

From the Lake Shores

Connors Lake • Lake of the Pines

LAKE ASSOCIATION



FALL

WATERS | VOLUNTEERS | FISH | FORESTRY

“Preserving and protecting our lakes for today and for future generations.”
a newsletter for the Lake Association Members • Volume 27 - November 2019

MESSAGE FROM DAVE

It's hard to believe summer is over and fall is already here (although with this crazy weather, it seems more like winter is here). I hope everyone had a great summer and had a lot of fun on the lakes. The Fourth of July fireworks at Connors Lake Beach made for an exciting celebration this summer. The feedback has been extremely positive, and we look forward to doing it again next year. The committee in charge of the fireworks have a list of improvements to implement for next year. We also had a good year of doing Fish Habitat and collecting data from our Citizen Lake Monitoring Volunteers.

Thanks to all our volunteers, and keep up the great work! We still could use more help, so if you have some time to give, please consider lending a hand.

Dave Bauer
President



Dave Bauer

NEW BOARD MEMBERS

My family has been coming to Connors Lake and Lake of the Pines area since 1972 when I was six months old. We started out with a travel trailer at Lake of the Pines campground and spent most of our time with relatives on Connors Lake. In 1976 my parents bought a lot on Connors Lake where we moved the travel trailer. Even after my Dad passed away in 1977 my Mom continued to bring me up to enjoy the outdoors. In 1982 my Mom built a cabin on the lot. I have always enjoyed hunting and fishing and have passed that love on to my wife Sue, daughter Brianna, and son Hunter. I look forward to serving on the Lake Association board and all its members.



Don Bluhm

Have you noticed something new at the Connors Lake boat landing? I think everyone that uses the landing will agree the new dock is a big improvement!

The old dock was five feet wide and 21 feet long. The new dock is a foot wider and nine feet longer, much better for docking larger boats.

This was a cooperative project with the FRSF DNR and our Lake Association and consists of two parts:

1. The new dock (completed)
2. Filling the hole at the end of the concrete ramp with larger flat rocks. This will be done after the dock is removed for the winter.

Our Association's total cost for this project was \$6,000.

We have had numerous comments that this is a big improvement and will impact anyone using the lake!

-Dave Schiotz



I was elected to the Connors Lake/Lake of the Pines lake association board in 2018 as chairman of the fisheries committee. I was raised in West Allis, WI and graduated from W A Central in 1962. My college career started at WSU Stevens Point where I completed a double major in Conservation and Biology, graduating in 1967. In 1965, I married my wife Dianne. From Stevens Point we moved to Provo, UT where I worked on my Masters and Doctoral degrees in Zoology with minors in Botany and Geology. During my MS program I did research on the Woundfin Minnow (an endangered species) and for my PhD I studied the impacts of river channel alterations on fish populations. Before completing my graduate work, I began teaching General Zoology classes and lecturing in Vertebrate Zoology classes. My first full time teaching position was at Mount Mercy College in Cedar Rapids, IA where I taught Biology courses for three years before moving on to develop the fisheries program at the University of Nebraska – Lincoln. There I taught Fisheries and Wildlife and Natural Resources classes, along with developing a research program in fisheries and aquatic ecology in rivers, streams and reservoirs across Nebraska. I retired as Professor Emeritus in Natural Resources after 30 years and Dianne and I moved to our present home in Loretta/Draper in 2005.



Ed Peters

We heard about the lake association when we saw announcements for their meetings at Connors Lake pavilion. Since I mainly fish at Connors Lake and some at Lake of the Pines, we thought it would be good to get involved. We started attending their meetings and when Tom Dienhammer retired from the fisheries board position I came forward because of my background and was quickly elected.

NEW BOARD MEMBERS

My name is Ashley Johnson. I am 15 years old and attend iForward High School (online). My hope is to set a standard by entering the position of Correspondence Secretary as the youngest individual in the Lake Association to hold an officer position. I encourage others to participate and be a part of the Lake Association. Involvement from various levels brings out a lot of different views and opportunities to improve our lakes. I have learned, even at a young age, from the many different opportunities that have been presented to me. I am a third-generation Johnson and am very proud to say that I have learned a lot from growing up on Connors Lake and in the environment around the lake. I am also fortunate enough to say that I have a friend in outer space who has inspired me to do a lot of amazing things.

Ashley Johnson



I am the President of my Earth space science research group for school, one of the tasks we are working on is producing an experiment for NASA to send to space. I am also President of my Student Council for high school, and in the past, I was my middle school's Student Council President. Something I have learned from my experiences is that you are what you make of yourself. As a freshman in high school, I decided to take a college-level business course. This course showed me a lot of new ways to look at life and various ways to accomplish tasks. I have also learned that all the time spent learning and developing yourself you carry with you and others cannot take that away from you.

In my free time, you will most likely find me on my paddle board on the lake during the summer or skiing down a slope in the winter. I also like snowmobiling, four wheeling, and hunting. Every year, I help my dad take care of the buoys as one of the projects I am involved with on the lake. I'm looking forward to doing more projects and learning more about the lakes, from this knowledge I hope to pass this on to others. This background is about me.

I feel it is important to share the extended background of my Grandfather who had spent a good share of his life in the Flambeau River State Forest. Our family has resided on Connors Lake for over 75 years. A few projects my Grandfather, Hugh Johnson, was involved with include:

- Connors Lake Beach Area with the CCC (Pre-DNR) – Tag alders, muck, and vegetation were removed and replaced with a sandy base—mostly during the winter months.
- Connors Lake Campground – with CCC and DNR
- Lake of the Pines (LOP) Campground – with DNR
- Lake Depth Survey for Connors, LOP, and Little Papoose - Ice grid of increment pattern for depth maps
- Fish Cribs for Connors, LOP, and Little Papoose
- Layout/Construction of Lone Pine Road from Werbs (The Cabin) to Hiezlers (Dukershians) first 1,000 feet completed in 1940s – this took the place of the original trail which followed the electric highline from Hwy F (Hwy W) to the south end of Hiezlers (Dukershians) property
- Layout/Construction of Johnson Road from Hiezlers (Dukershians) to Ironsides – next 1.5 miles completed in 1950's.
- Layout/Construction of Johnson Road from Ironsides to current turn around – final quarter miles completed in 1970

- Layout/Construction of Hwy M South - connecting the north and south legs of Hwy M together which was a trail. During fall and spring this was impassable; some would take a canoe or boat along and leave another vehicle on the opposite end to navigate the swamp/wetlands.

