

From the
Lake Shores



SPRING



WATERS | VOLUNTEERS | FISH | FORESTRY

“Preserving and protecting our lakes for today and for future generations.”
a newsletter for the Lake Association Members • Volume 38 - May 2026

Words from the President

As your president for the last 4 years and vice president before, I genuinely believe the last few years have been the best! We have an amazing group of people that are working hard for you. The Board of Directors has had many accomplishments over the last few years, some took a little longer than others, but we have quite the list. Some of these things were completed with the DNR and other organizations and some were just your Board of Directors.

- New walking trail on the Lake of the Pines and signage
- Replaced the sand on Connors Lake beach
- Re-built the seats on the benches on Connors Lake
- New water fountains on both lakes.
- Life Vest stations on both lakes
- We are getting new restrooms & changing rooms on Connors Lake
- Working to get the Milfoil back in control on Connors Lake
- Working with the DNR patrolling the ATV trails for issues
- Fireworks are back
- Applying and receiving grants to defray costs
- A new boat landing



"The future is in our hands"

As the year progresses, we will continue to work hard to keep you up to date on the boat landing and other projects. Our Board of Directors is full but that does not mean we can't back and relax because there is so much more to get done and we have elections in September again.

The new boat landing on Connors Lake has been in the making for over 7 years. It is so exciting to be in the final stretch, and the end is almost here. We will have a beautiful new landing and the DNR is also re-doing the restroom/changing area either this fall or spring 2027. It would be great to get it done this fall, but I think that it has to do with funding in Madison at this point. The boat landing is closed starting June 1 and will remain closed for 45 days, so make plans to get your boats in before closing. Also please remember that we have 3 businesses in the area and 1 is on Connors Lake, these businesses are going to take a big financial hit during the closing of the landing so be sure to stop and patronize their businesses. With all this going on I am pleasantly surprised at how many people are coming up to enjoy our beautiful area. The DNR said that we have more people camping, boating, and visiting our area than ever! People are looking for our Facebook site, and we have over 1000 followers now. Fishing opener is here this weekend and hopefully we have a great turn out, ATV trails are opening mid-May, and soon it will be Memorial Day weekend! Time certainly does pass quickly! We have a great relationship with our local DNR and are working hard to find exciting new projects for the area.

I remember coming up here since I was 6 years old! I would ride in the back of my dad's 1957 DeSoto wagon. We would park on the gravel road, put our boat in the lake from the gravel landing, and camp by the boat landing. We would sleep in the back of the car and my dad slept on the front seat. We would wake up in the morning to the old green Coleman cooker, smelling bacon cooking, and eating from plastic plates. After we were done eating, we would wash the plates in the lake. We would then head out for a full day of fishing. A few years later my dad bought our first cabin on Connors Lake. Life goes on and those times have passed, the area has changed and the next generation is now taking over. We are now the seniors of the area and it's our job to create memories and "to preserve and protect Connors Lake, Lake of the Pines, and their surroundings, and to enhance the water quality, fishery, boating safety, and aesthetic values as a public recreational facility for today and for future generation." (this statement is the Lake Association Mission)

So, in closing I hope your family has a great summer with family and friends and you will enjoy the area! I am sure I will see many of you this Summer! I think I smell some bacon cooking, so I must go!

See you in the North,

Steven Lindahl, President

Fireworks this Fall

Firework will be on September 6th at dusk (sunset is about 7:31pm on this day). The display will be shot from the same site as last year. The Beam family has once again allowed us to shoot them off their property! Thank you so much again!

WE NEED YOUR HELP to continue this tradition!! This year it is costing us \$12K for the fireworks display! The tariffs and shipping have gone up, and we need your help to keep it going. In the past it was the DNR stopping it because it was on state land and now that problem has been solved, the next hurdle is funding. We did receive a matching donation of up to \$6K, so that means we need to still raise \$6K. We have raised about \$3K this year and still need to raise a little more. We also have donations promised but they are not in our hands yet. We have been doing fund raising by asking for donations on your membership form and we are going to start doing other fund raising such as raffles to help raise the money. If you have any ideas, please let us know!

We will be discussing alternate ways of funding this at the next General Meeting at Big Bear Lodge on Saturday May 23rd. Please come to the meeting and help us with your ideas! This is the one thing we do for the members and would like to see it continue, but if we can't raise the funds yearly then we may need to skip a year or skip it altogether.



