

President's Letter

As another summer on the lake has come to an end, it seems the warm weather never made a very prominent visit this year. It has been a busy year with another successful fund-raiser in June and in August we joined the Bass Anglers for our annual meeting/picnic. In July a new Special Committee held its first meeting with an agenda full of lake issues. Look for more information about the committee in this newsletter. Your Lake Board will be making a number of decisions soon regarding fish population & habitat issues, water quality, river sediment problems, and other vital objectives in lake management. Please discuss these with your Board members to help them make decisions based on what the members want done. The Board also has decided to move our holiday party, this year on January 2nd, back to the Black Bear. Watch for the December newsletter for details and to sign up to attend what should be a great event.

I would like to thank everyone for their support in the past year and as always feel free to contact me concerning anything regarding our lake and how to manage its future.

John Selz

Lake Eau Claire Association Raffle Tickets on Sale Now!

1st Prize: Americana Sofa Quilt

(Donated by Jane Walsh)

2nd Prize: Portable Ice Shack

3rd Prize: ½ Pork

(Donated by Dan & Faith Esser)

4th Prize ½ Pork

(Donated by the Comstocks and Teeters)

5th Prize: Large Handmade Basket

(Donated by Carolyn Boehne)

Tickets are \$2 each or 3 for \$5.00

Drawing will be held on

Sat. Jan. 2, 2010 at

Jean's Black Bear.

Please contact John Selz at

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Reminder!
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News from Land Conservation

Hello everyone!

It's been a busy year for sure with lots of concerns and issues. We have been working hard with several of you from the Lake Eau Claire Association to review the available scientific data from Lake Eau Claire from the past few year, as well as information from the recent Lake Eau Claire Sociological Survey as a part of the Lake Eau Claire Management Planning process. This month will be the third meeting of the Lake Eau Claire Management Plan Steering Committee. The group met in July and August where they heard about Fisheries and Habitat Issues and Water Quality Concerns and Needs. The Steering Committee will be meeting each month for the next few months and will cover a variety of issues;

*Sedimentation and Erosion
Shoreland Habitat, Aquatic Vegetation and Invasive Species
Recreation on Lake Eau Claire - Needs and Issues
Finalize Goals and Objectives
Review Final Product and Discuss Next Steps*

The overall goal of developing a Lake Management Plan for Lake Eau Claire is to protect the overall health of the Lake and evaluate the current threats and find ways to minimize or alleviate them. In order to be comprehensive the management plan needs to use all available science to evaluate current water quality, fisheries and habitat needs. Additionally, it must incorporate the current values and uses of the lake to protect what people value the most. The results of the Sociological Survey have been evaluated for each area and are incorporated into each goal/objective set for the lake. The management plan will also be an important tool that prioritizes work for everyone, including the Lake Eau Claire Association, WI-DNR, Eau Claire County Land Conservation Division, Beaver Creek etc, to guide management on the lake. Once the Management Plan is established, we will need to establish an Oversight Committee to ensure the objectives are carried out and the plan is implemented. In addition, we will be applying for a WI-DNR Lake Restoration grant that will enable us to start implementing the plan.

In addition to the Steering Committee, the Lake Eau Claire Association Habitat Committee has also done some surveying of the lakeshore to evaluate the amount of coarse woody habitat in the lake and identify areas where trees could be dropped to increase it. We also teamed up LECA Habitat representative, Rod Zika, WI-DNR Lakes Coordinator, Buzz Sorge and UWEC Geography Professor/Fluvial Geomorphologist, Doug Faulkner and myself to do a preliminary streambank erosion assessment on the Eau Claire River upstream from the lake. The four of us headed out on Wednesday Oct 26th for a short canoe trip down the river with several stops along stretches with excessive streambank erosion. Our many thanks to Dave Steele, with Riverside Junction Canoe and Kayak rental for providing us with canoes and a shuttle to and from river.

We have included the preliminary goals from our Fisheries and Habitat Steering Committee Meeting for you to review. Stay tuned for additional goals/objectives for each meeting.

*Thanks again for all your hard work and cooperation to those of you who are assisting us in this process. It may take some time, but it will be well worth it in the long haul.
Take care and have a great Fall!*

*Kirsten Cahow-Scholtes
Eau Claire County Land Conservation Supervisor*

Preliminary Goals From the Fisheries and Habitat Steering Committee

Goal #1:

Protect and improve the aquatic life of Lake Eau Claire, including a self-sustaining fishery and diverse aquatic plant community. (Objectives for this goal could be established that pertain to studies and management of all aspects of aquatic life.)

