



Whitewater-Rice Lakes Management District

P.O. Box #301 • Whitewater, Wisconsin 53190

www.whitwaterricelakesdistrict.org



Chairman's Overview

2025 was another busy and productive year. We are grateful for our hard-working harvesting crew, a dedicated board, and the continued support of our membership. Throughout the summer, we harvested a total of 900 cu. yd. of weeds and then worked for two weeks in September with our bog contractor to remove an average of 18 truckloads of bogs each day. This spring we are awaiting DNR approval for two new weed and bog disposal sites after the State Forest terminated our long-time use of their site on Highway P.

We have begun the process of writing our next Aquatic Plant Management Plan, which the DNR requires every five years. While we worked with SEWRPC in the past, last fall we approved a contract to work with Onterra LLC, a highly regarded consulting firm based in De Pere, WI. We look forward to working with Onterra and learning more about our lakes and aquatic plants in general, as well as exploring options for managing their growth. We encourage all members to attend the kickoff meeting with Onterra at the Lions Club on June 6 at 10:30 AM. To note, we already have been awarded \$18,759 of DNR grants to defray our costs for this work.


While we had hoped not to spray at all last summer, we ended up spraying 51 acres of shorelines across both lakes to address the dense and unanticipated growth of Curly Leaf Pondweed, as well as a total of 20 acres of shorelines for Eurasian Water Milfoil that manifested itself in a few problematic areas. Our 2026 operations will already benefit from having Onterra on our team since they conducted aquatic plant surveys of both lakes last fall and will do so again this spring. Having done so, they will be able to help us to determine what spraying, if any, we should do this spring.

In April, four of us will attend the annual Wisconsin Lakes and Rivers Convention in Stevens Point as we have done in the past. This annual convention brings together scientists, educators and citizens for three days to learn about important lake management topics and to build relationships with others involved in that process.

Soon, we hope to realize a 40-year goal of owning a building for storing equipment and serving as a base for operations and maintenance, as is common for lake management districts like ours. Our membership approved debt financing for such a building at our 2023 and 2024 annual meetings.

At this year's annual meeting we will honor two board members who are retiring. Jerry Grant has served on our board for the past 24 years, having been appointed and reappointed by the Walworth County Board. A former Vice Chairman of the County Board, Jerry's contributions to the Lake District have been invaluable. In addition, Mike Lindenmuth is retiring after two terms on the Board, having done more than his share of "heavy lifting" with his focus on aquatic plant management. At the annual meeting we will vote to fill Mike's vacancy and the position held by Dan Berg, our hard-working treasurer who will be running for a second term. Jerry's replacement will be named by the Walworth County Board.

Our lake management district is blessed with two wonderful lakes, both of which are much admired for their natural beauty, lovely homes and recreational opportunities. We will continue to work hard to protect our lakes and maximize their enjoyment for homeowners and visitors alike. Have a safe and fun summer!

Carol Ducommun, Chairman 

Aquatic Plant Management Planning Process


As part of our ongoing commitment to protecting and improving the health of Whitewater and Rice Lake, we want to share an important update about aquatic plant management and planning for the year ahead. Historically, the Whitewater & Rice Lake Management District has contracted with our herbicide provider not only to perform treatment services, but also to complete the mapping of aquatic plant growth. This approach has served us for many years and has helped guide our seasonal management decisions. This year, however, we are taking an important step forward. We are partnering with Onterra, a private environmental consulting firm with expertise in lake management and aquatic plant planning. This change comes as part of a broader effort to strengthen our long-term planning and ensure we are meeting evolving state requirements and community goals.

