

Extension Lakes Annual Impact Report

July 1, 2022-June 30, 2023



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

*Dedicated to preserving our Wisconsin legacy of lakes through
education, communication, and collaboration.*

What is Extension Lakes?

Extension Lakes is a statewide education and outreach effort based out of the College of Natural Resources at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point (UWSP). The majority of Extension Lakes funding comes from the Wisconsin DNR through the Water Resources Account, derived from gasoline taxes paid by motorboat users. Additional funding and support comes from UWSP and the University of Wisconsin-Madison Division of Extension. This report summarizes activities based on the state's fiscal year, which runs from July 1 to June 30.

Overall Outreach and Education

As a result of Extension Lakes staff direct outreach and educational efforts, **109,680** individuals received education, support, and guidance helping to bolster the health of Wisconsin's lakes.



109,680

individuals received direct **education, support, and guidance** from our staff to help bolster the health of Wisconsin's lakes.

Our education and outreach leverages the many connections we've developed with lake organizations, local governments, and people who care about lakes. As you will see in this report, Extension Lakes connects directly with thousands of people each year. Many of these connections have immediate ripple effects (individuals sharing training and resources with their communities). We also have an even broader ripple when our work is passed along further to hundreds of thousands of lake users, shoreland property owners, and professionals working in lake management. These ripples add up to an informed public that works in partnership to protect our legacy of lakes.

Expanding Our Reach

Each year, the Extension Lakes staff strive to increase the scope of the Lakes and Rivers Partnership to include additional stakeholders that go beyond the traditional audience.

The Flow Project – Art Inspired by Water

Connected **seven** UWSP undergraduate artists with water professionals.

A traveling art exhibit of **31** pieces of art inspired by water, representing **ALL 13** UW campuses, was available at **six** venues across the state.



Photo by Doug Moore

Youth – the Next Generation

Youth are the next generation of water users and water professionals and are critical to the future of our lakes. Extension Lakes staff reached **172** K-12 students through field days and classroom water education activities as well as judged the statewide Land + Water Conservation Poster Contest.



Executive Residence Native Planting

Joined statewide partners to plant **1,700** native plants along the shores of Lake Mendota.

1,700
Native plants

Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Prevention through Clean Boats, Clean Waters (CBCW)

Developed capacity of local communities' AIS prevention efforts, primarily through watercraft inspection known as the Clean Boats, Clean Waters program.



237

Individuals supported

Photo by Gary Engstrom

137,848
Boats inspected



Photo by Jeanne Scherer



- Provided training and resources to **237** individuals at workshops, webinars, and meetings.
- Over **400** individuals received regular electronic communications.
- Supported **161** CBCW DNR grant recipients who covered hundreds of landings across the state.
- CBCW grantees and volunteers spent **85,500** hours inspecting **137,848** boats and contacting **274,126** people.
- CBCW Watercraft Inspection Training Scenario videos viewed on YouTube **1,420** times.

Citizen Lake Monitoring Network (CLMN) Coordination

Provided direction, leadership, and statewide support for the Citizen Lake Monitoring Network.



1,000
Volunteers









-  **~1,000** volunteers monitored **750** lakes
-  **787** individuals participated in hands-on trainings and educational presentations
-  **15,000+** people listened to CLMN interview via Community Radio WORT 89.9 FM based in Madison
-  **860** individuals receive regular electronic communications
-  **350** volunteers received CLMN equipment
-  Answered questions for **187** members of the general public
-  Provided quality assurance training and equipment to **15** lakes
-  CLMN training videos received **1,270** views over last year



Photo by Steve Heimerman

787
Trained



15,000+
Radio listeners

Photo by Nicholas Githiri

Lake Organization Assistance and Training

Assisted lake communities in organizing lake associations and districts and supported lake groups across the state through trainings, guidance, and resources. In total, **4,783** individuals from hundreds of lake organizations were directly supported by Extension Lakes through recognition activities, webinars, the annual Lakes and Rivers Convention, the Lake Leaders Institute, the statewide Lake List directory, presentations at lake organization meetings, and the development of organizational capacity tools.



