

Vilas County Lakes and Rivers Association (VCLRA) News

P.O. Box 494 Eagle River, WI 54521-0494

Spring 2015

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Presidential Pebbles and Pearls

As I write these notes the lakes in my neck of the woods have been ice free for two weeks. A fairly normal spring for a change. Time to get the boat on the water!

The recently concluded Wisconsin Lakes Partnership Convention was outstanding, as usual. I wanted to briefly tell you about the Healthy Lakes Implementation session I attended. It includes a list of five "best practices" for healthy lakes along with specific fact sheets for each of these best practices. Much more information can be found at the website: <http://tinyurl.com/healthylakes>. Please take the time to check it out.

Elsewhere in this newsletter, please study the Shoreland Stewardship article in some depth. After a very successful test run this past fall, this initiative is being officially rolled out as we speak. Sandy Gillum, Rollie Alger, and several members of the VCLRA Board of Directors will be available to give brief presentations to interested lake associations this year. Complete information on this program can also be found at the VCLRA website: www.vclra.us.

Planning is fairly complete for Celebrate Lakes & Rivers Day, to be held this year at the Conserve School near Land O' Lakes on Friday June 12th. See the complete agenda elsewhere in this newsletter. The event is free. Please plan to attend.

Please take the time to join VCLRA in welcoming the new Vilas County AIS Coordinator Cathy Higley. Cathy can be reached at 715-479-3738 and ca-higl@vilas.wi.us.

Contained in this newsletter:

The 2015 Blue Heron Award winners

Information on the Shoreland Stewardship Initiative

Wetlands in Vilas County

Celebrate the Lakes Day Agenda

A form to renew your VCLRA membership for 2015.

Finally, the VCLRA Annual Meeting will be held at the Conserve School following the Celebrate the Lakes Day agenda on June 12th (about noon). All are invited.

Steve Budnik, President
VCLRA

Vilas County Lakes & Rivers Association
Friday, June 12, 2015
Conserve School-Land O'Lakes

Celebrating Lakes & Rivers Day

8:15-9:00	Registration & Networking	Gathering Rm.
9:00-9:40	Assessing Lakes on a Large Scale Using Citizen Monitoring Data (Noah Lottig)	Community Rm.
9:40-10:00	Shoreland Stewardship Presentation	Community Rm.
10:00-10:30	Break	Gathering Rm.
10:30-10:45	WI Lakes Partnership Overview (Patrick Goggin)	Community Rm.
10:45-11:30	Coarse Woody Habitat & Fish - Relationship & Current Knowledge (Greg Sass)	Community Rm.
11:30-12:00	Blue Heron Stewardship Awards	Community Rm.
12:15-1:00	VCLRA Annual Meeting-all are welcome	

Note: Lake-related agencies & organizations are set up in the Gathering Room. Please take time to visit them. These include:

Citizen Lake Monitoring Network, Wisconsin Action Volunteers, Vilas County Land & Water Conservation Dept., North Lakeland Discovery Center, Trees for Tomorrow, Loon Watch, UWEX, VCLRA, and Lac du Flambeau Lakes Committee,

Directions to Conserve School: Take CTH "B" west out of Land O' Lakes to North Black Oak Lake Road (4.4 miles), Turn right on north Black Oak Rd. and follow that to the gatehouse (1.3 miles), Follow signs to the parking area.

Coming soon to a bridge near you!

Join others in Vilas County for the Statewide Riverine Aquatic Invasive Species Snapshot Day on August 29th, 2015! We are looking for volunteers to look into the water in areas where people are likely to introduce species into our rivers such as at bridges and road crossings. If you have a favorite river or area that you would like us to consider adding to our list for 2015, we'd like to hear about it! If you are interested in signing up or learning more, please contact: Carol Warden at warden@wisc.edu.

Wetlands in Vilas County

Originally there were 10 million acres of wetlands in Wisconsin. Today there are only half of those wetland acres left. Some counties in southern Wisconsin now have less than 20% of their original wetlands remaining.

Vilas County still retains most of its wetlands. There are 121,258 acres of wetlands in Vilas County (18.5% of the land cover). That is more than the acres of lakes, rivers, and streams in the county: 102,276 acres (or 15.6% of the county). Together, water dominated habitats make up 34% of Vilas County.

