

For Immediate Release

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## PUBLIC NOTICE: Thin Ice on Moody Lake due to Winter Aeration

**Chisago Lake TWP, MN** – The Comfort Lake – Forest Lake Watershed District is planning to run an aeration system on Moody Lake beginning on or after January 1, 2019. This will result in thin ice and/or open water on the west side of the lake near Lofton Avenue. The aerator will remain on until ice-out in spring 2019. Signage will be posted around the perimeter of the thin ice and at access points around the lake. Please exercise EXTREME CAUTION on Moody Lake from January 1<sup>st</sup> until ice-out in spring.

What winter aeration does to lakes is kind of like what happens when you blow into the straw of your drink; it creates bubbles of air that will rise up to the top. This helps add more oxygen to the water. Naturally, wind is the main way that oxygen gets into the water. When lakes freeze in the winter and become iced over, no new oxygen can make its way into the water. When it snows on the ice no sunlight can reach the underwater plants, and they cannot make oxygen through photosynthesis. When oxygen levels get too low, fish can suffocate, causing a winterkill.

The reason the District will aerate Moody Lake is to help protect gamefish populations that compete with black bullhead and eat bullhead eggs. Black bullheads are bottom-feeding fish that stir up lake sediment and nutrients from the lake bottom. This harms native aquatic plants and decreases water quality and clarity. Black bullheads are able to survive the low oxygen conditions better than gamefish, which means they can outlive their predators during the winter months when the lake is frozen over. Winter aeration increases oxygen levels in the water during the winter months which can help gamefish survive and keep the bullhead population in check. A lower population of black bullheads is expected to result in cleaner, clearer water in Moody Lake.

Again, the aeration on Moody Lake will cause thin ice and/or open water. Pay attention to warning signs, and use EXTREME CAUTION on Moody Lake when deciding whether or not to walk on ice on a lake where a winter aeration system is in use. Please do not hesitate to contact the District with questions.

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