# JESSIE LAKE WATERSHED ASSOCIATION



VOL.18, NO. 1 SPRING 2015

#### MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT DAVID ANDERSON

Spring has arrived and it is a beautiful one so far. I hope this finds you well and ready for the start of another great fishing season. I am always anxious to get the docks in, the boat gassed up and bait ready for that first cast. I also hope my mound system unfreezes unharmed and works, as I know many of you shared the same fate of a frozen system and several trips from the honey wagon. This spring is in stark contrast to last spring when cold weather and the ice out on all our lakes barely beat the opener. This year the ice out is about 10 days early. The real issue this year is the dry conditions and low water levels, given the lack of snow last winter and a lack of rain so far this season. Let's hope and pray the rains will come sufficiently to keep our lake and river levels up.

The biggest issue we continue to face in all Minnesota waters is related to Aquatic Invasive Species or AIS. The AIS include zebra mussels, spiny waterflea, Eurasian milfoil, faucet snails, purple loosestrife, rusty crayfish and curly-leaf pondweed. The impact is easy to see as these foreign invaders attack our lakes and reduce fish stock and make shorelines dangerous to walk on. Lake Mille Lac is probably the best example of the harm zebra mussels can do, with walleye levels down to a 40 year low. While not all of this decline is due to AIS, many believe AIS is a contributing factor. To inform all our lake owners what they can do to help protect all our waters, our board is sending all land owners from Jessie, Little Jessie, Spring Little Spring and Peterson Lakes a brochure just released by the Minnesota DNR appropriately named Help Protect Minnesota Waters. We hope this brochure will be helpful as a learning tool for all our members and non-nonmembers alike.

I would like to highlight some of the major events and projects coming up this spring and summer:

- Our JLWA spring meeting is going to be on June 6, 2015 at Jessie Lake Lutheran Church. Please come and participate, our speaker at the meeting will be Jeff Forester from Minnesota Lakes and Rivers Advocates (MLA) and he will talk about the AIS problem and how MLA supports lake associations throughout Minnesota.
- Our lake picnic is set for Friday, July 17<sup>th</sup>. Rhonda Nichols will be hosting it again this year at her house at 47030 S Tillys Road.
- This summer we will host another "Share the Lake Day" on July 15, 2015. Bigfork seniors will enjoy a picnic lunch and rides on the Let's Go Fishing specially equipped pontoon boat. Marn Flicker and Jim Deconcini are coordinating this event. This event has always been well received.
- Over the winter, we contracted with a local trapper to trap beavers in the creeks around Jessie and Spring Lake to help slow the large number of dams clogging the flow in our inlets and impacting our fish spawning areas. We hope this year to monitor the north creek for walleye spawning and keep the creek free of dams and debris to facilitate its recovery.

As the spring and summer get us all out on our lakes, please be safe and have an enjoyable boating, fishing and cabin season.

**Please Mark Your Calendar With These Dates:** May  $1^{st}$  – roadside cleaning July  $15^{th}$  – Share the Lake Day July  $17^{th}$  – Summer Association Picnic Sept  $5^{th}$  – Fall meeting

# BE SURE TO CHECK YOUR DOCK AND LIFT FOR ZEBRA MUSSELS BEFORE INSTALLING IN OUR LAKES – ALSO CHECK YOUR BOAT AND TRAILER

#### SPRING MEETING

Hope to see you all at the spring meeting starting at 10:00 a.m. (coffee at 9:00 a.m.) on Saturday June 6<sup>th</sup>. Please note, we are continuing another trial year of an early June meeting instead of the usual time in mid-May as decided by the membership last fall to improve attendance. The meeting will be at the Jesse Lutheran Church on Co. Rd 4. The business meeting will follow the coffee hour with your directors and neighbors. Maybe you can share your fish stories and hot-spots with a new member.

### JLWA 2015 Proposed Budget-Approved at Annual Meeting

Expenses	<u>2015</u>	<u>2014</u>	
Postage	\$450	\$450	
Printing	\$350	\$350	
Share the Lake Day	\$350	\$350	
MN Waters [dues & hosting web]	\$250	\$250	
MN Lakes and Rivers Dues	\$150	\$150	
Meeting rentals	\$100	\$100	
Mileage/Education*	\$200	\$200	*This item was
ICOLA [dues]	\$ 50	\$ 50	and added items
Lab water testing	\$300	\$300	plus \$100 for IV
Supplies [office/operating]	\$100	\$100	total of \$2625.
AIS Signs for Public Access		\$200	
JLWA Picnic	\$ 75	<u>\$ 75</u>	
Total	\$2375	\$2575	

\*This item was cut at the spring Board meeting and added items were \$350 for beaver trapping plus \$100 for IWLP donation/dues for a 2015 total of \$2625.

#### AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES – ZEBRA MUSSELS

#### **By Harold Goetzman**

As reported a year ago, zebra mussels have been found in Sand Lake and Little Sand in Itasca County (our close neighbors). The adult mussels have now been found attached to docks and lifts this past fall (see picture below). Because the Sand Lake chain has been designated infested by the DNR, bait harvest and transport of water for any purpose is prohibited. If you fish in Sand Lake remember it is the law to remove all aquatic plants, zebra mussels and other invasive species from your boat and trailer. All water from bait containers, livewells, bilges and the boat hull (remove plug) must be drained before leaving the boat landing. This is very important for JLW lakes with the normal back and forth travel to our neighboring lakes, which a lot of fisherman use when they are not biting on Jessie.

Currently, we have over 250 lakes infested with zebra mussels. A list of the MN infested waters for all AIS is given in the new 2015 Fishing Regulations booklet if you are fishing other lakes. Just this year there are 40 new lakes added to the list that are infested with zebra mussels. Many of them are in Crow Wing County our neighbors to the south. There are 23 new cases of Eurasian watermilfoil and 10 spiny waterflea so all types of AIS are on the move. In addition, there are now over 800 lakes with curly-leaf pondweed, which are not even listed in the booklet. Dixon Lake near Winnie has a lot of it so if you go there be sure to clean your trailer. I recently talked to a resident of Gull Lake by Brainerd and he said the zebra mussels have really exploded since arriving 5 years ago and have virtually ruined the fishing. The water is clearer, but you don't see a minnow or small fish anywhere. Any rock in the shallow water is now covered with mussels and kids swimming cut their feet since they are very sharp.

It is not clear how the mussels got into Sand Lake, except that people were involved since zebra mussels can't swim. Currently, the MN Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center at the U of MN is

conducting genetic(DNA) research to try and determine which water body was the source of the mussels found in Sand Lake. They are also exploring technology for management or control of zebra mussels, but at this time there is no affordable method that can be used in lakes. WE MUST ALL TAKE ACTION TO AVOID MOVING THESE INVASIVE SPECIES TO OUR LAKES. RULES THAT ARE IN PLACE REGARDING MOVING A BOAT FROM INFESTED WATERS NEED TO BE FOLLOWED.



A dock float removed from Little Sand Lake last fall shows how the population is expanding.

# DNR POSTPONES AIS TRAINING AND TRAILER DECAL PROGRAM DNR News Release Jan. 28, 2015

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources will postpone the new aquatic invasive species training and trailer decal program while legislators consider changes to the program.

Under a law passed by the State Legislature in 2012, anyone trailering a boat or water-related equipment such as docks and lifts in Minnesota is required to take aquatic invasive species training and display a decal on their trailer. The effective date is July 1, 2015.

"With the legislative interest in this educational program and ongoing discussions about possible changes, we are postponing the launch until we see if the Legislature acts this session to modify the program," said Bob Meier, DNR assistant commissioner.

The DNR supports the education that would be provided under this law, but recognizes there are some concerns with the way the law is currently written. For example, people transporting boats on trailers through Minnesota to another destination are required to take the course and display a decal even if they don't put their boat in Minnesota waters.

Since the training and decal are currently not required until July 1, the DNR wants to remind people that there will be time to see what happens legislatively and still take the course and receive decals. The agency will post online any updates on trailers and alert the media if there are any changes.



New AIS sign at Little Jessie public access installed by JLWA last fall.

