



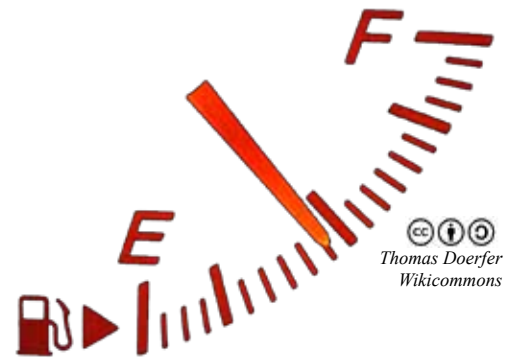
# Checking Our Fuel Gauge

## Budget Challenges Call for Changes and Updates to *Lake Tides*

By Eric Olson, Director and Lakes Specialist, Extension Lakes

*It usually only takes one experience of ignoring the fuel gauge for a boater to learn their lesson. The humbling experience of asking for a tow or seeking someone to share some fuel sticks with you, and from then on, you find yourself glancing at the instrument panel much more diligently. So it is with annual budgets; finding yourself getting close to an “empty tank” financially causes heightened awareness of how far you can get with what you have left.*

**F**or *Lake Tides*, the forces of inflation in the last several years have caused our financial fuel tank to run rather low lately. To better understand the issues, it helps to have a more complete view of how Extension Lakes and much of the Wisconsin Lakes and Rivers Partnership are funded, which is just one avenue Wisconsin uses to support water resources and conservation.



*Lake Tides* is a publication of Extension Lakes housed at UW-Stevens Point but primarily funded through an agreement with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The DNR is the lead state agency responsible for managing, protecting, and restoring the state’s streams, rivers, and lakes. This responsibility is part of what we often refer to as the Public Trust Doctrine, which protects the rights of the people of Wisconsin regarding:

- ◆ Transportation and navigation on waterways.
- ◆ Protection of water quality and aquatic habitat.
- ◆ Recreational activities, including boating, fishing, hunting, and swimming in waterways.
- ◆ Enjoyment of scenic beauty while on the water.

Within the DNR there are multiple different funding sources and budget allocations, incorporating everything from fishing and hunting license sales to state park revenue to fees charged for different permits. The DNR also receives a portion of the overall state sales and income tax (referred to as general purpose revenue or GPR). According to a study of Wisconsin’s conservation finances published last year by the non-partisan Wisconsin Policy Forum, GPR funding for the DNR has decreased nearly 70% over the last 25 years! This has resulted in an increased reliance on non-GPR dollars as well as a reduction in the size of the DNR workforce.

*(Continued on page 2)*

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According to a study of Wisconsin's conservation finances published last year by the non-partisan Wisconsin Policy Forum, GPR funding for the DNR has decreased nearly 70% over the last 25 years! <https://wispolicyforum.org/conservation-funding-in-wisconsin/>

Switch your mailed paper copy of this Lake Tides newsletter to an online version - with FULL COLOR photos! Just scan this QR code and fill out the short form, or call 715-346-2116, or email [lakes@uwsp.edu](mailto:lakes@uwsp.edu).



## Funding Source

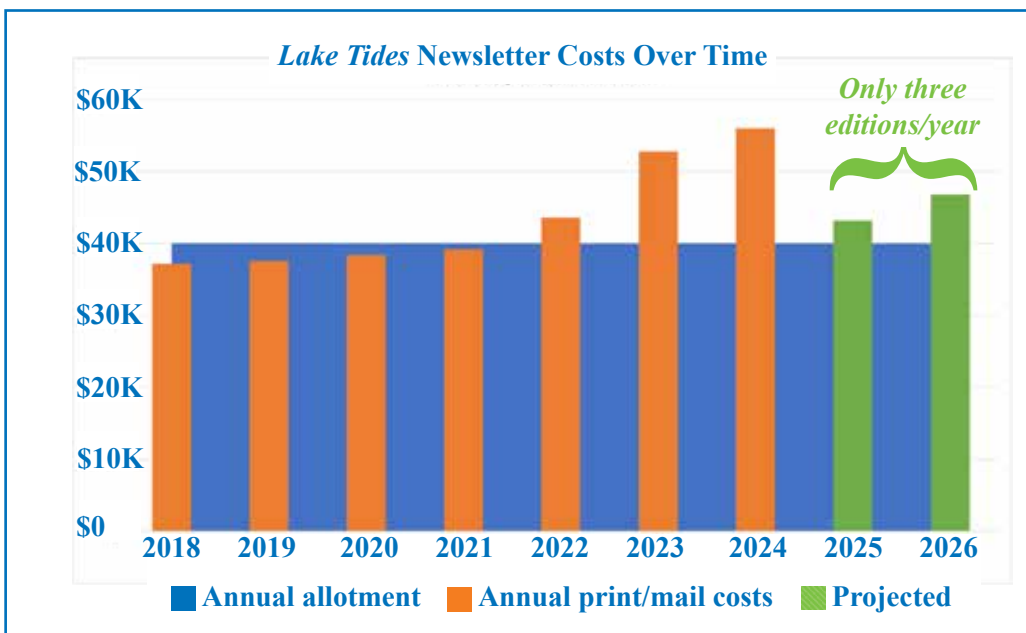
Lakes and rivers have long enjoyed a dedicated funding stream to help pay for staff as well as the annual surface water grant program (which provides over \$6M in cost-sharing funds for lake and river protection and restoration). The Water Resources Account is funded by estimating the amount of state gasoline tax paid by in-state and out-of-state motor boaters. Since people do not operate boats on roads and highways, it makes sense to divert that tax revenue from the pumps before it is transferred to the Department of Transportation. A similar approach is used for ATVs and snowmobiles, with funding directed to trail development and maintenance.

Since there is no way to know exactly how much gas is sold for boating purposes, Wisconsin uses an estimate based on the number of boats that are registered in the state. An in-depth, statistically sound survey of boaters conducted in 1989-1990 found that the average boat in Wisconsin burns 50 gallons of gas a year, and that there are about 40% more boats than are registered in Wisconsin due to visiting boaters from other states. To estimate the gas tax attributable to boats, the state multiplies the number of registered boats x 50 gallons x 39.09 cents (the state gasoline tax rate), then adds 40% more to account for visiting boats.

