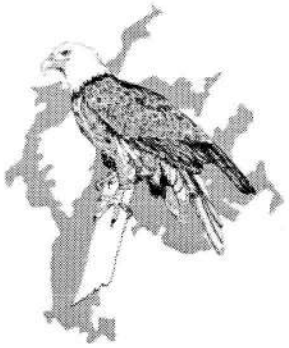
Turtle Flambeau Flowage and Trude Lake

PROPERTY OWNERS' ASSOCIATION, INC.



Spring-Summer 2007

Anglers Turn In Lead Tackle:

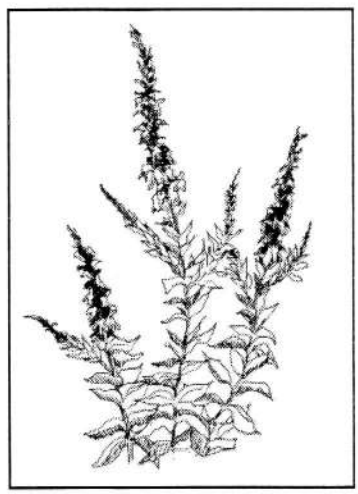
Non-Toxic Materials Available

Have you ever closed a lead split shot with your teeth? Lead is toxic. The Romans knew this. Our legislative body knows this. Lead paint was pulled from the shelves in 1978, and lead was outlawed as an automotive gasoline additive in this country in 1986. Lead's resiliency in the marketplace can only be attributed to one thing: it's remarkably useful despite the hazards it poses.

Lead has been the choice material in tackle for generations, and chances are that all the jig heads and sinkers in your tackle box are lead based. Over time, lost tackle builds up in our lakes and streams. Today, studies show that lead poisoning from ingested lead tackle has been documented in twenty-five species of water birds, with loons being especially susceptible. In New England states, almost half of all adult loon mortality is due to lead poisoning.

With legislative mandates lagging, anglers have voluntarily answered the call to get the lead out of their personal tackle boxes. Disposal sites were coordinated through LoonWatch, the Raptor Education Group Inc., and volunteers across the state. In 2007, this effort continues with many Wisconsin counties accepting lead at their household hazardous waste collection events this spring and summer. There will be free samples of non-toxic tackle for all who turn in their lead. LoonWatch is also selling tackle kits of alternative materials such as steel, tin, bismuth, and ceramic sinkers and jig heads. For opportunities in your area to Get the Lead Out, contact Loonwatch at (715)682-1220 or your local hazardous waste coordinator for more information.

--- Purple Loosestrife Alert! ---



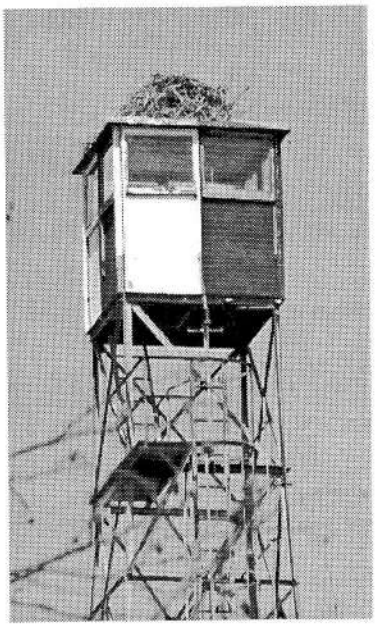
Volunteers are needed to report and survey for purple loosestrife on the flowage. The association coordinates an annual survey with established routes that are run in early August each year when the plants are in bloom. As you may be aware, loosestrife is an invasive exotic species that is damaging to lakeshores and wetlands.

Last summer, John Bates and Mary Burns worked with the association to raise beetles that can help control the spread of loosestrife. They live on the Manitowish River upstream from the flowage. There is a growing population of loosestrife on the river and it is hoped that by growing and releasing these beetles, that the spread downriver will be contained.

If you are interested in helping with the survey, or growing loosestrife beetles in future years, please contact the association for more information. This is one environmental issue where we can take direct action and see a real result in our own backyard.

