

To preserve and protect Long Lake, its watershed and ecosystems



Long Lake

Preservation Association
Issue 72 • Spring 2023



— Photo by Joe Thrasher

President's Message

I hope that when you receive this latest LLPA Newsletter, you are all enjoying the arrival of spring. This past winter has been a long one, even for those who enjoy winter as I do. In last fall's newsletter, I shared with you the changes made in our organizational structure, our updated web site and that we had just submitted our application to the DNR for a Comprehensive Lake Management Plan (CLMP) Planning Grant. At that time, it was noted there would be opportunities for membership engagement.

There is good news that you may have already heard. Our planning grant application was approved and funded. Work is now underway to develop the CLMP that we will submit to the DNR by November 2023. In this newsletter see the article by Megan Mader, our lake scientist consultant, where she provides an overview of the grant process and how you can help with our lake assessment, as well as inform us on your priorities to protect and enhance Long Lake. We feel extremely fortunate to have Megan

Continued on Page 2

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President's Message continued

assisting with this and feel the contract with the Northwest Regional Planning Commission has been extremely beneficial.

When the CLMP is approved by the DNR in early 2024, we can move into an action mode to not only preserve the quality of Long Lake but look at options to improve the quality of Long Lake by addressing concerns our membership has noted. Even with funding from the DNR, there will be a need for in-kind effort and monetary support to receive the funding and implement the plans. The Sustainability and Capacity Building Committee (SCBC) has been the group within the LLPA that has been spearheading the efforts to identify this support. See the article from the SCBC in this newsletter to learn more about their activities and ways you can help.

Over the past months, there has been an increase in the number of LLPA members involved in SCBC, the Operations Committee, LoonWatch, and the Clean Boats Clean Waters program. We have continued our partnerships with the Tomahawk Scout Camp and Washburn County Land and Water Commission working on Aquatic Invasive Species initiatives and with Hunt Hill Audubon Sanctuary in providing education programs. I thank the members and partners that have been working on our initiatives. Without the help of these members and our partners, the progress made to date would not have been possible. You, as a member of the LLPA, can help advance our efforts to improve Long Lake. Strength is present within individuals but the power to make needed changes comes from aligning individual strengths and focusing our collective efforts on the challenges we will be tackling. We will need your help.

Our upcoming **Annual Meeting** will be held at the **Tomahawk Scout Camp on Saturday, June 3rd starting with registration at 9AM and the meeting beginning at 9:30AM**. This will be a crucial time as we are advancing our CLMP planning process. It will be a time to meet your board members and LLPA members involved with these activities, a time to have questions aired and answered. I hope you join us at the Annual Meeting and participate in our lake assessment activities this coming year. We will be sending out more information on the Annual Meeting and how you can participate in LLPA projects through our emails, or you can find the information on our website: LongLakellpa.org. If you have additional questions, please contact us at: info@longlakellpa.org

Byron J. Crouse

President – Long Lake Preservation Association

APPAREL SALES GO DIGITAL

Article by Steve May
Vice President, LLPA

Sales of the long popular LLPA line of apparel, like so many other things, went on hiatus during the worst of the Covid pandemic. Clothing items had been offered at public gatherings, such as the annual meeting and Cakes at the Lake, and those ceased to exist for a while. As normalcy gradually returned, we were faced with the question of whether to restock inventory, hoping we chose items people would want, get volunteers to store that inventory, haul it to events and back again and sell it, or try something different. We opted to try on-line sales last year, and the response was encouraging. So we are doing it again. The current sales window closes May 8; we do expect to have another in the fall, and will notify members by email.



We have tried to make it simple. Use the accompanying QR code to enter the store, where you will find polo shirts, sweat shirts, tees, caps and micro-fleece jackets. Look around at the great looking items that help you boast about our great lake, pick a size and color, and then look for another! Order by May 8 with your credit card and choose your delivery option:

- 1) Pick your items up at the annual meeting on June 3rd (no delivery charge), or:
- 2) Have as many items as you want delivered to your door for a flat \$15 delivery fee.



I will see you on the lake...I will be wearing my LLPA apparel!

ANNUAL MEETING JUNE 3RD

The LLPA annual membership meeting will be held at the Camp Tomahawk main lodge June 3. Registration with refreshments begins at 9:00 AM, with the meeting to follow at 9:30. Guest speakers confirmed at press time include John Bowen of Ken-Way Services of Rice Lake and DNR Fisheries Biologist Craig Roberts.

Anyone who lives in a town with more than two or three stop signs is served by a carefree (by you) municipal septic system; anyone on the lake who does not have a holding tank has some type of private septic system, and needs to know the proper use and care of it. That will be the topic of John's presentation.

