



# Bone Lake Newsletter

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

FALL 2018

## WATER CLARITY

### Best year ever?

by Phil Foster

This summer's lake clarity may be the best ever—the best in recent history, anyway. The secchi disk readings have averaged about three feet better than the norm. We speculate the improved clarity is due to the late ice out, reduced wind conditions, and the lake remaining stratified much longer. Hopefully, the work property owners have done to reduce waterfront runoff has contributed as well. Unfortunately we do not expect 2018 to be the norm.

We have formed a committee to recommend if aluminum sulfate (alum) should be used in Bone Lake to improve lake clarity by reducing phosphorus loading from sediments. If most years were as good as this year, we would not be doing this investigation. However, as the graph below depicts, the lake's average secchi reading in late summer is 3 to 4 feet; it is in these conditions we occasionally have blue green algae blooms.

On page 3 of this newsletter we further explain the work of the alum committee. If Bone Lake did use alum, our lake clarity is projected to be similar as 2018 in years ahead, particularly during late summer. ■

KAREN ENGELBREYSON

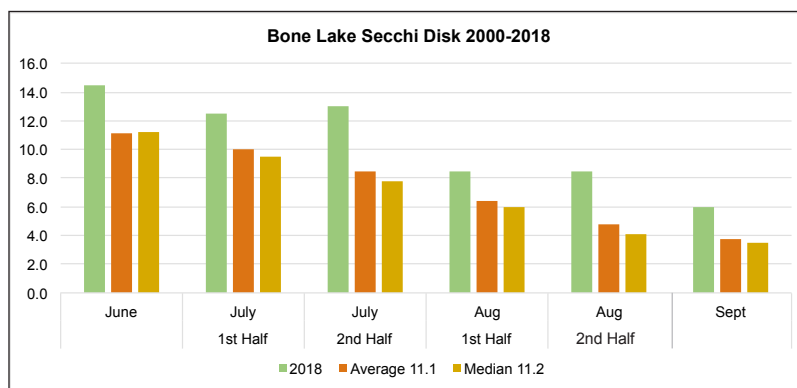


Northern maidenhair fern, *Adiantum pedatum* is found in the shady humus-rich woodlands around Bone Lake. Its lacy fronds extend horizontally from shiny purplish-black stems. Pictured above in early October, maidenhair fern is still green above the fallen autumn leaves.

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[www.bonelakewi.com](http://www.bonelakewi.com)



For more about measuring water clarity, see the Fall, 2017 issue of the *Bone Lake Newsletter* at [bonelakewi.com](http://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.

*Metimnion* (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.

## Dear Bone Lakers,

Your Bone Lake Management District Board of Commissioners met on Saturday October 27, 2018 for the fall meeting. The agenda indicated a busy meeting with several items for discussion.

Bob Boyd reported the fisheries committee was meeting following the commissioners meeting to discuss the Black Crappie Sarcoma Study which is headed by Bob's granddaughter Kayla, a student at the University of Wisconsin Stout in Menominee.

Kayla Boyd is a senior graduating next year and has

taken an interest in this problem that affects some of Bone Lake's crappies. She has received funding for the study from Bone Lake, Pipe Lakes, Wapogassat/Bear Trap Lakes, Beaver Dam Lake and individual citizens, with the possibility of a grant from Polk County Land and Water Resources Dept. We wish her the best going forward.

Another big endeavor of BLMD is the organization of a committee chaired by Phil Foster, to look into the feasibility of treating Bone Lake with alum to retard available phosphorus from lake sediment. The committee will report back to the commissioners and present at the 2019 annual meeting with recommendations and costs, as well as alternatives.

The commissioners have been discussing the by-laws that the District has been operating under since its formation in 1976. Lake Districts are governed by Wisconsin State Statutes, namely Chapter 33 and other state laws. Districts can also adopt certain policies as long as they do not conflict with the statutes. We expect to propose rescinding our outdated by-laws and the adoption of the state statute at the annual meeting next year.

We mailed out property owner surveys last fall and were pleased with the nearly 50 percent rate of return. The survey results and summary are available on our website and summarized in this newsletter.

