



THE BIRCHWOOD VOICE

Birchwood Lakes Community Association, Inc.
212 Aspen Road, Dingmans Ferry, PA 18328
(570) 828-2111 • www.birchwoodlakes.net

Volume 5/ No. 2

BIRCHWOOD LAKES COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION, INC.

SPRING 2010

President's Message

by Chas Ritson

I am focusing on our lakes in this message, because spring is here and many of us are looking forward to getting out for some early season fishing and boating. It has also been almost four years since the Lake Management Committee was instituted and I can say with some degree of pride that the committee continues to monitor the lakes closely and to look for new ways to maintain their health for the future. Each BLCA member has a stake in this as well, since our lakes are not only important for their recreational opportunities, but also for the overall quality of life in Birchwood and their importance to property values throughout the community. How would current and future members perceive our community if these lakes were allowed to become swampy messes or perhaps muddy holes without water? It has happened in other places and it could happen here, if we do not care enough to put in the required time, effort, and yes, money.

Elsewhere in this issue, you will find two articles dealing with our lakes. The first one is a report from PADEP that gives an overview of the sampling and monitoring of Upper Birchwood Lake that took place in

2009 under the Citizen's Volunteer Monitoring Program. This is the second consecutive year that we were fortunate to be accepted under this program, with Lower Lake being monitored in 2008. Unfortunately, this program and the CSAW/ Consortium for the Scientific Assistance to Watersheds, which we were part of in 2007, are being discontinued due to state budget problems. The second report is from EcoSolutions, our contractor for controlling aquatic plants, which outlines the water quality data and treatments performed on all four lakes, also in 2009. These reports may be interesting to some of you, perhaps not so interesting to others, but take a moment at least to look at some of the things that are being done to monitor these vital resources.

So, what do the reports say? What they say is that our lakes in general are in good condition, particularly given that they are shallow man-made impoundments that are more than 50 years old. But, they also say that they are also subject to natural and/or man-made degradation. One perfect example of this degradation is Middle Lake, where although the water quality is currently



The winter that was.

good, the lake is actually dying slowly due to the ever-growing peat islands throughout the lake. We have been unable to find a suitable partner to trade the large amount of peat in return for the actual dredging, which is necessary to revive this lake, but we are continuing our search. Another on-going concern, clearly stated in one report, is that because our lakes are joined in sequence (the overflow from one flows into the next), a major problem in one could impact the others.

There are several ways that all members can help to maintain the current quality of our lakes and to minimize future problems. Let me list a few:

Only use phosphorous free dishwashing and clothes detergents.

Minimize or eliminate the use of high nitrogen and/ or phosphorus containing fertilizers; consider allowing some of your property to revert to its natural setting.

Plant a riparian buffer along your shoreline, if you are a lakefront owner, or just allow the natural plants to take over the first 5-10 feet of shoreline.

Maintain your septic systems and comply with the new septic inspection and pump-out program that will soon go into

effect.

Minimize the use of pesticides around your home, due to their possible impact on your well, the groundwater and the lakes.

Properly dispose of all pesticides, used oil, paints, thinners, etc.

And lastly, if you see something in or around the lakes that doesn't seem right, please contact the office immediately.

In closing, our lakes are our most precious resource, but they will not remain in satisfactory condition without a commitment from everyone in Birchwood.

See you on the water!

**Chas Ritson, BLCA
President**

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Birchwood Lakes Community Association, Inc.
212 Aspen Road
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**Deadline for the Birchwood Lakes
newsletter is May 10.**

2010 Board of Directors

Officers

President: Charles Ritson
 Vice President: Louis Freeman
 Treasurer: Marcella Livingston
 Secretary: Clare Bennett

STANDING COMMITTEES

BLCA Property Development
 Chairperson-Ann Marie Celentano
 Co-chairperson-Charles Ritson

Finance, Budget, Contracts
 Chairperson-Marcella Livingston
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APPOINTED COMMITTEES

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 Co-chairperson-Kathleen Stirrat

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 Chairperson-Charles Ritson
 Co-chairperson-Sheila Salmon

Community Affairs
 Chairperson-Sheila Salmon
 Co-chairperson-Clare Bennett

Tennis Court Usage

Tennis courts, located opposite the Clubhouse, are available for use by members in good standing and their guests. A key to access the courts may be obtained at the BLCA Office and requires a \$5 deposit. Badges should be displayed when utilizing the facilities.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

During the months of January and February, Birchwood Lakes welcomed the following new members into our community:

Punmart, Dobinson, Jennings, Westhoff Holdings, Lacorte, Palma, GMAC, Hill and Pezzuti/Schelberg-Pezzuti Trust.

We encourage you to become an active part of the community and look forward to seeing you at community meetings and functions. Welcome neighbors!

Vehicle Decals

Public Safety will be conducting traffic stops during the month of May to check for BLCA vehicle decals. If you do not have a BLCA decal on your vehicle, please bring proof of registration and insurance to the BLCA Office to obtain a decal for your vehicle. We strongly encourage you to obtain a decal prior to April 30 and appreciate your assistance in this matter.

Section 98-10-5 of the BLCA Rules and Regulations states:

"A. All member's vehicles, including family members residing at the residence, and registered renters occupying the member's home shall display a BLCA decal for identification and security purposes. Vehicle decals may be obtained from the BLCA Office upon providing proof of the owner's valid motor vehicle registration and current insurance.

