Several County Land and Water Conservation Departments, Public Health Departments and County Board Supervisors from Adams, Juneau, Marquette, Portage, Waushara, and Wood Counties as well as Representatives from UW Madison Extension have recently joined together to form the Central Sands Groundwater County Collaborative (CSGCC). This collaboration was formed to meet the present and future needs for safe, high quality, reliable and sustainable drinking water due to our region being uniquely susceptible to nitrate contamination in our groundwater because of our sandy soils.

CSGCC representatives have been working toward establishing a plan of action to assure safe drinking water for residents of and visitors to our communities. Goals and strategies of the collaborative include the following:

1. Understand current groundwater conditions by developing a sampling strategy to collect baseline water quality information across the Counties in the Central Sands Region. This information will be used to identify areas with elevated nitrate levels. In areas considered "hot spots", further analysis will be conducted to evaluate likely sources of nitrate contamination.

2. Gain a uniform understanding of methods to prevent nitrogen contamination in groundwater based on information from previous studies conducted in the central sands and similar settings.

3. Understand where areas most vulnerable to groundwater contamination exist to guide the development and use of ordinances, practices, and other preventative responses for land use.

4. Develop a unified regional outreach strategy to provide partisan-free education about groundwater conservation and water quality safety to the general public.

5. Create a model structure for regional collaboration on groundwater management that can be applied statewide.

While the CSGCC is in its very early developmental stages, County Officials and partnering organizations hope to collaborate through collective research, data management, education, outreach to address the current and emerging human and environmental health challenges of ground-water management in this region. To accomplish these ends, CSGCC has reached out to our local Representatives, Senators and Legislators for financial support as participating counties alone are unable to completely fund this project.

When funding is made available, it is envisioned that additional organizations will be invited to participate and outreach to the public will be sought for insight and comment. Should you have any questions in the meantime or like updates, please do not hesitate to contact your local Land Conservation, Public Health Department or UW Extension offices.

Mission Statement:
Promote conservation of our natural resources to a diverse group of landowners and future landowners in Waushara County, through educational opportunities, technical assistance and professional collaborations, that result in the long term stability of natural resources.
2020 DATES TO REMEMBER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Crop Cover Seminar</td>
<td>February 20, 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conservation Field Days</td>
<td>May 14 &amp; 15, 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sand Lake Conservation Camp—Marinette County</td>
<td>June 17-19, 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>WI Land &amp; Water Conservation Camp-Vilas County</td>
<td>June 22-25, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waushara County Fair</td>
<td>August 20-23, 2020</td>
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</table>

2020 NRCS PROGRAMS UP-DATE

*The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)* is the primary program available to producers for farm and woodland conservation projects, offering cost-sharing payments for over 110 conservation practices. The first cut-off date for the 2020 EQIP sign-up of this year is **February 28th**, however applications may be submitted year-round. There will be another cut-off on **June 5th** for EQIP funding. All applications are reviewed, and those found to be eligible receive planning, are prioritized and are ranked for funding. Applicants are encouraged to apply early to begin planning with their NRCS office and have their permits and designs completed prior to receiving funding for their application. We are here to help you with any questions and to guide you through the application process.

The Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) offers a 5-year contract of cost-sharing payments to agricultural producers and forest landowners for active management and expansion of conservation practices (cover crops, buffer strips, forest stand improvement, pollinator habitat…), while maintaining or improving production on their land. The Conservation Stewardship Program also allows NRCS to encourage adoption of cutting-edge techniques including precision agriculture, soil health, and practices that protect water quality, by offering financial incentives. We expect to receive an announcement soon regarding CSP renewal cut-off dates, followed by a general signup, and we do accept applications year-round. Contact us today if you are an operator and you are interested in improving your conservation stewardship on your operation.

