

Fall Newsletter 2023

2023 Closes & 2024 Look-Ahead

This year’s Annual Meeting was held on August 12, 2023. A copy of the slide presentation from the Annual Meeting is available to view or download at the CLPA website (<http://www.cheteklakespa.org>), or request a copy through our email.

Some of our new projects completed in 2023 included:

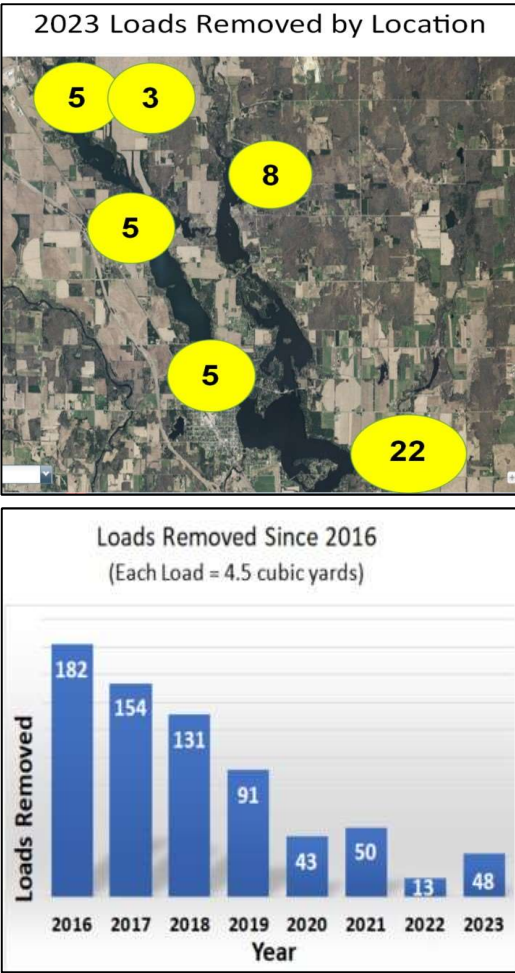
- 1. Multiple options for electronic payment and member renewal online through our website
- 2. Increase communications thru more frequent updates on Facebook; website; emails; and Chetek Alert articles
- 3. Completed Landing Signage updates for the 14 landings
- 4. Expanded our recognition program for donations, memorials, and business sponsorships
- 5. Aquatic Plant Management Plan development and release by the end of 2023
- 6. WI-DNR Grant for comprehensive sediment study performed; Engineering results to be posted online by end of 2023

Additional projects for 2024 will include:

- 1. Expand our Lake Data Monitoring and Clean Boat Clean Waters programs
- 2. Apply for a new Healthy Lakes Grant to assist more homeowners wanting to upgrade/repair their shorelines
- 3. Participate in Broader Water Quality Improvement Projects with other groups in the Red Cedar Watershed

Skimmer Operations Update

2023 marked the 8th year of the CLPA’s weed skimming program on the Chetek Lakes. In spite of the late spring ice-out, we began skimming a couple weeks earlier than in past years. Curly-leaf pondweed, historically our target species, was somewhat down this summer with elevated levels of coontail, duckweed and lily pads across the Chain. As shown in the map, we removed 48 skimmer loads or 216 cubic yards of plant material this year. This brings the total since we started skimming in 2016 to 2,873 cubic yards or 239 dump truck loads! After seeing a consistent year over year reduction in the early years, we are now seeing a leveling or reduction of weeds in the last few years. Areas that were heavily harvested in previous years are now showing notably fewer weeds. This has opened up bays that had previously not been navigable to being relatively weed-free much of the summer. This is especially evident with pondweed. The graph shows the location and the number of loads of material removed this year. We visited most areas of the Chain with Moose Ear and Ten Mile harvested most heavily. The skimming program is totally funded through donations and staffed by local volunteers. A sincere **THANK YOU** to all who donated or participated in the program.



Healthy Lakes and Rivers Grant Projects

The CLPA is ramping up for more shoreline improvement projects through the Wisconsin DNR Healthy Lakes and Rivers Grants. In 2022, the CLPA finished two Healthy Lakes Grants totaling over \$67,000 to assist lake property owners with improving their properties and

reducing runoff into the Chetek Chain of Lakes. This runoff is the leading cause of the green waters we experience each summer. We completed multiple projects for 29 property owners which included native plantings, rain gardens, water diversions and rock infiltrations, and placement of 29 fish stick bundles on the shores to improve fish habitat.

