



# ON THE WATERFRONT

The newsletter of the  
**WASHBURN COUNTY LAKES & RIVERS ASSOCIATION, INC.**  
**PROMOTING THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND RESPONSIBLE USE OF  
 WASHBURN COUNTY WATERS, SHORELAND AND WILDLIFE RESOURCES.**

## Spring 2014 WCLRA #34

IN THIS ISSUE	PAGE
President's Comments	1
Good Plant	2
Escargot Recipe	2
Wild Rice Recipe	2
WCLRA Board of Director	3
WCLRA Stewardship	3
Birchwood H.S.C.C.	4
Government & Environment Report	4-5
New WCLRA Website	5
New WCLRA Director	6
Minong Town Lakes Fair	6
Wisconsin Conservation Congress	6-7
Land Donation	7
Calendar of Events	7
Waterfront Survey	8
Fish Stocking	8-9
Kathy Bartilson article	9

WCLRA provides copies of its *On The Waterfront* newsletter to individual members and to the officers of member associations. If your association has recently had elections, please make us aware of the address changes. Contact Fred Blake at 715-469-3228 or by email at [blakelake@centurytel.net](mailto:blakelake@centurytel.net)

## PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS

Wetlands - what I know about them isn't much. During my career as a civil engineering consultant, I had numerous encounters with wetlands and intentionally avoided them with my projects at all costs. It wasn't just the State regulations. For construction, wetlands are impractical, and uneconomical, and they can swallow construction equipment.

Across the road from our home, about 150 ft. distant, is an approximately 2-acre wetland. In the 16 years we have lived here, I have become more and more aware of and fascinated with its flora and fauna. The Spring Peepers are deafening, but we can hardly wait for them to become active every spring. There are several clusters of Marsh Marigolds (I can't reach them without hip boots) that are just beautiful with bright yellow blossoms.

I would love to wade around in there to explore, but truthfully, I am afraid to try. Also, I don't want to disturb it. The more I walk past it on my daily walks, the more I am drawn to stop, listen, and observe. I find I want to learn more about wetlands, the very places that I had so actively tried to avoid.

According to the Wisconsin Wetlands Association, over 17 percent of Washburn County is wetlands identified as over 5 acres each. That would not include smaller wetlands similar to the one across our road. Conservatively, Washburn County has over 100,000 acres of wetland. One of our board members casually remarked to me that building across from a wetland could be the new "lake front" property.

The topic of our August 23, 2014 Annual General Meeting will be Wetlands. **MARK YOUR CALENDAR.** More details will be announced roughly a month prior to the scheduled meeting.

Craig Walkey, President

## KNOW THE WETLAND NATIVE PLANTS

### Common Arrowhead:



Artist: Carol Watkins,  
provided by the Wisconsin Lakes Partnership

How to identify common arrowhead:

- \* Arrowhead shaped leaves. Different sub-species have “arrowheads” of various sizes and widths.
- \* The erect flower stem has whorls of three-petaled white male flowers with at the top and mounded green female flowers below.
- \* Leaves grow from tuber-tipped rhizomes rooted in the soil.
- \*The female flower produces a globe-shaped head packed with dozens of nutlets or seeds (to the right of the leaf in the drawing).

#### **Common arrowheads provide:**

- \* Seeds and high-energy tubers for waterfowl during migration.
- \* Tubers and leaves for muskrats, beavers and porcupines.
- \* Shade and shelter for young fish among dense beds.

**The common arrowhead**, also known as the broad-leaf arrowhead, duck potato, or wapota, is a native plant common in Wisconsin and most of the United States.

- \*It is one of the highest value aquatic plants for wildlife. It can grow in large, dense colonies.
- \*It is found in shallow waters of wetlands, lakes, ponds, streams, and marshes.
- \*Its tubers are edible and be boiled or baked like potatoes.
- \* It is effective in restored wetlands designed for water quality improvement and it removes phosphorus from sediments.
- \* It is best to just enjoy them and let them grow.

Learn more about common arrowheads and other native aquatic plants in *Through the Looking Glass: A Field Guide to Aquatic Plants*, Wisconsin Lakes

Partnership, 1997. Contact: UWEX Lake Program, College of Natural Resources, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, 715-346-2116, [www.uwsp.edu/cnr/uwexlakes/publications](http://www.uwsp.edu/cnr/uwexlakes/publications).