Much of the economic and environmental health of Vilas County is dependent on the quality of the lakes and streams. In turn their quality depends on the healthy and effective functioning of the wetlands. The environmental benefits of wetlands include:

- Water purification - They trap nutrients, sediments, and pollutants before they enter our waters. (Wetlands can filter as much as 91% of the phosphorus and 86% of the nitrogen that enter the water stream).

- Flood protection – They act like sponges to store and slowly release rain and snow melt.

- Shoreline stabilization - They help buffer water level fluctuations that cause erosion. (Shoreline erosion is a major concern of riparians in Vilas County).

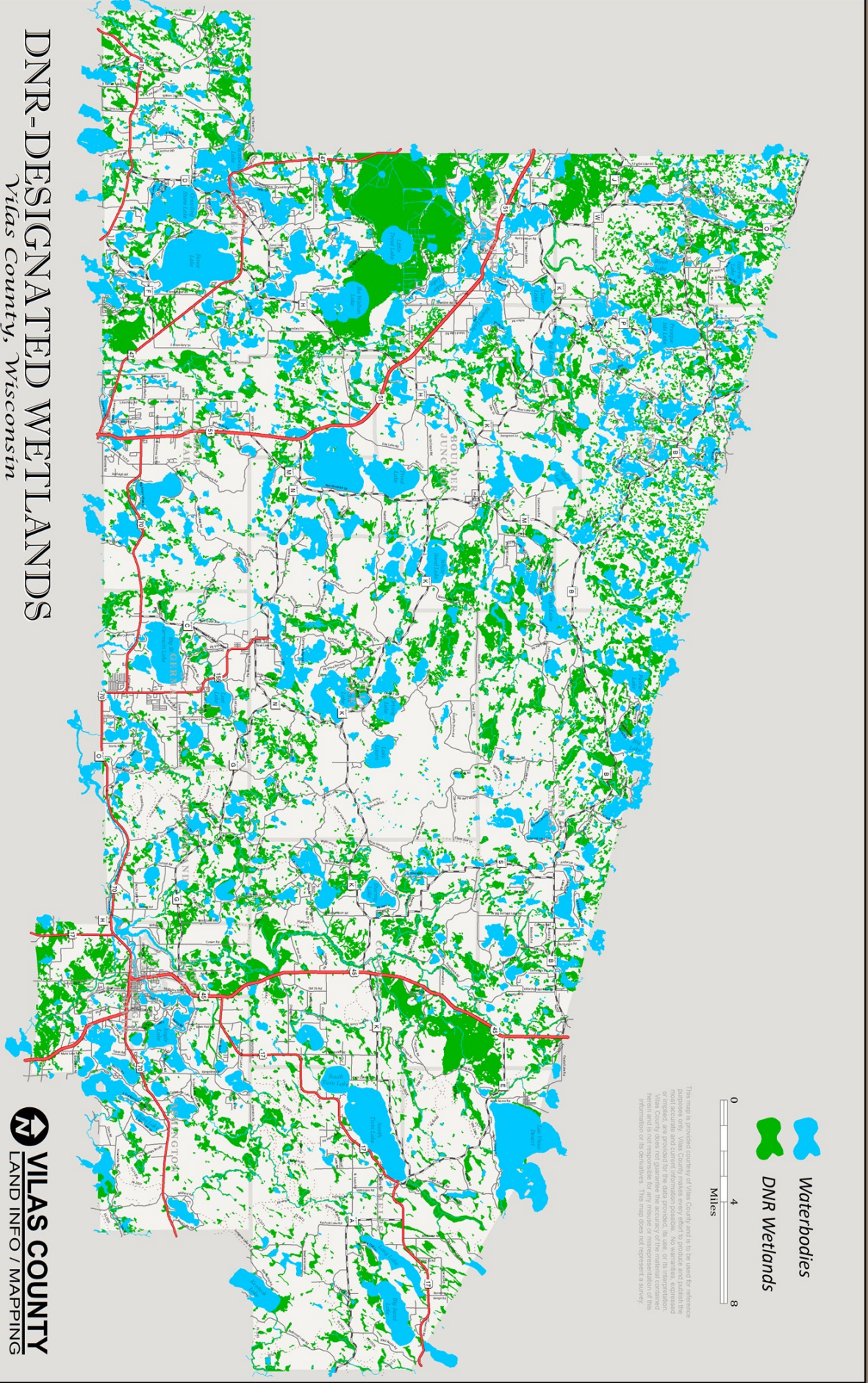
- Groundwater recharge and streamflow maintenance – providing both drinking water and the main source of water for some of our lakes and streams.