Inside this Issue

--- TFF Osprey Study Begins 34th Year ---



This summer marks the 34th year of research and management on TFF and Iron County osprey. During this time the program has been focusing on construction of artificial nest platforms, banding of adult birds and chicks, return rates of adults birds, and food habits of nesting pairs. This summer a Northland College intern will be inventorying all Iron County nests, looking for color leg band combinations, and assisting with banding of adults and chicks in July. The Mercer ranger station is coordinating a tour for the Natural Resource Foundation Tour during the summer banding. This has been one of their most popular education tours and highlights the work being done for osprey on the flowage.

For those interested in extreme osprey sightings... you may want to check out the nest on the Springstead Fire Tower! Apparently ospreys began construction on the nest last summer and are now incubating eggs. They undoubtedly have the best penthouse view in all Iron County!

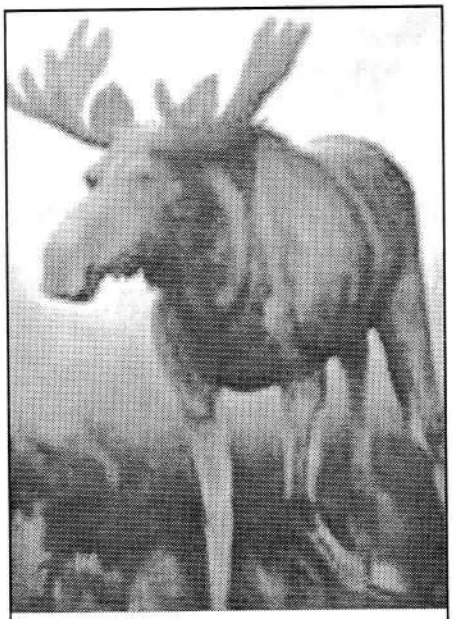
--- Paradise Lost? ---

Paradise Lost? Climate Change in the North Woods – Traveling Art Exhibition to Open at North Lakeland Discovery Center.

For people living in the Northwoods of Wisconsin and Upper Michigan, climate change may seem like something happening somewhere else – or maybe not...Recent hot dry summers and variable winter snowfalls and temperatures often bring the question closer to home.

Paradise Lost? Climate Change in the North Woods is a new traveling art and science exhibit focusing on climate change in the Lake Superior region. It will be hosted at the North Lakeland Discovery Center in Manitowish Waters from August 17-31.

The exhibit is the culmination of over a year's work involving 20 artists, seven scientists, six educators and numerous partner organizations. The exhibit includes paintings, drawings, photography, sculpture, poetry, prose, and music. Scientific findings on climate change in the Northwoods accompany the artwork. There will be an opening reception on August 17th at 7 pm. The opening will feature presentations by scientists and artists. There will be refreshments served, and the program is free and open to the public.



"Moose Running"
Oil painting by Joyce Koskenmaki

During 2007-2008, the exhibition travels include Rhinelander, Ironwood, Ashland, Manitowish Waters, Calumet, Wausau and Madison. For more information on the schedule and offerings of this project, visit the web site at http://www.wisc.edu/cbe/K12/paradiselost.html or call for information at (715)476-3530.

This project is sponsored by the University of Wisconsin – Madison Center for Biology (CBE) Education and Department of Forest Ecosystem and Management. The UW-Trout Lake Research Station and North Lakeland Discovery Center are primary partners. Funding comes through the UW-Baldwin Endowment Awards, and the Wisconsin Arts Board. Dolly Ledin, (CBE), Dr. David Mladenoff, (Forest Ecosystem and Management) and Terry Daulton (UW-Trout Lake) are leading the project.

--- President's Letter ---

By Maryann Brown

How many times have you heard "So you have a place on the Turtle Flambeau Flowage. Boy, are you lucky." This is such a true statement. I have been lucky to own a piece of property on the flowage and as a result, have had many special encounters with nature and water. Our flowage has to some extent been protected from the pressures of development that have affected many other lakes in the north. We can perhaps credit this to our somewhat remote location, public ownership of shorelines, and the dedicated citizens who live and recreate here. However, our flowage is not immune to problems. Exotic species, shoreline development, invasive plants, increasing recreational use and ever-larger boats and motors are a few of the problems that will eventually threaten our special flowage.

