



# Upper Hay Lake Association

P.O. Box 769  
Pequot Lakes, Minnesota 56472

Spring Newsletter

April 2023

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## GREETINGS FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

It is with great anticipation that I look forward to enjoying Upper Hay Lake this spring. Spring is my favorite time of the year at the lake. However, it looks like the ice is staying longer this year.

Have you placed bets with your neighbor regarding the ice out date? Hopefully, this spring Upper Hay Lake residents will not experience a lot of soil upheaval and shoreline disruption. I look forward to the loons returning with their majestic sounds and grand beauty.

Last month, the Crow Wing County Board approved our 2023 AIS Prevention Plan and the county is currently accepting applications for the seasonal watercraft positions. Applicants must be at least 17 years of age or older and willing to work weekends May through September. The starting wage is \$17 per hour and hours range from 18-40 hours per week. Apply online at: [www.crowwing.us/careers](http://www.crowwing.us/careers) or call 218-822-7030 if interested. I know that the county is in desperate need of seasonal watercraft inspectors. We were allotted 90 inspection hours last year at our landing but they were not fulfilled because of the lack of inspectors. I have submitted a request for more inspection hours at our landing, but this will depend on the amount of boat traffic and inspectors available.

Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center (MAISRC) is looking for volunteers and/or lake associations to participate in their spiny water flea surveillance program. If you are interested in getting involved in the pilot program, more information can be found by visiting <https://maisrc.umn.edu/spinysurveil>. Last year our lake association participated in this program and we would like to have other volunteers continue this effort.

A friendly reminder regarding zebra mussels, if we see them this year before the docks are taken out, is that children may want to wear water shoes while in the water. Zebra mussels have the ability to close their shells when treated with copper. Minnesota law requires people to clean watercraft, trailers and equipment to remove aquatic plants and invasive species. They also recommend that watercraft and equipment is dried for at least five days before using in another waterbody.

Please mark two dates on your 2023 calendar: We will have our annual meeting on Thursday, June 15th at 5:00 PM. Note the change from the May weekend in the past. I have scheduled a speaker from the National Loon Center at 5:00 PM followed by burgers at 6:00 PM at the American Legion in Pequot Lakes. The other important date is Thursday, August 3, 2023 for a Burger Night at the Legion. Can't wait to see you for both dates!

The UHLA Board will be discussing the July 4 th boat parade. If you have a preference for Sunday July 2 or Tuesday July 4 th , be sure to let a board member know. Also – we will have two openings for board positions. I will be stepping down as president but am willing to stay on the board for a couple years to help with the transition. Please consider how you can make a difference so we can continue to enjoy the beauty of our lake. Thank you.

–Claire Steen



**Environmental Stewardship Today, for Tomorrow**

## **COLD WATER DANGERS**

Over 30 percent of boating fatalities in Minnesota happen in cold water with a victim not wearing a life jacket. Falls overboard and capsizing are still the most common cause of boating fatalities in the state. Falling into icy water can be deadly because many boaters do not think about the effects of cold water immersion. Wearing your life jacket could be the single most important factor in surviving cold water immersion. Cold water immersion can kill in several ways, and most people die long before they become hypothermic.

### **Cold Shock Response**

Within the first 2 to 3 minutes:

- Gasp, hyperventilation, panic.
- Drowning if not wearing a life jacket.

### **Swim failure**

Within the first 30 minutes:

- Rapid cooling of arms and legs impairs the ability to keep the head above water.
- Effects occur regardless of swimming ability.
- Drowning, if not wearing a life jacket.

### **Immersion hypothermia**

After at least 30 minutes of immersion:

- Cooling of the body's core temperature results in gradual loss of useful consciousness.
- Drowning, if not wearing a life jacket.

### **Fight for survival**

If you are wearing a life jacket, the 1-10-1 principle can save your life:

1 Minute

- Get breathing under control

10 Minutes of meaningful moment

- Assess the situation and make a plan.
- Perform most important functions first, such as locating other party members.
- Self-rescue if possible.
- Practice emergency communications and signaling.

1 Hour (or more) of useful consciousness

- Focus on slowing heat loss.

### **Stay with the boat**

If the boat capsizes or the victim falls overboard, stay with the boat and try to reboard.

- Most capsized watercraft will still float.
- A craft in the water is easier for rescuers to locate.

- If you have to remain in the water, do not attempt to swim unless it is to a nearby boat or floating object.
- Keep boots and clothes on. Almost all clothing will float for an extended period of time.
- While wearing a life jacket, float on your back with your head and feet out of the water.



### **Slowing heat loss**

Reduce the effects of cold water immersion by assuming the heat escape lessening position (H.E.L.P.).

- Cross ankles
- Cross arms over chest with hands kept high on the shoulders or neck.
- Draw knees to chest
- Lean back and try to relax.

Practice H.E.L.P. in a pool first, before depending on it in an emergency.



If more than one person is in the water and wearing a life jacket, the "huddle" is recommended.

- This is where small groups of two to four “hug” with chests closely touching.
- Arms should be placed around the backs of the others and kept underwater, while smaller individuals or children can be placed in the middle of the “huddle.”
- The huddle helps to conserve body heat and it is also easier for rescuers to locate than one lone victim. The close proximity of victims can also serve as a significant morale booster.



