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LAKES AND RIVERS ASSOCIATION

PO BOX 494 • EAGLE RIVER, WI 54521-0494

VCLRA.ORG

SUMMER 2023



This time of the year, we get numerous member calls, emails, and messages through our online forms. We enjoy hearing from you and learning what's on your mind, whether it's a concern or need that we can help with, feedback or ideas for improvement, or even a complement on a recent activity. Your support and encouragement is much appreciated!

I am also grateful for the wonderful partnerships and collaborations we

have with other organizations; they inspire and challenge us. With the support of our partners and members, together we can accomplish so much more and have greater impact, and that's really the strength of VCLRA.

If you are still not a current member, please be sure to join or renew today. Your support adds to our strength and makes a real difference in what we can accomplish! It's fast and simple to join or renew online at VCLRA.org, or use the mail-in membership form inserted in this newsletter.

We have been busy with preparations for the SIX-COUNTY LAKES & RIVERS WORKSHOP & ANNUAL MEETING, which VCLRA and OCLRA jointly host. This year the workshop will be held on Friday July 14th — SAVE THE DATE! This event is a great example of how member feedback factors into our planning. Last year's six-county workshop, which included an examination of issues surrounding wake surf boats and short-term vacation rentals, had one of the biggest turnouts in memory and there was great discussion.

This year, I'm even more excited about this event. Again, your input was vital in shaping it. In addition to expert briefings on timely subject areas by a truly distinguished group of experts, we will have a moderated panel to discuss the law enforcement challenges stemming from enhanced wake boats and other watercraft concerns, short-term vacation rentals issues, zoning violations and other areas that impact on the health and enjoyment of our Northwoods lakes and rivers. Eric Olson, director of UW-Extension Lakes, will moderate our workshop and panel. It should be a wonderful learning event and provide a great opportunity for meaningful discussion about issues we deeply care about. I think this will be our best 6-county workshop yet and not to be missed! Please plan to come and participate. See below for more details.

Continued on next page

2023 Six-County Lakes & Rivers Conference & VCLRA Annual Meeting Friday, July 14, 2023, 8:30 am -12:30 pm; Lakeside Center, Nicolet College, Rhinelander WI

DRAFT AGENDA

| 8:30 | Refreshments/Exhibits |
|-------|---|
| 9:00 | Welcome/Updates: Eric Olson, Director, UW-Extension Lakes |
| 9:10 | Wisconsin Policy Picture: Mike Engleson, Executive Director, Wisconsin Lakes |
| 9:30 | Zebra Mussels and Spiny Water Flea: Gretchen Gerrish, Director, UW Center for Limnology, Trout Lake Station |
| 10:00 | Loons and Lead Poisoning: Mark Naniot, Director of Rehabilitation, Wild Instincts Inc. |
| 10:30 | Break/Visit Exhibits |
| 10:45 | Law enforcement panel (Eric Olson, moderator) Darren Kuhn, Conservation Officer, Wisconsin DNR Grady Hartman, Sheriff, Oneida County Erika Roeder, Administrator Iron County Zoning Karl Jennrich, Director, Oneida County Zoning |
| 11:30 | Attendee Comments/Questions: Eric Olson, Director, UW-Extension Lakes |
| 12:00 | County-wide meetings: Vilas/Oneida Counties (Breakout rooms provided) |
| 12:30 | Adjourn |
| | PLEASE CHECK OUR WEBSITE FOR REVISIONS AND THE LATEST AGENDA. |

President's Message, continued from page 1

As part of our work to preserve our natural waters for future generations, one of our joys is to encourage youth to discover and protect our natural world. Each year we are excited to present scholarships to area high school seniors interested in pursuing conservationrelated careers. This year we are pleased to have awarded scholarships to Lauren Malanche and Sophia Simac at Northland Pine High School. See more details inside!

We also have an update from Jeff Meessmann on the citizen resolutions to regulate wake boats, additional information about permanent shoreland protection through our partner Northwoods Land Trust, and an article on Spiny Water Fleas by Susan Knight. This and much more inside...

Thank you for all you do for our amazing lakes and rivers, and I hope to see you on July 14th at Nicolet College for our workshop and annual meeting!