For a long time, the number of boats registered in Wisconsin grew with the population, and the per-gallon gasoline tax used to increase based on the rate of inflation. Automatic increases in the gas tax rate stopped in 2006, and in recent years the number of boats registered in Wisconsin has held steady at just over 600,000. This has resulted in roughly \$13 million annually to the water resources account.

## Unbalanced Growth

The challenge today is that while the per-gallon gas tax rate has not been growing, the cost of just about everything else is. More specifically, the cost of printing and mailing this newsletter (which is funded by the Water Resources Account) has grown rather dramatically in recent years. This expense is in addition to the time and effort that staff and volunteer writers put into making this newsletter possible. Our physical mailing list includes nearly 25,000 addresses, which means we get low per-piece printing prices and we receive the U.S. Postal Service's bulk mail discounts. Due to increases in paper costs and the postal rates, the total *Lake Tides* expense is on a trajectory to possibly double in a ten-year time period. In response, we have been working to reduce costs by "cleaning up" the mailing list, eliminating any possible duplicates and gently asking recipients, who are willing, to switch their mailed copy to an online version.



## Information Age

Another consideration for the future of *Lake Tides* is, of course, technology. The way in which people receive and share information has changed dramatically over the last 50 years. The most rapid and innovative developments have been in the last decade or two with the widespread adoption of smart phones, the persistence of email, and the rise of social media. In the 1970s, when Extension Lakes and the DNR wanted to share timely updates with lake districts and other people working on lake issues, a quarterly newsletter was a good fit. Today, we use an email service to send

With projected inflation of both printing and mailing costs, and no additional funds for the newsletter, we will still need to take additional steps after reducing the number of yearly editions of *Lake Tides* from four to three.

monthly updates to lake district and lake association board members directly. (If you're not receiving these monthly updates and you are on a lake group board, please contact us at [lakes@uwsp.edu](mailto:lakes@uwsp.edu) or 715-346-2116!) The DNR also maintains email directories through a service called GovDelivery (search for Wisconsin GovDelivery, enter your email, and sign up for the updates that interest you). While it takes staff time to administer our lists and compose messages, the sending of bulk emails is relatively free. There remains an issue of whether these emails are ever opened and read; generally only about a quarter of them are.

## **Our Readers Matter**

We want to be mindful of you, the reader, when contemplating these changes. When we have surveyed our readers in the past, we found that the majority of people getting this newsletter prefer having it in hard copy. Like a magazine, the hard copy *Lake Tides* allows for more casual reading at the cabin, and it enables you to share your copy with others by either leaving it on the coffee table or passing it along to your new neighbor. Just this summer we received a letter from a long-time reader thanking us for continuing to provide hard-copy editions of *Lake Tides*, stating "Many thanks for printing 'Lake Tides' with paper and ink. I'm a senior citizen, born in 1931, I don't have a computer..."

We also have asked if people would be willing to subscribe and pay for *Lake Tides*; the results were mixed, with most people indicating they would not do so. Moving to a subscription model would make sure the mailing list is continuously up-to-date, but it also creates a new set of tasks around managing the subscriptions and a possible increase in the per piece cost. Most importantly, we want to make sure everyone has access to this publication.

## **Taking Steps Now**

In the meantime, we need to take some steps to mitigate these budget impacts and make sure no one has to metaphorically tow us to the shore. For 2025, we will only be printing and mailing *Lake Tides* three times rather than four. We will also be regularly asking readers to contact us to ensure they continue receiving

the paper copy. We may eventually need to do a "purge" of the mailing list, requiring people to definitively affirm that they wish to keep receiving the hard copy in the mail. This step will likely occur over time to maximize the odds that a reader sees that we are doing this and has an opportunity to respond. This is not an unprecedented action, but the last time it was done was over 20 years ago.

We also want those people who are involved in lake organization leadership (board members, etc.) to take steps to make sure we are able to reach them with regular updates. Associations and districts should check their listing on the Lake List on our website and send along updates. We do not make board members' emails public, but we do use them for our periodic (monthly) updates. We also have created a Facebook group for board members to join (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/578587483880637/>).

We want to provide more ways for lake people to interact and collaborate in order to tackle lake and organizational challenges.

Finally, we invite you to share your feedback about *Lake Tides*. What content are you finding most useful? What topics do you think merit more coverage? With a bit more time between issues, we want to track down important and interesting stories that we hope will motivate you to do more for the lake(s) in your area. Email or call us to share your thoughts! 💧

### **What is the Lake List?**

The Lake List is a searchable directory of Wisconsin lake organizations. You can use it to find a lake organization or officer, see how folks deal with lake management issues by checking out their management profile, and obtain contact information for many businesses that service the needs of lake organizations.

[uwsp.edu/uwexplakes](http://uwsp.edu/uwexplakes)

### **Support Lake Tides in Perpetuity**

An endowment fund was started to eventually support undergraduate fellowships, graduate assistantships, newsletter production expenses, and other *Lake Tides* expenses. To contribute to this endowment account, please go to <https://give.uwsp.edu/give-now>

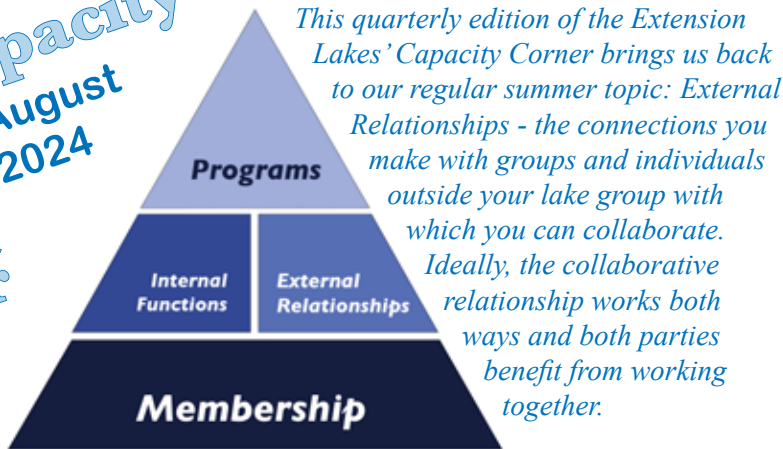
- a. Type "lakes" into the search bar and when "No Results" comes up, scroll down and
- b. Enter Fund Name: "Wisconsin Lakes Partnership Program Endowment"
- c. Enter amount and proceed to fill out your personal details and billing information and confirm donation

