

Apple River Protection and Rehabilitation District (ARPRD) Newsletter.....Summer 2024

Every year is different and special but 2024 is a year like we have never had before on the Apple River Flowage. Due to the unusual winter, spring, and summer weather conditions, we have had extreme weed growth that seems to be the most in our 12 years of harvesting. The harvesting team is going full force to keep the weeds in check so that the river stays navigable and useful for boating, fishing, and other recreation.

It is good to see new residences along the shores of our 640-acre lake. The Apple River Flowage that we represent has a watershed of about 111,000 acres which includes forest, farmland, cities, other lakes, golf courses, swamps, and wetlands. Runoff from all this land flows into the Apple River and brings with it a wide range of nutrients and plant and animal life. To keep our lake open and useful is always a challenge. We hope this newsletter will bring you up to date on where we are in 2024.

A. When are the ARPRD meetings?

1. The Board of Commissioners held a spring meeting on April 26, 2024.
 2. The Board of Commissioners held a summer meeting on Saturday July 20, 2024.
 3. **The Annual Meeting of ARPRD will be held on Saturday August 17, 2024, at 10:00 a.m.**
- ALL meetings are held in the Council Room of the Amery City Hall. All tax paying residents on the flowage are invited to attend the Annual Meeting. If you are unsure if you are a flowage resident, check your property tax statement to see if ARPRD is listed.**

B. What does the ARPRD really do?

We are a very active organization, working to make the Apple River Flowage useful and enjoyable every summer. How does this all happen?

1. We own 2 weed harvesters. The older one is a 7' (cutter head) Aquarius machine which was purchased in the spring of 2012 and put into use when we received it in August. It is fully paid for and is still going strong due to being properly maintained by Dave Schleusner. It functions mainly in the upper north end... the area above the highway 46 bridge. However, they brought it down to the lower end this year due to the heavy weed growth. We also own a 10' (cutter head) Inland machine. This machine functions totally in the south end all summer. We have about three years of payments left on this machine. We also own one dump truck and a conveyor for the Aquarius machine, and another truck to pull a large transport trailer (which also serves as a trailer for hauling weeds) for the Inland machine. The Aquarius holds about ten cubic yards of weeds or 4,489 pounds in a load which is unloaded into the dump truck. The Inland machine dumps into the trailer which holds about 9,500 pounds of wet weeds per load.
2. We hire six men who operate the equipment. Dave Schleusner oversees all the harvesting operations and reports our results to the WI DNR each year. Dave is one super guy! He repairs everything and is going every morning at 5 or 5:30. All the lakes around us want Dave!

3. In 2024, we have a crew of three who check boats at the Lincoln landing. They will inspect boats for at least 200 hours during the boating season. The Clean Boats Clean Waters project is managed by Isaac Wieczorek.
4. We have also installed two decontamination stations, one at the Lincoln Landing and one at the Birch Street Landing in Amery.
5. Carlson SV in Amery manages our payroll.
6. Derrick Carlson is in charge of checking for aquatic invasive species (AIS) in the flowage.
7. Tom Scheffel checks the water quality in the flowage every month and reports to the DNR. Hopefully you can see that many people are involved in making the flowage a useful body of water.

C. Approval of an Updated Aquatic Plant Management Plan

The WI DNR **requires** every lake or body of water to have an approved Plant Management Plan which must be updated every five years. We had our latest plan approved last fall, so we are safe for another five years. Having an approved plan is essential if we want to get harvesting permits and grants approvals. It is a very key document. Thank you to Cheryl Clemens and Harmony Environment for leading and guiding us through this two-year long process.

D. Harvesting Results

Below are the harvesting results since 2012. **Please note that in 2021 harvester number two was put into use, with a corresponding increase in loads and weights.** Wet load weights are now approximately 13,989 pounds, with around 9,500 pounds on the new 10' machine and 4,489 pounds on the old 7' machine.

Year	Began	Ended	Days	Loads	Weights
2012	Aug.10	Sept. 14	22	112	501,750
2013	May 28	Aug. 29	67	566	2,535,680
2014	May 28	Sept. 5	63	513	2,302,857
2015	May 8	Sept. 9	68	500	2,244,500
2016	May 11	Sept. 9	75	564	2,531,796
2017	May 15	Sept. 20	80	368	1,656,000
2018	May 11	Sept. 25		351	1,579,500
2019	May 17	Sept. 21		346	1,557,000
2020	May 28	Sept 18		388	1,746,000
2021	May 6	Sept. 24		619	6,919,086
2022	May 20	Sept. 20		376	3,792,000
2023	May 20	Sept. 8		511 loads	3,821,281
2024	May 8	to July 1		366 loads	3,654,000*

*It is very clear 2024 is going to be a huge total with about two and a half months still to go. The harvesters are going from 5 a.m. to 5 p.m. five days a week and cannot stay ahead of the weed growth. We hope you appreciate all they are doing to keep the flowage as usable as possible. Dave and his team need our support not criticism. They are working hard in a difficult year.

Curly-leaf pondweed seems done for this summer, but Coontail is coming on strong... from now on the DNR rules allow limited harvesting areas but the operators will do their best to take care of you for the rest of the summer months. We have not seen much duckweed; apparently it does not like rain. **Please note if we were not harvesting, all those weights would be at the bottom, releasing nutrients and creating more muck!**

E. Clean Boats Clean Waters Project

The whole project is aimed at keeping invasive plants and animals out of the flowage. The following chart shows our efforts to date and so far, “knock-on-wood,” we only battle Curly-leaf Pondweed. However, we are surrounded by lakes with zebra mussels, Eurasian milfoil, etc. so we need to be careful, which is why we have CBCW inspections and two decontamination stations. We hope boaters are following CBCW rules, and using the decontamination stations even when inspectors are not present.

Year	Number of Boats Inspected	Hours Spent Inspecting
2013	65	64
2014	62	92
2015	66	144
2016	143	227* CBCW Grant
2017	145	204
2018	144	206
2019	167	205
2020	173	214
2021	158	202
2022	137	242
2023	153	205

2024 is underway. We only watch the Lincoln Landing which is the more popular public landing.

*Boat inspectors must be trained. We began getting grants in 2016 and have applied and received grants each year since 2016.

F. Newsletter... summer 2024

This newsletter, which we hope keeps you informed, and additional information are posted on our website, arprd.org

Roland Peterson, Chair and newsletter writer

Billie Jo Schleusner, Treasurer

Kitty Miller, Secretary

Eric Elkin, City of Amery Representative

Fran Duncanson, Polk County Representative