



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

207 paid members!



You can still pay dues for this year

Your voluntary dues can be paid until the end of the year. 55% of the 375 property owners on Farm Island Lake have paid their voluntary membership dues.

An application is at the end of this newsletter and is on the website.

You can also pay dues online at FarmIslandLake.org. Past and present member lists are online. **A member is someone who has paid their dues.**

FILIA had 238 members in year 2021 and 235 in 2020, so it would be great to receive dues from those who have not yet paid.

It does make a difference!

A large lake association membership base provides FILIA with a strong voice when it comes to the affairs involving lakeshore ownership, including grant applications, government, county, and local agency activities.

If you have not been a FILIA member in the past, please consider joining this year. If you are already a member, we hope you will continue to support the stewardship that FILIA provides.

ICE IS NEVER 100% SAFE! Recommended Minimum Ice Thickness
 (Guidelines for New, Clear Ice Only)

Ice Thickness	Recommended Use
<4"	Keep off
4"	On foot
5-7"	Snowmobile
7-8"	Side-by-side ATV
9-12"	Car
13-17"	Truck
20+"	Heavy duty truck with wheelhouse shelter

m DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Use caution as ice season gets underway

The ice season got off to a quick start in parts of Minnesota in recent days, with ice forming on some water bodies and numerous reports of ice anglers already testing their luck. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources reminds everyone to stay on shore until there's at least 4 inches of new, clear ice.

Ice conditions this time of year are highly variable and can change quickly. Falling into the cold water can turn tragic fast. Safety officials stress the importance of anyone heading onto the ice to check its thickness for themselves and not rely on other people's footprints, tracks or social media posts.

General ice safety guidelines

No ice can ever be considered "safe ice," but following [these guidelines](https://www.mndnr.gov/safety/ice/thickness.html) (mndnr.gov/safety/ice/thickness.html) can help minimize the risk:

- Always wear a life jacket or float coat on the ice (except when in a vehicle).
- Carry ice picks, rope, an ice chisel and tape measure.
- Check ice thickness at regular intervals; conditions can change quickly.
- Bring a cell phone or personal locator beacon.
- Don't go out alone; let someone know about trip plans and expected return time.
- Before heading out, inquire about conditions and known hazards with local experts.
- Parents and guardians should talk with their children and neighborhood children about staying away from the ice unless there's adult supervision. This includes lakes and rivers, as well as neighborhood ponds, retention ponds and anywhere ice forms.

For more information, visit the DNR's [ice safety webpage](https://www.mndnr.gov/icesafety) (mndnr.gov/icesafety) and the [boating safety webpage](https://www.mndnr.gov/boatingsafety) (mndnr.gov/boatingsafety).

Cartoon by Steve Moore



Ice-On date was December 1

- 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.

New Minnesota law to crack down on winter anglers leaving behind trash. Keep the ice clean!

Big changes are coming for all ice anglers this winter! A new law is in effect related to storing garbage and other waste (in all its forms) left on the ice.

While the impetus for the law was increased dumping of sewage from permanent fish houses, it will affect all ice anglers, regardless of the type of shelter they use.

Specifically, people using an ice shelter, vehicle or other conveyance on the ice may not deposit “garbage, rubbish, cigarette filters, debris from fireworks, offal, the body of a dead animal, litter, sewage or any other waste outside the shelter, motor vehicle or conveyance, unless the material is placed in a container that is secured to the shelter, motor vehicle or conveyance, and not placed directly on the ice or in state waters.”



The law is aimed at ensuring everyone who uses the ice can do so without encountering garbage and other substances that are not only a potential environmental concern, but an eyesore that takes away from a quality experience for winter recreationists of all kinds. During the winter, complaints about litter left on the ice are among the most common that DNR conservation officers receive.

They take these complaints seriously and work to locate violators. **The penalty for a violation is a petty misdemeanor and carries a fine of \$100.**

Garbage and human/pet waste do not belong on the ice. Take off what you take on! Read the [new statute online](#).

Make a plan for trash and waste removal before you hit the ice.

Whether you access the ice from a public or private entrance, plan to take off the ice what you take on it. Many access points and resorts offer garbage collection services. If your site doesn't, plan to transport it home for disposal.

Do not place garbage and waste on or under the ice.

It's the law.

Use colored garbage bags.

In snowy conditions, white trash bags can be difficult to see. Brightly colored bags or black bags are easier to spot making it less likely trash will inadvertently be left behind.

Make sure your garbage is secure before departing.

This will help prevent it from blowing out of truck beds and off trailers and sleds.

Remove all materials when moving a fish house.

This includes wood blocking, insulation and other items.

Minnesota DNR shares reminders about the upcoming snowmobile riding season

As the snowmobile riding season draws near, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources reminds riders of important dates, safety tips and registration requirements. The current lack of snow cover means that Minnesota's snowmobile trails will not be usable by the official opening date of Dec. 1.

Several conditions must be met before trails are open, groomed and ready for travel:

- The ground must be frozen. Where trails cross wetlands, 15 inches of ice are needed to support the weight of trail groomers.
- Adequate snow cover of about 12 inches must be on the ground to allow for trail packing and grooming.
- Trails must be cleared of fallen trees, signs put in place and gates opened.

While snowmobilers await the arrival of snow and groomed trails, now is a good time to make sure registrations are current and snowmobiles are in good operating order, review safety training, and check local trail maps for route changes or new trails.

Registrations for new snowmobiles must be purchased in person at a deputy registrar of motor vehicles or at the DNR License Bureau in St. Paul. Renewals of registrations and out-of-state trail stickers can be handled in person or on the [DNR's licenses and vehicle registrations website](https://mndnr.gov/licenses) (mndnr.gov/licenses).

Local trail conditions are often posted online by tourism associations, chambers of commerce and volunteer snowmobile clubs. To find the nearest club, visit the [Minnesota United Snowmobiler's Association website](https://mnsnowmobiler.org) (mnsnowmobiler.org).

Important snowmobile riding safety tips include:

- Be weather aware and don't ride in adverse weather conditions.
- Check the [DNR snow depth and groomed trail conditions webpage](https://mndnr.gov/snow) (mndnr.gov/snow) before leaving home.
- Measure ice depth before riding on lakes and rivers. The DNR recommends a minimum of 5 to 7 inches of new, clear ice for snowmobiles.
- Always stay on designated snowmobile trails. Venturing off trails can result in accidents.
- Don't drink alcohol and ride. Alcohol is a factor in more than 60% of fatal accidents in Minnesota.
- Always wear a quality DOT-approved helmet and facemask.

Dry conditions throughout Minnesota increase potential for wildfires

From the MN DNR Dec. 13, 2023. Contact 888-646-6367

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources encourages Minnesotans to use caution and stay aware of wildfire risk. Lack of snow and unusually warm, dry conditions over the next week are likely to increase fire danger in much of Minnesota. Dry, brown grasses and vegetation mean wildfires can start easily and spread quickly; this elevated risk is likely to persist until we have continuous snow cover.

"Don't be fooled because it's December. Even with some scattered snow showers, burning vegetative debris is risky right now, especially with temperature increases and windy conditions predicted over the next week," said Karen Harrison, DNR wildfire prevention specialist. "We are asking people to consider delaying any planned burning until conditions improve."

Due to drought conditions over the past few years, any fires now have the potential to burn deep into the unusually dry organic soil layer. Deep-burning fires hold heat for days, sometimes months, and could lead to wildfires in the days or weeks ahead.

It is best to wait to burn brush or vegetative debris until there is at least 3 inches of snow cover on the ground. Alternatively, Minnesotans are asked to consider composting, chipping, or transporting materials to a brush collection site as alternatives to burning.

When conditions improve, remember [burning permits \(mndnr.gov/burnpermit\)](https://mndnr.gov/burnpermit) are required for burning vegetative debris (leaves, branches, woody material, etc.) in piles larger than 3 feet high by 3 feet in diameter until there is at least 3 inches of continuous snow cover. Check current conditions on the [DNR fire danger and burning restrictions webpage \(mndnr.gov/burnrestrictions\)](https://mndnr.gov/burnrestrictions). Also, be sure to follow safe debris burning tips (mndnr.gov/wildfire/prevention/debrisburning) to help reduce wildfire risk.

New Infestation in Aitkin County

By Kyle Fredrickson | Aitkin County Soil And Water Conservation District | Aitkin AIS coordinator/ District Technician- Forester

- Spirit Lake was recently listed as infested with Zebra Mussels. All lakes up the Ripple River have been infested, but this is the first time Zebra Mussels have been identified on Spirit. The Ripple River connects to many great lakes, and there is risk of infestation to lakes down river at some point.
- Information on infested waters can be found on the MN DNR's website at: <https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/invasives/ais/infested.html>

Here is the latest version of the Minnesota Infested Waters List

Water body name	County or counties	Listed for aquatic invasive species	Year listed as infested	Year species was first confirmed, or connected water body
Big Pine	Aitkin	zebra mussel	2018	2018
Big Sandy	Aitkin	flowering rush	2009	2008
Cedar	Aitkin	zebra mussel	2021	2021
Farm Island	Aitkin	zebra mussel	2020	2020
French	Aitkin	Eurasian watermilfoil	2019	2019
Hickory	Aitkin	zebra mussel	2023	connected to Spirit (01-0178)
Little Pine	Aitkin	zebra mussel	2020	connected to Farm Island (01-0159)
Ripple River between Farm Island (01-0159) and Little Pine (01-0176)	Aitkin	zebra mussel	2020	connected to Farm Island (01-0159)
Spirit	Aitkin	zebra mussel	2023	2023

University of Minnesota's Saint Anthony Falls Lab is researching the potential impacts of boat-generated waves and propeller wash on Minnesota's lakes.

Waves and propeller wash produced by recreational boats have the potential to damage delicate lake ecosystems (e.g., shoreline erosion, decreased water quality, loss of aquatic vegetation, etc.). A better understanding of when, where, and how boat waves and wash impact lakes can help communities make informed decisions that balance recreation with keeping our lakes healthy for future generations.

Our goal is to provide Minnesotans with a robustly researched picture of the environmental impacts of various boat types and activities so that everyone has the information they need to enjoy and protect their favorite lakes. Read their updated reports at:

<https://sites.google.com/umn.edu/healthywatersinitiative/welcome>

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 & Water Patrol	911 or 218-927-7435
MNDNR Hotline	651-296-6157
AIS Specialist	218-203-4354

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.



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.



Loon Watch
The immature loons, the last ones to leave, were gone by November 1st.

Get the Lead Out

Get the Lead Out is an educational program with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency working to protect and restore the population of common loons and wildlife in Minnesota by reducing their exposure to lead-based fishing tackle.

To learn more about Get the Lead Out, visit <https://lakeadmin.org/get-the-lead-out/> or

Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/LeadOutMN/>

Looking for People with Waders

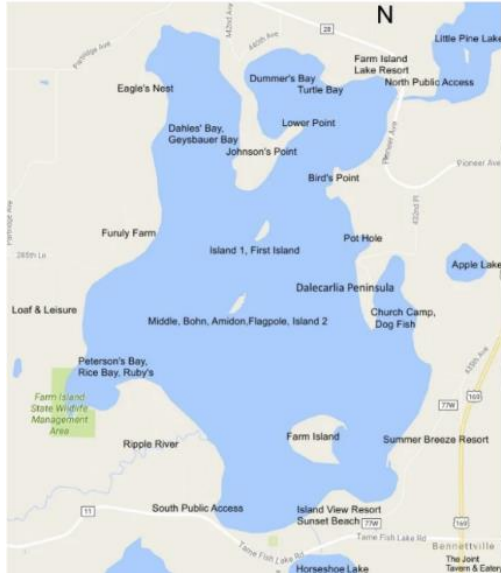
Loon ANPs - The FILIA board is looking for people who will help with placement and removal of the loon ANPs (Artificial Nesting Platforms). The platforms are placed in the lake just after ice-out, around mid-May, and pulled out of the lake around the beginning of September, after loons have left their nest.

Bog Removal - We also need folks to help with removal of large bogs when the ice is melting in the spring, around May. This would be on an as-needed basis, should a large bog need to be moved to prevent property damage. This happened in the spring of year 2022 when a large bog was moved away from the east side of Dahle's Bay. The board filed for a permit with the DNR to remove the bog.

Please contact us at FILIAlake@gmail.com or call 218-851-7026 for more information and to volunteer.

Thank you!

We had a great response from volunteers. Let us know if you're interested in helping with loon platforms when ice is out, first part of May.



AIS Brochure

“WORKING TOGETHER FOR A BETTER FARM ISLAND LAKE”

Find the brochure at

<https://www.farmislandlake.org/copy-of-score-your-shore-1>

A printable version of this map is on our website.

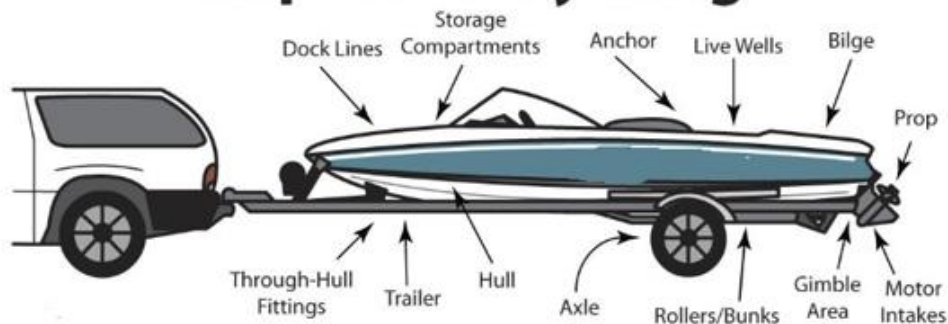
Minnesota law requires water recreationists to:

- Clean watercraft of all aquatic plants and prohibited invasive species.
- Drain all water by removing drain plugs and keeping them out during transport.
- Dispose of unwanted bait in the trash and dispose of bait water.
- Dry docks, lifts, swim rafts and other equipment for at least 21 days before placing equipment into another water body.

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.

Before leaving and before launching...
inspect everything!



To prevent the spread of all aquatic species, remember to

- Clean
- Drain
- Dry
- Dispose of water.

To print just this page for your application, in your Print Settings at the Pages input prompt, type in 9

FILIA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

FarmIslandLake.org

BECOME A MEMBER AND HELP PRESERVE AND ENHANCE FARM ISLAND LAKE

Dues are **\$25.00** a year per property owner from January to December.

You can pay online at 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 \$ _____

