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# Vilas County Lakes and Rivers Association (VCLRA) News

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

WINTER 2016

## Presidential Pebbles and Pearls

**Happy New Year to all.** It is my hope that all reading these words have had a wonderful & safe holiday season.

After the passage of Act 55 the previous year, 2016 proved to be one of counties and lake organizations trying to figure out the ramifications of losing control of shoreland zoning at the county level.

Indeed, as this is being written, counties are now in the process of rewriting their ordinances to conform with statewide minimums which now, appear to be maximums.

Elections have been held. The Legislature will be back in session shortly. With party majorities being what they are, we can expect more bad legislation and attacks on the Public Trust Doctrine to continue. As always, expect VCLRA to act as a conduit between what's happening in Madison and our members and member organizations. The Wisconsin Shoreland Initiative ([www.wisconsinshoreland.org](http://www.wisconsinshoreland.org)) has been active during the second half of 2016 preparing a bill which will attempt to return shoreland zoning to county control & restore our lake classification system. Early support for this bill has been encouraging.

In a matter of days as I write this, a joint meeting of VCLRA and our counter-parts in Oneida County will take place, for the express purpose of exploring projects we might undertake together. There is strength in numbers. I'm excited at the prospect of what we might achieve together.

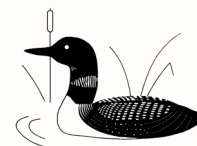
The annual Lakes Partnership Convention will again take place in Stevens Pt, Wisconsin April 5<sup>th</sup> thru the 7<sup>th</sup>. Registration at [www.uwsp.edu/uwexlakes](http://www.uwsp.edu/uwexlakes) is usually available around February 1<sup>st</sup>. We will once again co-host a multi-county lakes workshop in June at Nicolet College in Rhinelander. Watch for details in spring. Please take the time to renew your memberships.

### Contained in this issue:

Membership renewal form and information	2016 Clean Boats-Clean Waters Summary
Wisconsin Shoreland Initiative Update	Healthy Lakes Winter 2016
Other Lakes Related Information	

*Steve Budnik*

President VCLRA



## 2016 Clean Boats-Clean Waters Summary

With the 2016 Clean Boats Clean Waters season having come to a close, a summary of the Vilas County CBCW data was prepared from SWIMS as of 11/14/16.

Nearly 13,000 hours of CBCW activity was reported.

				Confident Boater Understands AIS Prevention							
Year	Total Hours	Total Boats observed	Total People Contacted	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
2016	12,999.25	17,154	31,839	12,148	69%	5,289	30%	147	1%	33	0%
2015	12,306.20	18,878	35,656	14,779	72%	5,607	27%	207	1%	34	0%



Continued on Pg. 3

# Wisconsin Shoreland Initiative Update

## Summary by Steve Budnik



On October 13, 2016 John Richter of the Wisconsin Shoreland Initiative was asked to speak to a meeting of the WI Counties Association. This brief update is a summary of his remarks that day. John started off his talk by stating that his organization is committed to returning shoreland zoning control to county government and to recover our lake classification system in our effort to protect our lakes from degradation and to insure our tax base and preserve our local economies.

John went on to relate that the threat to water quality from decreased shoreland zoning regulations is well known and well documented. The recent changes in shoreland zoning will diminish the value of property as lakes are over developed with consequential loss of qualities that traditionally support strong land values, such as water quality, fishing quality, and scenic beauty. Longer term, when the lake water quality is impaired by increased density and hard surface runoff, values have been shown in a number of studies to significantly decline.

Continuing to talk about lake economics, he further stated that in the counties represented by members of the Wisconsin Shoreland Initiative, riparian property often represents 70 to 80% of the tax base, which has historically been controlled and managed by counties. With state government now in control of local zoning, continued legislative tinkering is almost assured. With no voice in these decisions, county government and riparian's will continue to be victimized by this process. Potential continued tinkering for 2017, has already been announced.

It is very clear that the state is not prepared to deal with the day-to-day issues surrounding shoreland zoning. It's not only the riparian owners who are unhappy with this situation, but also the professionals in the counties who have worked for years to preserve the quality of our lakes. Having lost control, they and their counties are now exposed to further uninformed and damaging legislation that will continue to reduce the value of our land and waters, transferring that value to those who choose to exploit our lakes and property for their own goals.

It is our hope that WSI, our lake organizations, and their members can work with the WI Counties Association. The property rights of all riparians have been violated by the changes in shoreland zoning created by Act 55, without consultation, notice, or public hearing. It is WSI's intention to offer remedial legislation in the next session **that will return local control of riparian property to the counties**, where it has historically resided, and to recover the lake classification system as the foundation of shoreland zoning to protect the lakes of the state.

It is our hope that we will draft this legislation in a collaborative and thoughtful way that will enhance the quality of our lakes and shorelands for many years to come. Time is of the essence now, to prevent further damage, all of which will be irreversible.

