



PRESIDENT'S LETTER

We hope you enjoy this first full color issue of the Big Sand newsletter. Below is a recap of some of the news and BSLA highlights from the 2017 lake season.

The BSLA Board voted to write a letter expressing concerns over the handling of AIS in the state of MN and in support of the Wright County request for mandatory decontamination. Bob Bray, BSLA President Elect, volunteered and took the lead composing the document. The Park Rapids Enterprise immediately responded to the request for publication and it was highlighted as a Guest Opinion in the Sept 9, 2017 edition. The letter appeared in other regional State papers. Twice it was sent to the Star Tribune, but regrettably was not published. To read the full letter go to parkrapidsenterprise.com and enter in the search bar "Must Minnesota Accept the Failure of AIS Prevention Program".

Note: Wright County was finally approved for mandatory watercraft inspection and tagging on 4 lakes by the DNR in September of 2017 and implemented in October for a 3 week period. Wright County Soil and Water is collecting data related to the implementation and will issue a report early in 2018. It is expected the program will continue in 2018. More information at:

http://wrightswcd.org/Water_Management/WRIP_approved.pdf
http://wrightswcd.org/Water_Management/wrip.html

Hubbard County has been noted in state-wide publications for being completely AIS-free. As of late summer, Hubbard CO is no longer free of AIS. Two Hubbard County lakes have been identified with having AIS. Eurasian Milfoil was discovered in Bad Axe in late August and in late September, zebra mussel veligers were identified in Garfield Lake.

Hubbard CO COLA (Coalition of Lake Associations) has established a rapid response plan for infected lakes and is working with Bad Ax Lake on their recent discovery of Eurasian Milfoil. Please view details of the response plan and COLA's citizen watch initiative, 'Eyes on the Water,' in this newsletter.

A goal of the Big Sand Lake Management Plan for AIS prevention efforts, beginning spring and summer of 2018, is to establish a team of volunteers located in different areas of the lake. The team will be professionally trained and will be an addition to our front line of monitoring for AIS. Please let us know if you are interested in

becoming a volunteer. This role is of upmost importance and is anticipated to require a minimum amount of time. More information will be on the website and in the spring newsletter.

The board is awaiting the Big Sand Lake 5 year water quality report from R&D labs, who analyzes our water samples. Once received, we will distribute the report. It will be sent via a blast email as well as posted on the website and Nextdoor. This report is a valuable historical tool for tracking both past and present lake conditions.

The only development by the DNR at the the Big Sand Public Access is the installation of a small dock. See a photo elsewhere in this newsletter. The BSLA Board is in contact with the DNR to continually monitor development of the access. Further renovation is currently on hold due to lack of DNR funds.

BSLA is working to publish an updated print version of the resident directory (last printing was in 2011). Neighborhood captains are collecting updated contact information. This may appear redundant as you provide information when renewing your membership. This 'personal' approach is taking place to avoid errors. Your prompt response to the captains is appreciated. The directory is only for the use of Big Sand Lake residents and provides contact for BSLA neighbors in case of emergencies in this day of cell phones. Please let us know if you have concerns providing the information.

Summer socials, the first Big Sand Lake golf outing, women's coffees and a breakfast, were well attended and enjoyed by the participants! Thank You to the Roseth Family and Debbie Bowers for hosting our June and August socials. Thank You to Adrienne Bray for organizing the women's events, Mike Moore and Chuck Fenton for coordinating the September golf scramble, and Beth Kruger for assistance in coordinating and setting up all events!

With much gratitude we thank all for your wonderful and most generous support of Big Sand Lake. Big Sand Lake is fortunate to be loved and cared for by the many who are captivated by its beauty and who go forth with passion to preserve this magnificent resource for all to enjoy.

Best Wishes for a delightful winter!
Barb and Catharine

JOIN THE ARMY *Become an "Eyes on the Water" Volunteer to Monitor Big Sand*

Hubbard County COLA (Coalition of Lake Associations) has initiated a citizen watch program called "Eyes on the Water" for early detection of aquatic invasive species. Early detection is the best defense if a lake is invaded with unwanted, destructive species. Lake residents are encouraged to "join the army" to regularly inspect and monitor their lakeshore for invasive species. No application process is needed — just be observant, look around your lakeshore area frequently and complete a 10 minute survey at the end of each lake season to report your activities, findings or non-findings.

All information, including the survey, about participating in the 'Eyes on the Water' can be found at <http://www.hubbardcolamn.org/public-awareness--education.html>. For "Tips and Tactics" for inspecting lakeshore, download the protocol link. For an excellent identification guide for distinguishing invasive from native aquatic plants and animals (invertebrates) go to <http://www.hubbardcolamn.org/identification.html>.

