

SHORE LINES

Cisco Chain Riparian Owners Association

www.ciscochainroa.com email: ccroa49969@gmail.com

June 2020
Volume Number 60 Issue 1

"Promoting Safe Fun on Clean Lakes"

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

By Bob McGuffin

Spring has sprung up north and summer is upon us. 2020 has been "interesting" to say the least. Our lives have been turned upside down with the Covid-19 outbreak and we are all looking for a return of some normalcy. Pandemic or not, there is still work to be done on the Cisco Chain and your Association is keeping busy with a full slate of Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) work set for 2020.

Given the reality of our current situation, we have had to modify our annual business meeting. The meeting will be held as scheduled on July 18th at 10am at the Cisco Bar pavilion but the picnic to follow has been cancelled. Instead of holding the meeting inside the pavilion, we will be outside to promote social distancing. We ask that all attendees bring their own chairs as well as a facial covering. We will conduct our business as expeditiously as possible and then adjourn. Because our outside meeting potentially exposes us to the weather, we have set August 15th as the rain date. We appreciate everyone's flexibility and understanding. Hopefully, we will be back to a normal meeting and picnic in 2021!

This is the point of my report where I get to climb up on my soap box. (I will pause here while our younger members google "soap box") One of the things I am passionate about- besides killing invasive species- is space and astronomy. I enjoy looking thru



the telescope or watching satellites from the hot tub. To maximize what one can see, the skies have to be dark. Increasingly, I am seeing homes with lights left on every night. I recognize that leaving lights on is good for security and safety. However, going full-on Tom Bodett Motel 6 can be detrimental to those of us trying to enjoy the night sky. (I'll pause here while our younger members google "Tom Bodett Motel 6")

The International Dark Sky Association provides guidance for responsible lighting. Besides turning off unneeded lights, they recommend that any lights to be used be of a shielded design to prevent light from being emitted sky-ward. Their website at darksky.org is highly informative. It has examples of both good and bad lighting. I have a challenge for every home on the Cisco Chain- I challenge every home to take an inventory of exterior lights. If there is a light that is unnecessary, turn it off! Additionally, look around and find one light that shines sky-ward and replace it with a shielded light. Everyone remembers that first time that they left the lights of the city and looked up to see the milky way. Let's preserve that feeling for the next generation!

Keep looking up!
Bob McGuffin

REMEMBER TO CLEAN, DRAIN, DRY AND DISPOSE!!

Clean boats, trailers and equipment; drain live wells, bilges and all water; dry boats and equipment; dispose of unwanted bait in the trash...do not throw it into the lake...It's the Law! To help stop the introduction and spread of AIS (aquatic invasive species) the State of Michigan past laws effective in 2019, that require all watercraft and/or trailers are free of AIS prior to launching; watercraft must drain all drain plus and drain all water from bilges, ballast tanks and live wells prior to transporting; unused bait must NOT be released into the water.

CISCO CHAIN AIS PROGRAM FOR 2020

By Eugene Clark

The overall budget for 2020 is \$107,000. This budget accounts for *all* AIS activities performed on the Chain to the benefit of the CCROA members and all people owning property on the Chain. This spend is covered by the special taxing districts, various grants we are able to secure, work performed by our partners, and monies drawn from the CCROA General Fund. This budget appears as a sharp increase from that published in 2019 of \$49,600. The 2019 AIS budget did not include many of the activities described in this budget. This year we opted to include all activities so that Chain residents can see the activities and how they are funded. As we discuss below, you will see how we are able to leverage our tax district funding to cover more than double the work. The breakdown of our budget is as follows:

