THE RAG

AUTUMN / WINTER 2025

The Aurora over the Turtle Chain,
courtesy of Janell Kellett

A NOTE FROM THE (EX) PRES

As most of you probably know, at our annual meeting this July, I stepped off the board, turning over the title of TLCA president to Tom Rued, with Mike Judge moving up to serve as our new VP. While I'm back to civilian life, I'm still helping via maintaining our website and will be doing another Rag or two before that job is passed along to others.

My decision was all about time; I noticed it was flying, and there are other aspects of my life that are requiring more and more of it. Besides, the TLCA has many great people, and when someone takes a step back, it's an opportunity for others to take a step forward. It was wonderful to see so many new faces take on board positions this year, and I hope people will continue to step up to volunteer, for invasive species monitoring, or Fun Day activities, or road clean-up or flower-watering, or a board position / lake representative / etc. If you're not yet engaged, there's no time like the present.

I wanted to thank all of you for your support, with a special thanks to the board members I had the pleasure of partnering with over the last 13+ years, especially Tom for agreeing to be next in line (please treat him as well as you treated me). Change can be good, and with the new board, I've no doubt it will be. But the one thing that won't change for me is the same thing I doubt will change for any of us — being a proud member of the TLCA. This organization excels at doing good works and making great friendships along the way, and there will always be time for that.

- Emil

IN THIS ISSUE:

TOWN OF WINCHESTER
LAKE USER GUIDE

Common Sense Courtesies

- **Water Sports:** Please restrict the activities of water skiing, tubing and personal water craft (PWC) to the hours of 10:00 AM to 7:00 PM, and at all times respect those who are swimming or fishing.
- **Quiet Hours:** Please consider your neighbors and eliminate excess noise and loud music, especially between 10:00 PM and 8:00 AM.
- **Space:** Observe Loons, Eagles and other wildlife from a distance of at least 100 feet, and 200 feet from nesting Loons and chicks.
- **Clean Lakes & Shoreline:** If you carry it in, please carry it out.
- **Fireworks:** Think before you shoot and clean up afterwards. Fireworks make noise, frightening children, pets & wildlife while contaminating our lakes with heavy metals and other toxic chemicals. They also pose a serious fire hazard to both forests and personal property.

It's the Law

- **Shoreland Lighting:** Please consider the glare of yard lights on your neighbors across the lake. Consider using motion detector lights, light shields and/or low wattage bulbs. *Winchester Town Ordinance 2018-07.*
- **Slow-No-Wake:** All boats are required to operate at slow-no-wake speed within 100 feet and all personal water craft (PWC) within 200 feet of lake and island shorelines. *Town of Winchester Boating & Water Regulation Ordinance 2018-09.*
- **Artificial or Enhanced Wakes:** Use of ballast, water sacks, mechanical fins or similar devices to create enhanced wakes is prohibited on all Winchester lakes. *Town of Winchester Artificial Wake Ordinance 2024-02.*
- **Boaters:** All boaters must stay at least 100 feet from anglers, swimmers, divers, snorkelers, rafts, docks and other watercraft.
- **Waterskiing & Tubing:** Waterskiing and the use of personal watercraft (PWC) are not permitted after sunset. *Town of Winchester Boating & Water Regulation Ordinance 2018-09.*
- **Invasive Species:** Launching or transporting boats or boating equipment with aquatic plants or animals attached is prohibited. Clean your boat, motor, trailer and anchor. Drain all water from wells and bilge. Do not release unused bait into the lake.

Perform Lake CPR – be Courteous, Polite & Respectful
Help Keep Our Lakes Safe, Clean and Enjoyable for Everyone

Town Board Approved 2025

LOOKING BACK AT SUMMER 2025

The **Gerald "Jerry" Kutz Memorial Boat Landing** on the channel between North Turtle Lake and Rock Lake was dedicated on Memorial Day Saturday, with many friends, neighbors, TLCA board members and Kutz family members all gathered together for the occasion.

The annual TLCA Musky Classic saw fishermen heading out onto the Turtle Lakes the Saturday of Father's Day weekend, with Aaron Andreshak taking first place with a beautiful 32 3/4" fish.