B. Location of vehicle decal: The decal shall be prominently displayed on the driver's side back window, or the back bumper, or the decal may be affixed to the back of the driver's visor which shall be positioned in the down position whenever the vehicle is in the community.

C. The fine for violation of Section 98-10-5 shall be \$25."

WE NEED YOUR HELP

Maintenance staff has removed the garbage cans from the mailbox areas due to increasing amounts of household garbage being placed in these areas. While we regret any inconvenience this may cause, the increasing staff time and expense of disposing of household garbage has become burdensome. All unwanted mail and garbage should be disposed of through your own privately arranged sanitation services.

Community Notes

All property owners are hereby put on notice that the Association has a right of way on each roadway. Any personal property placed in the Association's right of way is not the Association's responsibility and the Association will not be held responsible for any damages incurred to said personal property. All property owners are to refrain from placing personal property within the Association's right of way. The Association does not permit encroachment of any Association property, which includes roads or right of ways, common area or any other location, which is BLCA property.

Notes from the Community Manager

Bettye White Gross, CMCA, AMS

Welcome Spring! Maintenance staff is eagerly looking forward to putting the plows away for the spring/summer season and beginning work on opening up the recreational areas. The winter season included several nuisance storms, as well as a few larger storms including the two back-to-back storms in late February. Costs for winter road materials, equipment repairs and staff were greater than budgeted amounts that the Board of Directors addressed through budget transfers.

Weight restrictions have been in place under the parameters of the Uniform Planned Community Act to protect the Association's roadways during spring thaw cycles. The roads are reviewed weekly and restrictions will be lifted as conditions permit and will not exceed the eight-week limit. If you are expecting a delivery, please contact the BLCA Office to determine if the restrictions are still in effect and notify the contractor accordingly.

You should have received your 2010/2011 annual dues statement. If not, please contact the BLCA Office immediately as there are several time sensitive dates. Annual dues are due by May 1. Members wishing to request a payment plan must submit a written request indicating the general reason for the request along with a \$25 application fee no later than April 15 to avoid penalty charges for late payment plan requests.

Several notices were included with the annual dues billing. Two corrections should be noted. First, the telephone number for Public Safety is 570-828-6009. (The 570-828-9009 number is for the Association's fax machine.) Second, invoices for tenant-occupied homes reflect the 50% additional dues structure as required by the By-Laws, not 100% as noted in the insert. We apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused.

Finally, as the warm weather arrives, Public Safety will be focusing on the enforcement of several of the Association's Rules and Regulations, including traffic, use of Association common areas and facilities, untidy properties and abandoned vehicles. Warmer weather brings an increase of members and their guests on the roadways whether on foot, bicycle or vehicle, so for everyone's safety, please slow down. Adhere to the posted speed limits and observe all stop and traffic flow signs. Remember, badges must be worn when utilizing the facilities and common areas. Obtain a decal now for your vehicle and/or boat and avoid the summertime

rush.

We greatly appreciate the efforts of the members who have worked to clean up and maintain their properties in a neat and tidy condition. To the members that have delayed the clean up of their properties until the warmer weather arrived, we urge you to begin now and avoid any enforce-

ment action. Compliance with the Rules and Regulations benefits the community as a whole, helps maintain your property values and avoids the assessment of fines for noncompliance. Contact the BLCA Office, or download a copy from the Birchwood Lakes website if you need a current copy or have any questions.

PUBLIC SAFETY REPORT

	Citations
January 2010	42
February 2010	69
Abandoned Vehicle	6
Assaulting Public Safety Officer	1
Burning	1
Careless Driving	9
Commercial Vehicles	3
Construction Permit	1
Damaging Entrance/Exit Gate	1
Driver's License	1
Eluding Public Safety	10
Emergency Vehicles	9
Gate breaking	1
Insurance	1
Motor Vehicle Lights	1
Off-Road Vehicle	2
Registration	
Resale Certificates	2
Speeding	25
Stop and Traffic Control Signs	9
Tailgating	2
Temporary Storage	1
Traffic Flow Signs	2
Tree Removal	1
Unauthorized Driver	1
Untidy Property	13
Vehicle Decal	7
	Radar
January 2010	13.5 hours
February 2010	19.74 hours
	Patrol Miles
January 2010	1849
February 2010	1678

We Need Your Help!

Please help us help you. Many residents in Birchwood Lakes Community still do not have "911" street signs on their house or in front of their property. When a call comes in requesting emergency assistance (ambulance, fire, police), it is difficult for the Association to offer assistance in leading the emergency volunteers to your home if it isn't clearly marked with the 911 address. Make sure your sign is visible from the road. If you need information on your 911 address, contact the BLCA Office at 570-828-2111. While we hope that you will never require emergency services, take a moment to help yourself and your loved ones just in case.

BIRCHWOOD LAKES COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION, INC. 2010 SCHEDULE OF OPEN BOARD MEETINGS

Open Board Meetings are held at the BLCA Clubhouse

Saturday, April 10 @ 9 a.m.

Friday, May 14 @ 7 p.m.

Friday, June 11 @ 7 p.m.

Saturday, July 10 @ 9 a.m.

Tuesday, August 10 @ 7 p.m.

Annual Meeting: Saturday, August 21 @ 9 a.m.

