



P.O. Box 93
 Star Prairie, WI 54026
 cedarlake-wi.org



Volume 7 • First Edition

A NEWSLETTER FOR OUR FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS

May 2020

MEETING WATER QUALITY GOALS

WDNR CONTINUES FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR ALUM TREATMENTS

The Lake District recently received two Wisconsin Department of Natural Resource grants to support the next alum treatment.

- \$200,000 Lake Protection Grant for Alum Treatment
- \$25,000 Lake Planning Grant for Alum Monitoring

The most recent alum treatment occurred in 2019. We mailed a report of treatment results and funding plans to lake residents in December of 2019. This report and the full 2019 monitoring report are available on the website: Cedarlake-wi.com. In summary, algae growth has declined and water clarity has improved significantly following alum treatments in 2017 and 2019. In 2019, algae growth, as measured by chlorophyll, was about half that of 2010. Prior to the alum treatment, lake residents recall lake-wide, persistent algae blooms. Our lake algae blooms are now infrequent, short-lived, and tend to be windblown to specific shoreline areas.

We have applied 42% of the recommended alum dose through 2019. With the new grant, a third alum treatment could occur as early as 2021. We rely upon results of monitoring led by Bill James from UW-Stout to guide Cedar Lake alum treatments.

HORSE CREEK COOPERATIVE MONITORING

One component of Lake District alum monitoring is to collect water samples and measure water flow to assess nutrients flowing into Cedar Lake from its tributary Horse Creek. The Horse Creek Watershed Farmer-Led Council also has a Horse Creek testing program to assess the effectiveness of their efforts. Representatives from the Lake District, Polk County, and UW-Stout met to coordinate Horse Creek monitoring efforts and provide information to both the Lake District and the Farmer-Led Council. The Lake District's \$2,000 annual donation to the Farmer-Led Council will support the combined testing program for 2020.

The Farmer-Led Council promotes practices that benefit soil health, farm profitability, and water quality, encourages farmer leadership, and shares knowledge. Horse Creek Watershed Farmer-Led Council efforts have led to decreased phosphorus and sediment loading in Horse Creek. The Lake District has contributed to their efforts since 2014.

More information is available at <https://farmerledwatershed.org/>



CEDAR LAKE PROTECTION
AND REHABILITATION DISTRICT

ANNUAL MEETING

9:00 a.m.

Saturday, August 1, 2020

(TENTATIVE)

Star Prairie Town Hall,
2118 Cook Drive, Somerset, WI

WATCH FOR POTENTIAL MEETING DATE OR FACILITY
CHANGES RELATED TO COVID-19 CONCERNS

Final meeting date, time, location, agenda, and budget will be sent via US mail and posted on the website cedarlake-wi.org and at the Star Prairie Community Center and Town of Alden and Town of Star Prairie Town Halls prior to the meeting.

REGULAR BOARD MEETINGS ARE HELD AT 5:30 P.M.
ON THE FOURTH TUESDAY OF THE MONTH
AT ALDEN TOWN HALL, 183 155TH STREET, STAR PRAIRIE, WI
OR VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE.

CONTACT harmonyenv@amerytel.net
TO REQUEST MEETING INFORMATION FOR
PUBLIC ACCESS TO BOARD VIDEO CONFERENCE MEETINGS.

COMMISSIONER ELECTIONS BOARD NOMINATION PROCESS

Elections will be held for two positions held by current board members at the 2020 Annual Meeting. In order to be included on the ballot at the annual meeting, a candidate must submit a written notice of the intent to run for a commissioner position. The notice must be received by the secretary of the Cedar Lake Protection and Rehabilitation District 60 days prior to the annual meeting. The annual meeting notice will include commissioner positions to be voted on and the candidates running for those positions. Write-in candidates are not allowed in commissioner elections nor are nominations allowed during the annual meeting. District members will be asked to vote for candidates to fill each position with an expiring term. Candidates receiving the most votes will serve as commissioners.

COMMISSIONER POSITIONS

Commissioners are elected to 3 year terms.

COMMISSIONER ELIGIBILITY

If not appointed as a Town or County representative, the board nominee must be an eligible voter of the Cedar Lake P&R District.

COMMISSIONER EXPECTATIONS

Commissioners must regularly attend monthly board meetings. Commissioners must serve as an officer of the board or lead a board committee. In order to understand Lake District operations, the board encourages Lake District members and prospective commissioner candidates to participate in monthly board meetings and Lake District committee projects and groups.

INVASIVE SPECIES

PREVENTING AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES (AIS): WITH OR WITHOUT MONITORS PRESENT

Cedar Lake's Clean Boats, Clean Waters inspectors provide a line of defense against introduction of aquatic invasive species by educating boaters at the landing. As of the publication date of this newsletter, it isn't clear when our AIS defenders (aka Clean Boats, Clean Waters inspectors) will be in place in 2020 because of COVID 19 concerns. It is up to each of us to practice and to remind others to practice the basics for invasive species prevention.

Recommended AIS prevention is also the law in Wisconsin:

- INSPECT boats, trailers, and equipment
- REMOVE all attached aquatic plants and animals
- DRAIN all water from boats, vehicles, and equipment
- NEVER MOVE plants or live fish away from a water body

NEW EURASIAN WATER MILFOIL CONTROL METHOD COMPLETED IN 2019

ProcellaCOR, a newly licensed herbicide for aquatic use, was used to control Eurasian Water Milfoil (EWM) on Cedar Lake in 2019. ProcellaCOR (Florpyrauxifen-benzyl) was selected for its promise of effective treatment of small areas of EWM growth with minimal impacts to nontarget species. We target EWM by treating early in the season before native aquatic plants are well-established.

