

District Of Powers Lake NEWSLETTER

Published for all those who use and love Powers Lake

SUMMER 2000

Aquatic Plant Survey Confirms

Eurasian Watermilfoil Invasion

The District of Powers Lake (the District / DoPL) was created in 1985 in response to growing concerns regarding protecting and maintaining the water quality of Powers Lake. Following the formation of the District, we undertook the preparation and implementation of a comprehensive Lake Management Plan. Along with the DoPL, the US Geological Survey (USGS), Kenosha County, the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC), and private consultants were involved in various aspects of the project. As part of the Lake Management Plan, SEWRPC recommended that an aquatic plant survey be done every five years to monitor both the mix and quantity of the various plants. In 1993 Aron & Associates, a private consulting firm, was contracted to conduct an initial DoPL aquatic plant survey. In 1999, the District of Powers Lake once again contracted Aron & Associates to re-evaluate Powers Lake's current aquatic plant population.

The goal and objective of the DoPL is to balance the various needs of users of Powers Lake and to insure that the health of the lake is maintained. Fish and wildlife need aquatic plants to thrive. Boaters and swimmers desire relief from nuisance aquatic plants. Property owners depend on safe and clean water to protect their investment, and to insure enjoyment for their children.

The District of Powers Lake desires to:

- Preserve native plants,
- Protect sensitive area,
- Educate members on the value of aquatic plants and a balanced plant population,
- Control exotic and nuisance plant species.

Native aquatic plants are imperative to the health of Powers Lake and these plants are an essential part of the lake's ecosystem. Native aquatic plants provide food and cover for fish and wildlife as well as contribute to dissolve oxygen production. Invertebrates, which fish depend upon for food, spend much of their life cycle on or near plants. Young fish and wildlife use plants for shelter and protection from predators. Aquatic plants also stabilize sediments, helping control shoreline erosion, and turbidity. Without plants, nutrients in the water column are readily available to fuel algae blooms. Native plant beds rarely experience oxygen or pH problems that are often associated with *exotic* plant species. An aquatic plant monitoring program provides an early warning signal to negative impacts, such as the loss of native plant diversity or the increase of nuisance exotic species.

The decrease of native plants, and the increase of the non-native (exotic) plant, specifically, Eurasian Watermilfoil (*Myriophyllum spicatum*) is of great concern to the District of Powers Lake. This exotic plant quickly takes advantage of all opportunities to expand its growing area. It grows to form a very dense canopy on the surface that shades out light to other more desirable native plant species. The native plants then decline in size and number and Eurasian Watermilfoil continues to expand its boundaries. Fishing and boating is impaired or restricted, and swimming becomes dangerous in the long stringy plants. Eurasian Watermilfoil spreads by fragmentation. Pieces of the plant will break off, usually by wind, wave, or boat activity. The fragments then float to a new location and take root. Often fragments are found with roots already present, ready to take a foothold.

In the 1993 Plant Survey, this exotic plant was practically non-existent and rarely found. The 1999 Plant Reassessment Survey conducted by Aron & Associates confirmed that Eurasian Watermilfoil has *significantly* invaded our lake, and has become a very serious problem. It can be found *throughout* Powers Lake and *at all depths*. The greatest density of Eurasian Watermilfoil is found in the 8 to 15 foot depths. Take note that the nature of this plant is to grow to the water's *surface*. Although it is rarely possible to eradicate Eurasian Watermilfoil from a lake once it has invaded, it can be controlled. It is imperative that we protect our current native plant population base and follow a comprehensive plan to reduce the spread of Eurasian Watermilfoil.

The District of Powers Lake is currently working with SEWRPC and the Wisc Dept of Natural Resources to formulate a comprehensive Plant Management Plan to expand on our current Lake Management Plan.



Phosphate-Free Fertilizers

Many of you have discontinued the use of lawn fertilizer, or have switched to Phosphate Free fertilizer. Thank you, Thank you!

For those of you who have not, please take note! The improper use of fertilizer does cause water pollution. When nitrogen and phosphorus wash into the lake it:

- promotes unsightly algae blooms and aquatic weed growth,
- lowers the dissolved oxygen levels in the water, and
- releases ammonia — which is toxic to fish.

We must all try to reduce the phosphorus level in our lake. Water testing has shown that we are experiencing an increase in phosphorus, which is not a good trend. IT ALL ADDS UP! Fertilizer carelessly applied on one lawn may seem insignificant. On *hundreds* of lawns, however, careless applications add up to a major problem for Powers Lake.