With the onset of winter, I'm always glad the docks and boats are in and the leaves are raked.

I wish a happy holiday season to all. ■

—Bob Murphy, Chair

### BONE LAKE MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

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##### Lake Management Plan

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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

Chair position open

##### Boating Safety & Buoys

Mike Musial

##### Audit

Mike Belich

Bone Lake water data:  
[dnr.wi.gov/lakes/clmn/](http://dnr.wi.gov/lakes/clmn/)

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**ADVERTISING COORDINATOR** Please consider this paid position. Contact the editor.

## 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](http://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](mailto:enews@bonelake.com) to your address book. Signed up but not getting emails? Contact [karen@kje.design](mailto:karen@kje.design).

**Bone Lakers Facebook group page** More than 850 members are sharing photos, events, recommendations and news about life around the lake. To join, go to [facebook.com/groups/BoneLakers](https://facebook.com/groups/BoneLakers).

# Alum study committee work underway

by Phil Foster

This year we learned that 50 percent of Bone Lake's phosphorus loading is coming from our lake sediments (internal loading). In prior years we had estimated our internal loading to be 15 percent.

This input is the result of a District-commissioned study which also analyzed using aluminum sulfate (alum) to reduce phosphorus loading. We currently have no direct practices in place to reduce phosphorus from internal loading. As you likely know, we do have practices to reduce the phosphorus coming from septic systems, curly leaf pondweed and runoff from lakefront properties and streams.

The study by Bill James, University of Wisconsin Stout, and Cheryl Clemens, Harmony Environmental, along with Steve Schieffer, Ecological Integrity Services, suggests that internal phosphorus loading from bottom sediments may be contributing to water quality impairment in Bone Lake. The study also suggests the expected alum dosing required to control phosphorus loading.

With alum treatments, the secchi disk reading would improve by three feet in late summer/early fall when average readings are in the 3.5- to 4-foot range.

At our annual meeting in August, formation of the alum committee was approved with the mission to recommend using alum with a corresponding implementation plan, or to recommend not to use alum to the BLMD board of commissioners and then the District membership at the 2019 annual meeting.

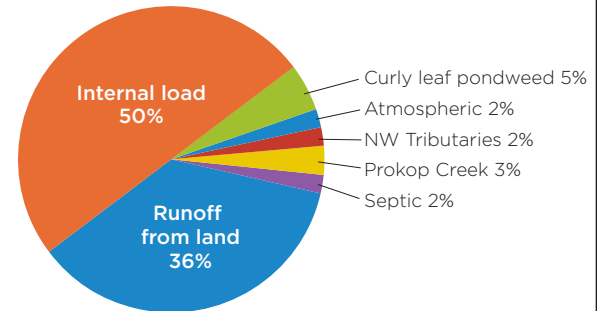
Alum has been proven to be effective in other lakes but it is costly. Depending upon grant funding received, some current estimates indicate it could increase property taxes between 5 to 7 percent the first 10 years and 4 percent the next 10 years.

The alum committee held its first meetings on October 20 and December 1. We also reviewed alternative internal load treatments and came to the conclusion that alum would be the most cost-effective and proven treatment to consider for Bone Lake. Before making a final recommendation, the committee will be looking at financing, alum dosage, and communication strategies.

The alum committee is comprised of Bob Boyd, Michael Downey, Kathy Killeen, Jerry Lutgen, Bob Murphy, Cary Olson, Shelley Rose, Pat Schmidt, John Ukura, Jim Widen, Wayne Wolsey, Cheryl Clemens (moderator) and Phil Foster (chair). ■

**Bone Lake Phosphorus Load by Source**

2015-17 Analysis



Bone Lake's Internal Load Study and the report *What is Alum and How does it Work* by HAB Aquatic Solutions are available at [bonelakewi.com](http://bonelakewi.com).



HAB Aquatic Solutions barge operator stops to explain the systems that apply aluminum sulfate during an alum treatment at Long Lake near Centuria, WI last June. The barge's tanks are filled from tanker trucks parked nearby.