### ITASCA COUNTY AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES PROGRAM

The MN Legislature approved a bill in 2014 to appropriate \$10 million annually from the general fund that goes directly to counties for local AIS work. The counties can make grants from these funds to lake associations or other groups to reduce the threat of AIS such as zebra mussels, spiny waterfleas, rusty crayfish and Eurasian milfoil. The money will be doled out to the 87 counties based on how many boat landings and trailer parking spaces are in a given county. Itasca County will receive the second largest appropriation on the order of \$256,000 for 2014 and \$570,000 in July, 2015. The AIS Technical Committee was chosen by the County Board to make these decisions because it includes a wide-ranging group of agencies, associations and interest groups. These include IWLP, SWCD, DNR, ICOLA, U of MN County Extension, USFS and the Leech Lake Band with Bill Grantges of Sugar Lake as the official Itasca County AIS Coordinator (218-256-9100). This AIS Tech Committee drafted the Itasca County Aquatic Invasive Species Plan, which is comprised of six Priority Areas, each managed by a sponsoring agency or organization.

A summary of the Proposed Itasca AIS Plan Priority Areas with the lead organization is as follows: <u>Prevention and Inspection</u>: lead organization – IWLP. Priorities include AIS watercraft inspection and decontamination program, enforcement, education, public landing infrastructure improvements, local partnerships (anglers, fishing guides, bait shops, hunters, marine businesses, float plane operators and all other businesses). A budget and detailed plan for the Prevention Area has been completed and approved by the AIS Tech Committee.

<u>Early Detection</u>: lead agency – U of MN Extension – Itasca County. Priorities include working with the University of Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center to develop educational resources including AIS identification, curriculum, citizen science and infrastructure for reporting and responding to AIS. Educational programs will be offered to County citizens. Still in planning stage.

<u>Control, Monitoring and Research</u>: lead agency – Itasca SWCD. Priorities include coordinating trained AIS field crew(s) for early detection, control and monitoring of AIS in Itasca County lakes and rivers; and coordinating with Minnesota AIS Research Center, MN Sea Grant and MN DNR research on control and monitoring for long-term control of AIS. Still in planning stage.

<u>Community Action Projects</u>: lead organization –ICOLA. Priorities include managing a small grants program that enables organizations, associations or individuals to further AIS prevention locally by means of enhancing other AISP programs or innovative projects, matching funds required to leverage AIS prevention efforts. The line item budget and detailed plan for the Community Action Projects Area has been completed and approved by the AIS Tech Committee. The first round of matching fund reimbursement grants have been awarded. Recipients were: Bowstring Resort & Campground for purchase of a Hot Water Pressure Washer; Sand Lake Property Owners Association for their 2015 AIS Volunteer Program that included the purchase and installation of several signs; Grand Rapids Marine and T&M Marine (both in Grand Rapids) for the purchase of Hot Water Pressure Washers.

<u>Communication/Awareness</u>: lead organization – IWLP. The priorities include managing public communications, mass media programs, AIS awareness at public events, printed materials, outreach to new or external AIS partners, AIS programs for youth, contributing website content, and collateral support for other priority areas communication needs. The budget and detailed plan for the Communications/Awareness Area have been completed and approved by the AIS Tech Committee.

<u>Database</u>, <u>Website and County Reserve</u>: lead agency – Itasca County. Priorities include participating with the DNR AIS Database, developing a county AIS website to include an AIS location map, identification, reporting, calendar of events, volunteer opportunities and contact information. Still in planning stage.

A summary of the Proposed Budget for the Itasca AISP Priority Areas for 2014-15 is as follows:

1) Prevention and Inspection - \$247,043 (46%), 2) Early Detection Training - \$80,713 (15%), 3) Control, Monitoring and Research - \$78,406 (14%), 4) Community Action Projects - \$48,179 (9%), 5) Communication and Awareness - \$18,133 (3%), 6) Database and Website - \$68,681 (13%) for a total of \$541,154. From July 2014 to July 2016 we have a total of \$825,972 to spend on the AIS program.

