

The

Chain Letter

Pike Lake Chain Lakes Association, Inc.

2024 ISSUE



The
Chain Letter

PLCLA OFFICERS

Mike Ida, President
Russ Schroeder, Vice President
Peggy Kuss, Secretary
Lynne Clemens, Treasurer

BOARD MEMBERS

Steve Ave'Lallemant
Jack Wierzba
Thor Gunderson
Jim Clemmons
Everett Sammis
Dave Ebert
Jeff Witon
Open

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Aquatic Invasive Species
Steve Ave'Lallemant

Lake Monitoring/Water Quality
Rick Sironi

Clean Boats Clean Water
Open

Fisheries
Russ Schroeder

History
Manny Stein

Membership
Lynne Clemens

Newsletter Editor
Derek Dieringer

Facebook
Derek Dieringer

Website
Derek Dieringer

MAILING ADDRESS

N14885 Shady Knoll Road
Park Falls, WI 54552



**PIKE LAKE CHAIN
LAKES ASSOCIATION**

PREZ SAYS *by Mike Ida*

As you read through this issue of "The Chain Letter", I think you will be pleased to see how active and proactive your Board has been since our annual meeting in June. Let me highlight for you what has happened.



- ◆ Our board has been much more intentional in using our Facebook page and website to communicate with our membership and lake community. Better communication has resolved past issues and has brought about positive results.
- ◆ Board meetings are now rotating between Monday nights and Saturday mornings to allow more people, especially weekenders, the opportunity to attend and dialogue with the Board.
- ◆ Our Board financed, and now maintains, a life jacket station that was installed at the Federal boat landing. As you will see, this station has been widely applauded and very well used.
- ◆ To help facilitate communication and education, our Board has held three listening sessions. Two were related to Lake Ordinances and one was regarding the proposed Fish Passage project. All were well attended.
- ◆ As many of you know, our Board recently made a recommendation to the Fifield Town Board regarding Ordinance 28. I'm happy to announce that the Board implemented our recommendation and has changed the water skiing hours on the Pike Lake Chain to be 10:00 AM—7:00 PM effective this year.
- ◆ Our Association By-Laws are currently being reviewed and updates are in the works to present to our membership for approval.
- ◆ Our financial records, which had not been reviewed in a number of years, have recently been examined and were found to be accurate and in compliance with state expectations.
- ◆ Our Board is now sending a representative to Fifield Town Board meetings as a way to facilitate better communication between our two Boards.
- ◆ Our Board is anticipating offering three new educational/listening sessions in the future. One session will focus on exploring the 2019 DNR shoreline study of our chain. The second session will focus on practical things shoreline owners can do to help protect and preserve their shoreline. The third session will focus on the proposed US Forest Service (USFS) Fish Ladder project.
- ◆ As you will see in this newsletter, a new fishing line recycling project is in the works.

continued on page 7...

PIKE LAKE FIRE DEPARTMENT *by Warren Johnson*

Happy New Year to all our neighbors and friends in the Pike Lake area.

In the past year, we have had 13 Fire and 19 EMS calls. We have been fortunate in that we haven't experienced a structure fire, but we train for that possibility every month.

Our department remains strong and vibrant. Our training has been outstanding, with Captain Jim Nelson as our Training and Safety Officer, assisted by Assistant Chief Dan Metz and Captain Pete Anderson. Pike Lake Fire trains twice a month on the first and third Wednesday. Captain Rich Dejarlais leads our EMS team with joint training once a month with Fifield and Sherman EMS, as well as coordinating training with our firefighters *continued on page 3...*



PIKE LAKE FIRE DEPARTMENT *(continued from pg. 2)*

and ground support personnel. Rich also grant writing and the flow of information between Pike Lake and the grant provider. I am confident in our team's ability to respond competently to any and all calls.

This past year our EMS team have made more requests for Advanced Life Support (medical helicopter) than ever before. Every one of those calls were confirmed as medically necessary by the local hospital ambulance crew and our patients were transported quickly to the nearest appropriate care center. Great work team!

Keep in mind, we are a volunteer organization that depends on the personnel who are available at any given moment. With that said, we could always use more members, so give me a call if you're interested in joining our family.

