

ILA Bulletin



INTERMEDIATE LAKE ASSOCIATION

September 2023

ILA: 25 Years!

2023 marks the 25th year of existence for our association. 25 years!!! We first came together in 1998 as a for-profit lake association and then in 2006 converted into a 501C3 non-profit enterprise. But throughout all these 25 years we have been dedicated to the protection and preservation of Intermediate Lake and the entire ERCOL watershed (ours to protect!). Our association has been guided through this time by the following Presidents: Forrest (Bud) Welch, Scott Zimmerman, Steve Young and Dave Christian, our current president.

Here are some of the notable accomplishments the ILA has made over these last 25 years:

- Installed 30 fish shelters at 10 sites on Intermediate Lake and posted GPS locations on the ILA Website.

- We monitor, test and report on Intermediate Lake water quality each year, including water clarity, dissolved oxygen with depth, water temperature with depth and more.

- Increased nesting habitat for Common Loons on Intermediate Lake such that we now regularly have 3 nesting pairs of Loons each year on the lake (and hoping for more!).

- We are successfully growing our membership. That means more Intermediate Lake owners believe and support our core mission: Ours to Protect! We now have over 40% of Intermediate Lake owners on our team!

- We are also getting area commercial businesses to stand with us in supporting us and our core mission.

- While Swimmers Itch (SI) is a continuing "irritation" for many lakes in northern Michigan, including ours, we have funded research (along with other lake associations) into SI which has vastly increased our understanding of SI, thus helping our members minimize its effects when enjoying time in the lake.

- We have regular dialog and cooperation with other ERCOL lake associations, sharing information and resources as we all work to protect the ERCOL lakes and watershed.

- We formed the Lake Level Committee to work on Intermediate Lake lake level concerns. This work group has now expanded to address all ERCOL watershed lake level issues, has a broader membership and reports its work to many area stakeholder groups. Its most notable accomplishments include:

 - We have formed a strong and proactive relationship with the Antrim County Operator of Dams, working together on key issues affecting our lakes and county owned dams.

 - Working with the Operator of Dams, we modified the Bellaire Dam operating guidelines to improve lake level management.

 - Measured detailed lake level and rainfall data over a multi-year period on 9 lakes throughout the ERCOL chain to increase our knowledge of how our individual lakes water levels vary.

 - Contracted with the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to construct a hydrologic model of the ERCOL watershed. USACE contributed \$290,000 and Antrim County \$77,000 to cover the cost to build this computer model. The model predicts lake level movements on all ERCOL lakes.

 - Contracted with Spicer Group (an engineering firm) to expand the hydrology model to include the Elk Rapids dam and to study both the Bellaire and Elk Rapids dams during significant rainfall events. The work was paid for by Antrim County and area lake associations, including the ILA.

 - All this effort has greatly increased our understanding of lake levels issues on all the lakes in the ERCOL chain, how they interact, key pinch points and areas of concern.

We look forward to celebrating the ILA's 25 years early next summer with a special event – stay tuned for more on that as plans develop!

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End of Season Loon Update

It's hard to believe that Labor Day weekend has come and gone already...and with it most of our summerlike weather.

The loons have certainly taken notice. It appears that our historic four pairs have split up. Generally, the female of each pair will head south before the rest of her family, leaving the male to give some final support and advice to the maturing youngsters. The males tend to leave a few weeks later. The youngsters will hang around until the snow flies...usually into November.

This season certainly had its ups and downs. The southernmost pair, who have in recent years captured the coveted First Chick Award, sat for over two months on a single infertile egg. That was sad to watch, but all part of the natural order of things. On the other hand, the eagle tree pair and the Gorham Beach pair have raised two healthy chicks each.

For the icing on our 2023 loon season, we finally had a fourth pair of loons occupy the nesting platform at the Green's property near the 90 degree turn of Intermediate Lake Road! As exciting as that event was, those two were not successful in producing any eggs, let alone any chicks. They did get plenty of practice making a nest and sitting there...possibly fooled by a couple of egg shaped stones mixed in with the nesting material. We expect, and hope, that pair will return and have better luck next year.

We can all continue to watch our young loons growing up for the next month or so. I will post my final loon log for 2023 to the ILA website later this fall.

Dick West, Andy Hickman
Co-Captains, ILA Loon Platoon
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ILA Election Results

The 2023 Annual Meeting of the Intermediate Lake Association took place on Saturday, August 5th. At the meeting, one ILA member was newly elected to the Board – Mandy Bush. Existing Board member Dave Christian stood for re-election and was elected as well. We thank these two individuals for their willingness to serve on the ILA Board of Directors!

The new Board of Directors met on Tuesday, August 22nd and elected Officers of the Board. With that, your ILA Board of Directors consists of the following:

Dave Christian – President
Jim Gilleylen – Vice President
John Bridenbaugh – Treasurer
Stan Yoder – Secretary
Matt Gabris – Director at Large
Andy Hickman – Director at Large
Aaron Phelps – Director at Large
Mandy Bush – Director at Large

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2023 ILA Annual Meeting

On Saturday, August 5th, ILA members gathered at the Torch Lake Café in Eastport for the 17th ILA Annual Meeting. Annual meeting business included election of directors to the ILA Board and approval of a refreshed set of ILA Bylaws. You can always view the ILA Bylaws on our website at IntermediatLake.org. Plentiful and delicious complimentary hor-d'oeuvres were served for those in attendance.

The special topic for the meeting was an update to the recently completed study by Spicer Group on lake level issues. Spicer has expanded the hydrologic model of the chain of lakes to include the Elk Rapids Dam, thus making the model cover the entire ERCOL watershed, and then used the model to study both the Bellaire and Elk Rapids Dams during 10-year, 100-year, and 500-year precipitation events.

Here are a couple pictures from the event.



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ILA is a 501c3 non-profit