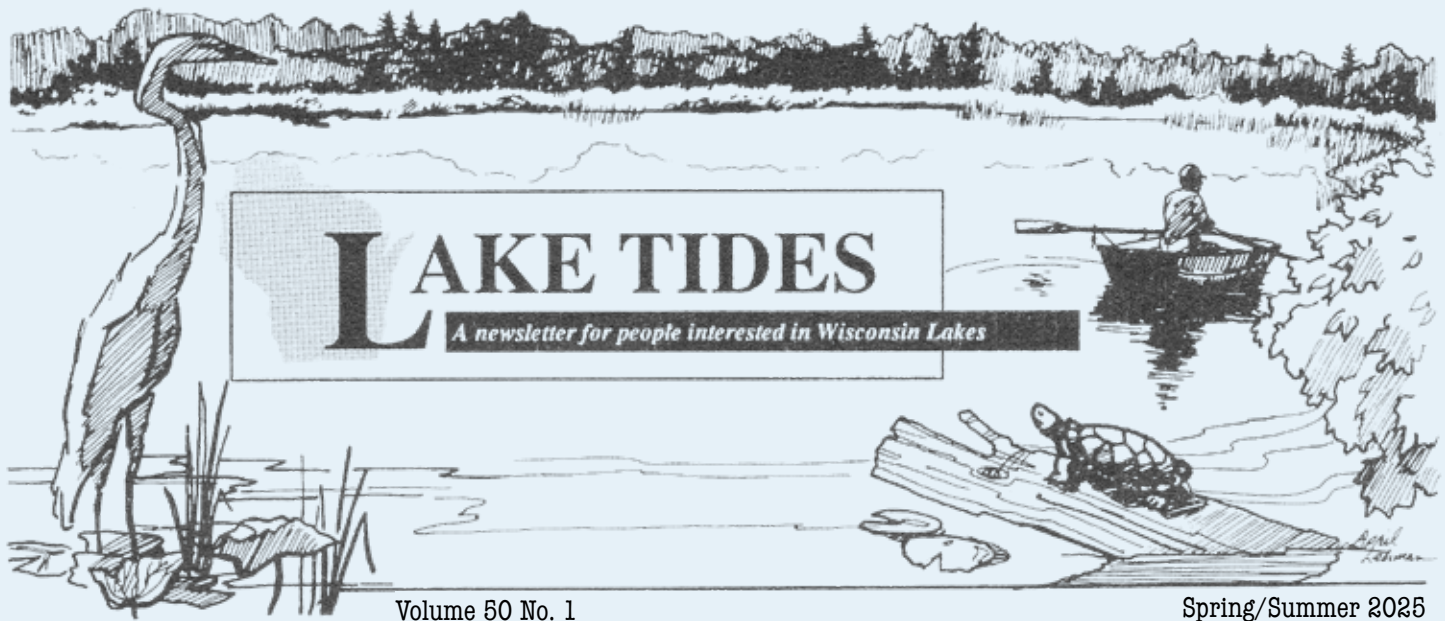




Taking the Long View on Lake Recreational Conflicts

By Eric Olson, Director and Lake Specialist, Extension Lakes

It's hard to miss the level of public conflict across Wisconsin regarding the relatively new sport of wake surfing and the motorboats people use to generate surfable waves (aka "wake boats"). Rather than stake out a position in the debate, we think it's helpful to take a longer view on the matter and see how citizens and lawmakers have settled some past controversies related to lake recreation. In the spirit of marking the 50th volume of *Lake Tides*, we thought it might also be a chance to highlight the extensive set of articles that make up our archive. We hope this tour through time helps some people see the recurring themes and solutions that have popped up from time to time.

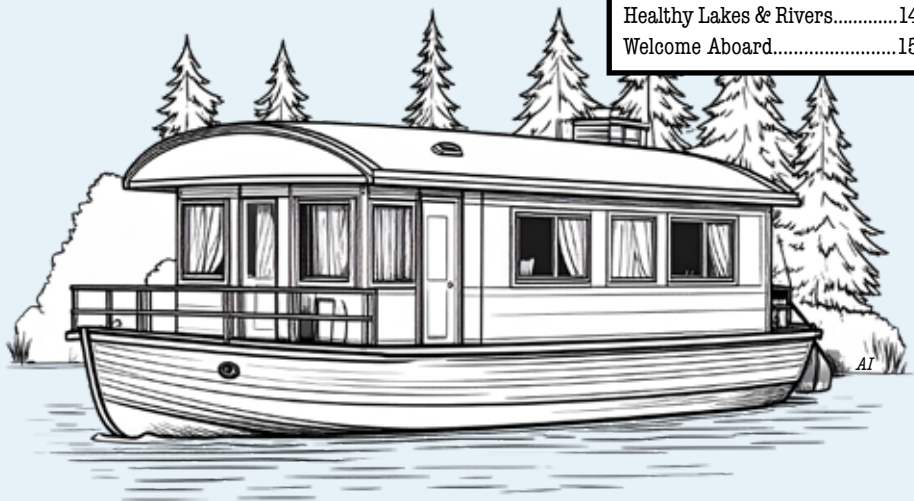
1950s: the Wisconsin "flushed waste" controversies

The Wisconsin Lakes and Rivers Partnership's origin story is rooted in debates over recreational activities on lakes. This story is captured in Volume 22 of *Lake Tides* in an article explaining how the statewide nonprofit representing lake interests – now called Wisconsin Lakes – came into existence. Robert Schrameyer, Past President of the Wisconsin Federation of Lakes, sets the stage by noting that in the 1950s the Wisconsin Legislature was prepared to allow the use of houseboats on lakes, and permit the flushing of houseboat toilets as long as it occurred more than 300 feet from shore on all lakes except Lake Winnebago, where the distance was set at 100 feet. This activated leaders from across seven different lakes to band together and form the Federation of Wisconsin Lake Property Owners' Associations, Inc.

The new group set their sights on the houseboat and flushed waste issue and were successful; laws passed by the legislature in the late 1950s and early 1960s prohibit the dumping of marine sewage and waste into all inland lakes. Today, any boat with a wastewater

IN THIS ISSUE

Lake Tides Turns 50!.....	2
Scholarship Winners.....	5
Wisconsin Lakes Update.....	6
Communicating Data Stories.....	7
Water Scorpions.....	8
Capacity Corner.....	10
Great Lakes Landing Blitz.....	12
AIS Snapshot Day.....	13
2025 Convention Recap.....	14
Healthy Lakes & Rivers.....	14
Welcome Aboard.....	15



(Continued on page 4)



Lake Tides Turns 50!

