



NEWSLETTER: SPRING, 2007

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THANK THEM FOR THEIR SUPPORT OF PCLA

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Our business members pay a premium to help support PCLA's efforts to protect our water quality.

This listing is one way we can say thanks.

If your business is not listed, please print and fill in the [online form](#) and we'll be happy to add you!

BULLETIN: LOCKS REPAIR UNDERWAY!

Thanks in part to letters written by PCLA members, the DNR has seen fit to fund repair to the Crooked River Locks in time for the 2007 boating season...maybe even in time for opening day! Your board continues to work with federal legislators to obtain funding for complete renovation that may be needed for a long term fix. Your involvement matters!

**PCLA Garage Sale to raise funds for aquatic plant survey;
 \$7,000 needed**

ONE MAN'S JUNK...If you don't use it much any more, bring it to the

BOATER SAFETY CLASS ON JUNE 30

The Pickeral/Crooked Lakes Association is sponsoring a free Boater's Safety Class for anyone 12 years of age or older (or turning 12 during the 2007 boating season). The class will be held on Saturday, June 30th from 9:00-1:00 at the Littlefield-Alanson Township Hall (7631 Burr Ave., U.S.31). To register call the Emmet County Sheriff's Department at 231-439-8900. Please mention the date and place when registering. There must be at least 10 people signed up for the class or it will be cancelled (maximum 40). For questions call Karen Plasencia 231-548-5656 or email at karen@plabay.net .

PCLA ANNUAL MEETING JULY 14

The Inland Water Route Historical Society museum (Old city hall next to Tiger Lily's in downtown Alanson) is the site for the annual meeting again this year. Donuts, coffee, meet and greet begin at 8:30 a.m. and there will be a program on groundwater withdrawal at 9:00 a.m.. We will also look at 2006 in review, as well as 2007 coming attractions. Bring a new member and/or carpool with neighbors. **Please be sure your dues are paid for calendar year 2007. You can [print an online form](#). Only members in good standing will receive ballots to elect three directors.**

WHEN IS A SHORELINE NOT A SHORELINE?

When a shoreline appears on the U.S. Geological Survey map, it's a shoreline according to the Emmet County zoning ordinance. Shorelines are subject to setbacks that preserve their integrity and important functions as littoral habitat, pollution filter and erosion barrier. When a manmade canal or lagoon is proposed, zoning has been interpreted to mean that the manmade shoreline isn't really shoreline because it isn't on the map. PCLA hopes to convince the planning and zoning department to change the language so that all property connected to a public body of water is subject to protective setbacks. We may need your calls and letters to support our position that all shorelines are equal; stay tuned!

Fish Disease Halts Walleye, Pike and Muskellunge Production and Stocking

The rapidly increasing distribution of Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia virus (VHSv) in Michigan waters is forcing the Department of Natural Resources to place a one year moratorium on walleye, northern pike, and muskellunge production and stocking ensure the disease is not inadvertently spread by DNR activities, and to protect the state's fish hatchery system.

“All of the DNR's egg sources for walleye and one key source for northern pike are from Great Lakes waters that are, or are highly likely to be, infected with VHSv,” said Kelley Smith, chief of the DNR Fisheries Division. “Muskellunge egg sources, as well as two other sources for northern pike are located in very high risk waters, based on our understanding of the movement of bait fish around the state, as well as the amount of recreational and angler boat traffic between those waters and the Great Lakes.”

Citizens are encouraged to [report sick fish or fish kills](#) to their local DNR office or use the DNR Web site at www.michigan.gov/dnr . Anglers should contact the DNR if they observe fish that exhibit any of the following signs: hemorrhaging in the skin, including large red patches particularly on the sides and anterior portion of the head; multiple hemorrhages on the liver, spleen, or intestines; or hemorrhages on the swim bladder that give the otherwise transparent organ a mottled appearance. This information will help DNR fisheries staff to track VHS and take appropriate management actions to help slow the spread of this virus.

