



Bone Lake Newsletter

Bone Lake — Once called Onondogacona which means lake of small pines

SPRING 2018



KAREN ENGELBRETSON

Looking for an attractive tall grass to plant along your shore? Prairie cord grass (*Spartina pectinata*), grows in a beautiful tall, arching clump. It spreads by rhizomes, making it an excellent choice for stabilizing soils along wet areas. Golden fall color.

MONITORING AND STUDIES

New information on causes of algae growth

by Phil Foster

Over the past three years we have been learning more about how lake sediment influences our algae growth. Well, the Internal Load Study is finally complete and the findings surprised us a bit.

As you know, phosphorus (P) is the key nutrient for the growth of algae. The lake sediment contains a lot of P which gets released into the water when there is no oxygen in the bottom layer of water. When the lake is no longer stratified (layered), the phosphorus is brought to the surface and becomes available for algae growth.

Previously we had estimated that of Bone Lake's total P loading, lake sediment was contributing approximately 15 percent. The recent three-year study indicates it is closer to 50 percent.

We currently have various activities attempting to reduce the P load coming from other sources, e.g., waterfront and watershed runoff, curly leaf pondweed, and non-compliant septic systems. We have no activities aimed at reducing the P impact to our water clarity from the lake sediment. However, this study did identify the best option available to us.

Alum (Aluminum sulfate) is a nontoxic liquid which has been effectively used in many Wisconsin lakes to improve water clarity. Alum is sprayed into the lake's deeper water to bind with phosphorus and thereby prevent its release into the water column. The biggest negative to its use is the cost—both of the initial application and follow-up applications in the future.

At our next District commissioners meeting on July 14 we will be reviewing the details of the Internal Load Study and potential alum treatment. All are welcome to attend. The presentation is scheduled for 8 to 9 a.m. at Georgetown Hall. We will also discuss next steps, including forming a committee to further study the alum treatment option and to make recommendations in 2019.

At our annual meeting on August 11 you will hear a summary of the Internal Load Study, alum treatment details, and possible next steps. Please plan to attend. ■

FREE
FISHING
WEEKEND
June 2-3

Fish Wisconsin without
a license or trout stamp.
Other fishing rules apply.

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www.bonelakewi.com

Did you know? Lake stratification is the separation of a lake into three layers of temperature.

Epilimnion, top-most layer of the lake is exposed to wind, atmosphere and sunlight, typically the colder layer in winter, warmer in summer.

Metalimnion (or thermocline), is the middle layer. Temperature can change with depth throughout the day.

Hypolimnion, the bottom layer of a stratified lake, is typically the colder layer in summer and the warmer layer in winter.

BONE LAKE
MANAGEMENT
DISTRICT

**ANNUAL
MEETING**

SATURDAY
AUG 11, 2018
9-11 AM • WILKINS

Dear Bone Lakers,

I have just returned from the spring commissioners meeting originally scheduled for April 14, but postponed because of the late season blizzard. The landscape is still fifty percent snow covered as I look outside and the ice on the lake is at least two feet thick.

At the meeting the commissioners, ably assisted by Bob Boyd, enthusiastically laid out plans and programs to maintain and improve the health of Bone Lake. Much of the success is the result of a capable and willing large group of volunteers who pitch right in and get things done.

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#bonelakewi

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Evaluation and Studies
Bob Boyd
Fisheries
Bob Boyd and Mike Belich
Waterfront Runoff
Alex Chorewycz
Watershed
Ann Miller
Wildlife and Natural Beauty
Karen Engelbretson

Aquatic Plant Management

Bob Boyd, Phil Foster
Clean Boats Clean Waters
Richard Mackie

Communications

Karen Engelbretson

Social

Sherri Singer

Boating Safety & Buoys

Mike Musial

Audit

Mike Belich

Bone Lake water data:
dnr.wi.gov/lakes/clmn/

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ADVERTISING COORDINATOR

Please consider this paid position. Contact the editor.

The Clean Boats Clean Waters staff at both public landings, assisted by cameras, work to keep out invasive species, which we are delighted to report have been successful to this point, but continued vigilance is necessary.

A very preliminary discussion of alum to control of Bone Lake's high phosphorus internal loading was held at the meeting. Vice Chairman Phil Foster, just back from the Wisconsin Lakes Convention, gave an excellent presentation of costs, risks, successes and failures of using alum to improve water clarity in lakes.

Ron Ogren, Georgetown Town Board Chair, updated us on progress of the Town's public access development at Sandy Hook. Ogren and others have met with Dan Harrington, Water Regulations and Zoning Specialist, DNR-Spooner, to review the site development under the conditional use permit:

- Harrington confirmed the wetland designation at the base of the hill. The wetland extends the width of the property behind the shoreline. A constructed path through the wetland is not allowed.
- The sand point well must be abandoned.
- A required engineering plan of the site has not yet been completed.
- Runoff diversions to the Georgetown property from adjacent properties will need to be redirected.
- Cutting of dead trees and other clearing will begin this spring.

