Big Sandy Lake Association

A Minnesota Star Lake

August 2018

In this issue:

Love Your Lake Event

Swimmer's Itch

The Tullibee Fish- A Canary in the Coalmine

BSLA Annual Meeting Notes

Shallow Water Blackout

Responsible Catch-and-Release

Lead Tackle and Loons

New Pipeline Corridor in Sandy Lake Watershed

And then there are the regulars:

President's Letter

Conservation Officer News

Corps of Engineers Updates

Bob Harder's "Did You Know . . ."

BSLA members are welcome to attend the Board of Directors meetings, held from 8:30 to 11 a.m. on the 2nd Saturday of each month in the lower level at Big Sandy Lodge.

President's Letter

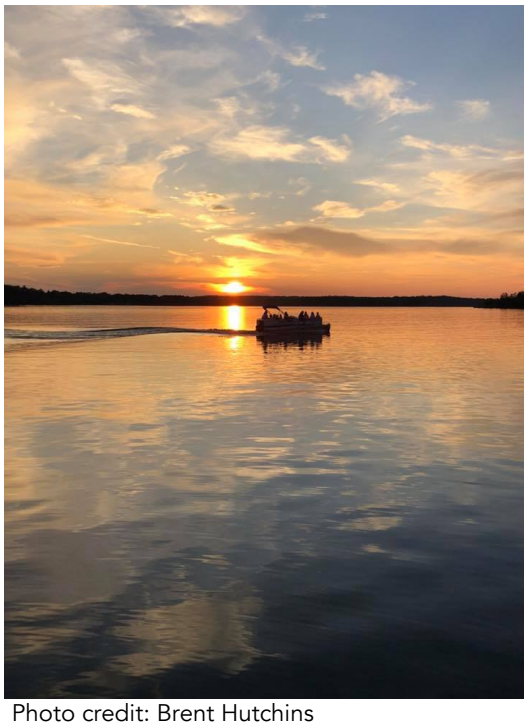


Photo credit: Brent Hutchins

What a great summer it's been! We've had many warm, sunny days that have allowed us to get out and really enjoy our beautiful Big Sandy Lake. Some might say we've had too much rain, but those of us who were here in 2012 really know what too much rain is. We did have some heavy rains this year, but fortunately, the time between the storms allowed the Army Corps of Engineers to do a great job of controlling the lake's level. Kudos to all the workers at the federal dam.

The 5K Run for the Lake was another successful event. It was held on the Saturday of Memorial Day weekend and we had more runners (and walkers) than any other year. Big Sandy Lodge sponsors this event and the lake association provides volunteers as needed. The profit from the event is donated to the lake association by the lodge and this year it was the biggest amount to date.

In May, your lake association sponsored an event – Shoreline Management – at the Minnesota National Golf Course. The attendance was good and everyone had the opportunity to learn about doing what is best for the lake by caring for their shorelines and after the meeting, everyone was given breakfast and a plant to take home for their own shoreline.

In June we held our annual meeting at the Big Sandy Lodge. After our business meeting and informative talks by some of our directors, lunch was served. Like the breakfast at the golf course, the lunch at the lodge was great. We are fortunate to have two fine facilities like Minnesota National and Big Sandy Lodge where we can hold meetings, play golf and take our friends and families out to eat. Their employees are the best and help make our events successful.

We do need to thank all the people and businesses that do so much for us all and I want to also thank Wayne Floe and his crew for the absolutely amazing 4th of July fireworks, which were enjoyed by hundreds of people in their boats on the lake and from shore. It's one of the lake's biggest and best events of the year.

Photo credit: Staci Schendel Reimann

Make sure you get outside at every opportunity and enjoy all the fun we can only have in the summertime on the lake – boating, swimming, water-skiing, fishing, paddle boarding, dinners and parties outdoors, etc. Summer will be ending all too soon.

Be careful, have fun and enjoy Big Sandy Lake and we hope you will stop by our booth in downtown McGregor during Wild Rice Days on Labor Day weekend.