The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) offers cost-share assistance and per-acre annual incentive payments to landowners that agree to keep vulnerable lands out of agricultural production. Producers establish long-term, resource-conserving plant species (grasses, trees) on these lands to control soil erosion, improve water quality and develop wildlife habitat. Applications for the 54th General enrollment period are currently being accepted through **February 28th**. The applications would be submitted to the Farm Service Agency for a 10 to 15-year contract on cropland that meets crop history eligibility. Crop history eligibility includes land that must be planted to an agricultural commodity crop 4 of 6 years from 2012 to 2017.

For more information regarding NRCS programs and the application process, give us a call at (608)296-2815, (ext. 3) or stop by our office at 438 Industrial Dr. in Westfield. Our Westfield Service Center staff includes District Conservationist (DC) Caleb Zahn; Soil Conservation Technician (SCT) Scott Doherty; & Soil Conservationists (SC) Lisa Zamzow & Shannon Johnson. We service Waushara, Marquette and Adams counties and more. Producers are free to work through whichever NRCS Service Center is most convenient for them.
There have been many questions concerning the use of an aerator on a lake. Please read on to learn information from the DNR: The use of an aerator has become a popular method of protecting structures from ice damage. Aerators may provide some benefits to individual homeowners however they can often impact neighbors and the public. A permit is not required to install or maintain these devices so long as all of the following conditions are met:

- Aeration systems must be attached to a legal structure (pier, retaining wall, etc.). This can be a previously permitted structure or a structure that is exempt from permitting.

- The operation of an aeration system cannot adversely impact the public or your neighbors who may be accessing the lake near your waterfront. You need to ensure that your aerator does not impact the ice on your neighbor’s property or create unsafe ice conditions for ice skaters, fishermen, snowmobilers, etc. This can often be accomplished by installing temporary “skirts” around the area to be protected. The “skirts” are commonly made out of a material that will stop the flow of water from the aerator. Any material placed in conjunction with the aerator must be removed immediately after lake/river ice-out.

- Prior to creating any ice holes, you need to design a marking plan. You must mark ice holes that form from your aerator with one of the following methods (Wis. Stats. s. 167.26). Any material used to mark the hole must be removed from the water immediately before or immediately after the melting of the ice.
  1. Erect and maintain a barricade around the holes consisting of uprights that are spaced at adequate intervals to maintain the barricade and that are connected by a continuous rope, cord, or similar material placed at least 2.5 feet and not more than 4.5 feet off the surface. The connecting rope, cord, or similar material shall have reflectorized, fluorescent, or lighted ribbon or tape or other reflectorized devices attached to it, so as to be highly visible, and shall be of sufficient strength to allow for the retrieval of the barricade following melting of the ice.
  2. Erect and maintain a visual warning mechanism that is highly visible and that is reflectorized, fluorescent, or lighted.

- The mixing action from the aerator cannot disturb the lake bottom.

- If the system is placed, anchored, or resting on the lake or stream bed, or the aerator cannot meet any of the aforementioned requirements, a miscellaneous structure permit is required. Go to http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/waterways/ for more information and permit applications. If you have any questions, please call a WDNR Water Management Specialist or Conservation Warden. Please be aware that you are liable for accidents that occur due to improperly marked ice holes.

The Waushara County Watershed Lakes Council, along with the Waushara County Land Conservation Department, applied to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources in 2018 for a Surface Water Grant. The purpose of this Lake Planning Grant was to cover the costs involved in putting together a new supply of our very popular Waterfront Living Packets, which are available to our membership lakes and rivers for distribution to their new residents.

In March of 2019, we were notified that we had received the grant and then the work began on ordering, accumulating and assembling the items needed to make up the 400 packets. WCWLC board members and volunteers helped with the project and the new packets were ready to distribute to the member groups at the annual meeting of the WCWLC on August 10, 2019.

