

**Apple River Protection and Rehabilitation District (ARPRD)**  
**Newsletter Summer..... 2020**

Greetings from ARPRD! This newsletter is meant to give you an update on the activities of ARPRD. We hope you are using the flowage and are able to enjoy time on the flowage. This is the 45<sup>th</sup> year of the existence of ARPRD.

**Meetings**

The Board of Commissioners held a meeting on May 30, 2020 in the Amery City Hall Council Room. This meeting had been scheduled for March 28 but of course the “nasty virus” caused a long postponement. You may read the minutes on the website arprd.org

The Board of Commissioners will meet on Saturday July 18<sup>th</sup> 2020 in the Amery City Hall Council Room to prepare for the Annual Meeting.

The Annual meeting of ARPRD will be held on Saturday August 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2020 at 10:00 a.m. in the Town of Lincoln Hall located at 651 85<sup>th</sup> St. Amery. We hope you can join us.

**ACTIVITIES FOR 2020**

**Weed Harvesting**

This is year nine for the weed harvesting operation. This is a major activity for the District. We began in August of 2012. In last years “newsletter” we gave you a list of the loads harvested since the beginning (a load is 10 cubic yards or 4,480 pounds per load) in August of 2012. In 2019, we had removed 113 loads by the end of June. As of June 25 of 2020 the team has removed 115 loads...so by the end of June we are ahead of 2019. Unfortunately, we had a late start which began on May 28<sup>th</sup>. This was about 2 weeks later than most years. Why the late start? The bad news is that our two Harvest Team Leaders have both been experiencing VERY serious health issues that have involved major surgery and hospitalization for one leader. We hope you appreciate the work of Dave and Dale for these past nine years . ARPRD is fortunate to have these men who repair and modify the equipment fast and at a minimal cost. If you do not appreciate these men just ask other lakes trying to find operators. These men deserve MUCH thanks and support.

The harvesting crew is made up of six men who are working each week. It appears 2020 will be a ‘weedy year’. The Curlyleaf Pondweed (CLP) (an invasive species) is the early weed. Once the team got started they removed 51 loads in 5 days. They average about 5 – 8 loads each day at this time. Harvesting began in the City of Amery and the North Park Bay. The South end was the start this year. They moved all the way to the North end and are now working back toward the South end. As you know, the Hwy. 46 bridge is a barrier for harvesting. They spent the week of June 22-26 in the area above the Hwy. 46 bridge. Please know this team is working as best it can to keep the flowage as clean as possible. Just a reminder, the CLP has a short life span and we are permitted to go wherever we can to remove this weed before they spread their seed and die. Once that is over we are restricted by the DNR to keep the channels open

50' in some areas and 100' in some others. We can also remove weeds up to your docks so you have a clean path to the channel. We are confident that the Apple River Flowage has been greatly improved over the past nine years. We have heard criticism that some days the machine is not running. There are breakdowns and so far this year Dave has had to install a new fuel tank, a gear box and a hydraulic engine. When a machine is nine years old things do wear out. Also, when the weeds are not present and it takes 2-3 hours to obtain a load it may be time to wait a bit. Since 2012 through 2019, we had removed 3,320 loads. As of the end of June 2020, 3,435 loads have been removed. That material, if not harvested, would be at the bottom decaying and releasing nutrients (like phosphorus) which we do not need, back into the water. One final note, the CLP has passed or been harvested and Coontail (a native species) will show its presence all summer. Of course some of us must endure duckweed. We hope you appreciate the work of the weed harvesting team.

### **Clean Boats/ Clean Water**

We are continuing this effort to hopefully prevent the invasion of Eurasian Milfol and Zebra Mussels from getting into the flowage. We have a team of trained boat inspectors who work at the Lincoln Landing. They check watercraft as it comes and leaves the flowage. This project is once again supported by a grant from the DNR. We have a small share of the costs. The inspectors must work a minimum of 200 hours during these active months. We hope this on-going effort shows the ARPRD's intent to improve the flowage.

