



Morse Waterways Association Newsletter July 2023

The MWA is a Not for Profit, 501c3, organization that is supported by donations from those who use the reservoir. Donations can be made to Morse Waterways Assoc., P.O Box 422, Cicero, IN 46034 or by using PayPal as found on the website (morseh2o.org).

Lake Cleanup

The 2023 Lake Cleanup got an early start this year, thanks to the time and energy of volunteers from Duke Energy. On Friday, July 14th, the Duke Energy crew worked to remove all the debris around the town docks. This was a major task since the area had collected a very large number of logs, sticks, trash, floats, etc. It took several hours but the result was extraordinary. The group was even able to provide a boat to tow the large logs to Red Bridge to be removed and cut, thanks to the support from the town of Cicero.



Lake Cleanup on Saturday, July 15th turned out to be a the most challenging day in the history of Lake Cleanup! When we first arrived at Red Bridge Park it began to drizzle but not enough to avoid removing the logs that had been left from the prior day. Then the rain increased and, after an hour and a half and a forecast of rain for the remainder of the morning, we decided to end the project for the day.

Unfortunately, the forecast was not correct and, later in the morning, the rain stopped and volunteers began bringing logs to Red Bridge Park, only to find that no one was available to remove them. So, an emergency call was made to the MWA members and, with the help of some volunteers, we were able to pull the logs onto the shore (using manpower and truck) since the tractor provided by the town was no longer available.

Finally, on Monday, the MWA members and some more volunteers worked with the town crew to remove the logs as well as unload the barge that was delivered by Thomas Docks. The logs were loaded into the dump trucks and taken to Green Cycle for processing. The result of the efforts on Friday, Saturday and Monday was 10 loads for Green Cycle and a dumpster of 10 dock floats of trash.

For future Lake Cleanup Days, taking a lesson from this year, we will be available at Red Bridge until noon, regardless of the weather conditions. Thank you to everyone who supported the event this year and thank you for your patience and cooperation considering the conditions.

A special note of appreciation is extended to the volunteers from Duke Energy for their work on Friday, to Terry Cooper and Shannon Fiddler from Cicero Utilities for helping on multiple days, to Michael Berry for taking photographs, and to all who volunteered. Thanks to Dave Vanette and Art Hall for making it all happen.

Another note of recognition goes to Jimmie Hunter from the Cicero Parks Department for his cooperation and understanding in dealing with the special conditions, the multiple days, and the damage that was done to the park property.

VERY IMPORTANT NOTICE:

DO NOT BRING LOGS TO RED BRIDGE ON ANY DAYS OTHER THAN THOSE DESIGNATED FOR LAKE CLEANUP!

There are times throughout the year when logs and debris are brought to Red Bridge Park and tied to the dock. This can only be done during Lake Cleanup. When this happens, the Parks Department must make special arrangements to have the material removed and hauled away. Jimmie Hunter and the Park Staff are dedicated to keeping the park clean and maintained and they already do a special service to repair the damage from the cleanup. Please exercise some consideration for the work that they do.

NOTE: THE FOLLOWING TOPICS WERE DISCUSSED AT THE MWA GENERAL MEETING IN MAY

Dredging and Other Projects

MWA board member, Rogers Goings, who is Vice Chairman on the Service Advisory Board for Citizens Water provided an update on the dredging for Big Cicero Creek.

HISTORY OF THE RESERVOIR:

- The reservoir was built in 1956 as backup water for Indianapolis.
- It was sold to Citizens Energy in 2013.
- Citizens has implemented a 50-year horizon plan to maintain the water level and extend the life of the reservoir.
- Engineering has improved water level maintenance as evidenced by the elimination of the large fluctuations that used to occur.
- Additional water supply to reduce the reliance on Morse.
 - a. The recent activation of a gravel pit near Geist Reservoir will provide an additional 3 million gallons of water. The water will be pumped directly to Geist.
 - b. In severe drought conditions Citizen's customers use 200M gallons per day which is twice the demand during non-irrigation months.
- Active projects by Citizens that are incorporated in the 50-year plan.
 - a. Weather Stations are used to determine irrigation timing rather than fixed timers.
 - b. Better landscape soil and drought resistant grass seed

DREDGING SUMMARY:

- The current dredging cycle was completed in November 2022.
- The next dredging cycle is scheduled for June – November 2024.
- The target area is from the St Rd 19 bridge, 80 feet from shoreline to the railroad bridge.
- When that is completed, work will start on the island.

