



FILIA, P.O. Box 135, Aitkin, MN 56431 • FILIALake@gmail.com • FarmIslandLake.org

Letter from the FILIA president, Bill Haroldson

Greetings everyone, and thank you for reading this issue of the FILIA Newsletter.

I am anticipating enjoying that first fresh meal of FIL fish very soon. Here's to a safe and successful Opener for all of you!

To all of the Mothers, we wish you a Happy Mother's Day. "To the world you are a Mom, but to your family you are the world". Thank you, Mother.

The Board is looking forward to seeing all of you at your Annual Member's Meeting June 8! See below for the board member elections which will take place at the Annual Meeting.

In the meantime, it is LAKE TIME. Please slow down a bit and enjoy!

Thank you, and God Bless.

Bill



Annual Meeting June 8

The FILIA annual meeting will be held at Hazelton Town Hall from 9:00 to 11:00 AM. It's a good way to meet your neighbors and stay on top of events and discussions surrounding Farm Island Lake and the Aitkin community. The meeting is held at Hazelton Township on Hwy 169, about 4 miles south of Tame Fish Lake Rd.

You do not have to be a paid member to attend. We have guest speakers who cover information pertinent to lake property owners. Other activities, to name just a few: walleye re-stocking updates (when available), attendees can discuss concerns and happenings around the lake, vote for board association member when a board member's term is expired, ACLARA updates, AIS updates, water clarity, etc.

The speaker this year will be Executive Director Jeff Forester of MLR – Minnesota Lakes and Rivers. MLR has been protecting Minnesota's lake and river heritage since 1994 by:

- Working to keep lake places affordable,
- Working to protect and improve water quality,
- Providing grants to help with shoreline management, aquatic invasive species control and prevention, septic system management, firewise wildfire protection, Sustainable Forest Incentive Act, non-typical insurance for remote properties, and more,
- Greater transparency in the taxation and permitting process.

Click here for more information on MLR <https://mnlakesandrivers.org/>

Greetings from Sheriff Dan Guida

Received 3/15/2024

I'm not sure how many would agree with me, but I am ready for some rain!

Last year I dealt with spring flooding and this year we have a low water drought scenario that is causing some major fire concerns. Please use extreme caution around those fun spring campfires. Let's hope for rainy weekdays....



One fun part of being at the lake is jumping on an ATV or side by side and going for a ride. Aitkin County has an ATV ordinance that allows travel on the far-right side of county roads, 30 MPH, with headlights required. The operator must have a driver's license, ATV safety certificate, and with anyone under 18 years old a DOT approved helmet. If there are questions and you wish to read the specific ordinance you can just google Aitkin County ATV ordinance and make sure you are reading the most current version.

If there are safety issues on the lake, please immediately call and we will dispatch our team to assist. We will have several Recreational Water Patrol staff that will frequent Farm Island, as well as Deputy Asmus, our senior recreational Deputy. This crew will perform routine safety checks for PFDs, Fire Extinguishers, and any other requirements that exist. If you are unsure of the requirements, a boating guidelines book is put out by the MN DNR every year and is available at the license centers or on the front desk at the Sheriff's Office.

I want to thank all of you for a great winter. Your calls are always welcome and if you see something, say something and we will do our best to solve the problems!

Sheriff Daniel Guida | Aitkin County | W-218-927-7435 | dan.guida@co.aitkin.mn.us

MNDNR Creel Survey This Summer



The DNR will perform a creel survey this summer, starting at opener and running through the end of September. Farm Islanders will see DNR creel clerks running around the lake doing boat counts and interviewing anglers to get the information to estimate fishing pressure and harvest.

There have been concerns for some time about issues relating to anglers from Mille Lacs "moving" to Farm Island. This creel should give the DNR an idea of how much of that is occurring. The DNR thanks you all for your cooperation with this project as it will need your collective cooperation to make it successful.

Check the DNR burning restrictions before lighting a fire.

Fire danger and burning restrictions maps are updated daily.
https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/forestry/fire/firerating_restrictions.html



It has been very windy so be careful when doing any outdoor burning. It may be calm one minute, and then a wind may suddenly kick in and spread your fire. This has happened to a few people this year.

77 paid members so far!

Membership Update

Thank you to those who have already paid this year's dues!
Current and past member lists are on the website.

212 (55% of the 375 property owners on Farm Island Lake) members paid their voluntary membership dues last year. Thank you!

