



ON THE WATERFRONT

The newsletter of the
WASHBURN COUNTY LAKES & RIVERS ASSOCIATION, INC.
**PROMOTING THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND RESPONSIBLE USE OF
WASHBURN COUNTY WATERS, SHORELAND AND WILDLIFE RESOURCES.**

President's Comments

SPRING 2011 #26

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WCLRA provides copies of its *On The Waterfront* newsletter to individual members and to association board members. If your association has recently had elections, please make us aware of the address changes. Contact Fred Blake at 715-469-3228 or blakelake@centurytel.net

In April, I attended the annual Wisconsin Lakes Convention in Green Bay. The theme for this year's convention was "Speaking for Our Lakes". One of the outstanding speakers was Eric Eckl whose business, called "Water Words That Work", helps nature protection and pollution control organizations professionalize and modernize their communications.

Eric gave us tips on persuading more people to get involved in our water protection efforts. The best way to approach a potential new volunteer is to begin with something small. The typical volunteer won't undertake a bigger commitment until they have had a taste of the success and the satisfaction from a lesser responsibility. Eric also talked specifically about how to get more young people involved. He said that young people will be most likely to participate in group efforts that provide immediate satisfaction and social interaction such as beach cleanups.

Eric also advised us to avoid technical jargon that won't be meaningful to the general public. For example, instead of "riparian owners," we should say "waterfront owners" or "lakeshore owners." "Watershed management" is a term that could be replaced by "land and water conservation". Similarly, "natural area" is more descriptive than "open space". "Storm water" translates better than "polluted runoff" and "clean water" is more readily understood than "water quality". Simpler, readily understood language is better.

Another speaker at the convention was the new DNR Secretary, Cathy Stepp. After some fairly brief remarks, she opened it up for questions. Many people in the audience objected to the Governor's proposal to delay implementation of the phosphorous rule, which Sec. Stepp supports. (See p.4 for background on this issue.) There were more questions than she could address in the time allowed, so she invited us to send her our opinions and concerns via email. Her address is dnrsecretary@wisconsin.gov. She said that she reads all of her emails personally.

It is important to tell the DNR Secretary and our legislators about our concerns for Wisconsin's waters. (You can look up your legislators' contact information at <http://legis.wisconsin.gov/w3asp/waml/waml.aspx>.) I also think it is important to speak out to our neighbors and visitors and about our concerns and the threats to our waters. If you see someone doing something that will impact our water, either positively or negatively, don't hesitate to say something.

I wish each of you a pleasant summer on Washburn County waters and urge you to speak out for our lakes, rivers, streams, wetlands, and groundwater. They cannot speak for themselves.

Cathie Erickson
President

Zoning Matters

Web Macomber, Zoning Administrator
Washburn County

Greetings:

I am sure glad that the spring season has finally reached northern Wisconsin. It has been a very long winter; it is nice to see the ground and open water again. Of course for the zoning office, that means that we will be issuing more permits and will be out and about. I should say that I HOPE we will be issuing more permits, as the economic situation has affected everyone to say the least.

I crave simplicity and try to maintain a back to basics lifestyle. I also tend to be direct and like to get right to the point; too much so sometimes. As we enter the time of year when we like to cut, dig, hammer, mow, tear down, drag, remove, erect, build, push and add-on, I am asking you to simply “think” before you do any of the above activities. I know the readership of this article is well-aware of zoning regulations, so if my statement doesn’t apply to you, pass it on to your lake neighbors who may not be as familiar with land-use regulations. Now, what am I asking you to “think” about? Well, in larger urban areas throughout the nation, there are regulations that govern pretty much any activity that humans can do. Most people tell me they wouldn’t even “think” about cutting, building, adding on (but it’s just a little deck) with out a permit. Well, we generally have the same laws here although it is a little sparse in terms of government regulation, especially when it comes to land-use. The day-to-day job falls on the DNR and the counties. When you get the urge to improve your property please consider the following:

1. Zoning permits (land-use) are required for any structure greater than 64 square feet in size, even if it is temporary or can be moved. All structures, even the small ones, must meet water, road and lake setbacks.
2. Property owners - do not assume your contractor obtained the permit!
3. Contractors - if I were you, I would not begin a job until it has been determined who will get the permit. Once the permit is obtained, post it on the job site!
4. Working on existing dwellings is confusing when it comes to permitting. Basically, all that can be done without a permit is general maintenance and repair. If you are expanding any part of the structure or even doing something that requires altering any of the structural members (joists, exterior wall studs, trusses, etc.) you may need a permit.

5. The vegetation along your shoreline is important for the health of the lake. Simply put: State law requires it to be there. If it is undisturbed and in the natural condition, leave it that way back to a distance of 25’ less than your lake setback. You may PARTIALLY CLEAR a 30’ wide viewing corridor so you can see the lake and within that corridor, you may mow, clear, create a 4’ wide access path, but that’s generally it! If you want to do more, it is best to ask first.

6. Do not install or work on your septic system yourself! Plumbers need to do that and permits are required.

7. Do not rely on rumors and lake gossip as to what is allowable and what is not. Again, call us!

In closing, I wish to express thanks to all of you who support our efforts and to those of you who may in the future. It is a difficult job properly serving all of the people who actually do obtain permits and a more difficult one “serving” the ones who don’t. The economic situation took its toll on this office and we lost the position held by Katie Bauer. She and her dedication to her job will be greatly missed, so like many of you, we will have to do more with less.

Enforcement of the zoning code will not lessen. Violations, especially those that affect our lakes are too important to overlook. Finally, as you interact with your lake neighbors, perhaps you could relay the message that we (in zoning) are not “cops on a power trip”. Countless property owners express their appreciation to us for helping them with a project. We’re trying to do a good thing here! The lakes belong to all of us.

Calendar of Events

MAY:

Saturday May 21 AIS Monitoring Workshop
DNR Service Center
9am-11am

JUNE:

Friday June 24 NW Wisconsin Lakes Conf.
Northwoods School, Minong
7:30am-3:45pm

JULY:

Learn About Your Lakes – see article on page 9 of this newsletter for dates, times and locations of sessions.

Saturday July 23 Minong Town Lakes Fair
Minong Town Hall
Nancy Lake Road
9am-3pm

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The Governor and the Legislature

By Earl Cook & Fred Blake

Legislative activity this year has been quite interesting. Immediately after being sworn in, Governor Walker called a special session of the legislature to deal with a number of his special requests. Eleven bills were introduced including the Budget Repair Bill, **Special Session AB-11**, which garnered nation-wide attention. That bill became the bill that eliminated collective bargaining for public employees and could have an indirect impact on environmental implementation and enforcement. The bill passed and was signed into law by the governor as **2011 Act 10**. But, at this writing, the court has stepped in, ruled that the bill was improperly enacted and issued an injunction that stops the implementation of the law.

Other special-session bills may have a more direct environmental impact. **Special Session SB-10**, passed and signed into law as **2011 Act 6**, exempts a small wetland area in the village of Ashwaubenon, Brown County, from water quality regulations. The exemption, limited to Ashwaubenon, was specifically introduced to allow for development of a Bass Pro Shops facility. As a result of the controversy surrounding the issue, Bass Pro Shops – consistent with its environmental orientation – has withdrawn its interest in the land.

