



LAKE TIDES

The newsletter for people interested in Wisconsin lakes

Three Myths

Study finds that larger shoreline frontage may increase property values

Presently, approximately 30 counties in Wisconsin are involved in lake classification projects. An underlying goal of lake classification is to minimize the effect of home construction on the ecology of lake systems. One strategy employed by counties requires new homes to have greater frontage (200' instead of 100') on lakes determined to be susceptible to damage from home construction and similar activities. The question at issue: how does larger lot frontage impact your pocket book? Dr. Bill Provencher of the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and Fiorenza Spalatro, a graduate student, performed such an investigation. Data on home sales were collected for 892 vacant lakefront properties sold in Vilas County and three adjacent towns in Oneida County during the interval 1986-1995. Here are some of the results.

A number of towns in Vilas County have minimum frontage requirements for lakefront residential properties more stringent than the statewide minimum of 100 feet. What has been the effect on property values of these stricter requirements? This was the question we examined. These properties included 286 properties in towns which, at the time of sale, required a minimum frontage of 200 feet for new residential lakefront development not previously platted. In the discussion below we refer to this zoning requirement as the "200 Foot Rule". All other lakefront properties were subject to the less stringent statewide minimum frontage requirement of 100 feet.

Zoning restrictions of this sort have two primary economic effects. **The first effect is a *development effect*.** Whenever laws or administrative regulations restrict the development of a property, the effect is to make the property less valuable (reduce its market value). The logic of this claim is simple: at best, restrictions on land use have no effect on the property, and at worst, restrictions constrain the property owner from using the property in a manner that maximizes its value in the marketplace.

The second effect is an *amenity effect*. Restricting the manner in which properties along a lake are developed serves to make lakefront property more valuable, if such zoning assures that certain aesthetic and ecological characteristics of the lake are preserved that otherwise would be lost or degraded. So, for instance, minimum setbacks may add value to a lake by serving to control erosion, and by making lakeside views more scenic. Presumably stricter minimum frontage requirements have similar positive economic effects.

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In our sample, the average effect of the 200 Foot Rule is to increase the value of frontage on undeveloped lots by 12.3% (\$24.05 per foot).

These two effects are countervailing economic forces. Even as minimum frontage zoning serves to reduce property values via the development effect, it serves to increase property values via the amenity effect. The upshot is that whether minimum frontage requirements have a positive or negative effect on property values is an empirical question. That is, it is a question that cannot be decided by force of economic logic, but instead must be investigated using real world data.

To examine the effect of the “200 Foot Rule” on the sale price of a property, we used a statistical technique called **hedonic valuation**. The principle underlying hedonic valuation is the same as that underlying property tax assessment. Namely, that a property is a bundle of characteristics, each of which adds incrementally to the value of the property. So, for instance, a property on a lake is worth more than a property off a lake, and a residential property with two bathrooms is worth more than a residential property with only one bathroom. The distinguishing feature of the hedonic valuation method is that the increment to the property price contributed by a particular property characteristic is determined statistically using data on property prices and property characteristics. In the case at hand, we let our data on property sales in Vilas and Oneida counties identify how different property characteristics contribute to the price of a property. In particular, we let the data answer the central question of the research: does the property characteristic, “Property is on a lake regulated by the 200 Foot Rule”, increase or reduce the value of a property?

As it turns out, there is no clear-cut answer to this question; it depends on the property. For those properties already platted at less than 200 feet, the effect of the 200 Foot Rule is to raise the value of a parcel due to the amenity

effect. For those properties with more than 200 feet of frontage, the effect is ambiguous, due to the competing development and amenity effects. Nonetheless, the overall effect appears to be positive. In our sample, the average effect of the 200 Foot Rule is to increase the value of frontage on undeveloped lots by 12.3% (\$24.05 per foot). The effect for any particular parcel is, of course, subject to the particular circumstances of the parcel—the size of the lake, the current level of development on the lake, and so on.



The analysis sheds light on three significant myths about lakefront zoning. All of these myths concern the argument that lakefront zoning is the source of economic loss because it creates scarcity of lakefront housing. But a focus on “scarcity” is misplaced, and clouds the real economic issue, which is the interplay of the development and amenity effects. The total amount of lake frontage does not change. What changes is how property owners

can develop their property, and this change is encompassed in the development effect.