An application is at the end of this newsletter and is on the website.

You can also pay dues online at FarmlandLake.org. A member is someone who has paid their dues, payable yearly.

FILIA had 238 members in year 2021 and 235 in 2020, so it would be great to receive dues from those who have not yet paid. If you can't access the application, just drop the \$25 check in the mail and email your contact information to FILIALake@gmail.com

If you have not been a FILIA member in the past, please consider joining this year. If you are already a member, thank you, and we hope you will continue to support the stewardship that FILIA provides.

It does make a difference! A large lake association membership provides a strong influence when it comes to the affairs involving lakeshore ownership, including grant applications, government, county, and local agency activities.

Be sure we have your email to ensure receipt of newsletters sent throughout the year.



Ice-out date was March 14

This is the earliest date that I have on record. Past ice-out and ice-on dates are on the website.

The lake experienced some intermittent ice-overs of thin ice for a few weeks after March 14.



FILIA Membership Facts

- 368 property owners as of March 2024
- Newsletters are emailed to 501 recipients
- 223 members is the average membership over the last 5 years
- 33% of members pay additional money toward the AIS Fund
- 33% pay their dues online at FarmlandLake.org
- \$2,362 is the average donated to the AIS Fund over 5 years
- FILIA is a non-profit organization
- You are a member when you pay dues, which are due each year

- The FILIA Board Members, to fulfill our mission of stewardship for Farm Island Lake, strive to maintain good communications and collaborative efforts with lake association members, Aitkin County, and state agencies. To name a few - the DNR, Aitkin Area Fisheries, Aitkin County Soil & Water Conservation District, and Invasive Species Specialist, etc.
- When government, local agency and county information is included we are serving as the messenger to keep you informed of their activities concerning Farm Island Lake.
- The FILIA board members act in good faith as volunteers and assume no responsibility for the boat parade or other FILIA activities.

2023 Aitkin County AIS Inspection Numbers/ Data Review

Submitted by Kyle Fredrickson | Aitkin County Soil And Water Conservation District | Aitkin AIS coordinator/ District Technician - Forester | 218-927-7285

	2023	2022	2021	2020
Plug on Arrival	87	1	45	61
Issues found	40	38	72	104
Zebra Mussels Found	3	2	0	0
Drain Required	6	2	2	-
Decontamination	25	-	-	2
Lakes Inspected	26	17	17	17
Total Inspections	11696	9991	9417	10516

Lake Name	Inspection
FARM ISLAND, SOUTH	1280
FARM ISLAND, NORTH	1238
CEDAR, CEDAR	1093
CLEAR, CLEAR	1010
BIG SANDY, EAST	827
BIG SANDY, HWY 65	764
BIG PINE	703
BIG SANDY, NORTH WEST	685

List of water bodies monitored for zebra mussels using tow/ and vertical veliger net pulls.

Spirit Lake, Ripple Lake, Big Sandy Lake, Hammal Lake, Lone Lake, Minnewawa Lake, Hickory, , Wilkins Lake, Dam Lake, Long Lake.

No positive results in 2023!

Risks found on watercraft					
Lake name	mud	plants	water	zebra mussels	Grand Total
1003302, MINNEWAWA, SOUTH	1				1
1006203, BIG SANDY, HWY 65		2			2
1008901, LONG		2			2
1009301, CLEAR, CLEAR	1	3			4
1009901, GUN	2	2			4
1010201, WILKINS		1			1
1010501, FLEMING		2			2
1012501, LONE LAKE		1			1
1014601, RIPPLE LAKE, RIPPLE		2			2
1015701, BIG PINE		3			3
1015901, FARM ISLAND, NORTH	1	4		1	6
1015902, FARM ISLAND, SOUTH		2			2
1020401, ROUND (North of Mille Lacs)		1			1
1020901, CEDAR, CEDAR Sissabagamah		1	1		2
Grand Total	5	28	1	1	35

Zebra Mussels found on watercraft	
Lake Name	Grand Total
1015701, BIG PINE	1
1015902, FARM ISLAND, SOUTH	2
Grand Total	3

Lake Facts

Lake level May 4, 2024

- 1,255.3 feet
- 2.5 inches under OHWL
- 4 inches up since ice-out

The OHWL sign is by the Little Pine Lake culvert. OHWL stands for Ordinary High Water Level.

