



Annual Report

2012

Thirty Lakes Watershed District
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TLWD 2012 Annual Report

2012 Annual Report Thirty Lakes Watershed District Brainerd, MN

This annual report is submitted pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Chapter 103.D. It summarizes the activities of the Thirty Lakes Watershed District for the calendar year of 2012.

Background

Thirty Lakes Watershed District was established by Order of the Minnesota Water Resources Board on May 18, 1971 in response to two nominating petitions.

The primary goal of Thirty Lakes Watershed District is the protection of the surface and subsurface water within the District Boundaries.

The primary purpose of the District is to conserve natural resources through land use planning, flood control and other conservation projects to protect public health, safety and welfare.

There are 34 lakes and 18 protected wetlands within the 70 square miles of the Thirty Lakes Watershed District boundaries. The entire District lies within Crow Wing County, and 60% of the total area is covered with surface water. Portions of the cities of Nisswa, Merrifield and Breezy Point are within the District, as well as portions of the townships of Lake Edward, Pelican, Mission and Unorganized First Assessment. The largest lakes within the District are Pelican Lake, Lake Edward, Lake Hubert and North Long Lake.

Introduction

The Board of Managers of the Thirty Lakes Watershed District holds regular meetings on the second Monday of each month. All regular meetings are open to the public and were held at the District Office, in the Land Services Building, located at 322 Laurel Street, Brainerd, MN. Proper notices of special meetings are published in the prescribed manner.

The Annual Election of Officers for the Board of Managers is held during the regular May or June meeting.

The **Managers and Officers** at the beginning of 2012 were as follows:

| | |
|--|---|
| Mark Young, President/Chair | Gorden Hardy, Vice President/Vice Chair |
| Thomas Sweningson, Secretary/Treasurer | |

The **Managers and Officers** at the end of 2012 were as follows:

| | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Gorden Hardy, President/Chair | Mark Young, Vice President/Vice Chair |
| Thomas Sweningson, Secretary | Darrel Palmer, Treasurer |
| Wesley Ellis, Manager | |

Citizen Advisory Committee

The Thirty Lakes Watershed Board of Managers is grateful to have the following individuals comprise the Citizen Advisory Committee:

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| Bob Albrecht | Crow Wing County Commissioner Rosemary Franzen |
| Rick A. Johnson | Michael Duval |
| Chris Pence | |

Staff

| | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Tasha Lauer, District Administrator | Darren Mayers, TLWD/SWCD Technician |
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2012 PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES

Thirty Lakes Watershed District Permits

Onsite inspections are unofficially turned over to Crow Wing County Environmental Services. Thirty Lakes Watershed District may choose to review/comment on the Crow Wing County applications/permits.

Annual Overflight

The East half of the watershed district was flown. Areas of environmental concern were recorded and formed into digital images taken from an altitude of approximately 2,000 feet. All images are numerically correlated to maps of the area. These photographs will provide important historic information for future land use decisions.



Web Site

The web site of Thirty Lakes Watershed District, www.30lakes.org, continues to be regularly updated with current information, Water Quality Data, District Programs, Board Meeting Minutes and Photographs.

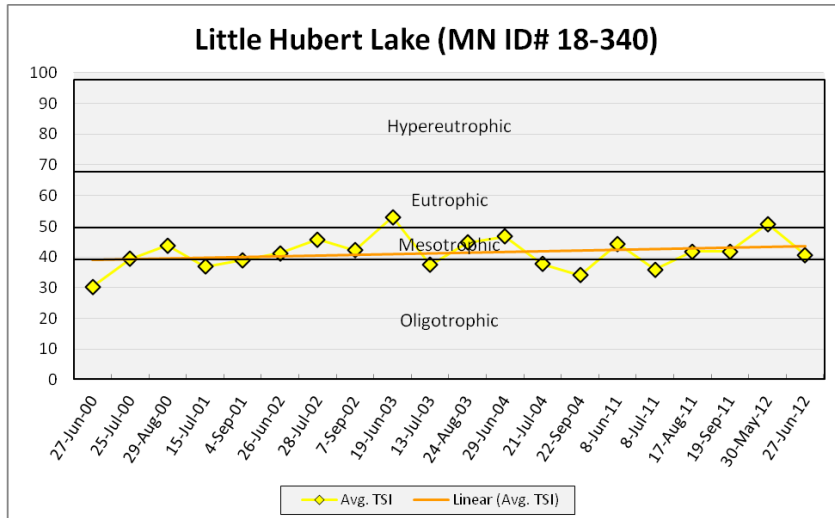


www.30lakes.org

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Water Quality Monitoring

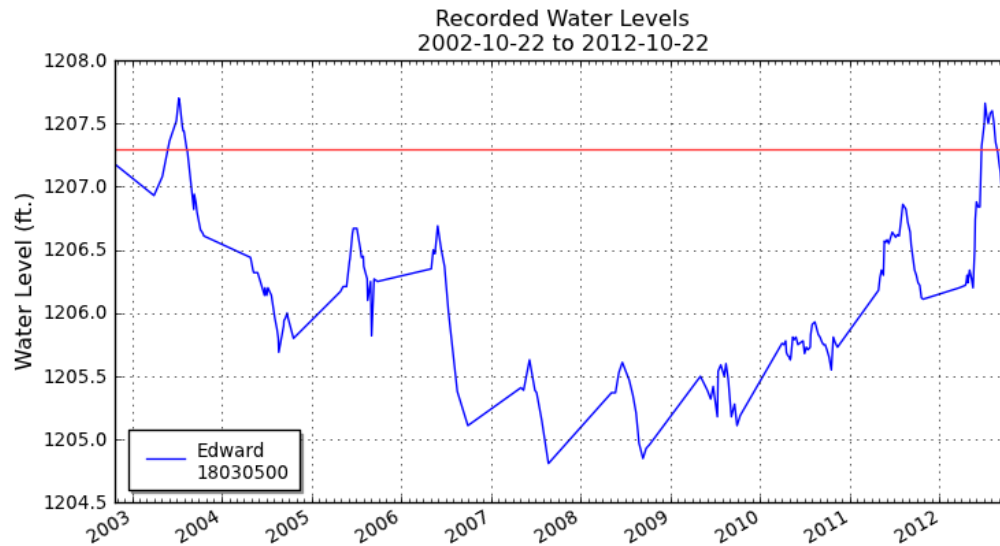
Twenty (20) lakes were tested four times during the summer of 2012 to determine their Trophic Status Index (TSI). Of the 52 lakes and wetlands within the District, 12 to 18 are tested each year on a rotation basis. All data was submitted to the MPCA EQUIS system and made available on the Thirty Lakes Watershed District website. TSI Mapping was done on 5 lakes in the Watershed District. (Little Pelican shown).



Little Pelican Lake

Lake Level Monitoring

Lake gauges were placed in twenty two (22) lakes within the District, and their levels were recorded every one to two weeks from May through October. Eleven Volunteers checked 12 of the lakes, while District Staff monitored the rest. All data was submitted to DNR staff and made available on the DNR website, with a link on the TLWD website.



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Cost-Share Program

Our Cost-Share Program is a 50% to 100% Cost Share with the land owner, up to amounts of \$2500 or \$5000 respectively. The program was extended to lower income for needed areas. We have had 7 Best Management Projects installed this year, and a few projects that needed maintenance, for an approximate total of 1200 linear feet. The total cost for projects in 2012 was \$28,655.98.



Septic System Program

We just started a septic system upgrade program. Landowners have the ability to qualify for a loan or grant, if they don't qualify for the Region Five Development Commission Loan. This will give lower income landowners a way to upgrade their septic system and keep the waters cleaner.

Vegetation Control

Thirty Lakes Watershed District placed 18 muskrat platforms in Little Pelican Lake, in a V pattern to stimulate the muskrat's path into the excessively vegetated areas. The muskrats have used many of the platforms and seem to be eating more vegetation in this area. One platform is being used by Swans.

TLWD Overall Management Plan: The Thirty lakes Watershed District is in process of amending the 10 year overall management plan for 2013-2023. The plan is intended to have a more project orientated base.

Training and Workshops

Staff attended the Garden Expo, Earth Day, BAELN (Brainerd Area Environmental Learning Network) Workshops, ADA (Association of District Administrators) meetings, Crow Wing County Fair, BWSR (Board of Water and Soil Resources) academy, and MAWD (Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts) annual meeting.

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Work Plan for 2013

Cooperation

The District will strengthen its cooperation with the cities, county, Crow Wing Soil and Water Conservation District, lake associations, and other Local Government Units. We are planning to meet, call, email more often with these entities. We are in the process of identifying short term and long term plans for each of these entities.

Annual Overflight

The District will continue to have annual overflights to document land use, and water quality. This is a valuable tool to identify any issues that may need to be addressed with possible cost-share funding.

Website

The District will continue to utilize the web site to post monitoring data and other important reports to improve water quality, etc.

Water Quality Monitoring

The District will continue its extensive Trophic Status Index monitoring programs that have been occurring since 1989. Currently 15-20 lakes are sampled 4 times a year in the summer months.

Lake Level Monitoring

The District will continue its lake level monitoring programs. We have however; based on input from the local MN DNR hydrologist reduced the number of lakes we will monitor from 23 to 14. The majority of the lakes have a volunteer monitor.

Cost Share Program

The District will continue its Cost Share Program with an approved overall budget of \$30,000. TLWD supports projects that protect or restore quality of lakes and rivers, protects or restores ground water resources, protects and restores native plant communities found within the district and innovative approaches to treat storm water at the source, focusing on specifically identified areas of lower water quality.

Residential Septic System Grant Program

The Thirty Lakes Watershed District has implemented a residential septic system program for residential property owners with a full grant to provide funding for repair or replacement of existing septic systems in the District if maintenance/compliance is done for 10 consecutive years. The amount available to residential owners is up to \$6000.00, which includes testing of the current system. Applicant first needs to seek a grant/loan through Crow Wing County or Region Five Development Commission.

Commercial Septic System Loan Program

The Thirty Lakes Watershed District has implemented a residential septic system program for commercial property owners with a 10 year, 0% interest loan, to provide funding for repair or replacement of existing septic systems in the District. The amount available to commercial owners is up to \$25,000.00, which includes testing of the current system.

Aquatic Invasive Species

Thirty Lakes Watershed District will be discussing Aquatic Invasive Species issues with the lake associations, MN Dept of Natural Resources, to develop information and potential plans, and are looking for possible grants. TLWD will provide a report to its Board on what the plans are of each entity/group, where they need assistance, and what grants may be available to TLWD for funding these efforts.

Public Awareness and Education

The District will create more public awareness and education through advertisements, flyers, 2-3 Best Management Practices workshops, and having an open house.