

BREAKAWAY BOGS: *Floating 'Islands' on Pelican Lake*

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This year's high water levels have brought about numerous unforeseen issues for shoreline property owners. Recently, residents of the Pelican Group of Lakes have been surprised to discover floating "islands" of emergent vegetation wandering the waters. Bogs and emergent vegetation are vital to the health and productivity of aquatic ecosystems. However, they can quickly become a nuisance when they wander into areas used for recreation.



Bog on Linneman Lake, July 2018. DAVE SCHWARZ / SC TIMES

Floating bogs tend to break loose during periods of high water levels, strong winds, and large waves. In these conditions, emergent vegetation is vulnerable to uprooting. Uprooted bogs are able to float because their peaty soils release gases during decomposition.

Despite their important role in ecosystem health and water quality, floating bogs are rarely welcomed by lake residents. When a bog is floating freely in the middle of a lake, it can be a hazard to boaters. Furthermore, the bogs often settle down in shallow waters, inhibiting recreation and causing damage to docks and lifts. In order to remove a bog, an aquatic plant management permit must be obtained from the Minnesota DNR.

If a floating bog becomes a nuisance, it is the responsibility of the property owner(s) where the bog is grounded to move the bog to an acceptable location. Moving a floating bog away from your property requires a DNR aquatic plant management permit issued through the DNR Regional Fisheries Office. DNR responsibility is limited to the following:

- Provide advice and approval on bog disposition.
- Remove any floating bogs lodged on state owned dams or other DNR property

<https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/permits/water/needpermit.html>