

Cochran Lake District Newsletter

(Proposed) Mission Statement: *The stewardship of Cochran Lake will be proactive by its 52 members to promote water clarity, work towards a natural self-sustaining fishery, aggressively retain and/or restore the no-cut 35 feet buffer zone of plants and trees on the lake, maintain the natural aquatic plants while being proactive in preventing the spread of exotic and destructive plants from other lakes, and supporting Cochran's indigenous bird population like loons, woodpeckers, eagles, and others while discouraging the population of birds like geese that have been designated as a polluting pest in several counties.*

(Proposed) Harmony Mission Statement: *The stewardship of Cochran Lake District will abide by its Cochran Lake District's By-Laws that addresses the stewardship of Cochran Lake that is defined above in the proposed Mission Statement. Issues regarding harmony and the stewardship of the lake can be addressed by the Lake District like maintaining the no wake speed limit of no more than 10 mph if far enough from the shoreline and any issue that has the potential of polluting Cochran Lake or destroying its protective shoreline. However, other issues of harmony like enjoying the natural tranquility of nature, the wind, the loons, and the wildlife, and the lake's waves—unobstructed by noise that echoes off the lake or from other lots, use of outdoor lot lights sparingly to allow other members to view the cluster of stars w/o this city light interference, and the observance of all laws governing Cochran Lake District including covenants can be reflected in Cochran's Newsletter as an observance but if this observance does not have the potential of polluting Cochran Lake, then it cannot be resolved by the Cochran Lake District. Instead, it must be resolved between member and member(s).*

Cochran Lake Meetings—Please park by the entrance to the garbage/recycling entrance. Do not park next to the entrance to the meeting room so that these spaces can be reserved for volunteer firemen—if a fire call is activated your car may be blocked from leaving until the fire call has been terminated.

Annual Meeting held: May 25, 2002
Quarterly Meeting held: July 6, 2002
Next Quarterly Meeting: October 26, 2002 -- 9:00 AM*
Quarterly Meeting: to be scheduled
Next Annual Meeting: May 24, 2003**

*Pike Lake Fire Meeting Hall reserved -- 9:00 AM

**Pike Lake Fire Meeting Hall & Pavilion reserved – 11:00 AM

Adopt a Highway Report

Greg oversaw the application and enactment of roughly 8.5 miles surrounding Cochran Lake District as the Cochran Lake District “Adopt a Highway” section. This past spring, Greg and his wife, Ilona, with George and his wife, Letty, collected between 10 – 12 bags of trash over a two-day period. There will be another clean up in the fall; Greg will try to notify the membership of the fall collection; however, Greg understands that seasonal members may not be here to participate and that the date of the fall collection is tentative on weather and bug conditions.

“Hats off to the Yorton’s and Rasmussen’s” for keeping our Cochran Lake District roads beautiful and for showing Fifield that the Cochran Lake District is willing to provide service beyond our property taxes.

Again, Greg will appreciate any help for the fall clean up; but Greg understands that many of our members are seasonal.

Financial Report—submitted by Nancy Sevivk

Cochran Lake District approved the motion of \$0.00 membership fee at the annual meeting for 2002-2003 district year. As of July 6, 2002, the Cochran Lake District has a balance of \$7330.49 after paying for the following expenses:

Boat Landing	\$166.00
Newsletters & Notices	\$196.22
Water Quality	\$249.35
WAL Membership	\$ 62.50
WAL Meeting	\$ 30.00
Directory(Estimate)	\$100.00
Misc	\$ 47.99
Enviorn. Task Force	\$125.00
Misc. Postage	\$ 6.45

(One of the reasons why Cochran Lake District has this balance is because the residents approved an expenditure of roughly \$2000+ to have a Cochran Lake Dry Hydrant water feed to access water during the winter to extinguish any fire on Cochran Lake. However, the geology of the lake and its access points made this impossible to secure within the ice ranges of the lake during winter. At one of our previous meetings, Manny Stein, Pike Lake Fire Marshall indicated that although a dry hydrant would be ideal, Pike Lake Fire Department has equipment to pump water directly from the lake. He further reviewed the need for burning permits that is covered in the following paragraphs.)

