

Manitowoc County Lakes Association 2025 Edition

Wave Boats Regulations The Issue of the Year



MCLA'S BOARD OF DIRECTORS

***President Jerry Corfman** corfmanpj@yahoo.com*

***Vice President Maria Lynch** mlynch1421@gmail.com*

***Secretary Scott Umland** scoumland@gmail.com*

***Treasurer Marcia Salm** marciasalm@gmail.com*

***Membership & Newsletter David Pozorski** dp1@mainframe.cc*

***Publications Roger Vander Logt** roger@Vloutdoormedia.com*

Letter from our President



Greetings and welcome to our 2025 MCLA newsletter,

Along with all the volunteers that make this newsletter happen, I want to thank you in advance for reading it and providing us with any feedback you may have. As always, if you have an appropriate article you would like to submit for our next newsletter, please feel free to contact us about it through our website (manitowocountylakesassociation.org).

Years ago, I attended 3 or 4 Wisconsin Lakes Partnership conventions as President of the Wilke Lake Advancement Association. Note that it is now called the Wisconsin Lakes and Rivers Convention. I was extremely impressed with the amount of information available at these conventions and I highly recommend that every local organization sends someone there to gain this info to pass back to your respective community. Unfortunately, now that I have become a “snowbird” I am out of the state when this convention takes place in late March or early April. There are concessions and compromises in virtually every aspect of life and giving up attendance at the convention was something that I regrettably had to

relinquish. Looking back at the conventions that I did attend, I remember a speaker talking about the NIMBY principle (Not In My Back Yard) and I have never forgotten that concept. Please think about this principle as you read the rest of my letter.

So how does the NIMBY principle apply to you?

Do you have a cell phone, flat screen TVs, solar panels, and a vehicle with all kinds of bells and whistles?

Do you use AI (Artificial or Augmented Intelligence), knowingly (ask SIRI a question) or unknowingly through internet site interactions rather than speaking with a representative?

Do you have garbage pickup or do you take your refuse to a township recycling center?

Do you enjoy eggs in the morning, chicken, beef, or pork at home or at your favorite restaurant?

Do you like to birdwatch or watch pollinators at work (bees, butterflies etc.)

Do you have a fast, sleek boat to get to your “fishing hot spot” first with the latest fish finding technology or do you own a boat that has push button ballast control to modify wake sizes for various water activities?

Do you want clean water in our county lakes that you use for your various activities?

Would you agree to have one or more of the following in your backyard (or your neighborhood) in order to have the amenities that I listed above?

Raw materials mines for the materials that are needed for all the electronic devices in our lives and the solar panels that provide us with cleaner energy.

Install a cell tower in order for your cellphone to work reliably.

Would you support a nuclear power plant or a SMR (Small Modular Reactor), wind turbines and/or solar farms to help mitigate the enormous amount of power that will be required by the AI data centers? Would you accept scheduled rotated power outages to keep AI data centers running?

Oil refineries and pipelines and rail and truck transport are necessary to supply the gas and fuel oil for our needs but no one wants them to disturb their neighborhood. Would you?

Think about what you send to the landfill. Are you able to compost everything that you do in your own yard?

Certified Animal Farming Operations (CAFOs) are highly regulated but they do have associated odors that many people find objectionable.

Would you stop drinking milk, eating cheese, eggs, poultry, beef and pork to reduce the need for CAFOs?

Would you stop using all pesticides to help our pollinator populations recover? How about planting additional native flowering plants in your yard?

Most water activities have the potential to impact the quality of our waters in some way. Would you give up potentially harmful water activities for the good of everyone that uses the resource? Would you stop fertilizing your lawn and install shoreline buffers, fish sticks, etc. on your riparian property for the good of the water quality?

If you didn't understand the NIMBY principle before, I think you should now. Most everyone wants the amenities in their lives until they have to answer the question of whether they will allow something to happen in their backyard. It's all well and good when it's somebody else's back yard and out of sight and mind to you. Regardless of your affiliation in the currently divisive political atmosphere, we all share the same world and we must be cognizant of and act respectfully when it comes to open and honest discussions about the consequences of the amenities we want. There are a lot of very good results that can come out of cross sectional team problem solving discussions. Let's have these discussions and start solving the issues based on what data tells us. Solutions will continue to evolve and hopefully enough foresight will go into those solutions to mitigate the impact to anyone's backyard. The solution starts with you! Understand the problem and get involved and don't be afraid to agree to disagree during the process.

In closing, I'm repeating a portion of the last paragraph from my 2024 letter as I feel it is still very appropriate ...

Enjoy our natural resources in a safe and environmentally conscious manner and respect others that are sharing the same resource with you. Be safe, have fun, read and follow the local ordinance signage at the individual boat landings and leave the water as good as or better than when you arrived!

Respectfully,
Jerry Corfman
President – MCLA

2024 MCLA Banquet Held at Autumn Ridge



From Left, Maria Lynch, Mary Shimek, Jerry Gospodarek and Jerry Corfman

Maria Lynch, and the Pigeon Lake Association nominated Jerry (Gus) Gospodarek, for one of MCLA's Lake Stewardship Awards.

Jerry has been involved in the Pigeon Lake Association (PLA) since 2008 becoming a board member in 2010 and was President from 2012-2024.

- during his tenure, membership has increased to 259 members from approximately 80 and involved 50 properties which also increased to 119.
- was instrumental in establishing relationships with various county, township and DNR departments.
- was also actively involved in the MCLA.
- implemented local road clean up, help expand creek cleanup of the creek between Pigeon Lake and Little Pigeon Lake to keep lake flowage open.
- helped develop the PLA lake apparel program.
- reinstated the walleye restocking program.
- developed and was administrator of the PLA Facebook page until 2024.
- helped promote Ice Golf in winter to fundraise for walleye restocking
- initiated with the help of Steve Meidl the lake management program to eliminate the Eurasian Water Milfoil in 2016 with ongoing surveillance.
- Co-chaired Camp Sinawa kitchen help for their Christmas at Sinawa program from 2010-2024.
- Co-chaired the 50/50 July 4th celebrate raffle resulting in thousands of dollars being put toward the walleye restocking program.

Jerry has been blessed to be surrounded by so many volunteers who aided in his success with the PLA.



From left are Bill Fricke, Amy Fricke Weigel and Dave Pozorski

Dave Pozorski presented **Amy Fricke Weigel and Bill Fricke**, brother and sister owners of **Fricke Printing**, with their MCLA Lake Stewardship award plaque at the April meeting. Fricke Printing has been printing, labeling, sorting and mailing our newsletters since about 2003. When we started mailing our newsletter out to 1400 riparian landowners, the county could no longer print that many for us. Up to this point, Tom's office personal or our members on their kitchen tables, labeled and sorted by zip code to get us a Non-profit mailing group rate, When **Fricke Printing** took over the printing job, they not only did the printing, but also the labeling, sorting, and mailing. Now Fricke does this for us by computer, and saves us all a lot of time, and delivers it to the Post office for us. For this, we say **"Thank you the great job that you do for us"**.



