

The Wisconsin Lakes Partnership: An Example of the Wisconsin Idea in Action

Eric Olson

Director, UW Extension Lakes

eolson@uwsp.edu

Lakes!

- *15,074 lakes in Wisconsin
- *Most are small, 5 acres or less
- *3,000 + lakes larger than 24 acres

Lakes!

- * Tourism driver
- * Real estate values (\$100 billion?)
- * Quality of Life
- * Ecological value









Linda Grenzer 2011

Three Eras of Lake Organizing in Wisconsin

- * 1898-1958 Formative Years
- * 1958-1992 Transformations and Growth
- * 1992-2012 Maturity and Mid-Life Changes



1898 Lake Geneva Association Forms

Public Trust Doctrine and WI Waters

- * WI Constitution recognizes waters as public assets
- * *Diana Shooting Club v. Husting* (1914) expanded public rights to include recreation
- * *Doemel v. Jantz* (1923) Riparian landowners granted special right and privileges
- * *City of Milwaukee v. State* (1927) Legislature must both preserve and proactively protect waters

Paul Husting, a Profile in Leadership

- * Elected State Senate in 1906
- * Authored several Water Power Acts
- * Arrested for trespassing in 1911
- * Elected to US Senate in 1914, the first by a direct vote of citizens
- * Killed in a hunting accident on Rush Lake in 1917



Public Trust Doctrine and WI Waters

- * WI Constitution recognizes waters as public assets
- * *Diana Shooting Club v. Husting* (1914) expanded public rights to include recreation
- * *Doemel v. Jantz* (1923) Riparian landowners granted special right and privileges
- * *City of Milwaukee v. State* (1927) Legislature must both preserve and proactively protect waters

Post-WWII Water Challenges

- * Dramatic growth in outdoor recreation after WWII
- * Motorboats



Post-WWII Water Challenges

- * Dramatic growth in outdoor recreation after WWII
- * Motorboats
- * Houseboats



Carri-Craft Catamaran Houseboat
Berlin, WI

Transformative Years

- * 1959 FWLPOA Inc. forms as a result of flushed waste controversy
- * 1959 Department of Resource Development
- * 1961 Gov. Nelson enacts ORAP, \$50 million
- * 1957-65 UW law professor Jacob Beuscher drafts water-related bills
- * 1965 Gov's Conference on Water Resource Management

THE MILWAUKEE JOURNAL

Sunday

Picture
Journal

April 17, 1966

THE SPREADING MENACE

An Important Series That Chronicles
Pollution of Wisconsin's Waterways

Color Photos of Our 'Stinking Water'



PEWAUKEE RIVER:
OCTOBER, 1965

WI Water
Resources Act
passes in the
early summer
of 1966

Inland Lake Demonstration Project

- * May 1968 - March 1974
- * \$1 million of federal funding for 12 lakes
- * Wide range of lake rehabilitation and protection measures explored
- * Examined lake organizations as institutions capable of caring for lakes