## Blue Heron Stewardship Award Nominations Now Open

### BLUE HERON



**Shoreland Stewardship  
Award Program**

Do you know someone who makes a conscious effort to preserve an outstanding natural shoreline?

We want to recognize them for their effort! The Blue Heron Award was created for exactly this reason.

It also creates awareness, educate lake property owners on the importance of shoreland stewardship, and showcases good examples of lake-friendly waterfront development.

To nominate someone, please visit our website:

<http://www.vclra.us/home/blue-heron-shoreline-stewardship-award-program>

Or call **Carol Warden** at **715-356-9494**.

## **VCLRA Membership Benefits**

VCLRA is an informational education network that helps lake associations and individual citizens make wise decisions in their effort to preserve and protect the unique waterways of Vilas County, now and well into the future. From its inception, VCLRA has established and maintained strong cooperative relationships with the Wisconsin DNR, UW Extension, and Vilas County government. With the help of these partnerships, VCLRA is able to provide benefits to lake association members and individuals who do not have lake associations.

VCLRA provides the following to its member associations and individuals:

- Providing information and assistance on lake related problems and issues,
- Sponsoring and participating in educational programs,
- Providing yearly Blue Heron Awards for recognition of individual property owners' shoreline stewardship,
- Publishing newsletters for our membership,
- Developing Shoreline Covenant Program for property owners,
- Organize a yearly Lakes Day symposium for our members and partners to strengthen their partnerships and gain new knowledge,
- Helping in the formation of new lake associations,
- Assisting with direction to or interaction with partner agencies,
- Assisting with grant applications when an association may not qualify,
- And monitoring state and county government activities.

VCLRA is a constructive citizen group that has earned the respect of the local and state community. We encourage you to contact us with questions, concerns, or ideas. We will answer them to the best of our ability, or direct you to someone who can.

The purpose of the Vilas County Lakes and Rivers Association is to educate, communicate, and promote cooperation among organizations, individuals, governmental bodies and the general public of Vilas county; and to preserve, protect, and enhance our lakes and waterways for present and future generations

*Anne Kretschmann*

Treasurer





# 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 ☐ Associate/Supporting \$75

## Section A: Individual/Family or Associate/Supporting Membership

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Permanent Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Ph \_\_\_\_\_  
 Wish to receive newsletter via email? Yes No  
 Wish to receive occasional email alerts on lake issues? Yes No  
 Name of Lake of Residence: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name of Lake Organization (if established): \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other affiliation (i.e. town chairman, county commissioner, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

## 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

# Purple Loosestrife in Eastern Vilas County

Status report 9/22/2016

Cathy Higley

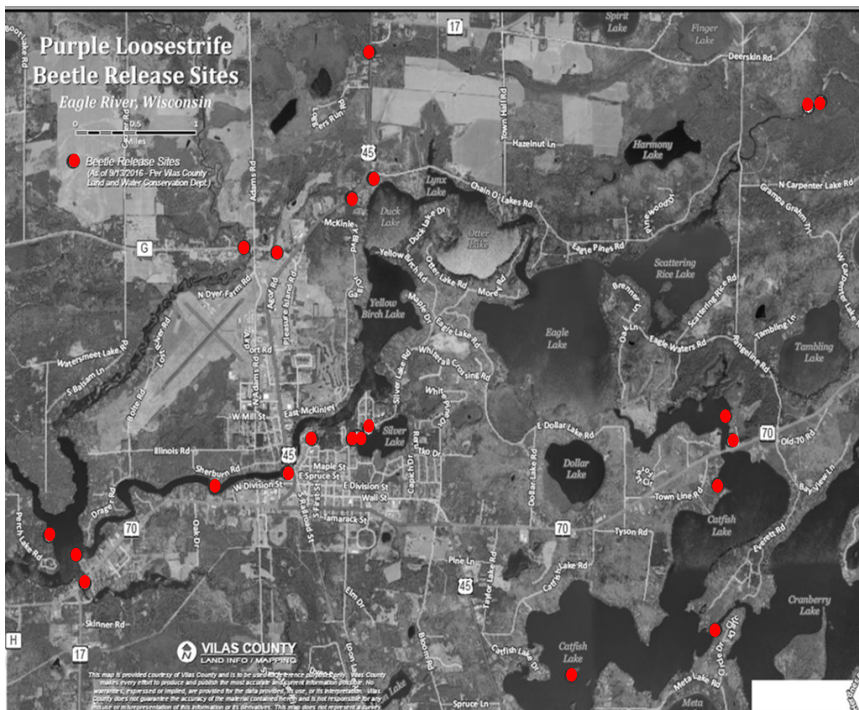
Invasive Species Coordinator

Vilas County Land + Water Conservation Dept.

Purple loosestrife is an invasive wetland plant particularly challenging to control – it has a beefy root system; can produce up to 2 million seeds/mature plant; and its preference for wet areas makes herbicide applications complicated and often not permitted. Biological control of purple loosestrife with *Galerucella* beetles (aka purple loosestrife beetles) has been shown to be one of the safest most effective ways to manage it. Read on for a brief status report on the purple loosestrife in eastern Vilas County.

