



Church Pine, Round and Big Lake
Protection & Rehabilitation District
Lake Newsletter • April 2021

LAKE CURRENTS



2021 Chairman's Greeting

The Church Pine, Round and Big Lake Protection and Rehabilitation District was formed in 1980. Since that time, the Lake District has worked to support viable recreational opportunities while maintaining the water quality we have come to enjoy!

The 2021 update of our Lake Management Plan will continue Lake District grant eligibility. We monitor our aquatic flora and fauna to maintain the balance needed for a healthy lake ecosystem. When unwanted aquatic invasive species (AIS) are detected, we are ready to respond with an AIS rapid response plan in place. We will continue to identify water quality issues and formulate a plan to protect our water resources and improve them for future generations.

Last year, because of the unusually high watercraft use on our lakes, we received many complaints with boaters not adhering to the "No Wake" laws. Areas designated "No Wake" by statute include 100 feet from swimmers, shore, docks, floating rafts, etc. If "No-Wake" buoys are placed as a reminder, a DNR permit is required. We are looking into the placement of these buoys where necessary. Round Lake, at less than 50 acres (38 acres), would be designated a "No Wake" lake if it wasn't a connection between Big and Church Pine Lakes. In 2020 there was minimal waterway law enforcement visible on our lake system. In 2021 we are looking at ways to increase their presence.

Clean Boats, Clean Water grants are secured for 2021. Based on the results of the "Big Lake Internal Phosphorus Load Study," we charted a course of action that will improve and prevent further degradation of water quality. More "Healthy Lakes Projects" will be identified for state funding requests as project applications are submitted by landowners.

The DNR extended our third successful grant for the treatment of curly leaf pondweed into 2021. Due to the successes achieved, we are treating fewer acres each year and therefore spending less. We have also effectively treated purple loosestrife, Japanese knotweed, and invasive yellow iris on a few scattered locations around our lakes. In 2020, with the help of the Polk County Land and Water Resources and Health Departments, we monitored water quality at the beach area at the south end of Church Pine Lake. We will again do this in 2021 to assure the safety of our lake users.

Each year our social events get bigger and better as you will see in the Social Committee update! Your help and continuing support will be crucial to our future success. Our plans are your plans, and your input into this process is needed for success. We are looking for a few more folks to step up to become committee members as our plans develop. New ideas are key to continue the successes we have achieved and to expand the scope of our projects. Please contact one of the Board members if you are interested in adding your ideas to the process! Board contacts are listed on the website. Become part of the adventure!

Mike Reiter,
Board Chairperson

DON'T FORGET

LAKE SOCIAL DINNER
No date has been set

ANNUAL MEETING
No Date Set Yet

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AQUATIC PLANT MANAGEMENT PLAN UPDATE

The Lake District's Aquatic Plant Management Plan is currently under review by a committee of lake residents. A draft plan update

will be available for public review by early May on our website <https://bigroundpine.com>. The plan presents a strategy for managing aquatic plants

by protecting native plant populations, controlling curly leaf pondweed, and preventing establishment of aquatic invasive species.

CHURCH PINE BOAT LANDING UPDATE

Discussions are underway to improve safety at the Church Pine Lake boat landing. Representatives from West Immanuel Church, the Town of Alden, the DNR, and Polk County met this summer to discuss donation of land adjacent to the Church Pine Landing. The Town of Alden forwarded an initial proposal to have West Immanuel donate a little more than an acre to the Town to be used for off road parking and a portable toilet. A decision from the church is expected sometime this spring or summer. Next steps include

input from Polk County and the DNR as well as securing permits. There is no definite timeline for landing improvements at this time.

This past year saw increased use at our lakes and the boat landings. They are a resource used by many. Please consider safety when using the landings or when you are driving in the area. The Polk County Sheriff's Department has indicated they plan to increase water patrol time in 2021. This is good news for our lakes and landings.

**AS A REMINDER,
IF YOU SEE ILLEGAL
ACTIVITY HAPPENING
ON THE LAND OR
THE WATER, THE
APPROPRIATE COURSE
OF ACTION IS TO
CONTACT THE
POLK COUNTY
SHERIFF'S
DEPARTMENT
715-485-8300**

RECREATIONAL BEACH TESTING ON CHURCH PINE

Church Pine Lake was one of ten lakes in Polk County tested to determine swimming beach water quality in 2020. The testing showed that the quality of the water at the landing was good for swimming.