If you have property on a lake or river in Waushara County and its association or lake district is a member of the WCWLC, please consider attending our meetings, if you haven’t already done so. If your association or lake district is not a member, please consider joining our organization. You can learn more at https://wcwlc.org/
On May 2nd & 3rd Waushara County Land Conservation and Zoning hosted the 13th annual Conservation Field Day event at Lake Lucerne Camp & Retreat Center. The event is a hands-on environmental learning event for fifth graders and has been well received by all Waushara County Schools attending: Parkside Middle School, Wautoma, Redgranite Elementary School, Wild Rose Elementary School, Tri-County Middle School, Plainfield, Coloma Elementary and All Saints Catholic School in Berlin. There are six learning stations for the students designed to make learning fun and meaningful. Professional environmentalists donate their time to provide knowledge beyond the classroom! It is so nice to see the smiles and expressions as they learn: A Big thank you to UW-Extension, DNR, NRCS, Golden Sands RC&D and Wild Rose High School as presenters!

THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS:
Tom Catlin        Kevin Fitzgerald
Arnie Wilke       Jim Peirce
Marty Wilke       Mark Schumacher
Greg Dobratz      Karen Reynolds
Jay Johnson

THANK YOU TO THE PRESENTERS:
Raptor Education Group, Inc. (REGI)
WI DNR
NRCS
USDA
Golden Sands RC&D
Wild Rose HS Environmental Class
Land Conservation & Zoning Staff
UW-Extension
REGI (Raptor Education Group, Inc.) is dedicated to caring for injured or orphaned avian wildlife. They work with and temporarily care for birds from endangered or threatened species “for rehabilitation and education purposes.”

### Conservation Field Days Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Richford Game Club</th>
<th>Mike and Fay McMonigal</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alpine Lake Protection and Rehabilitation District</td>
<td>Arnie and Marty Wilke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bugh's Lake Property Owners Association</td>
<td>White River Flowage Management District</td>
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<tr>
<td>Silver Lake Management District</td>
<td>Rotary Club of Wautoma</td>
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<tr>
<td>Little Silver Lake Improvement Association</td>
<td>Hancock Lion's Club</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deer Lake Management District</td>
<td>Stone Ridge Piggly Wiggly of Wautoma</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pine Lake Property Owners Association</td>
<td>Waushara County Watershed Lakes Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>Porters Lake Management District</td>
<td>Waushara County Employees Jeans for Kids &amp; Conservation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wautoma Kiwanis Club</td>
<td>Mt. Morris Lake Management District</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kathy and Bill Hutchinson</td>
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### Station #2 Soils

### Station #5 Aquatic Indicator Species
In 2019 Waushara County landowners received cost-sharing to help defray costs of construction and implementation of best management practices (BMP’s). Grants for cost-sharing are available through the Waushara County Water Quality Improvement Program (WQIP) and from Land and Water Resource Management (LWRM) funds, which constitute state grant monies.

The Waushara County Water Quality Improvement Program (WQIP) has $15,000.00 available in 2020 for structural practice funding and $10,000.00 for a new private well monitoring program. The Land and Water Resource Management (LWRM) program has approximately $50,000.00 in structural practice bond funding available as well. After receiving potential projects from interested landowners, they are rated and ranked according to priority resource concerns for both cost-sharing programs which can range from 50% to 70% depending on practice. For example, in 2019 the cost-shared practices that qualified included grassed buffers, riparian buffers, streambank stabilization, stream crossings, wetland restorations, grassed waterways and grazing systems.

Wetland Restoration installed thru:
the Waushara County Water Quality Improvement Program (WQIP) & Land and Water Resource Management (LWRM) program.
Streambank Protection installed thru:  
the Waushara County Water Quality Improvement Program (WQIP)  
& Land and Water Resource Management (LWRM) program.

If you have any conservation projects or best management practices (BMP’s) you might be interested in completing, please contact the Waushara County Land Conservation Department (920)787-0443 for project eligibility and cost-sharing information. Listed below is a partial practice list of best management practices (BMP’s) available for possible cost-sharing.

