Lake Metonga Association Newsletter
Spring 2014

It's starting to break up.

I'm looking for fish on the ice.

It's Opening Day I found open water.

FINALLY - - - ICE OUT ----- MAY 9, 2014

SNOW-COLD! SNOW-COLD! SNOW-COLD

This had to be the winter that everyone talks about or rather, the winter that everyone wants to forget. Setting records is a goal all athletes strive to achieve; however, Mother Nature also chose to provide some record breaking numbers for us in the Northwoods. Officially, it was the coldest snow-packed winter on record between December 1st and February 28th. The Morning WJFW Rhinelander TV Meteorologist, Melissa Constanzer, supplied the following winter season (December 1 to February 28) data:

Total Snowfall – 110.3 inches.

Sixty-six days were below zero.

Average temperature +4.7.

January 6th High: -17; Nighttime Low: -30 degrees.

Thanks Melissa! Let's hope for a warmer report in 2015.

The good news is that the additional snowfall this year will add water to lake levels that have continually declined because of the drought in previous years.

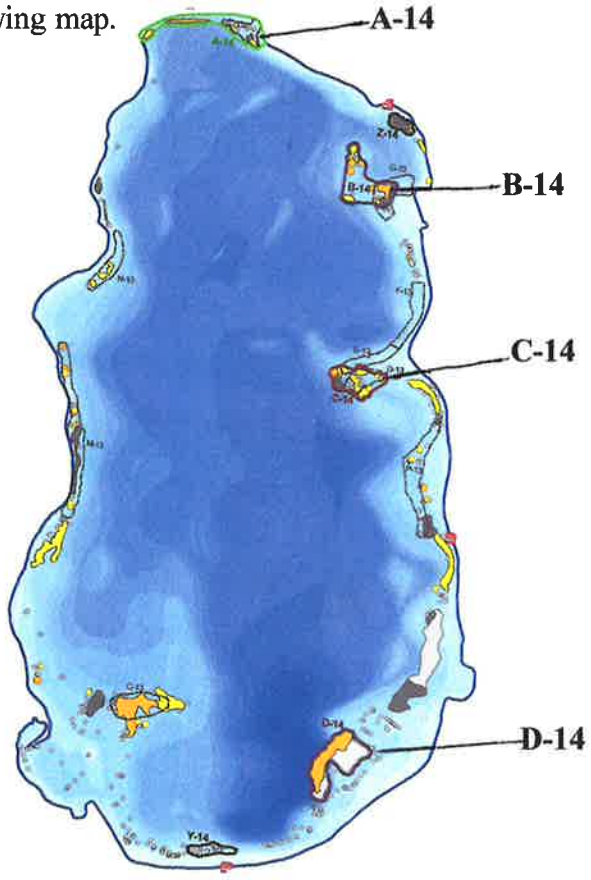
If you did any ice fishing on Lake Metonga you know that the cold, below zero freezing temperatures make ice. Reports from fisherman indicate that there was 30 to 36 inches of ice covered with approximately 2 feet of snow. As bitter cold and windy as it was, there were only about 70 ice fishing shacks on the Lake compared to 200 or more in other years. There were a considerable number of perch caught, but reportedly they were small – about 6-7 inches. It wasn't until

the end of the season that there were reports of larger perch being caught.

2014 -2015 AIS GRANT APPLICATION

With the assistance of our Lake Consultant, Onterra LLC, the Association filed an Eurasian Water Milfoil ("EWM") Control and Prevention Grant. The chief goal of this management project is to bring EWM densities within levels that minimally affect the aquatic ecosystem in the Lake. If EWM, this non-native species, becomes the dominant aquatic plant, the dense stands of this exotic will have a negative affect on navigation, recreation, will present safety concerns and prevent the growth of desirable native submersed species.

The current density of EWM, is shown on the following map.



The project plan included herbicide treatment of EWM sites A-14, B-14, C-14 and D-14, as well as hand harvesting of sites Y-14 and Z-14 in front of the City and County Park beaches.

