



Church Pine, Round and Big Lake  
Protection & Rehabilitation District  
Lake Newsletter • April 2019

## LAKE CURRENTS



# Welcome to our Spring 2019 Newsletter

This newsletter reaches out to the 252 homes in our Lake District to share issues impacting our lakes, property, and recreational enjoyment.

Thank you to all the dedicated volunteers who have found time to give back to our lake community and to those residents who participated in establishing the direction, budget, and leadership for our Lake District at our August 2018 Annual Meeting. The entire meeting presentation is available for viewing on our website [www.bigroundpine.com](http://www.bigroundpine.com). The next annual meeting is scheduled to be held August 24, 2019.

From a financial perspective, your Lake District tax for 2019 remains unchanged, and has remained unchanged since 2013. This is due to the Board's aggressive pursuit of DNR grants which bring your state tax dollars back to our local Lake District. For 2019, we have again been awarded a Clean Boats Clean Waters Grant providing boat landing inspectors. We also continue to take advantage of multi-year grant awards for the Healthy Lakes program providing individual property owners with shoreline restorations, a Big Lake internal phosphorus load study, and curly leaf pondweed control for Big Lake.

Of specific emphasis this year, I would like to ask all residents to please review the Wisconsin Boating Laws <https://bigroundpine.com/handbook>. While these regulations address important aspects of boating safety, we are also finding that not complying with Slow No Wake (SNW) boating laws (page 15) promotes excess algae growth by stirring up phosphorus laden sediment in shallow areas.

I trust you will see from the newsletter articles that your Lake District team continues to pursue our charter to "Protect and Rehabilitate" our lakes. The Board continues to execute our DNR approved strategic Lake Management Plan and Aquatic Plant Management Plan. Both plans (and all official documents) are available on our website.

Our mission progress only remains constrained by the lack of volunteers. We need additional Board Members, Project Managers, Committee Chairs, and Members. If you see a topic of interest and you can get involved, please contact a Board Member.

Enjoy and protect our wonderful water resource,

Gary Ovick, Board Chairman

## DON'T FORGET

### LAKE SOCIAL DINNER

Saturday, June 15th

UW Wanderoos The Shed

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

# TOWN OF ALDEN UPDATE

By Greg Frost, Town of Alden Supervisor and Lake District Commissioner

On behalf of the entire Town of Alden Board, thank you to lake residents for keeping this chain of lakes a wonderful place to enjoy for residents and visitors alike. 2019 is an exciting time for Alden as we open the new Allied Fire Hall and continue to expand the road maintenance fleet and staff. Research continues on the Big Lake boat landing with the goal of understanding legal ownership and ultimate responsibility of landing maintenance.

The Polk County Highway Department deemed the current location unsafe; therefore, an effort is underway to evaluate the financial feasibility of investing further in this location. In other landing news, the Kowalski family has graciously donated 34.12 acres of land surrounding the existing Church Pine Lake boat landing to the

West Immanuel Church. This property was donated with the mutual understanding that the Town of Alden would entertain the idea of accepting a donation of property from the church at a later date. This smaller parcel of property may be used in the future to further improve parking and access near the landing. Both of these landings have their own unique challenges. As a reminder, if you see illegal activity happening at either of these areas, on the land or the water, the appropriate course of action is to contact the Polk County Sheriff's Department.

We appreciate your continued support and patience as we work through these complex projects.



## FISH STOCKING REPORT

The Fisheries Committee, chaired by Bob Meyer, continued with the stocking program that has been in place for over 20 years. Appropriate permits required for stocking our lakes were obtained this fall, and 7 to 8 inch walleye fingerlings were stocked in October. Using Lake District funds and a generous donation of \$1500 from the Big Lake Store ice fishing contest, 1625 walleye were stocked in both Big Lake and Church Pine Lake. The total cost for stocking these 3250 fish was \$6,500. Thanks to all who assisted with this project and good luck to the fisherman out there in coming years.

# NAVIGATIONAL COMMITTEE COMMENTS

By Jerry Tack, Committee Chair

It's time to get excited about another season of boating fun. Safe boating practices, including the placement of the "slow...no wake" buoys, are the focus of the Lake District's navigation committee. The buoys are placed in high traffic, congested areas and areas susceptible to shoreline erosion from wakes. Please reduce your speed gradually when approaching the buoys. A full throttle approach with rapid deceleration creates a large wake that carries well into the no wake zone.

One regulation that is especially important to our lakes is the "no wake" requirement within 100

feet of the shoreline. The intent of this regulation is to provide a safety margin for boats entering or exiting the main body of the lake and to prevent unnecessary shoreline erosion. Please approach the 100' shoreline no wake zone with a gradual reduction in speed to reduce the carryover wake from your boat. Also, when leaving a no wake zone, accelerate slowly to minimize shoreline impact.

