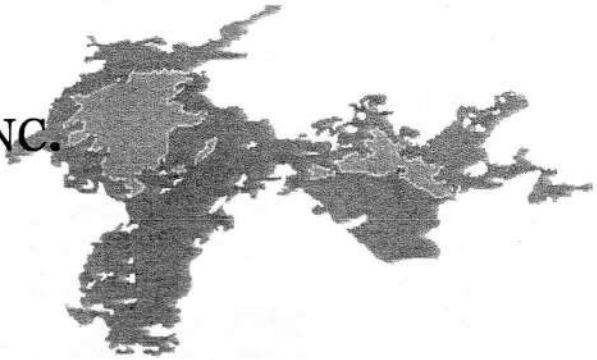
Turtle Flambeau Flowage & Trude Lake

PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION, INC.



Fall/Winter Newsletter

TWO THOUSAND AND EIGHT

President's Letter

By:Terry Daulton

Google Earth shows an idyllic aerial view of the Turtle Flambeau Flowage and Trude Lake. Like a real life air flight, this Internet wizard allows you to zoom in, pan the horizon, make a dizzying circle, or take a tree top view of our mostly undeveloped lake. What Google Earth, or even a boat ride on the TFF, fail to show are potential threats looming on the horizon.

In some ways, residents and visitors to our flowage may be lulled into a false sense of security. Our shores are 95% state owned and will not see the houses, lawns, or condominiums found on other lakes in our region. Fishing is good and seeing wildlife like eagles, loon, beaver, or deer is not unusual. But like all natural systems, the flowage is part of a larger ecological complex. Over the past two years we have had dramatic demonstrations on how our lake can change due to drought, and how humans and our dams can exacerbate natural fluctuations in water levels. In some ways, these extreme low water events have been a helpful wake up call – showing that our lake is not a pristine wilderness and that our association needs to be involved and forward thinking.

Water levels, however, are not the only issue relevant to our waterbody. Invasive species such as Eurasian water milfoil can increasingly be found in our region's lakes. We have little knowledge of pollutants that reach the flowage from upstream sources. And climate change, while subtle, may be the single largest factor that will change the quality and quantity of our waters in the future. Projections not only cite warmer summer water temperatures for lakes (with related changes in fisheries) but also increased severe weather such as droughts.

Our association hopes to be pro-active; and this spring we launched an ambitious new project to develop a lake management plan for the flowage and Trude Lake. This winter we will be drafting a grant proposal that we hope will lead to funding for this project. Our proposal will focus on action on the following five issues.

Water Quality

The flowage has not had a large scale water quality study. It is currently classified as "eutrophic," which means high in nutrients and more likely to experience large-scale algae blooms. We hope to learn more about its nutrient balance,

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Inside this Issue

In Search Of Mega Fauna

By: Bruce Bacon WDNR - Wildlife Biologist

What wildlife can you expect to see on the flowage these days? Ask Maryann Brown and she'll tell you about the moose that swam in the flowage past her house. Moose are becoming somewhat more common in Iron County. And since the flowage has a history of attracting moose that wander into Iron County, we can probably expect more moose sightings in the future. Late September and October are when most of our visitors come out of Michigan's U.P. A few stay all year; but most of these moose, predominately young bulls, wander back into Michigan before winter sets in. Though moose are now annual visitors to the flowage, it is still a lucky day if you see one on the flowage.

Black bear are certainly more numerous these days and often are seen near and even swimming in the flowage. This past July and August a young bruin set up camp on an island south of Mud Lake in the big water. He would swim out to greet boaters, begging for food. While providing entertainment for many boaters, he also caused a bit of concern. We are fortunate that, during a long history of camping on the flowage, there have been few bear problems at the campsites.

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At Loosestrife Ends?

By: Diane O'Krongly

Have you ever been to the marshy area where the Manitowish River flows into the Turtle Flambeau Flowage? It is a wide expanse of sweet flag, pickerel, cattails, arrowroot, and wild rice. Common and uncommon bird species can be found there such as osprey, grebes, many types of waterfowl, and black terns. Musky and northern pike spawn there. This area is unique on the flowage. Purple loosestrife could easily thrive in such a habitat, and in the process transform it into a different type of ecosystem--one unsuitable to many of the current flora and fauna. Human activities such as duck hunting would be negatively affected.

On July 31st lake association members, other volunteers, DNR staff, and Iron County Land and Water Conservation Department (ICLWCD) staff went on a seek and destroy mission to help rid the flowage of purple loosestrife. The mission started out at 9:00 a.m. at the Sturgeon Bay boat landing. We decided it would be best to divide into three work teams of three to four persons per boat. Thanks to the previous work of volunteer surveys, we knew where the plants were. So with maps in hand of known plant locations, the crews departed from Sturgeon Bay landing. One crew proceeded towards Four Mile Creek, another along Big Island's northern side, and the third north towards the Turtle River. A trusty canine, Hazel, aided Jeff Wilson, Heather Palmquist, and Terry Daulton on their route. The weapon used to poison the plants was an herbicide called Habitat. This herbicide is certified for use on aquatic vegetation. A blue dye was added to the herbicide so that plants sprayed with it were marked. Each boat crew had a driver, a poison sprayer, and one or two spotters who also cut and bagged the blooms. The going was rather mucky at times. All areas were covered in about two hours. Just in time for lunch.

Wow! What a wonderful lunch our volunteer group of cooks prepared. They grilled burgers and brats to perfection and set up the Lake of the Falls pavilion for a pleasant dining experience. The TFFTLA donated the meat and basic food items. The volunteers donated a variety of delicious foods. The lunch was a welcome treat after trudging around in the muck for two hours.

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Droughts, Dams, and Dry Dock: Balancing our water levels

As anyone who lives along a shallow shoreline will know, this summer and fall we again saw low water levels on the flowage and Trude Lake. While the drought lessened to some extent, we were still down in rainfall. Discharges in July and August brought early low water, a September drop below the four-foot minimum drawdown, and a drop below the required outflow of 300 cubic foot per second (CFS).

In brief, the chronology of water levels and flows is as follows. Full pool is 1572 feet above sea level. This spring we had a late ice-out and were close to full pool. In June we saw discharge rates at the dam between 309 and 974 CFS, which balanced rainfall and kept the flowage at a "normal" level of 1571.5 foot on July 1. Outflow rates were between 399 (July 1) and 389 CFS (Aug 1). By August 1 water levels were at 1570.

In July the association set up a meeting with the DNR to discuss water levels. Subsequently the DNR and Xcel agreed on a gradual reduction of flow, but real drops were not implemented until Aug 15 when the flowage outflow fell to 309 CFS (near the legal minimum of 300). The flowage continued to drop, and we again contacted the DNR in September. They informed us that they were working with Xcel to reduce the flow to 225. These reductions were implemented in September. Nevertheless, the flowage fell below the maximum drawdown, and by Oct 1 the lowest level this season was recorded at 4.25 feet below full-pool. At this writing, (mid-Oct) water levels are beginning to rise. For many flowage residents this fall increase is "too little, to late."

The following is a section of a past newsletter article summarizing some of the rules that govern our dam:

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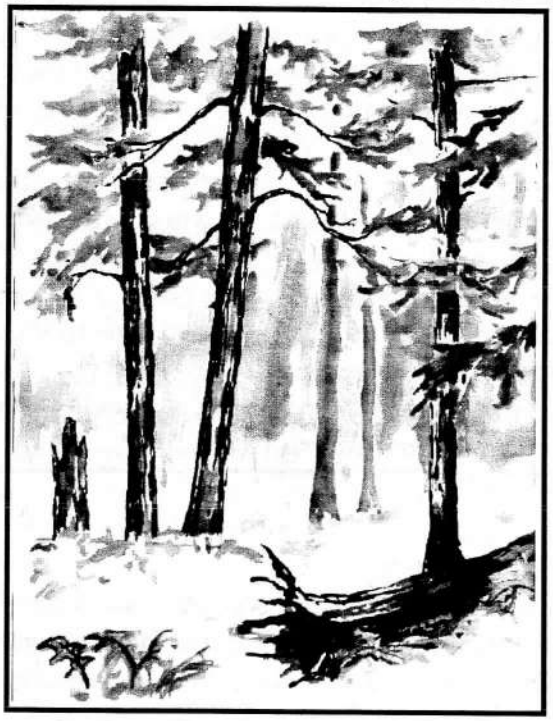
Trees Falling On Popko Circle: What's Happening?!

By Chris Niehaus - WDNR Forester

Many of you are wondering about the timber sale on Popko Circle near the Trude Lake boat landing. I'm sure some of you are even swearing at me for the "destruction" that is taking place. Rest assured there will be trees again. Regenerating white pine and red oak is the main objective for the timber sale. As you drive by the sale area, you will notice that the remaining trees are white pine and red oak. These will provide the seed for the next generation. The best trees were left to ensure good genetic seed stock. Because of the summer logging, an excellent seed bed has been prepared by exposing some mineral soil so that the germinating seeds do not have to struggle through leaf litter. These tree species require sunlight to get their start in the world.



Next summer you will see aspen and white birch sprouts two to four feet high. If you look closely, you will also see white pine and oak seedlings. The pine and oak take several years to reach a height noticeable while driving. Early on they spend their energy in developing a good strong root system; once established they will rapidly grow in height. When the young seedlings establish themselves and become saplings, white pine and red oak can tolerate more shade. The master plan for the Turtle Flambeau Scenic Waters Area allows for sustainable harvesting of the timber resource. White pine, in particular, is a species we want to increase in numbers because of its high value as a "super canopy" tree. This means it stands above the average height of the surrounding trees. Bald eagles and osprey, especially, prefer these super canopy trees for nesting. Red oak provides valuable food in its acorns for blue jays, ruffed grouse, bear, and deer. Therefore we encourage it wherever possible because there are precious few areas around the Flowage and in Iron County where we have red oak with which to work.

Part of this same timber sale lies north of the nature trail and on the east side of the road going to the boat landing. This part of the sale will not be cut until winter to accommodate the traffic going to and from the boat landing. Thinning will occur in this part of the

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Presidents Letter Continued...

Water Quantity

Along with scientists at the US Geological Survey (USGS), we hope to start work on a "mass balance" study, which would identify inflows, outflows, and the impacts of water level fluctuations. This study should help Xcel Energy and the DNR better manage our water flow.

Public Opinion

What are the priorities and concerns of our members and the DNR land managers responsible for most of the shorelines?

Climate Change

USGS is studying ways that climate change will likely affect lakes and is seeking ways to mitigate potential threats that may emerge. Information we gather about water quality and quantity can be linked to climate change models and thus help managers prepare for the future. For example, these data could help fisheries staff support walleye populations.

Invasive Species

We are working with the Iron County Land Conservation (LCD) staff to increase our programs for the prevention and control of invasive species and are considering future grant options to protect the TFF.

Partners in this work include the USGS, DNR, and LCD. The USGS is very excited about the potential to study our waterbody – providing research expertise and cost-sharing dollars. With our first grant, we hope to launch a pilot project for next summer which could be followed by a large- scale study over the next few years.

In a way – we hope that this new initiative will keep the Google Earth view of the flowage – and our experiences on the water--as high quality and rewarding in the future as they are today. Next spring we will be sending members a survey to ask for your opinions, concerns, and priorities. We also welcome your thoughts and comments on the project as it moves forward. In the meantime, our committees and board will be busy with our ongoing projects and extra volunteers will be welcome. Thanks for your time and thoughts!

- Terry

Kudo's Maryann!

Boundless energy, common sense, commitment to community, love of nature, and a dose of good humor are what makes Maryann Brown an asset to any organization. A tireless friend of the flowage, Maryann has spent hours serving on flowage planning committees, testifying before the Natural Resources Board, volunteering for association work groups, and educating countless guests at her resort on Lake Bastine.

This past May, Maryann stepped down as president of the lake association. Her tenure as president saw our group membership grow, and our involvement in public policy and conservation projects increase. She led the group during our expanded role in tracking water levels and invasive species, and she kept us on track on our many ongoing projects such as fish cribs, jet ski and fire works ordinances, and water quality monitoring. However, perhaps she should be thanked the most for her insistence that our work be fun and help us get to know each other better. She came up with the Cabin Fever winter party, and made sure that our work days had great refreshments and time to socialize. For a lake like ours where we live many miles apart by road – this is a real challenge.

