



2009 APMP Update

It's a chilly, rainy afternoon in the North woods. Van Vliet Lake is ice-free although larger lakes are still icebound. So far I've seen little evidence of significant fish kill even though this winter provided us with more sub-zero days than we've seen in quite a few years. Nonetheless, lake health, both short and long term, remains the overlying concern of the Van Vliet Lake Association.

As such, you should know about the progress of the Presque Isle Town Lakes Committee (PITLC) with respect to the 2008 grant. As you may (or may not) know the DNR funded seven Presque Isle lake surveys for 2008 and the physical inventory was completed on Van Vliet Lake last July. Jill Wilm and I accompanied the lake sampling personnel from Northern Environmental gathering plant and water samples. The finished product should be a DNR approved document, produced by Northern Environmental conforming to contract specs and providing each of the seven lakes with an aquatic plant management plan (APMP).

This document, when received would give the Lake Association the ability to file for DNR approval for weed control, if deemed necessary, and also allow us to apply for funds to combat aquatic invasive species should they ever arrive. Without this document, we are told by the DNR that they wouldn't even talk to us in the future much less render help. So this is an important set of papers. Why our 2005 Lake Survey didn't fill the bill for information needed either for Northern Environmental or the DNR is not a topic worth debating.

Suffice it to say that the 2008 grant was approved, the town kicked in some money, the Lake Association made a modest contribution (10% of 25%=2.5% or less than \$200), and now we await results. The down side of the story is that the results from the previous year's grant (2007) that covered 7-8 different Presque Isle lakes are still awaiting approval as of this writing. Between reduced DNR staff reviewing these sorts of documents, greatly increased volumes of these kinds of projects, and some alleged squabbles between the DNR and Northern Environmental's contract deliverables, the situation leaves us without an end date in sight and there is nothing we can do to accelerate this quagmire and there's no plan B available.

Interestingly the DNR failed to fund the 2009 grant applications for the balance of the Presque Isle watershed so there are lakes that will not have an opportunity to get DNR help should they have issues in the future. A positive attitude would be to reflect that we were lucky to get in "under the fence".

Stay tuned.

Jeff Burke, President
Van Vliet Lake Association