

### Spring #36 Newsletter

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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

Our planned August 29, 2015 WCLRA Annual General Meeting will feature a program on the subject of plantings along the shores of lakes and rivers. We encourage you to attend and learn more about enhancing your shoreland to protect the lake, promote scenic beauty and attract wildlife. Shoreline restoration is more than just planting native plants, shrubs, and trees. On page 6 of this newsletter is an article describing a new grant program aimed specifically at shoreline restoration.

My interest began in 1962 when my parents purchased a lake front cabin on Paddock Lake, Kenosha County, Wisconsin. The lake had been a popular recreation place and developed since the 1920s. My job was beach maintenance, raking and piling seaweed. That summer, I removed an eight foot section of picket fence, a broken glass gallon pickle jar and numerous cans, bottles, and trash beyond our shore. I learned early on to wear shoes when wading in the lake.

At the age of 17, I was honored to be hired by our neighborhood beach association as beach caretaker and certified life guard for the summer of 1964. The roughly 100 foot wide swimming area was bordered on each side by two approximately 50 foot long docks that moored association member boats. Cleaning up around the docks I removed scores of bottles, cans, trash, and a nearly new 10 hp Evinrude motor. The amount of trash in that lake was mind boggling. Though I loved that lake, years of neglect had created an underwater landfill.

Jane and I are fortunate to live on Spider Lake No. 5 just north of Birchwood. It is sparsely populated, but I still take nothing for granted. Since 1998, I have patrolled the shorelines in my kayak removing cans and a few bottles. Each year I find less and less which makes the work worth while. In 2013, I removed all the shards from a broken quart bottle on an island shore that is now a popular beach for three young girls and family that recently moved to our lake.

I believe waterfront owners and visitors to our lakes and rivers today are more conscious of their responsibility toward stewardship of our Wisconsin water resources. I say that I'm doing it for the grandkids.

Craig walkey, President

P. S. I found only one beer can this spring. I remain hopeful.

## 17th Annual Northwest Wisconsin Lakes Conference: June 26, 2015

By Lisa Burns

Plan now to attend the *2015 Northwest Wisconsin Lakes Conference*, which will be held on Friday, June 26 at the Hayward High School. This popular regional gathering has turned into one of the state's premier lake conferences. The all day program provides a great opportunity for lake enthusiasts, local government officials and others interested in protecting our water resources to attend a number of educational presentations, visit many informative exhibits and network with fellow conference attendees. John Gozdziński, a.k.a. "John G", is the conference's keynote speaker. John has been the DNR Secretary's Director for Northern Wisconsin since 2004. He serves as Secretary Stepp's eyes, ears and voice for 18 Northern counties. His talk is entitled "*Reflections on Lake Protection*".



John Gozdziński

The conference will feature 12 different breakout sessions covering a wide variety of lake-related topics and issues, including: walleyes, muskies, loons, Healthy Lakes Grants, mysteries lurking in lakes, wetlands, algae, northern Wisconsin furbearers, water megatrends, lakeshore restoration successes and challenges and Yummy shoreline plants.

Numerous exhibitors will have displays at the conference. Exhibitors will include lake and natural resource-related nonprofit organizations as well as private businesses.

The \$40 registration fee includes: continental breakfast, lunch and program materials. Students, both high school and college, can attend free of charge, but need to indicate the school/college they attend on the conference registration form.

For more information or to register, contact Wisconsin Lakes at 1-800-542-5253 in Wisconsin or (608) 661-4313 or go online at [www.wisconsinlakes.org](http://www.wisconsinlakes.org). For more detailed information on the conference program and speakers, contact John Haack at (715) 635-7406 or [john.haack@ces.uwex.edu](mailto:john.haack@ces.uwex.edu).