We can do something to protect the qualities of the flowage we value. Our association has many members who are aware on the aforementioned threats. We are hoping that more folks will step up to the plate and get involved in our association projects. Our next annual meeting is June 11th at the Mercer Town Hall at 6:00 p.m. We will be talking about our projects, volunteer opportunities, and hopefully your ideas as well. We hope to see you there and encourage you to join us in our work to keep the flowage healthy and beautiful.

--- Update On Fish Cribs ---

This winter the association sponsored another work day to put together fish cribs for the flowage. We assembled 37 cribs with 20 on East side of Merkle and 17 on North side of the Turtle River north of the bridge to Big Island. There was a nice group of volunteers from the north and south sides of the flowage, and as always the DNR arrived with crews and equipment. We again want to thank Arnie Popp for recruiting volunteers and making the excellent soup for lunch.

Building cribs requires bolting together medium sized logs into square boxes that hold the filler brush. It was slow work on the crib building days this year due to low water level and lack of snow. Filling the brush was even slower, due to a small turnout in volunteers. We give a big thanks to the DNR and the few members who were able to work. We used 15 cords of wood from logging jobs on Big Island. We determine the final location for the cribs based on where the logs are cut and where loggers are able to deliver the materials. It is important to have a landing or lot where we can do construction as soon as the ground is frozen. At this time 272 cribs have been placed in the flowage, primarily funded by donations. The generosity of association members and the larger flowage community helps keep this program afloat. Additional donations are always welcomed to support future years. In addition, we are looking for donations of cement blocks for weights on the cribs. If you would like to donate funds or blocks, please contact the association.

--- Climate Change and North Woods Lakes ---

Polar bears and ocean level rise, increased droughts in Africa and stronger hurricanes in the Caribbean; these are the environmental impacts we most often hear about relating to global climate change. But, what might climate change mean for northern lakes and the flowage. The following is an excerpt from the exhibit "Paradise Lost? Climate Change in the North Woods" sharing current research findings for lakes in northern Wisconsin. In future articles we will highlight impacts on forests and wetlands.

The north woods lays claim to some of the richest aquatic resources on our planet. Consider inland lakes. Their edges provide diverse habitats for wildlife such as songbirds, ducks, loons, amphibians, otter, mink and beaver. Humans are drawn to lakes for recreation, relaxation, and livelihoods. Inland lakes add beauty to our lives and enrich our economies. They are also vulnerable to changes in climate.

Lakes in Winter

Ice cover data records the duration of ice on lakes from onset in fall to ice-out in spring. It is an excellent tool for measuring climate change because ice is easily observed, closely reflects air temperatures, and can be used to estimate historical trends.

We are already experiencing an unprecedented loss in winter ice cover. Activities that depend on ice include ice fishing, skiing and snowmobiling. These activities are an important part of our culture and the economies of the north. For fish, less ice cover may mean fewer winter fish kills. However, fish like whitefish require ice cover to protect vulnerable eggs from winter storms.

Lakes in Summer

The ability of lakes to hold oxygen is important to aquatic life. Cold water can hold more dissolved oxygen than warm. However, waters near the surface of a lake, while warmer, can be re-supplied with oxygen through wind mixing. Each species of fish is adapted to different temperatures and oxygen levels. A lake trout, for example, needs cold water with high oxygen levels. Perch and bass need high oxygen but can live in the warmer upper waters of a lake where wind mixes oxygen from the air into the water. As lakes warm, some species may have difficulty finding just the right mix of temperature and oxygen.

