

2010
ANNUAL REPORT
PELICAN GROUP OF LAKES IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (PGOLID)

Introduction:

Minnesota Statutes section 103 B.571 (4) require Lake Improvement Districts to file an Annual Report to the County Board, the Commissioner of Natural Resources, and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. This direction has been and will be interpreted to be the Otter Tail County Commissioners, Land and Resource Management, Bill Kalar, the DNR Director, and Tim James at the MPCA office in Detroit Lakes.

The Pelican Group of Lakes Improvement District (“PGOLID”) commenced 2010 with nine members: Jeff Peltier, Nick Valentine, Dennis Tollefson, Vance Stueness, Janel Uglem, Lisa Wheeler, Bill Zimmerman, Mike Ostbye and Gary Hart. At the 2009 Annual Membership meeting Ms.Uglem, Ms.Wheeler and Mr. Oksendahl were elected to the board. Mr. Larry Kohler was appointed to the board in July 2010.

Current Program Status:

1. Monitoring of Water Quality:

PGOLID, through RMB Labs and the PGOLID Lake Resource Coordinator, Moriya Rufer, continue to monitor lake and stream water quality. 2009 was the eighth year of this program. This information continues to be incorporated into a Comprehensive Lake Management Plan. All monitoring results and the Lake Management plan are available on the PGOLID website: www.pgolid.org.

- a. The PGOLID Water Resource Coordinator does monthly evaluation of the streams surrounding the PGOLID lakes. She collects the water quality parameters: *E. coli* Bacteria, Total Suspended Solids, Chlorophyll a (algal concentration), two kinds of Phosphorus (Ortho and Total), Total Dissolved Solids, and Temperature which are taken at nine sites including the several inlets and one outlet. The sites include the inflow at Strom’s inlet, the Spring Creek culvert at the Simison inlet to Pelican Lake, at Bob Creek and at other locations. These are the sites in which the data show the majority of the nutrient loading into Pelican Lake.
- b. The PGOLID Water Resource Coordinator also monitors 6 sites total in Pelican, Little Pelican, Bass and Fish Lakes. These sites are tested for total phosphorus, chlorophyll a (algal concentration), clarity, water temperature and oxygen.

2. Mosquito Control:

Management for mosquito control has been assigned to the Mosquito Abatement Board, chaired by board member Stueness. The continued presence of the West Nile Virus encourages a continuing aggressive and expensive mosquito control program now.

3. Invasive Species

Since 2004, PGOLID has been very vigilant in working to prevent invasive species in their lakes and educating lake residents. These activities have included chemical treatment of invasive plants, the DNR Watercraft Inspection Program, and Educational Seminars conducted by the PGOLID Water Resource Coordinator. Two invasive species have been confirmed in the PGOLID lakes – Zebra mussels and Curlyleaf pondweed. A third invasive species that is near PGOLID lakes, but not established in the lakes yet is Eurasian flowering rush.

- a. Zebra mussels were found in Pelican Lake in 2009. They can attach to hard surfaces such as boat lifts and docks and clog water intake pipes. Unfortunately, currently there is no known treatment for zebra mussels.
- b. Curly-leaf pondweed is an invasive plant that can form large mats early in the summer and interfere with recreational activities. When curly-leaf pondweed dies off in early June, these large mats wash up on shore and create a nuisance. PGOLID hires a licensed chemical applicator to treat Curly-leaf pondweed each summer with an herbicide for control. Over all there has been approximately a 95% reduction in curlyleaf pondweed density from 2005 to 2009.
- c. Eurasian flowering rush is a nuisance plant in the lakes upstream in the Pelican River from Little Pelican Lake. Each summer, the PGOLID Water Resource Coordinator canoes down the Pelican River and hand-removes any established Eurasian flowering rush. So far, this control has been working to prevent the spread of this invasive plant downstream into the PGOLID lakes.
- d. PGOLID participates in the DNR Watercraft Inspection program in the summer. DNR interns inspect boats entering and leaving Pelican Lake for invasive species, and educate boaters about invasive species prevention.

4. Navigation Aids:

The LID now owns 36 buoys that are marked as PGOLID property and they are strategically placed in the LID to mark channels, rocks, no wake zones, and other navigation needs.

5. Fish Lake Dam Evaluation:

Since the early 1930's, the water levels in the lakes in the LID have been controlled by a concrete structure of three weir levels, which is located in the Pelican River below Fish Lake. The dam was flooded during the high water years, but now due to erosion and age it no longer effectively limits the outflow. It has been determined that the dam is under the ownership and control of the DNR. PGOLID is working with the DNR to plan repairs to the dam.