Water clarity is at 14 feet, which is the same as it was last year at this time.



Aitkin County Planning and Zoning

If you are building, remodeling or working on shoreline, contact Aitkin County at 218-927-7342 or their website to be sure you are up-to-date on their codes.

<https://www.co.aitkin.mn.us/departments/enviro-svcs/enviromentalSvcs.html#gsc.tab=0>

Fishing opener is May 11



AIS inspections start May 10 or 11

Lack of snow could spur growth of Minnesota lake invader Curly-leaf

MPRNews synopsis of article by Kirsti Marohn February 25, 2024



Curly-leaf pondweed. Courtesy of Michael Verhoeven, University of Minnesota

This year's lack of snow cover on many Minnesota lakes could boost the growth of a nuisance aquatic plant - Curly-leaf pondweed - a University of Minnesota researcher predicts.

Curly-leaf is an invasive species that's been found in Minnesota for more than a century. It's known to be present in more than 750 water bodies in the state. It grows in the early spring and can create dense mats on the surface that interfere with recreation.

That problem could be worse this summer. Michael Verhoeven, a research scientist at the university's fisheries system ecology lab, has studied curly-leaf pondweed and found its growth patterns are closely tied to the amount of snow on the ice that covers lakes.

Snow cover prevents light from reaching plants at the bottom of the lake where curly-leaf pondweed grows during the winter, Verhoeven said. But this year, many Minnesota lakes have had less ice than normal, and little to no snow cover.

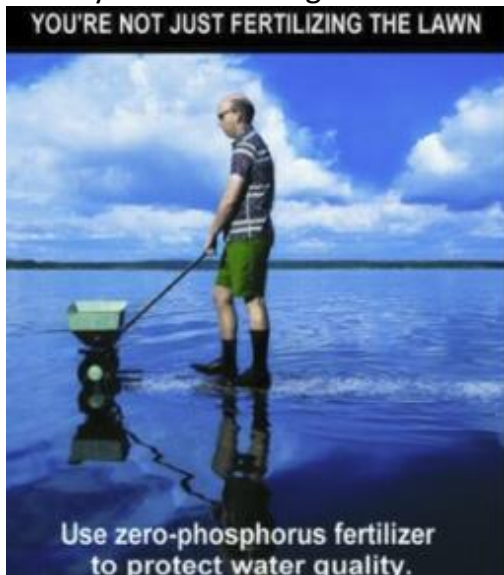
"The general consensus from the data that we used in our work is that winters like this will be really good for curly leaf pondweed," he said. "It's going to be a happy plant when the ice comes out."

It's the snow cover, not the ice, that matters to the invasive plant, Verhoeven said. Read entire article <https://www.mprnews.org/story/2024/02/25/lack-of-snow-could-spur-growth-of-minnesota-lake-invader>

There are certain areas of Farm Island Lake that have curly-leaf. The FILIA Board Members ask that people with curly-leaf work together to determine any action taken. The best time for removal of curly-leaf is within weeks of when the ice melts. Trying to harvest the weeds in the spring and summer merely spreads the seeds around.

[Click here](#) to learn more at the MNDNR website and [click here](#) for information on our FILIA website.

When you're fertilizing the lawn remember,



Board Member Elections

3-year term elections

Up for 3-year term elections are current board members Cindy Chuhanic, Bill Haroldson, and Stan Barnes.

Board Member Opening

Denise Noling has stepped down as a board member, so we have an opening. Thank you, Denise, for serving as the secretary and for your valued contributions and insight. Also, thank you for all the hard work and commitment to the Loon ANP project.

Board members serve a voluntary 3-year term. They meet two times a year, and attend the annual meeting. Let us know if you're interested!

AIS Detectors Core Course from the UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA – Aquatic Invasive Species

Check out the live workshop options below. This course will provide some basic aquatic ecology, how to identify high priority invasive species for Minnesota, impacts AIS can have on the environment, how to report AIS sightings, Minnesota AIS regulations, and how to search for AIS on your own.

LEARN MORE and REGISTER HERE:

<https://learning.umn.edu/search/publicCourseSearchDetails.do?method=load&courseId=27946673&courseTitle=ais-detectors-core-course>

Workshop Dates:

Cass County - May 31, 9am-5pm

Duluth - June 7, 9am-5pm

All Virtual - June 4 & June 5, 1-4pm

Minnesota law requires water recreationists to:

- Clean watercraft of all aquatic plants and prohibited invasive species.
- Drain all water by removing drain plugs and keeping them out during transport.
- Dispose of unwanted bait in the trash and dispose of bait water.
- Dry docks, lifts, swim rafts and other equipment for at least 21 days before placing equipment into another water body.