4,783
Individuals
supported

Lake List

Wisconsin's statewide directory of lake organizations

- 1,241 organizations and businesses are represented in the Lake List
- Approximately 2,000 individuals, representing 824 lake groups, received monthly communications
- 285 individuals representing lake-related businesses received quarterly communications

Surface Water Grants


- Reviewed and provided feedback for the 228 applications of Surface Water Grants.
- Hosted Surface Water Grant webinars for 36 county staff and 41 applicants and recordings have been viewed 225 times.


Presentations to Lake Organizations

- Provided 329 lake organization board members and property owners with resources, guidance, and support through mostly in-person meetings, conferences, or other events.

Lake Leaders Institute

Enhanced Wisconsin's lake resources through leadership, training, and civic engagement for water professionals and waterfront property owners.

 **22** Wisconsin Lake Leaders graduated from Crew 14 in Fall 2022.

 **330** active Lake Leaders engaged in continued learning and networking.



Photos by Amy Kowalski

645
Participants

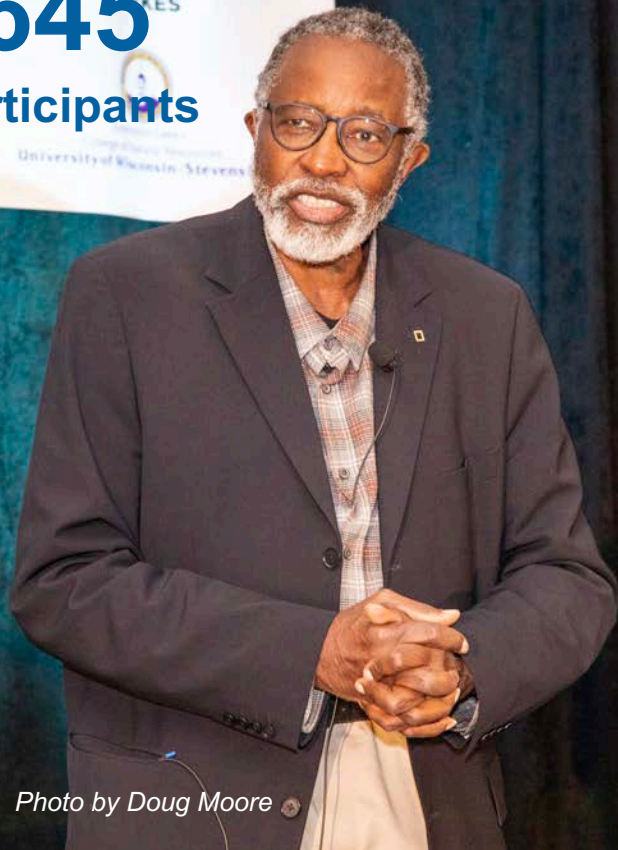



Photo by Doug Moore

2023 Wisconsin Lakes & Rivers Convention


Building Trust Around Water Together

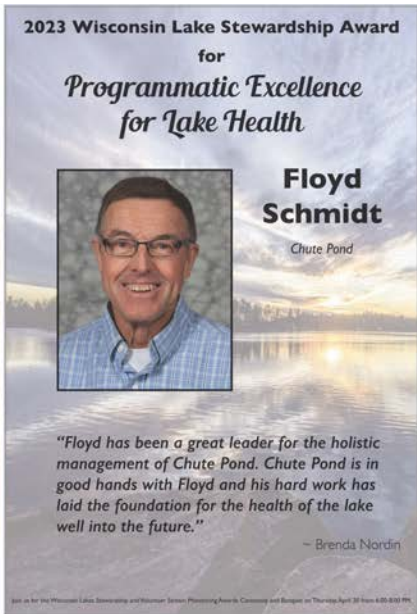
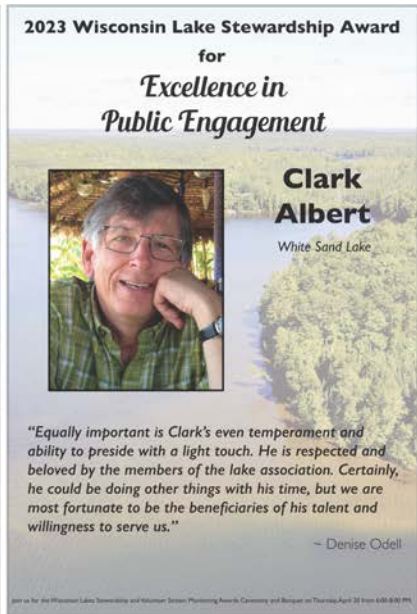
 Successfully coordinated the 2023 Convention which brought **645** individuals together, including **60** virtual participants.

164 presenters

67 concurrent sessions

18 workshops/field trips

 Extension Lakes staff conducted four workshops and two concurrent sessions reaching **188** attendees.



Recognition

Wisconsin Lake Stewardship Awards