Retro look and feel takes us back

By Amy Kowalski, Communication Specialist, Extension Lakes



The theme for the 1997 Lakes Convention was "Water from Another Time," so Jeff Bode (now retired Wisconsin DNR) and Bob Korth (now retired Extension Lakes) dressed the part. We celebrate the visionary efforts of these two, along with many other exceptionally intelligent folks, whose dedication and insight were instrumental in shaping lake policies that continue to protect and preserve Wisconsin's treasured waters.

This year marks a monumental milestone for *Lake Tides* as we celebrate churning out the 50th volume of the "newsletter for people who are interested in Wisconsin's lakes." For half a century, *Lake Tides* has been a constant source for anyone passionate about Wisconsin's

beautiful inland lakes, providing valuable information, important updates, and stories that connect and inspire us all.

We thought it might be fun to take a trip down memory lane and remember the stories and the people who shared them. Looking through the past five decades of *Lake Tides*, a song popped into my head: The Pretenders' *Hymn to Her*, which reminds us, "Some things change, some stay the same."

Boats – bigger, faster, more

The carrying capacity of a lake, or the amount of human recreation it can handle before conflict arises (social carrying capacity) or signs of degradation appear (biological carrying capacity), has not changed, but the types of recreation have. Our feature story covers how these recreational use conflicts have evolved over time and how they've been documented in *Lake Tides*.

We remain committed to providing high-quality news about lake ecology, laws and regulations, and related water resource opportunities.

Shoreland best practices 1975:

1. Maintain a natural shoreland buffer
2. Leave existing vegetation
3. Don't fertilize
4. Use phosphorus-free detergents
5. Maintain adequate septic tank filter field size
6. Don't rake leaves into the lake
7. Don't pile or burn trash on the ice
8. Clean your septic tank every other year

From 1975: Vol. 1, No. 2

Now

Then

Climate – then and now

Acid rain, one of the topics from the 1981 Lake District Commissioners Convention, thankfully has not been on our radar (literally) since the early 1990s, when amendments to the Clean Air Act were passed at the federal level. These amendments, along with Wisconsin's own 1986 law, led to a substantial reduction in sulfur dioxide emissions, the main cause of acid rain.

However, as the planet continues to warm at an accelerated rate, the increased warming of our inland lakes and streams have negatively affected fish species like brook trout and manoomin (wild rice) populations. In addition, increased heavy rain events have caused flooding, affecting both aquatic and human communities.

Nature knows best

Throughout the decades, *Lake Tides* has shared best practices for keeping our inland lakes healthy and thriving. It's comforting to know that many of these practices have remained constant (often inexpensive or even free) over the years – see the examples below. We have taken our

Shoreland best practices 2020:

1. Let trees be
2. Don't mow - let it grow
3. Seed yourself (harvest native plant seeds and propagate them)
4. Skip the fertilizer
5. Get duff (leave the leaves - don't rake into storm drains, the street, or the lake)
6. Make a swerve (redirect water from downspouts away from lake)
7. Plan now, save later (don't add more hard surfaces to property)
8. Seize nature (protect existing natural areas)
9. Don't flip the switch (try outdoor composting instead of using the garbage disposal)
10. Scoop the poop (pick up pet waste - especially in urban areas).

From 2020: Vol. 45, No. 2



cues from nature and tried to impress upon our readers, specifically waterfront property owners, the importance of living in harmony with the land, water, and other creatures. It is a simple way to keep our watery jewels sparklingly fabulous!

Students have the best ideas



Did you know that two popular Wisconsin water programs began from the ideas of students? That's right, the Wisconsin

Citizen Lake Monitoring Network (CLMN), made up of 1,000+ volunteers who collect high-quality lake monitoring data, came from an idea developed by high school students in Ohio. *Lake Tides* editors asked for feedback in the November 1975 issue to help determine if folks in Wisconsin were interested in collecting water quality data on a regular basis. Although the CLMN didn't officially begin until 1986, several Wisconsin lakes have records of water quality data that predate that year.



Similarly, the Clean Boats, Clean Waters watercraft inspection program bloomed from a group of middle-schoolers in Minocqua, Hazelhurst, and Lake Tomahawk, Wisconsin,

who were researching the impact tourism had on their town and the negative impacts aquatic invasive species (AIS) might have on the surrounding lakes. These young activists proposed a plan to prevent the spread of a particular AIS – Eurasian watermilfoil – among the lakes in their area. They received a cash award from the Christopher Columbus Fellowship Foundation for their innovative idea and used it to create educational kits for boaters – covered in Volume 27, No. 4, Fall 2002. Not only did they create awareness of AIS, but also the prevention steps each boater needs to take when leaving a waterbody. The state of Wisconsin continues to use this model today!

Blending art and science

One of the traditions we have tried to continue is using pen and ink drawings to help tell the story. Although a picture is worth a thousand

words, sometimes a drawing or cartoon can do a better job of conveying our message or getting your attention. Many creative minds and hands have contributed to *Lake Tides* over the years, with a few standards that have stood the test of time. We hope you enjoy some of the past artwork sprinkled throughout this anniversary issue.

The future

Although the creation and distribution of *Lake Tides* is faced with budget shortfalls and reduced staff, we remain committed to providing high-quality news about lake ecology, laws and regulations, and related water resource opportunities. Because our dedicated staff continue to tackle this charge (something that has remained the same), we are offering more frequent and up-to-date online content through social media and our website – a new look and updates coming this summer. Additionally, we started a new bi-monthly E-news service in January called *Lake Ripples* (a change that gives our readers more frequent updates and resources).

As we celebrate this golden anniversary, we look forward to many more years of *Lake Tides* – and now *Lake Ripples* – continuing to educate, engage, and unite those who cherish Wisconsin's lakes. Here's to 50 years and to the countless more to come! 🌊

A way to help financially

An endowment fund was started to eventually support undergraduate fellowships, graduate assistantships, newsletter production expenses, and other *Lake Tides* expenses.

