



# FoCL

## Friends of Clam Lake

Spring 2016

[www.friendsofclamlake.com](http://www.friendsofclamlake.com)

### Elk River Chain Watershed Management Plan

An eighteen month effort by five graduate students from the University of Michigan School of Natural Resources and Environment resulted in a draft management plan for the Elk River Chain of Lakes watershed which includes Clam Lake. When it's finalized the plan will be submitted and approved by both the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality and the Federal Environmental Protection Agency. The draft plan conforms to the EPA's nine elements required for approval and covers areas such as water quality, road stream crossings, shoreline development, invasive species, recreational activity, priority conservation parcels and more. For example, under water quality, the plan combines 15 years of lake specific data from 6 major sources into a single database to be used as framework for future monitoring activity.

Detailed information in the plan came from two public town hall meetings, several workshops supported by area lake associations and conservation organizations including FoCL and input and organizational efforts by Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council and The Watershed Center Grand Traverse Bay. The next step will be to conduct a survey of local residents, shoreline property owners and all local township officials. Although a lot of data was supplied by area lake associations, some sections of the plan still need to be completed. FoCL will continue to work with other area organizations to arrive at a final version later this summer.

When it's complete, the plan will be submitted to the DEQ as part of the Grand Traverse Bay Watershed Plan which is being updated for the first time since it was initially approved in 2005. The Elk River Chain is the largest sub-watershed in the greater Grand Traverse Bay watershed. The GT Bay plan has helped to attract over 20 million dollars in

grants during it's first ten years of existence for land conservation, water quality monitoring, invasive species control and other conservation initiatives.



**SNRE Team pictured with Grenetta Thomassey of Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council**

### Clam Lake Parcel Conservation

In December last year the Grass River Natural Area, Inc. purchased approximately nine acres of forested wetland on the south east shore of Clam Lake. According to Haley Breniser, executive director of GRNA, the peninsula of land is contiguous with



**Peninsula of land acquired on Clam Lake**

existing GRNA property and expands their total land protection from 1443 to 1452 acres. The property had been on their priority list for over 30 years. Most importantly, the acquisition means an additional 3035 feet of Clam Lake shoreline will remain undeveloped and in its natural state. Great work Haley and GRNA! **Please remember GRNA relies on your support to reach these objectives.**

### **Busy Summer of FoCL Projects**

This is the final year of the **Fish Shelters Project** permit. All sites on Clam Lake were completed by the end of last year but there are still sites on Torch Lake and Lake Bellaire that need to have shelter structures installed. FoCL volunteers have been assisting those lakes with the construction of shelters and will do so again this season.

FoCL will also be supporting the **Large Woody Debris** project on Grass River where an additional 10 sites have received permits from the DEQ. Additional work will be performed prior to placement of LWD structures to document the condition of the river channel and these areas will be measured again during subsequent seasons to quantify how effective this technique is at maintaining a navigable river channel. It also provides habitat for fish and aquatic insects.

As we have in the past, FoCL will again be teaming with other area associations and sponsoring **Boater Safety Education classes** at area high schools.

A second loon **Artificial Nesting Platform** has been added at the East end of the lake in hopes of helping loons successfully raise chicks. A pair of loons has again adopted Clam Lake as their home for the summer. Both loons are believed to be new to Clam Lake and possibly are younger birds. It can take a number of years before young loons mature and are able to successfully produce/fledge chicks.

### **Message from Membership Chair Cottie Volle**

Spring is here, and soon the population Up North will swell. Contrast our happy sojourns to the lake with the tragic migrations taking place in the world today, fellow human beings forced to flee for their lives. We are so lucky to be free to experience the tranquilizing effects of our beautiful Clam Lake; the stillness of the morning's brilliant sunrise, the



peaceful and calming serenity of the beautiful evening sunsets. Indeed, we are blessed! But, freedom begets responsibility; demands that we maintain and preserve, for future generations, the natural beauty of the resource we love and share. I ask everyone's help. **Please return the enclosed membership application as soon as possible**, and please be proactive and share your concerns and suggestions with us.

### **Message from President Fred Sittel**

This will be my fourth year volunteering as president of our organization. Going beyond supporting the organization as a member and joining the board has been a rewarding experience for me. The interaction with other board members who share a common desire to keep members informed about and proactively address threats to Clam Lake has been rewarding. Projects such as Fish Shelters, LWD and Artificial Loon Nesting Platforms has given me an opportunity to enjoy Clam Lake out on the water while helping the environment and wildlife habitat. **I hope some of you will choose to join me and other FoCL board members this season. We have several openings on the board and we need your help.** And don't forget to mark your calendars, the **Annual Meeting will be held Saturday, August 13 in the Alden United Methodist Church starting at 9:30 a.m.**

**Friends of Clam Lake**  
P.O. Box 173, Alden MI 49612

<p><b><u>Board of Directors</u></b> President: Fred Sittel Vice-President: Bob Hockenburger Secretary: Mary Frost Treasurer: Art Hoadley</p> <p><b><u>Directors at Large</u></b> Cottie Volle Bill Frost Jack Gartner Dave Latanick</p>	<p>FoCL is a member driven organization dedicated to the protection of Clam Lake and its environment for all to enjoy.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><a href="http://www.friendsofclamlake.com">www.friendsofclamlake.com</a></p>
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