“Healing the earth, One Yard at a Time”

Shannon Davis-Foust

I am an environmental educator, a climate activist, and I have been serving on the Wild Ones Fox Valley Area for 15 years. If I had to pick one, I'd say advocating for native plants is my most important work. Why? Science has alerted us to accelerating biodiversity loss, climate instability, insecurities in food production, and a future that looks bleak. The evidence is clear that we are at a pivotal moment in our global conservation needs. To start, the iconic monarch butterfly is slated to be added to the Endangered Species List this year, and the rusty patched bumblebee already is listed. It's happening now-not in some far off, hard-to-envision future.



Land use is the key to solving many of our environmental problems. In Dr. Doug Tallamy's famous book, *Bringing Nature Home*, he points out there is more lawn than national parks in the lower 48 states. Lawn is America's #1 crop. And we can't eat it. He stated the “homegrown National Park” movement to encourage people to stop mowing their lawns and put in native landscaping. Google it; it's pretty cool. Doug is pretty cool.

Why native plants? Their large root systems compare to lawn makes them extra hungry and resilient. Native plants gobble up carbon and absorb nutrients to improve water quality and prevent flooding., and they provide habitat for birds, insects, reptiles, amphibians and other species to find food and shelter. You actually don't need to fill a bird feeder! Native plants do this naturally.

As beneficial and important as native plants are to healing the earth, lawns are still all pervasive in American culture, and lawns continue to grow with urban sprawl and moving directives that take even more habitat along the roadsides. You can change this social acceptance of habitat destruction. Here is what you can do:

- ♦ Educate yourself: Stay informed about native ecology, native gardening techniques, and environmental issues. Attend courses to deepen your knowledge and skills. The Wisconsin Native Certification Program can be found on our chapter website. Our courses aren't just focused on native plants, we also teach about forests, fungi, nature teaching strategies, insects, and much more. There is something for everyone.
- ♦ Volunteer: Conservation groups have many volunteer opportunities. Your time and input are the very fabric of success. Become an advocate for conservation: Share our message of the importance of native landscaping with friends, family, and neighbors. Engage with local policymakers and community leaders to promote policies that support native landscaping and conservation practices.
- ♦ Go outside and inspire others: Transform your own landscape by incorporating native plants and reducing reliance on non-native species. By leading by example, we can help others to see the beauty and advantage it offers.
- ♦ Collaborate: Partner with other people and community groups whenever you can. Reach out to us to help synergize your ideas for events.
- ♦ Most importantly, believe in change. Your voice can make a significant impact in shaping the future of our environment.

Wild Ones members offers programs including presentations and yard tours, classes and mentoring, annual plant sales, grant to help offset the cost of native landscaping, conferences, and more. All of these activities offer lots of opportunities to connect with others. (And nature folks tend to be pretty nice people.)

Take part in the movement. Check wildones.org for more information. Together we can make a meaningful difference.

“There are many ways of elevating humanity, the best is with understanding.”

J.R Lowenstine

Seven Rivers Soil Cooperative Benefits Manitowoc County Lakes

In January 2024, Seven Rivers Soil Cooperative in Manitowoc County was formally established as a watershed conservation group. Watersheds are areas of land that separate waters flowing to different rivers, basins or seas. Seven Rivers Cooperative was inaugurated by 10 area founding farmers topsoil health, reduce or deter impairment of waters in Manitowoc County area watersheds, and to mitigate the negative effects of climate change and farmers carbon with 23 pages of footprint. The Cooperative presently has 16 farmer members and 6 corporate member / sponsors and has committeemen's on 22,000 acres to use advanced, tested and improved agronomic techniques that will detect soil and nutrient runoffs from farm fields that may and often does impair water quality for at least sulfas waters.



On the website of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, one can find the 23 pages of impaired surface waters in the state. On this list there are 5 of Manitowoc County's 17 lakes listed as impaired for reasons such as phosphorus, mercury, excess algae and degraded aquatic plants. Strangely enough, though, eight of Manitowoc County's lakes having higher phosphorus levels greater than 20 ug/L are not listed as impaired, based on Manitowoc County's Soil and Water Department tests of phosphorus in 2023.

While area farms are not known to be contributors of mercury contamination and pollution, we certainly have contributed to phosphorus runoff. In fact, roughly 98 percent of the causes of impairment of all Wisconsin waters are attributed to phosphorus. With climate change and extreme weather events caused by such, heavy and extreme downpours of rain are attributed to causing runoff of topsoil and plant nutrients. Phosphorous as one of three principal components of fertilizer needed for healthy plant growth remains largely concentrated on surface and upper couple of inches of top soil to which a small amount of phosphorous is bound. The remainder of the phosphorus remains unbound. Runoff from heavy rains carries that phosphorus to our watershed and pollutes our lakes and rivers. We as farmers being stewards of the environment and the farmland we tend seek to find ways to eradicate the polluting and impairment of our watersheds. The Cooperative intends to educate local farmers through mentoring and leading by example. In 2025 we will begin by offering financial incentives to member farmers to adopt practices such as: year-round living plants and at least after late summer/harvest to plant cover crops, no-till or minimum tillage to not disturb earthworms and soil microbes that increase organic matter, in the soil that makes the soil more absorbent to receive downpours and deter runoff, low disturbance manure injection, riparian barriers, and waterways, amongst others. Grazing livestock will also improve our environment. The financial incentives are paid from initial investments of the founding members, grants from the Wisconsin's Department.

Of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection, matching grants from other funds, and member's dues along with in-kind contribution from the county's Soil and Water Department. Presently and nationally, only two percent of farmers engage in cover-cropping and 15 percent in no-till. Our members in Manitowoc County are much higher, but there is still a great amount of work needed to educate and help farmers adopt new practices that will improve our watersheds and lakes.

Seven Rivers Soil Cooperative, then, is working to provide significant benefits to the lakes, lakeshore owners and residents, and the county's community by improving farming practices that clean our waters and reduce their impairment. Let us as farmers and members of the Manitowoc County Lakes Association work together to be a winning relationship.



Ryan Sullivan from the Sullivan Family Farm, and a board member of the Seven Rivers Soil Cooperative accepted a \$200 donation from MCLA. The Seven Rivers Soil Cooperative is a farmer-led group in Manitowoc County focused on sustainable agriculture and soil health while at the same time mitigating the impact of farming to the environment. You can learn more about this group by going to their website at <https://www.sevenriverssoilcooperative.com>



MANITOWOC COUNTY LAKES ASSOCIATION

“The Manitowoc County Lakes Association will protect and enhance the quality of area lakes and watersheds for the benefit of all.”

6/26/2025

Hazardous wake size resolution Resolution 2025 - #1

The Manitowoc County Lakes Association propose that the following non-binding resolution be adopted to communicate our concern regarding the adverse side effects to Manitowoc County’s lakes created by the use of boats creating hazardous wake sizes.

Be it resolved that the Manitowoc County Lakes Association (MCLA) supports at a minimum a “hazardous wake” restriction preventing the intentional generation of hazardous wakes within 500 feet from any shoreline or any other water user on a lake or river and in waters less than 20 feet in depth.

