

FISH KILL ON PLEASANT LAKE

April 6, 2007

On the morning of March 24th I got a call from a person who lives on the North West end of the lake about a large amount of “Dead Fish” floating on the lake. I took a ride over there and was surprised to see so many dead fish floating on the lake. A DNR and State Police officer were on site and estimated the fish kill at 2000 or more fish. They stated they had never seen this many at one time. The DNR officer said he would contact the DNR fisheries biologist and see if he would come out and take a look and examine samples. I gave my name, phone number, and address as a contact for the lake. I ‘ m sorry to say I was never contacted. I saw an article in the Citizen Patriot dated Mar. 27 Titled, “Fish Kill”.

DNR: Fish deaths typical

State officials are telling people not to be alarmed when seeing dead fish floating on lakes and ponds this time of year. Its natural they say.

Hundreds of fish have been found floating on Pleasant Lake after the warm weather melted the ice on top of the water. “We expect the typical winter kill,” said Scott Handhue, fisheries biologist for the Michigan Department of Natural Resources.

“Over the winter lakes lose oxygen and dead fish are hidden under the ice and snow” . When the ice melts the dead fish surface and drift. The number of fish found on Pleasant Lake is consistent with winter kill numbers for other bodies of water, said Jay Wesley, fisheries supervisor for the DNR.

Pleasant Lake was stressed going into the winter and shows evidence of low oxygen, he said. People living near the lake could have contributed to the problem with lake weed treatments, but that has not been proven, Wesley said. The weeds provide oxygen to the water. “Fish can even continue to die into the spring with the increase in temperature all at once, Wesley said. “ It can be quite stressful on the fish”.

Residents can throw out the dead fish or bury them in their yards. DNR officials will not remove them. Fishermen should not worry about live fish caught in the lake .

DNR officials do not run tests on the fish that die over the winter, but residents who see fish that die now can contact the DNR to see if there are other factors.

Al Dicks