



## **2007 Low Lake Level / Weed Introduction**

Concerns about low water levels for Van Vliet Lake were expressed at the 2006 annual meeting.. During the summer of 2007, the lake dropped to even lower levels. Northern Wisconsin has experienced drought conditions during the last year with many of our neighboring lakes also suffering from low water conditions. Lake Superior fell to an all time historical low level in August, 2007.

An additional factor impacting the water level of the Presque Isle chain is the presence of beaver dams along the Presque Isle River which is the chain outlet. During the summers of 2006 and 2007, destruction of these dams occurred which some people believe has added to the amount the lake level has dropped. A letter was written by the board expressing concerns about the consequences of the loss of the beaver dams.

As lake levels drop, the growth of aquatic weeds in shallow bays increases. More sunlight reaches nutrient rich beds that contain large quantities of latent seeds. This generally triggers not only an increase in the existing weed growth, but also allows for the growth of other species of weeds not generally found in deeper water. Weed growth in the bays has reached a level that impacts recreational use of the lake and raises concerns about overall health of the lake.

The board meeting in June, 2007 focused on low water levels and consequent weed growth. Discussion continued at the annual meeting. (2007 minutes).

Aquatic plant management in Wisconsin is regulated by the DNR. Individuals who use manual methods (raking or hand cutting) to remove vegetation from an area not wider than thirty feet which extends directly out from a use area such as a pier do not need a permit. Any manual removal outside the manual removal zone or mechanical removal requires a permit. Weed control permits can be issued for individual properties but it is considered better for plant management to be done on a whole lake basis. In the absence of an approved weed control plan, a lake permit would be limited to one year versus a possible three year permit.

The Van Vliet Lake Management Plan included a plant study but does not contain an approved aquatic plant management component. The board conducted a survey on what role the association should pursue in regard to this issue during the first three months of 2008 and numerical results are now available.