Lakes Grant, Phase III - Update and adoption of Lake Management Plans

In a continuing effort to help area Lake Districts and Associations with their individual management plans the Land Conservation Department is beginning Phase III of a Lakes Grant approved by the WI-DNR.

The grant, applied for and awarded in the summer of 2010, began a 4-phase Lake Classification Study. During Phase I a shoreland inventory was accomplished, providing an objective record of shoreline health and the nearshore area at a specific period of time. Digital photos were recorded in order to provide a benchmark from which implementation and tracking improvements to lake management plans can be ascertained and documented.

Phase II involved obtaining detailed information, including water samples, surface & groundwater watershed mapping and aquatic macrophyte (vegetation) assessments. This work was completed the summer of 2013.

Now in Phase III the LCD & Zoning Dept., with the cooperation of UW-Stevens Point and UW-Extension, will evaluate and present the data collected to the 33 lakes studied (only lakes with public access were targeted).

Several lake planning meetings are currently scheduled, with the priority being given to lakes who have never had a lake management plan drawn up, or who have lake management plans that are outdated. From there, lakes may proceed in creating a Lake Management Plan for their specific lake, or use the information presented to update their current Lake Management Plan.

Data collected for all lakes with public access has been posted on the County website (see website address on the last page of this newsletter).

Click on Department/Zoning & Land Conservation /More About Land Conservation/Grants/Waushara County Shoreland Inventory.

For more information on the Lakes Classification project or the scheduled Lake Planning Meetings contact Ed Hernandez at the Land Conservation & Zoning office, 920-787-0443 or e-mail lcd zoning.courthouse@co.waushara.wi.us
Lake Happenings
Golden Sands RC&D Staff Busy on Waushara County Lakes

Regional aquatic invasive species specialists from Golden Sands Resource Conservation & Development Council (RC&D) ("Golden Sands") have been protecting Waushara County’s lakes and streams from aquatic invasive species (AIS) again this year. All public lakes in the county were visually surveyed for AIS, distribution maps were created, and lists of native aquatic plants observed were also developed for each lake during its survey. These surveys drastically increased the amount of information known about AIS distribution and abundance throughout Waushara County. To view AIS information about your favorite Waushara County lake, visit the Golden Sands website at www.goldensandsrcd.org or call them at 715-343-6278.

Many lake associations and districts took advantage of free training services offered by Golden Sands. Two groups were trained on how to conduct and develop watercraft inspection programs to keep AIS from moving in or out of their lakes. In addition to watercraft inspection training, Golden Sands provides free training workshops on monitoring and removal strategies for many aquatic invasive species.

Big Silver Lake partnered with Golden Sands to teach over 200 local 8th graders about AIS and their impacts on area lakes.

Waushara County partnered with Golden Sands at the annual Conservation Field Day, held at Lake Lucerne. Over 200-5th graders spent a day outside at this event to learn about natural resource conservation. Golden Sands has been hosting invasive species sessions at this event since 2008. These sessions teach kids about the impacts of invasive species and how to identify some of the common species in Waushara County.

Eurasian watermilfoil (EWM) has been a serious nuisance to many Waushara County lakes. This aggressive species can be transported between water bodies by boat trailers, anchors, and other equipment. Once in a lake, it can choke out native aquatic plants and prevent boating, fishing, and swimming. As an alternative to chemical herbicides, some lake groups have turned to Golden Sands to learn about techniques to manually remove the plants from their lake. At a training workshop in Wautoma this past summer, over a dozen residents learned how to properly remove this plant with simple tools, while preventing accidental spread of the plant. This workshop featured a “20-minute video tutorial, which includes above-water and underwater video footage to walk lake residents through the removal process from different perspectives. The free video can be viewed at www.youtube.com by searching for “EWM hand removal”.

Porters Lake has been partnering with Golden Sands since EWM was discovered there in August 2012. At that time, EWM occupied over 2 acres of the lake. Lake residents wasted no time—they began learning how to identify Eurasian watermilfoil and remove it by hand. Using manual removal techniques in several areas of the lake, and a chemical herbicide in a small bay with very
(Golden Sands RC&D Cont.)

dense EWM, they were able to remove all of the EWM by June 2013. Further monitoring throughout summer and fall yielded zero EWM plants. Monitoring will continue in 2014.