Each year, we celebrate Wisconsin's outstanding lake stewards in categories that recognize outstanding contributions of individuals, organized groups, educational youth, and businesses. The awards reflect the importance of the organizational work and projects in which individuals and lake organizations are involved so we can recognize those who are strengthening their community capacity with the goal of protecting and improving lake health. Three awards were presented in April 2023:

- **Floyd Schmidt** from Chute Pond in Oconto County received the *Programmatic Excellence for Lake Health Award*.
- **Clark Albert** from White Sand Lake in Vilas County received the *Excellence in Public Engagement Award*.
- **Rick Georgeson** from Petenwell and Castle Rock Stewards (PACRS) in Adams County received the *Excellence in Building Partnerships Award*.
- **Candy Ramsay** received an international award from the North American Lake Management Society as a result of being nominated by Extension Lakes staff.

Monitoring Milestones

- **Nine** Citizen Lake Monitoring Network volunteers received awards this year (**four** 25-year and **five** 30-year)!

Recognized in a poster display at the annual Wisconsin Lakes and Rivers Convention:

- **929** active Citizen Lake Monitoring Network volunteers were recognized for monitoring lake chemistry, clarity, aquatic invasive species, ice, and water level.
- **473** individuals and organizations were recognized for conducting inspections and entering data as either grant-funded or volunteer inspectors with the Clean Boats, Clean Waters watercraft inspection program.

Communications & Resource Distribution

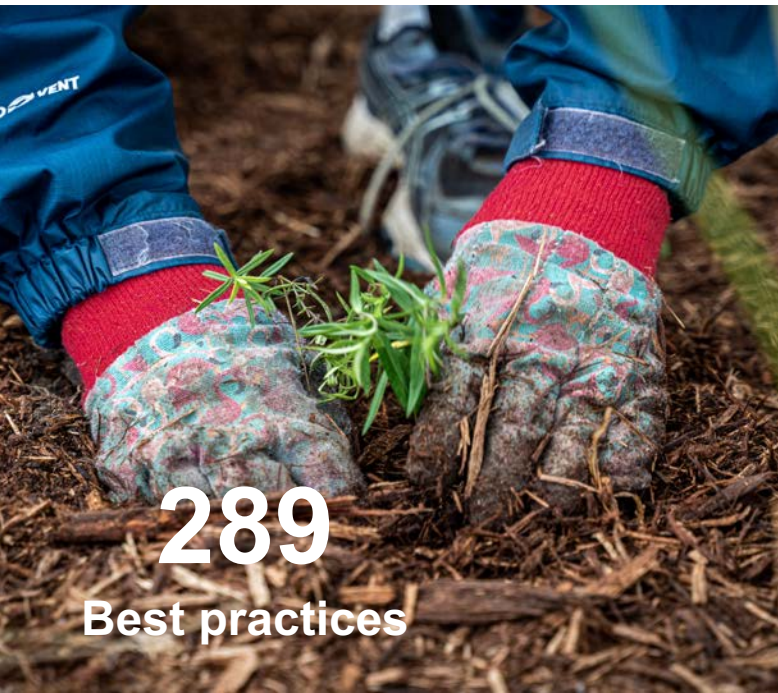
-  Reached **651** individuals through conferences, public events, presentations, and exhibits
-  **Over 25,000** Lake Tides newsletters were produced and distributed quarterly.
-  **1,742** items (publications and CBCW items) sold/distributed to **284** people.
-  **14,909** views of the Extension Lakes YouTube Channel.
-  **73% increase** in reach on Facebook in the last fiscal year with a total of **45,985**.