A fertilization program should begin with a soil test. Soil tests provide specific fertilizer recommendations for your lawn and can help you avoid using excessive fertilization. For more information on soil testing, contact the Kenosha UW Extension Office. Should you need to fertilize, do it in early October, NOT early May. Spring applications tend to wash into the lake during Spring rains, and can actually harm your lawn by promoting more top growth than root growth. Fall fertilizer applications, however, promote a deep healthy root system. Also, the fertilizer is less likely to be washed into the lake.

Avoid the use of fertilizers that contain any Phosphorus, a major water pollutant. Most soils already contain enough phosphorus for a healthy lawn. Phosphate-free fertilizers can provide the necessary nutrients while avoiding a threat to Powers Lake water quality.

Please, be sure to tell your landscaper that you only want PHOSPHATE-FREE fertilizer applied to your lawn. If you apply your own, the Burlington Co-Op sells a full line of lawn care products called "ClearLake".

GREEN GRASS PROMOTES A GREEN LAKE!



FISH STOCKING REPORT

Powers Lake has a reputation as a good fishing lake due to the efforts of the Powers Lake Sportsman's Club. Last Fall, as in years past, volunteers from the Sportsman's Club stocked Powers Lake with 2300 game fish. The fish were purchased from Robertson's Fishery in Genoa City at a cost of \$3,000. The Sportsman's Club, the Town of Randall, and the District of Powers Lake equally shared the cost for this project. 1300 Walleye 10-12 inches in length, and 1000 Smallmouth Bass 9 inches in length were transferred from the delivery truck to boats that were supplied by members of the Powers Lake Sportsman's Club, and then released into the lake. The Sportsman's Club feels that the extra cost of larger fish will insure a survival rate of 90%, smaller fish tend to become "fish food".

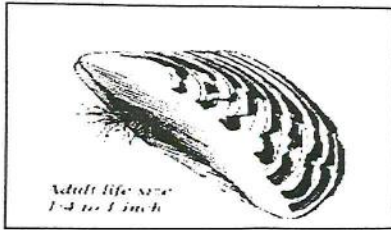
Seventy-five of the fish were released with a small plastic tag. If you catch one of these fish, please call the phone number on the tag, you will be providing useful information on the stocking effort. The DNR will be conducting an in depth fish survey in the Fall of this year and continuing in the Spring of 2001, with the intent of implementing a fishery plan for Powers Lake. In the Spring of 1998, the DNR completed a fisheries index survey that was reported in our last Newsletter.

Powers Lake Yacht Club



Sailing School

A two week class is tentatively scheduled to begin this July. Adults and children over 7 are welcome to enroll. Classes will be formed according to skill level and boat availability. For further information on fees, times and place, contact Jim & Cindy Leparski (847) 359-7290 or (414) 279-3551



Zebra Mussel Advisory

Zebra mussels and a related species, the Quagga mussel, are small, fingernail-sized mussels native to the Caspian Sea region of Asia. Zebra mussels have now spread to many neighboring inland lakes. Lake Geneva has a serious infestation. As of this date, we have not received any reports of the Zebra mussel in Powers Lake, but everyone must be very careful!

Female zebra mussels can produce as many as *1 million eggs per year*. These develop into microscopic, free-living larvae (called veligers) that begin to form shells. At about three weeks, the sand grain-sized larvae start to settle and attach to any firm surface using "byssal threads". They will cover rock, metal, rubber, wood, docks, boat hulls, native mussels, and even aquatic plants.

HOW TO IDENTIFY

Zebra mussels look like small clams with a yellowish or brownish "D"-shaped shell, usually with dark and light-colored stripes (hence the name "zebra"). They can be up to two inches long, but most are under an inch. Zebra mussels usually grow in clusters containing numerous individuals (see photo) and are generally found in shallow (6-30 feet), algae-rich water.

HOW TO SLOW THE SPREAD

The first step in prevention of spread is to develop an attitude of concern. Second, accept the fact that your activities are a potential means of transportation, and third, adhere to the recommendations in this newsletter and to those issued by Wisc Dept of Natural Resources. Nearly anything that has been in Zebra and Quagga mussel infested waters may have the mussels on them.