The first myth is that zoning necessarily increases the average price (per foot of frontage) of lakefront property in a region by making lakefront “scarce”. This is not true. When the amenity effect is small or nonexistent, it remains possible that the negative development effect on those properties directly affected by a zoning restriction causes a reduction in the overall average price of lakefront property.

The second myth is that an increase in the average price of lakefront property in a region due to zoning restrictions is evidence of an economic loss due to zoning. This myth is predicated on the assumption that high property prices due to zoning arise because zoning artificially increases the scarcity of housing. But as noted above, zoning may serve to preserve certain amenities—scenic views, pristine lakes, and so on—that are valuable to



people. The preservation of such amenities, and the value that lakefront property owners place on them, is a source of economic gain that causes property values to rise.

The third myth is that by examining the effect of zoning on *average* property prices in a region, one can discern whether the zoning ordinance is the source of an economic gain or loss. An increase in average property prices tells us nothing. The only way to determine whether zoning generates an economic gain or loss is to evaluate the price difference between parcels on lakes controlled by the zoning restriction and parcels on lakes free of the zoning restriction. If this difference is positive—if, in other words, the average property price on lakes with the restriction is higher than the av-

erage property price on lakes without—then the incremental effect of the zoning restriction is positive, and extending the restriction to additional lakes would generate additional economic gains. On the other hand, if this difference were negative then removing the zoning restriction from at least some lakes would generate economic gains.

By Dr. Bill Provencher, Dept. of Agricultural and Applied Economics, University of Wisconsin, Madison.

What is a lake's value? The economics of Wisconsin's lakes and water resources is complex. One thing is sure—the price we are willing to pay for waterfront property is increasing at an astonishing rate. Look for more articles on the economics of water in future issues of Lake Tides.

The economics of Wisconsin's lakes is complex.

Old Friends

Have you ever said good-bye to a person with whom you shared a significant part of your work life?... a person with whom you worked through the good times and the difficult times?... a person with whom you worked through the long hours and late nights when you thought no one in the world appreciated your efforts? Well, all of us here in the Wisconsin Lakes Partnership and at Lake Tides must do just that. A number of our friends and colleagues have made decisions to move on.

Dorothy Snyder has been at the UWEX/ UWSP Lakes office for the past seven years. She has played a critical role in all aspects of the Wisconsin Lakes Partnership program, ensuring that lake educational materials were delivered in a timely fashion and that the annual state Lakes Conference was a consistent success. Dorothy also held the position of Project WET coordinator over the past year. Dorothy's charm, intelligence and conscientious work ethic will be sorely missed.

Bob Young, DNR Lakes Coordinator for the Northern Region (based in Rhinelander), has been a joy to know and work with. For the past decade Bob has been indispensable to the success of the Lakes Partnership. Bob covered all aspects of lakes management, from limnology to lake fairs, to grant dollars and organizational assistance.

Scott Szymanski, DNR Lakes Biologist in the Northeastern Region, has also made the tough career choice to move on. This talented young man has built a reputation for always being willing to go the extra mile to assist folks with their lake management issues.

After nearly a decade of little staff turnover within the Wisconsin Lakes Partnership, the past year has seen a number of changes. **Tim Rasman**, DNR Lakes Coordinator for the Northeast region, based in Green Bay; **Jim Leverance**, DNR Lakes Coordinator for the South Central Region, based in Madison; **Bob Wakeman**, DNR Lakes Coordinator in the South Eastern Region, based in Milwaukee, have all changed positions. All of these individuals have made tremendous contributions and have been vital to the success of the Wisconsin Lakes Partnership program. Some of these positions have been refilled; other positions remain vacant.

There is insufficient space to say all that should be said about the dedication and talent of these people. One thing is sure: the lakes in this great state and the people that love and care for them are better off as a result of these individuals' dedication. We will miss you all and we wish you the best of luck in the years ahead.



Leaving a Legacy: Thank You, Mrs. Wolter

A recent acquisition by the Wisconsin Chapter of The Nature Conservancy has protected a substantial piece of Wisconsin's "North Woods" and some of its wildest lakes.

On June 23, The Nature Conservancy completed its acquisition of 2,189 acres of land in Presque Isle Township in Vilas County. The acquisition will bring long-term protection to a large block of northern forest and 15 wild lakes and ponds, an increasingly rare commodity in northern Wisconsin today.

