

# 2022

## Wisconsin Lake Stewardship and Volunteer Stream Monitoring Awards




### Banquet and Awards Ceremony

Wisconsin Lakes and Rivers Convention

April 7, 2022

# *Join us in celebrating the stewards of our lakes and streams!*




## **Long-term Volunteer Lake and Stream Monitors**

The Wisconsin Citizen Lake Monitoring Network and Water Action Volunteers Program Leaders will congratulate several long-term lake and stream monitoring volunteers.



## **Volunteer Stream Monitoring Awards**

Since 2002, the Division of Extension at UW-Madison and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources recognize a small selection of individuals and organizations every year for their efforts leading to increased participation in stream monitoring, collecting stream data, and sharing their knowledge and data.



## **Wisconsin Lake Stewardship Awards**

The prestigious Wisconsin Lake Stewardship Awards celebrate the extraordinary volunteer and professional efforts made to protect and improve lakes in Wisconsin. These Lake Stewardship Awards represent our best collective effort to honor and celebrate all the incredible work that goes into ensuring the future of our state's legacy of lakes.

People are nominated for Lake Stewardship Awards by their peers - what a meaningful way to say, "Thank you!" to the people in your community who work so hard to care for our lakes. Winners of these awards join a select group of individuals and organizations whose unmatched dedication, vision, and commitment ensure that Wisconsin's legacy of lakes will be safe and secure for generations to come.

## Long-term Volunteer Lake Monitors

### Sue De Ment - 30 years

Sue De Ment has been monitoring the water quality of Tichigan Lake in Racine County. She has recorded 291 water clarity readings, collected 105 total phosphorus samples, and filtered 83 chlorophyll-A samples. Sue was not able to join us this year, but she says hello from sunny Arizona!

### David Vogt - 30 years

Dave monitors Annabelle Lake in Vilas County. He has collected 227 water clarity measurements, 113 total phosphorus samples, and 86 chlorophyll samples. He has also monitored aquatic invasive species in Annabelle Lake for 10 years and reported 21 ice cover observations. Like Sue, Dave was not able to make it to the banquet this year.

### Bob Kirschner - 35 years


Bob Kirschner's passion for water inspired his entire career, working for more than 40 years as an aquatic ecologist. He has monitored several lakes over the years, and currently monitors Bass Lake in Oneida County. Bob has been collecting data on water clarity, phosphorus, chlorophyll-A, and ice cover. Please join me in congratulating Bob on 35 years of monitoring efforts!



## Long-term Volunteer Stream Monitor

### Jayne Jenks - 20 years

Jayne is a Conservation Specialist with the Waukesha County Land and Water Conservation District. She took her first WAV training at Riveredge Nature Center in 2002, and she started training volunteers on her own soon after. Jayne has worked with many organizations such as the Rock River Coalition and the Pewaukee River Partnership to promote stream monitoring and stewardship. When asked what Jayne values most about her experience, she said she loves to see the variety of creatures that call our rivers and streams "home," and says it is most fun when she can share that information with others. Thank you, Jayne, for your dedication to Wisconsin's moving waters. We are excited to recognize Jayne even though she could not be here in person.



Know someone deserving of a Lake Stewardship or Volunteer Stream Monitoring award? Nominate them to be included in the running for 2023! Nomination forms can be found on the Wisconsin Water Week website.

**[wisconsinwaterweek.org](http://wisconsinwaterweek.org)**

# Wisconsin Volunteer Stream Monitoring Awards

## Connie Hagen ~ Citizen Category

Connie Hagen has been monitoring Door Creek since 2014. She is an especially active member of the Friends of Lake Kegonsa Society, where she advocates for water quality monitoring in the Lake Kegonsa watershed. Always quick to fill in when others can't make their sample dates, Connie has even sampled streams throughout the winter. Her advocacy within the Friends group has brought a greater awareness of and support for stream monitoring in the Lake Kegonsa and Door Creek area. Connie's samples have assisted with the Yahara Watershed Improvement Network's Adaptive Management Plan. She's also a Citizen Lake Monitoring Network volunteer, and has assisted in several native plantings with the Friends of Kegonsa group. In the words of her nominator, Addie Schlüssel with the Rock River Coalition, "We are lucky to have a super volunteer like Connie who not only participates in monitoring herself, but also supports other volunteers and champions the stream monitoring cause. She is kind, generous with her time and resources, and passionate about water quality."