LOOKING BACK AT SUMMER 2025

38 golfers competed in an epic **Fun Day Golf Tourney** at Lake Gogebic, with four teams tied after 18 holes! After a 6-hole sudden death playoff, TEAM KLOTZ emerged as the champions! • **Winning team (top):** Cibelli, England, Klotz, Miljevich • **Wildcat winners (middle):** Mike and Rose Martin, Brian and Nate Fons • **Individual award winners (some pictured at bottom):** Julie Rued, Marjean Schuelke, Jan Ryan, John Bruhn, Tim Casey, Mike Printon. A special thank you to Barb and Gary Engstrom, Jim Hochstetter, Rose and Mike Martin and Brian and Nate Fons for their help during the event, and a huge thank you to Jan Osikowicz, golf outing leader extraordinaire!

Fun Day paddlers enjoyed a relaxing morning exploring the nooks and crannies of our amazing chain.

The **Fun Day Picnic** was a great success, with plenty of food, fun and prizes. Thanks to Marjean Schuelke for organizing, chefs Mark Schuelke and Joe Discianno, bartender Monty Giffin, Raffle Wrangler Carole Theesfeld, and everyone who donated prizes!

While not a TLCA event, Carole Theesfeld asked that we pass on her thanks to all the fabulous ladies who helped her count the votes in the annual **Boat Parade.** *"Thanks very much! I couldn't have done it without you; you were angels to help!"* - Carole

NLDC TURTLE CHAIN END OF SEASON SUMMARY

PERSONNEL:

The North Lakeland Discovery Center (NLDC) Woods and Water team had a wonderful group of six seasonal staff members that worked very hard this field season. Janelle, Koen, Lily, and Luke finished their time with NLDC in August. Katie will help thru early October and Sabrina will be here until the end of October. A big thanks to all our seasonal staff members for their hard work and dedication this summer.

NLDC also welcomed a new Woods and Water Director and AIS Coordinator to the team:

Abby Vogt, Woods and Water Director
Abby@discoverycenter.net • (715) 598-6281

"I graduated from the University of Montana in 2022 with a B.A. in Environmental Studies and a B.S. in Sustainability, Science and Practice. In 2022, I was a Seasonal Lake Technician for the Discovery Center. Following my time as a seasonal staff member, I worked as the coordinator for Timberland Invasives Partnership, focusing on terrestrial invasive species in Northeast Wisconsin for two and a half years. I am passionate about aquatic and terrestrial invasive species and native plants in our Northwoods. In my free time, I enjoy hiking, kayaking, snowboarding and pressing plants. I am excited to be back working with the Woods and Water program and look forward to growing the program and working with property owners on restoration activities."

Lydia Dobberstein, AIS Coordinator
Lydia@discoverycenter.net • (715) 972-6119

"I'm excited to serve as NLDC's AIS Coordinator to share my passion for protecting and caring for our lakes and rivers with the Manitowish Waters community. I recently earned my B.S. in Wildlife Ecology and Resource Management at UW-Stevens Point, with an emphasis in water resources. My career has taken me through many facets of the field of ecology including conservation biology, aquatic invertebrate research, lake management, habitat restoration, and fieldwork from across Wisconsin to Yellowstone National Park. Now, I'm thrilled to dive back into the world of water as there is no better place to do it. I also love to kayak, ski, travel, and volunteer with the Red Cross, and am on a quest to visit every national park."

NLDC TURTLE CHAIN END OF SEASON SUMMARY

ACTIVITIES:

Clean Boats, Clean Waters

- On June 19, NLDC held a CBCW training session for five volunteer /participants at S. Turtle Boat Landing.
- A total of over 150 volunteer hours were reported for the Turtle Chain. ***We love to see that many hours!***
- NLDC completed 120 hours at S. Turtle Landing per the agreement.

Point Intercept Surveys

- July 10-15th, NLDC completed Point Intercept (PI) Surveys on Rock. North and South Turtle were done by Onterra.
- Final report of Rock to be completed this winter by NLDC.