The Conservancy acquired the land from Mrs. Catherine Wolter, a long-time resident of the Presque Isle area. The Wolters have owned and cared for the property for 58 years, limiting the amount of fishing and the use of motorized vehicles on the lakes. As a result, the lakes host a rich diversity of fish and other aquatic species. The surrounding forests provide habitat for many native plants and wildlife, including loons, osprey, otters, fishers, bears, and timber wolves.

Commenting on the sale of the land, Mrs. Wolter's son, Carl, said, "Mom has instilled her love of the land in her children and her grandchildren, and that's why we're very happy that it will be protected by The Nature Conservancy."



Mrs. Wolter donated approximately 25% of the value of the land to The Nature Conservancy. To honor her long-time stewardship of the land and her generous gift, the Conservancy has designated the parcel as the Catherine Wolter Wilderness Area.

"We are grateful to Mrs. Wolter and her family for their stewardship of the land over the last 58 years," said Mary Jean Huston, State Director of The Nature Conservancy's Wisconsin Chapter. "It is thanks to private landowners like the Wolters that the Conservancy still has opportunities today to protect some of Wisconsin's most scenic and biologically rich lands."

The Nature Conservancy, a national non-profit conservation organization with chapters in all 50 states, is committed to safeguarding natural habitats and native plants and wildlife. The organization often purchases critical natural lands—or development rights to the land—and works with private landowners and local conservation groups to ensure their long-term conservation management. The Wolter acquisition is significant because it will protect 36,000 feet of undeveloped shoreline on 15 wild lakes and ponds in northern Wisconsin.

Commenting on The Nature Conservancy's recent acquisition, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Secretary George Meyer said, "The Department of Natural Resources considers this purchase by The Nature Conservancy to be particularly significant because of the outstanding ecological values of the site. Large parcels of forest land and undeveloped lakes are a rare feature in Wisconsin, and this property contains both."

The land acquired from Mrs. Wolter is part of a larger area, referred to as the Border Lakes area by The Nature Conservancy, which spans about 24,000 acres in Vilas County. It is one of the best remaining examples of a large, relatively undisturbed forested glacial lake ecosystem. The forest, which harbors some white pines up to 400 years old, is interspersed with wetlands, spring-fed ponds, many wild lakes and streams.



The Border Lakes area links the one-million-acre Ottawa National Forest, located to the north in Michigan, and the 220,000-acre Northern Highland-American Legion State Forest, located to the south in Wisconsin. As a link between these protected areas, the Border Lakes serves as a travel corridor for large ranging mammals including timber wolves and possibly moose and Canada lynx.



As with most other Nature Conservancy properties in Wisconsin, the land acquired from the Wolters will be open to the public for low-impact recreational activities, including hiking, birdwatching, and photography, beginning sometime in the spring of 2001. This fall, Conservancy stewardship staff will post the boundaries to avoid trespass onto neighboring landowners' property by visitors to the site. The organization will also develop a management plan in the next six months, which will guide how the property may be used.

The Nature Conservancy will apply for a Wisconsin Stewardship Fund grant to assist in the acquisition of this parcel. The remaining funds will be raised privately. The Wisconsin Stewardship Fund was established by the Legislature in 1990 and was recently renewed for the next ten years. When the Legislature and Governor renewed the program in 1999, they listed protecting our remaining undeveloped "wild lakes" like those found on the Wolter property to be one of the top priorities for the new program. The Stewardship program provides funds for Department of Natural Resources land acquisitions and also provides cost share grants to qualified non-profit conservation groups and local governments to purchase important conservation and recreation properties. The Nature Conservancy has received Stewardship cost share grants at several of its projects throughout the state.

*Contributed by Cate Harrington, Director of Communications and Outreach, The Nature Conservancy.
Aerial photograph by Dr. Ted Cline.*

This project represents just one example of a growing trend to protect open space and ecologically significant parcels through the sale or donation of land and conservation easements. Look for additional articles on these voluntary land protection strategies in future issues of Lake Tides.

New Friends

The Wisconsin Lakes Partnership welcomes two new individuals to the UWEX Lakes Office at UW-Stevens Point. **Mary Pardee** has assumed responsibility for Project WET (Water Education for Teachers). Mary's professional career and educational background have focused on youth and environmental education. You can contact Mary at 715/346-4978 or by email at mpardee@uwsp.edu.