## Kathy and Paul Byrne ~ Citizen Category

As a part of the Crawford Stewardship Project and Water Action Volunteers programs, Kathy and Paul Byrne have been stream monitoring volunteers for almost 10 years. Over the years, they have monitored eight different stream sites in Crawford County. Since 2013 they have also coordinated with other members of the Crawford Stewardship Project to receive water samples and bring them all to the laboratory for testing. They assist with recruiting and training new stream monitoring volunteers, and also help with refresher trainings for existing volunteers. They cover additional monitoring sites when the need arises. They also participate in many community meetings, network with statewide organizations, write letters to the editor, and speak at public hearings regarding water quality issues. As John Delaney wrote in his letter of support, "They are an integral component of Crawford Stewardship Project's water quality monitoring efforts and advocates for water quality education in our community." Kathy and Paul especially enjoy monitoring with their grandchildren and neighboring youth to nurture an appreciation for streams and the life that resides in them.



# Wisconsin Lake Stewardship Awards

## History

For the past 34 years, we've been celebrating Wisconsin's outstanding lake stewards in categories that recognize outstanding contributions of individuals, organized groups, educators, youth, and businesses. For this 35th year, we're changing the categories to reflect the importance of the organizational work and projects in which individuals and lake organizations are involved. We want to recognize those who are strengthening their community capacity with the goal of protecting and improving lake health.

## What is Capacity?

Our model of lake organization capacity is built around four related parts: membership, organization, relationships, and programs. Membership is the basis for the other three: a group needs members who provide financial and volunteer support to fuel their efforts. Organizational capacity concerns how a lake association or lake district conducts its internal affairs. Organizations develop relational capacity by collaborating and networking with external people and groups. Lake groups leverage these first three types of capacity to increase their ability to get things done: programmatic capacity.

## Nomination Categories

We understand that capacity looks different for each organization since each is working on different areas in order to boost their ability to get things done. We want to recognize individuals and organizations who are strengthening the capacity of their organization in the following categories:

### **Excellence in Public Engagement**

Recognizing an individual, group, or business who has taken steps to increase public understanding, engagement, and support for lake issues and opportunities.

### **Excellence in Building Partnerships**

Recognizing an individual, group, or business who has helped an organization develop new, or strengthen existing, external relationships to benefit a lake or watershed.

### **Programmatic Excellence for Lake Health**

Recognizing an individual, group, or business who excels in programs that improve the quality of our lakes due to program implementation. Program implementation will need to go above and beyond and have measurable impact.

## Selection Process

We rolled over nominations for two years and because we did not accept nominations in 2021, the 2019 and 2020 nominations were also considered along with 2022 nominations. Winners were selected by a team of reviewers who ranked applications according to the criteria listed in the nomination process. Because our collective action to protect and restore lakes is more effective with diverse perspectives at the table, reviewers also took into consideration groups and projects that include diversity, equity, and inclusion in their work.

# Nominees Considered for the 2022 Lake Stewardship Awards

(some nominees chose not to be listed)

## **Excellence in Public Engagement Award Nominees**

Dale Hedke, Bughs Lake

Michelle Nault, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

Clark Albert, White Sand Lake Association (new this year)

*Candy Ramsay, Spider Chain of Lakes, Sawyer County - winner*

## **Excellence in Building Partnerships Award Nominees**

Jon Blume, Pike Lake Sportsman Club & Fishing Club

Stephanie Boismenu, Oneida County

*Bill Boettge, Beaver Dam Lake, Dodge County - winner*

## **Programmatic Excellence for Lake Health Award Nominees**

Floyd Schmidt, Chute Pond

Jane Getting, Whitefish Lake

Skip Hansen, Porters Lake

Steve Johnson, Fish Lake Property Owners' Association (new this year)

Rock Lake Restoration Association, Inc. (new this year)

*Black Oak Lake Preservation Foundation - winner*

## **2022 Lake Stewardship Awards Winners**

### **Candy Ramsay ~ Excellence in Public Engagement**

The Spider Chain of Lakes is a group of five pristine lakes located northeast of Hayward in Sawyer County. Through the efforts of the Spider Chain of Lakes Association, these lakes remain free of Eurasian watermilfoil and zebra mussels. A key member of this association is Candy Ramsey, this year's winner of the Excellence in Public Engagement award.

Candy and her husband, Marv, purchased their property on the lake over 50 years ago. Initially splitting their time between the lake and their home in Rochester, MN, they later moved to Onalaska. Much of their time raising their children and then their grandchildren was spent enjoying the lakes and surrounding area.

Candy has served as a member of their local Aquatic Invasive Species Committee since 2011. In this role, she has helped recruit, train, and oversee the efforts of approximately 30 trained citizen scientists who monitor the five-lake system for invasive species throughout the boating season. She has also informed association members about invasive species and known control strategies and has authored many grant requests to secure funding for AIS monitoring and control. Fellow Committee member and Chair Ray Langer shares, "Candy is always thinking about new ways to

educate our membership about the danger of AIS and recruit new volunteers for lake monitoring.” In addition, Candy has been named the Rapid Response Communicator, maintaining the chain’s AIS records and being the primary contact when possible invasive species are found.

