

**Horsehead Lake Protection and Rehabilitation District #1
Annual Meeting
August 2, 2025**

Sloan Center Meeting Room, Lake Tomahawk, WI

Commissioners Present:

Dusten Tornow, Chairperson
Dave Averbeck, Treasurer
Kevin Collins, Secretary
Lenore Lopez, Oneida County Board Commissioner
Stephanie Sowatzka, Lake Tomahawk commissioner, absent

Meeting was called to order at 9:06 a.m. by Dusten Tornow. The meeting proceeded with an introduction of all members that were present. The list of attendees is attached (Attachment 1). The meeting was attended by two representatives, Jack Block and Mike Stronghart, from North Two Lake as observers. North Two Lake is considering incorporating into a lake district.

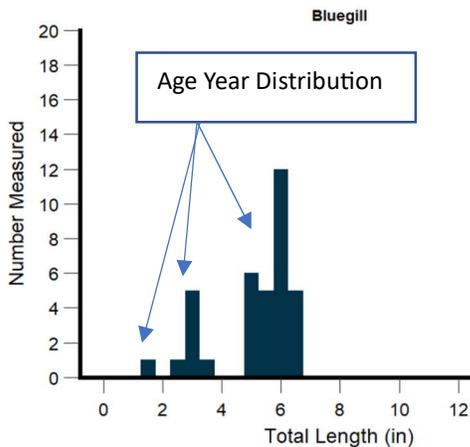
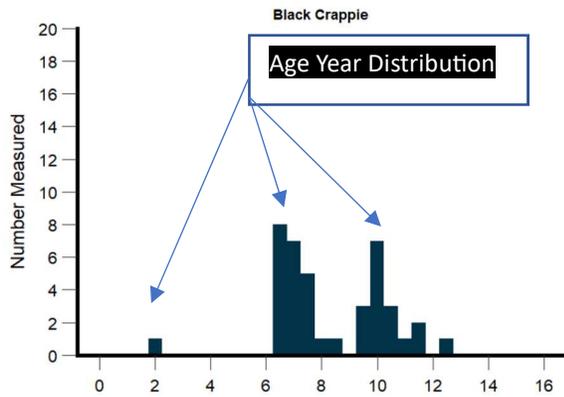
Dusten asked the members to approve the agenda with a change the scheduling of the agenda to allow Lenore Lopez to speak earlier and allow her to leave early. Kevin Collins made a motion to accept the change in the order of presentations, Dennis Batchelet seconded the motion. Everyone approved.

Dave Averbeck motioned to approve last year's meeting notes. It was seconded by Kevin Collins. Approved unanimously.

Dusten announced that there is a volunteer signup sheet and anyone can spare some time is encouraged to help out. Dusten reminded everyone that, by law, we are following the "People of the Lakes" Guide for Lake Districts and during the meeting we adhere to "Roberts Rules" meeting guidelines. Anyone can make a motion. Making motions, seconding motions and voting are only to be done by eligible voters. He asked that people state their name when making or seconding a motion so the secretary can record their names.

Our guest speaker this year was Nathan Lederman, Wisconsin DNR Fisheries Biologist out of the Rhinelander office (Nathaniel.lederman@wisconsin.gov). His past experience was with the IL DNR for six years and prior to that, the MN DNR for 3 years. Nathan is from southern Wisconsin and has been vacationing up in the north woods all his life. Nathan had just completed a fish survey on Horsehead Lake and was asked to explain the results of his preliminary findings to the members. Nathan presented a slide show of his findings which indicated that our lake is successfully stocking panfish with reproduction of the species occurring. Prior year's sampling (2014, 2019) showed no bluegill or crappie being collected during sampling. This year's results indicated that our lake crappie population density is in the 90th percentile of similar lakes. Our lake bluegill population density is in the 25th percentile





of similar lakes. Both crappie and bluegill had different size distributions indicating that they are reproducing naturally in Horsehead Lake. The introduction of more panfish into the lake is reshaping the fishery. Winterkill and low dissolved oxygen during the winter has been shaping our lake fishery over the years resulting in high numbers of northern pike and pumpkinseed, which are both low oxygen tolerant. With the stocking of panfish and additional aerators, we should see a change in the fishery as Mother Nature works to restructure the fishery predator/prey balance. Hopefully, we will see panfish recovery in our lake. Several questions were posed to Nathan and *his responses*.