Note: *In a conversation with Bass Pro Shops, I was told that when their name was first brought up as a developer for the Brown County site, they had not yet been contacted. When subsequently asked if they would be interested in a site in the Green Bay area, they were unaware that it was a wetland area. When the facts were finally known, Bass pro shops, consistent with its strong environmental protection ethic, indicated that it would not build on a wetland area. FDB*

Special Session AB-8 was proposed to introduce some radical changes in the administrative rule process. Administrative rules form the backbone of the implementation of many laws and fill in the details of what the law covers and how it is to be enforced. The most significant part of this bill allows the governor to approve or disapprove proposed administrative rules. Under current law, the governor has no role in the generation and promulgation of administrative rules. If this law is adopted, the governor will effectively have the ability to veto, pre facto, an administrative rule before it is even developed. **Special Session AB-8** has passed both houses, but was referred to committee rather than being sent to the governor. The rationale for this unusual maneuver is somewhat clouded.

The Assembly and Senate are currently in regular session and a number of regular session bills are noteworthy.

The most significant bill introduced thus far is the governor's 1345-page budget bill, **AB-40/SB-27**, containing the governor's proposals for the 2011-2013 biennium. Numerous hearings on the bill will be held across the state and both legislative bodies will debate the budget issues and have the opportunity to offer amendments. A budget of some sort should be passed by July 1, 2011.

The Legislature.....continued from page 3

Some noteworthy proposals in **AB-40/SB-27** include:

Lake Protection Grant Funding and AIS Funding are both proposed to be funded at current levels through the next biennium.

Funding for Best Management Practices (BMPs) in the Targeted Runoff Management (TRM) Program would be augmented with an additional \$7 million in new “segregated” fund supported general obligation bonds.

AB-23/SB-19 addresses the current DNR rule requiring disinfecting of all municipal drinking water systems and limits DNR’s authority to require disinfection to only those municipal systems required to disinfect under federal guidelines.

AD-43/SB-33 addresses the hearing procedures associated with the removal of dams.

SB-36 reintroduces a bill that was considered but not enacted in the last biennium. This bill exempts highly developed, unincorporated areas like Minocqua from NR 115.

Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program:

Early in the budget process, it became known that this program was under scrutiny. The program provides for bonded funds to cost-share the purchase of private lands for public use and recreation. The legislature had authorized \$86 million dollars/year over the next 10 years for this purpose. Although there were concerns that the funding might be reduced, the governor voiced his support for the program and the total amount of funding was left intact.

However, the following additional proposed conditions would make the process more difficult and more likely to encounter resistance from local governments.

- In general, only fee simple land acquisitions would now be funded. In the past, development rights and easements could also be acquired but, except in special cases, this would no longer be the case.
- Aids to local governments in lieu of taxes would be eliminated with future purchases. These aid funds helped offset the tax losses when a piece of land was purchased by the state and was taken off the local tax rolls. Local governments would now be required to pass a non-binding resolution in support of or in opposition to the purchase. This condition will make it less likely

that stewardship funds will be granted because local governments will not want to lose tax revenue.

- Acquisition costs for land would be required to reflect the lower of the acquisition price or the fair market value and two appraisals would be required for all grants.

Limitation on Phosphorus Standards

Another area of concern relates to the recent effluent (agricultural runoff) standards and limitations in **Wisconsin Administrative Code NR 217**. As most of us are well aware, excess phosphorus in runoff can lead to noxious and sometime dangerous algae blooms, lower oxygen levels (which can threaten fisheries and other aquatic life), and excessive vegetative growth. NR 217 attempts to reduce the amount of phosphorus reaching our waterways.

The governor’s budget initially recommended **prohibiting WDNR from enforcing the already promulgated phosphorus administrative rule** if it established effluent limitations that were more stringent than limitations established by any of the surrounding states (Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota or Ohio were listed) However, as observed by Wisconsin Lakes, since NONE of these surrounding states has rules addressing issues “uniquely related to phosphorus”, the proposed budget would effectively prevent WDNR from using the phosphorus criteria to develop water quality based effluent limitations for publicly and privately owned wastewater treatment facilities and implementing them through the Wisconsin Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (WPDES) permits.

