

THE CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

William F. Norris, Chairman

The Walworth County Board of Supervisors approved our petition to form the Whitewater-Rice Lakes Management District on December 9, 1986. Formation of Lake Management Districts was encouraged by Act of the Wisconsin Legislature in 1973, and the rules and laws under which Lake Districts operate are detailed in Chapter 33 of the Wisconsin Statutes. To date, more than 130 Lake Districts have been formed in Wisconsin, and a similar concept has been adopted and encouraged by many other states.

Whitewater Lake has an area of approximately 750 acres, and Rice Lake represents an additional area of about 175 acres. The number of persons (primarily property owners) qualified to vote on Lake District affairs is nearly 1100. Because much of the property is jointly owned by husbands and wives, it requires about 615 addresses to contact the electorate. Two-thirds of these 615 addresses lie outside of Walworth County, and represent non-resident owners of Lake District properties.

A substantial portion of the shoreline of Whitewater-Rice Lakes is occupied by the Kettle Moraine State Forest and the Walworth County Nature Center. These publicly-owned lands, situated not far from major urban centers such as Chicago and Milwaukee, make Whitewater-Rice Lakes of considerable interest to Wisconsin's Department of Natural Resources. The existence of our Lake Management District provides a focus for interaction of the DNR with our District that we foresee will be mutually advantageous. It is not generally recognized that, not counting 10-12 very large Wisconsin lakes, Whitewater-Rice Lakes is one of the largest of the 15,000 lakes in the state.

SUMMARY OF THE DISTRICT'S FIRST ANNUAL MEETING—MAY 30, 1987

By Wisconsin law, a Lake Management District must hold at least one meeting of its electorate each year. All major decisions that affect lake management, together with election of officers, are made at this time. Approximately 180 property owners (16% of the the total) were present. The meeting was chaired by Bill Norris the interim chairman appointed by the Walworth County Board of Supervisors.

a) District By-laws were adopted:

The electors present voted to discuss, in detail, the proposed By-laws that had previously been mailed to all property owners. Inevitably, there were a number of changes. Perhaps the most significant of these changes was the decision to reduce the property tax limit of the District to 0.5 mil from the 2.5 maximum mil rate allowed by Wisconsin Statutes. At present 1987 property assessment levels, this decision limits the property tax revenues available to the District to about \$19,000 per year. A higher level of expenditure will require modification of the By-laws.

The By-laws have been amended to conform to the decisions made at the Annual Meeting. To save money, copies of the amended By-laws will NOT be mailed to the entire electorate. Copies are, however, available by written request to the District Secretary.

b) Budget for FY 1987 and FY 1988:

Because property taxes for 1987 will not become available to the district until about March, 1988, it was necessary, this first year only, to approve operating revenues for both FY 1987 and FY 1988. The budget suggested by the interim Lake Commissioners was discussed and approved as follows:

BUDGET FOR FY 1987 AND FY 1988

	<u>FY 1987</u>	<u>FY 1988</u>
Operating expenses to date (borrowed-letters, postage, etc.)	1000	
Interest	100	400
Newsletters (4 each year)	1200	1200
Insurance	1000	1000
Miscellaneous expenses	250	250
Legal Fees	<u>500</u>	<u>500</u>
Sub-total	4050	3350
* Water Analyses	500	3000
Weed Harvesting		10000
* Preliminary survey for defective septic systems	500	
Shoreline erosion--prelim. study		200
Totals	<u>5050</u>	<u>16550</u>
Totals for FY 1987 and FY 1988		21600

1987 Property Tax Assessments for the District were as follows:

	Assessments	Equalized	% of Total
Town of Whitewater	\$29,814,036	\$29,814,036	79.57
Town of Richmond	8,651,298	7,656,157	20.43

c) Election of District Officers:

A nominating committee chaired by Walter Hicks presented seven candidates for the three positions of Lake District Commissioner. In this first year, the three candidates receiving the most votes were elected for either three, two, or one years. Hereafter, only one candidate will normally be elected each year--for a three year term. Together with the two representatives appointed by the Walworth county Board and the Board of the Town of Whitewater, respectively,

the elected Commissioners met to determine the responsibilities of each member. The results were as follows:

Chairman	William P. Norris	2 years
Secretary	Willard L. Gross	3 years
Treasurer	Tom Ponyicsanyi	1 year
Walworth Co. Rep.	James Van Dreser	
Whitewater Town Rep.	Kenneth Loehndorf	

NEXT ANNUAL MEETING

The electorate voted to hold the next Annual Meeting of the District on Saturday, May 28, 1988; 2:00 p.m.; Lake View School. Please put this date on your calendar and plan to attend!