The June 6, 2019 ProcellaCOR treatment occurred in two beds totaling 12.2 acres. Rake samples were taken at specific points within the treatment area before and after treatment. EWM was present at 59.5% of these points before treatment and 0% following treatment. Previous control efforts using other herbicides and hand removal methods have not been as successful. It is too early to tell the impact this spring. Monitoring results will guide the EWM response for 2020 and beyond. Volunteer monitors look for Eurasian water milfoil and other aquatic invasive species throughout Cedar Lake. Our consultant, Steve Schieffer, of Ecological Integrity Services, backs them up with overall AIS surveys and pre and post treatment monitoring. These activities are guided by our 2017 Lake Management Plan.

HABITAT IMPROVEMENTS

SUPPORT AVAILABLE FOR ESTABLISHING NATIVE PLANTS ON YOUR PROPERTY

Help is available for you to establish native plants on your Cedar Lake property. The Cedar Lake District is participating in the Wisconsin Healthy Lakes Program. This program provides grant funding to establish native plants next to the lake. Native plants stabilize shorelines, attract pollinators, support wildlife, and provide natural beauty next to the water.

Cedar Lake owners completed these minimum 350ft² plantings in 2018 and 2019. Plantings are supported by a 75 percent grant from the Department of Natural Resources. The Lake District also provides technical assistance at no charge to help you select the right plants and to explain the process. There are just a couple of open slots for this program for 2020. Please contact Cheryl at 715-268-9992 or harmonyenv@amerytel.net if you are interested in planting native plants along your shoreline. Note that these plantings are intended to replace existing lawn or other disturbed areas and need to be at least 10 feet deep starting at the water's edge.



A Cedar Lake Native Planting



Yellow Swallowtail Butterfly on
Native Prairie Phlox

CEDAR LAKE DAM

Cedar Lake water levels and dam operations are regulated by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR). Lake District commissioners who were concerned about the condition of the dam requested that the WDNR inspect the dam and make recommendations for appropriate maintenance. Prior to the 2019 inspection, the most recent WDNR formal inspection report was from 1986. Information for this article is from the 2019 WDNR inspection report and a follow-up inspection conducted by Cedar Corporation and commissioned by the Lake District. Both reports are available on the website cedarlake-wi.org.

The Cedar Lake dam is classified as a small dam based on the structural height and maximum storage. As a small dam, it is not subject to all requirements of larger dams. A permit was first issued for dam construction in 1949 when the current dam replaced an illegal rock structure at the outlet. The Cedar Lake Protection and Rehabilitation District has owned the dam since 1986. The Lake District is required to maintain water levels based on a 1987 WDNR water level order.

The August 2019 WDNR inspection focused on condition of the concrete which is likely original from 1949. Cracks in the concrete were evident and further inspection was recommended. Other recommendations focused on vegetation removal, establishing benchmarks, maintaining steel grates that limit invasive fish passage, and upgrading stop logs used to maintain water levels.

Cedar Corporation examined the condition of the dam more closely and estimated cost for dam repair. Cedar Corporation found the dam to be in generally sound condition and operating as expected. The following repairs were recommended:

- Repair cracks in the left abutment
- Repair the downstream side of the dam piers
- Repair steel grates to inhibit carp migration
- Place rock riprap to prevent streambed scouring

The cost estimate for the recommended repairs totaled \$102,145, including contingencies and professional services. The cost estimate for a second option with additional repairs was \$179,800. The Lake District is investigating a competitive WDNR Municipal Grant Program to assist in carrying out these repairs which are not currently scheduled or budgeted.

CEDAR LAKE FISHERY

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources completed the most recent Cedar Lake fish survey using netting and shocking to measure fish populations in 2016. The next WDNR fish survey is scheduled for 2021, but may be pushed back to 2022 due to COVID-19 impacts on staffing, according to Kasey Yallaly, Senior Fisheries Biologist.

Cedar Lake is stocked with approximately 1,100 large fingerling musky every other year. Cedar Lake was stocked with 16,800 large fingerling walleye in the fall of 2019, and will be stocked every other year going forward. This was the first time walleye were stocked in Cedar Lake since the original stocking in the 1980s. Walleye were previously self-sustaining in Cedar Lake with good natural reproduction. However, since about 2012, numbers of juvenile walleye dropped, and adult populations dropped in subsequent years, according to fisheries surveys.

Cedar Lake historically had better water quality, aquatic habitat, and fish populations, according to the 2016 fish survey report. Poor water quality and severe algal blooms severely reduced the quality and quantity of aquatic plant beds. This, in addition to the disruptive nature of artificial water level fluctuations, destroyed once abundant bulrush stands. Extensive, shallow, near shore flats are subject to ice damage; and the removal of nearshore woody debris and vegetation associated with intensive residential development compounded habitat loss and fish population declines. The introduction of carp and white bass also displaced more desirable species. Fish species such as carp, walleye, and white bass, which are better adapted to algal dominated systems, prevailed through 2004. Outbreaks of fish disease caused the collapse of carp and white bass populations. This, in combination with improving water quality, a new walleye size limit, and the addition of fish crib habitat resulted in a resurgence of walleye, panfish, and bass populations. As of 2016, severe algal blooms remained, even with greatly reduced carp populations.

Future fish surveys will begin to assess the impacts of improved water clarity resulting from the alum treatment. As previously described, WDNR will conduct the first fish survey after the alum treatment in 2021 or 2022. WDNR also completes creel surveys interviewing anglers regarding fishing efforts and results at the landing. The last creel survey was conducted in 2016-2017, and the results are posted at <https://cedarlake-wi.org/legals-reports-news/>. Most anglers fish for and catch panfish species (bluegill, crappie, and perch) followed by walleye.

