



LAKE TIDES

Volume 11, No. 2
Summer, 1986

In the Wake of a Loon: An Editorial

In the spring of 1975, Bob Sterrett and I produced the first issue of *Lake Tides*. The editorial introducing the newsletter was entitled "WELCOME TO OUR TRIAL BALLOON." In the second issue, published in November, 1975, we began to use the double meaning of "loon" to title our personal introductory message (editorial) in each of 30 issues in the series.

We've shared our reactions to good news and bad news. We struggled to continue the newsletter after all state funds were cut in 1982 and George Gibson returned to Maryland.

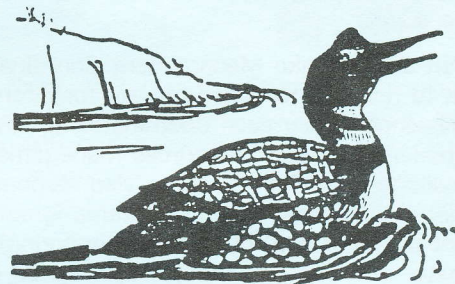
With the renaissance of interest in lake management during this biennium, DNR staff resources have returned to about 50 percent and funds for educational services have returned to about 25 percent of 1980 levels.

Therefore, It seems appropriate to give *Lake Tides* a fresh look with a number of changes.

- We have cleansed the mailing list and are in the process of rebuilding it. We appreciate the returns we received when we asked if you wanted to stay on the mailing list. We also appreciate the many compliments that accompanied the requests to be kept on the list.
- At this point, we are accepting all officers, board members, and committee chairs of lake associations, lake districts, or other lake-oriented groups. If your lake community leaders are not receiving the newsletter, please send us organization name, personal names, personal addresses, lake name, and county. Any individual with interest in lake management can also send us the same information and that person will be added to the mailing list. At this point, we are not adding full membership lists of lake associations or districts, but may be able to do so in the future. If you have a *current* list, you are welcome to send it to us. We will add the names if our budget permits.

- We have gone to a full-page format which provides more opportunity for use of headlines, photos, and illustrations. The full-size pages are also easier to punch and insert in the *Lake District Commissioners Handbook* or any other 3-ring binder.
- In addition to printing and postage costs, a contract funded by the new DNR lake management budget has allowed us to offer a small stipend to a graduate student to assist with the newsletter. The first student is Scott Olson. He has a bachelor of science degree from UW-Eau Claire in Geography and is interested in land use planning and adult education.

We hope you will find the newsletter beneficial in your dedicated efforts on behalf of the lake in your community. Please offer suggestions for topics to be offered in *Lake Tides* or send us a story on the management efforts at your lake for publication in *Lake Tides*.



Finally, I want to publicly thank the Wisconsin Association of Lake Districts and the Wisconsin Federation of Lakes for the award presented to me at the 1986 Wisconsin Lakes Convention. The support and appreciation of individual lake property owners and local officials has been heartwarming throughout the past sixteen years—through good news and bad. While that support is especially valuable during difficult times, it sure is more pleasant to write mostly good news newsletters such as this one.

Lowell L. Klessig
Professor of Resource Management
Cooperative Extension Service Specialist



Lake Management Program

The DNR's Lake Management Squad

by Mary Ellen Vollbrecht

Like any good football team, Wisconsin's lake management team has several squads, each with a special purpose. You and your fellow local lake management organizations and agencies are one squad. The DNR, UWEX, and Wisconsin citizens in general are the other three. This issue of *Lake Tides* focuses on the DNR lake management squad, with a scouting report and, of course, the starting lineup.

Scouting Report

The DNR squad is strong on technical assistance to lake management organizations. With 15,000 lakes in Wisconsin needing assistance, we are working hard to develop good ways to help people help themselves. Our lake management experience has shown that the critical ingredients for protecting lakes over the long run are local initiative and organization. The DNR Lake Management Program is the catalyst—like the egg in a cake—that helps groups and programs combine to produce results.

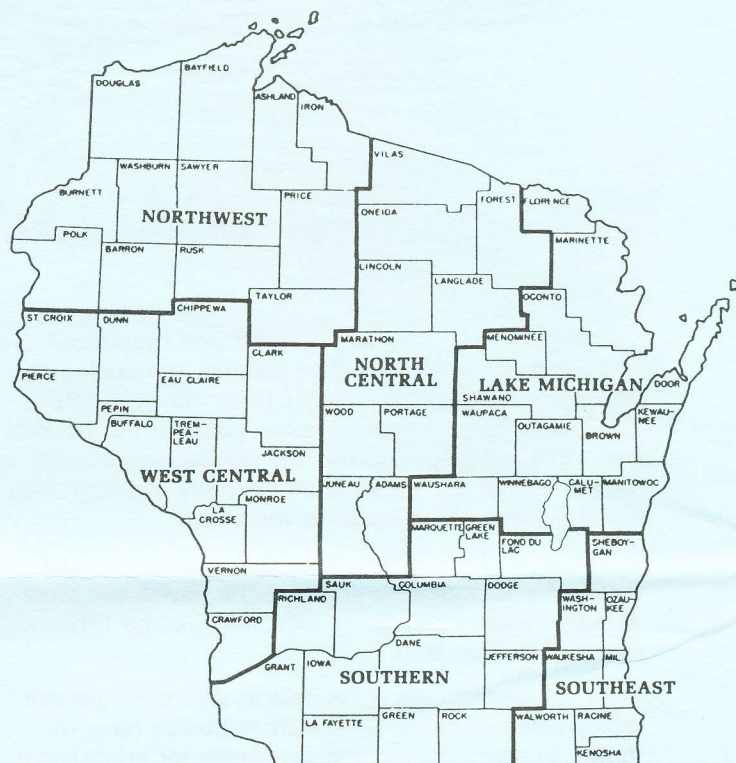
The DNR district Lake Management Coordinators are the first to respond to your requests for information and assistance. Since each coordinator has training and experience in water resources management, the Lake Management Coordinator is also responsible for the other major water quality programs (groundwater, nonpoint pollution control, stream monitoring), the coordinator may not personally follow up on every request. You may be referred to another expert or given information and guidance for proceeding on your own.

The Central Office lake management staff are among those that you your district coordinator may call on. Each Madison staff member has a special area of expertise from limnology and hydrogeology to engineering and organizing. The Central Office staff also provide coordination, management, and information services for the programs.

The Lake Management Program was officially created in July, 1985 by the legislature in the State's budget. Once all staff were on board, the lake management squad huddled to come up with a game plan—or

what a business manager would call a strategic plan—for the new program. They agreed on several goals for the new program:

- * Minimize degradation of high-value lakes.
- * Create new support groups for lake management.
- * Help programs affecting lakes work together.



Staff members are guided by these goals in carrying out the current activities of the Lake Management Program described below:

1. Outreach and Technical Assistance: Helping lake organizations and agencies protect and manage lakes. In addition, we can provide intensive assistance to a few lakes each year.
2. Self Help Monitoring: Measuring water clarity and levels, with the help of a local volunteer, is an excellent way to learn about your lake.
3. Information and Education: Slide shows, fact sheets on hot issues, workshops, and field days—these are some of the ways we're helping people help themselves.
4. Lake Trends Monitoring: How do we know whether we are protecting our lakes? What new lake problems are on the horizon? Data we are collecting on a sample of Wisconsin's lakes can help us answer these questions.
5. Research and Demonstrations: Testing new lake protection and management techniques—and teaching people about them—is still another way we're helping people help themselves.

The Starting Lineup

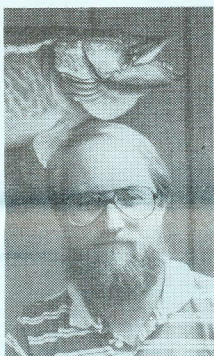
You can't tell the players without a program!



- * Left to Right, Jim Vennie, Dick Wedepohl, Carolyn Rumery, and Mary Ellen Vollbrecht are the Central Office staff of the Lake Management Program.



- * Bob Young, Rhinelander, is the coordinator for the North Central District. With DNR since 1977 as a water pollution specialist, Bob has worked with many groups in northern Wisconsin to protect their lakes.



- * Art Bernhardt, West Central District, is based in Eau Claire. Art's been with DNR since 1977 as a water resources specialist.



- * Dan Ryan, center, is the Northwest District Lake Management Coordinator from Spooner. He's been with DNR for twenty years; early on as a fish manager, and then as a water resources specialist. Ted Smith (L) and Frank Koshore (R) pitch in too.



- * Tim Rasman, Lake Michigan District, works out of Green Bay. Tim's an aquatic biologist with DNR since 1973.

- * Not pictured are Tom Bainbridge and Bob Last, Southern District, and Neal O'Reilly, the Southeast District contact in Milwaukee. Tom coordinates the work of three biologists with lake management experience based in Dodgeville, Horicon, and Madison area offices. Bob Last conducts lake monitoring for the Southern District. Neal began his career as a DNR water resources manager in 1977.



Capitol View

by William P. O'Connor

After some disappointing years, the Wisconsin legislature adopted several important measures affecting lakes in the session ending this spring. Among the highlights:

ACID RAIN: Wisconsin's tradition of environmental leadership was renewed this year with the adoption of the nation's strongest legislation to control acid rain. The new law will require some utilities to shift to cleaner-burning low-sulfur coal as part of a broad program to cut instate sources of sulfur dioxide (SO₂) emissions by 50% by 1993. Sulfur dioxide is the key chemical building block in the formation of sulfuric acid in the atmosphere. Acid deposition has been blamed for extensive damage to buildings, forests, and lakes. The new law also mandates a state study to review the impact of acid rain on streams, forests, and lakes and to investigate impacts of other acid rain-forming compounds.

BOAT GAS TAX FUNDING: For the first time this decade, the 1985-87 State Budget transferred gasoline tax revenues from the Transportation Fund to four waterway programs. The transfer is based on the notion that fuel tax generated by boaters should be spent on waterway—not highway—programs. A total of about \$2.4 million of gas tax was allocated to four lake and water programs in the current budget:

- **LAKES MANAGEMENT PROGRAM:** \$375,000 annually will support this program aimed at lake management research and educational and technical assistance for local communities (see related story on page 5).

- **WISCONSIN WATERWAYS COMMISSION:** The Waterways Commission, dormant for about 5 years, received \$1.85 million annually to provide grants to local communities for boating facilities. The funds support the development and improvement of Great Lakes harbors and boating facilities on inland lakes and rivers. After January 1987, parking facilities, security lighting, and sanitary fa-

cilities at public access sites will also be eligible for Waterway Commission grants. Under the law, 30% of the funds must be used for inland waters and 30% for Great Lakes Harbors. The remaining funds may be allocated by the Waterways Commission to either Great Lakes or inland programs. Lake districts, cities, villages, towns and communities are eligible for these grants. For information on the program, contact Mr. Larry Freidig at the DNR. His phone number is 608/266-5897.

- **BOATING ENFORCEMENT AIDS:** Approximately \$100,000 annually was allocated to provide matching funds for local boating enforcement.
- **UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER MANAGEMENT:** About \$100,000 will assist in the resolution of management problems of the river and its impoundments.

SAFE BOATING LAW: About half of the 10-40 boating fatalities in Wisconsin each year involve alcohol. Legislation modernizing Wisconsin's drunk boating laws was adopted as part of the May Special Session. The law will extend implied consent rules and the 0.1% blood alcohol level standard of intoxication to motorboat operators. These are already a part of drunk driving enforcement. This law should help reduce boating fatalities and conflicts among various water users.

The new law *only* affects motorboat operators (defined as the person in control of the boat's speed and direction). It does not affect canoe, rowboat, or sailboat operators, or passengers in motor-powered boats.

SOIL EROSION/NONPOINT SOURCE CONTROL: Water pollution resulting from soil erosion and runoff is a major threat to Wisconsin lakes. The March special session on agriculture adopted three provisions that should help reduce the pollution of Wisconsin lakes by "nonpoint sources."