If you are interested in learning more about Healthy Lakes and Rivers Projects, please see the DNR website at “healthylakeswi.com”. Also, contact the CLPA if you are interested in doing any projects as we are building a list of interested lake property owners that we will use to write a future Healthy Lakes and Rivers Grant.

The DNR covers 75% of the cost of 5 approved project types (Fish Sticks, Native Plantings, Diversions of Stormwater runoff, Rock Filtration, and Rain Gardens). The property owner is responsible for 25% of the cost, however, volunteer work by the CLPA and the property owner can offset the cost to the property owner.

Clean Boats, Clean Waters

Growing concern over the spread of aquatic invasive species to Wisconsin’s inland lakes has many lake association members and other concerned citizens looking for ways to get involved. The Chetek Chain had an active Clean Boats, Clean Waters watercraft inspection program in place for many years. Unfortunately, that program has lapsed in recent years but we are happy to share that we will be reviving it for 2024! This is a wonderful opportunity for adults and youth teams to educate boaters on how and where invasive plants and animals are most likely to hitch a ride to other waterbodies. We will be putting together and training inspector teams in the spring. Give some thought to how you and family members and friends can become involved in the program. Stay tuned for more information.



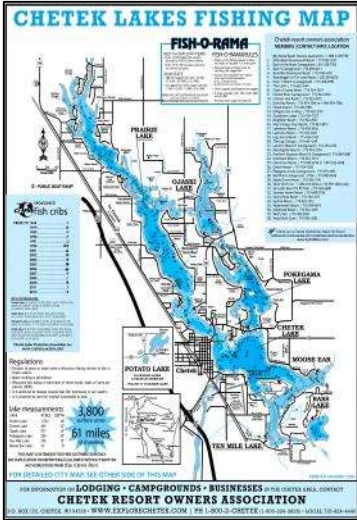
Education and Outreach

Signage: We have completed our rebuild plan for all public landing sign platforms throughout the Chain. Over the last three years we have replaced fourteen landing signs with weather proof materials to last. Our final sign rebuilds were on Ten Mile and Pokegama lakes.

This initiative provides a clean consistent platform for DNR, County, CLPA messaging and Sponsorship recognition. Future plans include adding QR code signs for visitors to access our Resort Owners Association Lakes Map and a Venmo/Credit Card “Donate To Support Lakes Preservation” sign for visitors.



Website Enhancements: This summer we were given approval to post the Chetek Resort Owners Association lake map on our website. Should you need a high-resolution map you’ll be able to find it there. You can also access a link that takes you to the DNR Fishing Regulations so you can get all your questions answered...all in one place (at the CLPA website)!



Thank You to our Annual Sponsors

Premier Level

We Energies Foundation Lake Country MARINA Wolf Pack CHARITIES, INC. Supporting Our Local Community

Signature Level

Kwik Trip Nicolet NATIONAL BANK KT's Fresh Market Gulligans Chetek State Farm Kam Rold - Chetek Agency Sterling Bank Six Lakes REALTY K&W DIVERSIFIED

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Helping to Fund Our Efforts

In addition to annual memberships, “Friends of the Lakes” is a great way for you or your organization to be recognized for your donation. There are close to 50 individuals and/or organizations that are recognized as “Friends of the Lake” on our web-site.

“Memorial Tributes” can be a nice way for family and friends to donate in memory of a “loved one” who enjoyed our Six Lakes community. This past year we received memorial donations from 9 families. You can view these tributes on our website as they are updated throughout the year and will remain on our website indefinitely.

“Sponsorship & Commercial Grants”: Last winter we applied for over a dozen online commercial grants. We want to thank **Kwik Trip, WE Energies, Lake Country Marina,** and **Wolf Pack Charities Foundation** for awards of over \$5,500 to help fund our Lakes Sediment Study.

We also introduced a Sponsorship program in 2022, and today have nine sponsors who have contributed funding to assist in the cost of our Aquatic Lakes Management Plan. The Plan is needed to identify lake preservation strategies and is required by the WI-DNR in order to operate our Weed Skimmer each summer.