## HELP WITH NO WAKE ZONE ON JESSIE LAKE Steve and Patsy Bowers - Rising Eagle Resort

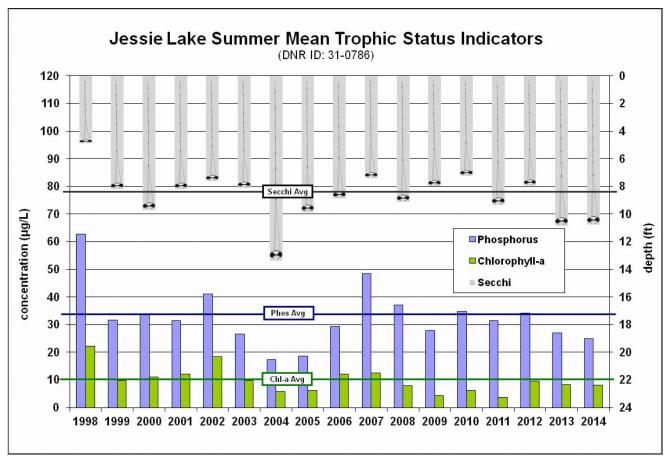
As you may know, the NW shoreline of Big Jessie Lake suffers a great deal of erosion with the biggest culprit being waves caused from Big Jessie's frequent southeast winds. We spent a great deal of time and money last year working with the SWCD in efforts to repair and restore 200 feet of resort shoreline to prevent future erosion. However, the work done will take the next few years to get fully established. With this in mind, along with the wildlife use and loon nesting sites seen at the lake's north end, we are sending out this friendly request for everyone to maintain a "no wake" zone when motoring up at the north end of Big Jessie Lake. While we cannot prevent waves caused from winds, we want to decrease the number of "preventable" waves coming into the shoreline from motor boats and recreational activities like water skiing and jet skiing. Please know we do communicate this request to all of our resort guests, both verbally and through posted signs in all of our rentals. We thank the JLWA and the SWCD for all of the support given to us with the shoreline restoration efforts last year. Lastly, we sincerely appreciate any cooperation in helping decrease further erosion in one of Big Jessie's most susceptible locations.

Rising Eagle Resort invites anyone interested in the project to stop in and look at the progress. Editor's Note - This is a great example of stewardship for protecting our lake resources into the future so stop by and say thanks personally to Steve, Patsy and Angie. Also, the Association supported posting a no wake zone last summer, but the Itasca County Sheriff's department denied the request.

#### JESSIE LAKE WATER QUALITY – 2014 MONITORING

By Kim Slanga, SWCD Water Resources Specialist

Seventeen consecutive years of water quality data have been collected on Jessie Lake since 1998, which provides insight as to the health of Jessie Lake's Aquatic ecosystem. Water quality was good overall for the summer of 2014 with better than average readings for phosphorus (nutrients), chlorophyll-a (algae), and secchi (water clarity). All parameters sampled aligned quite closely to the 2013 sampling data. The phosphorus average of 25 ug/l was significantly lower than the long term average of 33 ug/l, which was probably due to the colder water temperatures and lower water levels in 2014. This correspondingly gave lower chlorophyll-a values resulting in better water clarity as seen by the secchi disk average of 10.8 ft., which is 2 ft. better than the yearly average.



When reviewing data since 1986 and looking for trends in the more recent (1998-2014) continuous data set, it is encouraging that the data shows Jessie Lake's condition is stable with no negative trend in water quality, meaning amidst the yearly ups and downs the lake appears to be remaining stable. Above is a figure showing the more recent data from 1998-2014 and you can see that the phosphorus values for the past six years have been at or better than average.

Itasca SWCD would like to extend our utmost appreciation for the lake association and volunteer commitment to protect and preserve the health of Jessie Lake for future generations to come. Hopefully, the monitoring will continue in future years and help establish the long term trend for Jessie Lake. This data is annually reported to the MPCA and becomes part of their data base for Minnesota lakes, which is why it is important to continue monitoring the lake.

# SWCD FUNDS AVAILABLE FOR 2015 JESSIE WATERSHED PROJECTS By Harold Goetzman

An earlier issue of the Jabber had an article explaining the need for shoreline owners in our watershed to contact SWCD regarding an interest in completing a shoreline restoration or erosion control project. We still have some funds available and would like anyone with a potential project to contact Harold Goetzman (326-3908) or Andy Aerns (326-0017) at SWCD to discuss the project on your land. Types of projects that could be considered for implementation and funding include the installation of native plant buffers along the lakeshore, willow bundle or coconut fiber log installation to decrease erosion and aid the establishment of native plants, installation of water diversions to reduce erosion and the creation of rain gardens. All of these practices help reduce the nutrient (phosphorus) inputs associated with erosion and sediment transport, which promote the growth of green algae blooms that inhibit recreation in the summer. A reduction of one pound of phosphorus will decrease the algae growth by 500 pounds. Any concerns about your shoreline erosion or storm water management can be explored for solutions. The main thing is to get everyone thinking of how they could help to reduce the phosphorus input into Jessie Lake.