Luckily, Maryann will stay with the board for another term and we are all looking forward to carrying on her work with dedication and a touch of fun and renewed *camaraderie*!

Water Levels Continued...

The WDNR and Xcel hold joint responsibilities for water levels under the supervision of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). In order to receive its license for the Big Falls Dam, downstream from our dam, Xcel needed a Water Quality Certificate from the DNR. They have received that certificate, which lays out a number of requirements for TFF management. TFF water levels and discharge flow are managed by terms of a 1990 "Memorandum of Understanding" (MOU) between WDNR and the Chippewa and Flambeau Improvement Company (CFIC). Xcel Energy is the majority owner of CFIC. Major Principles of the MOU call for draw downs of up to 4' in the summer and up to 8' in the winter. 1572' is full-pool for the TFF. The MOU calls for a minimum of 300 cubic feet per second (cfs) to be discharged from the TFF dam.

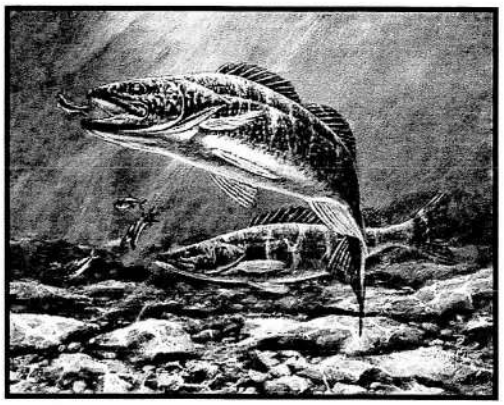
The MOU includes five Modifications for operation of the dam. 1). CFIC is supposed to refill the TFF to 1571.5' by April 20th or within one week after ice-out, whichever is later, without lowering flow below 300 cfs (in normal conditions). 2). CFIC is not to increase or decrease flow by more than 300 cfs per day. 3). CFIC is not to decrease flow from its level on April 10th until June 10th, unless it is apparent that refilling the TFF to 1571.5' may not otherwise occur. 4). CFIC and WDNR are to cooperate and make minor adjustments to TFF dam operation where possible. 5). In times of extreme high or low precipitation, CFIC and WDNR are to consult before deviating from the terms of the MOU.

The primary reason water levels were low in 2005, 2006, and to some extent 2007, was drought. Weather records show that we were 35" - 40"of precipitation below normal over the course of those three years (http://water.weather.gov/). Rainfall this summer has been somewhat better, but we are still short by 3 inches at the Mercer Ranger Station and 20 inches below normal for the past three years. Last season (2007) the association board was assured that 2008 would see a more "conservative" and careful approach to outflows in anticipation of continued drought. The association and board were disappointed in this season's operation and have sent a letter to the DNR outlining our concerns. Our hope had been that the dam would have operated at the minimum outflow (300) for a larger percent of the season.

The board has heard from a number of residents who are concerned about the pattern of low water and its impacts on recreation. We are also concerned about the ecological effects of low water, such as its role in increasing purple loosestrife stands and its impacts on aquatic mammals such as muskrat and beaver. We are currently setting up a meeting with DNR for early winter. Due to the upcoming retirement of Roger Jasinski, there will be a new lead DNR staff person with expertise in water resources and we hope to encourage a more pro-active role in managing water levels. Addressing these water level issues is one of our top priorities. Above all, we want to work with our partners and neighbors develop a long-term solution to this issue that will protect the flowage and Trude Lake.