**Sources:** *Through the Looking Glass: A Field Guide to Aquatic Plants*, Wisconsin Lakes Partnership, 1997; DNR publication:

# FH-207-97.

Missouri Botanical Garden website.USGS Northern Prairie Wildlife Research Center website: Wetland Plants and Plant Communities of Minnesota and Wisconsin

### **ESCARGOT, AIS Style**

By Ed Fischer

My Chinese Mystery Snails Recipe: Last year while lunching with the guys somebody was complaining about the invasive snails they have in their lake. I made the wisecrack response, “I’ll bet you could eat them.” A few days later I was presented with a Ziplock bag full of snails. It was put up or shut up time. First I made a reasonably positive identification that they were in fact “Chinese Mystery Snails.” Then I poured the snails into a plastic bucket and changed the water every day for four days. The amount of sand produced was amazing. Then I boiled the snails for about 10 minutes, shelled them with a chop stick, removed the connecting tissue and sautéed them in butter and garlic for a couple of minutes. They have the texture of scallops. They have a butter and garlic flavor. I would do this again but have no such snails in my lake.

### **WILD RICE OF THE NORTH**

By John Haack

1 Cup of uncooked wild rice  
1 Can (8 Oz) of mushroom stems and pieces, drained  
1/4 Cup Butter or Margarine  
2 1/2 Cups of chicken broth  
1/3 Cup slivered almonds  
(I also like to throw in a handful of dried cranberries)  
4 Tablespoons chopped chives or green onions

Wash and drain the rice very well. Melt butter in large skillet. Add almonds, chives and mushrooms; cook and stir until almonds are golden brown, about 20 minutes. Add the rice and stir for the last 5 minutes.

Heat oven to 325. Pour rice mixture into un-greased 1 ½ quart casserole. Heat chicken broth to boiling; stir into rice mixture. Cover tightly; bake about 1 ½ hours or until all liquid is absorbed and the rice is tender and fluffy

*Please note: If using natural wild rice harvested from area lakes, the cooking time is considerably shorter.*

## THE BOARD

**Craig Walkey**, President  
715-354-7386  
[cwalkey@centurytel.net](mailto:cwalkey@centurytel.net)

**Barb Robinson**, Vice President  
715-781-7737  
[ribaldness@gmail.com](mailto:ribaldness@gmail.com)

**Patricia Shifferd**, Secretary  
715-466-5867  
[patriciashifferd@gmail.com](mailto:patriciashifferd@gmail.com)

**Cathie Erickson**, Treasurer  
715-865-4406  
[CathieErickson@aol.com](mailto:CathieErickson@aol.com)

**Fred Blake**, Director  
715-469-3228  
[blakelake@centurytel.net](mailto:blakelake@centurytel.net)

**Ron Brown**, Director  
715-466-4025  
[ronjeannebrown@centurytel.net](mailto:ronjeannebrown@centurytel.net)

**Ed Fischer**, Director  
715-635-7704  
[efischer812@gmail.com](mailto:efischer812@gmail.com)

**Wayne Sabatke**, Director  
715-354-7003  
[sabatke.wayne@gmail.com](mailto:sabatke.wayne@gmail.com)

**Charlotte Shover**, Director  
715-469-3569  
[cshover@lightblast.net](mailto:cshover@lightblast.net)

**Vold, David**, Director  
715-635-2034  
[natland2002@yahoo.com](mailto:natland2002@yahoo.com)

### WEB SITE

[www.wclra.org](http://www.wclra.org)

### ADVISORS

#### UWEX

Beverly Stencel  
John Haack

#### Planning, Land & Water

**Resource Management** (including  
AIS)

Lisa Burns

#### DNR

Kathy Bartilson

#### Citizen Lake Monitoring (DNR)

Kris Larsen

#### Conservation Wardens

Dave Swanson  
Jon Hagen

#### Zoning Administration

Web Macomber

## WCLRA WINS STATEWIDE AWARD

By Cathie Erickson

At the 2014 Wisconsin Lakes Convention in Stevens Point, WCLRA was awarded the Lake Stewardship Award in the category for organizations representing multiple lakes. The award was given by the Wisconsin Lakes Partnership which comprises the Wisconsin Lakes association, WDNR, and University of Wisconsin Extension. In announcing the award, Wisconsin Lakes noted that WCLRA represents 25 lake and river organizations and roughly 350 individual members who value the 964 lakes and roughly 700 miles of rivers and streams in our county. They cited the following specific accomplishments:

- \* Establishing the Youth Environmental Stewardship (YES) program in cooperation with Hunt Hill Audubon Sanctuary and the Long Lake Preservation Association.

- \* Obtaining a WDNR grant and sponsored a county-wide "Learn About Your Lakes" programs which were coordinated by the UWEX in 2011.

- \* Providing ongoing support for Washburn County's AIS program.

- \* Participation in organizing the Northwest Wisconsin Lakes Convention.

- \* Regular monitoring and comments on both county and state governmental actions.

- \* An outreach program that provides new shoreland owners a free 1-year membership.

- \* Playing a lead role in the 2009 designation of the wild stretches the Totogatic River as Wisconsin's fifth Wild River.