# Partner Mapping

## What is it and why is it important?

By Sara Windjue, Leadership and Capacity Development Specialist, and Eric Olson, Director and Lakes Specialist, Extension Lakes

Capacity  
Corner  
August  
2024

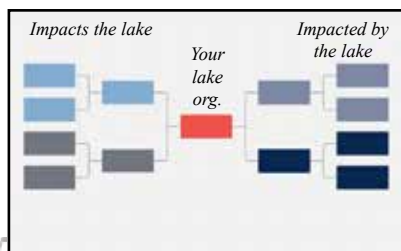


Partner mapping is the process of creating a visual representation of your existing and potential collaborators. From a lake organization's perspective, these would include all individuals and groups who have a vested interest in the well-being of the lake. Since most lakes are public, we could argue that all of the public are partners (and they are); however, it is easier to conduct a partner analysis and mapping activity with clearly identified groups. Partner mapping allows you to see everyone who can influence your work and the relationships among those partners. Mapping your relevant partners allows you to focus on relationship-building with important collaborators, which can improve engagement.

*Mapping your relevant partners allows you to focus on relationship-building with important collaborators, which can improve engagement.*

### Where To Begin

You can start by using a simple flow chart to show the relationships between your



organization (represented in the center) and all of the partners that are either impacted by the lake (on the right) or those that impact the lake (on the left).

Since many of these partners might fit on both sides of a chart like this (i.e. angling clubs can impact the lake as users and are also impacted by the lake since they want to see the lake remain a quality resource), using a bubble map may make more sense (see example on page 5). You can start with a simple bubble map; however, as you continue to develop mapping your partners and their connections, your bubble map will become more complicated.

It may take several attempts to get your partner map right, and these partner maps and connections can change over time. New partners will be added and some partners may be removed; relationships between partners and the lake can also change.

Take a look at the example on the next page to see what a simple bubble map could include.

### Dunn County Example

Tainter Menomin Lake Improvement Association (TMLIA) created a handwritten "map" identifying the connections within their community networks. According to Liz Osborne, Nonpoint Source Coordinator with the Bureau of Watershed Management with the WDNR, "The idea was to brainstorm all the partner organizations TMLIA had working relationships with and could go to for help, support, and influence."

From that hand drawn map, Liz created a version using partner logos. Then, working with the partners, she added the connections. This illustrates the web of connections among stakeholders surrounding both Tainter Lake and Lake Menomin. The final map was often used in slideshow presentations about TMLIA and its work to foster restoration in its 1,900 square mile watershed. Major efforts like





restoring the Red Cedar River Basin require many collaborators and a lot of coordination. Although the TMLIA dissolved in recent years, the work among the partners continues.

Have you already performed a partner analysis for your organization? If so, please send us photos and/or a summary of your process. If not, let us know if you'd like some help with your first partner mapping exercise! 💧



You can see the progression of these images from brainstorming to organizing to connecting all of the partner organizations that have a tie to Tainter Lake and Lake Menomin. Images courtesy of an exercise with the Tainter Menomin Lake Improvement Association in Dunn County.



## WISCONSIN LAKES

*Wisconsin Lakes, formerly known as the Wisconsin Association of Lakes, is the only statewide non-profit organization working exclusively to protect and enhance the quality of Wisconsin's 15,000 lakes. We are the citizen arm of the Wisconsin Lakes and Rivers Partnership.*

*Register to vote and find out what is on your ballot at <https://myvote.wi.gov/en-us/>*

# Advocacy for Lakes

## Learn What Your Lake Org Can Do

By Mike Engleson, Executive Director, Wisconsin Lakes

As we're sure you know, 2024 is a BIG election year.

Wisconsin lake organizations often wish to influence policy, but may be afraid to do so.

While there are limitations that need to be kept in mind, lake organizations might be surprised at just how much advocacy they can undertake, even in an election year. While we cover the basics below, we encourage you to take the time to learn what your organization can do both by following the Wisconsin Lakes' blog (<https://wisconsinlakes.org/blog/>), as well as taking advantage of great resources like those offered by the Alliance for Justice at <https://afj.org/>.

### State Lobbying Rules vs. Federal Tax Rules

One thing to keep in mind is that "lobbying" is only one form of "advocacy" and is generally the activity regulated by Wisconsin and the IRS. Lobbying is communication with the intent to influence legislation in a particular way. Advocacy can take many forms, including simply providing education about an issue.

In Wisconsin, "lobbyists" (those who lobby) and "lobbying principals" (entities who pay lobbyists) may need to be registered. But that's mostly only if the lobbyist is being paid. If you or your organization is lobbying on a voluntary basis, you should be in the clear. See <https://lobbying.wi.gov/Home/Welcome> for more information.

For its part, the IRS limits the amount of lobbying certain types of nonprofit organizations can do. 501c3 organizations (generally ones with deductible contributions) are subject to limits, but can still do quite a bit and many statewide advocacy groups, including Wisconsin Lakes, have the 501c3 status. What counts as lobbying or advocacy under the tax rules is fairly specific, which means there is a lot of room for nonprofits to lobby. Alliance for Justice provides some great info regarding the IRS rules.

It should also be noted that as a form of local government lake districts might need to register themselves and their lobbyists in Wisconsin, a lake district is under no IRS limitations because of their tax status.

### Election Year Work

No lake organization should be doing true "electioneering," or working specifically for a candidate or party. But there's still a lot you can do.

For instance, you can ask candidates to answer questions about how they would deal with an issue, as long as you ask all the candidates. And educating your members about the fact that an election is upcoming and explaining how to register and what is on their ballot, is absolutely okay.

Scholz Nonprofit Law, a Madison based law firm specializing in nonprofit law, has a short presentation online outlining nonprofits and elections at <https://j2i64d.p3cdn1.secureserver.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/SNL-Election-overview.pdf>

Wisconsin Lakes is committed to helping lake organizations understand the ins and outs of advocacy and lobbying and what they can and cannot do. Watch [wisconsinlakes.org](https://wisconsinlakes.org) for more on these and other helpful topics! 💧



# Ripples of Carnivory

## Exploring the World of Predaceous Diving Beetles

By Grace Hasse, UW-Stevens Point Student

The family name *Dytiscidae*, derived from the Greek word meaning ‘able to dive,’ aptly describes the predaceous diving beetle. This title not only encapsulates their proficient swimming behavior but also their remarkable ability to remain submerged for extended periods. These beetles represent a mixture of mystery and carnivory, thriving in various freshwater environments from ponds to lakes and pools.

Adult diving beetles have adapted remarkably to their aquatic life. They carry a life-sustaining bubble of air, tucked neatly between their elytra (hardened forewings), allowing them to stay underwater for up to thirty minutes! This air reserve functions like a diver’s SCUBA tank. Their sleek, oval-shaped bodies are evolutionarily honed to minimize water resistance. In addition, their hind legs, transformed into powerful, paddle-like appendages, enable swift, agile movements through the water. This design is critical for their predatory lifestyle.

Predaceous diving beetles display fascinating feeding behaviors. Although they are opportunistic scavengers and enjoy the occasional snack of earthworms or carrion, they are also mighty hunters. Equipped with robust jaws, these beetles can capture and dismember live prey with efficiency. Their diet is impressively diverse, encompassing everything from tadpoles and small fish to other aquatic insects and their larvae.

The life cycle of these beetles is equally intriguing. Their larvae, often called “water tigers,” are as predatory as the adults and are equipped with elongated, piercing mandibles ideal for hunting.



Paul Skawinski



While collecting aquatic plants for a training, Erin McFarlane was excited to find this predaceous diving beetle!

Predaceous diving beetles play a crucial role in their ecosystems. As predators, they help maintain the balance of aquatic communities, controlling populations of other insects and smaller aquatic organisms. Their presence is often an indicator of a healthy aquatic ecosystem. 💧

### Diving Beetle’s Food-sharing Rules

*Any type of larva is mine, as well as all tadpoles, minnows, and newts. Sticklebacks, caddis flies, spiders, and small frogs of any kind - mine.*

*In short, if it moves, it is mine.*

*If it’s anywhere near me, it is mine. If I’m hungry (and I’m always hungry), it is mine, mine, mine.*

*And if, by chance, I choose to crawl up yonder smartweed, bask for a bit,*

*open my armored wings, and fly about my kingdom (within which everything is mine), do not forget what is mine.*

*For if I return and you have taken it,*

*YOU are mine.*

~Joyce Sidman  
*Song of the Water Boatman*



# Boats for All Folks!

## Connecting Youth to Milwaukee's Water through Meaningful, Hands-on Learning

By William "Bill" Nimke, Executive Director and Founder, All Hands Boatworks, Inc.

All Hands Boatworks



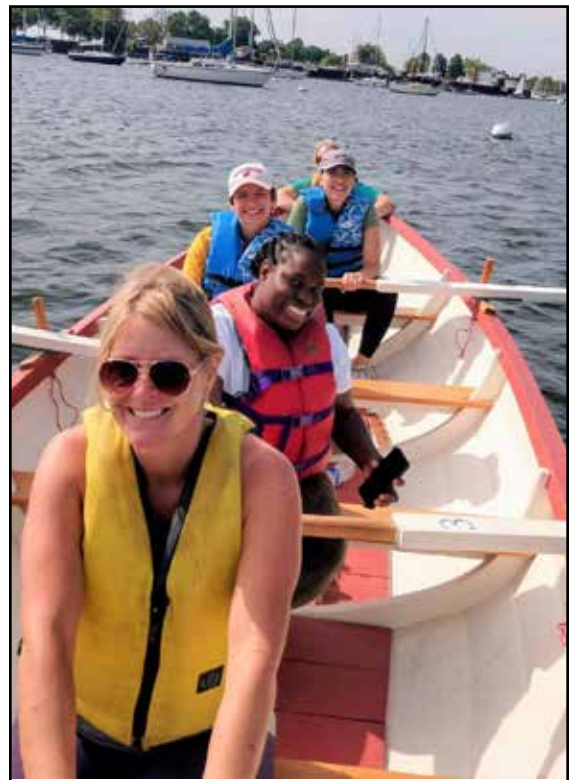
AHB has a goal to expand its summer on-water and small boating activities for Milwaukee youths, families, and the wider community. We refer to this goal as *Boats For All Folks!* which is to expand meaningful hands-on learning experiences for youth, while at the same time providing youth groups and the public with safe on-the-water recreation and appreciation of our urban rivers. *Boats For All Folks!* is meeting its goal in a

**O**n a recent spring afternoon this past May, teens and their families, along with staff and volunteer mentors from All Hands Boatworks (AHB) gathered on Milwaukee's lakefront to launch the 150th boat built in AHB's programs since 2013. The 24-foot four-person rowing dory was christened the GREEN HERON. It joins an identical rowing dory, the WHITE SWAN, built by teens and mentors a year earlier. Both crafts are part of a growing fleet of hand-built boats that AHB is utilizing to connect more people, young and old, with our local rivers, ponds, and lakes. The AHB fleet includes a floating menagerie of rowing skiffs, kayaks, canoes, sailboats, and larger rowing gigs.

variety of ways: free community rowing days, group rowing and teambuilding, *RiverVentures* youth day camps, year-round internships for teens, and a new youth rowing program. One of the newest programs is *On-The-Water Skills & Jobs*, which encompasses water safety and boat handling skills, a Wisconsin Boating

*Bill Nimke has championed project-based, experiential education for Milwaukee-area youths for more than 30 years!*

All Hands Boatworks, Inc. is a nonprofit youth development organization based in Milwaukee. Over the past 11 years, AHB has taught and inspired more than 6,000 Milwaukee-area youths, building more than 150 wooden boats and using them for on-the-water programs. For many participants, these projects have been their first introduction to boating and often their first connection to Milwaukee's urban rivers and lakefront made even more powerful with boats built with their own hands!



