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not drugs

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Hanging up
the helmet

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help replacement

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The Journal



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STAFF PHOTO BY EMILY GEDDE

Due to the recent spring thaw, the ice road at the Voyageurs National Park Rainy Lake Visitor Center has closed for the season.

Professors offer ‘educated guesses’ for this year’s ice out date

BY SPENSER BICKETT
Staff Writer

One of the coldest winters on record led a group of local professors to err on the late side with guesses of when ice out will happen on Rainy Lake.

Professors from Rainy River Community College were picked by The Journal and asked, “When do you think the ice will go out on Rainy Lake?”

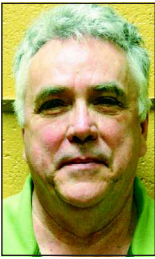
The ice is considered out on the first day a boat can travel from Rainy Lake’s Island View to Kettle Falls without being impeded by ice. The earliest ice



Jeff
Wickstrom



Stephanie
Olson



Mark
Rooney



Rachel Hasbargen-
Glowack



Tom
West



Kelly
Sjerven

Wickstrom and Stephanie Olson both picked May 23, though their reasoning behind their guesses was quite different.

Wickstrom based his guess on last year’s ice out date, which was May 16. Conditions this year are worse than last year, so he added another week to last year’s date and guessed May 23. However, he said he hopes he’s wrong, and the ice goes out before Memorial Day weekend.

“I hope that I am way wrong, because I would sure like to get on Rainy Lake as soon as possible

Ice Out to A6 >

Plans for road improvements reviewed

BY LAUREL BEAGER
Editor

Drivers in the International Falls and Ranier area should expect to see some changes in area roads as the construction season this summer and next gets underway.

Bob Anderson, chairman of the Highway 35 Citizens Long-Range Improvement Task Force, met with members of the task force last week for an update on a variety of projects.

Anderson reported to The Journal the Rice River to Cook four-lane expansion of U.S. Highway 53 is 72 percent complete, Kevin Adolfs and Rob Ronning of the Minnesota Department of Transportation told the task force.

The late spring last year delayed the restart of the project, which has added a few days to it, he said.

The northbound two lanes, being used as a detour people are

now driving on, is complete, but will be resurfaced upon the end of construction of the southbound two lanes, now under snow, he said.

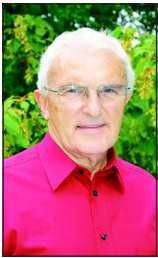
The expected completion date is in July, Anderson said.

“A couple of small frost heaves are yet to be investigated, but otherwise it’s looking very good,” he said.

Peat excavation will be conducted as crews prepare to work on the southbound lanes when the snow is gone, he said. Frost has been measured down to nine feet in those areas, he said.

“Two more months and that four lane will be done to Cook,” he said.

If all goes as anticipated, Anderson said \$5.1 million should be left from the federal allocation for



Bob
Anderson

the project and nearly \$1 million left in state funds. That money could be used to add four center-turn lanes and three passing lanes on the highway. Contracts for the center-lane improvements, in a “best guess” scenario, could be awarded in December with construction in 2015. Wetland permits will need to be secured for some of those improvements, he said.

The meeting also included an overview of significant road projects in MnDOT District 1.

Under that plan, a portion of Highway 53 will be resurfaced in 2015 with resurfacing in other areas planned in future years, he said.

As part of that, work will be done within International Falls from the curb section near Chocolate Moose to Fourth Street and east on Minnesota Highway 11, he said.

Roads to A6 >

INTERNATIONAL FALLS CITY COUNCIL

Council to consider
airport funding

BY LAUREL BEAGER
Editor

International Falls City Council is expected to consider a report on financing options for improvements at the Falls International Airport when it meets April 21.

The report Monday by city Administrator Ken Anderson was accompanied by a draft resolution asking the airport commission to study all options for funding the local share of a proposed terminal improvement project and ongoing operations and maintenance expenses.

The resolution also calls for a recommendation by the commission to the council and

Koochiching County Board for “cost effective financing of the local share of costs that considers tax base, anticipated terminal building users, and revenue sources including lease income, passenger facility charges, bonds, cash reserves and/or other sources.”

The city and county jointly own the airport, which is governed by a local airport commission, made up of representa-



Ken
Anderson

Council to A6 >

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