



Seasonal greetings to one and all! The mild weather certainly gives credence to the global warming theory, although it dramatically reduces our heating costs for those of us that did not go south for the winter.

Singer/song writer Neil Young had a 1979 album entitled "Rust Never Sleeps". Our lakes never sleep either and the water quality continues to change regardless of the time of the year. Some problems, such as algae and noxious weeds, are more evident seasonally, but being proactive is important all 12 months of the year. Lake Tippecanoe Property Owners (LTPO) works diligently on programs that have specific deadlines when it comes to securing funding from governmental entities such as the Lake and River Enhancement (LARE) funds through Indiana's Department of Natural Resources (DNR). Should LTPO choose only to address these issues during the summer months when more lake residents are available, our organization would have missed out from receiving thousands of dollars in funding.

LTPO is a decades old organization of VOLUNTEERS dedicated to water safety, land management, water quality, and lake enhancement. It should be evident to even the most casual observer our lakes are not the same as 50 years ago, 25 years ago or even a decade ago. Water quality has diminished due to increased sediment loading, increased boating traffic, and the negative effects of septic systems. Our lakes are a finite resource that can only absorb a limited amount of stress. In a proactive effort to reduce these negative impacts, which contribute to noxious weeds, algae, and reduced water clarity, LTPO utilizes state funded programs and expert consultants to identify problems and offer solutions.

This year LTPO is involved with two major efforts to enhance our lakes. First is the aquatic weed program that was highlighted in the October newsletter. By the time you read this month's missive, all lake residents should have received a mailer describing the program and should have put a check in the mail to support this important initiative (VISA and MasterCard will work too!). This type of program is used on other lakes and reflects the reality that LARE money is becoming increasingly more difficult to obtain and that lake associations must assume more financial responsibility. Herbicide treatment is not a curative process, so half the money received will be earmarked for educational and preventative programs.

The second project involves a proposed ecozone to combat the algae problem that exists. LTPO has made a concerted effort to let ALL lake residents, whether LTPO members or not, to be informed as to the aspects of creating an ecozone on the Tippecanoe chain. Ultimately, the DNR will make the decision as to whether an ecozone will be established or to what extent. This topic has been the subject of several public meetings, LTPO board meetings, articles in local newspapers, and surveys sent to lake residents. While impossible to contact everyone, LTPO is a transparent organization interested in everyone having an opportunity to express his or her opinion. The DNR will be holding a publicized public meeting so all who choose to attend will be able to voice their concerns. Rational debate on subjects such as the ecozone are a healthy part of a democratic society, so long as it does not become vindictive or mean spirited.

There are no easy solutions to significant problems such as enhancing the quality of lake water. I am confident that LTPO, with over 700 memberships, will provide the leadership and innovative thinking to preserve our lakes for now and for future generations.

Only 15 weeks till ski season!

Mark Ennes, LTPO President