All Hands Boatworks

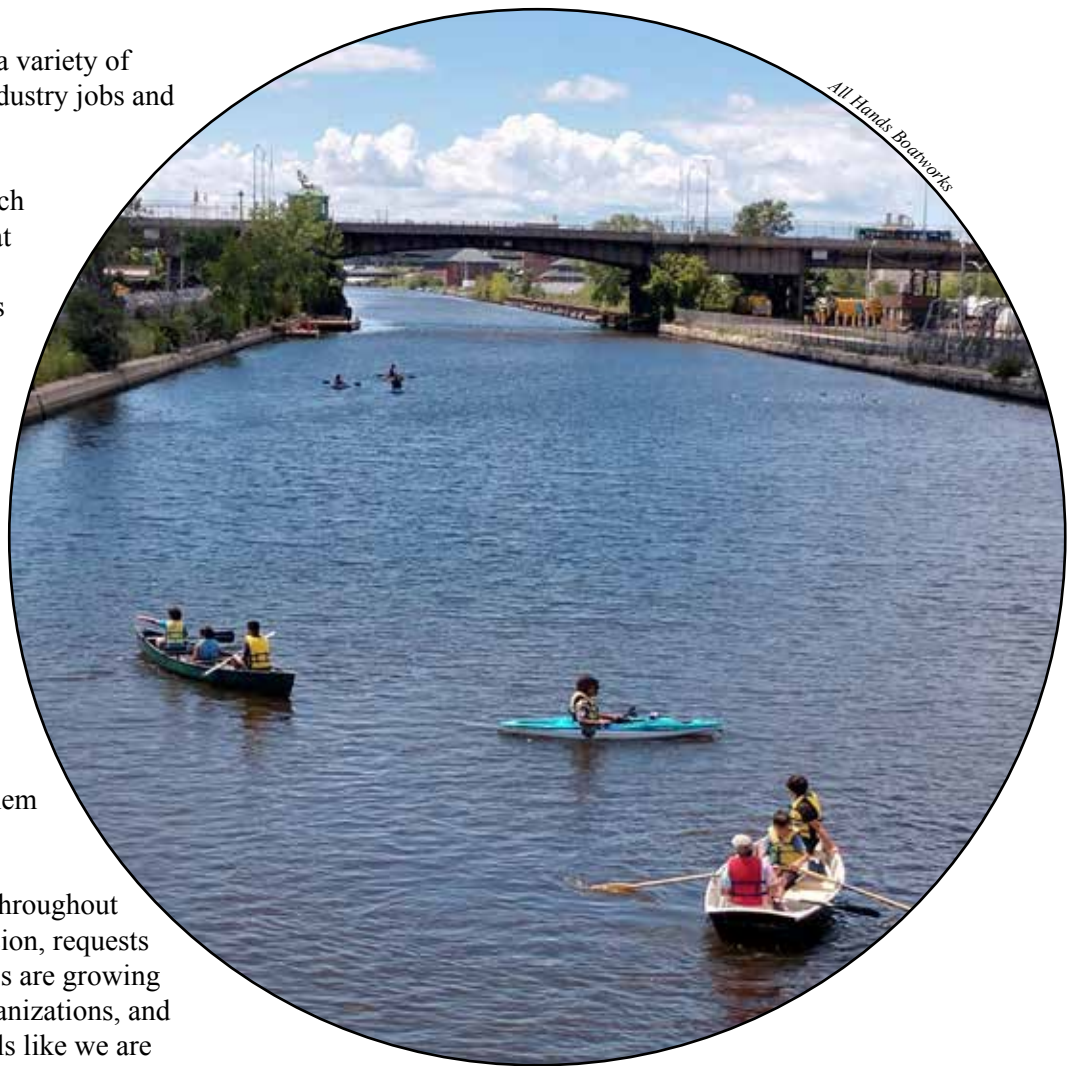




License, and introductions to a variety of water-related and maritime industry jobs and careers.

All Hands Boatworks' approach is deeply rooted in a belief that building and using wooden boats has limitless potential as a teaching tool and vehicle for individual, social, and community development. We believe in the radical potential and importance of experiential learning to change society and peoples' lives for the better. Furthermore, our approach values the beauty and power of the natural world, particularly marine environments, to lift people and communities and move them forward.

As word continues to spread throughout Milwaukee about AHB's mission, requests for programming and activities are growing from schools, community organizations, and families. After 11 years, it feels like we are just completing the first leg of our journey to impact more young lives and connect our communities to our vital waterways. 💧



*I encourage you to learn more about All Hands Boatworks and its many programs and activities at [www.allhandsboatworks.org](http://www.allhandsboatworks.org). Feel free to contact us at 414-404-8213 or [bill@allhandsboatworks.org](mailto:bill@allhandsboatworks.org).*

All Hands Boatworks



*After 11 years, it feels like we are just completing the first leg of our journey to impact more young lives and connect our communities to our vital waterways.*

# Share Your Story

## Open Call for WI Lakes and Rivers Convention Presentations

**T**he power of words is immense, especially when advocating for our waters. By raising awareness, promoting conservation efforts, and crafting compelling messages, words can inspire action and drive positive change to protect our water resources for future generations. Join us for the 2025 Wisconsin Lakes and Rivers Convention where we will be exploring the Power of Words and so much more! Mark your calendars to save the date next March 26-28 in Stevens Point.

### Share Your Research, Project, or Water Story

We invite presenters to share how the power of words can improve water resource management and protection. Have you helped manage invasive species by adopting new tools and techniques or through citizen monitoring and education? Have you tested new strategies for mitigating climate consequences through resiliency, adaptation, and action? Can you share examples and tips to increase the functionality and success of lake and river organizations? If so, we want YOU to use the power of words to share your successes and help us all learn through our collective failures. Throughout these sessions, we encourage highlights of efforts and ideas that support diverse perspectives and group dynamics, as well as equity and inclusion in water resource protection and management.

