



Hook, Line, and Sinker

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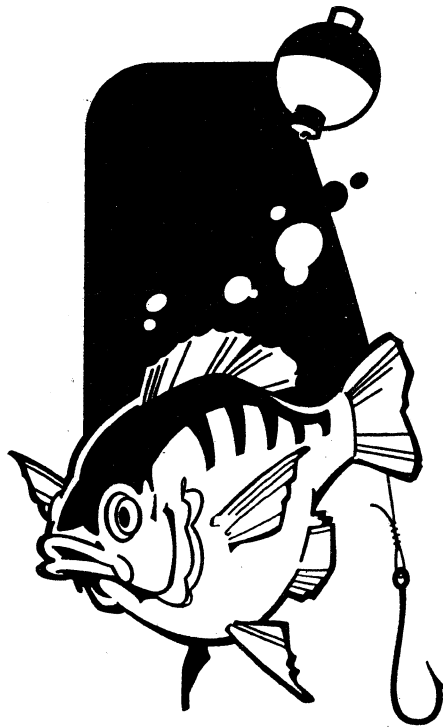
CLEAR LAKE UPDATE

Lake makes it through winter

We have made it through another Minnesota winter. If you call what we had winter that is. According to the statistics, it was one of the warmest winters ever. We certainly can testify to that, what with all the trouble we had with fish houses going through the ice and our fishing contest getting shut down because of poor ice conditions. On the plus side, we were able to turn the aeration system off in January, which saved electricity and wear on the system.

The lake has come through the winter in excellent shape. Oxygen levels never dropped below 12 ppm. Even though the aeration system has been shut down since January, there is still a large area of open water on the lake. This open water is home right now to a large number of ducks and geese, also three swans. According to

test netting that was done last fall, fish numbers, except walleye which were overstocked last fall,



look to be in excellent shape. With practically no chance for a winter kill and very light fishing pressure, we should have a very good spawn this spring. Which in turn should give us some hot fishing once the lake opens up.

Once the lake does open up we will have to retrieve our thin ice signs. When this happens we need to get out there as soon as possible to minimize damage to the signs. We will also need to do some clean-up of the beach area at the County Park. With the lake having a healthy population of fish, the park will see a lot more use. Over the past several years the beach area has become quite overrun by weeds. If we can get 8 to 10 guys out there some afternoon, we can make the beach quite attractive again. We will work out the details at the next meeting.

Club Calendar

March 28th.....Meeting at Club House 7:30 p.m.
April 25th.....Meeting to be announced

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From the President . . .

In an effort to keep our grounds from getting torn up due to Spring break up, our next meeting will be at Evan. There will be a meal of barbecue, potato salad, and beans following the meeting and as usual Erv Fischer has rounded up some great musicians for some entertainment and fellowship before and after the meeting. We will discuss several issues including Bison feed wrap up, potential funding for Lake Hanska improvements, NUASF Minnesota River private access from club grounds, scholarship applications update, honeybee departure date, food booth dates/policy and more. Car pooling details are in this issue of the *Hook, Line and Sinker*.

Our club's thanks goes out to all who bought and sold Bison Feed tickets and to those who helped clean up after at the Legion Club.

As we look forward to a year of open water angling, we should take time to consider one of our organization's original missions, that being fish habitat improvement. As we travel around our region, we all see the differences in bodies of water and their abilities to maintain fish populations. I am not suggesting that fishing pressure is a factor, it is. But, fish habitat improvement when successful, can spread out that pressure and in doing so, improve angling for everyone. It's pretty simple math. Plus, this is a long term method of improvement that provides society a best "bang for the buck" when it comes to spending tax dollars. Some reading this may misconstrue my assumptions into thinking that I am talking about dredging. I am not opposed to it when it can be proven that in a particular body of water, conditions will significantly improve angling over a long period of time. And as a condition, that land use practices are in place to accommodate and improve the watersheds surface waters feeding the lake prior to any dredging. This prevents the continual cycle of dredging, which in reality treats only the symptom of a larger problem that is associated with watershed land use practices. I think we have all seen the pouring of tax payer's money down the drain year after year, with no end in sight in this regards. Every dredge project was "the project to end all projects". It never goes away until the hard work of land use improvements are done. We have the technology to improve land use management, we know the various steps that need to be taken, yet they do not get done simply with the knowledge. There has to be incentives. What those incentives are, is up to society. What are we willing to do? That covers a big area and makes for a fruitful debate. Hopefully we are up to the task.

See you at the next meeting.

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