## NEWS RELEASE: Cathie Erickson appointed to Wisconsin Lakes Board

Cathie Erickson, former president of Washburn County Lakes and Rivers Association (WCLRA), has been elected to the Wisconsin Lakes board of directors. Wisconsin Lakes, formerly known as Wisconsin Association of Lakes, is a statewide non-profit organization working to protect and enhance the quality of Wisconsin's 15,000 lakes. The organization represents citizens and lake groups as it works toward statewide solutions to challenges facing many lakes while also supporting local water resources protection efforts.

WCLRA has benefitted from the work and support of Wisconsin Lakes in many ways. Their newsletters keep us aware of statewide lake policy and issues. Their staff has provided us with information for many of our newsletter articles. As part of the Wisconsin Lakes Partnership, they have collaborated with the Wisconsin DNR and the University of Wisconsin to organize the annual Wisconsin Lakes Convention and the statewide Lake Leaders Institute. Your WCLRA board members have participated frequently in both of these programs. The Wisconsin Lakes association has also been a support of the regional Northwest Wisconsin Lakes Conference sponsored annually by the five northwest counties (Burnett, Douglas, Bayfield, Sawyer and Washburn).

Cathie and her husband Gary have been seasonal residents in Washburn County for nearly 30 years and are now permanent residents of Stone Lake. Her interest in water protection began with the Shoreowners of Stone Lake Association which led to her joining the WCLRA Board in 2002 and participating in the Wisconsin Lake Leaders program in 2010. Cathie says she is taking on the Wisconsin Lakes role because it is important for more northern representatives to participate in determining statewide water policy and efforts to protect our waters.



Cathie Erickson

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## WEB SITE

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

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### DNR

Kathy Bartilson

### Citizen Lake Monitoring (DNR)

Kris Larsen

### Conservation Wardens

Dave Swanson  
Jon Hagen

### Zoning Administration

Web Macomber



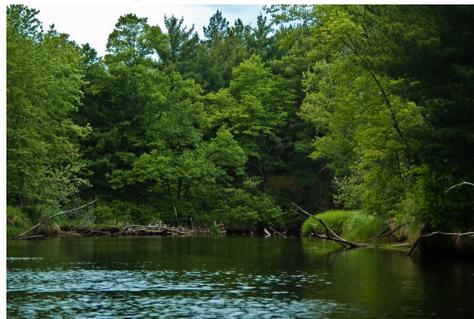
## Celebrations Planned for the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Wisconsin's Original Wild River Law

by Kathy Bartilson

Aldo Leopold wrote in "A Sand County Almanac," *"There are some who can live without wild things and some who cannot."* Fifty years ago, our Wisconsin legislators had the foresight and conservation ethic to pass the state's Wild River law so future generations could have the opportunity to enjoy time on undeveloped, wild rivers. Chapter 30.26 of the state statutes reads:

*"In order to afford the people of this state an opportunity to enjoy natural streams, to attract out-of-state visitors and assure the well-being of our tourist industry, it is the interest of this state to preserve some rivers in a free-flowing condition and to protect them from development; and for this purpose a system of wild rivers is established".*

These words were authored in 1965 by former State Representative David Martin, who is credited with founding the State Wild Rivers Legislation. The original bill won broad, bi-partisan support, passed unanimously and was signed into law by Governor Warren Knowles making it the first law of its kind in the United States. At that time; the Pine, Popple and Pike Rivers in Florence, Forest and Marinette Counties were the first three state-designated wild rivers. In 2009, the Brunsweller in Ashland County and our own Totogatic were added to this list of state Wild Rivers. David Martin actually came to Washburn County in 2006 to see the Totogatic and encourage our local leaders to seek state designation.



Washburn County's Wild River



The Totogatic

Three years after the original state law was passed, U.S. Senator Gaylord Nelson took the idea to the national level, leading the effort to create the Federal Wild and Scenic Rivers act, which was signed by President Johnson in 1968. Northern Wisconsin's own Namekagon and St. Croix Rivers were among the first eight rivers to be federally designated.