Lowell Klessig

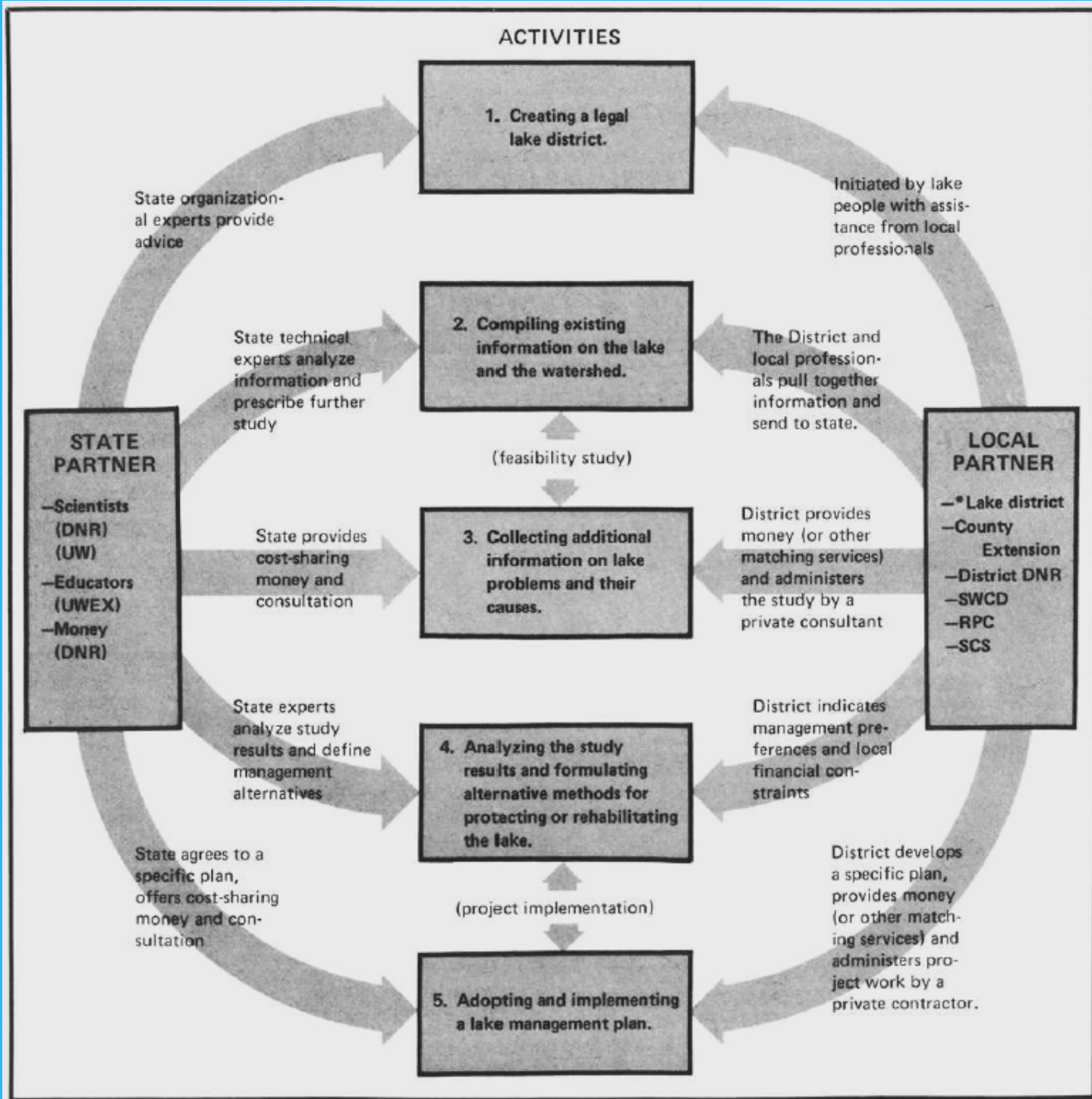
“... local property owners were the only group with enough personal interest and proximity to manage individual lakes. However, voluntary lake associations do not have legal authority or financial ability to carry out most management schemes.”

– Lowell Klessig

Chair, Environmental Resources Unit UWEX

Chapter 33: Lake Districts

- * Chapter 33 passed in 1974
- * UW Extension given statutory mission of providing education services to lake communities on: lake district formation, district operation, lake ecology, and lake management
- * State money could only cost-share with lake districts
- * 100 districts formed by 1978
- * Wisconsin Association of Lake Districts formed 1981



Recession and Recovery

- * 1980 Statewide referendum to allow non-resident lake district members to vote (900 K margin)
- * 1981-82 Legislative audit of DNR lakes program and proposed elimination of lake district cost sharing
- * 1986 Self-help Monitoring Program started
- * 1987-88 Water Resources Account created
- * 1989-90 Gas tax allocation formula improved & provides for UWEX Lakes staff