To contribute to this endowment account, please go to <https://give.uwsp.edu/g/wisconsin-lakes>

For more about this effort, read the article "Can We Fly this Balloon...Forever?" on page 6 of *Lake Tides* Vol. 42, No. 2 (Spring/Summer 2017).



Sign up for Lake Ripples

Go to uwsp.edu/uwexlakes and click Newsletter to find the "subscribe now - it's FREE!" button.

Searchable database

Go to uwsp.edu/uwexlakes and click "Newsletter" to find a searchable database of all our past *Lake Tides* articles.

Connect with us on:

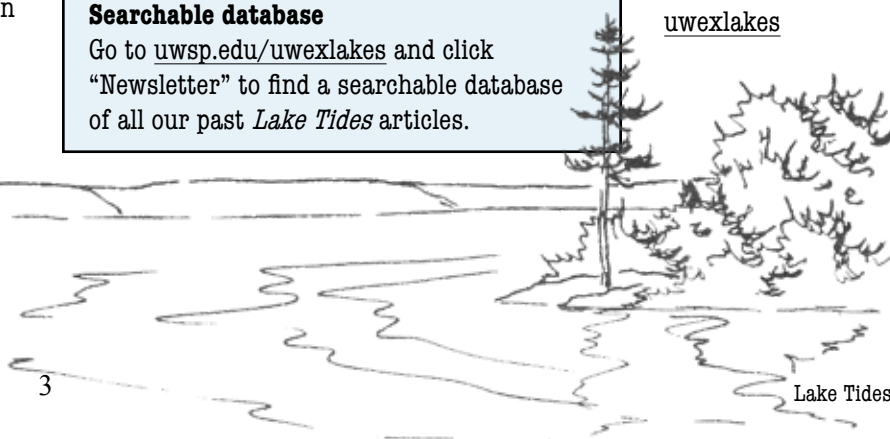
Website:
uwsp.edu/uwexlakes

Instagram:
[extensionlakes](https://www.instagram.com/extensionlakes)

Facebook:
[wilakespartnership](https://www.facebook.com/wilakespartnership)

LinkedIn:
[company/extension-lakes](https://www.linkedin.com/company/extension-lakes)

YouTube:
[uwexlakes](https://www.youtube.com/uwexlakes)



Robert Korth



system operating on a lake must disable any mechanism that would allow direct dumping of waste into surface waters. On several larger inland lakes and the Great Lakes, marinas provide pump out facilities that safely move on-boat waste to proper treatment facilities.

1980s and 90s: Advent of personal watercraft

Jet Skis, Waverunners®, and similar personal watercraft (PWC) were an emerging activity in the late 1980s, appealing to young recreationists seeking thrills on the water. In the fall of 1994, a *Lake Tides* article noted that the number of PWC in Wisconsin had doubled from 1989 to 1993 – from 5,000 to over 10,000. Local officials, lake organization leaders, and lawmakers were getting an earful from residents who viewed the new watercraft as a nuisance. The watercraft manufacturers were leery of laws and rules that might limit a fast growing business sector, and one that introduced more people to water sports.

State and local officials contemplating regulations on PWC needed to navigate Wisconsin's Public Trust Doctrine, derived from Article IX of the State Constitution which provides that the waters of the state are "common highways and forever free." Over time, this has largely been interpreted to allow greater recreational access to our lakes and rivers. To prevent a certain type of watercraft from being used in a lake

(or portions of a lake), advocates would need to demonstrate substantial differences between the regulated watercraft and others to justify the stricter regulations.

In September 1994, Wisconsin's Attorney General James Doyle shared an informal opinion with the Legislature concluding that state law "authorizes the enactment of ordinances that treat different types of watercraft differently if justified by reasons of public health, safety, or welfare...(t)here is no indication that the Legislature intended to prohibit municipalities from doing precisely what the Legislature itself did – namely, enacting craft-specific regulations." State laws were passed at the time requiring that PWC operate at a slow-no-wake speed anytime they are within 200 of the shore or 100 feet of another watercraft. A series of articles in *Lake Tides* in the early 1990s documented the back-and-forth in the Legislature that resulted in those regulations. Thirty years ago, to mark the 20th anniversary of this newsletter, there was a lead story summarizing a range of water recreation safety issues in the 1990s.

2020s: Loving lakes to death

Things seemed relatively quiet on the lake recreation front in the early portion of the 21st Century. The boat operator training requirement passed in the 1990s, along with the PWC rules, meant that a growing share of lake users were at least exposed to the state's boating safety laws. More recently, the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in a sharp increase in outdoor recreation in general and boating in particular, as more people sought out the lake environment for family recreation. In 2020, boat registrations in Wisconsin grew by 2%, and angler license sales increased by 11%.

The increase in lake use has been accentuated by the growing popularity of wake surfing and the sale of boats designed to create surfable waves. This lower-speed water sport is viewed by many as a more accessible way for people of all ages to enjoy being on the lake. However, the impacts of large wakes on other lake users, shallow lake bottoms, and shorelines can be significant. Much like the debates around PWC in the 1990s, there are competing viewpoints on the best approach to managing the activity and the related watercraft.

The Wisconsin Lakes and Rivers Partnership's origin story is rooted in debates over recreational activities on lakes.



Since some boats that are not specifically marketed as “wake boats” can be modified and operated to generate large surfable wakes, many of the local ordinances focus on regulating the activity of wake surfing and/or generating large wakes. As of this summer, dozens of communities have passed local ordinances restricting or prohibiting wake surfing on all or a portion of specific lakes. A coalition of conservation organizations has formed that focuses heavily on the wake sports issue, including Wisconsin Lakes (the heir to Wisconsin Federation of Lakes) and Wisconsin Wildlife Federation, as well as two relatively new organizations – Lakes at Stake and Last Wilderness Alliance.

Looking all the way back to the 1950s, there has consistently been a focus in Wisconsin on matching new lake recreational activities with the types of lakes – and locations on lakes – that can safely and sustainably support them. There has been, and continues to be, a way for citizens and lake organizations to inform and connect with state lawmakers about statewide minimum standards. This has been complemented by citizen-led efforts to promote and support local regulations that reflect specific lake conditions.



For decades, Wisconsin’s state and local boating regulations appear to have worked well in balancing new boating activities with a diverse collection of lakes.

This lower-speed water sport is viewed by many as a more accessible way for people of all ages to enjoy being on the lake.