This year we will be getting the Rural Rescue Vehicle that was ordered and built to our specifications last year, and is now being lifted and fitted with 4-wheel drive. We applied for and received a grant for the vehicle, as well as new EMS turnout bags that are in compliance with state directives. This vehicle will replace our current EMS van and will be capable of providing off-road/trail medical rescues. Additionally, it is configured with a climate controlled care environment for unsheltered patients awaiting the arrival of an ambulance. This will be a great

improvement over our current equipment.

Financially, we are strong as well. Between our equipment (savings) account held by the town, and our Pike Lake Chain Firefighters, Inc. non-profit organization, we are in a position to help substantially with the purchase of new equipment. Thank you, our community, for your continued support throughout the year.

Remember, Spring brings the possibility of wildfires. If you plan to burn, you need a burn permit as well as a call to the DNR to check the daily burning restrictions. The number is 1-800-947-2876.

In closing, **PLEASE don't hesitate to call 911 if you feel you need help.** We are here to serve and protect you. We gladly respond day or night. That's what we signed up for. Thank you for trusting us with that responsibility.

I hope to see you around the neighborhood and at Fun Day. Take care and keep your smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors freshly powered and tested frequently.

Warren Johnson, Chief
Pike Lake Fire and Rescue
715-661-4267

LAKE TESTING REPORT

by Rick Sironi

This year, our dedicated team of lake testers completed three tests during the months of June, July, and August.

The tests we run include measurements of Secchi (water clarity), Dissolved oxygen at 3-foot intervals, Temperature at 3-foot intervals, Phosphorus, and Chlorophyll.

The WI DNR has changed their website layout since the last report. To view results, go to <https://apps.dnr.wi.gov/lakes/lakepages>. Click the SEARCH tab, enter the lake name of interest, and set the LOCATION to PRICE Co. Select the lake, then the MORE tab. Go to "Water Quality Reports and Data", then Details. You must then open their new app (Water Explorer) to see the results of our testing in chart form. Remember that Amik Lake is in Vilas County.

While, as always, there is normal variation over time, it appears there continues to be NO STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT change in chlorophyll or phosphorus based on the data. The TSI (Trophic State Index) calculated for chlorophyll and total phosphorus supports this observation, as does the SECCI graph. The measure of phosphorus did tick up for the year, but it was driven by a very high measure in August, while the other months were in line with past tests. We'll be interested in how 2024 looks to see if this is a trend or an anomaly.

Thanks to all of the members of the "testing team". This includes Jack Wierzba, Terry Mantor, Russ Schroeder, Ron Ahles, Tim Henke, Dave Ebert, and Rick Sironi.



**RENEW
YOUR MEMBERSHIP
Online!**

<https://pikelakechain.net/membership>

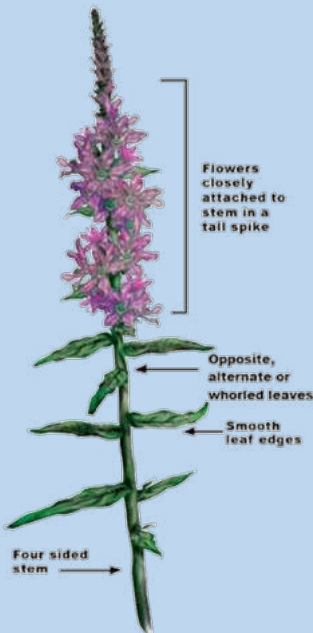
Save a stamp and renew your Pike Lake Chain Lakes Association membership online! Simply visit <https://pikelakechain.net/membership> to renew your membership.

Paper membership forms are also available online if you'd prefer to mail in a check. Just visit the membership page and click on the link to 'Download the PLCLA Membership Form'.

AQUATIC INVASIVES COMMITTEE REPORT

by Steve Ave'Lallemant

Purple Loosestrife is still the only known aquatic invasive plant species on the Pike Lake Chain. A complete shoreline survey of all four lakes was done in late August, 2023. No loosestrife was found on Turner or Amik Lakes or the connecting channels again this year.



Pike Lake

Two individual plants along the south shore were dug out and removed. I did not observe any flowering loosestrife plants along the shorelines of the old Pine Forest Resort. Perhaps land-owners dug them out. If so, that's great.