Marin

Tom Ewing, VCLRA president

Free training on a new toolbox to help PROTECT AND IMPROVE YOUR LAKE

VCLRA has teamed with Wisconsin's Green Fire to offer free workshops for leaders and members of Vilas County lake associations

Imagine that, without a costly consultant, you could:

- Assess conditions that affect your lake
- Identify threats to water quality, habitat and properties
- ✓ Present steps property owners can take for lake protection

Let us show you how, using public data that already exists!

Presenters: Dr. Mike Meyer and Jim Kreitlow of Nova Ecological

Vilas County workshop dates (choose one):

August 21, 23, 25, 10 am to 2:30 pm at Kemp Station, Lake Tomahawk

To register or for more information, email: Terry Daulton, tdaulton@centurytel.net



- Basic lake ecology & management
- Where to find data on your lake
- \checkmark How to identify action strategies that make a difference



Scan QR code for more information, or browse to bit.ly/461b6eh





WISCONSIN'S

IN THIS ISSUE

| Presidents message/six-county workshop & annual meeting | 1-2 | Membership | 5-6 |
|--|-----|--------------------------------|-----|
| Toolbox workshops | 2 | Permanent shoreland protection | 7 |
| VCLRA awards scholarships to area seniors | 3 | Spiny water fleas | 8-9 |
| Update: citizen resolutions regulating wake boats | 4 | Northwoods LIGHTS OUT! | 9 |
| Northwoods Author's Corner | 4 | Calendar | 10 |
| | | | |

VCLRA awards two scholarships to area seniors

Article by: Susan Knight, VCLRA

Congratulations to Lauren Malanche and Sophia Simac, the 2023 winners of the Vilas County Lakes and Rivers (VCLRA)

when they comply with fishing and hunting regulations, and work to prevent the spread of invasive species. Our award

Scholarship Award! VCLRA awards one or two scholarships each year to graduating high school seniors, who, like Lauren and Sophia, plan to continue their education in natural resources. Upon graduating from Northland Pines High School, Lauren will start at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point and Sophia will continue her education at the University of Wisconsin -Madison this fall.



Pictured left to right are Northland Pines High School seniors Lauren Malanche and Sophia Simac, recipients of the 2023 VCLRA scholarship awards.

committee was equally impressed with Sophia, who also enjoys the natural world. She loved camping and watching frogs and ducks and other creatures on her family's land near Eagle River. Sophia will be studying conservation biology so that she can better educate the public about making good choices to protect the environment.

Congratulations once again to Lauren Malanche

Our award committee was impressed with Lauren, who has a life-long interest in the natural world after spending time fishing and enjoying nature at a family cabin on a lake near St. Germain. She plans to study conservation law enforcement and become a conservation officer. This fits well with her confidence that people will help protect the environment

Dear Scholarship Committee,

I was excited when I found out that I was a recipient of the VCLRA scholarship. I am writing today to thank you for your generous financial support towards my higher education.

As you may already know (will be studying conservation law enforcement at U w stevensp point. Growing up I have always enjoyed the priviledge of spending time outdoors. My passion for the outdoors has inspired me to go into the field that I have chosen to pursue and I am so excited to start this next Chapter of my life.

I have already started my career on a good note with my new job with

the DNR as a creek survey taker, which will be my main sommer employment. I plan on conserving our natural resources as a game warden and educating the public as to why we have specific rules and laws in place so that everyone can enjoy the outdoors. By awarding me with this scholarship, I will be able to focus all of my energy on doing well in my classes. Your generosity is allowing me to make goals and make my dreams a reality. Thank You &r making me a recipient of your scholarship.

Sincerely, Lauren Malanche and Sophia Simac, winners of the 2023 Vilas County Lakes and Rivers Scholarship Awards.

Dear Vilas County Lakes and Rivers Association, Thomk you so much for awanding me with your generous Scholanship! Your support and confidence in me mains so much to me. I am beyond gruteful for your assistance in furthering my education

I will be attending the College of Letters and Sciences at the University of Wisconsin - Madison this fall, with a major in Conservation Biology. I have also already been accepted to the College of Letters and Sciences thenors track at the University. After I recieve my Bachelors degree, I can planning to attend graduate school. I am so excited to continue my education and use what I learn to better the world!

