

Caribou Lake Property Owners' Association Annual Meeting
September 5, 2026, 10:00- noon
Lutsen Town Hall

World's Best Donuts and Coffee

AGENDA

Introduction of Board Members

- Guest Speaker, Steve VanKekerix, Cook County Firewise (20 minutes)
- Guest Speaker: Mona Hansen, Chik-Wauk Loon Center (10 minutes)
- Approve Minutes of 2024 Annual Meeting (5 minutes)
- Nomination and Election of Board Members, nominees: Tom Rider, Tom Flink, Karl Karst, Lisa Miller-Johnson (4 of 10 board members) (5 minutes)
 - New board members?
- Treasurer's report – Charlie Austin (10 minutes)
 - link for paying dues online: [https:// caribou.mnlakesanddrivers.org/membership/](https://caribou.mnlakesanddrivers.org/membership/)
- CCCoLA report - Irene Mullen (10 minutes)
- Water Quality Report, Larry Mullen (15 minutes)
- Rusty crawfish update – Tom Rider (20 minutes)
 - what was done this summer,
 - Plan for future years
- Name Change? (5 minutes)
- Comments from Commissioner Storlie (10 minutes)
- Questions, comments from the floor
- Adjourn

DID YOU KNOW?

The Loon Population is in decline nationally.



Gunflint Trail lakes are a critical habitat for loon nesting and key to their survival.

THEY ARE HERE TO NEST AND RAISE THEIR YOUNG AND NEED OUR HELP TO MAKE IT THROUGH THE SUMMER.

Photo courtesy markellis.com

The haunting call of the Common Loon is one of the most recognizable sounds of the Northwoods — and one we can't take for granted.

LOONS ARE A SIGN OF A HEALTHY LAKE, BUT THEY DEPEND ON CLEAN WATER AND HEALTHY FISH POPULATIONS TO THRIVE.

LOON AWARE

Keep your distance. Please stay 200 ft from loons and shoreline nesting loons.

Use Binoculars to view loons. This helps keep your distance from loons, nests, and chicks.

Be Patient on the water. Slow Down and keep your distance. Loons need up to ¼ mile of open water to take off.

If a loon is running across the water, it's trying to fly — slowing down helps keep it safe.

Don't Cut Fish Lines. Reel, Remove, Retrieve.

Get The Lead Out. Choose Lead-Free Tackle.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

In one season (about 12 weeks) loons are hatched and transition from chick to adult preparing to migrate south.

LITTER AND FISH LINES

Discarded fishing line can cause entanglement, injuries and even death.

BOATING - SPEED AND WAVES

Boat wakes can cause nesting failures; chicks can be drowned or displaced.

LEAD - INGESTION CAUSES DEATH

Lead from hooks, sinkers, jigs can be in fish or sink to the bottom of the lake.



Photo courtesy Keith Wendt

SURVIVAL CHALLENGES

VULNERABLE TO PREDATORS

Eagles

Black flies drive loons off nests

NESTING

Loons only lay a couple of eggs per nesting although they may renest if the first attempt fails. (Average 27 days for incubation).

To learn more about the Common Loon, Get The Lead Out and hear loon calls, visit:

chikwaukloonprogram.com



CHIK-WAUK
Loon Program

GUNFLINT TRAIL

5 WAYS TO HELP PROTECT LOONS

Loons return to Gunflint Trail lakes each spring to nest and raise chicks.



Because they nest near shore, raise their young on open water where they dive for fish - small changes by boaters and anglers can make a big difference in their lives.

1. GIVE LOONS SPACE

Stay at least 200 feet away from nesting loons, loon pairs, and chicks.

2. SLOW DOWN NEAR LOONS

Reduce speed and minimize wakes when loons are nearby.

BOAT STRIKES CAN KILL LOONS FISHING FOR FOOD & WAVES CAUSE NESTING FAILURES.

3. OBSERVE FROM A DISTANCE

The best way to enjoy loons is quietly and respectfully.

USE BINOCULARS FOR VIEWING TO PREVENT DISTURBANCE.

4. WATCH FOR WARNING SIGNS

If a loon lowers its head toward the water, it is signaling that it feels threatened. Back away slowly and give the bird more space.

5. FISH RESPONSIBLY

- Avoid casting near loons
- Retrieve and dispose of fishing line and lure
- Choosing lead-free tackle is one of the simplest and most effective ways to help protect loons.

Visit chikwaukloonprogram.com to learn about the Get The Lead Out Program



Photo by
Keith Wood



GET THE LEAD OUT: PROTECT MINNESOTA'S LOONS

Lead fishing tackle is responsible for 25% of adult loon deaths.



Photo by Mark Ellis

The call of the loon is part of Minnesota's soul. Don't let it go silent.

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM WITH LEAD?



LEAD IS A LETHAL TOXIN

Lead is lethal to loons, eagles, swans and other waterbird, even in small amounts.



WITHOUT REALIZING IT

You and your family can be exposed to toxic lead by handling it.



LOONS INGEST TACKLE

Loon eats a fish with tackle attached to or inside it OR when they pick up lost tackle.

XRay of dead loon.



LEAD FREE ALTERNATIVES

Tungsten, steel, tin, and bismuth perform just as well without the harm.

TRADE IN YOUR LEAD TACKLE FOR FREE!

Look for Lead Tackle Exchange Stations at local businesses and community locations to:

Ditch the Lead:

Bring in your old lead sinkers and jigs.

Get the Good Stuff:

Free lead-free samples to get started.

Lead the Way:

Join other guardians of Minnesota's waters.

Don't wait for the next fishing trip to realize your tackle box is a hazard.

Check your gear today, find an exchange station, and choose lead-free.

SMALL CHANGE. BIG IMPACT.

Swapping out your tackle is one of the most effective ways anglers can directly help loon conservation.

These efforts are made possible through a partnership between the Cook County Coalition of Lake Associations (CCCoLA) and the CHIK-WAUK Loon Program, working together to protect loons and educate anglers.