Round Lake

Several individual loosestrife plants were dug out and removed along the north shore of Round Lake as well as at the corner of the bridge crossing between Pike and Round. I observed fewer loosestrife plants in the area of the old Wild Goose Resort. There were some plants around the small bay by Moose Jaw, and at the mouth of MacArthur Creek, but they too appeared to be fewer in number than last year. The two bays just north of the dam held the most loosestrife. It is the only area on the chain where density and accessibility make hand-digging and removal problematic. Still, the density of plants is relatively low.

The overall density of loosestrife on the chain is still fairly low and I observed less adult loosestrife this year than last. Young plants would be overlooked since they are not old enough to be flowering. Please monitor your shorelines for purple loosestrife and remove it if you see it. Dig it out and dispose of it in the garbage.

PLCLA BOARD OF DIRECTORS UPDATE

At the heart of every organization is a group of dedicated volunteers. We want to take a moment to introduce you to the new members of the Pike Lake Chain Lakes Association Board of Directors.



MIKE IDA - President

Mike is from Milwaukee, WI. Mike was an ordained minister for 38 years. After retiring in 2016, he and his wife moved permanently to their home on Pike Lake that he purchased in 1993. Mike has been on the Board for 6 years. This is his first year as president.

Secretary - PEGGY KUSS

Peggy is originally from Abbotsford, WI. She and her husband retired to their home on Round Lake in 2020 after retiring from a career in human resources. This is her first year on the board.



DAVE EBERT - Board Member

Dave is originally from Madison, WI. He spent his career overseeing Wisconsin Medicaid Claims and working in the Data Warehouse field. He was introduced to the chain in 1983. This is his first year on the board.

Board Member - JEFF WITON

Jeff is originally from Geneseo, WI and is a retired District Leader for Kwik Trip. He purchased property on the chain in 2017 and is currently building his retirement home. This is his first year on the board.



BOARD NOMINATIONS NEEDED!

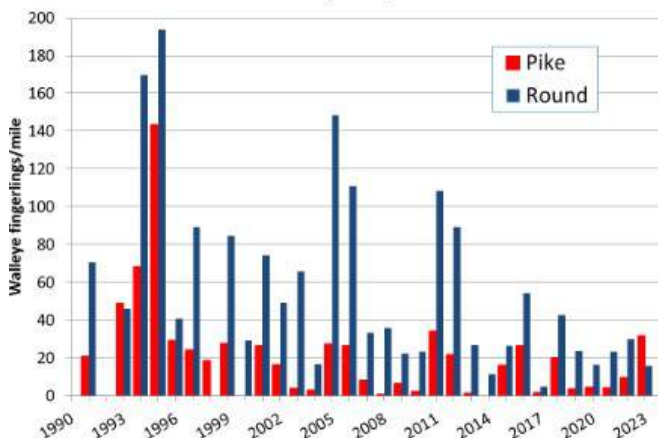
Each year we hold elections for a rotating set of Board positions. If you are interested in serving on the Board, please contact secretary@pikelakechain.net. Anyone interested shall be a member of the Association and will need to be present at a Board meeting this spring to indicate their interest in serving on the Board.

FISHERIES REPORT *by Dave Ebert*

WI-DNR Walleye Recruitment

This year, the WI-DNR has included a third chart regarding walleye recruitment with combined history for both lakes to show that Pike Lake's walleye produced more new recruits than Round Lake did for the first time since 1993. Their electrofishing catch rate of walleye fingerlings in Pike Lake was twice the rate they measured in Round Lake in 2023.

Walleye Recruitment in Pike and Round Lakes
Fall Electrofishing Surveys 1991-2023



Loon Nesting Platforms

The PLCLA is currently working with the WI-DNR and potentially Northland College to determine if our chain would benefit from building and placing Loon Nesting Platforms. There is caution advised about the placement of these structures, as they can help but can also cause issues with predators. Therefore, we will be doing a "Loon Watch" this coming season to gather data on our population. The WI-DNR will be providing signs to be placed at our landings to alert boaters to the project. We envision having an online reporting tool to assist in gathering information.

Stocking our Lakes!

Walleye—The WI-DNR annual fall electrofishing surveys in Pike and Round lakes have been serving as a "control" measure of how recruitment varies from year to year in lakes where natural reproduction alone supplies new recruits to the walleye population. This role as "control lakes" is important in the ongoing evaluation of walleye stocking under the Wisconsin Walleye Initiative. Stocking and data collection for that large-scale evaluation are scheduled to be completed in 2026, after which they should have more flexibility to consider stocking walleyes produced in private fish farms or in WI-DNR's hatchery.