The Lake Management District is required to update its Aquatic Plant Management Plan with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources every five years. Onterra will be working closely with us to complete this required update– but their role will go well beyond simply revising a document. This will be a comprehensive, year-long project that includes:

- Updated and detailed aquatic plant mapping
- Evaluation of current management practices
- Review of ecological health indicators
- Consideration of both chemical and non-chemical management strategies
- Opportunities for public input and community participation

Most importantly, this process will include you. Community involvement is essential to developing a thoughtful, balanced, and effective Aquatic Plant Management Plan. Throughout the year, there will be opportunities to share feedback, attend informational meetings, and help shape the future direction of lake management efforts.

Our goal is to ensure that Whitewater and Rice Lake remain healthy, accessible, and enjoyable for everyone– now and for future generations. We look forward to working together during this important planning process and will continue to provide updates as the project progresses.

Mike Lindenmuth, Commissioner 

40th Anniversary of Whitewater Rice Lakes Management District

If you are new to the lake area, or even if you are not, you may be wondering what a lake management district does. In 1986, voters approved the formation of our district under Wisconsin's Statute 33. This statute, passed in 1974, established lake management districts to ensure the long-term health of Wisconsin's beautiful lakes, making them responsible for lake protection, rehabilitation, management, and water quality improvement and giving them taxing authority.

The Lake District serves roughly 700 homes and properties in Whitewater and Richmond Townships and is governed by a board of seven commissioners; five are elected by district membership, and two are appointed, one by the Walworth County Board and one by the Whitewater Town Board. The district operates independently from the other organizations you may be familiar with, including the Towns of Richmond and Whitewater, and the Greater Whitewater Lake Property Owners Association, which is a voluntary organization that seeks to build connections among members of the lakes community.

Please Note Two Important Meetings this Summer


Members* of the Whitewater-Rice Lakes Management District are invited to join us for two important meetings this summer. They will be held at the Lions Club on Kettle Moraine Drive, and we hope you will plan to attend each of them.

- **Kick off for Aquatic Plant Management Plan, June 6** from 10:30 AM to noon
- **Annual Meeting, August 22** from 9 AM to 11:30 AM

As mentioned earlier, the intent of the June 6 kickoff meeting is to engage district membership and solicit your input regarding the aquatic plant management planning process. At the August annual meeting, we will vote on the 2027 budget and capital plan, hold elections for two board positions, and celebrate the district's 40th anniversary.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

*Members are deeded property owners with a line item for the district on their annual tax bill OR registered voters in either Richmond or Whitewater Townships whose legal address is within the boundaries of the Lake Management District.

Carol Ducommun, Chair 

Financial Results

In 2025 we generated an operating fund surplus of \$32,858 primarily due to not having equipment storage costs (budgeted at \$17,000), as well as more efficient weed and bog harvesting operations than anticipated (\$8,800 and \$4,200 under budget, respectively.) Revenues were higher than budgeted by \$2,600 due to increased interest income, donations and launch fees.

Our Capital Fund balance at 2025-year end was \$244,734, an increase from the 2024 balance of \$172,052. The capital fund had interest earnings of \$6,670 from investing in certificates of deposit and using Wisconsin's Local Government Investment Pool, and we had only minimal capital outlays (separate from non-capitalized maintenance costs.) Additionally, our members voted to increase the capital contribution from operations by \$10,000 to \$70,000 at last year's annual meeting.

Our 2026 operations budget includes a \$6,000 increase in maintenance costs due to the advancing age of our weed harvesters and trucks, as well as additional costs for a new storage building of \$18,500 for mortgage payments and \$5,500 for insurance.

The Board will develop a plan over the coming months to address our future capital needs, including the potential use of last year's surplus. The capital plan and use of last year's surplus will be on the agenda for members' input at the August annual meeting.

Dan Berg, Treasurer 


Fish Management

2026 ice fishing was capped by a very successful Lions Club Fish-A-Ree on February 9th. Big turnout, good weather, thick ice, active fish and a great breakfast. Many nice sized fish, including walleyes were caught. Ice conditions deteriorated quickly after the event and Whitewater Lake was declared ICE OUT March 7.