CLPOA Treasurer's Report

9/1/25 to 8/30/26

Statement of Activities

8/31/25 to 8/30/2026

Income	
Dues	\$1,557
Donations – Rusty Crayfish Fnd	1,936
SSD reimbursement	13,394
SWCD Grant	2,750
Interest	<u>4</u>
Misc income	<u>1,250</u>
Total Income	\$20,891
Expenses	
Shipping, Postage	\$80
WQ testing	1,599
Events	544
Membership/Dues	235
Website, misc	115
Total	\$2,573
Net Inc/Exp b/4 Rusty Crayfish	\$18,318
Rusty Crayfish Expenses	\$12,352
Net Income/Expense	\$5,966

Rusty Crayfish Expenses

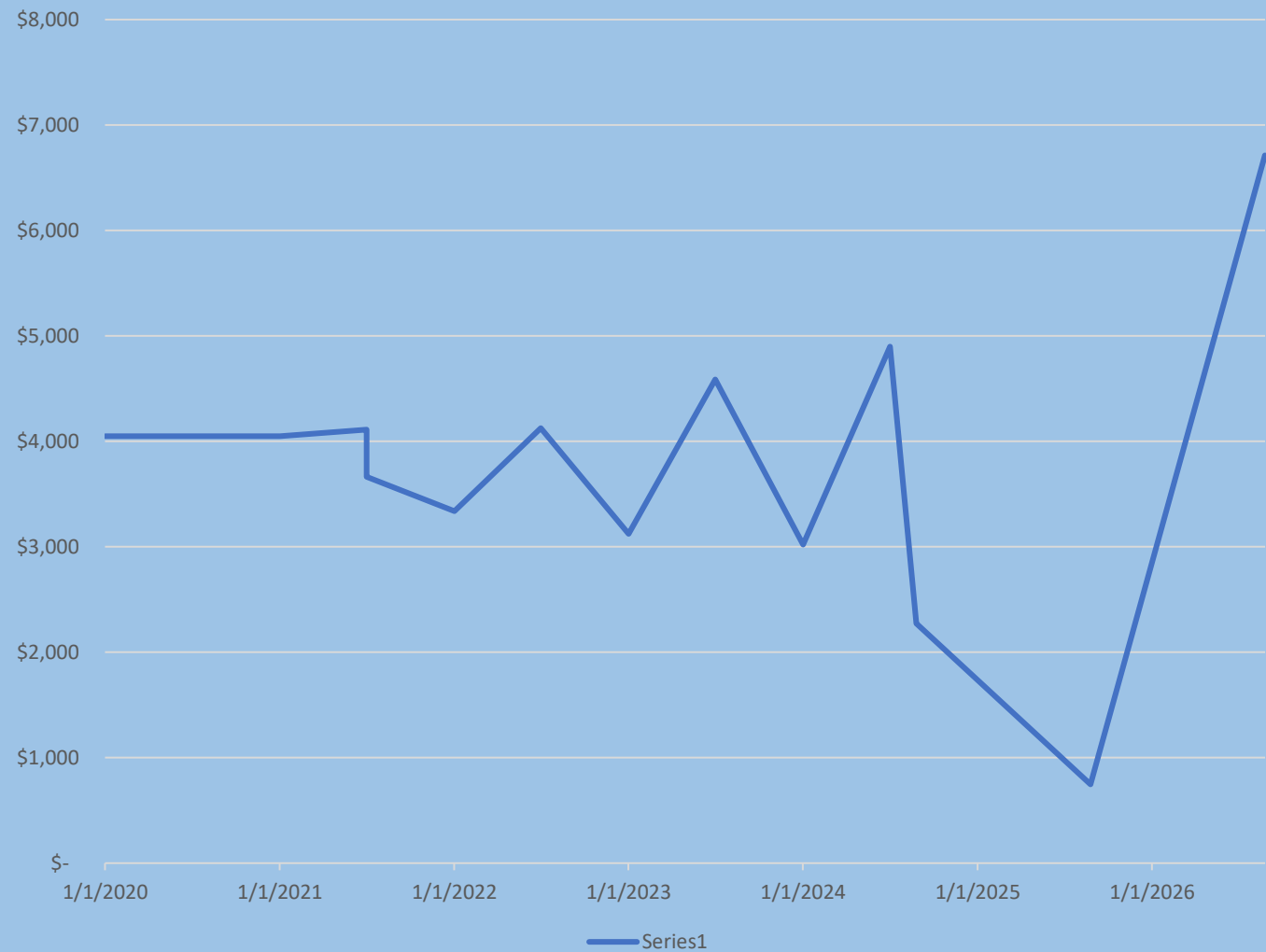
9/1/25 to 8/30/2026

Bait, Tackle & Supplies	\$ 2,852
Jon Boat	\$1,500
Crawdaddies	\$8,000
Total	\$12,352

Change in Cash Position
9/1/25 to 8/28/2026

Opening balance 9/1/24	\$747
Ending balance, 8/28/25	\$ 6,712
Difference (decrease)	\$5,965

Cash Balance Over the Years



How to pay dues

- Pay to me today.
- Mail to PO Box 11, Lutsen MN 55612
- Pay with credit card on our website:
 - <https://caribou.mnlakesanddrivers.org/>
- THANK YOU!

Caribou.mnlakesanddrivers.org

secure.myvanco.com/L-ZECD/home

Caribou Lake Property Owners Association

Home Profile Basket

Search



2024 Membership Dues

Help us promote clean water, preserve shoreline aesthetics, and combat AIS for Caribou Lake.

Give now



Donation

Do even more to help us promote clean water, preserve shoreline aesthetics, and combat AIS for Caribou Lake.

Donate now



Rusty Crayfish Harvesting Fund

Support our efforts to control the spread of rusty crayfish in Caribou Lake.