Objectives used to attain Goal #1

Monitor the lake's fish population every four years to assess trends in the fish community. Under WDNR's lake monitoring program, the next scheduled survey would take place in 2012. However under WDNR's treaty assessment program, a fisheries survey is planned for 2013. In conjunction with this survey, an angler creel survey also will be conducted. Data from this fish survey will be compared to the 2008 survey, and information gathered from the creel survey will be used to evaluate the desires and perspectives of anglers on Lake Eau Claire as well as the angler's impact on the fish community. (WDNR)

Adopt an annual voluntary creel survey program that will be combined with current invasive species surveillance program at the main boat landings. The creel survey will assist by providing more data on fishing experiences of angler's and may assist in overcoming some of the current negative public perception about the lake. (LECA and BCR oversight by WDNR)

Continue stocking muskellunge in Lake Eau Claire on a biennial basis (odd-numbered years) at a rate of one large fingerling per acre.

Within the confines of natural variations, maintain fish populations at densities and size structure that are desirable for anglers. Using 2008 and 2013 survey data, evaluate population density, size structure, growth and mortality rates of the dominant gamefish and panfish species in Lake Eau Claire to determine whether or not regulation changes are needed to improve the quantity and/or quality of these populations.

Explore the possibility of establishing slow-no-wake areas around mid-lake plant beds to protect them from boat and jet ski activity (LECA, Ludington and Bridge Creek Townships).

Goal #2

Protect and improve in-lake and shoreline habitat to promote a healthy and diverse community of aquatic life in Lake Eau Claire. (Include objectives for shoreline habitat management, coarse woody habitat, aquatic plant management, etc.)

Objectives used to attain Goal #2

Educate riparian landowners of the importance of coarse woody habitat (CWH) and aquatic plants in the lake to the community health of fish and other aquatic life in the lake. (ECC-LCD, LECA)

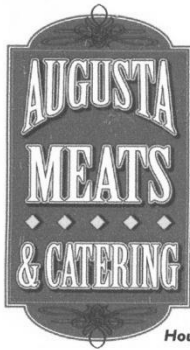
Develop a plan to increase CWH in the lake. LECA will send letters out to lakeshore property owners about the plan to improve CWH and solicit participation in a voluntary tree drop campaign. The Habitat Committee of LECA conducted a visual survey of the lakeshore and identified trees that are likely to fall into the lake within the next few years. To prevent shoreline erosion problems, these trees could be dropped into the lake to enhance littoral zone habitat. (LECA, WDNR, ECC-LCD)

Conduct tree drops along the shoreline to increase the amount of CWH in the littoral zone. Along developed shorelines, it is desirable to have a minimum of 1-2 pieces of CWH per 100 ft. of shoreline. Along undeveloped shorelines, it is desirable to have a minimum of 3-6 pieces of CWH per 100 feet of shoreline. Tree drops should not be used in lake areas with moderate to high density aquatic plant populations. (LECA, WDNR)

Install log fish cribs in deeper portions of the lake to increase the amount of deep water habitat available to fish. Fish cribs must have a minimum clearance of five feet of water over the top of the structure (LECA, WDNR).

Install half-log structures in the littoral zone to increase spawning habitat for smallmouth bass. These structures must be placed in water less than five feet deep, and will provide spawning habitat along shorelines where tree drops may not be possible or desirable (LECA, WDNR).

Conduct a critical habitat designation survey of Lake Eau Claire in 2010. WDNR will utilize aquatic plant surveys conducted in 2003 and 2009 and a team of biologists and regulatory staff to determine the type and amount of habitat in the lake that is critical for protecting water quality, wildlife, fish and other aquatic life as well as aesthetics. Once a critical habitat designation has been completed, it can be used as a tool by the lake association, Eau Claire County, WDNR and others to protect these important lake features. (WDNR, ECC, LECA)



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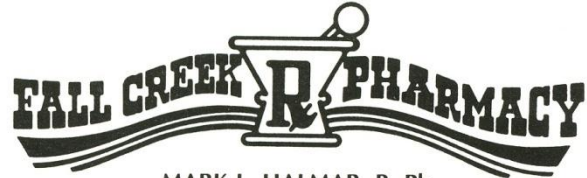
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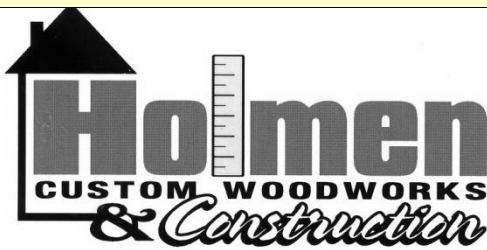
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Where would you like to see our Association
concentrate its attention in the coming year?