A subsequent March 31, 2011 “Budget Errata Letter”, http://www.wispolitics.com/1006/large/110331_2011_13_Budget_Errata.pdf, modified the original position stating that “The bill needs to be modified to remove the reference to standards in other states and should instead delay the effective date of the phosphorus numeric quality standards.” This is a step in the right direction, but we strongly concur with the Wisconsin Lakes (WL) position that phosphorus policy should be removed from the budget.

We have relied heavily on information published by or available from Wisconsin Lakes (WL). We thank them for their invaluable efforts on behalf of all of our Wisconsin waters. Please see the insert information on Wisconsin Lakes (WL) and how to support those efforts.

Northwest Wisconsin Lakes Conference Comes to Minong in June 24, 2011

By John Haack

Mark your calendar!!! The *2011 Northwest Wisconsin Lakes Conference* will be held on Friday, June 24 in Minong at the Northwood School. This popular program will again be a great opportunity for lake enthusiasts, local government officials and others interested in protecting our water resources to take in a full day of educational presentations, exhibits and networking. Dr. Nancy Langston, Professor in the Department of Forest and Wildlife Ecology and the Gaylord Nelson Institute at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, is the conference's keynote speaker on the topic, "Toxic Bodies and the Struggle for Healthy Watersheds." Her current research focus is on Lake Superior.



Breakout sessions at the conference will cover a wide variety of lake-related subjects and issues, including:

aquatic invasive species control strategies, using mapping tools for lake projects, lake legislative updates, using conservation easements to protect lakeshores, model shoreline zoning ordinance, lake grant programs, bringing wildlife to your shore, history of water resource

protection, algae in your lake, update on the clean boats clean waters program, lake projects that work, loon status update, and frogs in your lake. The registration fee is \$45, which includes: admission, program materials, a continental breakfast and lunch. Doors open at 7:30 a.m. and conference concludes at 3:45 p.m.

For more information or to register, contact the Sigurd Olson Environmental Institute at (715) 682-1223 or pkalmon@northland.edu. You can also register online at www.northland.edu/soei. For more detailed information on the conference program and speakers, contact John Haack at john.haack@ces.uwex.edu or (715) 635-7406.

It's A Dam Problem!

By Jeanne Brown
Minong Flowage

In the 1930s, when people started to trickle into Washburn County for fishing and recreation, and when the Works Progress Administration was creating work for the unemployed during the Depression, a dam was built across the Totagatic River. Cutting the forests that would be flooded started in 1933 and construction of the dam was begun in 1936. A celebration on July 10, 1937 marked its completion. A memorandum on October 25, 1937 refers to the project as the Lake Nancy Diversion Dam owned by Washburn County. A report from the Water Regulatory Board dated December 12, 1938, states the purpose of the dam was for water conservation and lake level control. The dam was known as the Nancy Lake Dam. Two bodies of water, Geshen Lake and Moon Lake, were swallowed by the river waters that were held back by the dam, and the level of Cranberry Lake to the north in Douglas County rose two to three feet.

In the years since the dam was constructed, resorts lured more vacationers to the flowage that was created by the dam across the Totagatic River. People acquired land along the flowage for cabins and recreation. The new flowage, known as the Minong Flowage, covers an area of 1,736 acres in Washburn and Douglas counties.

Dahlberg Light and Power Company of Solon Springs applied for a certificate of convenience and authority to use the water power rights, site of the dam and adjacent lands in 1951. By 1953, Dahlberg Light and Power had completed construction of a powerhouse and production of electricity began in 1954. The capacity of the power production is 475 kilowatts, enough to provide electricity for ten McDonald's restaurants. A 50-year lease and use agreement was created between Dahlberg Power Company and Washburn County. In 1996, the power company lowered the level of the Flowage so that repairs could be made to the dam. In 2001, North American Hydro sub-leased the dam and entered an agreement with Washburn County, and they continue to sell power to area power companies. A new 50-year lease agreement is in effect.