The 2026 general Southern Wisconsin fishing season reopens May 2. This season allows for harvesting of most species including walleye, northern pike and bass. As in the past, the first full weekend in June (6th and 7th this year) is free fishing ...no license needed! Visit 'Go Wild' for more Wisconsin DNR info on regulations and licenses.

Current 2026 plans call for the Lake Management District to return to stocking 6-to-8-inch walleyes in Whitewater and 4-to-6-inch perch in both Whitewater and Rice.

Send me your photos and fish stories.

Tom Potrykus, Team Leader 

We want your email!

The Whitewater-Rice Lake Management District is collecting emails to quickly and easily communicate with our members and to help reduce our costs to do so. Wisconsin State Statute 33.30(2)(a) now allows members to receive email notification regarding Lake District meetings.

There are two ways to indicate your agreement to receive emails from the District. First, each deeded owner of your property can send an email to wwrice@lake.com with your name, lake address and email address. A second option is to sign the following form and send it to the Whitewater-Rice Lakes Management District, P.O. Box 301, Whitewater, WI 53190. Thanks for helping us communicate with you!

Permission to Receive Email Notices from Lake District

I hereby authorize the Whitewater-Rice Lakes Management District to send emails including our newsletters, which notice the annual meeting in August each year, in lieu of paper copies by mail. All property owners for your address should sign this form if you agree to receive email notice.

You may bring the completed form to our Annual Meeting on August 22, 2026, at the Lions Club or mail it to the Lake Management District:
Whitewater-Rice Lakes Management District, P.O. Box 301, Whitewater, WI 53190

Printed Name _____ Signature _____

Email Address _____

Printed Name _____ Signature _____

Email Address _____

Aquatic Plant Management

Last spring, our herbicide contractor treated both Whitewater and Rice Lakes, even though we had hoped to avoid spraying last year. They applied herbicide to 51 acres on our lakes to control Curly Leaf Pondweed, which forms mats on the surface of the water and was far denser than expected, particularly in areas we couldn't reach with the harvesters. The herbicide contractor also spot treated 20 acres for Eurasian Water Milfoil, including much of Rice Lake's developed shoreline and three heavily affected areas on Whitewater Lake: Isabella Bay and the southeastern and southwestern shorelines of the south bay. For the remainder of the 2025 season, we managed weed growth with mechanical harvesting and harvested a total of 900 cubic yards, a 13% increase over the 2024 total.


Scott Center and his assistant crew chief, Paul Klocek, will continue to lead our efforts in weed harvesting, bog removal, and equipment maintenance this summer. We are grateful for their leadership and mechanical abilities, as well as the contributions of our whole operating team.


We will begin harvesting on both lakes in early June, Monday to Thursday, with weed pickups on Whitewater Lake every Monday morning, weather permitting. Please

know that our lake equipment is large and impacted by strong winds and, in the case of our harvesters, use paddle wheels for steering. For pier pickups, our team cannot pick up weed piles with sticks, sand, or other debris since they will damage the equipment, nor can our barge approach piers with floats or lifts that obstruct their movement.

As mentioned earlier, we are working with Onterra LLC to develop our next Aquatic Plant Management Plan (APMP). Such plans are required by the DNR every five years to obtain permits for both herbicide spraying and weed harvesting. While the plan itself will not be done until early 2028, we look forward to having input from Onterra regarding our spraying options for this summer and next based on their knowledge, experience and spring and fall weed surveys of our lakes.

As we have done in past years, we would post notices on properties adjacent to treatment areas before we apply any herbicide. Feel free to contact us with any questions or concerns.

Carol Ducommun, Commissioner 

Mike Lindenmuth, Commissioner 

Boater Safety Course

The Turtle Lake Improvement and Protective Association (TLIPA) has graciously extended an invitation to WWRLMD members to attend the Boaters' Safety Course on May 2nd & 3rd at the Turtle Lake Tap & Grill, space permitting. Students must be 12 years or older. The cost is \$10 per student and payment may be made via Zelle, check or cash.