The Polk County Health Department recommends swimmers take caution when swimming at any beach, especially after heavy rains. Bacteria counts usually rise after a

rainstorm at beaches. The most frequent sources of disease-causing microorganisms are waterfowl fecal contamination, storm water runoff, sewage treatment plant malfunctions, boating wastes, and malfunctioning septic systems.

If swimmers are concerned about swimmer's itch, a type of skin irritation caused by microscopic parasites that can lead to a rash and itching,

they should rub off with a rough towel *before* the water dries on the skin surface. An immediate fresh shower after leaving the water is also effective.

For more information about swimming beach monitoring and safety, call the Polk County Health Department at 715-485-8532 or visit them at www.polkcountyhealthdept.org



WINTER ON THE LAKES

There was a lot of activity on the lakes this past winter with many folks spending more time outdoors. The weather cooperated providing good ice for many skating rinks and

ice fishing. The fish occasionally cooperated including on February 20th for the Big Lake Ice Fishing Contest. It was a beautiful day with many fish caught.

Thanks to our neighbors who plowed a walking path plowed around the lakes. The path was used by many. The snow provided many days of good cross country skiing and snowshoeing.

2020 FISH STOCKING *By Kel Kobernick*

Near the end of October 2020, 2,500 walleye were stocked in our lakes – 1,600 in Big Lake and 900 in Church Pine. The fish averaged eight inches long and were certified as meeting all health standards and requirements under Wisconsin regulations. We obtained the walleyes from the Central Wisconsin Fish Farm, owned and operated by Fritz Galler, for \$5,000 or \$2 per fish. The Big Lake Store contributed \$1,000 to this effort, and we thank Earl for his generosity. Our plan is to continue to stock walleyes in our lakes at the current level.

Walleye survival rates vary from year to year depending on the weather and other factors. On average 6-8 inch walleyes will be legal size in 4 years. Studies have shown that the mortality rate in the first year is high at about

80 percent. In years thereafter, the loss is about 20 percent per year. By the fourth year when the walleyes are legal size, roughly 10-12 percent of the stocked fish remain. Anglers are catching walleye in our lakes, so our stocking program is working.

The DNR conducts fish surveys on a regular basis every seven years or so. The last survey of our lakes was done in 2014 on Church Pine Lake only. The survey showed Church Pine had a healthy population of good-sized pan fish, both sunnies and crappies. It also showed a healthy population of bass. A healthy bass population is actually good for pan fish as the pan fish on average are larger in lakes with good bass. There were northern and walleye noted in the survey as well, although a different method is used to accurately count walleye. The

next DNR fish survey for our lakes is scheduled for 2022.





Shoreline native plantings on Big Lake

HEALTHY LAKES - YOU CAN HELP

by Beth Hartman

This year the Church Pine, Round and Big Lake District will again seek participants for Healthy Lakes projects such as the native planting shown. The Healthy Lakes grants provide lakeshore owners with substantial reimbursement for approved projects such as restoring lakeshores with native plantings that absorb runoff, directing rain from rooftops away from the lake to lovely rain gardens, and other infiltration and erosion control projects.

Many lakeshore owners have participated in the past. We have been able to help fund several rain gardens, many shoreline plantings, and a few diversions. The DNR has a website that describes these practices and the requirements for funding - healthylakeswi.com. If you are unsure, a consultant can visit your property at no cost to advise you on the best practice for runoff control.

If you are interested, please contact Beth Hartman bhartmanstroix@yahoo.com. You will be asked to review the information on the website, determine what you want to do, and fill out the interest form. The district will apply for grant funding in the fall for projects beginning in 2022. If you have questions, please contact Beth Hartman - bhartmanstroix@yahoo.com.

CLEAN BOATS CLEAN WATERS PROGRAM CONTINUES FOR 2021 SEASON

By Warren Wasescha

With the concern over the spread of aquatic invasive species in our area, we continue to fund and secure grants to cover the costs to inspect watercraft entering our lakes. For the 2020 season we employed five boat inspectors to help perform boat and trailer checks, hand out informational brochures, and educate boaters on how to prevent the spread of

aquatic invasive species. These five boat inspectors worked May through August, logging in over 750 hours, and educating over 700 boat owners on ways they can keep our lakes free from aquatic species.

