

Friends of Lower Hay

2022 Fall Newsletter

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Photo by Liz Rollman

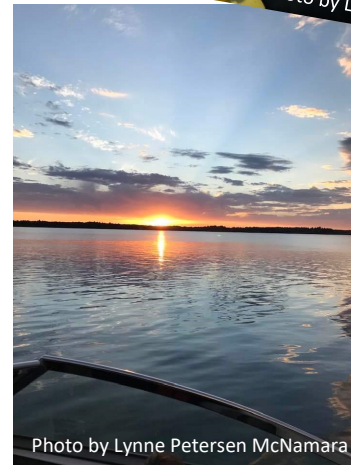


Photo by Lynne Petersen McNamara

Save the Date!

(Event dates are tentative, look for confirmed dates in the 2023 FOLH Spring newsletter)



FOLH Annual Meeting

- Saturday, June 10, 2023 at 9:00 a.m. Jenkins VFW

FOLH Boat Parade

- Tuesday, July 4, 2023 at 4:00 p.m.

Snarky Loon Happy Hour

- Sunday, August 27, 2023 at 3:00 p.m.

The Friends of Lower Hay Lake Association is dedicated to protecting the water and watershed of Lower Hay Lake and the preservation of surrounding natural resources through sharing of information with other organizations. It strives to enhance the enjoyment of the lake and encourages a sense of community among its residents.

Friends of Lower Hay is a charitable 501(c)(3) organization

Friends of Lower Hay Lake Summer 2022



BOAT PARADE



SNARKY LOON Happy Hour August 2022



Vodka Lake?

Lake Turn Over and Why It's Important

By Dave Topinka

Water is a unique liquid, unlike other liquids. Temperatures of water and other liquids can impact their weights and determine if they float or sink when the same liquid of different temperatures is mixed together. Take, for example, vodka (ethyl alcohol). One pint of cold vodka weighs more than one pint of warm vodka, so when the two are mixed together, cold vodka will sink to the bottom and the warm vodka will float on top (stratify). Water, on the other hand, is heaviest at 39 degrees Fahrenheit. As water gets colder than 39°F it becomes lighter and will float on top of the 39°F water.

So, what's the big deal? In the summer, the lake stratifies with the lighter, warmer water on top and the cooler, heavier water down below. In the fall, as the air cools the top lake water, the surface water remains the warmest and the cooler water sinks (remains stratified) until everything reaches 39°F. As air temperatures continue to drop, the surface water becomes colder and floats on top of the 39°F water. The water column is now "stratified" but the colder water is on top and the warmer 39°F water is on the bottom. The lake has turned over!

In the spring, as the air warms the surface of the lake and all the water warms up to 39°F, the lake turns back over again. Why does this matter? Let's go back to the comparison using vodka. If lakes were all vodka, the coldest vodka would be on the bottom and that is where the "vodka ice" would form. As the vodka continued to cool, the "vodka ice" would build from the bottom up, freezing the lake solid. This would not be good for anything that is living in our all-vodka lake.

In our lakes of water during winter, a 39°F liquid living area is maintained below the ice. In addition, when the lakes turn over, the well oxygenated surface water is distributed throughout the water column. This well-oxygenated water helps keep our under-water creatures happy.

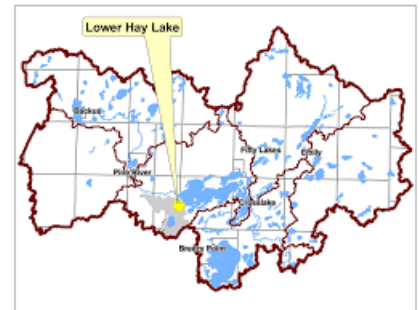
Thank goodness our lakes are comprised of water and not vodka!



What can YOU do to protect our watershed?

By Kay Rezanka and Dave Topinka, FOLH 1W1P Committee members

As part of the distribution of funds from the passage of the Clean Water Land & Legacy Amendment, local Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD) received funding from the state to develop watershed protection plans. The One Watershed, One Plan (1W1P) for the Pine River Watershed has set forth several 10-year goals for Lower Hay Lake. Because of our strong lake association, Lower Hay Lake was among the first lakes selected to participate in this activity. Planning and financial support are available for many watershed protection projects under 1W1P.



Which of the following activities might YOU be interested in doing on your property that can help us achieve these long-term protection goals?

Phosphorus Reduction

One of the best ways each of us can make a significant impact is by capturing stormwater before it has a chance to carry sediment and phosphorus into the water. Our 1W1P goal is to **install 10 rain gardens/stormwater management practices in the next 10 years.**

- Gutters, rain barrels, rain gardens, French drains, pervious pavers, and many other hard-working and attractive tools can help direct water coming from rooftops, patios, sidewalks and driveways away from the lake.

Shoreline Restoration

- **Install 6 shoreline buffers in the next 10 years.** Keep in mind that you don't have to give up access to the lake with vegetative buffers. Creating a beautiful, low-maintenance buffer along just a portion of your shoreline can positively impact the watershed.
- **Plant 500 trees along the shoreline in the next 10 years.** With our over 100 properties on the lake, we can achieve this goal if each property plants one tree every other year. Trees planted near the shoreline or along steep banks stabilize the soil and reduce storm water runoff. The added bonus is that trees beautify your property, provide privacy and shade, and attract wildlife.