- Wetlands also provide critical habitat for fish and wildlife, including endangered species. (75% of wildlife species are dependent on wetlands habitats at some point in their lifecycle – including many game species. Most species of freshwater fish are dependent on wetlands for food, breeding habitat or cover).

- Wetlands generate fishing, hunting, and other recreational opportunities such as hiking, bird-watching and photography.

- Wetlands contribute both directly and indirectly to the economic base of Vilas County, most especially through the health of the lakes. When wetlands are damaged or destroyed, these ecological functions are lost. To restore or replace these functions is incredibly expensive and not always effective. Per unit area, wetlands contribute more ecological services than their area predicts

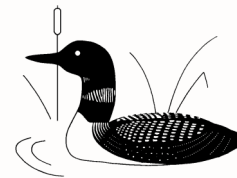
Vilas County Wetlands and Waterbodies



VILAS COUNTY LAKES and RIVERS ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 494

Eagle River, WI 54521-0494



May 2015

Happy Spring !!

Just a reminder from the Vilas County Lakes & Rivers Association (VCLRA) that with the arrival of the “soft water” season, it is now time to renew your membership for 2015. This year promises to be another productive and exciting year.

VCLRA continues to be pleased with the progress we are making to protect our lakes. We will continue to work closely with our partner on the state level, Wisconsin Lakes (WL), to support efforts to protect our lakes and maintain our shorelines. Within the county, we have worked with many lake associations to bring greater awareness of the importance of the lake shoreline to overall lake quality. Our new **Shoreland Stewardship Program**, explained elsewhere in this issue, had a small enrollment last fall to initiate the program. The official program rollout is taking place now as we speak. **Blue Heron Awards** will again be presented in June.

Planning for our 2015 Celebrate the Lakes & Rivers Day and annual meeting held at the Conserve School near Land O’ Lakes are mostly complete. It will take place on **Friday June 12, 2015**. Look for the complete agenda elsewhere in this newsletter. **Mark your calendars now** and plan to attend.

Elsewhere in this issue is a 2015 membership renewal form. Please complete it and submit with your remittance to the address above. Your continued support and membership helps protect the 1,300 plus lakes of Vilas County.

Also, please continue to check out our website at www.vclra.us for a wide range of current and ever changing information.

Plan to stop by the VCLRA booth at Forest Fest in Eagle River on August 1st, and Cran-A-Rama in Manitowish Waters on October 3rd.

Responsibly enjoy the beauty of our lakes and waterways. They truly do have something unique and exciting to offer, in each and every season of the year.

Best regards,

Steve Budnik

VCLRA President

Preserving, protecting and enhancing our Vilas County lakes
and waterways for present and future generations



Vilas County Lakes and Rivers Association MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION OR RENEWAL

Preserving, protecting and enhancing our Vilas County lakes and waterways for present and future generations

Type of Membership:

__ Individual/Family \$25__ Lake Organization \$50 __

Section A: Individual/Family or Associate/Supporting Membership

Name(s) _____ Ph _____

Permanent Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Wish to receive newsletter via email? Yes No Email Address: _____

Name of Lake of Residence: _____

Name of Lake Organization (if established): _____

Approximate number of individuals represented by lake organization (if established): _____

Other affiliation (i.e. town chairman, county commissioner, etc.) _____

Wish to receive occasional email alerts on lake issues as **Key Contact Person**? Yes No

Section B: Lake Organization (Lake Associations and Districts) Membership

Please submit the names and contact information of organization officers/ board of directors/commissioners, each will receive the VCLRA newsletter. If person and contact information is the same as prior year write "NC" after name. Please indicate a **Key Contact Person**, ideally with email, this is used occasionally when legislative updates or call-to-actions occur.

