

Hello RLAA members,

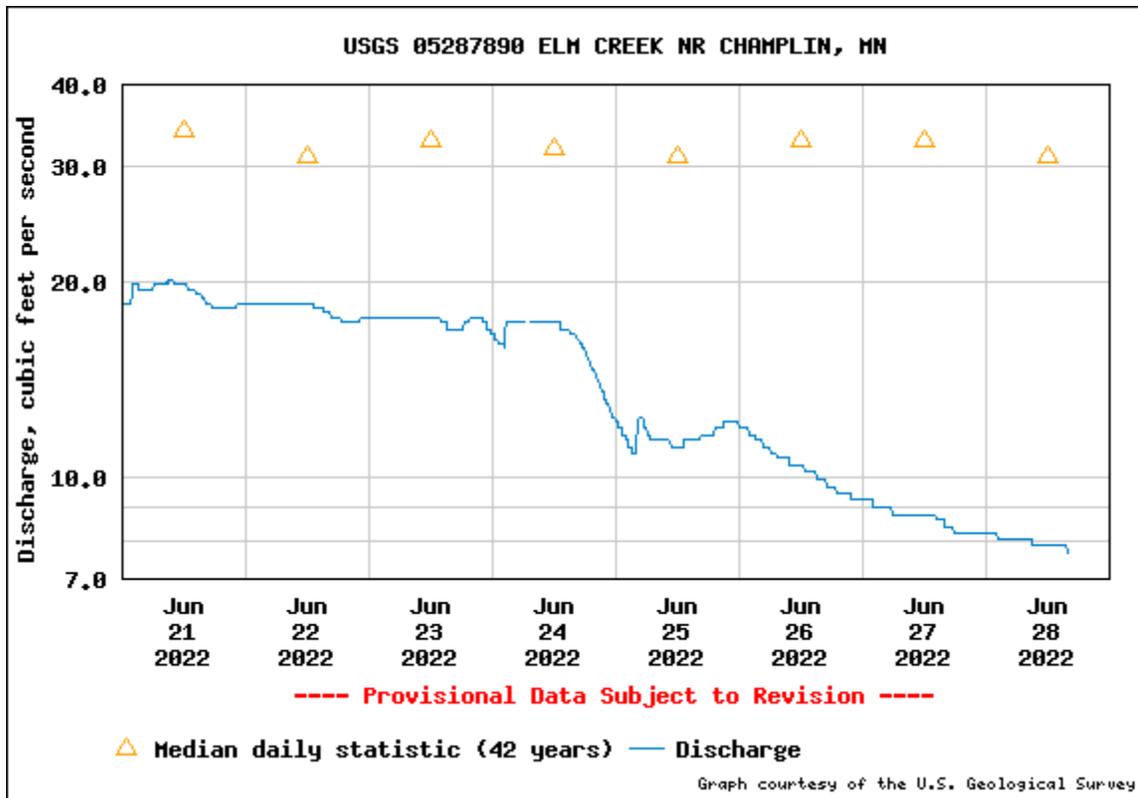
We already shared the good news that the drawdown *appears* to have done a good job of stunting invasive Eurasian Milfoil and Curly Leaf Pondweed as intended, giving way to native aquatic vegetation. If the large flock of pelicans this year is any indication, the fish seem to have survived the harsh drawdown winter too. We'll see what the official plant and fish surveys determine.

The bad news is that drawdowns don't eliminate the high phosphorous and nitrogen loads of lawn and agricultural chemicals flowing into Rice Lake. That means drawdowns don't reduce algae blooms. Adding *more* chemicals to counteract those pollutants would be big money over the dam. Unlike some other lakes, Rice Lake is really just a shallow widening of Elm creek by virtue of the dam. The very expensive chemical treatments would just wash downstream rather than staying mostly in the lake (like much deeper Fish Lake) and the typical high inflow of new "nutrient rich" water would quickly negate any chemical treatment.

The dry spell we've been experiencing (while Northern Minnesota floods) has resulted in some ugly algae blooms, including the dreaded blue/green type. June rainfall was about 3" below normal, so we've received about 1/4 of the normal rainfall for the month. The lake level has now dropped about a foot below the top of the dam, accelerated by a malfunctioning dam spillway. The City of Maple Grove informs us that:

"The spillway was vandalized this past Spring near the end of the drawdown. Subsequently, a stop log used to restrict flow through the bypass was unable to seat properly resulting in higher than normal discharge through the spillway during periods when it is "closed". Please note, there will always be some minimal flow through the spillway and that is normal. (the vandalism resulted in) Higher than normal discharge, usually measured in cubic feet per second (cfs). The work the City crews completed last Friday (6/24) resulted in a noticeable visual improvement (reduction) in the discharge coming from the spillway and is also apparent in monitoring of Elm Creek where the downstream flow has been reduced by about 6 cfs since Friday."

As you can see from the USGS chart below, the repairs to the spillway were noticeable as Elm Creek's flow North of the dam dropped from 19 cfs June 22nd to around 8 cfs June 28th.



The City also hauled away several truckloads of driftwood that had piled up in front of the dam.

Now we need the rain to fall, wash down the algae blooms, and replenish the lake level. RLAA members are encouraged to apply their influence in producing that rain! 😊

Best Regards on behalf of your volunteer RLAA Board,

Hente Braam
RLAA President

Sent from my iPad