

JESSIE LAKE WATERSHED ASSOCIATION



JESSIE JABBER

VOL.13, NO. 1

SPRING 2010

MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT Marn Flicker:

Spring arrived earlier than any time in recent history at Jessie. Yes, the ice-out was documented and verified as April 3rd this year. The average ice-out since 1940 is April 25th so this is extremely early. These stats should get you excited to “get to the cabin” and start the 2010 lake season sooner than ever before.

The other good news is that on April 13th the walleyes started swimming up Spring Creek to spawn. The bad, the lake level is too low for the other creeks to have enough flow to allow fish to navigate upstream. The beaver dam leveler pipe is functioning as designed and the extra water flow will assist in the spring walleye run.

We are still in a drought for the third straight year. The entire northern half of the state is in an extremely “High Risk” mode for fires. With little or no spring runoff from the watershed area, the lake levels are far below normal spring levels. Someone please do a rain chant or rain dance to try and get a few heavy rains to get us closer to normal?

The memberships have been coming in at a very positive rate with many generous donations to fund the Association’s functions and missions to “enhance water quality and improve the total Watershed environment”.

The Board of Directors met on April 6th to review our needs for the 2010 season and those minutes along with the proposed budget are a separate article in this edition of the Jabber. The JLWA questionnaire results were also compiled and are part of that article. The response was more than fantastic and beyond expectations. Thanks to all who took the time to share your thoughts and ideas for JLWA.

We now have a newly revised fisheries Lake Management Plan from the DNR that is presented in an article by Dave Weitzel and will be discussed at the Spring meeting so plan on attending to hear about the new walleye stocking plan. We will be presenting bylaw changes for you to review and comment on so a vote on those changes can be taken at the annual fall meeting.

We also moved the summer JLWA picnic to Saturday, July 31st as a majority of the survey returns requested a Saturday picnic. The “Share the Lake Day” of hosting seniors by providing fellowship, picnic and pontoon rides will be August 4, with August 5 as the backup rain day.

Thank you again for your support and take a few minutes to review the various lake committees that offer an opportunity to volunteer in an active Association that strives to protect all the beauty of the watershed area.

SPRING MEETING

Hope to see you all at the spring meeting starting at **9:00 a.m. on Saturday May 22nd (not Memorial weekend)**. We will meet **at the Bowstring Township Hall** on Co Rd 133. The business meeting will be first and after the meeting stay and have coffee with your directors and neighbors or maybe meet someone new. Maybe you can share your fish stories and hot spots with a new member.

DIRECTORS MEETING - APRIL 6, 2010

By Betty Steinbrenner, Secretary

The meeting was held at Steinbrenners with Marn Flicker, Harold Goetzman, Krista Hagen, Dale Hertle, Ardie Sheplee and Betty Steinbrenner attending. Marn called the meeting to order at 2:00.

Dale Hertle reported that current membership is at 92 and the checkbook balance is \$5,257.29.

*Marn presented the 2010 JLWA Budget recommendation which projects income of approximately \$2000 as well as projected expenditures of about \$2000. A motion was made, seconded and passed to accept the 2010 budget and present it to the membership for approval at the Spring meeting. The following is the proposed budget handed out by Marn.

Jessie Lake Watershed Association Budget

April 2010

Income 2008	\$1929.48
Income 2009	\$2016.00
Average Anticipated Income	<u>\$2000.00</u>

Expenses:

Postage	\$325
Printing	\$300
Share the Lake	\$400
MN. Waters	\$250
Rental	\$ 50
Mileage/Edu	\$200
ICOLA	\$ 50
Water Lab testing	\$300
Supplies	\$125
<u>Total</u>	<u>\$2000</u>

*Bylaw Review – The Board reviewed the Bylaws and will present recommendations for change to the membership for comments at the Spring meeting. The following changes were recommended:

Article II – Membership – revise associate membership class.

3.4 – Quorum shall consist of the majority of members present at meeting.

4.9 – Vice-President will head a committee of choice.

4.10 – Secretary will be responsible for keeping the Association records.

*Harold Goetzman reviewed the new Lake Management Plan. The DNR has suggested a new stocking plan of every year and they will have a final version of the new plan in late April.