Activity	Total Cost	Funding Source			
		Tax Districts	Grants	CCROA Gen'l Fund	ISCCW
AIS Monitoring and Surveys	\$15,291	\$3,073	\$9,218		\$3,000
Survey, Dive, DASH EWM	\$20,000	\$10,000	\$10,000		
Chemical Treatments	\$30,000	\$30,000			
Water Quality	\$18,616	\$1,449	\$9,087	\$8,080	
Boat Landing Inspections & Washes	\$15,280	\$985	\$2,955		\$11,340
AIS Education	\$6,615				\$6,615
Permits for AIS Activities	\$1,275	\$1,275			
Total	\$107,077	\$46,782	\$31,261	\$8,080	\$20,955

The AIS Monitoring & Survey work is on Mamie, Cisco, Thousand Island and Clearwater Lakes largely funded by a Grant from UPPC/BFIT. The ISCCW funds some more work on other lakes not covered by grants. The Survey, Dive and DASH work is performed on other lakes and is partially covered by USFS and WDNR grants. Chemical Treatment work will focus on Big Lake in 4 areas totaling 8.5 acres. We are using a new more expensive chemical that we successfully piloted last year (\$17,000 application cost). We then have a provision of \$13,000 on additional work that we may see in several Michigan lakes. Water Quality work consists of our Vegetation Mapping work that we have been doing for several years, and a Temperature Monitoring program largely funded by UPPC/BFIT. Volunteers will continue our secchi disk (water clarity) program at no cost to the CCROA. The ISCCW continues to provide the Chain with valuable Boat Landing and Educational activities.

We are able to leverage \$107,000 of work on \$46,800 in Tax District funds. That is more than doubling our efforts by seeking funding through grants and valued partners. As a reminder, approximately 140 of the 400 ISCCW members are Chain residents. You contribute \$14,000 to the ISCCW, helping to fund their activities that directly benefit the Chain. Please continue your memberships and if you are not an ISCCW member, please consider joining this valued partner.

OAK WILT IN VILAS COUNTY

By Partners in Forestry Landowners Cooperative

December 2, 2019

Re: Occurrence of Oak Wilt in Vilas County

Dear Land O' Lakes Town Board (Chairman Dan Balog, Supervisor Sam Otterpohl, and Supervisor Mike Stopczynski),

We are writing to inform you of a developing threat to oak trees in Vilas County, and specifically what the town can do to help protect the abundant oaks found in the Town of Land O' Lakes. Oak is a stately tree in our area, being important to the economy as well as for its aesthetic value to residents and visitors. In addition, oaks are also a very important wildlife tree as they provide food and shelter to many wildlife species, both game and non-game.

Due to the risk of oak wilt introduction, it is important to: avoid pruning, wounding/breaking of branches, or harvesting oaks from April 15 - July 15, which is the high-risk period for oak wilt introduction. This includes roadside mowing operations that damage oaks. And, if damage to oaks occurs during this time, it is important to paint the wounds immediately (almost any paint will do).

Oak wilt is a deadly disease that was first identified in southern Wisconsin in 1944. Since that time, oak wilt has been making its way north, mainly through the transportation of oak firewood from region to region. Locally, oak wilt is spread by a beetle attracted to injured oaks primarily between April 15 and July 15. Preventing injuries to oaks during this time can protect your oaks. Oak wilt kills thousands of trees each year in Wisconsin forests, woodlots and roadsides. Oak wilt does attack and kill healthy trees. The disease is a particularly serious problem for species in the red oak group such as northern red, northern pin and black oaks. Once wilting symptoms are apparent on a red oak, the infected tree will lose most of its leaves and die within a month. Alarmingly, this past September, a tree located in the NW corner of the Town of Conover near Co Hwy S and Rummels Road, tested positive for the disease by WI DNR Forest Health Specialist, Linda Williams. This tree had been injured from road work by the Town of Conover. This discovery of the disease is in close proximity to Land O' Lakes and poses a direct risk to all oaks within our town. Also note, that pockets of oak wilt have been identified in other locations in Vilas County in recent years.

