



Illinois Highlights



East and West Loon Lakes A Conservation Plan was approved by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) for East and West Loon Lakes (Lake Co.). The lakes are natural glacial lakes in the Fox River watershed and are widely used for recreation. The two lakes have been extensively studied and surveyed over time by the Lakes Management Unit of the Lake County Health Department, by the IDNR and its predecessor agency the Department of Conservation, and by private consultants. The plan includes cooperative agreements between state, county and local entities and addresses invasive aquatic plant species, recreation interests, and ecological function.

The lakes provide habitat for several fish species that are listed as threatened or endangered by the IDNR and Illinois Endangered Species Protection Board (three species of shiner, banded killifish, starhead topminnow, and Iowa darter). The IDNR also has advised that the lakes could potentially host the mudpuppy (*Necturus maculosus*), which is an aquatic salamander and a newly state-listed (2009) amphibian species. The lakes historically harbored two state threatened and endangered plant species.

De-icing Workshops Several workshops were held in NE Illinois targeting public and private entities that are involved in snow and ice removal on roads, parking lots, and sidewalks. Various studies in NE IL have shown an increase in chloride concentrations in water bodies, with some ponds as high as a 2,700 mg/L. Funding for these workshops came from Illinois EPA, IL Lakes Management Association, and participating counties. Attendees were also given the opportunity to take a certification test.

Sentinel Lake Program in Lake Co. The Lake County Health Department identified seven lakes (Long, Third, Wooster, Countryside, Cranberry, Bangs, and Cedar) to be part of a sentinel lake program in 2006. These lakes are important lakes due to their watershed position or unique ecological value. Sentinel lakes have been monitored annually (water quality and aquatic plants surveys) since 2006.

Invasive Species In 2009, two ponds in Lake Co. were found to be infested by Brazilian Elodea. The ponds are owned by a municipality, who agreed to aggressively treat the ponds in 2010 and 2011. An aggressive media campaign was also launched to highlight the dangers of releasing exotic plant species.

Illinois Lake Management Association ILMA hosted its 25th annual conference in March in Naperville, IL. 2010 also marked the 30th anniversary of the IEPA's Volunteer Lake Monitoring Program.



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