

Spring

2015



BAD RIVER NATURAL RESOURCE

Common Ground

Long Island Piping Plovers

By Lacey Hill-Kastern, Wildlife Specialist



Pictured above is a piping plover and nest located on Long Island. Picture courtesy of the BRNRD.

This year is the 41st year of the Piping Plover Project on Long Island! Piping plovers have been known to nest on Long Island long before then. There was a fifteen year stretch in which the plovers did not nest on Long Island/Chequamegon Point. In 1998, piping plover began nesting on Long Island Chequamegon Point, and staff from the Bad River Natural Resources Department were right there investigating the first nest and have been active with the project ever since! Currently the piping plover Project involves United States Fish & Wildlife Service, Apostle Islands National Lake Shore – National Park Service, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the Bad River Band of Lake Superior Tribe of Chippewa Indians, and other private stakeholders.

Long Island actually isn't even an island at all; it is actually a barrier spit. Well what does that mean? It is a long sand bar formed from the sediment flowing out of the Bad River. Before 1975, Long Island was an actual island and you could drive a boat between Chequamegon Point and Long Island. On November 10th, 1975 a huge storm hit Lake Superior and closed the gap between Long Island and Chequamegon Point. This is the same storm that also sunk the Edmund Fitzgerald.

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- *New Piping Plover Monitor*
- *New Environmental Specialist*
- *2015 Radon Poster Contest*
- *Beach Monitoring*



Long Island Piping Plovers *Continued*

By Lacey Hill-Kastern, Wildlife Specialist

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The summer of 2007 was the first year a Piping Plover Monitor was hired to actually stay on Long Island and monitor the piping plover and educate the public. In 2008, the WDNR was able to hire two monitors. Since then there have been two piping plover monitors stationed on Long Island/Chequamegon Point. The Bad River Conservation Enforcement Program has helped out immensely with the project over the years, providing



transportation, enforcement, and other additional needs of the project. In 2010, the tribe took over the responsibility of hiring and supervising one of the two monitors and in 2011 the Tribe started hiring and supervising both Piping Plover Monitors on Long Island/Chequamegon Point.

Jeanna Mielcarek and Dawn Marsh were hired to be this year's piping plover

monitors. So far there have been five pairs of piping plovers observed! Two nests have been found and we had a nest abandonment occur already. According to a paper written by Matteson et al., on Piping Plovers Breeding in Wisconsin that was written in 2007, Long Island/Chequamegon Point can potentially support ten to fifteen breeding pairs of Piping Plovers. We have not observed that amount yet, but are hopeful.

The job of a Piping Plover Monitor is to camp on Long Island and walk the beaches observing Piping Plover behavior, locating nests, determine cause of predation (if any), help construct predator exclosures and maintain physiological barriers to protect the nesting piping plovers from disturbances, and to educate the public that visit the area about Piping Plovers. If you are interested in learning more about the project or about the plovers in general please feel free to contact Lacey at the Bad River Natural Resources Department.

Dawn Marsh, New Piping Plover Monitor

My name is Dawn Marsh, and I graduated from Northern Michigan University in May 2014 with a degree in Environmental Science (Natural Resources concentration) and minor in Biology. After taking Field Ornithology in May 2011, I developed a passion for avian ecology and hope to incorporate it into my future career in environmental conservation. As a student, I was an intern for three summers at Seney National Wildlife Refuge (NWR), in Michigan's Upper Peninsula, as a Visitor Services intern and then as the Crew Leader for the Applied Sciences Program. At Seney NWR, I was responsible for planning the annual Children's Fishing Day event and creating and presenting interpretive programs and tours, including a program on Piping Plovers. I was also responsible for conducting a variety of wildlife surveys and collecting rapid ecological assessment data in mixed-pine forests. I am looking forward to building upon my previous field experiences as a Piping Plover monitor on Long Island and working with the Bad River Department of Natural Resources!



