VAN VLIET NEWS

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INFORMATIONAL MEETING HELD ON SEPTEMBER 4TH

On September 4th, an informational meeting was held at Taylor's Alpine Lodge to discuss concerns about Van Vliet Lake, provide an opportunity to get to know one another, and consider ideas for the future. The focus was to develop a better means for communication and development of information about the lake.

About 60 people attended the meeting representing 25 different properties in or around Van Vliet Lake.

The primary speaker was Dr. Carl Watras with the Research Bureau of the DNR stationed at Trout Lake. Dr. Watras had recently been involved the formation of a lake association on Carlin Lake where he resides.

Dr. Watras discussed the general features of Van Vliet Lake and some of the likely impact of those features. Van Vliet Lake is a shallow and rather fertile lake. These features will allow for good aquatic weed growth, periodic algae blooms and will also support a good fish population.

Dr. Watras' feeling was that warm and sunny days which we had in June and July were the most likely causes of the large algae bloom which occurred in July and early August. The particular algae involved is resident on the lake bottom in shallow areas. As it grows, it will produce large amounts of oxygen and float to the surface.

According to Dr. Watras, this form of algae can double itself in twenty four hours under ideal conditions which makes harvesting of it a difficult task.

Other causes may be increased fertility in the watershed. Sources of this fertility could be lawn fertilizer, septic system failure and other forms of nutrients washing into the lake.

Comment was made that beaver dams on the Presque Isle River had not been removed this year, and that the water was quite high. Dr. Watras indicated that the dams might restrict the flow somewhat and impact on the fertility in the lake.

An interesting comment by Dr. Watras was that the water in the lake changes probably about every 5 to 10 years. He compared this to Carlin Lake which has no outlet and whose water escapes only through seepage and evaporation. Carlin Lake's water is thus considerably "older" than Van Vliet's.

In addition to supporting a good fish population, Dr Watras indicated the fertility and aquatic weed growth in the lake helped to buffer Van Vliet Lake from acid rain impact. The acidity in Van Vliet Lake is relatively low.

Dr. Watras indicated that a number of things could be done to study the lake including the measurement of clarity and water quality.

Dr. Watras also described the various organizations which can assist lakeowners in studying and managing a lake. These include the Department of Natural Resources, the University of Wisconsin Extension and the Wisconsin Association of Lakes. Funds are available to qualified organizations to develop study and management plans.

LAKE ASSOCIATION DISCUSSED

Tom Olson, who owns the point at the south end of the lake, and Dr. Watras presented a discussion of the various forms of organization which are available to lakeshore property owners interested in understanding and managing a lake.

There are 3 basic forms: they are (1) a lake management district; (2) a qualified voluntary lake association; and (3) a voluntary lake association.

Lake Management District

Many of you may recall a discussion we had in 1982 regarding the formation of a lake management district. This is a quasi-governmental form which has the power to assess property owners when it takes certain actions. In 1982, it was the only form of organization which could receive governmental assistance.

Its positives are that it has the power to raise money by assessing property owners. Its negatives are that same power. It is governed by its members who must be 50% of the owners on the lake.

Qualified Lake Association

A qualified lake association is a **voluntary** association of 25 or more property owners who live within a 1 mile radius of a lake. Its purpose must be to maintain or improve the quality of the lake. Its by-laws must state that it is organized to protect or improve a lake for the benefit of the general public.

Dues must be between $10 and $25 per year. If it is organized properly, it does qualify for tax-exempt status.

A qualified lake association is governed by its members. It can seek grants and assistance from the Department of Natural Resources for lake study and improvement. The grants are 75% from the state and must be matched with 25% from the association for a study grant. The state will match 50% for improvement activities.

Lake Association

A lake association differs from a "qualified lake association" in that it does not carry the same requirement for its purpose to benefit and preserve a lake for the benefit of the public. As a result, it cannot qualify for state assistance. Otherwise, it is quite similar to a qualified lake association.

Action Taken

On a unanimous vote of those present, the group decided to proceed further with the formation of a **qualified lake association.** A steering committee of volunteers was formed to develop by-laws and articles of incorporation. It was agreed that the initial dues would be $10.

The group tentatively agreed that the first meeting of the association would be on July 2, 1995 at Taylor's Alpine Lodge on Van Vliet Lake. We will seek a speaker from either the DNR or UW-Extension on the subject of either water quality/aquatic weeds or fish management.

Steering Committee

The steering committee will review and prepare articles of incorporation and by-laws. Upon agreement to the articles and by-laws, the committee plans to provide information to all property owners on the lake and in the vicinity.

Steering Committee Members

The members of the steering committee are:

Ken and Nancy Gross
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Steve and Linda Smithson
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Tom and Barbara Olson
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If you have any comments regarding the development of the by-laws and articles or any other matter of interest regarding the association feel free to contact one of the members of the Steering Committee. The Committee plans to meet on October 29th to continue its activities.

INTERESTS, ISSUES SURVEYED

Your neighbors were surveyed in a totally unscientific manner to determine the range and prevalence of interests and issues.

Interests identified on the basis of favorite activity on the lake were:

(1) Fishing
(2) Solitude
(3) Swimming
(4) Nature watching
(5) Boating
(6) Water skiing.

All were asked to provide feedback on the greatest issues. Those were identified as follows:

(1) Water quality
(2) Nutrients in water
(3) Weeds, algae
(4) Fishery/stocking
(5) Beaver dams
(6) Sediment removal

THANKS

To:

Dr. Carl Watras for his informative discussion.

Forbes and Toddy Taylor for hosting our meeting.

Everyone who called their neighbors and advised them of the meeting.

All who attended the meeting.

The Steering Committee for volunteering to give their time to this effort.

-Tom Olson-