

WIND LAKE MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

P.O. Box 222
Muskego, WI 53150

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Dedicated to the Revitalization of Wind Lake



Volume 37, Number 1, April 2022

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VISIT WLMD.ORG FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Meetings, schedules, agendas, and minutes
- Information about who to contact for various activities
- Links to other lake-related sites
- The latest lake depth map of Wind Lake
- Important Notices

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS:

Mike Bluemel – Chairman	(262) 895-2502
Ron Mayer – Secretary	(414) 614-5859
Jeremy Sauld – Treasurer	(262) 391-7044
Ralph Schopp – Town Representative	(414) 531-6020
Joe Bellante – County Supervisor	(262) 895-6694
Bruce Rosenquist – Commissioner	(262) 895-3942
Jim Marks – Commissioner	(414) 810-9526

Commissioner's meetings are usually held the 4th Tuesday of every month, with the November and December meeting combined. Meetings begin at 7pm at the Norway Town Hall. All residents are welcome to attend, but please note that meeting dates are subject to change. Always refer to our website for the latest up-to-date information.

QUESTIONS?

Email us at info@wlmd.org

WLMD NOW HIRING!

The Wind Lake Management District is accepting applications for the position of Harvester Operator. Interested persons should submit a resume and/or a letter of interest with their qualifications and contact information to: WLMD, PO Box 222, Muskego, WI 53150. Letters must be postmarked by May 10, 2022. Primary interviews will be completed by the Harvesting Program Manager and final interviews/approval will be at the WLMD Board Meeting at 7pm on May 22, 2022, at the Norway Town Hall located at 6419 Heg Park Road, Wind Lake, WI 53185.

The Harvester Operator job description can be found on-line at wlmd.org and any questions can be directed to Harvesting Program Manager John Landry at **(262) 313-7177** or Chairman Mike Bluemel at **(414) 305-8875**. Once selected, the Operator will report to the Harvesting Program Manager and will be paid through a temp agency.



Your WLMD Board and the harvesting crew proudly pose in front of Wind Lake's brand new weed harvester.

PIER/DOCK WANTED

The WLMD is hoping to upgrade the short pier sections used to access our weed harvester. The pier sections are needed to tie-off the harvester to shore and for completing maintenance. We are looking for approximately 32 feet of used aluminum pier/dock. If you are upgrading your dock and are selling your old pier, please contact Ron Mayer at **(414) 614-5859**.

ROADSIDE LAKE WEED PICKUP

The WLMD will continue the roadside weed pickup program this summer. Only lake weeds can be placed on the roadside for pickup. Please make sure the pile is close to the side of the road and not setting back up against a building or tree line. We will not be picking up "ice-off" debris. Do not put lake sediment, dirt, rocks, branches, garbage, or other debris in the pile. The pile will not be picked up if anything other than lake weeds are on the pile. Piles must be out by noon on Mondays to be picked up between Monday and Wednesday evening.

Here are the pickup dates for 2022: **June 6th, 20th, 27th; July 11th, 18th, 25th; August 8th, 15th, 29th; September 12th, 19th, 26th; and October 10th, 24th.**

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

As I write this, the weather is warming, the ice is leaving the lake and the sound and smell of spring is in the air. This is a wonderful time to reflect on last years' time on the lake as well as look forward in optimism upon a new lake year soon to begin. This reminds me of New Years, as we look on the lake and make (somewhat optimistic) expectations of how much time we will spend on the lake this summer. Whether you enjoy the quiet time, floating around the lake enjoying the beautiful weather and the gorgeous sunsets, or you are waiting for the lake to warm up to allow for water skiing, tubing, or other water sports. Perhaps you are looking forward to early morning Kayaking through the still waters with fog lifting over the lake, or cleaning and organizing your gear to be the first out to catch the big one when the season opens in May. We all look at the lake to enjoy our life and make a lifetime of memories.

As chairman of the Wind Lake Management District (WLMD), I understand how important our job as a board is to help everyone enjoy the lake to the maximum amount. While it seems, at times, different people around the lake have different opinions and concerns on the lake, I believe that everyone has the goal of having a well-kept, clean, and beautiful lake. As a board, the WLMD understands that we are given the task of trying to blend everyone's desires together in an attempt to be the best "caretaker" of the lake that we can be.

