

HORSEHEAD LAKE PROTECTION & REHABILITATION DISTRICT

NO 1



September 10, 2018

Chairperson:

Dennis Batchelet
6461 Pigeon Road
Lake Tomahawk, WI 54539
(262) 670-5067
(262) 844-8193

Secretary:

Debra Bursik
431 S. Good Hope Rd.
DePere, WI 54115
(920) 339-8265

Co-Treasurers:

David Averbek
Kathy Averbek
S34W32840 Sierra Pass
Dousman, WI 53118
(262) 422-6882

Town Board:

Larry L. Hoffman
7892 Dorothy Road
Lake Tomahawk, WI 54539
(563) 249-1273

County Board:

Mitchell Ives
Rhineland WI 54501
(715) 362-6222



www.horseheadlake-wi.org

August Annual Meeting Notes (42nd)

- David & Kathy Averbek elected as Co-Treasurers. (3 year term)
- Voted 2018-'19 total budget \$57,793.42 with a tax levy of \$24,807.47.
- Mill rate for 2018-'19 set at \$1.1503 or \$115.03/\$100,000 property value.
- Noted 2017 total property value of \$21,566,170, the last available figure.
- Voted to continue membership in Wisconsin Shoreline Initiative.
- Voted to re-join Oneida Co. Lakes & Rivers Assoc.
- Announced 2019 Annual Meeting date - Aug. 17th, 2019

- Voted to repeal by-laws/Constitution and replace with online "People of the Lakes: A Guide to Wisconsin Lake Management Law.
- Created the Aeration Research Committee to investigate the feasibility of a second aerator.

Excellent Annual Meeting

A friendly group of Twenty-three owners and six visitors gathered at the Sloan Center to share concerns and solve problems.

Guest Speaker from Wisconsin Shoreland Initiative

John Richter, Plum Lake President, and leader of Wisconsin Shoreland Initiative, shared a Power Point presentation on preserving and protecting the northwoods environment, especially our lakes. Lakes represent 41% of our region's economic

foundation (tourism) and are a priceless resource for relaxation and enjoyment. He encouraged everyone to stay engaged and contact our legislators to urge return of local authority in managing our lakes - missing over the past 8 years. Over 100 laws have been passed to reduce local authority.

Lake Study Results Overview

By Kris Balge - Lake Study Committee

This year's lake study by Onterra is complete in its data collection and preliminary planning phases; however, additional review and planning in cooperation with the DNR is needed in order for the project to be considered finalized. This summer, a planning committee met with Tim Hoyman from Onterra to receive the initial findings from the study on the health of our lake. Overall, his report was reassuring and positive about the condition of our water

quality, aquatic plant community, and shoreland.

The water quality of Horsehead Lake is considered to be very good, partly due to our healthy plant community which provides a home for zooplankton that, in turn, keep the algae levels low. The shoreland of the lake was rated to be healthy overall, though it was observed that a significant number of properties have decreased the amount of natural habitat, including course woody habitat such as trees, foliage, etc. near the shoreline, which can greatly impact the ecosystem.

The aquatic plant community was assessed to be "as expected" for our type of lake. Horsehead Lake has 28 native species of plants and 3 invasive species. Only the 3 invasive species are truly considered "weeds," as the native species of plants are necessary and beneficial to the fish and ecosystem. Of the 28 native plants in our lake, we have had the same 4 dominant plants for the last decade. Numerous factors including prevention of the spread of the invasive species, timing of the peak growth periods, and cost vs. efficacy ratios, determine that mechanical harvesting is the only viable method for managing the aquatic plant

community in the lake and that the recommended time to do so is mid-summer. Annual removal of aquatic plants does not significantly alter the rate of biomass accumulating on the bottom of the lake or alter the aging, or "trophic state," of the lake, due to the relatively small amount of weeds that are removed mechanically compared to those that remain and decompose naturally.

Your Questions Answered - From the Survey

Why do we keep stocking bass into Horsehead? It's not a bass lake.

Actually, the DNR considers bass to be native to Horsehead Lake. Some of the stocking that occurs is done independently by the DNR and they only stock fish that are native to the lake. Thus, if it's a DNR-sponsored stocking, they may choose bass because they do consider it to be native here. When the Lake Association votes to stock fish, the choice of fish is generally decided by vote; however, cost can be a factor as well. Fish that are considered native to the lake can be requested from the DNR at no cost. Bluegills, sunfish, and

crappie are not considered native to Horsehead Lake and must be purchased at a cost per fish to stock. Quite simply, it's pricey to stock panfish and bass are free.