Notes: Snowdates have been added to the calendar, all being Tuesday nights at 7 p.m.

August Open Board Meeting will be on a Tuesday night at 7 p.m.

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Letters to the Editor

Letter to the Editor.

Thanks to all who put up Holiday decorations. It's so pretty riding around at night and seeing the homes lit up, especially with the snow on the ground.

May the spirit of the holiday remain with us all year.

Also want to say thanks to the Maintenance staff for keeping the roads open. How nice to wake up and see the roads plowed.

Carolyn Martin

Dear Birchwood Members,

Controversy in our community swirls around the issue of renters. Some members predict that our home values will depreciate and the quality of life will deteriorate if rental restrictions are not put in place. This may be true and the experiences of other communities in the area may, in fact, become a reality in Birchwood. In order to evaluate this concern, a serious and constructive effort to put the issue in a context of fairness to both renters and landlords is needed. All renters are not destructive and all landlords are not uncaring of Birchwood values.

There are already a number of restrictions placed on landlords. They must register their tenants, show proof of public

liability insurance, pay 50% extra on dues, leave a \$500 security deposit to be used to pay fines or damages caused by the tenant and be replenished if used. Landlords are required to be responsible for tenants' compliance with all rules and regulations. Tenants are required to follow the rules.

Are there additional restrictions that will ensure that our community will be protected in the future? Should we limit a homeowner's right to rent by restricting leases to a non-renewable two or three year period, and grandfather in the landlords who are now renting their properties. Should we place stricter limits on what constitutes a family? Can we force landlords to evict tenants who pose a danger to the community? Are any of these or other restraints necessary?

It is time to cool the conversation and think together about the issues and the best way to go forward. We have the opportunity to do so at Board meetings and by joining the by-laws and rules and regulations committees.

**Sheila Salmon
Robert Salmon**

Editor, Birchwood Voice:

I invite everyone to take a ride or walk up Guntree Lane from Aspen Road. I am

shocked at the amount of litter and garbage that lines this road. What kind of people do we have living here? Soda and beer cans are all over the road, along with fast food containers and other assorted trash.

It is bad enough that our residents don't care about the Association; but do we have to live with their garbage? What would drive people to habitually throw their trash out of their windows? Do they do this at home? And what about the children? Are they taught to trash their community? What is our Board of Education teaching our kids about good citizenship? Or is this curriculum no longer taught for fear of offending someone? Is this what we pay exorbitant taxes for?

Yes, these are hard questions which some don't want to, or don't want asked. But we, as a community, can do something about littering – let's start making examples out of offenders. I fully support any efforts at draconian enforcement, at \$300 a pop. All it will take is prosecuting two or three miscreants and I predict the problem will abate. There can be no good explanation for throwing your garbage out of your window.

Why not have the resolutions committee consider community service as an alternative to fines? Let people see the

trash being picked up by their neighbors, and let the impression be made on offenders. I only wish we could make them wear orange jumpsuits.

This is a disgusting situation and cannot be allowed to stand. This is a beautiful and quiet community that deserves better. Our residents deserve better. The Association must take substantive steps to address the "Trashing of Birchwood".

What can YOU do? If you see someone throw something out of their window, get their tag number and send it to the Association or to me through the MBB website. Let's do a "Slob of the Week" feature!

Take pictures – they don't lie and the miscreant cannot argue with it.

And Folks, make an effort to clean up after these slob – it has been said that the best way to stand up to this bad behavior is not to let it stand. Broken windows invite more broken windows – piles of trash invite piles of trash. We all need to take some pride in our community and then maybe the slob will get the message.

This is your community, you get out what you put in. Hopefully this road will be cleaned by the time you read this. But this road is only one of many. Show some pride – fight the "Trashing of Birchwood Lakes".

DO YOUR PART!

**Dan Capano
WWW.MBBPA.NET**

BUDGET VOTE RESULTS

The Board of Directors met on January 23 to announce the results of the recent voting for the 2010/2011 Fiscal Budget and Reserve Withdrawal.

Total votes received: 201.
Reserve Withdrawal of @\$262,000: 166 Yes, 21 No, 15 Void.
2010./2011 Fiscal Year Budget: 170 Yes, 16 No, 15 Void

Birchwood Lakes Annual Clean-up Day

Saturday, May 1 • 9 a.m.-Noon

Meet at the 739 entrance.

Gloves, bags & refreshments provided.

Rain Date, Sunday, May 2

Important Telephone Numbers

Police, Fire, Ambulance Emergency 911
Birchwood Lakes Office 828-2111
Birchwood Lakes Public Safety 828-6009
Vector Security Dispatch 1-800-222-6565, press option 1

GUIDELINES FOR LETTERS

Birchwood Lakes Community Association residents are invited to submit Letters to the Editor for publication in The Birchwood Voice. It is the intent of the Community Affairs Committee that publication of letters will encourage a civil discussion about important issues in the community. These are the committee guidelines:

1) All letters must include the member's name, address and telephone number and MUST BE RECEIVED BY THE DEADLINE AS NOTED ON THE FRONT PAGE OF THE LAST ISSUE. Names only will appear in print. Letters may be e-mailed to: editor.birchwoodlakes.net or dropped off at the office.

2) All letters must be 300 words or less. Longer letters may be edited or returned to sender for editing.

3) Letters to the Editor may not be inflammatory, derogatory, obscene, and libelous or discuss issues in terms of individuals in the community.

EDITOR'S NOTES MAY BE ADDED to clarify or correct information.

Permits

BLCA Rules and Regulations (Section 98-50-19), in accordance with the Association's Covenants and Restrictions, require members to obtain a BLCA permit prior to moving to, constructing, or erecting any structure or building within the community. There is no fee for obtaining the permit. Additionally, permits are needed for septic repairs and tree removals. For more information, contact the BLCA Office.

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Place Your Free Classified Ads on the Birchwood website.
www.Birchwoodlakes.net
Volunteer Wanted to Maintain our Website.

Looking for information on Birchwood Lakes?
Don't forget to check out the Association's website at www.birchwoodlakes.net.

Some of us spent the winter here in Birchwood, others in sunnier climates. There are beautiful landscapes in each of the climates, but we all welcome the spring.

Nancy Halliday took photos of Birchwood and Sheila Salmon took photos in Siesta Key Florida.



Beach scene in Florida.



Lake scene in Birchwood.



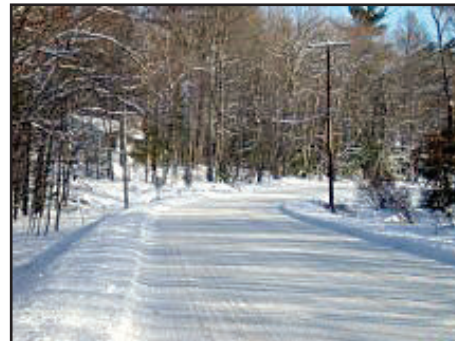
Oak tree with spanish moss.



Spruce with snow.



Road in Florida.



Road in Birchwood.



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Delaware Township in partnership with Twenty First Communications has instituted a local notification system that will be able to send telephone notification to residences and businesses within Delaware Township impacted by, or in danger of being impacted by, an emergency or disaster. Register your phone numbers with us so we can add you to our Reverse 911 calling system.

Please contact us at: 570-828-2347

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Some of us spent the winter here in Birchwood, others in sunnier climates. There are beautiful landscapes in each of the climates, but we all welcome the spring.

Nancy Halliday took photos of Birchwood and Sheila Salmon took photos in Siesta Key Florida.



Pelicans at the dock.



Geese in the field.



Flowers in the sun.

Notes from the Gardener

by Sheila Salmon, Penn State Master Gardener Volunteer

ABC's for new gardeners: Part 2

In the last issue of the Voice, I discussed three steps for beginning a garden project. The first is to define your garden goal. The second step is to pick a location, and the third step is to determine the growing conditions and research the plants that will suit them.

D. Fourth Step

Prepare your planting area. If you are planting in pots and planters, make sure they are clean and large enough for your plants. If you are buying new planters, check out ones that are self-watering or the kind that allows you that have all the ingredients for planting vegetables in a box. Invest in a good potting soil for best results.

There are two techniques for in ground gardens. One is to dig down eight to twelve inches, which in our area may be very difficult to do because of rocks. The other is to cover the soil with layers of newspapers soaked in water, cover the newspapers with layers of leaves and grass clippings and leave them for 6 weeks to compost and then plant on top of them. Either way, adding leaves, vegetable matter and grass clippings to the soil will enrich the soil naturally and avoid having to use fertilizers that may seep into the lakes and cause high levels of nitrogen and potassium in the water that encourage excessive weeds.

If you are digging, wait until the soil is moist, not wet. A test for proper moistness is to take a handful of soil, and make a ball. Dig only when the soil is moist enough to form a loose ball in your fist, but dry enough to fall apart when you drop it.

E. Fifth Step



After danger of frost is over, in this area it is usually after Mother's Day in May, do your planting, but be prepared to cover the plants or take them in should there be a frost warning. Options are to plant seeds, or buy nursery grown plants. Seeds are cheaper, but you have to be sure that you have a long enough growing season for the plants to mature. Some plants have to be started indoors. Read the directions carefully.

Nursery grown plants are more expensive, but have had a good start and are ready to go. Be sure you buy disease free spec-

imens, leaves should be clear, soil should be moist, the plant should be well rounded and not leggy (long stems with leaves on top only.)

F. Sixth Step

Care for your plants. They will need water, particularly in the first year of planting. Pull the weeds. Keep the ground moist by adding a thin layer of a covering such as ground up leaves, compost, or commercial mulch. Enjoy!

Common Terms

Annuals: Plants that complete their growing cycle in one year and have to be replanted in subsequent years. i.e. Marigolds, impatiens, begonias, zinnias, most vegetables

Perennials: Plants that reproduce and that will return for at least three years. i.e. Bleeding hearts, Virginia bluebells, Phlox, Joe Pye Weed, most bulbs, asparagus, rhubarb

Biennials: Plants that complete their growing cycle in two years, i.e. carrots, foxglove

Compost: A mixture of decaying organic material such as leaves and vegetable matter that improve soil.

Mulch: A protective covering, usually organic material to protect plants

Full sun: Six hours of direct sunlight every day.

Partial Sun: Three to six hours of direct sunlight every day.

Shade: No direct sunlight necessary

HELP! When you have questions, call or e-mail the Pike County Cooperative Extension. A live master gardener will speak to you on Tuesday mornings. The number is 570-296-3400, e-mails Pikeext@psu.edu; web: <http://pikeextension.psu.edu>



Flower in the snow.