I wish each of you a great summer in spite of the late start.

—Bob Murphy, Chair

It's Easy to Recycle Around Bone Lake

Georgetown Town Hall

Second and fourth Fridays and Saturdays of each month, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. Questions? Call 715-483-1088.

St. Croix Falls Hwy. 8 across from Menards, any weekday.

Balsam Lake Hwy. 46 by the Government Center, any day, 24/7.

Keep in touch

Subscribe to Bone Lake eNews! Get Bone Lake updates between newsletters throughout the year. Go to bonelakewi.com and click "Join Our Mailing" on the front page. Be sure to reply to the confirmation email to complete your subscription and click the link to add enews@bonelake.com to your address book. Signed up but not getting emails? Contact karen@kje.design.

Bone Lakers Facebook group page More than 600 members are sharing photos, events, recommendations and news about life around the lake. To join, go to facebook.com/groups/BoneLakers.

Grant dollars put to good work

by Phil Foster

We have made some great use of our DNR grant dollars aimed at improving Bone Lake's water clarity. Property owners have used \$65,000 of our current grant with most of it toward waterfront and watershed runoff mitigation practices.

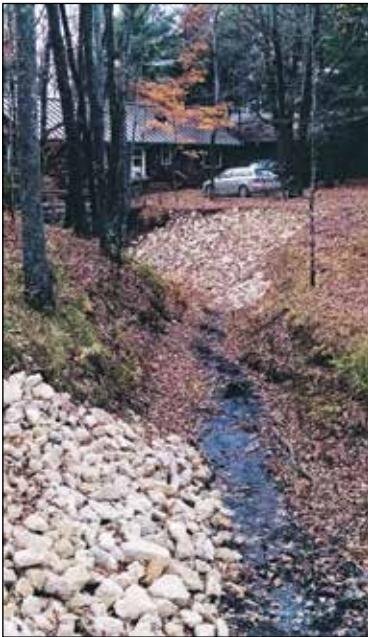
Waterfront runoff practices include 10X35 native plantings, rock infiltration pits, rock trench infiltration, rain gardens, shoreline buffers, porous pavers, driveway diversions and berms. Larger scale watershed practices installed include holding ponds, stream stabilization, and culvert replacement.

A big thank you to the 45 property owners who have installed runoff mitigation practices over the past eight years (see the list >). These Bone Lakers are all helping to improve the lake's water clarity. Our goal is to have 88 additional properties install such practices and the good news is we have \$110,000 in grant funding still available.

Does your property slope toward the lake?

If so, you are an ideal candidate to have a free, no obligation site visit by our consultant Cheryl Clemens. All properties are eligible to receive this grant funding. If interested, please call Mary Chorefycz, our waterfront runoff secretary at 715-857-6733 to schedule your visit with Cheryl, or email amchorefycz@yahoo.com.

If you have a stream adjoining your property and are concerned about erosion and/or runoff into the stream, email Ann Miller, Bone Lake's watershed committee chair, at ann.russ.miller3@gmail.com. ■



Three Bone Lake projects, left to right: The Rosenthal's driveway diversion flows to a native planting at their shore. Holly Thompson and neighbors Dave and Lisa McCarty got together for a stream stabilization project that stopped erosion, saved valuable trees and controlled sediment runoff to Bone Lake. Jan Nelson framed her cabin, *Lykkebo*, with a colorful 10X35 native planting in 2015.

RUNOFF MITIGATION PROJECTS AROUND BONE LAKE

Waterfront

Amundson, Ron and Vicki
 Atkinson, Bob & Barb
 Boyd, Bob and Lorraine
 Connelly, Chip and Ann
 DePhillips, Susan
 Feldick, Debbie and Bob
 Ferguson, Randy
 Foster, Phil and Sue
 Gammel, Roger and Judith
 Hauge, Gerald and Joyce
 Ihrig, Richard & Cooper, Colleen
 Derheim, Mike and Labatt, Nathan
 Nelson, Clarence & Lorraine
 Nelson, Jan
 Ohlrogge, Cynthia and Ken
 Olson, Cary and Kari
 Pullin, Bill
 Quinn, Sandy & Tom
 Randall, Carla
 Rosenthal, Ron and Gail
 Schaefer, Jill and Brian Gunderson
 Schaffer, Kay & Craig
 Shannon, Bill and Cindy
 Smith, Dave and Elizabeth
 Stellwagon, Paul & Marti
 Sullivan, Steve
 Killeen, Tim and Kathy
 Town of Bone Lake
 Walberg, Melody
 Werner, Paul and Linette
 Westland, Roger and Beulah
 Wilkins
 Wilson, David and Rita

Watershed

Bol, Sis and Steve
 Christensen, Jon and Julie
 Lindquist, Greg and Kathy
 McCarty, David and Lisa
 Pullin, Bill
 Thompson, Holly and Mester Richard
 Villstrup, Lori and Tom
 Walstron, Karl and Barbara

Property owners' projects are often featured in the [Bone Lake Newsletter](#). Go to bonelakewi.com for the archive of past issues.