Away from the Lake my Grandfather completed many projects within the forest, from snowmobile trails within the Flambeau Forest to reclamation of the railroad bed, which involved removal of all railroad trestles and building of low elevation bridges on the Tuscobia Trail from start to finish, ski trails, Oxbow, Flambeau and hiking trails within the forest.

In the earlier years, Hugh, his brother, and Art Esmo constructed the Log Office which resides across from Rays Place (Big Bear Lodge) which has become an interpretive center with history of the Flambeau Forest and encompassing area.

As one would say, this is a snapshot of just a handful of my Grandfather's work within the forest and the impact directly related to the lake region. A dear friend of the family encouraged me to include recognition of my Grandfather and his accomplishments. While I know that I will not have the same impact on the lake and surrounding areas that he had, I am hopeful that I can play a positive role. This has motivated me to be a part of something my Dad helped start as the first President of CoPaPi Lake Association. My family friend, Astronaut Jeff Williams, Winter, WI, has encouraged me to carry on and forge the next chapter and that is what I intend to do.

NEWS FROM THE FLAMBEAU RIVER STATE FOREST

Happy fall friends! The colder weather descended on us much faster than anticipated this year, but hopefully there will be a few nice days to enjoy yet this fall before the snow flies!

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Lake Association for its generous contribution this year to go towards the purchase of a new boarding pier at the Connor's Lake Boat Launch. I hope many of you have enjoyed the new dock this year! We will also be installing rip rap at the end of the landing this fall to fill in the hole created by prop wash. Thank you!

As we transition into the fall and winter months, the staff here will be changing gears to work on more forestry related activities. Here's a look at what has occurred over the past few months, and some of the upcoming plans for the next few months:

Highlights:

- **Timber Sales.** Due to the wet conditions, timber sale progress has been slow on the forest. We currently have two timber sales being harvested, but progress is slow due to all the rain we have been getting. A 35-acre timber sale was completed in August on Lake of the Pines Road. The fall bid opening on the forest was October 17, 2019. Eight sales totaling 1,220 acres were bid out. We are currently marking timber for future timber sales. We are hoping for a good winter, so numerous timber sales can be completed. There are approximately 20 sales that are expected to be cut throughout the winter months.

Additionally, 2,400 acres of reconnaissance checks were completed. Site preparation using herbicides was completed on 37 acres in the northern portion of the forest. This is to get the site ready for tree planting in the Spring of 2020.

FLAMBEAU RIVER STATE FOREST CONTINUES...

• Access Improvements continue on the forest:

- Numerous Washouts and culvert failures on the Price Cr and Bear Cr loops resulted in the roads being closed for about a month this spring until they could be repaired.
- A one mile portion of Hervas North Road was re-surfaced with crushed gravel.
- Bids will be going out this fall for the construction of a new segment of open road (named Deer Cr Road) that will be off of West Lane.
- A number of small graveling and road improvement projects have been occurring throughout the summer, and will continue through the fall.
- The road naming project has been completed. The purpose of this is to give visitors a better reference of where they are at & for emergency response as well. As good stewards of the land, please remember & remind others to stay on designated roads and trails to keep this wonderful place intact.
- New this year are Motor Vehicle Use Maps (available now), similar to that of the US Forest Service, that will clearly define motor vehicle access within the forest.

• Projects this fall and Winter

- Maintenance on the exterior of the Historical Headquarters – a contract has been awarded for the re-roofing of the building, which should be completed this fall.
- Camping Yurt – the Flambeau will pilot something new for the state, and that is a rustic yurt for camping. A yurt is a round, domed structure (typically made of fabric) that has been a growing trend for campers. This project was funded by a federal grant to expand hunting opportunities and access. Therefore, the yurt will be geared towards hunters during the hunting months, and general campers for the remainder of the year. The yurt will include bunk beds, futon, wood stove, table, campfire ring, picnic table, vault toilet, and a game pole. The yurt will overlook the Flambeau River up in the Oxbo area.



• Recreation

Hello all, Joe Kraetke here. I am the new Park Ranger with the Bureau of Parks and Recreation here on the Flambeau River State Forest. I started here at the end of June 2019. I worked here previously and an LTE in 2012. Originally from the area and having jumped around to a few properties, it's nice to be back to my home area. With that, it wasn't a hard transition coming to the Flambeau having previous knowledge and experience here. Weather played a huge factor in this summer's projects. Wet conditions kept us from getting equipment and vehicles into a lot of areas but that doesn't mean we weren't busy in other areas.

We kicked off the summer with the installation of a new dock at the Connors Lake boat landing. It will need a few minor adjustments that will be taken care of when it is removed this fall. I met with Sawyer County and went through inspections of our campgrounds. Previously, they were in great shape with minor details that were immediately fixed which now makes us 100% compliant (fire extinguishers and updated maps were added in two locations in each campground). The Mason/Evergreen boat landing road was improved with new gravel added and leveled. A new culvert was installed on the snowmobile trail off Tower Hill Rd which will help with the water backing up and washing out the low area in the future. There are too many small projects to list that were completed by recreation staff this summer. I think the crew did a nice job of staying on top of issues as they came up.

There are some projects currently going on. A new bridge will be installed this fall over Mason Creek on the ski trail. Currently there is no bridge at all. The old one was ripped out by rec staff and the weather prohibited the contractor

from getting in to install the new one. It is planned now to go in once the ground freezes. New kiosks will be added to the campgrounds and Connors Lake picnic area this fall too. They will contain additional information about the property and various announcements.

In the future, there are some larger scale projects that will be taking place. One is a new changing/restroom building that will be constructed in place of the old one at the Connors Lake picnic area. Another will be to replace the old pit toilet on the upper loop in Lake of the Pines campground. Those are the two that will take place the soonest for large scale projects. There are always others, big and small, that will be completed as time and weather allow.

• **Partnership opportunities** - The Flambeau River State Forest continues to seek the creation of non-profit Friends Group that will help enhance the property. We have a few individuals working on forming it. If you are interested in helping or want more information, please contact me.

27th Annual Candlelight Ski

Join us on Saturday February 1st, 2020 from 6p-9p at the Flambeau Hills Trailhead off HWY W for night of skiing in the Northwoods of Wisconsin. Hiking & snowshoeing are permitted during this event. A 1.8 kilometer Trail Loop will be groomed, tracked, and brightly lit with over 600 glowing candles. Hot dogs, chili & spiced tea will be provided. Picnic tables and hot BBQ grills along with the serenity of a warm campfire will be maintained throughout the night.

