



Volume 9 • First Edition

A NEWSLETTER FOR OUR FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS

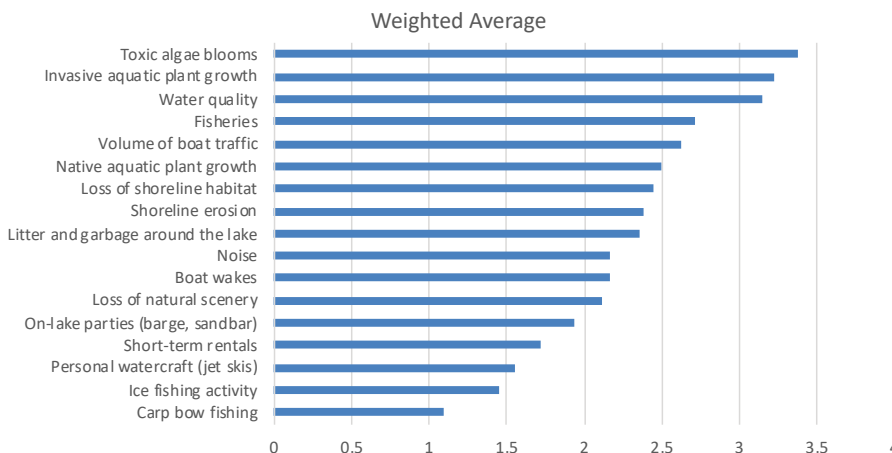
July 2022

CEDAR LAKE DISTRICT PROPERTY OWNER SURVEY RESULTS

Thanks to Cedar Lake District residents who completed our recent property owner survey. The results are in and are posted on the Cedar Lake District website: <https://cedarlake-wi.org/>

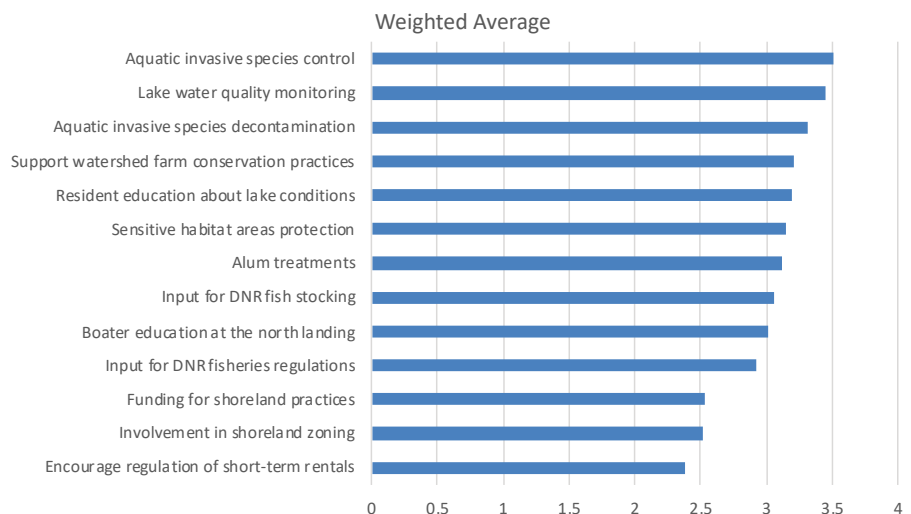
Recipients completed 89 of 266 surveys successfully delivered to owners, a return rate of 33.5 percent. We hope to increase efficiency of getting feedback from property owners by maintaining an email list. Please help us out by sending yours if you haven't done so already. Polk County and St. Croix County maintain lake district mailing lists.

The survey asked questions about use of property, recreation on the lake, lake health and management, and communication and member participation. Detailed results are in the summary report. A few highlights are shown below.