- \* Recognizing that one of the best ways to protect the water is with natural shorelands and preserving 2.5 miles of pristine forested shoreland along the Totogatic River with help from former owners Craig Solum and Terry Larsen, a WDNR Stewardship Grant and The Conservation Fund. That land has been donated to the WDNR for continued protection of the watershed.

- \* Working to protect the 125 acres donated by Austen Cargill. See article on page 7 of this newsletter.

Representing WCLRA at the award ceremony were current president Craig Walkey and past presidents Fred Blake and Cathie Erickson. In accepting the award, Craig said that two of the reasons for our success are the diversity of our Board and the fact that we meet every month. Cathie commented that our success is also due to the outstanding support we receive from local contacts at the WDNR, UW Extension, and Washburn County. Fred extended his congratulations to those in attendance from all over the state who work hard to protect Wisconsin's waters.

WCLRA is extremely gratified by this recognition. We thank our members, both associations and individuals, for their support in our efforts to preserve and protect Washburn County's water resources.



## BIRCHWOOD HIGH SCHOOL CONSERVATION CLUB

By Craig Walkey

Many of us ask, "What can I do to give back to my community and also help the environment?". In the case of the 20-member Birchwood High School Conservation Club, they have been doing just that through fund raisers, volunteering and donations. The goals of this organization are: to improve the environment, to provide scholarships for students, and to educate students at Birchwood Schools about Wisconsin's natural resources.

In the past, the students organized a group fishing day and donated the entire cleaned-and-packaged catch to the Birchwood Food Pantry, teamed up with Rice Lake High School Conservation club to assist WDNR in Washburn county trout stocking efforts, and awarded two \$500 scholarships to graduating Birchwood seniors annually. They even purchased and installed a solar aerator on a remote lake. The lake was stocked with 200 extended-growth trout under the direction of retired DNR Fisheries Biologist Larry Dammon.

This year the club donated \$1000 to the Big Chetac and Birch Lakes Association (BCABLA) for conservation purposes. The money will be used to reintroduce native plants to Big Chetac Lake. The students will also be involved in the actual planting. Through the 3-1 matching WDNR grant, the \$1000 donated will enable the BCABLA to spend \$4000 purchasing and placing the native plants in the summer of 2015. Both the money and the students' volunteer time will be used to offset the matching 25%. The native plants will help to repopulate the native species decimated by Curley Pondweed in recent years.



To fund these endeavors, the students collected donated deer hides at 4 local business, sold raffle tickets and sold deer hide gloves. These activities are providing the students with real life learning as well as providing a major contribution to the community. The picture below shows the Birchwood High School Conservation Club presenting the check to the BCABLA.

## GOVERNMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE REPORT

By Fred Blake

The WCLRA Government & Environment Committee has been monitoring several areas of interest and/or involvement both in the Wisconsin legislature and here in Washburn County.

**LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITY:** Several proposed pieces of legislation had potentially significant implications for the preservation water resources.

**Senate Bill 349:** This bill, introduced in late 2013, proposed to limit or eliminate the power of local government to regulate the environmental impacts of mining operations. The legislation addressed frac sand mining but was not limited to that activity. It proposed to eliminate local government's ability to regulate, or even monitor, such things as water quality, water quantity, air quality, use of explosives and road maintenance contracts. The Wisconsin Supreme Court in February 2012, in the case of *Zwiefelhofer v. Town of Cooks Valley*, 338 Wis. 2d 488, upheld the right of towns to regulate nonmetallic mines, in particular industrial frac sand mines and processing plants, to protect the public health and safety of their towns.

SB349 would effectively allow mining interests to operate without being held responsible for environmental damage inflicted on the local area and its residents. Local governments are limited in the scope of their regulatory authority, but even town government is empowered to regulate matters of public health, safety and welfare. This bill would have removed regulatory tools from the hands of those who would be most directly affected by environmentally unsound mining practices.

The outcry from the environmental community has been loud. On Conservation Lobby Day, more than 250 citizens spoke out against this bill and other future bills with similar intent. SB349 was not acted upon by either house during the legislative session and is, therefore, considered "dead" ... for now. It will likely be reintroduced in the next session.

**Senate Bill 632 (Assembly Bill 816):** These proposed bills would allow mining companies to avoid future mining related ordinances that are adopted before a hypothetical mine even begins pursuing a permit. Further, these bills would invalidate existing ordinances which regulate all aspects of mining operations at mine sites, processing plants and loading facilities.

Again, the outcry from those concerned with the environment was loud and immediate. SB632, languished in committee. As it was not acted upon during the session, it (like SB349) is dead for the present. However, no one will be surprised if it is reintroduced during the next legislative session.

