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PO BOX 494 • EAGLE RIVER, WI • 54521-0494
VCLRA.ORG SPRING 2022

THE President's message

Perhaps no other newsletter article has generated as much a response as the *Wake Boats* article in our last newsletter. Wake boats have been showing up on our lakes in increasing numbers, and this, combined with the increased level of lake activity in the last few summers, has raised concerns about noise, safety and negative impacts on lakes. As noted in the wake boat article, many states are grappling with the same issues.

When we met with our counterparts on the Oneida Lakes and Rivers Association (OCLRA) to plan the upcoming Northwoods Six-County Lakes Conference that we host jointly with OCLRA each July, I mentioned that lake capacity and wake boat concerns seemed to be the hot topic in Vilas in recent years. No surprise — this was also the case in Oneida. As a result, our proposal to make this the theme of this year's northwoods lake conference was an easy choice.

Speakers from Minnesota (Chuck Becker, SafeWakes.org) and Vilas County, Wisconsin (Jeff Meessmann, Last Wilderness Alliance) will be discussing wake boat impacts and remedies, plus Wisconsin Lakes' Mike Engleson will provide a Wisconsin policy update on lake capacity issues. We will also have presentations on AIS, which remains a key concern on our lakes. The *Northwoods Six-County Lakes & Rivers Conference/VCLRA Annual meeting* will take place on Friday, July 15 from 8:30 am to 12:30 pm at the Lakeside Center, Nicolet College, in Rhinelander. It will be an in-person event for the first time since the Covid outbreak, and we hope to have a good response this year. Please plan to join us to learn and share experiences with other participants from the six counties that make up the Wisconsin Northwoods: Oneida, Vilas, Forest, Langlade, Lincoln, and Iron counties!

As in the past, in addition to the formal speaker sessions, we will have breaks throughout the morning to allow attendees to meet for informal discussions and visit exhibits (including our VCLRA booth), then at noon we will have our VCLRA annual meeting. You are welcome to attend, meet our board and discuss your lake concerns and ideas. I hope to see you at this important lakes event!

This newsletter also highlights a number of useful tools, initiatives and resources that support clean lakes and rivers. I hope you find these useful.

Finally, please renew your membership, become a member, or make a donation. With your help, we can carry on the vital work of protecting our beautiful lakes and rivers for future generations.

Enjoy our lakes and rivers responsibly, and I hope to see you on July 15th at Nicolet College.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tom Ewing".

Tom Ewing
president@vclra.org



2022 Northwoods Six-County Lakes & Rivers Conference + VCLRA Annual meeting
 Friday July 15, 2022 , 8:30 am—12:30 pm, Lakeside Center, Nicolet College, Rhinelander

Lake group leaders and members from six northern Wisconsin counties will convene for a discussion of the environmental impacts of wakeboats, the proliferation of short-term rentals, and other issues related lake recreational capacity on Friday, July 15th. The conference will return to an in-person event and is sponsored jointly by Oneida (oclra.org) and Vilas County Lakes and Rivers Associations (vclra.org).

The effects of enhanced wakes from wakeboarding and wake surfing have been the subject of great concern and extensive scientific research in recent years. Meanwhile, concern is rising about short-term rentals of lakefront homes and cabins and how they affect lake water quality, lake crowding, and the integrity of lakefront neighborhoods.

Other topics at the annual Six-County Lakes Conference will include aquatic invasive species prevention, lake access and viewing corridors on lakefront properties, and an update on state legislation and policy related to water resources.

Attendees are expected from Oneida, Vilas, Forest, Langlade, Lincoln, and Iron counties. VCLRA and OCLRA will separately also host their annual meetings immediately following the event.

For more information, contact Steve Budnik (VCLRA) at 715-686-7852, skbudnik@centurytel.net or Bob Martini (OCLRA) at 715-282-5896, bobmartini@charter.net, or use the contact form: <https://vclra.org/contact/>.