Bruce W Johnson, President, Big Sandy Lake Association

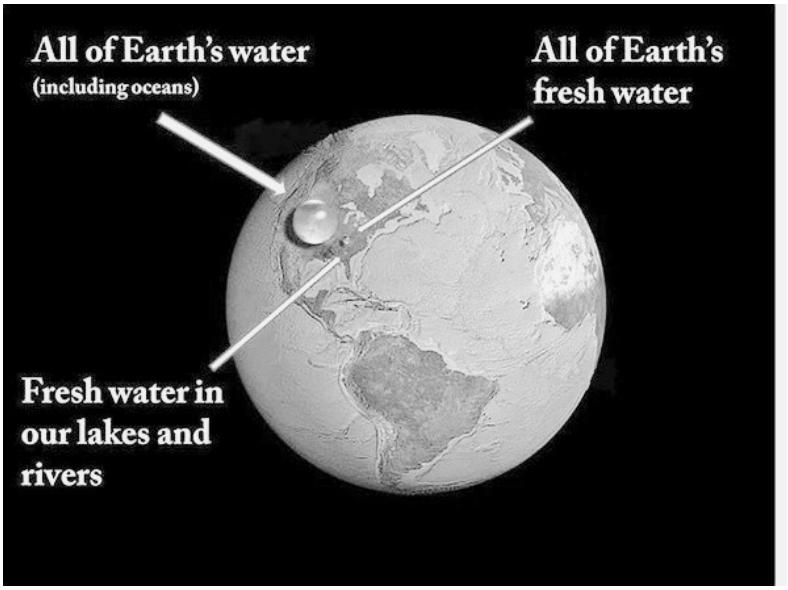
Love Your Lake Event Overflows With Helpful Info

by Janet Hill, BSLA Board

Big Sandy Lake Association's Shoreline Management event at the Minnesota National Golf Course in May was well attended and informative.

Invited speakers Steve Hughes, District Manager of the Aitkin County Soil and Water District, and Deirdre Coleman, Program Coordinator at Freshwater Society, offered tips and some eye-opening facts about our fresh water.

Coleman presented an overview of the Earth's water that made it clear that Minnesota's clean lakes are precious, valuable resources that require our best efforts to preserve. Nearly 70 percent of the world is covered by water, but most of this is saltwater: only 2.5 percent of Earth's water is freshwater. Of that 2.5 percent, just 1 percent is easily accessible to us; the rest is trapped in glaciers and snowfields. (Of the small amount of freshwater on Earth, Lake Superior contains 10% of it.) She used the graphic here to make her point: it may be hard to see in black and white, but a tiny dot represents the percentage of Earth's mass that is accessible freshwater in lakes and streams. Not much!



Steve Hughes spoke of Big Sandy Lake's clean water, good fishery, and welcoming habitat for wildlife, stressing the importance of keeping things that way and making them even better. He offered some practical tips on how to do this through shoreline management.

Three things you can do on your property to improve lake water quality:

- Slow down runoff (by natural means or with a rain garden)
- Make sure septic systems are in compliance
- Encourage native shorelines

Revegetation to slow run-off is very simple: just put something between you and the lake to slow down water runoff.

BSLA BOARD **BSLA Website: bigsandylakemn.org**

Bruce Johnson, President	218-426-5221	bwj4@frontier.com	Christopher Krolak	612-991-2108	cjkrolak@gmail.com
John Sturner, Vice President	651-356-1101	johnsturner6070@gmail.com	Stuart Mortrude	612-850-9275	smortrude@dresi.net
Ben Gisselman, Secretary	612-987-1770	ben@gisselmanlaw.com	John Pilney	651-398-9548	jppilney@aol.com
Kathy Beatty, Treasurer	651-724-3690	kathybeatty12@gmail.com	Ann Rorem	612-219-3720	annrorem@gmail.com
Jeff Backowski	218-426-4047	jcbackowski1@gmail.com	Russ Thompson	218-380-1828	(no email)
Richard Beatty	651-724-4697	rjb1946@aol.com			
Jim Carlson	218-426-4256	carlsona@frontiernet.net	Liaisons		
Margo Gisselman	612-720-4527	mgisselman@gmail.com	Bill Reed		wreed4318@yahoo.com
Janet Hill (Editor)	218-259-4090	janethillnew@gmail.com	Jim Krezowski		krezco@frontiernet.net
Jack Johnson	218-820-7265	digjack39@gmail.com	Robert Greifzu		mcragbag@hotmail.com

Hughes offered these practical suggestions:

- Install rain gardens.
- Add places for water to pond naturally.
- If you have a sloped boat landing on your property, consider water bars: trenches that catch runoff and divert it.
- Use a rain barrel to collect roof runoff.
- Remove hard surfaces wherever possible.
- If you have a dock and have a stand of wild rice, just use one boating channel if you can, to leave the wild rice intact; it slows water action on your shoreline.
- Easiest of all: just let things grow! Let tall natives and shrubs grow along the shoreline from 15' to as much as 30' along the shore. Native plants filter runoff, provide habitat for butterflies, birds, and other pollinators, and anchor the soil with their long taproots. Best of all, whatever you leave in a natural state you don't have to work on!