Smith said that currently it is not known whether eggs from these species of fish can be disinfected, adding that disease testing takes four to eight weeks, thus making it impossible to determine which egg sources are infected before moving the eggs into state hatcheries. VHSV has already caused widespread fish mortalities in Lakes St. Clair, Erie and Ontario, and is an international reportable disease. In late 2006, the DNR determined it had spread into Lake Huron, as far north as Cheboygan and Rogers City. The disease entered Michigan waters from the Maritime Region of Canada, likely in the discharge of infected ballast water from cargo ships that took up ballast water in previously infected waters.

The virus does not affect humans in any way.

“If VHSV would inadvertently infect a state fish hatchery, all of the fish at that facility would have to be destroyed and the hatcheries completely disinfected. The economic loss to our state would be between \$40 and \$60 million,” Smith said. “Since we only rear coolwater fish at Thompson and Wolf Lake State Fish Hatcheries, incubating potentially infected walleye, muskellunge and northern pike eggs at these two facilities would put at risk all of the state’s production of steelhead, 40 percent of the Chinook salmon and a number of other species.”

Prior to making the decision to place a moratorium on the production of these species, the DNR examined a range of options. They included:

- Developing isolation areas within existing hatcheries it was determined that this cannot be done without substantial risk to other fish species in the hatcheries.
- Undertaking off site rearing at other DNR facilities this was rejected because sufficient water of the proper quality and temperature was not available and appropriate effluent treatment could not be done.
- Undertaking off site rearing at other cooperator facilities the DNR determined that the liability risk is too great, since contaminating a non DNR facility with VHSV would result in substantial costs for the DNR to disinfect and clean up of the facility.
- Obtaining fish from other agencies this concept was investigated, but genetically compatible sources of walleye and northern pike are not available in the Great Lakes region. However, this may be an option for muskellunge, and is being

pursued by the DNR.

- Obtaining eggs from other inland sources in Michigan this option is not feasible because insufficient numbers of fish are available to meet the state's egg take needs, and the potential sources of eggs are at high risk of VHSv infection. The DNR is taking the following steps to ensure that walleye, northern pike, and muskellunge production can resume in the future:
- Experiments will be conducted this spring on eggs collected from walleye and muskellunge populations in Lakes Erie and St. Clair that are likely infected with VHSv to determine if standard iodine disinfection techniques will work for coolwater fish. If the experiments demonstrate that the standard techniques are effective, then normal coolwater fish production will resume in 2008.
- Extensive VHSv surveillance and monitoring of current coolwater broodstock populations will be conducted to allow the DNR to determine the prevalence and intensity of infection in each broodstock population. These efforts should help to identify potential broodstock sources and rearing locations for the future.
- Determine other potential out of state sources for coolwater fish for future rearing options.
- Develop additional backup options to incubate and rear coolwater fish outside of the state's hatchery system, including the development of fully contained mobile incubation and rearing facilities and the potential use of other off site incubation and rearing facilities.

The cost of additional mobile incubation facilities is approximately \$22,500 per one million walleye fry. "Implementation of these measures will require a substantial commitment of effort and dollars, at a cost that will greatly exceed what would be expended for coolwater fish rearing under normal circumstances," Smith said. "There are no new dollars for such efforts, so we are reprioritizing our existing work plans and budget to ensure the work is accomplished prior to the 2008 coolwater fish production season. We have, however, requested emergency funding from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, but we do not yet know if and when these funds might be available to help us meet the threat posed by VHSv in the Great Lakes." For more information on VHSv, visit the DNR Web site at www.michigan.gov/dnr and click on the Fishing section.