This summer, a "50 Years of Wisconsin Wild Rivers" celebration will be held in Florence, Wisconsin on June 13 from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Wild Rivers Interpretive Center (at the junction of US Hwy 2 and Hwy 70). At the event, a new 100-mile auto tour will be unveiled along the Pine and Popple with unique black and gold signs marking sites of special interest. The celebration also includes distinguished speakers, a cook-out, and a hike to Big Bull Falls on the Popple River.

Continued on page 4

Locally, Washburn County Lakes and Rivers Association and the St. Croix River Association are planning a couple of outings to celebrate the anniversary on and near the Totagatic. Watch both websites for further details.

If you get the opportunity to paddle any of our wild gems this summer, consider and appreciate the foresight of our local, county, state, and federal leaders who recognized fifty years ago how precious these rivers would be today for habitat, water quality, natural scenic beauty, and recreation. Enjoy, protect, and celebrate!

**Good or Bad, Clams or Mussels**

by  
Larry Damman

Have you ever wondered about the clams that we see in the bottoms of our lakes and rivers? No, they're generally not another dreaded invasive species. Clams are a family of species more scientifically called fresh water mussels. Half of Wisconsin's 52 mussel species are endangered, threatened or species of special concern.

With just one "foot" and no legs, travel is not something clams are noted for. They are the ultimate couch potato. Many species spend their entire adult life buried in a clam bed with just an intake and discharge siphon tube exposed. Others attach to rocks and fallen trees or manmade objects like bridge pilings. Once established, they feed on most any organic matter, live or dead, that they siphon from the water flowing by. Essentially they vacuum clean the aquatic environment.

During mating season the males shoot gametes into the water and females siphon them in to fertilize their eggs. The eggs develop within the safety of the mother's shell and hatch into glochidia. The mother has no way to feed them, so she will shoot her brood at a fish. Some lucky glochidia may find their way to the fish's gills and bite down to feed vampire style. Nutrient rich fish blood makes it possible for them to produce the shell they need to live on their own. After several weeks they drop off, doing the fish no real harm.

Don't worry about getting glochidia bites. Fish are their only target. In fact many riverine mussel species depend on a single or maybe just a few specific fish species to complete their life cycle. How does a blind, immobile mussel find the right fish to shoot? It can be as simple as timing your mating season to coincide with a fish that spawns over your clam bed. Some mussels expose a piece of flesh and wiggle it as a lure. The fish dumb

enough to take the bait is likely to belong to the right species. Choosing the right fish is so important because the host also has to be in the right kind of place when the glochidia drop off.

If this sounds like a hit or miss way to reproduce, it is. Mussels, especially the riverine ones, make up for low birth rates by being very long lived. Ages of 30 to 40 years are common and some species can live to 100. So if you happen to run across one, its ok to look him over and consider how difficult it is for nature to replace him. Then put him back where you found him. Many river species are on the threatened or endangered list.

Lake mussels aren't as specialized as riverine species. They can use most any fish as a host so their populations are pretty secure.

Zebra mussels are an altogether different critter. They have free swimming veligers instead of glochidia. The veligers absorb minerals directly from the water so they don't need a fish. Not having a parasitic stage helps make it possible for them to become so abundant.

**LOOKING FOR SOMETHING DO?  
HERE ARE SOME IDEAS FOR YOU.  
CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR 2015**

- June 20 Eurasian Water-Milfoil (EWM) Conference  
Cumberland, Wisconsin  
For more information or to register contact  
Dave Blumer at 715-642-0635  
or [dblumerleaps@gmail.com](mailto:dblumerleaps@gmail.com)
- June 13 "50 Years of Wisconsin Wild Rivers"  
11am – 3pm Wild Rivers Interpretive Ctr  
Florence, Wisconsin
- June 13-19 St. Croix River Assn Paddle Namekegon  
[stcroixriverassociation.org](http://stcroixriverassociation.org)
- July 16-19 Skin-on-frame Canoe Building Class  
Wisconsin Canoe Heritage Museum  
Spooner, Wisconsin  
[info@wisconsincanoeheritagemuseum.org](mailto:info@wisconsincanoeheritagemuseum.org)
- June 26, 2015 Northwest Wisconsin Lakes Conference  
Hayward High School  
For more information or to register,  
contact Wisconsin Lakes at 800-542-5253  
or online at [www.wisconsinlakes.org](http://www.wisconsinlakes.org).
- Aug 29, 2015 WCLRA Annual General Meeting  
Shell Lake Community Center  
Shoreland Planting for Restoration and  
Wildlife