Curly Leaf Pondweed (CLP)

- June- Early Season CLP survey done, nothing found.

Purple Loosestrife

- August- Surveys completed, nothing found.

AIS Surveys (Including Eurasian Water Milfoil)

- Late June- AIS Early Detection done on South Turtle: nothing new found.
- Late July- Late Season AIS on Rock, North and South Turtle: nothing new found.
- September 10th- Spiny Water Flea Survey on South Turtle, nothing found.

Keep up the decontamination and education!

Yellow Iris

- Yellow Iris surveys were conducted while it was flowering to locate the plants for later season removal.
- August through September- 3 days of iris removal throughout Turtle Chain on properties with permission.
- NLDC will complete a yellow iris report this winter to summarize location, density, and management efforts.

Healthy Lakes Grants

- NLDC met with two landowners to discuss Healthy Lakes Grants on how property owners can partner with NLDC to promote best practices and install projects that benefit habitat and water quality.

If you're interested in learning more, please contact Lydia Dobberstein at lydia@discoverycenter.net

SHORELINE PRESERVATION AND RESTORATION

Condensed and summarized by Gary Engstrom, Rock Lake

Cathy Higley from **Vilas County Land & Water Conservation** recently presented information on protecting our lakes at the Winchester Town Lakes Committee. This presentation was summarized at the TLCA Annual Meeting in July. I think it's worthwhile to share this information with TLCA Members who were not able to attend.

One of the most beneficial things that lake property owners can do is to keep nutrients such as nitrogen (N) and phosphorus (P) out of the lakes. When you hear nutrients, think of fertilizer. Most lakes in Wisconsin (80%) are phosphorus-limited which means that if additional (P) is added to the lake, it will stimulate rapid plant and bacterial growth which can lead to large algae and Cyanobacteria (blue green algae) blooms which are always undesirable. **Figure 1** shows the impact of adding the limiting nutrient (P) on algae growth.

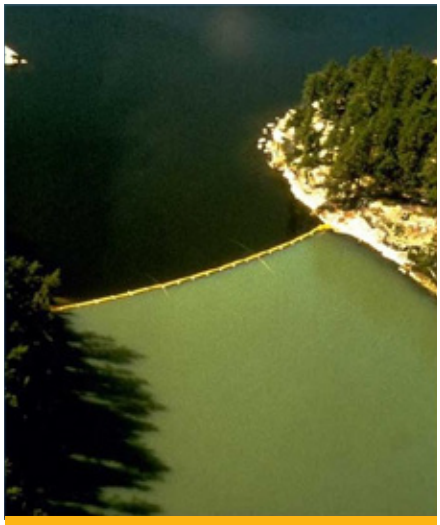


FIG 1 (above): Carbon and Nitrogen added to top lake portion; Carbon, Nitrogen AND Phosphorus added to the bottom portion.

The (P) comes from increased run-off from developed lake properties along with increased sediment. **Figure 2** shows the changes in run-off volume, phosphorus and sediment input as you move from undeveloped shoreline (base case) to semi-natural to urbanized.

FIG 2 (left): Increase in run-off, (P) and sediment based on the development type.

The 6X increase in (P) input for the urbanized shoreline is significant versus the other two examples. ***Every pound of phosphorus added to the lake is capable of generating 500 pounds of algae!*** What prevents the increase of (P) in the other examples? ***The maintenance of the "Shoreline Buffer" (Figure 3).*** *The Shoreline Buffer consists of vegetation layers from the Ordinary High-Water Mark (OHWM) up to 35 feet inland.* ***Continued next page***

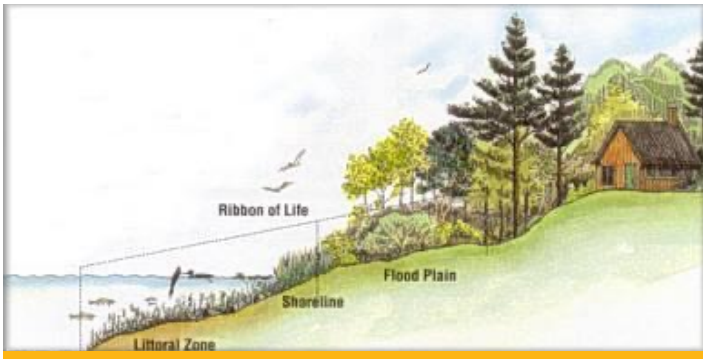


FIG 3: Shoreline buffer zone setback.