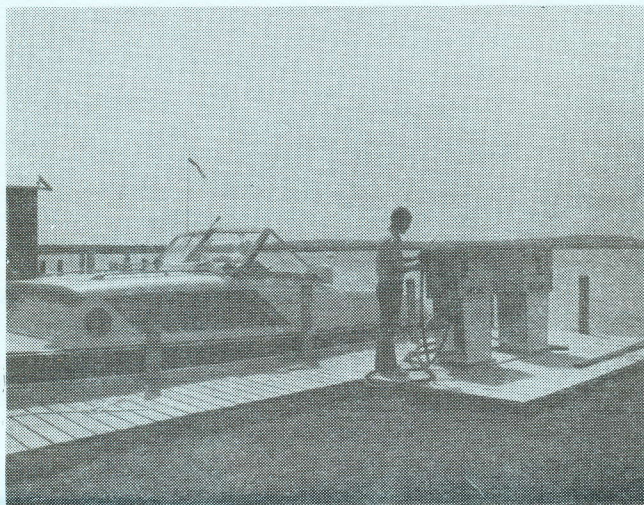
- The first provides one million free trees to county conservation committees to stabilize soil. This will assist in development of the new federal conservation reserve, which aims to put 2 to 3 million acres of Wisconsin cropland into grass or tree cover under ten-year U.S. Department of Agriculture contracts.
- The second provides for reductions of property tax on wetlands and lands subject to conservation easements.
- The third provision will encourage nonpoint source pollution research and demonstration projects.

Overall, the session ranks as one of the best for lakes in many years, but there were disappointments. A notable bill which failed adoption:

LAKE AND WATERSHED AUTHORITY: This legislation would have created a public/private partnership to assist lake and watershed management organizations by providing grants, education, and technical help. The Authority would be governed by a board of directors representing lake management organizations, state agencies, local government, and the University of Wisconsin. The bill was introduced by a broad, bipartisan group of legislators, passed in the Assembly

Environmental Resources Committee by a wide margin, but died in the Joint Finance Committee in the closing days of the session. Even though the bill failed, it did increase legislative interest in the need to address lake problems broadly and to encourage local initiatives.

Bill O'Connor is an attorney in private practice in Madison and Executive Secretary of the Wisconsin Association of Lake Districts.



MOTOR FUEL TAX FUNDING OF LAKE MANAGEMENT EFFORTS

by Scott Olson

The controversy over the source and amount of funding for Wisconsin's lake programs continues. The debate began in 1973 when the original Wisconsin Lakes Program was being created. At that time, funding through the Wisconsin fuel tax was considered, based on the premise that fuel taxes collected on gasoline for motorboats should be used on public waterways rather than public highways. However, the Department of Transportation opposed any siphoning of fuel tax revenues for non-highway purposes, and the program was enacted with financial support from General Purpose Revenue (income tax) funds. This funding continued until 1983 when it fell victim to the State's budget crunch.

After almost no funding for Wisconsin lake programs between 1983 and 1985, the past legislative session was a welcomed improvement. Legislative proponents of state investment in lake management indicated that a new source of funding, based on boating fuel tax revenues, provided the best hope of reviving the lake management program. Following the user fee philosophy, the Department of Transportation agreed to transfer fuel taxes collected from boaters to DNR to

support four different programs. These are the Lake Management Program, Wisconsin Waterways Commission, Boating Enforcement Aids, and Upper Mississippi River Management Program. As noted in the capitol report on page 4, the Legislature agreed to the proposed transfer of funds for the four programs.

The personal fuel tax refunding program was eliminated. In previous years, boaters could receive a refund from the state fuel tax they paid for boating fuel expenditures. The program was discontinued because the new funding for lake programs now uses these funds and because the refund was used by very few boaters. Boaters were required to save the receipts and apply for the tax refund. Only about \$30,000 was refunded annually to individuals under the old system.

Although the consensus favors the fuel tax as an improved revenue source, it also provides the basis for continuing controversy. No one is sure how much fuel tax revenue boaters contribute each year in Wisconsin. The Department of Transportation, which collects the revenue, is hesitant to specify an amount without good data. The Legislature decided that the four programs should receive about \$2.4 million a year in the 1985-87 biennium.

Feeling that boaters actually pay more than \$2.4 million per year in motor fuel taxes, the DNR recently conducted a survey. The survey randomly sampled 1041 boat owners who owned a total of 1652 boats. Of these boats, 1340 were motorized; the owners reported that each boat consumed an average of 51 gallons a year. Although the results are not yet completed, they seem to support the argument of higher fuel consumption, and therefore higher revenues raised. The preliminary estimate of \$3.8 million each year is based on the 440,000 Wisconsin registered boats (1984) and does not include the revenue raised from fuel bought by non-resident boaters. The survey is expected to be published in August, and is being reviewed by the Department of Transportation. The Wisconsin Association of Lake Districts, the Wisconsin Federation of Lakes, the Wisconsin Waterways Commission, and local governments with lake frontage are keenly interested.