Donate now

Caribou Lake Property Owners Association tom@lutsen.com (218) 340-8182 292 Peninsula Point Trail, Lutsen, MN 55612

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Cook County Coalition of Lake Associations

21 board members made of Lake Associations, Road Associations and individuals

Protect Preserve Participate - Lakes of Cook County

CCCoLA Meetings

- Second Thursday of each month
- 4 in person meetings in person
- Zoom during the rest of year
- Updates from AIS and Soil & Water – as needed
- County Updates from Ann Sullivan
- Updates and presentations
- Anyone can attend meetings - coffee and snack provided
- Check out website for minutes and updates

Community Outreach

- Fisherman's Picnic – along side with Cook Cty AIS and SW
- AIS – Brewery Event – June – Mystery Snail
- Canoe Races
- Take a Kid Fishing
- Mining Informational Meeting with Cook Cty. Higher Ed
- WTIP and Cook County News Herald

Surface water usage is big concern for members

- Health of the lake
- Water is used for their cabin
- Erosion
- Wildlife - Loons
- GET the LEAD OUT

Cook County AIS

- Boat Inspections
- Survey for Spiney Water Fleas and Calcium testing

Cook County Soil and Water

- MN Lake Lookout - Cyanobacteria and Chloride testing training
- Shoreland workshop
- pH and oxygen monitoring equipment

Shoreland Stewards – That's all of us!

- Cook County has over 90% of its pre-European settlement wetlands
- Shoreline is defined as 1000 feet from shore
- MRL - score your shoreline, become a Lake Steward

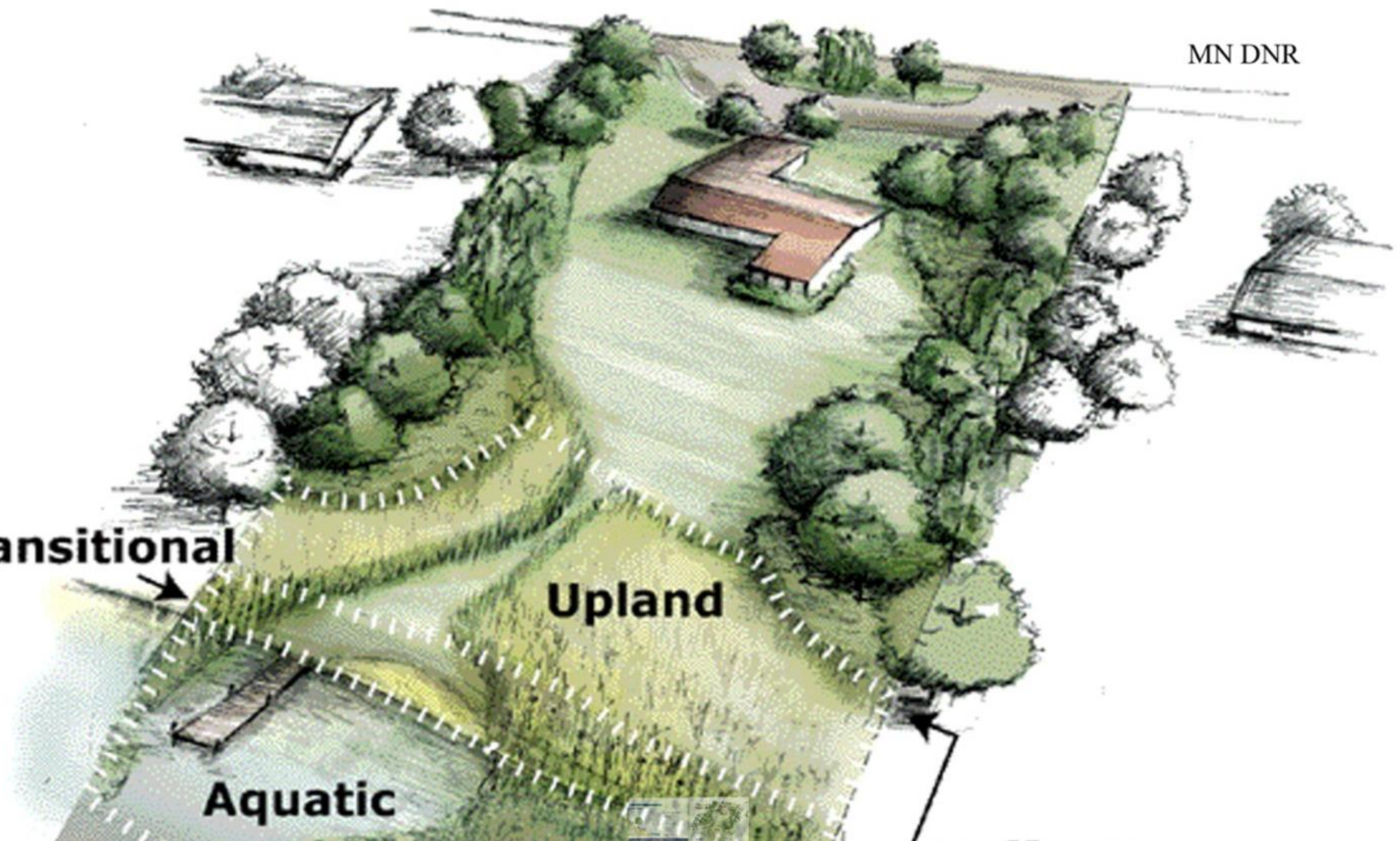
- Start small – stop mowing or clearing 10 feet from shoreline moving back every year till you are at 30 feet from shoreline
- Plant native flowers, shrubs, trees
- Soil & Water will do site visits

Transitional



Upland

Aquatic



Soil Water technician observations of Caribou

- Ways to keep phosphorus out of Caribou
- Sealed firepit – to keep ash out of the water table
- Disposal of ashes - the best spot – gravel pit
- Any disposal on ground will eventually end up in ground water – lake
- Driveway rain gutters slow down drainage –



Water Quality Report

Phosphorus

Chlorophyll-a

Secchi Disk

Oxygen

Calcium

PH Factor

5 Sampling Sites

(Used Historically)