Cost-Share Practice list:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practice</th>
<th>Practice</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manure Storage Facilities</td>
<td>Manure Storage Abandonment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Barnyard Runoff Control System</td>
<td>Access Roads or Cattle Crossing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animal Trails &amp; Walkways</td>
<td>Diversions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Windbreak</td>
<td>Grade Stabilization Structures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heavy Use Area Protection</td>
<td>Prescribe Grazing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fencing</td>
<td>Livestock Watering Facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milkhouse Waste Control</td>
<td>Riparian Buffers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roof Runoff</td>
<td>Water &amp; Sediment Control Structures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Streambank Protection</td>
<td>Other Shoreline Protection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Streambank Shaping &amp; Seeding</td>
<td>Terraces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waste Transfer System</td>
<td>Grassed Waterways</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well Abandonment</td>
<td>Wetland Restoration</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shoreland Habitat for Developed Areas</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Waushara County LCD was awarded a 2020 NMFE (Nutrient Management Farmer Education) grant from DATCP. The same grant, used to hold a nutrient management certification course, was awarded in 2015 and 2017 which allowed for 2,375 acres to be covered with nutrient management plans. The program helps assist farmers with soil sampling and developing nutrient management plans. A $1,250 stipend is available to farmers who participate in the program. The NMFE Grant allows farmers to write, design and customize a nutrient management plan particular to their own individual operation. The certification course consists of 5 main topics, which include:

- **Introduction to Nutrient Management Planning**
- **Soil Testing and Conservation Plans**
- **Nitrogen Management**
- **Phosphorus, Potassium and pH Management**
- **Manure Management**

Nutrient management allows farmers to apply the right source of nutrients at the right time, rate and place to meet crop needs and minimize nutrient losses from fields. Nutrient management plans account for all activities on the farm that could affect nutrient needs and losses during one crop rotation. It also accounts for soil type, slope, crop rotations and residual nutrients, and includes both manure and commercial fertilizers. Waushara County Land Conservation Department will be offering a certification course this April, to reserve your seat call Josh Saykally @ 920-787-0443.

Waushara County’s farmland covered by nutrient management plans continue to increase each year among non-CAFO Farms. In 2019 Waushara County had 42,773 acres under a nutrient management plan or approximately 45.26% of the county’s cropland. In 2019, non-CAFO farms submitted nutrient management plans for 15,298 acres, up from 12,564 acres in 2018, while CAFO nutrient management plans covered 27,475 acres. Waushara County LCD encourages producers to have a nutrient management plan, especially when the farm utilizes manure.

Treating manure as a nutrient source, instead of a waste, can save money and lead to higher crop yields. Any farmer wanting more information about nutrient management planning or who would like to become certified to write and develop your own plan may contact: Josh Saykally—Waushara County Agronomist @ 920-787-0443
The keyboards are noisily clicking away at the Fox-Wolf Watershed Alliance’s Kimberly office as we wrap up the development of the new Winnebago Waterways Lake Management Plan (LMP). Stemming from a series of efforts first initiated in 2010, the LMP is the product of a collaborative effort between the Winnebago Waterways Program (part of the Fox-Wolf Watershed Alliance), Calumet, Fond du Lac, Winnebago, and Waushara Counties, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, and a variety of Winnebago System stakeholders.

The overarching goal of the LMP is to develop a regional framework for cooperation to restore and protect the health of the Winnebago Lakes. It’s taken a lot of effort because the Winnebago System is so big – it encompasses 10% of Wisconsin’s land mass and holds about 17% of Wisconsin’s surface water. That means there are a lot of people to talk to, each one having various opinions regarding how our System should be managed. The list of stakeholder groups is extensive – anglers, shoreline property owners, boaters, conservation professionals, farmers, paddlers, industry representatives, the 250,000 people (or so) that get their drinking water from Lake Winnebago...just to name a few.

The LMP project is divided into nine different topics, covering in-lake issues like aquatic invasive species, aquatic plant management, recreation, and waters levels as well as topics that transcend the land-water boundary such as water quality, habitat, shoreline management, watershed management, and community engagement. What occurs on our landscapes impacts our waters, which is why the LMP focuses not only on the lakes themselves, but a large portion of the landscape that drains into them.

