.

Please consider attending our annual meeting on June 28<sup>th</sup> at the Auditorium. You can learn more about the work our organization is doing and ask questions or provide input. We have two Board of Director positions open, and we will seek nominations at the meeting. Being a member of the Board involves attending two or three meetings each year, and provides the opportunity to get more involved in the great work of the organization. While we certainly value all of our members, without some of these members providing additional time and effort, we would not be able to do any of the great work that is being conducted.

Lastly, I want to again thank members who have generously donated amounts above and beyond their membership dues to any of the three initiatives (Walleye Enhancement, AIS, or a general fund). These funds are allowing us to continue our mission as an organization as well as move forward into new projects. We look forward to discussing our plans with these donated funds at our annual meeting.

In closing, I will again invite those who haven't "liked" Nebagamon Lake Association on Facebook to do so. I do my best to add content and welcome any articles, pictures, or links that are relevant to the organization.

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**Summer Schedule**—Mark your calendars! Look for more complete information further on in this letter.

June 21—Village-wide Garage sale, 8 a.m.-3 p.m.

June 28—Annual Meeting—Auditorium, 9:30 a.m., with speaker Christine Ostern, Douglas Co. Conservationist

July 4—Boat Parade—Honeymoon Point, 7 p.m.

August 9—Summer Social, Norwood, 5 p.m..

Sept 7—Board of Directors Meeting, Aud., 4 p.m.

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## Quotable

The good Lord didn't create anything without a purpose, but mosquitoes come close!  
(from an email)

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Have you ever seen Honeymoon Point under water before this year?!?

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**Boater Safety Classes for 12-16 yr. olds**

There is no instructor available to offer this class in Lake Nebagamon this year. However, the class is available on line through the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. Students will need a DNR customer ID number, which is available either by phone (1-888-963-7463) or by visiting a DNR service center during regular office hours.

The boating course is a three-hour course split into short segments that are designed for easy comprehension and quick learning. It has the identical text as on-site classes, with more than 200 realistic drawings, more than an hour of streaming videos and interactive animations. It is suitable for boaters of any age and reading skills. This course takes a minimum of three hours to complete. Minnesota also honors the certificate of students passing this class.

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More spring flooding on Lake Nebagamon

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**SPRING**

Spring is when you feel like whistling even with a shoe full of slush. (Doug Larson)

**Village-Wide Garage Sale June 21, 8a.m.-3 p.m.**

**Buyers and sellers needed!**

To get a map of sale locations, stop at Ole’s Market on the day of the sale. To be on map, contact Carol at [jarthur7697@charter.net](mailto:jarthur7697@charter.net) , 715-374-2529, or Gail at [levos@mindspring.com](mailto:levos@mindspring.com) , 715-374-2185, before June16th.

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**Boat Monitoring 2014 by Dave Sprowls**

We started monitoring the boat launch for invasive species on Saturday, May 10<sup>th</sup>. We usually begin monitoring with the start of the fishing opener, but, due to ice on the lake, it was delayed. We have 3 monitors this year, and they are all new. Jeff Giansanti and Judy Dalbec are residents of Superior. Judy has been a monitor for lakes in the Minong area for the past 10 years. The third monitor is Victoria Schmidt, a Northwestern High School junior from Maple.

We monitored Saturdays and Sundays from May 10 to Memorial weekend, when we began monitoring 7 days per week (a total of 53 hours per week). The weekly schedule will be Mon.-Thurs from 1 p.m. to 6 p.m. and Fri., Sat., and Sun. from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m until Labor Day. This is the same schedule as last year.

William Cain from Lake Nebagamon has once again agreed to serve as back-up. He worked as our monitor for 2 years previously, and then helped out as back-up last year. He also spent 2 hours with each of the new hires on May 10 and May 11 going over the new DNR forms, where and how to look for invasive species and coaching them on how to interview the public.

This year, due to individual contributions from home owners in the LN area, we have an extra \$1000 in our budget to monitor the lake. As a result, we expect to expand our hours during the week in July and August.

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**Walleye Stocking - 2013**

By Willard Kiefer & Phil Takkunen

What a great surprise when four DNR Tank Trucks from the Tommy Thompson Fish Hatchery at Spooner showed up at Lake Nebagamon on Oct 10-11 to stock large fingerling walleye measuring 7-10 inches in length. These fish were raised with funds appropriated by our state government to increase the state’s walleye fishery for the enjoyment of residents and tourists. We were very fortunate to receive a good portion of these fish because of our past Lake Association’s Walleye Initiative

and the support of so many organizations and business people here.

Over 14,000 DNR walleyes were stocked in Lake Nebagamon in addition to 2200 fingerlings stocked by the Red Cliff Indian Tribal Conservation Unit from near Bayfield. This puts the total fish stocked this fall at 16,200. These large fingerlings were scatter planted around the lake as well as put in at the landing. Scott Toshners's DNR fishery crew from Brule assisted our crew of: Phil Takkunen, Al Yoshimoto, Jack Sellwood and Will Kiefer in distributing a large portion around the lake. We need to recognize and thank both the DNR Fisheries and the Red Cliff Tribal Conservation Unit for their effort in this great walleye stocking event.