Do you think this system is still working? If you would like to have your voice heard on this or other lake-related regulations, contact your local lake organization, one of the aforementioned groups, and/or your local and state representatives. Find your representatives at <https://www.commoncause.org/find-your-representative/addr/>.

Congrats to the Wisconsin Lakes Partnership Scholarship Winners

The University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point College of Natural Resources (CNR) selected Shannon Kearney and Eathan Zimmerman to receive the Wisconsin Lakes Partnership Scholarship this year. This award is given to deserving students studying or researching in fields relevant to the preservation and enhancement of inland surface water resources in Wisconsin. These scholarships are made possible through a generous donation from Roger Dreher, who has been active in Partnership activities for many years at the local and state level.

Shannon is majoring in Environmental Education and Interpretation with a Wildlife minor and hails from Rosemount, MN. She has also been a Student Assistant with our Extension Lakes team since 2023. Shannon says, “I absolutely love working for Extension Lakes, they have helped me grow professionally as well as personally. They are such a supportive group of people who truly care about the conservation of lakes, and being part of their team has been an incredible experience.”

Eathan is from Stevens Point, WI and is working toward a degree in Water Resources. He says, “I plan to pursue a career in lake and river management once I graduate. Thanks to your generous scholarship, I am now one step closer to achieving my goal.”



Celebrating our scholarship winners at the CNR Symposium (L to R): Eric Olson, Shannon Kearney, Amy Kowalski, Eathan Zimmerman, and Sara Windjue.

Tom Charlesworth





WISCONSIN LAKES

We Say Hello, Goodbye

Leadership changes come to Wisconsin Lakes

By Mike Engleson, Executive Director, Wisconsin Lakes

2025 is shaping up to be a year of major changes in leadership for Wisconsin Lakes. While the organization says hello to three new directors, its president and Executive Director either departed or are departing soon. Here's the rundown:

The organization welcomed three new directors in late 2024 and early 2025, replacing outgoing directors David Zelinger, Nick Homan, and Kristin Charlton.

Donna Carlson



Jacob Schmidt



Dan Johnson



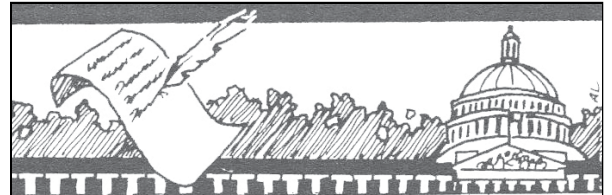
Donna Carlson of the Grindstone Lake Association joined the board, along with Jacob Schmidt, who owns Good Earth Consulting, LLC and is the former Executive Director of the Geneva Lake Environmental Agency. Dan Johnson from the Waupaca Chain of Lakes also recently took a board seat and is one of the volunteers who runs Wisconsin Lakes' Lakekit program of websites for lake organizations. Welcome Donna, Jake, and Dan!

Departing the organization are Executive Director Michael Engleson and President Dan Butkus.

As was announced last fall, Engleson will be leaving to take on other pursuits, shifting to part-

time status at the end of June and finishing up in early fall. A search for his successor is ongoing at the time of printing and more information can be found at wisconsinlakes.org.

The biggest surprise came with the unexpected resignation of Dan Butkus from the Presidency and the Board due to a serious health issue that made it difficult for him to serve effectively. The recent recipient of two awards, the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation's 2025 Conservationist of the Year and the Wisconsin Lakes and Rivers Partnership's 2025 Lake Stewardship Award for Excellence in Building Partnerships, Dan will be sorely missed. One of Dan's nominators for his Stewardship Award put it best, saying Dan "put the good of Wisconsin's waters ahead of self." A new President – chosen in early May – can be found on the Wisconsin Lakes website.



Despite all these changes, Wisconsin Lakes continues its work to advocate for sound, science-based lake policy in Wisconsin, evidenced by advocacy for legislation limiting the impact of wakesports on the state's lakes and the revision of the statutes covering lake district governance.

The board of directors is also involved in a long-term planning process, currently working to establish a two-way communications system between the organization and local lake organizations. As part of that effort, look for a board-led series of online and in-person presentations on topics of interest to the community coming soon.

Wisconsin Lakes is a 501c3 nonprofit organization working on conservation of our state's lakes and waters. We also serve as the association of local and regional lake organizations for Wisconsin. Membership and donation information are available at wisconsinlakes.org.



Retro logo for Wisconsin Lakes, formerly known as the Wisconsin Association of Lakes.



Community-based Research

Communicating water quality research through data stories

By Becky Abler and Rick Hein, University of Wisconsin-Green Bay

As faculty working with undergraduates in community-based research on water quality, one of the most important aspects of our work is teaching students how to tell “data stories”. Our research focuses on several small tributaries of Lake Michigan, located in Manitowoc County. Specifically, we study how intensive restoration projects, land use, and environmental factors like rainfall affect these streams, and ultimately Lake Michigan.

Over the summer sampling season, student researchers become adept at field and laboratory techniques to collect thousands of data points that evaluate water quality. Still, these students are beginning researchers and find it challenging to work with large sets of quantitative data. So when they are presenting their findings to others, these students often focus too much on reporting the numbers without thinking about how to make their discoveries have meaning to a wider audience.

In order to help them think outside the academic and research setting, we rely on the robust partnerships we have formed with local nonprofits, government organizations, and members of the community. Representatives of these groups attend student practice presentations to provide feedback. Likewise, our focus as faculty members is to help students communicate with a goal of fostering

data-driven decision making around water quality management. Students use the data they have collected to identify and develop their observations into major “data stories”. We encourage them to pick a few stories that illustrate the most important impacts on the stream. Once students identify their stories, they develop graphs and photographic details that can best illustrate the critical issues affecting our local streams. Our community partners help ensure that students are presenting these stories in a clear, concise manner. A key outcome of these partnerships is that, by the end of the sampling season, students have created well-developed “data stories” that effectively inform a wide audience – from homeowners to government officials. Through this hands-on research and sharing, students foster public awareness and support evidence-based decision making.