6. Septic Systems Inspections

In 2007-2009, Otter Tail County conducted mandatory inspections on individual waste treatment systems that were 20 years old or older. In all, 329 properties were inspected and 86 abatements were issued (26.1% of properties inspected were abated).

7. Plant Surveys

In the summer of 2003, Blue Water Science (St. Paul) conducted a plant survey in the 4 PGOLID lakes. This survey is how we originally found Curlyleaf pondweed. This summer, PGOLID has hired a contractor to do another survey to compare to the 2003 results. This survey will show any new species of aquatic plants and new invasive species that could be present in the PGOLID lakes.

8. Shoreland Projects

In 2009, PGOLID was awarded a \$25,000 grant from the DNR for Shoreline Restoration. This grant money paid for native plants, shrubs and trees to be planted along shorelines. Plants, shrubs and trees prevent shoreline erosion and act as a buffer to filter runoff from yards into the lake. So far, six private properties have been planted. This grant runs through June 2011 and has funding available for additional projects. Anyone interested should contact the PGOLID Lake Resource Coordinator, Moriya Rufer (218-846-1465, lakes.rmbel@arvig.net).

9. Information and Education

PGOLID puts a high value on the dissemination of information and education to its constituents. The PGOLID Water Resource Coordinator is the main conveyer of this education along with the PGOLID Board Members. These educational programs have included: educational seminars for lake residents in the summer, articles in the Pelican Brief, educational presentations at PGOLID and PLPOA meetings, maintenance of the PGOLID website, act as a contact and resource for community education and outreach and availability to PGOLID residents, keep abreast of new state/county/local government lake regulations and disseminate the information in an understandable way to PGOLID residents, work with upstream landowners, farmers, ranchers, and other lake associations to act in a proactive manner in the protection of the water quality that flows into the PGOLID. Education has focused on the following topics: water quality, invasive species, shoreline restoration, septic system and holding tank maintenance, aquatic plants and algae, the importance of maintaining native aquatic plants such as bulrush, boater stewardship and DNR regulations.

DIRECTORS INTENTIONS AND CONCERNS:

1. Septic system compliance and monitoring is a continuing worry since a significant number of private systems were found to be out of compliance over 20 years ago. The voluntary survey of 2006 indicated that 21% of the systems were out of compliance in some way. The LID has assembled data and is working with Otter Tail County regarding future inspections.
2. Exotic weeds that have been introduced into the Pelican River chain of lakes are a real nuisance; especially bothersome is the Curly Leaf Pondweed in Little Pelican Lake. Flowering Eurasian rush has been discovered in the Pelican River chain of lakes and is being monitored by the Pelican River Watershed, the DNR and PGOLID.
3. PGOLID currently has a program to control Curly Leaf Pondweed (CLPW). In previous years portions of Pelican, Little Pelican, Bass and Fish have been sprayed to control and eradicate the weed. This spray takes place during May. The proposed budget for 2010 included funds to treat this problem species.
4. The PGOLID is in a predominantly farming community and has both livestock and cropland in the lake watershed. Several large agricultural efforts utilize shallow well irrigation on crops of corn, alfalfa, potato, and sugarbeet. All are high users of water and soil nutrients. The Directors are concerned that e-coli and weed-encouraging nutrients are being leached or transported directly into the streams and river feeding the LID. The Board is working with the lake coordinator to visually inspect nearby streams and drainages leading into the LID.
5. The Otter Tail County Board of Commissioners stated in the Order establishing the LID, that "The PGOLID will benefit the property values and quality of life within the district by enhancing and maintaining the environmental quality of the Pelican Group of Lakes and the surrounding land areas". The discovery of naturally occurring arsenic in deep water wells, the potential for nitrate and e-coli contamination of the shallow water wells, and the ageing septic systems all lead the board to continue to investigate alternative water and sewer accommodations for property owners in the LID.

6. An agreement with Cormorant Lakes Watershed and Becker County regarding the control of water flowing out of the Cormorant Lakes was reached. This agreement is especially important when the lake levels are at or exceed the Ordinary High Water Mark.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY:

Please review enclosed PGOLID Funds Balances and the proposed 2011 Budget.

Respectfully submitted,

Board of Directors, PGOLID
Mike Ostbye, Chairman
Jonal Uglem, Vice Chairman
Lisa Wheeler, Secretary
Nick Valentine, Treasurer
Doug Oksendahl
Jeff Peltier
Dennis Tollefson
Larry Kohler
Gary Hart