Wayne Stoll

Events In the Northwoods this Summer & Fall

WINTER:

- May 9th-10th Winter Greenhouse Mom's Day Weekend Event
- May 23rd-Spring Fling 8:00am-2:00pm Zion Luthern Church has a breakfast at 8:00am, Car show at 9:00am, and craft fair.
- May 23rd-25th-Winter Greenhouse Memorial Day Weekend Event
- June 20th-21st Winter Greenhouse Father's Day Event
- July 3rd-4th-July Jubilee Truck pull, parade, fireworks, entertainment on the 4th
- September 5th-6th Winter Greenhouse Autumn Splendor Event
- November 28th-Homespun Holidays Indoor craft sale in Winter High School

PHILLIPS:

- June 1st, 8th, 15th, and 22nd Yoga in the Park Elk Lake Park
- June 11th-14th Community Garage Sale
- June 19th-20th Czech Slovak Fest
- July 2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd, 30th, Aug 6th Music in the Park Elk Lake Park. We don't have a line up yet; check phillipswi.net or Phillips Area Chamber of Commerce on Facebook
- July 3rd-4th Phillips Rodeo Fair Grounds
- July 4th Parade and Art & More on the Lake Shore
- July 18th-19th Antique Tractor Expo and Car Show Fair Grounds
- August 6th-8th Community Garage Sale
- August 20th-22nd Price County Fair
- October 3rd Phillips Harvest Fest

PARK FALLS:

- June 19th-21st-Garage & Sidewalk Sales Maps will be available online (Parkfalls.com) starting June 12th or at the Chamber Office
- July 31st-August 2nd-Flambeau Rama Live music, full carnival, food trucks, car show, kids' activities, softball and pickleball tournaments, parade, and craft fair
- August 1st-Evergreen 5K Run/Walk Registration starts in May
- September 5th & 6th-Tour De Flambeau 35-mile road bike race on Saturday & 13-mile trail bike race on Sunday. Registration starts in June.
- October 24th-Fright Fest Pumpkin drop, trunk or treating, free children's games, DJ Toby, pumpkin decorating.
- Wednesday Night Live: Live music at Old Abe Park
- June 17th-Relative Paradox
- June 24th-Joyann Parker
- July 1st-Copper County Line
- July 8th-Jason Taylor with Jesse Bauman
- July 15th-Bree Morgan
- July 22nd-Tony Sabo Band

July 29th-Uncommon Denominator
August 5th-Rough Romance

OTHER SURROUNDING TOWNS:

- May 23rd-Cable Natural History Museum Exhibit Open House: Wild About Wetlands!
- June 6th-7th WI DNR Free Fishing Weekend
- June 12th-13th Catawba Lumberman's Day Catawba Park
- June 27th Kennan Fire Department Truck & Tractor Pulls
- June 26th-28th Hayward 76th Annual Musky Fest
- July 4th-Hayward Cardboard Boat Races (boldlodge.com) for more information
- July 9th-11th Spooner Heart of the North Rodeo (spoonerrodeo.com) for more info
- July 15th-18th Hayward Lumberjack World Championships
- August 13th-16th Hayward Sawyer County Fair
- September 4th-7th Prentice Progress Days
- September 25th-26th Cable Fall Festival
- September 26th Hayward Fall Festival
- October 2nd-4th Bayfield Apple Festival
- October 3rd Stone Lake Cranberry Festival
- November 27th Hayward Christmas in Hayward begins



**SPOONER HEART OF THE NORTH RODEO
JULY 9TH - 11TH**

Hello Everyone,

My name is Gloria Lindahl, and for the past two years, I've had the joy of coordinating the boat parade on Connors Lake. I'm excited to let you know that we're gearing up for another festive parade this year! To give everyone plenty of time to catch the area fireworks afterward, we're moving the start time up to 6 pm on July 4th.

I've attached a few photos from the last couple of years along with this year's flyer. Whether you'd like to join us on the water or prefer to cheer us on from your dock, we'd love to have you be a part of the celebration.