Outcomes of this work can include simple changes with immediate impact. For example, students realized that a local institution was allowing grass clippings to enter a nearby stream – causing oxygen and nutrient issues. A simple conversation with that stakeholder resulted in changed mowing practices, and water quality improved. Longer-term outcomes include development and implementation of watershed management plans, enhanced local partnerships, and increased citizen engagement. This collaboration improves water quality,

develops students’ professional skills, and strengthens ties between the university and the community. 🌱

A key outcome of these partnerships is that, by the end of the sampling season, students have created well-developed “data stories” that effectively inform a wide audience – from homeowners to government officials.



Students Karen Bergen, Rachel Hock, Tony Skupas, and Ashley Muench sample water quality in a Manitowoc County stream (Summer 2024). Presenting their results at the Lakeshore Water Summit in October are (L to R) Morgan Burnside, Timbre Kott, Karen Bergen, Caleb Newberry, and Ashley Muench.



Becky Abler



Water Scorpion

Master of disguise, fearsome predator, aquatic acrobat

By Grace Hasse, Extension Lakes Student Assistant, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point

Sara Windue



Can you pick out the two water scorpions that Grace found while collecting aquatic plants and animals during the 2024 Waupaca County Field Day event for elementary school students?

Have you ever wandered along the banks of a pond or marsh and spotted what looks like a twig floating near the water's edge? You might have thought it was just a piece of natural debris. But if you took a closer look, it might be something far more intriguing – imagine an underwater walking stick, stealthily lurking among the reeds and aquatic plants.

Chances are, you

were actually eyeing a water scorpion from the genus *Ranatra*. Sometimes these bugs go unnoticed by even the most observant nature enthusiasts.

Sneak attack

Those long appendages at the front are not antennae, but rather the forelegs that are used to grasp their prey. These “raptorial” limbs

are specialized for attack. Much like a praying mantis, *Ranatra* uses the sit-and-wait strategy to ambush their prey. The water scorpion's forelegs are elongated and jointed for a much wider range of motion than a human's elbow capability. This flexibility allows for an instantaneous strike and capture of unsuspecting prey. The forelegs are not just designed for brute strength; they are also incredibly sensitive. The tiny hairs on the limbs detect vibrations and movements in the water, alerting *Ranatra* of danger or potential prey. Their raptorial limbs showcase the efficiency of these specialized appendages, and are the key to the water scorpion's aquatic success.

Good eats

The water scorpion's meal of choice is aquatic invertebrates and insects, although they will sometimes go for tadpoles or small fish. Among their favorite snacks are mosquito larvae. So, if you spot a *Ranatra*, give it a nod of appreciation for keeping those summer pests in check. To consume these tasty treats, *Ranatra* will insert their piercing rostrum into the insect and inject an enzymatic fluid. The fluid causes the insides of the prey to become mush, allowing the water scorpion to drink it like a Slurpee®. Bon appétit!

Impressive equipment

The name water scorpion may cause fear to those who hear it – conjuring images of venomous stingers and menacing pincers. But fear not, our aquatic friend is nothing like its desert-dwelling namesake. The “stinger” extending along the abdomen is really no stinger at



all; it works like a snorkel! This is why you might see a water scorpion tilted at an angle under the water's surface. It will leave the tube tip above the surface to wait for prey for extended periods of time. If its snorkel equipment didn't impress you, this aquatic insect can take flight. Yep, you read that right, these fearsome predators are also aquatic acrobats! Water scorpions have fully developed wings tucked away, only revealing them when the time is right to show off their flying skills.

Functional camo

These three-inch-long bugs are sneaky and rarely seen, due to their excellent camouflage. Water scorpions hide along the banks of ponds, marshes, or lakes, and when it's time to reproduce, they continue to use their ability to blend in. Females will lay their eggs on aquatic plants while ensuring that their offspring won't be disturbed. The eggs are often camouflaged to look like tiny plant parts, making them nearly invisible to predators. Once the nymphs hatch, they are already equipped with the skills of their parents. As they grow, these young water scorpions will molt several times. Each time, discarding their old exoskeleton and emerging with an even better disguise. This cycle of life ensures their camouflaged existence.



Appreciating small wonders

Despite their elusive nature, these insects are important to freshwater ecosystems. By preying on mosquito larvae and other aquatic invertebrates, *Ranatra* helps control populations. They are a sign of good water quality and contribute to the health of their habitats. Next time you're out by your favorite waterbody, take a moment to appreciate the masters of disguise lurking just beneath the surface! 🐼

It's difficult to see this Ranatra that was found near the Wisconsin River last month. You can get a clearer view by checking out our online Lake Tides where the images are in color.

Grace Hasse enjoyed teaching these students about aquatic insects during the 2024 Waupaca County Field Day event.



Sara Windue



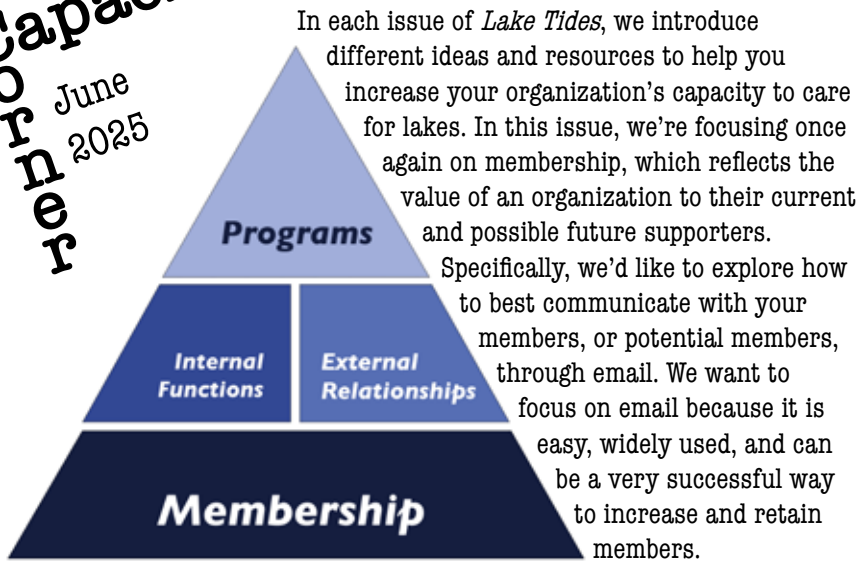
Lake Tides 50(1)

Capacity Corner

Communicating with your members

By Sara Windjue, Leadership and Capacity Development Specialist, Extension Lakes

Capacity
Corner
June
2025



Background

Don't let the perfect become the enemy of the good.