For more information on the Minnesota law, which holds true whether or not a lake is listed as infested – go to this online link. https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/invasives/preventspread_watercraft.html

Be sure to inform your visitors and neighbors of this important Minnesota regulation, which is also important and necessary to keep our lake clean and free of invasive species.



To prevent the spread of all aquatic species, remember to

- Clean
- Drain
- Dry
- Dispose of water.



AIS Cleaning Tool

Stop and clean your watercraft with this handy cleaning tool that will be at the two landings, and other places on the lake. These AIS tools were provided by the DNR.



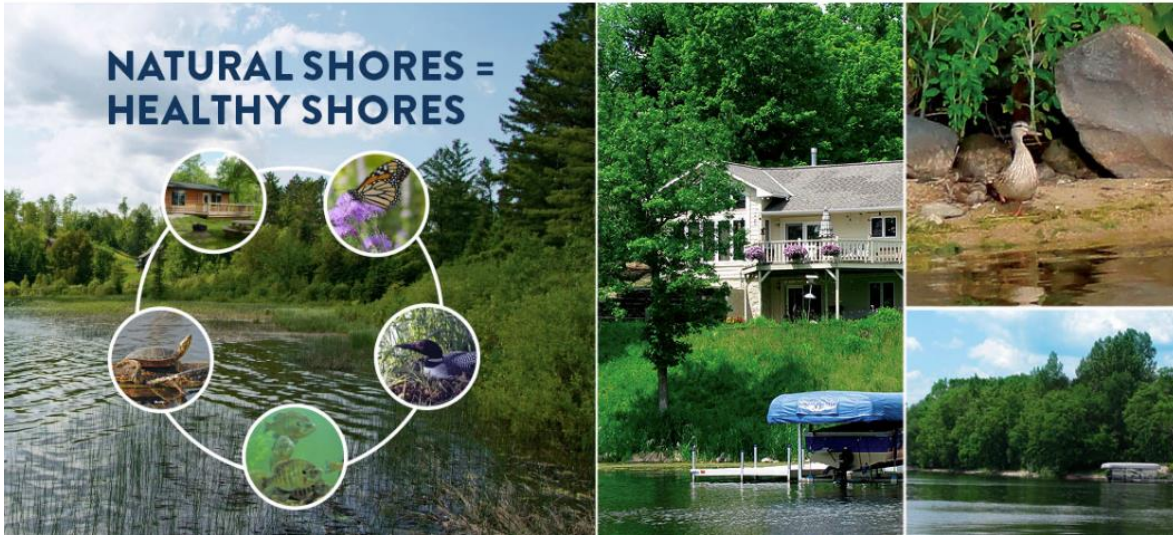
All vessels, boats, jet skis, etc. should **stay at least 200 feet away** when they see a SCUBA flag.

SCUBA Warning Flag

A diver down flag, or scuba flag, is a flag used on the water to indicate that there is a diver below. This flag will also be displayed on the diver's boat.

Shoreland Management – Protect the Lake and the Wildlife

https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/waters/watermgmt_section/shoreland/index.html



Maintain and/or restore natural vegetation along your shoreline. Natural vegetation:

- Holds soil in place protecting shorelines from increasingly intensive rain events and rising water levels
- Slows runoff and stores moisture
- Filters out nutrients, which along with rising lake temperatures, accelerates algae blooms
- Provides habitat so species can survive in a changing climate
- Increases property values by keeping lakes clean.

DNR List of Permitted Lake Service Providers

Lake service providers who **install and remove docks and lifts** for hire are required by the DNR to be trained and have a permit. Use the link below and select Aitkin and Crow Wing or another county for a list of permitted lake service providers. The list appears at the bottom of the web page.

https://webapps11.dnr.state.mn.us/aquatic_invasive_species_training/lake_service_provider_permits/public_website_list.

The list of permitted lake service providers is made available for the convenience of the public only. Farm Island Lake Improvement Association, The State of Minnesota and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources neither endorse the services listed nor accept any liability arising from the use of the services listed.

