



Lake
Redstone
PROTECTION DISTRICT

PROTECTION CONNECTION

SPRING 2024

NEWS FROM THE LAKE REDSTONE PROTECTION DISTRICT

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ADVICE FROM A LAKE

Be clear
Make positive ripples
Look beneath the surface
Stay calm
Shore up friendships
Take time to reflect
Be full of life



PHOTO: MIKE MITTELSTADT

LRPD board chairman's message: *Many accomplishments. And the work continues.*

Summer will soon be upon us and it will be time to start enjoying the lake.

Highlights from 2023

- **LEADERSHIP CHANGES** This past year, we had Paul Burke retire from the board. I would like to thank Paul for his years of dedicated service to the lake. David Crockett was elected to the board and he is serving as our new treasurer. He is a CPA and brings a wealth of financial knowledge to the board.
- **A NEW EDUCATION EVENT** In June, we had the inaugural "Take a Stake in the Lake" event. This was an highly informative event that inspired 12 property owners to sign up to do shoreline improvement projects in 2024 utilizing the Sauk

County and DNR Healthy Lakes reimbursement programs. These projects will also be eligible for the newly created LRPD "Shoreline Reimbursement Program."

- **MANAGEMENT PLAN PROGRESS** This past year we also updated our five-year Aquatic Plant Management Plan, completed the 3-year stream monitoring program with USGS and paid off the loan for the Meronek Meadows repair project.

2024 Planned Activities

- **DREDGING** We are at the halfway point of paying off the 2019 dredging loan. The final payment will be made in September of 2029.
- **WEIR REPLACEMENT** We will be

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Chairman *from page 1*

replacing the Meadowlark Weir (low head dam) damaged in the 2018 flood.

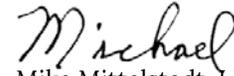
■ COUNTY STAFF SUPPORT

Recently, Sauk County Land Resource and Environment department hired Jenn Schneiderman. She will be able to provide LRPD with additional assistance with our lake management plan tasks. Additional county resources have

been identified as a key success factor by other lake groups implementing their lake management plans. We are pleased that Sauk County took steps to provide us this resource.

- **TRIBUTARY MONITORING** We have initiated a new tributary monitoring program with USGS. The data from this project will aid in filling gaps needed to evaluate projects in our 10-year lake management plan.

Have a safe and wonderful summer. If you have any questions, please contact the board at lrpd.board@gmail.com.



Mike Mittelstadt, LRPD Board Chair

DAM OR WEIR? A weir allows water to flow over the crest. Dams allow water flow to be controlled by gates or spillways. A dam usually does not allow water to go over the crest.

Producers of Lake Redstone continue work to improve water quality

By Dustin Ladd, Juneau County Conservationist

Formed in 2019, the Producers of Lake Redstone is one of more than 40 farmer-led watershed groups in Wisconsin funded by the Wisconsin Department of Ag Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP). Since 2019 the producers have received \$148,000 in grant funding for conservation practices

in the watershed. Their conservation efforts have directly improved water quality and reduced sediment in Lake Redstone.

Monitoring devices on the main streams going in to the lake tell us agricultural runoff into the lake continues to be minimal thanks to the efforts of farmers, aided by Juneau County personnel.

In 2023, the Producers of Lake Redstone received \$24,400 in grant funding. These funds were used to support education and outreach, farm research and demonstration projects, and cost-sharing conservation practices implemented in the Redstone Watershed. The cost-sharing program increases on-the-ground practices and farmer

participation, encourages farmers to implement conservation practices for the first time, experiment with new practices, or increase the number of practices they are already using.

In 2023, 20 members of the Producers of Lake Redstone participated and eleven of those members received cost sharing to implement conservation practices. Thanks to those 11 farmers, nearly 1,000 acres of cover crops were planted with no-till planting or planted into a living cover – both practices that reduce sediment dramatically – even though less than half of those acres were cost shared by the grant.