Let's Get Together

It's been a long winter. I'm sure some of you would like to get out some afternoons, meet neighbors, learn a new skill, enjoy being with others who have the same interests. We have a pleasant place to meet at the clubhouse, participation is free, and a good time can be had by all.

If you would like to be part of a: needlework group, book club., a games/cards group, or any other form of social activity, please come forward. Please call the office and leave your name and phone number and what you are interested in. Someone will get back to you.

BLCA Curfew

BLCA has a curfew of 10 p.m. Sunday through Thursday and 11 p.m. Friday and Saturday.

As a courtesy to all members, please observe the curfew hours.

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Board Meeting Minutes

This is an abbreviated record of the minutes. A complete copy may be obtained in the BLCA office.

Actions Without a Meeting: September-October

Meeting: September-October

Accepted a Board resignation; approved crossing dam survey documents to go to the membership; purchased second air purifier; approved wording for new septic requirements in Rules & Regulations.

October 2009

Regular Board Meeting

Approved 7 write-offs of over \$3800; approved expenditure for Halloween Party on October 24; approved purchase of new radar gun, not to exceed \$700; agreed to a request for inspection of corporate documents; approved purchase of trees for home owner to replace those removed for joint culvert project.

Other discussions:

The Board thanked Directors Meola and Freeman for laying a new floor in the office. Maintenance Supervisor, Jim Silverman updated the Board on winter readiness.

November 13, 2009

Regular Board Meeting,

Actions without a meeting between October and November meetings

Approved repairs to backhoe, Route 739 telephone entry directory; increased amount needed to investigate office, maintenance building and salt shed structural report.

Actions taken at the meeting:

Approved submitting a bid for 15 properties at \$25 per lot to the Pike

County Repository Sale.

Payment of bills, approved Cornerstone Consulting for drainage study.

Also approved sending letters to some property owners to clean up property, 19 amnesty plan requests, and replacing camera at the 739 entrance.

December 12, 2009,

Regular Board Meeting Minutes

Actions taken between the November and December meeting by polling all Directors.

Appointed Marcella Livingston to fill vacancy on Board; approved expenditure for Breakfast with Santa on December 13, 2009; approved budget that will be sent to the membership.

Motions approved at the meeting

Rejected a request for corporate documents; appointed Marcella Livingston Chairperson of the Beautification Committee; approved two amnesty plan requests and filing of Certified Judgments.

January 8, 2010

Regular Board Meeting Minutes

Motions approved at the meeting; approved write-offs totaling \$9,909.44; accepted bid to repair Clubhouse roof; approved 5 Judges of Election

Other discussions: a new tree removal policy; a new Conflict of Interest Policy/Code of Conduct Policy for Directors, researching installing an office message hotline; removing garbage bins from mail box areas; responded to correspondence; agreed to Lot Improve Maintenance Facility property.

Water Quality Monitoring Report

December 2009 - Adapted from Ecological Solutions, Inc

Introduction

Ecological Solutions, Inc. (ECS) has completed the 2009 water quality monitoring and aquatic plant management program for the Birchwood Lakes Community Association. As part of these programs, ECS visited on a monthly basis the four lakes within the Birchwood Lakes Community Association (BLCA). Monthly visits began in May and ended in October. During each visit, biologists collected data to monitor nine (9) different physical and chemical parameters within each lake. All of the data collected became part of a computer database, maintained by ECS. This database is currently being used in the development of lake management strategies aimed at controlling aquatic plant/algae growth within the four lakes in the Birchwood Lakes Community.

During the 2009 growing season, ECS applied aquatic herbicides and algacides as necessary to maintain acceptable levels of aquatic plant and algae growth in the lakes. As a company philosophy, ECS only applies chemicals as needed to maintain a predetermined level of plant and algae growth. The amount of plant and algae growth considered acceptable varies from lake to lake, and is determined by what the specific management goal is for that given body of water (e.g. fishing vs. swimming). This past season the inclement weather made scheduling and completing the necessary treatments a challenge. However, a comparison of the 2008 and 2009 treatment seasons has given ECS a better understanding of how plant and algae growth in the lakes/ponds respond to increased or decreased amounts of rainfall.

Summary

The results of the 2009 water quality monitoring indicated that the water quality in all four lakes has not changed significantly since 2008. Based on pH measurements, all of the lakes maintain neutral to slightly alkaline conditions throughout the year. Dissolved oxygen concentration and water temperature measurements indicate that conditions in all the lakes are suitable for maintaining warm water fish

species. Water transparency in the lakes is good (> 1 meter on average), but influenced by the discoloration caused by naturally occurring organic compounds found in the surrounding soil. On average, nutrient concentrations (i.e. nitrate nitrogen and total phosphorous) didn't vary significantly between the lakes. Nitrate nitrogen concentrations were on average 0.15 mg/l in all the lakes, and total phosphorous ranges from a high of 0.23 mg/l in East Lake to a low of 0.17 mg/l in Lower Birchwood Lake. The highest nitrate nitrogen concentrations in all four lakes occurred in late June. Total phosphorous was highest in Middle and Lower Birchwood Lakes in late June, while it was highest in East and Upper Birchwood Lakes in October. Using this data, it wasn't possible to establish a trend in the data that would indicate potential sources of nutrient loading in the lakes. However, a comparison of this year's data with past and future water quality data should help establish trends indicating potential nutrient sources within the community that would influence aquatic plant and algae growth in the lakes.