SHORELINE PRESERVATION AND RESTORATION

FIG 4: Urbanized shoreline.

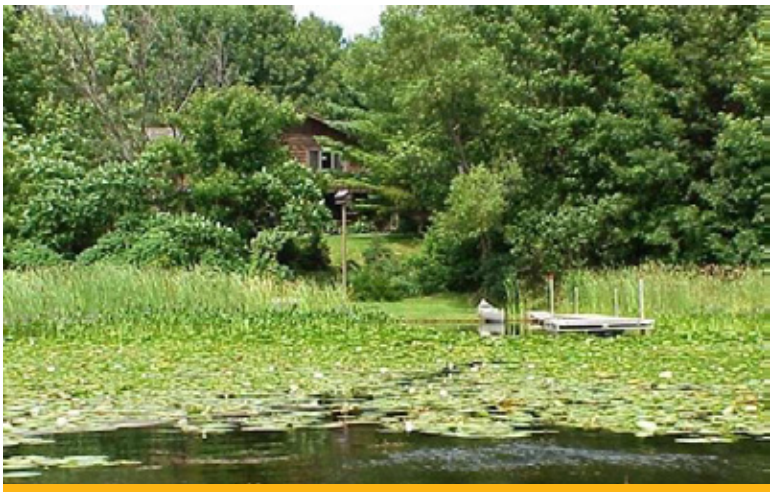


FIG 5: Developed semi-natural shoreline.

The idea is to move away from the highly urbanized shoreline **(left)** to more of a developed natural shoreline **(right)**. This can be accomplished by reestablishing as much of the 35-foot Buffer Zone as possible on your property with native plants and no cut zones.

The benefit for moving back to trees and native plants is the result of enhanced root systems which assist in soil stabilization and run-off control. The root system comparisons for various native plants and Kentucky Blue Grass are shown in **Figure 6.**

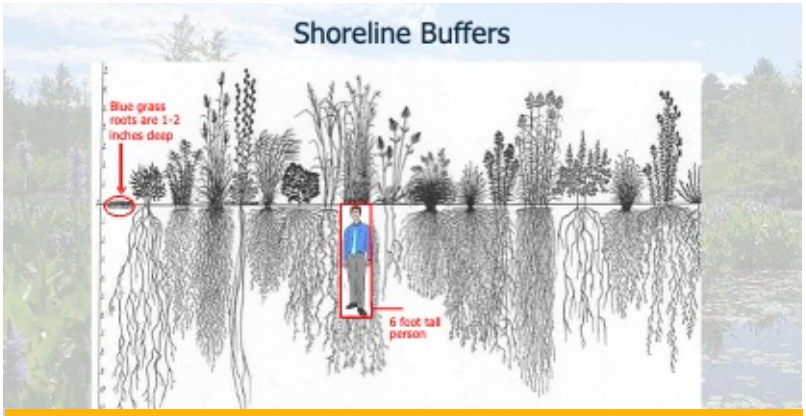


FIG 6: Native plant root system comparison.

Regulations & Requirements

Shorelines are protected in Vilas County by **Vilas County Zoning** within 300 feet landward of the lake. They should be contacted before planning any:
• Tree/stump removal • Vegetation removal • Mowing • Soil disturbance or adding sand/soil fill • Buildings • Driveways

The **Wisconsin DNR** regulates activity below the lake's OHWM. Contact them before planning any:
• Aquatic plant removal • Dredging • Docks/piers • Rip rap/seawalls • Culverts/bridges • Wetland impacts

Vilas County has also put together a Shoreland Zoning Regulation & Requirements Ordinance Guidance Brochure which should be available on their website at **vilascountyzoning.com**.

