

Annual Report -- July 10, 2020

- Last year we were awarded a grant for a new dissolved oxygen meter. This instrument is available to all county lake associations/districts. Due to the shortened measurement season from the virus, we have received a 1 year extension.

Bill Abba (FOFL) recently wrote: This year we switched from the Phelps meter to the Vilas County meter to ensure the quality of our data. The Phelps meter was difficult to use, the newer Vilas meter is much nicer, easier to use, and it is great they calibrate it before each use. I hope this change will give us more confident and consistent results going forward.

- We partnered with Oneida Lakes & Rivers Association to host a multi-county lake workshop last July, and again today via Zoom.

Last year, about a hundred participants from six northern Wisconsin counties attended our workshop focused on natural shorelines and water resource protection. This was a significant improvement in participation, reversing a trend of declining attendance. We hope we see our Zoom attendance reaches even higher. If successful, we will be pursuing other online events, even post-Covid.

- We presented a Blue Heron Shoreland Stewardship Award,
- We rolled out the *new shoreland owners initiative* that targets new lake property owners to get them off to a good start in developing strong lake stewardship values and practices. An email campaign to LAs was recently initiated to roll out the Greet Your Neighbor element.
- We awarded a scholarship to a local high school student, Nathan Krause of Northland Pines HS.
- We contributed a letter of support to Northwoods Land Trust for a grant proposal (Northwoods Private Shorelands Protection Project)

We had a presence at several town and county government meetings that shape policy that impact our lakes, and developed two position letters to policy makers:

- We took a position against proposed amendment to Article VII Section 7.1 of the Vilas Shoreland Zoning Ordinance to add an exception for larger boathouses up to 24' x 30'.
- We took a position against issuing a conditional use permit for the creation of a large RV park and campground along Mud Creek.
- We published and distributed two print newsletters (January and June 2020), supplied VCLRA brochures to member lake associations and other partner organizations, and exhibited at the following public events late last year prior to the coronavirus outbreak:
 - Forest Fest (Trees for Tomorrow) and
 - Cran-a-rama (Manitowish Waters).
- We acquired logo-embroidered caps (20) at a cost of just over \$10 each.
- We developed a new website from the ground up earlier last year and continued to improve it. The new site features design elements to facilitate user engagement and information sharing, including mobile-friendly design, social media integration (subscribe to be notified by email of new content, plus post favorite content with others on social media), and secure (encrypted) communications to support online financial transactions. Later we also acquired the vclra.org domain (retaining www.vclra.us, which automatically redirects to vclra.org), plus 2 mailboxes (president@vclra.org and new-owner@vclra.org).

Over the winter, online membership was added by credit card (with an option to mail a check). The ability to make donations is also available online. Most recently we added a Greet Your Neighbor website dedicated to providing

resources this new element of the New Shoreland Owners Initiative, a Board Working Papers webpage to support online board meetings, and several new (blog) articles were added.

Having a strong online presence is very beneficial during the coronavirus outbreak. Online articles and newsletters, along with online memberships, provide a touchless option that is considered a best practice.

Top Posts/Pages

1. [VCLRA – Protecting our lake and river heritage](#) (homepage)
2. [Vilas County lake organizations – VCLRA](#)
3. [Six-county lakes annual meeting goes virtual on July 10th – VCLRA](#)
4. [Six-county lakes & rivers meeting agenda – VCLRA](#)
5. [New Shoreland Owners Initiative – VCLRA](#)
6. [Note from the President – VCLRA](#)
7. [Greet your neighbor program – VCLRA](#)
8. [Contact – VCLRA](#)
9. [Meet our board – VCLRA](#)
10. [Aquatic invasive species of Vilas County – VCLRA](#)

Device breakdown:

Desktop 64%
Tablet 2%
Mobile 34%

Stats:

Total views to date: **10,323**
Best one-day total views: **137** on 2019-12-22