Fire Report—Conversation with Pike Lake Fire Marshall, Manny Stein—July 22nd.

According to Manny Stein, until July 21st of this year, the Pike Lake & Cochran Lake District had experienced little rain for over 6-weeks; and, combine this with the dry vegetation on the ground, the natural decaying of trees and vegetation, and the dying of trees—especially Birch Trees due to the tent worms—this was a catalyst for fire if residents/visitors ignored the following fire regulations:

Campfires

- are allowed if the fire is enclosed by bricks and rocks
- are confined within these bricks and rocks
- are set only to warm your person or to cook
- are not to extend beyond the height of the bricks or rocks
- are attended by a person 100% of the time
- are extinguished by midnight

Bonfires/Brush Fires

- are only allowed with a fire-burning permit during the non-snow-cover season;
- the process of obtaining a fire-burning permit is to fill out an application that will trigger a DNR inspection of the burning site;
- if DNR approves this site, then you can burn brush between 6:00 PM and midnight if a person 100% of the time attends the fire
- at midnight, the fire must be totally extinguished;
- to secure an application, you can go to Musky Jacks on Highway 70 or Park Falls's DNR's office

(During drought conditions, burning permits are not issued and remaining permits are suspended to reduce the threat of a forest fire.)

Bonfires/ Brush Fires can be set w/o a permit and inspection only during the 100% snow cover of the ground; but, again, this fire must be attended by a person 100% of time until extinguished by midnight.

Incinerator Yearly Permits

Barrel incinerator are allowed to burn garbage if built and inspected according to the permit specifications and if burning times and garbage to be burned conforms to all of the permit regulations.

(Since there is a garbage and recycling drop-off every Wednesday and Saturday during the summer and every Saturday during the other months at the Pike Lake Fire Station, members are encouraged to use these services as your burning may easily float to your neighbor's lots.)

Fireworks

According to Manny and the Sheriff, any setting off of air-borne fireworks is illegal in the state of Wisconsin and subject to litigation. Manny recalls his experience with the forest service when several fireworks that were presumed to be controllable—set off forest fires. Manny, also, confirmed that “air-borne fireworks” were a very high forest fire threat during this July 4th week—especially due to the lack of the rain prior to the 4th of July.

[Butch Lobermeir, our County Representative, shared with us that during his scuba diving on other lakes, he would see debris at the bottom of the lakes from these air-borne fireworks; and since most of it was plastic, he estimated that it would be permanent debris. At the next district meeting, October 26th, the Cochran Lake District will start to explore the impact of air-borne fireworks on the ecology of the lake as well as on the threat of starting a forest fire.]

Fishery Report

Skip Sommerfeldt, DNR, completed the Spring Shocking of Cochran Lake on May 30th. This was the 5th time that the lake was shocked. Other dates were, June 14, 1973, May 31, 1989, May 26, 1999, and May 30, 2001. Skip sent this shocking report to Franklin with the following conclusions of a sample size of 396 that was tabulated within 0.9 hours:

Northern Pike had a good hatch in 2000 or 2001

Bluegill approaching a high-density population

Bass showing further improvement

Saw and missed as many Large Mouth Bass as we caught. Many bass were paired up and on beds.

Also saw and missed as many Northern Pike as we collected. All Northern Pike and musky were removed from the lake—13 Northern Pike and 1 Musky.

The one Musky removed was well under the legal limit. Since this is the first time that a shocking discovered a Musky, Skip and Franklin are concluding that there is a high probability that this Musky was caught elsewhere and released in Cochran Lake; this implies that this Musky was taken undersized—illegal in any lake--and illegally dumped into Cochran Lake.

Almost the same situation has occurred with the Bluegills that they were illegally dumped into Cochran Lake. Now, Skip and Franklin are advising that we take out as many Bluegills that we can because this last shocking showed that the Bluegill population is “approaching high-density population.” The limit for anglers is 25 bluegills per day per person. However, Skip is not hopeful that anglers can reduce the bluegill population

enough. *Skip fears that if this bluegill population continues to explode that within 5 years Cochran Lake may have all species of its fish stunted.*

The DNR is obviously pleased that the Large Mouth Bass is regaining its strength; however, the illegal introduction of any species of bait fish or game fish will only weaken the ecology of Cochran Lake and the cooperation of DNR with the Cochran Lake District--especially when Franklin seeks support and approval for fish cribs, stocking, and other pro-active measures to maintain not only the Large Mouth Bass but other highly desirable species of fish.