Some lakes had small populations of other aquatic invasive species, like common reed grass (*Phragmites australis*), flowering rush (*Butomus umbellatus*), or Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*). Golden Sands staff were able to help remove common reed grass from Lakes Napowon and Lucerne; flowering rush from Little Silver Lake; Japanese knotweed from Big Silver and Alpine Lakes; and Eurasian watermilfoil from Porters, Lucerne, and Deer Lakes.

The AIS program at Golden Sands is funded by a grant from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. Their generous support allows residents of Waushara County to get professional assistance with AIS issues at no cost to them. For information on the Golden Sands regional AIS program, or to request a free training workshop in 2014, contact Paul Skawinski, Regional AIS Education Specialist, at 715-343-6278 or Paul.Skawinski@goldensandsrd.org.

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**Lakes Fair Held at Camp Luwisomo**

A Waushara County Lakes Fair was held on August 10, 2013 at Camp Luwisomo. In collaboration with the Waushara County Watershed Lakes Council, local lake associations and districts, UW-Extension and the Land Conservation & Zoning Department this event was planned to celebrate the quality lakes in Waushara County and demonstrate processes involved in keeping all the lakes in good shape for both now and into the future.

Attendees learned about invasive species, advantageous lake plants, identifying plants, chemical treatment and hand-pulling of AIS, plant harvesting, and programs like Clean Boats Clean Waters. Information on dealing with problem geese, group septic pumping, boater safety/boater safety patrol, aeration options, proper septic maintenance, fish stocking and an update on riparian zoning laws was available.

Many lake groups are working hard to keep the county lakes in good shape. A goal of this fair was to celebrate the fine quality lakes in Waushara County and to highlight those things being done by local lake groups.

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**2014 Annual CAFO Meeting**

February 6, Green Bay, Tundra Lodge
February 7, New London, Crystal Falls
February 11, Fond du Lac, UW-Fond du Lac

Update meeting for WPDES permitted CAFO owners and managers, nutrient management plan writers and engineers.

Session goals: Improve nutrient management plan implementation; improve communication between plan writers, permit holders and WDNR; and also provide other information on regulations that may affect large farming operations.

$30 in Advance; $45 after January 30th or Walk-ins - Lunch and snack provided
Registration 8:30 AM Sessions: 9AM-3:30PM

For registration form contact the Land Conservation Office, 920-787-0443.
Lake Buzz...

There’s more than lake flies buzzing about Lake Winnebago and its pool lakes, including Lake Poygan. Five counties are working together to address issues of concern to shoreland property owners and lake enthusiasts. *Weigh-in on the Winnebago Waterways* is an effort that drew much attention in 2013 as it urged people to get engaged by identifying the top issues, and then make suggestions on how those top issues should be addressed.

The public attended a series of eight meetings held around the Winnebago system, participated in surveys, and engaged in a dialogue using the Mind Mixer forum at www.WinnebagoWaterways.com. What “rose to the surface” as the top issues to be addressed were: algae blooms, polluted runoff, and invasive species. Some matters the counties began addressing immediately. For example, in Waushara County conservation efforts focused on the Winnebago watershed to improve conservation farming practices, and a comprehensive inventory of all the septic systems was completed.

Many other concerns were identified, and some are getting immediate attention. The counties are currently working on a uniform boat launch pass, the need for washing stations and vegetation composting receptacles at the boat launches, and a comprehensive inventory of the shoreline health (so landowners and agency personnel know where to target their efforts and available cost share funds).

When asked who should address the matters, and other issues, it was suggested one central body should be organized/re-organized to serve as a clearinghouse for information, and possibly become an “umbrella” to oversee activities around the lake that can help resolve problems. In 2014 the counties will be working with the Winnebago Lakes Council and a consultant to help determine if an umbrella organization exists, and if so, can it be morphed to meet the lake needs; or should a new one be formed; what matters could the organization address; how it should be staffed (employees vs. volunteers); and how it should be funded.

The five counties working together are Calumet, Fond du Lac, Outagamie, Waushara, and Winnebago. Your Waushara County contact is Terri DoppPaukstat, phone 920-787-0453.