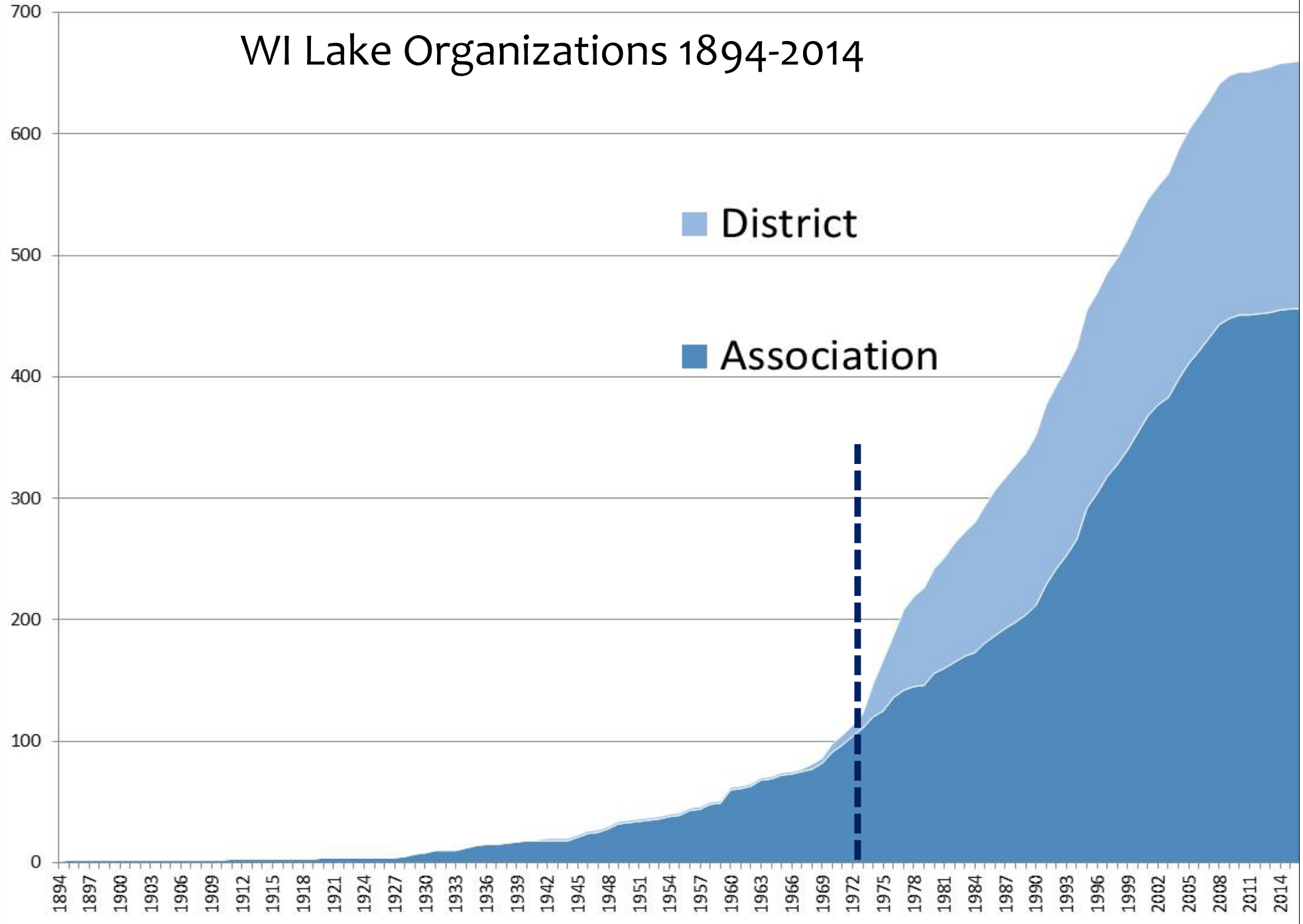
1992-2016 Maturity & Mid-Life Changes

- * 1992 WALD and WFL merge to form WAL
- * 1997 Lake Classification Grants added
- * 1998 Lake Leaders Institute initiated
- * 2001 Advisory Task Force on Invasive Species
- * 2003 Clean Boats Clean Waters initiated
- * 2007 VHS virus in Great Lakes and Winnebago