Thank You, Gloria



Squatters' Shack

Many, many years ago, in the Flambeau Forest, there was a squatters' deer hunting camp. On the door was a sign reading "Lac-A-Nook-E Lodge". It was about half a mile in from a dirt road and the walk was a beautiful path lined with big pines. The shack was built of logs and wood. It was 1 big room with built-in bunk beds, a stove, and a huge wooden table. The shack was never locked, so people could walk in at any time and there were signs that mice, squirrels and raccoons visited. The hunters would throw their beer cans out by the side of the shack. On the table was a visitor's book with pencils where you could write your name and address as well as comments. There were names from people all over Wisconsin and beyond. It was fun to go several times a year to see who had visited the lodge.



This shack was eventually razed by the DNR. Now you would never know it had been there. The road leading into the shack has a new "official" name. But to us it will always be Lac-A-Nook-E Lane.

Submitted by: Cynthia Aigner

The Ruby-throated Hummingbird (*Archilochus colubris*) – Wisconsin’s Fearless, Amazing, Flying Jewel
Let’s discover some incredible fun facts about these tiny marvels of nature!

There are 340+ species of hummingbirds in the New World, and the Ruby-throated is Wisconsin’s only nesting species of hummingbird. Arriving in the Spring, as early as late April, the adult males are typically the first to arrive. Once they have returned to their nesting grounds, both males and females will stake out a site as their own and defend it tirelessly. Hummingbirds have astonishing spatial memory allowing them to return to your property and recall where feeders have been as well as flowers. They will do this not only on their territory but also on their migration stops, year after year.

All hummingbirds require nectar but also enormous amounts of bugs. That’s right...they cannot survive on nectar alone! This is why it’s imperative to plant a variety of diverse trees, shrubs, perennials as well as annual flowers. This provides shelter, nesting areas, and food. Their high metabolism requires the amino acids and protein found in spiders, gnats, mosquitos, and other small invertebrates.

An example of some native perennials include: Beardtongue, Bee Balm (*Monarda*), Cardinal Flower (*Lobelia*), Columbine, Coral Honeysuckle, Royal Catchfly, Virginia Bluebells, and Spotted Jewelweed. There are many, many more one can search for online.

Some examples of annuals (And I believe this is a must if you truly want to attract hummingbirds) include: Salvias (*Amistad*, *Black and Blue*, *Argentine Skies*, *Purple Majesty*), Cupheas (*Vermillionaire* and *David Verity*), and Red Tropical Sage. Again, there are many more to discover online.

Variety is important for the most success. Create mass groupings of flowers, hanging baskets, and remember to place them where you can enjoy them as well.

Hummingbirds are tenacious creatures, which I’m sure comes in handy when defending territories and during migration. Last fall I observed an adult male harass a young common yellowthroat for quite some time. The young warbler finally had enough and departed, heading over the roof of the house. The male hummer pursued, attacking the warbler making direct contact, creating a very audible sound. After landing on the roof stunned and reorientating itself, the warbler left the area. I truly believe hummingbirds are afraid of nothing.

Migration is a perilous time for all birds. And for a hummingbird weighing around 3g with a demanding metabolism, the journey presents another challenge. So how does the ruby-throated hummer make it to the wintering grounds in Central America? First challenge is they migrate alone, not in flocks like songbirds, and during the day. Flying at tree height or lower, these dynamos can stop and forage along the way.

Adult males start migration first, followed by the adult females. Young or hatch-year birds tend to linger and will often spend considerable time at a good site hosting shelter and plenty of food for sometimes a couple of weeks before moving on. During this time, they are mastering flight, foraging, and discovering what plants are providing them the best food source.

While not all ruby-throats cross the Gulf of Mexico, many do. There are staging areas where large numbers of this species will “hang out” waiting for the right conditions to cross the Gulf. How can they possibly make the 500+ mile journey? It’s a phenomenon for sure but one strategy is hyperphagia. These hummers will eat massive amounts of insects and nectar and can literally double their weight. This provides plenty of reserves to make the journey.

The Ruby-throated Hummingbird



Eurasian Watermilfoil (EWM) and our Lakes

Eurasian Watermilfoil, an invasive aquatic plant, appears to be holding steady after the treatment in the spring of 2024, based on the Aquatic Plant Management Plan. We have seen no EWM in the bay by the boat landing or in Happe's Bay, and the acreage in Musky Bay has been significantly reduced. The Aquatic Plant Management Plan can be found on the lake associations web site at <https://www.connorspineslakeassociation.org>.