On February 7, 2011, the Washburn County Board's executive committee was informed that the dam failed the most recent inspection. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources determined that the dam does not

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meet the requirements for a thousand-year flood event and the dam must be updated or removed. The county has 10 years to make a decision. Estimates of between \$1.8 million and \$2 million have been suggested for necessary upgrades.

This is not a "wait and see" dilemma. Property valued at \$60 million sits along the shoreline of the Flowage in Washburn County adding tax revenue of \$250,000 to the County annually. County officials are meeting with representatives of Dahlberg Light and Power and North American Hydro to determine what can be done. Yes, it is a dam problem!

EDITOR'S NOTE: *On March 28, 2011 the Highway and Dam Committee of Washburn County met to decide the plan of action for the Minong Dam. According to the minutes of that meeting, it was determined that there is a grant program in the state budget that would allow the county to receive up to \$400,000 if the proposed state budget is approved. The committee asked Mr. Johnson, Commissioner of the Highway Department, to send out RFP for the feasibility study and proceed with the grant paperwork. According to Lester Fiedler, County Board member, there is approximately \$750,000 in the county budget for this dam project..*

Youth Ecology Stewardship Project - Phase III Funding Approved

By Storme Nelson, Hunt Hill Executive Director

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources has just announced that a third year of the YES Project through the Wisconsin Lakes Planning grant Program has been approved. The spring and fall field trip opportunities will now be able to continue through 2012, and perhaps include even more students.

Almost 500 students in 3rd through 6th grade classes from watersheds in or near Washburn County have participated so far, including classes from Spooner, Birchwood, Shell Lake and Minong.

This partnership between the Hunt Hill Audubon Sanctuary, the Washburn County Lakes and Rivers Association, the Long Lake Preservation Association and the Wisconsin DNR, brings school classes out for a day of water quality environmental education. This includes habitats, lake chemistry and much more; and then asks the participants to return home to carry out a stewardship service project to make their water quality even better for their own schools, communities

and families. Grant money of up to a total of \$3,000 is used to pay for student program costs, instructors, water test chemicals, monitoring equipment and bus transportation costs to Hunt Hill, with matching funds or donated services from the partner organizations.

Reductions in school field trip budgets have meant that environmental education classes disappear from schools – YES helps to get more students back outdoors to learn about our northern Wisconsin water resources, why we have clean water, and the importance of protecting it. It helps to reinforce the sense of responsibility among younger generations to protect our water.

Town of Minong Lakes Committee

By Russ Robinson

MINONG TOWN FAIR – Be sure to schedule time on July 23, 2011 to attend the **Minong Town Lakes Fair** at the Minong Town Hall. The planning for this year's Fair is well underway. We already have word that we will receive money from two of three grants we have applied for which will help offset some of our initial expenses.

This year's fair promises to be even bigger and better than the last Fair held in 2009. We will have loads of activities for kids, presentations, vendor displays, raffles and **FREE** pig roast lunch.

If you are a resident of the Town of Minong and would like to get involved with your friends and neighbors in helping at the Fair please contact me at russrobinson@centurytel.net or call 715-466-4152.

LAKE SURVEY: The Minong Town Lakes Committee will also be doing aquatic plant surveys for five lakes in the town of Minong for which no current information is available. These surveys will be conducted by an outside consultant and will be used as a training opportunity for interested residents. The surveys are being jointly sponsored by the Town of Minong and a grant from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources along with volunteer time from members of the Town of Minong Lakes Committee.

ERRATUM: In the last WCLRA newsletter, I had stated that "nearly all the town's (Minong) income is generated through property taxes". A more accurate statement is that the majority of the town's revenue is generated by property taxes and approximately 70% of those taxes come from waterfront properties. Most of the remaining income is from state distribution of funds to local governments for road improvement.

