



FILIA, P.O. Box 135, Aitkin, MN 56431 • FILIALake@gmail.com • FarmIslandLake.org

**June 13 Annual Meeting 9-11:00 AM**

July 4 4<sup>th</sup> of July Boat Parade Noon

Guest speaker is Ellie Joing, AIS scuba diver. Updated bylaws, a new mission statement, lake stewardship and more will be discussed! Door prizes!

The annual meeting is at Hazelton Town Hall 4248 US HWY 169.

**Board Member Opening**

We have an opening for a new board member. Contact me if you're interested in getting involved in the lake community and its stewardship. [FILIALake@gmail.com](mailto:FILIALake@gmail.com).

Board members serve a voluntary 3-year term. They meet two times a year, the first Saturday in May and September, and attend the annual meeting.



**103 paid members so far!**

- 207 members in 2025

Read below:

- Why FILIA dues matter
- Current member list



**FILIA will sponsor another AIS scuba dive survey this Fall.**

On September 13, 2025, a scuba diver was hired to perform an Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) inspection, specifically starry stonewort, at the north and south public accesses. The results were that starry stonewort was not observed at either boat launch, indicating that it has not found its way into Farm Island Lake.

[Read the full report](#) on our website with detailed activity description and maps, videos and pictures. Our website contains information on how to identify starry stonewort, curly-leaf and other AIS.



The same diver will perform another AIS survey this Fall. We'll keep you posted.



Find 10 hidden objects below.



**Membership Facts**

- **Annual membership dues can be paid starting at the beginning of each year.**
- **Membership lists and an application** are on your website [FarmIslandLake.org](http://FarmIslandLake.org). An application is at the end of this newsletter.
- **Pay dues online!** About 33% make online payments and contribute to the AIS Fund.
- **FILIA is a non-profit organization.**
- **Be sure we have your email** to ensure receipt of newsletters.
- **Stop Aquatic Invasive Species!** Additional monies can be paid toward the AIS Fund with your mailed application or online.
- **372 property owners** in 2026.
- **Newsletters are emailed to 509 recipients.** Non-paying property owners also receive newsletters.
- **223 (60%) members is the average membership** over the last 5 years.

## Greetings from Aitkin County Sheriff Dan Guida

Received 3/10/2026

Greetings from Sheriff Dan Guida,

The 2025 addition of another Recreation Enforcement Deputy was a success and the numbers of interactions with snowmobiles, ATVs and boats have doubled. The patrol hours for Farm Island Lake have also doubled and I hope you have seen a positive impact. Proactive numbers are difficult to track but I know that the increased patrol makes a safer lake.

Thank you for your support in this process as it is taxpayers who fund our operations.

My staff reported that last summer the wakeboat/jetski operators were operating “better” than previous years on Farm Island. I hope this was due to educational efforts to remind everyone that they are responsible for their boats’ wake. The staff also shared they fielded less loud music complaints. Good job for all of you, and remember that most people with residents/cabins on Farm Island are not involved in these issues. We see that guests of the residents are responsible for about half of our calls, so please make every effort to educate those you share with before sending them out to the water!

I want to thank all of you for a great winter. Your calls are always welcome and if you see something, say something and we will do our best to help with the problems!

Sheriff Dan Guida



## Release 16-to-19-inch Walleyes

The walleye slot limit on Farm Island Lake is 16” to 19”.

Fish this size are to be immediately released. On Farm Island Lake the slot limit from 16 to 19 inches designates the size to NOT keep.

This protects the best breeders on Farm Island Lake, per the DNR, and has been a special regulation since 1996.



**Board Member Cheryl McDonough is stepping down at the end of the year.**

Besides being the secretary, she also maintains and updates the FILIA website and creates and sends the newsletters.

We are seeking a new board member who would be interested in taking over these responsibilities. Please send us an email or contact Cheryl at 218-851-7026.

## Minnesota New Boater Education Law

Read more here: [New Boater Education Law](#)



## Walleye Fingerlings Stocked by FILIA / DNR

Based on Rick Bruesewitz's (Aitkin Area Fisheries Supervisor) report from October 2025 - that "the electrofishing survey showed pretty poor results for Farm Island for both young-of-the-year and yearling Walleye" - the FILIA board members unanimously voted to stock 400 lbs. of walleye fingerlings on October 25, 2025. [See pictures and videos](#) on our website.