I loved attending the scholarship night program and being able to put at least one face and name to your kindness and generosity. I am excited to meet with your board of clirectors and discuss my future plans. I will be keeping in touch! Thanks you again for your amazing support!

Sincerely,

Ropphia Sima

PAGE 4



The Wisconsin Conservation Congress (WCC) is a government department that conveys the wisdom and influence of Wisconsin citizens in the formation of natural resource policy, research, education and conservation. The WCC is the citizen's conduit to the Department of Natural Resources and Natural Resource Board. Every year the WCC conducts a citizen resolution survey. People around the state weigh in on things like lead shot, wolf hunts and wake boats. If the citizen resolution can make it through the gauntlet of surveys, committee approvals and district leadership approvals, the resolutions could become a state law and that is our objective.

This survey has many steps and will take about 30 months just to get to legislation. We submitted six wake boat resolutions in 2022 and five new wake boat resolutions in 2023. The 2022 resolutions are on month 13 of the 30-month process. These resolutions were voted on at the state level. The 2023 resolutions are just beginning the 30-month process. These resolutions were voted on at the county level.

In the April 2023 survey, the citizen resolutions regulating wake boats were submitted and voted on by the public. All passed to move



Scan QR code for a detailed summary of the voting results, or browse to https://qr.link/VWRQkF on to the next step by a margin of approximately 2 to 1. While the results were not as exceptional as in the 2022 survey (anywhere from 79% to 94%), they were still very good (2 to 1). This indicates there is strong support for wake boat regulation at the state level.

Jeff Meessmann can be reached at lastwildernessalliance@gmail.com.

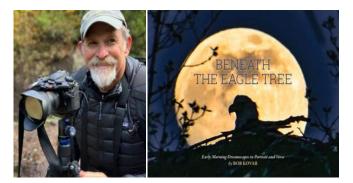


FOR FURTHER BACKGROUND ON WAKE SURF BOATS

SEE BOTH OUR WINTER 2021-22 AND WINTER 2022-23 NEWSLETTERS FOR MORE ARTICLES ON WAKE SURF BOATS

NORTHWOODS AUTHOR'S CORNER

The Northwoods is fortunate to have many talented authors whose main topic is appreciating, preserving, and protecting our lakes, rivers, and forests. The VCLRA Newsletter is highlighting one book in each newsletter and plans to highlight more on the VCLRA website. It is definitely worth your while to read every one of them!



Bob Kovar describes his photography as a heart-felt creative process, developed from a life-long love affair with the land and people of Manitowish Waters in Vilas County. His new book of images and short essays is entitled "Beneath the Eagle Tree: Early Morning Dreamscapes in Portrait and Verse." It's a self-published coffee-table style of book full of stories and pictures worthy of framing that documents the beauty and allure of this remarkable area. Both his book and a visit to BK Photography, a quaint log studio located under an eagle nest in Manitowish Waters, is highly recommended! VISIT HTTPS:// WWW.BOBKOVAR.COM/ FOR DETAILS.



Let's protect our lakes and waterways! Join VCLRA *now* so we can all work together!

If you're as concerned about wake boats, short-term rentals and aquatic invasives (like eurasian water milfoil) as we are, we hope you'll to join us to support our advocacy and education work. In fact, we need you to join us. VCLRA helps individuals and lake associations make wise decisions about their lakes and gives them a voice in preserving and protecting our unique lakes and waterways.

From its inception in 1994, VCLRA has maintained strong working relationships with the Wisconsin DNR, UW Extension, Wisconsin Lakes, and town and county officials and administrators in Vilas County. This allows VCLRA, a lake conservation and education organization, to provide the benefits below to lake associations and their members as well as individuals who do not have a lake association:

- Information and assistance on lake related problems and issues
- A bi-annual newsletters rich with insightful information addressing key challenges that impact Vilas water
- Help with forming new lake associations
- Connecting with and interacting with partner organizations and government agencies
- Assistance with and sponsorship of grant applications when an association may not qualify

VCLRA is a constructive citizen group that has earned the respect of the local and state community. Our members are an important part of what we do. Support our mission. Become a member and help protect our beautiful lakes and rivers. If you are already a member, now is the time to renew your membership.