We can expect continued controversy each biennium as the amount of funding and its distribution between the various lake programs is debated.

Community Focus: Big Green Lake

(Private Initiative at Work for Lake Protection and Improvement)

by Ken Lay

Every lake has its own unique characteristics which tend to shape the organization of those governmental and private bodies which deal primarily in lake matters. Physical features of the lake, local governments, the lake property owners, and residential and commercial development all have an impact. The common denominator in many Wisconsin situations has been private initiative in the form of a lake association.

Big Green is Wisconsin's deepest and its second largest inland body of water. It is fed by a combination of atmospheric precipitation, surface drainage, and groundwater. The surface drainage originates in a 57,000-acre watershed of largely agricultural land. More than 90% of its shoreline is developed, almost entirely with single-family residences. Only about 20% of the lake property owners are legal residents of the lake community.

The lake lies entirely within Green Lake County, but is bounded by five municipalities: Brooklyn, Green Lake, Princeton, and Marquette Townships; and the City of Green Lake. This fragmentation of authority naturally complicates coordination and agreement in lake matters.

The Sanitary District is Big Green's governmental organization for lake management. It has broad taxing authority, and a liberal interpretation of the statutes gives it powers to conduct almost any program relating to water quality. Its jurisdiction includes all of the lakeshore and adjoining back areas, except the City of Green Lake.

Since its inception in 1964 under the leadership of the Green Lake Association, the district has steadily expanded its activities to include septic system monitoring, solid waste disposal, water quality monitoring, non-point source pollution abatement, weed harvesting management, cost-sharing replacement of failing septic systems, and development planning for collective sewage disposal. The Green Lake Association maintains a close working relationship with the Sanitary District.

The Green Lake Association dates back to 1951 when a group of concerned citizens united to form a non-profit organization which was incorporated as the Green Lake Property Owners Association. The name was later changed to more closely reflect the organization's general character and purposes and to broaden membership appeal. Today, the Association has roughly 650 members and over 100 merchant and professional associate members. It is headed by a board of nine directors and a part-time administrator, the president, who has a secretary and maintains an office in the City of Green Lake.



Six committees—Boating and Safety, Fishing, Membership, Sanitation and Pollution, Weed Harvesting, and Zoning—provide the vehicle for grass-roots representation and individual participation in the day-to-day affairs of the Association. As a recent example of their effectiveness, a drive initiated by the Membership Committee, working in concert with the president, has put the Association well on the way to achieving a 20% increase in membership—a goal set by the Board of Directors last year.

In the early years, the day-to-day affairs of the Association were conducted by three officers elected by the Board for one-year terms, who served without compensation. As the Association's activities continued to grow, it became evident that greater continuity and a degree of professional administrative ability were needed. Consequently, in 1976 the appointive position of "president" was established and filled with a part-time, paid employee.

Another important step was taken in 1977 when the Association acquired charitable tax exempt status under the provisions of Section 501c (3) of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code, making contributions to the Association deductible for federal tax purposes. Given this stimulus, contributions have grown steadily and now range on the order of \$19,000 a year.

Accomplishments of the Association during its 25-year history include the following:

- Sponsored the formation of a sanitary district.
- Supported the first scientific study of water quality and nutrient input.
- Conducted a comprehensive land use study of the Green Lake area resulting in a plan for orderly development.
- Acquired mechanical weed harvesting equipment and initiated a weed harvesting program.
- Procured and erected anti-litter and boating safety signs.
- Initiated and worked cooperatively on programs for fishing improvement.
- Published an "Ecoguide" booklet telling property owners what they can do to help protect and preserve the lake.
- Published a quarterly newsletter.
- Monitored county zoning administration and worked for enactment of sound zoning ordinances.

At the state level, the Association sees the Wisconsin Federation of Lakes as a logical extension of private association influence to the state level. It was one of the original members of the Federation and one of the Association members has served on the Federation Board for many years.

Ken Lay, former Executive Director of the Green Lake Association, serves on the Board of Directors and as Newsletter Editor for the Wisconsin Federation of Lakes.

