

Big Sugar Bush Notes

August 2017 Volume 27 Number 2

BIG SUGAR BUSH LAKE ASSOCIATION

FALL MEETING SATURDAY,
SEPTEMBER 2, 10:00 A.M. AT
RICHWOOD WINERY –LAST FALL
MEETING, NEXT YEAR MOVING TO
ONE SPRING MEETING

UPCOMING EVENTS

Friday Sept. 8, Toast to Tamarac-Tickets
available from Fran Mattson, at the
Richwood Winery, and at Central Market

Sat. Sept. 9, Grape Stomp-Richwood
Winery

Sat. Sept. 30, Fall Festival

**Check our map on page 6 of residents
locations' on the lake.**

Congratulations to the Pakes

One year ago Don and Joan Pake took advantage of Becker County Soil and Water Conservation District's 50 per cent cost share funds in an effort to create a , better buffer zone on their shoreline. This year we see beautiful wildflowers in bloom They recognized the importance of this addition..



Pakes Buffer Zone Plantings

Buffer zones stabilize shoreline. They prevent fluctuating water levels, moving ice, wave action and surface runoff from eroding your shore line,. This line of defense allows rain to soak into the ground minimizing nutrients from being washed into the lake. This reduces phosphorus from entering the lake which would increase algae growth in the water. All residents are encouraged to take a look at what you can do to create a buffer zone if you don't already have one on your shoreline.

Stand Up For Big Sugar Bush **By Fran Mattson**

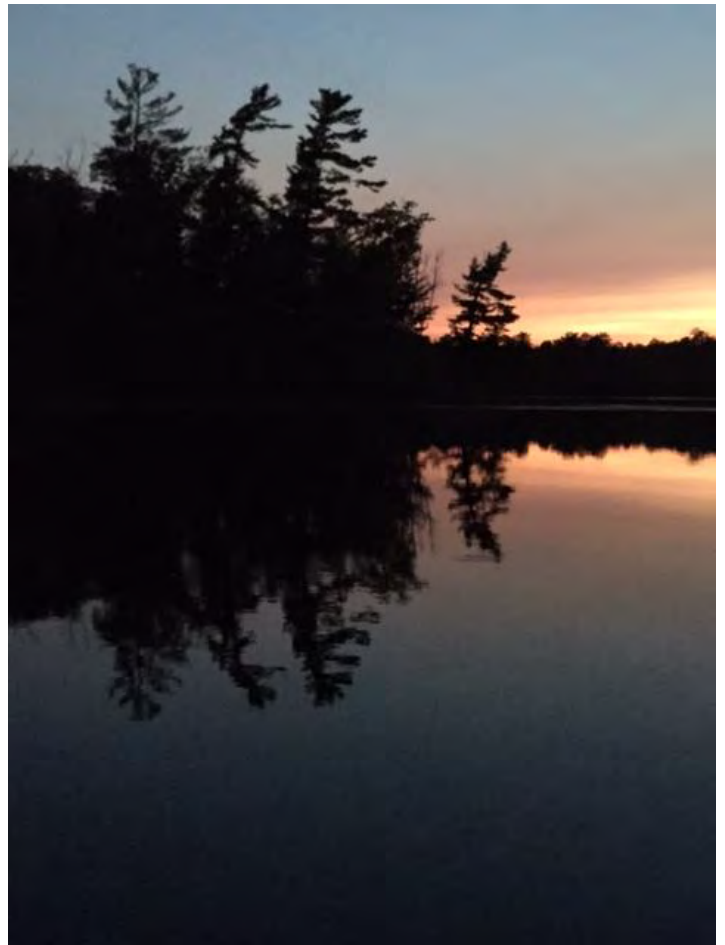
Historically Big Sugar Bush property owners have stood up to protect the fragile, natural environment of this lake. One example, of course, is when 17 couples dipped into their pockets to purchase the island and then donated it to the Department of Natural Resources so the natural environment would be protected forever.

Another example of this occurred when property owners stepped forward to block commercial development on the lake in the summer of 1997. Eighty Big Sugar Bush individuals attended a planning and zoning meeting at the court house to oppose a campground from being permitted. There were more in attendance than fit in the court room. Individuals overflowed into the hallway. The planning commissioner had never seen such a turnout at one of their meetings. This response led to a front page article in the DL paper on July 23, 1997. Besides packing the zoning meeting, 54 letters were sent to the county opposing the proposed development. The commission unanimously denied the permit.

Rod Bergen and David Anderson were instrumental in organizing an emergency meeting at Anderson's cabin prior to going the courthouse where 40 attended. Bruce Paakh, of the Mn Pollution Control Agency and Bob Merritt, DNR hydrologist appeared at the courthouse in opposition, also. Merritt said the "natural ecology" of the lake would be harmed by such a development. Carol Engebretson, one of the

commissioners had been taken on a tour of the lake prior to the zoning meeting. She was impressed by the determination of its residents to protect the natural environment. She agreed that we have to protect our lakes.