DRAFT AGENDA

8:30	Refreshments/Exhibits	
9:00	Welcome/Updates	Patrick Goggin, Lakes Specialist - UW-EX Lakes
9:10	Policy Picture: Lake Carrying Capacity	Mike Engelson, Executive Director - Wisconsin Lakes
9:30	Wakeboats: Impacts/Remedies	Chuck Becker, SafeWakes Minnesota Lakes; Jeff Meessmann, Last Wilderness Alliance
9:55	Tourist Rooming Houses Access and Viewing Corridors	Bob Thome, Oneida County Supervisor
10:15	Break/ Visit Exhibits	
10:30	AIS: Shoreline Inspection	Joe Steinhage, Two Sisters Lakes
10:45	AIS: Full-Time CBCW	Keith Montgomery, Black Oak Lake
11:00	Attendee Comments/Feedback	Patrick Goggin, Lakes Specialist - UW-EX
11:30	VCLRA and OCLRA annual meetings	Vilas/Oneida Counties Annual Meetings; Breakout rooms provided
12:30	Adjourn	

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2022 VCLRA Scholarship Winners



ARTICLE BY
Susan Knight, VCLRA

Congratulations to Carolyn Schaars and August (Gus) Phillipich, the 2022 winners of the Vilas County Lakes and Rivers (VCLRA) 2022 Scholarship Award! VCLRA awards one or two scholarship each year to local high schoolers, who, like Carolyn Schaars and August Phillipich, plan to continue their education in natural resources. Upon graduating from Northland Pines High School, both Carolyn and August will start at the University of Wisconsin — Stevens Point in Fall 2022.

Our award committee was impressed with Carolyn, who expressed an interest in studying environmental science and addressing habitat

protection and water quality issues. Carolyn has lived on both a large chain of lakes in the Eagle River area, as well as a smaller, less populated lake, and has noticed the differences in water quality on these water bodies. Gus Phillipich also recognizes the challenge of balancing tourism with lake water quality, and he plans to use his leadership skills and his studies in fisheries and aquatic science to contribute to better decisions in lake management.

Congratulations once again to Carolyn Schaars and Gus Phillipich, winners of the Vilas County Lakes and Rivers 2022 Scholarship Awards.

The Blue Heron Shoreland Stewardship Award — be part of a grand tradition!

Do you know someone who makes a conscious effort to preserve an outstanding natural shoreline? **We want to recognize them for their effort!**

To obtain more information about the Blue Heron Shoreline Stewardship Award program or to access an online application, visit <https://vclra.org/blue-heron-program/>, or contact Susan Knight at seknight@wisc.edu or 608-890-4722.



Support VCLRA through Membership



VCLRA is a 501c3 non-profit lake conservation and education organization. All of our work is funded by support from our member families and lake organizations, generous donations, and public grants. Support our mission through membership and help keep our lakes clean and beautiful.

VCLRA 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 working relationships with the Wisconsin DNR, UW Extension, Wisconsin Lakes, Vilas County government and others. This allows VCLRA to provide benefits to lake association members as well as individuals who do not have a lake association.

VCLRA offers the following to its member associations and individuals:

- Provide information and assistance on lake related problems and issues,
- Sponsor and participate in educational programs, including awarding a scholarship annually to a local high school student,
- Provide yearly Blue Heron Awards in recognition of individual property owners' shoreline stewardship,
- Publish and distribute print newsletters for our membership plus blog articles year-round on our website,
- Organize a yearly workshop for our members and partners to strengthen their partnerships and gain new knowledge,
- Help with the formation of new lake associations,
- Assistance with direction to or interaction with partner agencies,
- Assistance 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

VCLRA 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

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

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

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

NOW YOU CAN ALSO JOIN OR RENEW ONLINE AT VCLRA.ORG



Shoreland Protection Initiative

ARTICLE BY

Carrie Rasmussen, Northwoods Land Trust

The Northwoods Land Trust has been awarded a WDNR grant for its Shoreland Protection Initiative. VCLRA is a partner in the initiative, providing outreach, communication and advisory support.

Are you concerned about the future fate of your waterfront property? The Northwoods Land Trust (NWLT) is currently promoting its “Shoreland Protection Initiative” to Vilas County lake and river property owners who have 500 feet or more of undeveloped shoreline. A priority of NWLT is to help concerned landowners conserve sizable properties to collectively protect our world-class natural resources before they become degraded and polluted.