Anglers and boaters can also help prevent the spread of VHS and other viruses or bacteria that cause disease in fish by not transferring fish between water bodies, and by thoroughly cleaning boats, trailers, nets, and other equipment when traveling between different lakes and streams. The use of a light disinfectant such as a solution of one part chlorine bleach to 10 parts water (i.e., one gallon of bleach to 10 gallons of water) to clean vessels and live wells is very effective against VHS and other viruses and bacteria that cause disease in fish. Soaking exposed items such as live wells, nets, anchors, and bait buckets in a

light disinfectant for 30 minutes is also an effective method to prevent the spread of a wide range of aquatic nuisance species.

Citizens are encouraged to report sick fish or fish kills to their local DNR office or use the DNR Web site at www.michigan.gov/dnr .

See www.michigan.gov/dnrfishing for more information on helping prevent the spread of disease and invasive species on the Great Lakes.

BLOODY RED SHRIMP FOUND IN GREAT LAKES

Federal authorities with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration want Lake Michigan anglers and boaters to keep an eye out this summer for the most recent invader, a tiny crustacean known as *Hemimysis anomala*, or bloody-red shrimp.

"We've decided to get the public involved looking for the organism," said Dave Reid, director of the Ann Arbor-based National Center for Research on Aquatic Invasive Species. "Its swarming behavior is very unique - like a cloud of gnats in the water. No other water species does that. If people see a strange phenomenon that looks like reddish-tinged insects but underwater, we want them to contact us and give the date and the location."

The tiny shrimp was discovered last November along the Muskegon channel off Lake Michigan. It is named for its red markings and the red cloud it creates underwater. It is a shallow-water denizen, often found in 30 feet of water or less and close to shore. Experts suspect the shrimp arrived in the ballast water of a ship.

Invasives can out-eat and out-produce natives, resulting in long range changes to habitat and food supply that have critical impact on native species. Officials say the new shrimp is thought to be a high-energy food for alewives and perch and may turn out to be a rich food source for those fish. But red shrimp also feed on the same zooplankton that larval fish need to eat. Scientists speculate that it has the potential to compete with young fish for food, thus crippling the native population .

This illustrates the need for boats traveling between waterbodies to "take a shower" before entering and after leaving a lake. Boat washing is one way to prevent invasive species from spreading. Bait buckets should be emptied on land and washed between uses.

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

This issue of "Shorelines" seems to have a troubling and recurrent theme: invasive species. We all have seen the impact of zebra mussels on our lakes. When is the last time you found a good old fashioned clamshell along the shore? Our native clams were able to survive on the tiny zooplankton available in these waters until zebra mussels came along, multiplied at warp speed, and took over the food supply. No more clams.

The DNR recently placed a moratorium on walleye rearing due to septicemia virus. Bloody red shrimp have been found in Lake Michigan. The aggressive rusty crayfish are competing with our native variety. Eurasian milfoil is on the march. You'll find several articles about invasives in this issue, and they are sobering.

We've all heard about the "web of life" and the interconnectedness of species in a given environment. Because we haven't yet experienced critical change in our own lives we are often unaware of how a single alteration can affect an ecosystem. In a 12-year study conducted by two University of New Mexico researchers, a kangaroo rat guild was removed from its home in the Chihuahuan Desert. Five new rodent species quickly moved in, the shrubland converted to grassland, annual plants languished, bird populations dwindled. One little change resulted in numerous unforeseen consequences.

In the case of purple loosestrife, the plant alters shoreline which affects bird and reptile life that now can't come ashore through the dense plantlife. Cattails, a prime food source for much wildlife, are being crowded out. I wonder how many other changes have taken place below the surface that we may not even dream of?

PCLA has led efforts in northern Michigan to control purple loosestrife, a beautiful tall flowering plant that loves water and has taken hold in roadside ditches and along shorelines. We know how hard it is to get rid of; we've been working for three years, digging, spraying, cutting, burning. We recognize the importance of early discovery and action on invasives, and have established a fund for a comprehensive aquatic plant study so we know what we've got and can monitor changes. (please donate!) What else can we do? We are passing along suggestions as we receive them, and we encourage you to take invasives seriously. It's awfully easy to transplant a problem, and nigh onto impossible to fix it. Preventive measures are the best we've got right now.

