

I hope DLA's 2023 Spring Newsletter finds you in good health, optimistic, and looking forward to the coming Deer Lake spring and summer season. I look forward to seeing you on Deer Lake!

Please take time to read through important water quality information below. In addition, please add DLA Events and Activities to your personal calendar.

*This year our Annual Membership meeting is **10am Sat June 10** at Camp Hiawatha. **Spencer Rettler** from the Minnesota DNR. Spencer will speak about Loons, including declining numbers, causes, and what Deer Lake and other lakeshore property owners can do. Please plan to attend! – John Davis*

DLA Membership Renewal 2023

All property owners can unite around a goal to maintain and improve water quality. Is Deer Lake water quality important to you and your family?

If so, please **join DLA or renew your membership for 2023**. It's only \$25. Join DLA even if only to support DLA's water quality work. DLA is a 501(c)(3) MN all-volunteer non-profit public charity, so your membership payment is tax-deductible to the full extent of the law. We're not political. We have no employees and no member gets paid to work. That means your \$25 membership fee goes directly to our water quality and other important Initiatives. **DLA recently revised our membership procedure to make it easier for you to join or renew. See enclosed Membership insert for how to join DLA or renew for 2023.**

Recent Deer Lake Water Clarity

Unfortunately, since 2014 Deer Lake has experienced a decline in water clarity. During this time Deer Lake has lost on average between 4-8" of clarity annually, resulting in an average total clarity loss of around 2-6'. DLA's water quality Initiatives have helped to hold our phosphorus and chlorophyll numbers steady, but this clarity decline appears to be caused by particulates in the water or color brownification. DLA is working with world-class limnologists to determine causes and an action plan. In the meantime, we need to keep up our good work limiting the amount of phosphorus loading into the lake from sources including **rainwater runoff, shoreline erosion, ineffective septic systems, and aquatic invasives.**

What We Can Do to Keep Deer Lake Blue

DLA invites property owners to learn more about which actions improve, harm, or are neutral to Deer Lake water quality. *There are numerous ways to accomplish recreational goals while preserving lake water quality.*

Your individual action could make the difference.

Here are **three ways** property owners can help: Shoreland, Septic, and Aquatic Invasives (AIS).

1. DLA's **Shoreland Initiative** encourages Deer Lake property owners to learn how their land and shoreline affects Deer Lake water quality. Best Deer Lake water quality results when property owners *repair shoreline erosion and leave in-place forested shoreline and natural ice-ridges*, or, for those properties where ice-ridges have been breached and/or forested shorelines removed, to *add a natural buffer and low berm near the shoreline*. There are multiple low-cost ways to meet recreational goals while preserving water clarity.

DLA offers a local objective consultant (someone not trying to sell you something) who will call you to schedule time to come to your property, meet with you, and provide a no-obligation shoreland assessment and options for you to consider. DLA can also help with plant selection and contractor recommendations if you decide to implement a solution.

DLA also offers a *self-service option*, called the **Deer Lake Challenge**. It's a two-page guide that helps you think through how your land and shoreline impact lake water quality.

If you are having a specific problem with shoreline erosion or rainwater runoff, or if you're new to the lake or simply want to understand more about how you can accomplish your recreational goals while preserving or improving water quality, DLA's Shoreland service can help with that too. **For more information about DLA's Shoreland Service or the self-service Deer Lake Challenge, please see our website <http://deerlakeassociation.org/index.cfm?pageid=282027> or contact beautifuldeerlake@gmail.com**

- DLA's **Septic Initiative** encourages Deer Lake property owners to learn more about how our septic systems may impact Deer Lake water quality.

How to maintain our septic systems for best Deer Lake water quality results:

- Filter Cleaning.** Most septic systems have a filter that must be cleaned regularly (usually annually)
- Pumping.** Accumulating solids must be pumped from your septic tank regularly (usually every three years)
- Septic Compliance Inspection.** Septic systems are designed to function properly for 20-30 years and then must be replaced. Over time, the filtering soil under your drain-field becomes saturated and ineffective. Once your septic system is 20+ years old, order a septic compliance inspection every 5-10 years. **Systems installed prior to 1996 are especially at risk.**

On average, 50+% of septic systems installed prior to 1996 would fail inspection, are contributing to Deer Lake water quality decline, and need replacement.

How can you know if your pre-1996 septic system is ineffective filtering effluent before it runs into the lake? *Order a septic compliance inspection.*

A septic compliance inspection is different than the simple inspection performed when a septic service technician pumps your tank. It's the same inspection required by law when you sell your property or apply for a building permit. A Septic compliance inspection is a simple procedure including only interior tank-inspection and soil-borings near your tank and drain-field, performed by a licensed private inspector.