Bad River Conservation Warden Update



Christina Dzwonkowski, Lead Bad River Conservation Warden attended the 33rd Annual Native American Fish and Wildlife Society National Conference in Juneau, Alaska May 17-May 23, 2015. While at this conference she attended several seminars on Law Enforcement and Natural Resource protection topics. She also competed in the Native American Fish and Wildlife Society

National Pistol Competition. To qualify to participate in the shoot you have to be one of the top 5 shooters in the region. In September 2014 Christina qualified to be on the Great Lakes Shoot Team at the Regional Conference. The Great Lakes Region took 1st place at the National Conference. A special thanks to everyone that helped her get to the conference including NAFWS Board for the scholarship and Chief Conservation Warden Fred Maulson of Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission for donating the ammunition she used for the competition.



In Picture (Left to right): Kevin Modlin (MI Pokagon Tribe), Bill Bailey (MI Grand Traverse Tribe), Johnnie Morris (Owner/Founder Bass Pro Shop/ Guest Speaker), Christina Dzwonkowski (WI Bad River Tribe), Harvey Kosowski (WI Onieda Tribe), Donnie Carrick (MI Bay Mills Tribe)

2015 Bad River member deer hunting season is near! Bad River member deer hunting begins Wednesday, July 1st 2015 and ends on Friday, January 31st 2016. Remember to report your kill within 72 hours of kill if you are outside the reservation and have killed a deer within the ceded territory. If you need a Transportation tag, please call Bad River Wildlife or Game Wardens during business hours to register or pre-register. Remember that a 500 yard restriction of discharging a firearm from any building of human occupancy without permission of owner or occupant is enforced, as stated under Section 301.6(b) (1) of Bad River Tribal Court Code.



Please remember to also register your boat and ATV. Registration is available at the Chief Blackbird Center in the Natural Resources Department during business hours. Boat registration is only valid for the period it was issued. 2015 boat registration period began Wednesday, April 1st 2015 and ends Thursday, March 31st 2016.

ATV registration is valid for two years. All new ATV registration certificates begin Wednesday, July 1st 2015 and will end Friday, June 30th 2017. Expiration dates shall be clearly stated on the decals per Section 352.2.6 of the Bad River Tribal Court Code. Don't forget persons under age 18 are required to wear an approved helmet. Persons at least 12 years of age but under age 16 may not operate an ATV unless they hold a valid all-terrain safety certificate or is accompanied by a person over 18 years old and are on the same vehicle. All riders must comply with all stop signs, yield signs or other regulatory signs per Section 352.3.1(a) (5) of the Bad River Court Code.

Print out and keep approved ATV safety class certificates that can be taken online at <http://www.atvcourse.com/usa/wisconsin/> and <http://www.offroad-ed.com/wisconsin/>.



Burn Barrels and Burning Trash

Nathan Kilger, Air Quality Specialist

Each year I write an article outlining the **Bad River Open Burning, Burn Barrel, and Fire Prevention Ordinance** and I remind everyone that Bad River burning permits are required within the boundary of the Bad River Reservation. These permits are free and available by coming into the Bad River Natural Resource Department. (Bad River Conservation Code §376 enacted by Tribal Council in 2002)

I recently came across an article written by Mr. Ralph Dashner about burning garbage and would like to take this opportunity to republish his words.

Burn barrels used to be a popular method of reducing the volume of household trash, disposing of cardboard boxes, packaging materials, and many other miscellaneous items. Although you do not see as many around as you used to, they are still present in rural communities in northern Wisconsin. Burning of some household wastes continues to be a method of disposal for a significant part of the population. Polluting the soil and water in your own backyard, that's what's happening when you fire up a burning barrel.

The tradition of putting a match to the family garbage has been around for generations, so what's the big deal? Until a few decades ago, it wasn't so dangerous to your health because most of the things burned were made of paper and wood, and gave off smoke and ash. This is not the case anymore. Modern household products and packaging materials contain a mix of plastics and other synthetics that release cancer-causing chemicals and other toxins when burned. Packaging for fast food and convenience items such as containers for frozen pizzas, microwave dinner, beverages, may seem harmless, but when burned they can give off toxic emissions. These emissions may include PCB's, dioxins, arsenic, styrene, formaldehyde, and that's just a small part of what is released.