This list of potential carriers includes:

- Plants and animals
- Fishing gear and bait buckets
- Any water
- Water skiing equipment
- Snorkeling and scuba gear
- Boats, trailers, and related equipment

Placing these items in uninfested waters without following precautions may lead to an accidental introduction of these mussels. Remember that the larvae are about the size of the period at the end of this sentence.

Actions to follow after using a boat or other equipment in an infested body of water. Remove any visible vegetation from items that were in the water, including boat, propeller, trailer, and all equipment. (Zebra mussels readily attach to aquatic vegetation.) Flush engine-cooling system, live wells, and bilge with hot water. Rinse any other areas that get wet, such as water collected in trailer frames, safety light compartments, boat's decking, and the lower portion of motor cooling systems. Water hotter than 110 F will kill veligers, and 140 F will kill adults. If hot water is not available, use tap water. Do not use salt and chlorine water mixtures as both mixtures are very toxic to other organisms and may also damage your equipment.

PUBLIC ASSISTANCE IN REPORTING ANY ZEBRA MUSSEL SIGHTINGS IS ESSENTIAL
Please notify any District Commissioner if a Zebra mussel is spotted.

WILL YOU HELP?

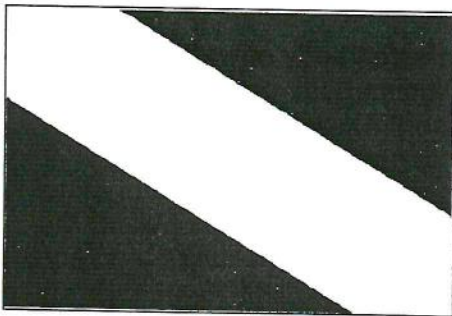
Candidates for
District Commissioner
Annual Meeting Election
Friday August 4, 2000 8:00 p.m.

Last year the District of Powers Lake was fortunate to have two long-time residents elected as new Commissioners. Both of these people have experienced the changes to the lake, and will provide the knowledge and guidance that comes from being on the lake for many years. Please welcome and support Pat Miller and Gil Kroll to their positions.

In order to maintain the dynamics of the District of Powers Lake, we need the help and continual input from new people with fresh ideas and energy. If you love Powers Lake and want to help preserve its beauty for the next generation, please consider contributing your talents to one of the two Commissioner positions that will expire this year. The positions are three-year terms.

Contact Bob Laurine for more info 279-2992

Boaters Do You Know This Signal Flag?



DIVER DOWN FLAG – Do not approach, divers are below. Stay at least 100 feet away from diving operations. This flag may be flown from a vessel or on a float.

SEPTIC SYSTEM CHECKLIST

Lake community homeowners have a special responsibility to ensure that their septic systems are not polluting Powers Lake. Septic systems can be safe and effective so long as homeowners actively monitor and maintain them.

- ✓ Inspect your septic tank once a year to discover the level of scum and sludge that has built up, and pump your septic tank when necessary.
- ✓ Read product labels! Use low phosphorus detergents and cleaning products whenever possible. Phosphorus is the nutrient most likely to cause damage to Powers Lake after leaving your septic system.
- ✓ Avoid using a garbage disposal. Garbage disposals adds tremendously to the amount of solids entering your septic tank.
- ✓ Do not pour strong cleaning agents, chemicals, or old medicines down the drain. These kill beneficial bacteria that break down septic waste.
- ✓ Keep all non-biodegradable items such as sanitary napkins, disposable diapers, paper towels, cigarette butts out of your septic tank. These items will not degrade in your tank, and can clog inlets, outlets, and absorption fields.
- ✓ Remind your guests that they are "in the country", and that they should be careful as to what they flush and wash down the drains.

Keep your septic system working properly. Much of the value of your property is dependent on the cleanliness of Powers Lake. Help protect the waters of Powers Lake and it will protect your investment.



Swimmer's Itch - "June Itch"

(cercarial dermatitis, schistosome dermatitis)

What is swimmer's itch?

Swimmer's itch is a skin rash caused by a parasite that penetrates the skin. Only about one third of the people who come in contact with the parasite develop the rash. When infected, a reddened spot appears within a few hours. The spot may grow in size - especially if scratched - and the skin surface swells, sometimes appearing as red welts. The irritated spot reaches its maximum size after about 24 hours; the itching may continue for several days. The symptoms should disappear after a week. The parasite in man does not mature, reproduce or cause any permanent infection.

How do you get swimmer's itch?

