

The News from Lake Ellwood



January 2014

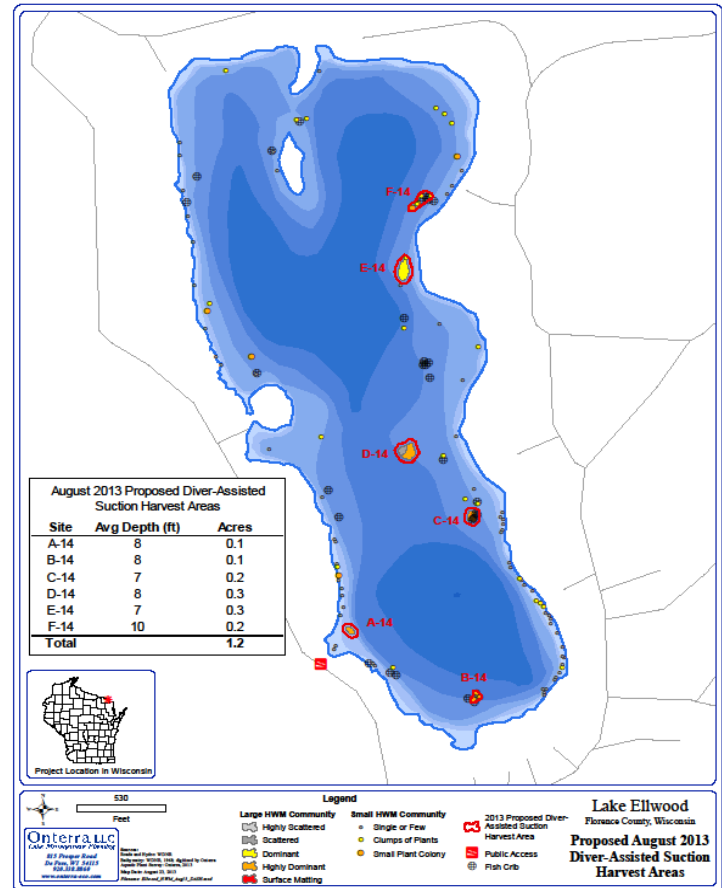
Happy New Year, Lake Ellwood Neighbors!

Even though we are locked into one of the coldest winters I can remember, lots of promising developments are “warming up” on Lake Ellwood! Here are some highlights:

- The diving team of **Many Waters Consulting** removed a **total of 2,303 pounds of Eurasian Water Milfoil (EWM)** from our lake in 2013—a great start on an ongoing task. The LEA Board is at work in setting up dates for their work in 2014, preferably early in the summer.
- We have received official notice that our **Lake Ellwood AIS Control Project has been extended through December, 2017**. That means that we can use the remaining balance of our grant, originally set to expire in December 2014. This is great news!
- **Our fish are coming back!** Greg Matzke, WDNR Senior Fisheries Biologist and author of a 2012 study revealing a decline in several species of Lake Ellwood’s fish, conducted a follow-up survey in September. He reports that the reproduction of blue gills, yellow perch and large-mouth bass has rebounded significantly since 2012. In fact, he believes the recovery is nearly 75% complete, returning to 2002 levels. (Note that he did not observe a similar rebound in northern pike—though these have been recently restocked—or in rock bass or black crappie.)
- Greg Matzke and Greg Sass, WDNR Natural Resources Research Scientist, note that EWM is thriving near the lake’s remaining fish cribs—35+ of them. Matzke has offered to assist us with moving or removing **at least some of these cribs**. (Coleman Engineering moved 3 cribs to deeper water last summer, and positioned a fourth for removal this year. LEA contributions paid 100% of the \$1,575 removal cost. Crib removal is not covered under the terms of our grant.)
- Greg Sass is **submitting a proposal to the WDNR to fund a study of our lake**, its fish, plant life, water quality and the factors affecting them. Watch for updates.
- **Lake Ellwood’s low water level worries all of us**. Thanks to contacts made by Kurt Person, Christopher Walkons, a grad student in environmental engineering at Michigan Tech, is looking at the history of those levels and also identifying current factors that affect the lake—rainfall, snowfall, evaporation rates, etc. He is a student of David Watkins, Professor of Civil and Environmental Engineering at Michigan Tech. See page 2 for a preliminary report.

More soon! We will send you another newsletter in the next few weeks, and update our website (www.leassoc.org), too.

Nate Goudreau, LEA President



Many Waters logs 21 hours removing “a ton” of EWM

DASH (Diver-Assisted Suction Harvesting) came to Lake Ellwood beginning August 14, thanks to the diving team of Many Waters Consulting located in Iron River, MI. The team focused on EWM removal in four areas of the lake: A-13 and B-13 = a total of 8 hours spent removing close to 500 pounds of EWM; and C-14 and D-14 = a total of 13 hours spent removing more than 1,800 pounds. (Note: A-13 and B-13 are not depicted on the above map; they are located in the bay northeast of D-14.) LEA’s Board is working on a contract for 2014 with Many Waters.



Calling all volunteers!

Your time is needed more than ever. For years, the lake's property owners and their friends have volunteered hundreds of hours—working at the boat landing, hand-pulling EWM, gathering and disposing of EWM fragments at their beachfronts, monitoring water clarity, checking the buoys, etc.