Kathy Ziemann has moved into the position of office manager and program assistant for the UW-Stevens Point, UWEX Lakes Partnership office. Kathy can be reached at 715/346-2116 or by email at kziemann@uwsp.edu. Kathy comes to Stevens Point after working in state service for 15 years in Madison.

Both women bring a wealth of experience and talent to the Lakes Program. They are delighted to be here and look forward to meeting and working with Wisconsin's many enthusiastic lake stewards.



From Cable to Cable: A Farewell Message from Lowell Klessig

Twenty-six years ago I helped organize and spoke at the first lake management conference for citizens, which was held in Cable, Wisconsin. On June 29, 2000 I provided the keynote presentation at the Northwest Wisconsin Lake Fair—a citizen-organized and well-attended conference in Cable, Wisconsin. That was the last presentation I will be giving to lake property owners. I hope to spend a year or so organizing a woodland owners educational program and then retire from UW-Extension.



Those two Cables span most of my adult life. The professional centerpiece of that life has been working with more than 600 lakeshore communities in the state. It has been gratifying to watch citizen leadership develop and local lake management organizations mature. But most gratifying has been all the personal relationships that have grown beyond a simple educator-student relationship.

I appreciate and want to thank all of you for the recognition you've given me over the years. Wonderful as it is to be formally recognized by the people I have served, the personal expressions from many of you are the most appreciated. I want to say a special farewell to the Wisconsin Lake Leaders Institute participants. Of all my professional work, leadership development is my favorite because of the long-term community benefits and because of the long-term bonds that continue beyond graduation. The greatest compliment to any Extension Teacher is to see his/her students interested and capable of teaching and organizing themselves – and the Lake Leaders certainly are doing that.

Preparing for a Positive Future

I can talk to you about a positive future for lakes, but only you can make that future positive. As a basic premise, I believe there are two realities. We can't put more people on our lakes for recreation (or that point is fast approaching). We can't put any more people on our shorelines – it's all gone. So what are we going to do with all the people who want to use lakes? Two out of three Wisconsin residents use lakes each year – plus all the out-of-state folks.

In the past we have thought about lakes primarily as places to recreate or to live. In the future we will have to think about lakes in terms other than watercraft horsepower and expensive shoreline real estate.

These economic drivers will not go away. They will relentlessly drive us to a pathetic low common denominator unless we reconceptualize what lakes mean. A positive future for lakes is possible if we can implement the following seven strategies:

- We help people see lakes – see lakes from roads, vistas, parks and waysides like the Finnish have on virtually every lake/road interface. Many more people can use a lake aesthetically than can recreate on it or live around it. Even now more people use lakes for natural beauty and solitude than for any other reason
- We help people learn and enjoy the history and culture of lakes and rivers and the people who have used them. The Lake Fairs are an example. Heritage tourism is another.
- We provide opportunities for people to participate in ecological protection and restoration. The current popularity of shoreland restoration is a hopeful sign. There are many other possibilities.



- We celebrate the emotional content of lakes – too often we put down emotions as irrational or unscientific. Emotions make life worth living. Even engineers sometimes have emotional responses. Lakes have tremendous emotional content for our ties to nature and for the place where we spend the best times of our lives with family and friends. They are dear to us and that is pure emotion. And it should be celebrated not put down. Lake planning should encourage such emotionalism by protecting and redeveloping the situation in which emotional attachment to the lake can flourish.
- We set aside special time and special places when and where the lake can have spiritual meaning for people like Thoreau who find lake and shoreline to be places for worship. These might include islands, peninsulas, cathedral shoreland forests, or wild lakes.
- We redefine water-based recreation as a privilege like driving on public highways rather than as a right to use public water. We refocus the Public Trust Doctrine toward protecting the quality of the opportunity to use the privilege rather than the basis of a right to use public water with any watercraft at any speed at any time. We should combine a boating license with the highway operator's license and adopt the same unified point system, same alcohol standard, same eyesight standard, and a driving test. Thus, if you get a ticket for your behavior on the water or have an accident, it affects your general driving points and your insurance.
- We redefine lake property ownership as a special heritage and responsibility to care for the shoreline, protect vegetation, make building and lighting as inconspicuous as possible. Riparians are a special group of people with special responsibility. There should be pride in how well that responsibility is carried out rather than a conspicuous effort to show off wealth.

Upcoming Events!