Lake organization name _____

Website _____

Approximate number of individuals represented by lake organization _____

Please attach additional
board members, directors, or
commissioners, if needed.

President/Chairman

Name(s) _____

Permanent Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Email Address _____

Wish to receive newsletter via email? Yes No

Name of Lake of Residence: _____

Receive occasional email alerts on lake issues? Yes No

Key Contact Person? Yes No

Secretary

Name(s) _____

Permanent Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Email Address _____

Wish to receive newsletter via email? Yes No

Name of Lake of Residence: _____

Receive occasional email alerts on lake issues? Yes No

Key Contact Person? Yes No

Vice-President

Name(s) _____

Permanent Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Email Address _____

Wish to receive newsletter via email? Yes No

Name of Lake of Residence: _____

Receive occasional email alerts on lake issues? Yes No

Key Contact Person? Yes No

Treasurer

Name(s) _____

Permanent Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Email Address _____

Wish to receive newsletter via email? Yes No

Name of Lake of Residence: _____

Receive occasional email alerts on lake issues? Yes No

Key Contact Person? Yes No

Please make checks payable to: **Vilas County Lakes and Rivers Association (VCLRA)**
Return completed form with annual dues before **June 1st** to: VCLRA; PO Box 494; Eagle River, WI 54521

Vilas County Lakes and Rivers Association
Shoreland Stewardship Initiative



Vilas County Lakes & Rivers Association (VCLRA) created the Vilas County Shoreland Stewardship Initiative in summer 2014. Some shoreland owners have already adopted this stewardship covenant and a number of other owners are in the process of doing so. The purpose of this initiative is to offer an educational tool to shoreland property owners who wish to have an additional way to protect their lake or stream and do so with a legal document that can be attached to their deed.

The stewardship covenant being offered does not step beyond state and county shoreland regulations, yet it provides new buyers or family members seeking ownership an opportunity to become familiar with local shoreland zoning during the title search of the property, before the transfer of ownership is complete. So often, new owners illegally modify their shoreland by cutting trees and shrubs and do so simply because they are not familiar with or seek information about shoreland management practices that protect the quality of your lake or stream. This covenant embraces what you as a shoreland owner have worked so hard to achieve on your property.

Many waterfront properties were grandfathered-in when the new shoreland zoning ordinances were adopted in 1999. However, at the current time only properties that conform to the Vilas County Shoreland Zoning Ordinances are eligible for designation as Vilas Shoreland Steward properties. These properties will have dwellings set back 75' or more from the Ordinary High Water Mark (OHWM), a 30' or less viewing corridor, and a maximum 6' wide path or 4' wide wooden walkway to the water. VCLRA wishes to send a consistent message that it supports the current Vilas shoreland zoning ordinances, because they provide the most beneficial protection for our lakes or streams.