There is no cure for the disease. Once the tree is infected, the disease also spreads to nearby oak trees through interconnected root systems, creating an expanding pocket of dead oak trees. Once established in a stand, further spread is very difficult and costly to control. **The best control is to present its introduction in the first place by not damaging oaks from April 15 – July 15.**

What can the town do to prevent the introduction of oak wilt in Land O' Lakes? It is our recommendation that the town immediately change its road maintenance policies to delay any brushing, mowing, or pruning of trees along roadsides during the months of greatest risk of oak wilt transmission (from April 15 through July 15), when oak wilt spore-carrying beetles are most abundant.

Adjusting the timing of these road maintenance practices is our best option to protect our oak trees from this disease.

All of the partners listed below support this initiative to prevent the spread of oak wilt. I sincerely hope the Land O' Lakes Town Board will take immediate action to address this new threat to the town's beautiful oak trees.

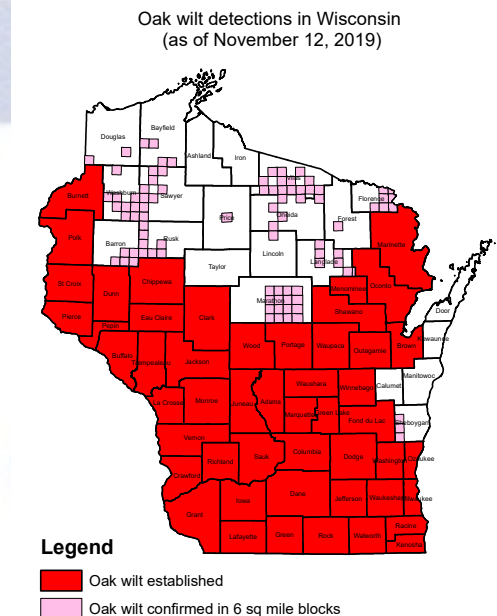
For further information on this disease, we are enclosing an updated DNR fact sheet on oak wilt in Wisconsin as well as a more recent map showing the nearby locations. As mentioned previously, there are control options once oak wilt is identified, although they can be costly and time consuming, but if you would like more information on options for control, please contact Linda Williams with the DNR (920-360-0665, Linda.Williams@Wisconsin.gov). Feel free to contact any of us if we can be of assistance. Sincerely,

Joe Hovel
Partners in Forestry Cooperative
715-479-8528
logcabin@nnex.net

Robert Simeone
Sylvania Forestry
Land O' Lakes
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rsimeone@sylvaniamforestry.com

Wisconsin Headwaters Invasive Partnership
(Vilas, Oneida, and Lincoln Counties)
Michele Sadauskas, Chair
715-369-7835 (Oneida Co. Land & Water Conservation)
msadauskas@oneida.wi.us

Al Murray
Vilas Co. Forest
Administrator
715-479-5160
almyrr@vilascountywi.gov



THE BENEFITS OF “FISH CRIBS”

By Patrick Mans Thousand Island Lake

Fish cribs have been constructed and utilized for decades. Cribs provide habitat and security for small fish which attract larger fish which then feed on the smaller fish associating with the cribs. Well-constructed fish cribs also fill a habitat niche voided by shoreline development resulting in removal of fallen trees in lakes. How a crib is constructed is critical to its ability to attract fish.

Most fisherman have seen the remnants of fish cribs created long ago on the lake bottom of clear water lakes. Historically, Lincoln-log style cribs were constructed on the ice in the winter, weighted down with cement blocks or rocks and left to sink to the lake bottom when the ice melts in the spring.

Fish cribs provide minnows and small fish with cover and a place to find food. A crib slows the flow of natural lake currents and provides habitat for weed, algae, and both zooplankton and phytoplankton growth which minnows eat. Any fisherman knows that where there are minnows, game fish which eat those minnows will be close by. Like humans who have refrigerators and cupboards in their homes for easy access to food, fish prefer to be close to their source of food. Think of a crib as a fish refrigerator. When fish feed they go to the crib for something to eat.