For the 2021 season, we are pleased to announce that we have once again secured grant monies to cover the bulk of

this expense. And again, Annette Viebrock has agreed to recruit and oversee the work of our boat inspection team. When you see these inspectors at our boat launches, please thank them for their time and effort in keeping aquatic invasive species from entering our lakes.

2021 Social Committee



LAKE SOCIAL DINNER

No Date Has Been Set

for the 2021 Social Dinner,

as we are still in pandemic conditions!

We're looking forward to getting together with our neighbors around the lake and hope to once again enjoy the hospitality at UW-Wanderoos. **STAY TUNED.**

Expect a postcard as details are finalized.

FOURTH OF JULY BOAT PARADE



July 4 • Noon

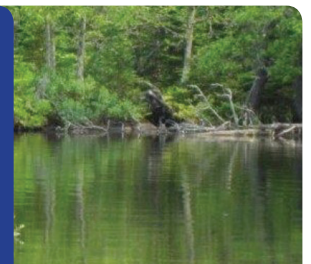
The Fourth of July boat parade will be socially distanced on Church Pine Lake starting at noon on the Fourth of July. Meet at the south end of the lake, by the landing. We will go counterclockwise.



FIRST ANNUAL PADDLE PARADE

A non-motorized paddle parade was held the Sunday of Labor Day Weekend, September 6, 2020, on Round Lake. Although it was very windy, about 15 brave souls attended and were treated to the start of the beautiful fall scenery around the lakes. There was a variety of boats including kayaks, paddle boards, canoes and pedal boats. The group met on the island at the south end of Round Lake for beverages and socially distanced comradery. This was the first annual paddle parade, and we plan to continue the tradition next year on the Sunday of Labor Day Weekend. Hope to see you there.

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



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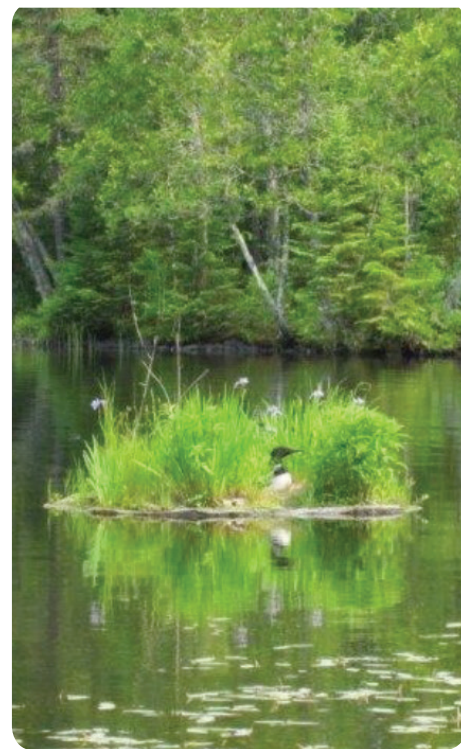
CPRB P&R District
PO Box 494
Osceola, WI 54020

LOON PLATFORM TO HELP NESTING LOONS

By Warren Wasescha

We love our loons. I knew this the moment I saw an eagle attempt to eat a baby loon on our lake. All the boats in the area instinctively began circling the baby loon, honking their boat horns to protect it from the predator. That's how much we love our loons. But we haven't seen baby loons in a while, and often it's due to mammalian predators that eat loon eggs in nests built on shore. So as a test, our Lake District board approved the purchase of a man-made, off-shore loon platform used successfully in many lakes. The platform provides safe nesting for loons, away from their on-shore mammalian predators. The Wisconsin DNR supports the use of these wildlife nesting structures, and has provided us with installation guidelines that we will strictly follow.

Our plan is to purchase one platform this spring, and moor it in an out-of-the-way location immediately following ice out. Beth Hartman gave us permission to install the platform near her island home between Church Pine and Round Lakes. It is a requirement to have the adjacent homeowner's permission to moor a loon platform. Experimentation is necessary to optimize the vegetation on these platforms, so it may take one to two years to establish the platform and see results. Based on this test, we will consider adding additional platforms where adjacent landowners provide us permission for placement. For the size of our chain of lakes, we could potentially have three to four of these platforms moored. We are looking forward to this experiment to grow the population of loons on our lakes.



We love our loons!