

# Rice Lake FAQs

Here are some Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) regarding Rice Lake. These questions (with answers) are categorized for easy reference. If you would like to contribute more to this document, please contact us via e-mail at [RiceLakeAssoc@comcast.net](mailto:RiceLakeAssoc@comcast.net) for your suggestions or corrections.

Thanks!

RLAA Board of Directors

## Statistical

- How large is Rice Lake?
  - The main basin of the lake is 315 acres.
  - This makes it the largest of the 7 lakes in Maple Grove.
  - It ranks 10<sup>th</sup> in size in Hennepin County.



- How deep is the lake?
  - There are several locations where the lake is about 11' deep. (*See the lake depth map on our website for more information*)
- Is there Public Access available on Rice Lake?
  - No, only private access to local residents is available, plus a carry-on access at the Arboretum park.
- How large is the Elm Creek Watershed, which includes Rice Lake?
  - 130.68 square miles lying in the north central portion of Hennepin County.
  - 8 municipalities (Champlin, Corcoran, Dayton, Hassan, Maple Grove, Medina, Plymouth, Rogers).



## Administration

- Is there a formal lake association for Rice Lake?
  - Yes, the Rice Lake Area Association (RLAA).
- Is the RLAA a 501c3 organization?
  - No, RLAA does not qualify for 501c3 status as we only serve residents in the immediate Rice Lake area. 501c3 organizations serve the general public, meaning anyone can belong/contribute.
  - RLAA is a non-profit organization, as filed with the state for tax status.
- Can anyone be a board member on RLAA?
  - Yes, as long as you are a state resident and pay dues to the association, you can volunteer to serve on the Board of Directors.
- How long are terms for Board Members?
  - 3-year terms.
- Can anyone be a member of RLAA?
  - Yes, anyone who pays dues can be a member of RLAA.
- Does the association have a website?
  - Yes, visit us at <http://www.ricelakemn.com>

## History

- Does the lake's name have anything to do with growing rice?
  - We are not sure at this time, but it is believed that Native Americans did grow rice where the lake now stands.
- Has Rice Lake always been the same footprint, or size?
  - No, the lake was originally about 50 acres in size before going through several transformations:
    - 1913 - Lake was drained to be used as farmland
    - 1929 thru early 1930's - The lake bed was mostly all exposed during the 'Dust Bowl'
    - 1965 - A public meeting was held to pursue building a dam on the north end of Elm Creek (current location by the Maple Grove High School). The main reason for this project was to bring Rice Lake to an elevation of 891 feet above sea level, the same as Fish Lake.
- How long has the dam existed up next to the high school?
  - The original dam was built after 1965. Somewhere during the 1970's the dam was modified to its current form.

## Projects

- Have any projects been conducted to improve water quality on Rice Lake over the years?
  - Yes, there have been many projects conducted on the lake over the years to improve water quality, including:
    - **Aquatic Plant Surveys** (required for most treatments)
      - 1995-2004 conducted by Blue Water Science and paid by City of Maple Grove
      - 2005 conducted by Jim Storland (\$375)
      - 2006 conducted by Blue Water Science (\$2,800)
      - 2007 conducted by Blue Water Science (\$3,000)
      - 2008 conducted by Blue Water Science (\$3,000)
      - 2009 conducted by Freshwater Scientific Services (\$3,800)
      - 2012 conducted by Freshwater Scientific Services (All Spring plants only - \$2,000)
      - 2014 conducted by Freshwater Scientific Services (Combined - \$2,290)
      - 2020 conducted by Freshwater Scientific Services (AIS Spring plants only - \$950)
      - 2021 conducted by Freshwater Scientific Services (AIS Spring plants only - \$950)
    - **Fish Surveys**
      - In 1979, 1985 and 1994 by DNR
      - 2008 by Blue Water Science (\$5,000)
      - 2014 by Blue Water Science (\$3,900)