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What the "snow birds" missed this winter—ice caves along the South Shore of Lake Superior! (Lee Mogen)

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**Summer Social Info**  
By Adam Riutta

This year's Summer Social will be held Saturday, August 9<sup>th</sup>, at 5 p.m. at Norwood Golf Course. Please join your fellow Nebagamon Lake Association members for a picnic-style social complete with dinner, good company, free prize drawings, and more! Dinner price is expected to be between \$8-10 per adult, half-price for children under 12. More details, including final pricing, full menu options, and other fun new additions to the Social to be announced at the Annual Meeting.

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**Lake Nebagamon's Water Quality Status Report 2004 to 2013**  
By John W (Jack) Arthur  
December 2013

This report summarizes a 10-year water quality study (2004-2013) conducted in Lake Nebagamon, Douglas County, Wisconsin. Water samples were analyzed for total phosphorus, chlorophyll, water clarity, temperature and dissolved oxygen. The phosphorus and chlorophyll samples were analyzed by the Wisconsin DNR in Madison, WI. Lake stage (water level) was recorded for

each sampling period. Phosphorus, chlorophyll and seicchi disk readings proved to be good markers in tracking water quality changes in Lake Nebagamon. With exception of sampling year 2013, increasing concentrations of total phosphorus and chlorophyll samples were found during the later years of the study. Because of 2013 findings, additional sampling is needed to establish if increasing nutrient trends continue. Also, progressive decreases in water clarity are a concern. Thermal and dissolved oxygen lake stratifications occurred below 21 to 24 feet in the summer months. Summertime hypoxia dissolved oxygen conditions ( $\leq 2$  mg/l) were found at depths below 24 feet. Surface water temperatures exceeded 80 oF in July on two occasions, and may impact residing fish populations in surface water layers. Stable lake levels were generally present during the sampling activities. Lake Nebagamon appears to have a trophic status at the borderline between mesotrophic and eutrophic conditions. Mesotrophic lake classifications indicate total phosphorus and chlorophyll concentrations in the range of 18-27 and 8-10 ug/l., respectively, and seicchi disk readings of about 6 feet. Guidance supplied by the Wisconsin DNR would rate Lake Nebagamon as mesotrophic. The lake's trophic status appears to be in good condition with a relatively non-impaired status. Betz and Howard (2005) supply average values for Wisconsin Lake geo-regions. For the northwest lake geo-region, average values were as follows:

- Chlorophyll – 13 ug/l
- Seicchi Depth – 10.7 ft. (stratified lakes)
- Trophic-- 45 units (drainage lakes)

Northwest geo-region phosphorus values were not supplied by Betz and Howard (2005) However, they stated that lakes with total phosphorus concentrations  $> 20$  ug/l can expect algal blooms. Lake Nebagamon phosphorus values were near this threshold level. Although chlorophyll values were about one-half the reported northwest region values, seicchi disk readings revealed worse water quality conditions than reported in northwest lakes. Average TSI indices for Lake Nebagamon varied from 47.7 to 50.4. According to Betz and Howard (1954), when chlorophyll, phosphorus, and secchi TSI indices are equivalent, algae dominate light attenuation. The decreasing water clarity found in Lake Nebagamon might then be due to increasing algal populations, and possibly as a response to increasing phosphorus levels. No Lake Nebagamon algal data was found in the literature. Increasing phosphorus and chlorophyll concentrations together with declining seicchi disk results represent decreasing water quality, especially during the past 3 to 4 years of this study. However, with the exception of decreasing water clarity, it can be argued that Lake Nebagamon's water quality condition represents a relatively stable condition based on comparisons with Field's (1993, 1994) studies. Additional monitoring with the Wisconsin DNR is needed to determine if water quality continues to decline. Mixed signals were found to rate the lake's present condition, but suggest that Lake Nebagamon is somewhere between a mid to a top-tier condition.



**Nebagamon Lake Association Budget**

July 1, 2014-June 30, 2015

**FROM THE DESK OF THE LOON RANGER**

By Dan Takkunen

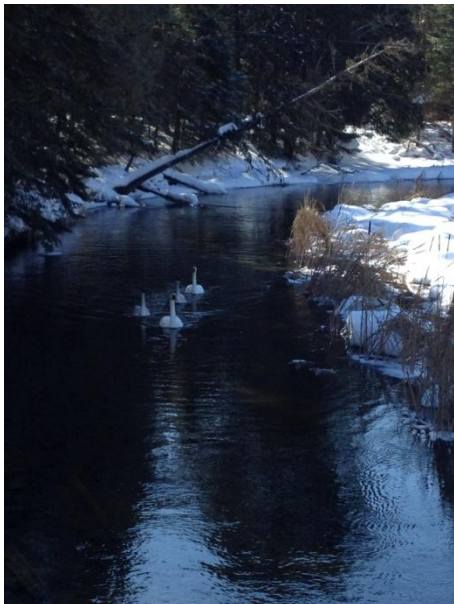
**INCOME:**

Dues	\$4000
Rummage Sale	400
Social	600
Donations	2000
Boat Monitoring	5500
Interest	<u>5</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b><u>\$12505</u></b>

**DISBURSEMENTS:**

Boat Monitoring	\$8000
Walleye Stocking	
Boat Parade	100
Fireworks	400
LN Swimming Class	200
Purple Loosestrife	
Hazard Markers	300
Social	600
KIN—Christmas	200
Annual Meeting	75
Educational Materials	100
New Project	1000
WI Association of Lakes dues	350
Douglas Co. Lake Assoc.	50
State Lakes Convention, conferences	250
Rummage Sale Expense	50
Web site	200
Newsletters, Postage, Office exp.	<u>500</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b><u>\$12375</u></b>

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**Winter swans (R. Denzler)**

So, what is it that makes the common loon we see on Lake Nebagamon every summer so interesting? Is it the haunting calls, the beautiful plumage, or the loon’s diving abilities that we find so fascinating?

Last fall, the loons on our lake migrated 1200-1600 miles, using Lake Michigan as a stopover, on their way to the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic coast, their winter homes. While there, their plumage changed to a grayish-brown color, and even their eye color changed. When juvenile loons migrate, as we hope our juveniles did last summer, they generally stay 3-4 years before coming back up north.

In 2012, of the 276 chicks that hatched in the state, 213 survived to 8 weeks, which is important, because by then chicks have developed the ability to dive and occasionally feed themselves. During that year, the two chicks that were born on Lake Nebagamon did not survive. In 2013, we think one of the two chicks survived. Predators threatening the chicks are large fish, raccoons, gulls, and mink, but in the case of Lake Nebagamon, the most likely enemies of the chicks are the resident eagles on Honeymoon Point.

If we are lucky enough to get chicks this summer, the eggs will be laid in May (usually 1-2 eggs) and will hatch in June. At 8 weeks, they have a 77% survival rate, based on current statistics. At 12 weeks, they are fully fledged and can hunt for food, although they still depend on their parents for most of their food.

When the loons come back this spring, they’ll become very territorial. Males will battle males, females will battle females. They chase each other until there is a winner. In some cases, if an intruder male wins a battle with the resident male, the female will pair with the winner. It turns out the females are more married to their lake than to their mates.

How can we help protect the loons on Lake Nebagamon? One way is to use non-lead fishing tackle. Many loons and other water birds die from lead poisoning due to accidental ingestion of lead fishing tackle, such as sinkers and jigs. Also, as you cruise slowly around the lake in your pontoon, or move a little faster in your watercraft or a ski boat, stay at least 200 feet from any loons you see.

If you have interesting observations, questions, etc., please feel free to contact the Loon Rangers on the lake, Dan Takkunen ([danbarbtakkunen@yahoo.com](mailto:danbarbtakkunen@yahoo.com)), and Jan Conley ([jconley003@centurytel.net](mailto:jconley003@centurytel.net)). They are part of the LoonWatch program sponsored by the Sigurd Olson Environmental Institute at Northland College in Ashland. Happy sightings!

**Walleye Initiative Update Spring 2014** by Willard Kiefer

1. October Stocking : DNR-13,710 EGW, Red Cliff -2,178 EGW for a total of 15,888, at 16/acre. Extended Growth Walleyes are in the 6-7 inch size range.

2. Regulation Change: The legal harvestable size increased from 15" to 18" this spring to give the walleyes at least once chance to spawn. Walleyes in the 15" size range are limited in spawning.

3. Fishsticks Project: Scheduled in February for 23 sites had to be postponed due to the deep packed snow conditions. Funding for this project will be carried over to next year.

4. Spawning Habitat: One beaver dam was removed in Minnesuing Creek to allow walleye access to 2 choice spawning sites. Steel Lake Creek was checked out with some improvement planned for access to favorable spawning sites.

5. Spring Survey: Scott Toshner, Fisheries Biologist completed a spring population survey just after ice out to get a good look at the walleye population from the earlier stocking. Results are not yet available.

6. Shoreline Restoration Project: This is a new project that is being initiated as part of the walleye improvement initiative. This is the area where the land meets the water. It is an extremely important area to all aquatic species and to lots of wildlife that associates with the "waters edge". The purpose is to improve these sites to a more natural condition. This would be an *entirely agreed to project by the lakeshore property owner* and is not intended to restrict use of the lake. Sites selected are those that the owner could set aside from high use, using other adjoining portions for lake use and water access. Christine Ostern, from the Douglas County Land Conservation Department will give a presentation on shoreline restoration at our June 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting. Christine indicates there can be assistance in planning and may be financial assistance in caring out this type of restoration work.

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