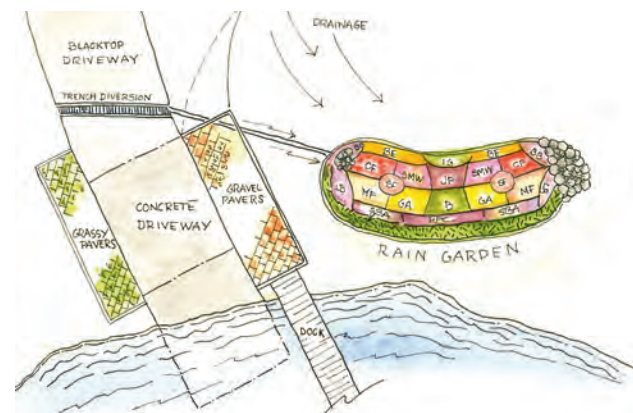
## Waterfront diversion and infiltration practices

*Environmentally friendly lakescaping includes waterfront diversion and infiltration practices. These practices direct runoff to a place where it can soak into the ground and be purified by the soil. The purified water will then enter the lake as clean groundwater. Surface water runoff carries nutrients, sediment and other pollutants to Bone Lake.*

**Rain gardens** are landscaped shallow depressions with loose soil planted with native plants. They are designed to collect roof, path, and driveway runoff while also creating wildlife habitat and natural beauty.



**Rock infiltration** is an excavated pit or trench filled with rock that reduces runoff by storing it underground until it can infiltrate. A French drain is one type of rock infiltration pit. In this installation, runoff from a garage roof is captured in the trench.



Diversion and rain garden design at Bone Lake's north landing.

**Diversions** redirect runoff that would otherwise move downhill into the lake to an area where it can soak into the ground. Diversions may be used in connection with rock infiltration or rain gardens. Diversions include pipes, berms, trenches, and water bars.





**Examples of these diversion and infiltration projects are found at the Bone Lake North Landing Demonstration Site and at other properties around the lake. More information about water diversion and infiltration is found at [healthylakeswi.com](http://healthylakeswi.com).**

**What resources are available to help?** Grants from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources provide free technical assistance and 75 percent of the cost of installation to Bone Lake property owners.

**Why are we concerned about runoff from waterfront property, and what can we do about it?** Waterfront properties (along with the larger watershed) are one of the sources of phosphorus and sediment that flow into our lake causing algae blooms—36 percent of the problem as identified by a 2017 study of multiple sources of phosphorus.

Some properties generate more runoff and carry more phosphorus and sediment—those with steeper slopes, channels of water flow, structures or hard surfaces close to the lake, or a lack of natural vegetation at the shoreline. Your property might have at least one of these characteristics. If it does, consider scheduling a free, no-obligation site visit.

Cheryl Clemens, our environmental consultant, will visit you. Together you'll identify no-cost, low-cost, and grant-funded projects for your property—projects that can improve Bone Lake and your investment in it, too. ■

**To schedule a site visit contact:** Mary Chorewycz at 651-454-9456, or [amchorewycz@yahoo.com](mailto:amchorewycz@yahoo.com)

Sunday, October 21, 2018

Saint Paul Pioneer Press



## Replace 'Landscaping' With 'Lakescaping'

You can't put a price tag on the wonders of nature." This is certainly true if you are hiking in one of our majestic state parks – but when it comes to buying, owning and selling waterfront property, price is definitely a factor.

In fact, the quality of the lake water plays an enormous role in determining the price of a waterfront property. Fortunately, property owners can take steps to improve the quality of their shoreline and the water in their lake.

A 2004 study of lakes in north-central Minnesota by Bemidji State University researchers found that a change in water clarity (increase or decrease) can influence property values by as much as \$400 per foot of shoreline – which translates into \$32,000 on an 80-foot lot. The study also revealed that homebuyers are influenced by water clarity when making purchases and are willing to pay more for a better environment.

A survey of Maine waterfront residents found that water clarity (98%), quality of swimming (87%) and scenic beauty (82%) were the top reasons people gave for selecting the property they purchased.