The Resource Advisory Council (RAC) funds approved in 2013 from the USFS Chippewa Forest have not been fully allocated to projects so these funds need to be scheduled and used by fall 2015. Let's get involved and make good use of these funds. Several people have expressed interest and projects will start this spring. There are still sufficient funds for more projects, so give us a call. Other SWCD funds may also be available.

#### **ITASCA SWCD**

Over the past 16 years you have often seen reference to Itasca SWCD in our newsletters. The Soil and Water Conservation Districts are political subdivisions of the State of Minnesota established for the conservation, use and development of soil, water and related resources. The offices are normally aligned with the 87 counties we have in MN. The Itasca SWCD is a local agency, which provides access to conservation and resource management services. In cooperation with federal, state and local agencies, the District provides technical assistance, cost-sharing and natural resource management information in the areas of wetlands, forestry, shoreland, water resources, soils and education. Urban and rural landowners, businesses, industry and agencies may request these services. They are not an enforcement agency.

The Itasca County SWCD Board of Supervisors has prioritized four resource problems of highest priority in Itasca County. They are, in order: 1) Water Quality, 2) Forest Resource Management, 3) Soil Erosion and Forage Quality and 4) Land Use Planning.

#### **SWCD Staff**

Terry Schaedig, District Manager - <a href="mailto:Terry.Schaedig@itascaswcd.org">Terry.Schaedig@itascaswcd.org</a>
Kim Slanga, Water Resources Technician/Specialist - <a href="mailto:Kim.Slanga@itascaswcd.org">Kim.Slanga@itascaswcd.org</a>
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Kathy Loucks, Office Administrator - <a href="mailto:Kathy.Loucks@itascaswcd.org">Kathy.Loucks@itascaswcd.org</a>

The SWCD has recently hired a new District Manager to replace Jim Gustafson and a new Water Resources Specialist to replace Noel Griese.

<u>Terry Schaedig</u>, the District Manager has a Bachelor's Degree in Fisheries and Wildlife Management from Lake Superior State University in Sault Sainte Marie, Michigan. Recently, Terry worked as a consultant for his company Northwoods Forestry. He previously worked at the USDA Pathology Laboratory and for the US Fish and Wildlife Service on three National Wildlife Refuges (Michigan, Wisconsin and Montana). He also was the Native Plants Program Manager for the Michigan

Association of Conservation Districts, a forester for the Oceana Conservation District in Michigan and for three years was based in Bagley, MN as the forester for the Clearwater Soil and Water Conservation District. He grew up in Upper Michigan and has lived near Bemidji for 13 years so this area is familiar territory.

<u>Kim Slanga</u>, the Water Specialist grew up in Duluth, but is familiar with this area since her family had a cabin while growing up, which was located on Three Island Lake near Marcell. She attended several Community Colleges and received Associate in Science Degrees in Water Quality and Watershed Management. Then went to UW Stevens Point, where she got a Bachelor's Degree in Geo-science, with an emphasis in Hydrogeology and double minors in Geology and Water Resources.

Kim previously worked at Lake County SWCD and as intern at our Itasca SWCD. She also worked for the USFS in Wyoming's Big Horn National Forest and in the Superior National Forest.

#### MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

**Roadside Clean Up.** On Friday, May 1<sup>st</sup> at 10:00 a.m. we will meet at Jessie View Resort to pick up litter on the 3 miles of County Road 35 between Highway 6 and County Road 133. The County provides garbage bags and vests so it is a good JLWA public service event if it fits your schedule. Call Harold Goetzman(326-3908) or email if you can help. The backup day in case of rain will be May 5<sup>th</sup>. **Lake Shoreline Clean Up.** This year we are planning to carry out the fourth annual shoreline clean up. The first two years we have cleaned Jessie Lake with 7 or 8 people canoeing or kayaking around the lake and collecting visible trash in the shallow water or on shore while last year it was done on a casual volunteer basis. This year we would like to consider the shoreline cleaning during the last week in May and the first week in June. Let's make all our Association lakes the cleanest in Itasca County. We assume that people will pick up trash in the water or on shore along their private land, but we need people to cover all of the public shoreline during this time. Don Ojanen (832-3716) at

<u>Summer Picnic.</u> The JLWA annual picnic will be held on Friday, July 17<sup>th</sup> and will be at Rhonda Nichols home on Tillys Road. Since Rhonda has indoor space the pot-luck picnic will be held rain or shine so put it on your calendar now and let's make it a big success again. Please note we have changed from Thursday to Friday to try improving the attendance.