Continued next page

SHORELINE PRESERVATION AND RESTORATION

When it comes to protection of the Buffer Zone, the following information applies:

NO CUT ZONE

Land extending from the OHWM to 35 feet inland is a vegetative buffer zone. No removal of trees, shrubs, or undergrowth is permitted within the vegetative buffer zone except for the creation of a shoreline recreational area (viewing corridor).

VIEWING CORRIDOR

May be a maximum of 35 feet per 100 feet of shoreline frontage. May run contiguously for the maximum width, extending from the OHWM. Select cutting of trees and shrubbery in this area is permitted to create a recreational area if one does not exist naturally.

So, what can you do to control run-off and the corresponding phosphorus loading to the lake?

- **Protect the 35-foot buffer zone**
- **Manage stormwater on the uplands from driveways, patios, building roofs, etc.**
- **Keep as much shoreline habitat as possible**
- **Leave wood in the water when possible**
- **Restore eroded or manicured lawn areas**

Can establishment and maintenance of the buffer zone help protect our lakes? A picture is worth a thousand words.

FIG 7:
Cyanobacteria (Blue-Green Algae) growth in non-buffered, high run-off shoreline zone.

FACT SHEET SERIES:

FISH STICKS

Bony Lake, Bayfield County - Pamela Toshner

FISH STICKS, an in-lake best practice (not eligible for rivers), are large woody habitat structures that utilize whole trees grouped together, resulting in the placement of more than 1 tree per 50 feet of shoreline. Fish Sticks are anchored to the shore and are partially or fully submerged. Fish sticks are not tree drops since the trees utilized for the projects come from further than 35 feet from shore, thus they don't "rob from the bank" of trees that may otherwise grow and fall in naturally.

MAINTENANCE

COSTS

- Range: $50 – $1300 per cluster of 3-5 trees, installed *(average = $890)*
- Healthy Lakes & Rivers grant funding available: *$1000 per Fish Sticks Cluster*

MATERIALS

- Whole, live trees from outside shoreland vegetation protection area
- Cables/cabling gear
- Heavy equipment including snowplow and chainsaw
- Safety gear

DNR PERMIT

REQUIRED

PURPOSE

This fish and wildlife habitat best practice creates food, shelter, and breeding areas for all sorts of creatures from small aquatic insects, to fish, to turtles, ducks, and songbirds. Fish Sticks can also help prevent bank erosion – protecting lakeshore properties and your lake.

HOW TO BUILD

It may be necessary to work with your local DNR fisheries biologist, county land and water conservation department, or landscaper to design and/or construct this practice. Logging companies may assist with tree supply, cutting, and transportation. Check with your local zoning department to determine if any permits are necessary.

Detailed guidance is found here: http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/fishing/outreach/fishsticks.html.

1. Find a location

Ideal Fish Sticks sites have low ice energy – places like protected bays and shorelines leading to and from bays. High ice energy areas on lakes greater than 250 acres require alternate methods that ensure they remain in place.