*Continued on page 5*

**Senate Bill 302 (Assembly Bill 679):** Introduced in late 2013, SB302/AB679 Has been described as "High Capacity Well permitting Made Easy". It would diminish the authority of DNR over permitting and monitoring high capacity wells in a number of ways including, but not limited to, a) limiting the definition of a high capacity well, b) limiting the instances in which DNR can use **its own** environmental review process and c) limiting DNR's administrative rule making related to high capacity wells. Limitations on high capacity wells are extremely important in cases where groundwater depletion impacts surface water resources.

In the 2011 Wisconsin State Supreme Court Lake Beulah decision (Lake Beulah Management District v. DNR, 2011 WI 54), the court unanimously held that "*.. the DNR has the authority and general duty to consider whether a proposed high capacity well may harm waters of the state...*". SB302 essentially attempts to overturn the Lake Beulah Supreme Court decision. That decision confirmed that the DNR has the duty to consider the effects of high capacity wells where groundwater depletion impacts surface water resources.

It is interesting to note that, in two cases above, pieces of proposed legislation would effectively overturn Wisconsin Supreme Court decisions and that both would tend to dramatically diminish environmental protections at the public expense.

Consistent with its mission to protect water resources, WCLRA has opposed these pieces of legislation and has provided formal statements to the appropriate agencies and individuals.

**WASHBURN COUNTY ACTIVITY:**

**Land Donation and Disposition:** Last fall, WCLRA received and gratefully accepted an unrestricted donation of 125 acres of land in the town of Crystal from Austen Cargill .

As WCLRA has no wish to own and manage land on a long term basis, we investigated ways of placing the land with an agency which would manage it in an environmentally sound manner and keep it available for public use.

On March 18, 2014, the Washburn County Board of Supervisors agreed to purchase the land from us for a price well below its appraised value and add it to the Washburn County Forest inventory. The funding derived from the sale will go into WCLRA projects consistent with the mission of our organization. More detail can be found on page 7 of this issue.

**Washburn County Non-Metallic Mine:** Several months ago, we became aware that the Washburn County Highway Department was requesting a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to open a pit to mine trap rock for road projects. The pit area was roughly 4 miles east of Minong on highway 77 on County Forest land. The pit location is immediately adjacent to a very large wetland area which is the source of both Sink Creek and Little Frog Creek and we felt concern for the welfare of those water resources.

We learned through Barry Nielsen, a retired Washburn County Forest employee, that trap rock was present in a number of other locations in the area. These alternate sites are environmentally better suited pit area might be available.

On February 25, 2014, the Washburn County Zoning Committee met to consider the CUP application. We presented a letter asking only that the decision of the CUP be postponed until other locations for the pit could be evaluated. The committee elected not to postpone their decision and approved the CUP application. However, the applicants (Jon Johnson of the Highway Department and Mike Peterson of the Forestry Department) both agreed that alternate sites should be examined. They committed to doing so as soon as the "glaciers" recede and spring arrives. If a workable alternate site is identified, a separate CUP application will be filed for that alternate site.

Both Mr. Johnson and Mr. Peterson are mindful of the environmental concerns and we believe that the project will be handled carefully with those concerns in mind.

**NEW WCLRA WEBSITE**

By Barb Robinson

This past summer the WCLRA Communications Committee put together a committee to look at getting funding for the design and implementation of a new website. The grant application was submitted and approved. This grant is a 3-1 matching grant so all time spent by the committee on it's development will help to offset the 25% match.

Over the winter the committee met several times to determine what was needed in the new design, how much it would cost and what the time frame would be. The committee then approached several outside web service providers to submit proposals based on what the committee had decided they wanted in the web site. A web service provider was chosen.

The committee is currently working with the service provider to create a website that has much improved functionality, is easy to up date, and is user friendly. Once the website has been tested and approved by the board of directors, WCLRA members will be notified that the new website is up and running. It is expected that the website will be ready by the WCLRA Annual General Meeting in August. Stay tuned.

## MINONG TOWN LAKES FAIR - JULY 26

By Debbie Loza

The 3<sup>rd</sup> hosting of the highly successful Minong Town Lakes Fair will be on Sat., July 26, 2014, from 9:00 -3:00 at the Town Hall grounds. The theme for this year will be plant life in and around the lakes. There will be a series of presentations in the new pavilion about plant diversity, shoreline health, wild rice, and fire protection. These will lead up to the keynote speaker, Susan Knight (U. of W.), talking about "The Good Plants".

The Fair will have ongoing educational kids' activities, a FREE lunch, interesting exhibitors' displays, and local vendors' booths. You'll be able to see a live owl up close, learn how to become a loon ranger, and more! There will also be a 50-50 raffle with great prizes awarded at the end of the pavilion presentations.

