

Improving Habitat with Treefalls

Lake District Preserve Tour

Trees that succumb to disease or storm damage and fall into the lake provide important habitat for fish, turtles, frogs, wood ducks and other wildlife. They also help protect against shore erosion caused by waves and ice. Unfortunately, most of Lake Ripley's shoreline is devoid of fallen timber, depriving many native species of this unique type of natural cover. Interested lakeshore residents are urged to contact us to discuss feasibility, permit requirements and potential cost sharing.



Photo is of a diseased tree that was felled as part of a shoreline restoration cost shared by the Lake Ripley Management District and F.K. Elson Fund. The project also involved reshaping the shoreline and planting an attractive "buffer" of native shrubs, grasses and wildflowers.

A tour of the Lake District Preserve will be held on Saturday, August 12th, from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. Come learn about the history of the property, past and ongoing restoration efforts, and the different flora and fauna that inhabit this marshland area. Also, find out how the Preserve functions to protect lake health, and what public recreational amenities it has to offer. Be sure to bring your binoculars to take advantage of a new nature-viewing platform.



Photo was taken from a nature trail at the Lake District Preserve. In the background, an elevated boardwalk is shown spanning a shallow pond that used to serve as a farm drainage ditch. The Preserve, located on County Highway A at the inlet to Lake Ripley, encompasses about 100 acres of restored wetlands and native prairie.

Ripples

Lake Ripley Management District
N4450 CTH A
Cambridge, WI 53523

Presorted Standard
U.S. Postage PAID
Cambridge, WI
Permit No. 5

Ripples

LAKE RIPLEY
PRIORITY LAKE PROJECT



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FROM THE HELM



At our June 20th meeting, a large group of residents heard Mary Knipper from Delavan Lake speak about what maintaining a healthy lake means to the entire community. And in the most recent Lake Ripley Edition of the Cambridge News, Paul Dearlove (our lake manager) continued the conversation with an article titled "What is Lake Ripley Worth to You?" These discussions were directed towards dealing with the end of our 13-year, Lake Ripley Priority Lake Project grant.

We are very grateful to the Department of Natural Resources for its support over these last 13 years. The grant has enabled the Lake District to make huge steps in protecting and preserving Lake Ripley by targeting major sources of polluted runoff. However, with the grant coming to an end this year, it is time to look to the future.

Those present at the June 20th meeting asked that we continue to be aggressive in our efforts to protect Lake Ripley. We intend to honor this request. At the same time, we will continue to pursue other grants and work hard to keep our operational costs down.

One cost-cutting effort will involve trying to communicate more efficiently. The grant provided some of the funds for printing and mailing this newsletter, and we are pleased that we have been able to keep you informed in this way. Now, we would like to economize by supplementing mailed newsletters with electronic newsletters. To do this, we need your email addresses. Please make sure we have this information by contacting us at 423-4537 or Ripley@charterinternet.com.

The budget process will continue with a budget hearing on August 12th and our Annual meeting on August 19th. I encourage you to attend these meetings as we work to ensure the future protection of our beautiful lake and watershed.

John Molinaro
Chair, Lake Ripley Management District

Lake Economics

There is a growing body of research showing that lake quality is strongly correlated with regional property values, tax base and economic activity. A literature review can be downloaded from our website at www.lakeripley.org. These studies demonstrate that property owners—both on and a good distance off the water—derive significant benefits from investing in lake-protection and restoration work.

The opposite is true when lake conditions are allowed to deteriorate by not sustaining good stewardship practices. The unfortunate consequences of abuse and neglect include: declining lake quality, falling property values, fewer visitors and tourism revenues, lowered tax base, higher lake-management costs, and a faltering local economy.



2005 aerial photograph of Lake Ripley with superimposed Lake District (black) and watershed (white) boundaries.