The Polk County Sheriff's office provides only sporadic water patrol coverage. To help maintain a safe boating environment, we encourage all to be aware of boaters who



continue to operate their boat or personal water craft in an unsafe manner. The Sheriff's office welcomes calls to report unsafe boaters. The telephone number is 715-485-8300. A description of the boat and registration number can be of great help.

# HEALTH LAKES: REVIVING YOUR LAKESHORE TO IMPROVE WATER QUALITY

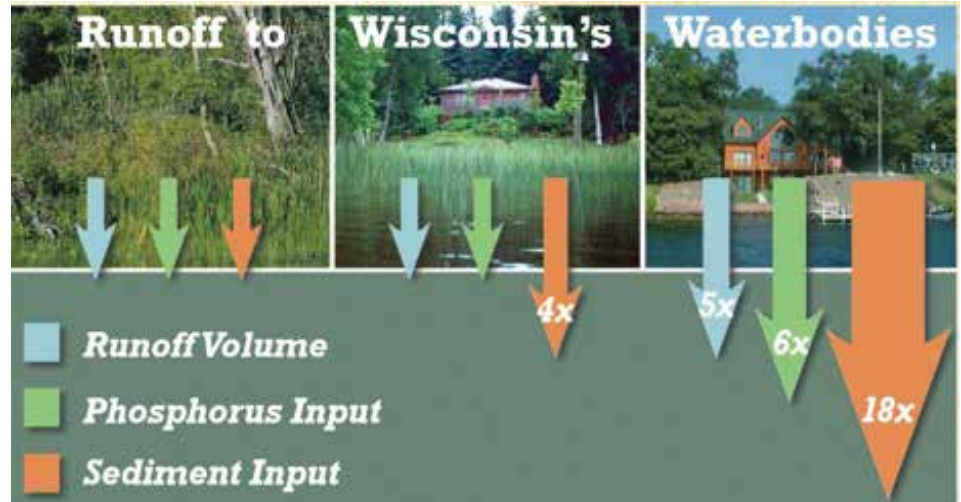
Owners of shoreline property often prefer a manicured lawn and mow right to the shoreline. Unfortunately, this does little to help the lake and can increase runoff of phosphorus and sediment into the lake. As the graphic to the right illustrates, as natural vegetation is removed and areas of hard surfaces and lawn increase, there are increased amounts of runoff, phosphorus and sediment that flow to waterbodies.

## HOW CAN YOU HELP PREVENT THE RUNOFF?

Instead of urban traditions such as manicured lawns, why not help preserve the natural Wisconsin lakeshore by leaving a buffer of natural vegetation along the shore? Shoreline restoration is the practice of restoring the healthy transition between land and water and bringing back the healthy native plants that will do much to absorb the runoff. Native plants are superior to non-native plants for the conditions found along your shoreline.

## STEPS YOU CAN TAKE TO HELP:

**EASY AND INEXPENSIVE:** **Stop mowing along the shoreline.** You can create a buffer zone by simply not mowing along the shoreline. Turf grasses will grow 12-24 inches tall before going to seed. Creating a curving edge that separates the buffer from your lawn and any pathways to the water will also give your shoreline a



pleasing, natural appearance. Over time, natural vegetation will fill in and provide a more diverse plant cover.

**INEXPENSIVE:** **Create a buffer of native plants.** You can improve the beauty and interest of your lakeshore and provide habitat for birds and butterflies by planting a buffer of plants native to Wisconsin. The Wisconsin DNR has provided several templates for these gardens to suit your property type and interest and provides grant money through the Lake District for these projects.

**MORE EXPENSIVE:** **Install rain gardens** to infiltrate the water from your roof or impervious surfaces before it reaches the lake and **install diversions** to direct the water to a rain garden or infiltration area. The Wisconsin DNR has handbooks and

grant money through the Lake District for these. Professional installation is recommended.

## NEED HELP DECIDING WHAT TO DO?

**Visit the website:**

<https://healthylakeswi.com/>

for more information about controlling runoff and project ideas. The Lake District will try to arrange for professional consultation at no cost to you before you make your decision. If there are enough committed participants, the Lake District can apply for grant money to help defray the cost of the projects.

## More information?

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# AQUATIC PLANT LAKE MANAGEMENT UPDATE

By Mike Reiter, Committee Chair

Over the last several years the Lake District has been very proactive in keeping abreast of new aquatic invasive species threats that have the potential to cause serious problems in our lake system. We are continuing to monitor for these “new” arrivals such as Eurasian watermilfoil, zebra mussels, and common carp while actively treating those unwanted visitors that have already arrived.

This spring we will be treating curly leaf pondweed (CLP) again as our efforts have proven very effective to keep it in check and markedly reduce this aquatic nuisance over the last several years. We have applied for and received numerous DNR grants that have offset the cost of these treatments. Our plan is to evaluate the success of the 2019 application and make a decision regarding applying for another grant in 2020. We will be working very closely with county and state DNR experts to use

scientific determinations to plot our course of action moving forward. We will also be evaluating and updating our Aquatic Plant Management Plan soon to incorporate these decisions.