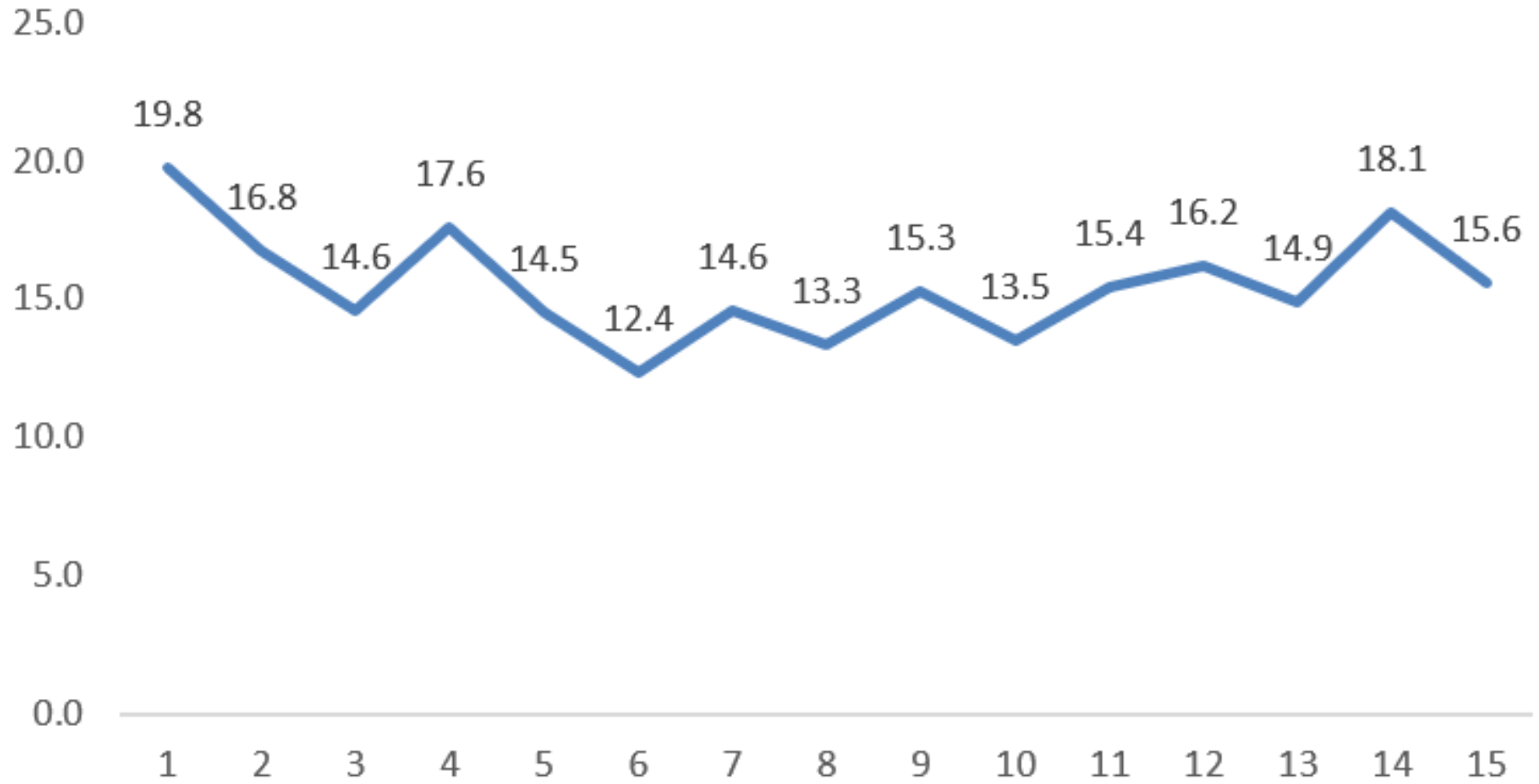
Phosphorus

Goal 15 PPB or less

<u>Site</u>		<u>5/27</u>	<u>6/30</u>	<u>7/28</u>	<u>Sep</u>	<u>Ave</u>
<u>Phosphorus (PPB) Goal = 15 Or less</u>						
203 (Camp)		37.6	11.0	16.5		
210 (Island)		11.8	12.1	14.4		
205 (Fosters)		15.2	11.1	14.8		
103 (Landing)		8.6	12.4	18.4		
201 (Isthmus)		23.2	11.6	15.3		
Average		19.3	11.6	15.9	0.0	15.6