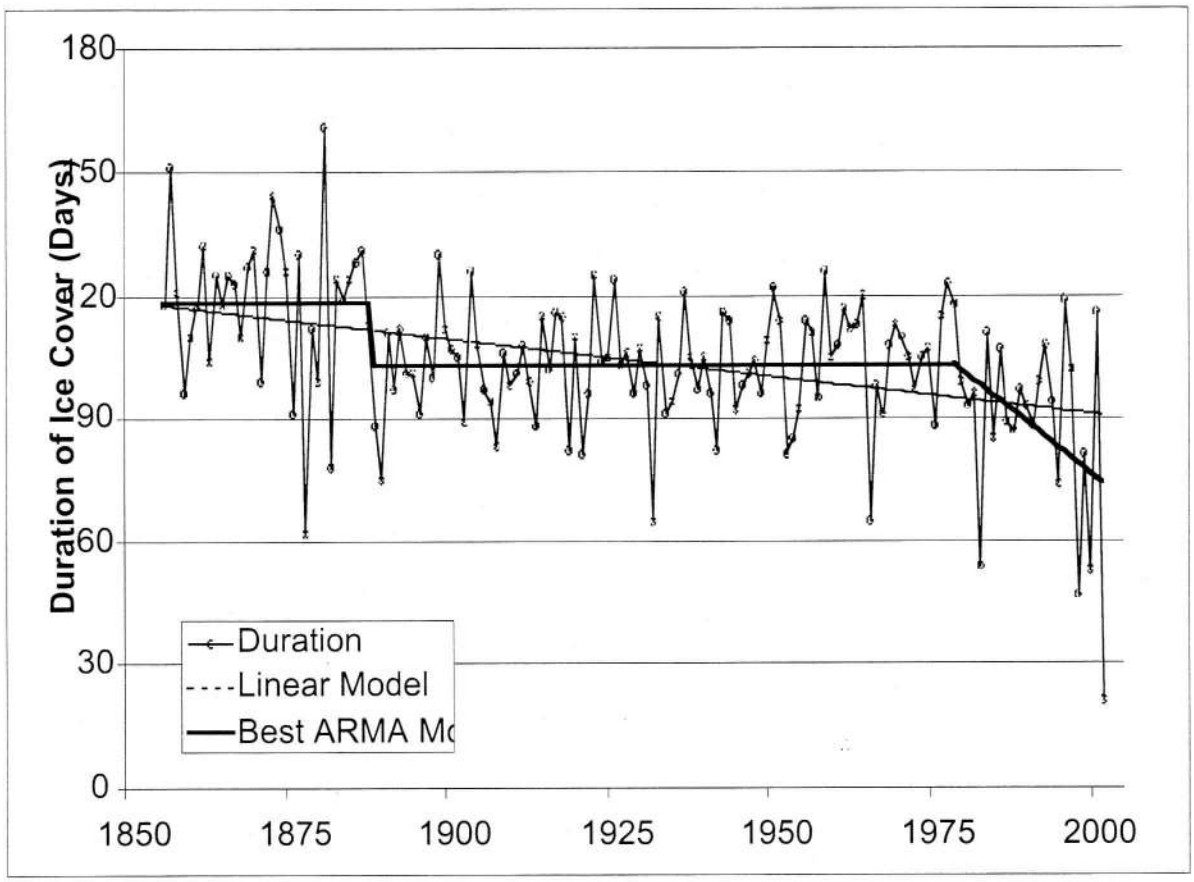
In summer, the most vulnerable aquatic habitats are streams and ponds where there are no deep, cold water refuges for fish and other organisms to escape from heat and warm waters that are low in oxygen. Species that live in lakes that stratify, or form thermal layers, are the next most vulnerable. In stratified lakes deep water layers will likely to lose oxygen. Development of longer low-oxygen periods means more potential fish-kills.

As lakes warm, sensitive cold-water fish such as trout and pike may be replaced by cool-water species like walleye and bass that can survive warmer temperatures. Lakes that currently support walleye may be more favorable for suckers, largemouth bass, and other warm-water fishes. Lake Superior will likely remain a refuge for cold-water species due to its immense size and volume. The Great Lakes are least vulnerable to oxygen loss.

