Chetek Lakes Protection Association

Fall Newsletter 2026

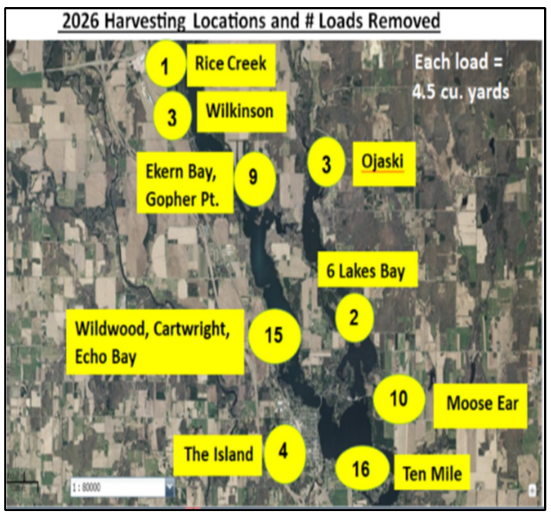
PO Box 916, Chetek, WI 54728
715-256-7650
info@cheteklakespa.org

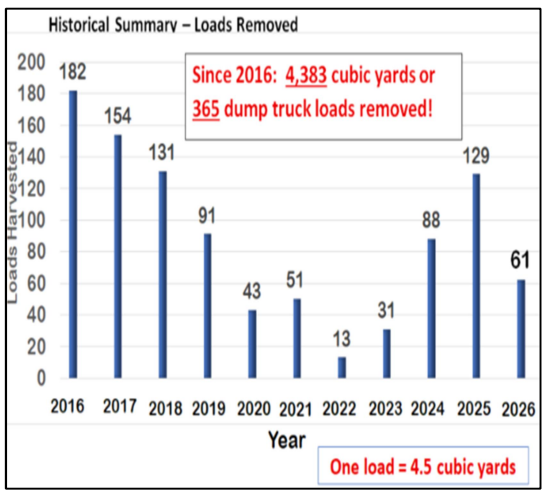
2026 Skimmer Operations Update

2026 marked the 11th year of the weed management program on the Chetek Chain. Lake weeds appeared 3-4 weeks earlier than past years. In total, we removed 280 cubic yards of weeds and algae, the equivalent of about 24 dump truck loads. All material removed was composted and will become fertile planting mix. The material harvested this year was down due to extreme hot, dry weather. The curly-leaf pondweed was heavy in May and June but then submerged for a couple weeks during the unusually hot, dry July.

We noted again this year the continued shift in location of the heavier weeds. The traditionally heavy areas of the northern lakes again experienced less growth while mid-Prairie (Cartwright Point/Wildwood) and southern lakes saw increased growth.

All equipment, operating and maintenance costs for the program are funded through donations. Labor is provided by local volunteers. No tax or grant money is used. A big thank you to those who contributed their time or support. Learn more about the program by going to cheteklakespa.org or follow us on FaceBook.





Lake Monitoring

We continued our monitoring coverage of the Chetek Chain this year. Six monitoring teams monitor 7 sites on the chain. As part of the Wisconsin Citizen Lake Monitoring Network, CLPA volunteers measure water clarity using the Secchi disks and collect temperature and dissolved oxygen data at 7 sampling points on the Chetek Chain:

- Prairie Lake (3 sites)
- Ojaski (Mud) Lake (2 sites)
- Chetek Lake (1 site)
- Tenmile Lake (1 site)

Threats to our Water Quality

The CLPA developed an Aquatic Management plan with SEH Engineering in 2024. A copy of the plan is available to view at our website. There are 2 key causes of algae growth that the CLPA is addressing:

- Invasive Plants – As Curly Leaf Pondweed and Eurasian Milfoil die and decay, they release phosphorous that can produce 500-1000 pounds of algae per acre, currently controlled by removal through skimming.
- Contamination from storm water runoff – Most of this phosphorous comes from decayed grass/leaves/needles and stirred up sediment. It needs to be controlled with shoreline plants, rain gardens, settling ponds, etc. This is why the Healthy Lakes Grants were born (to help homeowners reduce runoff to reduce lake algae).

FY2026 Board Members:

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Vice President…..Gary Luepke
Governance Officer...Sue Schmitz
Treasurer…..Greg Steele
Membership…..Nancy Nix

Directors

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John Flor
Greg Gray
Curt Geissler

Weed Skimmer Operations:
skimmer@cheteklakespa.org
Membership/Treasurer:
treasurer@cheteklakespa.org
General Inquiries:
info@cheteklakespa.org

Healthy Lakes and Rivers Grant Projects

The CLPA did not start any new projects in 2026 but we'd like to reach out to anyone who might want to apply for a project grant for next year. The projects are designed to reduce runoff and improve shoreline health.

The Wisconsin DNR covers 75% of the cost of 5 approved project types (Fish Sticks, Native Plantings, Diversions of Stormwater runoff, Rock Filtration, and Rain Gardens) for up to $1,000 per project. The property owner is responsible for at least 25% of the cost; however, volunteer work by the CLPA and the property owners can offset the cost. Multiple projects can result in multiple grants. For example, if you have two 350 square foot native planting projects, you may qualify for two $1,000 grants.

If you are interested in learning more about Healthy Lakes and Rivers Projects, contact us to discuss your project!