Hope you have a great fall & winter!
Chris Bender, Property Manager
715-332-5271 Ext. 112



Citizen Lake Monitoring Network. (CLMN)

By Dave Schiotz

Many of the docks are on shore, boats sitting on trailers, which spells the end of our open water sampling.

We had another very successful year which is a testimony to our two dedicated groups of volunteers. On Lake of the Pines (LOP) we had Larry Anderson, Dave Bauer, Don Bauer, Carl Edwardson, Jim Schofield, and Perry Slack. On the Connors team are Gordie Dukerschein, Bob Feller, Jeff & Sherry Hansen, Mark LaVick, Rich Marusinec, Dave & Karen Schiotz, and Tom Stram. Due to “retirement,” “aging team members” etc., we need some new volunteers for the coming season on both lakes. This is a very important opportunity, collecting vital data which help assess the health of our lakes and guide management decisions.

Generally, over the past three years, both of our lakes have shown increases in clarity, and decreases in Phosphorus and Chlorophyll a, which is encouraging. When we compare these three parameters to the Regional averages, our values fall within the acceptable range. We don’t know what next year will bring as lakes are living systems and subject to fluctuations in the environment and the effect of human influence.

As you enjoy the coming Winter, think seriously about joining one of our monitoring teams. Training and help is provided and usually a team of two works together. If you can spare a couple of hours in the summer this is an interesting and important volunteer opportunity to consider. Contact me if you want more information or want to join either team, Connors or LOP.

Dave Schiotz
715-332-5164
dkschiotz@yahoo.com
Have a good winter!

Fish Habitat: Dave Bauer

After last year’s successful rock drop, designed to improve our walleye spawning habitat, we are planning another Spawning reef/rock drop. Mark your calendars for Saturday, January 25th. We also are planning to drop twice the amount of rock we did last year. Ideally, we would like to do two spawning beds. If we have the same amount of help as last year, we should be able to complete them in the same amount of time. Thanks to all who helped last year. I am hoping we can count on you again for this upcoming event. I will email everyone with more details as we get closer to the date.

Saturday January 25th, is the Spawning Reef/Rock drop – keep in mind we will be moving 3-5” rocks.

Equipment Needed:

Snowmobile/ATV/UTV-depending on conditions

Large Otter Type Sled – should be attached to Snowmobile or ATV by rope (more efficient)

Small tractor/Skid steer - to load and level rocks

Rakes for leveling the rock

FLAMBEAU RIVER STATE FOREST STAFF

It’s been a number of years since the FRSF has had a full staff, and there have been a lot of changes in staff over the last few years. I’m happy to announce that we finally have a full complement of staff on the property again, and I would like to introduce them to you!



Chris Bender – Property Manager

Chris Started his DNR career in 2014 as a Conservation Warden in Southern Wisconsin before transferring to the Flambeau River State Forest in 2015. His duties include overseeing the day to day operations of the property and oversight of the Forestry and Recreation Programs on the property.

Heidi Brunkow – Forester

Heidi started her DNR career in 1997 as a forester on the Flambeau River State Forest. Her duties include sustainably managing and implementing forestry practices on the state forest. Heidi primarily works with timber sale establishment and timber sale administration.



Justin Cook – Forester

Justin has been a forester on the Flambeau River State Forest since November 2018. He has enjoyed learning the property over the last year and is excited to continue to help the property accomplish its goals. Justin’s primary work includes establishing timber sales and inventorying the many acres on the property. He is currently enjoying the cooler weather and is looking forward to the next blanket of snow.

Taylor Lockwood – Forester

Taylor began working for the DNR as a forestry LTE at the Kettle Moraine State Forest - Southern Unit before getting hired full time on the Flambeau River State Forest in the fall class of 2018. Taylor’s primary work includes timber sale establishment, regeneration, and invasive species control.



Judy Freeman – Financial Specialist

Judy started her DNR career in 1997 as a visitors services associate on the Flambeau River State Forest. Judy is now a Financial Specialist for the Northwest District and oversees timber sale financials on the forest and other state lands as well as conducts financial audits on other State and County Forest lands.

Joe Kraetke – Ranger

Joe started with the DNR as an LTE Ranger in 2012. In 2014 he received his first full time position as a Ranger stationed at Copper Falls State Park. In October of 2015 he transferred to the Northern Highland – American Legion State Forest where he continued as a law enforcement Ranger. With a new transfer opportunity to move back to his hometown, Joe transferred to the Flambeau River State Forest in the summer of 2019 where he is excited to be “home”.

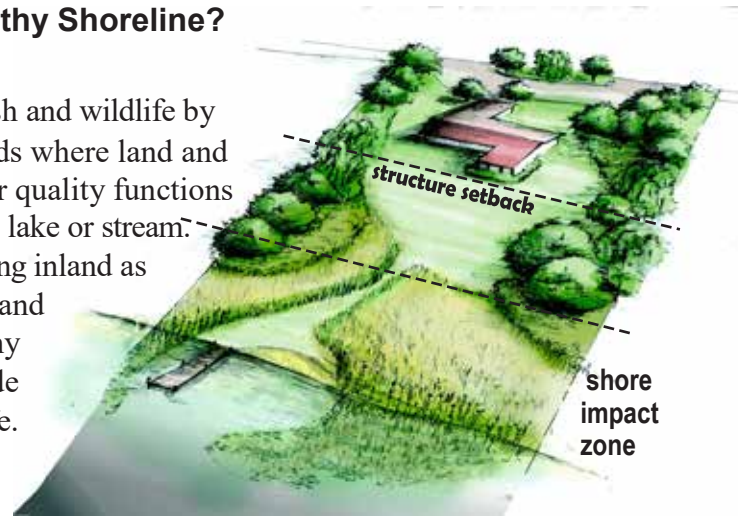




Healthy Shorelines

What is a Healthy Shoreline?

A healthy shoreline supports a diverse community of fish and wildlife by providing native vegetation that fulfills their habitat needs where land and water meet. Native vegetation provides important water quality functions by slowing and filtering water runoff as it moves to the lake or stream. Shorelines with a diverse mixture of native plants extending inland as well as offshore of the bank are more resilient to wave and ice erosion. Our lakes, streams and wetlands need healthy shorelines to reduce runoff, filter pollutants, and provide important habitat functions that benefit fish and wildlife.



Vegetation Management in Shoreland Areas

The protection of natural vegetation in shoreland areas, especially along lakes and streambanks, is critical to maintaining water quality and wildlife habitat. Good shoreland management requires the protection of natural vegetation in shore impact zones, steep slopes and bluff areas.