Our sponsors are recognized in all of our communications and events throughout the year. Please show your support and appreciation by thanking these 9 sponsors personally for their support of the Chetek Lakes and the CLPA!

Results of Our On-Line Survey

In late 2022, the CLPA conducted an online survey to gather input to assist the engineering team in updating the Aquatic Plant Management Plan. The goal of the survey was to better understand 1) who uses our lakes, 2) their connection to the lakes, and 3) what’s most important to them. Here’s a brief summary of the findings:

- Of the 255 respondents, 86% were CLPA members, 14% non-members, 92% were property owners. 46% were full-time residents.
- How the lakes are used: 88% fishing, 79% water sports, 55% enjoyed the sponsored events, 52% ice fishing, and 18% for snowmobiling.
- Watercraft types were 82% pontoons, 62% kayak/canoe/paddle boat and 27% small fishing boats.
- The top issue for those using the lakes was weeds. Surface weeds such as duckweed, pondweed and milfoil are considered to be the key offenders due to the odors they create in mid-late summer as they die and decay.
- Shoreline management concerns: 75% said the continued loss of shoreline vegetation caused by wave action from boats and wind, 52% said lack of native vegetation aggravates the problem, and 28% said uncontrolled storm water run-off.

Thanks to those who participated in the survey. Your feedback reinforced our current and near-term plans. Full detail of the survey questions and responses can be found at www.cheteklakespa.org.

2023 Engineering Studies

We are close to having the Updated Aquatic Plant Management Plan and The Comprehensive Sediment Study reviewed and published before the end of the year. These reports will be available on our website for review or download, and we’ll send out an email to let you know when they are available for review. These Engineering Studies will drive our planning and action plans for the next 5 years.

Working Together Across the Red Cedar Watershed



The CLPA works with other groups working to improve water quality in our watershed. We are an active member of the Red Cedar Watershed Partnership and the Red Cedar Learning Hub.

These two groups include representatives from local, state and federal agencies, private business, lake associations, UW-Stout, and others. The CLPA works directly with these groups to assist in meeting watershed goals, sharing information, and synchronizing with the other Red Cedar groups to improve the water-quality of the Red Cedar Watershed. Several accomplishments have been documented and can be found at the Red Cedar River Watershed website, under the “Maps and Publications” page:

<https://fyi.extension.wisc.edu/redcedar/red-cedar-watershed-publications/>

Membership Update

We welcomed 41 new memberships this past year, for a total of 547 property owners with family or business memberships. That’s more than 2,000 total members supporting the preservation of our lakes!

Getting CLPA Emails?

If you haven’t received a CLPA email this year, please update your email with us! We have about 60 email addresses in our system that are no longer valid. We don’t want you to miss a thing in 2024, so please let us know if you’re not getting our emails!

2024 Member Renewal

Reminder: It’s not too late to pay your 2024 member dues or make a donation. Many members have requested online/electronic payments for processing membership dues and donations. We are now setup to receive electronic payments from your credit/debit card, PayPal, or Venmo! Secure payments can be made by going to the CLPA website, or scanning one of these QR codes from your smart phone’s camera:



Please note you can also pay your 2024 member dues by completing this form and mailing a check to the CLPA:

*****Chetek Lakes Protection Association MEMBERSHIP FORM*****

CLPA is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, your tax deductible dues help to fund projects for our lakes.

Name:

Mailing Address:

City/State/Zip Code:

Phone:

Email:

Membership Level:

☐ Individual \$15

☐ Family \$20

☐ Business \$30

☐ Friends of the Lake \$125

Additional Target Donations:

☐ Skimmer \$

☐ Fish Sticks \$

☐ Landing Signage \$

☐ General Fund \$

Interest in Volunteering:

☐ Skimmer

☐ Clean Boat Inspection

☐ Lake Water Sampling

☐ Board of Directors

Please mail form to: CLPA Treasurer, PO Box 916, Chetek, WI 54728

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Premier Level

We Energies Foundation

Lake Country MARINA

Wolf Pack CHARITIES, INC.
Supporting Our Local Community

Signature Level

Lakeside WATERFRONT

Nicolet NATIONAL BANK

KWIK TRIP

KJ's Fresh Market

Gilligans Chetek Wisconsin

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Six Lakes REALTY
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