## Wonderful Wacky Water Critters

If you ever spend time closely examining the water in a stream or river, you will undoubtedly find all kinds of critters swimming around. These aquatic bugs make their homes in the rocks, leaves, and sediment in streambeds. Some stay in the stream all of their lives, like clams, muscles, and snails. Others are just there in their nymph and larval stages, waiting to fly free as adults, perhaps as dragonflies, damselflies, mayflies, and even mosquitoes. These water bugs are called aquatic macroinvertebrates because they live in water, are big enough for us to see, and do not have a backbone.

So why should we care about macroinvertebrates? Because they can be indicators of water quality. Many macroinvertebrates require significant amounts of oxygen to survive. Pollution in the form of sewage, fertilizer, or manure can use up dissolved oxygen and reduce macroinvertebrate populations. Industrial and mining pollutants can lower pH levels that can weaken their shells and kill them. In addition, the removal of vegetation along a stream edge takes away macroinvertebrates' food sources and breeding grounds, thus reducing their levels in a stream. Therefore, checking out the macroinvertebrates in a



Stonefly Nymph



Mayfly Nymph

stream can help determine water quality. It is not only the number but also the kinds of macroinvertebrates that are important for a stream or river. Some macroinvertebrates, like caddisflies, mayflies, and stoneflies cannot live in polluted water. If these are found in a stream, water quality is pretty good. Other macroinvertebrates like leeches, aquatic worms, midge larvae, and sow bugs are more tolerant of pollution so can survive poor quality water conditions.

Adverse conditions in our streams impact the rivers and lakes. Clean water is of vital importance. When water quality declines it affects the food chain by impacting plants, invertebrates, and the fish that rely on them.

So grab a kitchen sieve and a child or grandchild and collect some samples for a fun science experiment. The resources listed below will help you identify the "critters" and help you check on the water quality of your stream or river.

### Wonderful, Wacky, Water Critters

University of Wisconsin Extension and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources 2001  
[clean-water.uwex.edu/pubs/pdf/wwwc.pdf](http://clean-water.uwex.edu/pubs/pdf/wwwc.pdf)  
[clean-water.uwex.edu/pubs/pdf/riverkey.pdf](http://clean-water.uwex.edu/pubs/pdf/riverkey.pdf)

## Help FISH Recycle Monofilament

By Larry Damman

In 2014, supporters of the Spooner Hatchery established a non-profit organization called Friends Into Spooner Hatchery (FISH). The purpose of FISH is to "increase conservation awareness through educational programming, outdoor exploration and exhibits at the Governor Tommy Thompson Hatchery". As an example, FISH, in partnership with DNR employees, had over 107 students participating in three ice fishing clinics this winter.

FISH's monofilament fishing line recycling program may be of interest to you or your lake association. The program starts with placing recycling tubes at public landings. The tubes are generally easy to strap to an existing kiosk sign or other post. Permission from the government unit that owns the access should be obtained. The tubes provide a convenient place for fisherman to recycle old line and keep it out of the environment and land fills.

The tubes are available at the hatchery at our cost of \$30 each. A designated volunteer to mount the tube and periodically empty it and bring the mono to the Spooner Hatchery is needed. FISH will ship the mono out to be recycled. If you are interested in participating or if you have questions, please send a note to Jon Luikart at [jluikart@outlook.com](mailto:jluikart@outlook.com).

Also, if you and/or your lake association are interested in becoming a member of FISH, you can find more information at our website [www.spoonerhatchery.com](http://www.spoonerhatchery.com). It would be great to have you join us.