Shoreland vegetation (native trees, shrubs, forbs, grasses) provides numerous ecological benefits including:

- Minimizes the erosive impact of raindrops
- Holds soils and limits soil erosion from surface runoff, which is important since high velocity or concentrated runoff volumes can readily erode soils
- Removes nutrients in runoff which would degrade water quality
- Binds and strengthens the soil column with deep, dense roots which prevent and reduce the likelihood of bank or slope failure
- Provides diverse fish and wildlife habitat
- Provides privacy and helps screen shoreland development
- Provides natural and aesthetic views
- Reduces erosion by protecting the banks against wave energy

What is a Shore Impact Zone?

The shore impact zone is land located between the waterbody and one-half of the structure setback.

This concept was created in the 1989 shoreland standards to maintain existing buffers, limit the number of buildings placed in close proximity to the water, reduce soil erosion caused by construction or vegetation removal, and preserve aesthetic values. It serves to buffer the water from more intensive land uses.

A proliferation of accessory structures (boathouses, fish houses, sheds, etc.) clutters shores and displaces natural vegetation. Moreover, construction near the shoreline brings grading and filling activities and increases erosion. In order to protect shoreland soils, vegetation and aesthetics, the Shore Impact Zone was designated to protect important amenities of the lake while still allowing for access to the waterbody.

Healthy Shorelines

So What's the Problem?

There are many shorelines where the banks were long ago stripped of the native plant community, including trees and shrubs, and converted to turf grass-type lawns. The loss of this vegetation encourages soil erosion and nutrients to flow directly to the lake. As these practices spread around a lake, there are fewer areas left to treat runoff water and provide habitat. Studies of Minnesota lakes have shown that the removal of natural vegetation near the shoreline reduces the amount of habitat available to songbirds and amphibians and reduces fish-nesting. Many of these problems could be prevented or minimized if an area of native plants is maintained or restored.

Shoreland ordinances allow a limited number of trees and shrubs to be cleared to accommodate stairways and access paths. However, the applicable standard for such removal is that the screening of structures, vehicles or other facilities as viewed from the water may not be substantially reduced. Dead or diseased vegetation can be removed although they may be important for songbirds and other wildlife. Invasive species can be an overwhelming problem both on the shore and in the water. The local zoning office or DNR area hydrologist should be contacted for guidance before proceeding with any lakeshore alterations or removal of live vegetation.

What Can You Do?

- Protect the health of the vegetation growing on your property.
- Invasive species tend to spread rapidly. Learn to identify the most common invasive species. Invasives should be removed, but replanting native species may be needed to protect shorelines from erosion.
- Use herbicides that are labeled for an aquatic site or use a more precise method of application, like a wick applicator or a cotton glove over the top of a chemical resistant glove to apply the product only to those plants you want to control.
- Leave vegetation in place to screen structures, vehicles or other facilities as viewed from the water.
- Consider leaving dead or diseased vegetation in place as they may be important for songbirds and other wildlife.
- Most importantly, leave an area of native plants between the house and the shoreline area. Limit the removal of trees and shrubs.
- If you have been mowing near the shoreline, simply discontinue that practice to allow growth of native plants or restore and replant with native flowers, shrubs or trees.



Contact the local Soil and Water Conservation District, DNR area hydrologist or your county zoning office to get assistance. There are also a number of books and "on-line tools" (*Restore Your Shore* <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/restoreyourshore/index.html> and *Score Your Shore* <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/scoreyourshore/index.html>) and other literature available to help you support shorelines that promote healthy lakes and streams and the biotic communities that depend on them.

Glossary of Terms

- Shore Impact Zone:** land located between the waterbody and one-half of the structure setback
- Bluff Impact Zone:** bluff and land located within 20 feet from the top of a bluff
- Steep Slopes:** land having an average slope greater than 12 percent
- Runoff:** precipitation or snow melt, which is not intercepted by vegetation, absorbed in soil, or evaporated, that moves over the land surface to streams, lakes, ditches, and depressions in the ground

DNR Contact Information



DNR Ecological and Water Resources website and a listing of Area Hydrologists: <http://mndnr.gov/waters>

DNR Ecological and Water Resources
500 Lafayette Road, Box 32
St. Paul, MN 55155
(651) 259-5100

This information is available in an alternative format on request.

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DNR Information Center

Twin Cities: (651) 296-6157
Minnesota toll free: 1-888-646-6367
Telecommunication device for the deaf (TDD): (651) 296-5484
TDD toll free: 1-800-657-3929

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FALL 2019 ELK UPDATE

Sixty Kentucky Elk (45 yearling and older elk and 15 calves, 13 males and 47 females) were released from the quarantine pen on August 12, 2019. Some have moved a couple miles south and some have moved a half mile north. These groups of Kentucky animals have mixed with existing resident elk, both 2017 Kentucky elk and Wisconsin elk and are finishing up the annual mating season. As in the past most cow/calf groups have been tended by bulls, mostly Wisconsin bulls. Good integration is occurring. Some newly released young bulls and cows are still hanging out in the vicinity of the pen. Hopefully, they combine with savvy local elk so to gain training on wolf avoidance.



GLIFWC Executive Administrator Mic Isham leads a LCO Tribal blessing for the Kentucky elk being released in Wisconsin.

December 12 through 21st. All successful hunters, tribal or state, must register their elk and allow biological samples to be taken, including CWD sampling. Tribal elk are registered by the Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission, while state elk are registered by local state wildlife biologists.

We had a good crop of calves across the entire elk range this year. Around 70 calves were born. The long term average is 50 percent of these perish before their first birthday, but during the past 3 years it's more like 30 percent, resulting in 10-13 percent annual growth in the elk herd these past 3 years. Pending a mild winter we hope close to 100 calves will be born in 2020.

The Flambeau River State Forest, Sawyer, Price and Rusk County Foresters are all doing their parts in producing excellent elk forage and predator escape habitat by setting up timber sales, especially aspen clear-cuts! This management not only provides all of what wild elk need in this region, but aspen clear-cuts result in ample forest regeneration of this forest type in addition of suppling deer and elk with ample food. Aspen has evolved to produce so many "suckers" that deer and elk browsing doesn't prevent regeneration of harvestable timber. The trick is having large enough clear-cuts (about 100 acres). Both wild elk and the local timber economy win! Remember, it's easier for a "freight train" to crash through that young aspen than "a guy on a bicycle chasing it"... the "freight train" are those several hundred pound elk, and "the guy on the bicycle" are the 75-100 pound wolves chasing the elk. Aspen clear-cuts in the 0-10 year age class not only feed the elk, but provide them protection too!