- Should we still harvest northern pike? *Yes, by removing smaller pike, you reduce the demand on the prey food chain.*
- The DNR stocked bass years ago, why don't we see them in the lake? *Stocking success rates are variable, 13-15% is considered average, 30% survival thru the first year is considered exceptional. IT could be that the bass did not survive the winter and pike predation.*
- Someone commented that we had a lot of bass beds, how can we tell? *A lot of species make beds, pumpkinseed and bluegill make similar beds as bass. It could be that those were the beds, DNR electroshocking did not observe any bass in the lake, they could be there.*

- Does stocking bigger fish improve survival? *Yes, the DNR has to balance the cost of raising the fish to the success rate.*
- How does aeration affect the vegetation in the lake? *Nathan did not know, contact Scott Van Egren DNR.*
- Can you catch bullheads? *Yes, but there are mixed results. Nathan provided a number of documents of studies. Bullheads also increase turbidity in the lake.*
- When will the next fish survey be done on Horsehead Lake? *The DNR typically surveys a lake every 10 years. If there is a significant change in the lake such as winter kill of 1000's of fish or change in the vegetation, it may require a survey.*
- Recommendation for stocking? *Unofficially, Nathan recommended that we hold off on future stocking to see whether stocking was successful over time.*

The following is the stocking history for Horsehead Lake per the DNR.

Stocking Year	Source	Stocked Waterbody Name	Local Waterbody Name	Species	Strain(Stock)	Age Class	Number Fish Stocked	Avg Fish Length(IN)
2023	PRIVATE STOCKING	HORSEHEAD LAKE	Leta	BLUEGILL	Upper Mississippi River	YEARLING	5530	3
2021	PRIVATE STOCKING	HORSEHEAD LAKE	Leta	BLACK CRAPPIE	UNSPECIFIED	LARGE FINGERLING	750	3
2021	PRIVATE STOCKING	HORSEHEAD LAKE	Leta	BLUEGILL	UNSPECIFIED	LARGE FINGERLING	5000	4
2016	DNR	HORSEHEAD LAKE	Leta	LARGEMOUTH BASS	UNSPECIFIED	LARGE FINGERLING	18850	2.2
2015	DNR	HORSEHEAD LAKE	Leta	LARGEMOUTH BASS	UNSPECIFIED	LARGE FINGERLING	14327	1.9
2014	PRIVATE STOCKING	HORSEHEAD LAKE	Leta	BLUEGILL	UNSPECIFIED	SMALL FINGERLING	5990	2.5
2014	PRIVATE STOCKING	HORSEHEAD LAKE	Leta	BLACK CRAPPIE	UNSPECIFIED	YEARLING	3187	4
2014	DNR	HORSEHEAD LAKE	Leta	LARGEMOUTH BASS	UNSPECIFIED	LARGE FINGERLING	9150	3.2
2013	DNR	HORSEHEAD LAKE	Leta	LARGEMOUTH BASS	UNSPECIFIED	LARGE FINGERLING	16950	3.25
2012	DNR	HORSEHEAD LAKE	Leta	LARGEMOUTH BASS	UNSPECIFIED	LARGE FINGERLING	17980	3
1994	DNR	HORSEHEAD LAKE	Leta	NORTHERN PIKE	UNSPECIFIED	FRY	65000	0.4
1993	DNR	HORSEHEAD LAKE	Leta	NORTHERN PIKE	UNSPECIFIED	FRY	737300	0.5
1992	DNR	HORSEHEAD LAKE	Leta	NORTHERN PIKE	UNSPECIFIED	FRY	117600	1
1990	DNR	HORSEHEAD LAKE	Leta	NORTHERN PIKE	UNSPECIFIED	FRY	109605	1
1985	DNR	HORSEHEAD LAKE	Leta	WALLEYE	UNSPECIFIED	FINGERLING	18000	2
1984	DNR	HORSEHEAD LAKE	Leta	WALLEYE	UNSPECIFIED	FINGERLING	12800	3
1981	DNR	HORSEHEAD LAKE	Leta	WALLEYE	UNSPECIFIED	FRY	500000	
1976	DNR	HORSEHEAD LAKE	Leta	NORTHERN PIKE X MUSKELLUNGE	UNSPECIFIED	FINGERLING	479	9