Be it also resolved that although this resolution is intended for Manitowoc County lakes, MCLA recommends that hazardous wakes only be allowed on State of Wisconsin lakes that are 500 acres in size or larger to provide adequate space for the safety of all water users and mitigate any possible environmental impacts created by generation of these hazardous wakes.

For the purpose of this resolution a hazardous wake means a boat wake the height of which is intentionally amplified through the use of added ballast, boat design features or other operational procedures that are used to increase the size of the motorboat’s wake. These enhanced wakes are generally created at speeds of 15 miles per hour or less with the boat operating in a continual bow up position.

Note that the intent of this resolution does not prohibit the use of any type of boat on Manitowoc County lakes; it only prohibits the creation of the hazardous wake sizes by said boats via the methods stated above.

Also, because each and every waterbody may have its own unique properties the MCLA resolution recognizes that in order to protect a specific waterbody, local municipalities shall have the right to enact or maintain local ordinances that are more restrictive than any statewide minimum that may be enacted.

Additionally, in order to aid in the prevention of invasive species, boats that move from lake to lake must safely decontaminate or remove residual onboard water prior to entering another waterbody.

Respectfully,
Jerry Corfman
President – Manitowoc County Lakes Association

Are Wake-Generated Waves significantly different from those of other boats in terms of shoreline erosion?

Wake Surfing on Wisconsin Lakes: Environmental Threat or Misguided Hysteria?

Wake surfing has been enjoyed on Wisconsin lakes for over 25 years. Cedar Lake, the largest lake in Manitowoc County, is home to approximately 10-12 wake boats owned by riparian property owners and features a public boat landing. The lake's 2024 Aquatic Plant Management (APM) Plan highlights its heavy usage, stating: "At 154 acres, the lake has a maximum depth of 27 feet, an average depth of 10.3 feet, and 3.57 miles of shoreline. Being the largest inland lake in Manitowoc County and located near the cities of Manitowoc and Sheboygan, Cedar Lake experiences the highest use of all lakes in Manitowoc County."

Given the number of wake boats—especially over the past 5 to 10 years—the impact on the lake should be evident.

Has Cedar Lake been Ecologically Compromised due to Wake Boats?

A review of the most recent Cedar Lake APM Plan 2024 gives us the best picture of plant life and water quality on Cedar Lake. The three indicators used to evaluate the lake are : Floristic Quality Index (FQI) , Trophic State Index (TSI), and the Simpson Diversity Index (SDI)

Floristic Quality Index (FQI) status:

The FQI measures aquatic plant communities based on species presence. Cedar Lake, located in the Southeastern Wisconsin Till Plains eco-region—a glacially formed area—typically experiences more shoreline development and recreational use, which can lead to some degradation in aquatic plant metrics like FQI and the coefficient of conservatism. Despite these pressures, the report notes that Cedar Lake maintains a **FQI of 27.29, a high-quality and above-average aquatic plant community for the region.** While some variance in metrics is expected, there is currently no cause for concern.

Table 5: FQI and Average Coefficient of Cedar Lake Compared to Wisconsin Southeastern Till Plains									
	Average Coefficient of Conservatism			Floristic Quality			Number of Species		
Quartile*	Lower	Mean	Upper	Lower	Mean	Upper	Lower	Mean	Upper
Wisconsin Lakes	5.5	6	6.9	16.9	22.2	27.5	8	13	20
Southeastern Till Plains	5.2	5.6	5.8	17	20.9	24.4	10	14	19
2021	5.82			27.29			23		

Trophic State Index (TSI) status:

Cedar Lake is classified as mesotrophic, meaning it has **moderate nutrient levels and supports a healthy balance of aquatic life.** The lake is described as mildly productive, **with excellent water clarity, making it well-suited for recreational use.** Long-term data on water clarity, total phosphorus, and chlorophyll-a show a stable trend with only minor annual fluctuations. The lake's average TSI score is **44.5**, reinforcing its mesotrophic status.

Simpson Diversity Index (SDI) status:

Species richness on Cedar Lake was above average compared to other lakes in the region, with 23 species identified. The lake exhibited strong diversity at the sample level, averaging **2.09** native species per vegetated site, which is consistent with results from previous surveys. Additionally, a well-distributed mix of species was observed throughout the lake, reflected in a **Simpson Diversity Index (SDI) score of 0.88.** Since SDI values closer to 1.0 indicate a healthier and more evenly balanced plant community, this score suggests that Cedar Lake maintains a robust and stable aquatic ecosystem.

In summary, there is no evidence in the 2024 APM Plan to support the claim that wake boats are destroying the ecological makeup of Cedar Lake. On the contrary, **the lake continues to exhibit strong plant diversity, stable water quality, and resilience despite ongoing recreational use and historical management interventions.**

While concerns are often expressed with phrases like “we’re at a tipping point” or “our lakes are in imminent danger,” a careful review of the available scientific data and decades of recreational use suggests that the situation being portrayed does not align with the facts.

AVE MAX WAVE ENERGY ft-lb/ft (AMC, SAFL, Ray, Terra Vigilis, WSIA, WEC)			
	100 ft*	200 ft	300 ft
Ave Fish/Ski 20-24 mph	45		
Ave Wake Boat - No Ballast 20-24 mph	100		
Ave Fish/Ski 10-12 mph	157		
Ave Wake/Typical Boat - No Ballast 10-24 mph	158		
Lake Keesus Tubing @ 100 ft: 16 mph**	174		
Ave Wake Boat - No Ballast 10-12 mph	223		
Ave Wake Boat - Ballast 10-12 mph	278	144	110

* - Current law: Even with local ordinances including exemptions, these wave energies have existed for years and will continue to exist.

** - Video analysis: 20' wake boat with no ballast; meets current ordinance language

- LWA and LAS utilize a comparison similar to this to achieve their wave energy messaging.

- WWC: normal and exempted activities from ordinances can produce wave energies legally at 100 ft comparable to average wave surfing energies at 200 ft.

Do Wake Boats pose a greater risk of spreading AIS compared to other Watercraft?

In 2024, Wisconsin's Clean Boats Clean Waters (CBCW) program inspected approximately 146,000 boats statewide. One key question asked during inspections was: **“Was your boat in a different body of water within the last 5 days?”**

The CBCW program emphasizes that when boats are properly drained and dried for **at least 5 days**, the risk of transferring invasive species is effectively eliminated.

DNR Guidelines for all boats: all water from boats, motors and equipment must be drained. This would include the draining of engine compartments, and all lines associated with live wells, bilge pumps etc. **DNR instructions for Wake boats and ballast systems** Access the Water Sports Industry Association's [Boat Decontamination Database](#) to understand the water system of your boat model so decontamination can be performed effectively and safely. For example, view the [Ballast Tank Decontamination](#) video produced by the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission.

Wake boats account for approximately 3.7% of all boats inspected. This means that out of every 1,000 boats moving between lakes, only about **37** are wake boats, while 963 are other types of watercraft.

Restricting wake boats will not significantly reduce the spread of aquatic invasive species (AIS) because all types of boats have the potential to carry invasives. Effective prevention depends on consistent, thorough decontamination practices across all watercraft.