The key to a successful fish attracting crib is not the log structure making the frame of the crib, rather it's the dense brush inside and sticking out of the crib. The complexity and height of the crib are also critical factors in a crib's fish attracting ability. The more complex the shape, the more fish attracting cover is available for small fish to utilize in the constant struggle to avoid being eaten by bigger fish. Height is also important to a fish crib. A crib needs to be at least four to six feet in height, preferably with access for fish to swim under the crib.

As our lake shorelines have become more and more developed over time, the large trees which used to fall into the lake and remain there as cover, have been removed in the name of navigation and aesthetics. Cribs are simply a man-made solution to the man-made problem of a lack of near shore cover for fish

It is of course important to place cribs in a location which is deep enough to allow for safe navigation over the crib by those who may not be aware of its location.

Fish cribs, like other natural lake structure, are the game fish cafeterias of the underwater world. A well-constructed and correctly placed fish crib can provide structure and fish attracting cover for many years. Have a safe and relaxing fishing season on the Chain.

Tight Lines!
Pat Mans



Pictured Above: An example of a built fish crib resting on the lake ice. Once the ice melts, the fish crib will sink to the bottom and become a new habitat for area fish. Pictured Below: Sunken fish crib turned fish habitat.



NEW ISCCW BOAT INSPECTOR

By CCROA Collaborative

Please welcome Denny Friske to the ISCCW Boat Inspector Team. You'll see him at Thousand Island Boat Landing and Cisco Landing on Thursdays-Sundays, June 1st to mid-October. Denny has recently made the full-time move to our area from western Dane County, WI. His professional career has spanned field design for Subzero-Wolf, home inspection and real estate. Denny loves the outdoors and is excited to be pursuing his passion for fishing and hunting. When he's not enjoying the outdoors, he's busy being a grand-dad, woodworking and raising 8 chickens! We're glad to have him help us protect our lakes for generations to come



CCROA ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING AND PICNIC

By CCROA Collaborative

During this time of uncertainty, health and safety factors, we are saddened to announce that the Annual CCROA Picnic will be cancelled. After weighing out our options and many concerns being raised, we could not justify putting any of our members at risk.

However, we will still be conducting our business meeting. This will be held July 18, 10 am, at Cisco Bar Pavilion. The meeting will be held OUTSIDE on the grass. We are asking all that wish to attend to make sure and bring the following.

- Your own Chairs for seating
- Your own personal face covering as approved by CDC guidelines
- Practice social distancing.

We as a board will make sure to get to business right away and conduct our meeting as quickly as possible. Seeing as the meeting will be held outdoors, we are subject to the elements. A Rain Out day has been set for August 15th.

We hope to see everyone there. In the meantime, enjoy some pictures from last year's picnic.

Stay Safe and Enjoy your summer!!!



CCROA MEMBERSHIP IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER!!!

Now that the Special Assessment District for the Michigan and Wisconsin side of the chain has been established, you might wonder "Why do we need the CCROA"? The districts will provide financial support; however, the CCROA will continue to provide the manpower required to manage our aquatic invasive species abatement program. The CCROA has successfully established and maintained optimal water levels on the Chain to avoid navigational hazards and shoreline erosion. We have established important partnerships with professionals to oversee lake surveys and management in order to plan for long term health of the Cisco Chain of Lakes.

Membership renewal notices were mailed to members whose membership expired. If you haven't done so, please renew today. If you would like to check on your membership, email us at ccroa49969@gmail.com or call Laura at 715-293-6828. Thank you!!!

CISCO CHAIN AND BARBERRY

By Daniella and Jonathan Pereira Thousand Island Lake

Dear Cisco Chain Riparian Owners,

This newsletter has been an excellent resource for information on how to protect our lakes for health, recreation, and fishing. Stewardship of the accompanying forests is also necessary to protect our lakes. A healthy forest keeps soil in place and reduces sediment from entering waterways. This keeps the lake temperatures cool which is best for a thriving fish population. We are writing now to give information about Japanese barberry, an often-overlooked invasive shrub, affecting the health of our forests and letting you know what we can all do to limit its spread.