Estimating the Bone Lake musky population

by Bob Boyd,

During the spring of 2017, WDNR began a two-year study to estimate the musky population in Bone Lake. They set out fourteen fyke nets to capture muskies and they will repeat the practice again this year.

Result of 2017 efforts

They captured and released 185 muskies 30 inches or larger, and 16 muskies less than 30 inches. The largest was 45.9 inches and the smallest was 21 inches. The fish were tagged with a chip the size of a large grain of rice, injected just under the skin. When tagged muskies are recaptured they can be identified with an electronic device. ■

Bone Lake fishery studies can be found at our website, bonelakewi.com.



Christian Dueholm and Aaron Cole, WDNR regional fisheries manager, with a Bone Lake musky in 2017. A fyke net can be seen in the background.

Smallmouth bass are growing

by Bob Boyd

The Bone Lake Fishery Committee over the last few years installed 80 half log cribs in the lake to create spawning habitat for smallmouth bass.

In 2010-2012 the committee facilitated the stocking of 12,500 smallmouth bass, ranging in size from four to six inches, with the goal of boosting a sparse native population to one of a more fishable size.

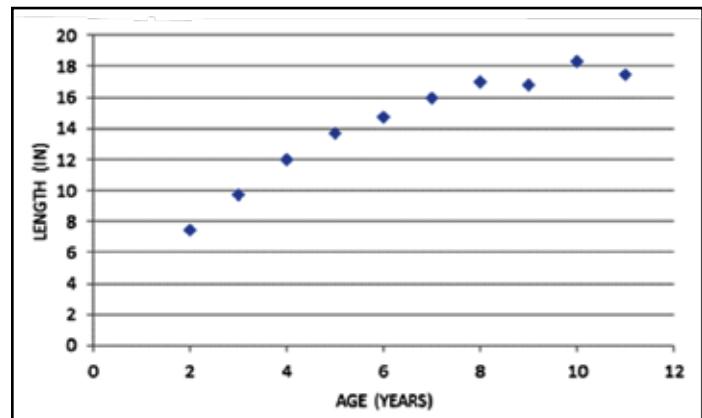
According to some residents more and larger smallmouth bass are being caught recently. Tournament anglers have reported catching some fourteen- to seventeen-inchers.

Lake residents can provide valuable information on the success of the smallmouth bass stocking efforts by keeping track of the number and length of those you catch this season. We can use this information to help determine how the smallmouth bass are reproducing.

We invite you to email your smallmouth bass information to:

- Bob Boyd at boysnest@lakeland.ws, or
- Mike Belich at michael.belich@yahoo.com

Thank you!



Above is the average length at age for smallmouth bass in the lakes and flowages of Barron and Polk counties.

DONATE LIFE JACKETS (PFDs)

The Kids Don't Float life jacket kiosk could use a refresh. At the kiosk, those who need a life jacket can borrow one while boating on Bone Lake. You can donate life jackets any time at the north landing kiosk—each must have a legible tag attached.

Cushions, throwables and life jackets of all sizes are welcome. Thanks for helping keep Bone Lake safe for everyone!

Boyd legacy continues with internship and research study

Two of Bob and Lorraine Boyd's grandkids will be spending a lot more time at the lake this year—working and studying.

Noah Boyd, 19, and Kayla Boyd, 22, each cut their Bone Lake teeth in our Clean Boats Clean Waters program and have stayed involved with the lake growing up.

Noah is now a student at Vermillion College in Ely, Minnesota, majoring in Fisheries and Wildlife Management/Natural Resource Technology and Wildlife Ecology. He will be serving a work and volunteer internship at Bone Lake this summer as a program of study.

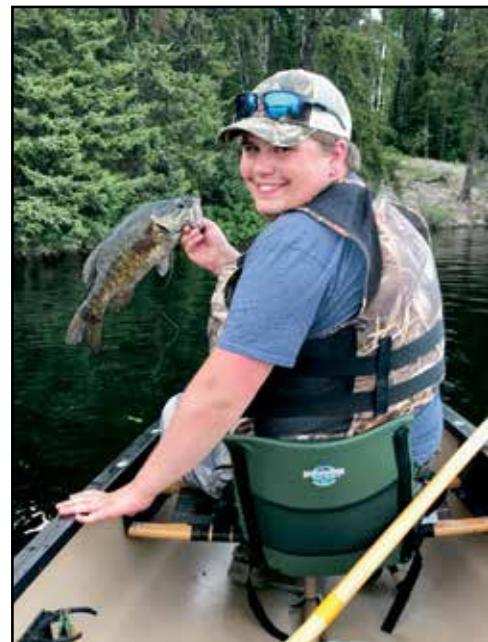
Noah will be paid for his time assisting with the Bone Lake Management District's goose census, shoreline habitat assessment, AIS monitoring activities and Clean Boats Clean Waters inspections. Also, he will volunteer with the creel census regarding the smallmouth bass population, report incidents of Black Crappie Sarcoma, conduct water chemistry and aquatic plant monitoring.