Over the past five years the group has been making steady progress, adding new farmers to the group every year, experimenting with different conservation practices, hosting field days, and partnering with other producer-led groups for educational events.

Utilizing the stream gauging by USGS as well as the Discovery Farms Edge-of-Field sites we can see the impacts of these watershed efforts paying off in terms of reduced sediment and nutrients entering Lake Redstone from agricultural fields. ■

PHOTO: DUSTIN LADD



PHOTO: DUSTIN LADD



Above left: Farmer from the Redstone Watershed partnering with a farmer from the Lemonweir Watershed for on-farm research.

Left : Waffle Farm pasture walk

Lake Redstone fishery survey update

By Nate Nye, Wisconsin DNR Senior Fisheries Biologist

Thanks to recent and regular fishery surveys, we know Lake Redstone's fish population is robust and healthy.

Muskies!

The recent fishery survey was completed by the DNR in spring 2023 with an April netting survey of muskies. Based on the number of muskies marked in 2022, and the number of marked fish recaptured in 2023, the population of adult muskies over 30 inches was estimated at 274 fish, or about 1 adult fish per 2 acres. That was up from the estimate of 200 fish or 1 adult fish per 3 acres from the 2010-2011 survey. The increase in population size was due to a lengthy period of stocking muskies every year as part of a musky stocking study led by the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point. Musky stocking has since returned to its normal every other year schedule and the musky population should slowly return to the 1 fish per 3 acres average, making it a trophy fishery — a lake with muskies 50 inches or larger.

Final Fishing survey published soon
In other news, the final report on the 2022-23 survey is complete, and is just awaiting final approval by the DNR Office of Communications before it

can be published to the website for public viewing.

Bag limit change

A change to the daily bag limit for walleye, sauger, and hybrids on inland waters statewide was approved in 2023 and took effect on April 1, 2024. The daily bag limit was reduced from 5 fish to 3 fish and regulation signs have been updated to reflect this change. This change came about after an extensive outreach effort by the DNR Walleye Management Team, as well as citizen support through the Wisconsin Conservation Congress spring hearing questionnaire in 2022 (advisory question) and 2023 (rule change proposal).

Moving forward, an additional regulation change is being considered for Lake Redstone to increase the minimum length limit for walleyes from 15 to 18 inches. Combined with an improved stocking program (large fingerlings) and very fast growth of walleyes, the DNR biologist feels this regulation change would create a better fishery by increasing adult walleye abundance, improving catch rates for anglers, and creating a larger pool of fish that could grow to impressive sizes; walleyes average



A 46.1 inches, 31.5 pounds muskie held by DNR fisheries technician Casey Weber.

over 20 inches by age 5, and females average over 25 inches by age 7 in Lake Redstone. The rule proposal would appear on the 2025 spring hearing questionnaire, and if approved would take effect in 2026. See DNR survey report for full details when published and contact DNR Fisheries Biologist Nate Nye with

The 2022 Fishery Survey

Interested in learning more about the fishing survey? Find details in our 2023 newsletter at:

lakeredstonepd.org/newsletters

LRPD ANNUAL MEETING



Saturday, Aug. 3 ■ Time and location to be announced

We hope you'll come to our annual meeting that will last about an hour and a half. We'll talk about many successes and plans for this year.

LOVE THE LAKE AND WANT TO HELP IMPROVE IT?

Please consider running for the commissioner seat open this year. These are very part-time, paid positions with occasional virtual meetings. You can work full time, live out of the area, and be a commissioner. Contact any board member for more information. To become a candidate, you will need to send a short biography to the LRPD Board Secretary at P.O. Box 313 in La Valle or ken.keegstra@gmail.com.