This Year's Catch; Next Year's Count

By: Jeff Roth
-Fisheries Biologist



The 2008 open water fishing season is about to wind down for this year with only the heartiest of fisherman enduring the cold, late-fall temperatures. Fishing on the flowage this past year has been good to excellent with walleyes dominating the catch with a wide range of sizes and several year-classes being represented in the catch. Based on angler reports, quality size fish have been a large part of the catch throughout the year. Smallmouth bass continued to provide good action throughout the season, especially when walleyes became a bit finicky. Musky action has been above average this year with many fish in the upper 40 inch range being reported by anglers. Panfish continue to be an important part of the overall fishery in the flowage with a high percentage of fish being caught that are at keeper size. Survey results from our sturgeon sampling have shown that past stockings have been extremely successful with numerous juvenile fish showing up. Recent age and growth data reveal evidence of some natural sturgeon reproduction, and recruitment is occurring which is helping to rebuild the population. The information gathered during our annual sampling will enable us to eventually estimate the population density with hopes of re-opening a hook and line season for sturgeon down the road.

The spring of 2009 will mark the fifth comprehensive survey of the fisheries for the Turtle-Flambeau Flowage and Trude Lake. Watch for our crews to be out netting after ice-out. That netting will be followed by an electro-fishing effort to estimate the adult walleye population. The public should feel free to approach our netting boats to observe our catch when we stop to "process" fish. We will be measuring, taking scale samples for age and growth determinations, and fin-clipping fish for future identification prior to releasing them. A creel census will be conducted throughout the 2009 fishing season for all fish species being caught to determine angler catch and harvest rates. Anglers are advised to provide accurate information to the creel clerks. This information is extremely important to the final analysis of this fishery and to the determination of whether fishing pressure, angler exploitation, and angling success have changed over time when compared to previous surveys.

As always, feel free to contact me if you have any questions about the flowage fishery or for survey results as they become available.

Crib-Crafting

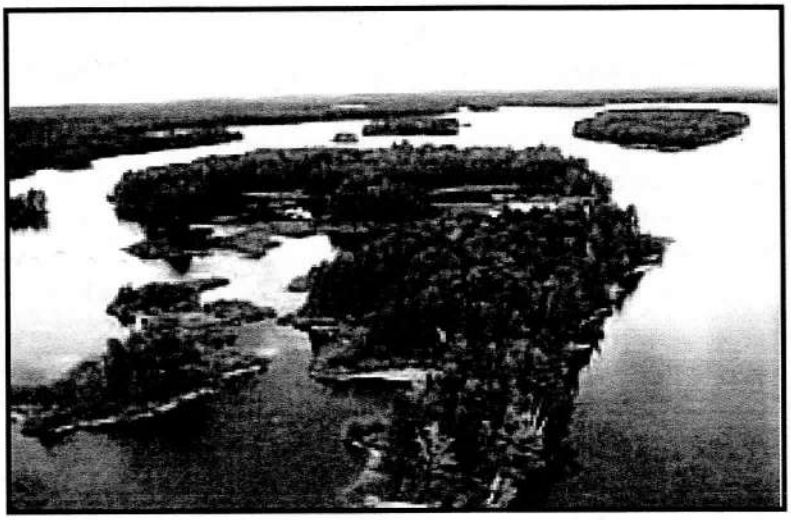
The fish crib program for this winter was initially planned for Fisherman's Landing but has been changed to the Horseshoe area due to availability of logs. We will try to plan a drilling party on a weekend. We will assemble the cribs on a weekday so we can take advantage of DNR personnel and equipment. We are looking to use 16-20 cords. Arnie Popp will cook up some soup.
If you would like to help with any part of the project please contact Kal Patzer at kjpatzer@centurytel.net or call Arnie at 715-476-0424.

Trees Falling Continues...

sale with only aspen, white birch and fir being cut. The objective here is to convert the timber stand to hardwoods, such as maple and yellow birch, that are much longer-lived and more tolerant of shade conditions. In essence, we are speeding the natural conversion process while capturing the value of the wood at the same time. In the future, this stand will require periodic thinnings to allow maple and yellow birch seedlings room to grow. You may have noticed that some trees along the landing road are marked with orange paint. These are being cut to allow room for road maintenance.

Hopefully I have eased some of your concerns regarding this timber sale and other sales in the future. You may still swear at me but hopefully you understand the reasons behind the sales and realize that there will be even more big pine and oak trees in the future.

If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to give me a call at 476-3890.



