

**NEWS RELEASE | July 22, 2015**

## ***Minne the Lake Creature* Makes Early Exit from Lake Calhoun**

*Minneapolis Parks will conduct routine inspection for aquatic invasive species before the sculpture goes to a conservator*

**Minneapolis, Minn.** - Today is the last day that MI (aka, *Minne the Lake Creature*) will grace Lake Calhoun in 2015. The Minneapolis Parks Foundation launched *Minne* in Lake Calhoun in June, with a colorful standup paddleboard escort and plans to keep the Lake Creature there through September. The Parks Foundation is bringing in the 13' fiberglass sculpture early this year for inspection and repair.

*Minne* is the Twin Cities' only annual floating sculpture. The Parks Foundation first introduced Minneapolis to the Lake Creature in 2009, purchased the sculpture in 2010, and today manages Facebook and Twitter personas (@LakeCreature), which have grown to nearly 5,000 followers combined.

In May, the Parks Foundation invited the public to choose *Minne's* 2015 aquatic abode; Lake Calhoun won in a popular vote. At more than five million visits annually, the Chain of Lakes Regional Park is one of the most popular destinations in Minneapolis, with people of all ages and cultures taking part in both land and water activities. Lake Calhoun is the most active in the regional park and boasts biking and walking trails, three beaches, a yacht club, watercraft rental and a restaurant. *Minne's* Loch Ness Monster-like appearance created moments of unexpected whimsy for park-goers, and the sculpture quickly became a must-see selfie destination for trail users and paddlers.

"Lake Calhoun embraced *Minne the Lake Creature* like no other lake – a bit too literally, at times," says Tom Evers, Executive Director of the Minneapolis Parks Foundation, who notes that as many as three people at a time were witnessed climbing on the Lake Creature this summer. "We want people to engage with *Minne* from a safe distance because it's a sculpture, not a climbing structure. It's better for both *Minne* and Minneapolitans."

Regulations prevent the Parks Foundation from posting "no climbing" signage on or near the Lake Creature.

### **Seeking a Clean Bill of Health**

The Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board will inspect the Lake Creature, like all watercraft, as it's removed from Lake Calhoun. The Park Board has a comprehensive program to reduce the risk of spreading aquatic invasive species; inspectors are posted at all Minneapolis boat launches throughout the summer. The Park Board has found five virulent invasive species in its waterways – including zebra mussels and Eurasian watermilfoil, which is abundant in Lake Calhoun.

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The Park Board advises that all watercraft – including kayaks, canoes, and standup paddleboards – be thoroughly cleaned and dried after every use, even if it was only for a few hours.

Once out of Lake Calhoun, the Parks Foundation will take the Lake Creature to a Minneapolis art conservator for a professional assessment of her condition and any needed repair, in preparation for a longer stay in another lake in 2016. *Minne* is maintained through donations to the Minneapolis Parks Foundation; to contribute for her rehabilitation, please visit [MplsParksFoundation.org](http://MplsParksFoundation.org).

### **About the Minneapolis Parks Foundation**

The Minneapolis Parks Foundation, which partners with the [Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board](#), is an independent 501c3 dedicated to community investment in the nation's top park system. The Parks Foundation is working to ensure that the [RiverFirst](#) Initiative – a partnership with the Park Board and others to reimagine the Mississippi River north of St. Anthony Falls is implemented, is leading the design and preliminary steps for the [Water Works](#) site, and hosts the Next Generation of Parks Lecture Series. The Parks Foundation seeks to provide visionary and philanthropic support for the whole Minneapolis parks system with a special attention to innovation and equity. For more information or to support our work, please visit [MplsParksFoundation.org](http://MplsParksFoundation.org).