Kayla is a senior at the University of Wisconsin-Stout. Her major is Biochemistry and Molecular Biology with a Computer Science minor. She will be conducting a major research project on Black Crappie Sarcoma, a disease that has infected some crappies in Bone Lake and other area lakes. Currently, she is networking and gathering data from the WDNR and University of Wisconsin.

Kayla reports, "this could be a year and a half study and could become material for my thesis."

Grandpa Bob says he really likes talking to Kayla about the project but when she gets into gene sequencing DNA and viruses he tunes out saying, *too far over my head*.

Noah and Kayla will be helping us learn more about Bone Lake in many ways—this summer and into the future. They don't fall far from the tree, do they? We Bone Lakers can all be grateful for that. ■



Noah Boyd, above, using his "graphite sampler" and Kayla Boyd, left, researching wine in Europe.

Black Crappie Sarcoma

The fish disease named Black Crappie Sarcoma continues to infect Bone Lake crappies. If you catch an infected fish, it may help to remove it from the water and dispose of it on land, although the fish would count toward your limit.

Visit the fisheries page at bonelakewi.com for more about the disease.



Aquatic Plant Management Plan Update

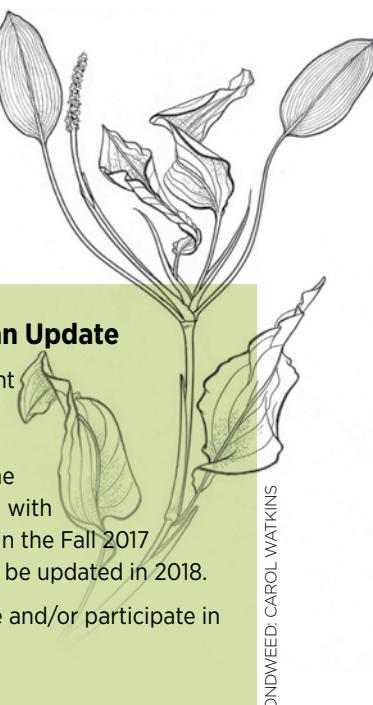
Bone Lake's Aquatic Plant Management Plan, a component of the overall Lake Management Plan, is now scheduled to be updated in 2019 by the aquatic plant management committee with input from property owners. A notice in the Fall 2017 newsletter stated the APM plan would be updated in 2018.

If you would like to join the committee and/or participate in input sessions in 2019, contact:

Bob Boyd, boydsnest@lakeland.ws

or

Phil Foster, phil.sue.foster@lakeland.ws



BIG LEAF PONDWEED: CAROL WATKINS

Bone Lake zebra mussel update

by Bob Boyd

Monitoring for zebra mussel presence in Bone Lake came back negative last year.

Twelve zebra mussel plate samplers were deployed by residents at various locations around Bone Lake. No zebra mussels were found on any of the sampler plates.

Zebra mussel monitoring on Bone Lake by the following agencies also came back negative: U.S. Fish and Wildlife services, U.S. National Park Service, and Polk County Land and Water Resources.

This year the District will purchase the necessary equipment to conduct our own zebra mussel monitoring.

All residents can help with the monitoring by inspecting your boat hoists and docks before putting them back in the water this spring. If you have a suspect mussel attached, collect it and call Bob Boyd at 715-553-0629 for further identification. ■



Zebra mussels are fingernail-sized animals that attach to solid surfaces in water. Adults are 1/4 to 1-1/2 inches long and have D-shaped shells, often alternating yellow and brownish colored stripes.

Our Bone Lake AIS prevention strategy includes communication via newsletters and hand-outs.

Our Clean Boats Clean Waters personnel have received additional training in zebra mussel identification and have been supplying aebra mussel handouts to boaters.

Our CBCW staff will be on duty again in 2018 inspecting water craft and communicating with the public at both north and south landings.

Cameras at the north and south landings record watercraft launches.



Clean Boats Clean Waters data

	2016	2017
CBCW boat inspections	940	1,062
People contacted	1,854	2,297
Camera-recorded launches	2,700	2,629

CLEAN. DRAIN. DRY.