The Cisco Chain is located at the western end of a transition forest which extends east from Minnesota through southern Canada and northern New England to the Atlantic (the "North Woods"). To the south there are broad-leaved trees whose leaves are shed every fall and to the north, the boreal forest dominated by evergreen conifers. In the transition zone, beech and sugar maple from the southern forest grow side by side with spruce and balsam fir from the north. The northern and southern species combine with trees such as hemlock, red pine, and white pine to create forest communities unlike those found anywhere else.

The large deer population across the North Woods and their browsing habits makes it difficult to regrow much of the native herbs, shrubs, and trees of the forest. Healthy deer need to eat five to ten pounds of young shoots and twigs every day! Anyone who has spent time on the chain has witnessed how efficient deer can clear the understory of young trees. This efficiency means that the forest around the lakes will not be able to regrow many of the native trees such as hemlock, cedar, pine, and oak.

Deer also spend a lot of time near houses surrounding the lakes as they are attracted to the many herbs, flowers and fruit bearing plants that have been planted by owners with a green thumb. We have heard of deer getting so comfortable with grazing around houses that they have come up on porches to taste the plastic plants! In order to combat this behavior, many of us look for "deer resistant" plants to incorporate into our gardens. Unfortunately, some of these plants are invasive to the North Woods and cause unintended negative consequences.

These woody plants can grow up to six feet tall and will form dense clumps of thorny shrubs. These shrubs displace our native plants and change the soil chemistry, making it more alkaline and favorable for additional Japanese barberry plants and less favorable for the old growth forests.



Over time, the change in soil pH and the higher nutrient levels can contribute to changes in the whole ecosystem of the area resulting in a decrease of native plant and animal biodiversity.

Japanese barberry spreads both through its roots and by birds. It continues to spread through its roots and takes over more and more space, changing the soil and crowding out space for native species to grow. Additionally, birds eat the bright red berries and poop them out with a nice package of fertilizer to take root in new areas. (By the way, these berries are not good food for birds because they only contain sugar and none of the necessary fats.) Unfortunately, Japanese barberry is not browsed by deer and therefore, doesn't have a predator to limit its spread. Instead deer continue to browse on even more limited and easier to eat, native plants. Research has also shown that dense stands of naturalized Japanese barberry have twice the amount of ticks as in non-invaded areas. Some ticks are carriers of Lyme disease and increased tick populations could lead to more cases of Lyme disease in humans and pets.

There are already areas of the chain of lakes that are becoming overrun by the shrub. We had a barberry bush that at one point was growing as an ornamental around our cabin on Thousand Island Lake. We removed it about 15 years ago shortly after discovering how invasive these plants could be. Since that time, we spend several days every year removing what we can from the other 80 acres of forest where this invasive is spreading. While it can seem overwhelming at times, we can tell that we are making a difference.

What we ask of this community is to:

1. Choose other deer resistant plants (please check to make sure those are not invasive too),
2. Remove any ornamental barberry that you have around your house, and
3. Check the rest of the land and reduce the barberry population by pulling out these plants by their unforgettable, yellow roots. Since birds do most of the spreading of this plant, it will continue to invade unless everyone is diligent to reduce its spread.

You should wear leather gloves to do this work and depending on the size of the stand, will need a woodsman's pal and sometimes, a chainsaw to remove the upper portions of the shrubs. When you pull the plants out, if small enough, you can collect them in a black, plastic garbage bag or hang the plant roots on a random branch to desiccate. The plants grow their berries in late summer so catch them in midsummer before berries grow. Hopefully this action will increase the native plant population and restore the forest to grow for generations. For more information on Japanese barberry see the following links.

www.uwgb.edu/biodiversity/herbarium/invasive_species
www.michigan.gov/invasives/
www.dnr.wi.gov

Your neighbors,
Daniella and Jonathan Pereira (Thousand Island Lake)