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**USDA-NRCS UPDATE**

2013 brought some staffing changes to the NRCS Westfield Service Center (again!). Our staff now includes Michelle Komiskey, District Conservationist; Scott Doherty, Soil Conservation Technician; Meagan Hoffmann, Soil Conservationist; Melissa Vila Rodriguez, Soil Conservationist and Joan Hoffman, Office Automation Clerk. The common programs the NRCS offers remain the same at this time, pending changes that may be in a new Farm Bill. Those programs include the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), and the Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP). Applications can be made at any time throughout the year, but they are subject to ranking cut-off deadlines. The CSP program is only about 5 years old and many producers don't know the details of this program. CSP is not a program to enter into only if you have a resource concern on your property, this program is for farm and forest land operators to assess the existing operation and to choose an enhancement that has not been implemented yet. Between the assessment and the new enhancement practice, points are tallied up and a dollar value given for the number of points. It is much different from our typical cost share programs such as EQIP. Please contact the office in Westfield for information about CSP and our other programs and sign-up deadlines.

Thank you,
Michelle Komiskey, District Conservationist
Nutrient Management Numbers Increasing

Nutrient management planning in Waushara County has increased dramatically in the last few years. In 2010 Waushara County had 8,940 acres or 6% of cropland under nutrient management. Last year we had 27,179 acres or 18% of cropland under nutrient management. Many farmers in Waushara County have completed a DATCP approved nutrient management course which qualifies them to write their own plans. In 2010, 4 farmers wrote their own plans on 1,734 acres and in 2013 the numbers increased to 8 farmers on 3,900 acres. Waushara County offered a Nutrient Management course in February of 2013 and is offering the course again in 2015. The DATCP nutrient management course consists of; an introduction to nutrient management planning, soil testing and conservation plans, nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium and manure management. A nutrient management plan consists of managing the amount, source, placement, form and timing of the application of plant nutrients and soil amendments. Nutrient management planning has many purposes and benefits not just to the environment, but also for the farmer:

1. To keep soil loss to a tolerable level
2. To minimize agricultural non-point source pollution of surface and ground water
3. To maintain or improve the physical, chemical, and biological conditions of the soil
4. To budget, supply and conserve nutrients for plant production
5. To properly credit all on farm nutrient sources
6. To protect air quality by reducing odors, nitrogen emissions and formation of atmospheric particles.
7. To enhance profitability for the farmers.

If not handled and applied properly, nitrogen and phosphorus from manure and fertilizer can impair both surface and ground water. Properly timed applications reduce the possibility for nutrients to be transported to water. The nutrient management plans also ensure that nutrient credits are given for all manure applications and legume crops. This helps farmers from over-applying commercial nutrients, thereby potentially improving their net profits. Any farmer in Waushara County who would like to develop a nutrient management plan for their farm is encouraged to contact Josh Saykally at Waushara County Land Conservation Department at 920-787-0443.

Soil sampling with a soil probe
Spreading fertilizer in a tow behind spreader
Wildlife Damage Abatement and Claims Program

Wisconsin has a program that assists farmers when wildlife damage their agricultural crops. The Wildlife Damage Abatement and Claims Program (WDACP) provides damage prevention assistance and partial compensation to farmers when wild deer, elk, bear, geese and turkeys damage their agricultural crops. Wildlife managers issue agricultural damage shooting permits to farmers for removal of deer - and occasionally bear, geese and turkeys - that cause damage.

Waushara County contracts with Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) to administer the wildlife damage program. In 2013 nine landowners were assisted with crop damage claims totaling $36,825.92 through the WDACP. The Waushara County contact for APHIS is Barry Benson, who has worked for them almost 23 years. Barry works in conjunction with the new DRN Wildlife Biologist for the area, Jake Fries.

Barry Benson, in cooperation with the DNR, applies a radio collar to a wolf on a Cranberry marsh in Jackson County. The wolf was trapped in order to collar and let go. This way the DNR can study it in order to gain valuable information needed for our co-habitation with this wild animal.
2013 LAND CONSERVATION DEPT. YEAR END SUMMARY

Cost-share funding of $81,539 was secured for landowners working with the Soil & Water Resource Management Program with $32,564 slated for nutrient management, covering more than 1,163 acres.

The Water Quality Improvement Program, ending its second year, was established in 2012 to offset decreasing state funding and to provide cost-share funding for worthy conservation projects that do not rank high enough for State or Federal funding. $25,000 in Waushara County funds, allotted per year, are being used for a 3-year trial period. All of those funds were allocated in 2012 and 2013 for worthy projects.

Land Conservation partners with Golden Sands Resource Conservation & Development (serving Waushara, Adams, Portage, and Wood Counties) on the DNR Aquatic Invasive Species Grant Program. RC&D is also contracted to maintain groundwater education for 4th graders in all Waushara County Schools.