As part of the 'Eyes on the Water' effort, BSLA has circled Big Sand Lake with the placement of 19 settlement samplers (Zebra Mussel detectors) on docks in strategic locations. In addition, one detector has been attached to each of the buoys in the lake. A Lake Emma resident and a Lake Ida resident agreed to participate, thereby covering the inlet and the outlet to Big Sand Lake. An article describing the detectors with a photo appeared in the 2016 Fall/Winter issue of the newsletter. Records are being kept on placement and reports. This fall the data collected from the samplers did not reveal any evidence of Zebra Mussels. The samplers will be again be put into the lake in the spring. The samplers or other detecting devices are only one part of the process. Individuals checking their lake equipment is a good start. Checking shorelines out to 15 to 20 feet is useful.

All Big Sand residents are encouraged to keep their "eyes on the water" and regularly check docks, water related equipment, and lakeshore areas for the presence of any new, different and suspect plants and invertebrates. Hopefully there will be nothing to report and Big Sand will remain AIS-free. Vigilance is the key and early detection is the best remedy.



*DNR Dock Installed at Big Sand
Public Access August 2017*

YOUR BIG SAND LAKE CHARITABLE FUND UPDATE

Thank you to all lake homeowners who made donations to the Big Sand Lake Charitable Fund in 2017- either for annual watercraft inspection or to the main fund. To date, Big Sand Lake remains aquatic invasive species free, thanks in large part to the vigilance of the Big Sand Lake Association's planning and scheduling of inspection at the boat launch.

The Charitable Fund, which is managed by the Northwest Minnesota Foundation, was created in 2009 for the protection and beautification of Big Sand Lake. The main body of the fund has a balance of \$102,495, and it is being preserved to deal with any costly emergency AIS contamination issues that might arise in the future.

Each year, the Charitable Fund committee fundraises amongst Big Sand Lake cabin owners to cover the cost of watercraft inspection for the upcoming year, in order to avoid tapping in to main fund. We are currently waiting to find out exactly what the inspection costs will be for 2018. Please watch for our letter in January. Thank you for doing your part to protect our beautiful lake!

Big Sand Lake Charitable Fund Advisory Committee Co-chairs,
Chris and Ann Hilger

Jonathan D. Allen
Deborah Goltz
Rolf and Karen Nelson
Paul Askegaard
Mark H. Gulbrandson
Nelson Cabin
Edward and Rose Behling
Bill and Kelly Hanley
Sandra Ondracek
Big Sand Lake Association
Hilger Compound
David and Kate Paster
Paul and Marilou Birkeland
Tricia Hilger
Brian F. and Jane Ellen Peterson
Deborah Bowers
Christopher Hilger
Pinewoods Trust
Diana Brainard
Tim Hilger and Kathy Ebert
Point House Association
Andrea U. Brainard
Dr. Peter & Linda Hilger
Tom Scott
Bob and Adrienne Bray
Don and Jeanne Hoodecheck
Richard and Carol Sederstrom
William J. and Connie L. Brock
Michael J. Johnson

Jeffrey Shandorf
Bruggen Family
Tom and Barbara Kimer
Carol Sokol
Catherine Chandler
Marcia Landgraf
Robert and Laura Spolum
Salvador B. and Kathleen K. Dasilva
Ruth Larsen
John and Susan Steffen
Tim and Linda Daugherty
Linda and Paul Lee
James and Janis Stephenson
Bill and Vicki Eichten
Mrs. William O. Lewis
Charles Patterson and Margaret Prah
William and Carmelita Ellis
Richard and Mimi Long
Marcia Udem
Marlene J. Fairchild
Candy Malm
Ken and Norma Wilcox
Tim H. Fischbach
Michael and Marissa Marzlol
Stan and Catharine Williamson
Gene Fladeboe
Thomas M. and Susan Mayerle
Randau and Robyn Wimmer
Steven J. Fuglestad
Butch and Ann McConn

MEMBERSHIP MAKES A DIFFERENCE! THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

Big Sand Lake Association's (BSLA) greatest strength is our membership. We rely on member support through annual dues, donations and volunteer time to accomplish the BSLA mission to preserve and protect Big Sand Lake and to provide activities and amenities to help make, and keep, Big Sand a beautiful, enjoyable place for all. A list of BSLA activities and accomplishments during 2017 is printed elsewhere in this newsletter. Thank you to the approximate 160 current BSLA members and the many volunteers who have helped this year.

HOW DO I RENEW OR BECOME A NEW MEMBER?

Visit our website at: www.bigsandlake.org. Click on "Membership" where you can renew or join on-line with a credit card or PayPal. Or if you prefer, download the membership form, print, fill out and mail along with a check for your dues to BSLA, P.O. Box 181, Park Rapids, MN 56470. BSLA is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Note: Any NEW membership received between October 1 and December 31st will be credited for both 2017 and 2018. Non-residents and adult children of Big Sand residents can become Friend/Associate members at a reduced rate.

HOW DO I KNOW IF MY MEMBERSHIP IS CURRENT?