In 2009, ECS applied fewer aquatic chemicals than in the previous 2008 treatment season. The most significant reduction in chemical usage occurred in Lower Birchwood Lake. In addition, systemic herbicides were not used this past season due to the significant amount of rainfall received throughout the summer. Systemic herbicides are slowly absorbed into the leaves and stems of the plants, and because water was flushed through the lake much more quickly this past year ECS opted to use a contact herbicide that works almost instantly. The most significant increase in chemical use occurred in East Lake to control submerged vegetation and to control a 1.0 acre patch of watershed in the central portion of the basin. No chemical algacides were applied to any of the lakes in 2009.

Data & Treatments

Upper Birchwood Lake

The lake maintained low nitrate levels throughout the monitoring period.

Nitrate levels generally found in unpolluted waters are <1.0 ppm (parts per million), and on average the nitrate nitrogen concentration in Middle Birchwood Lake was 0.11 mg/l during the 2009 season. Total phosphate concentrations were similar to values obtained in 2008 and ranged from a high of 2.02 mg/l in late October to a low of 0.03 mg/l measured earlier in October. Dissolved oxygen concentrations measured at the surface remained well above the minimum acceptable level of 5.0 mg/l required to maintain a 'healthy' fishery. Since the lake remains "mixed" and never stratifies during the warmer summer months there was no concern about a lack of available oxygen in the deeper portions of the water column. This in combination with a maximum water temperature of less than 28 °C indicates that the conditions in the lake are suitable for a warmwater fishery. Water clarity (secchi depth) was below average during several of the monitoring visits dropped below the predetermined acceptable level of 1.5 meters in June, September, and October. ECS uses 1.5 meters as a threshold for determining when an algae treatment is required to maintain conditions considered acceptable to the residents in the community. In BLCA when the water transparency drops below 1.5 meters (5 feet), conditions are considered to be unacceptable and an algae treatment is performed. The decrease in clarity was associated with excessive runoff carrying nutrients, tannins, and other organics into the lake. Wet conditions this past season were assumed to be the cause of high turbidity and discoloration in the water. Therefore, even though the secchi disk readings were less than 1.5 meters, algae treatments were not performed because poor transparency was "limiting" algal growth.

Alkalinity reached a high of 38 mg/l in September and a low of 20 mg/l in June and October. The hardness values obtained during the monitoring period reflect a

Continues on next page



Carolyn's Recipe Recommendations

by Carolyn Martin

I love to cook and collect cooking books and magazines. I have always loved the kitchen. Since we are busy people, I use simple recipes. Please try them and enjoy the results.

Hot Crabmeat Dip

1 can (6oz) crabmeat
1 cup shredded cheddar cheese
1 cup mayo

1 package cream cheese (8oz)

Mix all ingredients together. Sprinkle with paprika (optional)

Bake at 350 for 15-20 minutes.

Serve warm with crackers

Serves 4-6 people

Submitted by Anna Gonnella in BLCA paper Mountain Breeze, Summer 1991 edition.

Dump Cake

1 can (20oz) crushed pineapple, unstrained

1 can (21oz) cherry pie filling

1 package Duncan Hines moist deluxe yellowcake mix

1 cup chopped pecans or walnuts

½ cup (1 stick) butter or margarine, cut into thin slices

Grease 13 X 9 inch pan.

Dump pineapple with juice into pan, then add pie filling (spreading evenly over the pineapple).

Sprinkle dry cake mix evenly over pineapple and cherry filling. Sprinkle nuts, dot with butter slices.

Bake 350 degrees for 60 minutes, or until lightly browned, makes 12-16 servings

Serve warm or at room temperature. Can be topped with cool whip or ice cream.

This is quick and easy. Kids can do it.

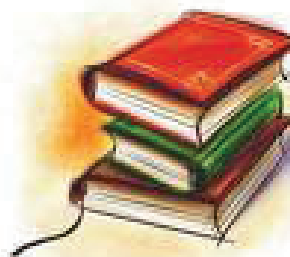
Do You Know Birchwood has a Library?

Oh yes we do! It's in the old coatroom in the clubhouse. Many people have donated adult and children's books. It runs on the honor system. Bring in books you have read and take home ones you haven't. The theory of the lending library is great but, and it's a big but, we need someone at the clubhouse when it is open.

It would be great if someone would volunteer to set up a chair, and recruit some

willing people to run the library. It could be one day a week, one hour at various anything that works for you. Right now the library is only open when the clubhouse is open.

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Water Quality...

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“soft” water lake system, which makes the lake slightly sensitive to acid rain. This corresponds with the lowest alkalinity readings being recorded in September and October when significant amounts of rainfall (> 1”/24 hrs) were observed.

Upper Birchwood Lake was treated once this season. The treatment was completed in early August to approximately 3.0 acres of the lake to control the growth of Southern Naiad (*Najas guadalupensis*) in the southeastern portion area of the lake basin. The heavy growth began at the inlet of the lake and extended out through much of the basin.

Middle Birchwood Lake

Nitrate nitrogen reached a high of 0.36 mg/l in late June. Overall nitrate values within the lake were considered low because they were well below the standard of 1.0mg/l.

However, the total phosphorous concentrations exceeded the limit for natural waters (0.05 mg/l to 0.1 mg/l in May and June. The highest value of 1.08 mg/l was reached in late June. The high values recorded in May and June were attributed to the heavy rains and subsequent runoff. The nitrogen to phosphorous ratio was low (< 7) suggesting that a lack of nitrogen in the lake was “limiting” algal growth. Dissolved oxygen concentrations were more than adequate at the surface throughout the monitoring season. Even though this lake is very shallow dissolved oxygen was considered adequate

throughout the water column. Water clarity (secchi depth) in the lake was similar to what was recorded in Upper and East Lake. The secchi depths from August through October were below the 1.5 meter, but the tea-colored conditions that existed in the lake were responsible for the poor transparency. In comparison to Upper Birchwood Lake, the alkalinity in Middle Birchwood Lake was greatest in early September and remained low (< 24 mg/l) throughout the rest of the monitoring period. Hardness was greatest in early May and remained consistent throughout most of the season. The low alkalinity and hardness suggest that the lake has very little buffering capacity and maintains conditions typical of “soft” water environments.

The spatterdock (*Nuphar* spp.) in Middle Birchwood Lake was treated in October this past season. Spatterdock was restricting access to several lakefront properties in the northeast portion of the lake basin. The lake was drawn down during this treatment allowing for better absorption of the herbicide.

Lower Birchwood Lake

Lower Birchwood Lake is the second largest lake in the Birchwood Lakes community. Near equal amounts of nitrate nitrogen and total phosphorous were recorded in the month of June. Because the nitrogen to phosphorous ratio was less than 7, nitrogen was considered to be the “limiting” nutrient. These conditions increase the likelihood of a blue green algae bloom occurring. However, the lake had a tea stained color allowing less light to penetrate the water column growth. This inhibited extensive plant growth and most likely preventing a significant algal

bloom.. Nitrogen was most available in October, but because it was late in the growing season algal growth wasn't a concern. Dissolved oxygen was consistently greater than 7.0 mg/l and surface water temperatures were less than 28 °C. These conditions are optimum for the growth and survival of warmwater fish species such as largemouth bass (*Micropterus salmoides*). In May, the transparency in Lower Birchwood was the best observed in any of the lakes within the community. At the time of that sampling secchi depth was 3.5 meters or 11.5 feet. The water clarity waned during the remainder of the monitoring period. The water became discolored in early June and remained that way throughout the remainder of the summer. The discolored water resulted in poor transparency, which helped inhibit or “limit” plant and algal in this lake.

During 2009, Lower Birchwood Lake was only treated once in mid July. This treatment was to control the growth of southern naiad (*Najas guadalupensis*) that was restricting access to shoreline areas at several locations in the lake. Treatment was restricted to the eastern and western shorelines in the southern half of the lake basin.

East Birchwood Lake

The highest nitrate nitrogen concentrations occurred in late June. The increased nitrate concentration was attributed to the large amount of decaying plant material resulting from the herbicide application

earlier that month. Total phosphorous was highest in May, which seemed to correspond with spring turn over. The nitrogen to phosphorous ratio suggests that the lake is nitrogen “limited”. The discolored water also “limits” transparency resulting in less submerged plant and algal growth. The alkalinity and hardness concentrations recorded in East Lake are typical of “soft” water systems with a poor or reduced buffering capacity. These “soft” water systems are usually less biologically productive than “hard” water lakes with similar habitats.

Dissolved oxygen concentrations reached a low of 7.2 mg/l in August, but remained at concentrations greater than 7.5 mg/l throughout the remainder of the sampling period. This single low reading in August resulted from the treatment of submerged plants in June. The decaying plants increased the oxygen demand and discolored the water. The discoloration reduced transparency and prevented re-growth of the submerged vegetation, which minimized the amount of dissolved oxygen provided by growing plants. Because the lake is so shallow the water transparency was less of an issue. The secchi depth readings were consistently greater than 1.0 meters, except in late June when the transparency dropped to a season low of 0.9 meters. Decaying plant material resulting from the herbicide treatment completed earlier in June had increased turbidity and discolored the

water.

Ten acres of East Birchwood Lake was treated in June with an aquatic herbicide to control submerged milfoil and Naiad. This was the first chemical application since the lake was filled after the dam repair. The management plan for the lake was to allow the aquatic vegetation to become re-established, to re-stock the lake with largemouth bass and sunfish, and then manipulate the habitat to establish a quality largemouth bass fishery. The plan was to target for approx 30 to 40 percent plant coverage in specific locations of the lake as fish habitat. If the entire lake was overgrown with submerged vegetation, the 2009 treatment would have reduced the coverage to approximately 60 percent. However, after the treatment it was estimated from follow-up surveys that approximately 40 to 50 percent of the lake still maintained aquatic plants. A large portion of the remaining aquatic vegetation was represented by floating species such as water-shield (*Brasenia schreberi*) and white water lilies (*Nymphaea* spp.). A follow-up treatment in August was aimed at eliminating approximately 1 acre of these floating plant species from the central portion of the lake basin in front of the dam. In addition to treating vegetation growing in the lake, a stand of common reed (*Phragmites australis*) along the northern shoreline was treated to eliminate this invasive non-native plant species.