*Discussed MN Waters P&L question. Their income from charitable gambling and dues is about \$500,000 and expenses consist primarily of salaries and consulting fees.

*Marn presented a list of recommended Committees, which will be explained and offered to the membership for participation at the Spring meeting. Marn said he would like to have members other than the Board of Directors head up these committees to get more people involved in the activities of the association.

Proposed JLWA Working Committees

Media Committee

1. Assemble, print and mail Jabber newsletter twice a year from general information, photos, articles and news from JLWA area.
2. Notify media of special JLWA events and release photos and event information to media.

Membership Committee

1. Promote memberships through the mail, phone, and personal visits.

Data/Records Committee

1. Maintain database of memberships and map location reference list.
2. Maintain an external data storage device with membership information downloaded every six (6) months. External device provided by JLWA.

Historian

1. Collect and/or assemble photos, news clippings, documents, artifacts and books of Jessie Lake watershed area history to share with membership.

Public Relations/Events

1. Organize and/or oversee Association events that include events such as roadside cleanup and Share the Lake.

Hospitality Committee

1. Oversee assignments for food, beverages and needed supplies for Association meetings and annual picnic.

Environmental Committee

1. Educate and inform membership on environmental issues such as invasive species, docks, water quality, shoreline buffers and septic tanks regulations.
2. Provide a member representative to ICOLA for information exchange.

*The JLWA Web Page was discussed and the consensus was that it needs to be enhanced. Our Website is accessed through the MN Waters Website and has a fairly limited storage capacity according to our webmaster Jim Anderson.

*TMDL – Harold reported on the status of the 100-page report, which has been completed by Wenck Consulting. It has been reviewed by the MPCA and returned to the consultant. The first draft of the Implementation Plan with costs is expected by April 15 and public comment in June.

*Map Update – Harold will ask Jim Anderson to update the map directory that will be sent out in June (Jim was not able to attend meeting).

*Discussed the following potential event dates.

Roadside Cleanup – Tuesday May 4 at 9:30 (meet at Jessie View) with rainout date of May 6th. Krista Hagen has agreed to assume responsibility for this event.

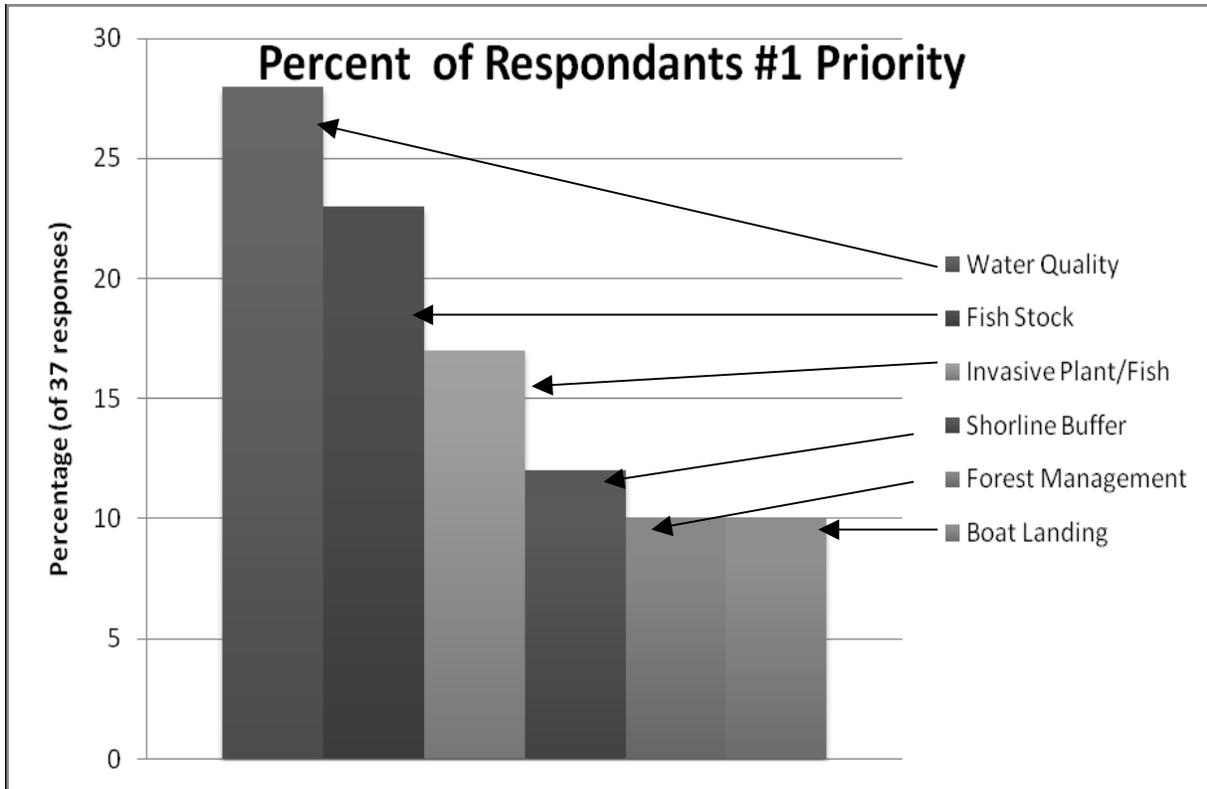
Spring Meeting – Saturday, May 22 – Betty Steinbrenner will reserve Bowstring Town Hall. There will be no speaker.

Summer Picnic – This year will be held on Saturday, July 31 at the Bob & Barb Lewis residence. We need to poll the membership at Spring meeting on most desirable month/day for future picnics.

Share the Lake – Set for August 4; LGFWS Pontoon has been reserved and a Round-up Fund grant was applied for in March.

*Dale Hertle reported on Beaver Dams and Creeks in watershed. They have started the walleye monitoring, but no fish have been seen since the water level in the creek is very low.

*Marn presented the results of the questionnaire sent out to the membership. So far, 46 members responded to the questionnaire with water quality and fish stocking being the top two items of concern; however, many members also expressed concern of the low water level. Also, the concern for invasive species is increasing, which means the educational efforts on this subject have been effective. The following graph of the survey results was handed out and discussed.



NEW DNR STOCKING PLAN FOR JESSIE LAKE

By David L. Weitzel, DNR Assistant Area Fisheries Supervisor

The Minnesota DNR completed a fisheries population assessment late last summer and revised the fisheries lake management plan for Jessie Lake last winter. This plan takes the current status of the walleye population into account to revise the management strategies. Walleye remained the primary management species and were caught in high abundance during the 2009 assessment. A very strong 2006-year class suggests excellent fishing opportunities in the very near future. The current updated plan can be obtained from the DNR web site.

Past walleye management of Jessie Lake has included frequent assessments, habitat improvements and walleye stocking. Walleye fry were stocked for two consecutive years, followed by two years of no stocking, at a rate of 1000/surface acre from 2002 to 2009. “Blank” years with no stocking were used to evaluate the contribution of natural reproduction. Recent data indicates that natural reproduction has increased from one percent to about 6 percent, although levels are too limited to maintain the fishery. Evaluations of walleye year class catch rates and fall electrofishing on Jessie Lake continue to indicate that walleye abundance is primarily dependent on fry stocking. Past stocking strategies have produced highly variable year class catches resulting in inconsistent angling opportunities and “boom and bust” angling cycles.

Beginning in 2010, Pike River strain walleye fry will be stocked annually at a rate of 500/surface acre (875,000) for 10 years in an effort to provide more consistent year class strength and augment any natural reproduction that may be occurring. By stocking some fry every year, there is a higher probability that good growing conditions will occur and an increased likelihood that a good year class will be produced. Two assessments are planned during the evaluation period and the fall electrofishing will be discontinued. The stocking plan will be reassessed in 2021

JESSIE LAKE TOTAL MAXIMUM DAILY LOAD STUDY

By Harold Goetzman

Jessie Lake has been under study for over ten years to develop a management plan that would improve or maintain the fishery and water quality.

After completion of a Clean Water Partnership grant in 2002, the lake was placed on the impaired waters list by the MPCA in 2004 due to increased levels of nutrients (phosphorous). Last year a grant was awarded to the Itasca SWCD to start a project that would develop the allowable Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) of phosphorous. A contract for \$75,000 from the MPCA was awarded to Wenck Associates, Inc of Maple Plain, MN to complete the TMDL in 2009. The first draft of the 110-page report was sent out for review in December and things have been moving very slow since that time. The MPCA has made comments to Wenck and these have been included in a revised report, which was sent back to the MPCA on April 1, 2010. At this point it appears the report will be sent to the EPA in May for preliminary review and comments, which will take several months. Then a second draft is prepared, which goes out for public comment and those comments are incorporated in the final draft that returns to the MPCA and finally to the EPA for final approval. Obviously, this process is much more detailed and drawn out than any of us could imagine.