Members current for 2017 are identified with a loon symbol on our website, www.bigsandlake.org. Click on the password protected 'Member's Area' tab then select 'Resident Directory'. To request login assistance, please send an email to admin@bigsandlake.org

If you have questions or concerns about membership, please don't hesitate to contact Bonnie Brand, BSLA Membership Chair, at bonnie@pineconelodge or 320-491-6952.

BIG SAND LAKE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Each year the Big Sand Lake Association plans on-going and new activities as part of our Lake Management Plan (LMP) to help keep Big Sand Lake a beautiful, pristine and enjoyable place for all of its residents. The list of 2017 activities and accomplishments is below.

The Lake Management Plan was established in 2005 to assist in prioritizing annual goals to guide lake resident actions and engagement in priority action areas. The success of the LMP and the long-term vitality of Big Sand hinges on the input from all BSLA members and lake residents, current and new, bringing fresh ideas, making suggestions and contributing both financial support and volunteer time. If you have suggestions for BSLA activities, please send an email to admin@bigsandlake.org or come to next June's Annual Meeting where the LMP goals for 2018 and beyond will be discussed. More information about the Lake Management Plan can be found on our website www.bigsandlake.org under 'BSLA Information'.

2017 BSLA ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- BSLA Board voted to approve requesting an additional 100 hours for 2017 AIS watercraft inspection
- BSLA Board requested that the Big Sand Lake Charitable Fund collect and manage AIS donations to accommodate payment for watercraft inspections
- Submitted a request to Hubbard County AIS Program for a total of 1,100 hours of watercraft inspection for the 2017 season which included extra time for fishing weekends in October
- Submitted AIS grant request to the Lake Emma Healthy Lakes Partnership and received \$3,400 toward 2017 watercraft inspections
- Distributed and monitored placement of 20 zebra mussel detection devices in 20 key locations around the lake
- Partnered with Hubbard COLA (Coalition of Lake Associations) to support county wide lake activities and AIS information and tactics
- Supported advocacy groups with annual dues — COLA, MN Lakes and Rivers, Conservation Minnesota
- BSLA volunteers continued annual veliger testing for early detection of zebra mussels
- BSLA volunteers conducted on-going monthly water quality testing for phosphorus content and clarity (secchi disk readings)
- BSLA Board voted to fund the 5 year lake quality report update from RMB Laboratories
- Wrote a letter in support of mandatory decontamination of watercraft and other more rigorous AIS prevention efforts by the DNR. and submitted to various newspapers
- Re-established the 'calling tree' for Big Sand neighborhoods
- Organized calling tree volunteers to collect contact information for updating the Big Sand Resident Directory to be published and distributed next spring or early summer
- Maintained www.bigsandlake.org website and two webcams
- Promoted Big Sand communication via two newsletters, blast emails and Nextdoor
- Hosted annual meeting/family picnic and other social activities

THE INAUGURAL BIG SAND LAKE ASSOCIATION GOLF OUTING

Seventeen brave Big Sand residents enjoyed a 9 hole golf outing on the cloudy afternoon of September 16th just before the Big Sand social at the Headwaters Golf Club. In what we all hope will be the first of many, the inaugural Big Sand Lake Association golf outing was a raging success. Prizes were awarded for the following fine golfers: Longest Drive (Men) Rob Anderson on hole #5 Longest Drive (Women) on hole #5 Laura Spolum and longest putt made on hole 9: Dean Johnson. You will notice there was no closest to the pin winners. It's not that we didn't try! That means we need to work on our game for next year. Thanks to all who participated and organized this fun event.



P.O. Box 181, Park Rapids, MN 56470

BIG SAND LAKE 2018 CALENDAR

(tentative)

ANNUAL MEETING and FAMILY PICNIC

Saturday, June 23
Meeting 10:00 a.m. - Picnic 11:30 a.m.

FOURTH OF JULY PARADE

Wednesday, July 4
11:00 a.m. at Northeast end of the lake

LADIES COFFEE/HAPPY HOUR

May 23, June 26, July 19, August 22, September 27
(Locations TBD)

SOCIALS

Saturday, June 9 - Hosted by Kimers
July TBD
August - Hosted by Seavers
Saturday, September 15 - Headwaters Golf Club
preceded by 2nd Annual Golf Outing

IRON HORSE DINNERS IN NEVIS

Casually scheduled during the winter months
Contact Linda Van Bruggen, freddie54mn@yahoo.com,
for email notifications

BSLA BOARD MEETINGS

Saturday, May 26 - 8:30 a.m.
Saturday, June 2 - 8:30 a.m.
July, August, September and October dates TBD

DEADLINES FOR NEWSLETTER MATERIALS

SPRING ISSUE - April 1

If you have an idea for an activity
or are interested in hosting an event,
please contact either
Adrienne Bray - adriennebray@gmail.com
Beth Krueger - wkrueger@paulbunyan.net