Feedback from the previous Fairs indicates that anyone in the area on July 26 would experience a day of fun, education, and value by planning to attend!

This Educational Fair is made possible by major financial support from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and the Realtors Association of Northwestern Wisconsin, along with contributions from local businesses. We rely entirely on volunteer help and encourage you to contact Barb Robinson , [ribaldness@gmail.com](mailto:ribaldness@gmail.com) if you are interested in helping out.

## NEW DIRECTOR FOR WCLRA

By Barb Robinson

At the March 21, 2014 WCLRA monthly Board of Directors meeting, Dave Vold, was appointed to fill the vacant seat created by the resignation of Tony Tubbs. Tony, one of our founding members, no longer lives in the area full time and is already greatly missed.

Dave Vold, a WCLRA member, had expressed an interest in being considered for a board position. His career encompassed 34 years with the NRCS and 13 years as the Lakes Coordinator for the City of Shell Lake. The WCLRA bylaws allow the board to appoint a new director and, if there is a viable candidate, it is generally preferable to do so rather than leave a board position vacant for an extended period. Dave will serve the board until the end of Tony's term at the next Annual General Meeting (AGM) in August, 2014. At that time, he will be a candidate for election to a full two-year term by the WCLRA membership. Our current board membership is President Craig Walkey, Vice President Barb Robinson, Secretary Pat Shifferd, Treasurer Cathie Erickson, Charlotte Shover, Fred Blake, Ed Fischer, Wayne Sabatke, and Dave Vold.

Another board vacancy was created by the resignation of Joan Quenan. She also no longer lives in the area and we miss her presence and contributions. If you have an interest in this position, contact one of the above directors or contact me directly at 715-781-7737 or [ribaldness@gmail.com](mailto:ribaldness@gmail.com). It would be useful

for any potential candidate to attend a board meeting or two to become familiar with the board and its activities.

Each of the current board members brings a diverse background. Not all of us have advanced college degrees. Not all of us have a science or technical background. Not all of us call Washburn County home. What we all do have is a passion for the protection and preservation of the water resources in Washburn County. . With new technology we don't all have to be sitting in the same room at a board meeting. It is not unusual to have one or more of the directors participating by phone. Filling a vacant seat until the next AGM often proves to be a useful introductory period for both the new director and the rest of the board.

## WISCONSIN CONSERVATION CONGRESS

By Larry Damman

WCC liaison to WCLRA

What is the Wisconsin Conservation Congress (WCC)? Founded in 1934 by no less than Aldo Leopold, the WCC is a citizen organization with statutory responsibility to serve in an advisory capacity on all matters under the jurisdiction of the Natural Resources Board. No other state has anything like it.

The most well-known WCC activity is the spring hearing. All counties hold simultaneous hearings at 7:00 pm on the 2nd Monday of April. This year's congress was held on April 14. Washburn County met at Spooner High School auditorium. At the congress, county delegates are elected. This is also an opportunity for citizens to voice their opinion on various statewide or local resource issues. Citizens can then vote them. In addition, any citizen may submit a resolution to initiate consideration of a rule or policy change. Most of the questions are related to hunting and fishing like bag limits, season dates and zone boundary changes. There are also state park, invasive species, lake access, contaminants, and environmental education policy type issues as well. More about the WCC and a list of this year's questions can be found at [www.http://dnr.wi.gov/about/wcc/](http://dnr.wi.gov/about/wcc/). Results for this year's Congress can be found at: [www.http://dnr.wi.gov/about/wcc/Documents/spring\\_hearing/2014/2014\\_CountyResults](http://dnr.wi.gov/about/wcc/Documents/spring_hearing/2014/2014_CountyResults) .

Each of the 72 counties has 5 elected delegates for a statewide total of 360. Based on their interests and knowledge, delegates are then assigned to serve on study committees covering a broad range of issues.

To run or vote for county delegates you must be 18 and reside in that county. However, there are no age or residency requirements to participate and vote on the hearing questions. There are basically two types of questions: advisory and rule change. The most important ones, in my opinion, are the advisory ones. They tend to steer future policy making by questioning the status quo. If the public vote suggests that something needs to be changed, WCC study committees and DNR obtain appropriate scientific data, review legal issues and get additional public input on options. The

## Wisconsin Conservation Congress.....continued from page 6

These advisory questions, which include the resolution question process, can help shape legislative action on issues beyond the authority of the Natural Resource Board. Otherwise at some point, perhaps a few years later the issue comes back as final rule change proposal at a spring hearing. Technically all hearing votes are advisory as the Natural Resource Board, Legislature or Governor could override them. However, a favorable vote on a rule change proposal means it will almost certainly be on the books the next year. Most rule change proposals fly through because the real work was done before hand.