FUNDING SOUGHT FOR AQUATIC PLANT SURVEY

By Karen Plasencia

In the last newsletter we mentioned that we need to conduct an Aquatic Plant Survey of Pickeral and Crooked Lakes so that we can create a baseline aquatic plant map of the two lakes. Presently we have two known invasive plant species on our lakes-purple loosestrife and curly pondweed. We have been actively involved in working to eradicate the purple loosestrife and we want to be aware of any other invasive species that may be affecting us as well as native plants that we have. We are also trying to keep up on new invasive species that enter Michigan and more specifically our area. The Aquatic Plant Survey will produce a variety of measurable data that will be very helpful in knowing what we need to do now and in the future as we work to keep our lakes healthy. This survey costs approximately \$7000 so we are beginning to set aside funds to pay for it. We have allocated \$2000 out of this year's budget and we are challenging you to do the same. For every dollar our membership donates, the PCLA will match it up to \$2000 with the goal of having \$4000 in the fund this year. This will get us more than half way to our goal of funding the study which is vital to our two lakes. If you are willing to donate please indicate so on the renewal envelope and if you have already renewed your membership, please consider sending a donation. [BACK TO TOP](#)

ONE-CLICK E-MAIL SERVICE IS UP AND RUNNING

By Karen Plasencia

The PCLA Yahoo Workgroup is up and running and has proved to be very

successful during our recent "save the locks" campaign. With the knowledge that the Crooked River Locks were broken and may not open up for the 2007 boating season, we immediately sent messages to our members (those members who have chosen to be on the list) and they sent messages to our Congressmen and women and our messages were received and helped. The locks will be operational this year and legislation is being established to be sure they are operational for years to come. Thanks to all who sent letters.

For those of you not on the Yahoo Workgroup list, we have found this a great way to keep our membership informed of current issues such as the one mentioned above. If you would like to have your name added to the list please contact Karen Plasencia at karen@plabay.net. There is also a space on the included renewal envelope to let us know if you want your name added to the list. When your name is added to the list, Yahoo will strongly recommend that you sign up for Yahoo. This is not necessary to be a member of the Workgroup. We only want to use this as a means of member communication through mass e-mail so signing up for other Yahoo services is strictly optional.

INVASIVE SPECIES

By Jan Quaine

Invasive species have threatened the Great Lakes since the 1800's. Currently there are more than 140 types of plants, algae, fish and mollusks that have established themselves in the Great Lakes region. More than 87 of these non-native aquatic species have been accidentally introduced to the Great Lakes region in the 20th Century alone. Once detected, invasive species are impossible to eradicate but must be managed and controlled so that they do not cause our native species to become extinct or damage our delicate ecosystems. Crooked and Pickerel Lakes have not escaped this invasion. We are currently trying to manage the introduction of Purple Loosestrife and are monitoring the impact of the infamous Zebra Mussel.

Other species the PCLA is watching out for are the following;
Plants: Eurasian Milfoil, Curly-leaf Pondweed, Flowering Rush
Fish: Sea Lamprey, White Perch, Ruffee, Goby, Common Carp
Crustaceans: Rusty Crayfish, Spiny Water Fleas,
Cercopagis pengoi Mollusks: Quagga

While our Association is working to develop early detection plans to better control and manage any invasive species, there are ten things that you can personally do to prevent the spread of any aquatic invaders:

Remove any visible mud, plants, fish or animals from boats, trailers and equipment before transport.

Wash boats and trailers with a power washer if available.

Eliminate water from equipment before transport.

Clean and dry anything that comes in contact with water (boats, trailer, equipment, clothing, dogs etc.

Drain water from the motor, livewell, bilge, and transom wells at the ramp or access before leaving.

Put a cap of detergent in the bilge of your boat and rinse it out on

land.

Never release plants, fish or animals into a body of water unless they came from that body of water.

Learn to recognize the appearance and characteristics of aquatic invasive species.

Destroy any aquatic nuisance species when caught and dispose in trash.

Report any unusual fish or plants to your local DNR or fisheries station.

You will be hearing much more on this topic in future newsletters and other local publications. Please know that your PCLA is hard at work on seeking solutions to best deal with any current and future invasive species. It is a cause that may warrant all of us to one day volunteer to keep our waters preserved for future generations. (References: Department of Environment Quality and Michigan Sea Grant)

FLOATING LAKE FOAM

By Jan Quaine

Have you ever been leisurely boating or walking along the lakeshore enjoying the day only to be greeted by a white soap like floating foam? What in the world is it and where did it come from? You might be interested to know that there are two types of foam. Natural foam and foam from some type of pollution.

Foam is created when the surface tension (attraction of water molecules or strong bonding) is reduced. Decomposing water plants release a variety of organic compounds in the water. These organic compounds are surfactants, which reduce the surface tension of the water. This allows the wind and wave action to mix air with the water creating foam, which frequently collects on the downwind shore. It is not very pleasing to look at but if it is natural foam it is harmless. Foam is often seen in the morning and may disappear in the afternoon. In the fall when there is a general dying and decomposing of aquatic plants and algae the increased decomposition increases foam.

Since zebra mussels came into our lake, you may see an increase of foam. This invasive species seems to be excreting large amounts of surfactants, which reduce surface tension into the water or their feces fertilize the growth of algae and other aquatic plants which eventually dieback. Both of these may be the reason that with the introduction of the zebra mussels in our water also came an increase of lake foam.

Foam caused by pollutants comes from detergents that leech or are discharged into the lake. The law now prescribes phosphorus free washing machine soaps but that isn't the case with dishwasher detergent. Many of these contain high levels of phosphorus.

If you have difficulty purchasing phosphate free detergents you may follow this recipe for dishwasher soap: 1 cup Borax Plus mixed with ½ cup baking soda.

How can you tell the difference between the naturally occurring foam and the detergent caused type? Put some foamy water in a jar with a tight fitting lid. Shake vigorously. If the foam subsides, it is most likely naturally occurring. If the foam does not dissipate, it

is probably from some type of pollutant. Natural foam will also smell "fishy" while pollutant foam may smell like scented soap. While it is comforting to know that most of the foam is natural, we all need to be aware that it could be a sign of water pollution. (Source of information: Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council)

SOS!

PCLA needs your SUPPORT to help us with community OVERSIGHT in our attempt to provide SECURITY for our water quality, environment and lakefront property. Identifying your property with a PCLA window decal, a reflective driveway post reflector or an automobile license plate will help to assure that our friends and neighbors recognize our strong membership numbers and our neighborhood involvement! Purchase our SOS Combo Package which includes 2 logo decals, one metal reflector and one license plate for just \$21.00--shipping and handling included! Send check and shipping address to: PCLA P.O. Box 211 Conway, MI 49722

PCLA Garage Sale to raise funds for aquatic plant survey; \$7,000 needed

ONE MAN'S JUNK...If you don't use it much any more, bring it to the Alanson Village Hall on Friday, June 8 from 5 to 8 p.m. Then come back from 9 a.m. until 2 p.m. on Saturday, June 9, to see what fabulous goodies you can find! Household items, furniture, kitchenware, linens, tools, toys, books albums and movies are usually bestsellers. If you would, help us out by putting price tags on items...just please price them TO SELL! (All of those dimes and dollars add up, plus we don't want to spend two days hauling leftovers away.) All proceeds will go to our [plant survey fund](#). You will receive a tax deduction receipt for items you donate. Questions? Can you volunteer to help for a couple of hours? [E-mail the committee](#).