The class will be held from 9 AM until 1 PM, with both days required to complete the course. All participants must obtain a Wisconsin DNR customer ID at gowild.wi.gov, unless you already have one. Once you obtain a customer ID, please email scott.nowicki4@gmail.com to indicate your interest.

The boater safety class is also available online from the State at www.dnr.wi.gov for \$25. However, if you can attend in person, particularly younger students, we encourage you to do so since the takeaway is generally greater.

Please note that anyone born on or after January 1, 1989 must have a permit to operate a motorboat in Wisconsin.

Questions? Please contact Scott Nowicki from Turtle Lake at scott.nowicki4@gmail.com.

Jake Hintz, Safety Team Leader 

GWLPOA


The goal of the Greater Whitewater Lake Property Owners Association (GWLPOA) is to build connections among people around Whitewater and Rice Lakes. Our commitment to our members is to provide opportunities to meet and socialize with your lake neighbors and to keep you "in the loop" on a timely basis regarding pivotal happenings.

Our \$50 annual dues help fund a directory of lake-area residents, which we publish in even numbered years, as well as monthly newsletters with important information and happenings around the lake area. Members are invited to a variety of events, including our annual picnic, classes for CPR & First Aid, pontoon parties, and lake neighbor happy hours. Dues also fund our popular Music-on-the-Lake concerts, which anyone is welcome to attend. We also partner with the town and Lake Management on lake expenditures like buoys.

Whether you are new to the area or are a long-time resident, the GWLPOA is a great way to meet and socialize with your neighbors and to enjoy being a part of the lake community.

Please visit our website, www.WhitewaterLake.org, and click on membership for more information and to join today.

We have a great lineup of events planned this summer and look forward to seeing you!!

Amy Rodgers, President 

Why A Bog Floats On Whitewater Lake Each Summer

40th Anniversary Feature

Each summer, usually in August or early September, many Whitewater Lake users notice something unusual– large dark mats appearing on the lake’s surface in the northeastern portion of the lake. These are the floating Bogs, one of the lake’s most unique natural features.

As the Whitewater-Rice Lakes Management District celebrates its 40th year, it’s a great time to revisit the history and science behind this natural phenomenon. Research conducted in 1999 for the District, including studies by the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, identifies floating Bogs located in the northeastern lobe of Whitewater Lake that periodically rise to the surface during late summer.

The Bogs themselves has been known to lake residents for much longer. In the early 1970s, members of the Whitewater Lake Ecology Committee studied the lake and documented the presence of floating Bogs and their seasonal movement. Their observations helped lay the groundwork for later lake management planning and improved understanding of how the Bogs behave throughout the year.

Researchers believe the Bogs are likely a remnant of wetlands that existed before the modern lake was created. In 1927, a dam was constructed on Whitewater Creek, combining several smaller lakes and wetlands into the larger Whitewater Lake we know today.

Portions of the original wetland vegetation remained beneath the water, forming a large mat of organic material. For much of the year the Bogs remain just below the surface. During warm summer months, decomposition within this material produces gases– particularly methane. As gas accumulates beneath the mat, it increases buoyancy and causes the Bogs to rise toward the surface, which is why they are most often seen in late summer.

When the Bogs surface they may cover several acres, and portions can occasionally break apart and drift across the lake. Because these floating sections may sit just below the water surface, they can create navigation hazards for boaters.

For this reason, the Whitewater-Rice Lakes Management District monitors the BOG area each summer. The District operates under Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources permits allowing limited Bog removal after Labor Day when conditions are safest.

2025 Bog Removal Efforts

So now that you know a little bit more about Bogs and their history, it’s time to give a huge thank you to our dedicated Bog removal team! From September 16–26, Scott Center and our team, along with Riese Aquatics, worked tirelessly to remove Bogs from the northeast lobe of Whitewater Lake. Together they cleared about 18 truckloads of Bog material per day– an incredible effort.