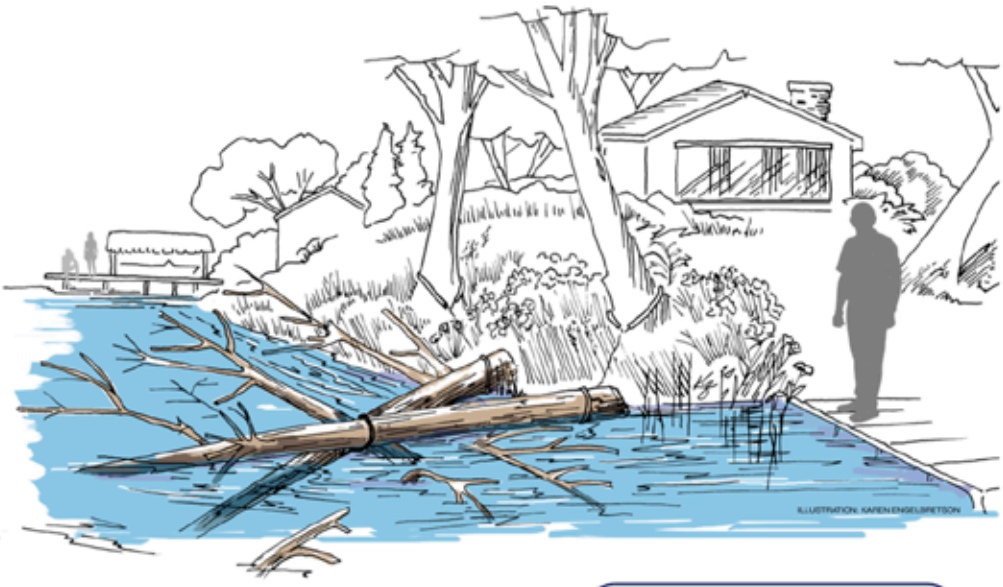
Typically a single Fish Sticks cluster occupies 50 linear feet of shoreline, so it should be placed on an area of your lakeshore that is not used for pier(s) or swimming. If you have a lot of frontage, you may choose to add more than a single Fish Sticks cluster.

PROJECT TIMELINE

SITE PREP	INSTALLATION	MAINTENANCE	PROJECT END
2 MONTHS	< 1 DAY	Spring safety check	3 YEARS
winter ice road			cable removal

Healthy Lakes & Rivers

FACT SHEET SERIES: FISH STICKS



2. Create a design

Fish Sticks structures are commonly made up of three to five whole trees. The butt ends of the trees, at the water's edge, are cabled to live trees on shore.

Sketch the design and dimensions to be sure you understand what area it will cover and how it may function or fit into your landscape. Consider the following:

- Is the water deep or shallow? Trees sink and settle with branches breaking off soon after installation, but more trees can be placed in a deepwater cluster.
- Is your lakeshore mowed adjacent to the proposed Fish Sticks site? If so, and if you would like DNR Healthy Lakes & Rivers grant funding, you must commit to not mowing a 350 ft^2 area at the base of the cluster or installing a 350 ft^2 native planting.

3. Apply for a permit

The DNR recently streamlined the water regulation permits to make it easier for you to install Fish Sticks. There is a $303 fee unless this practice is funded through the Wisconsin DNR. Eligibility standards and application materials are on the DNR website http://dnr.wi.gov/Permits/Water/.

$ FUNDING NOTE

In order to be eligible for Healthy Lakes & Rivers grant funding, properties must comply with local shoreland zoning vegetation protection area (i.e. buffer) standards. If not, the property owner must commit to a 350 ft^2 no-mow zone at the base of the Fish Sticks cluster(s) or to installing a 350 ft^2 native planting.

Scott Toshner

4. Lay out the best practice

Flag the area(s) along your waterfront property where Fish Sticks will be installed. This is important because most projects take place in the winter, making it more difficult to identify landscape features and location preferences.

5. Construct the practice

Installing Fish Sticks on ice is the most practical and inexpensive method. Identify an ice road and maintain with snow plowing until ice is adequate thickness for installation (18 inches). Cut live trees from outside the shoreline vegetation protection area, which is usually at least 35 feet from the water's edge. Transport and place the trees in criss-cross clusters or stacks and then cable and anchor them to a live tree on shore.

MAINTAINENCE

- Check on the site soon after spring ice out to be certain all the trees remain in place.
- The cables should be removed approximately three years after installation so they don't damage the live trees or litter the shore.
- Trees should remain in place for ten years if funded through a DNR Healthy Lakes & Rivers grant.

LINKS

Healthy Lakes & Rivers Website – http://healthylakeswi.com
Fish Sticks Guidance – http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/fishing/outreach/fishsticks.html
DNR Surface Water Grants – http://dnr.wi.gov/aid/surfacewater.html

For more information contact Pamela Toshner at 715-635-4073 or pamela.toshner@wi.gov.

WISCONSIN DEPT. OF NATURAL RESOURCES

WISCONSIN LAKES PARTNERSHIP

Design and layout by Amy Kowalski, Extension Lakes