Reports:

Lenore Lopez, Oneida County Board Commissioner

- Lenore reported that with the approved state budget, conservation areas received an increase in funding by over 30% for 2026-2027. This allows The Oneida County Land and Water Conservation group to be funded by the following: In addition, she reported that the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship program will

Name	Position	Email	% State funded
Boismenu, Stephanie	AIS Coordinator	sboismenu@oneidacountywi.gov	70
Jewell, Jonna	Secretary III	jjewell@oneidacountywi.gov	50
Sadauskas, Michele	County Conservationist	msadauskas@oneidacountywi.gov	100

receive \$28.25M/year for projects for the next 4 years. Past projects that have benefitted this area have been the LT boat launch and Bearskin Trail. Finally, she reported that a new study St. Francis Fall Lab (Univ. of MN) on wake boats further documents the damage to the lake bottom caused by operating wake boats and powerboats in a non-planing mode. HLPDRD note: *Please keep this in mind when operating your boat on our lake. Bow-up operation directs the force of water displacement into our lake bed which re-entrains the sediment and dislodge aquatic plants.*

Dusten Tornow, Chairperson:

- First year in many years that we had to perform weed harvesting. On 7/2/25, Dusten, Deb Bursik and Dennis Batchelet surveyed the lake. The east side of lake was not bad, however the west side was pretty bad. We had challenges getting Aquatic Plant Management harvester equipment launched. APM did not like the water entry on the state land near “Horsehead lake cabins” (Pyrchalla) off of Bluebird. APM then tried launching at the Bursik’s outlot and got stuck. They had to call a tow truck to pull the apparatus out. They were able to use the boat launch on the

south end of the lake. We had APM contracted for 3 days and based on their progress, it wasn't enough. We are still waiting for a final report. Dusten estimated that 4-5 acres (8500 ft³) was harvested. A discussion ensued on various aspects of harvesting. Someone mentioned that people on the west side of the lake are using chemical pellets to kill weeds by their shoreline. Any use of chemical eradication of weeds requires a WI DNR permit for use. *A search of the DNR permit database resulted in NO PERMITS were issued. HLPRD takes a dim view of illegal chemical use and will notify the DNR if we identify a landowner.*

- Aerators were operating this winter and we did not see any winter kill. However, it was a relatively mild Wisconsin winter.
- Dusten has been working on the web site and found that our district needs to have an American Disabilities Act compliant web site. Compliance deadline is 4/26/27. Dusten suggested that we form a committee to look into the requirements and revise the web site. Dave motioned to create a committee, Linda Deluis seconded. All approved.

Kevin Collins, Secretary:

- A remote dissolved oxygen (DO) sensor was placed in the Deep Hole monitoring spot in the lake and operated from October to April. The monitoring showed a U shaped curve in DO readings with the lowest levels occurring in mid-February (down to 1 ppm for one day). This would be a typical curve where, once ice covers the lake, the oxygen levels drop until either ice comes off the lake or plants start growing subsequently producing oxygen. This last winter was a relatively mild winter, we will need to see a more severe winter to confirm that we are properly aerating the lake. Kevin sent the results to the DNR (Scott Van Egren) for comment. He noted that, this year, we will have two sensors in the lake, one at the deep hole and another 500 yards south, both will have buoys indicating where they are located. Please do not remove the buoys or sensors. Deb Bursik asked if they need to do manual sampling over winter. The short answer is NO. James Watters asked is there a cost to replace monitors periodically? The answer is every year we have to replace the sensor membrane (about \$120 each) and every three years we need to send the devices in for maintenance and replace the batteries (~ \$ 500 each).

Audit Report:

- Dave reported that we switched to fiscal year audit to meet the regulations. Chuck Konsitzke has done the audit review for HLPRD. The last fiscal year (2023-2024) audit found no discrepancies.