It is not just in times of special circumstances that we need to guard Big Sugar Bush environment, but on a regular basis. We need to follow the guidelines that are in place as far as permits, setbacks, sewer regulations, fishing regulations, etc. The rules and regulations are there to protect the land and the lakes for the future.



Star Tribune 7/29/17 Zebra Mussel Surge Imperils Lake Life (excerpts taken from above article)

Once zebra mussels arrive at a lake, you can't stop them. Their rapid spread is an increasingly dire threat. The thumbnail-sized mollusks spread rapidly, and silently but relentlessly upend the fragile ecology of a lake.

They smother and kill native mussels. They strain out and consume tiny edible material, robbing native fish of a fundamental link in the food chain. They excrete a carpet of waste that fosters the growth of hairy, stinky, toxic mats of algae. In Mn, they exist in at least 275 lakes and rivers and move into 20 to 30 new ones each year. They deplete the productivity and diversity of fish communities.

A single female zebra mussel can produce a half billion adult offspring in her lifetime. In three to five years, beds of adult mollusks often coat bottom area of a lake or river. **DNR experts say fighting the mussels is not a lost cause.** At this time fewer than 5 percent of Mn lakes are currently contaminated. They are not spreading as fast in Mn as in less vigilant states. "We still have pristine lakes and they should be shielded," said Smith-McKeppros, a prevention specialist.

McCartney, the U researcher said people tend to disregard control efforts, believing that an all-out spread of zebra mussels is inevitable. There is much being done related to a variety of research that might prevent or eliminate the mussels altogether. That's why it's important for us to slow it down said John Ringle, director of environmental

services in Cass County. "We're buying time."

What Are Action Steps Big Sugar Bush Residents Can Do to Prevent the Invasion of Zebra Mussels

Big Sugar Bush is not a destination fishing lake as bigger lakes in our area are where fishermen might pursue walleye, trout, or muskies. We may have a minimal number of local area residents come in pursuit of a fish dinner. But what about our guests that bring in watercraft from elsewhere.

Questions we need to ask:

What lake has this been in recently?

How long ago?

Links of what lakes are infested and where the decontamination locations are the following:

<http://www.eddmaps.org/midwest/tools/infestedwaters/>

<http://beckerswcd.org/programs/aquatic-invasive-species/>

Why not share your equipment and have them leave theirs at home. We need to continue to educate ourselves, family, friends, and others about aquatic invasive species and how to prevent them. (Clean, Drain, and Dry).

Make sure any docks, lifts or other equipment you might purchase are cleaned and dried for the proper length of time. Rather than assume that it is inevitable that this lake will ultimately get zebra mussels, why not do what we can to protect the pristine lake that we have.

Big Sugar Bush Gatherings



Why Do We Have Fishing Limits

Laws are set to assure a stable and healthy fishing lake. Typically residents of a lake are the people who care about the lake and protect the lake. If the residents don't follow the regulations, who will? In talking to a former resident of Juggler Lake, she told of how the quality of fishing has deteriorated over her lifetime. She felt this had occurred because rules had been abused.

Every so often you hear of an extreme case of abuse taking place where they have way over the limit and additional counts in their freezer. Enjoy that fish dinner, but then practice CPR (Catch, Photo, Release).

The following are the possession limits for 2017:

