



# Short Ears, Long Tales

Courte Oreilles Lakes Association

Issue #47 June 27, 2021

## The Early Voyages of the Eco-Harvester

Jim Coors  
COLA Board of Directors

*The following account was mostly derived, paraphrased, misconstrued .... from the notes of Kevin Horrocks.*

The Eco-Harvester (aka Eco-Beast) was delivered to Lac Courte Oreilles on Monday, May 3. After getting familiar with its surroundings, the Eco-Beast and its handlers were set free on LCO. Gary Pulford, Kevin Horrocks, Brett McConnell, Doug Seylar, Jim Paine, and Jeff Aspenwall helped tame the beast and put it to work.

Kevin, Brett, Gary climbed aboard the Eco-Beast to learn and observe operations. Jim, Jeff and Doug were each in their own boats that served as "satellites" looking for patches of aquatic invasive species (AIS) and noting the effectiveness of the harvest.

The flotilla headed first to the east end of big LCO near Barbartown Bay as many people had correctly reported curly-leaf pondweed (CLP) hitting the surface near their homes on the south shore.



Photo by Jim Paine.

Michelle at Trails End Resort and Restaurant offered the use of her landing for the initial launch. She also helped the crew park the very long Eco-Beast trailer along with its dump trailer on her property. The trailers were removed at the end of the day, but her generosity continued over the following days as the Eco-Beast crew returned and again used her landing for transferring the CLP to dump trailers.

**Many thanks to the vigilant CLP volunteer scouts for watching out for invasive species. This was very helpful!**

Then the flotilla moved further down the shore to the Sweden Bar to take care of other known patches of CLP. The thicker patches and deeper water required some revision of harvest technique. It's actually easier to remove AIS in deeper water, and all went smoothly. At the end of the day, the Eco-Beast was fastened to a partner's dock nearby.



Photo by Kevin Horrocks.

On June 8, the Eco-Beast was unleashed once again with Brett and Gary at the helm, accompanied by Kevin and Jim in a satellite boat. The group headed to the end of Barbartown Bay where there were a number of sizable patches of CLP at and just below the surface.

Brett and Gary had become very skilled at removing CLP. They also figured out some finer points of 'skimming' back over areas to collect plant fragments. Jim and Kevin in the satellite boat used long-handled nets to circle around the Eco-Harvester and gather fragments, which were put into buckets and then a large tub.

All returned to the launch site at Trails End and transferred a large amount (several cubic yards) of CLP to the dump trailer.

**Removing AIS from LCO prevents dead and decomposing plants from consuming dissolved oxygen and contributing more phosphorus into the sediment.**

LCO Conservation (LCOCD), our Tribal partner with the Eco-Beast, assisted with the operation of removing AIS. LCOCD has provided not only a place to pile the removed plant material but also a secure yard for storing the trailers and the Eco-Beast.

On June 11, Dick, Gary and Kevin continued scouring Barbartown Bay for AIS, but since so much had been removed by the previous operation, they decided to move to Anchor Bay where Eurasian water milfoil (EWM) had been reported. The crew then continued to Musky Bay.

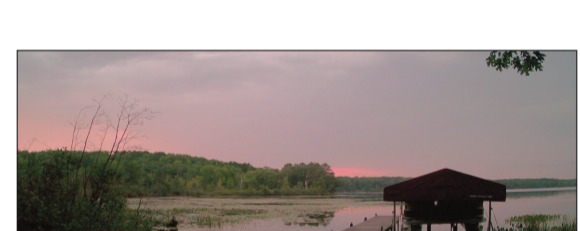
A few days later, Gary and Linda Pulford worked Musky Bay and removed a good load of CLP. Kevin and Sue Horrocks took the dump trailer from LCOCD to a private landing on Musky Bay. The property owner wanted to help with the operation, which was most welcome. The landing's proximity to the CLP harvest was extremely important - a nearby transfer point saves a huge amount of time and gasoline.

What's been learned so far?