In the United States, about 10 billion emails are sent daily. In comparison, the United States Postal Service reports they handle 318 million pieces of mail daily. Whether you love or hate email, there is no denying that it is part of our daily life and a growing medium for communication.

Rom Haekstra, Pixabay



Benefits of using email

- Low cost
- Relatively easy (and easy to delete)
- Most people are currently using it
- Can set up and manage multiple accounts (personal, professional, organizational)
- Easy storage by topic/folder/tags
- Organizational ownership can be handed off from one person to another

We all need to use email to function in western society and lake organizations are no different. The medium itself is very similar to snail mail, but there are nuances that we might forget, occasionally. It is important for lake organizations to approach using email – just like snail mail – in an organized and positive way to communicate with members and their community. Don't let the perfect become the enemy of the good. Instead, get your organization to try some best practices and evolve email habits over time to get the most out of your communications.

Email best practices

1. **Develop an email plan.**
 - Frequency – how often emails go out (What is realistically manageable?)
 - Content – be informative and engaging:
 - * Alerts/Calls to action
 - * Event invitations and reminders
 - * Thank you notes to volunteers
 - * Membership renewal notices
 - * Official notices from lake districts
 - * Success stories/highlights
 - Style, language, and tone – A lake district, as a form of government, will likely have a more formal tone than a lake association, but try to keep the language geared towards your audience: those who care about lakes.
2. **Invite reader feedback and contributions.**

Can folks respond to surveys, polls, or questions? If so, how?



3. **Create a design.** This will help differentiate your emails from others and provide consistency (Ex: include your logo and repeat colors).
4. **Use subject lines to your advantage.** Resist being too clever and try to communicate in the subject line what the email is all about.
5. **Use preview text.** Preview text is the bit of text below or next to an email's subject line in the inbox that gives extra insight into what's inside the email. Consider it a sneak peek! Check to see if your email provider includes this as an option.
6. **Abide by email law.** You can find an example compliance document from the Federal Trade Commission here: <https://www.ftc.gov/business-guidance/resources/can-spam-act-compliance-guide-business>
7. **Be inclusive and accessible.**
 - Use legible, readable fonts
 - Use proper color contrast, or shapes/text to help differentiate colors
 - Offer an electronic version of your newsletter
 - * Add alt text to meaningful images
 - * Provide descriptive hyperlinks
 - * Use responsive design (easy to read on a phone, tablet, and computer)
 - * If using a PDF, follow ADA guidelines

How to plan content

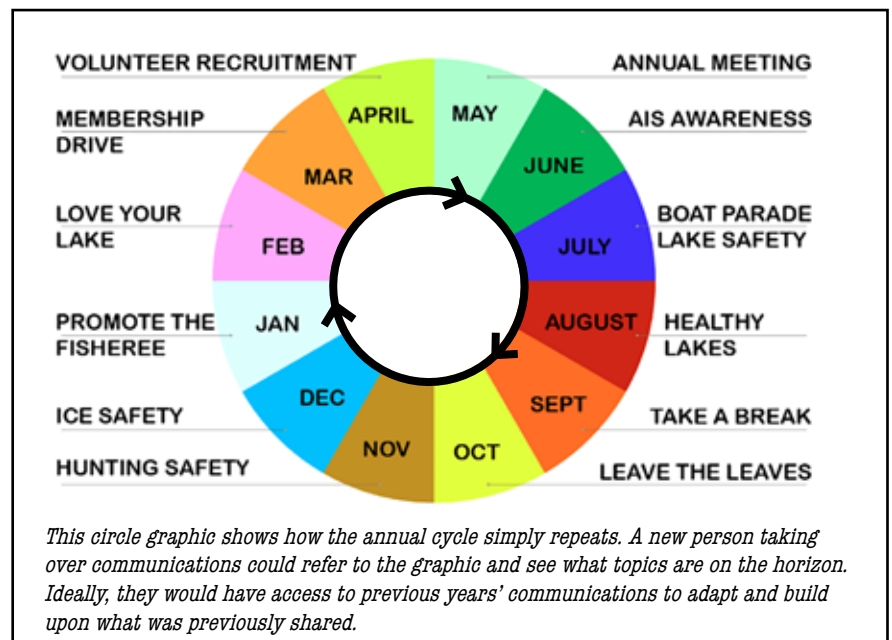
1. **Use a shared calendar.**
A shared calendar allows multiple people to be on the same timeline when it comes to drafting, submitting, and publishing emails. You can assign tasks to specific people and see if they've accepted or rejected your task. You can then easily follow up via email with questions and reminders.
2. **Use a spreadsheet.**
Accountants may have invented spreadsheets, but communicators have adopted them as handy ways to structure information using multiple tables in a single online document. The ability to copy entire tables through tabs saves time and allows you to organize your plan in whatever way suits you best. Online shared spreadsheets available through Google® or Microsoft® make it possible for multiple volunteers

to collaborate in real time without passing around attachments via email. We've created a generic email communications planning spreadsheet that you can copy and use with your organization to get the ball rolling. You can find it by navigating to "Capacity Corner" under "Lake Organizations" at uwsp.edu/uwexlakes, then clicking on "Membership."

3. Recognize the annual cycle and use it to help recycle content.

This chart is meant to show what a typical "year in communications" might look like for Wisconsin lake organizations. This example is "keyed" to a May annual meeting; your group might have a different annual meeting date. In addition to sharing the basics about your annual meeting – time, place, and agenda – work backwards to include timely reminders about renewing membership or signing up for volunteer opportunities – particularly as they relate to board elections at the annual meeting. Lake districts do not have "membership drives," but they do have legally binding timelines to communicate the annual meeting agenda, which must be publicly announced AT LEAST 14 days before the annual meeting. If the lake district's agenda and draft budget are ready before that time, then it can be sent earlier.

We all need to use email to function in western society and lake organizations are no different.



To learn more about communicating effectively using email, watch our monthly "Lake Org Chat" from February. Navigate to "Capacity Corner" under "Lake Organizations" on our website at uwsp.edu/uwexlakes.



Great Lakes Landing Blitz

Join the effort!

By Erin McFarlane, Clean Boats, Clean Waters Statewide Educator, Extension Lakes

Jeanne Scherer



CBCW participants around the state will be promoting AIS prevention over July 4th, like this inspector on Rock Lake in Jefferson County.