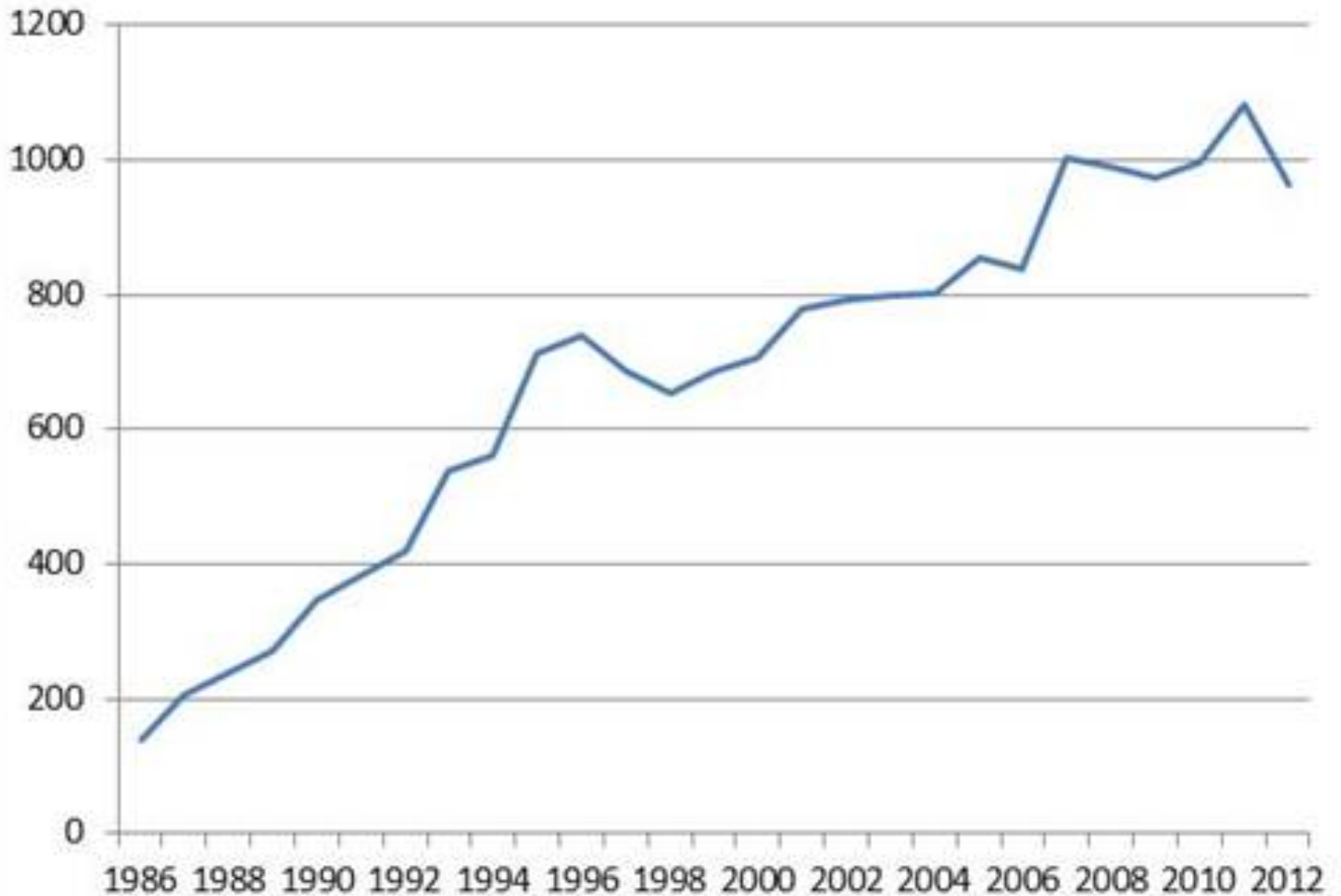
WI Lake Organizations 1894-2014

District

Association



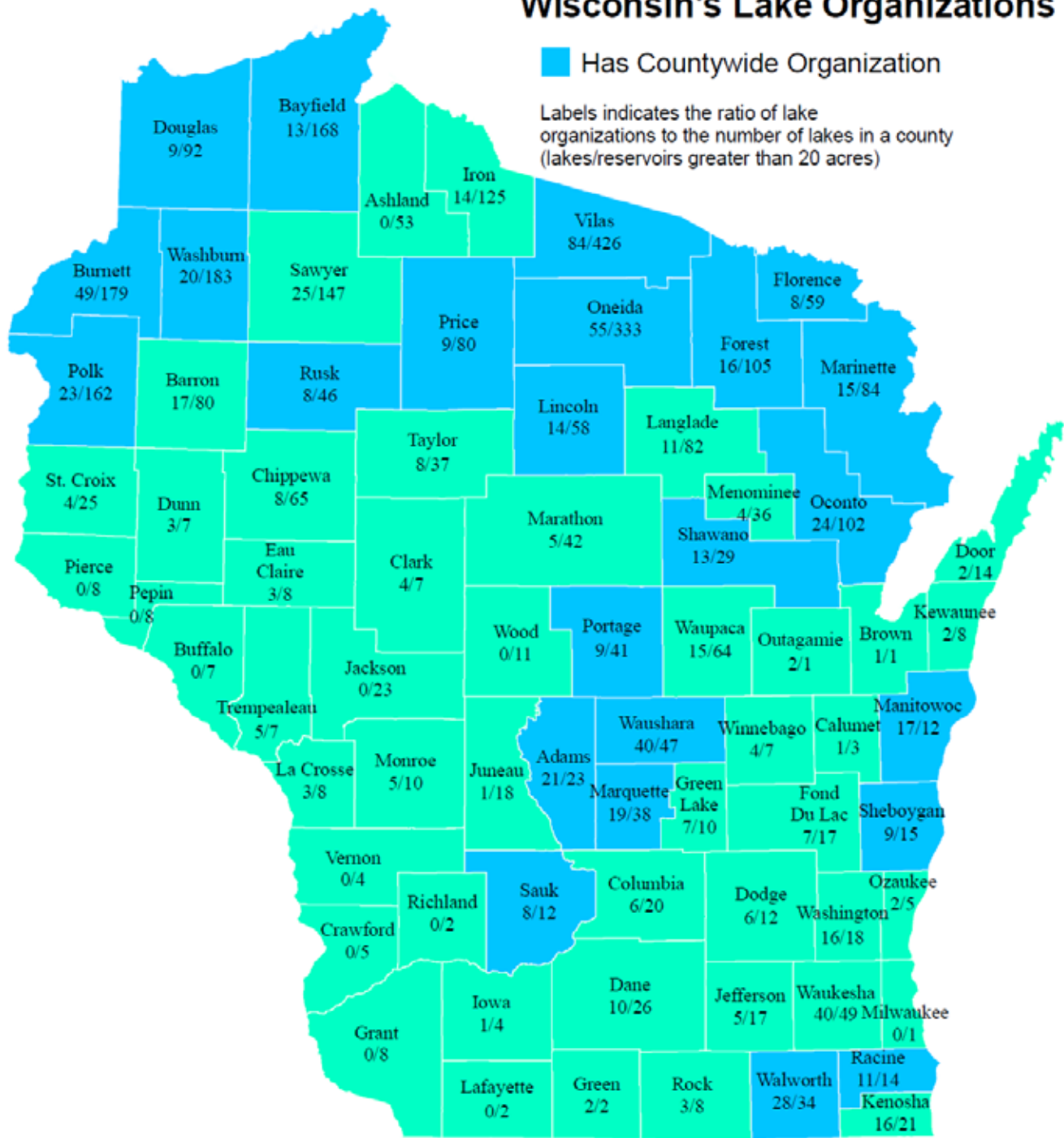
Wisconsin CLMN Water Clarity Volunteers



Wisconsin's Lake Organizations

