

The Apple River Protection and Rehabilitation District (ARPRD)
Newsletter.....Summer 2022

It appears summer 2022 has arrived and the ARPRD has activities underway. This seems to be a year of either winter or summer, cold or extreme heat, and wind coming at us all the time not sure if we had a spring. Despite the weather vegetation is growing in the Apple River Flowage and the ARPRD has the responsibility of management. We are sure you are seeing weed growth appearing in many patches from Amery all the way north to the far end about one and a half miles south of U.S. Highway 8. This 640 acre body of water (lake...river...flowage) is hopefully becoming more useable for fishing, boating and many recreational uses. We do have aquatic plant growth which hopefully does not mess up your use of the flowage. In this newsletter, we will try to share activities underway for summer 2022. For you residents who have been on the flowage for a few decades, we hope you are seeing a great deal of improvement over those years. The following sections hopefully will inform you regarding summer 2022.

Meetings

The Board of Commissioners held a meeting on Saturday April 2, 2022. The meeting set the plan for summer 2022. This will be a unique summer as we are in the first phase of developing an update to our Aquatic Plant Management Plan (A Wisconsin DNR requirement). This summer a plant survey is being conducted to determine what native and invasive plant species may be growing. Hopefully, following the survey report we can see if our years of harvesting are having an impact.

We will be holding another Board of Commissioners meeting on Saturday July 16 at 10:00 a.m. in the new Amery City Hall. This meeting will provide the Board with and update on summer activities as well as to prepare a proposed budget for the Annual meeting.

The Annual meeting for ARPRD (which is open for all residents who pay taxes into the District) is set for Saturday August 20 at 10:00 a.m. also in the new Amery City Hall. This will be a time to hear reports, elect a Chair, and approve the 2023 budget.

We are also have two new board members joining the Board of Commissioners.. Eric Elkin represents the City of Amery and replaces Paul Isakson who has done a great job for our board. We thank Paul for all he has done and was a very faithful and involved board member. Denise L'Allier-Pray is joining the Board as a representative of Polk County. She replaces Fran Duncanson who has also been an active and helpful board member. We want to express our thanks to Paul and Fran for their service.

Weed Harvesting

This is year number 11 for our weed harvesting operation. We began in August of 2012. We are very grateful for the crew that operates the harvesting equipment. We have been very fortunate to have Dave Schleusner leading this crew. He schedules the crew, operated the equipment and also reports all the harvesting numbers to the DNR. He is also THE man who can

repair almost everything. He saves the ARPRD a huge amount of money in fixing the equipment and maintaining upkeep. Other lake districts continually call on him for help. We own two trucks and two harvesters, and, as you may know, equipment, when being used, can experience breakdowns. Dave does not call the manufacturers for help but simply digs in and makes the repair. We owe Dave much thanks for all he does for the district.

As you all may see, the Curlyleaf Pondweed (CLP) appears in early May and forms many beds throughout the flowage. It has a life cycle from about mid-May until the end of June or early July. It is an invasive species and the DNR allows the harvesting crew to go wherever they can to cut the plants so that they cannot set seed and reproduce. The pressure is on the crew to cut the CLP as much as possible. Once CLP has died, the next big weed to hit us is Coontail. This is a floating weed and also is a great carrier of Duckweed....that nasty tiny green stuff that seems to be everywhere...so far this year not so bad. Hopefully, you are aware that once the CLP is gone, the DNR restricts where we can harvest. The harvesters can only function where the "channel" is and there they keep a 50 foot wide area all the way from Amery to the very north end clear. In the lake area south of the Hwy 46 bridge they can keep an area 100 feet wide. They can also cut swaths to all the residents and along the shoreline as well as clear all the bay areas. Each year we have reported the tonnage (loads) of weeds harvested that is reported to the WI DNR. You should also know that the crew works Monday through Friday each week from about 5:00 a.m. until mid-afternoon. They stay off the water if it is too windy because it is difficult to keep the harvesters on course with the g.p.s. system.

As you look at the results from harvesting please remember that from 2012 until 2020 we harvested with the 7 foot Aquarius machine which requires the use of a conveyor and the dump truck which holds about 10 cubic yards or 4,500 pounds. In 2021, we obtained the 10 foot Inland machine which uses a trailer and no conveyor since the harvester unloads directly into the trailer. The trailer holds a great deal more than the dump truck in fact about 18,000 pounds per load so you will see real differences after 2021. Here is the record once again:

2012	112 loads...largely August into September = 252 ton or 504,000 pounds
2013	566 loads = 1,273 ton or 2,547,000 pounds
2014	513 loads = 1,154 ton or 2,308.500 pounds
2015	500 loads = 1,125 ton or 2,250,000 pounds
2016	564 loads = 1,269 ton or 2,538,000 pounds
2017	368 loads = 828 ton or 1,656,000 pounds
2018	351 loads = 790 ton or 1,579,500 pounds
2019	346 loads = 789 ton or 1,557,000 pounds
2020	388 loads = 873 ton or 1,746.000 pounds
2021	(2 machines) 3,460 ton or 6,919,086 pounds

Just a reminder, if we were not harvesting, all that tonnage would be at the bottom of the flowage decaying and releasing its nutrients back into the water enhancing more weed growth.

Clean Boats/ Clean Water Project

This project has been a long term effort to prevent invasive species such as Eurasian Milfol and Zebra Mussels and other invasive species from contaminating the flowage. It is a challenge since water flows into the flowage from other lakes and a 111,000 acre watershed.

Isaac Wieczorek leads a team of boat inspectors at the Lincoln Landing. This team follows a schedule when they feel is the greatest boat traffic time. As a result, early mornings and weekends and holidays will likely be the times they are working. We must have at least 200 hours of boat inspections to meet the DNR requirements. The DNR pays for 75% of the costs for this project. We hope the ARPRD residents appreciate this project.

Aquatic Plant Management Plan

The DNR requires every lake to have an updated Aquatic Plant Management Plan. All of our grant requests and harvesting permits refer to us having an updated plan on file with the DNR. This must be done every 5 years. We completed the first one in 2012, had an updated one in 2017 and are in the process for another in 2023. This is a two-year effort with the first year requiring an aquatic plant survey which is currently underway by Matt Berg's company Endangered Resource Services St. Croix Falls. As of this time end of June, he has completed the CLP survey and will soon spend at least 2 days completing the survey for the other plant species. Once his data are analyzed and a report prepared, a team of ARPRD residents will be formed (lead by Cheryl Clemens of Harmony Environmental) to prepare a full report with objectives and plans for us to follow for the next 5 years.. The final plan will be submitted to the DNR for approval likely in the fall of 2023.

Hopefully, this newsletter has given you some insight as to activities the ARPRD is doing to keep the Apple River Flowage a viable and useful body of water. Last year we asked you for a \$10,000 tax increase and as a result we are receiving a \$60,000 tax levy to carry out this business. We had no idea that inflation would hit us so hard so that our fuel costs would more than double what we had budgeted. We are thankful for all the support and hope that your investment in the Apple River flowage is benefitting each of you.

The ARPRD Board of Commissioners

Roland Peterson Chair...and newsletter writer

Angie Johnson Secretary

Billie Jo Schleusner Treasurer

Eric Elkin City of Amery Representative

Denise L'Allier-Pray Polk County Representative