Over the past two years, the Winnebago Waterways Program worked with regional conservation professionals, including staff from Waushara County, to come to a clear and thorough understanding of the issues our lakes face. We then worked on developing, for each topic, a management strategy that will effectively improve the quality of our lakes. Those documents include a detailed overview of the topic as well as management recommendations.

Although the plan is not yet finished, implementing recommendations outlined in the LMP is already underway. Thanks to continued financial support from Calumet, Winnebago, Fond du Lac Counties, system wide coordination will continue through the Winnebago Waterways program in 2020, beginning with an expanded water quality monitoring program for the Lakes and their tributaries and advancement of Aquatic Plan Management Program which will provide shoreline residents with support as they work to balance water quality improvement efforts and recreational desires. You can learn more about the Winnebago Waterways Program and the LMP at www.winnebagowaterways.org.

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2019 WILDLIFE DAMAGE AND CLAIMS STATISTICS

The Wisconsin Wildlife Damage Abatement & Claims Program provides damage prevention when wild deer, bear, geese & turkey damage their agricultural crops.

- 7 enrollees
- 52 deer harvested
- 1 bear relocated
- 7 claimants for crop damage
- Total deer & bear damage payable losses $26,817.14
LAND CONSERVATION ENVIRONMENTAL POSTER CONTEST

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL WINNERS

Poster judging began on January 8th. The Waushara County Land/Water/Education Committee had 110 entries. Students could earn first through third place certificates. The first place winning posters were then entered in the Lake Winnebago Land and Water Conservation Association District Area Contest, held January 24th. Primary Division first place winner was Ally J. Christensen, Elementary Division first place winner was Aryia Dahl, Middle Division first place winner was Hannah Schmidt, Junior Division first place winner was Fatima Paredes and the Senior Division first place winner was Emmaline Raboin. This year’s theme, Where Would We Bee Without Pollinators?

GRADES K-1

Left to Right: Ally Christensen, Paige Zimmer, Marlin Schimelpfenig (Wild Rose Elementary)

GRADES 2-3

Left to Right: Aryia Dahl, Averey King, Brooklyn Bliefnick (Wild Rose Elementary)

GRADES 4-6

Left to Right: Hannah Schmidt, Makenna Jewell (Wild Rose Elementary)

Mason Dobrecovich (Parkside School)

GRADES 7-9

Left to Right: Fatima Paredes, Nevaeh Bender (Tri-County School)

GRADES 10-12

Left to Right: Emmaline Raboin (Tri-County H.S.)

Left to Right: Nyasha Wayne, Jazmin Ott (Wautoma H.S.)
Please see the Crossword Puzzle on next page from Golden Sand Resource Conservation & Development Council, Inc. Thank you Anna Cisar! For more information about Wisconsin’s aquatic invasive species visit: https://www.goldensandsrcd.org/aquatic-invasive-species

**Curly-leaf pondweed**, as the name suggests has curly or wavy leaves that have serrations along the edge. It prefers colder water and dies back mid-summer unless there is cold water nearby. This plant is native to Europe. It can grow in large, dense beds that restrict water flow and because it has an early season die off it can lead to algae blooms.

**Eurasian watermilfoil** has feather shaped leaves that have at least 12 pairs of leaflets per leaf. This plant is native to Europe and Asia, transported to the U.S. in a ship's ballast waters. This plant spreads quickly by fragmentation, allowing it to create dense beds that can reduce water flow, increase temperature and impede recreational activity.

**Japanese knotweed** is a large shrub that can grow up to 12 feet tall. It has large heart-shaped leaves that produce tiny, white flowers. As the name suggests it is native to Japan, and was introduced to the U.S. as an ornamental plant and is planted to create a “living fence”. It’s rhizomes (roots) create an extensive network and has been known to damage foundations and sprout through asphalt.

**Purple loosestrife** is a perennial wetland plant that can grow up to 8 feet tall. Its stems are woody and are 4-sided, and has pink-purple flower spikes. Purple loosestrife is native to Europe. It rapidly colonizes new areas displacing native plants, reducing waterfowl and shorebird communities.