The **Blue Fire Number**, which is your address number, is used by **emergency responders** to locate your property. This could save your life or property. If you are in an association, you need your own number, placed by your individual house, so you can quickly be located. To order, contact the Aitkin County Highway Department 218-927-3741. In an emergency, be able to give detailed directions on how to reach you. Write it down, and post it so everyone at your house can see it.



Free Recycling

Free recycling of flattened cardboard, plastic, cans, etc. is offered at **Aitkin County Recycling Center**, 36488 400th Ave, Aitkin, just north of Mille Lacs Energy Coop. Phone Aitkin County at (218) 927-7342.

AITKIN COUNTY Infested Waters List

Water body name	County or counties	Listed for aquatic invasive species	Year listed as infested	Year species was first confirmed, or connected water body
Big Pine	Aitkin	zebra mussel	2018	2018
Big Sandy	Aitkin	flowering rush	2009	2008
Cedar	Aitkin	zebra mussel	2021	2021
Farm Island	Aitkin	zebra mussel	2020	2020
French	Aitkin	Eurasian watermilfoil	2019	2019
Hickory	Aitkin	zebra mussel	2023	connected to Spirit (01-0178)
Little Pine	Aitkin	zebra mussel	2020	connected to Farm Island (01-0159)
Ripple River between Farm Island (01-0159) and Little Pine (01-0176)	Aitkin	zebra mussel	2020	connected to Farm Island (01-0159)
Spirit	Aitkin	zebra mussel	2023	2023

Note: Farm Island Lake also has Curley-leaf, Chinese and Banded mystery snails

If you witness a concern, please call the Aitkin County Sheriff's office at 218-927-7435 and provide as much information as you can. Location and photos and videos really help. Our local law enforcement really does want to hear from you.

Important Phone Numbers

Aitkin County Sheriff & Water Patrol	911 or 218-927-7435
MNDNR Hotline	651-296-6157
AIS Specialist	218-203-4354

Boating and Fishing Regulations

The DNR Boating and Fishing Regulations are on our website under Useful Info: <https://www.farmislandlake.org/useful-links> and are also listed on the DNR website. <https://files.dnr.state.mn.us/rlp/regulations/buide.pdf>



When government, local agency and county information is included we are serving as the messenger to keep you informed of their activities concerning Farm Island Lake.



A loon was spotted on April 3rd.

Get the Lead Out

Get the Lead Out is an educational program with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency working to protect and restore the population of common loons and wildlife in Minnesota by reducing their exposure to lead-based fishing tackle.

To learn more about Get the Lead Out, visit <https://lakeadmin.org/get-the-lead-out/> or

Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/LeadOutMN/>

A huge thank you to the team that placed the two loon ANPs (Artificial Nesting Platforms) in the lake. Don and Barb Swenson let us use their pontoon and added huge insight as to the best place to put the ANPs. Scott & Cheryl Scheele, Dennis Kraimer and Don Swenson put the ANPs on the lake on April 14.

As with all loon nests, and all wildlife nests, we ask that you do not disturb them.

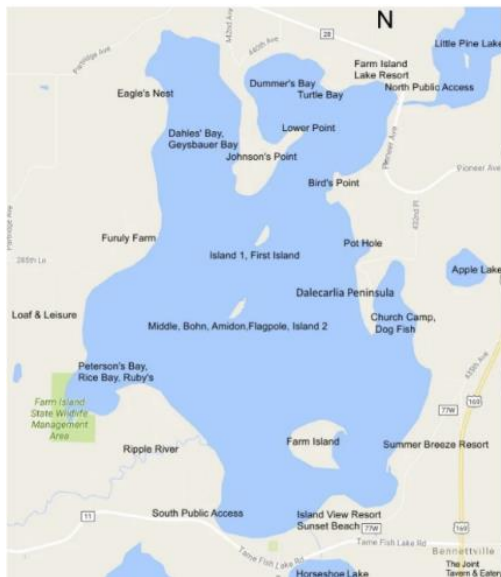


Did You Know?

- **PWC (jet skis) hours of operation are between 9:30 AM and sunset.**
- PWC must travel at slow-no wake speed (5 mph or less) within 150 feet of shore, docks, swimmers, swimming rafts, any moored or anchored watercraft, or nonmotorized watercraft. Exception is when a PWC is launching or landing a water skier by the most direct route to open water.
- **It is illegal to chase or harass wildlife**, or weave through congested watercraft traffic or jump the wake of another watercraft within 150 feet of that boat.



