



## Minnesota DNR Fisheries

# Brainerd Lakes Review

Edited by Carl Mills



### Meet the *New* Supervisor

Hi. My name is Marc Bacigalupi. I greet you with enthusiasm as the new Brainerd Area Fisheries supervisor. I promise to work with you towards shared goals -- creating and preserving long term quality fishing and outdoors experiences.

My experience is based on being raised fishing and hunting in Minnesota, a Master's Degree in Fisheries from the University of Minnesota, time at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Michigan, and 10 years with the Department in the metro and southern regions of the state. I bring a track record of operations and project success and a collaborative work style.

There are difficult challenges to overcome; without necessarily realizing it, we all put tremendous pressure on our resources because we love them so much. That being said, I hope to see you out on the water, enjoying some of the finest fishing Minnesota has to offer!

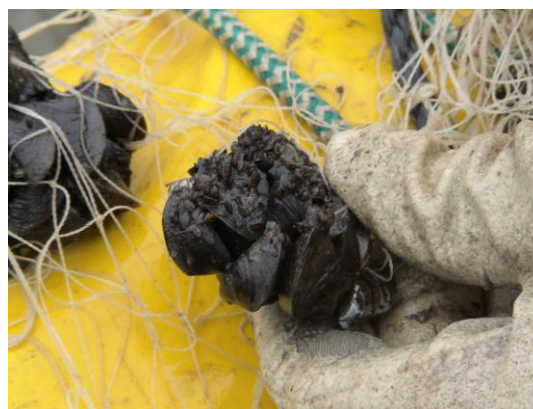
If you don't catch me, don't hesitate to call. (218)828-2550.



### Zebra Mussels Found in Gull

Zebra mussels have spread again. In 2010, they were found in Gull Lake. This renders the whole Gull Chain, which includes Round Lake, as infested. This is a good time to remind you of the new law which requires you to drain water from your boat, livewell, bilge, and impellor by removing drain plugs and draining any water *before* leaving a lake. Also, portable bait containers must be drained when leaving designated infested waters. If you want to keep your live bait when leaving infested waters, you must replace water in bait containers with tap or spring water. We all need to do our part in maintaining the integrity of our lakes and stopping the spread of these exotic species. For more information on zebra mussels, including an underwater video, check out this link on the DNR website:

<http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/invasives/aquaticanimals/zebramussel/index.html> 



Zebra mussels caught in a Brainerd Area Fisheries net that was set in Rice Reservoir

## Hunting & Fishing Heritage Initiative

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is proposing license adjustments that would sustain the state's high-quality hunting and fishing opportunities and better address customer preferences and expectations. This is being done because the DNR is approaching a time when it will no longer be able to provide the basic services that hunters, anglers and citizens expect. The Game and Fish Fund is projected to "go negative" by 2014. This fund is the foundation of core fish, wildlife and law enforcement work. Despite implementing millions of dollars of cost-saving measures (office consolidations, leaving staff positions vacant, converting to more fuel-efficient vehicles) expenditures exceed revenues by \$2.6 million per year.

License revenue goes directly into the DNR's Game and Fish Fund, a special account of funds that can only be used for purposes such as research, scientific management, habitat conservation and conservation law enforcement. It also funds expenditures such as staff, field offices, vehicles, and other infrastructure. The Legacy Amendment dollars generated by the voter-approved sales tax of three-eighths of one percent do not fund these things as many hunters and anglers believe. By law, these funds can be used only "to restore, protect, and enhance wetlands, prairies, forests, and habitat for fish, game and wildlife." They cannot be used to replace funding for basic fish and wildlife management. These dollars have been put to good use. For example, they have tripled the state Aquatic Management Area program in just two years. But these dollars are not being used to stock fish or fund the management that has made Minnesota one of the nation's leaders in hunting and fishing. In short, the Game and Fish Fund accounts for 82 percent of the Fisheries Section yearly operating budget of \$35 million.

You are probably wondering what this all means to you. It would mean changes to hunting and fishing license fees, as well as changes to the

number and types of licenses. Some of these changes would include:


- An extension of the 24-hour license to a new 72 consecutive hour (3-Day) license with no trout stamp needed
- A new 90 consecutive days license
- A new youth license for 16 and 17 year-olds at a reduced cost
- A new 3-year individual angling license
- Resident angling license would increase to \$24
- Elimination of the conservation angling license

Costs (such as fuel) have increased for the DNR. The basic prices of fishing and hunting licenses haven't since 2001. We are asking you as sportsmen and sportswomen to support the License Initiative. Hunting and fishing is important to Minnesota. Our state is home to 2 million anglers and nearly 700,000 hunters. Hunters and anglers spend about \$3.6 billion each year. This direct spending supports 55,000 jobs in the outdoor recreation and hospitality business. If you are one of these people, now is the time to contact your lawmaker. Tell them you are willing to pay a little bit more because you love to hunt and fish.

What are the implications of this? If the initiative doesn't pass, we do less for you. Lakes will be surveyed less often, we will talk with you less often, the information we use for decision making becomes less reliable, and the information you seek (lake survey data on our website) is more outdated. As vacant positions increase, we will do less habitat work for you, attend less of your meetings (this has already begun), office closures will be implemented, and you will get fewer newsletters like this (it's been over a year now).


For more information, visit:

<http://mndnr.gov/heritage>

Here you will find some background, the proposals, a narrated PowerPoint and more detailed information. 

## Out With the Old, In With the New

The Brainerd Area staff has gone through some pretty dramatic changes since our last newsletter. Five employees have retired, including our Supervisor and Assistant Supervisor. You already learned about our new Supervisor, Marc, on the first page. He started in September of 2010. In early March we added a new Specialist, David Lockwood, and a new Assistant Supervisor, Mike Knapp. Mike has worked in Brainerd before and is back after working in Aitkin for a year and a half. This means that even with our new additions, our crew size still went from eight to six.

This is a perfect example of what was mentioned in the previous Heritage Initiative article. These remaining two positions won't be filled in the near future to save costs. We will have to cut back on some of the work you value, like monitoring lakes and at some point, stocking fish. This will also directly affect how available we are to you and your organizations. We realize that your lake is important, as are all our wonderful public resources. We will strive to do the best we can to protect and manage our valuable resources in the Brainerd Area. 



L-R: David Bohlander (ret.), Mike Knapp, Carl Mills (front), Dale Lockwood (ret.), Tim Rosinger (ret.) and Lloyd Anderson (ret.)  
Not Pictured: Tim Brastrup (ret.)

## Ask Lori



Lori is our Fisheries and Wildlife Office Specialist. This section will address some common questions she answers on a regular basis.

**Q: After a long winter, Minnesota's lakes, rivers, ditches, ravines, ponds and wetlands are in need of a good cleaning to remove accumulated garbage. Does the Department of Natural Resources have a program where people can volunteer to help clean public waters, and if so, what does it involve?**

**A:** The DNR's Adopt-a-River Program helps volunteers organize their own cleanup by providing a free "how-to" kit, bags and gloves, recognition for their effort, and other assistance as needed. An annual cleanup is required, but many people decide to do cleanups several times per year.

Although adopting does not give property rights to those who adopt stretches of a shoreline, it does help develop a sense of responsibility and participation in the welfare of their community and public waters. Since 1989, there have been nearly 2,900 cleanups involving more than 80,000 volunteers. They have removed 5.8 million pounds of rubbish on almost 10,000 miles of shoreline.

For more information visit the DNR's Web site at <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/adoptriver/index.html>