SURVEY OF PROPERTY-OWNERS OPINIONS:

A questionnaire distributed at the Annual Meeting was completed by 128 of those present. 78 of these owned riparian property on Whitewater Lake, 29 owned off-shore Whitewater Lake property, and 21 owned property on Rice Lake. There were two basic questions: a) Why do you own lake property? and, b) What projects should the Lake District consider? Each of these questions contained ten items which the respondent was asked to rank by number from 1 to 10 to indicate the relative importance of each. The results follow:

a) Why do you own lake property?

	Overall	W'W Lake On Shore	W'W Lake Off Shore	Rice Lake
Scenic Environment	1	1	1	1
Swimming	2	3	3	2
Boating	3	2	4	4
Fishing	4	4	2	3
Water Skiing	5	5	5	5
Sailing	6	6	8	8
Nature Studies	7	7	6	7
Gardening	8	8	7	9
Ice Fishing	9	10	9	6
Wind Surfing	10	9	10	10

b) What projects should the Lake District consider?

Identify Defective				
Septic Systems	1	1	1	2
Shore-line Stabilization	2	2	2	5
Continued Water Analyses	3	3	3	3
Weed Harvesting	4	5	5	1
Carp Removal	5	4	4	9
Fish Stocking	6	6	6	4
Improve Weed Quality	7	7	8	6
Remove Floating				
Bog Pieces	8	8	10	8
Bog Stabilization	9	9	9	10
Aerate Deep Water	10	10	7	7

Your Lake District Board feels it advantageous to form committees of interested property owners to assist in studying lake problems and making appropriate recommendations. Three such committees are already functioning. We want to involve District members! Please contact us if you are willing to participate.

We suggest that you file these News Letters for future reference. Please stay in touch with us!

.....More next News Letter

FISH COMMITTEE REPORT

Dale Poeppel, Chairman

This report will focus on some of our past accomplishments and the activities we are planning for the future.

The Department of Natural Resources has decided to initiate some additional action in improving the quality of fishing on Whitewater Lake.

At this point we have reached a successful agreement with the DNR to begin stocking the lake with Walleye. Thus far the program is off to a good start. Our first stocking attempts of two year ago have proved quite successful. DNR officials have noted that the survival rate figures and average size of the fish were very impressive.

In 1987 we released 20,000 fingerlings in Whitewater Lake and hope to release 15,000 more this year and next as part of a continuing fish stocking program.

As a part of this program the DNR shocked the lake and took a census in September. Unfortunately, due to the high water temperature they were unable to obtain an accurate Walleye count. Only three were registered, but of those, each measured approximately 14 inches and appeared healthy. Other species which were included in that count were Bass and Bluegill. Both species were found to be numerous and of fairly good size.

Since shocking takes place in the shallows, Walleye like Perch, were difficult to count. The same was true of Northern.

There is also some evidence of a return of Whitebass; numerous small-fry were shocked and released.

Now as always Carp continue to be one of our chief concerns. We have had numerous discussions about the issue and are currently gathering information from various sources as to which method would prove most beneficial in dealing in dealing with the problem.

Unfortunately, the only method which would insure total eradication of all Carp is to poison the entire lake. This obviously is not the way to proceed and should not be considered an option either now or in the future.

Finally, the fishing on Whitewater Lake remains good while the fishing on Rice Lake is estimated to be between fair and poor. Needless to say many factors contribute to this. Some of them can be controlled through local efforts while other require outside expertise.

Even though this sample represents only about 12% of the nearly 1100 property owners, there appears a rather remarkable consensus of opinion--regardless of location on the two lakes. There is obvious concern that defective septic systems may be contributing to pollution of both lakes, and this is also reflected in recommendations for continued analyses of lake water. Residents of Rice Lake are more concerned about weed harvesting than those on Whitewater Lake.

