

Dear Fellow Crescent Lake District Residents,

Dare I say spring is here? After a mild winter with little snow and early warm temperatures, the optimist in me says yes, spring is here! I hope you had a good winter despite the lack of snow for the winter sports enthusiasts.

The purpose of this spring letter is to share the latest news from the Crescent Lake District with you. You can also find further information on our webpage www.crescentlakedistrict.com. I encourage you to check it out from time to time to see what's new.

New Commissioner Appointed

Our former treasurer, Jim Ketterson, resigned his role due to a job change and relocation to Minneapolis. Per Wis Statue Chapter 33, as chairman, I appointed Jim Solinsky to fill Jim Ketterson's remaining term. Jim Solinsky is a lake resident and retired CFO of a large Wis manufacturing company. He had previously expressed interest in serving, and we are thrilled to have him as our new treasurer. Please thank and congratulate Jim when you see him.

2024 Milfoil Plan

You may recall from last year, our spring 2023 Eurasian Milfoil chemical treatment permit was withdrawn by the DNR just prior to treatment after having received preliminary approval. Despite numerous attempts, including an opening records request, we were never provided a complete answer as to why the permit was withdrawn. Our best guess is the politics within the DNR played a big role, including input from the tribal organizations, lead to its withdrawal. The new local DNR representative had no answers when questioned at the CLA summer picnic. There are unproven and unfounded concerns by some in the DNR that feel the decline in Northern WI walleye population is due to chemical treatment in lakes. Our resident lake experts and the chemical manufacturer fully reject this concern, yet the DNR is unwilling to even provide us an opportunity to present the facts on this subject. We continued to be stonewalled by the DNR. We believe the DNR knows it has no basis for its position and is hiding its case. As residents and taxpayers, this is very frustrating and not how we should be treated.

In preparation for our 2024 treatment plan, we completed our annual fall 2023 lake survey which showed active milfoil on the north end of the lake. We submitted this information to the DNR with our grant request for lake treatment funding in 2024. The grant request is for financial assistance, not for specific treatment permission. However, our grant request has been declined by the DNR.

With funds from your tax levy, we will continue to contract for a May 2024 survey for the north end of Crescent Lake to be submitted with our 2024 treatment permit request. We will again be requesting a permit to treat approximately 20 acres on the north end of the lake, where our fall survey indicated the growth of Eurasian Milfoil. We hope the DNR will grant this treatment permit, but we are skeptical as they rejected our similar treatment request in 2023, and rejected our financial grant request earlier this winter. Note: by DNR rules we must submit a financial grant request earlier in the year than we apply for a summer chemical treatment request.

The DNR actions have put the residents and Crescent Lake District in a difficult spot. We successfully fought back the widespread milfoil in our lake during the 2020-2022 period with chemical treatment.

However, the milfoil is prevalent again in the north end of the lake. In 2023 the DNR rejected our similar limited treatment plan, forcing us to spend your resources hand-harvesting using outside contractors. Hand-harvesting is expensive and its effectiveness is debatable. Hand-harvesting does not eliminate milfoil, and some believe it adds to the spread as pieces float away. However, the District Commissioners unanimously agreed to do what we could and hand remove versus let the milfoil grow wild, only to be chopped by boats, and again spread throughout the lake. We acknowledge it was a band aid to the proper solution (which is chemical treatment), however we were bound by the DNR decision.

In our opinion, we are being forced by the DNR to let the milfoil once again spread throughout the lake and become cumbersome before we will be allowed to treat again. To us, this is an illogical approach. We believe it would be more effective to treat a small, impacted area with proven results versus waiting until we have a wide-spread problem again. A large area Milfoil treatment would require greater chemical release and be much more expensive for residents. We are in an unfortunate no-win situation with the DNR.

So here is our plan for 2024: We will complete our meander survey in May and submit for a chemical treatment permit of the areas showing to contain milfoil. We believe this will be the north end only and require 15-20 acres of treatment. If granted the permit, we will proceed with treatment in June. This is within our budget for 2024. This risks some early season spread, but is the tightest time line due to the May meander survey.

If, we are rejected again by the DNR, you may recall we asked in our budget request for money to hire an attorney and pursue action against the DNR. We intend to pursue this step if our treatment permit is again rejected. We regret needing to take this step, but believe we have no other recourse to protect the lake, our residents, and avoid an almost certain total lake spread of milfoil once again. We have a beautiful lake, let's continue our fight to keep it milfoil free.

On behalf of all Commissioners, I thank you for your ongoing support and welcome your input at any time.

Sincerely,

Tim Kilgore

Chairman, Lake District commissioners