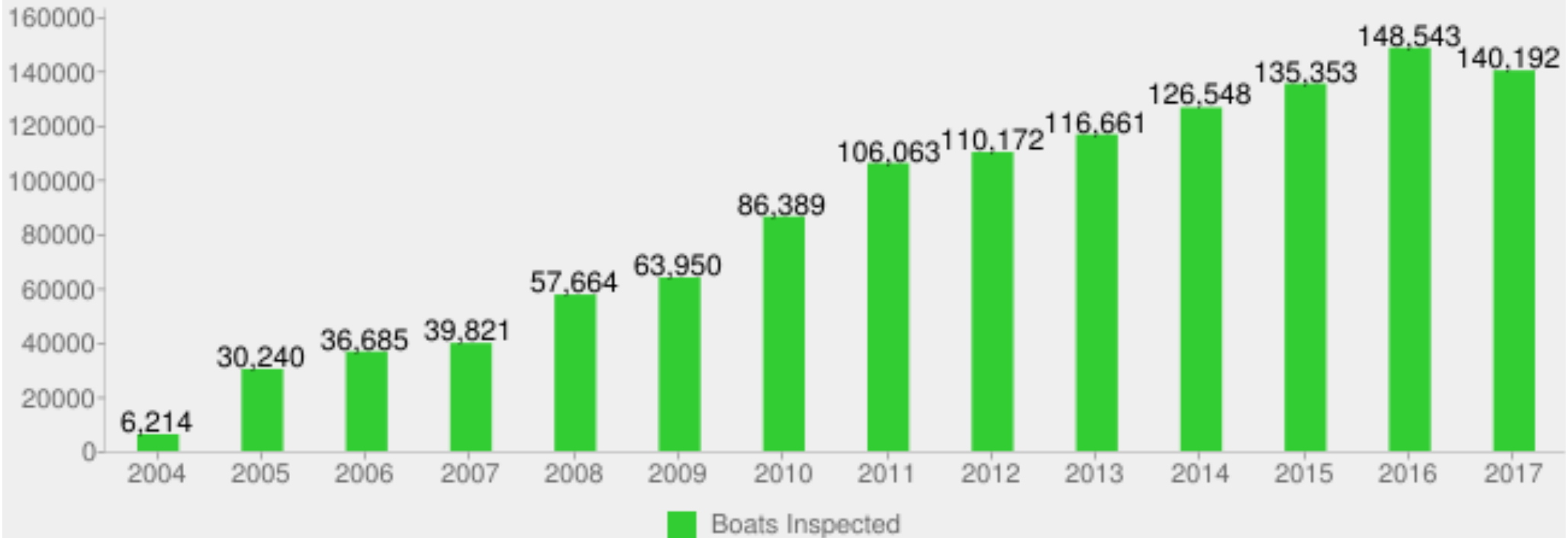
■ Has Countywide Organization

Labels indicates the ratio of lake organizations to the number of lakes in a county (lakes/reservoirs greater than 20 acres)





Boats Inspected

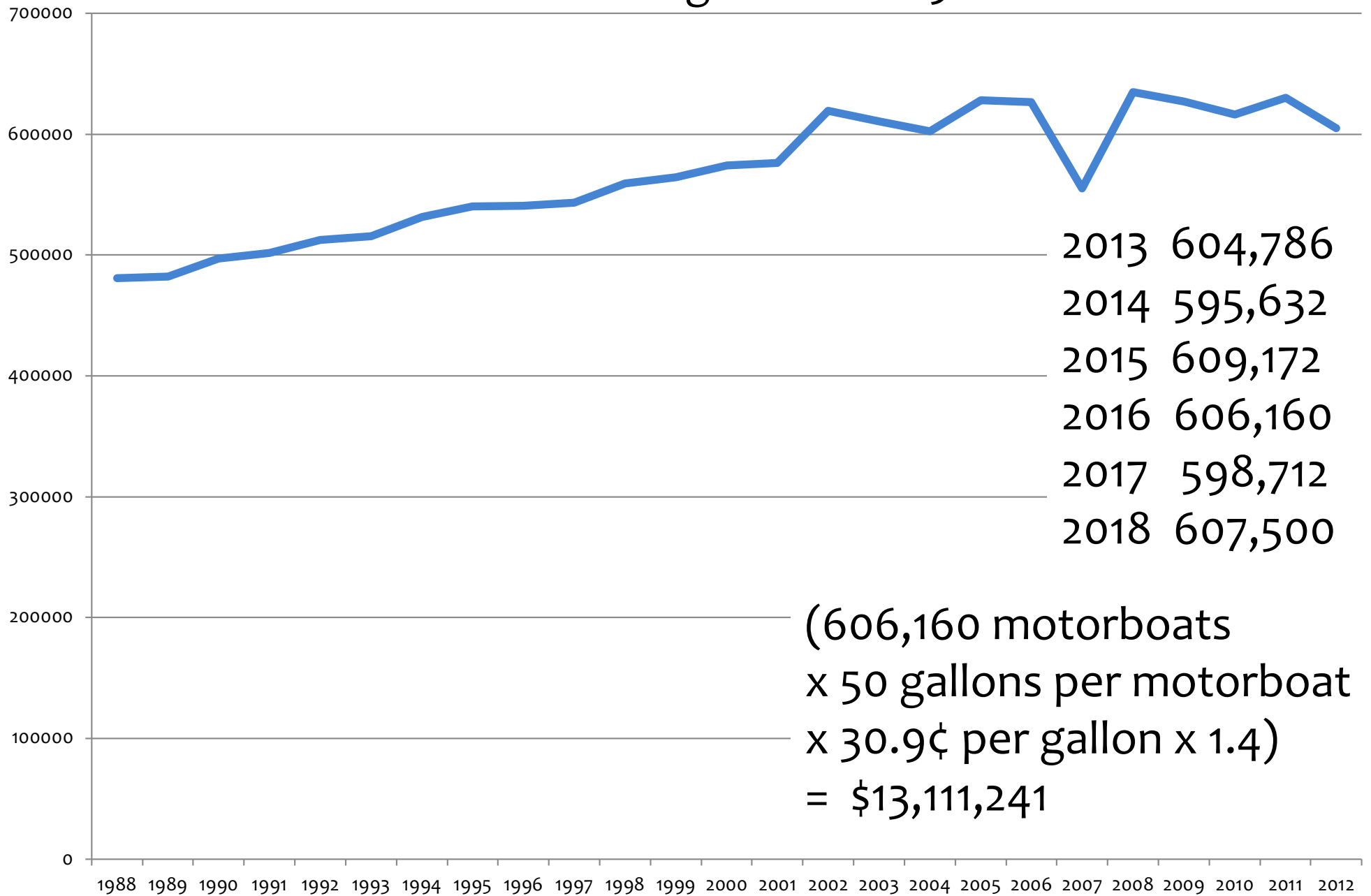


Current Issues and Challenges Facing the Wisconsin Lakes Partnership

Partnership members identified four strategic issues during a strategic planning process in 2011:

1. Promoting Lake Health
2. Inspiring & Engaging People
3. Working together through the Wisconsin Lakes Partnership
4. Funding Lakes Partnership Activities

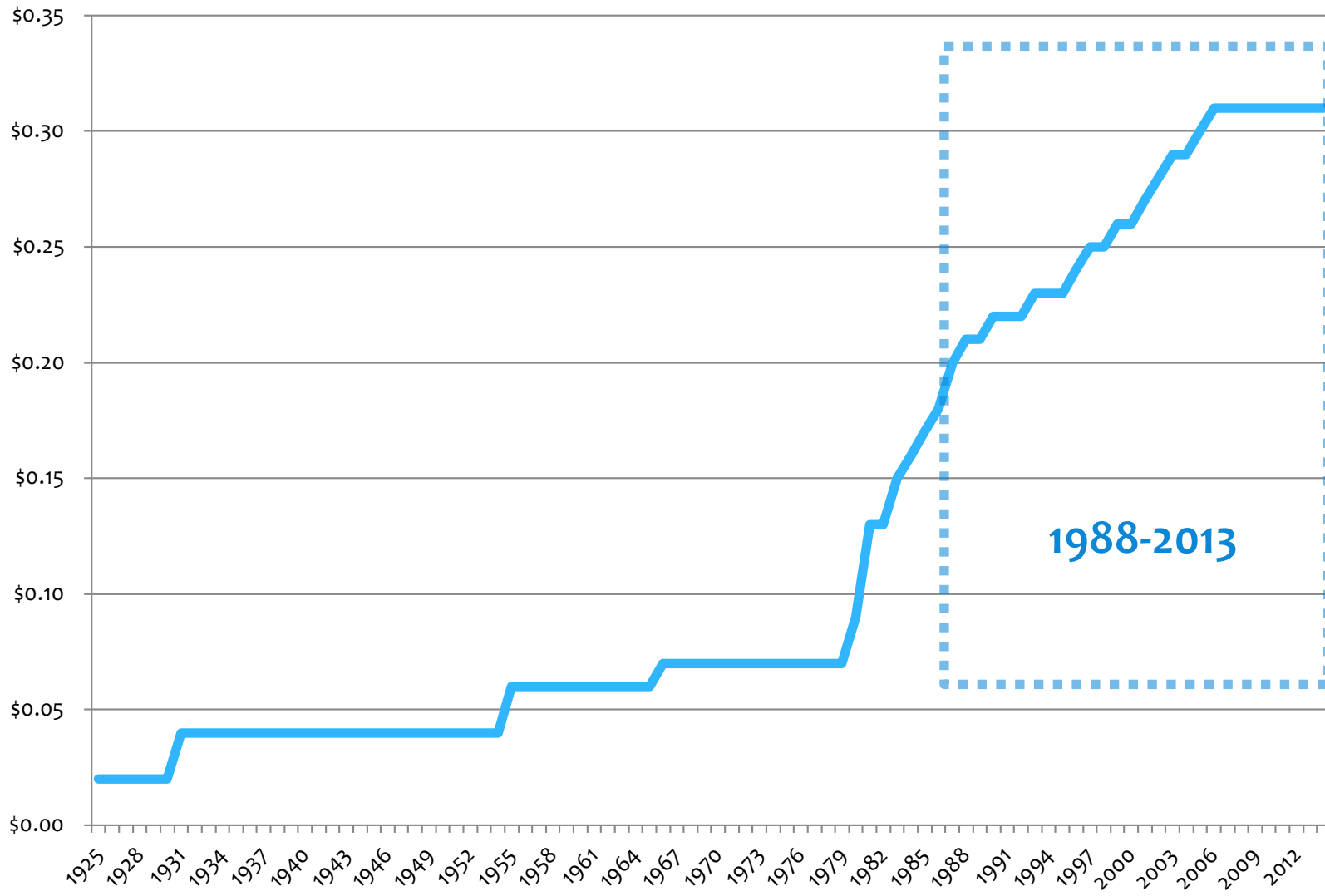
Wisconsin Boat Registrations 1988-2012



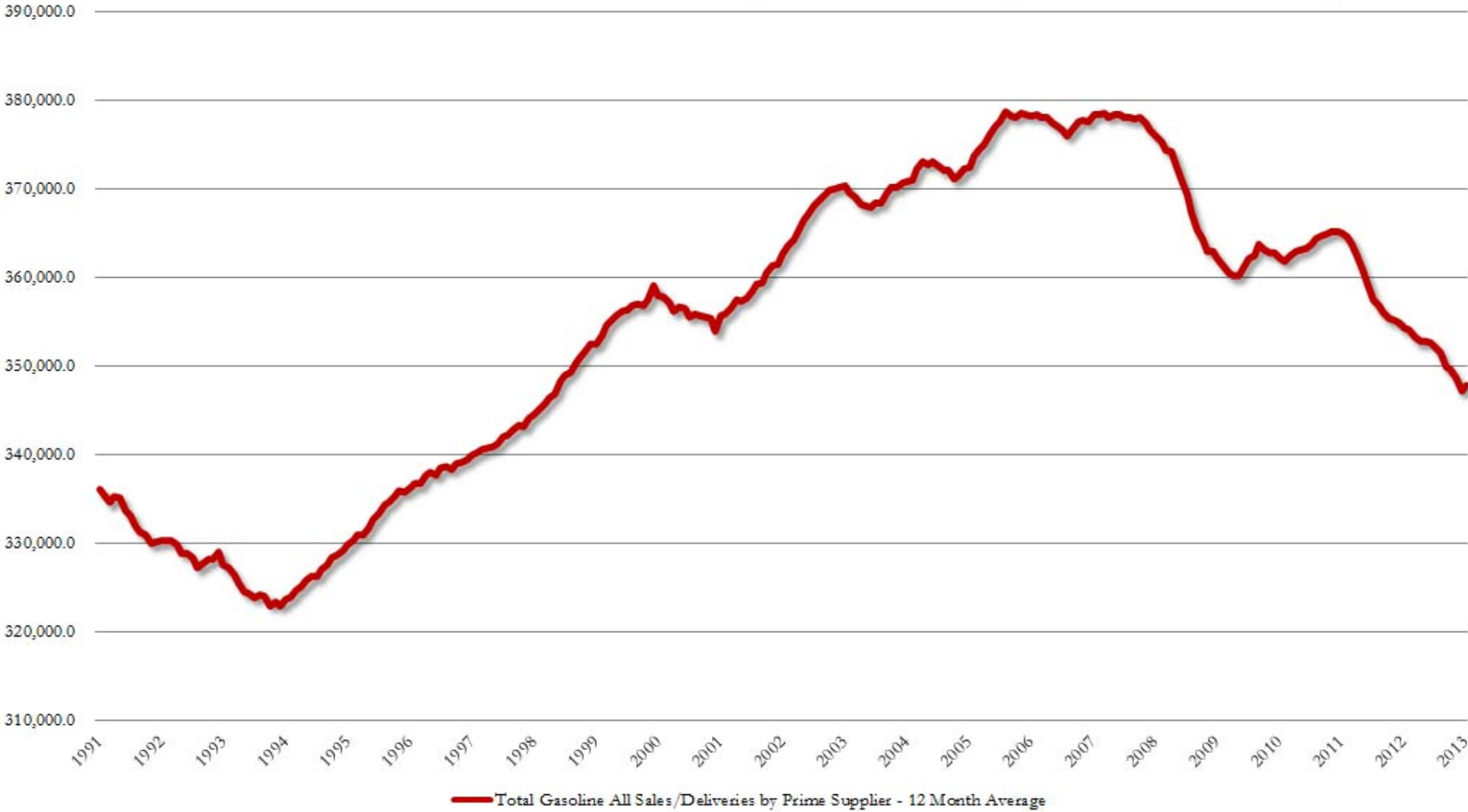
2013 604,786
2014 595,632
2015 609,172
2016 606,160
2017 598,712
2018 607,500

(606,160 motorboats
x 50 gallons per motorboat
x 30.9¢ per gallon x 1.4)
= \$13,111,241

Wisconsin Gas Tax Over Time (cents per gallon)



Gasoline All Sales/Deliveries by Prime Supplier - 52 Week Avg ('000 Gallons Per Day)



F-1: State Transportation Revenues by Source of Funds (nominal dollars, millions)