62% of respondents listed "water degradation" as one of their top three concerns. Is this a problem at Horsehead Lake?

The water quality readings at our lake are excellent and haven't changed since the beginning of the record, back in the 1970's. Our readings are consistently lower than the median score for our ecoregion. So, why do so many people have the perception that the water quality in the lake is getting worse? By science standards, water quality is measured by how far down scientists can see a black and white painted disk (Secchi Disk). The measurement is affected by levels of algae, which are typically very low in our lake due to our healthy level of plants. What

residents may be commenting on is water clarity which can be affected by turbidity. Our lake is a small lake which has much movement through waves, watercraft, recreation, etc. These factors can stir up muck, rip up plants, and "muddy the waters," so to speak, temporarily. Still, in the shallows, you can generally look down and see clear to the bottom because the overall quality is still very good.

Managing Eurasian Water Milfoil

Divers in September spent five hours searching our shoreline and found NO EWM.

Lake Water Testing

Hallie Moline and Joe Helmuth have been doing our lake testing. Water clarity was excellent in early spring, had a short period of algae and brown water. Kevin Collins will also be lending a hand.

Aerator Maintenance

Money has been set aside to replace parts as needed. Money has also been allocated and an Aerator Committee is researching adding another aerator to help sustain our struggling fish population.

Clean Boats/Clean Waters

Hallie Moline, reports we've experienced many fewer fishermen in the past three years. Risk to the lake from boats introducing Eurasian Water Milfoil is way down. Tom Niebler is our new volunteer for the coming year.

Check Your Boats and Trailers

Be sure your boat & trailer have NO plant material attached when you launch your boat. Leave it out for a week or wash with soap and water before re-launching.



Weed Cutting

Cutting of native aquatic plants was cancelled this year due to insufficient amounts to warrant the expense of \$18,000.

One-hundred hours of weed cutting has been scheduled for the 2nd week in July, 2019.

Notice of Winter Open Water

Notice is hereby given that no stakes or rope will mark open water during the winter season. Lake owners are obligated to make their

guests aware of this to release them from liability. Large-print signs at the Kildeer landing warn of open water danger.

We Need Your Email Address



From the Chair

By Dennis Batchelet

It's encouraging to note that our lake study is nearing a conclusion. Check out our website for more details on the survey. Also encouraging are the following:

- 1) we now have some new owners on the lake - several attended our annual meeting.
- 2) a number of new volunteers have stepped forward to continue our stewardship of the lake.
- 3) no Eurasian Water Milfoil was discovered

either by the lake study or divers.

Concerning, however, is the awareness that our panfish population has been somewhat reduced.

This was discussed at the meeting. We have only theories about why this has happened. Even the thousands of largemouth bass we planted are scarce. Everyone knows we have plenty of Northerns, so it seems plausible that between the bass and Northerns, our panfish have suffered. We are working with the DNR fish biologist to possibly have a fish shocking/seining survey count of our fish to give us some direction to follow. If that happens, it will be done in September.

We have taken the proactive step to set money aside and formed a committee to research the possibility of a second aerator - which was suggested in our lake study to further minimize fish kills in our shallow, eleven foot lake. Last winter we had about 30" of ice, together with deep snow, preventing sunlight from penetrating to sustain the aquatic plants, which provide oxygen.

Finally, I encourage everyone to continue being considerate of neighbors especially with noise & responsible boating.

Also, try to be conscious of excess lighting that may affect enjoyment of our natural surroundings.

Our 2018-'19 Volunteers

Webmaster:

Stuart Utley

Secchi testing/water

sampling: Hallie & Terry

Moline , Joe Helmuth, and Kevin Collins

Audit Committee:

Hans Delius & Bev Fagan

Clean Boats/Clean Waters:

Tom Niebler

Nominating Committee:

James Watters

Lake Study Support

Committee:

Dave & Kathy Averbeck

Linda Delius

Hallie & Terry Moline

Kris Batchelet

Aeration System Research

Committee:

James Watters

Paul Evert

Dave Averbeck

Paul Bursik

Lakes Convention:

James Watters

Sincerely,

Dennis Batchelet

David Averbeck

Debra Bursik

Mitchell Ives

Larry L. Hoffman