Household wastes placed in burn barrels, fireplaces, and similar devices burn at temperatures that rarely exceed 500 degrees Fahrenheit. A municipal garbage incinerator by comparison will operate at temperatures near 2200 degrees to ensure complete combustion of refuse and more of the pollutants. Because burn barrels operate at lower temperatures and lack filtration, they emit seventeen times as much dioxin and forty times as much ash per pound of garbage as an incinerator.

Burn barrels give off high levels of carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide, sulfur dioxide, and metals such as lead, arsenic, mercury, barium, chromium, and cadmium. All of these can cause a wide variety of health problems. They need not be directly inhaled from the smoke; some of these toxins remain in the immediate vicinity and the area downwind of the barrel for years. This accumulation exposes you, your family, neighbors, and future generations to ever increasing levels of hazardous substances.

Here are some alternatives to burning trash: Reduce waste by cutting down on what you buy. Buy in bulk when possible and avoid choosing products that are over packaged. Reuse, sell, or give away items you no longer need. Compost leaves, grass, and weeds. Take garbage and other unrecyclable trash to the Solid Waste Transfer Site. Recycle! You can make a difference.

The **Bad River Open Burning, Burn Barrel, and Fire Prevention Ordinance** prohibits the burning of any trash or items that are recyclable. Also prohibited are any items containing plastics, rubber, oils, or wood coated in stain or paint. A full list of prohibited items, along with more Ordinance information, can be found on the Bad River website at (shortened URL): <http://x.co/BRburn>

A valid permit must be in your hand if you are burning within the Reservation boundary.





Update from the Environmental Office

By Lisa Radke, Environmental Specialist

Planning for the Future Management of the Tribe's Natural Resources

In 2001, the Natural Resources Department produced an "Integrated Resources Management Plan" (IRMP) that described the natural resources on the Reservation and set goals for how to protect things such as air, water, forestry and vegetation, land, minerals, wildlife, fisheries, cultural and other components. The plan is used by the department staff to make sure these important resources are properly protected, restored, or cleaned up.

To help develop that plan, the department invited tribal members to give their opinions and suggestions about how they wanted to see the environmental managed. At that time, all tribal members were asked to fill out an extensive survey about using resources. In fact, over 700 members responded, which was a terrific rate of participation.

The staff are now reviewing their goals and objectives to make sure they are still important and relevant to keeping the natural environment sustainable and healthy. Once again we are asking tribal and non-tribal members who live on the reservation to let us know what they think about our plan's goals and to tell us what else you think we should be doing.

Your Comments about Natural Resources Management Are Needed!

We're going to email the survey to all on the tribe's "Everybody" list to get their input electronically. And we have come up with other ways for people to participate without using email or the Internet: we'll be mailing the survey to people's households; sending it to box holders at the tribal post office; delivering copies to those who request them; and having it available at the upcoming Health Fair in June and at Lake Superior Day on July 17. All comments should be submitted by July 31.

We want to hear from you! If you want a copy sent to you, please contact Lissa Radke at 682-7123 extension 1551 emailing environmental@badriver-nsn.gov before July 15.

Planning for Natural Hazards

The Natural Resource Department is happy to have received a grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to start a planning process for how to minimize

damages from natural disasters that might happen on the Reservation. These hazards can include floods, ice storms, wildfires, extreme temperatures, and other unexpected dangers.

The grant will also the Department to fund a coordinator who will set up a planning committee made up of tribal members who will assess what hazards might occur on the Reservation and how we can minimize the impacts. This work will start at the end of the summer and will be an important part of future work to write grants to help pay for mitigation activities.

The FEMA grant work will be starting soon, so let us know if you want to be on a planning team by calling Lissa at 682-7123, or emailing environmental@badriver-nsn.gov.