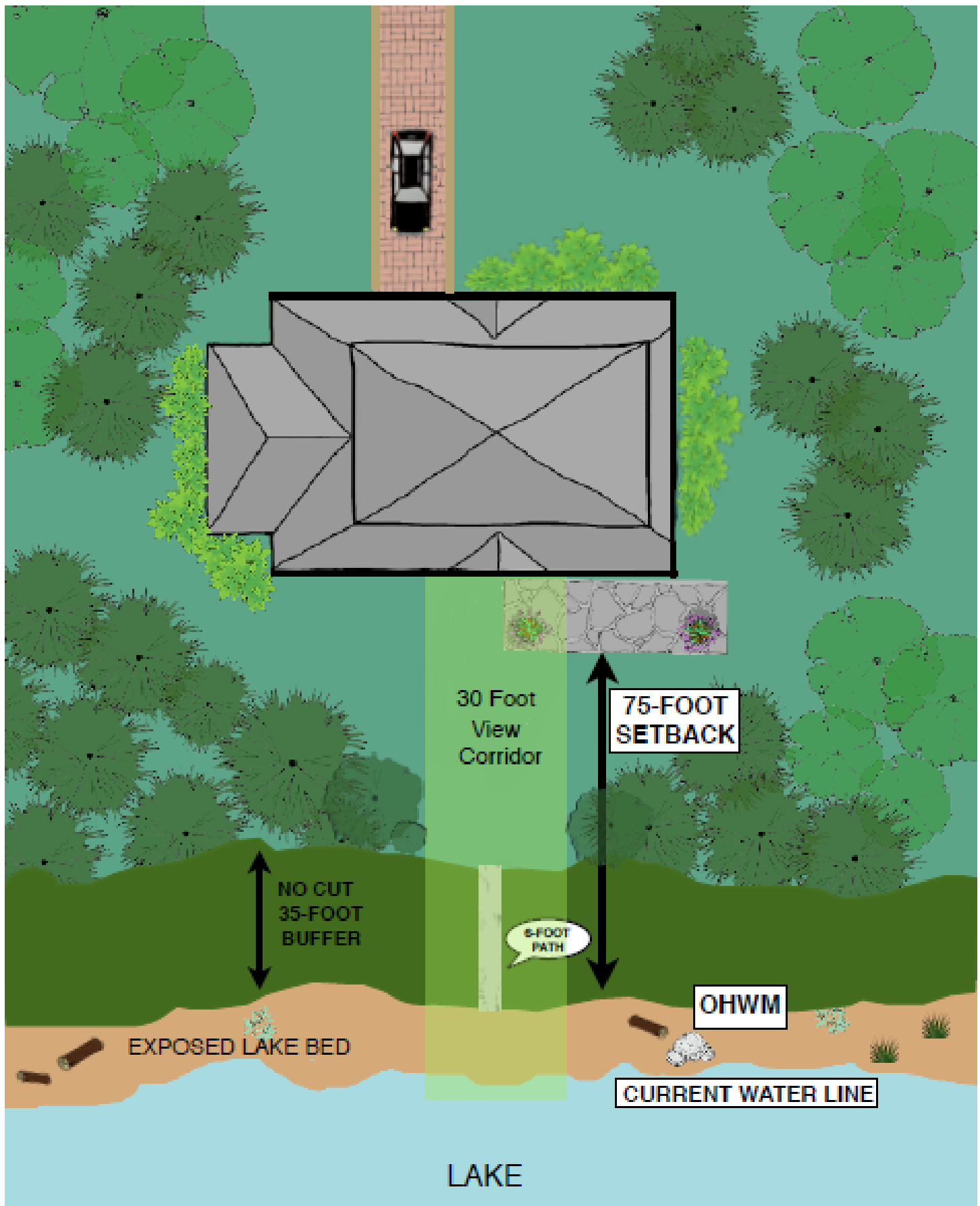
This program is totally voluntary. If a property owner believes they meet the requirements in the above paragraph, they need only to contact VCLRA and request a copy of the covenant. This document is also available on the VCLRA website at <http://www.vclra.us>, along with a graphic showing current applicable shoreland distances. An enrolled property owner may also request a VCLRA shoreland specialist visit their property to provide additional suggestions to further improve their lakefront property to help guard the quality of their lake or stream.

There is some paperwork involved. Vilas Title Company and their associate, Debby Soberg have graciously volunteered to help any interested property owner with the process. This may be especially helpful if your ownership is in a trust or partnership. An appointment can be made with Debby at 715-479-4070.

Once the covenant is notarized and taken to the Vilas County Register of Deeds for recording, the receipt for payment of \$30 for the recording should be sent to VCLRA. The receipt verifies the recording of the covenant and the \$30 will be reimbursed to the property owner by VCLRA through the support of a Wisconsin Small Lake Planning Grant.

VCLRA wishes to recognize all Vilas County shoreland owners who manage their shoreland area in compliance with the Vilas County Shoreland Zoning Ordinances and Wisconsin NR 115. Recognition of participating property owners may be published in the Vilas County News Review, Lakeland Times, and in *Lake Tides*, a publication of UW-Ext. Lakes.

VCLRA feels that shoreland designated as a Vilas Shoreland Steward property indicates that the management of this property offers the best protection for the quality of the lake or stream where it is located. If you are interested in adding this educational tool to protect your lake or stream, you are encouraged to contact Sandy Gillum (715-617-0031) or Rollie Alger (715-545-2711) with your questions and/or for copies of the pertinent documents. We encourage you to share this opportunity with others on your lake or stream and to publish this article in your newsletter or on your web site.