Aug. 4: Polk County Assoc. of Lakes & Rivers, Annual Meeting at Balsam Lake.

Aug. 12: Florence County UW-Extension is hosting a **Shoreland Preservation & Restoration workshop** on Sat. Aug. 12 at the Florence County Resource Center in Florence. This workshop will discuss: 1.) benefits of restoring shoreline buffers for wildlife habitat, aesthetics, and water quality protection; 2.) how to design and apply a successful restoration project at your property; 3.) how water classification projects will help achieve local lake protection goals; and 4.) shoreland regulations that protect our public waters, and who to call for permits or questions during your project. Please call Kathy Johnson, Florence County UWEX, at 715-528-4480 for more information.

August 26 Rock Lake Improvement Association, Jefferson County, is sponsoring a Lake Fair. Please call Patricia Cicero, Land Conservation Dept., at 920-674-7110 for more information.

Sept. 9: The Wisconsin Lake Leader Regional Workshop is designed to explore how we can help to ensure that our impacts will benefit both the lake ecosystem and future lake users. The workshop will be held 9 am-4 pm, Saturday, Sept. 9th at the Trees for Tomorrow Education Center in Eagle River. Pre-registration is required by Sept. 1st. Please call WAL at 800-542-5253 or 608-662-0923.

Sept. 16: Southeast Wisconsin Lakes Workshop will be held Saturday, Sept. 16th, at the Washington County Fairgrounds. Call Wisconsin Association of Lakes at 800-542-5253 or 608-662-0923 with questions. Sponsored by SER Lake Leaders, SEWRPC, DNR, UWEX, 4-H, and WAL.

Nov. 7-9, 2001: North American Lake Management Society, 21st International Symposium. Monona Terrace Community and Convention Center, Madison, Wisconsin. Local Hosts: Wisconsin Association of Lakes.





Self-Help Connects With The Cosmos

by Maureen Janson, *Self-Help Lake Monitoring*

Way high up in the sky, so high you can't even see it, there's a satellite taking pictures of your lake!

Most of us have some awareness of satellites. I can remember being up North as a child, spotting them moving among the stars in a clear night sky, imagining they were flying saucers. Those satellites have taken on a new meaning for the Self-Help program.

In our most exciting collaboration yet, Self-Help has already begun to share data with the UW-Madison Environmental Remote Sensing Center's collection of satellite images of Wisconsin lakes. These images, in conjunction with Self-Help data collected by volunteers on the same dates as the satellite passes over, will be used to develop a standardized methodology for classifying lake trophic state levels and various water quality characteristics.

Self-Help's collaborating partner in this study is the Satellite Lake Observatory Initiative (SLOI), part of the Upper Midwest Regional Earth Science Applications Center (RESAC), a consortium of universities, state and federal natural resource agencies, and industries in the Upper Midwest Region (Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan). The Upper Midwest RESAC has set a goal to develop remote sensing, geospatial analysis methods, and biophysical process models for applications in water resources as well as agriculture, forestry, and land cover.

Application of existing and new satellite imagery complements monitoring information on a spatial and temporal scale not possible with ground-based measurements. Of the many potential projects, RESAC has selected monitoring the trophic state of lakes as an initial area of development and is thrilled to work with Self-Help.

The SLOI program plans to develop a set of models to predict basic lake water quality parameters (Secchi disk depth, chlorophyll concentration, turbidity, color) from LANDSAT (satellite) data. With the help of ground sample data collected by Self-Help volunteers, these parameters can be more accurately defined creating a model for future studies. Study results will be presented at the 2001 Lakes Convention!

RESAC has developed a satellite-based lake monitoring protocol for routine use by planners and agencies across the region. Trophic state maps of lakes greater than 10 acres in size will be produced from Landsat-7 EMT+ data and for larger lakes with MODIS data.

These maps will be linked with GIS databases containing our land cover/land use maps and data and will be used to relate water quality to factors such as basin disturbance, non-point pollution sources and other landscape influences. The potential for expansion to a comprehensive statewide monitoring program also will be evaluated. Opportunities for more frequent (intra-seasonal) lake monitoring of the Great Lakes in the region than what is currently provided by Landsat images will be explored using the 250-meter bands of MODIS data.