### **Healthy Lakes Projects...Native Plantings Shoreline Buffers**

We are into year six of this project. Why this project? Our "Lakes Management Plan" approved by the DNR in 2016 has several goals. Goal 1 . "Reduce excessive watershed nutrient input". Goal 2 "Minimize the release of nutrients from the flowage". Harvesting addresses this goal. Our effort is meant to show that we are doing something to prevent nutrient runoff coming into the flowage. Please know that we have a 125,000 acre watershed. This far exceeds every lake in Polk County. It was felt that before we begin to tell others in the watershed to install buffers and other practices we need to set our own situation clearly. To date, we have had 18 Native Planting Buffer Strips installed. We are planning four for this summer so will have 22 by the end of 2020. Dave Schleusner leads this effort. As the weed harvesting leader, he likely knows your property. He may be contacted in person or [bscleusner@yahoo.com](mailto:bscleusner@yahoo.com). These buffer strips must be 10' x 35' or 350 sq. ft. and must touch the water along the shoreline. The cost per resident is \$200. The WIDNR has awarded us a grant and they provide 75% of the cost.

### **New Weed Harvester**

We have been very active since the 2019 Annual Meeting which those at the meeting gave the Board permission to pursue the purchase of a second harvester 'IF' we could receive a grant from the WI Waterways Commission which would provide 35% of the cost. We submitted a application for a grant and on April 14, 2020 and were awarded a grant of \$77,464.80. The application total, for a 10' harvester, with a trailer that converts into a carrier to haul harvested weeds, was obtained at a cost of \$221,327.96. (By far the lowest bid) We have also received an 8 year loan for \$110,000 from the Bremer Bank. The loan payments will be \$15,197.30 annually

but due semi- annually on August 24 and Feb. 24 each year for \$7,598.85. With these payments we are hopeful to continue our current finances without raising taxes. This loan payment will be about \$3,000 less per year than the payments we had on the loan for our first machine. This will be a very tight fit for our budget. Please know that 2 machines will likely not greatly increase our harvesting costs. Why not? The new machine has larger capacity moves faster and once in the flowage will work from the City of Amery to the Hwy. 46 bridge. The 2012 machine will only be used above the Hwy. 46 bridge. This should ease the pressure on that machine. These machines have a life time expectancy of 10 years and then usually need massive reconstruction. Our first machine is nearing the 10 year mark. We have been fortunate to have Dave and Dale who make repairs, rebuild parts at minimal costs. One major advantage of 2 machines is that they do not need to be moved on the highway several times which is dangerous and time consuming. Also, as with any type of harvesting, when things need to happen, they must happen quickly or the best time is missed. As with Curlyleaf Pondweed, we have a very short time to harvest that plant before it sets seed and then we are too late. Basically, we have from about mid-May until about mid-June to get at this plant. You should know that of our 640 acre flowage (lake) we have 13 beds of CLP totaling 345 acres. This is a challenge to contain this weed and eventually gain control. Of course, once the CLP has completed its life cycle, we are hit with Coontail and of course Duckweed blesses some residents especially those with bays.

We hope you will appreciate the new machine and the chance to take much work load off the old machine. The new machine is currently under construction and may not be delivered until near the end of the 2020 season.

### **No Wake Zone # 2**

We are in the process of seeking DNR permission to install a second “No Wake Zone” area. This will be located about midway through North Park Bay in Amery and extend northward through that “tight” area in the channel for a short distance midway through that bay on the left side. The reason for this move, is in that narrow area, watercraft often pass through that spot at high speeds and the residents shoreline is being seriously eroded.

You can look for new “No Wake Zone” buoys to appear this summer.

### **Summary**

This is a lengthy newsletter. We hope you have been informed of the ARPRD activities. We hope you can attend the Annual meeting. We will practice all the “social distancing, face masks and being careful” We hope as your Board we are doing our best to continually make the Apple River Flowage a fun place for every residents water enjoyment.

Prepared by Roland Peterson for...

**The ARPRD Board of Commissioners**

Roland Peterson Chair

Billie Jo Schleusner Treasurer

Angie Johnson Secretary

Paul Isakson mayor and City of Amery Representative

Fran Duncanson Polk County Representative