**Rusty crayfish** can reach 6 inches in length, are tan to light brown and have a rusty brown spot on its sides, which is how it gets its name. This animal is native to the Ohio River Basin and was brought to Wisconsin as fishing bait. Rusty crayfish colonize lakes and streams quickly. Their aggressive nature allows them to outcompete native species for food and habitat, and hasten the spread of Eurasian watermilfoil and other aggressive plants.

**Spiny waterflea** is a predatory zooplankton that grow to ¼ to ⅝ of an inch long, with a long tail-like spine. If present, they are often noticed by fishermen when they accumulate on fishing line creating a clear, gelatin-like mass. Spiny waterflea are native to Europe and Asia, brought over to the U.S. in ballast tanks. It feeds on zooplankton, which in turn negatively impacts water clarity.

**Zebra mussels** grow up to 1.25 inches and the shell is flat on the hinged side, creating a D-shape. They get their name for the brown-black stripes. This mussel is native to the Baltic and Caspian Sea region. Their shells can be sharp, cutting your feet on them. The female can produce up to 1 million eggs each year; colonies can clog up intake and discharge pipes.

**Flowering rush** has long, narrow leaves that are triangular in cross-section and usually twisted. This plant can have many, small pink flowers but not always. Flowering rush is an ornamental, water garden plant from Eurasia. It has the ability to grow on wet shores, as a submergent or an emergent allowing it to create dense colonies that crowd out native species and prevent boat passage.

**Phragmites** is an invasive grass that can grow up to 16 feet tall. The stems have distinct ridges, and the seedheads are fluffy and can be 8 - 12 inches tall. Phragmites is native to Middle East. It is dispersed by muskrats who use it to make shelter, as well as waterfowl hunters who use it to construct hunting blinds.

**Starry stonewort** is a macroalgae that can grow over 6 feet tall and has star-shaped reproductive structure called a bulbil. It’s native to Europe and western Asia. Starry stonewort can create dense mats impeding movement of aquatic organisms, and may make recreational activities difficult. (photo credit: Paul Skawinski)
Aquatic Invasive Species

Across:
1. this invasive grass can be dispersed by
   muskrats who use it to make shelter and
   by waterfowl hunters who use it to
   construct hunting blinds
2. native to the Ohio River Basin, this animal
   was brought to Wisconsin as fishing bait
3. narrow leaves are triangular and
   usually twisted, pink-ish flower
   umbels
4. this plant, originally planted as
   a “living fence”, can damage
   foundations and sprout
   through asphalt
5. this purple flowered plant has a
   woody, 4-sided stem, and
   rapidly colonizes new areas
6. this invasive organism feeds on
   zooplankton, negatively
   impacting water clarity
7. the female of this species can
   produce up to 1 million eggs each
   year, colonies can clog up intake and
   discharge pipes
8. this invasive grass can be dispersed by
   muskrats who use it to make shelter and
   by waterfowl hunters who use it to
   construct hunting blinds
9. native to the Ohio River Basin, this animal
   was brought to Wisconsin as fishing bait
10. this plant spreads quickly by
    fragmentation

Down:
1. this invasive
   plant dies
   back
   around July
2. this invasive
   is a
   macroalgae,
   native to
   Europe
3. narrow leaves are triangular and
   usually twisted, pink-ish flower
   umbels
7. the female of this species can
   produce up to 1 million eggs each
   year, colonies can clog up intake and
   discharge pipes
2020 LAND CONSERVATION DEPARTMENT
STAFF: (left to right)
Laura Johnson-Administrative Specialist,
Josh Saykally-Conservation Specialist,
John Olsen, Conservation Specialist,
Todd Wahler-Director Land Conservation & Zoning,
Ed Hernandez, County Conservationist.

ANSWERS TO THE AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES CROSSWORD PUZZLE

CURLY

JAPANESE KNOTWEEED

PURPLE LOOSESTRIFE

SPINY WATER FLEA

PHRAGMITES

RUSTY CRAYFISH

EURASIAN WATERMILFOIL