Dave Averbeck, Treasurer

- Dave presented the Treasurer's Report (attachment 2). He estimated a total spend of \$ 38,129. This is approximately \$15,000 under budget. Dave estimates a carry-over of \$15,000 to next year, this is primarily from NOT spending money for fish stocking.

Old Business:

- None.

New Business:

- Dusten reported that fish stocking was not done. Nate Lederman (DNR) recommended that we pause stocking for a couple of years to see the results of past stocking effort. Dusten asked if we wanted to continue catch and release on bluegill ? Kevin made a motion to rescind the moratorium on bluegill harvesting and remove signage. Dennis Batchelet seconded. All approved.
- Budget discussion. Final Approved Budget included as attachment 3 (2 pages). Sections were presented,
 - Administration and Operation: Reduced attorney fees and increased postage costs.
 - Information and Education: Increased the budget for web site and backup vault.
 - Lake Management: Reduced budget for aerator power, weed harvesting permit was reduced to \$0 (3 year permit paid last year), aerator system maintenance increased \$1500 due to having to replace the graphite vane on older pumps, fish stocking reduced to \$0. Discussion over aquatic plant surveys occurred with James Watters reminding the members that we resolved last year to conduct surveys every other year. James Watters made a motion to add \$4000 to the budget for AIS weed survey. It was seconded. All but Dave and Kevin approved. Dennis Batchelet made a motion to add \$3500 to the budget to remove AIS weeds if necessary. Nancy Collins seconded. All approved. A motion was made to increase the weed harvesting budget to \$20,000 for next year and was seconded. This would account for a week's worth of weed harvesting. Discussion ensued regarding finding harvesting vendors, impact on environment and when to harvest. Dusten called the vote and all approved of the increase to \$20,000.

Dave summarized the approved budget to be \$46,000, which is an 61% increase and mill rate estimate of 121.78 per \$100,000 valuation. Kris Batchelet moved that we approve the budget, seconded by James Watters. All approved.

- Election of (1) Commissioner for a regular 3 year term.

Tony Ellis is running for election as commissioner. By rule, we asked if anyone else would like to run. There were no nominees. The ballot were distributed and members voted.

Ballots were completed, collected and counted by Kevin Collins. Ballots were counted. The tally was 15 votes for Tony Ellis, who was elected to the Board of Commissioners for Horsehead Lake Rehabilitation and Protection District No. 1 for a three-year term.

- August 1, 2025 was suggested to be the next annual meeting.

Final Comments: Meeting adjourned at 11:20 a.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Kevin Collins, Secretary

Attachment 2. Treasurers report

Treasurer's Report

7/16/20

Horsehead Lake Dist. Budget Tracker FY24-25	Budget	Actual Thru 6/30	Estimated July 1 - Aug 31	Estimated Total Year	Under/Over
Administration and Operations	Budget	Actual Thru 6/30	Est 7/1 - 8/31	Est FY24/25	Under/Over
Insurance – Total	\$1,600	\$1,527.00		\$1,527.00	\$73.00
Attorney Fees (easement)	\$1,000	\$167.00		\$167.00	\$833.00
Office Supplies & Postage	\$350	\$160.06	\$200.00	\$360.06	-\$10.06
Commissioners' Expense allowance	\$1,400	\$698.00	\$698.00	\$1,396.00	\$4.00
Oneida County Tech Services	\$125	\$65.45		\$65.45	\$59.55
Administration and Operations Subtotal	\$4,475.00	\$2,617.51	\$898.00	\$3,515.51	\$959.49

Information and Education	Budget	Actual Thru 6/30	Est 7/1 - 8/31	Est FY24/25	Under/Over
Wisconsin Association of Lakes (Member Dues)	\$250	\$250.00		\$250.00	\$0.00
River Alliance of Wisconsin (Donation)	\$200	\$200.00		\$200.00	\$0.00
Oneida Co. Lakes & Rivers Association	\$50	\$50.00		\$50.00	\$0.00
Convention expense reimbursement	\$400	\$0.00		\$0.00	\$400.00
Annual meetings and picnics	\$100	\$0.00	\$100.00	\$100.00	\$0.00
Annual meeting speaker stipend	\$100	\$0.00	\$100.00	\$100.00	\$0.00
Zoom annual license	\$200	\$167.90		\$167.90	\$32.10
Web Site & backup vault	\$300	\$388.95	\$5.90	\$394.85	-\$94.85
Information and Education Subtotal	\$1,600	\$1,056.85	\$205.90	\$1,262.75	\$337.25