The Convention brings together scientists, water management specialists, educators, students, and citizen stakeholders to learn more about water resources, so the audience is more varied than a typical research or professional conference. Ideally, presentations will provide the audience with actionable lessons to use at any of Wisconsin's thousands of lakes, rivers, or streams.

We are currently accepting presentation proposals for four different types of presentations in several topic areas. 💧

### Deadline: October 1, 2024

*(or until we reach capacity)*

- 💧 Concurrent Sessions Presentation Proposals
- 💧 Pre-/Post-Convention Workshop Proposals

### Deadline: March 1, 2025

*(or until we reach capacity)*

- 💧 Poster Presentation Proposals
- 💧 Lightning Talk Presentation Proposals

**LEARN** from respected experts, grassroots organizers, and passionate water advocates.

**ENGAGE** in the workshops and interactive discussion sessions.

**ENHANCE** your network of water-focused professionals.

Save the Date: **March 26-28**



**2025 Wisconsin  
Lakes and Rivers Convention**

the **POWER**  
of **WORDS**

**Working for Our Waters**

**WisconsinWaterWeek.org**





# Let's Make Healthy Lakes & Rivers Together!

The Healthy Lakes & Rivers initiative is a statewide effort providing outreach, technical assistance, and funding for five simple and inexpensive best practices that are appropriate for most lakeshore properties. Pitch your Healthy Lakes & Rivers feature story to us at [healthylakeswi@gmail.com](mailto:healthylakeswi@gmail.com).

Amy Kowalski

## Rollin' with the Changes

Three of our esteemed colleagues, who have been part of the Healthy Lakes & Rivers Team since day one, have moved on to greener pastures. Pamela Toshner, who was integral in spear-heading this initiative and with patience and enthusiasm helped it grow, has taken the North District Water Resources Field Supervisor position with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. Patrick Goggin, who lent this team his expertise in native plants and shoreland restoration is retired from Extension Lakes and has started his own native plant nursery in Phillips, WI. Tom Onofrey, who recently retired as the Marquette County Planning, Zoning, and Land Information Director, was our gentle voice of reason and steadfast champion of the Healthy Lakes & Rivers initiative; Tom is literally enjoying greener pastures with his wife and horses on their family farm.



Celebrating 10 years of Healthy Lakes & Rivers at Beaver Dam Lake (L to R): Tom Onofrey, Pamela Toshner, Carolyn Aita (property owner), and Patrick Goggin

And so we “keep on rollin’” with an updated team that continues to support partner organizations with grant funding and resources, while working to increase the number of waterfront property owners to not only restore shoreland habitat and install runoff and erosion control projects, but also to engage their neighbors and friends in this important work.

## Celebrating Growth

The Healthy Lakes & Rivers Team had the opportunity to visit a few properties around Beaver Dam Lake that installed some 350ft<sup>2</sup> native shoreline plantings in 2015. It was great to hear how these native landscapes are now self-sustaining, low-maintenance wildlife habitat that bring beauty and privacy to the homeowners.

Celebrating growth with the Healthy Lakes & Rivers Team (front L to R): Tracy Arnold, Eric Olson, Pamela Toshner, Patrick Goggin, Cathy Burrow, Laura MacFarland, Pat Anderson, Lauren Haydon, and Karen Huber (property owner); (back L to R): Tom Onofrey and Scott Van Egeren

Pamela Toshner



Amy Kowalski



# Lakes 101

## How Wetlands Manage Water To Help Lakes and Communities

By Wisconsin Wetlands Association



Wisconsin Wetlands Association



*Wetlands occur between the places that are always wet and the places that are always dry. They protect the health and safety of our communities, reducing flood damages, helping keep our waters clean, and ensuring we have water to drink and use in our businesses.*

If we step back and take a broader view of the entire watershed, we can see that wetlands play an important role in lake health. By understanding how wetlands work, we can begin the exciting process of restoring wetlands to help heal Wisconsin's waters.

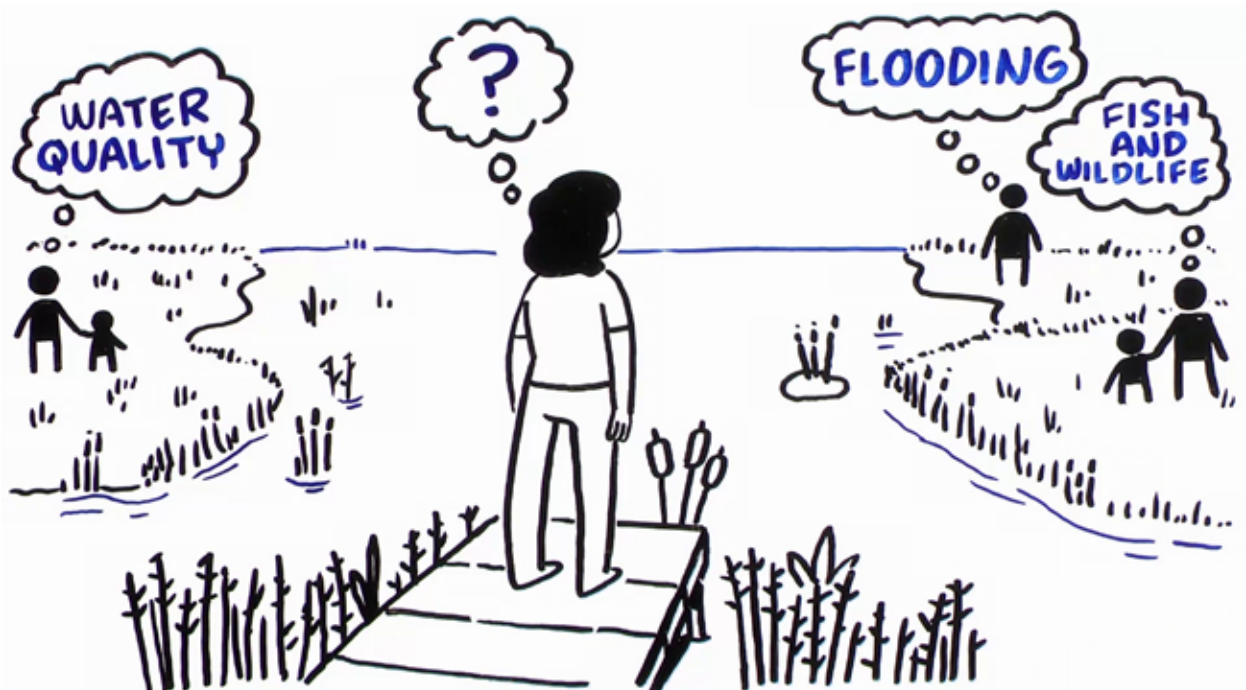
Because water flows downhill, we can't fix issues downstream if we don't fix problems upstream. Let's start at the top and look at how it's all connected: the watershed.