To review invasive species prevention steps, go to dnr.wi.gov/topic/Invasives/prevention.html

Bone Lake geese update

by Karen Engelbretson

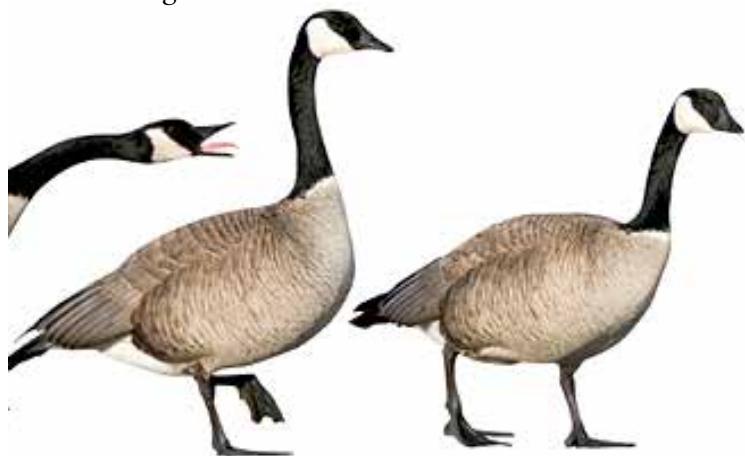
The Bone Lake Wildlife and Natural Beauty Committee has been working to address complaints and concerns about the growing population of geese around the lake. Here's what's happening in 2018.

The District plans to conduct a **goose census** on the lake during May, June and July of this year using a smartphone app called Avenza Maps and the assistance of the District intern, Noah Boyd. During these months we'll be counting the geese that call Bone Lake home while they're nesting, flightless and with juveniles. Volunteers may be needed, too; if you're interested in helping with the census, please email karen@kje.design.

Property owners and others around the District will have the opportunity to share their preferences by completing a **goose population survey** this summer.

With census counts and stakeholder opinion in hand we can begin to consider management solutions. Chad Alberg, USDA-Wildlife Services, Cumberland, will speak at our annual meeting on August 11 about control options we may consider for 2019.

Be sure you have signed up for Bone Lake eNews to stay up to date. Go to bonelakewi.com and select Join Our Mailing. ■



New Wisconsin law change—spotter not required

It is now legal in Wisconsin to tow someone behind a motorboat or personal watercraft without a spotter if the motorboat is equipped with a mirror that allows the operator to see the person(s) being towed. Go to dnr.wi.com/topic/boat for a boating rules handbook, boat registration and more.

Wisconsin Boating Safety Courses

Anyone born on or after January 1, 1989 is required to complete a boating safety course to legally operate a motorized boat or personal watercraft (PWC) on Wisconsin waters. WDNR recreational safety specialists recommend all boat operators complete a safety course.

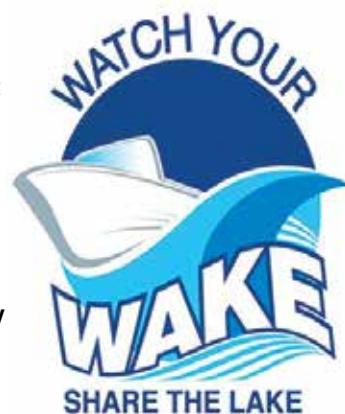
The in-person nine-hour course over three days includes instruction which emphasizes navigation, laws, ethics, personal safety and the proper use of boats. Anyone is eligible to take the class and receive a safety education completion certificate. Note that courses are designed at a 5th grade level and older. Pre-registration is required. Cost is \$10.

Find a nearby class to enroll in

Several in-person, nine-hour classes are now scheduled in Amery, Luck, Clayton and Osceola, WI during May and June. Go to gowild.wi.gov. Under Safety Education, choose Browse Upcoming Courses. Then choose Boat, Polk County, and you'll get a listing of classes, dates, times, instructor, and an option to enroll right there for the course.

Take the boating safety course online

The course can also be completed online. Go to boat-ed.com/wisconsin for the online boating safety course, study guide, Wisconsin boating handbook and videos.



REMEMBER:

All motor boats:
NO WAKE 100 FEET FROM SHORE.

Personal watercraft:
NO WAKE 200 FEET FROM SHORE

Big wakes:
Play in the big water away from docks, unmotorized craft, anglers and swimmers.

SOCIAL CALENDAR



FOURTH OF JULY: A favorite time at the lake!

Fireworks, sponsored by Joel and Jolene Owens

Wednesday, July 4, 2018 in tribute to our veterans and active military. Please consider a tax-deductible donation to the Milltown VFW Post 6856.

Send donations by August 1 to Jolene Owens, 2060 Dueholm Drive Milltown, WI 54858. Donations are used to help local veterans and active military in need.

Bone Lake 4th of July Boat Parade, Sunday July 1

Register at Wilkins 11am - 12:45pm. Parade leaves Wilkins at 1pm. Food and drinks provided to parade participants prior to parade. **Grand prize:** 4 tickets to Green Bay Packer/Minnesota Vikings football game. For more information, contact Wilkins.