CONDITION OF OUR LAKES--SUMMER, 1987

A quick, and simple, measure of water quality was made at intervals during the summer of 1987 using a Secchi disc. The results were reported to the DNR. A Secchi disc is a weighted metal disc, eight inches in diameter, attached to a string. The four quadrants of the disc are painted, alternately, black and white. When the disc is lowered into the water, the depth at which it disappears from view affords a reproducible measure of suspended solids in the water. In our lakes, this is primarily a measure of algae concentrations. Measurements were taken in good weather during the week when boat traffic was light. Measurements were made at four locations: a) the deep west lobe of Whitewater Lake (old Whitewater Lake); b) near the center of the south lobe of Whitewater Lake; c) center of the north end of the east lobe (old Bass Lake); d) midway up the narrow channel in the north end of Whitewater Lake near the State Park. Water levels refer to the lake level relative to the spillway in the Whitewater Lake Dam.

	Secchi Disc Measures in Feet				Lake Level (inches)
	A	B	C	D	
May 1, 1987	7.0				+ 3.5
June 8, 1987	4.0	3.0	3.75	2.5	+ 1.5
July 17, 1987	3.75	2.25	3.75	3.25	0.0
Aug. 4, 1987	3.0	1.75	4.5	2.5	- 2.0
Aug. 15, 1987	2.75	1.75	2.5	2.0	+ 1.5
Sept. 12, 1987	1.5	1.5	1.75	1.25	+ 0.8
Oct. 13, 1987	3.25	3.0	2.75	2.5	0.0

Aug. 4, 1987 Four locations on Rice lake gave Secchi depths of ten inches with very green water.

It is evident that both Whitewater and Rice Lakes are well fertilized, since both lakes produced abundant algae especially during the months of August and September.

ACTIVITIES OF YOUR LAKE DISTRICT BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Your Lake District Commissioners meet on the second Thursday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at the Whitewater Town Hall. All meetings are open to District property owners, and the meetings are advertised in the Whitewater Register about one week in advance. YOU ARE ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND!

As expected, lake management represents a substantial learning process. We are attempting to create a balance between a) the best solutions of perceived lake problems, b) the recommendations of property owners, and c) the available budget. We are very pleased with the assistance we have received from the DNR, UW-Extension in Stevens Point and UW-Extension in Elkhorn. In addition, we have had excellent cooperation from County officials in Elkhorn, as well as the Town Board of Whitewater.

Should you wish to contact me to discuss either these or other issues, please call or write:

Dale Poeppel
Route 2, Box 116
Whitewater, WI 53190

(414) 883-6357

FROM THE EDITORS DESK

The 1988 Wisconsin Lakes Convention will be held in Stevens Point, Wisconsin on March 25 and 26. This year's event is being co-sponsored by UW-Extension, Stevens Point, Wisconsin Association of Lakes Districts, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, and the Wisconsin Federation of Lakes. Workshops will include: Shoreland Zoning, Wetland Appreciation and Management, Natural Landscaping, Working with Local Officials, Lake Monitoring Options, Controlling Weeds and Algae, Loons in Wisconsin, Renewing Your Organization and Liability.

Site for the meeting in Stevens Point will be at the University Center on the UW-Stevens Point Campus. Information on parking and motels will be sent to preregistrants. A small block of rooms is being held at the Holiday Inn. Registration information is available from Diane Lueck, College of Natural Resources, UW-Stevens Point, Stevens Point, WI 54481 or by calling (715) 346-3783 or 346-4266.

I would like to take this opportunity to say how pleased I am to be a part of the activities of the Whitewater-Rice Lakes Management District. It is my hope that in future issues I will be able to offer additional information on work already being done by the District as well as research conducted by the University of Wisconsin-Extension and the Department of Natural Resources.

POST SCRIPT:

At its November 11 meeting the Whitewater Town Board reported that, during a normally snowy winter, this Town alone may apply as much as 850 tons of 15% salt-sand mix (equivalent to 127 tons of pure salt) to the Town roads. Because of the hills, a disproportionate amount of this salt is applied to the roads near Whitewater-Rice Lakes. In addition, salt is applied by the Town of Richmond and by the County on County Trunk P. Inevitably, much of this salt eventually washes into our lakes--a clearly undesirable result. This winter the Town of Whitewater has minimized salt applications to the limit compatible with safe driving conditions. There seems to be no reasonable alternative, at this time to the use of road salt. You should do your part by a) checking your tires, b) putting some weight in your trunk (for example, 100 lbs of dry sand) and, c) above all, taking it easy out there!

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