### **Be a safe boater**

Wear a life jacket – Minnesota law requires a wearable U.S. Coast Guard Approved life jacket for each person on board a watercraft.

Prevent capsizing – Reduce speed in rough water, don't overload a boat, secure loads from shifting and adjust for changing conditions.

Prevent falls overboard – Remain seated while underway, avoid sudden shift in weight.

File a float plan – Leave it with a responsible person. Include a description of your boat, names of passengers, boating location, time of return and description of your car and where it is parked. Tell the person to call 911 if you don't return at the expected time.

Brief passengers– Everyone should know where all safety equipment is (and how to use it), and how to start, stop and steer a boat.

Be prepared– Always wear a life jacket every time you step on a boat. Trying to put your life jacket on

in the water is extremely difficult (if not impossible) and costs precious time and energy.

Carry a whistle or horn– Minnesota law requires a whistle or horn on all motor boats 16 feet or longer.

Keep an eye on the sky– No boater should ever set out in a storm.

Boaters should also:

- Carry a compass and chart.
- Carry a cell phone or two way VHF marine radio. The U.S. Coast Guard monitors Channel 16.
- Take a boater safety course.

DOWNLOAD [Cold Water Kills brochure](#) PDF

<https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/safety/boatwater/cold-water.html>

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### **SHORELINE PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT GUIDE**

Crow Wing County has a valuable resource entitled “Shoreline Property Development Guide”. It will be available at the annual meeting. When it comes to shoreline property, different agencies regulate different aspects of use in our county. In general, most land use activities are regulated by these four agencies: Crow Wing County Land Services Department, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Crow Wing Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), and the Minnesota Department of Health. If you have questions regarding which agency to contact regarding regulation and your needs, call the Land Services staff at 218-824-1010.

–Claire Steen

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### **MARK YOUR CALENDARS**

Please mark two dates on your 2023 calendar:

The **Annual Meeting** will be Thursday, June 15th at 5:00 PM. A speaker from the National Loon Center at 5:00 PM followed by burgers at 6:00 PM at the American Legion in Pequot Lakes.

A **Burger Night** will be Thursday, August 3, 2023 at the Legion at 5:00 P.M.

### **A note from the Treasurer:**

Coming off the bad years of COVID, I thought it may take a while to get things back to a more normal situation – and it has. You have done pretty good about sending in your membership dues, but we are still behind where we should be. To date we have 61 paid memberships and hoping for about 40 more. If you haven't sent yours in yet, PLEASE DO! It saves money on stamps if I don't have to send out a reminder letter. Even though inflation is going out of site, our dues are still only \$25.

– Ken Meyer

Some of you may have notice the extra DNR activity going on last summer – they did a “targeted Survey” on the lake and this is a summary of their findings. You can go on the DNR website and check out the ‘catch’ results.

– Ken Meyer

### **Status of the Fishery**

A targeted survey of nearshore fish species in Upper Hay Lake was conducted on June 27-29, 2022, by Index of Biological Integrity (IBI) Program staff. Sampling sites were evenly spaced around the lake, and each was sampled by backpack electrofishing and seining with a 50-foot or 15-foot seine, where possible. Backpack electrofishing was completed at fourteen sampling stations. Similarly, a 50-foot seine was used to sample twelve stations and a 15-foot seine was used at two stations. Nearshore sampling captured twenty species of fish including five species that are intolerant of disturbance (i.e., Banded Killifish, Blackchin Shiner, Iowa Darter, Mimic Shiner, and Rock Bass) and two that are tolerant of disturbance (i.e., Fathead Minnow and Green Sunfish).

A concurrent summer trap net survey was also conducted by IBI Program staff. Nine trap nets were set along the shoreline in locations that encompassed multiple habitat types. Trap net sampling captured ten species of fish, including one that is intolerant of disturbance (i.e., Rock

Bass). Bluegill comprised a majority of the catch by number, whereas Bowfin comprised a majority by biomass.

The nearshore and trap net data were combined with gill net data from an August 2020 survey to describe the fish community and provide a fish-based IBI (FIBI) score. The FIBI uses fish community data to measure a lake's health, and the types of fish species present can help identify any stressors that may be negatively affecting the lake environment. In Minnesota lakes, certain fish species cannot survive without clean water and a healthy habitat (e.g., Blackchin Shiner, Iowa Darter, and Rock Bass), while other species are tolerant of degraded conditions (e.g., Fathead Minnow and Green Sunfish). The FIBI score, composed of several fish community diversity and composition metrics, indicates the overall health of a lake by comparing it to what is expected for a healthy lake. For additional information on the FIBI, search for "lake index of biological integrity" on the [mndnr.gov](http://mndnr.gov) website.

Results from this survey indicate that the fish community in Upper Hay Lake is healthy as indicated by an FIBI score above the impairment threshold for aquatic life use determined for similar lakes. These results will be considered when the biological health of the lake is assessed during the Pine River Watershed assessment process, which will be completed in coordination with MN Pollution Control Agency.

### **For More Information**

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