A meeting reminder and agenda, proposed budget, and biographies of board candidates will be mailed in early July. ■

Sediment control: Vital to the well-being of our lake

By Pat Sullivan, LRPD Sediment Control Committee Chair

PHOTO: PAT SULLIVAN

In 2023 the Sediment Control Committee team followed guidelines established in the LRPD 10-Year Management Plan. These efforts will show further growth in 2024 as our activities with Sauk and Juneau counties will continue to be expanded.

Data about farm practices informs decisions

The Cropland Roadside Transect Survey which began in 2022 happens every spring and fall when crop and tillage methods within the watershed are documented. This data helps the farmers keep their soil and reduce livestock waste from going into the watershed and they also use it to make decisions to optimize production. And, it helps when county personnel and the LRPD have the same data as they all work together for the good of the lake.

Identifying, monitoring, and mitigating major runoff-producing sites Numerous places where water with sediment and phosphorus flows into the lake are routinely monitored – 8-10 in a

typical year: culverts, ditches, steep banks, and natural streams. In addition to annual “drive-around” inspections by the LRPD, residents also report runoff-related places of concern to the LRPD board.

Annual photos of each site help determine if they require new action or maintenance to control the runoff. Monitoring can result in a variety of decisions: monitor until next year, do a temporary fix, contact a property owner if the solution could involve them, or engineer a plan to apply for a governmental grant for a full repair. For example, this summer Martin Meadowlark Bay is targeted for a full

repair to a failed weir (low dam) with funding coming primarily from a grant.

The photo library is also used to support grant applications. And this documentation supports claims made to FEMA or other agencies in cases of emergency, too.

Two DNR grants

Last year, two DNR grants were approved as part of the surface water restoration program. Unfortunately, the Chickadee South grant was canceled due to a change in direction, but the Martin Meadowlark weir (dam) repair will be scheduled later this summer when the bidding process is complete. The Sauk county grants have been approved again

for this spring and the sediment control team is working on a couple more Lake Redstone bay-related prospects for this DNR grant that is available to all lakes in Sauk county.

We continue to work on improving gullies and ravines coming out of the watershed that lack control during rain events due to debris, obstruction, volume, or required work in culvert areas. And, we'll continue annual surveying of gullies where the history is helpful for us to establish priorities.

The Clean Boats Clean Waters program is working

A major reason why Lake Redstone does not have aquatic invasive species such as zebra mussels is the Clean Boats Clean Water program established by the Wisconsin DNR. In many other lakes, invasive species have highly impacted fishing and water quality.



Grass has short roots and does little to keep water and sediment from flowing into the lake.

Private properties are a major source of regular sediment and phosphorus deposits into the lake.

With the high level of concern over the spread of aquatic invasive species to other inland lakes, this program will always remain a high priority.

The CBCW program provides boat landing inspectors trained to meet with incoming and outgoing boaters and educate them on how and where invasive species are most likely to hitch a ride into water bodies. Inspectors report their daily findings to the DNR for comparison with other lakes in the state.

In 2023 and in most years in the past, Lake Redstone has had two inspectors that work the Section 11 landing and the Sauk county landing during key summer boating times. Their wages are funded by a DNR Surface Water Grant. LRPD applies for this grant annually. To qualify for the grant, the inspectors are required to work 200 hours throughout the summer.

A NEW Reimbursement Program for Runoff/Shoreline Improvement! Monitoring devices in the streams coming into the lake indicate the sources of sediment and phosphorous.

Continued on next page

Education and Outreach: Impactful activities and exciting plans

By Brad Horner, LRPD Education and Outreach Committee Chair

Contrary to popular perception, most of the regular sediment and phosphorus coming into the lake no longer comes from farmer fields thanks to widespread changes in farming practices. The possible exception to this is when there is a 100+ year rain events such as in 2008 and 2018. Therefore, the 1000+ private properties around the lake are a major source of regular sediment and phosphorus deposits into the lake. This impacts water clarity and ultimately, the need for dredging.

