



## Come to the Mille Lacs Community of Stewards Picnic!

Saturday, July 9, 2022

10 am to 2 pm

Father Hennepin State Park, Isle, Minnesota

**Join us for good food and good company!** Connect with other folks who love the lake and its neighboring waters; enjoy a free lunch of locally produced food; and learn how your actions can assure a healthy lake for the future.

The event will be held at the Lakeview Picnic Shelter in beautiful Father Hennepin State Park. There is a special park pass price of \$5 for attendees. (Tribal members may obtain a free pass at the park office.) With Isle Days events taking place nearby, you can make this a full day of celebration!



*To RSVP (by June 26) and get the latest updates, visit  
<http://millelacswatershed.org> or email us at [millelacswatershed@gmail.com](mailto:millelacswatershed@gmail.com)*

### COMMUNITY OF STEWARDS PICNIC HIGHLIGHTS

**Get ideas about what you can do on your property to improve water quality.**

Encouraging landowners to pursue stewardship actions on their own property is central to the mission of the Mille Lacs Lake Watershed Management Group (MLLWMG). To accomplish this we bring the public together with helpful agencies like area Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs), the Minnesota and Mille Lacs Band Departments of Natural Resources, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), and local businesses such as Minnesota Native Landscapes (MNL).



At the Stewards Picnic, representatives from the Aitkin, Crow Wing, and Mille Lacs SWCDs will be available to hear about your needs and interests and suggest steps towards achieving goals for your property. You may decide to pursue a Lakeshore Stewardship Plan and thus become part of our Mille Lacs Compass Program. This process begins with a walk around your property with an SWCD lakeshore specialist who listens to your ideas, observes opportunities for various projects, and then follows up with a written plan of possible actions to benefit your land and the lake. There may be funding available for some projects. Stewardship Plans may include recommendations for reducing storm water run-off and its many pollutants; strengthening fish and wildlife habitat; and managing shoreline erosion. Many options incorporate the planting of native plants and trees that are both beautiful and resilient. Current participants in the Mille Lacs Compass Program will be at the picnic to discuss their own Stewardship Plans and the lessons they've learned along the way.

**Identify and learn about native plants.**

Learning to distinguish between beneficial native plants and noxious weeds is a continuing challenge. Jake Janski from Mille Lacs SWCD and MNL will be on hand to help. You're encouraged to bring in your mystery plants or pictures of them. Jake will also be giving out free native plant seeds from MNL.

**See a demo of the latest in aquatic invasives boat-cleaning technology.**

Mille Lacs Lake has several invasive species including spiny water fleas, zebra mussels, and Eurasian watermilfoil. Nearby Round Lake has zebra mussels and curly leaf pondweed. And starry stonewort is an emerging threat. These species disrupt the ecosystem that supports our native invertebrates and fish.



*Wild leeks (ramps) come into bloom.*

Cleaning watercraft when leaving the lake is key to reducing the spread of aquatic invasives. The Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Department of Natural Resources in cooperation with Mille Lacs County manages a self-service CD3 (Clean Drain Dry Dispose) Unit located at Shaw-Bush-Kung Bay landing. They will provide hands-on demonstrations of the unit at the picnic.

**Exchange your lead tackle for nontoxic options.**

Got lead tackle? Bring it to the picnic and receive samples of nontoxic tackle from Aitkin SWCD complements of the MPCA's "Get the Lead Out" program, funded by the settlement of the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill that damaged wintering grounds of our local loons. Loons, ducks, and aquatic birds and raptors are all at risk of ingesting fishing tackle lost in the lake and suffering injury and death from the lead it contains.

**Enjoy a free lunch of local food.**

Dan's Catering will be providing a lunch including pastured organic pork and chicken, in-season local fruits and vegetables, wild rice, and fry bread. Our area food system includes the Isle Area Farmers Market and the many small farmers who sell directly to the consumer. These farms are managed for chemical-free soil health that translates to nutrient-dense fruits and vegetables with

flavor to match. Poultry and livestock raised organically result in meats high in essential nutrients without chemical or hormone residuals. A meal on Mille Lacs is only complete with fry bread and locally harvested wild rice. Foragers gather wild rice in late summer – it's a hot, dusty, labor of love to gather and process this delicacy.

**Share your Mille Lacs area stories.**

Your personal stories about Mille Lacs Lake and its nearby waters, wetlands, forests, and fields can make a meaningful contribution to area understanding. MLLWGM member Barb Eller will be wielding a video camera to capture your experiences with lakeshore restoration and preservation, or any other story you may care to share. With your permission, we will distribute these stories through our social media channels.

**Hear from our area's elected officials.**

We've invited local legislators to attend, not as partisan politicians, but as our voice at the Legislature. You'll have the opportunity to discuss the care of our lake and surroundings with them, and hear about the importance they place on our environment and natural areas. Minnesotans voted approval of the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund amendment in 1988 and the Minnesota Clean Water, Land, and Legacy amendment in 2008. Both programs have provided local funds for lakeshore restoration, storm water mitigation, conservation projects, and our Mille Lacs Compass Stewardship Program.

**Gain insights from our guest speaker.**

Brad Harrington / Nazhike-Awaasanang, Tribal Liaison to the MN DNR, Advisory Board Member of the Mille Lacs Area Community Foundation, and a 2022 Bush Fellow will speak at about 1:15 pm. Brad was previously the Commissioner of the Mille Lacs Band DNR, grew up on Mille Lacs, and brings a wealth of experience and wisdom to our event.

**Enter to win a FREE kit of sandy soil loving plants from MNL.**

At the end of the picnic we will give away a free MNL Sandy Soil Kit to a lucky participant. The kit has a unique set of native plants suitable for planting on dry, sandy soil with generous sun. Note: You must be signed up and present to win.

**MLLWGM thanks our Community of Stewards Picnic sponsors and partners:**

Mille Lacs Area Community Foundation, a partner fund of the Initiative Foundation  
Mille Lacs, Aitkin, and Crow Wing Soil and Water Conservations Districts  
Mille Lacs Band Department of Natural Resources  
MN Pollution Control Agency  
MN Native Landscapes  
And our volunteers