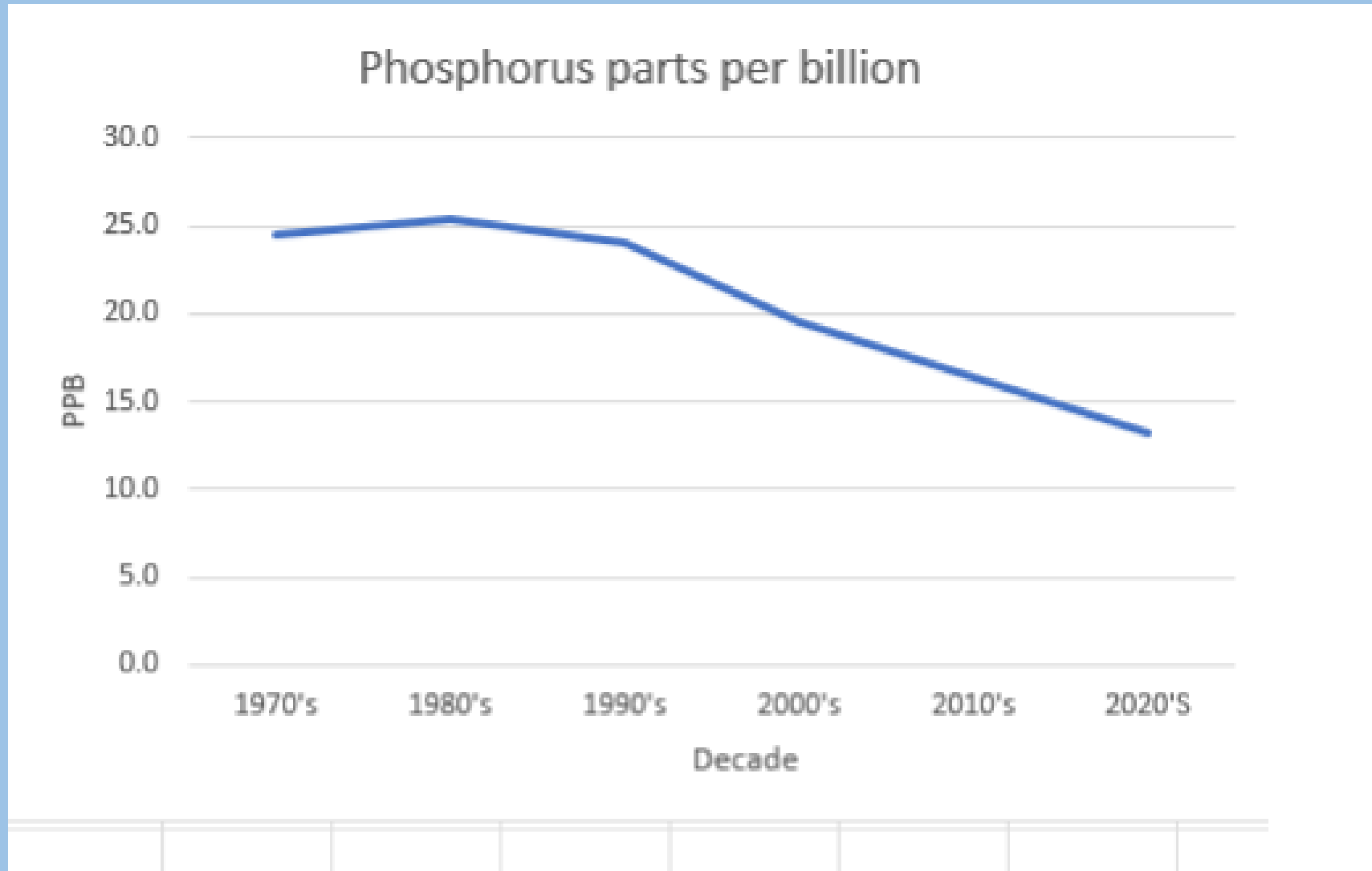
Phosphorus 15 Year Trend

Goal or less



2012 2013 2014 2015 2016 2017 2018 2019 2020 2021 2022 2023 2024 2025 2026

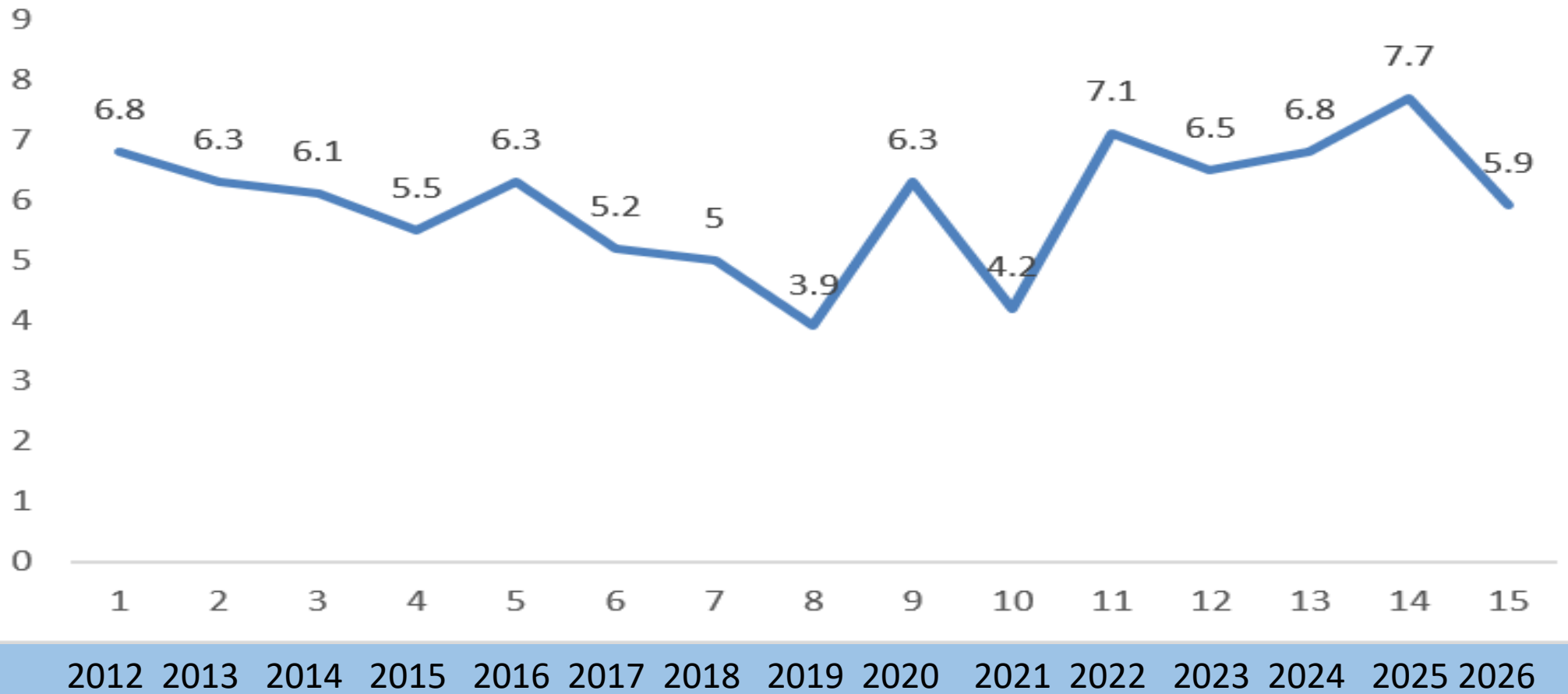
Phosphorus Testing History - site 205



Chlorophyll-a *Goal 8 PPB or less*

<u>Site</u>		<u>5/27</u>	<u>6/30</u>	<u>7/28</u>	<u>Sep</u>	<u>Ave</u>
<u>Chlorophyll-a (PPB) Goal = 8 or less</u>						
203 (Camp)		1.3	5.9	6.5		
210 (Island)		2.9	7.7	6.8		
205 (Fosters)		5.6	7.4	6.2		
103 (Landing)		2.4	5.3	6.2		
201 (Isthmus)		4.0	5.6	6.2		
Average		3.3	6.4	8.0	0.0	5.9