2014 Proposed EWM Treatment Areas

Site	Proposed Acres	Ave. Depth (feet)	Volume (ac-ft)	Herbicide Details: Product	2,4-D (ppm ae)	Endothal (ppm ai)
A-14	11.4	7.0	79.7	Liquid 2,4-D	4.0	N/A
B-14	12.5	6.0	75.0	Granular 2,4-D	4.0	N/A
C-14	8.7	8.0	69.6	Liquid 2,4-D + Endothal	4.0	1.5
D-14	14.9	6.0	89.4	Granular 2,4-D	4.0	N/A
Total	**47.5**		**313.6**			

2014 Proposed EWM Hand Harvest Areas

Site	Proposed Acres	Ave. Depth (feet)
Y-14	2.8	8.0
Z-14	2.2	7.0
Total	**5.0**	

The total two year project cost breakdown was $139,277.00. The standard cost share is 75% State funded and 25% Association funded. However, realizing the competiveness of applying for grants, it was decided to do a 65/35% split. Adding an additional ten percent cost to the Association.

GRANT AWARD DENIED

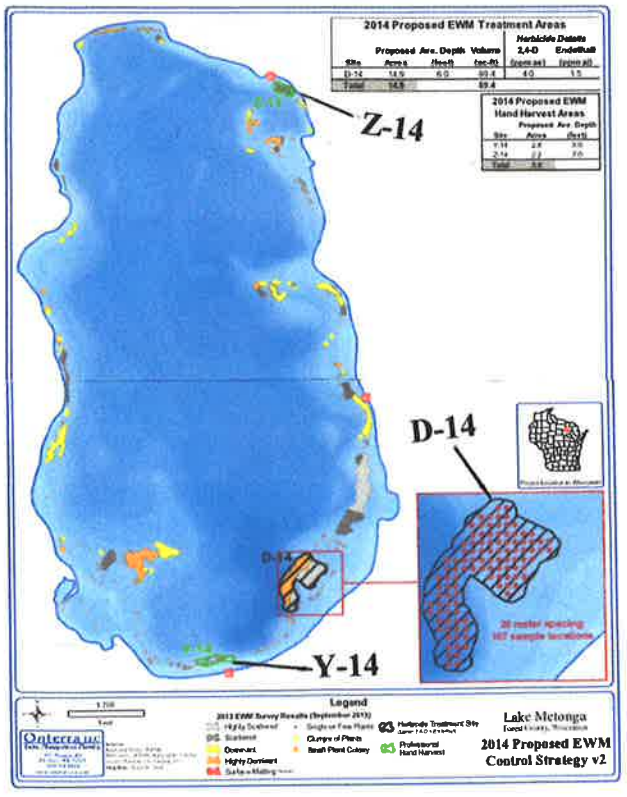
After explaining the context of the grant application you are probably asking why wasn't the Association awarded the grant. Following is the explanation receive from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources ("WDNR"):

"There was just not enough money in the ACEI category to fund all of the proposed projects in this funding cycle. There were $514,000 available in this category and over $1,314,000 in requests." The State has been a participant and has contributed to EWM control efforts in Lake Metonga in 2012-2013 and in previous years which may also have influenced the WDNR's decision.

ALTERNATIVE PLAN

Any EWM treatment or hand-pulling harvest needs to be funded with Lake Association funds since we didn't receive the grant. After careful consideration by the Board of Directors, the following action was approved:

1. Proceed with the hand-harvest-pulling of EWM sites Z-14 in front of the City Beach and Y-14 in front of the County Boat Launch at the County Park. The Association has contracted with Aquatic Plant Management LLC to provide this hand-pulling service.
2. Treat EWM site D-14 with liquid 2,4-D @ 4 ppm and liquid Endothal@ 1.5 ppm. The Association has contracted with Clean Lakes to do the application in late May or early June.



Site D-14 was chosen since it is spreading into the Forest County Park and encroaching toward the swimming area. Onterra will do a pretreatment survey to confirm or modify, if necessary, the 2013 Fall Survey Mapping and will also do a post-treatment survey in late summer to assess the effectiveness of the treatment. Following is a summary of the costs of this alternative plan:

Herbicide Treatment	$13,336.35
Onterra LLC	4,950.00
WDNR Permit	395.00
Hand-Pulling	4,986.00
	$23,667.13

This exemplifies the importance of every property owner to join and financially support the Lake Metonga Association's efforts to manage and control the impact of exotics on the Lake's ecology and its' fishery. Based on the response, it may be necessary to again explore forming a Lake District which permits the District to collect funds from every owner who benefits from the Association's effort to preserve this pristine water body now and for future generations.

