

LANDSCAPERS COMPLETE WATER QUALITY TRAINING

Several local landscapers recently completed a one-day training to expand their knowledge about landscaping practices that benefit water quality and native habitats. Rain gardens and native flower plantings were discussed in detail. These practices help to reduce runoff from waterfront property and attract birds, butterflies, and other wildlife. They also may help landowners to meet county and state permitting requirements. The Balsam Lake Protection and Rehabilitation District, the Deer Lake Conservancy, the City of Amery, Polk and Burnett Counties, University of Wisconsin Extension, and the Department of Natural Resources sponsored the training held in Luck at the Café Wren.

Participating Landscapers

Austin Lake Greenhouse
Webster, WI
715.866.7261

Balsam Lake Pro-Lawn Inc
Balsam Lake, WI
715.485.3131

Balsam's Lakeside Landscaping
Balsam Lake, WI
715.554.0618

Evergreen Landscaping and Irrigation
Siren, WI
715.349.2877

Golden Pond Landscapes
Webster, WI
715.866.5099

Lake Services Unlimited
Balsam Lake, WI
715.857.5753

Palmers Landscaping
St. Croix Falls, WI
715.483.3338

Rivers North
Webster, WI
715.733.0029

St. Croix Valley Landscaping
Osceola, WI
715.294.4471

Deer Lake Conservancy Report



Summer Edition



June 2009

CONSERVANCY ACQUIRES REMAINING ROCK CREEK SPRINGS

The Deer Lake Conservancy has purchased a four acre parcel containing two thirds of the spring sources of Rock Creek. Rock Creek is the principle source of off lake spring water feeding Deer Lake. The acquisition of the Rock Creek basin in 1998 gave the Conservancy the ability to control the inflow of agricultural chemicals from our largest watershed. This watershed of almost 2300 acres has more than 1500 acres in row crops and was a major source of pollutants and sediment flowing into the lake.

In 1999 the Conservancy began the restoration of the Rock Creek watershed by re-grading an abandoned gravel pit and badly eroded drainage way. After stable grades were established on this former crop field, it was planted in native prairie to slow and absorb water flow through the basin. Now all agricultural runoff in this watershed must pass through the prairie before entering Rock Creek and then flowing to Deer Lake. The sturdy, deep rooted native prairie plants absorb and filter the sediment, phosphorus, nitrates, and other



chemicals out of the runoff water. Dave Peterson, of Polk County Land and Water Resources, estimates that the prairie restoration filters out 98% of the sediment and phosphorus coming from this watershed. Water quality in this tributary stream has improved dramatically in the last ten years. Spring ponds in the waterway, which were green with algae, now are clear most of the year.

The new parcel contains a number of spring wells, where water bubbles to the surface from fissures in the underlying basalt, collecting in small ponds and overflowing through trap rock stream beds into the Rock Creek basin. These are the source of the Rock Creek springs. A new addition of walking trails has been added to the Rock Creek trail system to allow viewing of the parcel.

The spring water sources in the Rock Creek watershed are now under the permanent protection of the Deer Lake Conservancy. This property makes a natural addition to the Rock Creek Conservation Area which the Conservancy has dedicated as a memorial to longtime lake resident Margret Earl.

2009 CONSERVANCY OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

Rob Ilstrup, President

Jim Miller, Vice President

Phillip Foussard, Treasurer

Tom Pesek, Secretary

Sandy Bodeau

Mark Boyken

Cal Dinham

Nita Fronk

Mollie Keys

John Marinovich

Tom McBride

John Patterson

Dennis Raedeke

Tom Walther

John Wright

Dedicated to the preservation of Deer Lake

The Deer Lake conservancy is a tax exempt organization incorporated in the state of Wisconsin and also registered in Polk County. The purpose of the organization is the preservation of Deer Lake and the surrounding land that contributes to the natural, scenic, recreational and productive value of the lake.

As a 501C (3) corporation, any contributions are fully deductible from Federal and State income tax.

Contributions may be in the form of cash, securities, property and land easements.

Contributions should be sent to

Deer Lake Conservancy

P.O. Box 1139

St. Croix Falls, Wisconsin 54024

Interested individuals may also contact Jim Miller by phone at 715-483-3338.

2009 Annual Meeting

Please attend the Lake Association and Conservancy's combined annual meeting scheduled at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, July 11 at Trollhaugen. Each year we cover topics of interest to lake residents, review the previous year's projects, and outline our agenda for the coming year.

CONSERVATION EASEMENTS PROTECT LAND

The Sinclear and Prokop families at the end of Peer Road on Deer Lake's west shore have worked with the Deer Lake Conservancy to protect a critical drainage way with conservation easements. Several agricultural fields drained directly into Deer Lake through this land. The Conservancy worked with the families to establish a system of infiltration basins to capture the flow of agricultural runoff. These basins and drainage way have been planted with native prairie plants which will reduce erosion and sediment problems, and greatly enhance the removal of phosphorus from the runoff water. Prairie plants have evolved to rapidly take up phosphorus whenever it is available to them, and their deep roots help to carry them through extended dry periods. The project will reduce over 90% of the phosphorus from this area in an average year. The infiltration basins will help to recharge the in-lake springs along the west shore of the lake. A conservation easement will permanently protect this important project.

