



BIRCH LAKE NEWSLETTER

News from the Board of the Birch Lake Improvement District

BLID Board

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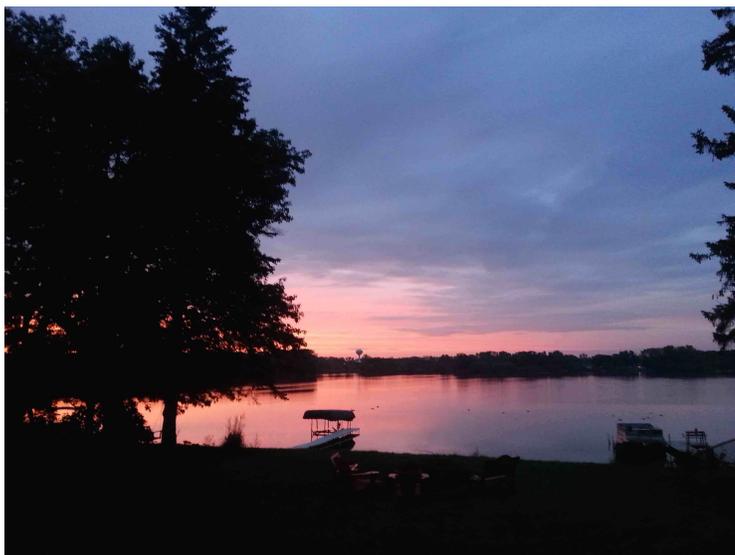


Photo courtesy of Ryan Hoops

VLAWMO Needs Your Help!

VLAWMO is in the process of upgrading its Water Plan. It is looking for public input and has developed a brief stakeholder survey. The BLID Board encourages members to participate in this online survey. It can be reached at <http://www.vlawmo.org/resources/why-water-matters/>

Please participate.

Chairman's Corner

By Dale Bacon

The ninth annual meeting of the Birch Lake Improvement district was held on June 17, 2015, at White Bear Lake City Hall. A near-record 24 district members were in attendance.

Chairman Bacon reviewed the highlights of 2014 – 2015. In addition to a review of operational items such as weed harvesting and aerator operation, special emphasis was placed on the following topics.

- Board members participated in a wide range of conferences, such as the Road Salt Symposium and the Shallow Lakes Conference. This is all a part of an effort to stay abreast of emerging regulatory and scientific issues.
- BLID is supporting VLAWMO to conduct water sampling and analysis to establish a chloride base level for Birch Lake. This will enable BLID to monitor the lake for potential road salt impacts.
- The BLID blog site has been updated. Members were encouraged to visit it at Birchlakeimprovementdistrict.org. The blog serves as the repository of BLID related information and is upgraded on a regular basis.
- The fish survey was completed on September 6, 2014. It demonstrated that the only fish species impacted by the 2013-2014 winterkill was the largemouth bass.

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- The lake was stocked with 2,000 largemouth bass on October 16, 2014. We should see results in 2016!

Special items in the 2015 -2016 plan include updating the BLID’s 2008 Sustainable Lake Management Plan, conducting a lake sediment survey, conducting a member survey, and painting the harvester.

The membership approved the 2016 budget of \$13,000. This will be presented for approval by the White Bear Lake City Council on October 27, 2015.

Tom Merritt was re-elected to a 3-year term on the board. Tom serves as BLID treasurer.

Following the business meeting, Chip Welling, coordinator of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Aquatic Invasive Plant Control program, gave a presentation on DNR programs to control aquatic invasive species.

A Rejuvenated Harvester

Look for something new on the waters of Birch Lake next year! As a part of the multiyear rehabilitation project, the harvester was painted a light blue, replacing the faded green. The paint job was completed by Capitol Town Painting. The entire harvester was pressure washed and sand blasted prior to the application of a two-part marine epoxy paint. During the sand blasting process about 4 layers of paint were removed before reaching the original paint!

The last part of the project will be the evaluation of the harvester hydraulic hoses, and, if needed, their replacement. This should happen during the next couple of months.