NWLT has several conservation tools available when working with private landowners who want to maintain the natural character of their properties and possibly receive tax benefits. These tools ensure landowners that the land they love will be protected forever. A common approach involves a land protection agreement, known as a conservation easement.

A land protection agreement is a voluntary, binding agreement between a landowner and a conservation land trust to permanently protect a property’s natural characteristics. A conservation easement is the legal document linked to the deed that details the agreement. The land remains private property, but it can only be developed to the extent specified in the easement. The land can be sold with the easement in place or passed down to heirs.

Unlike deed restrictions and covenants, a conservation easement comes with a stewardship commitment from the land trust to annually monitor the land and ensure that the easement’s terms are carried through into perpetuity.

Another approach landowners can consider is transferring ownership of land to NWLT. The natural portion of a property can be separated from a house lot area and gifted to the land trust. NWLT would own and manage the natural areas to protect its wildlife, woodlands and natural waters. Some people prefer to donate land (and in certain cases, their homes) in their wills to ensure the land remain intact and undeveloped.

NWLT is an accredited, nonprofit organization based in Eagle River. Since 2001, NWLT has assisted over 100 families to permanently protect nearly 80 miles of lake and river shoreline and 15,000 acres of land in its seven-county service area in northern Wisconsin.

To learn more about their Shoreland Protection Initiative, or to request an informational packet, visit northwoodslandtrust.org or call (715) 479-2490.

New graphic available on Shoreland Zoning benefits

A new graphic has been developed by the Center for Land Use Education at UW-Stevens Point that shows how actions on the land impact fish, wildlife, and water quality. Order free hardcopies of the graphic at <https://bit.ly/shorelandgraphic>. The standard size is 11" x 17," however a larger 18" x 28" poster version is available for use in public exhibits and classrooms. A YouTube video with more in-depth information on shoreland zoning benefits is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vruQaV0w5Es>.

Center for Land Use Education
College of Natural Resources
University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point

Design by
Melissa Nieuwenhuis

Extension
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

THE VALUE OF SHORELAND ZONING

✓ SHORELAND ZONING
A house that is set back at least 75 feet from the water allows space for trees and native plants.

✗ NO SHORELAND ZONING
A house that is close to the water does not leave space for trees and native plants that stabilize the shoreline.

When hard surfaces are built far from the shore and trees and native plants are kept in place, the shoreline is naturally more stable allowing:

- Clear water = High waterfront property values
- More trees and native plants = Stable shorelines = Less water pollution
- More trees and native plants = More fish and frogs
- Less algae growth

When hard surfaces are built close to the shore and native plants are removed, the shoreline erodes into the lake or river causing:

- Cloudy water = Reduced waterfront property values
- Fewer trees and native plants = Eroded shorelines = More water pollution
- More lawn attracts geese
- Fewer frogs, fish, and fish species
- Increased algae growth
- Fish eggs suffocate when covered in eroded soil

CONCLUSIONS
Shoreland zoning standards make it possible to carefully develop a waterfront property, stabilize shorelines, protect the lake or river, and keep waterfront property values high.

WHAT DO SHORELAND ZONING STANDARDS ACCOMPLISH?

- Stable shorelines
- Clearer water = Higher property values
- More food and shelter for fish and frogs
- More fish and fish species

CONCLUSIONS
Waterfront property developed without shoreland zoning standards can cause eroded shorelines, a degraded lake or river, and reduced waterfront property values.

For more information, check with your local zoning office.

Complete the Shoreland Evaluation Tool to assess your waterfront property at survey.healthywaters.com.

Point of contact for additional information:

Lynn Markham, Land Use Specialist, Center for Land Use Education
College of Natural Resources, UW-Stevens Point, 800 Reserve St., Stevens Point, WI 54481
715-346-3879
lmarkham@uwsp.edu.

Wisconsin Shoreland Evaluation Tool Now Available

The web-based Wisconsin Shoreland Evaluation Tool builds on the success of the Michigan Shoreland Stewards “Rate your Shoreland” tool, bringing a similar capability to Wisconsin. This online survey tool even helps direct users to useful resources and funding sources available through grants.