For the waterfront residents the implications are as clear as ... well ... the pristine waters of a Minnesota lake: Protecting water quality increases property value. Waterfront property owners have a vested interest in protecting their lakes.

According to the EPA, poor lakeshore habitat is one of the greatest contributors to unhealthy lakes. Much of this can be attributed to the standard definition of "curb appeal." For a typical home on a typical city street, curb appeal means a lush green lawn and a landscaped yard with a few artfully arranged trees and shrubs. This approach doesn't necessarily carry over to waterfront property.

Good "lakeshore habitat" should include trees, shrubs and tall grasses growing along the shoreline and overhanging the water. Natural habitat should not be "landscaped" away and replaced by manicured lawns, retaining walls, paved areas and storage sheds. "Lakescaping" provides shelter, habitat and sources of food for fish and wildlife, and helps reduce soil erosion and the amount of pollution caused by runoff from paved surfaces. Instead of increasing the value of a waterfront property, a traditionally landscaped yard

can contribute to the deterioration of water quality, which will decrease property values.

Real estate professionals and the EPA recommend the following practices to preserve and increase the value of waterfront property.

- Protect the native vegetation on your property and educate yourself on environmentally-friendly landscaping techniques.
- Remove harmful invasive species on your property and replace with native vegetation to protect the shoreline from erosion.
- Minimize the size of lawns and preserve natural shoreline vegetation.
- Use herbicides that are labeled for an aquatic site and target only those plants you want to control.
- Leave an area of native plants between the house and the shoreline. Limit the removal of trees and shrubs. Do not mow near the shoreline. Instead, let that area grow wild, or plant with native flowers, grasses or shrubs.
- Confer with other waterfront property owners to share tips and techniques for protecting your shared investment in a healthy lake.

## Bone Lake Habitat Assessment

A new shoreline habitat assessment conducted in 2018 reveals changes over the same study done ten years ago in 2008.

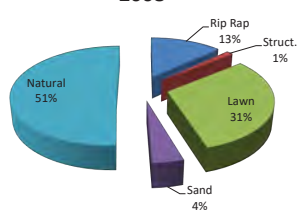
In general the new assessment found less lawn, more rip rap, more natural area.

**Shoreline Composition** is the land area right at the water's edge.

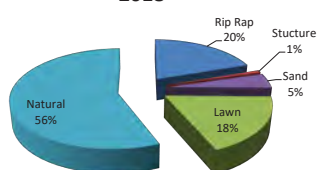
**Shoreland Buffer Composition** is the land 35 feet inland from the water's edge.

Volunteers surveyed the entire 12.5 miles of Bone Lake shoreline to complete the assessment.

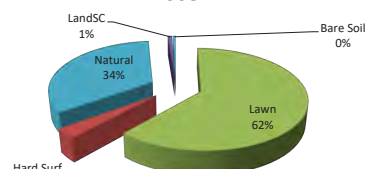
**Bone Lake Shoreline Composition 2008**



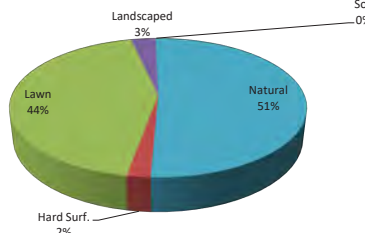
**Bone Lake Shoreline Composition 2018**



**Shoreland Buffer Composition 2008**



**Shoreland Buffer 2018**



## Bone Lake Canada geese census summary

by Karen Engelbretson

On three consecutive days in June this year, volunteers conducted a census around the entire lake to determine the population of Bone Lake resident geese prior to seeking recommendations for control measures from the wildlife division of USDA.

We found hardly any geese.

Anecdotal evidence suggests the low numbers may be due to the April 14 snowstorm having covered early nests so the adults moved on; or control efforts in nearby areas may have included Bone Lake resident geese; or it was just a weird year all around.

Due to the low population count, no control measures are planned for 2019. Another census may be conducted if high numbers of geese are present in the spring, and if volunteers can be recruited to help during the flightless period in early summer.