Minnesota's personal watercraft laws https://files.dnr.state.mn.us/education_safety/safety/boatwater/pwc-brochure.pdf



Printable version of map is on our website.

AIS Brochure

“WORKING TOGETHER FOR A BETTER FARM ISLAND LAKE”

Find the brochure at

<https://www.farmislandlake.org/copy-of-score-your-shore-1>

This is a section title from the FILIA AIS Brochure which is on the website. Click on the link to get the details.

BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES TO ENHANCE AND PROTECT THE LAKE AND WILDLIFE

1. Maintain or establish a buffer zone between your yard and the lake.
2. Maintenance of your lawn.



Should I Rake Leaves into the Lake?

Please be a good steward and do not rake leaves into the lake. It is important to do everything we can to keep our lakes free of pollutants. The DNR strongly discourages dumping leaves and grass clippings into a lake, river, wetland, or other body of water.

Leaves, grass clippings and similar debris add nutrients to the water that use up precious oxygen as they decompose. Some aquatic organisms need that oxygen.

If you'd like to be a good steward of our water and land resources, the best way to dispose of leaves and similar waste is to compost it either on your land, or at a designated compost site near you.

2024 Calendar of FILIA Events

*Spring Board Meeting	Saturday, May 4, 8:00 am	The Joint Tavern & Eatery
Annual Association Meeting	Saturday, June 8, 9-11:00 am	Hazelton Town Hall
4th of July Boat Parade	Thursday, July 4, Noon	FIL South Public Access
*Fall Board Meeting	Saturday, Sept 7, 8:00 am	The Joint Tavern & Eatery

Hazelton Town Hall is located on Hwy 169, a few miles south of Tame Fish Lake Rd.

*Only board members attend the board meetings.

The annual meeting is held the 2nd Saturday of June each year.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Bill Haroldson President
Gordon Vetsch V.P.
Cheryl McDonough Treasurer

Open Position..... Secretary
Cindy Chuhanic
Dennis Kraimer

Mike Harrington
Stan Barnes
Scott Scheele

Contact board members: FILIALake@gmail.com

FILIA Website

There is a lot of information on the FILIA website. This site map includes the links to the various pages on the website. FarmIslandLake.org **FILIA Financial Report is on the Administrative page.**

Site Map

- [Home](#) Mission statement, printable map of Farm Island Lake, description
- [Membership](#) Members lists, application form
- [Pay Dues](#) Pay yearly membership dues online with credit card
- [Newsletters/Lake Info](#) Current and past newsletters, Gillnet Survey Results
- [Contact/Calendar](#) List of Board of Directors, Shore Captains, Meeting dates
 - [Local Events](#)
- [Administrative](#) Financial reports, current and past
 - [Meeting Minutes](#)
 - [FILIA Bylaws](#)
- [Aquatic Invasive Species](#)
 - [Score Your Shore](#)
 - [How to identify zebra mussels](#)
 - [Living with zebra mussels](#)
 - [How to combat swimmer's itch](#)
- [Useful Info](#) Aitkin County contacts, etc.
 - [Boating & Fishing Regulations](#)
 - [DNR Permitted Lake Service Providers](#)

Be sure we have your email addresses to ensure receipt of newsletters and email updates throughout the year.



Have a safe and joyous year!

Sincerely,
Cheryl McDonough
Editor, FILIA Newsletter
filiialake@gmail.com

Your comments are welcome.

FILIA
PO Box 135
Aitkin, MN 56431

FarmIslandLake.org

FILIA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

FarmIslandLake.org

BECOME A MEMBER AND HELP PRESERVE AND ENHANCE FARM ISLAND LAKE

Dues are **\$25.00** a year per property owner from January to December.

You can pay online at your FILIA website, or bring this form to the annual meeting, or mail it to:

Farm Island Lake Improvement Association (or FILIA)

Date: _____

PO Box 135

Aitkin, MN 56431

Name _____

Home Address _____

No need to write your home address if your correct address is on your check.

Lake Address _____

Phone-best year-round contact phone(s) _____

Email-best year-round contact email(s) _____

Your email addresses will be used to send you newsletters and other FILIA news. It will not be sold or shared.

Additional money for the Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Fund \$ _____