ON THE LEVEL

Tom Mowbray informs us that the Wisconsin DNR has a web site for TFF Pool Elevation and Discharge. Xcel energy and WI-DNR are working together to update the information on a weekly basis. This information may not save any lower units, but it will arm you with precise data for conversations with neighbors or people you meet at local watering holes.

Here's the URL:

http://dnr.wi.gov/org/land/facilities/turtleflambeau/water.html

WAHL: Eyes on the Flowage

By: Mike Hittle

Sitting around the kitchen table talking with Bud Wahl, now long-since retired flowage guide, I was treated to the crisp reflections of a man whose relationship with the outdoors has been deep and sustaining throughout his life. After retiring from his Illinois construction company in 1979, Bud took up residence in a home that fronts the flowage on Bastine Lake. Shortly thereafter, he was persuaded ("after about six beers") by Joe Golumb-An outdoorsman for whom Bud still harbors the greatest respect- to help out guiding when Joe had bigger parties than he could handle. Thus armed with the endorsement of a legendary guide and the ever-present Pflueger Supreme reel, Bud started taking out Joe's "overflow" parties. Soon, however, Bud began attracting his own customers, and his own guiding career was launched.

Bud remembers it all: the limits of "nice" walleyes, the occasional musky, the retrieval of lost tackle from the brushy depths, the enduring relationships with many of his customers, the occasional stingy one, etc. Yet when asked about his most memorable day as a guide, Bud responded with a story about a couple that he guided one october down in Beaver Flats. While her husband fished, the woman clutched her camera and indicated that what would make the day for her would be the opportunity to photograph some of the flowage's non-finny wildlife. Now Bud is much too experienced on the water and in the field to think nature's various creatures can be summoned on command, but he also knows that sometimes those creatures can be inexplicably cooperative. And so it was on this day. A group of passing otters gave the woman her first opportunity to snap away. Then came a handsome buck, swinging his antlers as he stood on the shoreline no more than 20 feet away. Click, click.

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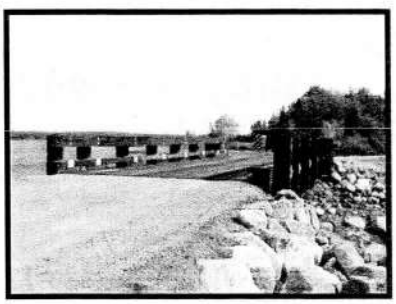
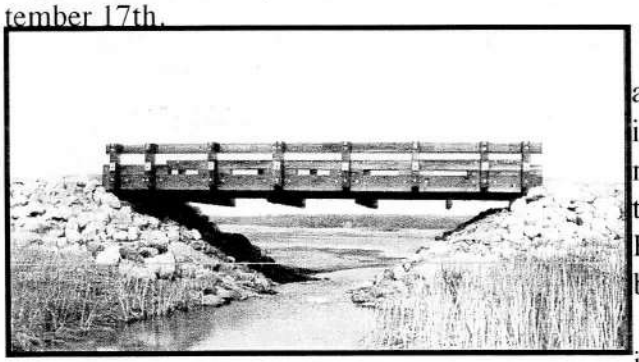
Bridge To Somewhere

By: Roger Jasinski, Flowage Property Manager



The old bridge to Big Island, constructed in 1978 as a temporary crossing bridge for logging, has been replaced with a new structure; construction was completed on September 17th.



The new bridge will provide safer access to the island for hiking, hunting, land management (including trail maintenance, timber harvest and construction and maintenance of the proposed new group campsites) and power-line maintenance. Boaters will also notice improved navigational clearance under the bridge.

Planning is also proceeding for the new group campsites on the island. Plans and bidding for construction should be completed this winter, with construction scheduled for the summer of 2009. These will be accessed by boat or foot, as vehicle access to Big Island will continue to be limited.

It was rumored that some fishermen had fed the bear, which is likely why he chose to stay on the small island. But the last thing we need is a bear, habituated to sandwiches and chips, roaming the woods on the flowage. This bear was definitely not afraid of humans, which is not a good situation. In the short run it seemed least harmful to the bear to let him keep his island home in the hope that he would abandon it to hibernate. That decision, however, may not be the best in the long run if he starts visiting campsites in 2009. Never feed a bear!