1986 WISCONSIN LAKES CONVENTION

Sixteen years ago, a Senator from Wisconsin began the environmental movement with the suggestion that April 22 be designated as a special day to appreciate our natural environment. He called for nationwide observance of Earth Day with teach-ins, speeches, clean-up projects, music, and other entertainment that emphasized our dependence on a well-functioning ecosystem.

Now head of the Wilderness Society, Gaylord Nelson brought the same message to the 1986 Wisconsin Lakes Convention in his keynote address. While the focus of environmental concern has shifted—from pipes discharging raw wastes into streams to non-point pollution of water; from dirty smokestacks to colorless acid rain—the ecological principles remain. Nelson came to Stevens Point to remind us of the continuing need for personal and national commitment to those values.

Participation by local leaders, professionals, and exhibitors continued to be good, with 230 attendees. Conference evaluations indicated high levels of satisfaction with the conference experience. If you missed the event, mark your calendar for April 3-4, 1987. If you attended in 1986, we hope you will return and encourage others to also attend.

Wisconsin Lake Waters

A 12-minute slide-tape program for anyone interested in lakes:

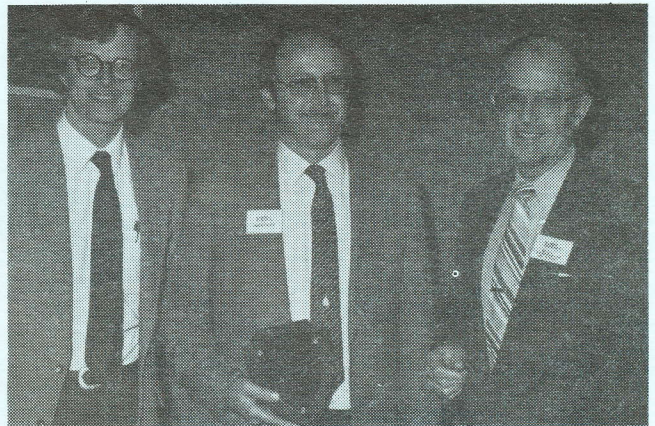
- * Lake Groups
- * Service Clubs
- * Sportsmen Clubs
- * School Groups

Contact your county Extension office or DNR district inland lake office for a no-charge, short-term rental.

Using Your Editor

Any article in *Lake Tides* can be reprinted without permission. We encourage you to use the articles for your local newsletters. Some articles may also be of interest to your local newspaper or radio station. A friendly visit to the editor or news director will usually result in a story, especially if you are willing to be interviewed to add local "color" to the story.

If you use our articles directly, it is appropriate to credit the author and Lake Tides, but please feel free to paraphrase or rewrite under your name. The important thing is to share the information.



At the 1986 Wisconsin Lakes Convention, Bill O'Connor (left), Wisconsin Association of Lake Districts, and Elmer Goetsch (right), Wisconsin Federation of Lakes, present Lowell Klessig (center) with an award "for outstanding dedication to helping citizens protect Wisconsin lakes, 1986."

NORTH AMERICAN LAKE MANAGEMENT SOCIETY TO MEET IN PORTLAND, OREGON

The sixth annual conference and international symposium of the North American Lake Management Society will be held November 5-8 in Portland, Oregon. The symposium theme is "Influence of Nonpoint Source Pollutants and Acid Precipitation." Special sessions for lake property owners are planned November 6 and 8.

Those attending the conference automatically become members of the North American Lake Management Society. Membership for lake organizations and individuals is available and strongly encouraged. The Society provides a regular newsletter service, a technical referral service, and a refereed journal of papers selected for presentation at the symposium.

For more information on either the conference or membership, contact Lowell Klessig (715/346-3783), Region IV Director, or Richard Wedepohl (608/267-7513), President-elect.

Mark Your Calendar

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| Oct. 4, 1986 | Fall Meeting - Wisconsin Federation of Lakes - Wausau
contact: Marion Urich, 608/222-8514 |
| Nov. 5-8, 1986 | North American Lake Management Society - Portland, Oregon
contact: /Spencer Peterson, 503/757-4605 |
| Apr. 3-4, 1987 | Wisconsin Lakes Convention - Stevens Point
contact: Diane Lueck, 715/346-3783 |

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A Newsletter for People Interested in Wisconsin Lakes

wex COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-EXTENSION

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