The Doctor Is In

By Barb Robinson

In our Summer 2010 WCLRA Newsletter, we congratulated Earl Cook for his passion for anything to do with land-use and lake-related issues. On March 31, 2010 Earl was presented with the Wisconsin Lake Stewardship Award by the Wisconsin Lakes Partnership at the 2010 Wisconsin Lakes Convention. We talked briefly about Earl's contribution to WCLRA with his articles on the Wisconsin Legislature. In the March 24, 2011 Spooner Advocate, Earl was honored for his contribution to not only Washburn County but also for his tireless work on behalf of Wisconsin Lakes (WL).

Prior to moving up to northern Wisconsin, Earl worked for 3M. He earned a Ph.D. in physics from Auburn University through a scholarship underwritten by NASA. Even though he traded in his suit and tie for the quiet lake life he continued his "education". He admits that he was ignorant about rules and regulations concerning lake issues so he started asking questions and talking with people. He became involved in doing lake chemistry and water quality monitoring on his lake. From there he worked with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources doing lake monitoring and water testing on other lakes working closely with the Extension staff at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point. Earl eventually became involved with Washburn County Lakes and Rivers Association (WCLRA) and teamed up with Fred Blake, director and former president of WCLRA, to work on lake issues in Washburn County. He educated himself on environmental issues and the laws that go along with them. Earl was eventually encouraged to expand his environmental interests from county-wide to state-wide, by joining the board of directors of Wisconsin Lakes (WL). Through WL he works closely with the DNR and University of Wisconsin Extension as the "Lakes Partnership" According to Earl, the DNR "brings regulatory and technical expertise, the Extension brings education, and we bring advocacy and citizens to the table".

There is a lot more to Earl than what appears here. He has a passion for his lake but he took it a step further. We may have strong advocates in the legislature through Bob Jauch and Nick Milroy but we also have the "doctor" in the house to oversee our interests at the state level. Through him we are able to give you, our members, the latest information about what is happening in Madison. For this, and for the countless hours you spent on behalf of all our Wisconsin Lakes, we thank you, Earl.

The Three-Legged Stool

By Fred Blake

Most of us have heard of the proverbial three-legged stool and how it fails to function if even one leg is removed. In some ways, our efforts to protect and preserve our lake and river resources are dependent on a three-legged stool of sorts.

At the state level, **Wisconsin Lakes (WL) (formerly the Wisconsin Association of Lakes - WAL)**, works in and around the state legislature to support and influence the creation of sound legislation and state-wide policy with respect to our lakes. Over the years, they have been a major force. They have the ear of the legislators who have the power to help or hinder our efforts. Their actions are absolutely crucial to maintaining good state programs for the protection of our waters. They are, however, too far from our individual lakes to be thoroughly aware of our immediate local problems and concerns.

At our county level, **Washburn County Lakes and Rivers Association (WCLRA)** performs somewhat similar functions in and around county government and in partnership with other agencies such as WDNR and UW Extension. In addition, we are close enough to be able to interact closely with individuals and local lake associations (where they exist). Unfortunately most of our lakes do not have associations (just under 30 in the county). Our job is to inform, assist and represent residents of the 964 lakes and almost 700 miles of streams in Washburn County and it is a daunting task. Even we, with our proximity to the local lakes, will not always be aware of developing problems on individual lakes.

The front line is, and will always be, on the lakes themselves and it is the **local lake residents and associations** that will first observe problems when they surface. Maybe it will be (hopefully not) a small patch of Eurasian water milfoil or a few zebra mussels adhering to a metal dock post. Whatever the problem, the local residents or associations will likely be the ones to raise the alarm.

When people ask me which of these three levels of organizations they should join, I have no hesitation in saying ... ALL THREE! It may cost a few more dollars, but how do we weight those few dollars against the value of Wisconsin's unique and irreplaceable water resources? In the current legislative climate, our

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support for lake protection efforts at all levels is absolutely critical. Supporting lake protection at all three levels is not duplication. Each of the three “legs of our stool” performs different functions and all are essential to our overall success. If ever we needed broad support, it is now. Think about it!!!