Everyone likes to fish, and will be interested in Craig's discussion of the state of the Long Lake fishery. If you have questions, he will be there to answer them.

We look forward to seeing you June 3.

State of The Long Lake Fishery

Article by Joe Thrasher

For those who would rather fish than motor home for dinner, these numbers are for you. In 2022 the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources conducted extensive surveys of the fish populations of Long Lake, using both netting and electrofishing methods. DNR Fisheries Biologist Craig Roberts has prepared a summary of findings, an excerpt from which, detailing the more popular angling quarry, is as follows (number is the number captured, and average and max are the average and maximum size of each species in inches):

SPECIES	NUMBER	AVERAGE	MAX
WALLEYE	2364	18.5	30.0
NORTHERN	161	21	37
LARGEMOUTH	106	12	17.5
SMALLMOUTH	20	10.8	17.5
BLUEGILL	540	4.9	8.1
BLACK CRAPPIE	188	7.8	13.1
YELLOW PERCH	29	4.3	8.6

Of particular note to walleye fishing fans, Roberts estimates that the findings translate to 1.9 walleyes per acre. He has accepted an invitation to speak at the LLPA annual meeting June 3; if you want to learn more about the fishery, be sure to attend.

That walleye population is due in large measure to DNR stocking efforts in recent years. While fry and small fingerlings had been stocked previously, commencing in 2014 and in each even numbered year thereafter, over 34,000 large fingerlings have been released into Long Lake. That is over 170,000 fish to date. Unlike fry, which are under one inch in length, large fingerlings are all over six inches. The purpose of stocking larger fish is to achieve a better survival rate, and Roberts reports that it does.

Incidentally, DNR has a web site where detailed records of fish stocking throughout the state can be found. This site, <https://dnr.wi.gov/fisheriesmanagement/Public/Summary/Index>, can be searched by county and lake, and shows species, number, size and genetic source of stocked fish.

On a final note, the Fish Sticks project planned for this past winter was not carried out. Unusual ice and snow conditions raised significant logistic and safety concerns, so it must await another winter. Fish Sticks, as all probably know by now, is a habitat improving project involving sinking trees off the shoreline, with placement being done on the ice. Since 2015, LLPA, in conjunction with Camp Tomahawk and, more recently, the Long Lake Chamber, has placed eight such projects, with multiple separate tree bundles in each project, and will continue the next time the ice is right. Meanwhile, happy fishing!



Walleye Stocking in Long Lake

LLPA Sustainability Committee Happenings

Article by Sandy Campbell and DJ Ehrike
SCBC Co-chairs

Happy Spring from the Sustainability and Capacity Building Committee (SCBC) of LLPA. We are very excited to be one of six lake associations that were awarded DNR planning grants for 2023. As we move forward with the Long Lake Comprehensive Management Plan, our group has shifted focus to develop ways to fund restorative projects both near and long-term. Our unofficial committee motto is adapted from Native American lore – “We did not inherit Long Lake from our ancestors, but we are borrowing it from our grandchildren”. Long Lake may be approaching a point where it is no longer resilient to threats like shoreland development and climate change. While it was classified as an Outstanding Resource Water (1990s) and a High-Quality Water (2022), in 1996 it was noted that the lake is susceptible to phosphorus loading and should receive a high priority for protection management, and, as of 2014, it was included on the Impaired Waters List for high nutrients and eutrophication. The State of Wisconsin continues to list Long Lake as an impaired water body in its 2020 Water Quality Report to Congress.

Since LLPA is a voluntary organization and not a taxing body, the success of our fundraising efforts to do future projects will depend on you, the members, and those most vested in the continued quality of Long Lake as a cherished resource. We are currently working on ideas to help fund protective measures that will be contained in the lake management plan.

Our fundraising activities will begin again soon as people begin to return to the lake for the summer. We had several neighborhood coffees last year to discuss the state of Long Lake and a plan of action moving forward. People found these meetings to be highly informative with what is going on with the lake. We are looking for some more volunteers to host additional meetings this year. In addition to that, we plan to be at the annual meeting to reach as many people as possible and might be reaching out to some of you individually.

As a plug for the Lake Management Plan, see the article in this newsletter by our Science Director, Megan Mader, for ways you can help volunteer this summer to collect data for the plan.

Please consider hosting a neighborhood coffee at your home or cabin and invite a few friends and neighbors over for some Long Lake history, lake science information and to find out how you can be involved and contribute to LLPA at this exciting point in time, we will bring the information if you make the coffee.