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Lake Ripley News Bulletins

BUDGET HEARING

AUGUST 12, 2006—9:00 A.M.—OAKLAND TOWN HALL
PROPOSED 2007 BUDGET

PROJECTS	2006	2007	CHANGE
LRPLP LAG CONTRIBUTION ¹	44000		
STAFF PAYROLL		56000	
LANDOWNER COST SHARING ²	4500	10000	+122.2%
WEED HARVESTING	4500	3725	-17.2%
LAKE DISTRICT PRESERVE	3000	1500	-50.0%
LAKE WATCH	250		
SPECIAL PROGRAMS ³		500	
CONSERVATION EASEMENTS	1500	500	-66.7%
NO-WAKE REGULATION	1000		
INSURANCE			
GENERAL LIABILITY	1900	1900	
MARINE & TRUCK	1400	1400	
WORKER'S COMPENSATION	900	925	+2.7
OPERATIONS			
LEGAL COUNSEL	3000	3000	
DUES & CONFERENCES	1500	1600	+6.7%
OFFICE/OUTREACH ⁴	700	7550	+978.6
CONTINGENCY	1500	1500	
COMMISSIONER STIPENDS	4900	4900	
CAPITAL RESERVE & LAND ACQUISITION	10000	10000	
TOTAL:	84550	105000	+24.2%
LESS ANTICIPATED CARRY OVER:	<41150>	<39000>	
REQUIRED TAX LEVY:	43400	66000	+52.1%

¹ Lake Ripley Priority Lake Project Local Assistance Grant (LRPLP LAG) Contribution. Supplemented annual \$46,350 state grant used for staff and office support to administer the LRPLP. Redirected to Staff Payroll and Office/Outreach.

² Budget category renamed. Previously referenced as LRMD Anticipated Cost-Share Reimbursement Account (ACRA) Contribution when it supplemented an annual \$25,610 state grant used for cost sharing.

³ Budget category covers expenses associated with anticipated special events, such as Lake Watch, litter cleanups, lake/watershed tours and carp harvests.

⁴ Referred to as Office/Mailings in 2006. Budget category now covers prior LRPLP-funded expenses such as office equipment and supplies, rent, vehicle expenses, newsletters, general communications and newspaper notices.

The actual assessed valuation of all Lake District property included on the tax rolls for the year 2006 is \$204,002,100. If the 2007 tax levy of \$66,000 is approved at the Annual Meeting, the mill rate will be 0.3235 per \$1,000 of assessed value, or \$32.35 for every \$100,000 of assessed property value. This represents a 47.9% increase over the 2006 mill rate of 0.2187 per \$1,000, or \$21.87 per \$100,000. The increase is due to the loss of Priority Lake Project funding that previously supported LRMD programs.

ANNUAL MEETING

AUGUST 19, 2006—9:00 A.M.—OAKLAND TOWN HALL

- I. CALL TO ORDER
- II. APPROVAL OF 2005 ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES
- III. NOMINATION OF BOARD CANDIDATES
(Names appearing on ballot: Derek Hoffman, incumbent)
- IV. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT
- V. TREASURER'S REPORT
- VI. BUDGET & TAX LEVY
- VII. TABULATION OF VOTE AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS
- VIII. ADJOURNMENT

200 Ft. Slow-No-Wake

All motorized watercraft must now operate at no-wake speed within 200 feet of the Lake Ripley shoreline (or within 100 feet of piers, rafts and marked swim areas—whichever distance is greater). Several reference buoys are in place around the lake to help boaters visualize and comply with the 200-ft. distance. In addition, maps and other postings can be found at the public landing. The new rule aims to:

Protect public safety. Fast-moving boat traffic is kept away from near-shore areas where shallow water depths, piers, moored boats, rafts and other hazards exist. In turn, a safe refuge is created for such activities as swimming, fishing and paddling.

Reduce property/environmental damages. Waves and turbulence from aggressive boating activities near shore are shown to erode shorelines, stir up the lake bottom, reduce water clarity, spread Eurasian milfoil weeds, and threaten sensitive aquatic habitat. A 200-ft. speed buffer helps minimize these adverse impacts.

Provide regulatory consistency. State law already establishes no-wake zoning for personal watercraft (Jet Skis) within 200 feet of shore. Under the amended Town of Oakland ordinance, all motorized vessels are now subject to the rule.

Also, don't forget that slow-no-wake hours are between 7:30 p.m. and 11:00 a.m. daily.

