

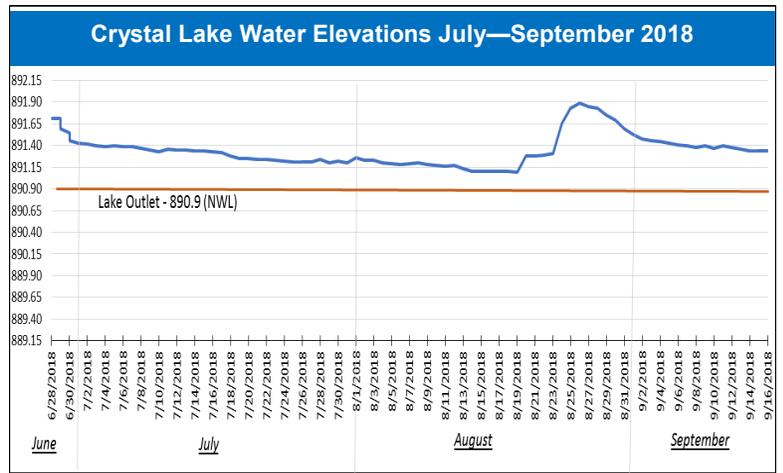
## Crystal Lake Fish Stocking

For many years, the Crystal Lake Anglers Fishing Club worked with the Crystal Lake Park District to restock Crystal Lake on an annual basis. The club raised funds to offset the cost and coordinated the hands-on stocking effort with the hatchery. The Anglers disbanded in 2017 but former members are still working closely with the park district. Plans are underway for stocking this fall. A detailed list will be available at a later date.

In addition to Crystal Lake, the park district is encouraging fishing at ponds in our community and neighborhood parks. Stocking will occur this fall at Shamrock Hills Park, located at 6204 E. Hillside Road.



An Illinois Fishing License is required to fish on all Park District bodies of water. Fishing licenses can be purchased at the Park District Administrative Office, One East Crystal Lake Avenue, Crystal Lake, IL. M-F 8:30 AM—5:00 PM.



The observed lake water surface elevations were above the lake outlet weir elevation (890.9') for the entire 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter period. With significant amounts of precipitation in June, a fairly dry July with just under 2" of precipitation and then back into August with about 5" of precipitation, we can see how the lake reacted to the amounts of rainfall (or lack of at times).

## PROPOSED PIER ORDINANCE

# COMMUNITY INPUT MEETING

**THURS  
OCT 25  
7 PM**

**PARK PLACE  
406 W. WOODSTOCK**

Your input wanted! Please attend the community input meeting to comment or ask questions regarding the pier ordinance being considered by the Park Board of Commissioners. For further information, contact Jason Herbster, Executive Director, at 815-459-0680 x 1203 or [jherbster@crystallakeparks.org](mailto:jherbster@crystallakeparks.org)

## Ice Fishing Derby to Return in 2019!

Save the date of February 9, 2019 for the return of the popular Ice Fishing Derby! The Crystal Lake Park District is resurrecting the event that was hosted for many years by the Crystal Lake Anglers. Plan on a full day of contests, prizes, food and of course, fishing at West Beach. Watch our website for more details as they develop. [www.crystallakeparks.org](http://www.crystallakeparks.org)

Jason Herbster, Executive Director  
 One E. Crystal Lake Avenue Crystal Lake, IL 60014  
 815-459-0680 [www.crystallakeparks.org](http://www.crystallakeparks.org)

The mission of the Crystal Lake Park District is to enhance the lives of our residents by providing programs, services, facilities and open spaces that safely promote health, recreation and community in an environmentally and fiscally responsible manner.



CRYSTAL LAKE PARK DISTRICT



# LAKE LINES

September 2018

## Eelgrass in Crystal Lake

By Jeremy Husnik, Lake Manager

Over the past few months I'm sure many of the lake residents have noticed more floating mats of vegetation on the lake and much of it ending up along your shorelines, piers and around boats. We have been on the lake several times and have been asked the same question, "What's with all of this seaweed and what is being done about it?"

To answer that question and hopefully provide a bit of insight, the plant that is at the center of attention these days is Vallisneria or otherwise known as Eelgrass. Eelgrass is a native plant that thrives in water that has very good overall water quality and provides fish habitat, lake bottom stabilization and play an important part in improving water quality by recycling nutrients in runoff from land.