Lake Management	Budget	Actual Thru 6/30	Est 7/1 - 8/31	Est FY24/25	Under/Over
Wisconsin Public Service – Total for Period	\$4,100	\$2,754.11	\$102.00	\$2,856.11	\$1,243.89
Weed harvesting	\$10,000	\$0.00	\$8,500.00	\$8,500.00	\$1,500.00
Weed harvesting permit	\$300	\$0.00	\$305.00	\$305.00	-\$5.00
Access road preparation / Maintenance	\$2,000	\$0.00	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$0.00
Aeration System Spring Preventive Maintenance	\$3,500	\$4,155.00		\$4,155.00	-\$655.00
Fish stocking	\$10,000	\$0.00		\$0.00	\$10,000.00
Fish stocking permit	\$300	\$0.00		\$0.00	\$300.00
DO sensor maintenance	\$500	\$0.00	\$550.00	\$550.00	-\$50.00
Public Bid notices	\$250	\$106.23		\$106.23	\$143.77
Aerator 1 pressure gauge fittings		\$42.22		\$42.22	-\$42.22
Aerator 1 pressure gauges		\$103.81		\$103.81	-\$103.81
Lake Management Subtotal	\$30,950.00	\$7,161.37	\$11,457.00	\$18,618.37	\$12,331.63

Total Operating Expenses	Budget	Actual Thru 6/30	Est 7/1 - 8/31	Est FY24/25	Under/Over
	\$40,025	\$10,835.73	\$12,560.90	\$23,396.63	\$16,628.37

Non-lapsable Capital Funds – 2nd aerator	Budget	Actual Thru 6/30	Est 7/1 - 8/31	Est FY24/25	Under/Over
Loan payment due March 15	\$13,217	\$13,216.73		\$13,216.73	\$0.27
DO Sensor replacement		\$1,490.43		\$1,490.43	-\$1,490.43
Bank Wire Fee		\$25.00		\$25.00	-\$25.00
Total 2nd aerator Project Expenses	\$13,217	\$14,732.16	\$0.00	\$14,732.16	-\$1,515.16

Grand Total Operating + Capital Spend	Budget	Actual Thru 6/30	Est 7/1 - 8/31	Est FY24/25	Under/Over
	\$53,242	\$25,567.89	\$12,560.90	\$38,128.79	\$15,113.21

Income	Budget	Actual Thru 6/30	Est 7/1 - 8/31	Est FY24/25	vs Budget
Interest – Total for Period	\$0	\$29.14	\$3.50	\$32.64	\$32.64
Total Tax Settlements	\$25,485.00	\$18,236.77	\$7,248.23	\$25,485.00	\$0.00
Other - EMC Insurance refund		\$31.00		\$31.00	\$31.00
Total Income	\$25,485.00	\$18,296.91	\$7,251.73	\$25,548.64	\$63.64

Year End Carryover Estimate

June 30 Checking Balance	\$1,372.11
June 30 Money Market Balance	\$19,116.91
July 1 - Aug 31 Estimated Income	\$7,251.73
July 1 - Aug 31 Estimated Spend	\$12,560.90
Estimated Carryover	\$15,179.85