The harvester was purchased from the City of Forest Lake in about 2006. The exact age of the harvester is unknown, but estimates put it at about 40 years! It is hoped that with the completion of the project it will be good for another 40!



Before



After

Lake Level Report

The 3+ inches of rain in mid-September topped off another of banner year of high water levels in Birch Lake. The level reading of 920.22 ft msl* (taken on September 22, 2015) was about the fourth highest for late September in the last 25 years! The lowest level recorded in 2015 was 919.30 ft msl on May 1, and the highest was 920.44 ft msl on July 21. The lowest recorded September level was in 2009 when the lake level dropped to 916.93!

What does all of this mean? From a practical perspective, it's going to be a little harder (especially for those of us that are height challenged!) to take out the dock! The lake is almost a foot deeper than when the dock was put in this spring!

The higher water level points to less of the chance for a freeze out and the potential of winter fish kill. More importantly, the lake level drops a couple of inches over the winter, resulting in high levels at ice out. Generally speaking, high levels at ice out, coupled with a normal rainfall, result in high levels during the summer months. Obviously there are other complex factors and interactions (well above my understanding) that can influence this: evaporation, transpiration, wind speed, direction, temperature, hours of sunlight and others.

Bottom line, the high levels going into the winter bode well for next year!

* msl = mean sea level

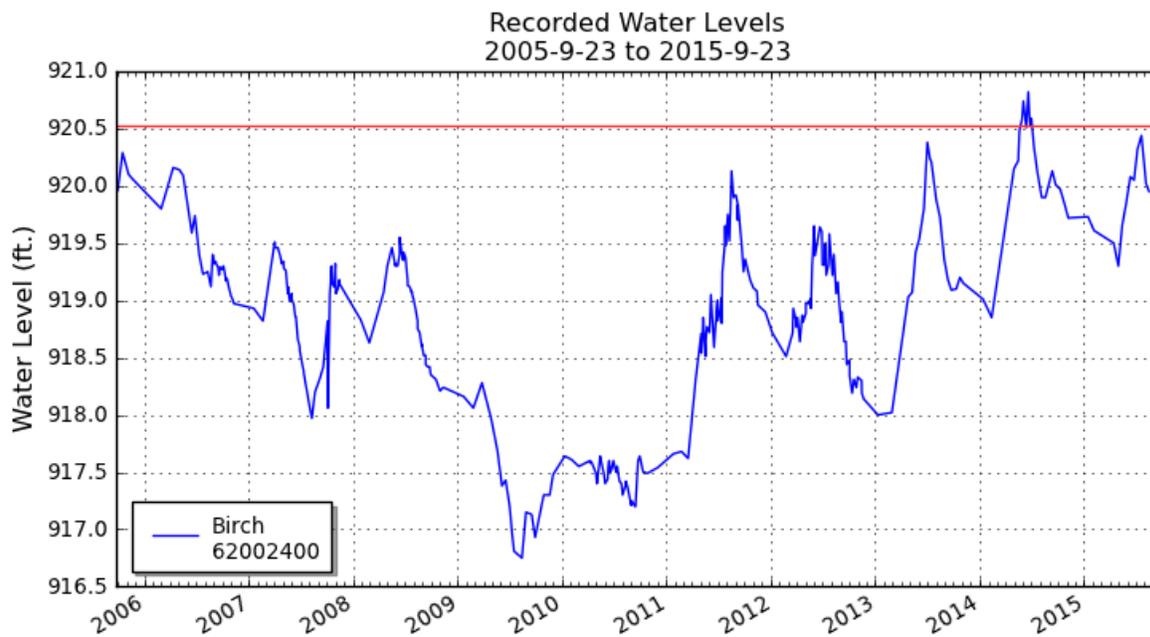


Photo Corner



Photo courtesy of Steve LaLiberte



Photos courtesy of Dale Bacon

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Please send your email address to Julie Yoho:

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BIRCH LAKE IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

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