Because lakes are often physically isolated, even lakes in the same general area may react differently to climate change. Imagine the challenges for fish managers and limnologists trying to protect or replace all the life in a lake, from invertebrates and small minnow populations to predator fish.

Other aquatic system impacts include:

- Increased mercury release from lake sediments, adding to fish advisories and risks to top predators such as loons and people.
- Exotic species such as carp may be able to expand their populations.
- Increased algae blooms are likely to occur, reducing both water clarity and oxygen levels.
- Lakes fed mostly by groundwater that do not have outlets may experience flooding due to changes in hydrologic (water) cycles, as is currently seen on Shell, Devil's and Fish Lakes in Wisconsin.



Ice Cover Data Lake Mendota, Wisconsin

This chart shows the trend in loss of ice cover that is being seen on many Wisconsin lakes.

--- Twelve Actions to Reduce Greenhouse Gases ---

Here are a dozen things you can do to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and alter the course of climate change in the Northwoods for the better. Start with the easy options and work up. Many of these options have the added value of saving you money, and some will even improve your health!

Action	Reaction
Install a energy saving shower head	Reduce household emissions by 12%
Use compact fluorescent bulbs	Reduce household emissions by 10%
Buy locally grown foods	Reduce emissions from trucking
Switch your electric service to green power	Reduce household emissions
Unplug an extra freezer	Reduce household emissions by 10%
Turnoff standby appliances (TV, DVD, computer)	Reduce home electric use
Car pool, walk or bike	Eliminate gas use
Plant a tree	Contribute to carbon uptake
Write a letter to our leaders	Help them make good decisions
Buy a fuel-efficient car	Reduce vehicle emissions up to 70%
Buy energy efficient appliances	Reduce household emissions by 50%
Install solar panels	Eliminate or reduce home emissions

--- Fishing For An Answer? ---

Fishing for an Answer? Climate Change in Your Creel Basket

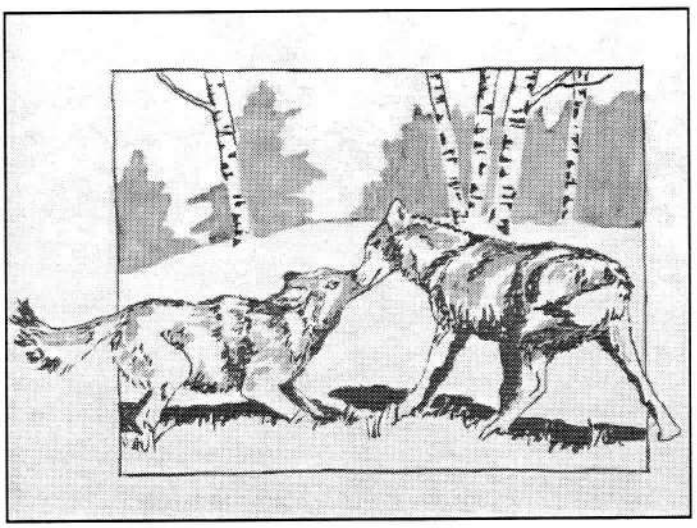
If you were wondering how climate change may effect your catch, here are a few research findings on fisheries and global climate change.

- As waters warm, fish like perch, smallmouth bass and carp may extend their range about 300 miles north into Ontario.
- 8 minnow, 7 sunfish, and 3 sucker species may extend their ranges north in the Great Lakes region with warming waters.
- The southern limit of cold water fish like whitefish, lake trout and brook trout, and cool water species, like northern pike and walleye, may move north.
- Reproduction of lake trout, walleye and pike may decline as spawning habitats warm.
- Lake trout may be lost in many warming inland lakes.
- There may be fewer winter fish-kills due to less winter ice cover on lakes.

For the angler this may mean a change in bag limits, what species you fish for, and where you fish.