The DNR will stock fry this spring again (they stock them annually) and then review in the fall after electrofishing. If they don't get a year class from the fry they will go ahead and change their stocking plan to fry in even years and fingerlings in odd years. But, they will wait to see before anymore changing.

## AIS Watercraft Inspectors for Farm Island Lake

From Aitkin County Soil and Water Conservation District (ACSWCD) AIS Project Coordinator Brian Roulet, May 4, 2026. [Roulet.aitkinswcd@gmail.com](mailto:Roulet.aitkinswcd@gmail.com) | 218-927-7284

Aitkin County AIS will be staffing the north access of Farm Island with an inspector and the decontamination unit; we will most likely not be staffing the south access unless certain circumstances arise. We have a 25% reduction in inspectors this season due to budget restraints.

We currently have 12 inspectors to cover all of Aitkin County. We only have funding for the AIS program through July of 2027; unless there is a change, we may not have the program at all in the coming year.

**If someone from the lake association would like to go through the DNR volunteer training program, they could then work at the access to help inform boaters of AIS.**

### Minnesota DNR adds new catch-and-release bass season

#### Anglers can now fish for bass before the traditional May fishing opener

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources' fishing regulations for 2026 include a new catch-and-release season that makes fishing for largemouth and smallmouth bass open all year on inland waters. These changes for bass fishing and a variety of other new regulations are listed on pages 13-14 of the [Minnesota DNR Fishing Regulations book](#).

The harvest season dates for bass remain the same. Now, though, anglers are able to catch-and-release bass starting Feb. 23.

"We're improving bass fishing opportunities after hearing strong support from anglers for earlier bass fishing," said Eric Altena, Little Falls area fisheries supervisor. "Bass populations are thriving and have increased abundance and sizes, and compared with past decades, have broader geographic distribution in our state."

Since bass spawning peaks in late May, which is later in the year than some other species, there is no biological evidence that catch-and-release bass fishing poses a conservation issue for the fish.

---

## Why FILIA Dues Matter: Stewardship for Farm Island Lake

When property owners pay FILIA membership dues, they help keep the organization running and support community programs. These dues pay for important services, advocacy, and improvements that benefit everyone, including property owners. By contributing, property owners build a strong, unified group that can solve problems, keep property values up, and improve life for all members and for the future.

1. Membership dues go towards:

- Newsletters & communications
- Bulk mailing of printed newsletter
- Postage & PO box rental
- Website & domain name for FILIA (FarmIslandLake.org)
- Annual membership meeting
- Organization donations
- General Liability & Board of Directors' Insurance

2. FILIA keeps property owners apprised of lake activities and critical issues that affect Farm Island Lake via the annual meeting, newsletters and the FILIA website and other communications as needed.

3. FILIA works to monitor our lake's water quality and undertake projects to reduce the amount of sediment and phosphorus directly entering Farm Island Lake.

4. FILIA actively applies for grant monies to support our work on both AIS and water quality. Matching funds are often required on some grants.

- In past years we have received AIS educational grants which are used to offset the cost of publishing and mailing the annual bulk mailed newsletter.

- FILIA will continue to apply for future invasive aquatic plant management grants.

5. FILIA represents you and your interests with government agencies – Aitkin County, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MNDNR), Aitkin County soil and water conservation district (ACSWCD), Aitkin County Lakes and Rivers Association (ACLARA), Minnesota Aquatic Research Center (MAISRC) and others.

6. FILIA represents you and your interests with other organizations working to prevent the spread of AIS and maintain our water quality. e.g., MN Lakes and Rivers Advocates (MLR), MNDNR etc.

7. FILIA members have access to notices regarding lake activities, water levels, boating & fishing regulations, and much more information by visiting the website.