How it works

The Shoreland Evaluation Tool walks you through questions about the aspects of your lake or river property, as well as how you manage it. Questions are arranged by property zone: *Upland*, *Transition*, and *In-Water* areas. The Tool also includes a section for you to identify habitat restoration and runoff and erosion control projects that currently exist on your property.

The tool tailors the questions based on your responses, ultimately arriving at a score of your shoreland property. By registering for an account, you can save your results and return later after implementing best practices to improve your score.

Many questions include help buttons to help guide you to an answer, links to additional information about shoreland management, and illustrative photos. Clicking on photos expand them for easier viewing. Your final score will reveal where on the path to improvement your property lies: *entry level*, *restoration level*, *enhancement level* or *protection level*, as well as indicate specific projects that could improve not only the score, but also help your lake or river!

What is a typical shoreland property?

Typical shoreland property is relatively flat, doesn't drain

a large area, and has some natural area. Homes and other structures are usually within a few hundred feet of the water's edge, and there are not

remarkable features like rock outcroppings or cliffs between the home and water.

Some properties may be beyond the scope of the Healthy Lakes & Rivers Best Practices the Tool suggests. These projects probably aren't

a good fit if your property is

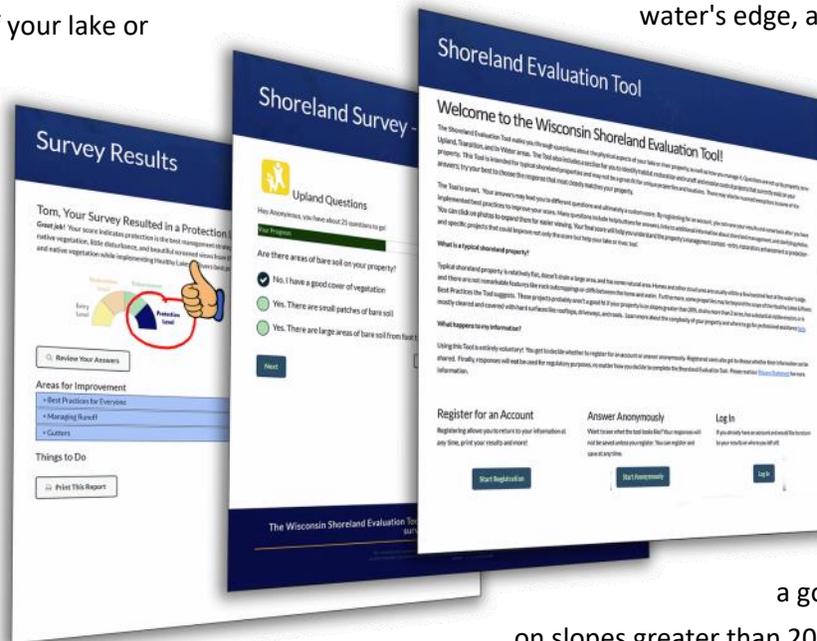
on slopes greater than 20%, drains more than 2 acres, has substantial visible erosion, or is mostly cleared and covered with hard surfaces like rooftops, driveways, and roads. You can learn more about the complexity of your property and where to go for professional assistance [here](https://healthylakeswi.com/best-practices/choosing-best-practices/) ➔ <https://healthylakeswi.com/best-practices/choosing-best-practices/>.

What happens to my information?

Applying this tool is voluntary! You decide whether to register for an account or answer anonymously. Registered users also choose whether their information can be shared. Finally, responses will never be used for regulatory purposes.

Ready to get started?

Access the tool by clicking [here](https://survey.healthylakeswi.com/) ➔ <https://survey.healthylakeswi.com/>.



MORE RESOURCES

VCLRA Tools and Initiatives

Browse our initiatives and other useful resources and tools at <https://vclra.org/initiatives/>. Here is a summary of some VCLRA initiatives. Check our initiatives/resources page for much more!

[VCLRA Scholarship](#)

\$500 competitive scholarships will be awarded to graduating High School Seniors who reside in Vilas County pursuing a career in the area of Natural Resources.