The WCC's latest challenge under new legislation will be to help coordinate local input on county based deer management initiatives including antlerless permit numbers on public and private lands for the 2015 season.

### LAND DONATION

By Fred Blake and Wayne Sabatke

There are times when good fortune smiles on us. We can take no credit for what happens. We can only be grateful for it. This is one of those times for WCLRA.

In late June of 2013, we received notification that Austen Cargill wished to make an unrestricted donation of a 125acre parcel of wild land to WCLRA. This property is located in the Town of Crystal, north of state highway 70 in Washburn County.

In early July, Wayne Sabatke, representing WCLRA, met with Mr. Cargill and explored the property. Two trout streams, Potato Creek and Westenberg Creek, run through it and join at its westerly end. Wetland areas surround the trout streams with smaller areas of high ground away from the water courses.

Wayne brought his findings to the WCLRA Board of Directors in mid-July. WCLRA is not structured to own or manage land long term and discussion centered on how we might get the property into the hands of an agency which would a) manage it in an environmentally sound manner and b) keep it available for public use. Mr. Cargill was notified that we would gratefully accept his donation, and in late October 2013, WCLRA formally accepted title.

Ed Fischer and Wayne Sabatke were then appointed to explore options available for disposition of the donated property. The apparent agency options were WDNR and Washburn County, the latter for possible inclusion in the county forestry inventory. Because the donation was unrestricted, sale to a private party would also have been an option, but the property would not then have been open for public use. The WCLRA board preferred an option which would be consistent with its goals and mission.

After meetings with both WDNR and Washburn County Forestry, the WCLRA Board opted to initially approach Washburn County Forestry. With the help of Mike Peterson, Washburn County

Forest Administrator, a plan was devised which would offer to sell the property to Washburn County at a bargain price (roughly 15% of its appraised value). The remaining 85% would be a gift eligible for use as matching funds for other grants proposed by Washburn County Forestry. The funds received by WCLRA will be used for future projects.

At their November 15, 2013 meeting, the WCLRA Board approved the general proposal. Over the next two months, the details of the proposal to be presented to the Washburn County Board were finalized. In January of this year, the finalized resolution offering to sell the property to Washburn County was approved by the Washburn County Forestry Committee.

At the regular monthly meeting of the Washburn County Board of Supervisors on March 18, 2014, the purchase resolution was presented by Mike Peterson and "Skip" Fiedler, Chair of the Forestry Committee, and was approved by the required two-thirds majority.

WCLRA is extremely grateful to Mr. Cargill for his generosity and for giving us the opportunity to place this property and its water resources in the hands of an agency which will manage it consistent with good environmental practice and keep it available for public use. We at WCLRA work hard to accomplish our goal of preserving Washburn County water resources, but a little good fortune along the way certainly helps.

### 2014 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

\*May 24 **3rd Annual Wisconsin Canoe Heritage Museum Opening Event**

\*June 7-8 **DNR Free Fishing Weekend**  
Size and catch limits apply

\*June 20 **Annual Northwest Wisconsin Lakes Conference**  
This year it will be held at Drummond High School  
For more information contact: John Haack at:  
[john.haack@ces.uwex.edu](mailto:john.haack@ces.uwex.edu)

\*June 21 **Natural Resources Foundation Pontoon Classroom**  
If you enjoy or own shoreline property, this trip is for you. Lunch included.  
Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin  
Telephone:(866) 264-4096  
E-mail:[info@wisconservation.org](mailto:info@wisconservation.org)

\*July 26 **Minong Town Lakes Fair**  
For more information contact Laurie Johnson at:  
[lfajej@gmail.com](mailto:lfajej@gmail.com)

\*August 23 **WCLRA AGM – location to be announced.**

\*October 25-26 **North American Loon Symposium**  
Northland College, Ashland, Wisconsin

## 5-YEAR WATERFRONT SURVEY

By Barb Robinson

Recently I came across an article in the Great Lakes Echo about a waterfront survey being conducted by the University of Wisconsin on two lakes— Long Lake and Des Moines Lake - in northwestern Wisconsin's Burnett County. Two of the research leaders are Bret Shaw, associate professor in the Department of Life Sciences Communication at the University of Wisconsin – Madison and John Haack, Regional Natural Resources Educator, University of Wisconsin Extension in Spooner, WI. When this article was written the research was in its fifth year. The objective of the research survey was to “identify why property owners prefer a manicured lawn and to learn how best to persuade them to go “natural instead”.

Years ago both of the study lakes had large, undeveloped parcels surrounding them with native vegetation along the shorelines. The native vegetation helped improve water quality, provided habitat for wildlife as well as the providing a natural lake. Over the years these large undeveloped parcels were sold off and made in to small developed parcels, changing the shoreline dramatically.