8. FILIA collaborates with the Aitkin County sheriff water patrol and the MNDNR.

---

## National Loon Center Loon Monitoring and Lake Conservation Workshops

Check out the free workshop series this May about the importance of monitoring and conserving Minnesota's iconic loons and their freshwater habitats. The workshop series will cover a variety of topics related to loon conservation, from counting loons through community science, shoreline management, water quality monitoring, to land protection. Each event is held on the waters of the Whitefish Chain of Lakes and on board the National Loon Center's educational pontoon. [NationalLoonCenter.org](http://NationalLoonCenter.org)



### Workshops & Topics:

May 21, 8:30-11:30am <a href="#">Loon-Friendly Shorelines</a>	May 22, 8:30-11:30am <a href="#">Loon-Friendly Forests</a>	May 27, 8:30-11:30am <a href="#">Loon Watcher Training</a>	May 28, 8:30-11:30am <a href="#">Loon-Friendly Waters</a>
--	---	---	--

### Boating and Fishing Regulations

The DNR Boating and Fishing Regulations are on our website under Useful Info: <https://www.farmislandlake.org/useful-links> and are also listed on the DNR website.



<https://files.dnr.state.mn.us/rlp/regulations/boatwater/boatingguide.pdf>

*When government, local agency and county information is included we are serving as the messenger to keep you informed of their activities concerning Farm Island Lake.*

### Aitkin County Planning and Zoning



If you are building, remodeling or working on shoreline, contact Aitkin County at 218-927-7342 or [click here for their website](#) to be sure you are up-to-date on their codes.

**If you witness a concern**, please call the Aitkin County Sheriff's Office at 218-927-7435 and provide as much information as you can. Location and photos and videos really help. Our local law enforcement really does want to hear from you.

#### Important phone numbers

Aitkin County sheriff and water patrol: 911 or 218-927-7435

MNDNR Hotline: 651-296-6157

AIS specialist: 218-927-7298

Aitkin Area Wildlife: 218-429-3053



### Ice on-out dates

Ice-out April 12, 2026

Ice-on December 4, 2025

## Removing lake plants could require a permit

Under Minnesota law, aquatic plants growing in public waters are the property of the state. Because of their value to the lake ecosystem, they may not be destroyed or transplanted unless authorized by the Commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources as stipulated in the Aquatic Plant Management Rules.

Specific regulations govern what situations require permits for aquatic plant removal and can be found at <https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/shorelandmgmt/apg/regulations.html>, along with the required permit.

Aquatic plants provide food and shelter for fish, ducks and wildlife. They also stabilize the lake bottom, which helps maintain water clarity, and protect shorelines from erosion by absorbing energy from waves and ice.

## Farm Island Lake Water Quality Monitoring Results from 2025



Test samples for chlorophyll “a” and phosphorus were collected by Bill Haroldson and board member Russ Hoppe. Farm Island Lake is solidly within the expected range - meaning things looked pretty good last summer. However, water quality can vary quite a bit with the weather. Lots of rain can add more nutrients and sediment to the lake. Lots of heat can encourage algae growth. Find out more at <https://awlab.com/lakes-program/>

## Who to Contact for Lake Shoreline Questions

These are the agencies to contact about lake shoreline questions-away from the water and into the water.

- The Aitkin County Environmental Services (Planning & Zoning) is involved with lake activity from the shoreline away from the water, in other words, above the water line. A permit is required for rip rap and major weed clean up. Contact: 218-927-7342 , [aitkinpz@aitkincountymn.gov](mailto:aitkinpz@aitkincountymn.gov)
- The DNR is involved from the shoreline into the water. Contact Brian Roulet, Aitkin County SWCD AIS Project Coordinator at [Roulet.aitkinswcd@gmail.com](mailto:Roulet.aitkinswcd@gmail.com) , 218-927-7298.



### Fish remains left on shore at the south public access.

#### 2026 Minnesota Fishing Regulations:

It is illegal to dispose of rubbish (including parts of fish or other animals), or chemicals into public waters, or on shore.