Harvester removing floating vegetation

Crystal Lake's West Bay is the source of much of the Eelgrass activity. The bay itself is relatively shallow with a depth ranging from 2 ½' – 8' throughout most of the bay with depths closer to 12' near the mouth of the bay. Because of the lake's clear water, the ability of sunlight to reach the lake bottom on the west end and with plenty of nutrients entering the west end of the lake via the channel from the watershed north of the lake itself, those characteristics provide the perfect setting for plant growth in West Bay.

The issue arising with the Eelgrass is the quantity and density of the plant species growing in the bay. With growth and the shallow root system of the plant itself, the plant will become very buoyant and will uproot itself and float to the water surface, creating floating mats. These mats are made up of uprooted plants, as mentioned, but it is also made up of significant amounts of chopped plant fragments. The plant can grow to a height where recreational traffic and wave action can chop the tops off from the submerged plant while

using the bay as the turn-around point to head back to east. We have taken photos from an elevation of 300' over the water with a drone and the wall of plants just outside where the turn-around point is in the bay is very apparent.

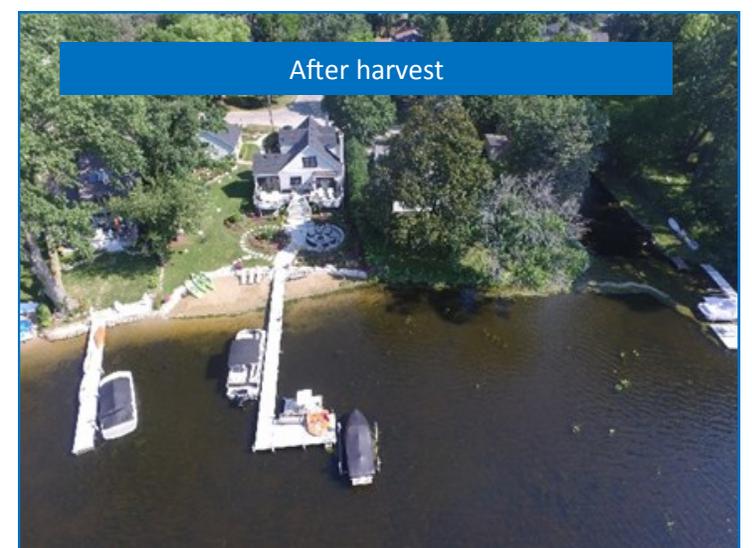
Once the plant has been chopped up or has uprooted itself, the fragments will float up and form mats on the water surface to be pushed around wherever the wind is heading. Much of the time the wind from the SW will push the floating mats up against the north shore of the bay. Given the characteristics of the bay, the shape and the peninsula, the shorelines between the channel and the peninsula receive most of the floating vegetation. With winds out of the west, the mats will make their way eastward towards Main Beach and settling in all points in-between at both the north and south shores. The wind is the main force determining where the floating mats will end up.

What can be done and what action has the Park District taken to lessen the effects of this natural process? Well, we are limited in what we can do to some extent. Because the plant is native, good for water quality and provides great fish habitat, we cannot wholesale clear the plant from West Bay. Once we start trying to wholesale clear out plants, especially "good" plants, one never knows what will come in behind it. It's not good practice. Typically, the Park District has allowed limited, strategic chemical treatments and has brought in a local harvesting company to grab up the floating mats and haul them off to a location offsite. The harvesting contractor will work between 10 and 12 hours per day starting at 6am. The effectiveness of the harvesting operation can be mixed. Yes, the operation can remove several tons of floating Eelgrass, but the machine is large and hard to maneuver in tight spaces and can break apart the vegetation mats, dispersing fragments to collect at a different location. The machine works best on open water where it doesn't have to change direction often. The harvesting operation was originally meant to remove a portion of the floating material to give the frontage owner some help, so they can keep ahead of the removal from their shorelines. The harvesting will process will not remove every plant fragmentation from the water.

With budget limitations, available treatment options and scheduling coordination, there is only so much that can be done to limit the floating Eelgrass mats in the lake. We continue to work on alternative options by talking with vendors, other lake groups and lake residents. This continues to be a work in progress.



Before harvest



After harvest

### Crystal Lake Facts

- Surface Area: 233.32 acres
- Shoreline Length: 3.2 miles
- Maximum Depth: 40 feet
- Average Depth: 14.7 feet
- Lake Volume: 3,347 acre-feet
- Watershed Area: 3,175 acres
- Lake Type: natural glacial seepage

From Crystal Lake Clean Lakes Phase I Protection Plan, July 9, 2007, Hey and Associates, Inc.