

EYE OF THE POTATO

WWW.WPLDISTRICT.ORG

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Happy spring to all our White Potato Lake District (WPLD) riparian neighbors. Our District is just about a year old and it's been a rigorous effort to form a governmental organization to lead the public into a better understanding of the environmental aspects of our beautiful lake. Communication between the District Board, the DNR, our contracted Ecologists firm Onterra, and the public is imperative towards our goal of proper management of WPL. It's the Board intentions to publish periodical future newsletters to the district, providing pertinent lake information and projects that volunteers can take part in.

Our main focus has been controlling the spread of the invasive weed Eurasian Water Milfoil (EWM) which can severely damage the ecological balance of our lake if not kept in check. In the next two years through the direction of Onterra, we will embark on an Aquatic Plant Management (APM) program that will incorporate lessons learned over the past years, as well as to account for evolved definitions of aquatic plant Best Management Practices (BMPs) and new invasive species management philosophies. This will also align the WPLD for future WDNR grants and permits, as the WDNR requires a lake group's Plan to have a completion date of no more than 5 years prior to the grant application deadline. This project would satisfy the requirements outlined in the Surface Water Guidance for potential future AIS Population Control Grants and AIS harvesting permits.

Stakeholder participation is a very important element in any environmental planning exercise. Not only from the perspective of informing participants and stakeholders about the project, but also from the standpoint of enhancing their understanding of natural ecosystems and their value to a healthy environment. The project's anonymous stakeholder survey will be sent to all riparian property owners and WPLD members. Survey results will be tabulated and displayed in bar charts, pie charts, graphs, etc. and included within the management plan and project meeting discussions. Two types of meetings will be used to raise project awareness, gather comments, create the management goals and actions, and deliver the study results and draft plan to the sponsor and public: a general wrap-up meeting held on a non-holiday Saturday morning, and planning committee meetings held during the week.

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KNOW YOUR PLANTS

INVASIVE vs NATIVE WATERMILFOIL



Invasive (bad)

Native (good)

INVASIVE PURPLE LOOSESTRIFE



THE NEXT WHITE POTATO LAKE DISTRICT ANNUAL MEETING WILL BE:

SATURDAY, JUNE 15, 2024

Members sign in 8:00 am-9:00 am

Meeting starts at 9:00 am

Brazeau Town Hall
10892 Parkway Rd
Pound, WI 54161



From the Chairman....Continued from front page

To reduce costs and increase participation potential as outlined in the budget, Plan Mtg II will be held virtually. The WDNR lakes coordinator would be invited to the planning meetings. We have the opportunity to save \$2,400, if all of the in-kind requirements are met (this is volunteered time in meeting attendance). Our \$25,440 APM project will be 67% DNR funded through a grant we have been awarded by the state, another 10% funded through an Oconto County Healthy Waters Cost Share awarded grant, and an additional \$750 Oconto County Lakes and Waterways Association (OCLAWA) grant. Our share will be \$8,400.

The first scope of the project consists of biological surveys, collecting aquatic plant data on WPL which includes a whole-lake point-intercept survey, early and late season EWM mapping surveys, and an aquatic plant community mapping. This will take place shortly as our lake waters warm to allow plant growth.



AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES REPORT (AIS) 

Sometime in late spring or early summer once we have an Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) survey result that identifies locations of EWM we can hire an aquatic harvester to pull invasive weeds from the lake. We are budgeting approximately \$6,000 for professional harvesting in two or three visits, but perhaps spending less if our volunteers can successfully pull weeds. The late season 2023 survey received from Onterra identified a few EWM plants in the lagoon, so this will be a priority focused area as well as previously identified areas on the northwestern shoreline.

We will be receiving more Purple Loosestrife eating beetles to be planted by our Florence, Langlade, Oconto Waterways (FLOW) AIS coordinator, our volunteers will continue to pull this invasive plant from our shorelines. We welcome additional public District volunteers to take action in identifying invasive plants, contacting the District Board, and even assist us in properly pulling plant root balls from the soil. Pictures of invasive plants, for identification purposes can be found on our website at www.wpldistrict.org We ask that people check their shorelines for Purple Loosestrife, and their dock areas for EWM, please contact one of the following skilled volunteers who are familiar with identifying the invasive EWM from the native Northern Milfoil. Fred Rosner 920-373-1628, Mark Wildenberg 920-419-1356, or Bob Wittmann 920-242-9044

Over the last 3 years, three of our volunteers have been collecting water chemistry and clarity data through the statewide Citizen Lake Monitoring Network to satisfy the requirements of an official water quality assessment according to the U.S. EPA. The results show that WPL clearly meets the water quality standards. Unfortunately, because of state budget constraints, WPL will not be eligible for participation in this year's chemistry monitoring as there are a handful of lakes with high priority for a three-year monitoring cycle. WPL will be added back to the eligibility list for 2027, however; the Board is considering funding our own chemistry monitoring program during the next 3 years and will at the very least continue to collect water clarity Secchi disk samples and temperature readings.



 **LAKE MANAGEMENT PLAN (LMP)**

The White Potato Lake Management Plan was created to ensure that White Potato Lake is healthy now and for future generations. It was designed to learn about White Potato Lake and identify features important to the White Potato Lake community, in order to provide a framework for the protection and improvement of the lake.

Reports from the White Potato Lake Study and the materials associated with the planning process and reports can be found on the Oconto County website: www.co.oconto.wi.us and navigating to Departments>Land Conservation>County Waterways>County-wide Lake Study.

GOALS

The following goals and actions were derived from the values and concerns of citizens interested in White Potato Lake and members of the planning committee, as well as the known science about White Potato Lake, its ecosystem and the landscape within its watershed. Implementing and regularly updating the goals and actions in this plan will ensure that the vision is supported and that changes are incorporated into the plan.

- **Goal 1:** White Potato Lake will maintain a healthy, well-balanced sport fishery;
- **Goal 2:** Maintain a diverse and robust native aquatic plant community free of invasive species;
- **Goal 3:** Sensitive areas in White Potato Lake, which provide essential habitat and/or water quality benefits, will be protected;
- **Goal 4:** Property owners in the White Potato Lake Watershed will understand their connection to the Lake and will know about/utilize resources for health land management;
- **Goal 5:** Shorelands around White Potato Lake will be healthy and protective of water quality and habitat. Over the next 5 years, at least 1,000 feet (at least 15-20 properties) of mowed shoreline will be restored;
- **Goal 6:** Maintain or improve water quality in White Potato Lake;
- **Goal 7:** Lake users will be informed about, and respectful of, White Potato Lake;
- **Goal 8:** Increase participation in lake stewardship;
- **Goal 9:** Review plan annually and update as needed.

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Want to know more?

For more information about the White Potato Lake District (WPLD) and the White Potato Lake Management plan, please visit www.wpldistrict.org. White Potato Lake District Commissioners can also be reached via the contact information listed below.

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