DLA can recommend licensed septic compliance inspectors and septic installation contractors to inspect or replace your septic system.

- DLA's **AIS Initiative** encourages property owners to learn how zebra mussels, stary stonewort, spiny waterflea, and other AIS are transported from one body of water to another.

Here's How We (And Our Guests) Can Help Prevent Aquatic Invasives in Deer Lake:

- Know which waters are infested <https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/invasives/ais/infested.html> or search "MN infested waters"
- Practice **Clean, Drain, Dispose and Dry** – remove drain plugs, then remove mud, weeds, and standing water when exiting any landing.
- Know whether your or your guests' owned or rented boats and gear have been in infested waters prior to launch in Deer Lake. If you don't know for sure, *assume waters are infested.*
- Drain and dry boats and trailers in the sun for at least 5 days.** If you don't have 5 days, decontaminate. *See below for more information about decontamination.*
- Dry lifts/docks for at least 21 days** before moving from one lake or river to another.
- Don't let others use your private launch** unless you know where their boats have been. Owners can many times prevent unauthorized private ramp use when absent by strategically placing docks, lifts, and trailers so that others can't use the launch.
- Patronize **FiveStar** service providers when you:
 - Install/remove dock/lift
 - Service boat and engine
 - Rent trailers, boats, and gear
 - Purchase used gear /equipment<http://bit.ly/FiveStarLSPs>

FiveStar Initiative

DLA asks property owners to move our business to a FiveStar dock installer this spring to help prevent Deer Lake from becoming infested with invasives.

FiveStar lake service providers that install/remove docks/lifts seasonally on Deer Lake:

- Grand Rapids Marine** 218-326-0351
- Thousand Lakes Dock & Lift** 218-398-7553
- JJ's Barge Service** 218-244-5194
- Matt Almquist/38Outpost** 218-259-9997
- Paul Grooms/Grooms Property** 218-259-2157
- Lake Home Helpers** – 218-969-5028

Dock installers can unwittingly infest Deer Lake with invasives (AIS) when coming here from infested waters. FiveStar providers are DNR-certified, sign a contract agreeing to apply additional AIS safeguards, and agree to help us disseminate best practices. Learn more about FiveStar at our website

<http://deerlakeassociation.org/index.cfm?pageid=262011>

Free Boat/Trailer Decontamination Service

If your boat or your guest's boat has been or may have been in infested waters, **dry boats, trailers, and gear in the sun for at least 5 days before launching into Deer Lake.** If you don't know or can't find out, *assume waters are infested.* If you or your guest do not have 5 days, then **decontaminate.**

Decontamination includes applying verified 140° hot water for 10 seconds or 120° hot water for two minutes. **If you or your guest need or want a hot-water decontamination, call 218-256-4243 or request a decon from the inspector at Deer Lake public access.** Depending upon staffing that day, the inspector will perform the decon for you at Deer Lake Station or will call for a trained professional to be sent over to Deer Lake Station to perform the decon. Otherwise we'll direct you to the nearest staffed mobile decon station. **218-256-4243**

Deer Lake Station

Deer Lake Station is open for your use 24/7. The Station provides self-service tools to help arriving and departing boaters perform Clean, Drain, Dispose, and Dry as required by law. Fresh rinse-water and hand-tools help boaters clean and flush the mud, weeds, and standing water from boats, trailers, and gear that transport invasives from one lake or river to another. Lights enable Station operation at night. The Waders Rack makes it easy to rinse gear. The Station also provides tools for use only by the Itasca AIS Inspection Program, including 140°+ decontaminating hot water. Deer Lake Station is located at the Deer Lake public access and was engineered, designed, constructed, and is funded and maintained by DLA.

<http://deerlakeassociation.org/index.cfm?pageid=312044>

FiveStar Landscape Firms

Landscape firms performing Permitted work along our shorelines must be careful to avoid transporting invasives (AIS) via barges and other machinery and gear when they move from one lake or river to Deer

Lake and our shoreline. **FiveStar landscapers** are DNR-certified, apply additional AIS-prevention safeguards, allow us to review their operations, and agree to help identify and disseminate AIS best practices. If you're hiring a landscape firm this year, **please request bids from FiveStar Landscapers:**

- **Lange Nursery & Landscape** 218-380-6939
- **McNeil Excavating** 218-259-6364
- **J.V. Tree and Landscaping** 866-232-5183

Learn more info about Landscapers, the Itasca FiveStar Initiative, and other FiveStar providers:

<http://bit.ly/FiveStarLSPs>

Compensated Conservation Easement

Do you own 20 or more acres of land that includes at least some Deer Lake shoreline? Would you like to receive payment of 60 - 80% of the *current fair market value* of your land to conserve it forever? This is possible through an initiative created by the Minnesota Land Trust (MLT). It's called a *Compensated Conservation Easement*. Please contact beautifuldeerlake@gmail.com for more info.

