

Eagle Lake Improvement District

Important Update:

June 20, 2024

This is an important update to inform the Eagle Lake property owners on where we are in our journey to better lake water quality and sustainability.

Thank you!

First, thank you for your overwhelming support in addressing the water quality issues on Big Eagle Lake. Because of your efforts, the Eagle Lake Improvement District (ELID) was formed to address our lake's needs. The Eagle Lake Improvement District (ELID) was established on January 2, 2024.



ELID Mission

The mission of the Eagle Lake Improvement District is to protect, preserve, and enhance Eagle Lake (also known as Big Eagle Lake). The ELID partners with the Big Eagle Lake Improvement Association (BELIA), the Sherburne County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), and other regional and state entities to implement a comprehensive program to alleviate ecological stressors and recreational impairments. These challenges include aquatic invasive species, native plant overgrowth, algae proliferation, excess nutrients, and sedimentation. Our additional goals include improving water quality, fisheries, and habitats.

What's a Lake Improvement District Anyway?

A Lake Improvement District is (LID) is a special-purpose government entity typically established to manage and improve the quality of a specific lake or group of lakes. Here's a brief overview:

- Purpose: LIDs are created to tackle specific environmental and ecological issues like water quality, invasive species management, shoreline erosion, and recreational enhancements.
- Formation: Residents and stakeholders in the area initiate the formation of a LID, usually through a petition process and with approval from local government authorities. In our case, the Sherburne County Board of Commissioners.
- Funding: LIDs are funded through property assessments, grants, and other local contributions. Property owners within the district typically contribute via a special tax or assessment.
- Governance: LIDs are governed by a board of directors, often elected by local property owners or appointed by county officials.
- Powers and Responsibilities: They may have the authority to:
 - Implement water quality monitoring and improvement programs.
 - Manage invasive species.
 - Enhance fish and wildlife habitats.
 - Improve lake access and recreational facilities.

In summary, a Lake Improvement District is a community-led initiative focused on the environmental stewardship and sustainable management of lakes.

ELID Approval

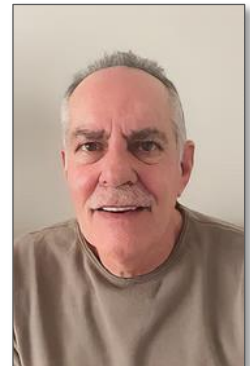
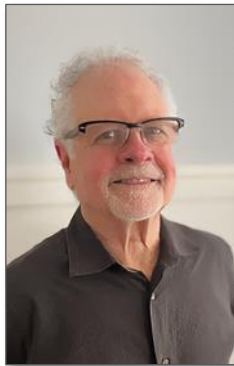
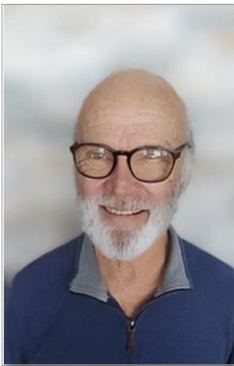
On January 2, 2024, the Sherburne County Board of Commissioners unanimously approved the formation of the Eagle Lake Improvement District (ELID).

The decision to support formation of the ELID was made easier by the tremendous support of the property owners within the district. The final vote tally on formation of an ELID was 74% yes, 10% no, and 16% were not able to be contacted. The ELID Board is pleased and encouraged by this very solid support.

While it will take time for the ELID to get up and running, it will eventually be responsible for all Eagle Lake water quality management improvements. Please keep in mind that the BELIA organization will continue to operate. Their focus may change slightly in future years, but they will remain committed to making the use of Eagle Lake enjoyable for all.

Your ELID Board:

In support of the technical and administrative needs of the Eagle Lake Improvement District (ELID), the following homeowners on the lake have stepped up to nurture and guide the management of the ELID:



Ken Andreen	Mike Donnelly	Sandy McClurg	Brian Moriarity	Joe Ryan
Chairman	Vice Chairman	Secretary	Treasurer	Director

Goals of the ELID

As noted above, ELID serves the purpose of managing the environmental needs of our lake for a healthy, clean waterway we can enjoy with our families and friends.

In a 2020 WSB Engineering Lake Study, commissioned by BELIA, two key deficiencies were identified that have the greatest negative impact on our water quality: the high carp population and very high levels of phosphorus causing elevated levels of algae.