[Franklin will be seeking approval for putting in fish cribs. His other applications have been denied by the DNR; but according to Butch's conversation with the DNR, Franklin's application for fish cribs should now be approved.]

Skip, also, was pleased to find Yellow Perch and Crayfish. According to Skip, the Largemouth Bass flourish when lakes have a supply of their favorite food--Crayfish and Perch. He, also, indicated that the Bass would eat the bluegills but far from its first choice.

The DNR will not impose any restrictions on size limit for the Large Mouth Bass for this season. However, Franklin is recommending that the Cochran Lake District voluntarily impose a slot size restriction that will encourage the continued healthy growth of Large Mouth Bass. This proposal will be discussed at the next quarterly meeting and voted upon at the annual meeting over the observed Memorial Day Weekend.

(Franklin, also, confirmed that Large Mouth Bass are comparable to eating Perch. In fact, Franklin filet his Large Mouth Bass in strips that mimicked his Perch and invited his Perch-Only Father-In-Law for dinner—the result was that his Father-In-Law loved Franklin's Perch—which were Large Mouth Bass. Yes, Franklin did confess to his Father-In-Law that he ate the savored perched-like Large Mouth Bass.)

Listed below are the sampling data of 396 fish that was tabulated within 0.9 hours of the shocking of Cochran Lake:

Game fish	Number	Modal Sizes (Inches)	Size Range (In)	Catch/Effort
Musky	1		less than 9 in.	1.1 per hr.
Northern Pike	13		11.7 – 16.5	14.4 per hr.
Large Mouth Bass	285	7.0, 9.5, 13.7	3.7 - 15.2	317 per hr.
White Sucker	3		7.6 - 9.2	3.3 per hr.
Bluegill	90	3.5	1.2 - 8.4	900 per hr.
Pumpkinseed	4		5.3 - 6.9	40 per hr.
Yellow Perch	P			

Observations:

Also found were yellow perch (P), blacknose shiner (C), fathead minnow (P), bluntnose minnow (C), Johnny darter (P), and crayfish (P). Saw and missed as many Large Mouth

Bass as we caught. Many bass were paired up and on beds. Also, saw and missed as many Northern Pike as we collected. All Northern Pike and musky were removed from the lake.

[The remaining three pages of this report show the distribution by size and number caught of the Bluegill, Northern Pike, and Large Mouth Bass as well as historical data of the trend of the Large Mouth Bass for the five shockings of the lake. Copies of these pages will be available at our October meeting or you can contact Karen or Franklin to request these copies.]

[Note: There has been a report of a fisherman casting so close towards boats and piers that their castings landed into a pontoon-boat cover. Isolated report or not, we need all fishermen to follow the lead of our 99.9% fishermen who cast within a safe distance of private property.]

Water Quality Report by George—May Report:

Last Spring water sample was sent to Stevens Point
Clear at 15 feet, 1 month later clear at 12 feet – same as last year
Last summer – Blue green Algae

Chemical testing last spring showed phosphorus level was $\frac{3}{4}$ times higher but at the fall reading it went back down

Reminder of zoning requirements like maintaining/restoring the 35 ft. lake buffer zone, avoid using any chemical fertilizers on the land, maintaining your septic system, and—even though subject to covenant litigation of the banning of out-houses and camping—if applicable, must comply by all of Price County's zoning regulations for the disposal of human waste as well as a separate facility for the disposal of gray water waste due to washing.

Also, please **clean boats and trailers of weeds before launching back into Cochran Lake**; some lakes are advising that your boat and trailer should not be launched into another lake until it is thoroughly dried out—especially dry wells; this may imply days.