The last of Kentucky Elk delivered to the State Forest 2019.



There exist excellent forage and predator escape cover around here due to the aggressive timber management that occurs on the Flambeau River State Forest and surrounding industrial and county forests. This area of the "Northern Elk Range" is a good place for elk to live. Last year and this, bulls in this area have literally dodged the bullet. Because of the new arrival of Kentucky elk, tribal hunters and state hunters have again agreed not to hunt bulls in this part of the elk range. Southern bulls won't be so lucky next year. This year Tribal hunters finished after harvesting their 5 bulls, the last being harvested this past weekend (October 12 and 13th). State hunters started on October 12 and 2 were successful so far. Three of the state hunters are still pursuing bulls. They have until November 12th and if unsuccessful also have from

The 2019 deer season is here and the gun season is approaching. There's about 130 elk down here and another 150 north of Highway 70. "Be sure of your target and what's beyond!" Don't shoot an elk. Be sure it's a deer you're shooting at. If you're not sure, don't shoot! Stop by the Flambeau River State Forest headquarters and get a handout that shows how to distinguish an elk from a deer! Furthermore, if you shoot a deer, stop by the Flambeau River State Forest headquarters. In the parking lot is a CWD Kiosk. In fact it's a freezer, but inside are directions, bags, pens, forms and everything you'll need to submit your deer head for CWD sampling. Please fill it out and submit it. We need at least 300 heads from Sawyer county for our sample. Not only that, make sure your harvested deer is safe for your children and grandchildren...submit the head for sampling! If it's a buck, cut the antlers off first. If it's a huge buck submit it after your taxidermist capes it and cuts the antlers off. We need your deer's head! Thank you!!!!

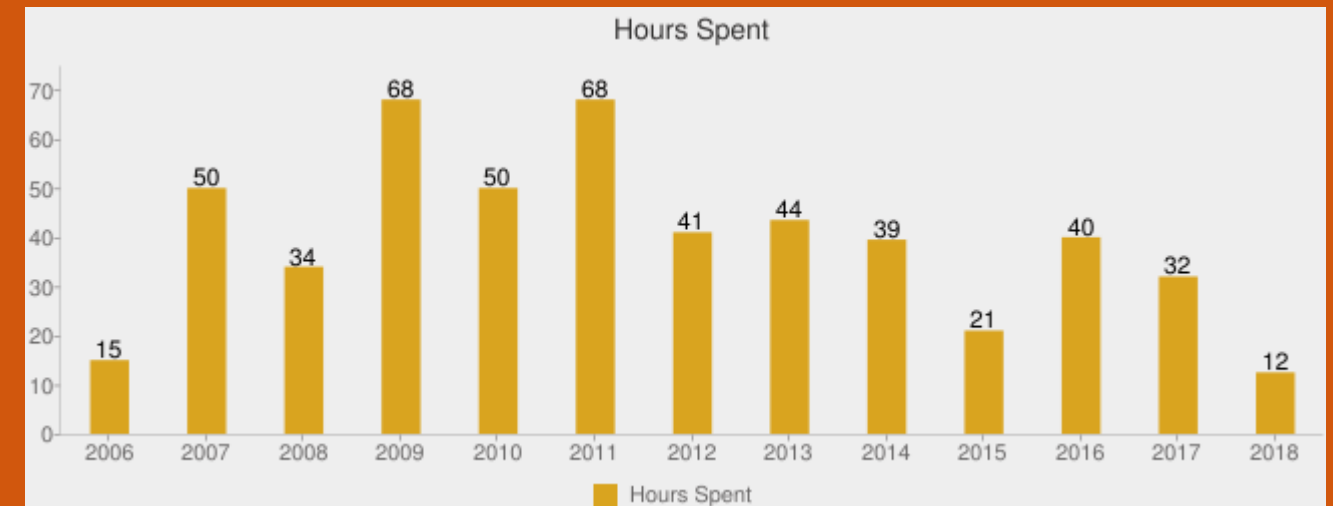
A new DNR elk management plan is being developed and should go out for public review sometime next year. I encourage everyone who cares about elk to review this draft closely and don't be shy about recommending changes. Only the public can defend it's wildlife...only you can defend your elk! Thank you for your support of Wisconsin Wild Elk!

Be safe and enjoy your fall!

Laine Stowell - Elk Biologist

CLEAN BOATS & CLEAN WATER: BY DAVE BAUER

Thanks to Ed & Dianne Peters, Audry Bluhm Tom Stram, and Donald Bluhm for educating boaters at our boat landings. Together they contributed 10 volunteer hours to the Clean Boats & Clean Water initiative. If anyone would like to volunteer, or if you just have questions, feel free to contact me at dbauer9255@gmail.com.



Addendum to Clean Boats, Clean Waters report

Because of the shrinking pool of volunteers for the CBCW program we have decided to apply for a grant to fund paid volunteers. The grant will cover 75% of the project costs up to a maximum of \$4,000 per boat landing or pair of boat landings. The Lake Association is responsible for 25% of the costs. The grants are noncompetitive. Inspection time (200 hours) will therefore be reimbursed at the rate of \$20/hour. The CBCW landing inspection program includes landing inspector training, speaking with and educating launch users, conducting inspections and collecting data to complete the Watercraft Inspection Report forms. If anyone knows of someone interested in being a paid volunteer this summer please contact Thomas Stram by phone 715-384-8348 or e-mail twrcstram@frontier.com

WOOD USED FOR SNOWSHOES: BY TOM STRAM

Larix laricina, or Tamarack is a small to medium-sized boreal forest coniferous and deciduous tree found primarily in older cold sphagnum bogs and our wetter swamps in Wisconsin. Other names include American, Black or Red Larch and Hackmatack. Its range is across Canada from the Yukon to Newfoundland and south into northeastern United States from Minnesota to West Virginia and New England. The Tamarack grows further north than any other tree in North America growing by the light of the midnight sun. In summer, it is one of the “most tenderly beautiful of all native trees, with its pale green leaves like a rime of life and light” and in autumn they “drop their soft, wispy needles in a glorious flush of gold and apricot and wait out the cold as a lifeless spire of blackened branches”. Evergreen leaves are a liability in very harsh winters because they must be sustained and protected from the bitter cold. The Tamarack is pyramidal, Christmas-tree shape like the spruce or fir with very shallow spreading roots. In spring the soft, fine, pale peppermint green 3/8 to 1-inch needles clothe the branches in sparse, stubby spurs in a zigzag pattern along the branches. Tamaracks are very shade-intolerant but also give the least shade of any tree. The cones are the small, only 3/8 to 7/8 inches with 12 - 25 seed scales and are initially bright red-violet in color. The bark is reddish-gray with a flaky, moderately rough surface. They grow to a height of 15 - 30 feet in the swamps, fen and



bogs of Wisconsin, but in the cooler regions of the Pacific Northwest larches thrive in moist open habitats reaching heights of 100 feet with 4-foot-thick trunks.