Shoreline & Land Protection

- **Develop 5 forest stewardship plans in the next 10 years.** If you own 20 or more acres in the Pine River watershed, you are eligible to participate. The process involves working with a forester to identify your goals for your land and how to achieve them over time. Having a stewardship plan in place also provides an opportunity for property tax savings.
- **Protect lands and shorelines with conservation easements.** Protecting property between Lower & Upper Hay Lakes is a priority, as the undeveloped lands and wetlands surrounding Hay Creek are important buffers in protecting water quality. However, long-term land preservation is valuable anywhere in the watershed. FOLH can connect you to the right resources to learn more. (continued on page 5)

(continued from page 4)

Ground water

- Our 1W1P goal is to have all properties up-to-date on **septic system maintenance**. For most systems, the recommended pumping and maintenance inspection schedule is every 3 years.
- **Seal 10 unused wells** in the next 10 years. Unused wells are a potential source of groundwater contamination if left unsealed.
- **Reduce the use of salt** on driveways, sidewalks and in water softeners in the next 10 years. Spreading sand on surfaces in the winter is a more lake-friendly alternative to salt. Upgrading to a modern water softener can significantly reduce or even eliminate salt use.

Water Monitoring

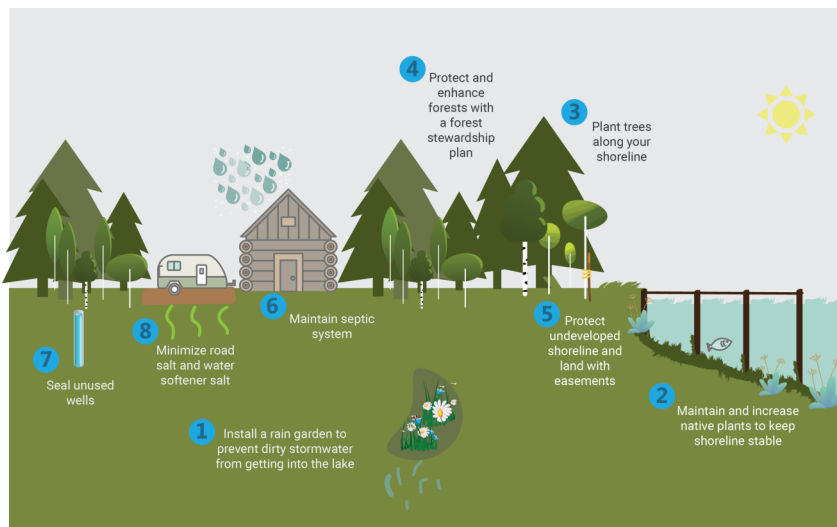
- Continue to **monitor water annually for the next 10 years** in partnership with WAPOA's water quality monitoring program. Many FOLH members have been active in this program over the years, but more volunteers are always welcome!

Opportunities exist for cost-sharing many of these projects, and consultations and planning advice are also readily available.

Other projects besides those listed above are possible also. We'd love to help connect you with the right resources to pursue any project ideas! Please reach out to a FOLH board member or directly to the Crow Wing County SWCD with questions or to share your ideas. Now is the time to take advantage of these opportunities while 1W1P funding is available.

Each of us has an important role to play in achieving these goals! Together, let's turn your ideas into completed projects, and in the process, protect Lower Hay Lake and the Pine River watershed for future generations to enjoy.

See the FOLH website (<https://www.friendsoflowerhay.org/>) for the official One Watershed One Plan documents, or scan the QR code below for more information about 1W1P from SWCD.



A Plank of History

By Dave Topinka

We have 57 years of ice on/ice off information for Lower Hay Lake thanks to the early efforts of Rollie and Addie Johnson keeping a record and sharing this information with their cousins, Ted and Bessie Johnson. It was Bessie Johnson who began the tradition of writing the dates on a 2 x 6 plank of cedar wood. Ray Steffens, current FOLH member, has the plank now and continues to document the ice on/off dates on it.

The plank of wood and the dates on it provide some interesting data: the shortest ice season was 2012 with 73 days of ice and the longest season was 1977-1978 with 177 days of ice. The earliest ice on date was November 3, 1983 and the latest was January 4, 2012. The earliest ice out was March 27, 2012 and the latest was May 24, 1978.

Last winter, Lower Hay Lake's ice on date was December 22, 2021 and ice out was May 6, 2022. That was 135 days of ice on the lake which makes up 37% of the year. The 2021-2022 season ranked 21st out of the 57 years of information.

While the plank provides a good story and a bit of history for Friends of Lower Hay Lake, the dates on it have been shared with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) and continue to be shared each year. The "official" ice on/off FOLH committee includes Debbie Enger, Kay Rezanka, Ray Steffens, and Dave Topinka. Once the committee comes to a consensus on a date, Ray is given the go ahead to "write it on the plank" and the information is sealed in Lower Hay Lake history.



Ray Steffens holding the cedar wood plank that documents ice on/off dates for Lower Hay Lake.

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FOLH Board Members left to right: Kay Rezanka, Rich Kobes, Steve Curry, Debbie Enger, Terry Enger, Judy Topinka, Dave Topinka, Liz Rollman (Missing from picture: Paul Harris and Tom Mathews)

Friends of Lower Hay Board of Directors

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First Snow of the Season!

Debbie Enger posted this photo on the Friends of Lower Hay Facebook page on Friday, October 14, 2022. The early snow disappeared quickly and the loon was able to enjoy more fall weather!



Business Sponsors



Thank You!

Abear Pequot Sand & Gravel

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Antlers Restaurant

Barstock Liquors

Bjerga Feed Stores

Black Pine Beach Resort

First National Bank North

First National Bank North Insurance Services

Hanneken Insurance

Lakeside Landscape, Inc.

Land's End Development

Larson Group-Keller Williams Realty Professionals

Merritt Jewelers

North Ward Homes

Old Milwaukee Club

Pequot Lakes Sanitation

Tip Top Building & Remodeling, Inc.

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Whitefish Lake Bertha Boatworks, Inc.



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www.friendsoflowerhay.org

JOIN us on Facebook:

Friends of Lower Hay Lake