To help with shoreline landscaping and rain gardens, grants are available through the Aitkin County SWCD for 50-75% of the cost of landscaping. The SWCD will help with design, but you do have a say in what plants are used. Call 218.927.6565 for an on-site consultation.

Other tips:

- You can bring in suspicious-looking invasive plants to the Aitkin County SWCD or to the Forestry office on County Road 14 for identification.
- Aitkin County SWCD also sells native plants, trees and shrubs; call for information. Other sources for native plants: Halen Woods in Milan, Itasca Greenhouse in Grand Rapids, and Lansford in Brainerd.
- The Minnesota DNR Restore Your Shore website is a good source for deciding on which native plants to use: www.dnr.state.mn.us/rys/index.html

Thanks to board members Margo Gisselman and Ann Rorem for planning and coordinating this informative and fun event. We hope to have another in Spring 2018.

Swimmer's Itch: What it is, and How to Help

by Kathryn Beatty, BSLA Board

A particular flatworm parasite lives in the blood of infected animals such as ducks, geese, gulls, swans, and certain mammals such as muskrats and raccoons. The parasites produce eggs that are passed in the feces of the infected birds or mammals.

If the eggs land in water, they hatch, releasing small, free-swimming microscopic larvae. These larvae swim around in search of a certain species of aquatic snail. If the larvae find one of these snails, they infect the snail, multiply and undergo further development. Infected snails release a different type of microscopic larvae, called cercariae, into the water. This larval form then swims about searching for a suitable host such as a bird or muskrat to continue the lifecycle. In the northern part of the United States, the most common hosts are the merganser and a snail in the Stagnicola genus.

Fortunately, humans are not suitable hosts, but unfortunately, the nasty little creatures still like to burrow into the skin of humans. The result is known as swimmer's itch, an allergic reaction causing an irritating red rash. Blisters may develop and scratching the area can lead to infection.

While Big Sandy Lake appears to be free of this combination of parasites, snails and hosts, many North American lakes are dealing with the issue. As a lake association, we have been asked to participate in research to identify areas throughout North America that are experiencing outbreaks. The goal of the research is to determine factors that increase the risk of infestation.

You can help by providing data to the researchers at the University of Alberta. If you experience swimmer's itch, report it on their website SwimmersItch.ca. The collected data will provide a detailed picture of where and when swimmer's itch is occurring.

The Tullibee Fish-A Canary in the Coalmine

By Ben Gisselman, BSLA Board

The tullibee is a native Minnesota fish that thrives in the deep lakes of Northern Minnesota. Many of us know it as the cisco, or I have also heard it called “whitefish.” It’s actually a member of the salmon family.

One Minnesota DNR habitat researcher refers to tullibee as the canary in the coalmine: “If you have tullibee in a lake, you know things are pretty good. If they are declining, you know something is wrong.”

The tullibee is a critical forage fish for native walleye and northern pike populations and therefore is essential for the health of an overall fishery. According to the DNR, "Minnesota contains more high-quality cisco lakes — those rich in tullibee — than any other state in the Lower 48.”