Tamarack wood is tough, durable and flexible. In thin strips, it is used by the Algonquian people to make snowshoes. Indians used the roots of the Tamarack for sewing strips of Birch bark for their beautiful canoes. The best roots come from trees in beaver ponds because they are tough, pliable, slender and elongated. Tamarack is primarily used for pulpwood but also for telephone poles, posts, ladders, railroad ties, fuelwood and formerly for ship building. The wood is very rot resistant. The thin bark makes the tree susceptible to fire damage, but it is usually protected by the wet environment. Tamarack trees are subject to damage from the Larch Sawfly which caused serious loss in Wisconsin Tamarack swamps from 1900 to 1910, but parasites of the sawfly have reduced the frequency and duration of the infestation. The Indians and first New England settlers found “the turpentine, that issueth from the Larch tree, is singularly good to heal wounds, and to draw out malice....”.



Many people have noted a fair amount of tamarack dying off in the past year or two in Northern Wisconsin. First, the slow growing stunted trees in the center of the wetland may be growing old and dying. They have never been harvested. Following a decade of below average precipitation, the past few years we have experienced more rain, hotter summers and colder winters. The trees in the wetlands began to drown. In Minnesota the larch beetle has caused significant mortality.

There are Tamaracks in Musky Bay, Price Creek and Papoose lake. My personal favorite is the Tamarack swamp several miles north of the Winter Greenhouse on Co Highway W. Lastly, the Tamaracks are larval food for the rare Columbia Silkworm.



Moth of the Columbia Silkworm

OUR NEIGHBORS IN THE WOOD - TRAIL CAMERA PHOTOS



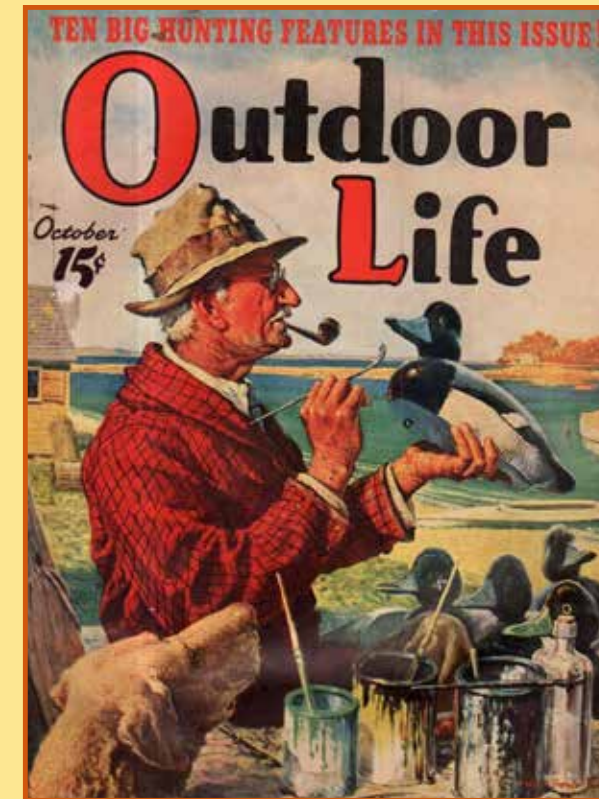
Where have all the Ducklings Gone?

One of the many perks that I have experienced during my many years of fishing Connors Lake and Lake of the Pines is witnessing all the beautiful miracles of nature as they unfold themselves before me during our Wisconsin seasons. One special occurrence that I always look forward to and especially enjoy is the first appearance of those little balls of fuzz, tiny baby ducklings, scurrying in a tight line behind their proud mother duck. There always seems to be one or two of the little guys who will fall behind the pack and who will suddenly and frantically shoot across the water to reunite themselves with their fellow brother and sister ducklings.

It was on a pleasant late summer evening, and I was jigging for walleyes off a patch of cabbage weed on the east shore of Connors Lake when I noticed a mother Wood Duck and her offspring casually swimming over the weed patch in front of me. As with all female wood ducks, her eyes were lined with their distinctive white eye shadow. Her offspring had long lost its camouflage and now wore a shimmering plumage of new feathers. Far from being a duckling, her offspring was almost three quarters the size of the mother duck. As I looked at the mother duck and her one "duckling", I thought back to the spring when each parent duck had their large brood of tiny ducklings following them. As the season continued the brood would get smaller and smaller. Now, this hen had only ONE of her brood left. Where have all the ducklings gone?

The production of each brood of ducklings is the result of around twenty-eight days of round the clock incubation by the mother duck. She only leaves the nest to feed once or twice a day for a short period of time usually at dawn or dusk. On returning to the nesting area, the hens are super secretive and

extremely careful not to expose their nesting area. On the 28th day the miracle of hatching begins. It takes around ten hours for the ducklings to hatch, dry off, and imprint with the mother duck. Baby ducks like baby chicks are well developed when hatched and because of this are said to be precocial. They can stand and walk on their own and have a downy covering unlike fragile baby robins who hatch in 12-14 days. Once the ducklings are hatched, the mother duck rushes them to the water as soon as possible. Being on the bottom of the food chain, the ducklings' survival rate varies from 10% to 70% and being on land is extremely dangerous for them. Many animals such as eagles, hawks, raccoons, mink, snakes, turtles, bass, pike, muskies, and even bullfrogs feed on them.



Still pondering about my question about the disappearing ducklings I casted my jig away from the mother duck and her offspring. Abruptly, my thoughts were interrupted by loud quacking and the sound of thrashing of wings on the water. As I quickly turned my head towards all the commotion and focused on the distressed duck, I suddenly realized it was the

mother wood duck, and she was alone. I watched as she desperately circled the area for several minutes searching for her now absent offspring. Suddenly, she just stopped paddling and was still. She gave several soft quacks and just as quickly, swam away. It took me a while to completely comprehend what all had transpired right in front of me. I sadly came to the realization that Mother Nature had just graphically demonstrated an answer to my question, "Where Have All The Ducklings Gone?"