But only 369 volunteer hours have been submitted so far for the summer of 2013. **This total is down 17% from the hours submitted in 2012!** Please help to stop the slide!

Volunteer hours are critical to accessing our grant's funds. They are considered LEA's contribution under the grant's matching provisions, calculated at 50%. To see how this works, consider these hypothetical cases:

Case A:

Company X helps with EWM and bills LEA	\$2,400
We log 100 volunteer hours (valued at \$12 per hour)	\$1,200
WDNR reimbursement to LEA: $(\$2400 + \$1200) \times .5$	\$1,800
LEA still must pay Company X for the balance	\$ 600

Case B:

Company X helps with EWM and bills LEA	\$2,400
We log 0 volunteer hours (valued at \$12 per hour)	0
WDNR reimbursement to LEA: $\$2400 \times .5$	\$1,200
LEA still must pay Company X for the balance	\$1,200

As you can see, your time IS money. If you have forgotten to send in your 2013 hours, please do so ASAP. Use page 3 of this newsletter to record your contributions of time/dollars!

And build volunteer hours into your plans for 2014 lake time. When you do, the working conditions are great, your efforts conserve the value of your own property, and the time you spend on the lake you love saves LEA lots of money. What's not to like about this proposition?

Highlights of Chris Walkons' Study: *Investigating receding water levels at Ellwood Lake, Florence County, Wisconsin, December 13, 2013.*

As noted by Nate Goudreau on p. 1, Walkons, a graduate student at Michigan Tech, researched possible causes for receding water levels at our lake as a part of his studies last fall. His 11-page report (including maps and graphs) will be posted at www.leassoc.org. Highlights include:

- Scope of sources: Walkons reviewed data from the United States Geological Survey (USGS); the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA); the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources; and the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) concerning a remediation project involving a well located in Kingsford, begun in 2005.
- Validation of other Lake Ellwood data: lake size = 130 acres; lake type = seepage (no surface water flows in); lake drainage = drainage is through groundwater and an ephemeral stream at the south end leading to the Pine River.
- Early conclusion: the decreasing lake levels we see are most likely due to a broader trend in overall groundwater level lowering in the region. Walkons recommends further study.

Financial contributions are needed, too!

The total of financial contributions collected so far this fiscal year (beginning June 1) is less than half of our contributions in 2011-12! But our expenses aren't decreasing—on the contrary!

Here is what we expect to have to spend in 2014:

Onterra (final payment-lake management)	\$14,000
Many Waters (see page 1)	6,000
Student "Bucket Brigade"	500
Insurance, filing fees, printing/mailing	2,400
Coleman Engineering (fish cribs)	2,000
Total:	\$24,900

Our 2014 anticipated expenses far exceed our bank balance of \$18,024.51!

True, we will recoup some of this money given our grant (more reason than ever for volunteer hours), but as hypothetical cases A and B attest, we still need to pay cash for services.

Consider our potential cash flow issue, too. We must pay our invoices in full before submitting a reimbursement request to the WDNR.

If all that weren't enough, remember that ours is not a one-year campaign. The fight against EWM never stops; we can only keep it at bay year after year.

PLEASE keep us from "going in the red." Do what you can by contributing to the 2014 Lake Ellwood campaign with your time and your financial contribution.

Contributions in any amount are welcome. But if you are looking for a guideline, consider contributing .1% of your assessed property value. (This guideline has been used in past LEA fund drives.) As an example of this guideline in practice, a \$250,000 property value would suggest a contribution of \$250.

Key 2014 Lake Ellwood Dates

Feb. 10: Planning meeting with WDNR's Jim Kreitlow, Greg Matzke and Greg Sass and the LEA Board

July 4: Fourth of July Boat Parade – noon

July 5: Lake Ellwood Association Annual Meeting—one hour only from 10 to 11 am—promise!!

July 12: Lake Ellwood's 5th Annual Sports Day (Led by Alexis and Bret Whaley)

Help us communicate with you more effectively and economically. Please send us your e-mail address (see page 3). And don't forget to check:

www.leassoc.org

2014 Lake Ellwood Association Campaign

Please join your neighbors in helping to keep Lake Ellwood healthy and beautiful. Your financial contributions and your volunteer hours are needed and appreciated!

To: Lake Ellwood Association

From:

(Your name)

(Mailing Address)

(Lake Ellwood Address – IF DIFFERENT)

(Telephone)

(E-mail)

Financial Contribution to the Lake Ellwood Association 2014 Fund

\$ _____

(Please write your check to the Lake Ellwood Association)

Your volunteer hours in 2013 (if you haven't already submitted them). Keep this list in mind for your summer 2014 planning, too!

_____ Clean Boats, Clean Waters Program
(monitoring the Lake Ellwood boat landing at times you select)

_____ EWM Control (Hand-pulling, and/or snorkeling)

_____ Assisting in fish crib removal/relocation

_____ Other: _____

**Please return this form and your check to:
Linda Western, LEA Treasurer, 1663 Vivio Road, Florence, WI 54121, leafwestern@gmail.com**

THANK YOU!