Meet the New Environmental Specialist

Lissa Radke started working as the environmental specialist in April, a position recently held by Nick Beiser and Cyrus Hester. For 13 years, she worked as the U.S. coordinator for the Lake Superior Binational Forum, which was a citizen stakeholder group of U.S., Canadian, and tribal members working together to protect Lake Superior through outreach and citizen input programs. Lissa also worked for the Bureau of Waste Management with the Wisconsin DNR, and was lucky to help tribes and communities set up recycling programs in 15 northern counties.

She's lived in northern Wisconsin since 1992, after moving here from central Illinois where in her former job as a recycling coordinator she talked a lot about protecting forests by recycling paper while living in a region where nothing taller than a corn stalk grew for hundreds of miles.

"It's a privilege to work with a tribe that cares so much about protecting and valuing its natural components, its culture, and its people," she said.

“The Quality of Life is Dependent on the Quality of the Water”

-Binational Program

By Ervin Soulier, NRD Manager



Picture is of Lake Superior looking at Chequamegon Point.

Several years ago I read an article which described a situation where New York City was getting some of its drinking water from a surface water source which flowed from a neighboring watershed into the city. The city found the water of sufficient quality that it didn't need to be treated for use as drinking water. In order to make sure the water maintain this level of quality which didn't require any treatment, the City decided to pay the stakeholders living in the watershed an annual dividend as payment to the stakeholders to keep the surface water as clean as possible. The City thought it would be cheaper to pay the stakeholders to keep the surface water clean than to construct a water filtration system and pay the annual maintenance costs to clean the water.

I thought that this relationship could happen with Lake Superior where the downstream user would pay the Lake Superior Basin stakeholders a payment to keep Lake Superior's water as clean as possible. In order to accomplish this you would have to get all the stakeholders to commit to this effort. That was why I was encouraged when the Binational Program was created in 1991 with the purpose of creating a "zero discharge and zero emissions of 9 persistent bioaccumulative chemicals that may degrade the ecosystem of the Lake Superior Basin. The Program's purpose was to identify the source(s) of the pollution and develop ways to eliminate the pollutant. The major parties in the basin (the State of Wisconsin, Michigan, and Minnesota and the Canadian Province of Ontario) all agreed to collaborate in this effort and provide resources to support the work as per the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement of 1978.

At first there was tangible progress with eliminating the source of some of the pollutants. But as time move on success of the

program's efforts declined. It was said the success of the initial efforts was because the program attacked the low hanging fruit where the pollutants were waiting to be eliminated. Today pollutants elimination requires major investments and innovations by the stakeholders. I still held out hope that the basin stakeholders could still create an environment where pollution could be stopped.

But as I look around the basin, I see the

State of Minnesota:

- had allowed the discharge of taconite tailings into the Lake at Silver Bay along with asbestos fibers which are said to cause people in Duluth sick with mesothelioma,
- continues to consider expanding the Polymet Taconite Mine which runs off into the St. Louis River that eventually ends up in the Lake;

State of Wisconsin:

- trying to establish a mine in the Bad River Watershed which flows into the Lake,
- allowed a business in Superior to discharge mercury (one of the 9 persistent pollutants) into the Lake
- looking to permit a CAFO in the basin which has the potential to pollute Fish Creek that flows into the Lake,

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“ The Quality of Life is Dependent on the Quality of the Water” *Continued*

-Binational Program

By Ervin Soulier, NRD Manager

(Continued from page 6)

- considering allowing Enbridge to run a pipeline into the City of Superior so it can transport Bakken oil to the east coast refineries by ship,
- have allowed communities along the south shore to discharge untreated solid waste into the Lake every major water event;

State of Michigan:

- has permitted the Eagle mine which is located on the Yellow Dog Plains next to the Lake,
- considering reopening the White Pine Mine,
- has permitted the development of the Copperwood mine which is located southwest of the White Pine Mine,
- still have an issue of the stamp sands (a residue from a former mine) which was discharged into Lake Superior on the east side on the Keewana Peninsula

Even the Department of Defense has used the Lake as its personal dumping grounds by dumping hundreds of barrels on munitions waste in the Lake. But the straw that might break the camel’s back is the along with all the mining operations on the north shore of the Lake, Canada is considering building a low level nuclear waste repository within the Lake basin.