Are Wake Boats Safe on Lakes

Wake boats **do not pose a greater safety risk** than other boats on Wisconsin waters. According to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR), the state has over 2,139 lakes larger than 50 acres where fast boating is legally permitted.

At the Natural Resources Board Meeting on August 24, 2024, the WDNR reported that from 2021 through August 6, 2024, it responded to 31 **calls**, not citations, for service specifically related to wake surfing or ballast boats. This averages to approximately 1.4 calls per month statewide.

Moreover, Cedar Lake has not issued any citations related to hazardous wakes or wake surfing violations.

Is there actually a Problem here, or just Perception?

There is justification for increasing the setback to 200 feet from shore, as this would help ensure that the impact of wake boats is equal to or less than that of other boats operating at 100 feet the statewide legal limit.

Is there actually a Problem here, or just Perception?

There is justification for increasing the setback to 200 feet from shore, as this would help ensure that the impact of wake boats is equal to or less than that of other boats operating at 100 feet the statewide legal limit.

Unfortunately, concerns about wake boats often extend beyond scientific data and objective impacts. For many, the issue is rooted in personal preferences, aesthetics, and how the presence of these boats changes the overall atmosphere of the lake. **Simply put, some people just don't like them.** We cannot base laws or legislation on personal preferences; doing so is inherently unfair and creates an unstable foundation for governance.

Some groups want restrictions far surpassing those of other states in the nation. Compounding this is the current patchwork of local government ordinances that ban the use of ballasts on lakes, and create confusion on state lake regulations. Many of these town boards are composed of part-time officials operating with limited budgets and resources. Without access to specialized experts or the ability to conduct thorough, evidence-based studies, they are using the method of “copying” these ordinances from other towns making them vulnerable to legal challenges. Litigation—whether through private counsel or municipal insurance—can be costly. Towns risk increased premiums or even losing coverage altogether. To quote a recent article published in NPR regarding a lawsuit in the Town of Scott: *“This Town and others have had repeated opportunities to accommodate all lake users, but with these bans, which are the most extreme in the country, towns have shown they cannot be trusted to act reasonably and compromise,” Attorney Anders Helquist said in a statement. Helquist said a “reckoning” is coming for towns that have passed bans, saying they plan to challenge all ordinances statewide.*

The solution: Statewide legislation The movement to do this is already underway. The fact that legislative leaders from both the Senate and Assembly - along with other lawmakers - stepped away from budget negotiations to discuss statewide wake surfing legislation with Stakeholders underscores the urgency and importance of this issue.

Lawmakers are wisely considering the long-term effects and aren't inclined to support making Wisconsin the most restrictive state in the country when it comes to wake surfing and other watersports. Such sweeping limitations would have broad consequences for public lake access, the recreational boating industry, and the state's tourism economy. Any move of that magnitude would require clear, compelling evidence to justify it.

Wake surfing, like all recreational activities, can and should be managed responsibly. But singling out a small segment of lake users without solid justification risks dividing communities and weakening the shared lake culture that makes Wisconsin unique. Sustainable, inclusive policy should be the goal—not reactionary restrictions.

Q&A Lake Districts

Q: Can someone get multiple votes at a lake district meeting if they own multiple properties?

A. No. All government elections in Wisconsin are based on the concept of “electors,” who are people representing themselves and are the sovereign of the state in our democracy. In any government election, you only vote once and voting more than once is a crime. Typically, you only get to vote where you live and the question of whether you own property where you live never applies. Outside of lake districts, owning property affords you no additional voting eligibility in Wisconsin. Ownership of property in a Wisconsin lake district makes you eligible to vote on the budget and in lake district elections - it's your “admission ticket” to an election that you otherwise aren't eligible to vote in (because you do not live there). If a person is both a resident, a landowner of a parcel, and the assigned representative of a corporation that owns another parcel, they are still only eligible to vote once. Those characteristics are just different paths to obtain eligibility.

Suffrage for lake district landowners represents an expansion of the sovereign concept to include non resident landowners as members of the lake district electorate. Article III Section 2 (5) of the Wisconsin Constitution provides that: “(Laws may be enacted...) Subject to ratification by the people at a general election, extending the right of suffrage to additional classes.” Wisconsin held a statewide referendum in November of 1980 to determine if this expansion should be allowed; it passed with 1,210,452 voting in favor and only 355,024 voting against.

Lakes are an indispensable thread woven into the tapestry of land and water that makes Wisconsin an exceptional place to live. Our history of oblivious abuse and overuse of Wisconsin's lakes is a flaw in that tapestry. Our growing awareness, our capacity to weave partnerships, and our collective wisdom will help remove past imperfections.”

Cedar Lake

Two out of three Wisconsin citizens report using lakes each year. This means four to five million plus, use Wisconsin lakes each year. The state's lake resource has remained the same, about 970,000 acres of inland lakes. In the meantime, the number of lake users and the numbers of different types of activities continually increase.

From 1970 to 1990, the average horsepower of motors of Wisconsin residents increased from 10 hp to 55hp. The national average was about 100hp for this same time frame. Technology has changed dramatically since then and has become much more invasive on other users. In addition, the "me first" attitude of the last 30+ years has made all types of users more selfish and less tolerant of other users.

For every reported boating accident, there are probably thousands of cases of conflict that do not get reported.

While the DNR (Department of Natural Resources), the NRB (Natural Resources Board), and the State Legislation have recognized that there are problems, they have failed to recognize that interpretation of laws must change to meet current social needs to preserve our lakes. The DNR has put the burden on local municipalities and said they should enact their own ordinances to deal with it.

Education is important, but not sufficient by itself. Regulation will be necessary when the number of users increase, and technologies expand.

All lake water users should be safe, courteous and let your legislators know your opinions on water activities.

As for Cedar Lake, we are feeling the effects of the above mentioned advancement in water activities, having about 14 ballast type boats owned by riparian owners. Cedar Lake is the largest lake in Manitowoc County at just 136 acres with an average depth of only 9 feet. This is nowhere near the size and depth needed to use this type of boat that makes the 3-4' wave to surf on when fully loaded with up to 6000lbs of lake water. They then travel in a bow up manner at 12mph, which studies have shown to churn up the bottom down to 27'. Nutrients are stirred up and plant life uprooted damaging vegetation, releasing phosphorus, which causes algae blooms, and damaging the lake eco system.

Currently the Schleswig Town Board has sent an ordinance to regulate wake surfing and condition report to the DNR for their determination to make sure it doesn't violate any state laws. It has been ok'd by the DNR, so the next step is for the Town Board to vote at their September meeting whether to enact or decline the ordinance. This is the same situation the Village of Elkhart Lake is at now with their ordinance and condition report where they will soon decide whether to pass or decline the wake surfing regulation.

Crystal Lake, in the Town of Rhine, has had such an ordinance in place for 4 years with no tickets having been issued, only 1 warning given out. Long Lake in Manitowoc County has also had such an ordinance in place for some years. Lake Ellen in Sheboygan County also has such an ordinance in place for a few years. Fifty-Nine municipalities in the state covering over 300+ lakes also have such an ordinance, most of them with the help of the Last Wilderness Alliance. The LWA group said they plan on having an additional 50 municipalities on board by next summer.