### WCLRA NEW WEBSITE

In honor of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Wisconsin Wild Rivers, please visit our website at [www.wclra.org](http://www.wclra.org) for more information. You will be able to search previous newsletters for articles about the Totogatic. Also on the website you will be able to link with member lake associations as well as other organizations working with WCLRA.

You can now join, renew or make a donation to WCLRA online through PayPal. You can also contact us about issues or concerns you may have about Washburn County's water resources via the website.

## **New Grant Program Funding**

By Jennifer Sereno and Pamela Toshner

A new DNR grant program was launched in November 2014 to encourage simple lakeshore projects to boost healthy lakes. The "Healthy Lakes" initiative is an effort of the Wisconsin Lakes Partnership supported by the DNR, the **UW-Extension Lakes Program, Wisconsin Lakes**, counties and the many lake groups and citizens who work to protect, improve and restore Wisconsin lakes.

The grant program aims to fund local projects around the state that focus on simple ways to improve fish habitat, integrate native plantings, divert and clean runoff water and promote natural beauty. With \$200,000 in funding available statewide, the Healthy Lakes project provides up to \$1,000 in state grant dollars for each "best practice" identified in a proposal. Grant awards to eligible sponsors such as lake groups, waterfront organizations and communities will be capped at \$25,000. Goals include increasing single-property participation in Healthy Lakes best practices by 100 percent from 2015 to 2017.

### **Do-it-yourself Projects Encouraged**

"Wisconsin's lakes help define our communities while providing valuable habitat and supporting our economy," said DNR Secretary Cathy Stepp. "Our research tells us that lakes with good habitat tend to have better water quality, which translates into more recreational opportunities and sustainable property values. By encouraging participation from lake groups, counties and private property owners, we hope to see simple practices implemented that encourage additional 'do-it-yourself' projects."

### **Examples of Healthy Lakes Best Practices**

Lake groups and other partners may identify their own habitat and water quality goals through local planning and public participation opportunities. Following are examples of simple projects, each capped at \$1,000 in state funding, that are included among the Healthy Lakes best practices:

#### *\*Installation of native planting packages*

Native planting packages include plan designs and lists of suitable plants for areas at least 10 feet wide and covering a contiguous 350 square feet. Lakeshore property owner preferences and site features will determine which packages, such as those developed to attract birds and butterflies or those for woodland plantings, would be most appropriate. When adopted by multiple homeowners, the plantings improve habitat, slow runoff and promote natural beauty. For a 350 square foot area, installed costs total about \$1,000.

#### *\*Deployment of "fish sticks"*

These include whole downed trees stacked in a cluster and anchored to the shore either fully or partially submerged. Use of fish sticks prevents shoreline erosion while improving fish and wildlife habitat. On average, fish stick projects cost about \$500 for a cluster of three to five downed trees.

#### *\*Placement of rock infiltration pits or trenches*

Rock infiltration projects capture, store and allow runoff water to soak into the ground where it cleans itself instead of streaming directly to the lake. Installed costs average \$3,800.

#### *\*Installation of upland rain gardens*

Rain gardens improve wildlife habitat while diverting and cleaning runoff water. When placed in upland areas near homes, rain gardens can collect roof, road and driveway runoff and prevent it from reaching a lake. While costs vary greatly depending on size and plantings, rain gardens average about \$2,500 installed.

### **Check with Local Zoning Ordinances First**

The Healthy Lakes funding is not intended for large, complex sites with substantial runoff or erosion problems where engineering design is more appropriate. Before undertaking any major projects, lake associations and homeowners are encouraged to consult local zoning ordinances.