Rain Barrels



A rain barrel that attaches to a downspout is an easy and inexpensive way for homeowners to control runoff while lowering summer watering bills. Working rain barrels are available (delivered) for only \$50.00 from the Upper Sugar River Watershed Association in Dane County. Please contact our office for ordering information and installation tips.

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Lake Ripley News Bulletins (cont.)

Molinaro Receives 2006 Wisconsin Lake Stewardship Award

Peter Murray, Director of the Wisconsin Association of Lakes, provided the following introduction during the presentation ceremony at this year's Wisconsin Lakes Convention:

"John Molinaro has been a passionate and tireless advocate for lakes in Jefferson County, particularly his home lake—Lake Ripley—for nearly 20 years. He has recently taken his dedication and leadership to the state level through his involvement with the WI Association of Lakes and the WI Lakes Partnership.



DNR Secretary Scott Hassett (left) and Senator Robert Cowles (right) present the award to John Molinaro at the 2006 Wisconsin Lakes Convention in Green Bay, WI.

In the late 1980s, John helped organize the aquatic plant management program on Lake Ripley, which is now viewed as a highly successful long-term management effort. He has been elected chair of the Lake Ripley Management District for 13 straight years. During that tenure, John has overseen significant lake-protection achievements, including: a large wetland restoration project; the creation of a neighborhood-watch style program aimed at curbing disrespectful and illegal boating; a path-breaking report assessing Lake Ripley's recreational carrying capacity; and the creation of local ordinances addressing the impacts of piers and shoreland development.

John has worked on lake and natural resource conservation issues at the county level as well, helping to create the Jefferson County Land Trust, serving on the Jefferson County Lakes Enhancement Committee, and being elected (and re-elected) to the Jefferson County Board of Supervisors. At the statewide level, John has volunteered to organize and speak at the Wisconsin Lakes Convention several years in a row, graduated from the Lake Leaders Institute, served as a member of the DNR's Pier Rules Stakeholder Group, served as vice-president (and now president) of the Wisconsin Association of Lakes, and presented at regional and national lakes conferences.

For his commitment to helping protect lakes at all levels in Wisconsin, for the enthusiasm with which he commits himself unselfishly to this cause, and for his good-natured and effective leadership, we present John Molinaro with the 2006 Wisconsin Lake Stewardship Award for Public Service." Congratulations, John!

New Boat-Launch Fees

\$7.00 Daily Pass
\$20.00 Resident* & Senior Citizen Season Pass
\$30.00 Non-Resident Season Pass

*Resident - Town of Oakland resident or property owner
(Season passes available at Piggly Wiggly, Dan's Gas 'N Stuff and Oakland Town Hall)

Why the Dead Fish?

A small fishkill occurred on Lake Ripley this spring, raising some questions and concerns. According to Susan Marcquenski, Fish Health Specialist for the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the minor bluegill die-off was the result of a common bacterial infection affecting fish that are stressed or have weakened immune systems. She pointed out that the "columnaris" bacteria (*Flavobacterium columnare*) are naturally present in lakes, and are not known to pose a threat to human health.

Marcquenski explains that when water temperatures reach 65-70° F and heavy spring runoff delivers a lot of organic material to the lake, conditions are ideal for this type of bacteria to thrive and multiply.



Combine this with increases in spawning hormones (or other stress) which can suppress a fish's immune system, and you have the ideal recipe for a columnaris outbreak. The most commonly affected fish in Wisconsin are bluegills, crappies, yellow perch and bullheads.

Lakeshore residents should remove and properly dispose of any dead fish that may wash ashore. Fish that are left to decompose in the lake release nutrients that promote algae growth. In the event of future fishkills, contact the Lake District right away so we can investigate the likely causes and take appropriate action.

Earth Day Events

A special thank you to Cambridge High School's science students (led by teachers Ed Grunden and Pete Degen) and the Aquatic Environmental Club for their participation in our spring litter cleanup, and for helping us spruce up the Town Hall rain gardens with fresh mulch and a new sign. Nearly 150 students and a handful of local volunteers worked hard to clean our area parks, roadsides, shorelines and natural areas of trash and debris. Their work is appreciated!



Volunteers pose next to a new rain garden sign they installed at the Oakland Town Hall (top and left), and next to a pile of trash collected at one of the cleanup sites (bottom right).