While we could have removed even more Bog material last fall, we stayed within the District’s Bog harvesting constraints and focused on removing Bogs that had the greatest impact on boaters. Great teamwork and dedication paid off, and we’re proud of what we accomplished.

Looking ahead to 2026, our budget for Bog removal includes another 10 days with our contractor. We plan to continue building on the methods used last fall and explore ways to gain efficiencies so we can remove even more Bog material within that timeframe. Your input is always welcome. If you have questions, ideas, or suggestions, we would love to hear from you.

Thanks to everyone for your patience and support– and we look forward to seeing you soon on our beautiful Whitewater and Rice Lakes.


Bob Szcinski, Commissioner 

Equipment Report

Again, this past winter we were able to again store all harvesting equipment indoors. While Mother Nature showed up a little earlier with snow this year, we were able to get everything properly winterized and stored indoors. We are hopeful to take possession of a facility to serve as headquarters for our equipment storage and maintenance operations over the next few months.

Scott Center continues to head our harvesting program. He takes personal pride in what he and the crew members accomplish throughout the harvesting season and is a real asset to our lake district. Our crew is responsible for daily maintenance, operations throughout the summer; and readying the equipment for launching in the spring and storing in the fall. As in past years, the staff will begin preparing equipment in early June for the harvesting season.

As a reminder to all residents, harvesting of aquatic plants will not begin in areas that have been chemically treated *until two weeks after any application.*

Chuck Chamberlain, Commissioner 

Lakes Management District NOTICE

Proposed Aquatic Herbicide Application for Eurasian watermilfoil and Curlyleaf pondweed control on Whitewater and Rice Lakes

The Whitewater and Rice Lakes Management District (the District) with support from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) and Lake and Pond Solutions, LLC proposes to manage up to 175 acres on Whitewater Lake and up to 65 acres on Rice Lake with aquatic herbicides to control the excessive growth of the aquatic invasive species, Eurasian watermilfoil (EWM), its hybrid (HWM) and Curlyleaf Pondweed (CLP). The District proposes to first assess populations of the invasive plants and then if warranted, conduct applications of ProcettaCOR EC (liquid florasulam-benzyl) and Aquathol K (liquid endothal) to infestations sometime in spring, 2026 to be performed by Lake and Pond Solutions. The project will proceed only after the District obtains a permit from the WDNR.

Notification of the exact date of application and water use restrictions (should there be any) associated with the use of ProcettaCOR EC and Aquathol K will be provided by the posting on the shoreline in and adjacent to management areas, and public access points.

The water uses restrictions associated with the products mentioned above are noted below:

There are no swimming, fishing, or other recreational restrictions. Do not use water from application area for non-turf irrigation purposes for 3 days, turf irrigation is fine immediately following applications.

Additional information on the proposed management including a completed copy of the permit applications, site map and WDNR Chemical Fact Sheets on florasulam-benzyl and endothal can be found at whitewaterlake.org.

Wildlife Control

We do an annual goose roundup to protect the lake and shoreline property from the goose droppings. If you are new or have not filled out the permission slip previously, please do so and send it to me.

Bob Montes, Wildlife Manager 

Permission for Entry to Property for Goose Management

I authorize representatives from United States Department of Agriculture - Wildlife Services and Whitewater/Rice Lakes Management District to access the property listed below for the purposes of goose management (egg oiling and/or a round up). ***This permission form has no expiration date and remains in effect until you request to be removed from the approved site list.*** You will have an annual opportunity via newsletter or direct mailing to remove your property from the approved site list. Thank you for your assistance. Bob Montes, Wildlife Manager

Printed Name: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Lake Address: _____

Mail to:
Whitewater/Rice Lakes Mgt Dist.
P.O. Box 301, Whitewater, WI 53190

Signature (Mandatory)