### **Small Changes Add Up**

Carroll Schaal, DNR Lakes and Rivers Section Chief in the Bureau of Water Quality, said the benefits of simple projects increase cumulatively as more property owners participate. "When adopted by many property owners, the small changes add up," Schaal said. "Positive incremental steps ultimately help protect and enhance our lakes for everyone. While lake groups, counties or other sponsors may adopt the Healthy Lakes Implementation Plan in its entirety to be eligible for grant funding, we have included enough technical information that individual lakeshore owners may choose to take on a do-it-yourself project without grant funding." See the Healthy Lakes Implementation Plan for more information on management practices at:

<http://tinyurl.com/healthylakes>.

*Jennifer Sereno is the Section Chief for External Communications in the Office of Communications. Pamela Toshner is a Water Resources Management Specialist in the Bureau of Water Quality, Northern Region.*

## Fish Habitat Enhancement

Would my lake's fishery benefit from a habitat project? What sort of projects would best apply? How much does a project cost? Are grants available? Is it hard to get permits? Larry Damman, has offered to help interested WCLRA members scope out these issues on a specific lake basis. Larry is a retired DNR fisheries biologist that is very familiar with local waters and serves as the Wisconsin Conservation Congress liaison to the WCLRA board.

"The key to habitat enhancement is to identify what the most limiting habitat factors are for the species you want to help," says Larry. "Then its a question of whether projects like woody cover, spawning structures, aeration, vegetation or water level management, might be a practical solution." Even if no project ever materializes, the process will help lakeshore owners understand the components of fish habitat and the importance of good shoreline stewardship.

"Basically", Larry states, "its a first come, first serve offer until I run out of time". Larry can be contacted at [larry@shearluckfarm.com](mailto:larry@shearluckfarm.com).

## NEED HELP CONTROLLING INVASIVE SPECIES?



Assistance is available to control invasive species on your property with a newly formed enthusiastic group of diverse partners. The St. Croix-Red Cedar Cooperative Weed Management Area (**CWMA**) was formed in 2014 and covers five counties: Washburn, Burnett, Polk, St. Croix and Barron.

Interest in action combined with lots of questions about CWMA's initiated the formation of a steering committee, which appointed a coordinator to guide the group through its first year. With the help of WDNR Weed Management Area Private Forest Grants, recent activities include a series of invasive species removal events involving the public, training events for citizens, in-service training for foresters, and the development of a traveling trailer with equipment for invasive species removal. The group hopes to provide support for local initiatives, along with training and general education in class rooms and during field events across the five county area.

To assist in controlling invasive plants, the group's traveling trailer contains manual removal equipment

such as loppers and handsaws, as well as herbicide application equipment including a backpack sprayer, smaller pump sprayers and gloves. The trailer is for use in community invasive species control days, but requires there be one responsible party present who is signed on as a partner with the CWMA.



Cumberland Charter School students pulling Honeysuckle at Kirby Lake Campground

For more information check out the CWMA website: <https://www.stcroixriverassociation.org/st-croix-red-cedar-cwma/> or call Coordinator Val Johnson at 715-466-2022 or John Haack at 715-635-7406.

## Minong Town Lakes Committee

By Russ Robinson

The Minong Town Lakes Committee (MTLC) will continue its program of boat landing inspections for aquatic invasive species in 2015. This will be the third year of inspections on nine boat ramps on the larger lakes within the town of Minong. These inspections are done by paid inspectors on Fridays through Sundays of each week and on holidays throughout the summer. Funding for this inspections is provided by Wisconsin Department of Natural Resource grants, contributions by MTLC and support of the town of Minong. For more information about boat inspections or available grants, please contact Pamela Toshner at [pamela.toshner@dnr.state.wi.us](mailto:pamela.toshner@dnr.state.wi.us) or Lisa Burns at [lburns@co.washburn.wi.us](mailto:lburns@co.washburn.wi.us).

**IN THIS NEWSLETTER REFERENCE WAS MADE TO THE FIVE WISCONSIN WILD RIVERS. DO YOU REMEMBER NAMES OF THE FIVE RIVERS?**

**1965: PINE, POPPLE AND PIKE**

**2009: BRUNSWEILER AND TOTOGATIC**

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SPOONER



Water Lilies in Washburn County 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