

# DEER LAKE CONSERVANCY REPORT

## WHAT YOU CAN DO TO PROTECT DEER LAKE

- Maintain a healthy population of native aquatic plants near your shore.
- Learn to identify Eurasian watermilfoil and monitor your waterfront for its presence.
- Avoid disturbing aquatic plants by maintaining no-wake speed when boating within 200 feet of the shoreline.
- Reduce phosphorus runoff from your property by not using phosphorus in fertilizer, installing buffer zones, reducing areas of erosion, and infiltrating water from hard surfaces.
- Upgrade old septic systems and properly maintain up-to-date systems.
- Support the Deer Lake Conservancy with a financial contribution.



Summer Edition



2007

## 2007 CONSERVANCY OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

Rob Ilstrup, *President*

Jim Miller, *Vice President*

Phillip Foussard, *Treasurer*

Anne Dowdle, *Secretary*

Sandy Bodeau

Cal Dinham

Connie Dinham

Dennis Enright

Mollie Keys

John Marinovich

John Patterson

Dennis Raedeke

Mark Thayer

Joanna Victor

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.*

## \$200,000 DIRECT RUNOFF GRANT BEING IMPLEMENTED

The Deer Lake Conservancy will use funds from a \$200,000 Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources grant to correct runoff problems in the direct drainages flowing into the lake. With successful installation of conservation practices in the larger watersheds, these smaller direct drainage areas become more critical to continued lake water clarity improvements.

The grant covers surveying and engineering design expenses to correct neighborhood runoff problems that form gullies to the lake. A portion of the cost of installation of ponds and infiltration basins for gully stabilization is also provided. We will need to raise the remaining funds needed to implement the proposed solutions from the individuals in the impacted neighborhoods and around the lake.

The Conservancy has worked diligently on our large watersheds over the last ten years, and because we have made significant progress in reducing phosphorus from these larger watersheds, our smaller drainage areas now become a more significant contributor to runoff problems. With this grant we will be able to address many of these problems. If you are aware of any such drainage problems around the lake or would like assistance with your own

property, please contact our consultant, Harmony Environmental at 715-268-9992 or (harmonyenv@amerytel.net).

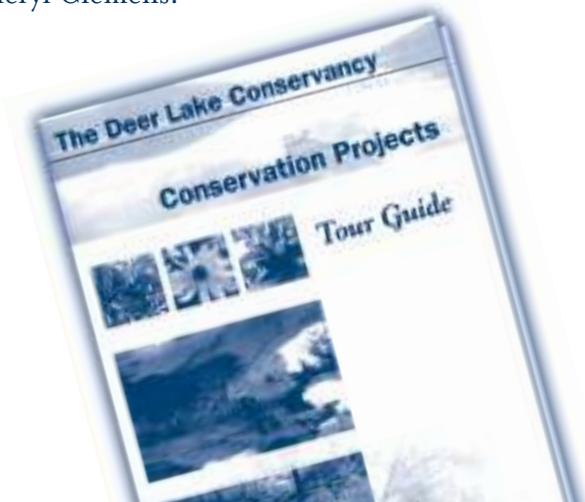
## DLC AWARDED AN ADDITIONAL \$100,000 GRANT

The Deer Lake Conservancy was recently awarded a grant of \$100,000 by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to complete the purchase of the south 20 acres of the Flagstad Farm. The north 50 acres was purchased in 2005 with the help of a \$200,000 DNR Lake Protection Grant and the generous donations of Conservancy members. At that time the south 20 acres of the Flagstad Farm had been identified as a possible corridor for the relocation of U S Highway 8. After several years of study, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation has now selected the "Far Southern Alternative" for the highway relocation. This will place the highway approximately one half mile south of the lake, preserving the wetland and ponds on the back 20 acres of the Flagstad Farm. This wetland and pond complex serves to buffer drainage from agricultural properties which flow north through this area to Deer Lake. With the additional benefit of a 100 species local ecotype prairie restoration on the 50 acre parcel to the north, we should be able to reduce phosphorus from this watershed by more than 90%.