Membership Update

We welcomed new memberships this past year, for a total of 600 property owners with family or business memberships. If we can continue to expand our membership, we will also expand our voice with local resources and agencies!

Getting CLPA Emails?

If you haven't received any CLPA emails this year, please update your email with us! We don't want you to miss a thing in 2027, so please let us know if you're not getting our emails!

Highlights from the 2026 CLPA Community Survey:



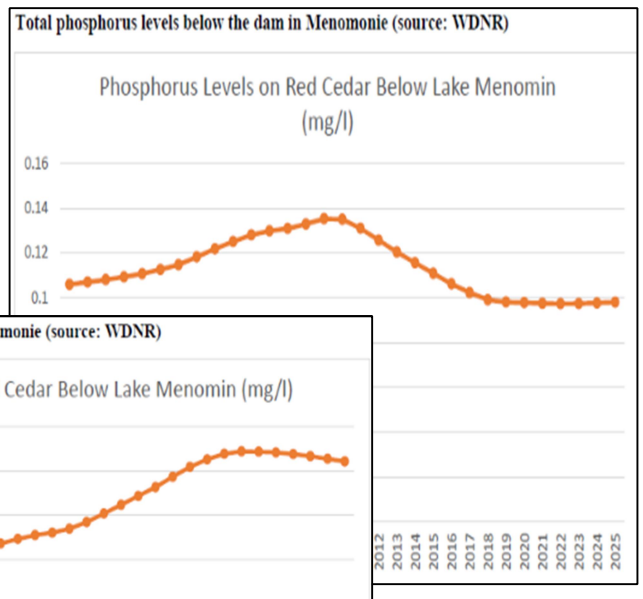
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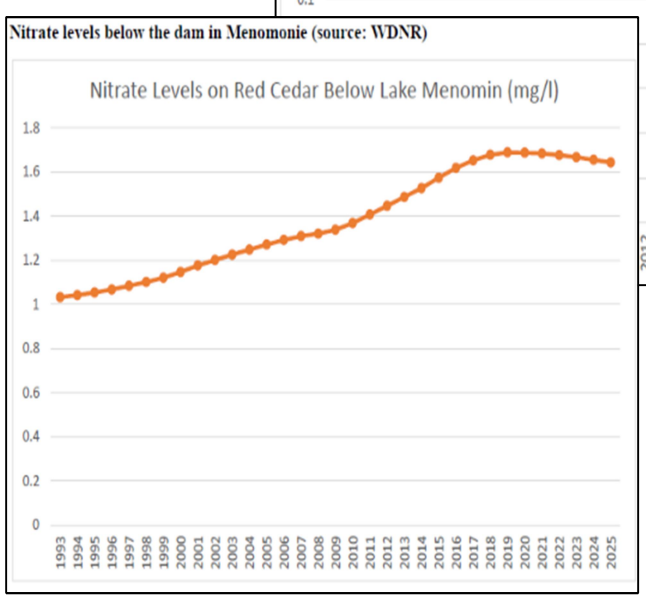
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The Red Cedar River Watershed
Division of Extension

The Red Cedar Watershed Partnership includes representatives from local, state and federal agencies, private business, lake associations, UW-Stout, UW-Extension, 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. Our data shows stabilization and improvement in Nitrate and Phosphorous levels in the Red Cedar Watershed the last 10 years:





Helping to Fund Our Efforts

Friends of the Lakes (FOL): In addition to our annual memberships, becoming a FOL is a wonderful way for you or your organization to be recognized for your generous donation. We proudly feature 110 FOL contributors on our website.

Memorial Tributes: Memorial Tributes offer a heartfelt way for family and friends to donate in memory of a loved one who cherished our Six Lakes community. These tributes are updated throughout the year and remain on our website indefinitely.

Sponsorship and Commercial Grants: Thanks to the support of more than fifteen local and national sponsors renewing their annual contributions this past year. We also appreciate the continued Premier Level support from Lake County Marina, Wolf Pack Charities, and the Parker Hannifin Foundations.

Also, please welcome our newest Signature Sponsors this year: **Reds Grill & Bar and Six Lakes Resort!**

Chetek Chain of Lakes Map



Did you know that you can view our lake chain map and fishing regulations on your smart device? Just scan the QR code or go to our website to download.

This high-resolution detailed map can be quite helpful especially for those new to our lakes.

Lakes Preservation Tips

Protect Our Shorelines

- Keep waves down — stay at least **100 feet from shore** (and **200 feet for PWCs**).
- **Please don't Power Load** — use your trailer winch instead of "motoring up".

Minimize Runoff



- Plant **native grasses and flowers** along your shore to soak up nutrients.
- **Redirect rainwater** into rain gardens or rock infiltration pits to help filter runoff.
- Keep your **fire pit a safe distance** from the shoreline, trees, and buildings.

Keep Our Lakes Clean

- Pick up any **floating litter** — bottles, cans, bags, or bait containers.
- Help keep **trash where it belongs and out of** the lake!

2026-2027 Member Renewal

Reminder: It's not too late to pay your 2026-2027 dues, make a donation, or upgrade to Friends of the Lake member level. We are 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 this QR code from your smart phone's camera.

You can also pay member dues or donations with this form and mail 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

Thank You to our Annual Sponsors

Premier Level

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Wolf Pack CHARITIES, INC. Supporting Our Local Community

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