L.A.R.E. (Lake and River Enhancement) GRANT UPDATE:

- \$200,000 per year for dredging is now available from the DNR. Sponsor must provide \$20,000 to get \$80,000 from the state.
- The Big Cicero Drainage Board agreed to provide \$20,000 for each of the calendar years 2024, 2025, and 2026.
- The MWA board is in the process of applying for the additional L.A.R.E. Grant funds.
- Surveys of Big and Little Cicero are no longer accurate. Jeff and Roger are planning to do measurements to aid in the determination of the amount of material that remains to be removed.
- The material that is removed is deposited at a location on 236th street approximately 3 miles west of town.
- The material will be dried and sold as topsoil.

Report from the DNR

John Gano, Conservation Officer for the DNR, gave a presentation on the violations that occurred on the reservoir last year, along with other important information regarding the Department of Natural Resources.

- Officer Gano has been serving the public since 1995 and has, previously, been a guest at the Morse Waterways Association General Meeting.
- Morse Reservoir is a public body of water.
- The Natural Resource Commission enforces rules over the reservoir.
- Accidents and violations are much less now than they were before the late 90's.
 - a. Before the late 90's, Game Wardens patrolled the lake.
 - b. The Conservation Officers who now patrol the lake receive better training than was available prior to the late 90's.
 - c. There are two new officers for 2023 which will improve enforcement.
- The following is a summary of Conservation Officer activities on the reservoir.
 - a. DNR officers issued a total of 42 citations and 165 warnings on Morse Reservoir last year.
 - b. Officers, also, investigated one drowning (not boating related).
 - c. There was one personal injury accident. It occurred at the marina.
 - d. One boater was jailed for boating while intoxicated.
- The most common violations that DNR officers addressed (top five).
 - a. Fishing without a license (35 citations or warnings issued),
 - b. Personal Flotation Device (PFD) violations (22 citations or warnings issued).
 - c. Idle zone speed violations (16 citations or warnings issued),
 - d. Failure to display registration numbers (14 warnings issued), and expired registration (11 citations or warnings issued).

REMINDERS:

Dock Signs

CHECK YOUR DOCKS! DO YOU HAVE A DOCK NUMBER SIGN?

In previous newsletters the need for dock signs has been emphasized. There are currently 1,387 docks listed on Morse and, if the individual docks at homeowners' associations and docks such as those at the marina are included, that total exceeds 2,100.

It is not only important but it is beneficial to have a dock number. The numbers provide easy identification for your location in the event of an emergency and the number is linked to your home address for emergency police, fire, or ambulance services.

Please help to provide a full complement of dock signs. The MWA is working to keep this project functioning but it cannot be done without your support. If you need a new sign, please see the following information.

For new or replacement dock numbers:

Contact: Dean Denhart

pdenhart@comcast.net

Donate to the Morse Waterways Association

The MWA is dedicated to protecting and preserving the Morse Reservoir so that it can be a source of enjoyment for many years to come. Please consider supporting this mission.

Donations can be made to Morse Waterways Assoc., P.O Box 422, Cicero, IN 46034 or by using PayPal as found on the website (morseh2o.org).

Current MWA Board Members:

Matt Clarke	Roger Goings	Pat Kelleher	John Weis
Andy Sheets	Dean Denhart	Art Hall	Eric Harley
John Myer	Jeff Derda – President	Dave Vanette – Vice President	
Chuck Watkins – Secretary	Jerry Schwier – Treasurer	Randy Clark	

Thank you to all of those who have contributed to the Morse Waterways Association.

Thank you to the MWA Board Members for their time and commitment.

Jeff Derda, President – Morse Waterways Association