# Mitchell Lake Association Annual Meeting

Thursday, October 10, 2024



# Agenda

- Welcome
- MLA Background
- Member Survey Results
- 2024 Year in Review
- Guest Speaker
  - Josh Maxwell RPBC Watershed District
- Panel Discussion
- Business Meeting
- Photo Contest Winners





# **MLA Board Members**

- Erik Hansen, President (Term expiring)
- Brian Haugen, Vice President (Term expiring)
- Michelle Rothwell, Treasurer (Term expiring retiring)
- Cheri Nehl, Secretary
- Breann Bundgaard
- Cheryl Harjes
- Dave Jackett (Term expiring)
- John Tyler (Term expiring retiring)
- Zach Fetzer





# MLA Background

- Formed in 2006
  - First lake association in Eden Prairie
- Purpose
  - Maintain, protect and improve the water quality, aesthetic values, wildlife habitat and recreational capacity of Mitchell Lake
  - Educate shoreline owners and the public about the condition and protection of Mitchell Lake
  - Provide a framework for representation for work with federal, state and local agencies for improving the quality of Mitchell Lake





# Over the Years...

- Water quality grade improved from grade D to grade C
- Lake was removed from Minnesota impaired waters list in 2018
- Worked with City of EP & watershed to address aquatic plants
- Hosted 18 lakeshore cleanup events
- Supported 14 lakeshore restoration projects
- Planted over 200 trees between lake and Hwy. 5
- Monitored lake for water quality and invasive species
- Stocked the lake with over 3,000 fish
- Established quarterly meetings between MLA board, City of EP and Watershed
- Built a stronger lake community through education & events













# MLA 2024 Survey Results



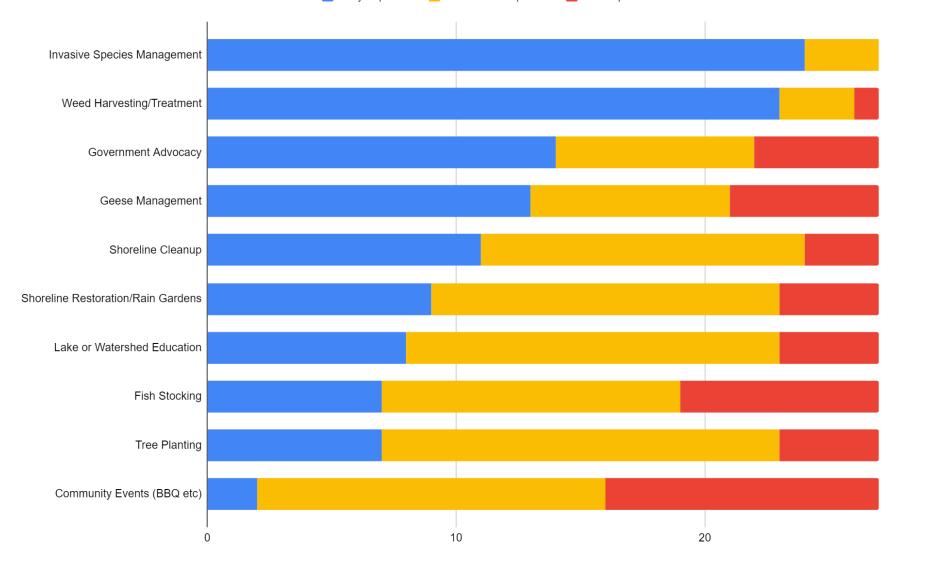
# 2024 MLA Survey Results (27 responses)

Are you a member of How long have you lived **Mitchell Lake Association?** near Mitchell Lake? 55.6% Yes 1 to 5 years No No 6 to 10 years 7.4% More than 10 years 92.6% 22.2% 22.2%



# **MLA Member Priorities**

Very Important Somewhat Important Not Important

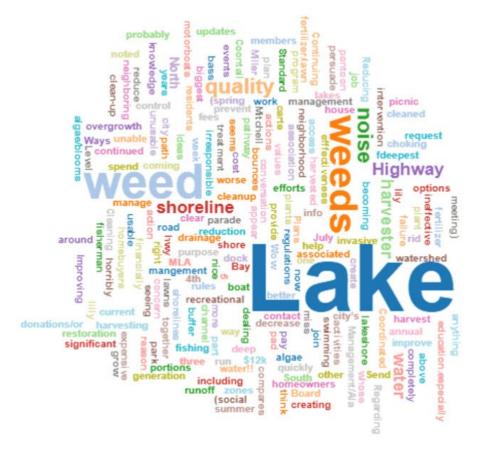


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# MLA Survey Questions/Concerns

- Thanks to members that responded
- Member questions/concerns to be addressed in tonight's meeting