Continued on page 6...

One of the tasks the Association has been working on this year has been revisions to its by-laws as they have not been reviewed in quite some time. Proposed revisions include:

- ⇒ Membership requirements
- ⇒ Clarification on voting requirements
- ⇒ Method for casting ballots
- ⇒ Terms of office for Officers
- ⇒ Other miscellaneous changes

All of the potential by-law updates will be presented at the Annual meeting in June for approval.

BOARD EMAIL

Our Board has new email addresses!

- president@pikelakechain.net
- vicepresident@pikelakechain.net
- secretary@pikelakechain.net
- treasurer@pikelakechain.net
- communications@pikelakechain.net

GET INVOLVED!

Getting involved with these organizations is a great way to meet your neighbors, help your community, and have some fun!

Pike Lake Chain Lakes Association

This is the organization that brings you this newsletter. Our mission is to preserve and protect our lake system for future generations. facebook.com/PLCLA

Pike Lake Chain Firefighters, Inc.

This is the organization that brings you Fun Day. Everyone who owns or rents in our Pike Lake Fire District is automatically a member. There are no dues. Fun Day helps support our fire department and EMS team. facebook.com/pikelakefirefightersinc

Fifield Sno Drovers

This is the organization that grooms our snowmobile trails. Our trails are known to be some of the best in the Northwoods. facebook.com/snodrovers

Recently, genetic analysis revealed that the former Mississippi Headwaters strain of walleye can be subdivided into several component strains, so now the optimal strain for the Pike Lake Chain would be the Chippewa strain. Under the WI-DNR interim stocking guidance, they would permit substituting the Upper Wisconsin strain of walleye, but the Chippewa strain is preferred in waters of the Upper Chippewa Basin. However, per several studies, a walleye population and fishery that are sustained by natural recruitment without stocking is the ideal situation. An example of this strategy is Butternut and Schnur stocking efforts. Butternut has natural reproduction and therefore is not stocked, but Schnur does not and is stocked regularly. So we are not allowed by the WI-DNR to stock walleye at this point in time.

Musky— About ten years ago the WI-DNR adjusted the musky stocking rate from 0.5 to 0.25 large fingerlings per acre in most of the waters that they manage. They have some evidence that natural reproduction is adding some unknown contribution to the Pike Chain's musky population, based on the fingerlings they encountered by chance in the fall walleye recruitment surveys. Stocking at 0.25 large fingerlings/acre is intended to supplement the unquantified natural recruitment to the musky population.

WI-DNR does not have a recent estimate of adult musky density in the Pike Chain but they hope to obtain that information in the next spring netting surveys scheduled in 2025-2026. If the combination of stocking and natural reproduction is not attaining the desired 0.2 – 0.3 adults per acre, they will reevaluate the current stocking strategy. At this time, they don't believe that stocking more frequently than every two years would be necessary or worthwhile. Potentially, the lake association could request and obtain permit approval to purchase and stock large fingerling muskies (Chippewa strain) in even-numbered years to make up any remaining balance, if production shortfalls at DNR's hatcheries prevent them from stocking the numbers and lakes planned in odd-numbered years.

Fish Structures

In 2015, Jeff Scheirer, Fisheries Biologist at Park Falls for the WI-DNR and Dave Neuswanger, Fisheries Team Leader, Retired Hayward Field Unit for the WI-DNR prepared a Fishery Management plan for the Pike Lake Chain. The following is based on their paper and discussions with Jeff Scheirer.

There are 3 methods for replacing submerged woody material.

1. **Tree Drop**—This entails dropping trees near shore, no closer than 50' apart. This was done in the late 1990's along the east shore of Round by USFS.
2. **Fish Sticks**—This restores woody habitat by adding trees to the near-shore area. The are large, woody habitat structures that use with single trees or trees grouped. They are anchored to the shore and partially or fully submerged near the shoreline.
3. **Fish Cribs**—Consists of 8' logs placed like a log cabin, brush placed inside, weighted down, and dropped in deep enough water to allow 5' of clearance above the structure.

Read the entire Fisheries Report at <https://pikelakechain.net/2024-newsletter-fisheries-report/>.