--- Mystery Wolves On Big Island ---

During the winter of 2006-07 there were several reports of wolves on Big Island and around Trude Lake. These occasional sightings are a bit of a puzzle to wolf biologists as this territory is in the middle of the ranges of the four known wolf packs in the area. The Hoffman Hay Creek Pack to the southwest of the Flowage has been known to travel even as far as Springstead landing in the past but not in recent years. To the northwest, the Chippewa River pack holds a territory in the Swamp Creek area. It rarely crosses as far east as Kimmear Road and has not had documented records on the actual flowage. To the north, the Pine Lake Pack centers around the Moose Lake area and comes as far south as the Black Lakes. The Murray's landing pack is most often seen on the flowage, with its range stretching from near the Mercer Industrial Park to Horseshoe Lake and Wilson Lake Hills. However, their radio collared pack members have never been as far west as Big Island.



So, which wolves are visiting Big Island and Trude Lake? It may be that during winter when travel on the ice makes it easy, the Hoffman Hay Creek pack extends its range north. It will be interesting to note if there are sightings or sign of wolves on Big Island this summer when open water might deter travel from the south.

If you see or find sign of wolves on the flowage or surrounding lands, report your data to Bruce Bacon at the Mercer Ranger Station. This may help us unravel the mystery of the Big Island wolves!

--- Group Campsite Update ---

The DNR will begin work on two additional group campsites on Big Island this summer. Each site will be able to accommodate three camping parties. This project has been in planning for several years and is in response to increased use of the existing group sites. The proposed sites are designed to handle the impacts of large numbers of campers, with adequate outhouse and erosion control features.

In addition to this project, the DNR is working to help reduce overuse and confusion on availability of sites for groups. The State code regulating use of State properties is being revised and the proposed revisions came out for public comment in May. In that proposal is a planned fee and reservation system for group campsites on the flowage. The proposal would allow the DNR to take advance bookings for these sites, thus eliminating conflicts which arise when groups arrive on the flowage to camp and find that the group sites are all taken. The standard fee schedule for group campsites is $40 per night with a discount for youth groups. In recent years, this issue has been an increasing problem for campers and law enforcement.

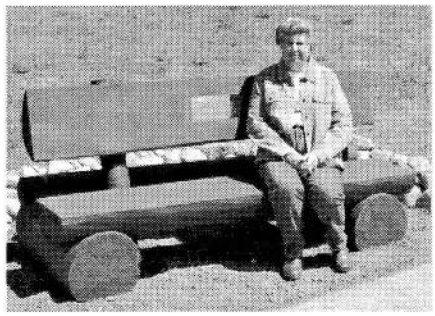
--- What's In A Name? ---

Swimmer's Island, Bonies Mound, Dollar Island, Big Island, Red Eye Bay, or Grassy Island... maybe some or all of these names are familiar to you. Some names on the flowage seem self evident. Swimmer's Island is clearly named for the activity popular on its shores and even a newcomer to the flowage would probably be able to find it on a hot July day – just by looking for children and beach balls. Other names on the Flowage are historical, like Bonies Mound, based in theory on Native American use of the Flambeau River before the flowage was formed.

We would like to put out a challenge to you to share your favorite island names and any associated stories that go with that special place. We will publish names and tales in future newsletters. To help us identify which island you refer to, share the number of the nearest campsite from the TFF official map. Send your island name, stories and location to our editor at tdaulton@centurytel.net

- In His Memory -

In memory of his dedication and hard work for the flowage, a memorial bench has been placed in honor of Arlen Wanta. Arlen was our association president, a dedicated volunteer, and a true friend of the flowage. The bench is located at Sprinstead Landing and the inscription reads "In memory of Arlen K. Wanta, for his dedication, commitment and significant contributions to the protection and enhancement of the natural resources of the Turtle Flambeau Flowage." In the photo you see the bench and Arlen's wife, Grace Wanta.



"A lake is the landscape's most beautiful and expressive feature. It is the earth's eye, looking into which the beholder measures the depth of his own nature." Henry David Thoreau

Turtle Flambeau Flowage and Trude Lake

PROPERTY OWNERS' ASSOCIATION, INC.

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If you would like to contact the association by email, please note the new address!
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--- Mission Statement ---

The purpose of the Association is to maintain, protect, and enhance the quality of the lake and its surroundings for the collective interest of members and the general public.

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