Clean Boats, Clean Waters (CBCW) watercraft inspectors across the state will work together to educate the public about aquatic invasive species (AIS) during the Great Lakes Landing Blitz, June 30-July 13, 2025. Hundreds of boaters and anglers will be out enjoying Wisconsin's

waters during the July 4th holiday, which means busier boat landings and higher potential for spreading AIS. Enthusiastic CBCW participants are stepping up to greet landing visitors, demonstrate the AIS prevention steps, and answer questions about invasive species.

2025 Drain Campaign: June 6-8

During DNR's Free Fishing Weekend, CBCW inspectors will be out across the state reminding anglers and boaters to always drain the water from their livewells, boats, and other equipment before leaving the boat landing and fishing access points. Draining is an important step towards preventing the spread of AIS!

Wisconsin's AIS program launched the first Landing Blitz campaign in 2008 and, thanks to the energy and commitment of our CBCW participants, the outreach event was a great success! Fellow water-rich

states took notice. In 2018, the event became a collaborative education effort among all of the Great Lakes states and provinces.

We can all protect lakes and rivers while we enjoy Wisconsin's waters! Everyone should follow these prevention steps, required by state law, to help prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species in our waters:

- **Inspect** boats, trailers and equipment before and after use.
- **Remove** all mud and attached aquatic plants and animals.
- **Drain** all water from boats, vehicles, and equipment, including livewells and fish buckets.
- **Never move** plants or live fish away from a waterbody.
- **Dispose** of unwanted bait in the trash.
- **Buy minnows** from a Wisconsin bait dealer. *Only use leftover minnows when fishing with them on the same body of water. They can be used on other waters only if no lake or river water or other fish have been added to their container.*

Emily Heald



To learn more about CBCW and AIS prevention, visit the Extension Lakes website and click the CBCW logo: uwsp.edu/uwexlakes.

To learn more about invasive species and their impacts on Wisconsin's waters and economy, visit the DNR's Invasive Species webpage: dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/Invasives.

CBCW inspectors with the Turtle Lakes Chain Association in Vilas County celebrate a successful summer season!



AIS Snapshot Day

Join us to make a difference

By Emily Heald, UW-Madison Division of Extension

Snapshot Day is a statewide event that brings together volunteers and local conservation groups for a day dedicated to monitoring aquatic invasive species (AIS) in Wisconsin's rivers and lakes. This event helps protect our waters from invasive plants and animals that can harm local ecosystems, wildlife, and recreational spaces.

On Snapshot Day, volunteers gather at local training sites hosted by community conservation partners. After a brief training on how to identify target AIS and follow search protocols, participants visit designated monitoring sites to search for invasive species. Any potential invasives found will be cataloged with the Wisconsin DNR, supporting efforts to control and manage these species. Best of all, this is a free event and no prior experience or special equipment is needed!

Snapshot Day offers a hands-on, community-driven approach to science, allowing volunteers to directly contribute to preserving Wisconsin's water health. Past volunteers have shared their appreciation for the learning experience, saying it was rewarding to identify species, get a closer look at local waters, and connect with a community to share similar interests.



Provided by Emily Heald

Wood County Snapshot Day participants pose proudly with the invasive species they collected and documented during the event.

In addition to helping monitor aquatic invasive species, Snapshot Day volunteers strengthen their connection to the natural world. By understanding and protecting these systems, we're not only preserving biodiversity but also ensuring that future generations can enjoy the same natural world we cherish today.

Get involved, enjoy the outdoors, and help protect our waterways — sign up for Snapshot Day today!

<https://wateractionvolunteers.org/events/aquatic-invasive-species-snapshot-day-2025/>

**Snapshot Day:
August 9, 2025**

This is a free event and no prior experience or special equipment is needed!

Find A New Favorite Fishing Spot This Year

There are lots of great places to fish in Wisconsin, including over 15,000 inland lakes, 42,000 miles of perennial streams and rivers, 1,000 miles of Great Lakes shoreline and 260 miles of the Mississippi River. With so many places to choose from, picking the perfect place to wet a line can sometimes feel overwhelming. The DNR's new Wisconsin Fishing Finder is here to help! Search for "Fishing Finder" at dnr.wisconsin.gov.

The Wisconsin Fishing Finder works using any internet browser to give anglers access to various fishing information, including regulations like bag and length limits for lakes and trout streams, boat launch locations and access points, lake habitat information, fish stocking data, and more.

Grab your license and gear and select a lake, river, or stream to discover your next favorite fishing spot!



Amy Kowalski

Don't forget the first weekend in June is free fishing weekend in Wisconsin - no license needed!

Also remember — draining all water from livewells, boats, and equipment prevents the spread of AIS!



Lake Tides 50(1)

The Power of Words

2025 Lakes and Rivers Convention recap

The 2025 Wisconsin Lakes and Rivers Convention was a huge success with approximately 578 people in attendance over the course of the three-day event – 57 virtual attendees. Thank you to the 125 presenters who brought us 55 engaging and informative concurrent sessions, 18 hands-on workshops, two special sessions, and a field trip. We appreciate the knowledge and passion you shared!

Dr. Kelsey Leonard (Shinnecock Nation and University of Waterloo, Ontario, Canada) and Chris Heeter (The Wild Institute), who bookended the event.

You can find many presentations in our searchable Convention Collection on the [wisconsinwaterweek.com](https://www.wisconsinwaterweek.com) website. 📌

SAVE THE DATE

April 15-17, 2026

Wisconsin
Lakes & Rivers Convention

An extra special thanks to our keynote speakers,

Celebrating the 2025 Wisconsin Lake Stewardship Award winners at the Convention are (standing LtoR): Michelle Nault (DNR Lakes and Rivers Section Manager), Pamela Toshner (Excellence in Professional Service award), Dan Butkus (Excellence in Building Partnerships award), Dave Zelinger (WAMSCO - Excellence in Public Engagement award), Chris Sampson (WAMSCO), Christine Neff (Programmatic Excellence in Lake Health award), Eric Olson (Extension Lakes Director) – (seated LtoR): Mike Engleson (Lifetime Achievement award), Shanda Hubertus (WAMSCO), Kori Halstead (WAMSCO)



Let's Make Healthy Lakes & Rivers Together!