The Ol' Fisherman

FOURTH OF JULY FIREWORKS

What an amazing donation from Rick & Lori Verbsky! They donated all the fireworks and their time putting on the great fireworks display for our lake association members and community! Thank you very much!

We have heard nothing but positive feedback from people who watched the display. Some of you watched on Connors Lake, from the Beach/Picnic area, from your homes/yards, and here at the Flambeau we sat in the parking lot! There was an amazing turnout for such short notice, we had no issues, and everyone was very respectful. The next day a group of us did clean up in the picnic area and down Johnson Road and there was very little debris. I did find one shoe in the park! We did hear that parking was a little crazy in the park and it was a little dangerous for people walking back to their cars here at the Flambeau. We are working with the DNR on that that for next year.

Many of you have heard that the board approved the fireworks for 2020. This time we have a little more room for planning and getting organized. We also must pay for them in 2020, so the fundraising has begun! We have had a couple monetary donations already and we are working on getting a letter out to everyone and planning some other ways to raise funds. If you have any ideas, want to volunteer, or help with the planning contact Toni Slack, Steve Lindahl, or any other board member. We will try to keep everyone up to date on any new information we have or things that are planned for the event.

If you could make a monetary donation, please make your check payable to Connors Lake/Lake of the Pines Lake Association and mail it to PO Box 63, Winter, WI, 54896. Please add FIREWORKS in the memo!

Aquatic Plant Management by Thomas W. Stram

The past three years we have not treated the *Myriophyllum spicatum* - Eurasian watermilfoil (EWM) in Connors lake because our recently revised Aquatic Plant Management Plan (required by the DNR to apply for and receive grants) states we cannot treat the EWM unless there is a 50% occurrence of the invasive aquatic plant. In August of 2019 our surveyor, Steve Schieffer of Ecological Integrity Services found a 49% frequency occurrence and a mean density of 1.5 of EWM in Muskie Bay. In many areas in the bay, EWM beds were canopying on the surface and large fragments were floating around the lake. There were a few single plants located in the small bay just south of Musky Bay but no other areas had noticeable plants. We have therefore met the threshold requirement for treatment next spring. We will apply for the required permit early next year and treat in early summer.

We have two options for chemical treatment of the milfoil. Use of chemical herbicides is the most effective treatment for the milfoil. In the past, we have used 2,4-D however the recommended herbicide by our surveyor, herbicide applicator and the DNR is ProcellaCOR (Florpyrauxifen-benzyl). It was approved for use in Wisconsin lakes in 2018 and is the first alternative to 2,4-D in 50 years. The product is taken up more quickly by the plants, is more selective, has no adverse effects for drinking water, recreational use or wildlife, has rapid dissipation and the duration of effectiveness is longer. Its effectiveness is guaranteed to last three years or there is a 50% refund. The cost of treatment using ProcellaCOR in the 16.28-acre Musky Bay is \$16,200. The cost of treatment with 2,4-D is \$6,600. We will apply for a grant to treat with ProcellaCOR. The DNR is looking for more lakes to evaluate the effectiveness of the new herbicide and our lake is ideal for this study.

Scott VanEgeren, our DNR Water Resources Management Specialist will go to bat for us in the grant process. We will ask Cheryl Clemens of Harmony Environmental to prepare our grant for \$1,000. On October 19th the Board of Directors voted to spend the money for grant preparation. We have used her in the past and she has a 100% success rate.

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FISHERIES COMMITTEE REPORT FOR OCTOBER: ED PETERS

First, a lament; how is it that the Fisheries Committee Chair only gets out on the water twice in the summer and only lands two fish? This is intolerable, but unfortunately, weather, graduations of a granddaughter from college and the marriage of another granddaughter all coordinated with outboard motor issues to pretty much sink most of this summer's fishing opportunities. Finally, my oldest son and I were planning some days on the water (along with some hunting) in October when he got a fantastic opportunity to relocate to western Washington with a management position with his company. Yeah!! But, that really finished off open water fishing for 2019. UGH!! Oh well, I am used to these kind of interruptions in my fishing schedule; that is all in the life of a fisheries professor. The rest of this report will focus on two major items; Muskies in Lake of the Pines and Lake Habitat and Habitat Management.

This is very high. It was decided that there would be no Muskellunge stocking in 2019 and Greg agreed that this would not jeopardize the study, because there are a number of other lakes in the study.

To summarize, this study is designed to follow the growth of individual fish in each lake. This is possible, because each fish is marked with a Passive Integrated Transponder tag (PIT tag) that is about the size of a grain of rice and is invisible on the outside of the fish, but has a unique number that can be detected using a reader that stimulates the tag to show its particular number when it is passed over the fish's body in the area where the tag is located. This unique tag was placed in the fish when it was stocked and at that time the fish was measured, so we know how long it was when it went into LOP. Then, every time that fish was recaptured during a netting or



Muskies in Lake of the Pines:

Over the summer, actually on July 19, members of the Fisheries Committee (Don Bauer, Don Bluhm, Jim Schofield and Ed Peters) met with Dr. Greg Sass (DNR Fisheries Research Biologist) to talk about Muskellunge stocking in Lake of the Pines (LOP). Since 2009 LOP has been a part of a research project that is scheduled to continue through 2029. During this project Muskellunge advance fingerlings were to be stocked every other year and Greg was asking whether we would agree to stock them this year. The question centered on the density of Muskellunge in LOP, which is estimated at 1.5 per acre.

electrofishing survey it could be definitely identified and measured again.

In addition, since the age of the fish was known when it was stocked; every time it is caught again, its age can be accurately determined. Therefore, the age and size of each individually tagged fish can be tracked through its life because it has an individually unique tag number. Potentially, a fish stocked in LOP in 2009 could be monitored until the end of the study in 2029. Often we will use scales or other hard body parts from a fish to determine its age, but on long lived fishes like Muskies

that may not be very accurate. So, that is why Greg Sass and his co-workers at the Wisconsin DNR are using data collected from known age fish (those stocked with PIT tags) to see how fast they are growing. They can follow the growth of individual fish in LOP and other lakes which are part of this study to see how fast they are growing. Every year that they catch and measure a particular fish that gives them another data point. After five, ten or fifteen years they will be able to calculate the values to fill in the growth equation for individual fish. Then they will be able to assemble those values for all the fish in a particular lake and come up with a better idea about how fast or slow the average fish in that population are growing. I am working on a more detailed description of how this information is important to Muskellunge management, but that still needs some work (so stay tuned)..