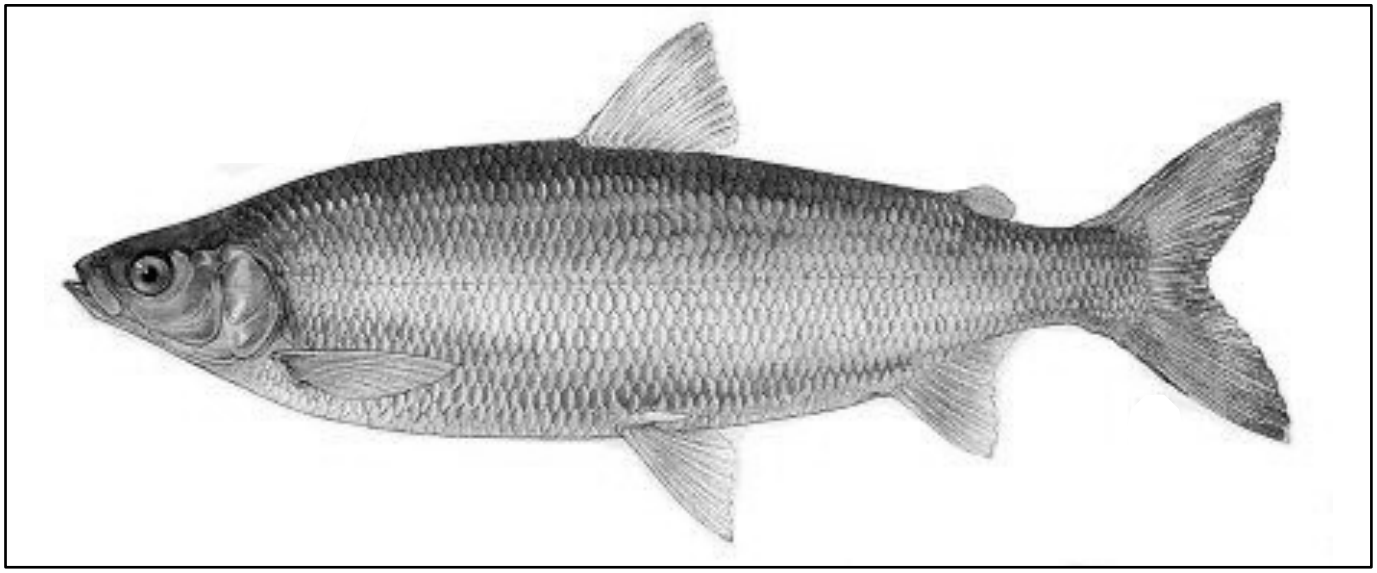
We have a healthy population of tullibee here in Big Sandy Lake. The average weight in the most recent gill net survey at Big Sandy was just under 1 pound. But most anglers don’t fish for the tullibee, although some late winter ice fishing for tullibee is popular in parts of northern Minnesota. There is no possession limit for tullibee on almost all Minnesota lakes.

Here at Big Sandy, the most common interaction with tullibee may happen during some late summers when a die-off occurs, especially in the deeper bays like Bill Horn. The tullibee, a silver-sided fish, thrives in cold, oxygen-rich waters. Typically, the cooler the water temperature, the more oxygen it can hold. Therefore, tullibee tend to spend their time down deep where the oxygen is most plentiful.

But slight changes in oxygen and water temperatures can cause a die-off. When the water warms too much from the top down, that can cause depleted oxygen levels down deep but at the same time, the water at the surface is too warm for tullibee survival. They get caught somewhere in the middle and if the situation persists, they begin to die off and float to the surface. So, it makes sense during summers like the one we’re having this year, with water temperatures at the surface registering in some places in the 80’s, that a die-off could occur.

It isn’t just increasing temperatures from hot summers that can cause die-offs. Any time organic material breaks down at the bottom of a lake, oxygen in the water is consumed. This is why when you harvest weeds, don’t leave them in the water to sink to the bottom and decompose.

Preventing organic material and runoff in general from entering the lake can contribute to a healthier system for the lake and therefore, fish habitat. You can help by doing anything to reduce or slow water runoff on your shoreline (see the Love Your Lake article in this newsletter).



BSLA Annual Meeting Notes

The Big Sandy Lake Association Annual Meeting was held Saturday, June 16th at Big Sandy Lodge. Our annual meetings are always an efficient way to get the latest updates on the BSLA and local government agencies.

Sheriff Turner spoke — for his last time as sheriff — about the fact that overall, crime at Big Sandy, burglaries in particular, have been down consistently. He said that as watchful neighbors, we contribute to that trend. Sheriff Turner is retiring as Aitkin County Sheriff after the November election. BSLA President Bruce Johnson thanked him for his service on behalf of the lake association; we all will be sad to see him go.

BSLA board members reported as follows:

- Margo Gisselman: the recent shoreland management seminar hosted by the BSLA in May (see the article about this seminar on page two of this newsletter).

- Christopher Krolak: ongoing BSLA efforts regarding AIS prevention including launch inspections, early detection, decontamination, sampling, and education.

- John Pilney: lake water quality, including historical phosphorous levels and the recent gradual decline, and an update on local mining activity.

- Stu Mortrude: analysis of the positive impact that lake water quality and lack of AIS have on lakeshore property values, and our new welcome program which involves early introduction of new property owners to the BSLA.

- Janet Hill: reported that the MN PUC approved Enbridge's Line 3 pipeline on June 28; we are now awaiting their order, which may include a revised corridor route through the BSLA watershed.

- Ben Gisselman: update on muskie stocking efforts in Minnesota and legislation to ban muskie stocking that did not pass in the last legislative session.

No one opposed any of the directors that were up for election, so they all "won" handily. We hope all interested members will run for the BSLA board in 2019, as it's satisfying and necessary volunteer work.