- Maneuverable satellite boats are very valuable in locating, spotting, marking with buoys, and netting fragments.
- Teams and teamwork are vital. It's difficult work, but it's rewarding.
- The immediate hit to the AIS was very noticeable, and pulling AIS is more effective than using herbicides.
- AIS removal works, but it is important to realize that we're dealing with control and management, not elimination.
- Rakes and pitchforks are important on the boat. It takes work to effectively distribute the pulled plants to get big, full loads.
- Sunblock, brimmed hats, sun-block shirts are a must.
- It's critical to carry coolers with lots of ice, water (no beer until off the boat). It can get hot and sun-cooked out on the lake, and the Eco-Beast engine throws out a heat wave.
- Long nets can gather a lot of plant material during the operation - up to 30 gallons.
- It takes a team to back the trailers neatly into place for launch, for pulling out, and for transfer of AIS.

**Notice how many times the terms "volunteer," "teams," "teamwork," "partner," ... were used above. This is what COLA is all about!**

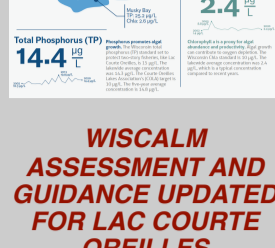
**Next time you see the Eco-Beast, yell, scream, and shout out your support for the great people doing great work on behalf of the great LCO lakes.**



STATE OF THE LAKES  
KEVIN HORROCKS, COLA PRESIDENT

Click [here](#) for the 2020 report.

[View this email in your browser](#)



**WISCALM ASSESSMENT AND GUIDANCE UPDATED FOR LAC COURTE OREILLES**

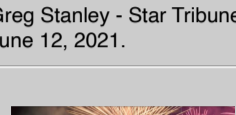
Wisconsin's Consolidated Assessment and Listing Methodology (WisCALM), from the WDNR, provides guidance on assessment of water-quality data against surface water-quality standards and for Clean Water Act reporting on surface water-quality status and trends.

The 2020 LCO water quality assessment based upon the WisCALM protocol is [now available](#).



**MINNESOTA FRESHWATER LAKES ARE RAPIDLY LOSING OXYGEN AS TEMPERATURES CLIMB**

The problem has been affecting lakes in just about every temperate climate in the world. See [this article](#) by Greg Stanley - Star Tribune, June 12, 2021.

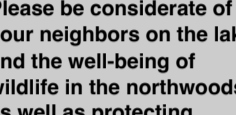


**PERMITS ARE REQUIRED FOR FIREWORKS IN SAWYER COUNTY**

Under Wisconsin statues ([Wisc. Stat. 167.10](#)), a permit is required if fireworks devices explode or leave the ground. [More information](#).

**Please be considerate of your neighbors on the lake and the well-being of wildlife in the northwoods, as well as protecting LCO's water quality, by limiting fireworks displays to the July 4 weekend.**

Contact the [Sawyer County Sheriff](#) if you observe illegal or dangerous behavior during the holidays.



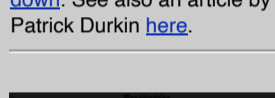
**NATURAL RESOURCES BOARD CHAIR REFUSES TO STEP ASIDE**

Gov. Evers seeks fresh faces on NRB, but current chair, [Fred Prehn, won't step down](#). See also an article by Patrick Durkin [here](#).



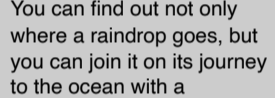
**A RAINDROP'S JOURNEY TO THE OCEAN**

You can find out not only where a raindrop goes, but you can join it on its journey to the ocean with a mesmerizing interactive map called [River Runner](#).



**COLA'S VIEW FROM THE DOCK SURVEY**

The full report is provided [here](#).



**SEE ANYTHING WEIRD?**

If you observe green water, algal mats on the surface or floating or dying fish - anything out of the ordinary - please take pictures and report this using COLA's [observation forms](#) immediately! COLA will alert the WDNR, the LCO Tribe, collect water samples, etc., to follow up.