[Blue Heron Shoreland Stewardship Award Program](#)

The Blue Heron Shoreland Stewardship Awards Program was established to recognize lake property owners who champion strong lake stewardship principles in the development and use of their waterfront property to minimize environmental impacts. VCLRA makes these annual awards to generate awareness and showcase excellence in lake-friendly waterfront development.

[Northwoods Businesses for Clean Waters](#)

The natural beauty and recreational value of our lakes and rivers are the foundation of our Northwoods economy. Northwoods Businesses for Clean Waters is a partnership of conservationists and businesses dependent on the vitality of our natural waters. Our common vision of the Northwoods as a place where both people and nature thrive can only be realized by working together to protect our beautiful lakes and rivers.

[New Shoreland Owners Initiative](#)

Are you a new owner of lake property? Learn about ways to help keep your lake beautiful and healthy. Special offer available.

[GREET Initiative](#)

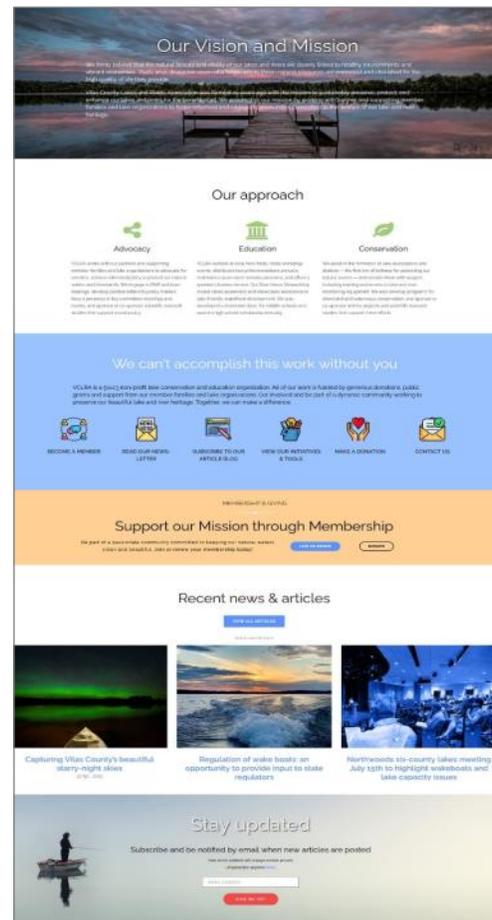
Improper shoreline development is the major threat to lake health. Many damaging developments happen soon after a change in ownership. Our Greet your Neighbor Initiative is designed to equip lake associations with the tools they need to identify and share their community's vision of waterfront living with new lake residents in a positive, engaging way.

OTHER RESOURCES: VCLRA also has a news and article blog that you can view at <https://vclra.org/newsarticles/>.

Subscribe to blog news/articles from our VCLRA homepage or at <http://vclra.org/#gotosubscribe> to be notified automatically by email when new articles are posted. You can always unsubscribe later.

Our biannual newsletters (which are mailed to members as a benefit) can be found at <https://vclra.org/newsletter-archive/>.

Finally, join VCLRA or renew your membership online at <https://vclra.org/join-or-renew/> using a credit card or check. Of course, you can still use the mail-in form, located at <https://vclra.org/mail-in/>.



Mark your Calendar

The following list of events are VCLRA booth exhibit venues. None of these have firm dates as of this publication, but typical timeframes are shown.

June 13, 2022: VCLRA Board Meeting at Trout Lake Station, 9 a.m.

June 18, 2022: Lakes Fest in Lac du Flambeau, WI. Contact Celeste Hockings at 715-588-4163 or Chockings@ldftribe.com for more information.

July 15, 2022: Northwoods Six-County Lakes & Rivers Conference/VCLRA Annual meeting. Visit vclra.org, or contact Tom Ewing, president@vclra.org, for more information.

Postponed until 2023: Forest Fest, Trees for Tomorrow in Eagle River, WI. See treesfortomorrow.com for more information.

October 1, 2022: Cran-a-rama in Manitowish Waters, WI. See manitowishwaters.org for more information.

Renew your membership or join VCLRA Today!

See membership form inside this issue or go to our website at vclra.org and register online. Working together we can keep our lakes clean and beautiful!