The first outbreaks of swimmer's itch usually occur in late May or early June. However, there's no way to predict how long an outbreak may last. The parasites are found in shallow water near the shoreline. The parasites penetrate the outer layer of skin within several minutes after making contact. All age groups and both sexes are vulnerable, but children are most often infected due to their habits playing on the beach in shallow water.

What is the treatment for swimmer's itch?

While all cases do not require treatment, some people may seek relief by applying specific skin lotions or creams to minimize the itching. Consult a physician if you are not sure what caused the rash, if the symptoms intensify or persist longer than a week, or if the symptoms cause undue discomfort. Some physicians will prescribe oral "Benedryl" type medications to reduce itching and swelling.

What can be done to reduce the chances of getting swimmer's itch?

- * Swim in water away from shore.
- * Avoid swimming immediately after an onshore wind if the lake is having a problem with swimmer's itch.
- * Avoid swimming in areas where snails have accumulated.
- * Toweling off immediately after wading in infested water can be very helpful in preventing the rash.
- * DO NOT feed or encourage birds to stay near swimming areas. Ducks are carriers of the parasite.

Know the rules, they are for our own good

Do you know the current recreational use regulations which apply to Powers Lake?

Here are a few selected requirements of the Town of Randall ordinances:

1. **Speed Restrictions.** No motorboat shall be operated at a speed greater than "slow-no-wake" between the hours of sunset and 10:00 a.m. No motorboat shall be operated at a speed greater than "slow-no-wake" within 200' from the shore. No motorboat shall be operated at a speed greater than "slow-no-wake" within 100' of any other boat.
2. **"Slow-No-Wake".** Means the slowest possible speed so as to maintain steerage.
3. **Swimming from Boat.** No person shall swim from any boat unless such boat is anchored. There shall also be at least one throwable personal floatation device for each person swimming.
4. **Water Skiing.** Any person being towed on water skies, surfboard, aquaplanes, or similar contrivances must wear a lifesaving device approved by the USCG of type 1, 2, or 3. The direction of travel of such towing must follow a counterclockwise direction in the designated traffic lanes.
5. **Littering Water.** No person shall deposit, place, or throw away from any boat any cans, bottles, debris, refuse, garbage, solid or liquid waste, sewage, or effluent into the water

District Applies For A Lake Protection Grant

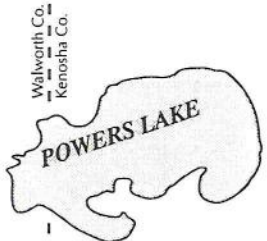
Last year the District of Powers Lake formed a committee headed by Gil Kroll to apply for additional assistance from the State of Wisconsin. This cost share program is quite different from the Lake Protection Grant that we were awarded last year. This grant program is authorized by s. 144.254, Stats. and administered under NR 191, Wisconsin DNR Administrative Code.

The District has applied for assistance in the purchase of 74 acres of wetlands on the North end of Powers Lake. This land is directly behind the Old Mill and is currently owned, and offered for sale by Lee and Dan Kozie.

All grant programs that entail the purchase of property are subject to numerous legal requirements related to purchase procedures. The following are some of the principle conditions:

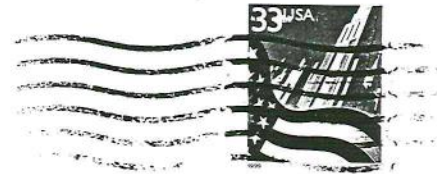
- ◆ Purchase of the property will significantly contribute to the protection or improvement of the natural ecosystem and water quality of the lake.
- ◆ The value of the property is to be established by a Dept of Natural Resources approved appraisal, that is to be submitted with the grant application.
- ◆ A comprehensive Watershed Management Plan for the property must be submitted and grant management contract will remain with the property as a deed restriction.
- ◆ The local share must be a cash match of 25% of the eligible project cost.

We hope to have the results of our efforts available at the upcoming August Annual Meeting.



THE
DISTRICT OF
POWERS
LAKE

P.O. Box 462
Powers Lake, Wisconsin 53159



MICHELS, JAMES & CAROLE
43 W 852 OLD MID TPK
ELBURN, IL 60119

ELECTED COMMISSIONERS:
JAMES MICHELS, CHAIR
PAUL DeMICHELE, SEC
ROBERT LAURINE, TREAS
GIL KROLL
PAT MILLER

APPOINTED COMMISSIONERS:
JUDY JOOSS, KENOSHA
MARK PELZ, RANDALL

60119/9862