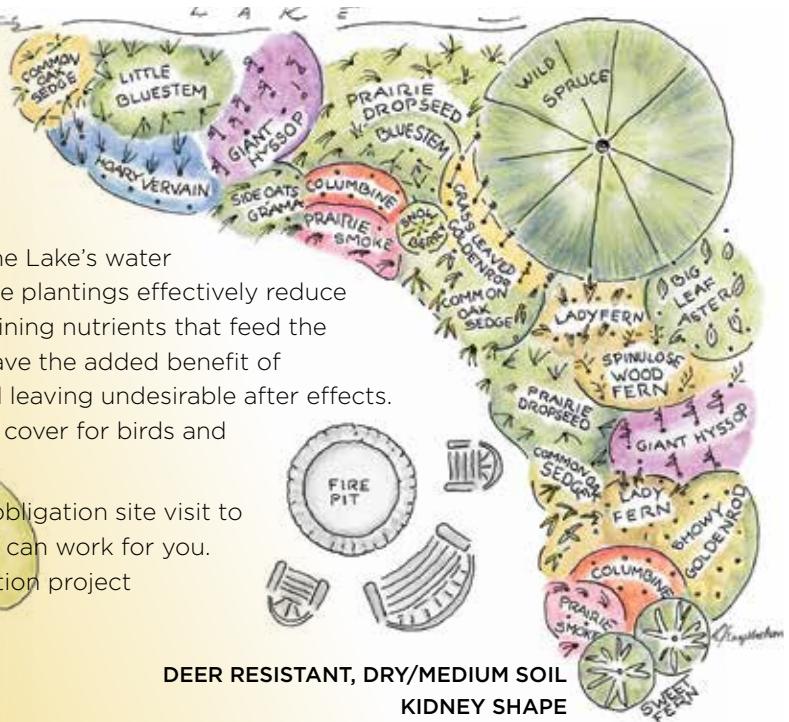
IS THIS YOUR YEAR?

Good news! Cost share dollars through our DNR Healthy Lakes grant, are still available for 10X35 native plantings at Bone Lake shorelines.

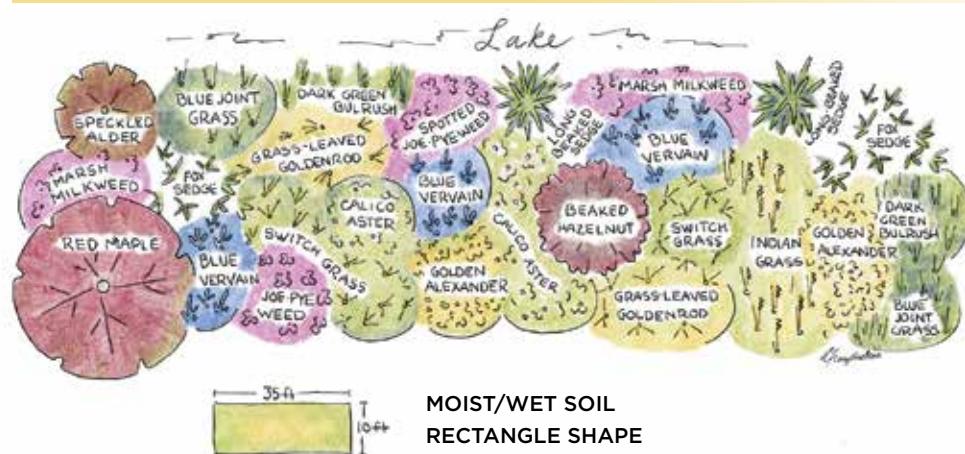
You can help reduce runoff to the lake and improve Bone Lake's water clarity while adding beauty to the shoreline. 10x35 native plantings effectively reduce runoff of water and sediment from your property containing nutrients that feed the growth of algae in our lake. By the way, the plantings have the added benefit of discouraging geese from wandering onto your yard and leaving undesirable after effects. They provide important habitat benefits, too—food and cover for birds and flowers for pollinators.

Please contact Mary Chorewycz to schedule a free, no obligation site visit to your property and find out how a 10X35 native planting can work for you. With cost-share grant dollars, this type of runoff mitigation project can be completed at no or minimal cost. This year!