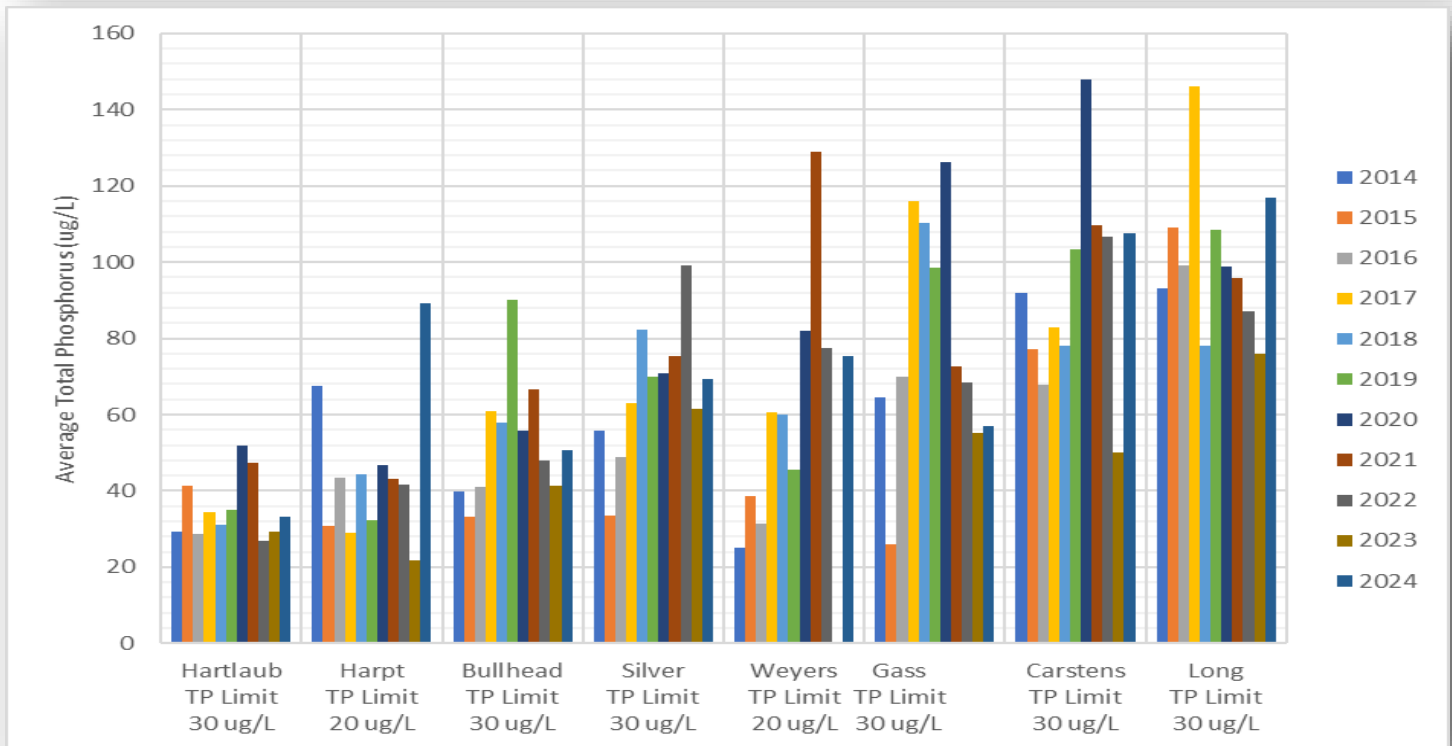
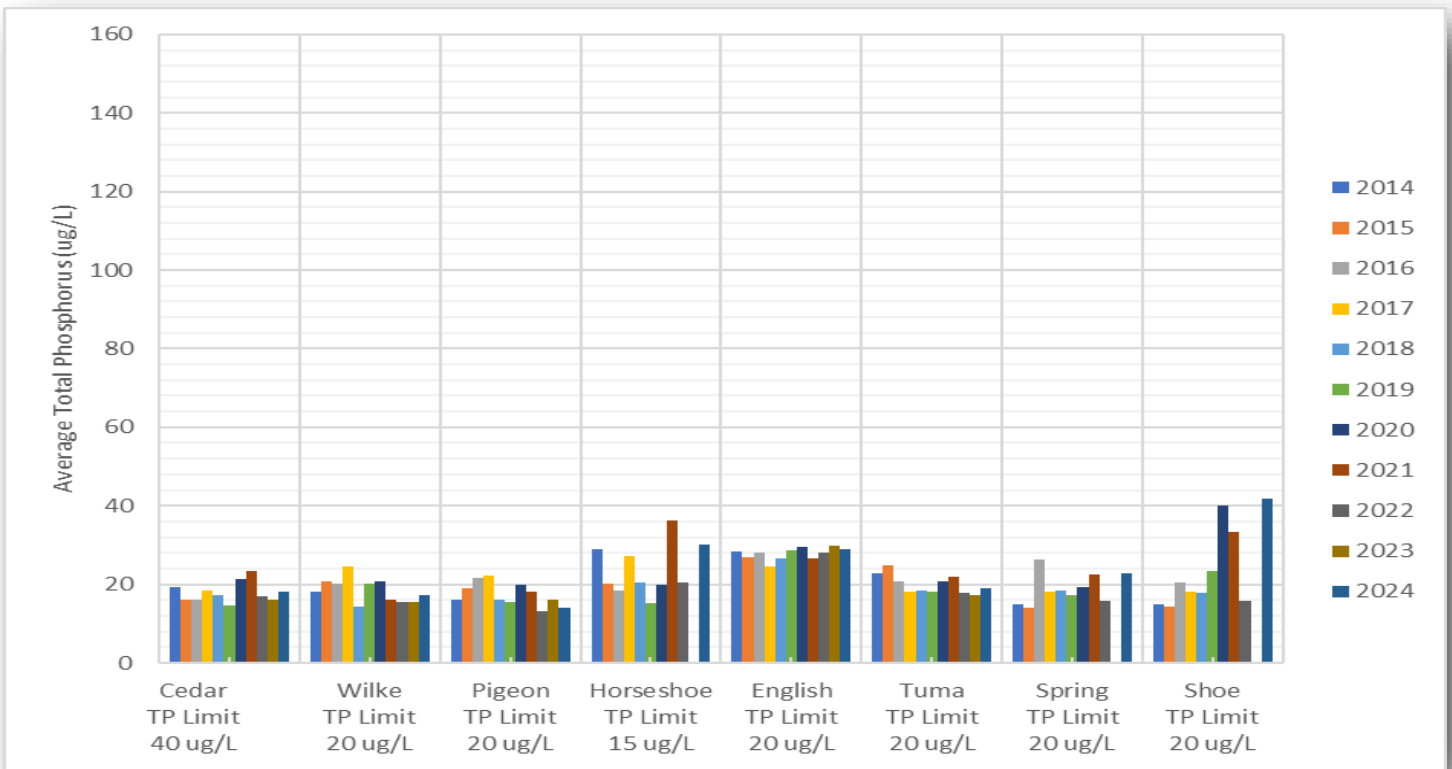
To slow down the success of these statewide ordinances, the first lawsuit was filed in Burnett County in northwest Wis by wake surfers who own property on the Wis lake but reside in Texas and Florida. They want the price of their wake boats awarded to them because they can't use them for the purpose they bought them for. I believe they have less than a 1% chance of winning their lawsuit because the average depth of the almost 800-acre lake is only 6'!! Wake boat owners' manuals say to operate these boats in at least 20' of water for the best results. This is an effort to stop and intimidate municipalities from proceeding with passing wake surfing ordinances! LWA has already said this. A recent study by St. Anthon Falls research shows in a video how a surf boat destroys the bottom with every pass when in 9' and 14' of water. They say the boats should be in at least 20'.