Susan Knight

VCLRA membership director



VCLRA is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. You can now join or renew your membership online at <u>https://vclra.org/join-or-renew/</u> using a credit card or check. You can also use the mail-in form on the reverse side or print the form out at <u>https://vclra.org/mail-in/</u>.



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION OR RENEWAL

We are a 501(c)(3) organization; membership fees and donations may be tax-deductible to the extent of the law We encourage you to join or renew online, if possible: https://vclra.org/join-or-renew/

| Select one: Individual or Family \$25 Lake Organization \$50 Business Associate - Supporting \$75 | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| Will you consider adding a small donation to your membership? \$ | | | | | |
| Individual or Family Membership New or Renewal | | | | | |
| Name(s): | | | | | |
| Permanent address: Street City State Zip Code | | | | | |
| Email Address: Ph: Ph: | | | | | |
| How do you wish to receive our newsletter? Print Email Email alerts on lake issues? Yes No | | | | | |
| Name of lake or river of residence, or enter "Off-lake": | | | | | |
| Name of lake or river organization (if established): | | | | | |
| Other affiliation, if any (e.g., town chairman, county commissioner, etc.): | | | | | |
| Lake or River Organization Membership (Lake Associations and Districts) New or Renewal | | | | | |
| Is there a change in the organization's contact person from last year: Yes No | | | | | |
| Lake or river organization name: | | | | | |
| Website, if any: | | | | | |
| Approximate number of individuals represented by lake or river organization: | | | | | |
| Key contact person: President/Chair Vice-President/Vice-Chair Secretary Other officer: | | | | | |
| Name: | | | | | |
| Permanent address: Street City City State Zip Code | | | | | |
| Email Address: Ph: Ph: | | | | | |
| How do you wish to receive our newsletter? Print Email Email alerts on lake issues? Yes No | | | | | |
| Do you wish to receive additional printed copies of our newsletter to distribute? If so, how many: | | | | | |
| On a separate sheet, feel free to list anyone else in your organization who should receive a copy of our newsletter directly by mail or email and/or receive email alerts. | | | | | |
| Associate-Supporting (Business, other non-profit) New or Renewal Business or Non-profit | | | | | |
| Business or non-profit: Contact name: | | | | | |
| Address: Street City State Zip Code | | | | | |



Please make check payable to: Vilas County Lakes and Rivers Association (VCLRA) Return form with annual dues before June 1st to: VCLRA, PO Box 494, Eagle River, WI 54521 Or join or renew and pay online by check or credit card at: <u>https://vclra.org/join-or-renew/</u>

Permanent shoreland protection

ARTICLE BY Carrie Rasmussen, Northwoods Land Trust in collaboration with Vilas County Lakes & Rivers Association

A priority of the Northwoods Land Trust (NWLT) is to assist landowners in conserving sizable properties to protect our world-class water resources. Permanent land conservation is one of the most effective ways to safeguard our lakes and rivers.

The Vilas County Lakes & Rivers Association (VCLRA) is partnering with NWLT to advance a Shoreland Protection Legacy Initiative to reach more landowners on Vilas County's 1300 lakes and 70 rivers. Both organizations are promoting permanent land protection tools as a means to ensure our waters stay healthy, productive and clean.

Natural forested areas and undeveloped shorelines play a big part in maintaining water quality and wildlife/fish habitat long-term. Moreover, protecting more land today will reduce the need to restore degraded water resources tomorrow.

Private landowners hold the key to preserving remaining natural shoreland areas. Community-based conservation with a nonprofit land trust like NWLT is local, voluntary, and (importantly) permanent. Landowners that protect the land they love also provide greater public benefits in the form of clean water and air, wildlife habitat and scenic beauty.



Below are two articles that we encourage Lake Associations to share with members in your

newsletter and communications. There will also be a Shoreland Owner Workshop on June 26th in Eagle River on best practices and programs to protect water quality and habitat, as well as permanent conservation options through NWLT. Registration is required. **More on the workshop here:** https://northwoodslandtrust.org/event/shoreland-workshop/.