Call Mary at 651-454-9456 or 715-857-6733, or email amchorewycz@yahoo.com

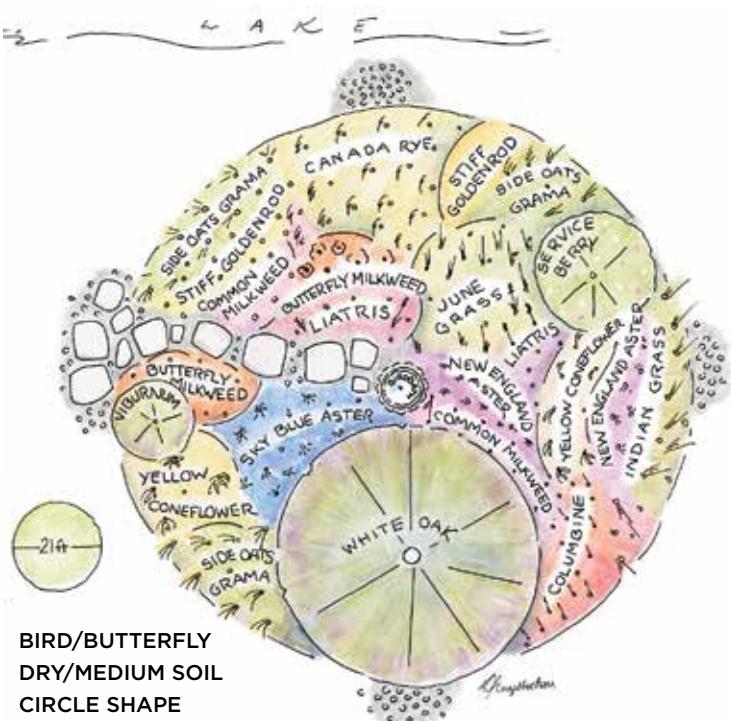
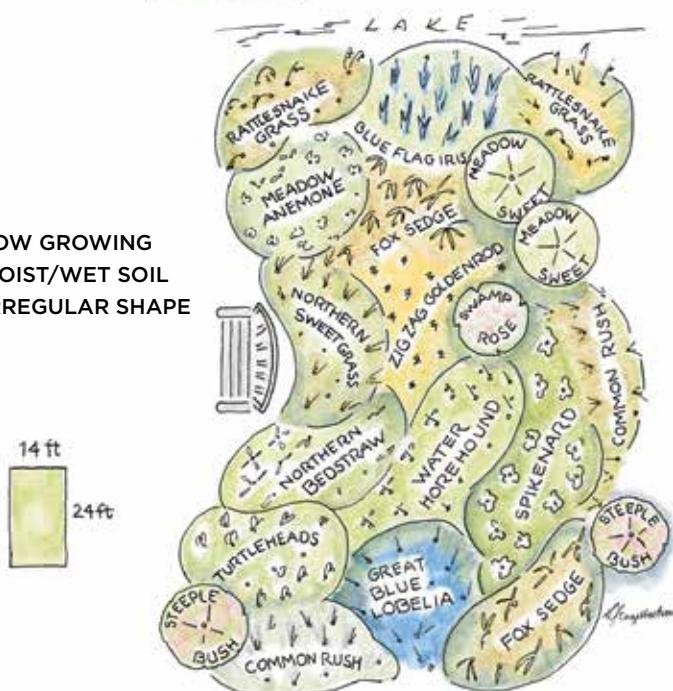


DEER RESISTANT, DRY/MEDIUM SOIL
KIDNEY SHAPE



Go to healthylakeswi.com for planting designs for a variety of soil types and site conditions (like those shown here). Is there one that suits you?

LOW GROWING
MOIST/WET SOIL
IRREGULAR SHAPE



BIRD/BUTTERFLY
DRY/MEDIUM SOIL
CIRCLE SHAPE

Yet, you still can make a difference!

by Mary Chorefycz

A good many of us remember Smokey the Bear. The phrase, "Only you can prevent forest fires!" conjures up images of that brown bear wearing a ranger's hat.

No doubt the first impression for many of us when we heard this public service announcement as children was that each of us was chosen by the bear for an important civic task. Even when we learned there were natural causes that created forest fires we still did not toss matches in the woods and we doused our campfires.

Smokey the Bear PSAs are still featured on highway billboards and with fire danger notices. In 2018 Smokey was cited as the most remembered PSA in recent time. Why? The answer is simple. It is effective! It motivates us to do the right thing.

Why, you may ask, am I bringing up Smokey the Bear in this edition of the Bone Lake newsletter? Let me explain.

You have just read on the front page that sediment accumulating over scores of years is the cause of much of the algae growth in Bone Lake. It is now known that phosphorus in sediments contributes over 50 percent of the phosphorus in the lake available to algae. Yet, a significant percentage of the phosphorus loading is attributed to runoff from waterfront properties and the area watershed.

WE STILL CAN ACT to reduce/mitigate the nutrient-bearing water that runs off our own properties.

If we don't, how will we feel that we didn't do something to improve Bone Lake's water clarity? Just as with forest fires, Mother Nature has her hand in this problem; and so do we.

Remember, you can still do something to reduce algae growth in the lake.

Remember, you can still do something to improve water clarity.

Remember, you can still do something to improve recreation at Bone Lake.

If you are ready and willing to act now to reduce algae growth in the lake, please call Mary Chorefycz at 651-454-9456, 715-857-6733 or email amchorefycz@yahoo.com to arrange a *free, no-obligation site visit* that will provide suggestions for effective ways to reduce runoff from your property.

Or, contact any volunteer member of the Waterfront Runoff Committee you may know for more information. In addition, a list of property owners who have completed projects with our grant funds is listed on page 3.