2024	MLA C	oncerr	s: Boar	d		
Finances  • Send more than one request for donations/or to join to those that are not members. • Manage fees be 2024		Social  • Ability to communicate directly with other All A members: (suidelines, of MLA Concerns)		Events  • Neighborhood cleanup  S: Aquatic Plants		
<ul> <li>Membership C sending out re members and</li> </ul>	• What are we goir invasive lake wee the #1 topic as it worse without int turn will decrease	Beneral Harvesting North Bay Weeds				
packets to nev	reduce the quality prevent the next i homebuyers from Plans for dealing South Bay and N • How to manage t algae/blooms • What can we do water quality / we • Weed control effe • What can be don taking over the la	What is the wat Lake?     Watershed plan years.     Standard updat     Lake quality op quality and redu     How our water     What is the development pu     Coordinated eff ineffective with	Water Quality ershed or city's biggest cor and spend for Mitchell lake es ions and actions. Ways to ce weeds uuality compares with neigi pest part of the lake now? el Management/Ala carte v Management/Ala carte v	incern for Mitchell e in the coming improve lake nboring lakes. veed . Ideas are nowledge of the	Shoreline Management           • Reduce fertilizer drainage into lake.           • Continuing lakeshore restoration including education. especially around Miller Park           • Is there a way we can persuade homeowners whose lawns run right down to the lake to plant buffer zones? Weeds and algae are choking the lake, and it seems like tertilizer/lawn runch is probably a significant reason why.           • Improving shoreline           • How can we create a shoreline that allows swimming.	Highway 5 Noise • Highway noise reduction (x5)
		<ul> <li>✓ Current lake</li> <li>✓ 5% of lake &gt;</li> </ul>	nealth and comparison to 15ft deep, max 19 ft deep health published by RPB	· · ·	<ul> <li>✓ Continue to promote lakeshore restoration</li> <li>✓ Promote best practice education</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>✓ Continue to plant trees</li> <li>✓ MNDot Repaying in 10 years</li> </ul>

# **MLA Year in Review**



# 2024 Objectives

- Lake Quality Focus Areas
  - Aquatic Plant management
  - Invasive species management
  - Shoreline Restoration
  - Tree planting
  - Geese management
- Plus...
  - Government Advocacy
  - Community Events
  - Communication/Education
  - Membership Campaign







# **Community Events**

- 18th Annual Lake Clean-up held April 20
- Summer Social held July 11
  - Food truck, Root beer floats
  - Native plant sale Sold 294 plants









# Highway 5 Noise

- Natural noise and visual barrier
  - MLA members have planted 200 trees since 2005
  - 2024 Planted 20 bare-root saplings and 2 maple trees
- MnDOT Highway 5 repaving at least 10 years out







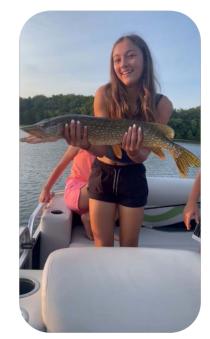
## Now



# Fish Stocking

- Over 3,200 fish were released over the past four years thanks to John Tyler's leadership!
  - Last fish stocking was in fall 2023
  - Program now exclusively funded by donations
  - Current fund at \$255



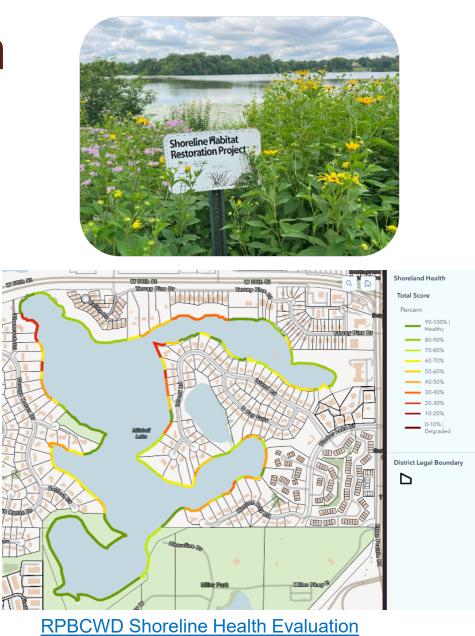






# Lakeshore Restoration

- 14 Restoration Projects on Lake
  - Capture Pollutants by filtering
  - Reduce erosion
  - Provide habitat for wildlife
- Funding Opportunities
  - <u>RPBC Watershed District</u>: 75% of Project Cost up to \$5,000
  - <u>City of Eden Prairie:</u> 80% of Project
     Cost up to \$2,000
  - <u>MLA Grant</u>: \$250 for watershed or city approved projects (MLA members)
- What is your shoreline health?





# Lakeshore Restoration – Miller Park

- City multi-year Miller Park shoreline restoration project underway
- Held three volunteer buckthorn removal events
  - Mitchell Lake Association working with Friends of EP Parks
  - Next buckthorn event planned for Sat, Oct 19
- Native plants to be planted after buckthorn is removed







# Mitchell Lake Health vs Nearby Lakes

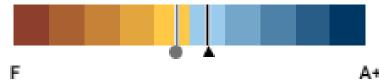
 Mitchell Lake is currently at DNR Health Grade C+