John and Brett examined the lakes lot-by-lot and then asked the property owners to rank how they perceived the health of their waterfront. The categories were “groomed” (mowed lawn to sandy beach), “mixed” (part natural and part groomed), and “natural”. While the biologist listed 82 of the parcels out of the 163 lots surveyed as groomed, residents identified only 4 of the 82 as groomed, 58 mixed and 20 natural.

According to this survey, people perceive that “their shoreline is considerably more natural than biologists do” and therein may be the problem. Although awareness of the need for a “natural” shoreline is important, the description of what is natural seems to be in question.

One area of improvement was that the survey found, “more lake property owners believe that their neighbors are supportive of natural shorelines now than 5 years ago”.

In the Fall 2013 issue of “On the Waterfront”, we published an article about an ongoing 10-year study about shoreline restoration. That study addresses the question of how to best restore a shoreline with the resources currently available to us. Another part of that equation is the property owner and his perception of what needs to be done. If a property owner thinks his shoreline is natural, it would be difficult to convince him to make any type of improvement to the “natural” state of his shoreline. Patrick Goggin (a past speaker at our Annual Meeting) stated that “understanding the barriers people have to conservation work and what we can do to lessen these obstacles is important to lake communities achieving success with restoring habitat”.

You can read the whole article at:

<http://greatlakesecho.org/2013/08/06/survey-reveals-why-lawn-trumps-native-shoreline-and-what-to-do-about-it/>.

## FISH STOCKING

By Larry Damman

In my years as a fish biologist, people constantly requested stocking records to find the good places to fish walleyes. What they really need is a list of walleye lakes that never get stocked. Walleye lakes maintained by stocking are the ones with habitat limitations resulting in marginal populations.

Given the right habitats for spawning, fry and fingerling development of a species will produce more fingerlings than the lake can support into adulthood. Nature has to mercilessly thin them down through predation and disease. This mortality is necessary to create a balance between the number of potential young recruits and the number of adults the lake can sustain. When we harvest a fish from a self-sustaining population, we are not decreasing the population so much as creating the opportunity for a fingerling to survive to adulthood. Stocking where fingerling habitat is essentially saturated increases the fingerling mortality rate instead of increasing the adult population.

There are 3 basic reasons for fish stocking:

**Type 1.** To introduce new species into suitable habitat

**Type 2.** To maintain a species where habitat conditions will support adult fish but not natural reproduction.

**Type 3.** To supplement existing populations that exhibit low rates of natural reproduction.

For stocking to be effective you need an empty habitat niche to target.

When the white man came to Washburn County, most land locked lakes including ones as big as Shell Lake had no fish. With no stream connections, fish couldn't colonize them after the glaciers receded. Early settlers and logging camps caught fish from nearby creeks for **type 1 stocking**. In those days suckers and bullheads were the most popular. They were oily fish suited to canning and smoking in the days before refrigeration. Over time, most every fish native to the great lakes region was introduced creating self-sustaining fish communities similar to those in the naturally colonized drainage lakes.

**Type 2** stocking occurs to provide the anglers something extra or special to catch. The trick is to find an open niche and match it with an appropriate species. Some lakes have a lot of deep, cold water. Warm water fish like bass or walleye can't utilize this habitat but rainbow trout may thrive in it. Rainbows only reproduce in streams so recruitment will depend on stocking. Stocking walleye into a shallow, weedy bass lake doesn't work because there is no niche for the open water loving walleye.

## FISH STOCKING.....continued from page 8

**Type 3** stocking to boost populations with low natural recruitment is widely practiced and most problematic. Physical habitat still controls the maximum number of fingerlings produced, not the number stocked. However factors such as weather or interactions with other species can further reduce potential. Unstable weather in the spring can wipe out the walleye hatch or a successful hatch in a year that coincides with the peak of the crappie population cycle will suffer higher than normal predation losses. Stocking fingerlings helps to assure that all available fingerling habitat is utilized even if you had some excessive mortality before that. The later in the year you stock the more of these mortality events you can avoid. The basic problem is that you are working on the margins. There may not be that much difference between a weak population maximized by stocking or the un-stocked version.

## July 12 – 20<sup>th</sup> IS RIVER AWARENESS WEEK

By Kathy Bartilson

It's time to get out on your favorite stream or river!

We think a lot about lakes in Washburn County, since we have 964 of them, and we live and play in a county with the third highest number of lakes in the state.

We are also blessed with many miles of excellent streams and rivers in the county, from the National Wild and Scenic Namekagon, to the Totogatic State Wild River, the Yellow, and headwaters areas feeding the Clam and Red Cedar. In fact, the "Surface Waters of Washburn County" booklet (published in 1978) states that Washburn County has 330 miles of rivers and streams, 31 of which are classified as trout streams. Department of Natural Resources statistics list Washburn County as having 79,140 acres of wetlands (15.3 % of the land area in the county). Our waters flow to two different major drainage basins in the state: the St. Croix (most of the county) and the Lower Chippewa (the watersheds of the Brill and Red Cedar Rivers in the southeast portion of the county).