## Shoreland Management – Protect the Lake and the Wildlife

[https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/waters/watermgmt\\_section/shoreland/index.html](https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/waters/watermgmt_section/shoreland/index.html)

### Maintain and/or restore natural vegetation along your shoreline.

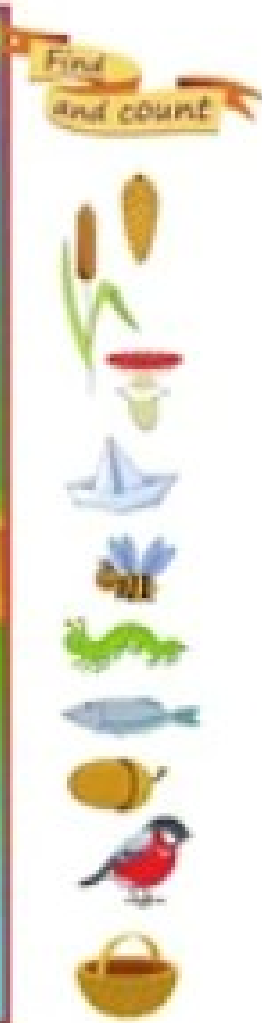
What Natural vegetation does:

- Holds soil in place protecting shorelines from increasingly intensive rain events and rising water levels
- Slows runoff and stores moisture
- Filters out nutrients, which along with rising lake temperatures, accelerates algae blooms
- Provides habitat so species can survive in a changing climate
- Increases property values by keeping lakes clean.



 **Take the Lake Steward Quiz** 

[mnlakesanddrivers.org/lake-steward/](http://mnlakesanddrivers.org/lake-steward/)



Can you find 10 objects hidden in the picture?

## Minnesota DNR proposes to reduce statewide walleye limit from 6 to 4

### New rules would also clarify the regulations for anglers on border waters

Minnesota anglers would be able to keep four walleyes instead of six in a proposal by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources to update a statewide inland water walleye fishing regulation that's been in place since 1956.

The rule change if approved, would go into effect March 1, 2027. The current regulation of only one walleye over 20 inches in possession would remain in place.

"The DNR is taking proactive steps to help ensure future generations can continue to enjoy the excellent walleye fishing we have in Minnesota," said Brad Parsons, fisheries section manager. "Over the last 70 years that the current limit has been in place, many factors have changed, including climactic conditions, invasive species introductions and fish-finding technologies."

"We have discussed this walleye limit proposal informally for a long time, including working with anglers and interested groups to see if this is something anglers would support. Now we're going through the formal process to propose the change and gather input," Parsons said. "This proposal is informed by what fisheries research and sampling data point to about walleye in the future."

More information about the proposal is available on the [Minnesota DNR website](http://mndnr.gov/fisheries/management/walleye-limit.html) (mndnr.gov/fisheries/management/walleye-limit.html).

## PWC Regulations

- PWC (jet skis) hours of operation are between 9:30 AM and
- PWC must travel at slow-no wake speed (5 mph or less) within 150 feet of shore, docks, swimmers, swimming rafts, any moored or anchored watercraft, or nonmotorized watercraft. Exception is when a PWC is launching or landing a water skier by the most direct route to open water.
- It is illegal to chase or harass wildlife, or weave through congested watercraft traffic or jump the wake of another watercraft within 150 feet of that boat.



Wear a USCG-approved life jacket!

### Minnesota's personal watercraft laws

[https://files.dnr.state.mn.us/education\\_safety/safety/boatwater/pwc-brochure.pdf](https://files.dnr.state.mn.us/education_safety/safety/boatwater/pwc-brochure.pdf)



The **Blue Fire Number**, which is your address, is used by emergency responders to locate your property. Contact the Aitkin County Highway Department 218-927-3741 to order. In an emergency, you and guests should be able to give detailed directions on how you can be reached.

- The FILIA Board Members, to fulfill our mission of stewardship for Farm Island Lake, strive to maintain good communications and collaborative efforts with lake association members, Aitkin County, and state agencies. To name a few - the DNR, Aitkin Area Fisheries, Aitkin County Soil & Water Conservation District, and Invasive Species Specialist, etc.
- When government, local agency and county information is included we are serving as the messenger to keep you informed of their activities concerning Farm Island Lake.
- The FILIA board members act in good faith as volunteers and assume no responsibility for the boat parade or other FILIA activities.

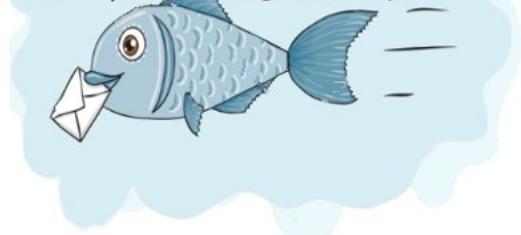
## Board of Directors

Gordon Vetsch..... President	Jennifer McGuire... Treasurer	Scott Scheele
Russ Hoppe .....V.P	Cindy Chuhanic	Mark Fjerstad
Cheryl McDonough..... Secretary	Dennis Kraimer	Open Position

## FILIA Website

There is a ton of information on the FILIA website. You can pay your membership dues online, see the FILIA Financial Report, annual meeting minutes, past and present newsletters, bylaws, membership lists and application, AIS information, boating and fishing regulations, and much more! Check it out at [FarmIslandLake.org](http://FarmIslandLake.org).

**Be sure we have your email addresses to ensure receipt of newsletters and email updates throughout the year.**



**The year-end financial report is on your website on the [Administrative](#) page.**

*Have a safe and joyous year!*

*Sincerely,  
Cheryl McDonough  
Editor, FILIA Newsletter  
[filialake@gmail.com](mailto:filialake@gmail.com)  
Your comments are welcome.*

FILIA  
PO Box 135  
Aitkin, MN 56431

[FarmIslandLake.org](http://FarmIslandLake.org)

[Click here for a printable version on our website so you can post it.](#)

## Prevent aquatic invasive species – Clean, Drain, Dry

Regardless of the activity—boating, paddling, fishing, moving shoreline equipment, using recreational gear on the water, or caring for aquarium pets or water gardens—everyone can do their part and take several simple actions to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species.

### Be sure to follow Minnesota laws:

- Clean watercraft, trailers and equipment to remove aquatic plants and prohibited invasive species.
- Drain all water and leave drain plugs out during transport.
- Dispose of unwanted bait in the trash.
- Never release bait, plants or aquarium pets into Minnesota waters.
- Dry docks, lifts and rafts for 21 days before moving them from one water body to another.

For more information on the Minnesota law, which holds true whether or not a lake is listed as infested – go to this online link. <https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/invasives/laws.html>

Be sure to inform your visitors and neighbors of this important Minnesota regulation, which is also important and necessary to keep our lake clean and free of invasive species.

### And take these additional steps to reduce the risk of spreading aquatic invasive species whenever possible:

- Decontaminate watercraft and equipment – find free stations on the Courtesy Decontamination page of the DNR website ([mndnr.gov/Decon](http://mndnr.gov/Decon)).
- Spray with high-pressure water or rinse with very hot water (120 degrees for at least two minutes or 140 degrees for at least 10 seconds).
- Dry watercraft and equipment for at least five days before using in another water body.

Contact our DNR aquatic invasive species specialist if you think you have found invasive species that has not already been confirmed in a lake or river. Brian Roulet | Aitkin County SWCD AIS Project Coordinator | (218) 927-7298 | [Roulet.aitkinswcd@Gmail.com](mailto:Roulet.aitkinswcd@Gmail.com)

More information is available on the Aquatic Invasive Species page of the DNR website ([mndnr.gov/AIS](http://mndnr.gov/AIS)).



# FILIA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

FarmIslandLake.org

## BECOME A MEMBER AND HELP PRESERVE AND ENHANCE FARM ISLAND LAKE

Dues are **\$25.00** each year per property owner, payable from January to December.

You can pay online on your FILIA website, or bring this form to the annual meeting, or mail it to:

**Farm Island Lake Improvement Association ( or FILIA )**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**PO Box 135**

**Aitkin, MN 56431**

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Home Address** \_\_\_\_\_

No need to write your home address if your correct address is on your check.

**Lake Address** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone**-best year-round contact phone(s) \_\_\_\_\_

**Email**-best year-round contact email(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Your email addresses will be used to send you newsletters and other FILIA news. It will not be sold or shared.

**Additional money for the Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Fund** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

FILIA membership lists are on the website at [FarmIslandLake.org](http://FarmIslandLake.org)

**103 members***28% of 372 lake property owners*

Althoff Chad and Tresa  
 Anderson, Julie  
 Anderson, Todd  
 Balko, Tim and Tracy  
 Ball Dennis and Sharon  
 Barnes, Stan and Karla  
 Beise, Dave and Laura  
 Bohn, James  
 Burnison, Russ and Trish  
 Carbone, Catherine  
 Chemlik, Marvin and Joanne  
 Christy, Judy  
 Cowan, Rob and Pam  
 Danielson, Stephen and Roxanne  
 Danielson, Steve and Katy  
 Dickison, Kevin and Kim  
 Diedrich, Bill and Karen  
 Ditty, Dave and Angie  
 Dosser, Paul and Linda  
 Engh, Jim and Julie  
 Fahey, Michael and Linda  
 Feldstein, Thomas and Mary Ellen  
 Fjerstad, Mark and Kim Curless  
 Fragodt, Brian and Joy  
 Furth, John and Allison  
 Garner, Jim and Pam  
 Gilson, Scott and Pam  
 Grielsel, Wayne  
 Harrington, Mike and Wendy  
 Hasbrouck, Chris and Meg  
 Hausauer, Jim  
 Hayes, Jim and Cindy  
 Hesse, Steven and Sally  
 Highum, Andrew and Sonja  
 Hoelzer, Greg and Marybeth  
 Hoffman, Mike and Denise  
 Holder, Adam and Kelsey  
 Holter, Steve and Lynn  
 Holst, Brad and Vicki  
 Jaeger, Doug and Laura  
 Jelsing, Doyle and Vicki  
 Johnson, Brad and Angela  
 Johnson, Dennis and Kelley  
 Juntti, Glen and Barbara  
 Keatts, Andy and Deb  
 Koester, Todd and Kate  
 Kuchera, Todd and Tamara  
 Larson, Tom and Rachel  
 Leonard, Gary and Rea  
 Lloyd, Mindi and Nick Schimming  
 Long, Gerry  
 Long, Lisa and Lori Long  
 Lund, Mike  
 Lux, Ronald and Carol  
 Macleod, Les and Judy  
 MacMillian Mike and Carol  
 Martin, Rett and Rebekah  
 Martin, Ron and Wendy  
 McDonough, Kevin and Cheryl  
 McGuire, Curt and Jenny  
 McLain, Janis  
 Meyer, Tim and Deb  
 Michaelis, John and MaryJane  
 Moser, Todd and Amy  
 Nelson Tim and Jean  
 Noling, Dennis and Denise  
 Norgren, Jim and Judy  
 Oare, Scott and Robbin  
 O'Brien, John and Karin  
 Olinger, Tom and Dru  
 Perrine, Pat & Judy, Aaron & Stephanie  
 Pierson, Gerald and Janet  
 Poser, Richard and Sue  
 Rasmussen, Roma  
 Reisetter, Tom, Doreen, Dan & Ann  
 Rezac, Terry and Janet  
 Riazi, Homayoun and Kathy  
 Roggenbuck, Mike and Linda  
 Romenesko, Sherry  
 Russell, John and Sue  
 Scharmann, Phil and Lori  
 Schifsky, Mark and Peg  
 Schifsky, Steve and Dawn  
 Schiffler, Roger and Sharon  
 Scheele, Scott and Cheryl  
 Schrupp, Alan and Lori  
 Seiger, Cheryl  
 Sherburne, Jim  
 Smalley, Matt and Angela  
 Smith, Danny and Jayne Bergquist  
 Smith Tom and Gerri  
 Strohmayer, Tim and Chris  
 Swensen, Don and Barb  
 Trick, Carol  
 Utterberg, Tom and Carol  
 Vetsch, Gordy and Laurie  
 Vollmer, Steve and Cindy  
 Wensole, Kern  
 Westendorf, Dean  
 Whalen, Tom and Kellie  
 Young, Keath and Lesley  
 Zelixon, Alex and Lily  
 Zingsheim, Tom and Mimi