



Deer Lake Conservancy  
 P.O. Box 1139  
 St. Croix Falls, Wisconsin 54024

# Deer Lake Conservancy Report



Summer Edition



JULY 2016

## Deer Lake Recognized for Lake Success

The work of the Deer Lake Conservancy is receiving attention across North America! It turns out that a clear demonstration of lake water quality improvement is quite rare, and our results are getting noticed.

In recognition of striking lake improvements in water clarity, the Deer Lake Conservancy received the 2015 "Lake Management Success Story" award at the 2015 North American Lake Management Society (NALMS) Symposium in Saratoga Springs, NY. Jim Miller accepted the award on behalf of the Conservancy in Saratoga Springs. The award recognized the importance of effective lake organizations, partnerships

with state and local government, and dedicated engagement by volunteer lake leaders.

The Wisconsin Lakes Partnership recognized Deer Lake and this award with an article in the Wisconsin Lake Tides Newsletter. The article was entitled "Local Efforts, Big News. Deer Lake Conservancy Wins National Recognition for Successful Watershed Efforts." And, the Wisconsin DNR's Natural Resources magazine will feature large and small scale work in Deer Lake watersheds with an article in the fall of 2016. Several watershed and waterfront projects will be featured in this article.



## Annual Flagstad Farm Celebration

Hosted by the Deer Lake Conservancy

Join your Deer Lake friends and neighbors for live music and refreshments at the Flagstad Farm.

Saturday, July 30, 2016 • 6-9 PM

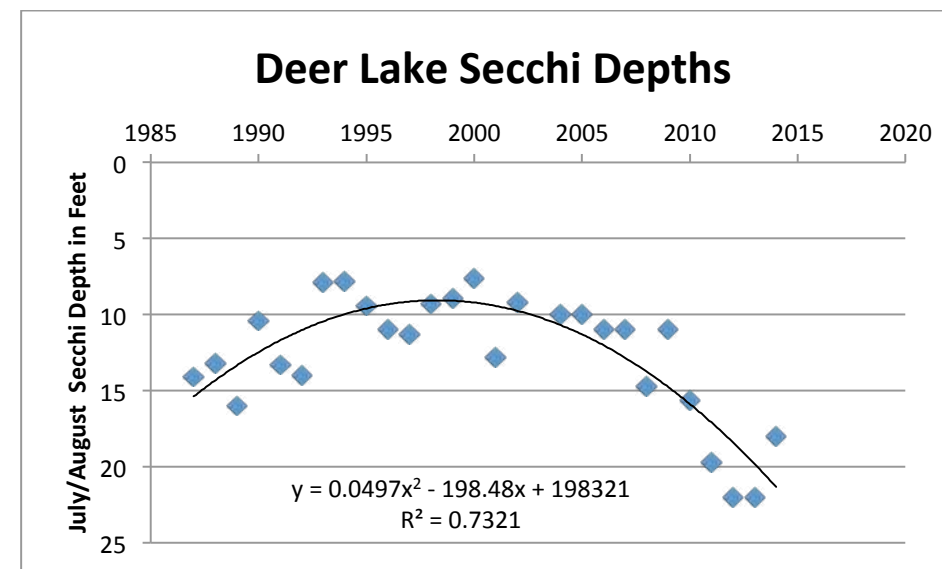
**PRAIRIE TOURS!!**

See the best view of Deer Lake!

All ages and guests are welcome.

### 2016 CONSERVANCY OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

Phillip Foussard, President  
 Jim Miller, Vice President  
 Tom Pesek, Secretary/Treasurer  
 Mark Boyken  
 Tom McBride  
 John Patterson  
 Tom Walther  
 John Wright



Deer Lake Improvement Association volunteers began measuring water clarity in 1987 using a Secchi disk. A Secchi disk is an 8" black and white disk which is lowered below the surface of the lake. The point at which the disk is no longer visible is recorded as the Secchi depth. Greater Secchi depths are equivalent to greater water clarity. Secchi disk measurements in the late 1980s indicated that water clarity was decreasing and the lake was becoming more polluted. Results today show marked improvement. Special thanks go to Dave Bauman and family for taking these measurements over the past several years. Dave's late May and early June 2016 measurements averaged over 21 feet in Deer Lake's East Deep Hole!



### 2016 Annual Meeting

Please join us for our Annual Meeting

Saturday, July 9th  
 9:00 a.m.