This was followed by a surveying of the homeowners on the lake. The number one issue identified was the algae problem which, as we all know, has become a severe challenge in the last few years.

The most effective solution; alum treatment.

Ballpark cost estimate - \$800,000.



Through the leadership of the BELIA, the team worked vigorously to search for a way to fund lake cleanup which led to the formation of a LID for management of the treatments we need.

Project Funding

As communicated last year, partial funding for the Alum treatment (total project roughly estimated to be \$800,000) would be through the award of a state grant for 75% of the actual cost (BSWR grant). We have also identified the possibility for 25% of the actual cost to be loaned to us by Sherburne County and reimbursed in the form of tax assessments on a property by property basis at \$250 per year starting in July 2025 (the details of which are being worked on currently) – a small price for the benefit we'll receive.

To summarize our funding expectations to pay for the alum treatment:

- Minnesota BSWR (Board of Water and Soil Resources) grant: 75%
- County funding based on property owner assessment: 25%
- Dosage study (determines volume, rate and distribution of alum): \$20,000

The dosage study is a requirement that was only recently brought to our attention and, where we need special support from our members. It determines how much Alum is needed, where to treat, how to inject Alum into the water, etc.

Dosage Cost Coverage – We Need Your Help

They say the hardest part of any task is the last mile. While we still have a long way to go, getting the dosage study completed is essential to moving everything else forward and we need your help.

BELIA will perhaps cover a portion of the cost from its operating funds. BELIA is still assessing how much they can fund, if any, due to their other lake cleaning commitments this year (mainly weed treatment), which will use a considerable amount of their current budget.

But, candidly we really need everyone to pitch in and give whatever they can now so we can move forward with the dosage study this fall. This is no small request – we genuinely need your help – whether it's \$100 or \$5,000, we'd love to hear from you!

Expected Schedule

Here is the aggressive schedule we're working with to secure the alum treatment - we so desperately need:

- Dosage Study Fall of 2024
- Apply for a BSWR grant June/July – 2025
- Prepare bids package April/May – 2025
- Receive the BSWR grant July/August – 2025
- Receive bids from ALUM contractors August/Sept. – 2025
- Receive county funding October - 2025
- First ALUM treatment October – 2025

Keep in mind that this schedule is very aggressive. All pieces need to fall into place in order to meet the goal of Alum treatment in the fall of 2025:

1. ELID needs to collect \$20,000 to fund the dosage study (this must be done before the BSWR grant would be considered to be awarded to us). ELID has basically no funds at this time.

2. There is no guarantee we will receive the BSWR grant – we are in competition with other lakes
3. The funding agreement has not yet been formalized with the county. If this is not obtained, the ELID would have to fund the 25% or approximately \$200,000.

ELID Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting for the ELID will be held on August 3rd, 2024 @ 10:00 and held at the Orrock Township Hall. As a member of the ELID, we encourage everyone to join us for this important meeting. Items to be addressed include:

- Approve the fiscal budget for 2025
- Approve any 2025 project expenditures over \$5,000
- Approve the ELID By-Laws
- Other important issues

Our Dosage Study Funding Need is for \$20,000

Since the ELID has no spending authority until after our 1st annual meeting (August 3, 2024), payment for the Dosage Study should be sent to Big Eagle Lake Improvement Association (BELIA). Therefore, please send your check made out to BELIA with a note on the memo line indicating the funds are for the LID dosage study. Please send your check to:

Jeff Johnson, Treasurer
23207 188th St NW Big Lake, MN 55309

You can also make an electronic donation via our website – just click on the “Membership & Donate” tab. Remember, our goal is \$20,000 by the end of August – no amount is too small but bigger is better.

In closing, we’re very grateful for your support and are committed to making your mission of lake quality a reality. We’ll keep everyone posted on our progress throughout the summer.

BTW, did you know you can secure a complete update on ALL of the association news, including the LID at our website – here’s the link: www.BELIA.org

Thank you again,

Your Board of Directors for the Eagle Lake Improvement District:

Ken Andreen	Chairman
Mike Donnally	Vice Chairman
Sandy McClurg	Secretary
Brain Moriarity	Treasurer
Joe Ryan	Director

Email: elidboard2024@gmail.com

Website: www.BELIA.org