Soaps and Detergents

Use soaps and detergents labeled “No Phosphorus or No Phosphates.” Phosphorus is the nutrient most responsible for unwanted plant growth in lakes. Soil has a limited capacity for filtering out phosphorus. Remember, “biodegradable” detergents are not necessarily phosphorus free. Check the label of the product you are buying carefully! (DNR, Lake Management Program, February 1988, PUBL-WR-188 88)

Has any member identified soaps and detergents that are phosphorus free as well as where to purchase these? Please let Karen know for the next newsletter.

Plant Inventory by Stan

As of the May meeting, Stan reported that plants are only in the deep water.

But, in mid - July, Stan and Franklin reported that they never seen as many plants and weeds in the lake as this year. This growth could be possible due to one or more of the following:

- the setting of and removing of the boat anchor—especially fishing in the weeds
- the higher level of the lake—especially activating dormant seeds
- Phosphorus levels
- run-off into the lake from lots not having the 35 ft. buffer zone
- zone violations for non-septic waste
- fertilizer use on the lake lots

Janes volunteered to help Stan identify aquatic plants.

Stan will, also, apply for a botanist thru the DNR to assist him and Janes; there is at least a yearlong wait list for one these botanists to do one on-site visit.

Accolades

- Carlene Bauer, Secretary, for minutes that created much of this newsletter.
- Rick Schwai for accepting the Treasurer position until the election at our May meeting.
- Lake District residents who went to the Fifield town to repair the culvert for our boat landing at no cost to our lake district.
- All Lake District Members for speaking your onions in a harmonious voice of respect and concern for the lake and our members.

Beware Highway 70 Construction Zone and Detour—Price County only

As of July 26th, detour signs are diverting traffic from Highway 70 using Highway 182 and Highway 51. As of August 5th, crews will be replacing all culverts on Highway 70 with cement culverts—over 50 of them—and repaving Highway 70 from Fifield to the county line by Musky Jacks. It appears that every effort will be made to allow local access during this construction. However, some culverts like in front of the Rib-er-Side will require a temporary redirection of the water/dam to Pike Lake and the repaving preparations from Forest Road 144 and Highway 70 West towards Fifield were already underway as of August 5th. Members are encouraged to check whether local access is still feasible to Forest Road 144.

Next Newsletter

Speak Your Opinions & Accolades

(Feel free to write to Karen or call Karen on any district or harmonious non-district concern—I will publish these concerns and accolades in the next newsletter; however, I will publish these concerns and accolades in a harmonious manner classifying them as lake district concerns or as non-lake district concerns per our by-laws.)

Wildlife Sightings

Any wildlife sightings, for example:

On July 25th, Frank and Karen thought they saw a muskrat swimming in front of their home—lot 15. Any other sightings—not excluding any land/air dweller are welcomed.

All bird sightings—by expert eyes and ears or by novice eyes and ears are welcome. What about our loons? When do they arrive and when do they leave? Have our loons produced offspring? Any volunteer is welcome to write up a short paragraph about the loons, grosbeaks, grouse, woodpeckers, or other sightings like a raven, owl, bats, or others for our next newsletter. Please submit your article to Karen on or before our October meeting.

Fish Consumption Advice for Pregnant Women and Would-Be Pregnant Women

Notice:

2003 Wisconsin Lakes Convention—25 Years of Lake Management
April 10 – 12, 2003
Green Bay, WI (*Lake Tides*, Vol. 27, No. 2, p.9)

Board Members:

Rick Schwai, President--completed his 3rd year as of May 25th

Karen Boyle, President

Carlene Bauer, Secretary

Nancy Sevcik, Treasurer--resigned as of July 6th)

Rick Schwai, Treasurer --as of October 26th
(Per Cochran Lake District by-laws, Rick was assigned by the president and secretary to complete Nancy's term that expires on the next annual meeting in May.)

Butch Lobermeir, County Rep

Neal Zierba, Town Rep

Committee Chairs:

Frank Sevcik, Fishery

George Rasmussen, Water Quality

Stan Kmiecik, Lake Plants

Greg Yorton, Multi-Committee & Adopt a Highway

Mary Hartung & Mary Kaminski, Public Relations

Mary Hartung, Directory