Lake Habitat and Habitat Management:

Over the past couple of years fisheries researchers and managers from the Wisconsin DNR have been publishing a number of technical articles on lake habitat and habitat management in a variety of journals. In 2019, Andrew Rypel and nine co-authors from the Wisconsin DNR published an article entitled; "Flexible Classification of Wisconsin Lakes for Improved Fisheries Conservation and Management" in the journal "Fisheries". This classification framework uses a combination of sportfish assemblages and lake temperature and water clarity to group lakes. Lakes that support populations of more than four sportfish species are defined as complex communities and those with fewer than three sportfish species are defined as simple communities. Both Connors Lake and Lake of the Pines fit into the complex sportfish category. In terms of water temperature there are three categories; cold, cool and warm and both Connors Lake and Lake of the Pines fit into the cool category. For water clarity there are two categories; clear and dark (turbid), Connors Lake is classified as clear and Lake of the Pines is classified as dark. Exactly how this classification system will influence management for lakes is still a work in progress, but to me it looks like a way to help fisheries managers compare similar lakes to each other and to better evaluate management opportunities. I would be happy to send electronic copies of this article to anyone who wants to delve into it more deeply and maybe we can discuss more about it on the fisheries committee and with Jeff Scheirer.

The second article that I want to mention is authored by

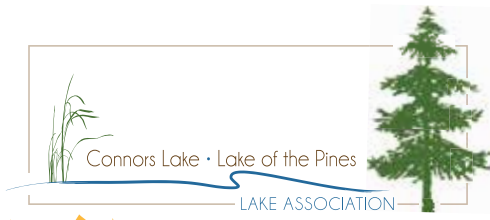
Greg Sass and two co-authors and is entitled "Inland Fisheries Habitat Management: Lessons Learned from Wildlife Ecology and a Proposal for Change" published in "Fisheries" in 2017. Greg brings up a number of points about the lack of habitat management that is done in lakes when compared to terrestrial wildlife and stream fisheries management. As I have read and re-read this article, I think that this is because we can more easily see and identify with the habitat of deer, grouse and stream fishes. On the other hand we can't see what is happening below the surface of lakes that we are trying to manage. Therefore we fall back on what Aldo Leopold considered to be more basic kinds of management techniques like limiting harvest or artificial replenishment of populations (stocking).

We, on Connors Lake and Lake of the Pines, because of the excellent record of water chemistry measurements done via the Citizen Lake Monitoring Program, have a better opportunity to "see" what is happening in these lakes than many other lake associations. This, I think, gives us the opportunity to go beyond the important additions of physical habitat augmentation like additions of rock for spawning areas and trees for affording cover. For example, the dissolved oxygen (DO) profiles from the past several summers have shown some unusually low DO concentrations at a depth of about 20 feet in Connors Lake that some limnologists from the DNR think bear watching, especially when we need to treat for Milfoil (Yup everything we do is connected).



ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY

Thank you!



ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY

Thanks to all the volunteers who helped with our 4th year of ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY. This is a way to get involved and volunteer to make our lake vicinity (even more) more beautiful. We clean-up the sides of the road on Hwy W from the Intersection of Hwy M (Fire Tower) to the DNR Headquarters.

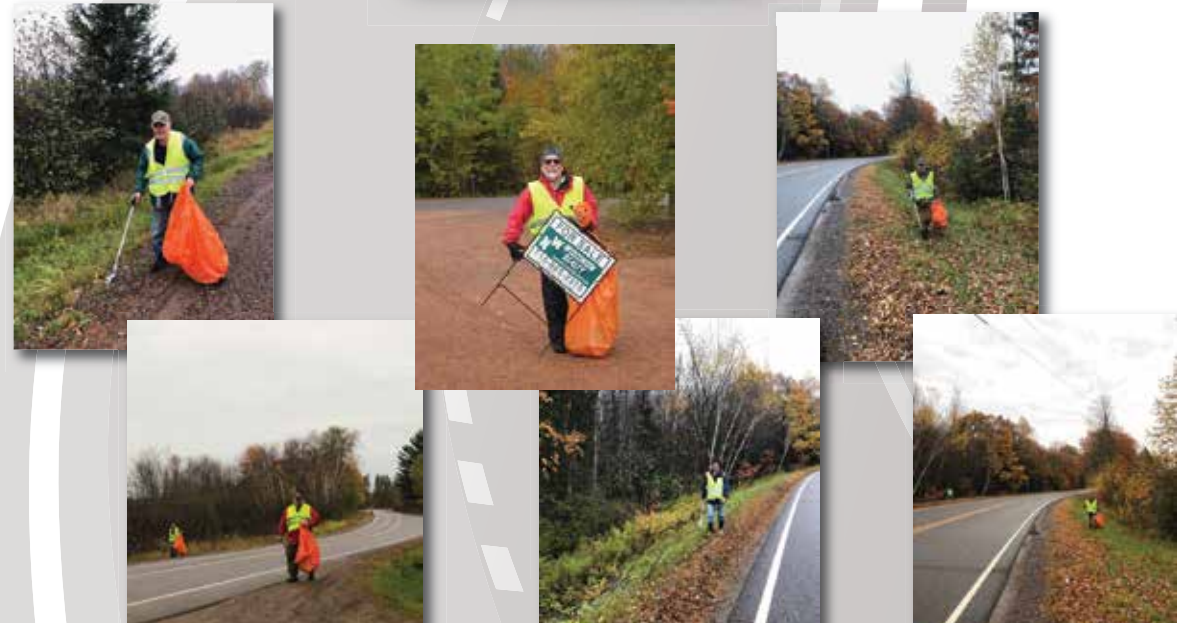
Thanks to those that helped this year:

Jim Biser, George Bogdanovic, Don Bauer, Dave Bauer, Bob and Patti Feller, Greg Cernjar Don, Cody, Brianna, Sue and Hunter Bluhm, Tom Eckels, Steve Luptak, Laura & Rich Marusinec, Mike & Kim Poncek, Dave Schiotz, Valerie Schultz, Jim Schofield, and Tom Stram.

(If I've miss anyone I apologize-let me know if I missed you and I'll give special mention next newsletter.)

This is a great way to encourage concern for the welfare of our local natural resources. Adopt-A-Highway is an activity that families can participate in together; children that are at least 11 years old or the 6th grade can participate. We will be out for the Adopt-A-Highway Clean-up 2 times a year; in late April after the snow is gone; and again in sometime in September/October.

If you would like to get your name on the volunteer list to be contacted for the next highway clean-up, please contact Dave Cooley at (920) 428-0755 or dec54914@prodigy.net.



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*Thanks for a great 2018 Season!
 We look forward to serving you next year.*

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