Upper Birchwood Lake Water Quality Summary

February, 2010

Introduction

Upper Birchwood Lake, Pike County, was sampled by BLCA Lake Management Committee volunteers with assistance from Pa. DEP staff. Sampling was conducted through the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection's Citizens' Volunteer Monitoring Program (CVMP) in March, July and November, 2009. Upper Birchwood Lake is classified as a High Quality Cold Water Fishery (HQ-CWF) according to PA Code, Ch. 93 standards. Dingmans Creek is the outlet. The lake covers 9.5 acres and is one of four lakes in a series at Birchwood. The Birchwood impoundments are part of the Shohola-Bushkill watershed and the Upper Delaware sub-basin. The Shohola-Bushkill watershed drains 433 square miles of land. At full pool Upper Birchwood Lake has a maximum depth of ~16 feet with an average depth of ~ 4.6 feet.

Conclusion/ Recommendations

The overall water quality of Upper Birchwood Lake is good and this can be maintained with community education, vigilance and policy initiatives. With healthy lake parameters at present, measures should be taken to preserve and even improve lake quality. In situ measurements and lab results for the upper lake are consistent with those of the lower lake. Best management practices for the watershed and residential properties need to be strictly implemented to prevent degradation, which can happen abruptly and can be extremely costly and difficult to reverse. Though nutrients are not a major concern, all potential sources must be minimized and the lake safeguarded in several ways. The septic inspection and pump-out initiative is an excellent preemptive measure to help to insulate the lakes from septic pollution, which has plagued many lakes. Other sources of nutrients like fertilizers, detergents, illegal disposal of liquids and sedimentation should continue to be addressed and their inputs minimized. Riparian vegetation is an asset to any water body and

serves as protection for the lake and its critter inhabitants. The more native lake-side vegetation, the healthier the lake will be. The nature of the Birchwood lakes is a mixed blessing in that it is essentially one system. On one hand, should one lake experience a problem, it should be easy to identify. On the other, an adverse development in the first lake can quickly affect the others. It would be wise to acquire background data on the other two lakes and continue to monitor as resources allow.

Data/ Nutrients

Nitrogen: TN levels averaged 0.387 mg/l and were well below the PA benchmark of 0.887 mg/l. Problematic levels of TN in PA lakes are considered to be greater than 0.6 mg/L. Nitrogen is not a concern.

Phosphorus: The mean total phosphorus concentration was 0.020 compared to the state average of 0.034 mg/L. Typically, phosphorus is made available by ongoing human inputs or is bound in the sediments and released under anoxic conditions in stratified lakes.

These levels indicate a lake that is on the mesotrophic/eutrophic margin. Under conducive weather conditions, TP concentrations of >0.03 mg/l will produce nuisance macrophyte or algal growth.

Autotroph production in most PA lakes is limited by phosphorus availability. Lakes with N:P ratios >15 indicate a phosphorus-limited system. Upper Birchwood Lake averaged a ratio of 22, presenting a slightly phosphorus-limited lake. Either nutrient will encourage algal and plant growth if more is introduced but the relative abundances indicate phosphorus as the controlling nutrient.

Chlorophyll-a: Chlorophyll levels were low for all samples and undetectable in one case. Generally, Chl-a levels >0.01 mg/l can produce noticeable algal scums.

Dissolved oxygen (DO), temperature, pH, conductivity profiles: Dissolved oxygen (DO) profiles were taken from surface to bottom at 1m intervals and were recorded in the morning during the sampling events.

Dissolved oxygen levels below 3.0mg/l will limit usable fish habitat and can be very stressful to most aquatic organisms. DO was healthy but dropped off quickly at 2 meters. Though anoxia was observed, no thermal stratification existed.

The pH measurements were healthy in all three seasons, ranging from 5.97 to 7.20. High pH, generally 9 or greater, indicates a very productive system and an algae bloom. If sustained, high pH levels are stressful to fish and other aquatic organisms just as acidic situations (<5) can harm aquatic populations. Often, pH values around 9 indicate high phytoplankton productivity due to over-abundant nutrients.

Conductivity measures the ion concentration in water, e.g., dissolved salts and minerals. Levels were good.

Alkalinity, Total Suspended Solids (TSS), Total Dissolved Solids (TDS): Alkalinity, a measure of calcium carbonate/buffering capacity, in the lake averaged 15.4 mg/l. Aquatic systems with an alkalinity greater than 20 mg/l are more capable of adequately buffering acidic inputs.

TSS test results were all below detection limits except one. TDS values were decent with a mean of 133 mg/l.

Carlson's Trophic State Index (TSI's): The trophic state of a lake refers to its nutrient richness, where it stands along the production continuum. The indicating chemical and physical parameters are nutrients and water transparency. To lake managers, Carlson's TSI values in the 30's are considered to be oligotrophic (nutrient poor), values in the 40's are mesotrophic (moderately enriched), values in the 50's are considered eutrophic (enriched), and those above 65 are considered hypereutrophic (highly enriched). The TSI values for TP and Chl-a were 45.0 and 47.47 respectively. These values indicate a mesotrophic system as does the TSI for Secchi readings

Josh Fair, Water Pollution Biologist
 Department of
 Environmental Protection
 Rachel Carson State Office Building
 400 Market Street, Harrisburg, PA 17101

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