Clorophyll-a 15 Year Trend



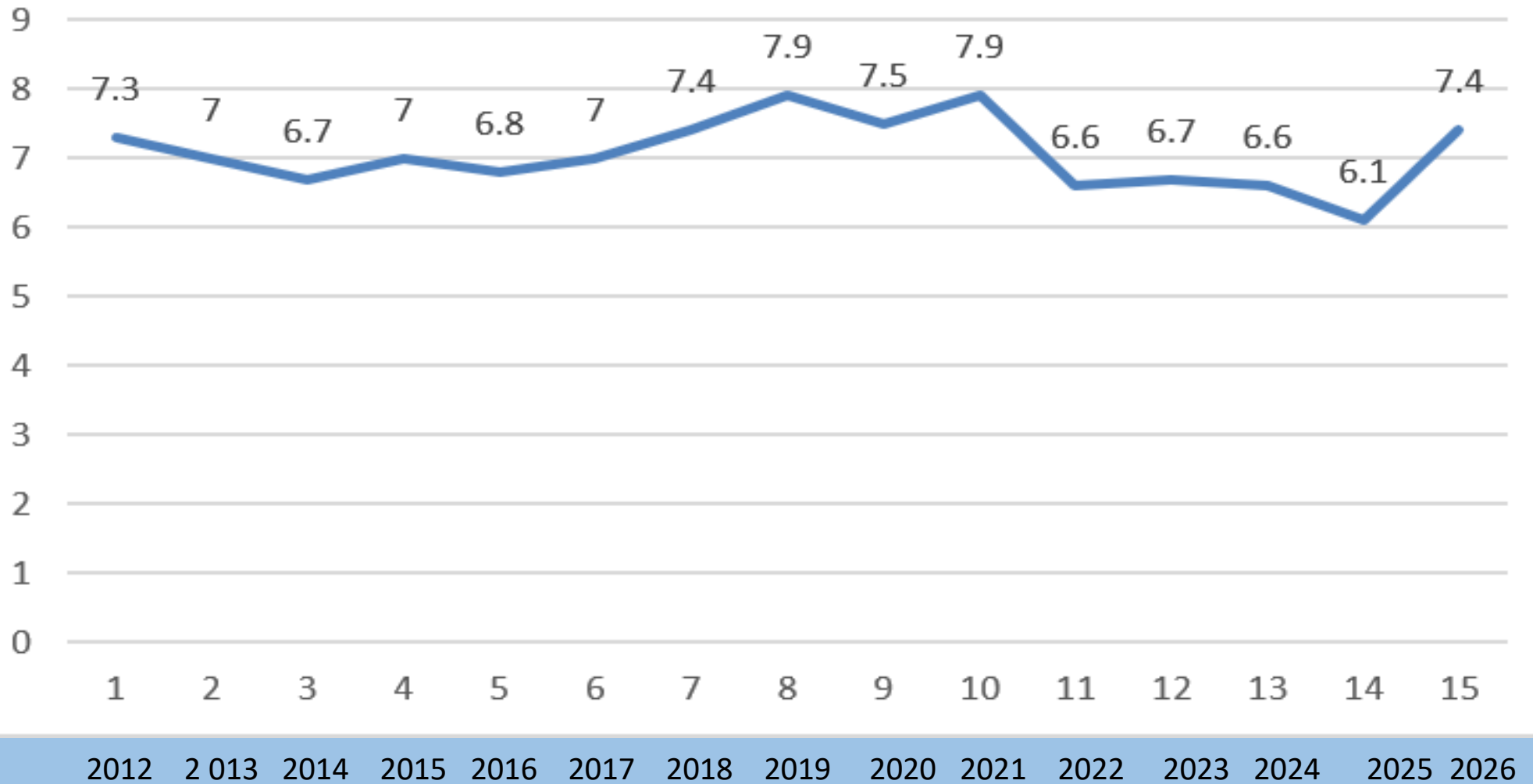
Goal
8 or less

Secchi Disk *Goal 6 feet or more*

<u>Site</u>		<u>5/27</u>	<u>6/30</u>	<u>7/28</u>	<u>Sep</u>	<u>Ave</u>
<u>Secchi (Feet) Goal is 6 or more</u>						
203 (Camp)		9.0	7.0	7.0		
210(Island)		7.5	7.0	7.0		
205 (Fosters)		8.0	7.5	8.5		
103 (Landing)		8.0	6.5	6.5		
201 (Isthmus)		7.5	7.0	6.5		
Average		8.0	7.0	7.1	0.0	7.4

Secchi Dish 15 Year Trend

Goal
6 Ft. or more



Oxygen and Temperature - Site 205 (Bottom 28 feet)

Surface water normal 8 milligrams per liter or more

Date	3 feet		12 feet		24 feet	
	<u>Temp</u>	<u>Oxy mg/l</u>	<u>Temp</u>	<u>Oxy mg/l</u>	<u>Temp</u>	<u>Oxy</u>
	<u>mg/l</u>					
8/14/2026	73.4	9.2	71.9	8.6	70.6	5.9
8/26/2025	72.3	9.4	69.4	8.1	65.1	4.5
8/20/2024	70.3	9.2	69.4	8.5	66.2	3.4
8/08/2023	73.3	9.0	72.1	7.5	59.5	0.3
7/21/2021	74.0	8.7	73.0	8.5	67.0	1.0
8/11/2019	74.0	8.6	72.0	8.7	66.0	4.0
8/07/2018	71.0	8.3	70.0	8.0	68.0	4.0
8/01/2016	75.0	8.3	74.0	7.8	71.0	3.5
8/13/2015	73.0	8.9	72.0	8.0	69.0	4.9