Walleye-6 no more than one over 20 inches

Sunfish – 20, may go to 10 2018

Bass - 6 large or small

Crappie -10

Northern -3 no more than 1 over 30 inches

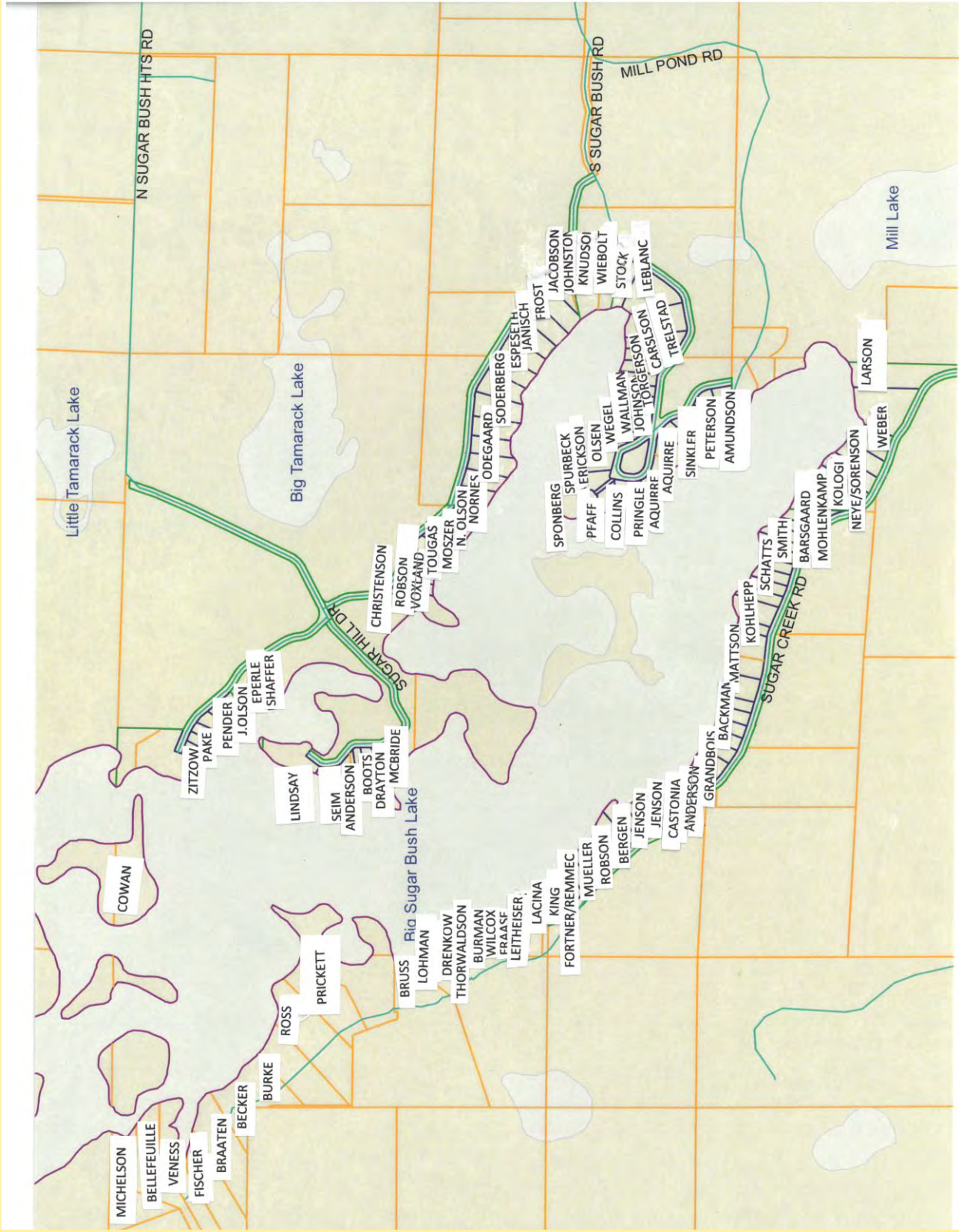
Fishing limits are to protect good fishing for the future. Protect Big Sugar Bush by abiding by the rules.



Photo taken by

Steve Odegaard

There were a number of bear sited this year. Some feeders were known to be missing



Anglers can boost chances that fish survive after catch and release

submitted by Bob Bachman

Stories of multiple anglers catching the same fish are more than fishing lore – they’re the real result of anglers practicing catch-and-release fishing. Anglers can take several actions to boost the chances a fish survives after being released, according to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.

“Catch-and-release fishing is an important topic, especially in recent years with expanded catch-and-release seasons in Minnesota for lake sturgeon, trout and bass,” said Al Stevens, fisheries survey and systems consultant. “What’s more, anglers often choose to release large fish, and are required to release fish that aren’t of a legal size to keep.”

Fish can be injured by hooks, stress and being pulled from deep water. Being hooked in the mouth does little damage to the fish, and setting the hook quickly helps avoid hooking a fish in the stomach or gills.

Jigs, circle hooks and active baits like crankbaits are more likely to hook a fish in the mouth. Barbless hooks or pinched barbs can help, but where the hook ends up is more important than the presence or absence of a barb.

“Ever hear the term, ‘throw it back?’ That’s a hold-over from the past when people thought nothing of literally tossing fish back so they slapped onto the water,” Stevens said. “In contrast, these days we hear more about handling the fish firmly but gently, and quickly returning them to the water.”

Beginner anglers, especially, may wonder what to do if a fish is deeply hooked.

“If a hook is deep in the fish, simply cut the line and leave the hook in the fish,” Stevens said. “A long-nosed type pliers is handy to remove hooks, but remember most people aren’t fish surgeons. It does them no good to use lots of force to twist out a deep hook.”

In the summer or when anglers are fishing deep water, the DNR encourages restraint when the fish are really biting. Fish pulled up from deep water can experience stress and injury, so anglers who plan on catch-and-release are reminded to avoid deep water. Under conditions when mortality after release is high because of physical factors like warm water or deep fish, anglers who catch and release a large number of fish could inadvertently cause more fish to die after release than their daily bag limit.

Here are a few more tips for successfully releasing fish:

- Wet 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.

- Hold a fish firmly but gently. Don't drop it. And don't hold a fish by the eyes.
- If planning to release a fish, do not place it on a stringer or in a live well.
- Revive a fish by cradling it under the belly and gently moving it back and forth in the water until it swims away.
- Harvest a fish that can be legally kept if it is bleeding or can't right itself.

For more information on fishing and fishing regulations, visit mndnr.gov/fishmn.

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**Submissions for spring 2018 newsletter are due April 1. Email stories and photos
To fnkmattson@gmail.com**