Our survey was designed by wildlife biologist Chris Loggers using the Avenza Maps app to record the numbers of birds and their location. A final report of the census can be found at [bonelakewi.com](http://bonelakewi.com). ■



Census volunteers looked for geese on land and in the water. Counts were recorded on paper and on the Bone Lake maps created for the Avenza Maps app.

Census volunteers, clockwise from top: Phil Foster, Sue Foster, Bob Boyd, Cris Dueholm, Noah Boyd, Joey Boyd. Not pictured: Wayne Wolsey, Karen Engelbretson.



KAREN ENGELBRETSON



## AIS PREVENTION

### Clean Boats Clean Waters

In 2018 staff in the CBCW program on Bone Lake contacted 1,415 people at the north and south landings combined. They inspected 689 watercraft, handed out aquatic invasive species information and educated boaters about AIS.



### Aquatic Invasives



Another adult zebra mussel was discovered attached to a dock on Deer Lake.

We would like all Bone lake residents to inspect their boat hoists and docks now that they are pulled out of the lake for the season. If you find what you suspect

is a Zebra Mussel put it in a zip lock bag with some water and record where it was found, then contact one of the BLMD commissioners.

Thanks go out to these volunteers who have installed zebra mussel monitoring plate samplers on their docks.

For the last two years they have checked them during the summer for any presence of zebra mussels. So far none have been found.

Cris and Lyn Dueholm  
Karen Engelbretson  
Phil and Sue Foster  
Gail Heller  
Andrea and Greg Lopnow  
Dick and Sally Mackie  
Tony Mann  
Kent and Debbie Prusak  
Don and Colleen Rivers  
Jeanne Voight  
Jim and Kathie Widen

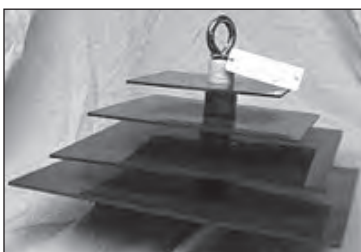


Plate sampler

### Landing camera data

The north and south boat landing cameras on Bone Lake this year recorded 2,928 watercraft launches.

There were 14 possible suspect AIS violations of which eight were reported to the Polk County sheriff's office.

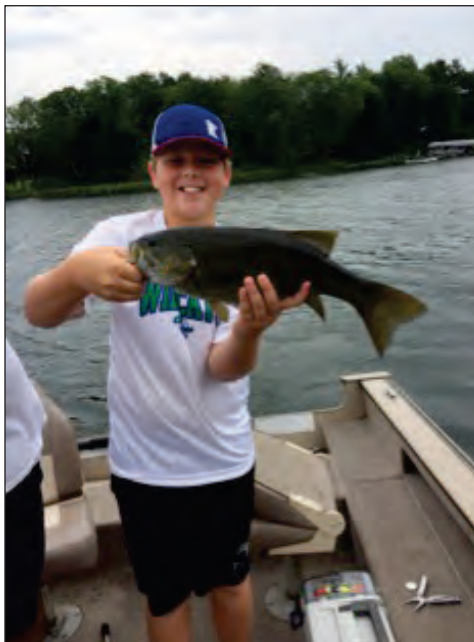
The cameras are valuable tools in educating boaters about making sure that they check their watercraft for any potential AIS.

### CLEAN. DRAIN. DRY.

To review invasive species prevention steps, go to [dnr.wi.gov/topic/Invasives/prevention.html](http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/Invasives/prevention.html)

## FISHERIES

Danny Lachenmayer caught this trophy 19½-inch smallmouth bass while fishing on Bone lake this summer. Rumor has it that this is the largest smallmouth bass caught on Bone lake in many years. Congratulations Danny!



Check out this huge musky and the smiling face on fisherman and Bone lake resident Parker Witt. He caught this fifty-inch beauty this summer using a bucktail that was a gift from his fishing buddy Christen Dueholm.



## Parcel mapping

Parcel mapping is now available for all properties in the Bone Lake Management District.

This property mapping aids in lot line placement, sanitary placement, 911 responses, property ownership, property address, primary mailing address and a host of other important areas.

You can access the tool at [polkcowi.wgxtreme.com](http://polkcowi.wgxtreme.com).

The Bone Lake Management District has funded this feature for your collective use.

## Change of address?

If you need to update your address for the *Bone Lake Newsletter* or for property tax mailings, please contact the Polk County Treasurer's office at 715-485-9255.

Occasionally the District receives address change requests but we do not have the authority to change your mailing address.

The District does not maintain its own mailing list, rather we rely on Polk County property records for our mailings.

## Miss the annual meeting?

Minutes of the BLMD annual meeting and of all District commissioner meetings can be found at [bonelakewi.com/administration](http://bonelakewi.com/administration). Meeting minutes include presentations, financials and other reports.

# Bone Lake Survey results

A big thank to those who responded to the Bone Lake Property Owner Survey in September. We had a 47 percent response rate which was great—a total of 262 responses. The survey results and a comparison to prior years is available at [bonelakewi.com](http://bonelakewi.com). Some key takeaways include the following:

### Ownership and usage

- 60 percent of properties are used year round.
- 31 percent of properties are used only on weekends/holidays.
- 29 percent are year round residences with 8 percent of these snowbirds.
- 39 percent are seasonal usage only.
- 72 percent are highly satisfied with Bone Lake property ownership—up from 66 percent in 2013.

### Concerns

- Preventing new invasive species continues as the number one concern and excess aquatic plant growth the number two concern.
- 58 percent are concerned with unsafe boating and/or PWC safety, up from 47 percent in 2013.
- 71 percent believe we should increase boater education on regulations and 68 percent regarding loud music.
- 78 percent believe we should consider additional ways to improve water clarity in the late summer.
- 51 percent are annoyed by Canada geese.
- 53 percent think the District should take measures to control the goose population but 34 percent of those respondents would not choose to grow tall/native shoreline vegetation to keep geese away from their shore.

### Communications

- This newsletter is the most popular choice for receiving information (78 percent), followed by email (41 percent), website (27 percent), Bone Lakers Facebook group (26 percent) and annual meeting (23 percent).
- More owners are aware of waterfront reduction practices and more have been installed.
- 86 percent support the formation of the Bone Lake alum committee.

The District board will be reviewing these responses and developing appropriate actions where needed. Thanks again to those who participated in the survey. ■

**DON'T FORGET** **Septic cost share dollars now up to \$2500.** If you have a failing or 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. Failing septic systems can contribute phosphorus and other nutrients into groundwater that enters Bone Lake.

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

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



# It's gone!

by Cris Dueholm

**E**agle nest No. 1 on the east side of the lake, 1/4 mile north of Fox Creek fell from its tall white pine on July 12, 2018, taking down many of the limbs beneath it.

The nest was built on a tripod of supportive branches one of which died, causing the nest to fall. It was 6-9 feet across, with a depth of six feet. Some of the branches were as thick as a child's arm. I have read that nests like this can weigh up to a ton!

## Location, location, location

A nesting pair of eagles will choose a sturdy tree that provides height and protection. Together they collect sticks and branches to weave and rearrange among the branches at the top of the tree.

When it comes time to lay eggs the pair will get grasses, reeds, straw, or corn stalks to fill what is called an egg bowl. They replenish this soft material many times while nesting. I often watched them out in the fields behind us picking up corn stalks.

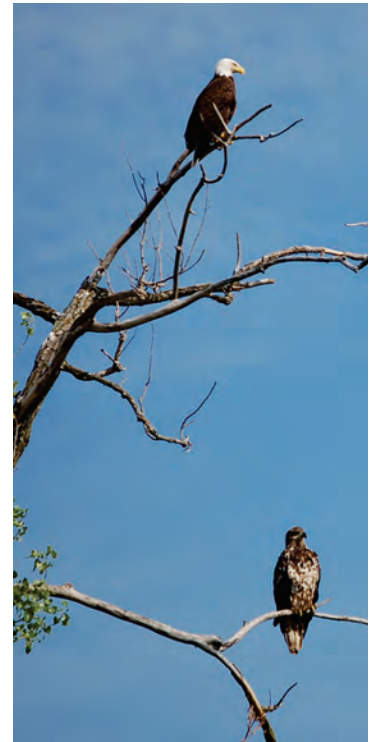
So what was in this nest when it fell? According to the property owners they found large sticks of course, twine, bones from fish and animals, colored ski rope, turtles and teeth! They expressed their joy in this great scientific

experiment as they sifted thru the debris wondering where it came from, and how those birds got that up there!