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Watersmeet Township Transfer Station

8 am to 4 pm Monday, Tuesday & Thursday thru Saturday
Closed on Wednesday and Sunday

Land O'Lakes Collection & Recycling Center

Tuesday 8 am – 3 pm
Thursday 12 noon – 6 pm
Saturday 8 am – 4 pm Sunday 9 am - noon
(Summer Hours Memorial Day Weekend- Sept 30th)

AS OF APRIL 1ST, 2019

Watersmeet Township Police will handle all calls for service within the Township with the exception of those calls on the Reservation, they will be handled by the Tribal Police.

CALL:

911 for EMERGENCIES

(906) 875-6669 for IMMEDIATE response (non-life threatening)
(906) 358-2048 for the Watersmeet office for administrative and general questions, if no one is in the office, please leave a message.

Below are the website addresses and phone numbers for Watersmeet Township & the Town of Land O'Lakes –

Watersmeet Township

www.watersmeet.us

906-358-4501

Town of Land O'Lakes

<http://townoflandolakes.com>

715-547-3255

Watersmeet/Land O'Lakes are literally where "Waters Meet"
The Ontonagon River flows north from Watersmeet into Lake Superior; the Wisconsin River flows south from Land O'Lakes into the Mississippi; and the Paint River flows east into Lake Michigan!

Find more Cisco Chain information on the CCROA website

www.ciscochainroa.com

Around Town Events-Land O'Lakes

Most events have been canceled or rescheduled due to Covid-19. Please check the towns website, Facebook page, or call the chamber for more information and or questions.

Around Town Events-Watersmeet

Most events have been canceled or rescheduled due to Covid-19. Please check the towns website, Facebook page, or call the chamber for more information and or questions.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

By Laura Mans

Happy Summer! As many of you have just heard in this newsletter, there will be no summer picnic this year due to COVID-19. During our picnic, many of you renew your association dues for the next year. There are 120 memberships that expired 12/31/2019. That is why it is so important that many of you utilize the form within this newsletter and mail us your dues for 2020.

As we try to reach as many of you as possible, we will be sending out email blasts with the renewal form and USPS to those we do not have email addresses for. Your active membership is vital to our lake system.

You can help with membership by encouraging Cisco Chain owners that are not members to join and be an important part of the CCROA's mission "Promoting Safe Fun on Clean Lakes".

Below is a breakdown of our current membership:

334 active members as of 12/31/2019

Big	48
Cisco	42
Clearwater	14
East Bay	20
Fishhawk	14
Lindsley	25
Little Africa	1
Mamie	24
Morley	2
Poor	19
Thousand Island	101
West Bay	23
Not on Chain	1

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the board via the CCROA email, ccroa49969@gmail.com, or contact a board member directly. A list of current board members can be found on our website.

Note: Membership year starts January 1st and ends on December 31st

Cisco Chain Riparian Owners Association Membership Application

NEW _____ RENEWAL _____ DONATION _____

Last Name _____ First Name _____ Spouse _____

Mailing Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone # _____ e-mail Address _____

Cell Phone _____ Additional e-mail Address _____

Name of Lake _____ Lake Address _____

Dues are \$25.00 per year. Advance payments are welcomed. Just indicate how many years in advance you wish to pay

Number of years _____ Amount Enclosed: _____

Lifetime Membership is only \$450.00. Amount Enclosed _____

Amount of General Fund Donation _____

Amount of Lake Management (formerly AIS) Donation: _____

Amount for Walleye Stocking Fund: _____ Total Amount Enclosed: _____

PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: CISCO CHAIN RIPARIAN OWNERS ASSN.

MAIL TO: CCROA P.O. BOX 687, WATERSMEET, MI 49969-0687

Be a Volunteer! Join Us and Make a Difference!!!

Officer or Lake Representative _____ Picnic Volunteer _____

Seasonal Committee _____ Educate at Boat Ramps _____ Special Projects _____