A watershed is an area where all surface waters—lakes, rivers, streams, and wetlands—drain to a shared body of water. Wetlands in different parts of a watershed manage water in different ways.

### Up Top

Wetlands in the upper parts of a watershed form in low spots on the land. These wetlands capture, store, and slowly release runoff from

*Are the wetlands near you healthy and abundant enough to support watershed health, or are they too damaged to do the work you need them to do? If you don't know the answer, you're not alone!*



rain and snowmelt. They may not always look like wetlands—they're wet in the spring and dry by late summer—and often, they don't even appear to be connected to streams or rivers, but they are critical.

Here's how: individually, these wetlands may be small, but they can be locally abundant. Together, they hold and manage a lot of water and literally slow the flow, allowing the water to soak into the ground. This reduces erosion and flood peaks and helps protect downstream roads and neighborhoods.

### In the Middle

Wetlands in the middle part of a watershed form along rivers and creeks, giving them room to swell during high water. They are most commonly known as floodplain wetlands. When floodwaters spread out across a floodplain, they slow down. Slower-moving water has less erosion-causing energy. And water that can spread out means lower flood peaks downstream.

### Down Low

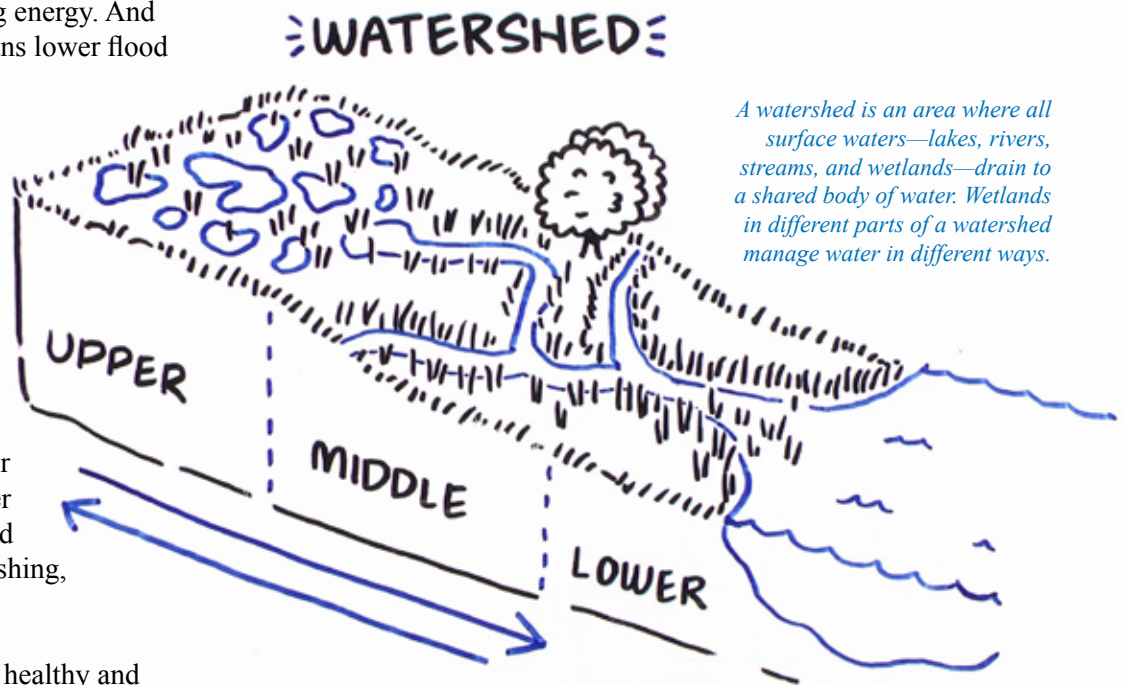
Wetlands in the lower parts of a watershed form where rivers empty into larger bodies of water, especially lakes. Where rivers flatten out, the current disperses and the river drops its load of sediments and other material. This makes the water that enters the lake cleaner and clearer, which means better fishing, swimming, and boating.

So, are the wetlands near you healthy and abundant enough to support watershed health, or are they too damaged to do the work you need them to do?

If you don't know the answer, you're not alone! Encouraging your community to explore how local wetlands are—or are not—supporting watershed health is a great place to start.



*The residents of the town of Stone Lake in Washburn County in Northwest Wisconsin understand the connections between wetlands and lake health. They came together as a community to protect wetlands in their growing town in order to protect the health of their lake and, at the same time, created a treasured community resource.*



*A watershed is an area where all surface waters—lakes, rivers, streams, and wetlands—drain to a shared body of water. Wetlands in different parts of a watershed manage water in different ways.*

Wisconsin Wetlands Association

Working together, we can use wetlands as solutions for water management in our lakes and communities.