Need space for a meeting, family reunion, retreat, family celebration or other special event? Want to send your child or grandchild to camp on Deer Lake? Consider **Camp Hiawatha**, a Deer Lake FiveStar steward.

<https://www.northwoodsretreatsmn.com>

2023 DLA Events

June 10, Saturday

DLA Membership Meeting

10AM at Camp Hiawatha, Baldwin Commons. Our featured guest speaker is **Spencer Rettler** from the Minnesota DNR. Spencer will speak about Loons, including declining numbers, causes, and what Deer Lake and other lakeshore property owners can do.

July 14, Friday

DLA Spaghetti Dinner/Annual Business Meeting

5pm DLA Business Meeting, 5:30pm Spaghetti Dinner. At Camp Hiawatha. Free-will offering at dinner for DLA.

August 17, Thursday

DEER LAKE FROLIC

5pm gather; 6pm-dinner at Camp Hiawatha

Music, food, silent auction, games. It's the best social event of the season! The Frolic is a great opportunity for the entire Deer Lake community to come together, including residents, guests, and visitors both from Deer Lake and the surrounding communities. All are welcome! **Please mark the date & plan to attend!**

DLA Bear Island Trail Maintenance

June 9 – Friday 9:00 AM

July 7 – Friday 9:00 AM

August 4 – Friday 9:00 AM

(In the event of rain - 'Rolex' 24 hours)

Coordinated again this year by Paul Askegaard. Bear Island was donated to the State of MN by DLA, who purchased it with donations from lake residents plus State matching funds. Once a month during the summer, DLA members spend about 1 hour keeping the walking trail open and removing trash. RSVP not necessary, just arrive on the south end of the Island at 9am on the scheduled day. If conditions are questionable, call Paul at 651-230-3361. **Please volunteer, especially if we have a bad storm during the month.** Bring gloves, wear long pants and bug spray, and bring any equipment you have (chain saw, clippers, loppers, small saw and/or garbage bag). Paul will provide coffee/donuts. Hope to see you there!

DLA Hwy 62 Clean-up:

May 27, Saturday

September 9, Saturday

Coordinated this year by Chad and Amanda Glader. Please join us for DLA Hwy 62 clean-up where we combine community service and fellowship! Gather in the parking lot of the Baptist Church at 9:30 am, corner of Hwys 62 and 177 on the east side of Deer Lake. <https://goo.gl/maps/7fd9J5frn5o> Clean-up takes about an hour. Afterward, you're invited to the Glader cabin for coffee, snacks, and fellowship. Please contact Chad or Amanda if you're able to join us gladerc@gmail.com or 763-516-6589.

DLA "Deer Readers" Book Club

May 30 (Tues) 4pm: **Just Mercy** by Bryan Stevenson (Leader: Dave Stark, Host: Jo Landwer)

June 27 (Tues) 4pm: **The Last Green Valley** by Mark Sullivan (Leader: Eric Grimsrud, Hosts: Alice & Dave Stark)

July 25 (Tues) 4pm: **The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek** by Kim Michele Richardson (Leader: Joyce Erickson, Hosts: Dick & Joyce Erickson)

Aug 22 (Tues) 4pm: **The Salt Path** by Raynor Winn (Leader: Abby Marrier, Hosts: Don & Abby Marrier)

Sept 13 (WEDNESDAY) 3pm: (earlier start time for Business meeting/voting followed by book discussion) **Adventures of Huckleberry Finn** by Mark Twain (Leaders: Don Ardery, Hosts: Don & Ellen Ardery)

Please note: Each month's book meeting will be at the home of the HOST listed for each meeting. Meetings start at 4pm (except September meeting, which starts at 3pm). Everyone brings an appetizer to share; host provides beverages. Contact Alice Stark with questions adstark@goldengate.net.

DLA Golf Scramble

This summer, we will be organizing a golf/dinner event on one Tuesday of each month. This is more of a fun, social event, as opposed to a serious competition, so all skill levels are welcome. We generally use a "scramble" format with a few special rules and contests thrown in. We will play nine holes at one of the area courses followed by dinner at the course or a nearby restaurant.

May 23rd (Tuesday): Pokegama – Tee Off 2pm

June 20th (Tuesday): Blueberry Hills – Tee Off 2pm

July 18th (Tuesday): Pokegama – Tee Off 2pm

August 15th (Tuesday): Eagle Ridge – Tee Off 2pm

September 12th (Tuesday): Pokegama – Tee Off 2pm

Dinner location will be determined the week prior to golf. Non-golfers are welcome to join us for dinner only if they like. Contact Paul Askegaard at 651-230-3361 or email askeupnorth@gmail.com.