

News Releases

Low water levels are exposing lake beds

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Even though spring snow melt has caused some Minnesota rivers and streams to flood, many lakes are still experiencing low water levels due to drought conditions from last year.

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) reminds shoreline owners that permits are required for control of aquatic vegetation on dry lake beds. This includes cutting, chemical treatment, or other disruption. Removal of emergent aquatic plants without a permit is a misdemeanor and can result in a fine and restoration order.

Aquatic plants growing in lake beds are property of the state of Minnesota, even if the lake bed is dry due to drought or temporary drawdown.

Emergent aquatic plants are extremely valuable to the lake, fish, and wildlife. Emergent aquatic plants protect shorelines from erosion and wave action, stabilize bottom sediments, improve water quality by intercepting phosphorus before it reaches the water, and provides valuable habitat to fish and wildlife.

Fluctuating water levels are a natural and important part of lake ecology and emergent aquatic plants, such as bulrush, rely on periods of low water to germinate and re-establish depleted stands. Removal of emergent vegetation destroys valuable habitat and can have negative effects on fish, wildlife, and the lake.

For more information, contact Steve Enger, Aquatic Plant Management Program, 651-259-5092, or your nearest regional fisheries office. Phone numbers are also available by calling 651-296-6157 or toll-free 888-MINNDNR (646-6367).