Calcium

8/8/2016	7.2	
8/8/2017	7.6	
9/19/2017	7.4	
8/7/2018	7.4	
8/28/2019	8	
8/4/2020	8.1	
9/9/2020	9	
9/10/2021	8.7	
8/9/2022	6.9	
9/6/2022	6.9	
9/13/2023	7.9	
8/13/2025	7.7	
7/28/2026	7.3	

PH Factor

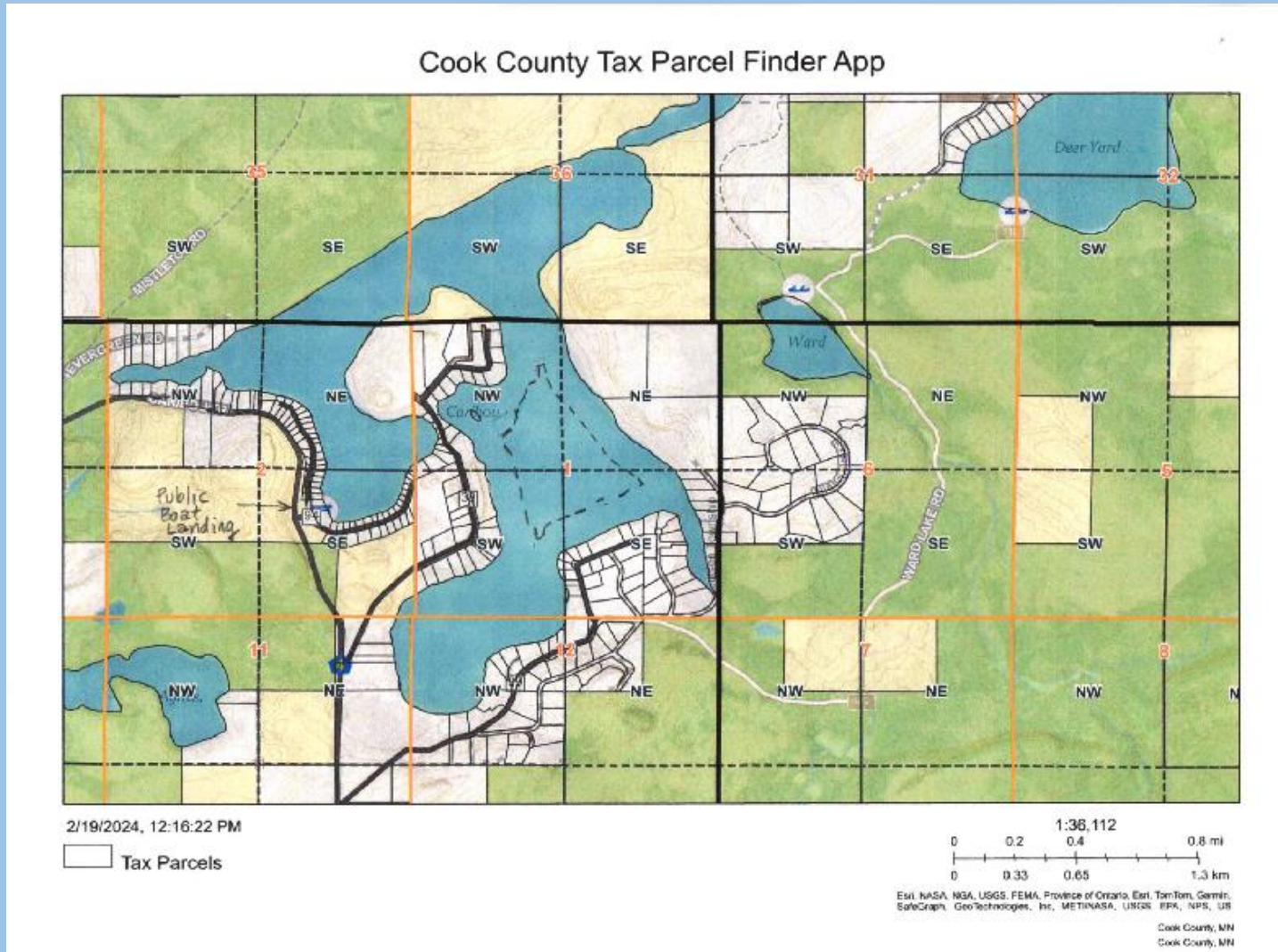
- PH is a measure of how acidic or alkaline the water is.
- Measuring the pH factor of a lake is crucial for assessing its overall health and ability to support aquatic life.
- Most aquatic organisms, including fish, insects, and plants, have a narrow range of pH they can tolerate.
- A healthy pH factor for a lake in Cook County is between 7.2 and 8.3

PH Factor (Site 205 at 12 Ft.)		
8/25/2025		8/14/2026
7.75		7.76

Rusty Crayfish



- How did they get here? Where are they now?



- What is the harm caused?
 - Native crayfish eliminated
 - Native grasses eliminated
 - Trap sediment
 - Absorb nutrient pollution
 - Add dissolved oxygen
 - Nursing environment for fish
 - Fish population declines, changes
 - Property values?

Are there other lakes in MN that are infested with Rusty Crayfish?

Yes, there are many. 75 lakes in St Louis and Cook Counties, including West Bearskin, Clearwater, Seagull, Vermillion, Leech Lake, Lake of the Woods.



- What can we do about it?
 - Nothing
 - Harvesting
 - Physical barrier – need DNR permit
- Is there evidence that Harvesting will work?
 - Some, but It's early days.