Please, if you see something, do something.

**Do your part to help enhance and preserve the LCO Lakes!**



**LCO NEEDS YOUR HELP**

COLA is a **volunteer organization**. That means essential jobs don't get done unless someone steps up to help out. Contact [communications@cola-wi.org](mailto:communications@cola-wi.org) if interested or you need more information.

**Short Ears, Long Tales**

[ARCHIVED ISSUES OF SHORT EARS, LONG TALES](#)

**COLA NEEDS YOUR ONGOING SUPPORT**

Please consider a tax-deductible donation today!

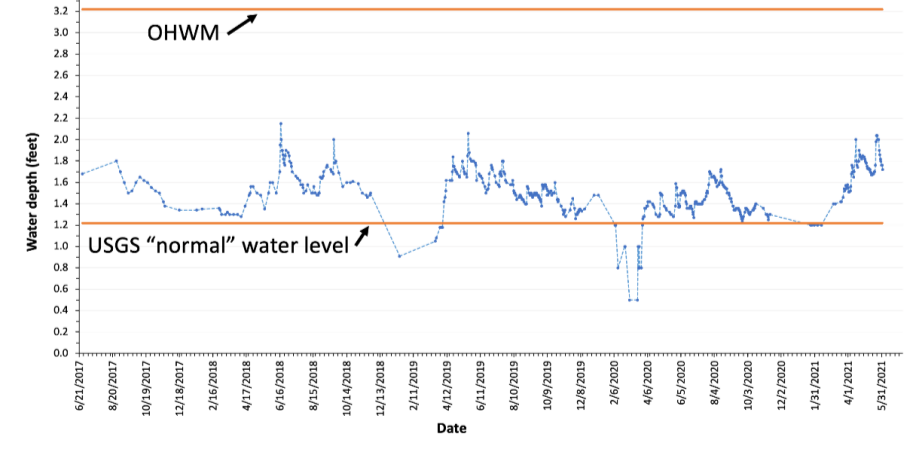
**DONATE**



Jim Coors is a member COLA's Board of Directors. He retired from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 2007 where he was a professor in the Plant Breeding and Genetics program and the Department of Agronomy for 24 years. He is married to Ann Pollock whose great grandparents, Edward Cady Higbee and Grace Fassett Higbee, purchased the land now referred to as the "Camp at Reserve" on the east shore of Lac Courte Oreilles in 1919.

Questions, comments, or suggestions for future articles maybe sent to [communications@cola-wi.org](mailto:communications@cola-wi.org).

### LCO Water Depth Recorded at Thoroughfare Bridge Gauge



Volunteers regularly monitor the depth gauge at the Thoroughfare bridge. The gauge and the chart readings are in tenths of a foot (1/10 foot = 1.2 inches). The first point on the chart, June 27, 2017, was when the gauge was first installed. The gauge was moved to the upper end of the bridge abutment on 4/15/21. The USGS "normal" water surface elevation for big LCO is 1287 feet and is represented by the lower orange line.

The Ordinary High Water Mark (OHWM) is represented by the upper orange line. The OHWM establishes the boundary between public lakebed and private land, was established for big LCO in 1955 and is 1289.27 feet above mean sea level. The OHWM is "the point on the bank or shore up to which the presence and action of the water is so continuous as to leave a distinct mark either by erosion, destruction of terrestrial vegetation or other easily recognized characteristic."

Periodic readings are recorded as accurately as reasonable. The water itself is in perpetual motion, not only flowing downstream but rising and falling due to waves, the current in the channel, the wind which can actually push water and "stack" it toward one end of the lake or the other and the seiche effect caused by the gravitational pull of the moon and sun.

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**COLA Mission:** 1) to protect, preserve and enhance the quality of Lac Courte Oreilles and Little Lac Courte Oreilles, their shorelands and surrounding areas, while respecting the interests of property owners and the rights of the general public; and 2) to consider, study, survey and respond to issues deemed relevant by COLA's membership.

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