The well-being of the Pike Lake Chain matters to us all. The PLCLA is pursuing the opportunity to place fishing line recycling containers on the chain. We are working to obtain necessary government approvals for installation at the Federal and State boat landings on Round Lake.

Fishing line, regardless of type, can cause serious damage when disposed of improperly. It can harm boats, kill wildlife, and foul propellers. These problems stem from the fact that fishing line is not biodegradable. It can remain in the marine environment for hundreds of years.

Pictured is an example recycling container built by Jim Clemmons to the specifications noted by the BoatUS Foundation. The container is four inches in diameter and two feet long and is made from PVC drainage pipe. The bottom unscrews for easy access and has holes to allow for water drainage. Once approved, a second container will be built and both can be strapped to the sign post by the boat landings for fisherman to easily dispose of old fishing line.

The goal is to have these recycling containers in place for the 2024 fishing season opener.

PREZ SAYS *(continued from pg. 2)*

- ◆ A subcommittee will soon begin researching recent demographic trends that impact our chain of lakes.
- ◆ Finally, our Board is exploring two possible scenarios that could influence the health of the fish and fowl that populate our waters. One of our Board members is looking into the possibility of stocking walleye and exploring the possibility of building nesting platforms for our lake's loon population

I commend our Board on their hard work over the course of the past year.

Let me remind you that our Lake Association will soon have to vote on whether or not we should endorse the proposed USFS "Fish Passage Project". Our Board has tried to provide you with as much history and information on this project as possible to help you make an informed decision. Through our Facebook page and website, we have published updated information about this project. We have also consistently invited everyone to send in their questions and comments on the proposed project. When questions have been asked, our Board has published the responses from the US Forest Service, again with the intent to keep our constituents as informed as possible. We anticipate hosting one more educational listening session on the fish passage before a vote will be taken at our annual meeting in June. If our Association votes to endorse the Fish Ladder Project, the USFS will have a greater chance of getting the funding needed for the project. If we decide not to endorse the project, there is a strong likelihood the USFS will not be able to secure the needed funding for the project.

As you read through the rest of this newsletter, I think you will be pleased to see the number of ways our Board has been proactively working to preserve, protect, and enhance our wonderful chain through various projects and educational opportunities. If you have any questions, concerns, or ideas regarding our chain of lakes, feel free to contact me at president@pikelakechain.net.

Sincerely,


Mike Ida
President

LIFEJACKET STATION

by Everett Sammis

Thanks to support from the US Forest Service, the Wisconsin DNR, the Price County Sheriff, and the PLCLA, the Prentice High School Shop Department was able to build our very first Kids Don't Float lifejacket station. Located at the Federal boat landing on Round Lake, this station contains loaner life jackets that can be borrowed for a day, a weekend, or even a week. With 35 lifejackets in the station, there are jackets available for all ages from infants—adults. With the first season over, all jackets have been removed for the winter, cleaned, dried, and stored for the beginning of the next season.





PIKE LAKE CHAIN LAKES ASSOCIATION

N14885 Shady Knoll Road
Park Falls, WI 54552

2024 Dues

are due now!

Pay online at
pikelakechain.net

STAY CONNECTED:

Web: pikelakechain.net

Facebook: facebook.com/PLCLA



REMINDERS

- ◆ OBSERVE "NO WAKE" ZONES
- ◆ RESPECT THE 10:00 AM - 7:00 PM SKIING HOURS (UPDATED FOR 2024)
- ◆ REMEMBER YOUR GARBAGE CARD WHEN USING THE DUMP



UPCOMING EVENTS

Some dates/times are proposed. Watch our website for updates as they are finalized.

- ◆ USFS FISH PASSAGE LISTENING SESSION: SATURDAY, MAY 18, 2024 – 9:00 AM
- ◆ ANNUAL MEETING: SATURDAY, JUNE 1, 2024 – 9:00 AM, PIKE LAKE FIREHALL
- ◆ FUN DAY: SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 2024 – NOON, PIKE LAKE FIREHALL



BOARD NOMINATIONS

The Board will meet on May 13, 2024 to set forth its recommendations for a slate of nominees to be presented at the Annual meeting. Anyone interested in serving on the Board should contact one of the existing Board members to be considered as a potential nominee. Anyone interested shall be a member of the Association and be present at the May 13th meeting to present themselves and indicate their interest in serving on the Board.