If you have an area of drainage, especially if the drainage tends to channelize water flow and does not allow for permanent vegetative cover, the Deer Lake Conservancy has a grant from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to cover the surveying and engineering design expenses, as well as a portion of the cost of installation of corrective measures, such as infiltration basins and water retention ponds. These areas can be protected with a conservation easement held by the Deer Lake Conservancy. These conservation easements provide protection for the future of Deer Lake.



GULLY REPAIR PLANNED

Steve and Donna Schletty have watched water from US Highway 8 and fields to the south erode a channel next to their Deer Lake cabin over many years. They contacted the Deer Lake Conservancy for help. Thanks to the Deer Lake Conservancy's Direct Drainage Grant, help is on the way.

Designs and permits are ready for mid-summer construction of two infiltration basins along US Highway 8 and a rock lined waterway to the lake. This project was a challenge because of multiple landowners. The project engineer identified space available for infiltration basins in a DOT right of way triangle along the highway, and the DOT granted permission for basin construction last year. The five additional permits required for project construction were obtained this winter. The project will be installed at the intersection of US HWY 8 and 170th Street on the south side of Deer Lake.

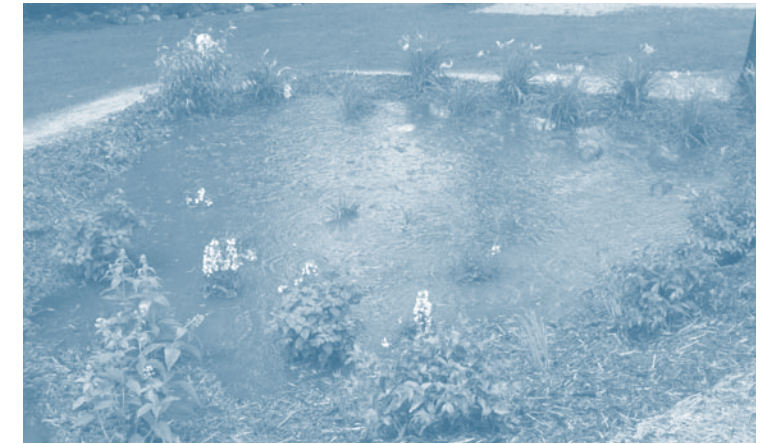
The project is the second of the Conservancy's gully repair projects under the Direct Drainage Grant. It will reduce pollutant loading to Deer Lake considerably. The ponds will reduce phosphorus loading by 94% or 29 pounds each year. Stabilization of the gully will keep additional phosphorus (12 pounds) and sediment from entering the lake every year. Contributions to the Direct Drainage Project are needed to match DNR grant funds.

FAMILIES COMPLETE RUNOFF REDUCTION PROJECTS

The Heiser and Berquist families recently completed waterfront runoff reduction projects on the north side of Deer Lake. The Deer Lake Conservancy extends thanks to Brian and Jody Heiser and Charlie and Alice Berquist for providing this great example. The Heisers and Berquists worked with local landscaper, Steve Palmer, and consultant, Cheryl Clemens to design and install a series of rain gardens and rock infiltration devices. The projects were featured in an open house last summer.

Prior to the installation, runoff caused erosion problems that carried sediment to the lake. The projects installed in July 2008 are estimated to reduce the phosphorus and sediment that once entered Deer Lake by over 97 percent. Half of the project cost was paid through the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Direct Drainage Grant to the Deer Lake Conservancy.

Grant funds are still available for this important project. Landowners concerned about runoff and erosion from their property or who are interested in installing rain gardens or other infiltration practices should contact Cheryl at Harmony Environmental. To arrange a site consultation, call 715.268.9992 or email harmonyenv@amerytel.net.



These rain gardens will drain within 12 hours of a storm.



A rock infiltration pit is another way to capture runoff water.



**Lake-Friendly
LANDSCAPING
Workshops**

\$10 EACH SESSION
Free to Balsam Lake
District residents

JUNE 26 Rain Gardens
JULY 10 Native Plants
AUGUST 7 Design and Tour

*To register or for
more information...*
**Call: 715-268-9992 or
email: harmonyenv@amerytel.net**
*Each workshop limited to
25 people. Register now!*

LEARN ABOUT LANDSCAPING FOR WATER QUALITY using native plants: How to create a rain garden, correct erosion and runoff to the lake, attract songbirds, butterflies, frogs and wildlife. **3 Fridays 2-5 PM in Balsam Lake** Polk County Business Center Corner of I and 46

With Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources funding more limited than at any time in our organization's history, we now need to rely more than ever on members' donations to continue our efforts in the restoration of Deer Lake. Please consider a tax deductible gift to the Deer Lake Conservancy. Founding memberships are \$1000, annual memberships are \$100. All donations are greatly appreciated and allow us to continue this worthwhile effort. Studies show that water quality is the most important factor in lakefront property values.