View a dynamic video version of this article at <https://www.wisconsinwetlands.org/learn/about-wetlands/benefits-of-wetlands/>. 💧



# LMPN County Highlight

## Polk County's Katelin Anderson and Colton Sorensen

By Amy Kretlow, AIS Program Coordinator, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

***"I really value the opportunity to work with volunteers."***

~ Katelin Anderson

***"My favorite accomplishment has been starting our Division's Facebook page, which showcases our department's work."***

~ Colton Sorensen

*This issue's Lake Monitoring and Protection Network (LMPN) shout out goes to Polk County's Katelin Anderson and Colton Sorensen for their participation in the network and work with aquatic invasive species (AIS).*

Polk County has been participating in AIS management and prevention with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) for many years, but more recently joined the LMPN family in 2022. Katelin Anderson, a 2018 Invader Crusader Award winner, has been

working with AIS and educating folks on their impacts since 2011. Colton Sorensen has been in his role working to monitor, manage, and educate folks about AIS for four and half years.

When Katelin was asked about her favorite part of the job, her response speaks volumes of her dedication.

"One of my favorite parts of my job is that every day involves something new, whether it's a new project, visiting a new waterbody, or talking with someone interested

in Polk County's natural resources. I really value the opportunity to work with volunteers for projects like Water Action Volunteers (WAV), Project Riverine Early Detectors (Project RED), AIS Citizen Lake Monitoring Network (CLMN), and Snapshot Day. The trainings that we host for these volunteer programs are always highlights of my year. It's especially rewarding to hear from the department-trained volunteers about all the monitoring efforts they have completed. Another favorite part of my job is the opportunity to provide two summer interns with exposure to the work the department and partner groups complete each year."

We asked Colton to pinpoint his favorite accomplishment, and he shared, "During my time at Polk County, my favorite accomplishment has been starting our Division's Facebook page, which showcases our department's work. The page has been active for about two years, and our following continues to grow. We educate the growing number of followers on a wide variety of AIS topics. Why I feel this is my favorite accomplishment is that I am able to meet many of these Facebook followers in person at events and meetings. They come up to me saying they saw my video, photo, or posts and loved them."

Both agree the biggest struggles in these roles are finding new AIS and the management that can come along with these new finds. Control is difficult due to the new population's resiliency in nature and the years of follow-up treatments that may be needed. Katelin and Colton both agree they have tackled these struggles by building great partnerships with members of the public and other agency staff. Through these relationships, they have been

Colton Sorensen



*Katelin uses an integrated sampler to collect water to sample from Ember Lake as part of Polk County's undeveloped lakes study, in which they are assessing nutrient levels in lakes with little (one house or less) to no development.*

able to work with landowners and WDNR in managing non-native phragmites, building a successful purple loosestrife biocontrol program, and gaining financial support for successful management of invasive species in Polk County.

Thank you, Katelin Anderson and Colton Sorensen, for your participation in the LMPN and all the hard work you both do in Polk County! 💧



### 2024 Nibi Walk Along St. Croix

*Water is the lifeblood of all living beings and according to the spiritual teachings of indigenous peoples, “Women take care of the water and men take care of the fire.”*

Following in the footsteps of Josephine Mandamin, who began the Nibi Walk ceremonies in 2003, Sharon Day continues the tradition. She and other indigenous women are organizing a water walk along the entire St. Croix River this fall.

Greg Seitz, writer for St. Croix 360, interviewed Day who says, “Nibi Walks are not publicity or protest, but prayer. We’re speaking to the spirit of the water.”

You can read the full article at <https://www.stcroix360.com/2024/07/water-walkers-plan-ceremony-along-entire-st-croix-river/> and get more information about the upcoming Nibi Walk at <http://www.nibiwalk.org/>.

CALENDAR

### Online Lakes & Rivers Calendar at [uwsp.edu/uwexplakes](http://uwsp.edu/uwexplakes)

Stay up-to-date with lake and river events across the state, region, and beyond with our online calendar. Don’t see your event listed? Let us know by clicking “Add an Event” at the top of the page and fill out the short form!



Colton stands at the Joel Marsh by this wader cleaning station he built (there are a total of three in Polk County). These dual-purpose stations, with coordinating signs, are used at trout fishing locations in the summer and then placed at waterfowl hunting locations in the fall.



### Fireworks Feedback

In the last edition of *Lake Tides*, we asked you to share your thoughts or reactions about fireworks on and around Wisconsin’s lakes. Thank you to those who responded! We want you to know that your feedback is valued. The responses mostly reference negative impacts on people, dogs, loons, and other wildlife, in addition to the fear of forest fires, toxins in the air and water, pollution on docks and beaches, and the knowledge that many of the fireworks set off are illegally brought here from other states (and not permitted). One response included an interest in learning more about alternatives, such as drone displays.

We will continue to share information on the impacts of fireworks as well as potential alternatives. We encourage you to continue to tell us about your experiences with fireworks. Just use this QR code or go to <https://forms.gle/Rr13VGcRjoWD6ewU8> to share your reactions and experiences.



## Lake Tides -- AAN7576

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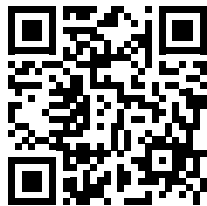
Volume 49, No. 3  
Summer/Fall 2024



Extension Lakes  
College of Natural Resources  
University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point

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#### A quarterly publication of the Wisconsin Lakes and Rivers Partnership

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715-346-2116



Printed on recycled paper with vegetable-based ink.

## Reflections

### 'U'a g T-ñi'oki

T-ñi'oki' att 'an o 'u'akc o hihi  
Am ka:ck wui dada.  
S-ap 'am o 'a: mo has ma:s g kiod.  
mat 'am 'ed.a betank 'i-gei.  
'Am o 'a: mo he'es 'i-ge'ej,  
mo hascu wud. i:da gewkdagaj  
mac 'ab amjed. behě g ñe'i.  
Hemhoa s-ap 'am o 'a: mac si has elid, mo d. 'i:mig.

~ Ofelia Zepeda

### Carrying Our Words

We travel carrying our words.  
We arrive at the ocean.  
With our words we are able to speak  
of the sounds of thunderous waves.  
We speak of how majestic it is,  
of the ocean power that gifts us songs.  
We sing of our respect  
and call it our relative.

*Translated into English from O'odham by the poet.*