At the conclusion of the meeting, all guests enjoyed a tasty picnic lunch with more socializing and opportunities to get to know others involved in the lake association. Next year's meeting will be held in either May or June -– watch your email or the BSLA Facebook page for further information.

Shallow Water Blackout

By Courtney Kinnett, Natural Resources Specialist, Sandy Lake Recreation Area

Shallow water blackout (SWB) is an underwater "faint" due to lack of oxygen to the brain caused by holding your breath for long periods of time. If the swimmer is not immediately rescued, they can quickly drown. SWB can occur in any open water, rivers or pools.

To prevent shallow water blackout from happening:

- Never swim alone
- Never hyperventilate
- Never ignore the urge to breathe
- Never play breath holding games
- No prolonged breath-holding
- No repetitive underwater laps. One lap, breathe.

For more information about Shallow Water Blackout please visit www.shallow waterblackoutprevention.org.

Please beware of your limits when you are in or around water, and always remember to wear a life jacket!

THANK YOU!

The BSLA board is grateful for all of you who support and help protect Big Sandy Lake by being members of the BSLA.

Thanks also to our contributing writers, without whom this newsletter wouldn't be possible:

Robert O. Harder
CO Amber Ladd
Staff of the Sandy Lake Recreation Area

Did You Know?

By Robert O. Harder

In our May issue we wrote about the "rest of the story" behind historic Battle Island. Subsequently, our always wide-awake newsletter editor, Janet Hill, alerted me to additional material on the subject archived in the Minnesota Historical Society Collections (See *The Story of Beengwa*, MN History Quarterly, Vol. 9, No. 4). It seems there are yet more variations of the story behind the last confrontations between the Sioux and Ojibway for control of Sandy Lake and surrounding waters in the mid-1840s.

In the summer of 1927, a Professor Irving Hart (Iowa State Teachers College at Cedar Falls) interviewed Mrs. George Curtis (a.k.a. Beengwa), a Sandy Lake Ojibway woman claiming to be more than ninety years old. Sandy Lakers who have read the late Eileen Wotring Keen's book, *Footprints of Early Backwoods Settlers*, will remember Prof. Hart as the same man who co-led the archaeological excavations uncovering the Northwest Fur Trading Post site on Brown's point. Readers might also recall we reported on the "Refuge Island" version of the battle told to WPA writer Clifford Greer in 1940 by another Ojibway woman named Aundaig (a.k.a. Crow). Aundaig--her white name was Martha Cornish--vigorously refuted Mrs. Curtis' 1927 version; the one we are about to recount here. It appears there was a bitter blood feud between Aundaig's and Beengwa's clans. "I have heard [her story] many times," snorted Aundaig. “And it is not true! The Augenosh's [Beengwa's father] were the worst tribe [clan] of Indians. Only two died a natural death."

Prof. Hart reported Beengwa's story just the same. He assures us she was of sound mind in apparent good health, rather remarkable considering she was born in the wilderness circa 1837 (caveat: there is evidence in her family of age exaggerations) and lived in primitive conditions nearly all her life. She was, she said through the interpreter, Mr. Charles Wakefield, a son by her first marriage to Joseph Wakefield, "about six years old" at the time of the climactic battle. Due to space considerations, we can't go into the colorful and very specific detail of Beengwa's tale, but here is the gist.

According to Mrs. Curtis, her father Augenosh was the war leader of the Sandy Lake band, one of several "chiefs" recognized by the entire band of several clans (Loon, Turtle, Beaver, etc. Augenosh was a Bull Head). She told Hart her father led a large war party of warriors on a surprise raid on a Sioux village near what is now the St. Paul metro area. Provocation for the attack is unknown, but in all likelihood it was another in a long line of tit-for-tat responses over some outrage, in the timeless manner of Hatfield-McCoy-type feuds. The Sioux warriors were said to be intoxicated and their women had hid their weapons to prevent bloodshed among themselves. Mrs. Curtis proudly told Hart the attack was "a complete success, with many Sioux killed without the loss of a single Ojibway." (Prof. Hart said this was "undoubtedly the battle of Pig's Eye Lake, fought in 1842 within the present city limits of St. Paul." Not surprisingly, other historians claim the fight was not that lopsided, with a number of Ojibway dead, though the Sioux loss was even greater. It was common for Indian victory celebrations to exaggerate the brilliance of their own warriors.)

