

Clearwater Lake Lady Slipper Project & 2012 Work Plan



The goal of the project is to identify and designate a section along the Clearwater Lake Highway where Minnesota's state Showy Lady Slipper habitat is protected and allowed to thrive. This would be done through combined efforts of the CLAA, county, property owners, and volunteers.

Summer 2011 Activities

1. Attended training session with Mike Stenseng on using a Global Position System (GPS) device.
2. In late June, volunteers Lois Budish, Carol Torgerson and I counted and identified lady slippers locations, using a GPS device, along the Clearwater Lake highway between the Leonard turn off to Haggerty Lake where Beltrami County begins.
3. GPS data, counts, and other observations were given to Mike Stenseng, Environmental Technician. Mike produced a great map of lady slipper locations.
4. Wrote and submitted article/photos to Leader Record, published article on July 20, 2011. .

Lady Slipper plant location observations:

- Conditions for lady slippers were ideal last summer with over 1,000 plants counted between Leonard turn-off and the Dam in a three mile stretch. Only one colony of lady slippers was found north of the North Shore Drive.
- Many young plants that have not yet produced flowers; these were included in the count.
- Majority of plants are growing in the ditch bottoms or opposite bank from highway. Few plants are growing along the highway side of ditches. This makes sense since herbicides are sprayed along the highway side and lady slippers/wildflowers cannot survive.
- Lady slippers like conditions where their roots are damp, such as lowlands and wetlands.

Proposed Summer 2012 Work plan

Note: Clearwater Co. will not be spraying Clearwater Lake Highway segment between Leonard turn-off (Hwy 14) and Beltrami County line for the next 3 years.

1. Arrange a meeting with county staff to review roadside weeds of concern and ways to control them. Outline responsibilities of each party.
2. With the help of other board members, talk to property owners about proposed "no spray" zone and what they are willing/not willing to do.
3. Draft and review No Spray agreement between CLAA Board and county.
4. Submit No Spray agreement to appropriate county staff for review and approval.
5. Organize a group of volunteers to help remove noxious weeds/brush along ditches using "best practices" for removal.

Submitted by Roz Johnson, CLAA Board Member, Summer 2012.