45,000+
Social media reach

Statewide Lakes Training and Education

Provided broad support to engage the public as partners in lake health, aquatic plant management, shoreland management, and preferred strategies for conflict resolutions around lake issues. Extension Lakes staff developed and distributed digital and print resources, along with participating in multiple working groups and committees with various partners.



289
Best practices

Healthy Lakes & Rivers

-  Engaged **460** individuals through webinars, presentations, and site visits, and coordinated **three** shoreland projects.
-  2022 Healthy Lakes & Rivers grants participation included **26** applications in **21** counties, impacting **49** lakes/ivers and **170** properties with **289** best practices.
-  **Three** additional resources developed in partnership:
 - Guide to Native Plants (a.k.a. Local Beings)
 - Landscaping Alternatives brochures for Aquatic Plants and Terrestrial Flowers and Grasses

Extension Lakes collaborates with many local, county, state, regional, and national water groups by developing and distributing resources, conducting and facilitating trainings, joining pertinent discussions, participating in working groups, asking and answering individual questions, celebrating successes, and carrying out hands-on service work. Listed here are direct partnerships from fiscal year 2023.

Partners

Local

- City of Stevens Point
- CREATE Portage County
- Farmshed's Growing Collective
- Mead Wildlife Area
- North Central Conservancy Trust
- Various counties across Wisconsin
- Wild Ones Fox Valley and Central Wisconsin Chapters

State

- Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
- Natural Resources Foundation of WI
- River Alliance of Wisconsin
- UW Madison Division of Extension
 - Natural Resources Institute
 - Native American Task Force
- Water@UW – The Flow Project
- Wisconsin Department of Agriculture Trade & Consumer Protection
- Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR)
- Wisconsin Envirothon (Wisconsin Land + Water)
- Wisconsin Lakes (statewide association)
- Wisconsin Tribal Conservation Advisory Council (WTCAC)
- Wisconsin Wetlands Association

Regional

- EPA Region 5
- Lake Monitoring and Protection Network
- Midwest Glacial Lakes Partnership
- North American Lake Management Society (NALMS)



*Wisconsin
Lakes
Partnership*



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



**WISCONSIN
LAKES**

Photo by Nathan Carlsen

The Extension Lakes Program is an outreach and education program within the College of Natural Resources at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point. Extension Lakes is also part of the Wisconsin Lakes Partnership, which joins science, education, and citizens to empower people to work together to care for our lakes. Since its genesis in the early 1970s, the Wisconsin Lakes Partnership has been recognized as a national model of collaboration. The Partnership has three core partners: the [Department of Natural Resources](#) (which supplies scientific research, technical expertise and regulatory authority), the [Extension Lakes Program](#) (which provides supporting educational materials and programs), and [Wisconsin Lakes](#) (which mobilizes citizens to be advocates for lakes). This partnership is a statewide, multi-faceted effort that reaches far beyond the core groups to include regional, county, tribal, non-profit, and federal partners. Our goal is to continue to protect and preserve our shared water legacy and support those meeting the challenges that come with the management and stewardship of Wisconsin's lakes.