DPOjanen@arvig.net has agreed to coordinate the event so please contact him with information on what part of the lake you will cover. Our mission statement is to improve the quality of the

environment in our watershed and this event follows that purpose.

Youth Water Summit. On May 21<sup>st</sup> the fourth annual Youth Water Summit will be held at the Itasca County Fairgrounds. This event will be for about 400 5<sup>th</sup> graders from Grand Rapids, Bigfork and St. Joe's schools. In addition, this year's event will again include the Deer River 5<sup>th</sup> graders and now the Coleraine 5<sup>th</sup> graders will also attend bringing the number of students to about 400. This will be a daylong event with many hands-on water science activities. It is hosted by Itasca Water Legacy Partnership (IWLP) and staffed by environmentalists and volunteer teachers. Harold Goetzman and Marn Flicker will represent JLWA. The keynote speaker will be Justin Liles, meteorologist from WDIO TV in Duluth. The goal is to teach youth how important it is to maintain our clean water resources, as these are our future decision makers.

Lakeshore Living. The JLWA has a copy of a new book titled "Lakeshore Living" by Paul Radomski, DNR Lakes Scientist and Kristof Van Assche, a Belgian landscape architect. The book is a remarkably accessible synthesis of ecology, landscape design, and social science. It presents an approach to lakeshore living that addresses the need to create rich, sustainable places and communities on the water, where both the loon and the family find a place, and where the cabin can be handed down with integrity to the grandchildren. Fragile shorelands require care, and that caring comes from knowledge, experience, and an environmental ethic. An environmentally sensitive lakeshore place and community design is the way forward. Lakeshores are beautiful places to live, but our lakes face many challenges.

The list of challenges is long and includes pollution, habitat loss, and poor design and development. If you are interested in reading this book, please give me a call to borrow it (832-3139).

<u>Lady Slippers.</u> The gorgeous Showy Lady Slipper, Minnesota's state flower, is often seen in area road ditches usually blooming in early July. It is one of 5 lady slipper orchid species that bloom in the northland. Each flower pod may produce a million dust-light seeds that float for miles, but it takes just the right spot with a certain fungus in the soil to produce a new plant. Once established the plant will take 14-16 years to blossom. A new stem, which carries a blossom develops each year beside the old stem. A large clump of perhaps 20 blooms might indicate a plant that is 100 years old. Orchids are protected on public land. In the U.S. Forestry, a rare plant specialist pointed out that because the plants need soil which contains the fungus to thrive, an uprooted lady slipper is unlikely to survive elsewhere. So take pictures and not the plants. Enjoy the flower where it grows in the wild.

**Quotable**. –"I know if I don't go fishing every day that it probably won't kill me, but then why take a chance." Anonymous

#### **DID YOU KNOW?**

#### By Harold Goetzman

- About 500,000 people are expected to fish on opening day of fishing on Saturday, May 9<sup>th</sup>.
- The average annual expenditure per angler is about \$1500 and we have 1.5 million anglers in MN.
- In March there was a new MN state record tullibee (cisco) caught on Sybil Lake in Otter Tail County. The fish weighed 5lbs and 13 oz, which is a really big tullibee. I thought 2lbs was big.
- MN was second in USA for fishing participation with 32%, which is 1.5 million anglers.
- Sand Lake will have a walleye slot of 17-26 inches starting in May of 2016.
- MN averages about 45 tornadoes a year, but 2014 saw just half that with 23 confirmed.
- It takes 10 seconds with 140 degree water to kill zebra mussels.
- The ice on Jessie Lake went our on April 15<sup>th</sup> while the average ice out date is April 25<sup>th</sup>.
- Our website (www.minnesotawaters.org/Jessielakewatershed) is updated regularly by our Webmaster Hollister Madsen with meeting notices and the latest issue of the Jabber.

#### **MEMBERSHIP**

The JLWA presently has 97 paid members. If you have not paid your 2015 dues, please send your \$10 to Tina Jorgenson, 20756 Field Crest Rd, Grand Rapids, MN 55744.

### CLIP AND SAVE FOR FUTURE REFERENCE

Our JLWA website is <u>www.minnesotawaters.org/Jessielakewatershed</u>						
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