We have grant money available that allows us to identify and treat wetland and shoreline invasive species that have proven to be very serious problems in the past. Last year, we had our lakes monitored routinely for some of these problem species and have identified landscapes where they have been growing. Purple loosestrife infestations have been mapped, and these locations are available on our website. While the majority of this problem plant occurs in small isolated clumps, there are a few larger areas out there that should be treated and removed. Identification of non-flowering plants can be difficult but when they flower in late summer, they are very noticeable. It is an easy task for small clumps of undesirable plants

to be dug out, placed in a plastic bag and disposed of in the garbage by landowners. Larger groupings can be professionally removed.

For more information contact: Mike Reiter at 715-294-3950.



Purple Loosestrife

## CLEAN BOATS CLEAN WATER (CBCW)

By Jerry Tack, Committee Chair

Your Lake District is once again set to continue with the Clean Boats Clean Waters program for 2019. This upcoming boating season will mark the sixth consecutive year for this very popular program. The goal of the Clean Boats Clean Waters program is to reduce the likelihood of invasive species of aquatic plants and animals from becoming established in our lakes. We contract with individuals and provide the necessary training so they may serve as boat landing inspectors. The inspectors are generally looking for weeds or mussels on the boats and trailers, and for water in the bilge or live wells of the boats, either when entering or leaving the lakes.

This program has been widely utilized throughout Wisconsin and other

states as a means to reduce the risk of infestation.

Of course, we cannot monitor the boat landings every hour of every day, but concentrate on weekends, holidays, and some days during the week. Last season our boat landing inspectors made over 300 contacts with boats entering or leaving our two boat landings. The inspections typically start the weekend before Memorial Day and continue through Labor Day weekend.

Funding for this program is provided by a grant from the DNR which reimburses us 75% of the cost of the program up to a maximum reimbursement of \$6,000. Our out of pocket cost is \$2,000. This is a great value for our three lakes,

considering the consequences of a Eurasian watermilfoil or zebra mussel infestation.

Ninety-nine percent of the boaters are very courteous and appreciate the boat inspectors' efforts to keep our lakes clean. If you encounter a boat landing inspector, please thank them for the terrific service they provide.

We are always in need of boat landing inspectors to fill all the hours necessary for an effective program. Annette Viebrock is our lead boat landing inspector, scheduling coordinator, trainer, and administrator of the CBCW program. If you know of someone who is dependable and works well with people, it is a great summer job. For more information, please call Annette at 715-294-2895.

## 2019 Social Committee

Andrea Anderson, Committee Chair



### LAKE SOCIAL DINNER

Saturday, June 15

at THE SHED at UW-Wanderoos

Social hour 6-7 • Dinner 7-9

We're looking forward to another wonderful dinner. All neighbors around the lakes are invited, plus family and friends. Watch for an RSVP postcard!  
Food, door prizes, and games!

### FOURTH OF JULY BOAT

### PARADE

July 4 • Noon  
Church Pine Lake

Assemble at the south end by the landing. Prizes for most decorated and creative designs!



## BIG LAKE INTERNAL LOAD STUDY

Big Lake is listed as an impaired water by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources for excess algae growth. The nutrient phosphorus is the likely cause of this algae growth. Phosphorus loading from Big Lake sediments is the focus of a study by Jeremy Williamson from the Polk County Land and Water Resources Department which began in 2016.

In shallow lakes there is intense interaction where the lake water meets the lake bottom. Therefore, understanding sediment water interactions is crucial to understanding phosphorus levels in Big Lake. Oxygen levels decrease in the lake sediment and in water near the sediment as organic matter in the sediment is broken down by microbes. When there is no oxygen present at the lake bottom, phosphorus can move from the sediment into the lake water. When phosphorus is released from lake sediments, internal phosphorus loading occurs.

The data collected over the last three open water seasons indicates internal loading events occur in Big Lake - particularly in mid-July. However, a clear pattern in oxygen levels and phosphorus release is not evident making the data difficult to interpret. The Lake District Board is considering an additional grant to further study this issue. Further study would include sediment core analysis to assess phosphorus release under conditions without oxygen in a laboratory.



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## WEB & SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE UPDATE

By Timothy Rudolph, Committee Chair

The Lake District's presence in the digital space is always growing. As time goes on, more and more residents choose to interact with our Lake District online through our website and social media. We are always looking to find ways to reach as many residents and visitors of our Lake District as possible. Whether you want to read about the history of our District, find the latest information about water quality, read our Naturalists' Blog, or see pictures of past events, now is the time to check out our website!

Interested in volunteering? Our Lake District runs on volunteers like you. We could use your help! To find more information, offer suggestions, or sign up for our digital newsletter and mailing list, visit our website: [www.bigroundpine.com](http://www.bigroundpine.com)

To see pictures of last year's events and sign up for our digital newsletter, visit our website: [www.bigroundpine.com](http://www.bigroundpine.com)

If you see a topic of interest, and you would like to get involved, please contact a board member.



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