A recent vote at the MCLA showed a 19 to 0 vote favoring a resolution to regulate boating. The Cedar Lake Improvement Assoc. did not vote because the president said it was too controversial. The lake Sanitary District, which is the only entity that can get grants for the lake, voted with the majority.

The Town of Schleswig Sanitary District (Cedar Lake) was one of only 6 grants in the state, awarded a whole lake grant of \$53,000 to treat the invasive Eurasian Water Milfoil. The early season application after a pretreatment survey was a huge success! No EWM has been found to date. This treatment should last 3-5 years with annual surveys and spot treatments if necessary. The harvester is running great and ready for the soon to be celery weed bogs which usually start popping up late summer.

Thank you,
Mike Strebe
Chairman, Town of Schleswig Sanitary District #1

2024, 10 Year Phosphorus Data on our Counties Lakes



We would like to thank our water testing volunteers listed below for a job well done:

Robert Sengbusch, Pat Kohlman, Brian Robley, Scott Otterson, Fred Van Serke, John Lambert, Marlene Rezek, Gene Weyer, Jake Devine, Chad Wendt, Dave Koplin, Fred Ruszkjiewicz and Jaret Paltzer.

Phosphorous graphs provided by Eric Oppermann of the Soil and Water department.

Manitowoc County launch tube donation came to a total grand of **\$20,186.53** for the 2024 season. The money collected is used for maintenance of all Manitowoc County launch facilities and helps offset costs for new piers, restrooms, paving and signage. We would like to thank Pete Tarnowski and the Manitowoc Planning and Zoning for keeping these numbers for us.

	Day Pass		Seasonal Pass		General Donation	
	Count #	Amount	Count #	Amount	Count #	Amount
Bullhead Lake	107	\$535.00	21	\$420.00	9	\$42.51
Carsten's Lake	41	\$205.00	41	\$220.00	5	\$25.75
Cedar Lake	417	\$2,085.00	134	\$2,665.00	21	\$170.62
English Lake	87	\$435.00	27	\$540.00	4	\$24.00
Harpt's Lake	99	\$495.00	17	\$340.00	8	\$34.75
Horseshoe Lake	97	\$485.00	31	\$620.00	8	\$45.65
Long Lake	694	\$3,470.00	126	\$2,520.00	27	\$183.70
Pigeon Lake	140	\$700.00	32	\$635.00	5	\$48.55
Silver Lake	46	\$230.00	16	\$320.00	6	\$19.00
West Twin	70	\$350.00	17	\$340.00	3	\$20.25
Wilke Lake	72	\$360.00	20	\$400.00	4	\$11.75
Walk In	0	\$0.00	54	\$1,120.00	2	\$70.00
Total	1870	\$9,350.00	536	\$10,140.00	102	\$696.53

Phenology Fun Fact

Did you know the green darner dragonfly can travel all the way from the Gulf of Mexico to Wisconsin for the summer? Just this week the common green darner (*Anax junius*) was observed in Marinette County near the Menominee River.

Because each wing is powered separately, these acrobats are able to move in all directions, catch their meals in flight, and sometimes avoid predators like birds, frogs, and fish.

Photo shows a female green darner laying eggs under a lily pad while a male holds onto her.

photo by Robert Korth





New Fishing Piers at Bullhead and Carstens Lake

The 115-year-old Manitowoc County Fish & Game Protective Association represents over 2,000 sporting men and women in our area. The Pier Committee charged is with helping improve access to the great natural resources we have at lakes in the county. The Forward Endowment is a trust established to fund projects focused on hunting, fishing, conservation and related education. They have announced the successful completion of the new pier project at Bullhead and Carstens Lake. It is part of an ongoing access improvement process that has been happening in Manitowoc Co. for many years. The Forward Endowment has partnered in several of these projects, and provides funding to help support projects. Credit should also be given to Greg Grotegut and the Manitowoc County Highway Department for the excellent paving work they provided at the landing.

The Forward Endowment has provided over \$130,000 in grants to projects and groups in Manitowoc County. These represent completed projects in the community. The Forward Endowment is a 501C3, and donations can be made check payable to The Forward Endowment, c/o Associated Bank. Only interest incomes from the fund are spent so that the fund will continue to grow and be there for future generations. Memorial or estate planning gifts are possible through the fund. Those making end of year charitable contributions.

For more information contact mantyfg071@gmail.com

Carstens Lake Aerator Hose Reel



Over the past 25 years the sun and weather has not been nice to our aerator hose at Carstens Lake. It is time for replacement. There are three hoses that are 150 feet long and 1 1/2 inch wide. This use to all lay on the ground and was a real challenge to stretch out each time we needed to use it until we created this reel. At that time we relaced a portion of the hose, and now it is time to look at a total replacement. Our board is looking into the cost of the hose at this time. For replacement this is quite an undertaking, as we have to stretch the hose out down Karbon Lane in order to do this, and then rewind it, this is a job in itself.



John Karbon Memorial Bench at Carstens Lake Boat Launch



From left are Brian Robley, Carstens Lake Association President.
Patti Reilly, Carstens Lake Association Secretary - Treasurer.
Dan Stock - Newton Fire Department, Assistant Chief.
Tom Hochkammer, Newton Fire Department Chief.
Bernice Christensen, John Karbon's Sister
Brock Kapla, John Karbon's Great Nephew.
Jenna Kapla, John Karbon's Great Niece in law.
Kipp Kapla, John Karbon's Great Great Nephew.
Marcia Salm, Carstens Lake Association Vice President.



From left are Dan Stock, Newton Dept. Assistant Fire Chief, Brian Robley Robley, Carstens Lake Association President, and Tom Hochkammer, Newton Fire Dept. Chief



Carstens Lake Association

The Carstens Lakes Association dedicated John Karbon Jr.'s memorial bench at Carstens Lake County Park on August 9, 2025. Since John moved to his Carstens Lake home in 1976, he became active in the community. He was a charter member both, the Manitowoc County Lakes Association and the Carstens Lake Association. He worked for Schuette's and the Town of Newton plowing snow and grading roads. He was a Town of Newton supervisor, a member of the Newton Fire Department and belonged to various community baseball teams. His friendly good-natured personality along with sense of humor naturally drew people to him. John loved everything about fishing and life on the lake. It is right and proper that even though John passed away in 2019, his presence will forever be felt with his bench placement overlooking the lake.