Does your property have grass running right up to the lake or to riprap? The typical half-acre lot of this type is contributing about a dime-width of sediment (1000 pounds), and 10 pounds of phosphorus, into the lake each year. Grass has short roots and does relatively little to stop runoff. Improving shorelines not only reduces runoff into the lake, it can also increase the aesthetics and property value.

The new LRPD Runoff/Shoreline reimbursement program will provide up to \$2000 reimbursement per property. This is in addition to money available from the DNR and Sauk County. Be aware that Sauk County also offers free, on-site advising and will manage the project contractor!

If you want to find out more about the methods to reduce runoff, and all three reimbursement programs, go to the LRPD website at lakeredstonepd.org/shorelineimprovement. Included is a video of the 2022 LRPD Shoreline Improvement Workshop including presentations by DNR and Sauk County reps explaining their programs, and a document explaining the new LRPD program. If you still have questions, you can send an email to: lrpd.board@gmail.com. ■

2023 Activities

■ TAKE A STAKE IN OUR LAKE EVENT



Last year's poster

The Education and Outreach Committee hosted the 'Take Stake in Our Lake' event in June. Over 70 people attended the event and interacted with displays and people from many area organizations.

■ NEW COMMUNICATIONS

The committee expanded communications to people around the lake especially via weekly email updates about the lake to the 400 households who are members of the Lake Redstone Property Owners Association.

■ LRPD SURVEY OF PROPERTY OWNERS

The committee completed the summary and communication of the 2022 LRPD Survey of district property owners. You can see the survey results summary and details at lakeredstonepd.org/survey-results.

■ LRPD NEWSLETTER

Published the annual newsletter.

Plans for 2024

■ CO-PLAN AND HOLD A "FIELD DAY"

The LRPD will partner with Sauk County, Juneau County, and the Producers of Lake Redstone to have a big event for property owners on and around Lake Redstone. To be held on the McWilliams farm on the west side of Lake Redstone. Date and details to be determined.

■ PROVIDE RUNOFF IMPROVEMENT SIGNS

We will provide a yard sign for placement near the lake, to property owners who have made reimbursed or unreimbursed runoff improvements.



New signs will help highlight lake properties which have had runoff improvements.

E.g. vegetated shoreline buffer, water diversion, rain gardens, or rock infiltration. People who display the sign will do a great service to the lake by helping to publicize the need for controlling runoff. Contact bhorner1486@hotmail.com if you might like a sign.

■ IDENTIFY SHORELINE IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Help Sauk County identify property owners to contact regarding opportunities to improve their property in terms of runoff/shoreline improvement. New property owners and owners of new construction would be included.

Thanks to Sue Walters and Jay Kolb for being E&O Committee members. ■



PHOTO: MIKAELA THORNE

CONNECT WITH US

Find membership forms at the North End Tavern. See us on Facebook. Email lakeredstoneFC@gmail.com



PHOTO: NICK RETZLAFF

Lake Redstone Fishing Club does more than fish

By Nick Hewitt, Lake Redstone Fishing Club Chair

The LRFCC's mission is to enable positive fishing experiences by promoting conservation, education, recreation and safety. Our club is open to all and made up of all kinds of anglers. Some of our members are local, some live nearby and others are vacationers. We work closely with our friends at the Lake Redstone Protection District, with whom we share numerous members. The LRFCC also works with the DNR and Sauk County Parks.

Stocking Walleye

The Fishing Club's main "claim to fame" is stocking the lake with walleye. Every-other-year we stock our lake with large fingerling walleye, which the DNR has shown has a higher survival rate than the fry that had been stocked previously. These stockings are funded entirely by the LRFCC.

Fun fishing events!