Finally, Candy serves as a member of the Comprehensive Lake Management Plan Advisory Committee. She has helped develop a survey reaching 360 shoreland property owners on the Spider Chain and has worked with local businesses, as well as town, DNR, and lake association representatives, to ensure broad input in the development of the plan.

With all of her efforts and accomplishments, Candy truly embodies the spirit of the Wisconsin Lake Stewardship Award for Excellence in Public Engagement. Congratulations, Candy!

## **Bill Boettge ~ Excellence in Building Partnerships**

Bill Boettge, this year’s recipient of the Wisconsin Lake Stewardship Award for Excellence in Building Partnerships, moved to the west shore of Beaver Dam Lake upon his retirement in 2008. Like many Wisconsin natives, he chose to move back to the state after a long career on the East Coast. He immediately became involved with the Beaver Dam Lake Improvement Association, finally serving as President from 2013 to 2019. Richard Emerson states, “He saw retirement as a change of scenery but still forging ahead to do big and better things. If I were to list all that he has done for the lake in these past 11 years, this letter would be several pages long.” Bill has been involved in nearly all of the lake association’s events and activities, including Kids Fish and Fun Days, Lake Days Cardboard Boat Regatta, The Great Beaver Paddle Festival, fish stocking, and buoy placement.

Major accomplishments during his tenure as president include the development of a comprehensive Lake Management Plan, creation of the Beaver Dam Lake District, and securing DNR grant funding for the Healthy Lakes and Rivers Initiative, for which he still serves as ambassador.

Maybe the most important accomplishment was the creation of the Dodge County Alliance for Healthy Soil - Healthy Water, a coalition of agriculture producers and lake property owners who focus on soil and water conservation through education. In a local newspaper Bill said, “When you put the lake groups with ag ... we are a powerful economic force.”

In her letter of recommendation, Karen Huber, the current President of the Beaver Dam Lake Improvement Association, states, “He was always pushing for more - to engage youth, educate landowners, update politicians and inform all of the opportunities and potential of Beaver Dam Lake. Bill Boettge did not step down as President to ride off into the sunset. Bill stepped down ... so that he could dedicate more time to Healthy Soils/Healthy Waters because he sees that as the next frontier to helping lakes and water supplies in the area.” Congratulations Bill. Keep forging and stoking these important partnerships!

## **Black Oak Lake Preservation Foundation ~ Programmatic Excellence for Lake Health**

There is a small, pristine lake in northern Wisconsin that is home to a unique strain of lake trout. It is one of the clearest lakes in the state with an average Secchi depth of 37 feet. Since 1975, the lake has been protected by the amazing members of this year's Stewardship Award winner for Programmatic Excellence for Lake Health, the Black Oak Lake Preservation Foundation.

In nominating the group, Susan Knight wrote, "Black Oak Lake Preservation Foundation hits all the key parts of programmatic capacity including membership, organization, relationships, and programs. Nearly every household on the lake is a member and most are extremely active."

Through their Clean Boats Clean Waters (CBCW) program, the association monitors boat traffic from 7:00 AM-8:00 PM every day from opening day of fishing season in May until mid-October. In 2018, they logged nearly 1,700 hours of CBCW monitoring at one landing. Over 2020 and 2021, close to 2,000 watercraft were inspected, contacting over 3,600 individuals. In addition to monitoring their landing, volunteers inspect the shoreline every two weeks for aquatic invasive species.

The association has participated in the Citizen Lake Monitoring Network for over 20 years, keeping meticulous records of water temperature, dissolved oxygen, clarity, conductivity, and phosphorus, nitrogen, and chlorophyll levels on their association's website.

They developed an adaptive Lake Management Plan in 2003 that has been updated six times to stay current with the needs of the lake.

Over the years, Black Oak Lake Preservation Foundation has worked with Wisconsin DNR to survey the fishery and assist in the lake trout propagation program. This has allowed the DNR to maintain a healthy lake trout population and to spread these fish to other suitable waters in the area.

It would be remiss to discuss Black Oak Lake Preservation Foundation without mentioning two individuals - John Annin and Walt Bates. The pair has worked tirelessly over many years to preserve the lake. Both are graduates of the Wisconsin Lake Leaders Institute, and both have attended at least one advanced Lake Leaders course. Unfortunately, John passed away last year and is dearly missed. Of the pair, Dean Premo of White Water Associates shares, "I cannot overstate my admiration for John Annin and Walt Bates as individuals who epitomize what lake stewardship should be. Descriptors that come to mind include enthusiastic, dedicated, inquisitive, professional, patient, and kind." Congratulations to Black Oak Lake Preservation Foundation on a well-deserved award!