Attachment 3. Final approved Budget for 2025-2026

Horsehead Lake District Fiscal Year 2025 -2026 Approved Budget	Approved FY '25 -'26 Budget	Approved FY '24 -'25 Budget	Comments
Administration and Operations			
Insurance	\$1,600	\$1,600	
Attorney Fees	\$500	\$1,000	
Office Supplies & Postage	\$500	\$350	
Commissioners' Fees	\$1,400	\$1,400	
Oneida County Tech Services	\$125	\$125	
Administration and Operations Subtotal	\$4,125	\$4,475	
Information and Education			
Wisconsin Assoc of Lakes Dues	\$250	\$250	
River Alliance of Wisconsin Dues	\$200	\$200	
Oneida Lakes & Rivers Assoc Dues	\$50	\$50	
Convention expense reimbursement	\$400	\$400	
Annual meetings and picnics	\$100	\$100	
Annual meeting speaker stipend	\$100	\$100	
Zoom meeting license	\$200	\$200	
Web Site & backup vault	\$400	\$300	
Information and Education Subtotal	\$1,700	\$1,600	
Lake Management			
Wisconsin Public Service - aerator power	\$3,300	\$4,100	
Weed harvesting	\$20,000	\$10,000	
Weed harvesting permit	\$0	\$300	
Access road preparation / Maintenance	\$2,000	\$2,000	
Aeration System Preventive Maintenance	\$5,000	\$3,500	
Fish stocking	\$0	\$10,000	DNR does not recommend more fish stocking at this time
DNR Fish Stocking Permit	\$0	\$300	Not reqd by DNR till 2027
Aquatic Plant Studies	\$4,000	\$0	
Aquatic invasive species removal	\$3,500	\$0	
DO sensor maintenance	\$1,100	\$500	
Public Bid Notifications	\$250	\$250	
Lake Management Subtotal	\$39,150	\$30,950	
Contingency			
Contingency Fund	\$3,000	\$3,000	
Grand Total Operating Expenses	\$47,975	\$40,025	
Non-lapsable Funds For capital expenditures – 2nd aerator			
Aerator Loan due to the State Board of Commissioners Public Lands	\$13,217	\$13,217	Debit Balance = \$14,578.08 2 Remaining Payments => \$13,216.73 on March 15 of 2026 ~ \$2959.97 on March 15, 2027
Tax Projection			
Budgeted Operating Expense + Capital Spend	\$61,192	\$53,242	Fish stocking not budgeted FY25-26
Carryover	\$15,179.85	\$27,757.05	Lower carryover due to weed cutting
Final Tax Levy	\$46,012	\$25,485	Increased budget & lower carryover
Equalized Property Value	\$37,782,663	\$37,782,663	Using 2025 Equalized Property Values
Mill Rate/1000	\$1.2178	\$0.6745	Increase due to lower carryover
District Tax on \$100,000 Property	\$121.78	\$67.45	

Estimated Carryover and Tax Rate use estimated Year End expenditures & income and 2025 Equalized Property Values

Attachment 3. Final approved Budget for 2025-2026

Horsehead Lake District Fiscal Year 2025 -2026		Approved FY '25 -'26 Budget	Comments
Approved Budget			
Administration and Operations			
Insurance		\$1,600	
Attorney Fees		\$500	
Office Supplies & Postage		\$500	
Commissioners' Fees		\$1,400	
Oneida County Tech Services		\$125	
Administration and Operations Subtotal		\$4,125	
Information and Education			
Wisconsin Assoc of Lakes Dues		\$250	
River Alliance of Wisconsin Dues		\$200	
Oneida Lakes & Rivers Assoc Dues		\$50	
Convention expense reimbursement		\$400	
Annual meetings and picnics		\$100	
Annual meeting speaker stipend		\$100	
Zoom meeting license		\$200	
Web Site & backup vault		\$400	
Information and Education Subtotal		\$1,700	
Lake Management			
Wisconsin Public Service - aerator power		\$3,300	
Weed harvesting		\$20,000	Original proposal = \$10,000
Weed harvesting permit		\$0	Original proposal = \$300
Access road preparation / Maintenance		\$2,000	
Aeration System Preventive Maintenance		\$5,000	
Fish stocking		\$0	
DNR Fish Stocking Permit		\$0	
Aquatic Plant Studies		\$4,000	Original proposal = \$0
Aquatic invasive species removal		\$3,500	Original proposal = \$0
DO sensor maintenance		\$1,100	
Public Bid Notifications		\$250	
Lake Management Subtotal		\$39,150	
Contingency			
Contingency Fund		\$3,000	
Grand Total Operating Expenses		\$47,975	
Non-lapsable Funds For capital expenditures – 2nd aerator			
Aerator Loan due to the State Board of Commissioners Public Lands		\$13,217	Debit Balance = \$14,578.08 2 Remaining Payments => \$13,216.73 on March 15 of 2026 ~ \$2959.97 on March 15, 2027
Total Budgeted Operating Expense + Capital Spend		\$61,192	