

NEWS RELEASE by Waldo Asp, president of the Sawyer County Lakes Forum.

Annual Lakes Forum Meeting to Hear Invasive Species Reports

The Sawyer County Lakes Forum Annual Meeting, Saturday morning, June 15th, at the Flat Creek Eatery in Hayward, will hear a series of reports on the attempts and vicissitudes of managing treatment of aquatic invasive species in the lakes of Sawyer County. Controversy over the appropriateness of treatments to eradicate curly leaf pondweed (CLP), as well as other invasive species, has prompted this year's focus to address these concerns.

As every lake association affirms, "the primary mission of the lake association is to help protect the water quality of the lake to insure that we maintain a healthy body of water with an active fishery, for everyone to enjoy for generations to come for fishing and other recreational activities." And most of our lakes are headwaters that impact the lakes downstream, so we have responsibilities in many dimensions as we plan for the careful management of our natural resources.

Simply put, as many have raised questions and concerns, should we chemically treat CLP? Will putting chemicals in the waters do more harm than good? Are there alternative treatments or what will the result be if nothing whatsoever is done?

Decisions for action ought be made based on the best scientific findings and evidence that we can obtain. Examples from lakes that have attempted treatments can be helpful. With some 431 lakes in Wisconsin infected with CLP, and another 597 or more with Eurasian Milfoil, our problem has grown to almost unthinkable levels. The incursion of invasive species decades ago was barely noticed, but now we are seeing that they have steadily grown in number and intensity. Aquatic invasive species (AIS) are a shared problem—the attempts to rectify this problem and experiences of success ought also be shared.

This meeting is open to the public and representatives from all the lake associations in Sawyer County are invited to be in attendance. The agenda starts with registration, coffee and scones at 8:30 a.m. and call to order is at 9:00. The agenda also includes reports on significant actions taken by the Board, strategic planning for the coming year, election of officers for 2013-14, legislative initiatives, assistance to lake associations and coordination with all northwest Wisconsin county lake forums. And we'll introduce our new web master, Martin Hanson. The Forum's website is:

www.Sawyer-County-Lakes-Forum.org

A round table open discussion will follow, and setting dates and places for 2014 meetings will conclude the Forum's meeting.

Everyone attending this meeting will receive a copy of the Sawyer County Lakes Forum's Lake Life Pocketbook ; a handy reference guide for those who enjoy our lakes. Copies are also available for all lakeshore owners and users of our area's lakes. Information in this 32 page booklet (that fits in a shirt pocket) ranges from fishhook removal tips, firewise advice, melanoma risk, standard fines for common vacationland violations, how to send SOS signals, how to do CPR on fish and lakeside first aid.

The Annual Meeting of the Sawyer County Lakes Forum is an open meeting--everyone is invited to attend and participate in the process of working to safeguard and improve the quality of our waters. The Forum enables us to be united in our efforts to make positive contributions for the benefit of our lakes, rivers, wetlands and underground waters.