The Wenck staff has also been working on a detailed implementation plan as required by the MPCA. Completion of this plan is part of Wenck's current contract and will include estimated costs for carrying out the various load reduction strategies for Jessie Lake. These will involve both watershed load reductions to external sources and internal load reductions involving the lake sediment. A preliminary draft of this plan has been sent to the MPCA for comments and discusses the various options to reduce the annual phosphorus load for Jessie Lake (average phosphorus 35 ug/L) by 22% that is required to obtain the water quality goal of 29 ug/L under average conditions. This means an annual reduction of 1220 lbs of phosphorus to the lake based on our 10 years of data.

The three areas considered for phosphorus reduction are septics, watershed and internal loading since groundwater and atmospheric contributions are not controllable. The recommended scenario by Wenck is to employ a combination of in lake and watershed load reductions to meet the TMDL requirements. These include: (1) alum treatment for a 40 percent internal load reduction, (2) septic system inspections and upgrades for all failing systems, (3) development and redevelopment ordinance to reduce P runoff, (4) add over 9,000 feet of buffers on both shoreland and forested areas, (5) assess Tilly's Creek and Poole's Creek to prioritize erosion areas and seek to restore 4,200 feet of channel and (6) assess Little Spring Lake for reduction improvements. This plan outlined by Wenck has estimates for the cost of each reduction method and they range from \$35/lb of phosphorus removed to \$423/lb with a total cost estimate of \$1.7 to 1.9 million over a ten-year period.

The preliminary draft of the implementation plan indicates the year of 2011 would be used to develop the various strategies and possible improvements could start to take place in 2012. Implementing the Jessie Lake TMDL, will be a collaborative effort between state and local government, individuals and the Itasca SWCD. To meet the water quality standards, Itasca SWCD will leverage the existing regulatory framework and relationships to generate support for TMDL implementation efforts. They will provide technical support and funding (grants) to achieve these goals.

Input from all stakeholders will be sought during the public comment period and a public meeting time will be announced later this year. Stay tuned and stay involved.

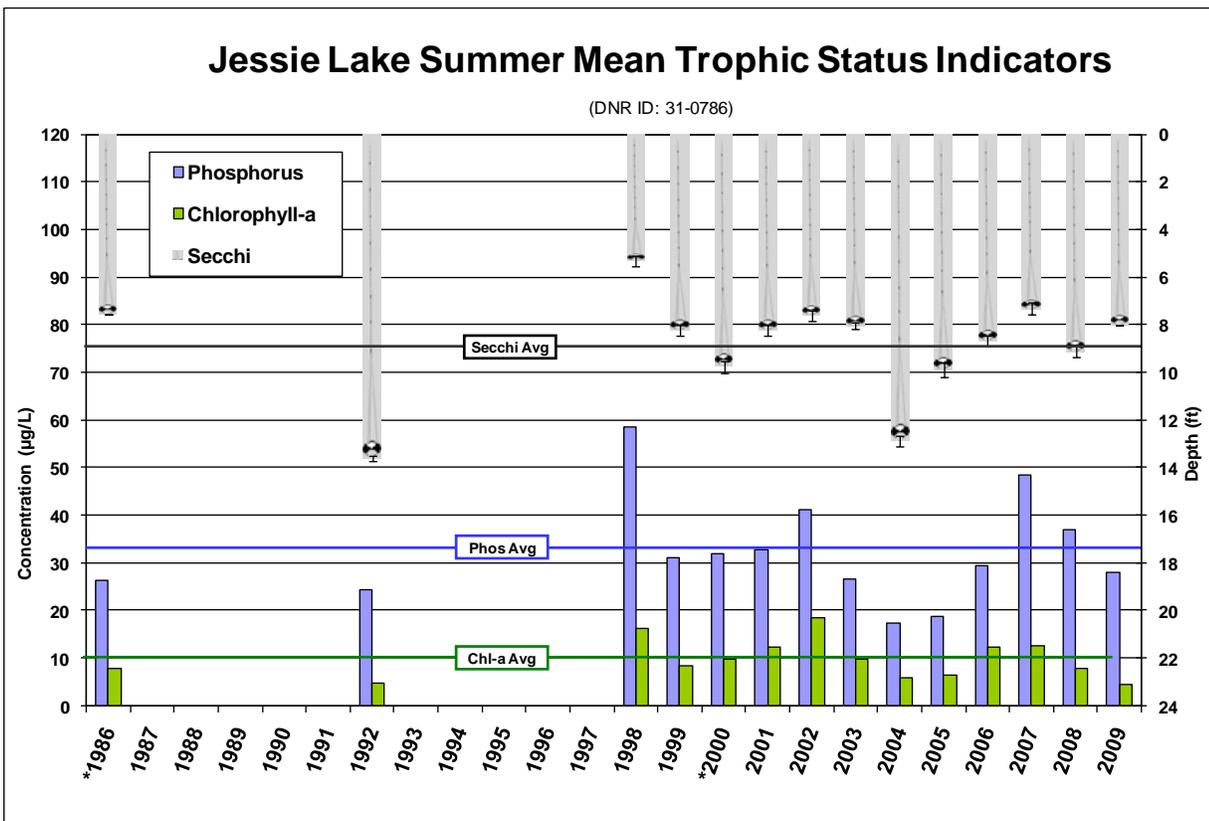
JESSIE LAKE 2009 MONITORING YEAR END REVIEW

By Noel Griese

Jessie Lake has become one of, if not, the most studied lakes to date in Itasca County through the continued efforts and partnership between the Jessie Lake Watershed Association and Itasca County

Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD). Along with the monitoring efforts we are nearing the end of the Total Maximum Daily Load study for Jessie Lake and completion of the implementation plan, which will help guide the future management of Jessie Lake. The TMDL report and opportunity to comment will be provided to the public around late fall to early winter.

Results for 2009 showed some mixed results, but overall it appears that it was a near average year in terms of water quality conditions. Phosphorus and chlorophyll-a (measurement of algae) concentrations were better than the average with chlorophyll-a levels only half of the long-term average. Secchi readings often give a better overall picture of Jessie's water quality for the year because there are more readings that help fill in the gaps between chemistry readings. Based on secchi readings for the year, water clarity indicated that 2009 was just below the long-term average (see graph).



As stated earlier, Jessie Lake has a wealth of information and data, which provides the opportunity to begin looking more closely at trends in whether the water quality of Jessie Lake is improving, maintaining or declining. When looking at the continuous record of data from 1998-09, it appears that the water quality of Jessie Lake is improving, but the data is highly biased by the poor water quality year of 1998. When focusing on the last eleven years (1999-09) the data basically shows no significant trend or change in water quality for Jessie Lake. That means amidst the yearly ups and downs, the lake appears to be remaining stable and although it's not clearly showing improvement it is encouraging to see that it is not declining.

Monitoring efforts will continue in 2010, and as always it is great to see the commitment of the Jessie Lake Watershed Association to protect and preserve the health of Jessie Lake for future generations to come.

ICE OUT

By Bill Nelson

This year the ice went out on Jessie Lake on April 3rd, which is a new record. The previous record was April 8th, 2000, which was the earliest since 1940. The average ice-out for the past 71 years is April 25th so this year is a good three weeks ahead of normal.

I have been keeping the ice out records since the formation of the lake association. When Tim and Rita Onraet Rita purchased Ayers Resort and Campground they found records of when the ice had gone out of Jessie Lake dating back to 1940. In checking around I learned from Florence Bellamy that Charlie DeGroot was the person who started the record keeping and that she had records of freeze-up dating to 1977.

In general, the time of ice out ranges over a six-week period, but about half the time the ice has gone out during the last week in April. When we started the Lake Association in 1998, the ice went out very early, only three days later than the record at that time of April 9 that occurred in 1945. Conversely, in 1996 the ice went out on May 9, with only 1950 and 1966 being later. Considering how miserable the winter and spring of 1995/96 were I am glad I was not here in 1950 when the ice did not go out until May 19. There have been 17 days of ice out occurring in May.

The time of freeze-up has not extended over as long a period as ice out. Nearly 70% of the time freeze-up has occurred from November 16-26. If you have any additional information for Jessie Lake, or Peterson, Little Spring, and Spring lakes let me know.

LOOKING BACK

By Harold Goetzman

After twelve years of working on the JLWA newsletter I decided to put all of those issues on a CD that would provide a record for our Association history. Fortunately, Bill Nelson who was the first editor still had computer files available. In the event that anyone is interested in having a copy of these past Jabbers please let me know and I could send you a CD. A couple dollars to cover the cost of the disk and mailing would be appreciated, but not required.

I found some interesting reading in those past issues of the Jabber and a couple of excerpts follow: Jabber V2N2 Fall 1999 (excerpt from the President Harold Goetzman Greeting)

“Speaking of diversity, as I look back at last year’s activities, I think we were successful at expanding the areas of interest and a large number of volunteer hours were spent on a variety of activities. More than 800 hours were put in on walleye monitoring, stream maintenance, placement of spawning rock, checking on beaver, shoreline restoration, measuring and sampling stream flows, lake water sampling, hanging wood duck houses, loon watch, attending meetings and preparing newsletters. Providing more than 40 wood duck houses to members attending the Spring and Fall meetings was a big step for getting into wildlife projects. A successful association can build and grow on the diversity of its members and that is why I am pleased we have continued to grow to 70 members, so encourage your neighbors to join also. We can all be proud that this high level of activity has earned our association an award from the Itasca County Soil and Water Conservation District (ICSWCD) as Cooperator of the Year for 1999.”

You can compare the results of our past survey with the current one by looking back at the old Jabber V6N2 Fall 2003 (excerpt from article JLWA SURVEY by Harold Goetzman)

“ At the annual meeting a survey sheet was handed out with a list of eight subjects that are of importance in creating a watershed management plan. Each person was asked to number the items in the order of importance to them personally and what areas they would like the Association to concentrate efforts. After the meeting Bill Nelson helped me summarize the survey sheets to rank the items in order of interest. The following is the result of our local survey: (1) Water Quality, (2) Fishery, (3) Land Use and Zoning, (4) Wildlife, (5) Surface Use, (6) Aquatic Vegetation, (7) Exotic

Species, (8) Public Access. Also, 83% of the people rated water quality either one or two, which is significant, but not as high as in the MLA survey where 98% ranked it number one.

In general, the results of our survey are also very similar to other lake associations in Itasca County. During the Healthy Lakes Initiative last year the nine local lake associations that participated ranked the top four issues as water quality, fishing, land use/zoning, and surface use in that order. This information will be useful in the future management of our association.”

MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

JLWA Logo Shirts. For those interested in ordering this year, we will take orders at the spring meeting and then place an order. Marn and Marie Flicker will coordinate the ordering and distribution. If you want to order or have questions about colors please call Marie at 218-326-0811(home) or 218-832-3154 (lake). Colored order forms can be sent out to new members who have not seen the original form. Also, we have 5 hats available if you are interested.

Roadside Clean Up. On Tuesday, May 4th at 9:30 we will meet at Jessie View Resort to pick up litter on 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.

Invasive Species Alert. There is still a great deal of concern in our state for some of the invasive species that are making their way north.

Emerald Ash Borer. The small, tree-killing insect from China has moved into the suburban area near Minneapolis and officials in Minnesota said the march North is inevitable. The state is working to slow that spread to give foresters and pest expert's time to find more control options. While the adult beetle can fly short distances, it is believed that most of the beetle movement is by people transporting infested firewood. In a truck the beetle can move 60 mph. **PLEASE DO NOT MOVE ANY FIREWOOD OR LIVE ASH TREES FROM OTHER PARTS OF THE STATE.**

Zebra Mussels. The discovery of Zebra Mussels in Mille Lacs Lake brings a concern regarding boats that use Mille Lacs and then travel to Itasca County. We need to do our best to insure only clean boats and those with empty live wells enter our lakes.

The DNR and others are very concerned about the spread of zebra mussels out of Mille Lacs Lake. According to DNR studies, Mille Lacs Lake has about 400,000 angling trips per year, so the volume of recreational boat traffic is huge. It is recommended that all lake and river groups step up their volunteer and community protection and education efforts. We are working on obtaining signs for the Jessie Lake public landing and the resort ramps.