"Some time after that battle," Mrs. Curtis said rather vaguely, two Ojibway hunters were camped on what was then called Rice Lake [renamed "Lake Minnewawa" in 1913 by real estate developers, including this writer's grandfather, Marcus Nelson] when they were attacked by "twenty or thirty Sioux." The two men fled westerly "going toward the place where the present dance pavilion is located [The Minnewawa Retreat Pavilion on the west shore along the narrow neck of Sheshebe Point], then crossing the lake in a canoe to the north and portaging over to Bill Horn Bay on Sandy Lake." The plains Sioux, who knew nothing of canoe culture, were forced to pursue on foot overland. The Ojibway hunters arrived at their village on Indian Point [present day CYC Camp] first and put the entire camp on a full war footing. The battle then commenced as is generally agreed by all, with the Ojibway victorious, finally gaining control of Sandy Lake.

What remains unsettled among all these variations of the story is the specific location of this final confrontation. Readers will remember it was this writer’s conjecture that it most likely occurred on the-then long sandbar that stretches between Indian Point and what is generally referred to as Ponderosa [Long] Point. Mrs. Curtis insisted the contending parties "fought standing in the water, [the battle taking] place between Moose Gut Island and the mainland." If she is talking about the Moose Gut Island we know today, those circumstances are not tenable due to terrain and depth of water conditions. Yet, we must still consider her testimony. If the battle was fought in late summer/early fall and the water was exceptionally low (remember there was no dam at the time; it is possible the lake could have been 8 to 10 feet lower than it normally is today), Battle Island and today's Moose Gut could have been nearly connected, making a "stand in the water" fight possible. Further, the total land mass of Moose Gut/Battle Island

would have been that much more contorted, lending greater credence to the "moose gut" name. Still, how would the Sioux have crossed the wide body of water from Ponderosa Point over to Moose Gut? Without canoes they could only have gone around by land, a distance of up to three miles, highly unlikely. And why in the world would the Ojibway want to make their stand over on isolated Battle Island with no possible avenue of retreat? Further, the Ojibway village was already at hand where surely the bulk of the band would have remained, just across from Ponderosa Point over the long sand bar. Logic tells us the Sioux had only to muster their courage and wade across the several hundred-yard expanse to meet their foe. This would also satisfy Mrs. Curtis' contention the fight occurred while "standing in water," leaving only the confusion over the Moose Gut/ Battle Island connection.

In the final analysis, however, and as I wrote in the May issue, it is not the precise battlefield location that is important but the significance of the event itself. The Battle Island memorial will always be as good a remembrance anchor as we will ever need. May the lake's waves lap forever gently on its shores.

Augenosh (left) and an unidentified man. Printed with permission from the Minnesota Historical Society. As Bob Harder points out, the Sandy Lake landscape was pretty bleak at that time, after the logging.

Summer CO Report

by Conservation Officer Amber Ladd

It certainly has been a busy summer and hopefully you have been able to enjoy the lake even with several rainy stretches. As the weather is cooperating for more recreational activities on the water, I want to address a very important topic: drinking and boating.

BWI: Boating While Intoxicated

In Minnesota and across the nation, BWI is the leading contributing factor in boating accidents and fatalities. Of the twelve fatal boating accidents that occurred last year in Minnesota, six involved alcohol. Over the past five years, alcohol has been a factor in about 44 percent of boating fatalities.

While failure to wear life jackets is the reason the majority of fatal boating accidents turn deadly, being intoxicated often is what causes people to end up in the water in the first place. The legal blood alcohol limit for boaters is .08, but boaters are encouraged to leave alcohol on shore and boat sober.

If this information alone is not enough to convince you to boat sober, consider the legal ramifications. Boaters convicted of BWI in MN face fines up to $1,000 for a first offense, possible jail time, impoundment of their boat and trailer, and the loss of boat-operating privileges for the first 90 days during the boating season. Intoxicated boaters with prior BWI convictions who have a child under 16 years old on board or who have a blood alcohol content of 0.16 may be charged with a gross misdemeanor or felony crime, and subjected to higher monetary fines, mandatory jail time, loss of driver's license, loss of vehicle plates, and forfeiture of their boat and trailer.

On a boat, a person is more highly affected by alcohol due to the sun, heat, movement of the water, and vibrations from the motor. Keep the alcohol consumption for shore.

Aquatic Vegetation

Speaking of shore…
Several land owners have been removing aquatic vegetation without a permit. The greatest impact on Big Sandy is on the wild rice. I know I have discussed this topic before, but with the ongoing violations on the lake with the removal, I think it is important to discuss it again.

Wild rice is great habitat for wildlife and is a substantial food crop worth at least $2 million to the state's economy each year. This plant is very important to our lakes, wildlife,

Thank You!

Please give our business members your patronage. They understand that the good health of Big Sandy Lake is essential to their business.

A&M Electric
Aardvark Septic
Aspen Realty, Inc
Bann's Bar & Restaurant
Big Sandy Camp & Retreat Center
Big Sandy Lodge and Resort
Catholic Youth Camps
Century 21 Twin Lakes Realty
Christian Realty North
David Winegar, DDS
EyeCare Center of McGregor
Floe International
Grand Timber Bank
GTS Tree Service
Independent School District #4
Lake Country Power
Light Publications Satellite Office
McGregor Baking Company
McGregor Printing & Graphics
McGregor Realty & Property Management
Meyer's Service Center
Minnesota National Golf
Northern Ridge Lawn & Landscape
Peat Inc.
Tamarack Pest Control
Thrifty White Pharmacy
Willey's Sports Shop & Spirits
Willey's Marine (Lifetime Member)
Yellowstone Log Homes

and economy. There are several folks who simply call it "weeds" and destroy the plant in the area where they want a clear beach and swimming area.

For any vegetation that comes out of the water (called emergent vegetation), **get a permit**. The DNR will issue permits, but they are fairly strict on width and location of the channel, especially with wild rice.

All of this information is on the MN DNR's website. If you have a question and are not able to locate the information, you are always welcome to contact me. Be safe and as always, if you have any questions/concerns/TIP information call or email me!

Also, I should mention, TIP (Turn in Poachers) is a non-profit organization that is affiliated with the DNR to help ensure the protection of our resources. Anonymous reports are accepted as well.

CO Amber Ladd #553, MN DNR Enforcement (McGregor)
Email: amber.ladd@state.mn
Cell: 218-392-0689
TIP: 800-652-9093 or #TIP from your cell phone

facebook

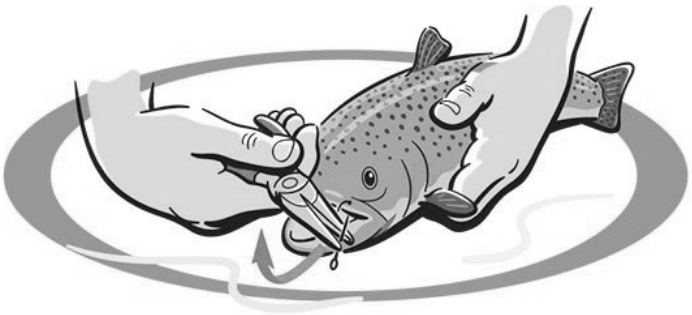
To join our Facebook group, search for **Big Sandy Lake Association** and click Join. This has become the primary site for sharing current information about our lake.

Responsible Catch-and-Release

Minnesota DNR

Responsible catch-and-release fishing can help ensure continued quality fishing opportunities. Anglers can boost the odds of fish surviving catch and release by using methods that avoid internal damage caused by hooks, stress and being pulled from deep water.

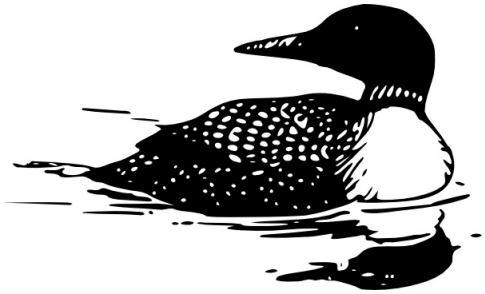
- Fish hooked in the mouth almost always survive. Set the hook quickly to avoid hooking a fish deeply. Jigs, circle hooks and active baits like crankbaits are more likely to hook a fish in the mouth.



- Use some restraint when fish are really biting, and it is a good idea to avoid deep water when planning to catch and release fish.
- Have pliers ready that work well for taking hooks out. Cutting the line and leaving the hook in the fish is also a good option.
- Quickly land a fish to minimize a fish's time out of water.
- Handle the fish firmly but carefully. Wet your hands before touching a fish to prevent removal of their protective slime coating. Rubberized nets help, too.
- Unhook and release the fish while it is still in the water, if possible, and support its weight with both hands or with a net when removed from the water. Never lift them vertically from the water.
- Do not place fish you plan to release on a stringer or in a live well.
- Revive a fish by cradling it under the belly and gently moving it forward in the water until it swims away.
- Do not release a fish that can be legally kept if it is bleeding heavily or can't right itself.

Lead Tackle and Loons

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency



Current statistics from necropsy of Minnesota loons shows a lead poisoning rate of 14.4%. This is an avoidable loss, just like the loss of bald eagles from use of lead ammo for deer hunting.

There are nontoxic jigs and sinkers available from Minnesota manufacturers (you'll find a list at www.pca.state.mn.us/living-green/manufacturers-and-retailers-nonlead-tackle).

Outfit kids' tackle boxes with non-lead weights. They are nontoxic and safer for youngsters to handle. Plus, inexperienced anglers tend to lose the most sinkers, so you'll be cutting down on the amount of lead getting left behind in Minnesota lakes and rivers.

Tips for anglers to help safeguard wildlife and human health

- Use non-lead fishing weights. Inexpensive and ecologically sound alternatives to lead fishing weights are available. Anglers should use sinkers and jigs made from non-hazardous materials such as steel, tin and bismuth.
- Never throw old fishing gear into the water or shore. Discard old lead sinkers and jigs properly. For example, bring them to your local household hazardous waste collection site during your next visit.
- Never put a lead sinker in your mouth or bite down on slip shot—use a pair of pliers instead!
- Always wash your hands thoroughly after handling lead sinkers or cleaning out your tackle box.
- Spread the word. Tell other anglers about the problem, and encourage them to switch to non-lead sinkers and jigs. Talk to your favorite retailers and ask them to stock non-lead fishing tackle.

Big Sandy Lake Association

Mission Statement

With respect for future generations, the mission of the Big Sandy Lake Association -- through education, leadership, and by example -- is to protect and improve water quality, promote best practice shoreline management and use, and seek balance and harmony between the rights of property owners and existing (and proposed) rules, regulations, statutes, and laws.

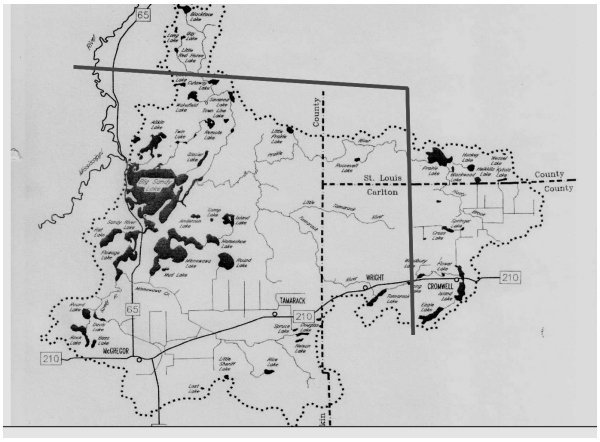
New Pipeline Corridor in Sandy Lake Watershed

On June 28th, the five Minnesota PUC commissioners presented their long-awaited opinions on Enbridge's Line 3 replacement pipeline route. They unanimously approved Enbridge's application for a Certificate of Need and preferred route, with one possible modification (proposed only during the last days of the final hearing): to bring the pipeline corridor north and east of Big Sandy Lake, shown (roughly) by the heavy black line on the watershed map below. This modification was made to locate potential pipeline spills further from the Mississippi River. While the modified route isn't as close to Big Sandy's inlet as Enbridge's original preferred route, it still poses a risk to Big Sandy, as any spills or leaks of toxins from the pipelines in this new corridor will eventually end up in our lake.

The PUC commissioners opted to not follow the advice of the MN Department of Commerce (DOC) or the Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) assigned to this case. The DOC determined that Line 3 is not needed, and that the state of Minnesota would be better off without it. The ALJ recommended that the PUC approve the certificate of need, but only if Line 3 is rebuilt in its existing corridor along Highway 2. All of the indigenous bands except Leech Lake do not approve of Enbridge's preferred route through ceded territory.

Once the PUC commissioners finalize their decision — including the proposed route modification, if approved — and issue a written order, intervening parties can file petitions for reconsideration and appeals to the Minnesota Court of Appeals and the Minnesota Supreme Court. Enbridge also must secure 29 permits from federal, state, and local agencies before they can proceed.

The BSLA's mission is to protect the water of Big Sandy Lake, now and in the future. There is still time to weigh in on this issue. Contact Governor Dayton's office and let him know that you don't approve of a pipeline corridor through the Sandy Lake watershed. Your voice makes a difference.



Blood Moon Rising over Big Sandy Lake

July 2018

Photo credit: Michael Bongiovanni

BIG SANDY LAKE ASSOCIATION
P.O. Box 21
McGregor, MN 55760

FORWARDING SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
McGregor, MN 55760
Permit No. 9