Last year was certainly a year with many challenges. We dealt with historically low lake levels, a lack of rain for new freshwater, warm early temps as well as a windy stretch in the middle of summer, not to mention the underlying threat of Starry Stonewort (SSW) still lurking in our lake. Add to this, last year being the first year of us managing our own harvesting program and you have the recipe for a challenging year. I am very proud of the WLMD board for fighting through everything and having a relatively good year on the lake. I would never say we were perfect or accomplished all our goals, but overall, I feel it was a successful first year of harvesting. I cannot begin to tell you how the current WLMD is working together and listening to each other to develop a positive atmosphere for accomplishing our goals. I would like to give a shout-out to Joe Bellante for working with our vender to create a clear and organized chemical program to fight SSW and other invasive weeds in our channels and waterways. Ron Mayer has worked extremely hard navigating through all the bugs that any new operation (weed harvesting) undoubtably has. Jeremy Sauld has our accounting clear and concise, and we have a true understanding of all the properties around the lake. We feel that we have a more fair and equitable collection of fees for all the properties within our boundaries.

On the harvesting side, the harvesting manager, John Landry has done a wonderful job and as a contractor, Jerry Kotarak has been more than fair and flexible working with us to successfully complete the harvesting. Butch Mayer has continued his awesome job of weed pick up around the lake. We could not have done it without them.

Certainly, I am not saying we are perfect, or it will be a cake walk from here. We have learned a lot about harvesting and look forward to refining our harvesting ability to meet the needs that Mother Nature sends us this year. Chemical treatments are always a struggle to accomplish at the right time due to the weather. Undoubtably, the weather will turn windy or rainy just as we have the best laid plans for chemicals. We have always tried our best to adjust to the weather to accomplish our goals.

In closing, as a board we understand the amount of trust that you have given us, and we understand our role is to be the best "caretaker" we can be for the beautiful lake we have been given. Whether you agree or disagree with what steps we have taken, please remember that we always try to evaluate all the options to select the best steps forward, given the wide, diverse goals that our membership has toward Wind Lake. Our goal will ALWAYS be to make Wind Lake a better lake for you and your family to enjoy, however you care to. Thank you for your trust and support.

Michael Bluemel – Chair WLMD

PUBLIC LAUNCH PAVING POSTPONED

As many have heard, the DNR is planning to re-pave the Wind Lake public launch parking lot. The original plan was to re-pave it in 2021 but the project was delayed to 2022. The DNR has again postponed the project because recent bids have been considerably higher than projected. Asphalt is petroleum based and just like the price of gasoline, the quotes have come back considerably higher than when the project was first budgeted. If prices drop, the paving could happen in fall. Please check wlmd.org for more updates.



GOOSE REMOVAL PROGRAM

Wind Lake has taken part in a goose-removal program in prior years to reduce the number of geese on Wind Lake. This program has been highly effective at keeping the numbers of non-migratory geese on the lake manageable. Excessive numbers of non-migratory geese contribute to water quality problems including

E-coli bacteria and increased phosphorus loadings (which increases plant and algae growth).

We are proceeding as though the roundup will take place. We hope to conduct the goose roundup again in mid-June when the birds are molting.

Please send in the form below if you have not sent one in previously and want to grant us permission to go onto your property. Please note that your permission will continue until you rescind it.

GEESE ROUNDUP APPROVAL FORM

I authorize representatives from the US Department of Agriculture-Wild Life Services and Wind Lake Management District to access the property listed below for the purposes of goose management.

I understand that this permission form has no expiration date and remains in effect until I request to be removed from the approved site list.

Name (print): _____

Lake Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Signature (mandatory): _____

Please drop off or mail form as soon as possible to: WLMD P.O. Box 222 Muskego, WI 53150

Measures You Can Take to Protect Yourself:

- Do not recreate (swim, boat, ski, fish, etc.) in water that looks like "pea soup", green or blue paint, or that has a scum layer or puffy blobs floating on the surface.
- Do not let pets swim in, or drink, waters experiencing blue-green algae blooms.
- Always take a shower after coming into contact with any surface water (whether or not a blue-green algae bloom appears to be present; surface waters may contain other species of potentially harmful bacteria and viruses).

If you think you are experiencing symptoms related to exposure to blue-green algae (e.g., stomach cramps, diarrhea, vomiting, headache, fever, muscle weakness, difficulty breathing), contact your doctor or the Poison Information Hotline, **(800) 222-1222** right away. If your pet displays symptoms such as seizures, vomiting, or diarrhea after contact with surface water, contact your veterinarian right away.

What You Can do to Limit Lake Nutrients:

- Maintain native vegetation along shorelines as buffer areas.
- Minimize activities that result in erosion.
- Reduce the amount of fertilizer used on lawns.
- Use only phosphorus-free fertilizer.

FREE VESSEL SAFETY CHECK

The Wind Lake Management District in conjunction with the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary will again be hosting a Vessel Safety Check on June 11, 2022. The free event will be held at the DNR Public Launch on South Wind Lake Road and will run from 10am to 3pm.

The Vessel Safety Check is a free inspection of your boat, intended to find safety issues before they become bigger problems on the water. If your boat passes inspection, you will receive a decal to show that your boat is safe. There are not any punitive actions if your boat fails inspection, just suggestions to correct the issues. If you can't make it to the event but would like a safety check performed on your boat, please contact Dan Jahn at **(414) 614-3164**.

ANNUAL FIREWORKS SHOW

The 5th Annual Wind Lake Fireworks Display will be held Saturday, August 20th at dusk.

This incredible community event is funded 100% through fundraisers and generous donations from members of the community as well as many local businesses.

Thank you to everyone who has donated to support this year's show!

For show updates, info on fundraising events/volunteering, or to donate and reserve your 2022 Fireworks Yard Sign, please visit windlakefireworks.com or the Wind Lake Fireworks Facebook page.



HARVESTING STRATEGY

We take many factors into consideration when crafting our weed control strategy:

- There is no pre-emergent aquatic herbicide so we cannot spray areas to prevent the growth of plants.
- We cannot harvest areas if the plants are 2-3 feet below the surface, so harvesting can only happen when the weeds reach the surface.
- We are limited by what the DNR permit allows. Water depth must be over 3' and we must leave 1' of plant growth on the lakebed. No cutting into the lakebed is allowed.
- Native plants need to protect the lakebed from the expansion of invasive species.
- Violation of the permit rules can lead to warnings, fines, and the rescinding of our harvesting permit.

HOMEOWNER ACTION

The DNR allows all homeowners the ability to clear an area 30' wide in their lake frontage as far out as they chose to a depth of 4'. This can be done by the manual method of raking to provide plant removal and the owner can remove both invasive and native plants in the 30' area. The raked vegetation can be placed by the roadside for pickup.

CHEMICAL TREATMENTS

WLMD receives a permit annually from the DNR to chemically treat weeds in Wind Lake. Most of the areas treated are shallow, weed-choked and restrict lake access for property owners. The plan is to treat when the conditions warrant, usually in early May and early June, weather permitting. Treatments to control the Starry Stonewort (SSW) are also planned.

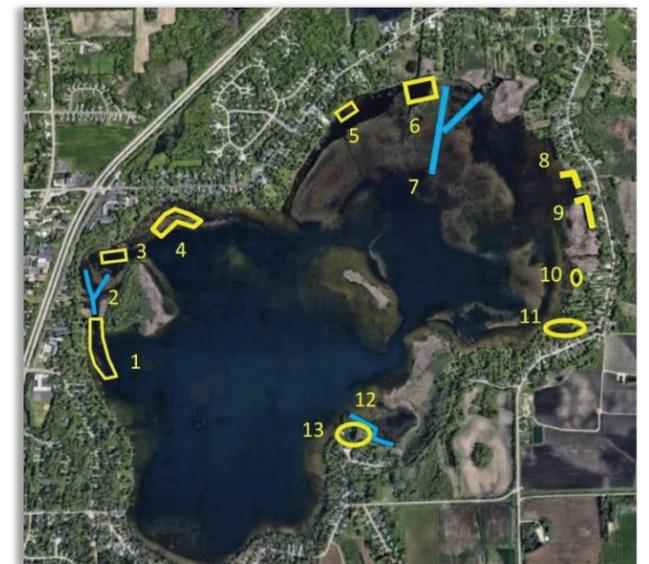
The DNR permit for the chemical treatment is available on the WLMD website. Go to wlmnd.org. The link to the permit is on the home page and on the aquatic plant page.

The lake is considered "waters of the State". Treatments will be conducted to try to maintain access for property owners and lake users.

When the treatment takes place, shoreline adjacent to treated areas will be posted with bright yellow signs, indicating what herbicide has been used and when it was done. The notice will also indicate if there are any recreational use restrictions following the treatment. The boat launch will also be posted with a treatment map. Because weather, including winds, affect the ability to conduct treatments, last minute changes may occur. We will keep the wlmnd.org website up to date as much as possible on when and where treatments are taking place.

The plants that are targeted for treatment include milfoil, curly leaf, SSW and filamentous algae. Occasionally, native plants are treated, but only if they are blocking navigation areas. DNR has the final say in all treatment areas for chemical control and may deny the treatment of specific areas. To the right is a map of the proposed areas of treatment.

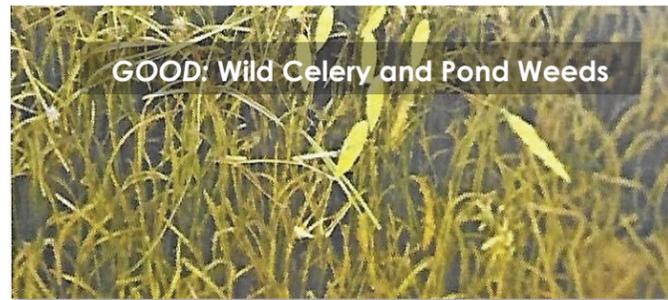
Wind Lake – Racine County, WI



PREVENTING THE SPREAD OF INVASIVE SPECIES

History has shown that once invasive species are present in a lake, it is pretty much impossible to completely eradicate it. Prevention is the key! Here are some steps that are recommended:

- Do not move your boat and fishing equipment from lake to lake without thoroughly decontaminating it.
- Remove all plant fragments from your boat, trailer, anchor ropes, live wells, etc.
- Dump all your bilge water before leaving a lake.
- Do not transport fish in water. Dump all water and put your fish on ice.
- Flush your motor cooling system between lakes.
- Keep your boat and equipment dry docked for a week after using a lake will help prevent the spread of invasives.
- Try to avoid launching into a lake with a "dirty" boat launch, one that has lots of weed fragments floating around.
- Check out the Wisconsin DNR website for more information on clean boats.



GOOD: Wild Celery and Pond Weeds



BAD: Starry Stonewort and Filamentous

GOOD V.S. BAD, NATIVE V.S. INVASIVE

Wind Lake has experienced many problems over the years, from water quality problems to Eurasian watermilfoil, from too-high water to too-low water. Each year seems to present a new challenge. Since August 2017, the newest, and most significant challenge for Wind Lake is the highly invasive, Starry Stonewort (SSW).

SSW complicates everything we do.

Back in the 80's the water quality on Wind Lake was so poor that the main problem was pea-soup, smelly algae blooms. There were very few native plants, and most of the plants in the lake were curly-leaf pondweed and milfoil, both invasive species.

As work began to clean up the water quality, clear water led to more aquatic plants (weeds). Milfoil seemed the happiest with the new conditions, growing thick and dense, blocking boat traffic, and choking large areas of the lake. A couple of years, over 200 acres were blocked by milfoil growing to the surface on the East and NE side of the lake. To make matters worse, filamentous algae, that slimy surface algae, covered the milfoil on the surface, clogging water intakes on boats.

The district responded by harvesting channels through the milfoil so lake users could access the open water areas. Shoreline areas of milfoil were chemically treated to try to reduce the access problems. Once the water quality and runoff problems were addressed, the native plants started to rebound. In 2011, 23 different plant species were present in Wind Lake. In 2017, the number increased to 29 species. Milfoil declined in that time going from 63% frequency to 20%.

Good weeds, in general, are less dense, have a thinner architecture, and often can be boated through. Native weed beds are great for the fisheries. Invasive species weed beds are generally very dense and can quickly block boat traffic. Dense, monotypic strands of invasives negatively affect the fisheries.

BLUE-GREEN ALGAE: A CLOSER LOOK

Wind Lake, like many Wisconsin lakes has areas and conditions that can foster the growth of algae. One of the most frequent types is filamentous algae which from time to time, can be seen along the shoreline during the summer or after episodes of storm run-off following a period of heavy rain. However, it can be found in deep waters as well. When weeds have reached the surface and the water warms up, the familiar green mats that form on top of the weeds are filamentous algae. Starry Stonewort is also an algae that not only can affect the water surface but also the water column below. While the presence of both can degrade the water quality and negatively impact the aquatic ecosystem, neither familiar algae produces toxins. The same cannot be said of *all* blue-green algae.

Unlike the name suggests, blue-green algae is actually a group of bacteria, often referred to as "pond scum." While they are frequently blue-green in color, they can express themselves as blue, green, reddish-purple, or brown. Blue-green algae generally grow in stagnant or slow-moving water. When water temperatures rise and nutrients like phosphorus or nitrogen are abundant, the blue-green algae will form scum layers or floating mats, usually between mid-June and late September.

Reason for Concern?

Only certain species of blue-green algae can produce toxins that can cause illness. Concerns associated with blue-green algae include among others, discolored water, odor, depletion of dissolved oxygen and toxin production. When a blue-green algae bloom dies off, the blue-green algae decays resulting in decreased oxygen in the water; a process that can negatively affect or even kill fish and other aquatic life. Toxins from certain blue-green algae are produced inside the cells of the blue-green algae. The chemicals are not produced all of the time and there is no easy way to tell when blue-green algae are producing them and when they are not. When the cells are broken open, the toxins may be released.



People and pets may be exposed to possible toxins through:

Skin Contact
Inhalation
Ingestion

Blue-green toxins can negatively affect you and the health of your pet differently depending on the species type and the level of exposure. Pets are especially susceptible to blue-green algae. Because of their relatively small size, they can become extremely ill, and even die, after swallowing or licking their fur following contact with water containing blue-green algae.

Are Chemical Treatments Possible?

Unfortunately no. Chemical treatment of an area experiencing a blue-green algae bloom may kill the blue-green algae, but any toxins contained in the cells will be released at once. So, while the bloom may no longer be visible, toxins may be present for some period of time following treatment. It is best to stay out of a water experiencing a bloom and wait for the bloom to dissipate on its own.