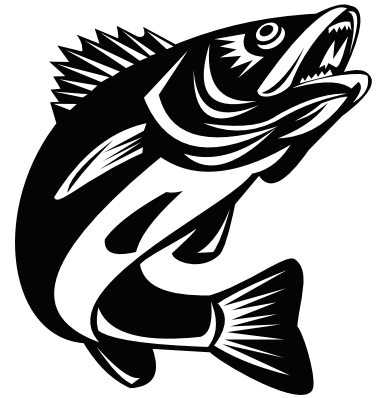
CONCERNS REGARDING LAKE HEALTH:
A higher number reflects greater concern

ACTIVITIES THAT SHOULD BE PURSUED BY THE LAKE DISTRICT:
A higher number reflects more support



CEDAR LAKE FISHERIES

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources will soon release information about the state of Cedar Lake fisheries in a final Cedar Lake Fisheries Survey Report. The final report will be posted on the Cedar Lake District web site. Kasey Yallaly, DNR Fisheries Biologist, shared some of this information at the 2021 Cedar Lake Annual Meeting.



Cedar Lake was surveyed in the spring of 2021 using fyke nets and electrofishing gear to assess the status of the current fish community. In 2022 Muskies were surveyed using fyke nets. The 2022 Muskie results are not yet available, but will be incorporated into the final report once approved by the DNR. Excerpts from the discussion of results follow.

While Walleye were previously the dominant gamefish species within Cedar Lake, the population has since experienced sharp declines. This trend of declining Walleye has been documented on other lakes in Polk County and across the northern Great Lakes states over the past several decades. Cedar Lake has undergone substantial changes within the last several decades including shoreline development, increase in rock rip rap, reduction in nearshore woody habitat, removal of aquatic plants, fish crib installation, and, more recently, alum treatments. Increased water clarity can lead to increased water temperatures. All of these changes coupled with the effects of a warming climate have influenced fish community changes which include the increase in centrarchid populations (such as largemouth bass, bluegill, and crappies) and decline in coolwater species populations (such as walleye and perch).

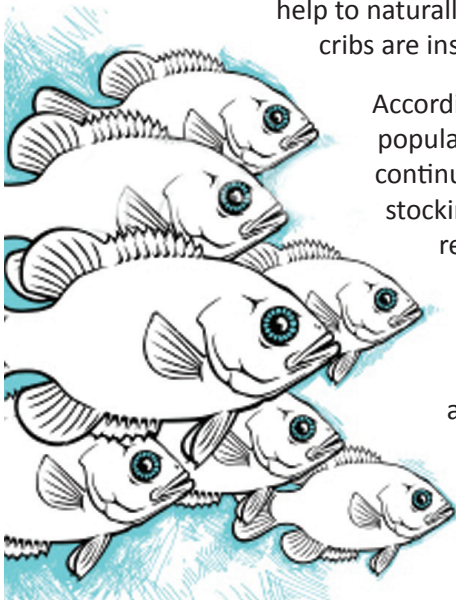
Stocking of large fingerling Walleye, initiated in 2019, will likely continue into the near future. The current walleye fishing regulation is protecting the majority of the large females within the population (20-24") which are essential for increased reproduction and population rebounds, if possible. However, because of the small and declining population, very limited harvest is encouraged by anglers.

CHANGES NOTED BETWEEN 2016 AND 2021 SURVEY

- Northern Pike were in lower abundance and there were few large fish
- Largemouth Bass abundance was higher with good size structure
- Bluegill and Black Crappie experienced large increases in numbers
- Bluegill, Black Crappie, and Yellow Perch had relatively poor size structure

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Installation of nearshore woody habitat in the form of tree drops and fish sticks would greatly benefit fish communities by offering natural habitat in the littoral zone. This habitat type is severely lacking within the lake and would also help to naturally slow shoreline erosion and stabilize aquatic vegetation beds. Cedar Lake fish cribs are installed at depths from 14-20 feet, and their impact on the fish population is unclear.



According to climate modeling, Cedar Lake is unlikely to contain a persistent Walleye population in the future because of lack of adequate thermal habitat. The lake will continue to be stocked with extended growth fall fingerling Walleye to determine if stocking can aid in the rebound of the population and natural recruitment can be regained. Muskellunge stocking will continue on a biennial basis with a reduction in the stocking rate by half in order to attempt to produce a lower density population with higher trophy potential.

Panfish continuously experience high harvest pressure in both the winter and summer fishing seasons. Consideration may be given to more restrictive experimental panfish regulations in order to protect larger individuals within the populations and distribute available fish to a larger group of anglers. Continued monitoring of the fish population is essential for adaptive management strategies and future success of the fishery.

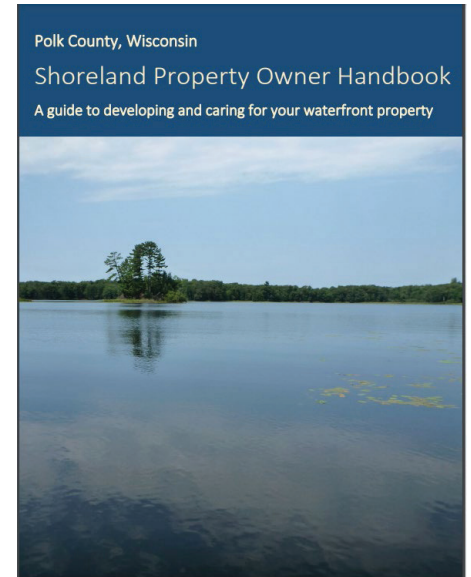


If you are interested volunteering to help keep track of the growth of Eurasian Water Milfoil in Cedar Lake, contact Jim Reckinger (651-895-3510 jimreck@aol.com). Monitoring results are critical to keeping the growth of EWM and other invasive plants and animals in check.

To volunteer to serve on an advisory committee to update the Cedar Lake Management Plan, contact Tom Deans (deano52@frontier.com). We will ask advisory committee members to attend 3, 2 hour meetings this coming winter and review background information and draft documents.

SHORELAND REGULATIONS

County zoning departments regulate activities in the shoreland zone which includes land beginning at the ordinary high water mark of Cedar Lake and extending back 1000 feet. Depending upon where you are located, your property may be regulated by the Polk County or St. Croix County Zoning Department. A new Shoreland Property Owner Handbook is included with this newsletter for those of you with property in Polk County. The Board has requested similar summary information from St. Croix County.



THANK YOU TO OUR GRANT FUNDERS AND PARTNERS

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources – current grants:

- ☐ \$200,000 Lake Protection Grant (Alum Treatment - 2023 or 2024)
- ☐ \$47,180 Lake Protection Grant (Alum Treatment Monitoring - 2022 to 2024)
- ☐ \$49,916 Aquatic Invasive Species Control Grant (EWM Control 2022 to 2024)
- ☐ \$10,000 Property Owner Survey and Lake Management Plan Update (2022 and 2023)
- ☐ \$8,000 Clean Boats, Clean Waters (2022)

Star Prairie Fish and Game (Aquatic Invasive Species control) \$500 (2021)

Star Prairie Fish and Game also provides valuable services around Cedar Lake including improvements and maintenance at the public boat landing and litter clean up at the end of ice fishing season and at the boat landing. THANK YOU!

The **Horse Creek Farmer Led Council** is a group of farmers working together to improve soil and water conservation within the Horse Creek watershed. Horse Creek is the major inlet to Cedar Lake.

The **Town of Alden** owns and maintains the boat landing.



HELP WANTED Contact Database Manager

The lake district is seeking a volunteer to maintain lake district records of contact information (names, lake address, and emails).

The counties maintain mailing address lists with property tax records, so this function is not included.
Interested in helping out?

Send an email to district@cedarlake-wi.org

SUPPORT POLLINATORS AND WATER QUALITY WITH A NATIVE PLANTING

Several Cedar Lake property owners have planted native plants along the shoreline to support pollinators and other creatures, protect against shoreline erosion, slow runoff, and create natural beauty. Technical support and installation assistance were provided by the Cedar Lake Protection and Rehabilitation District with support from the Wisconsin DNR Healthy Lakes grants.

The grant requires native plantings next to the water with a minimum area of 350ft². Please contact Cheryl at 715-268-9992 or harmonyenv@amerytel.net if you are interested in planting native plants along your shoreline in 2023. We need interested participants in order to apply for grant funding. Note that these plantings are intended to replace existing lawn or other disturbed areas and need to be at least 10 feet deep starting at the water's edge.



A Native Planting on Cedar Lake: photo by Beth Wood



Monarch Butterflies on Native Blazing Star

More information about pollinators:

<https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/endangeredresources/pollinators.html>

More information about the Healthy Lakes Program:

<https://healthylakeswi.com/>

HOW DOES YOUR SHORELINE RATE?

The DNR developed this informative tool to evaluate your shoreline. The survey will guide you through a series of questions about how you use your property and make suggestions for improvements. It takes about 10-15 minutes to complete.

<https://survey.healthylakeswi.com/default.asp>

WHAT IS A LAKE DISTRICT?

A lake district is a special purpose unit of government with powers focused on lake management and providing services to property located within its established boundaries. Chapter 33 of the Wisconsin State Statutes governs the formation and operation of lake districts. **There are specific requirements in Chapter 33 for eligible voters at an annual meeting. Proxy or absentee ballots are not allowed by state statute.**

Lake districts can work cooperatively with other government bodies and private organizations to carry out authorized activities.

Lake districts conduct a broad range of activities to manage and enhance the lake including:

- Study lake water quality and ecosystem
- Develop lake management plans
- Manage nuisance aquatic plants
- Undertake activities to enhance water quality
- Prevent introduction of invasive species
- Conduct information and education activities

EURASIAN WATER MILFOIL CONTROL CONTINUES ON CEDAR LAKE

We continue to monitor and control the growth of non-native, invasive Eurasian Water Milfoil (EWM) on Cedar Lake. A June 2021 herbicide treatment in a single 18-acre bed removed all but one EWM plant in the treatment area. The 2021 herbicide treatment used ProcellaCOR which targets milfoil species.

By late summer 2021, EWM growth was identified in two new areas, and some growth returned to an area treated in 2019. We planned another treatment in an area totaling 7.5 acres for 2022. However, a late spring and reduced clarity seem to have limited EWM growth this year. As a result, we delayed the EWM treatment until 2023.

Volunteer and consultant monitoring guide Cedar Lake EWM control efforts. Volunteer monitors look for Eurasian Water Milfoil and other aquatic invasive species throughout Cedar Lake. Our consultant, Steve Schieffer, of Ecological Integrity Services, backs them up with overall aquatic invasive species surveys and pre and post herbicide treatment monitoring. These activities are guided by our 2017 Lake Management Plan. The Lake Management Plan will be updated this coming winter.



EURASIAN WATER MILFOIL ECOLOGICAL THREAT:

- It invades lakes, rivers, and other water bodies and thrives in areas that have been subjected to various kinds of natural and manmade disturbance.
- It can form large, floating mats of vegetation on the surface of water bodies, preventing light penetration for native aquatic plants and impeding water traffic.

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



P.O. Box 93
Star Prairie, WI 54026
cedarlake-wi.org

CEDAR LAKE PROTECTION
AND REHABILITATION DISTRICT

ANNUAL MEETING

9:00 a.m.
Saturday, August 6, 2022
Star Prairie Town Hall,
2118 Cook Drive, Somerset, WI

AGENDA will include approval of minutes from 2021 annual meeting, review and approval of 22/23 budget, audit committee report, updates of lake district activities, election of commissioners, public comments. State regulation requires that eligible lake district members be in attendance to vote. No absentee ballots or proxy votes are permitted.

BUDGET includes income and expenses of \$87,130. \$47,475 of income is expected from grant funding from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

REGULAR BOARD MEETINGS ARE HELD AT 5:30 P.M. ON THE FOURTH TUESDAY OF THE MONTH AT ALDEN TOWN HALL, 183 155TH STREET, STAR PRAIRIE, WI
OR VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE.

CONTACT harmonyenv@amerytel.net
TO REQUEST MEETING INFORMATION FOR
PUBLIC ACCESS TO BOARD VIDEO CONFERENCE MEETINGS.

LAST PAPER COPY: Cedar Lake District Moving to Digital Newsletter

This is the last printed edition of the Cedar Lake Newsletter. We will be moving primarily to distribution of information via email to be more effective and to reduce costs (except where mail notification is required by law).

Please provide us with your name, lake address, and email address to ensure you receive communication from the Cedar Lake Protection and Rehabilitation District. You can complete and mail the enclosed form to us, or provide the information via email to: district@cedarlake-wi.org