Grant dollars are available for all runoff reduction practices.

Let's use them to improve Bone Lake.

REMEMBER, YOU STILL CAN...

Waterfront Runoff Committee volunteer members: Alex Chorefycz, Mary Chorefycz, Phil Foster, Richard Mackie, Cary Olson, Ron Rosenthal, Dave Smith, Paul Stellwagen.

Editor's note: Smokey Bear officially does not have a middle name. Back in 1952, "the" was added to his name to create rhythm in a popular song. Guess it has stuck.

DON'T FORGET **Septic cost share dollars now up to \$2500.** If you have a failing/non-compliant system, and choose to replace it, you are eligible to receive a cost share of 50 percent, up to \$2,500 from Bone Lake Management District.

Call Richard Mackie, Bone Lake septic ranger, at 715-857-5205 for details.

BOB BOYD'S ICE OUT

When this newsletter arrives in your home, Bone Lake may still be covered in ice.

Mother nature gifted us a long cold winter this year with lots of snow and to top it off, a late spring blizzard!

I'm writing this on April 17th and we are just digging out. Despite the bright sunny day, 28 inches of ice is out there under the snow.

Early this winter, sixty lake residents submitted their ice-out guesses. Bob Singer and Kirk Larson guessed March 30th. I think they were just hoping for an early spring.

I talked to an excited Cris Dueholm just before the blizzard and she figured with her second-to-last guess at April 27 she was a winner. But I did say *second to last*, didn't I?

The last guess on the 2018 contest list is Cathy Norgard—May 15th.

When I received her guess in early winter I had to chuckle thinking, man, there is no way. That's ten days after fishing opener!

But now I'm not so sure.

Here are a couple of facts from the Boyd ice-out statistics. These back-to-back years have had quite a swing in ice-out dates.

Year	Ice out date
2000	3/25
2001	4/20
2012	3/24
2013	5/9
2017	3/31
2018	????



JOHN HAACK

Hi. I'm a green frog, a true frog, aka *Rana clamitans*, Bone Lake's biggest frog, second only to my cousin *Rana catesbeiana*, the bullfrog, who might still be around here—somewhere.

I live right at the shore of our lake in the shallow water, where tall grass and hard stem bulrush grows. I spend a lot of time here because it can take me four years to come out of that tadpole stage and grow up. I am dependent on this place. Absolutely. Cannot. Live. Anywhere. Else. No kidding.

I am totally aquatic. Always in the water.

You'll know when I'm out there. Glug. You'll hear me. Like a plucked banjo string, way over there—maybe—if there's a spot for me.

See, you're killin' me. With the fertilizer, the pesticides, the lawns all the way to the shore and the shorelines with nothing but rocks.

Let's be friends. Make a place for frogs at your shore and I'll be out there. With my family. Glug. Glug. You just might just get to catch one of us someday—maybe.

That time the turtles hatched

by Karen Engelbretson

Around Memorial Day, the painted turtles and the snappers will leave the water, walk up the shore, dig a hole with their hind flippers, and drop their rubbery eggs. Could be in a sandy spot along the shore, or maybe even in your gravel driveway. If the nest survives predators and other hazards, tiny turtles will emerge just after Labor Day.

You might see a hole where there wasn't one yesterday, maybe with some crumpled shells on the sides. Look closer and tiny sand-coated blobs with feet are moving in there, clawing their way out—maybe twenty or thirty of them. Somehow they know the direction to the lake and they scramble off that way, a few of them dragging their egg sack behind.

In the morning you'll find them bobbing in the water, right along the shore. Their egg sacks are gone and they're about twice the size they were yesterday. Tomorrow they'll be somewhere else. I imagined them out in the lake somewhere power loading aquatic plants and looking for cover from the big fish.

I witnessed this one time. Once, in all the weekends spent at Bone Lake. The kids passed the day coaxing hatchlings to the water, even naming them as I recall, and when a few didn't make it, we grieved their loss. There were contests and invented races to see who'd get to the water first and who would be misdirected to the dock and in need of rescue.

We like to think that we helped those little snappers along into life somehow and that the stars aligned so we had the chance and, that we were lucky. ■



ILLUSTRATION: RACHEL NUSBAUM

Shelter in the storm

by Cris Dueholm

With our late spring and the recent blizzard we experienced, many of our migrating birds have stopped to spend extra time at our house at the south end of Bone Lake.

We have observed unusually large groups of juncos, red winged blackbirds, redpolls, goldfinches, and house and purple finches. This is not uncommon as I have seen it happen before and yes, we will lose some of them. Many dead birds were reported after the storm as they struggled to find food in the late winter snow.

To help them out we've been feeding more cracked corn and grapes or fruits. Those old raisins in the pantry make a special treat for the birds and our discarded Christmas tree works out well for protection from the storm. ■

You are invited to share your Bone Lake nature stories, photos and artwork in the newsletter. Email your submissions to the editor.



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