\$1.82M STATE investment

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources has invested nearly \$2 million toward Healthy Lakes & Rivers projects since 2015.



1101
Properties

Let's keep increasing this number and making healthy lakes and rivers together!

38
Counties

Over half of Wisconsin's counties have projects.



Healthy Lakes & Rivers is celebrating 10 years of partnership, practices, and protecting water quality! Since 2015, the DNR Surface Water Grant program has awarded nearly \$2 million in Healthy Lakes & Rivers (HLR) cost share grants to over 1,000 landowners in 38 counties. Through those grants, 1,921 shoreland health best practices have been installed along 205 lakes and rivers across the state. What makes these facts and figures even more impressive is the method in which the program is run. Since the program's inception, HLR has been a partnership among Wisconsin DNR, Extension Lakes, Wisconsin Lakes, and the local partner organizations who make it all possible. Even though there is not a single staff person devoted entirely to supporting HLR, each group contributes a critical component to making this program tick: grant administration, communications, partnership building, technical guidance, site visits, project design, outreach, and more!

When waterfront property owners are asked how they heard about this program, word of mouth from neighbors is often the answer. Making Healthy Lakes & Rivers is truly contagious and it often takes just one local champion to plant the seed. The HLR partnership is here to help water that seed, shine a light on local efforts, and ensure it thrives. If you're ready to help us reach the next 1000 landowners, visit healthylakeswi.com to get started!

Welcome Aboard

Partnership gains new faces and expertise



Anna Bartsch

Surface Water Grants Specialist, Wisconsin DNR

I have a bachelor's degree in water resources from UW-Stevens Point. My first introduction to invasive species management was during college, when I interned as a watercraft inspector and as an environmental restoration technician. After graduating, I worked for Fox-Wolf Watershed Alliance; first as the AIS Coordinator in Shawano and Menominee Counties, and then as the Coordinator of the Northeast Wisconsin Stormwater Consortium. For the last year and a half, I have assisted the DNR's Aquatic Invasive Species Program as an AIS Specialist. Now, I'm eager to continue engaging in AIS Pathways efforts within my new role managing the Clean Boats, Clean Waters and Lake Monitoring & Protection Network grant programs. In my free time, I enjoy hiking, fishing, and playing rugby for my local club.

Meg Domroese

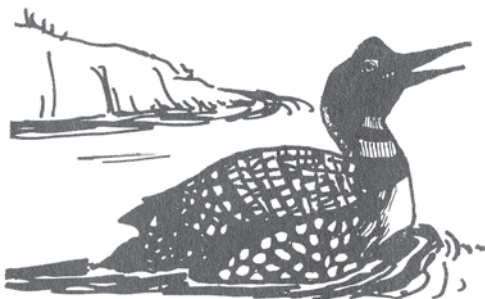
Water Program Manager, UW-Madison Division of Extension

In my 20+ years leading conservation initiatives, the throughline has been connecting people with tools to solve problems and increase equitable access to nature's benefits. At Gathering Waters: Wisconsin's Alliance for Land Trusts, I facilitated training and fostered peer networks across 43 organizations to advance habitat protection and water quality. Previously, at the Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts, and Letters, I convened discussions on statewide water and energy issues. Leading international partnerships at the American Museum of Natural History's Center for Biodiversity and Conservation, I worked with scientists and community leaders to develop locally relevant educational and participatory research programs.

You can find me around Madison pulling invasive plants in city parks as part of my Master Naturalist service. I love cycling, stand-up paddle boarding, and cross-country skiing. And reading lots of fiction, lately exploring the solar-punk genre.



C A L E N D A R



Check out our Online Calendar at
uwsp.edu/uwexplakes

Stay up-to-date with water-related events across the state, region, and beyond with our online calendar. Don't see your event listed? Let us know by clicking "Add an Event" at the top of the page and fill out the short form!



Lake Tides -- AAN7576

College of Natural Resources
University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point
800 Reserve Street
Stevens Point, WI 54481

Volume 50, No. 1

Spring/Summer 2025



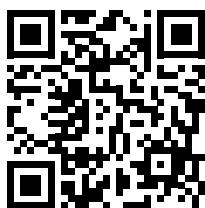
Extension Lakes
College of Natural Resources
University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point

NON-PROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
MILWAUKEE, WI
PERMIT NO. 530

Save Water, Paper, Money!



Switch your mailed paper copy of this *Lake Tides* newsletter to an online version - with FULL COLOR photos! Just scan this QR code and fill out the short form, or call or email us (see below).



A publication of the Wisconsin Lakes & Rivers Partnership

Editor/Designer: Amy Kowalski, Extension Lakes
Regular Contributors: Sara Windjue, Paul Skawinski, and Eric Olson, Extension Lakes
Contributing Editors: Erin McFarlane, Paul Skawinski, and Sara Windjue, Extension Lakes
Illustrations: Carol Watkins unless noted

The contents of *Lake Tides* do not necessarily reflect the views and policies of UW-Madison Division of Extension, UW-Stevens Point College of Natural Resources, the Wisconsin DNR or Wisconsin Lakes. Mention of trade names, commercial products, private businesses or publicly financed programs does not constitute endorsement. *Lake Tides* welcomes articles, letters, or other news items for publication. Articles in *Lake Tides* may be reprinted or reproduced for further distribution with acknowledgment to the author, *Lake Tides* (including volume and number of edition) and the Wisconsin Lakes and Rivers Partnership. If you need this material in an alternate format, please contact our office.



www.uwsp.edu/uwexlakes
lakes@uwsp.edu
715-346-2116

The University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Institution

Printed on recycled paper with vegetable-based ink.

REFLECTIONS



“Do not burn yourselves out. Be as I am - a reluctant enthusiast....a part-time crusader, a half-hearted fanatic. Save the other half of yourselves and your lives for pleasure and adventure. It is not enough to fight for the land; it is even more important to enjoy it. While you can. While it's still here. So get out there and hunt and fish and mess around with your friends, ramble out yonder and explore the forests, climb the mountains, bag the peaks, run the rivers, breathe deep that yet sweet and lucid air, sit quietly for a while and contemplate the precious stillness, the lovely, mysterious and awesome space.”

— Edward Abbey

taken from a speech to environmentalists in Missoula, Montana and Colorado, circa 1976