CLEAN BOATS-CLEAN WATERS BOAT INSPECTIONS

Lake Metonga Association is planning to monitor and inspect boats, trailers and other recreational equipment that enter and leave the boat launches at the North and South end of the Lake.

If Lake users fail to clean their boats and equipment invasive species can easily enter Metonga. Since Lake Metonga has Eurasian Water Milfoil and Zebra Mussels, it is equally important to inspect and clean boats and equipment leaving the Lake to prevent their spread to other water bodies.

A $7,311.00 grant was received from the WDNR to financially support hiring three inspectors to cover the boat launches at the North and South end of the Lake. The State will fund 75% ($5,483.25) of the total budgeted cost. Two inspectors are high school seniors and the third is a college sophomore. Matthew Mullens, Tyler Sturzl and Taylor Preul will fill the programmed schedule which begins on May 23rd and continues through September 8th. An inspector training session was conducted by WDNR staff on April 30th at the Crandon Public Library.

FUND RAISING COMMITTEE

Fund raising is an important means of monetarily supporting the activities of Lake Metonga Association. Income is used to:

1) Fund the publishing, printing and mailing of three newsletters throughout the year.
2) Fund the web-site which provides information and news about Lake Metonga and the Association.
3) To fund the control of aquatic species as the Association is doing in 2014.
4) Prepare grant applications for AIS control and Clean Boats-Clean Waters inspections. Funds are needed for the activities not covered by State grant money.
5) Participate in local community events such as Kentuck Day, Art in the Square and the Walleye Banquet. These are important public relations activities for the Association which generate visibility in the community.
6) Raise money for the Lake's fishery including the stocking of walleyes.

ATTENTION EVERYONE!!

People are needed to volunteer for the Fund Raising Committee. Please call Deb Gaueke at (715) 574-9100. Deb is the Committee Chairperson and can give you more details.

TRIBAL SPEARING

The walleye harvest for the Mole Lake Chippewa Tribe was 1,086 fish in 2014. The safe harvest level is determined by the adult population estimates; less than two years old and/or using mathematical models. These estimates are established from actual fyke netting and electro-shocking data that is collected in the spring of the previous year. There are many safety factors built into the estimate to prevent overharvesting.

The adult population estimate in 2007 was 0.8 adults/acre – which equates to approximately 1,600 adult walleyes. An adult generally reaches sexual maturity at this stage: males 11 inches and up; females 17 inches and up. Under the direction of the Mole Lake Tribe's Fishery Biologist, Mike Preul, a stocking program was developed. 5,000 walleye fingerlings 6" to 9" in length were stocked in 2007 and 2008. The Tribe and the Lake Association shared the $10,000.00 expense.

It was determined that the increasing bullhead population was preventing natural reproduction of walleyes because of the large number of walleye juveniles that were being consumed so the Fishery Biologist initiated a bullhead harvest program. In succeeding years 2008, 2009 and 2010 approximately 20,000 bullheads were removed from the Lake. The Tribe is preparing for bullhead removal in 2014 and is committed to harvesting

them to prevent their impact on the walleye population.

This in addition to the capture of walleye eggs and sperm which was incubated in the Tribe's hatchery producing more than 2.5 million frye in 2009, 2010 and 2012. The results of these efforts were successful.

Successful indeed! In 2013 adult population increased to 4.9 adults/acre. Now there are nearly 10,000 adult walleyes in the Lake. It is this number that the Tribe in conjunction with the DNR used to establish the Safe Harvest Level. At this point natural reproduction has been restored. Hopefully this provides an explanation as to how the Safe Harvest levels are set and population levels are maintained.

If you would like more details about the Safe Harvest System or any other information about the fishery, please contact:

Mike Preul, Fishery Biologist

Mole Lake Chippewa Tribe

Office: 715-478-7621

"Yes, the fish are biting."

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Enjoy the Spring and

Summer Seasons

Have fun on the Water

Les Schramm