Lake Health Score (A): 55

Lake Health Grade: C+

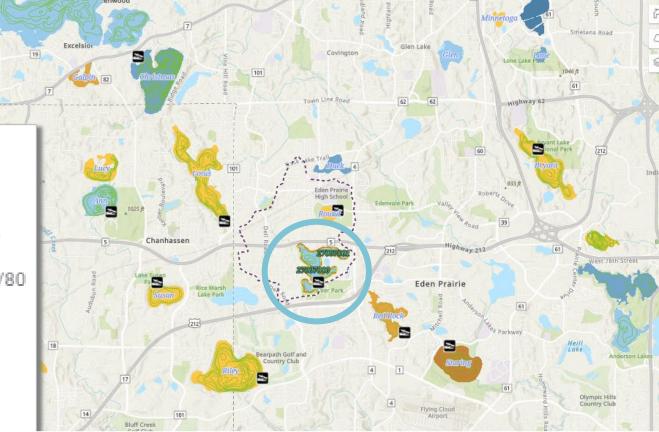
Lake Health Score Major Watershed Mean (
): 46

Lake Health Score Major Watershed Min/Max: 20/80



Lake Health Score is an average of the Water Quality, Biology, and Hydrology Lake Health Component Scores and is on a 0 to 100 scale.

Source: MNDNR Watershed Health Assessment



A healthy lake is one that is near its natural state. Water entering the lake has low levels of pollution. A healthy lake is protected by a natural shoreline and by investments in careful stewardship of the lake and its watershed.



# Mitchell is a "Shallow Lake"

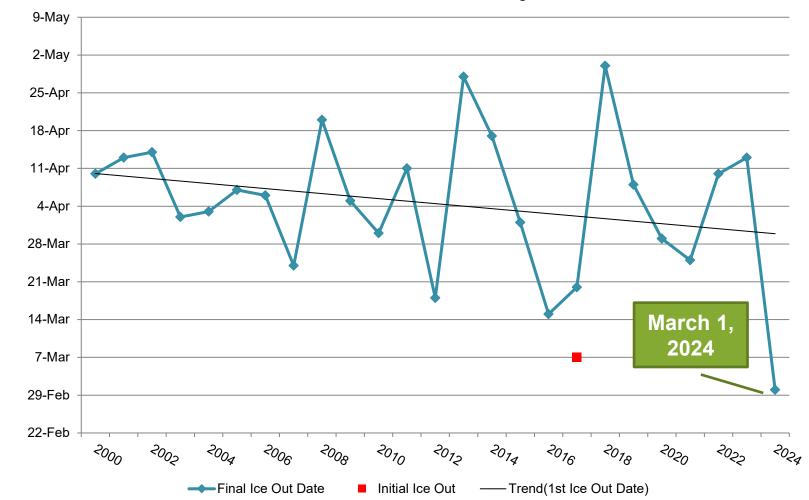
- Mitchell Lake is classified as a "Shallow Lake" by the MPCA.
  - 5.3 ft avg depth
- 95% of Mitchell Lake's area is littoral
  - <15 ft deep
  - Shallow enough for sunlight to reach the bottom, supporting a diverse plant and animal life
- Water level maintained by pipes linking EP lakes.
  - Water flows in from Round Lake and out to Red Rock Lake





# Ice Out - Earliest on Record

Mitchell Lake - Ice Out - Day of Year





**Ice out definition:** Ability to navigate from the inlet at Highway 5 to the Miller Park boat launch.

# **Aquatic Plant Management**

- Mitchell Lake is home to over 15 species of aquatic plants
- Non-native invasive plants include
  - Curlyleaf Pondweed, Eurasian Watermilfoil, Brittle Naid
  - Lack of ice and snow cover last winter boosted the growth of curlyleaf this year

#### • Methods to control invasive aquatic plants:

- Herbicide application (annual):
  - 13 acres treated in May 2024
- Mechanical harvesting (annual):
  - Completed in July 2024
  - 61 boat loads (564,25 cubic yards removed)
  - 5 weed harvesting rebates issued
- Alum treatments:
  - Watershed is exploring

## Curlyleaf Life-Cycle in MN WINTER SPRING SUMMER FALL





# Stopping the Spread of Invasive Species

- Adopt-a-Dock Volunteers inspect for Zebra Mussels
- Boat Inspection and Cleaning at Boat Launch
- Lake Monitoring
  - Last month 9 lake residents participated in on-boat training with an Aquatic Invasive Species Specialist
- Lake Pledge Challenge









# Lake Pledge Challenge

- Lake Pledge is a Hennepin County Program to educate lake users on how to stop the spread of AIS
  - MLA can earn money by achieving participation rate milestones.
  - MLA has earned \$3K to date Thank you!
  - 14 participants away from another \$1K
  - Our Goal: 60% participation to earn \$5K
- Have you taken the pledge?
  - Visit <u>www.lakepledge.com</u> or Lake Pledge app on your phone
  - Spread the word to your neighbors!