The last juvenile fledged July 4th. I heard a lot of yelling through September as it didn't have a nest to go to and followed its parents around, begging for food!

## What will happen now?

They say eagles will stay in their preferred territory and rebuild. Since they're creatures of habit they have been together more this fall and I have seen them fly back to "their" tree or nearby trees. I haven't seen any large branches start to gather yet but once that happens it should only take a week or two before they begin to lay their eggs—usually at the end of January. I just hope a new nest will be in an area I'll be able to observe as it helps make my winter go by just a little faster! ■



Adult and juvenile perched above Bald Eagle Island, 2018

## Native Planting Fall Maintenance

**M**any homeowners around Bone Lake have planted native plants along the shoreline to provide habitat, create natural beauty, and reduce runoff from their properties. With the growing season over, fall maintenance projects are upon us. For these native plantings, maintenance in the fall is simple.

**Watering and Weeding.** If you have a contract through the Bone Lake Healthy Lakes program, you'll recall that during the growing season, the most important tasks to encourage growth of native plants are 1) to water following initial planting and during periods of drought and 2) to weed out non-native plants. If you have completed these steps, there is little to do in the fall.

**Mulch.** Wood or leaf mulch serves to conserve moisture and prevent the growth of weeds. If you installed your planting a couple of years ago, it may be time to replenish your mulch. Fall leaves are a great choice. Unlike wood mulch which can use up the nutrients your plants need to grow as it decomposes, decomposing leaves can provide a slowly released boost of nutrients for native plant growth. If you have oak leaves, run over them with a mower prior to using them for mulch. They are very resistant to decay. Do not pile leaves any deeper than 4 inches. Excess leaves should be removed from your yard or composted away from the lake.

**Trimming Vegetation.** While you can trim or mow growth of non-woody vegetation to a height of 3 or 4 inches (all but trees and shrubs), we recommend you leave the stems and seed heads in place over the winter to provide wildlife cover and food. It is ideal to trim dead growth in the spring just as new growth emerges. Either leave the dead plant material in place to serve as mulch, or remove it from the lakeshore. Do remove all seed heads of weedy, non-native species to discourage their spread.

**Fencing.** If you have a lot of deer nearby, you will want to consider fencing around newly planted trees and shrubs to prevent browsing by rabbits, deer, and other animals.

### Eagle Nest # 1

East side, 1/4 mile north of  
Fox Creek, White pine  
N 45.50721, W 092.37470



## SOCIAL ACTIVITIES AND VOLUNTEERS

We had some wonderful displays in our Fourth of July boat parade, even though it was a wet and blustery day. Taking first place and winner of the four Vikings/Packers tickets was *Ol' Log CaBone* with second place going to *Yellowbone National Park*.



More photos of the Fourth of July boat parade as well as the May Spring Social can be found at the Wilkins Facebook page.

### Social committee is in need of more volunteers.

The social committee has done a great job over the past fifteen years providing opportunities for folks to get together all around the lake. Recent activities have included a spring social at Wilkins, the boat parade and picnic, sunken island party and the occasional Oktoberfest.

A big thanks to Sherri and Bob Singer and Lisa and Dave Smith who are now departing. We'll miss their contributions to all the fun.

If you're interested in participating with the social committee or would like to learn more, please call or text Phil Foster at 715-553-0719.



KIM FUDALI

Our thanks go out to the Owens family for another awesome Fourth of July fireworks display at the south end of Bone Lake.

This year's volunteer appreciation at the August annual meeting went out to Bob Murphy, Tim Laughlin, Jan and Bill Jungbauer, and, not pictured, Dick Boss. Each received a ceramic platter crafted with an outline of Bone Lake. Thank you for your contributions to our lake.



**HACKS PUB**  
Est. 1993

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