Please email Sandy Campbell sandycampbell11@gmail.com or DJ Ehrike at musicaldje@yahoo.com to host a coffee, volunteer, or inquire with any general questions.

COMPREHENSIVE MANAGEMENT PLAN UPDATE

Article by Megan Mader

The Long Lake Preservation Association was one of six lake groups to be awarded a \$25,000 DNR Surface Water Comprehensive Planning Grant. This funding will be used for the development of the Long Lake Comprehensive Management Plan. A Management Plan is required to be eligible for any potential DNR funding for projects around the lake. The plan will incorporate new and previously collected data about Long Lake's watershed, fishery, water quality, plant community, and more. This information will help determine management recommendations and decisions to meet short-term and long-term goals for Long Lake. To set these goals, we will also need your input! The LLPA, with assistance from the Northwest Regional Planning Commission, will be sending out a social survey in June to help prioritize the goals of the plan. Additionally, once the plan is developed, there will be a public comment period for anyone interested to provide feedback on the plan. Keep an eye out for more information and opportunities to voice your concerns and vision for Long Lake.

In order to create a long-term plan that addresses the watershed, shoreline, and water quality of Long Lake with as much detail and foresight as possible, some background information is required. In addition to the social survey, we will be conducting a shoreline habitat assessment, a coarse woody habitat assessment, and several educational events to supplement the 2022 aquatic plant survey and 2022 fishery report (these reports will be posted at longlakellpa.org under the Resources tab when they become available).

The shoreline habitat assessment will involve looking at parcels around the lake and determining the level of development on each parcel. This information will give us a snapshot of Long Lake's shoreline and a baseline of what the lake looked like in 2023. It will also tell us where we might be able to prioritize restoration efforts and shoreline stewardship projects. The LLPA will be providing more information throughout the summer on shoreline stewardship projects like Fish Sticks, rain gardens, rock infiltration systems, run off diversions, and native plantings. These projects can be funded through the Healthy Lakes & Rivers grant program. For more information on shoreline stewardship best management practices, please visit <https://healthylakeswi.com/> and attend the upcoming educational events provided by the LLPA!

The coarse woody habitat assessment will examine how much woody habitat is available for wildlife around the shoreline of the lake. As many fishermen, bird watchers, and general nature enthusiasts know, trees and logs in the water are critical habitat for wildlife – spring



crappie love hanging out around woody structure, birds use them for perching and hunting, turtles use them for sunbathing, and so much more. A totally undeveloped lake has an average of one log for every five feet of shoreline. That is approximately 1,000 logs per mile of shoreline! By understanding the habitat available for fish and wildlife, we can prioritize restoration efforts and the installation of additional woody habitat (Fish Sticks) to best benefit the lake.

These projects will require a considerable amount of volunteer hours. More involvement and interest from as many people as possible will make the Long Lake Comprehensive Plan that much better. If you are interested in contributing some of your time and getting to know every nook and cranny of the lake, please reach out to info@longlakellpa.org and keep an eye out for upcoming events through constant contact and the LLPA website at longlakellpa.org. The LLPA appreciates your help and your shared passion for preserving and protecting Long Lake, its watershed, and its ecosystems!

BECOME A CITIZEN SCIENTIST!

Article by Sage Dunham
Group Coordinator at Hunt Hill Audubon Sanctuary

There are a multitude of ways for the average citizen to contribute to scientific research including using nature apps, checking trail camera photos, and participating in animal surveys. You do not have to be a biologist to get started. Anyone can participate, and it is a great way to get kids interested in nature!

One easy way to get started is to use a nature app to record your observations. Nature apps can be downloaded for free. There are a myriad of apps to choose from, but I would recommend two pairs of apps in particular: iNaturalist/Seek and eBird/Merlin. The iNaturalist app is a way to record any species that you observe in nature including plants, animals, and fungi. Beginning naturalists can use the Seek app to help identify species before posting them. It has a helpful photo identification that allows you to identify what you see through your phone's camera!

The eBird app is similar to iNaturalist, except that it is specifically made to record a list of birds seen and heard. The Merlin app allows you to identify birds using either their physical features or their songs. It asks simple questions like "what color was the bird?" and "where was the bird seen?" to help you narrow down to a small list of birds likely to be in the area.

Of course, there are also ways to be a citizen scientist without the use of your phone. Hunt Hill Audubon Sanctuary participates in several citizen science projects and invites the public to join in! Hunt Hill leads a frog call phenology survey in April, monitors bluebird nests in May and June, counts bats when they emerge from their roosts in June and July, and participates in the Christmas Bird Count in December. For more information about these citizen science opportunities and to get involved, call Hunt Hill at 715-635-6543.



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— Photo by Joe Thrasher

