

PLATTE LAKE IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

P.O. BOX 272

HONOR, MICHIGAN 49640-0272

www.plattelake.com

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THE STATE OF THE LAKE

Platte Lake is again experiencing a marl precipitation problem that has lowered water clarity as compared to last year – See attached Platte Lake Secchi Disk Readings. Looking at the Secchi Depth Table, we began the year with some of our best readings. Things began to drop in mid to late June as the in-lake phosphorus concentrations began to rise – See attached 2000 Versus 2001 Platte Lake Phosphorus Concentration Chart.

The root cause of this phosphorus rise is still under investigation and will be discussed in detail at the Annual Meeting. As of this writing, the consensus opinion of the experts involved is that it does not appear that Hatchery discharge had anything to do with this event. Hatchery discharge for the first six months of 2001 was 86.5 lbs P vs. 101.6 in 2000. A review of the Platte River and Deadstream monitoring indicates that the phosphorus loading from these major tributaries due to the late spring and early summer rain events was insufficient to account for the rise in Platte Lake phosphorus. Deadstream and Platte River loading for the first six months of 2001 was 1979 lbs P compared to 1844 lbs P in 2000. An increase of 135 lbs P. Platte Lake phosphorus concentration on June 30, 2001 was 8.59 ug/l as compared to 5.03 ug/l in 2000. An increase of 3.56 ug/l! This increase equated to approximately 650 lbs additional phosphorus in the lake in 2001 as compared to 2000. The bottom line is that most of the increased phosphorus load to the lake came directly into the lake as opposed to being from the measured tributaries i.e. Deadstream and the Platte River proper.

Potential sources of this increased phosphorus load are:

- Increased local run-off from presently non-monitored creeks and streams that drain into the lake.
- Phosphorus contributed from the 2001 alewife die off.
- Phosphorus from increased lawn fertilization. We have noticed many lake side properties utilizing lawn services.
- Direct atmospheric fallout from the late spring early summer rains.
- Potential increase in mortality of out migrating salmon released upstream of the lake.
- Direct deposition of phosphorus containing material/debris near the lake or near drainage that will enter the lake.

We expect further discussion on this subject at the meeting and will also talk about the things the Lake Association as well you as individuals can do to be vigilant as well as to ensure the phosphorus discharge to the lake due to your activities is reduced/minimized. We need everyone to be involved from here on out! PLIA members presently comprise slightly more than half of the existing lakeside property owners.

CONSENT JUDGMENT IMPLEMENTATION

To date, the implementation of the Consent Judgment has continued to **exceed expectations!** As I stated last year, the many years of hard work, effort and dollars spent that culminated in the signing of the March 10, 2000 Consent Judgment marked a major milestone in our legal effort to

restore Platte Lake. We have an agreement, which will involve our working collaboratively with the DNR through approx. 2010 or 2011. The objectives of the DNR and the PLIA are now aligned. We have jointly committed to the following:

- Do whatever is necessary to clean up the hatchery to the lowest possible discharge level.
- Jointly participate in doing all that is necessary to restore the Platte River watershed and Platte Lake to its original pristine condition.
- Take all necessary actions to ensure that Lake and Watershed remain in that pristine condition.

Highlights of what has been accomplished to date are:

- A May 25, 2001 Annual Report out to the PLIA Board was held at the Hatchery by Dr. Canal. As stated in the June 10, 2001 newsletter, the DNR was in compliance with the agreement as was the PLIA.
- Also on May 25, 2001 a discussion of proposed watershed models and areas of further cooperation was had with the PLIA, DNR, DEQ, Benzie County Conservation District, National Park Service and local lake associations.
- The PLIA and DNR mutually agree to re-appoint Dr. Raymond Canale for a second one-year term as Settlement Agreement Implementation Coordinator. His job is to oversee the implementation of the consent Judgment as well as provide expertise and advice in all aspects of the agreement.
- The PLIA and DNR have engaged in bi-weekly meetings with the Implementation coordinator to maintain a continuous focus on the implementation of all aspects of the Settlement Agreement. These meetings have been either face to face or three way phone conference with detailed minutes, action items, etc.
- \$150K per year has been budgeted by the DNR for Settlement Agreement implementation i.e. water sampling and analysis costs, modeling, Implementation Coordinator fees, etc. Considerable effort has been expended in an aggressive search for more cost effective alternatives to the present sample collection and analysis process. The results to date have been promising. Savings will enable resources to be further dedicated to the enhancement of the lake/watershed.
- The PLIA and the DNR have also spent considerable effort aligning our efforts/resources with those of the Benzie County Conservation District and the National Park Service. The end result has been the signing of an Interlocal Agreement. The agreement is a partnership and commitment to cost and resource sharing for the Platte River Watershed Initiative. It is hoped that this will offer the Benzie County Conservation District a significant advantage in obtaining grants that will fund common watershed models that will be used by all parties as opposed to each activity pursuing independent action. I expect great things to happen as a result of this effort.
- Database modifications efforts are underway to convert the present MSEXCEL to a more efficient MSACCESS database. This should hopefully lessen the burden on the PLIA (Dr. Pattison and myself) who has the responsibility for maintenance update and distribution. We are looking at savings of several hundred hours per year.....our time! This more elegant approach should enable the establishment of a multitude of calculations and charts that will essentially be updated automatically. This will allow us to accurately monitor the state of the lake and watershed as quickly as the data arrives. Expect to start debugging by October!

- Deadstream Dam Fish Ladder project is moving forward and a meeting will be held with all involved parties on August 8, 2001. It is hoped that the ladder will be in place for the early spring Northern Pike Spawning run in 2002.

I will go into more detail on the above as well as addition items at the Annual Meeting. As I stated last year, we are working in a collaborative as opposed to an adversarial role with the DNR. All the time, money and effort spent on developing legal strategy, challenging technical witnesses, developing logic to convince a Court Master and Judge, court room preparations, etc. is now being channeled into positive value added effort to restore/preserve Platte Lake! I must add that this is due in no small part to the direct efforts of Mr. Gary Whalen the DNR Hatchery Manager.

PLATTE LAKE SEPTIC SYSTEMS

As discussed at last years Annual Meeting, Dr. Jerry Heiman has been actively involved in gathering information, attending meetings, etc. related to the Benzie County Septic System Ordinance as well as DEQ rules and regulations related to system pumping, etc. He has arranged for William Crawford to speak on the subject at the meeting.

SUMMARY

I feel we are on the right track and things are moving forward. The lake water clarity decline is disturbing, but I feel we have the tools and cooperation from all parties to identify "root cause" and identify a solution. I cannot begin to tell you how much easier that is today as opposed to three years ago when we were actively engaged in the lawsuit! As stated earlier, we need your help. We need you to actively do the things that will minimize your phosphorus input to the lake and get your neighbors who are not PLIA members to become PLIA members and actively do what they can to reduce their phosphorus input to the lake! Also, do not forget to send dues and any contributions, as we always need money.

Also in closing, I must say that I am extremely proud and thankful for the effort expended by your Officers and Board since the last Annual Meeting. Collectively they had spend hundreds of hours in meetings representing the PLIA, collecting lake data, collecting river data, fall salmon run fish counting, processing and analyzing data, writing reports, processing e-mail and most importantly performing vital administrative tasks that allow this lake association to continue to exist.

Thank You,

Wilfred J. Swiecki
President, PLIA

P. S. If there are any questions, comments or concerns please raise them during the meeting.
If issues arise at a later date, please feel free to call me: