



SPRING/SUMMER 2003 ISSUE



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Lake Lines

President's Column

It's been a cold, bleak winter in Burnett County!

Spring officially started on March 20, but there were no tulips blooming. We may have to wait until Memorial Day for the "perma frost" to disappear.

On a lighter note, please make plans to attend the great programs that have been planned with you in mind. I know there are precious few week-ends in the summer, but you are important to that lake you live on! Why not fill your mind with some comprehensive information that will give you an insight to your water and riparian environment? You'll never regret it.

I look forward to meeting you at these meetings.

The BCL&RA is always looking for dedicated people to join the

BCL&RA Board. If you or someone you know would be interested in committing some time to enhance or association, please call, write or email Mike Kornmann at the UW-Extension Office. We'd love to have you aboard!

Congratulations to Barb Gilbert of the Burlingame Lake Association. She was the winner of a paid registration to the WAL Convention in Green Bay April 10 - 12.

My tenure as president of the Burnett County Lakes & Rivers Association will be ending in July, but I will remain on the Board of Directors. I have been appointed to the WAL Board of Directors. My appointment will bring the voice and concerns of Northern Wisconsin lake areas to a state-wide organization.

Sincerely,

Susan Wallin, BCL&RA President

Got Geese?

If you live on Mudhen Lake or any number of other Burnett County lakes the likely answer is, yes. Depending on your point of view these geese are either a blessing or a curse. What can I do about geese on our lake or on my property?

These big birds have a voracious appetite that in the end deposits an average of 28 droppings per day totaling 1 to 1 ½ pound of feces. Because these birds have a rudimentary digestive system, they eat frequently and expel their partly digested remains in short order. One estimate clocked the bill to butt time in just seven minutes. During mid-day and again at night these geese spend time within the relative safety of their local resting area or roost "the lake out your front window". City parks and golf courses are often hard hit as small ponds surrounded by acres and acres of lawn provide ideal conditions for these adaptable turf moochers.

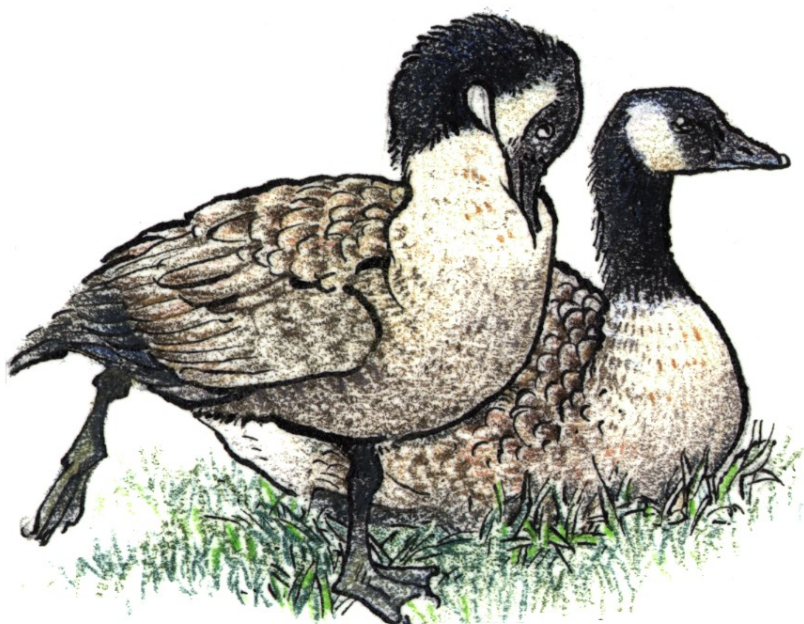
As a lake front property owner your concern might be related to geese impacts on your lawn or how all that goose poop is impacting the water quality in your lake.

Geese and water quality. While studies have shown that the greatest impact is on small shallow lakes, the following actions are recommended to all lakeshore property owners.

Don't' feed ducks or geese. What seems like great fun can easily turn into a nuisance problem quickly. Your lake doesn't need the small amount of extra imported nutrients from the corn, oats or even popcorn you are providing. Remember just seven minutes from bill to butt. The birds will do just fine on their own- we call them wildlife for a reason. Even if you view them as fantastic creatures to have on

your front lawn many other folks may not see it that way. The Department of Natural Resources and your County Land and Water Conservation Department receive numerous complaints from goose weary lakefront property owners

Limit Lawns. With the loss of prairies and savannahs, lawns next to water provide ideal habitat for Canada Geese. Like all animals, habitat is the key for successful goose growth. While it's not the entire answer, goose-feeding habitat is something you can control on your lakeshore. A number of researchers have found that geese prefer new growth stimulated by frequent mowing - the same thing that



geese

turf experts recommend for managing lawns. As the grasses get taller they are less palatable. Geese also have a preference for fertilized grass over non-fertilized turf. Not fertilizing and allowing the grass near the waters edge grow taller and tougher will help discourage goose grazing.

Geese get nervous in confined spaces without a good view at goose eye level. Planting patches of taller vegetation will help discourage goose use on you property. Vegetation management is the most frequent recommended practice for controlling goose use in parks, golf courses and lakeshore property.

Reconsider your view of the perfect shoreline. We are devoted to our lawns and for some very nice reasons. However, as they slowly blanket the natural landscapes of our shorelines they eliminate habitat for many lakeshore critters that live in this vital edge of our lakes. Think about a view to the lake though the trees rather than without them. Consider leaving an un-mowed strip 35 feet or more in width - slowly this area will re-establish a vegetative zone of taller grasses, shrubs, saplings and eventually trees - just the kind of stuff that geese want to avoid. Leaving a mowed access path will provide a nice corridor for getting to and from the lake while minimizing the goose greens along the water. A serpentine path eliminates the direct view geese desire and will help discourage them from traveling to the turf area behind the taller vegetation bordering the shore. Turf behind this vegetative buffer can provide you enjoyment and is less likely to be used by geese as they ponder what unknown creature is lurking in the buffer.

Ultimately limiting the amount of suitable habitat and the size of the goose population will provide long-term solutions. Finally, most surveys of lakeshore owners suggest that viewing wildlife is a high priority. With this in mind perhaps a little tolerance for wildlife maybe the easiest solution in most situations.

If you have room in the news letter consider adding this
You can find additional information on managing geese in the following publications:

Managing Problems Caused by Urban Canada Geese. Available on line at
<http://extension.usu.edu/publica/natrpubs/geese.pdf>

Canada goose web pg. University of Minnesota <http://www.fw.umn.edu/research/goose/html/default.html>

Author: John Haack, University of Wisconsin Extension

*Remember to submit your fish & game photos to: Brag Board, 7410 County Road K, #129, Siren, WI 54872. Visit the Brag Board on the Outdoor Page at:
www.burnettcounty.com*

New book available **"How's The Water?"**

A must for your organization. Explore how lake associations can manage recreational conflict. The book is published by UW-Extension and edited by Bob Korth.

Price: \$19.95 + S & H
Contact: UW-Extension
Lakes
715/346-2116



Changing Wisconsin's Shoreland Development Standards?

The state is launching a broad-based effort to update 34-year-old shoreland standards intended to protect water quality, fish and wildlife habitat and scenic beauty along navigable lakes and rivers by controlling the density of development along the waters and creating a buffer around them. The goal is to protect public rights in navigable waters while allowing property owners to make reasonable use of their properties.

New research, a continuing building boom, and growing complaints from property owners and local governments are spurring the state to evaluate and revise the standards in NR 115, the state's shoreland management program rules. Lawmakers in the mid 1960's recognized the importance of shoreland areas and the functions they serve and enacted the Water Resources Act (Chapter 614, Laws of Wisconsin 1965), which required counties to adopt and administer shoreland ordinances based on minimum state standards. NR 115 was created to establish statewide minimum standards including minimum lot sizes, how far structures must be set back from the water's edge, and limits on removing trees and other vegetation. The standards apply only in unincorporated areas and are enforced by counties.

Rationale for Changes

In the 30 years since these standards went into effect, development patterns along our lakes and rivers have changed. Across the state, large, year-round residences are replacing small traditional summer cottages and the numbers of homes are increasing along Wisconsin's shorelines. A study on Wisconsin's northern lakes found the number of waterfront homes has increased by over 200% since the 1960s. With this increasing development, there are more and more activities impacting Wisconsin's waters.