The LRFCC meets monthly to discuss current fishing topics, learn more

Above: Jim Gore with a nice Lake Redstone crappie

Left: Nick Retzlaff with a smallmouth bass.

about the lake, meet neighbors and plan events. We host a free ice fishing Fisheree in the winter. In late winter you may find us building wooden fish cribs to improve habitat. We do clean-up work around Earth Day, and in June we work with North End Tavern to host the Carp-a-Thon, a bowfishing event which removes lots of common carp from our lake (much to the delight of the Protection District). Later in the summer we hold Whiskers for Walleye, a catfish and bullhead tournament to raise funds for our stocking efforts. The two annual summer events set records for turnout and fish caught in 2023.

The Fishing Club also offers an Outdoors Career scholarship, which is awarded to a graduating senior who is pursuing a career in conservation. Thanks to generous donors and our fundraising efforts, we have been able to increase the scholarship to \$1000 this year. And don't forget the UTV raffle at North End Tavern in the fall!

We have a lot to offer fishing enthusiasts. Please reach out if you want to join a meeting, put in some volunteer hours, or simply meet and talk fishing. ■

LOVE YOUR LAKE

Volunteer to help

The LRPD volunteer needs will keep changing with new initiatives and grant requirements.

Whether you can donate a few hours per week, month, or year – in person or virtually – we'd love your help doing this rewarding, important work.

WRITE OR MANAGE GRANTS

The LRPD's Lake Management Plan requires applying for multiple grants to complete various improvement project work. Grants save taxpayers money.

HELP WITH EVENTS

The annual meeting and other special meetings and events called by the board need organizers and set up people. We especially need help with our annual meeting this August.

INTERESTED? Contact any board member at lrpd.board@gmail.com. ■

Two important organizations helping our lake

- 1 The Lake Redstone Protection District (LRPD)** protects and rehabilitates the lake water quality. It is a governmental body funded through a small property tax assessment paid by the 1000+ property owners in the district.
- 2 The Lake Redstone Property Owners Association (LRPOA)** focuses on communications, social events, and safety. It is a volunteer membership organization typically of 400+ households.

Aquatic Plants – Essential or a nuisance?

By Ken Keegstra, LRPD Water Quality Committee Chair

Aquatic plants are an essential part of a healthy lake. But too many plants along the shoreline can be a nuisance. Both things can be true at the same time. Consequently, the Lake Redstone Protection District (LRPD) spends considerable resources, both time and money, monitoring the populations of aquatic plants in Lake Redstone and performing control efforts when necessary.

Two types of aquatic plant surveys
During the past few years, LRPD has performed two different types of aquatic plant surveys. The first is a point intercept (PI) survey that provides quantitative information about all plants in a particular area, either specific bays or the entire lake. The second is a shoreline survey that provides qualitative information on the density and location of invasive plants, mainly Eurasian Water Milfoil.

Number of plants decreasing
What has been learned from the survey work? The results of the 2022 whole lake PI survey demonstrated that all plants, both native plants and invasive species, declined in Lake Redstone over the past 10 years. Details are presented in Figure 10 of the updated Aquatic Plant Management Plan (APMP) – available on the LRPD website at lakeredstonepd.org/aquatic-plant-management. Thus, one of the goals of the new APMP covering the next 5 years is to protect native plants in Lake Redstone.

Eurasian Water Milfoil mystery
Another important conclusion from the survey data is that the amount and location of EWM changes in unpredictable ways. For example, the recent shoreline surveys reported 5.0 acres of dense EWM in 2021 that had increased to 12.8 acres of dense EWM

in 2022. But by 2023, the area of dense EWM had decreased to 0.56 acres even though no herbicide treatments were performed since 2018. More details on plants in Lake Redstone can be found in the full reports available on the LRPD website (see link above).

If you have Eurasian Water Milfoil

What can be done if your shoreline is an area where EWM is at nuisance levels? The main solution available to individual homeowners

One of the goals for the next five years is to protect native plants in Lake Redstone.