Oversight of the Farmland Preservation Program provided an opportunity for tax relief for 16 farmers.

The seventh annual Conservation Field Days was held in May, over 200 Waushara County 5th graders were in attendance for a fun day of environmental learning.

Assistance for Construction Site Erosion Control was provided to 187 landowners. Forty-six onsite visits were made to help landowners with standard and individual plans relative to erosion control, stormwater management, and re-vegetation, resulting in 9 detailed plans for individual landowners.

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<tr>
<th>PROJECTS UNDER CONTRACT IN 2013</th>
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<tr>
<td>Shoreline Protection</td>
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<td>Windbreaks</td>
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<td>Wetland Restorations</td>
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<td>Barnyard Runoff Control</td>
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<td>Waste Transfer System</td>
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<td>Riparian Buffers</td>
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<td>Critical Area Treatment</td>
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2014 IMPORTANT DATES:

CAFO Annual Meeting        2/6,7,8,11
NRCS-CSP sign-up deadline  2/7
Wi. River Symposium        2/14
Watershed Lakes Council    2/15
Pesticide Applicators Training 3/14, 21
NRCS–Honey Bee Init.- sign-up deadline 3/21
Prairie Chicken Festival   4/11-13
Lakes Partnership Convention 4/24-26
Conservation Field Days    5/14-15
Watershed Lakes Council    5/17
Jakes Day for Youth        6/21
Watershed Lakes Council    8/9
Waushara County Fair       8/14-17
Watershed Lakes Council    11/8

GRASSED WATER WAY (COMPONENT OF AN UPLAND DIVERSION RUN-OFF PROJECT-2013)

Waushara Co. Land/Water/Education
Comm. Mtgs. are held the 1st Monday of each month
Conservation Field Days 2013

The Department hosted the 7th annual CFD event for 220 Waushara Co. fifth grade students at Camp Lucerne in May of 2013. One of the highlights was having the Raptor Education Group from Antigo come with live birds, including a falcon, hawk and owls. The 2014 event will be held May 14 & 15 again at Camp Lucerne. If you are interested in observing the environmental learning activities we have lined up, please call our office to get details and confirm your attendance.

We receive many wonderful donations to help improve and enhance the experience for the students. Our thanks to the following for their contributions:

RICHFORD GAME CLUB
A & M WILKIE
WAUTOMA KIWANIS
ROTARY CLUB OF WAUTOMA
HANCOCK LION'S CLUB
SILVER LAKE MANAGEMENT DIST.
PEARL LAKE PRD
BIG HILLS LAKE MANAGEMENT DIST.
ALPINE LAKE DISTRICT MUNICIPAL
WATERSHED LAKES COUNCIL
PINE LAKE PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOC.
WAUSHARA CO. EMPLOYEES
LITTLE HILLS LAKE MANAGEMENT DIST.
CINDY RADEMACHER (CREATIVE CUSTOM EMBROIDERY)
COPPS GROCERY STORE
STONERIDGE PIGGLY WIGGLY
DAIRY QUEEN
WAUTOMA CULVERS

Many Thanks to you all!!

Students take borings to determine the age of a downed tree while attending a Forestry Session.

Abbey Ruppert, from the Raptor Education Group, Inc. presents a re-habilitated falcon.

At the Aquatic Indicator Species Session students learn how to determine the quality of the lake water by identifying the insects found there.
LAND CONSERVATION DEPARTMENT STAFF:
Left to right-above
Front-Terri DoppPaukstat - Director LCD & Zoning
Tammi Kenton - Administrative Secretary
Back-John Olsen – Conservation Technician
Ed Hernandez – County Conservationist
Josh Saykally – Conservation Technician

NRCS STAFF:
Left to right-above
Scott Doherty - Soil Conservation Technician
Joany Hoffman - Office Automation Clerk
Meagan Hoffmann - Soil Conservationist
Michelle Komiskey - District Conservationist
Melissa Vila Rodriguez - Soil Conservationist

LAND WATER EDUCATION COMMITTEE:
Joe Piechowski - Chairman
Everett Eckstein – Secretary
Bernadette Krentz – Vice Chair
Larry Crawford – Member
Enrique Soria – FSA Representative

Promoting sound conservation throughout Waushara County

Waushara County Land Conservation & Zoning
P.O. Box 1109
Wautoma, WI 54982

We’re on the Web!
Visit us at:
www.co.waushara.wi.us