Japanese Knotweed

By Lisa Burns
Washburn County AIS Coordinator



Large roadside stands like the one above are also prevalent alongside riparian areas.

Imagine floating your favorite river, and seeing it lined with a red bamboo-like stem growing 10 feet tall. Now imagine the same plant breaking through your pavement or building foundation. This nasty invader is called Japanese Knotweed. It is a perennial that grows in upland sites, however, is more concentrated in wetlands and riparian areas. It was brought to WI in the mid 1900's by landscapers and gardeners.

Impacts: Japanese Knotweed crowds out native vegetation and decreases wildlife habitat. On stream banks, it creates bare ground which results in faster erosion and flooding damage. When undercut banks form, stem and root fragments fall into the water and are carried downstream to inhabit a new site.

Identification: Tan-reddish hollow stem that resembles a bamboo stick. Leaves are 6” long by 3-4” wide and spade shaped; young leaves are heart-shaped. Flowers are greenish white, are held in a branched up-right position and are produced in late summer. It occasionally produces by seed, but mainly by networks of underground rhizomes. The rhizomes can reach 6 feet deep and can grow up to 60 feet long; making it vulnerable to push their way under streets and up through pavement and foundations.

Control: Unless it is a small patch, attempting to remove it by digging, pulling or mowing is nearly ineffective. Plants are more susceptible to herbicide

treatment if they are cut when they are 4-5 feet tall and re-growth treated around 3 feet tall.

Fortunately, Washburn County hasn't been invaded as heavily with Japanese Knotweed as with Purple Loosestrife. However, if you think you spot it or have more questions, please call me.

AIS TRAINING

There will be a **free** AIS monitoring workshop on May 21st 9:00am-11:00 am at the DNR Service Center in Spooner. The workshop will offer hands-on AIS identification, where to look, and how to set up a monitoring team. Space is limited. Please register by calling Lisa Burns at 715-468-4654.

Totagatic Wild River Update

Public Comment Survey Results

In 2010, after acquiring over 2000 acres of land along the Totagatic River, the Department of Natural Resources held input meetings around Washburn County. The purpose of these meetings was to gather information from the public, management staff and partner organizations about the use of this land. The meetings included DNR staff, government representatives and partners, including Washburn County Lakes and Rivers Association, and a public Open House held at the Minong Town Hall. Spooner DNR staff members were on hand at the Open House in Minong to field questions and present information about the property. Participants were asked how they would like to see the property managed, what type of activities should be included (and/or excluded) and what type of future land acquisitions should be pursued. The responses received from these meetings were included as part of the record of public comment for the project and will be used in developing the Feasibility Study for the project.

According to the Summary of Comments sent out in January from Jessica Schalkowski, Project Assistant, the majority of the input favored keeping lands along the river as wild as possible. “Quiet day-use activities were important, such as hunting, fishing, hiking, birdwatching, etc.” Many people expressed the wish that activities be limited to non-motorized use. River access for canoes and kayaks and land-based users was also suggested, along with stabilizing existing access points to reduce the problem of erosion. Forestry practices remain an important aspect of land management on the property with 18 comments received supporting continued management for timber with consideration given to erosion control measures, seasonal timing of any timber harvesting, an emphasis on maintaining a natural appearance and providing quality wildlife habitat. There

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was also strong support for protection of the river through further land acquisition. As with the acquisition of the 2000 acres, land would only be acquired through willing sellers. Department staff is presently developing a draft feasibility study which will be completed this summer and shared with the public during another public meeting and public comment period.

Also new this spring, the Totagatic Wild River has a webpage on the Department of Natural Resources site. Prior to this only the Pine, Popple, and Pike Wild Rivers had their own web pages. Using information, publications, and photos that had been collected over the past several years, the Totagatic Wild River page was activated April 11th. Check it out at: <http://dnr.wi.gov/org/land/facilities/totogatic/>

If you would like more information about the Totagatic Wild River or the Totagatic Wild River Lands Area contact:

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Learn About Your Lake

By John Haack



Loons, frogs and lake animals continue to fascinate children and families. Come to one or more of our Learn About Your Lake* presentations and learn about critters in and around your lakes. Have fun listening and learning about lake wildlife and what you can do to help keep them around your lake.