The Aquatic Plant Management Plan goals are:

1. Eurasian watermilfoil growth is kept to a minimal level in Connors Lake.
2. Eurasian watermilfoil does not establish or spread into Papoose Lake or Lake of the Pines.
3. No new aquatic invasive species are introduced or established in our lakes.
4. The lakes' diverse native plant communities are preserved.
5. Lake residents understand the importance of native aquatic plants, the means to protect them, and the threat of aquatic invasive species.
6. Aquatic plant management efforts are carried out in an efficient, cost effective manner.



Wayne Stoll

In August of 2026, an aquatic plant survey will be conducted to assess overall changes in the distribution of native and invasive plant life. At that time, we hope that goals 1 through 4 are still being met.

It is important to understand that once an aquatic invasive species is introduced into a lake, eradication is nearly impossible and becomes a long term issue. It is therefore up to us and our fellow outdoor enthusiasts to be the caretakers of the lakes and the aquatic life in them. Please help us keep aquatic invasive species out of our lakes, ensuring enjoyment for you and future generations.

Prevention is the best line of defense, since aquatic invasive species move between water bodies on recreational equipment (boats, trailers, bait buckets, live wells, ballast tanks, and fishing equipment). The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources recommends the following for prevention:

- Before leaving the boat launch, conduct the following actions required by law:
- Inspect and remove aquatic plants and animals from boats and equipment.
- Drain all water from the boat and equipment.
- Before entering another waterbody:
- Spray boat and equipment with high-pressure hot water, or
- Allow the boat and equipment to dry out of water for at least five days.¹

Thank you for being good stewards of our natural resources, and I wish you an enjoyable upcoming summer.

John Meisner

¹ <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/Invasives/fact/EurasianWatermilfoil>

Connors Lake Boat Landing

We have some great news!! The date is set for the new boat landing to be put in Connors Lake! The project will start on June 1 and end about 45 days later, it may go a little longer if there is severe weather and they get delayed. As of now the project is from June 1st through July 17th. This is a huge project, and a lot of people have been working on it for a long time: DNR, engineers, fishery committees, and our Lake Association. I am sure there are more organizations, but those are the major ones.

Until the construction begins the landing will be open with the dock in place. It will be open for Memorial Day, but not the 4th of July. I have contacted Mark from Northland Piers, and he is aware of the closing date and will get your docks in before the landing closes. If you are using another Dock company, please call them and make them aware of the date too. If you have a watercraft that you use on Connors in the summer, we recommend you get it on the lake as soon as your dock goes in.

There will not be an alternate place to get your boat in the water once the landing is closed. DO NOT use the beach or any other state land to launch your boat after the closing of the ramp!! If you have a VRBO, Air B & B, or other rental property please make your renters aware that the landing will be closed. They can always go over to Lake of the Pines and have fun on that lake.

We have been waiting for this a long time, and it will only be closed for 45 days, you still have a lot of time this summer for fishing and fun on Connors. I am sure it will be amazing for many more years to come! This is all the information we have at this time, but we will make sure we update you with any changes in the future.

Have a great Summer,

Steve Lindahl
President

Aquatic Invasive Species Report Spring 2026

This report is basically a repeat from last September. The lakes were surveyed in late August 2025 by Steve Schieffer, Ecological Integrity Service. There was no milfoil identified in Lake of the Pines. Musky Bay was the only area in Connors Lake where milfoil was found. The milfoil had increased a small amount from 3 percent to 7 percent in that area — no where near the amount warranting treatment with chemicals. The next lake survey will be conducted in August 2026.

This will be my last report in the Lake Shores newsletter. As I've said before, I believe in term limits. My 2 terms will be completed in September 2026. During this time, we received a \$10,000 grant from the DNR to pay for lake surveys and creating a new Aquatic Plant Management Plan. We wrote the new 5-year Aquatic Plant Management Plan in 2024 and it was approved by the DNR in 2025. We also chemically treated an area of fast-growing milfoil by the Connors Lake boat landing. As noted above, no milfoil was found in the bay by the boat landing during our last lake survey.

I would like to introduce to you the person who will be taking my place on the board starting in late summer. John Meisner has a place on the west side of Connors Lake and he has been in the area since 1982. This spring John completed a course on aquatic invasive species from the University of Minnesota to prepare for his work on the board. One of his primary tasks this year will be to complete the requirements for the DNR grant ending in 2026. I feel confident he will be a great board member.

I have appreciated this opportunity to work on the Board. I have learned more about our lakes and I feel more connected with people here. This board is very hard working towards goals that better the lakes. We always need more volunteers!

Thank you and be safe on the lakes, Cynthia Aigner



Wayne Stoll

Sara Beam

Recording Secretary

"Hi everyone! I'm Sara Beam, and my husband Ron and I are proud homeowners on the east side of Connors Lake. Originally from Janesville, we raised our four daughters in Waukesha before finally finding our way to the Northwoods.

Our family keeps us busy and inspired: our eldest, Alicia, is an elementary educator/reading specialist in Milwaukee; Megan has a wonderful job in dental medical sales; Rebecca is completing her advanced degree in Dental Therapy; and our youngest, Elizabeth, is currently a student-athlete swimming in the Big Ten Conference for the University of Iowa. We are also joined by our very special Collie, Ellie.

Now that we are retired, we look forward to spending more time at Connors Lake and eventually making it our full-time home. When I'm not serving as your Recording Secretary, you can find me outdoors—fishing, traveling, or exercising—or tucked away working on a scrapbook, reading a book, doing a puzzle, or a new photography project. I love entertaining and can't wait to see more of you around the lakes!" Oh yea... I LOVE all sports WISCONSIN! Go Brewers, Packers, Bucks and Badgers.





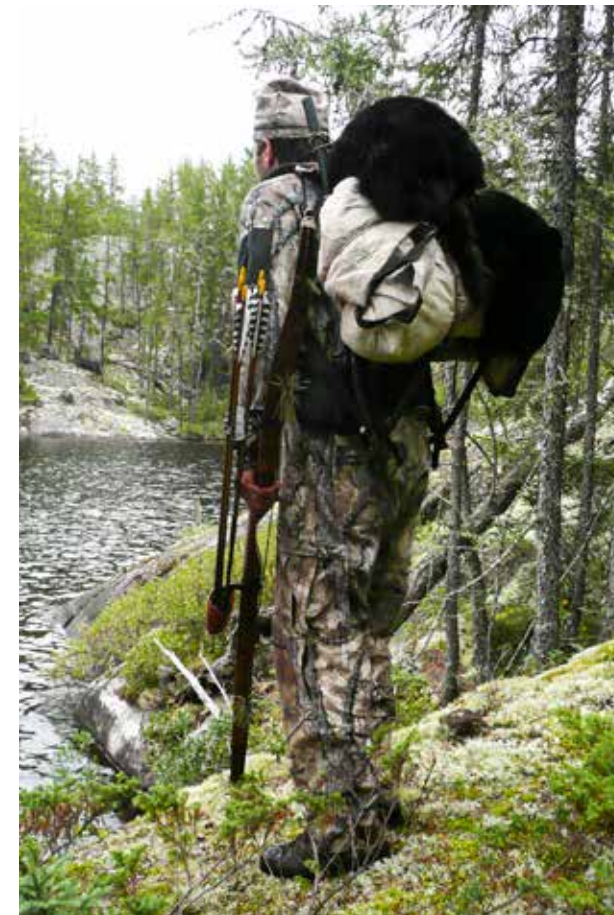
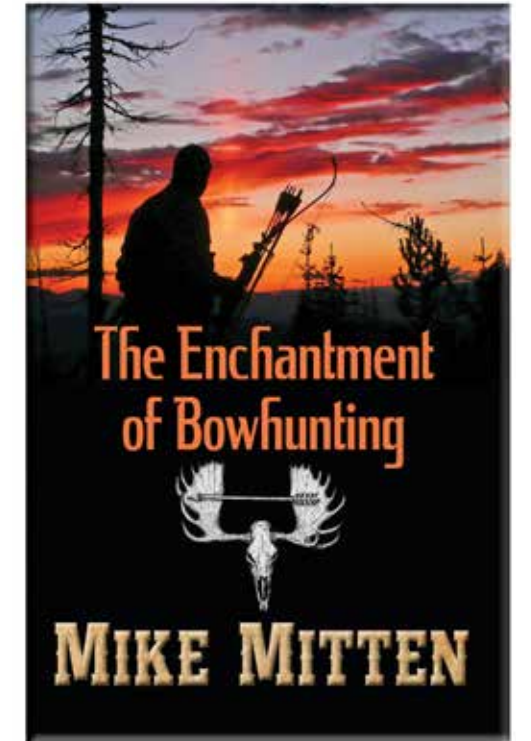
Good Read Recommendation! **The Enchantment of Bowhunting**

Mike Mitten is a northern Illinois native who has spent more than five decades hunting and exploring the woods and waters of the Chequamegon National Forest. Since 1970, his family's property near the forest has served as his gateway to the natural world, inspiring a lifelong pursuit of wild encounters with a bow in hand.

Mike and *The Brothers of the Bow* produced the award-winning video *Primal Dreams*, and he has since produced additional videos and writings. His newest book, *The Enchantment of Bowhunting*, is available now at HerdbullProductions.com.

A Journey of Solitude, Spirit, and the Wild Pursuit

Step into the untamed with legendary woodsman Mike Mitten in *The Enchantment of Bowhunting*, a deeply personal collection of wilderness stories, reflections, and spiritual insight drawn from a life lived close to the land.



From solo moose hunts in the remote North to intimate encounters with whitetails, bears, turkeys, and more, Mike invites readers to walk beside him—arrow nocked, senses sharpened, heart open. Each chapter immerses you in the elemental beauty of the hunt: the flutter of feathers in flight, the hush of snow beneath your boots, the electric stillness when you know you are being watched.

But this book is about more than the chase. It explores what bowhunting gives back: reverence for life, the quiet strength of solitude, and whispered prayers of gratitude offered over the flicker of a campfire or beneath the weight of a pack in bear country.

With prose as raw and reverent as the experiences it captures, *The Enchantment of Bowhunting* is a celebration of traditional archery, wild places, and the deeper meaning found in the pursuit. Praise, prayer, and predator tracks—it's all here.

Let this book guide you into the wilderness—and perhaps closer to God's heart.

Full-color photographs. 317 pages. Hardcover.

Fisheries Committee Update

The Fisheries Committee is working to ensure healthy fish populations in Connors Lake and Lake of the Pines. We have been in regular communication with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) regarding the management of the fisheries resources and fish habitat in our lakes. In addition, the fishery committee assists with lake improvement projects and provides regular updates to the Lake Association Board on all fisheries related activities.

Connors Lake and Lake of the Pines have been evaluated annually by the DNR during spring and fall population estimates using standard electrofishing and fyke net techniques. In addition, creel surveys were conducted in 2021 and 2022 to assess fisherman success and harvest. The combined results have been reviewed and are being used to direct our lake improvement projects.

The primary fish species in Connors Lake and Lake of the Pines are muskellunge, walleye, bass (largemouth and smallmouth), perch, bluegills, pumpkinseed, crappies, northern pike, and rock bass. Of these species, northern pike and rock bass are not monitored and are of less interest than the other species and will not be discussed in this update.

Panfish Population (perch, bluegills, pumpkinseed, and crappie):

One observation is that the size of panfish is lower than desired in our lakes. A possible cause for the reduced size could be overharvest of larger fish by anglers. In that case, imposing a reduced harvest limit could improve the age and size structure of the fish.

Our lakes were part of a 10-year study to assess modified panfish harvest limits on 94 Wisconsin lakes. The standard statewide panfish daily limit is 25 total fish of any species, however lakes in the study had limits that were modified to 25 total with 10 of one species (25/10) or 15 total with 5 of one species (15/5). Connors Lake and Lake of the Pines have both had the 25/10 limit since the start of the study in 2016. The overall results from the study showed that lakes that limited the harvest to 5 of one species showed a size improvement. So, there is now a new option of 25 total with 5 of one species being considered for panfish on some lakes. In addition, a total limit of 10 fish of any species is being considered. While the options are being vetted for the various lakes, the standard pre-study 25 daily bag limit will be reverted back to in 2026 for Connors Lake and Lake of the Pines.

Based on conversations with Jeff Schierer of the Wisconsin DNR, the data from this study and data from the creel surveys indicate that the bluegills and perch in our lakes did not appear to be affected by over-harvest, so modified limits may not help. However, crappie on Lake of the Pines may benefit from new harvest rules (25/5 or 10 in total). To implement a change, it would be proposed in 2026 and presented at the 2027 spring hearings. Any changes would be put in place for the 2028 season.

The DNR has been gathering input from fishermen and other stake holders regarding any proposed changes. A survey was sent out to fishing license holders in our area as well as all members of our lake association in November 2025. The DNR is currently assessing the responses and will make the proposals later this year. We will keep the association informed if any changes are made.

Other potential causes of reduced panfish size could be competition for food or predation by larger fish. Having suitable and sufficient habitat can help panfish thrive throughout their lifespan. One way to increase habitat is to submerge trees or woody structure into the lake. Volunteers have conducted Christmas tree drops in Connors Lake and Lake of the Pines for this reason. Observations by fishermen indicate that this effort may be having its intended effect with larger bluegills and perch being reported recently.

Walleye Population:

We have also been in communication with the DNR regarding the walleye population and sub optimal recruitment (i.e. replenishment of young walleye to the population) in our lakes based on DNR spring and fall fish surveys.

In Connors Lake, there has been a downward trend in walleye recruitment in recent years however 2024 was a strong year with 36 fingerlings per mile captured during the fish population survey (note: 15 per mile is considered adequate). It is common to have years of strong and weak recruitment and there is no evidence of a problem based on the DNR's assessment. Since 2015, surveys showed that walleye fingerlings per mile were greater than 15 per mile for five of the years and less than 15 per mile for 6 of the years. Factors such as warming water temperature and variable ice out dates have caused reduced spawning success and decreased walleye populations in lakes all over northwest Wisconsin. Increased bass populations and clearer water also appear to have a negative impact on the walleye populations. Population estimates from recent surveys show 2.3 adult fish per acre indicating that the population is being maintained and is at an acceptable level, however there is a desire to get the population to 3-5 adult fish per acre, if possible. A comparison of creel survey results from 2013-2014 vs 2021-2022 clearly show a walleye population difference in Connors Lake. In the 2013-2014 survey, fishermen caught 1744 walleye and harvested 134 fish, while in the 2021-2022 survey, fishermen caught 550 walleye and harvested 72 fish. The fisheries committee and Walleyes for Tomorrow (WFT) have been assessing options for increasing the population. We are fortunate to have Dave Bauer, the head of the Price County Chapter of WFT, on Connors Lake. In the past he coordinated rock drops along the shoreline in Connors Lake to increase walleye spawning habitat and this will continue with additional cobble to be placed in the waterway between Connors Lake and Little Papoose. In addition, he proposed placing a portable fish hatchery on Connors Lake to increase spawning success, however the DNR rejected that proposal stating that there is no data indicating that spawning success is inadequate and because the DNR is working to determine the underlying cause and best solution for the decreasing walleye populations in northern Wisconsin. We will continue working together to understand the factors that influence walleye survival throughout their lifespan and assess ways to make improvements on our lakes to correct or improve any observed deficiencies.

Lake of the Pines has a walleye population very similar to Connors Lake but is stocked by the DNR. It is currently at 2.2 adults per acre, however back in 2013, the population was only estimated to be 0.3 adults per acre. The low population at that time influenced the DNR to begin stocking. Since then, 15 fingerling walleye per acre have been stocked on even number years and will continue in the future. In the fall of 2024, a new approach was used that involved placing the stocked fish in various locations around the lake, vs 1 site (ie. the boat launch). The objective of the approach was to determine if scattering the fish around the lake would increase the survival rates. One aspect of this approach involved fin clipping the fish so they could be identified in future population studies. The fin clipping and transport of fish caused stress on the fish and led to higher mortality rates during the process. The overall success of this approach will be apparent in future surveys.

A question that lake association members often inquire about is how many walleyes are being harvested by tribal spearers and whether the spearing has a negative impact on the population. For background, tribal spearing has taken place every year since 1993 on Connors Lake, but no spearing has been conducted on Lake of the Pines for over 20 years. The quota (allowable catch limit) is set by established safe harvest calculations based on population estimates for the lake. The tribal harvest of walleye on Connors Lake from 2021 through 2025 was 161, 86, 109, 95, and 153. Based on the creel survey information shown previously, the tribal harvest is approximately double that of the sport fisherman harvest on Connors Lake. We have asked the DNR whether the safe harvest number for Connors Lake can be reassessed or if spearing could be paused for a few years based on a decreasing walleye population. We will continue to have discussions about this, but the issue is the same for many lakes in the ceded territory. It turns out that the DNR and the University of Wisconsin have been actively assessing the impacts of spearing and fisherman harvest compared to repopulation levels. What they are observing is that too many fish are being harvested and changes will need to be implemented to maintain a robust population in the future. The safe harvest of tribal spearers and sport fishermen was set many years ago at 35% of the total adult population per year. This appears to be much too high for the current reproduction levels in most northern Wisconsin lakes. A safe harvest of 20% seems more

adequate based on research described in a 2025 article by Greg Sass of the Wisconsin DNR. We will continue to provide updates to the lake association on this topic as we get more information.

Muskellunge (Muskie) Population:

The Muskellunge population in Connors Lake and Lake of the Pines is at or above goal but the quantity of muskies attaining memorable size (over 42 inches) is lower than desired. Muskies have been stocked in both Connors Lake and Lake of the Pines. In Lake of the Pines, the population was shown to be far above goal, so stocking was suspended in 2017. The DNR's objective is to let the fish in the lake grow at a lower density to create more of a quality vs quantity population. In Connors Lake, a low level of stocking has been on-going however natural reproduction is also occurring. The naturally reproduced fish tend to grow faster and are projected to grow to a larger size. Connors Lake has a reputation of producing a few fish in the 50-inch range every year.

Bass Population:

The bass population is adequate in both lakes. Lake of the Pines currently has a low but stable population of bass (both largemouth and smallmouth) while Connors Lake has a good population of smallmouth bass but very few largemouth bass. The size structure of smallmouth bass in Connors Lake is excellent, with memorable size fish (greater than 17 inches) being very common (estimated to be between 13-21 percent of the total population).

The Fisheries Committee will continue to work with the DNR and other stake holders to understand the dynamics of the fish populations in our lakes and will continually work to make improvements. If any member of the lake association has a question, would like more information, or would like to be involved, please feel free to contact one of the current fisheries committee members.

Mike Domanico



Fisheries Committee Members (with fish caught on Connors Lake):
Mike Domanico, Chair Don Bluhm Dean Hartwig



Your New Board Members -

If you see these people, say hi and thank them for helping us out! We now have a full Board of Directors!

Sara Beam is now the Secretary

Al Ward is the Vice President

John Meisner also joined us in 2025

We also need to thank the Board Members that stepped down in 2025:

Jaime Wilson and Don Bluhm

Thank you for all your time and help.

2025 Cash Raffle Results

The 2025 Cash Raffle Fund Raiser drawing was held at Big Bear Lodge at 10:00 am on Saturday, August 30. The fund raiser had 77 of the 100 tickets sold.

Our break-even point was 47 tickets.

Thank you to everyone who purchased and/or sold tickets this year.

The 2025 winners are as follows:

- 1st Place \$2,500.00 Ron Beam - 2nd Place \$1,000.00 Mike Dullum
- 3rd Place \$500.00 Cindy Babcock - 4th Place \$100.00 Len & Mary Ironside
- 5th Place \$100.00 Steve Reisner - 6th Place \$100.00 Bonnie Dyson
- 7th Place \$100.00 Brian Smith - 8th Place \$100.00 Angela Lindahl
- 9th Place \$100.00 Jane Hennen - 10th Place \$100.00 Brian Baldi

Kim Poncek
Treasurer

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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connorspineslakeassociation.org



**Big Bear Lodge hours:
4pm-9pm Thursday
11am-9pm Friday, Saturday, & Sunday.
Starting mid June open Monday at 4pm**



**Flambeau Forest Inn hours:
11:30am Wednesday through Sunday.
Winter hours Wednesday 4pm and Thursday
through Sunday 11:30am**

Starting May 1:	June/July/Aug:
Thurs 3-9	Wed Thur 3-9
Fri 3-9	Fri Sat noon-9
Sat noon-9	Sun noon-5
Sun noon-5	



***Please submit your pictures and/or short stories to the new addition of the Newsletter!
"Memory Moments at the Lake" we would like this to be all about our members sharing a short
story or picture of a fond memory that you participated in at the lake.
connorspineslakeassociation.org***

"Preserving and protecting our lakes for today and for future generations."

**Connor Lake | Lake of the Pines
Voluntary Lake Association**

**Connorspineslakeassociation.org | info@connorspineslakeassociation.org
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LAKE ASSOCIATION