Wolves have obviously re-established themselves as a part of Iron County's mega fauna. While usually elusive in nature, wolves are the "top dog" in the woods and often appear bold, giving viewers an opportunity for a sighting. Wolves are seen more often in the winter on the flowage. Although they are good swimmers, they appear to prefer walking on ice to get to food. In addition, in the winter some folks around the flowage feed deer. By attracting and concentrating deer, feeding also attracts wolves. For the visitor to the flowage, it is more likely that you will hear the wolves both as they howl to each other in their pack and as they warn other wolves to stay out of their territory. It was

"Enjoy the wildlife on the flowage, "these are the good old days!"

not that many years ago that you would not have been able to hear wolves, loons, owls, and frogs all singing together on a moonlit night out on the flowage.

Then there are those mysterious ghosts that turn up in the northwoods. Could a cougar (mountain lion) show up on the flowage? Possibly. But don't bet on it. Someday Wisconsin will likely get additional (the presence of one has already been confirmed in SE Wisconsin) cougars wandering in from out west, but they will be few and far between. Having visited a number of "cougar sightings" and looked at even more common "cougar photos", I think people often see what they want to see! Why these 100 pound plus critters never leave tracks in the snow is a mystery! And with all the trail cameras out there, surely a good picture would turn up... In areas with established cougar populations, road-killed cougars are not uncommon. As for black panthers, there is no such critter as a black mountain lion. The black panthers seen in zoos and circuses are melanistic leopards. So, if (when) you see a cougar, get a good picture or find good foot prints and cover them up to preserve them. Then let the DNR know.

The internet and photoshop abilities have really increased sightings of rare critters in areas where they do not belong! Too bad, but now you cannot trust photos "supposedly" taken in your backyard. The ability to cut and paste and write your own caption electronically is now taking up a lot of resource managers' time as we sort out what is really out there. Anyone can now come up with a picture of a cougar or wolverine or elk found in any county of the state. The (now) old fashioned 35MM film camera was much more reliable for getting real evidence.

The DNR is still interested in getting information on moose sightings. Wolves are everywhere, but we still would like reports of groups of wolves or pups as these reports help us estimate the size of the wolf population in Wisconsin. As for cougars, we would like information on those sightings as well, but it is really important to get good evidence to back up such sightings: a good photo or tracks or fresh scat, or hairs left where the animal went through the brush or under a fence. Anyone finding a new osprey nest off the flowage in a beaver pond or nearby lake should report it to us. New osprey nests are hard to find, and it's likely there are some new nests out there built by osprey that have been chased off the flowage by eagles. We do not need reports of bear unless it is a bear that's acting sick or too friendly, the latter being of more concern.

Loosestrife Continued...

WORK CREW AND COOKS ON JULY 31ST WERE:

Maryann Brown, Jim Leever, Bruce Bacon DNR, Jeff Wilson, Val Leever, Thad Krause DNR, Terry Daulton, Sally Stewart, Karl Pilch DNR, Melody Ross, Bill Stewart, Mary Jo Gingras, Jalina Ross, Deana Burnes, Diane O'Krongly, Arnie Popp, Heather Palmquist.

Other efforts are also helping to stop the spread of purple loosestrife into the flowage. On August 4th Thad Krause, Karl Pilch, Chris Niehaus, Ryan Magana (Spooner

DNR), Bruce Bacon, Teri Meyer, Jeff Wilson, and Chuck Norgren took four boats down the Manitowish River. They started at the bridge on Highway 51, removing flower blooms and spraying plants with herbicide. They were able to cover the entire river up to Murray's landing. Closer to Highway 51 the patches of purple loosestrife were more numerous and larger. No plants were found near Murray's landing.

John Bates and Mary Burns have also traveled up and down the Manitowish River to poison and remove plants.

Next time you are on the flowage, take time to notice the preventive work of the Purple loosestrife crews. Enjoy the ecosystem and all the flora and fauna.

Thanks to the crews for all their hard, mucky work!