Manual removal of EWM. It is important to remove the plants from the water. They make great compost.

is to perform manual removal of EWM, either yourself or by hiring someone to do it for you. This can be done without a permit unless your shoreline is designated a sensitive area. Details of how to perform manual removal can be obtained by doing an internet search with the phrase 'Manual removal of Eurasian

water milfoil.' One important point is to remove the plants from the water. Once removed from the water the plants can be composted to provide great soil amendments for a flower or vegetable garden.

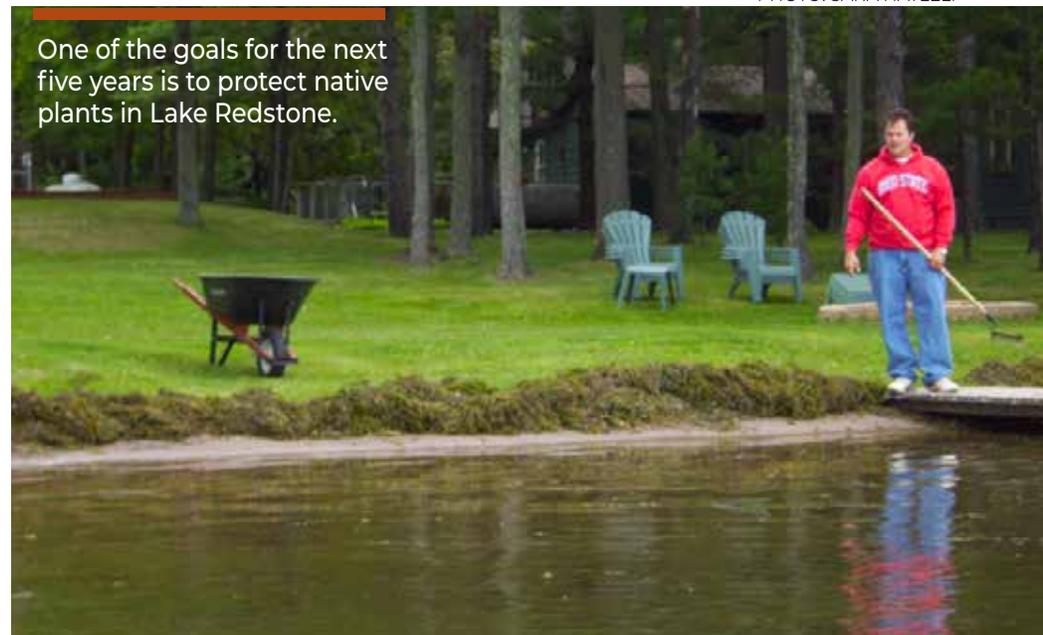
For additional information, send specific questions to lrpd.board@gmail.com. ■

PHOTO: DAVE BLUMER



Eurasian Water Milfoil (EWM).

PHOTO: SARA HATLELI





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LAKE REDSTONE PROTECTION DISTRICT

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lakeredstonepd.org

Scan to find us on Facebook:



Scan to find our website:



Protecting and rehabilitating the water quality of Lake Redstone for its residents and the public.

Chairman: Mike Mittelstadt ■ mbmittelstadt@gmail.com

Secretary: Ken Keegstra ■ ken.keegstra@gmail.com

Treasurer: Dave Crockett ■ dcrock7156@gmail.com

Assistant Treasurer: Pat Sullivan ■ gsully8@comcast.net

Vice Chairman: Brad Horner ■ bhorner1486@hotmail.com

LaValle Town Rep: Ray Demaskie ■ raydemaskie@townoflavalle.us

Sauk County Rep: Peter Kinsman ■ peter.kinsman@co.sauk.wi.us

BOARD MEETINGS are monthly at 6 p.m. on the second Tuesday at the La Valle Town Hall on 324 Highway 33

Agendas are posted at:

- The La Valle Post Office
- The Town of La Valle Hall
- Hartje's Travel Center, Market & Hardware in La Valle

NAMEPLATE AND MASTHEAD PHOTOS: TOM WALTERS