BLUE HERON Shoreland Stewardship Awards

The Vilas County Lakes and Rivers Association (VCLRA) will be awarding three community members our BLUE HERON Shoreland Stewardship Award at our “Celebrate the Lakes Day” on June 12, 2015 at Conserve School in Land O’ Lakes. On that day we will hear many presentations about the value of citizen engagement. Also on that day we will present the BLUE HERON Award to three Vilas County lake property owners who modeled the attributes for which this award was established. Congratulations to:

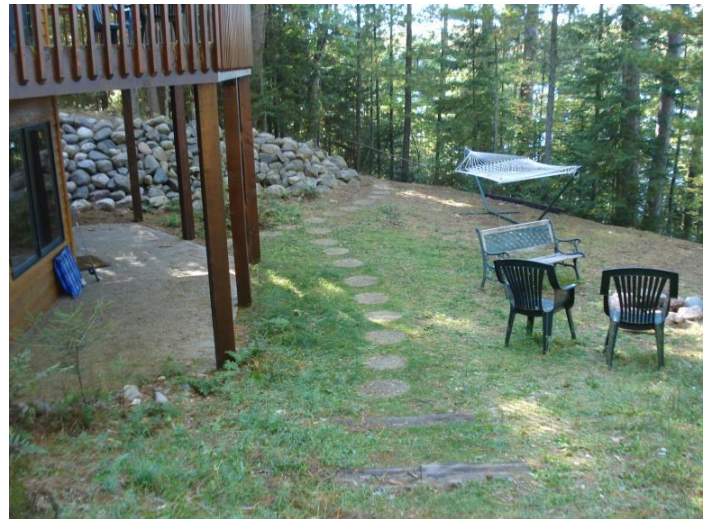
June Schmaal of Johnson Lake in Arbor Vitae



Chuck Thier of Found Lake in St. Germain



Burt Miller of Bass Lake in Eagle River



This award was established for a threefold purpose; first to provide lake associations with the opportunity to nominate and recognize property owners on their lakes who have worked hard to maintain their shoreline property in a more natural state with minimal environmental impacts. Secondly, to inform lake property owners about the many ways that negative impacts of shoreline property development can be minimized. And third, to educate lake property owners about how important shoreline biodiversity is to the overall health of their lake.

The award criteria are divided into five sections: driveway and parking areas, structures and septic areas, yard and recreation areas, shoreline area and an overview of the entire lot area.

Local Vilas County lake associations and districts are encouraged to nominate property owners on their lake who have worked hard to maintain or restore their shoreland.

To obtain more information about the BLUE HERON Shoreline Stewardship Award program and to print a nomination form, see the VCLRA website at www.vclra.us and click on the “Blue Heron Shoreline Stewardship Award Program” tab or contact us at VCLRA, P. O. Box 494, Eagle River, WI 54521. Nominations for 2015 are due August 1, 2015.

Mark your Calendar

June 12, 2015 Vilas County Celebrate the Lakes Day, at the Conserve School near Land O' Lakes, WI. Contact Jeff Curie at 715-617-0080 and curriefam@gmail.com, or Steve Budnik at 715-686-7852 and skbudnik@centurytel.net.

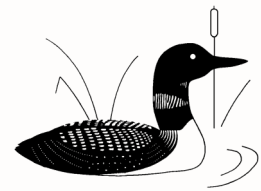
July 20, 2015 VCLRA Board Meeting at the St Germain Community Bldg. at 9am.

August 1, 2015 Forest Fest, Eagle River, WI.

October 3, 2015 Cran-A-Rama, Manitowish Waters, WI.

Join VCLRA Today! Forget to Renew?

See membership form inside this issue or go to our website at www.vclra.us and print the membership form.



Your support helps protect the lakes!

Lake County Journal

Volume 22 Issue 1 Spring 2015

Vilas County Lakes and Rivers Association, Inc.

PO Box 494, Eagle River, WI 54521

Website: www.vclra.us

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