- **Drawdowns** to eliminate non-native Curlyleaf Pondweed (CLP) growth.
  - Winter 1996-1997 (no cost to RLAA)
  - Winter 1997-1998 (no cost to RLAA)
  - Winter 2002-2003 (no cost to RLAA)
  - Winter 2004-2005 (no cost to RLAA)
  - Winter 2014-2015 (no cost to RLAA)
  - Winter 2021-2022 (no cost to RLAA)
- **Chemical treatment** to reduce **algae blooms**
  - Copper sulfate whole lake treatment in 1994 (\$2,058)
  - Copper sulfate whole lake treatment in 1995 (\$2,260)
  - Copper sulfate whole lake treatment in 1996 (\$2,273)
  - Copper sulfate whole lake treatment in 2005 (\$5,642)
  - Copper sulfate whole lake treatment in 2006 (\$6,877)
  - Copper sulfate whole lake treatment in 2007 (\$8,155)
  - No treatments done in 2008 or 2009 due to both insufficient funds to cover the complete application cost (over \$10,000) and board concerns the treatments were not worth the money for short term relief
- **Barley Straw Treatment (to reduce algae blooms)**
  - 2008 by Blue Water Science (\$1,100)
- **Sonic Solutions Anti-Algae units** (trial in 3 areas to reduce algae blooms)
  - 2009 by Lake Weeders Digest (\$2,700)
- **Weed Harvesting** to reduce **CLP growth**
  - August 2009 in West Bay for access channel (no cost to RLAA - volunteer help)
  - June 1999 in NE corner of main basin for access out onto the lake and along Glacier Lane and 88<sup>th</sup> Place.

## Fishing

- When was Rice Lake last stocked with game fish and what species were added?
  - In the spring of 1999, the association restocked the lake with fingerlings of the following species at a total of \$1,635:
    - Crappies
    - Northern Pike
    - Largemouth Bass
    - Bluegills
  - In 2015, the association restocked the lake for these species to help curtail the rough fish population:
    - Crappies (2,000 fingerlings)
    - Largemouth Bass (2,000 fingerlings and 10 mating pairs)
    - Perch (500 fingerlings)
    - Bluegills (2,500 fingerlings)
  - In 2017, the association restocked the lake for these species to help curtail the rough fish population:
    - Crappies (1,500 fingerlings)
    - Largemouth Bass (930 fingerlings and 11 adults)
    - Bluegills (4,500 fingerlings)
- When was the lake last surveyed for Fish?
  - Previous DNR Fish Surveys were conducted on Rice Lake in 1994, 1985, and 1979.
  - In 2008 the lake was sampled for fish using DNR techniques with trap nets and mini-trap nets. As expected, a large quantity of rough fish (Carp and Bullhead) was netted.
    - Other species caught included: crappie, largemouth bass, northern pike, sunfish (bluegill and pumpkinseed), white sucker and yellow perch.
  - In 2014 the lake was sampled for fish using DNR techniques with trap nets and mini-trap nets. As expected, a large quantity of rough fish (Carp and Bullhead) was netted.

- In 2018 a carp tracking and removal project was started along with nearby Fish Lake. The project was conducted by WSB, Inc. and funded by the City of Maple Grove, Elm Creek Watershed and the respective lake associations. Objectives were to install radio tags in a sampling of carp and northern pike (since they share similar migration patterns) and see if the carp congregate so they can be removed (netted).
  - Efforts to net the carp in 2020 and 2021 when they appeared to be concentrated failed in both Rice and Fish Lakes.
  - Radio tags expired during the summer of 2021. Future efforts to net the carp will need to be conducted without radio tracking.

## Wildlife

- Is Rice Lake part of a game preserve?
  - Part of the lake (west of I-94 where Elm Creek enters the lake) is governed by the Three Rivers Park District, which maintains a wildlife sanctuary where many birds and small game can be seen, including a man-made eagles nest.
- What types of birds frequent the lake and surrounding area:
  - Birds include: Eagles, hawks, egrets, loons (typically in spring), cormorants, coot, seagulls, and sandpipers, among others.
  - Deer, fox, woodchuck, rabbit, beaver, muskrat are among some of the wildlife in the area.
- Are there any unique viewing sites for birders in the area?
  - Yes, by the dam you can find dozens of egrets nesting overnight in the trees. Viewing is possible from the city trail on the SW side of the dam. The best time for viewing the egrets at the dam and along the creek to the South during the summer is the hours just before sunset, they will begin to fill the trees on the east side of the creek with the overflow roosting on the west side, they gather in the 100's. They seem to come to watch the sunset.