This is all cause to celebrate – especially when so many of our county's waters are fairly clean with good habitat. The St. Croix River Association has designated July 12-20 as this year's River Awareness Week. They will have many activities planned if you are interested in joining the fun. Here's a link to their web page with highlights from last year's event:  
<http://www.riverawarenessweek.org/>.

As you make plans for summer outings and family gatherings, think about including a paddle to enjoy one of our local rivers or streams. Better yet, do something to help protect them. Here are some things to think about all year long, not just during this special week:

- What we do to the land affects the water. Land use, cropping practices, yard and pet wastes, animal housing and grazing, construction runoff, and stormwater are all potential sources of turbidity, organic matter, petroleum residue, fertilizers, pesticides, nitrogen, phosphorus, and oxygen demand to our waters. Are there changes you can make that will help protect the watershed of the

stream, lake, river, wetland or groundwater receiving runoff or infiltration from your property? There are many options to consider, like capturing roof runoff, composting yard waste, restoring shoreline and streambank vegetative buffers, reducing the size and number of impervious surfaces, and improving forestry and agricultural practices for a start.

- We need to make good choices about the products we use. Every year we hear of more unforeseen consequences from what seem to be useful and harmless products. Researchers right here in the St. Croix Valley have found that the compound "triclosan" (added to cleaning products, soaps, and even tooth paste as an anti-microbial agent) can actually pass through community wastewater treatment systems, and convert to a form of dioxin in sunlight and water. Studies also show that just plain soap is as effective in preventing the spread of germs as anti-microbial products containing triclosan. The University of Wisconsin also is finding tiny plastic "microbeads" from skin "scrub" products in fish in Lake Superior. It pays to check the product labels and buy simple products without these "enhancements" that can later affect our waters.
- Stay informed on local, state, and federal laws, ordinances, and zoning standards, especially if changes are proposed. When reviewing any changes, use your critical thinking skills to decide if you feel there will be either positive or adverse impacts on our waterways. Share your position with your government representatives to make them aware of either your support or concern. Our Wisconsin Lake and River Associations (state and local) are excellent contacts on rule and law changes and provide information on whether these changes are likely to either improve protection or launch new threats to our waters.
- Our waterways need friends and protectors. Pass on your good example of stewardship to the next generation. One of my best friends and mentors made it a point to take people paddling and share his views on wilderness to be sure there would be people coming after him that would take a stand for wild places. How about sharing an evening paddle with someone new to awaken their senses to the joy of time spent on the water? Join a lake or river group to share information, paddle together, watch for wildlife, perform citizen monitoring surveys, etc. Consider hosting a cleanup day to pick litter from a popular section of stream (it's sad anyone needs to do this, really!). Every day on the water is litter picking day for our family – it's as much an expected part of the trip as bringing our life jackets and paddles. As always, if you notice a questionable activity or potential violation, please make note of your location, take a photo if possible, and notify the appropriate DNR or County staff about it.

Have a safe and enjoyable summer on the water. Thanks for all you do to protect our water resources.

The Waterfront is published by:  
 WASHBURN COUNTY LAKES AND RIVERS  
 ASSOCIATION, INC.  
 850 West Beaverbrook Avenue Suite 1  
 Spooner WI 54801  
 715-635-4444  
 Editor: Barb Robinson  
 ribaldness@gmail.com  
 RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

NONPROFIT ORG  
 U.S. POSTAGE  
 PAID  
 PERMIT NO.20  
 SPOONER



**SUMMER WILL COME!**  
 Photo by Russ Robinson

**Contacts to protect lakes and rivers**

“We need more than ever to provide what help we can to protect our lakes and rivers from environmentally damaging activities. Keep your eyes open! We are the last line of defense! But **do not trespass** to obtain further information. Let those in authority check it out.”

**DNR Water Regulation Violations and Information:**

**Dan Harrington** (Water Management Specialist, Spooner Office).....715-635-4097  
**Jon Hagen** (Conservation Warden for Southern Washburn County).....715-635-4099  
**Dave Swanson** (Conservation Warden for Northern Washburn County).....715-466-5428  
 If wardens are in the field, messages can be related to them through the Washburn County Sheriff's Department at 715-468-4720 or at the DNR's toll-free tip line.....1-800-TIP-WDNR (847-9367)

**County Shoreland Zoning Questions or Violations:**

Web Macomber (Zoning Administrator).....715-468-4690

**County Planning, Land/Water Resource Management:**

Lisa Burns.....715-468-4654