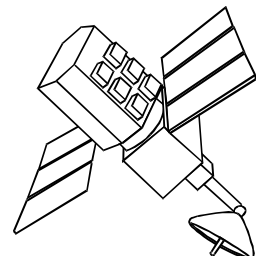
Check out these wonderful web sites for further information:

<http://www.ersc.wisc.edu>

<http://tidris.ersc.wisc.edu/sloi>

<http://chancey.ersc.wisc.edu/sloi>

If you are interested in getting involved with Self-Help Lake Monitoring, please contact Maureen Janson at (608)266-3599 for more information.



Adopt-A-Lake Water Education On The Move ...

*There are over 175 **Adopt-A-Lake** projects in action across the state. Read on for some of the project highlights of youth and adults involved in lake protection. If you are interested in starting an Adopt-a-Lake program in your community, please call Laura Felda, Adopt-A-Lake Coordinator, at 715-346-3366 or e-mail lfelda@uwsp.edu.*

Buffalo County

Gene Gardner, 4-H Youth Development Agent, organizes an annual **Conservation Day for Alma, Mondovi and Cochrane - Fountain Schools**. This outdoor event allows 5-6th grade students to learn how fishing and aquatic plants are a valuable link in keeping lakes and rivers healthy!



Washington County

Druid Lake Management District has been working with Hartford Union High School in the **SWAMP!** (Students Working Against Mean Plants)



Specifically, over the last 3 years, 30 tons of purple loosestrife have been removed from Lake Druid with the help of grant money. This summer, high school students under the direction of Greg Zimmer have restored the natural shoreline by planting several thousand native aquatic plants in areas once occupied by purple loosestrife. This fall, the students will be designing an educational display of their work for the Lake District and the community. Keep up the good work!

Milwaukee County

No water in sight, landlocked by asphalt and pavement? Lillian Krmpotich, 5th grade teacher from **Lincoln Elementary School, West Allis District**, says “bring the lake and water bugs to the students!” Over one hundred 5-6th grade students participated in exploring the wonders of the plant and animal world from a bucket!

Washburn County

One hundred eighty 4th grade students from Shell Lake and Spooner School District volunteered during the **Yellow River Restoration Project** at the Spooner Fish Hatchery. With the help of the Master Gardeners, John Haack, Basin Educator, and DNR personnel, students established a native prairie site and constructed a tile cement block that will later become a walkway at the hatchery. What a fine example of youth and adults working together!



Adopt-A-Lake/Project WET



Welcome New Lake Neighbors!

By Bob Young, Wisconsin DNR

It's no surprise to most Wisconsin residents that lakefront properties are a hot commodity these days. Waterfront property sells fast and usually at dizzying prices, whether it's "virgin" land being developed for the first time or existing properties being re-sold. The real surprise comes when residents already on the lake wake up one morning to the sound of chain saws, bulldozers and crashing trees. Another lot is being developed and with it goes another chunk of paradise. But wait, didn't those people already on the lake do the same thing, or the people they bought from?

Development brings inevitable changes to the lakeside landscape, some undeniably negative, at least from an ecological perspective. Yet people will continue to build as long as there is lakeshore property to build on. The challenge is to develop with the lake in mind, to minimize the impact of buildings, driveways, and bared soil. Shoreland zoning regulations provide the framework for that protection, but a good dose of awareness and education is needed up front, before the chain saw and bulldozer do their work. Without the awareness of what development means to a lake, the regulations can be seen simply as an irritant, or maybe something that limits one's personal property rights. Or maybe the new owner doesn't even know that there are shoreland regulations designed to protect the lake.



In any case, the lake and the surrounding communities, both human and wild-life, can suffer when too much soil is stripped bare, when most or all of the natural lakeshore vegetation is converted to lawn, or when the natural shore itself is replaced by an illegal sea wall or over-sized rip-rap. Fortunately, a growing number of people in Wisconsin's Lake Partnership are concerned with heading off these kinds of destructive activities before they occur. Through targeted education efforts, new waterfront property owners are being identified and given an awareness-raising packet of information, much like the "welcome wagon" approach used in rural communities to welcome new neighbors.

Several of these efforts have been around in various forms for years in the DNR, where information packets have been handed out to help waterfront owners deal with shoreland regulations and to consider lake protection concepts. More recently, a number of counties piloted projects with the DNR to develop and distribute "new owner" packets both through the mail and at county zoning offices. Those efforts have now matured into a broader Shoreland Friends Project that includes as partners the Wisconsin County Code Administrators (WCCA), Wisconsin Association of Lakes (WAL), UW-Extension (UWEX), and DNR.