CABIN FEVER PARTY: JANUARY 17th

Mark your calendar for Saturday, January 17th - for the annual Cabin Fever Party! This year's event will again be held at the Mercer Community Center and will feature good food, door prizes, and of course great conversations! We are hoping to have our fish-crib-building winter work day the following Monday (the 19th), so you can make it a flowage association weekend!

So pencil us in and look for your invitation flyer in the mail soon!

Eyes on the Flowage Continued...

Next, one of the resident flowage eagles held its perch on a towering pine until his customer took yet another "poster shot." This photographic grand slam concluded when a pair of loons persisted in popping up and down next to the boat, giving the now ecstatic shutterbug an opportunity to get some classic loony shots.

Bud remembers the ride back up from the flats that afternoon as particularly rough, but no complaints came from his customers. Indeed, the wife conveyed her satisfaction with the day so enthusiastically to her husband that he left Bud with the biggest tip of his guiding years! And now that I think about it, Bud failed to mention whether the party took any fish that day. Still, judging from the glow of delight in Bud's eyes as he recounted this story, fish had little to do with it. What counted was Bud's wonder, and gratitude, that everything had fallen in place so that he could share with his guiding party some of the true riches of the world he loves.

Iron County Is Zoned

By: Tom Bergman

Hello everyone. I am Tom Bergman, the new Iron County Zoning Administrator. It has been brought to my attention that folks are interested in learning more about Iron County Zoning Ordinances-- specifically the Shoreland Zoning and Keyhole Ordinances.

First, here's a quick overview of keyholing. Basically, keyholing occurs when a shoreland lot is shared by a number of off-shore property owners. ("Shoreland" refers to properties that abut navigable lakes, rivers, and streams, but also includes any property that is within 1000 feet of a navigable lake and/or 300 feet of a navigable river or stream.) This shoreland lot allows access to the waterfront for the off-shore property owners. As it stands now, Iron County does not have a Keyhole Ordinance; however, some of the towns in the county have put ordinances of their own in place. The town ordinances prohibit the use of keyholing. These ordinances were reviewed and approved by the Iron County Zoning Committee, but the county is not the enforcement agency of the ordinances. This falls under the jurisdiction of the towns that implemented them.

Questions regarding setbacks are probably the most common ones I receive. All structures (residences, accessory buildings, decks, additions, etc.) need to be 75 feet off the ordinary high water mark (OHWM). They also need to be 10 feet from property lines. The setback from the road is based on the type of road your property is on. State highways require that structures be 110 feet off of the highway center line. The setback must be 75 feet off of center line for county roads and 63 feet for town roads. All structures that are over 1000 cubic feet require a Land Use Permit. Things get a bit more complicated when it comes to existing non-conforming structures (buildings within the 75 foot OHWM setback). If someone wants to put an addition on a non-conforming structure, the addition cannot increase the value of the existing structure by more than 50% of the assessed value of that structure. If a property owner wishes to tear down an existing non-conforming structure and replace it with a new building. The new building must conform to all setbacks. In some situations average setbacks can be applied, but only when a hardship is determined by the Board of Adjustments.

Another question I get concerns visual corridors. As stated in the County Land Use Ordinance, a visual corridor can be created based on the following criteria. The cutting of trees and shrubbery shall be regulated to protect scenic beauty, control erosion, and reduce the flow of effluents and nutrients from the shoreland. In the strip 35 feet inland from the OHWM, no more than thirty feet in any one designated 100 feet of shoreline shall be clear cut. Outside that area tree and shrub cutting should be determined based on effects on water quality and should be in accordance with accepted forestry practices.

This is just a quick overview, and I imagine there are many more issues that folks have questions about. Feel free to contact me at the Iron County Land and Zoning Office--(715) 561-5414--or email me at zoningadmin@ironcountywi.org.

THANKS, DAVE!

The Association would like to extend a special thanks to Dave Pierce for his work on the Board. Thanks, Dave, for all your time and ideas!

Turtle Flambeau Flowage & Trude Lake

PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION, INC.

Mission Statement ~ The purpose of this association is to maintain, protect, and enhance the quality of the lake and it's surroundings for the collective interest of members and the general public.

Turtle Flambeau Flowage and Trude Lake Property Owners Association Inc.

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