Recent Initiatives

Shoreland management is a balancing act, attempting to protect our navigable water resources while respecting the rights of individual landowners. In an attempt to reach this equilibrium, 30 Wisconsin counties have updated or are in the process of updating their local shoreland ordinances. Unfortunately, the current statewide standards for the Wisconsin's Shoreland Management Program do not provide much flexibility for local governments as they seek to develop new and innovative ways to protect shorelands and navigable water in a manner that minimizes the limitations on the use of shoreland properties.

To find that right balance, DNR is forming a 24-member advisory committee to meet over the next year to evaluate existing standards and develop a range of options that reflects changes in scientific knowledge and housing trends since the standards were originally written.

For More Information

Contact Toni Herkert at the DNR at 608-266-0161 or Toni.Herkert@dnr.state.wi.us with your suggestions or comments on how the program can be improved. You can also ask to be placed on a list of interested parties to receive rule revision information as it becomes available.

OR

Check the website for updates at <http://www.dnr.state.wi.us> and under "Go to some topics" choose "Shoreland Management."

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources provides equal opportunity in its employment, programs, services, and functions under an Affirmative Action Plan. If you have any questions, please write to Equal Opportunity Office, Department of Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240.

This publication is available in alternative format (large print, Braille, audio tape, etc) upon request. Please call 608-267-7694 for more information.

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
Bureau of Watershed Management
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608-266-8030

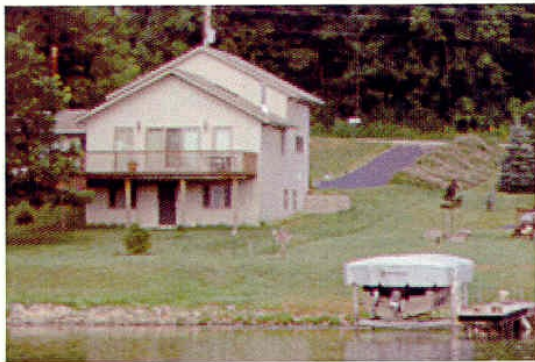


PUB-WT-WT-750-2002

The Big Four

Shoreland Management Issues

Shoreland Buffers & Setbacks



Current state standards are designed to protect a 35-foot deep buffer of vegetation along the shoreline. Property owners are allowed to clear a 30-foot wide corridor along every 100 feet of frontage. Most structures must be setback 75 feet from the ordinary high-water mark, unless there is an existing pattern of development with shorter setbacks.

Concerns: Vegetation removal standards are ambiguous and difficult for local governments to enforce. They do not recognize unique uses such as forestry and agriculture. Most studies recommend a buffer of 50 feet or more to help protect water quality and fish and wildlife habitat.

Development Density



Current state standards require an average minimum lot width of 65 feet on sewered lots or 100 feet on unsewered lots. Existing standards do not address the impacts of impervious (hard) surfaces such as roofs, driveways, and roads.

Concerns: As shorelands become more developed, studies have found fewer green frogs and native songbirds along our lakes and rivers. At 52 homes per mile (110 foot wide lots), green frogs can disappear altogether. Research has found that when a watershed exceeds 15% impervious surface, water quality is degraded and fish communities are severely impacted.

Nonconforming Structures



Current state standards require counties to regulate non-conforming structures. In the past, many counties have limited the alteration, expansion, and repair of a nonconforming structure over its life to 50% of the structure's equalized assessed value. This is often referred to as the "50% rule."

Concerns: The 50% rule is difficult for county staff to administer, track and enforce, and NR 115 doesn't specifically provide for other alternatives.

Flexibility & Mitigation



Current state standards do not provide alternative development options for specific circumstances, such as substandard lots that do not currently meet minimum standards.

Concerns: If minimum standards could be more responsive to specific circumstances, and property owners are willing to mitigate the impacts of their waterfront development, a balance could be struck between private property rights and natural resource protection.

Students Battle Exotic Invader

Minocqua, Hazlehurst and Lake Tomahawk middle school students are joining the fight to save Wisconsin's northern waters from the harmful aquatic exotic invader Eurasian Water Milfoil.

On April 26, students and adults will be stationed at the Jackson Town Hall to distribute informational materials to boaters to help them understand how they can prevent the spread of this and other exotic species. The workshop will begin at 2:00 p.m. and is scheduled to run until 5:00 p.m.

The program is sponsored by UW-Extension Adopt-a-Lake and Burnett County Land & Water Conservation. The effort is the work of the Milfoil Masters, a group of students from the three school districts. They received a \$25,000 grant from the Christopher Columbus Fellowship Foundation to develop an educational program on aquatic invasive species and make it available to others.