Session 1 **Living with Bears, Beavers, Bunnies and Birds**
Chris Cold, DNR wildlife educator and naturalist, will

discuss the fascinating and sometimes nuisance animals that inhabit our forested lakeshores. See Chris with his live raptors and get some tips about attracting birds and other wildlife to your lake shore.

Session 2 **It Isn't Easy Being Green: Frogs in and Around Your Lake** John Haack, UW Extension Natural Resources Educator, will share fun Wisconsin frog facts and teach you to recognize different frog calls. Expect a bit of live frog show and tell. Handle a live frog and get tips for helping frogs around your lake.

Session 3 **Loony About Loons**. Erica LeMoine from Project Loon Watch will teach you all about loon calls, loon migration, nesting and other fascinating loon facts. Get a free loon poster or purchase a loon mug and learn what you can do to help loons.

Program times and locations: *If you plan to come please e-mail us at learn.lakes@yahoo.com let us know what session(s) and location(s) you will attend. We need your e-mail confirmation to help plan for chairs, coffee and snacks. If you have question call John Haack at 715-635-7406.*

Bass Lake Town Hall (lunch included- hosted by area lake associations)

Session 1 Bears, Beavers, Bunnies and Birds

July 9th Noon- 1pm

Session 2 It Isn't Easy Being Green – Frogs In and Around Your Lake

July 16th Noon-1pm

Session 3 Loony About Loons

August 6th Noon- 1pm

Minong Town Hall (coffee and snacks provided by area lake associations)

Session 1 Bears, Beavers, Bunnies and Birds

July 9th 9am-10am

Session 2 It isn't Easy Being Green – Frogs in and Around Your Lake

July 16th 9am-10am

Session 3 Loony about Loons

July 30th 9am-10am

Birchwood School (coffee and snacks provided by area lake associations)

Session 1 Bears, Beavers, Bunnies and Birds

July 23th 10am-11am

Session 2 It isn't Easy Being Green – Frogs in and Around Your Lake

August 6th 10am-11am

Session 3 Loony about Loons

August 13th 10am -11am

*This program is funded in part by WCLRA through a WDNR Lake Management grant.

Chip Wood

By Cathie Erickson

I am sad to report Chip Wood's resignation from the WCLRA Board for medical reasons. Chip was elected to be WCLRA's first president at the formation meeting in 1999. While Chip and his wife Jan have been spending winters in California for several years, he has kept in contact with us via email. I have valued Chip's ideas and advice especially during my years as President. This year, because of illness, he will remain in California. We will miss him and we will wish him well. To contact Chip, email him at wwood987@centurytel.net.

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Early morning in Washburn County, Photo by Russ Robinson

Contacts to protect lakes and rivers

“We need more than ever to provide what help we can to protect our lakes and rivers from environmentally damaging activities. Keep your eyes open! We are the last line of defense! But **do not trespass** to obtain further information. Let those in authority check it out.”

DNR Water Regulation Violations and Information:

Dan Harrington (Water Management Specialist, Spooner Office).....715-635-4097

Jon Hagen (Conservation Warden for Southern Washburn County).....715-635-4099

Dave Swanson (Conservation Warden for Northern Washburn County).....715-466-5428

If wardens are in the field, messages can be relayed to them through the Washburn County Sheriff's Department at 715-468-4720 or at the DNR's toll-free tip line.....1-800-TIP-WDNR (847-9367)

County Shoreland Zoning Questions or Violations:

Web Macomber (Zoning Administrator).....715-468-4690

County Planning, Land/Water Resource Management Department:

Brad Robole (Director).....715-468-4654