## Are the beetles working?

After revisiting 13 prior release sites, some were much improved and some appeared they could use a bit more help with their purple loosestrife infestations.



Although I do not have enough data to infer any significance, it appears overall change in percent cover or number of plants was slightly decreased.

One service the beetles provide is they stress the purple loosestrife plants enough to make them not flower and/or grow smaller. These factors are important because less flowers = less seeds & less new plants; smaller plants = ability of native plants to compete for sunlight and perhaps shade out the purple loosestrife. This is happening on some of the sites.

Riverview Park seems to be a success story – much less flowering and shorter plants are obvious from before & after photos. While this is hopeful, it would be nice to see declines on all sites.

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### Next Year

**WANTED:** Volunteers from the Eagle River area to keep these efforts going along the Eagle River Chain and the greater Eagle River area – several sites could use more beetles!

If an individual or group (school, community group, business, etc.) in the Eagle River area is interested please contact me (**Cathy Higley**) at 715-479-3738 or at [cahigl@co.vilas.wi.us](mailto:cahigl@co.vilas.wi.us).

## Healthy Lakes Winter 2016

### By Mariquita Sheehan

The Wisconsin DNR has a new program to address shoreland restoration. It is offering cost-share grants for Healthy Lakes practices through lake organizations and local governments. The Grants will cover most of the installation expense and some technical assistance to put in a number of doable practices homeowners can install on their lakefront property.

This program grew from input of lakefront owners looking for simpler land and water conservation best practices. They wanted a program that gives them the confidence and technical know-how for do-it-yourself approaches to waterfront property management. Partners also wanted a streamlined and less bureaucratic WDNR lake grant application process.

The 5 practices are: (see pictures at the end of article)

1. **Fish sticks** – to create fish and wildlife habitat. Fish sticks are feeding, breeding, and nesting areas for assorted critters – from fish to song birds. They can also help prevent bank erosion, protecting lakeshore properties and your lake.
2. **A 350 square foot native planting** – to improve wildlife habitat, natural beauty and privacy, and decrease water runoff. Native plantings include grasses, sedges, rushes, and wildflowers along with a woody component of shrubs and trees. Lakeshore property owners choose a prescribed option with a list of suitable plants based on the owner's property and project goals – from bird/butterfly habitat to low-growing shoreline gardens that showcase the lake view.
3. **Diversion practices** – to prevent runoff from getting to the waterbody. Diversion practices move water to vegetated areas or an infiltration practice where it can soak into the ground instead of transporting dirt and pollutants into the lake. Depending on the situation, multiple diversions may be necessary.
4. **Rock infiltration practices** – to capture and clean water runoff. Rock infiltration practices fit in nicely along roof drip lines and driveways by providing space for water to run into and it then filter into the ground over time. Infiltration pits and trenches work best if the soil type is sandy or loamy.
5. **Rain gardens** – to create wildlife habitat and natural beauty while capturing and cleaning water runoff. Rain gardens multi-task – they improve wildlife habitat with native plant diversity and provide a zone for infiltration of water runoff. They also add natural beauty to a property owner's lakeshore view.



The Healthy Lakes goal is to protect and improve the health of our Wisconsin lakes by increasing lakeshore property owner participation in habitat restoration and runoff and erosion control projects. Lakeshore property owners can install the practices on their own. (See <http://healthylakeswi.com/>) Or they can reach out to their local lake group or the Vilas County Land & Water Conservation Department for financial assistance through the grant, along with technical support for their project.

**Diversions****Rain Gardens****Fish Sticks****Rock Infiltrations****350ft<sup>2</sup> Native Plantings**

## Mark your Calendar

**April 5-7, 2017.** The 2017 Wisconsin Lakes Conference in Stevens Point, WI. Registration @ [www.uwsp.edu/uwexplakes](http://www.uwsp.edu/uwexplakes) usually starts around Feb.1st.

**April 10, 2017.** VCLRA Board Meeting @ St. Germain Community Building @ 9am.

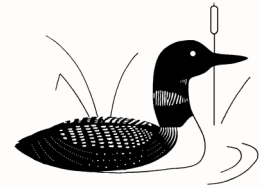
**June 9th 2017.** North Central Counties Lake Associations Workshop @ Nicolet College in Rhinelander, WI. Contact Steve Budnik (715-686-7852/ [skbudnik@centurytel.net](mailto:skbudnik@centurytel.net)) or Bob Martini(715-282-5896/ [bobmartini@charter.net](mailto:bobmartini@charter.net)) for more info. **Note:** VCLRA Annual Meeting will follow this workshop.

**June 17, 2017.** Lakes Fest event in Lac du Flambeau from 10:00AM to 3:00PM contact Celeste Hockings 715-588-4163 for more information.

### Join VCLRA Today! Forget to Renew?

See membership form inside this issue or go to our website at [www.vclra.us](http://www.vclra.us) and print the membership form.

**Your support helps protect the lakes!**



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