Boater Safety Tips

1. Anyone born on or after January 1, 1989 - may operate a motorboat only if they have completed a boating safety course accepted by the WI DNR. For more info: <https://dnr.wi.gov>
2. You need a life jacket on board for each person. Plus, a throwable if your vessel is larger than 16 feet. This includes canoes/kayaks/paddleboards.
3. When pulling a skier/tuber/boarder you need to go counterclockwise. There must also be another competent person to act as an observer (recommended) or the vessel must be equipped with a wide-angle review mirror.
4. No boat towing persons engaged in water skiing, tubing, boarding, aquaplaning or similar activity on any lake shall engage in such activity within 100 feet of any occupied anchored boat, any PWC or marked swimming area or public boat landing.
5. When skiing/tubing/boarding only 2 people may be pulled behind the boat. 2 people on one tube or 2 tubes with 1 person each tube.
6. PWCs are not to exceed slow no wake speeds within 200' of shorelines or within 100' of any other watercraft.
7. Never allow passengers to ride on gunwales or seatbacks or outside of protective railings, including the front of a pontoon boat. A sudden turn, stop or start could cause a fall overboard.
8. Swimming from boats is prohibited unless the boat is anchored, and the swimmers stay within 25 feet of the boat.
9. It is illegal to move, displace, tamper with, damage or destroy any navigational aid (buoys). Most of the buoys are placed at 200 feet from shore.
10. Slow no wake speed means a speed at which a vessel moves as slowly as possible while still maintaining steerage control.
11. All channels shall be deemed a slow-no wake area and no boat shall anchor in any channel and no boat shall anchor for a distance of 100 feet in either direction from the tip of the Ridge and the point opposite. NOTE: In 2022 - 4 new Black & White striped channel marker buoys were added in this channel.
12. On Fridays, Saturdays, Holidays, and the day before a holiday – slow no wake starts at 7:00 PM or sunset, whichever is earlier. On all other days – slow no wake starts at sunset. Every day of the week – slow no wake goes until 9:00 AM.
13. For more information on boating on Whitewater and Rice Lakes, visit <https://www.whitewaterlake.org/boating>

This is not a complete set of boating laws! Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information in this pamphlet at the time of its printing. We cannot guarantee the correctness of all information and assume no liability arising from errors and omissions. If you have any questions, contact DNR personnel or your local law enforcement authorities. ALL STATE OF WI BOATING LAWS APPLY. THE TOWNS OF WHITEWATER AND RICHMOND HAVE ADDITIONAL ORDINANCES SPECIFIC TO THE LAKES.

Town of Whitewater/Richmond Ordinances specific to Whitewater and Rice Lakes.

<https://ecode360.com/32933975#32933975>

Wisconsin DNR Boating Laws Handbook – read the entire handbook online:

<https://assets.kalkomey.com/boater/pdfs/handbook/wisconsin-handbook-entire.pdf>

You can review Wisconsin boating regulations, register your boat, or sign up for a safety class at the Wisconsin DNR website at: <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/boat/>

From The Combined Boater Safety Team 



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2026 Boat Launch Fees

As a reminder, all Town of Whitewater Boat Launches require a launch fee as suggested by the guidelines of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR). Envelopes will be available at the Self-Pay Boxes located at each launch site beginning with the Spring/Summer Boating Season. **Launch Fees for Calendar Year 2026** will remain the same as last year and are as follows:

Daily Fee: Lake District Resident (\$4.00)
Non-Lake District Resident (\$6.00)

Annual Fee: Lake District Resident (\$20.00)
Non-Lake District Resident (\$30.00)

The fees listed above apply **ONLY** to the **Town of Whitewater Boat Launches** on Whitewater Lake.

These are located at:

- Cruse Lane
- R-W Townline Road and Krahn Drive
- R-W Townline Road and Chapel Drive

Fees at the **State Park Boat Launches** located on Whitewater and Rice Lakes are set by and are under the jurisdiction of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR).