



**VanEtten Lake Association**  
**Spring Newsletter 2018**  
 Keeping Members Informed and Involved



**PFC CONTAMINATION UPDATE**

It appears that the issue of chemical contamination in drinking water has caught the attention of not only local officials, but federal as well, as indicated by a press release dated March 2018. An appropriations bill will be going to the House and Senate which includes: \$10 million to fund a health study on the impacts of PFAS exposure, increased funding to investigate and clean up contamination at active and decommissioned military bases, and doubling the size of USDA emergency water grants to eligible communities (like Oscoda) from \$500,000 to \$1 million.

Locally, the Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) has been meeting approximately every other month to give updates and allow the public an opportunity to ask questions. Highlights from the April meeting include: 1) New groundwater treatment facility to be built near the community center with a completion date of August/2018, 2) Continued water well sampling to define plume locations and activity, 3) Fish sampling in VanEtten Lake and lower Ausable River for possible PFC contamination, and 4) Further investigation into source/composition of foam samples taken from VanEtten Lake. Watch the newspaper for upcoming meeting dates to stay informed.

A new community action group NOW (Need Our Water) has been formed to be “a reliable resource and catalyst for education and communication while advocating for long-term health and environmental welfare plans on behalf of those affected by the water contamination from the former Wurtsmith AFB.” Contact person for this group is Greg Cole – [colescottages@gmail.com](mailto:colescottages@gmail.com)

There are many resources for following up on this issue and include:

- Information Repository at Parks Library in Oscoda
- [www.afcec.af.mil/Home/BRAC/Wurtsmith](http://www.afcec.af.mil/Home/BRAC/Wurtsmith).
- [www.mi.gov/wurtsmith](http://www.mi.gov/wurtsmith)
- Mich Dept Health & Human Services website – search Wurtsmith
- VELA website – [vanettenlake.org](http://vanettenlake.org) – click on Hot News

<u>Board Members 2017-2018</u>	<u>Event Calendar *</u>
Pres Joe Plunkey <a href="mailto:joemplunkey@charter.net">joemplunkey@charter.net</a>	Saturday June 2 Spring General Mtg
VP Dave Swenson <a href="mailto:dks110250@gmail.com">dks110250@gmail.com</a>	Saturday July 7 Annual Mtg
Sec. Carole Plunkey <a href="mailto:caroleplunkey@charter.net">caroleplunkey@charter.net</a>	Thursday July 12 PRVEL General Mtg
Treas. Leonard Brockhahn <a href="mailto:sbrock50@gmail.com">sbrock50@gmail.com</a>	Saturday, August 4 - Annual Picnic
Frank Rainey <a href="mailto:frank.rainey@sbcglobal.net">frank.rainey@sbcglobal.net</a>	Saturday September 8 Fall General Mtg
Rick Copland <a href="mailto:rcopland@marian-hs.org">rcopland@marian-hs.org</a>	Thursday October 11 PRVEL Fall Mtg
Leif Lindblom <a href="mailto:leif@lindblomfamily.com">leif@lindblomfamily.com</a>	
Doug Jager <a href="mailto:dj62852@charter.net">dj62852@charter.net</a>	
Celeste Creger <a href="mailto:cacreger@ameritech.net">cacreger@ameritech.net</a>	
<a href="mailto:nowactiongroup@gmail.com">nowactiongroup@gmail.com</a>	*VELA Mtgs @ 10 am – Parks Library PRVEL Mtgs @ 10 am – Harrisville Library

## 2018 Weed Management Plan

As reported by VELA weed committee and Lake Pro, the plan for this upcoming season is as follows:

- Early June – treatment of NW bay
- Mid June – lake vegetation survey
- End June/Early July – treatment as determined by survey results – not to interfere with Fourth of July activities
- Late July – second survey to assess treatment results/observe any new growth
- End July – treatment for late season unwanted weed growth
- Mid-late August – lake vegetation survey – assess if further treatment needed before Labor Day weekend

## Logs/Woody Debris from Pine River an Ongoing Concern

As more dead Ash trees and other woody debris find their way into the Pine River, they are creating a bottleneck at the mouth in early spring, lodging in the low water areas and posing a potential threat to the dam if/when they float free and head that way. The VELA board has been discussing how best to deal with this potentially annual event, seeking advice from the drain commissioner, the Pine River Watershed group, Huron Pines Conservation Council, US Forest Service, among others.

If the decision is made to remove or re-position the larger logs along the shoreline, an arborist would be consulted to determine how best to accomplish this. The drain commissioner's office has indicated that it will be ready to hire someone to assist in removal of drifting logs if/when they pose an imminent threat to the dam. If smaller debris remain into the boating season, lake residents will need to be alert to avoid hitting them while any logs lodged in the lake and breaking the surface will be flagged. Residents have the option to pull logs from the lake and use for buffers on their shoreline or let them dry out and use for firewood.

Unfortunately, trees will continue to maneuver down the Pine for years to come and some years will be more difficult to deal with than others.

## Picture Perfect Catch!



Ice Fishing in February/2018  
Picture courtesy of Tom and  
Amanda Minaudo

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## **Pine River Watershed (PRVEL) Update -**

PRVEL held its quarterly meeting in April and welcomed a new member to their board, Russell Williams, a resident of Oscoda and former forester.

Plans are underway to work on the following conservation projects: bank stabilization on the south branch, macroinvertebrate sampling at several streams, temperature mapping of warm/cold/transitional streams (may include drone technology), invasive species monitoring/treatment, water quality testing, and placement of temperature loggers at specific locations in conjunction with DNR Fisheries Division program to gather further data on status of our fishery.



PRVEL will also be participating in an event to be held in November through December sponsored by the Harrisville Library entitled **Water Ways** to highlight efforts at protecting our water resources throughout this NE area of Michigan.

Volunteers are always needed to help PRVEL accomplish goals for the watershed that directly affect VanEtten Lake. Working in the field is an enjoyable and productive way to be a part of local efforts to improve and maintain our natural surroundings here in Iosco/Alcona counties. Please contact Carole Plunkey to obtain more information on how you can help.

### **2017 VAN ETTEN LAKE WATER QUALITY RESULTS**

#### **SECCHI DISK CLARITY**

As reported in the fall edition of the newsletter, the average of the weekly clarity measurements taken for 2017 was 7.1 feet. The 10 year average is 7.3 feet. The average water temperature mid-lake over the summer was 68.1 deg. F. This compares to a 10 year average of 68.3 deg. F. The clarity and temperature measurements are taken weekly from mid-May to mid-September. There has been a trend to greater annual average clarity in the lake over the past 15 years.

#### **PHOSPHOROUS TESTING** (parts per billion = ppb)

The 2017 spring overturn phosphorus concentration was 28 ppb which was also the result in 2016. The spring result is thought to be a good estimate of the average phosphorus concentration in the lake. Comparative samples taken at the outlet of the dam on April 11 and 19 averaged 18.0 ppb. The 10 year average spring concentration is 24.2 ppb.

The 2017 summer phosphorus concentration was 23 ppb. This compares to the concentration for 2016 of 35 ppb. The 10 year average concentration is 34 ppb.

#### **CHLOROPHYLL A TESTING**

This test is intended to help to determine the relative amount of algae in the lake by measuring chlorophyll concentrations. The 2017 median concentration was 1.5 ppb. The 10 year average median concentration is 4.7 ppb. The algae bloom that occurred this year was unusual in that it was primarily green algae. The weed committee decided not to treat this as it occurred so late in the season.

#### **CARLSON TSI RESULTS**

With an average TSI score of 44.3 based on the 2017 Secchi transparency, chlorophyll-a, and summer phosphorus data, Van Etten Lake is rated as a mesotrophic lake.

Mesotrophic lakes are noted for having mid-ranged amounts of nutrients that fall between the generally clear and deep oligotrophic lakes that have little aquatic or algae growth and highly productive eutrophic lakes that are generally shallow, turbid and which support abundant aquatic plant growth. Van Etten Lake has historically fallen closer to the eutrophic end of the scale with lakes that support warm water fish, such as bass and pike.