This latest effort seeks to standardize the process of identifying new waterfront property owners at the county level and to support a system that allows counties to immediately send out "new owner" packets. The new waterfront owners receive educational materials that pertain to their county's shoreland regulations, lake classification system, and basic shoreland protection principles. As with previous and similar educational efforts, the primary goal is to reach new waterfront property owners before they begin clearing their property or starting construction. Those new owners who buy properties with existing development will benefit as well from educational materials promoting stewardship and shoreland rehabilitation practices.

Many in the Lakes Partnership are optimistic that these new efforts will result in real and long-term benefits for Wisconsin's lakes. But we shouldn't stop here – there are other ways to reach out to even more new and potential waterfront property owners in the state with guidelines for lake-friendly development. In your own lake organization, consider forming a welcome wagon committee to greet all new owners on the lake and include lake stewardship information. Be sure to keep the lake protection message direct but also keep it simple – don't overload them with scores of publications



and handouts that might seem overwhelming. UWEX's excellent "Life on the Edge" pretty much says it all and is available at nominal cost to your lake organization. A sheet or two with people to contact for assistance, a short welcome and "this is why your shoreline is important to the lake" statement can round out an effective packet.

In your broader local community, consider getting the word out through those who often are the first point of contact for new waterfront owners – realtors, contractors, chambers of commerce and tourist visitor centers. The Rhinelander Area Chamber of Commerce, for example, greets visitors to the area, many who stop in to inquire about buying waterfront property "up north". The Chamber has begun a pilot project with DNR to set up a display and distribute "new owner" packets to those potential buyers.

Our potential lake partners in the private sector - realtors, contractors, chambers of commerce and the like – may not have traditionally played a large role in the Wisconsin Lakes Partnership. But local lake organizations, and especially county-wide lake organizations, are in an excellent position to work with the private sector in getting out a lake stewardship message to new waterfront property owners. All it takes is the desire to make a few contacts and find like-minded partners - there are many who feel the same way about our lakes. Who knows, maybe someday lake stewardship will truly be a household word in Wisconsin.

Big Bass Lake Meets the Web

By Andy Pyzyk, Big Bass Lake Webmaster

It seems that the information age is upon us. Read on as Big Bass Lake enters the 21st century.

My name is Andy Pyzyk and I am the Webmaster for the Big Bass Lake website. The story of the website is like this:

I began most of my web experience when our family got access to the internet in January, 1998. From that day on I always wanted to create a website. One day I went in to help my mother at her school and the librarian offered to teach me everything she knew about web design. Soon after, I made my own personal website. I decided to advance my web experience by building my ultimate dream: a website for my favorite lake where I spend all of my summers, Big Bass Lake! I collected the information I needed to make the page and began. It took me about 4 months to complete the website. On Christmas day I finished the site as a present for the lake district. I sent an e-mail to the chairman of the board with the address attached and explained that it was my personal gift to the lake. The lake people were just thrilled when they saw the page.

I thought that Big Bass Lake should join the information age and that a website should provide the landowner with all the needed information at just a click of the button. I acquired Netscape Communicator 4.5 software to make the page and a Hewlett Packard Color Scanner. Then I acquired the information I wanted on the website such as maps, pictures, budgets, laws and our lake newsletter. I made a main welcome page by scanning a picture of a pretty sunset and saving it on my Big Bass webpage directory. I found a satisfactory web page server and started creating links. The rest was pretty easy.

Recently, I attended the Big Bass Lake annual meeting and received much gratitude and applause for my work. Many people submitted pictures for the site of fish and other wildlife. I am currently 16 years old and I am going to be a sophomore in high school. I spend a lot of my time at the lake and the remainder is spent working on my 1984 Pontiac Fiero. I attend Brookfield Academy Upper School where I take an advanced computers class that also has a focus in web design. I hope that someday every lake will have what our lake community has.



Big Bass Lake website:
<http://www.bigbasslake.homepage.com/>



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Reflections

"There is only one body of water on our planet Earth, constantly traveling from one river to one lake to one ocean...The sea is a bonus to us all, soothing climates, washing beaches, feeding animals and people, connecting nations together, pregnant with resources of all kinds, but still sensitive and vulnerable."

Jacques-Yves Cousteau