Cell Tower. The Jessie Lake area will be getting a new cell phone tower located on County Road #133 in front of the T&T gravel pit. The County Planning Commission approved a conditional use permit (CUP) on March 10th and construction may start this fall. They will first need FCC approval because of the Bowstring airport being so close, which may limit the height although the plan is for a 300-foot tower with lights. Tim Hagen of T&T also stated that they are planning to finish up the gravel pit this year as there is nothing left to remove and will start on landscaping. This is why they are selling/leasing the property to the tower builders. It will be built for ATT at first, but will probably be used by others.

Earth Day. On Earth Day 2010 (April 22), The Nature Conservancy and the University of California will publish “The Atlas of Global Conservation” that will bring together for the first time such information as where animal populations are concentrated, which species are in imminent danger of extinction, where forests are disappearing most rapidly and where nature is thriving. Readers can take measure of their own place in the world by the species that flourish at home, but not elsewhere, and by the amount of conservation that has been done – or could be.

Quotable. “Heck we’ve got a lot to do everywhere. Nature is important wherever nature is.” Mark Spalding –The Nature Conservancy

DID YOU KNOW?

By Harold Goetzman

- After two years of no stocking, Walleye fry will be stocked in Jessie Lake during 2010 and will now be stocked annually for the next 10 years per our new lake management plan.
- Only 96 lakeshore properties were sold in Itasca County in 2009.
- No snow in the month of March this year makes it the least snowiest March in history since 1891.
- Minnesota, the land of 10,000 lakes actually has 12,034 lakes greater than ten acres in size.
- The lakes and rivers in Minnesota have about 90,000 miles of shoreline, which is more than Hawaii, Florida and California combined.
- In 1850 Minnesota had 18.6 million acres of wetlands and this was reduced to 9.3 million acres by 2003. This drainage of wetlands was done primarily to create the farmland we now use.
- Currently, private concession companies operate 82% of the reservable campsites in the 4731 national forest campgrounds.
- Sturgeons have remained mostly unchanged for the past 200 million years – yet many species now face extinction because of over harvest and dams. You might wonder why we allow harvesting?
- Jessie Lake Township had 136 households and 335 people in the 2000 census, up from 252 in 1990.
- A river in South America may have 3,000 different fish species whereas a typical river in northern America will have less than 50.
- The average home today has three televisions and has increased its energy usage by 20% with cell phones, computers, appliances, DVD players, video games and many more electronic devices.
- We have a new variety of mosquito in MN called the Japanese rock pool mosquito. The Asian bug that came to the USA in 1998 and survived the Minnesota winter can transmit Lacrosse encephalitis.
- With the Minnesota fishing opener fast approaching, the MPCA is encouraging anglers to switch to lead-free tackle. The toxic metal can poison wildlife such as loons, swans and eagles that inadvertently swallow lead fishing tackle.
- Eurasian Watermilfoil was discovered in 12 more Minnesota lakes last year. That brings the state total to 232 lakes with the invasive weed. Last year, Itasca County received a \$25,000 grant to clean up invasive weeds in Dixon Lake, which is near Winnie.
- The word weather is used to describe short term while climate is over the long haul. The past decade of 2000 to 2009 is the warmest on record, which might be a trend or a temporary blip.
- The ice went out on Jessie Lake on April 3rd, which beats the old record of April 8th in 2000.
- Our website (www.minnesotawaters.org/Jessie) is updated regularly by our Webmaster Jim Anderson with meeting notices and the latest issue of the Jabber.

MEMBERSHIP

The JLWA presently has 92 paid members (99 fall 2009). If you have not paid your 2010 dues, please send your \$10 to Dale Hertle, 47104 Bellamy Road, Talmoon, MN 56637.

NOTICE

The JLWA has changed our policy regarding the mailing list, which was voted on by the members at the 2009 Spring Meeting. We will no longer be sending the newsletter to non-members who have not paid dues for the last 4 years. The cost for printing and postage has become too high to continue this practice. Anyone that becomes interested in supporting the mission of the watershed association and pays the dues invoice sent in January will be put back on the mailing list.