Permanent Shoreland Protection Tools

Scan QR code or visit https://qr.codes/ewjuda



How Associations Can Help Protect Land to Benefit our Waters Scan QR code or visit https://gr.codes/SxVXaq

The Vilas County Lakes & Rivers Association is a partner of the Northwoods Land Trust. Together, the organizations are advancing education and outreach to encourage landowners and associations to protect land and water today for tomorrow. To learn more, visit <u>vclra.org/legacy/</u> and contact us to start a conversation about how you and/or your association can help protect precious natural resources.

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 <u>https://vclra.org/blueheron-program/</u>, or contact Susan Knight at seknight@wisc.edu or 608-890-



Spiny water fleas

ARTICLE BY Susan Knight*, VCLRA board

Do you remember that 1979 horror movie, Alien? The alien from the title, the Xenomorph, was a creepy helmeted creature with a long tail and nasty intentions. If you squint, it kind of looks like Generally, they are thought to flourish only in large, deep, cold lakes, but are also found in the Gile Flowage in Iron County, which is neither deep nor cold.

one of the threats to our local lakes — the spiny water flea. In fact, all kinds of arthropods, that is small invertebrates with jointed legs, are quite monstrous if blown up to human size.

Many have murderous mouthparts and bristly knuckles. Many, especially the parasitic ones, have complicated life histories, like the Xenomorph, that erupted out of the belly of one of the astronauts after incubation.



search project at Trout Lake Station and zooplankton are sampled and quantified every two weeks during open water and monthly in winter. However, because SWF are relatively rare in the water column and are large relative to other zooplankton, biologists sample spiny water fleas

Spiny water fleas were

Trout Lake in 2014. Trout

Lake is part of the Long-

first found in Stormy

Lake in 2009 and in

Term Ecological Re-

Bythotrephes longimanus, or the spiny water fleazooplankton less than 15 millimetres (0.6 in) long. Photo credit: NOAA Great Lakes Environmental Research Laboratory, <u>CC BY-SA 2.0</u> via Wikimedia Com-

Spiny water fleas are aquatic arthropods called zooplankton. Zooplankton are small shrimp-like creatures, and most of them survive by eating phytoplankton, the microscopic photosynthetic algae at the bottom of the food chain in lakes. In turn, zooplankton are eaten by small fish and other animals.

Spiny water fleas upset the usual order of aquatic ecosystems because, although they are zooplankton, they are large enough to prey on other zooplankton that usually feed on phytoplankton. So, spiny water fleas can unleash a bloom of algae that would normally be eaten by the smaller zooplankton. It appears that the long tail on a spiny water flea makes it difficult for small fish to eat them.

Bythotrephes longimanus, the scientific name of spiny water fleas, are native to brackish Northern European and Asian waterbodies where they inadvertently slipped into ocean-going ship holds along with ballast water. They were then released into the Great Lakes when the ship's ballast tanks were emptied. They are present in Lake Superior and Lake Michigan, and from there have spread to a few of our inland lakes, including Trout, Plum, Ike Walton, Stormy and Star Lakes in Vilas County. using a special large net with larger mesh holes than is used for regular zooplankton sampling.

Using this special net, Stormy Lake was sampled every two weeks from 2009 through 2016 and numbers were high in 2013 and lower in all other years. In Trout Lake, spiny water fleas numbers were highest in 2014, the first year they were found. Since then, their numbers in Trout have been low, or none have been found at all.

So, are spiny water fleas demons like the Xenomorphs in Aliens? Mostly not. In some lakes, such as Lake Mendota in Madison, WI, spiny water fleas have caused large changes to the aquatic ecosystem, including reduced water clarity. However, Lake Mendota is eutrophic, meaning it has very high nutrient levels, has poor water clarity, has a mostly urban and agricultural watershed and, along with spiny water fleas, has invasive zebra mussels. (Jeesh – what a mess!). Our northern lakes are different; most are nestled in forested watersheds, are not eutrophic and so are clearer, and have few other invasive animals.

Continued on next page

Spiny Water Fleas, continued from page 6

One other difference is that Trout Lake has cisco, a deep and cold-water fish that apparently adapted quickly to eating spiny water fleas. While not all our lakes with spiny water fleas have cisco, cisco are common in Trout and Plum Lake and present in Stormy and Star. So, while some "typical" zooplankton predators cannot eat spiny water fleas, some fish can and may be able to keep their numbers low. Notably, cisco are extremely rare in Madison's Lake Mendota.