# **Guest Speakers**





# Mitchell Lake & Aquatic Plants

Mitchell Lake Association Annual Meeting

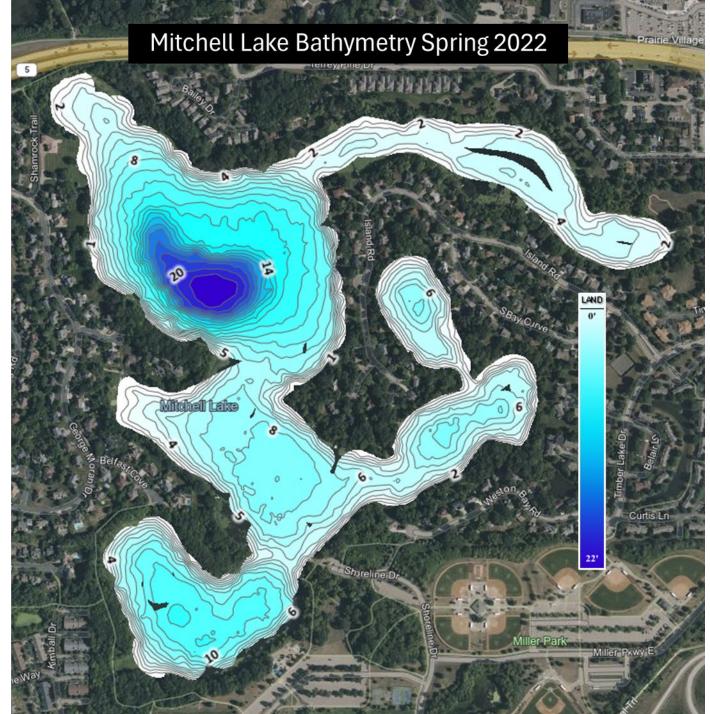
October 10, 2024

**Lori Haak** Water Resources Coordinator City of Eden Prairie Josh Maxwell Water Resources Manager RPBCWD Mitchell Lake

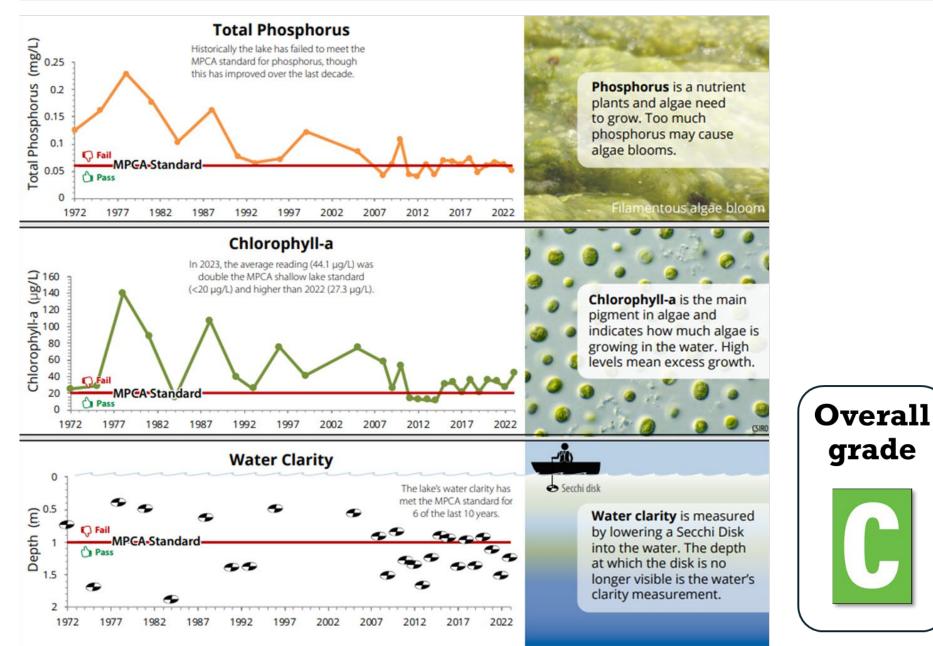
Maximum lake depth: 21 feet (spring 2022)



Depth varies yearly based on precipitation



### Mitchell Lake Water Quality



#### Lake Mitchell Chloride Trend



# The Chloride Problem



#### Salt is a forever chemical!

- · Impacts plants and animals
- Saltwater more dense: no moving, no mixing
- "Freshwater salinization syndrome"
- No "safe" or "environmentally friendly" salt—no matter what the package says

# **Reducing Chlorides**



# Reduce your chloride use by not relying on de-icers:

- ✤ Shovel early and often
- Prevent ice formation avoid driving or walking on snow
- Pile snow where it won't melt & refreeze on walkways/driveways
- ✤ Sweep up extra and reuse
- Help others understand the problem and how they can help

#### What is a Healthy Lake?

- Low levels of nutrient input (watershed and in-lake)
- Clear water (good clarity)
- Diverse native aquatic plant population
- Balanced fish community
- Shoreland with minimal disturbance