At the dedication John's sister, Bernice Christensen gave a donation to the Newton Fire Department building fund and Carstens Lake Association. Carstens Lake Association also gave a donation to Newton Fire Department building fund.

The bench was made possible by a memorial donation from the Town of Newton Fire Department and Carstens Lake Association. Thank you to Stocks Manufacturing and Newton Fire Department for transporting and placing the bench. Thank you also to Collin Kernz and Gintner Concrete for the cement foundation.

48th Annual
WI Lakes and Rivers Convention
April 15—17, 2026,
Stevens Point, WI
Visit

[Lakes and Rivers Convention-
Wisconsin Water Week](#)

for more in information

In Lakes and Rivers Convention

15



DNR conservation wardens Isaac Hackett and David Bennett introduced themselves and give us an update on their schedules for Manitowoc County and answered questions from the audience.

Lake Representative (director) responsibilities

Through the years the Manitowoc County Lakes Association board figured out that we need a better way to communicate with our lake residents. At that time, we decided that each lake was in need of a representative and an alternate, giving each lake one vote on decisions being discussed at the meetings, in order for that representative to take meeting information back to their lake residents. **Each representative has a title as a director and is listed as such on our website.**

- A director is an individual, or a designated alternate if the director is unable to attend a meeting, that represents a Manitowoc County Lake for the purpose of providing Information to MCLA with respect to that lake's residents.
- Directors or alternates have voting rights on behalf of the associations they represent at our MCLA meetings. If both the director and the designated alternate are in attendance at a meeting, only one vote is allowed on behalf of the lake they represent.
- A director or alternate should be prepared to provide a verbal report on behalf of their represented lake at each meeting with respect to items relevant to their lake such as grants, projects, social events, and lake conditions, to name a few. If neither are able to attend a meeting then a written report should be emailed to the president a week in advance of the meeting
- The representative or alternate that was present at the meetings should report to their lake residents what transpired at MCLA meetings.
- A director is required to provide a short report for our newsletter, consisting of a couple of paragraphs reporting on grants, projects, lake conditions, and other items of interest.

January 27, 2023

County Lake Reports

Cedar Lake Update by Scott Otterson, Sanitary District Commissioner and Cedar Lake Improvement Member 6/26/25 Successful DNR Grant for Herbicide Treatment:

The DNR grant to the Sanitary District for Eurasian Water Milfoil (EWM) treatment was only one of seven awarded. A chemical treatment for [EWM](#) occurred on May 27th. The DNR is contributing \$53,000. No signs of any EWM have been found and the native plant community is thriving!

Fishery Update:

5,267 Walleye fingerlings were stocked in the lake on June 16th. The DNR Biologist has been working with the Sanitary District to improve the fishery by revising the lake's current regulations. The recent Spring DNR/Wisconsin Conservation Congress

Survey had overwhelming support to;

Set the bag limit to 10 pan fish with a maximum of 5 bluegills. This is based on DNR Study Findings.

Set a Northern slot limit to return fish between 25 inches and 35 inches with a 2 fish bag limit to promote a reduction in small fish and improvement in growth rates.

It's anticipated that these new regulations will go into effect in the Spring of 2026

Successful DNR Grant for Boat Inspection:

The DNR awarded the Sanitary District a \$3,000 grant to pay for youth monitors at the boat landing. The Grant is being managed by a volunteer that has organized youth from the ages of 12 through 18 to take surveys and explain the importance of cleaning and draining boats to prevent transfer of invasives. These paid youth are supplemented by unpaid adults that contributed over 400 hours last year.

(continued from page 16)

Outhouse Upgrade:

Concerns over a County outhouse having stained concrete floors led to a cooperative improvement in the outhouse at the landing. The lady managing the Clean Boats Clean Waters Program wanted a nicer facility for her monitors at the landing. Contacts with Parks and Planning Director Tim Ryan resulted in approval of volunteer donated labor and expenses. The floor was degreased, prepared, and sealed with a colorful epoxy covering which provides an amazing look and ease of maintenance. Donations that were added were a Packer end-table, Mirror, and a Signed numbered framed watercolor of two ducks. Stop by for a look and we are challenging others to top it.

Bait Station installed at Landing:

A local resident installed a 24-hour bait station at the landing. It has red worms and nightcrawlers in a self-serve display with a payment box. Another great idea that could catch on.

Free Loner Library Kiosk:

Another resident provided a loaner library kiosk at the landing. It has a variety of kids and adult books. Another great community idea.

Cedar Lake Improvement Association Wave Enhancement Non-vote

After much concern at the April MCLA meeting by the President of the CLIA, the Wave Enhancement Resolution was tabled to allow for a polling at the Spring CLIA meeting. At the Spring CLIA Meeting, she took the regular Sanitary District Update off of the agenda. No opportunity for discussion of the MCLA Resolution was brought to the floor and no vote was taken.

Three days before tonight's meeting, she sent out a biased survey with a two-day response time. It was not sanctioned by the CLIA membership nor reviewed by all of the CLIA Board of Directors.

Town of Schleswig submits Draft Wave Enhancement Restriction Ordinance

The Town of Schleswig supported and approved the submittal of a Draft Ordinance for Wave Enhancement Restriction to the DNR for their review of compliance with the State regulations.

Over 80% of surveyed Cedar Lake residents want an ordinance and the Sanitary District unanimously feel that it is necessary to preserve Cedar Lake having an average depth of 9 feet with wave enhancing affecting lake bottoms over 25 feet in depth.

English Lake

There are a couple of projects going on for our lake this year. For invasive lake weed control, we are in the second year of the three year project with the WDNR and Onterra. This will include sampling and identifying the types and extent of the infestation by Onterra. We were successful in applying for a Grant from the DNR to help offset the costs. The second part of this project is to get feedback on the needs and desires of the members that represent a cross section of types of lake stakeholders. We already have the volunteers for this part of the project and will begin this year. As a result of both of these separate processes, we will determine with the DNR our plan of action to address the weed infestation.

The second project is the continual upkeep of the natural prairie which is a critical buffer from agricultural runoff to the north shore. We have contracted with Robert Lee and Associates to control the invasive weed species and encourage the growth of native flowers, trees and grasses to filter the runoff waters. This in turn will reduce the fertilizer load in the lake. The plan is to do a controlled burn this fall to maintain a healthy prairie and hence a healthy lake.

Hartlaub Lake

Hartlaub is being enjoyed by a steady group of kayakers. They come for the solitude of a smaller lake that does not allow motors. The kayakers catch and release the occasional bass and a few bluegills.

Unfortunately, water quality and clarity are less than average lakes in Manitowoc County. Some locals do swim but there are weeks when the water is not inviting. Old time farming practices have been abandoned but their affects continue on. The legacy phosphorus will take many decades to flush out of our deeper lakes.

Manitowoc County is blessed with choices for water activities. You can choose a bigger clean water lake for water skiing and other motor sports, or you can choose a smaller lake with solitude.