With all the mining projects going on within the basin and all the other threats (i.e. invasive species, personal care products, antiquated water treatment infrastructures, and now climate change) facing the Lake, the Lake is at risk of losing the title of the largest **fresh water** body in the world. It is becoming quite clear that in a very short time the water in the Lake might not be fit for human use without a lot of pretreatment. If this happens the idea to have down streamers or other parties pay the Lake’s stakeholders to keep the water clean will like water evaporate.

That is why like last year I would like to invite you to the Department’s annual Lake Superior Day celebration scheduled Friday July 17, 2015 at Joe Rose’s campgrounds and to invite you to take sometime to go down to the beach to look at the Lake so you can tell your descendants what the Lake used to look like.



Radon Poster Contest

By Daniel Wiggins, Air Quality Technician

The Bad River Tribal Indoor Radon Program has partnered with the Boys & Girls Club and the Birch Hill Community House to sponsored a Radon Poster Contest since 2012. The contest is designed to bring focus to the growing radon issues in the United States and in Indian Country. Youth from ages 8-14 are asked to design a poster on radon information gathered . This year the contest had 14 submissions , which were then judged by staff from the B&G Club and Birch Hill Community House on content, neatness, originality, and overall appearance. Below this years winner received a bike winner and special mentions for this year.



Picture is of Venessa Scott and of her winning poster. This years winner received a bike, while runner-ups received smaller prizes. All other poster submissions can be seen on the Radon Website @ <http://www.badriver-nsn.gov/18-tribal-operations/natural-resources/247-radon-home>.



BAD RIVER NATURAL RESOURCES

Bad River Natural Resource Department

Chief Blackbird Center

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Photo By Daniel Wiggins

"Waverly Beach"

We're On The WEB!

www.badriver-nsn.gov



Beach Monitoring

By Stephanie Julian, NRD Outreach Coordinator

The Bad River Natural Resources Beach Monitoring Project was formed in 2011, using Great Lakes Restoration Initiative funds granted to our program from the Chequamegon Bay Area Partnership. Upon the finalization of the Bad River Tribe's Water Quality Standards, we became eligible for funding through the Beach Environmental Assessment and Coastal Health (BEACH) Act. The purpose of this monitoring project is to provide the public with updated information regarding the safety of our area beach water.

Beach water is routinely tested at area beaches, by the Bad River Water Resources program for certain levels of E. coli. High levels may indicate unsafe levels of other harmful bacteria in the water. The Beach Monitoring Program, uses this information to ensure the water is safe for area beach enthusiasts.

In the event E. coli levels exceed our standard, the Beach Monitoring Program will respond by posting advisory signs at area beaches that show signs of contamination, emailing a Tribal wide advisory to all Tribal employees, and posting an update on the Beach Monitoring recorded message, which can be accessed 24-hours per day, for your convenience. High levels may indict unsafe levels of other harmful bacteria in the water.

If the E. coli levels on any of our area beaches show signs of elevation, the following Swimming Advisory signs will be posted at those beaches, to ensure public awareness. A yellow sign means the levels of E. coli have been exceeded. The red sign means the levels of E. coli have been exceeded to an extreme level.

For further information regarding E. coli and safe water at the beach, you can go to these websites:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Health Swimming/Recreational Waters:

<http://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/swimming/>

Environmental Protection Agency's Beaches:

<http://www2.epa.gov/beaches>

Wisconsin Beach Health:

<http://www.wibeaches.us/apex/f?p=181:1:17158548920930::NO>

Beach Monitoring Hotline: 715-685-7870

-MISSION STATEMENT-

The Department strives for resource management which both conserves the natural resources for the future generations and provide for the needs of the present. The departments existence reflects the importance the Bad River Tribe places on its right and ability to exercise sovereignty, self-determination and self-regulation in the area of natural resource management.