Trollhaugen  
 Convention Center



## Project Updates

### DEER LAKE WATERFRONT PROJECTS

Deer Lake property owners continue to install projects to reduce runoff and pollutants flowing to Deer Lake. With large watershed projects completed, our current focus is on medium-scale to individual lot projects. Every owner's efforts make a difference! Jack and Molly Emmer installed a series of infiltration projects in 2015 with the assistance of the Deer Lake Conservancy. Conservancy technical and financial assistance is supported by Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources grants. Steve Palmer from Palmer's Landscaping worked with the Emmers and Conservancy consultant, Cheryl Clemens, to design and install the project.

We'll let Molly tell the story. . . .

*We completed the project because we noticed erosion on our hill that seemed to be getting worse each year since we bought the home in 2004. We tried seeding multiple times with the hope that grass coverage would slow down and/or absorb some of the water, but the seed eventually just washed away. We tried some much more minor diversion tactics as well with gutters and rerouting. As the erosion continued, we became increasingly concerned about the integrity of the land, but also the hardscape which was a significant financial investment.*

*Our experience is limited as we have only been up this year on Memorial Day Weekend. However, I can already see a significant decrease in the chasm that was starting to develop in the hill and I can actually see the potential for a decent lawn! Although the rain garden needs work and weeding, the grass is growing AND staying! So far so good!*

*We are very grateful to the Conservancy and Cheryl for your experience, knowledge, and obviously financial help. We knew that we had to do something permanent and major, but we were very overwhelmed. Involving the Conservancy took all of the pressure off. We were able to let go and let you lead and it was such a relief. Knowing that the Conservancy is dedicated to the preservation of the land and not in the business of profit, gave us confidence in the legitimacy of the plan and the price.*

*We are so thankful that our neighbor made us aware of the potential help from the Conservancy. I have no doubt that their assistance made us act more quickly and we can be assured that things are done properly for the long run. Without their direction, we wouldn't have known where to start or the best course of action.*

Thank you!  
Molly Emmer



Technical and financial assistance for infiltration projects such as this rain garden at the Emmer property is available from the Deer Lake Conservancy.

Contact Cheryl at [harmonyenv@amerytel.net](mailto:harmonyenv@amerytel.net) or 715-268-9992 for more information.

### JOHNSON PRESERVE UPDATE

Owner Julian Andersen and Conservancy board members continue to work together to establish permanent protection of the 95-acre Gustav and Elizabeth Johnson Preserve. Current efforts involve developing an extra layer of protection for the property with a conservation easement to be held by the West Wisconsin Land Trust. Once the easement is in place, we can resume discussion on Deer Lake Conservancy purchase of the property. Both Julian and the Conservancy board hope to complete this process by the end of 2016. We will keep you posted on our progress.

Meanwhile we have hired engineers to investigate measures to slow water flow from ponds on the eastern edge of the Preserve. This will reduce significant erosion along an intermittent stream channel which flows to Dry Creek then directly to Deer Lake. Long term plans for the Preserve include an expansion of the Conservancy trail system to connect the Rock Creek and Dry Creek trails.



### BOAT WAKES - IN-DEPTH INVESTIGATIONS

No-wake areas are established in Wisconsin Boating Regulations to provide for safe boating and prevent shoreline erosion. Please be sure that your family and guests are aware of these rules. These rules, along with a dose of common sense considering type of boat and depth of water, can also protect lake water quality.

- It is illegal to operate a vessel at greater than slow, no wake speed within 100 feet of the shoreline, any dock, raft, pier, or restricted area on any lake.
- It is illegal to operate a personal watercraft (aka Jet Ski) at greater than slow, no wake speed within 200 feet of the shoreline or within 100 feet of any dock, raft, or pier.

Why the concern about boat wakes next to the shoreline?

Boat wakes, or waves, can cause considerable shoreline erosion, in some cases leading to the need for expensive shoreline stabilization measures such as rock rip rap. In addition to causing shoreline erosion, boat waves can stir up nutrient rich lake bottom sediments reducing water clarity from suspended sediments and increasing phosphorus levels which cause algae blooms. The degree of disturbance depends on the speed of travel, the size of the motor, and the type of boat. Research presented at the North American Lake Management Society provided information for the table below. Bottom line is greater numbers of boats, especially larger boats in study lakes led to greater pollutants in the water. This disturbance and resulting lake pollution can be minimized by paying attention to the lake depth at which disturbance can occur with your boat. Luckily, there is plenty of space to boat in Deer Lake where depths are greater than 20 feet. A lake depth map is found at <http://dnr.wi.gov/lakes/maps/DNR/2619400a.pdf>

Type of Boat	Depth of Disturbance below Water Surface
Personal Watercraft	Near the surface
Pleasure Boats (Pontoons)	10 feet
Water Sport Boats (especially wake boats)	15-20 feet