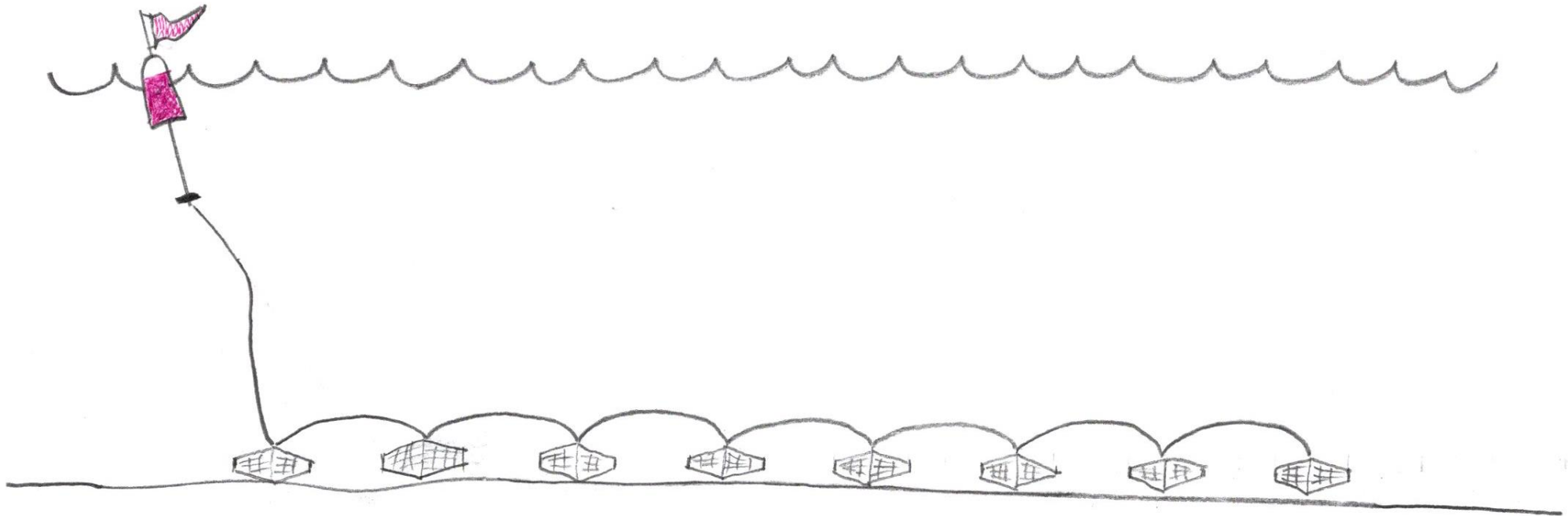
What did we do this summer?

- Hired Crawdaddies, all summer, 100+ traps
- Operated CLPOA boat all summer, 40 traps
- Larry Mullen, 24 traps
- Suzanne Pecore, 8 traps
- COP harvested mid-summer, 24 traps.
- 20 or so members harvesting from docks.
- Summary: 200 traps via trap lines; 20 from docks.

And we harvested in first week of June



Trap Line





Crayfish Terminator Volunteers

Harvest May 28 to September 20:

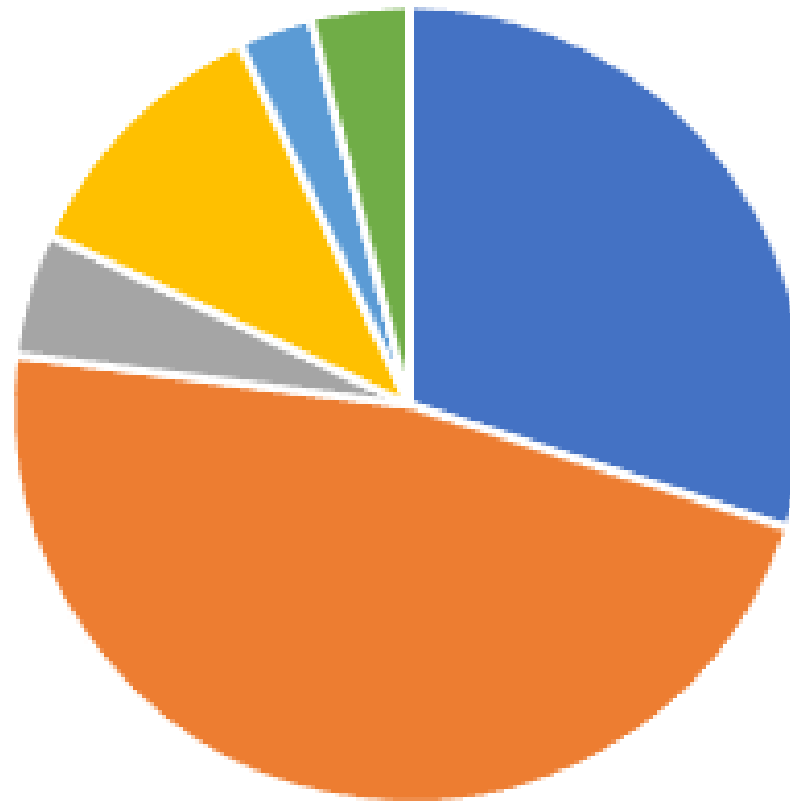
Boat captain	Number of shifts
Brad Sillman	15
Tom Rider	20
Tom Flink	9
Jeanne Anderson	4
Alan Anderson	3
Mike Nicklow	4



Projected Harvest Totals for Summer 2026

- **2026 = 300,000+ crayfish X2+**
- 2025: 120,000 crayfish X2
- 2024: 60,000 crayfish X5
- 2023: 12,000 crayfish

Harvesting Contributions



■ CLPOA ■ Crawdaddies ■ COP ■ Larry ■ Pecore ■ Docks

Observations this summer ...

- Reduced vegetation Bigsby (wild rice)
- Population of rusty crayfish increasing in footprint and density.
- Hardly any native crayfish observed.

Next summer and beyond?

- SSD will continue to fund, \$50 per taxpayer per year = \$50 x 138 taxpayers = \$6900 per year
- Continue harvesting, grow base of volunteers.
- Maintain partnerships with COP, Crawdaddies.
- Create barrier to stop in-migration: Larry? Physical? Phermones?
- Engage technical, political partners: NRRI, DNR, CCCoLA, Cook Co AIS, Tribal Nations, other Lake Associations.
- Stock small mouth bass, sunfish?
- Over time develop methodologies to evaluate whether our efforts are worthwhile and adjust strategy as needed to be effective + sustainable.

New Name?

CLPOA causes confusion, and mis-represents our mission. HOA?

The Board has recommended adopting the name **Friends of Caribou Lake**, which we think better communicates our mission.

Membership Vote.

Questions?