Pigeon Lake Report

Hello from Pigeon Lake, a great community of people dedicated to maintaining the water quality and lake environment for all to enjoy.

Early this spring, the Secchi disk reading was at 13', one of the best in recent years. The Water Quality committee of the Pigeon Lake Association (PLA) continues to monitor the water throughout the year.

(continued on page 18)

In years past during bouts of high rainfall, the lake has been closed to fast boating to help maintain the integrity of the shoreline and piers. This summer, work is being done by Eric Opperman from Manitowoc Soil and Water to measure the water level at different locations around the lake. He is using GPS coordinates to collect data which will help guide the PLA to establish an appropriate water height for the lake. It is hoped that enough data will be gathered this summer to be able to determine the water level when fast boating needs to be shut down.

Pigeon Lake Association received some good news recently from Onterra regarding the presence of EWM (Eurasian Water Milfoil) in the lake. In early August, Onterra conducted a GPS mapping survey of the lake, reviewing previous surveys and EWM locations as well as the 2016 pretreatment EWM footprint. Onterra is extremely pleased with the low amount of EWM in Pigeon Lake now, 9 years after the spring 2017 whole lake 2,4-D treatment. Manual removal of EWM, plant and roots, in August of 2024 was very successful, and Onterra recommends we continue to use trained divers to remove identified EWM each year.

The members of PLA are very active in maintaining our area. In the spring, a volunteer crew cleans out the creek between Pigeon Lake and Little Pigeon, while another crew does the road clean up along Pigeon Lake Road and part of County F. Another crew maintains the garden at the boat landing. Volunteers work in the kitchen and on the grounds at Camp Sinawa for their fall Family Day and Christmas at Sinawa events. And for fun, members participate in the Spring Golf Outing at Autumn Ridge and the Ladies of the Lake summer dinner. 4th of July events brings lots of guests to the lake for the Boat Parade and the amazing Fireworks Show. For exercise, there is a group of morning walkers as well as an ebike biking group. Our Pigeon Lake community is very involved!

Reflections

A lake is the landscape's most beautiful and expressive feature. It is earth's eye looking into which the beholder measures the depth of its own nature.

~Henry David Thoreau

Bullhead Lake Report

The Bullhead Lake District continues to work with Onterra, LLC to monitor phosphorus levels to try to determine the share of internal loading vs. external loading. To this end, the lake district submitted a surface water grant seeking funding for sample collections and analysis. Unfortunately, that study was not funded.

The question of adopting a 10 panfish aggregate limit on Bullhead Lake was generally supported by the questionnaires and individuals responding to the spring Conservation Congress surveys and those attending the meetings. It is anticipated that the new limits would go into effect in spring 2026.

An early spring fyke netting was performed but the report has not been released yet. We were told the capture was mostly northern pike.

The county put in a new, very nice fishing pier. It is receiving considerable use.

Silver Lake

Some Positive things are going on at Silver Lake are: there are many Kayakers and fisherman using the lake: fishing remains good: and the docks for public fishing have been sprayed for weeds and are also used regularly.

In addition, there are a couple of concerns. The weeds are really aggressive this summer. The shallow waters are weed choaked and non-fishable. Furthermore, there has been a large amount of trash being dumped in the parking lot by the boat ramp. People are abusing the garbage disposal in the parking area and are dropping off everything that you can imagine.

Spring Lake

Spring Lake is consistently enjoyed by kayakers, boaters, and fishermen, many practicing catch and release fishing. Because of the lake size gasoline engines are not allowed which makes for a quiet outing.

Shore fishing can be challenging with the amount of weed growth. But even so, just this evening there is a father and young son having a good time fishing from the dock at the public boat landing.

Water clarity with secchi disc as recorded on 8/24/2024 was 5 feet. Phosphorus level recorded on the same date was 22.6 (ug/L). And chlorophyll at 20.9 (ug/l).

Wilke Lake

Wilke Lake has had a busy start to 2025. Some Highlights of the year so far and upcoming actions/events include:

This past January, working with the DNR we anchored 3 Fish-sticks adjacent to the DNR Land on the Northwest corner of the lake. The fish-sticks are whole trees submerged and anchored to the shoreline to improve fish and other wildlife habitat

- During Mid May we used a firm to chemical treat Milfoil weeds in the lake. We treated an area of 30 Acres. Since treatment we have had no evidence of Milfoil. Most weeds died within 2 weeks. Weed treatment was fully funded through the district. We have engaged the services of an engineering firm to prepare a Lake Aquatic Plant Management report. We will be pursuing grants in the future. (HOPING FOR GOOD RESULTS from all efforts)
- Wilke residents continue to grow and expand. Multiple lake remodel/rebuild projects are ongoing. Our year round residents are increasing.
- DNR lake water sampling continues (Ice out and June, July, August sampling). Sampling compares Water Clarity, Chlorophyll levels and Phosphorus levels. So far all results continue to have year over year positive trends.
- Many Lake Events (Lake Association and other) planned/occurred including: March Association Corn Hole Tournament (Good time had by all)
 - I. 4th of July Fireworks
 - II. Summertime Boating, Tubing, Skiing, Fishing, Kayaking, Paddle boarding and other water fun.
 - III. Association Golf Outing at Autumn Ridge (always a great time, some great golf).



Join us at our MCLA Annual Banquet

Viking Bow and Gun Club
13431 Rusch Rd.
Valders, WI 54245
October 11, 2025

4:00 P.M. Hour with cash bar
5:30 P.M. buffet dinner served by Altona
\$20 per person advanced reservation
requested for headcount purposes.
Fee is payable at the door, cash or check
payable to MCLA.

RSVPs and door prize commitments due no later than Friday, October 3rd to Kim Braun at kimskattebo@icloud.com or phone/text (920) 973-2390

Speaker: Phil DeCastro, Meteorologist at WLUK-TV FOX 11, Green Bay
Phil DeCastro has been a meteorologist at WLUK-TV FOX 11 in Green Bay, Wisconsin for 14 years after spending 2 years at WLUC-TV in Marquette, Michigan. He has a degree in meteorology from Penn State University, and since coming to this region has developed a deep appreciation for the crucial links between weather, climate, and our local environment and ecosystems.

Good Food
Great Speaker
Lake Stewardship Awards
Great conversation before and after

Come and join us

It only took less than a couple of second's to flip a pier on English Lake at the home of Joe and Kim Braun. On July 8th 2025 a brief but powerful storm came through the English Lake area with straight line winds that flipped the pier on top of their pontoon. Other reports in the area included a tree falling on top of a camper and another tree being uprooted out the ground.

MCLA,
P. O. Box 342,
Valders, WI 54245

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Manitowoc WI
Permit No. 448

Save these 2026 MCLA meeting dates

***February 26, April 23, June 25, August 27 and November 19
Room 300 in the Manitowoc County Office Building
On Expo Drive***

Join our Membership:

***Manitowoc County
Lakes Association***

\$25 - individual membership

Payable to :

**MCLA,
P. O. Box 342,
Valders, WI 54245**

MCLA'S Mission Statement

The Manitowoc County Lakes Association will
protect and enhance the quality of area lakes and
watersheds for the benefit of all."