Eurasian water milfoil (EWM) is a harmful aquatic plant that can choke out native plants and animals and form thick mats just below the water's surface that can hamper boating, swimming and fishing. Like all other aquatic invasive species, EWM travels from lake to lake by attaching to boats, trailers, motors, or other water equipment and detaching itself when that equipment enters another lake. There are now 371 Wisconsin lakes and 59 counties that have been infested with EWM.

The Milfoil Masters have developed a tool kit that can be used at boat landings to educate Wisconsin boaters of the potential problems of Eurasian Water milfoil and other aquatic invasive species. The tool kit contents include informational material about EWM that can be given to boaters at boat landings.

An educational sticker can be obtained at the workshop. Boaters are encouraged to place that sticker on their boat trailer to make a visual commitment to continually check their recreational equipment for unwanted plant fragments, wash their boat before going into another lake, and open and empty all bait buckets in the trash. The sticker will also help remind them of the difference in appearance between native milfoil and Eurasian Water Milfoil.

For more information concerning this event, contact Dave Ferris at the Burnett County Land & Water Conservation Office, 349-2186.



Burnett County Lakes & Rivers Association Board Members

Susan Wallin
President

Fred Kruger
Vice –President

Greta Michaels
Secretary

Buck Gooding
Treasurer

Board of Directors

Dick Golding

Lin Lehmicke

Shirley Sandquist

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Burnett County Lakes & Rivers Association Membership Application

Subscriber Name _____ Phone _____

Mailing Address _____

Summer Address _____

Lake/River _____

Lake Organization _____

Contact Person and Address _____

Type of Membership (Check Category)
Group Organization \$25.00/Year ☐
Individual/Family, \$5.00/Year ☐

Please make check payable and mail (with membership application) to:
Treasurer, BCL&R Assoc., Inc., 7410 County Rd K, #107,
Siren, Wisconsin 54872

Satellites Assist In Water Quality Assessments

by John Haack



Natural resource managers have been using satellite images of earth to assess natural resources for many years. Many people have seen satellite photos of the Amazon rain forest that show quite plainly the number of fires that rage across Brazil. By comparing photos of the same area from week-to-week or even day-to-day it is possible to determine how many fires are burning on average and how much land they typically consume. This same technology is being developed to compare the water clarity of lakes across Wisconsin as well as track changes in those lakes. But this technology has applications beyond water clarity. By using images from different light spectrums, like infrared, scientists can track things like algae development and even estimate how much algae is in a particular lake.

This breakthrough does not mean that lake volunteers will soon be turning in their Secchi disks (click here for a description of a Secchi disk: http://dipin.kent.edu/whatis_secchi_disk.htm). The application of this technology is great for assessing natural resources on a broad scale, like a county or a state; but it has limitations when applied with a relatively narrow focus such as an individual lake. Scientists still need samples from lakes to make sure that their interpretations of satellite images match with what is actually occurring on the ground. Furthermore, access to high-quality satellite images is expensive and one cannot make any definitive assessments about a lake with a single photo. (That would be akin to taking a picture of a lake in February and assuming that it is frozen all year round.) A lake needs to be monitored regularly in order to determine if it is holding steady or on the road to ruin. So far, the most economical and accurate way to monitor lakes is with the help of volunteers who use relatively simple equipment and techniques.

Have a great Spring & Summer!

Michael Kornmann

UW- Extension Community Development Agent

Dates to Remember

Saturday, April 26, 2003

Burnett County Lakes & Rivers Association Spring Meeting
Buzz Sorge/WDNR, "What's With The Water?"

Saturday, April 26, 2003

Invasive Species (Eurasian Milfoil) Workshop
2:00 - 5:00 p.m. - Jackson Town Hall

Friday, June 27, 2003

Northwest Lake Leaders Conference
See Enclosed Brochure & Registration

Saturday, July 19, 2003

Burnett County Lakes & Rivers Annual Meeting
Forts Folle Avoine
10:00 a.m. - Elections & Program



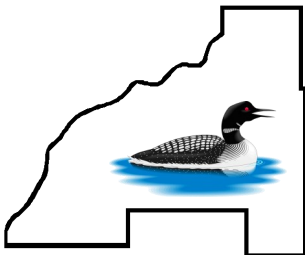
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