## NEW TOUR GUIDE

Using a grant from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the Deer Lake Conservancy is printing a new guide for our conservation areas. The new guide will add three new Conservancy properties, including the Flagstad Farm and two properties donated by Conservancy members. The 17 acre Foussard Kane Forrest is a beautiful mixed hardwood and conifer forest on the south side of the lake. The Miller Maple Cove is a 17 acre local ecotype prairie restoration with a sedimentation basin that buffers much of the agricultural runoff on the west side of the lake. These properties will now be permanently protected from development.

The new brochure will feature a fold out map of the Conservancy properties with the location of the parking areas and walking trails, as well as a brief description of each of the properties. The brochure was developed by Harmony Environmental and features photography by Tom McBride and Cheryl Clemens.



Guides will be available at the annual meeting, and we hope that everyone will have the opportunity to visit these project areas and see first hand how they are protecting our lake, buffering the flow of phosphorus, sediment, and agricultural chemicals that would otherwise flow into the lake.

After we receive the \$100,000 grant from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources we will have approximately \$51,000 of debt remaining on the Flagstad Farm from the original \$500,000 purchase price. Please consider a tax deductible gift to the Deer Lake Conservancy to help us pay off the remaining balance on this property. Once this property is paid off and the easements with the Department of Natural Resources are in place it will be permanently protected, eliminating any option of future development.

## NEW WALKING TRAIL

Last year the Conservancy, with the help of grant money from the Polk County Land and Water Resources Department, was able to reclaim two old gravel pits the Flagstad Farm and remove and recycle five tons of scrap metal and tires.

The Conservancy has developed a walking trail through the property. Please take time to walk through this outstanding conservation area to see how the work of the Conservancy is resulting in improved water quality in the lake. As you walk the trails on this property and see the beautiful views of the lake you will realize how vulnerable this property was to high density development and how important it was to protect it.

## THE BEAUTY OF RAIN GARDENS

Rain gardens are sunken gardens planted with an assortment of colorful flowers and placed to intercept runoff water. So, the beauty of rain gardens is two fold:

- they add blooming flowers to your waterfront landscape, and
- they capture the runoff water from roofs, driveways, and parking areas keeping nutrients and sediments out of the lake.



Driveway, parking areas, and other hard surfaces accumulate fine particles of sand and soil along with chemicals from vehicles. Phosphorus attaches to soil particles. When it rains heavily, surfaces are washed clean, and the runoff water carries phosphorus and chemicals to the lake. The powerful flow of runoff water from hard surfaces can also cause soil erosion, adding even more sediment and phosphorus to the runoff stream.

The beauty of a strategically placed rain garden is that it can be used to intercept the flow of runoff and the bad stuff it carries. Rain gardens are frequently placed below roof down spouts or parking areas. They should be placed in a relatively

flat area for maximum absorption of water. Runoff water will be taken up by plants or absorbed and purified by the soil eventually entering the lake as cool, clean groundwater.

Native flower choices add to the beauty of this water quality solution. When chosen based upon soil type, light conditions, and flowering times your reward will be color throughout the season and visits by hummingbirds and butterflies.

For a free site visit to your Deer Lake property to learn more about rain gardens: contact Cheryl Clemens, our consultant at Harmony Environmental. You may reach her by emailing [harmonyenv@amerytel.net](mailto:harmonyenv@amerytel.net) or calling 715-268-9992. A helpful publication Rain Gardens: A How-to Manual for Homeowners is also available from Cheryl or by downloading it at <http://learningstore.uwex.edu/Rain-Gardens-A-How-to-Manual-for-Homeowners-P372C82.aspx>.

If you prefer to work directly with a landscaper, consider contacting one of the landscapers who recently attended a special training session sponsored by the Deer Lake Conservancy and the Polk County Land and Water Resources Department.

### Participating nearby landscapers include:

Balsam Lake Pro Lawn Balsam Lake 715.485.3131	Palmers Landscaping St. Croix Falls 715.483.9222
J & S General Contracting Osceola 715.294.2748	St. Croix Floral St. Croix Falls 715.483.3757
Lake Kountry Osceola 715.248.3018	St. Croix Valley Landscaping Osceola 715.294.4471