Work on Trout Lake by Ben Martin and Tyler Butts of the UW-Madison Center for Limnology suggests that spiny water fleas can affect the whole food web, especially when their numbers are high, but native fishes within the food web, like cisco, may be successfully controlling their population, at least temporarily. However, the only way to control spiny water fleas is to never let them into the lake. Please make every effort to keep them out. This means consistently draining your live well and other water reserves in your boats, and cleaning and drying your gear before moving to a new lake. If you see spiny water fleas accumulate on your fishing line, be sure to let the WDNR know.

At least currently, spiny water fleas may not be the Xenomorphs of our northern lakes. But it is our responsibility to do everything to keep them out.

*Susan Knight is Scientist Emeritus at University of Wisconsin's Trout Lake Station, Center for Limnology, and VCLRA board member. She can be reached at seknight@wisc.edu.

Northwoods LIGHTS OUT!

ARTICLE BY Quita Sheehan*

Looking for another way to enjoy the wonders of the Northwoods? Exploring the night skies, watching fireflies and stargazing are but a few ways to appreciate the darkness. Oneida and Vilas County Land & Water Conservation Departments are promoting two summer weekends to enjoy the night.

We encourage you to turn off your lights for a few hours, go outside, and look up and around you! Listening in the darkness can also lead to exciting discoveries! Make this an event for your lake group or educational organization; help us spread the word through your organization communications and newsletters!

We hope that by setting dates, residents, and visitors alike, will coordinate for a broader appreciation of nighttime wonders. Please check out the Oneida Land & Water Conservation



website, https://www.oclw.org/special-projects.html, or call 715-369-7835 for more information. And if you or your group plan a Lights Out Event – let us know!!

Unnecessary lighting with improper placement and design interferes with visibility and robs us all of quality night skies. Other impacts



Two summer weekends to enjoy the night!

June 17-18 Firefly Watch! August 12-13 Milky Way & Perseid Meteor Watch! from light pollution include human health affects/sleep disruption, confusion for migratory birds and other wildlife, and wasting energy. You can help by only using lighting you really need, choosing energy-efficient bulbs, and directing lights downward. By working together, we can protect the night for everyone to enjoy!

*Quita Sheehan is a Conservation Specialist for Vilas County Land & Water Conservation and a VCLRA board advisor. She can be reached at mashee@vilascountywi.gov.



PO Box 494, Eagle River, WI 54521

Vilas County Lakes and Rivers Association VOLUME 28 ISSUE 2 - SUMMER 2023 Lake County Journal

vclra.org

I oolbox workshops Presidents Message/six-county conterence **JUSSI SIHT N**

regulating wake boats Update: citizen resolutions Scholarship award winners

Membership insert Northwoods Author's Corner

Permanent shoreland protection

Northwoods LIGHTS OUT! Spiny water fleas

Calendar

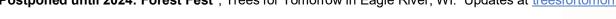
Remember to renew your membership or join VCLRA Today! Support our Mission through Membership and help keep our lakes clean and beautiful!

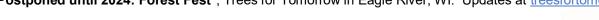
VCLRA booth exhibit venues are marked with an asterisk(*).

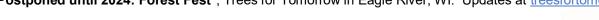
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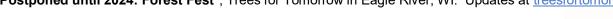
October 7, 2023: Cran-a-rama* in Manitowish Waters, WI. See manitowishwaters.org for info.

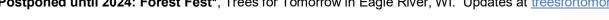
Nicolet College. Visit vclra.org or contact Tom Ewing, president@vclra.org, for more information.

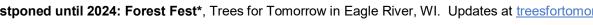


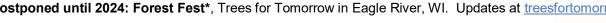


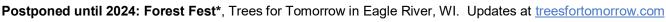
















June 26, 2023 at 10:00 am – 12:30 pm: Shoreland Owner Workshop* at Northwoods Center in Eagle River. Email carrie@northwoodslandtrust.org or call the Northwoods Land Trust office at 715-479-2490 for more info. July 14, 2023, 8:30 am - 12:30 pm: Six-County Lakes & Rivers Workshop & VCLRA Annual meeting* at

June 17, 2023: Lakes Fest* in Lac du Flambeau, WI. Contact Celeste Hockings at 715-588-4163 or

Mark your Calendar