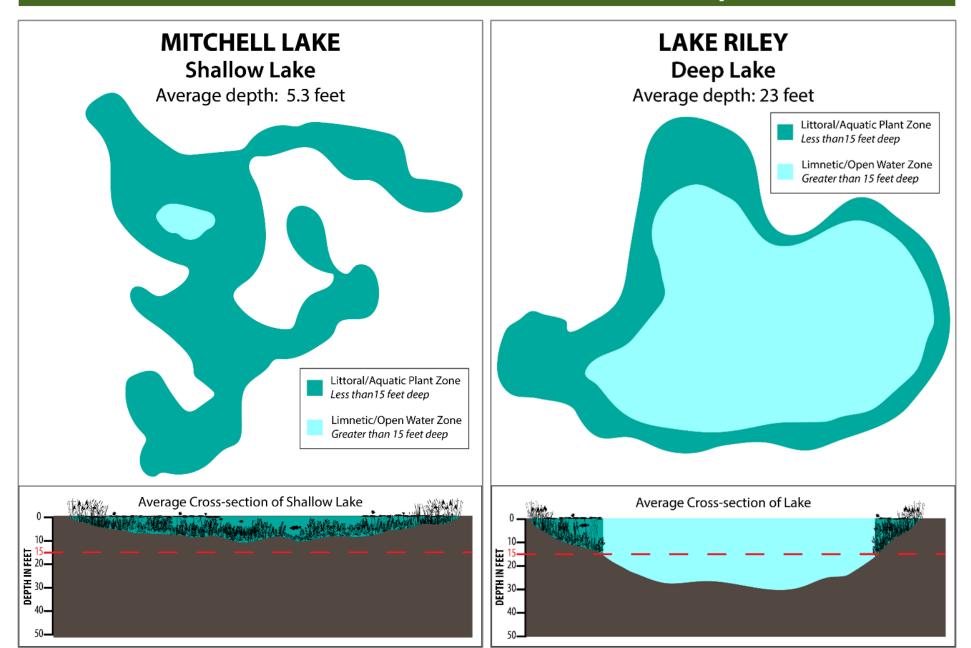
#### Native aquatic plants are not weeds.

Aquatic plants are essential to the lake ecosystem.

- Provide wildlife habitat:
   Food
  - >Place to hunt
  - NurseryShelter from
  - predators
- Oxygenate water
- Protect shoreline
- Stabilize lake bottom sediments



#### Littoral Zone: Shallow vs. Deep Lakes



#### Curly-leaf Pondweed in 2024



#### RPBCWD has been using herbicide to control CLP every year on Mitchell lake.

Effectiveness of treatment depends largely on timing of CLP growth.

Treatment must occur no later than May 31<sup>st</sup> (per DNR).

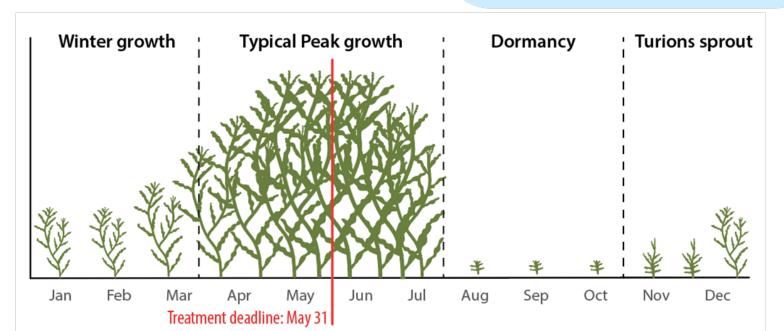
#### Winter 2023-2024

Conditions were **ideal for growth** of Curly-leaf Pondweed:

- Short lake ice season
- Almost no snow cover

A **cold spring** delayed growth of CLP, making it **difficult to survey** in prep for DNR permit application.

#### **RESULT = A bumper crop of CLP!**

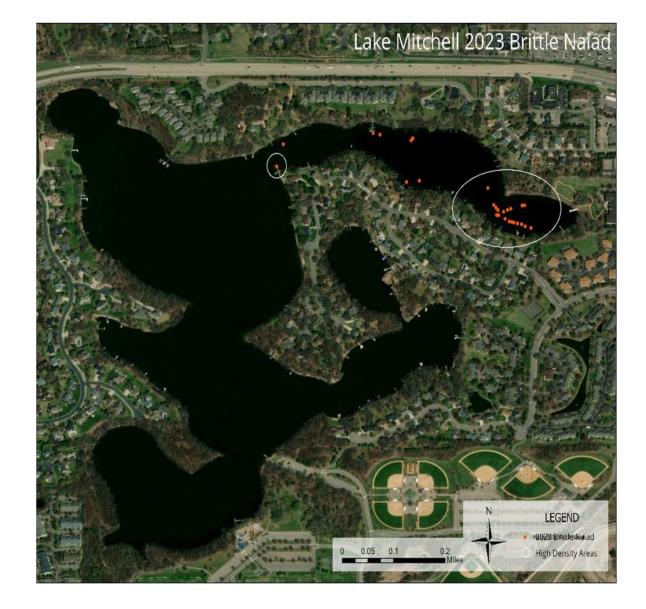


#### Curly-leaf Pondweed Treatment in 2024



#### Brittle Naiad in Mitchell Lake

- First documented in Mitchell in 2023
- Well-established in the lake
- Characteristics
  - Rooted, submersed plant
  - Thin leaves with serrated edges
  - Annual plant that grows from seeds and fragments
  - Forms dense mats
  - Outcompetes native plants
  - Unsuitable habitat for aquatic life



Emergent	Floating-leaf	Submerged	
Leaves & stems extend well above water's surface.	Leaves and flowers float on water's surface.	Grows entirely below water's surface, though flowers and seeds may extend above water.	
	VT K		
Examples: Bulrush, cattail, wild rice, arrowhead	Examples: Water lily, lotus, duckweed, watershield	Examples: Coontail, pondweed, watermilfoil, waterweed	
When a permit is NOT REQUIRED:	When a permit is NOT REQUIRED:	When a permit is NOT REQUIRED:	
<ul> <li><u>Not applicable</u>. A permit is ALWAYS REQUIRED for removal of any emergent vegetation.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Shoreline property owner may mechanically remove (cut or pull) floating-leaf vegetation to create or maintain an up to 15-foot-wide channel to open water.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Shoreline property owner may mechanically remove (cut or pull) submerged vegetation to create or maintain an up to 15-foot-wide channel to open water.</li> </ul>	
IMPORTANT: THE REMOVAL OF PROTECTED PLANTS The protected aquatic plant you are most likely watershed district is Yellow or American Lot	to encounter in our	<ul> <li>Shoreline property owner may <u>mechanically clear</u> (cut or pull) or maintain an open area up to 50 feet along the shoreline or one-half the length of the shoreline, whichever is less. The cleared area may not exceed 2,500 square feet in size.</li> </ul>	
When a permit is REQUIRED:	When a permit is REQUIRED:	When a permit is REQUIRED:	
<ul> <li>A permit of "continuing duration" to mechanically maintain an up to 15-foot-wide channel to open water</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>A permit is needed to mechanically remove anything beyond the 15-foot- wide channel.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>A permit is needed to mechanically remove anything beyond the 2,500 sq. ft. area and 15-foot-wide channel.</li> </ul>	
may be allowed if channel remains in the same location year-to-year.	<ul> <li>A permit is needed for any herbicide use on any size area of floating-leaf</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>A permit is needed for any herbicide use on any size area of submerged</li> </ul>	
<ul> <li>A permit is needed for any herbicide use on any size area of emergent vegetation.</li> </ul>	vegetation.	vegetation.	
Contact the MN DNR before proceeding!	Contact the MN DNR before proceeding!	Contact the MN DNR before proceeding!	



Lake Management Approach

**RPBCWD goal:** To improve the lake's **ecological health** & work to meet or exceed state water quality standards.

While RPBCWD does not manage lakes specifically for recreation, a healthy lake with a healthy aquatic plant population supports recreational opportunities such as fishing & birdwatching.





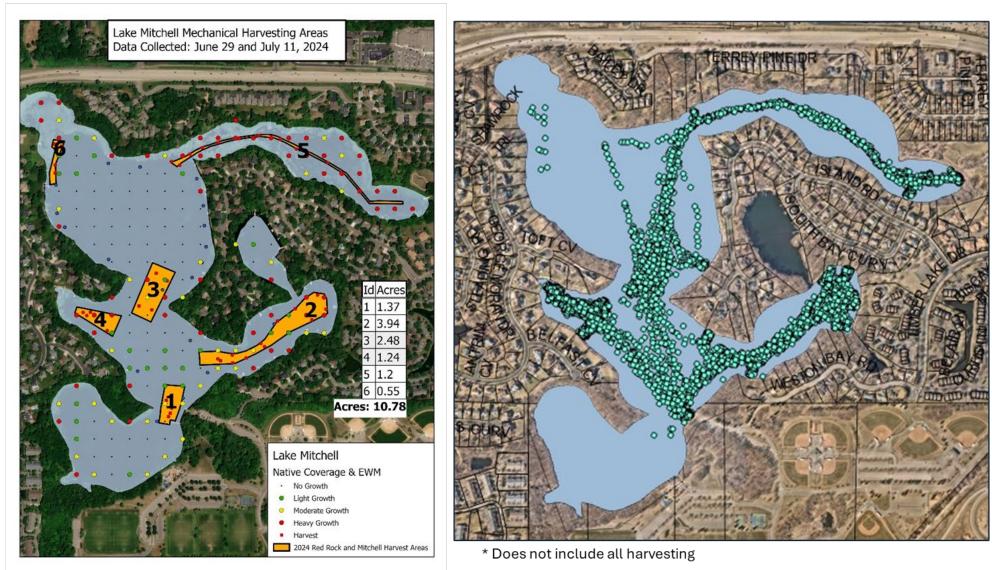
#### Lake Management Approach

- Balance lake health and recreation
- Primary goal is to provide access to open water, not to remove all aquatic plants
- Caution is needed in aquatic plant removal so unintended consequences (e.g. fish kills, algae blooms) are limited

#### Mechanical Harvesting in 2024

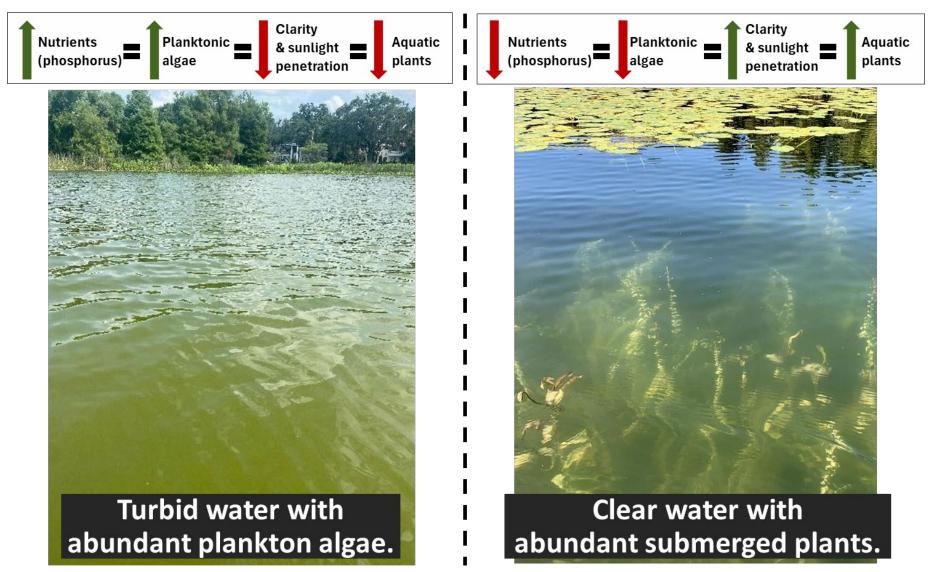
#### **Vegetation Survey**

#### **Harvester Paths**



#### Factors affecting Lake Health

The availability of nutrients influences algae growth and water clarity. Better clarity means more sunlight to spur aquatic plant growth.





Do Your Part: Nutrient Reduction

More nutrients means more **algae growth**.

Don't mow to the lake edge.



Minimize lawn fertilization. Keep grass clippings off the curb.

Pick up your dog's droppings.



#### Natural Shoreline Restoration

Stewardship Grant: rpbcwd.org/grants

Landscaping for Water Quality Rebate: edenprairie.org/water





# **Panel Discussion**

## 2024 MLA Concerns: Board Focused

	Finances	Communication	Events
What our members are saying?	<ul> <li>Send more than one request for donations/or to join to those that are not members.</li> <li>Manage fees better</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Ability to communicate directly with other MLA members. (guidelines, of course, but there really should be a way to communicate with other MLA members).</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Neighborhood cleanup</li> <li>Continuing lakeshore restoration including education. especially around Miller Park</li> <li>More activities (social)</li> <li>Have a 4th of July pontoon parade!</li> <li>I think the Board does a nice job of creating the three events each year (spring clean-up, summer picnic and annual meeting)</li> </ul>
What is being done?	✓ Membership Committee now sending out reminders to past members and delivering welcome packets to new neighbors	<ul> <li>✓ Members can communicate via MLA Facebook page</li> <li>✓ 3 Events/year provide opportunities for interaction</li> <li>✓ We have not made email distribution public due to privacy concerns</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>✓ Continue to host lake cleanup in the spring</li> <li>✓ Reconsidering summer social – possible pontoon happy hours</li> </ul>

## 2024 MLA Concerns: General

#### Water Quality

- What is the watershed or city's biggest concern for Mitchell Lake?
- Watershed plan and spend for Mitchell lake in the coming years.
- Standard updates
- Lake quality options and actions. Ways to improve lake quality and reduce weeds
- How our water quality compares with neighboring lakes.
- What is the deepest part of the lake now?
- Lake Water Level Management/Ala carte weed management program
- Coordinated efforts to improve lake quality. Ideas are ineffective without action. Please use the knowledge of the association and neighborhood to put together an action plan.

#### Shoreline Management

- Reduce fertilizer drainage into lake.
- Continuing lakeshore restoration including education. especially around Miller Park
- Is there a way we can persuade homeowners whose lawns run right down to the lake to plant buffer zones? Weeds and algae are choking the lake, and it seems like fertilizer/lawn runoff is probably a significant reason why.
- Improving shoreline

restoration

• How can we create a shoreline that allows swimming.

✓ Continue promoting lakeshore

✓ Promote best practice education

- Highway 5 Noise
- Highway noise reduction (x5)

- ✓ Continue planting trees
  - ✓ MNDot repaying >10 years out

✓ 5% of lake >15ft deep, max 19 ft deep

Annual Lake health published by RPBCWD

# 2024 MLA Concerns: Aquatic Plants

#### Weeds General

- What are we going to do about invasive lake weeds? This should be the #1 topic as it will continue to get worse without intervention. This in turn will decrease house values, reduce the quality of the lake, and prevent the next generation of homebuyers from moving in.
- Plans for dealing with weeds in South Bay and North Bay.
- How to manage the large amount of algae/blooms
- What can we do to improve overall water quality / weed management
- Weed control effectiveness (x6)
- What can be done with lily pads taking over the lake? (x2)
- Herbicide in spring, harvesting in summer

#### Harvesting

- Does weed harvesting really work?
- Weed harvesting on the lake

   does the MLA pay for or the city. I don't recall seeing info re when the weed harvester would be on the lake and how to contact them if we wanted to have our shoreline harvested - or did I miss it?
- It is financially irresponsible to pay \$12k once per year to have a weed harvester come through as make the lake usable for 1 week before the weeds come back seemingly worse than before.
- ✓ City of EP pays for harvesting channels

#### North Bay Weeds

- Cleaning the lake up from invasive plants. The lake is becoming unusable with the current regulations and rules associated. We are unable to get our boat out of the channel because of the Coontail and lily pad overgrowth.
- Making the lake usable for all residents portions of the lake, particularly the channel off of hwy 5 are almost completely unusable for recreational activities. It has continued to get worse each year and doesn't appear to be on treatment plans.
- In the north arm of the lake, the pathway of the weed harvester has been favoring the north shoreline. The cost to have the harvester come to our dock is horribly expensive, and it does seem like they don't harvest very deep - the weeds grow back very quickly. Is there any help for this?
- Those of us on the north arm feel quite left out of the conversation when it comes to weed management. If the purpose of weed management is to provide a way for fishing access which often means being able to cast along shorelines, the current path that is harvested is a failure.

 $\checkmark$ 

# **Business Meeting**



# **Business Meeting**

- 2023 Annual Meeting Minutes
- Treasurer's Report
- Elections for open board seats



# 2023 Annual Meeting Minutes

- Held Oct. 3, 2023, at 7 pm at Chanhassen American Legion
  - 34 in attendance
- Agenda:
  - Welcome & Introductions
  - MLA Background
  - 2023 Year in Review
  - Guest Speaker
    - Tony Brough Hennepin County
    - Lori Haak City of EP
    - Terry Jeffery RPBC Watershed District
  - Business Meeting
    - Financial Report
    - Election of New Board Members
  - 2024 Plans
  - Photo Contest Results

Minutes posted on mitchelllake.org



#### **MLA Membership Status**

- 67 current members (including 29 recurring members)
  - Membership dues increased to \$50/year in 2024
  - Annual dues now due in January, reminders will be sent out
  - Welcome packets being delivered to new neighbors





Mitchell Lake coasters still available for new recurring members



## MLA 2024 Financial Statement

September 30, 2024

2024 Current Members: 67 2024 Annual Membership Dues: \$50.00



MLA Balance Sheet	
Checking:Old National Bank	\$ 4,747.65
Paypal	\$ 3,797.44
MLA Reserve	\$ 8,545.09
Liabilities	0
Total Net Assets	\$ 8,545.09

Asset Categories		
General Fund	Ş	8,286.09
Fish Stocking Fund	Ş	259.00
Total Net Assets	Ş	8,545.09



2024 MLA General Fund (Income & Expenses)		
Income		
Membership Dues	\$	2,721.33
Contributions	\$	40.00
Total Income		\$2,761.33

#### Expenses

Member Rebates and Program Expenses	\$	742.63
Events (Spring Cleanup/ Picnic/ Annual Meeting)	\$	663.77
Operating Expenses( Website/Newsletter/Fees)	Ş	716.87
Total Association Expenditures	Ş	2,123.27
Net Income General Fund	Ş	638.06

2024 Fish Stocking Fund (Income & Expenses)	
Contributions	\$ 255.00
Fish Stocking Expense	\$ -
Net Income Fish Stocking Fund	\$ 255.00



## MLA Board Thank You!



#### Thank you to retiring board members

- Michelle Rothwell (3 years)
- John Tyler (18 years)



# **MLA Board Opportunities**

- 5 Open Board Member Positions
- Board Member Commitment
  - Three-year term with 6-8 board meetings/year
  - Support MLA activities
  - Interface with partners (EP/WD District)
  - Great opportunity to get involved and meet your neighbors
- Short on Time? Join an MLA Committee
  - Restoration/Water Quality/Aquatic Plants
  - Community Events
  - Communications/Membership





## **Board Member Election**

- New Candidate Introductions
  - **Motivation:** What are your primary reasons for wanting to join the MLA board?
  - **Experience:** Describe your relevant experience and skills that would benefit our efforts.
  - **Goals:** What specific goals or initiatives do you hope to contribute to if elected?
- Vote for 5
  - Voting eligibility: Each address with a paid membership is entitled to one vote

Candidate	Status
Erik Hansen	Incumbent
Brian Haugen	Incumbent
Dave Jackett	Incumbent
Jon Hanke	New
Mark Friesen	New

# **2024 Photo Contest**



# 2024 Photo Contest

- Received 46 photo submissions
- All photos will be posted on the MLA website



**2023** - 1<sup>st</sup> Place - Lorinda Fraboni Schlauderaff



**2023** - 2<sup>nd</sup> Place - Jessica Thompson











































































































## And the Winners are...

#### **Honorable Mention**





#### Erik Hansen

**Cheryl Harjes** 



#### And the Winners are...

#### 2<sup>nd</sup> Place

Brian Haugen





#### And the Winners are...

1<sup>st</sup> Place Paul Yahnke





# Thank You!!!

#### Our MLA Board

#### **Our Partners**

#### **Our Members**

# Ways to Get Involved!

- Join as an MLA member! (Consider annual renewal)
- Join an MLA subcommittee
- Join the Mitchell Lake Association Facebook page and visit our website
- Adopt a Drain
- Plant a shoreline buffer