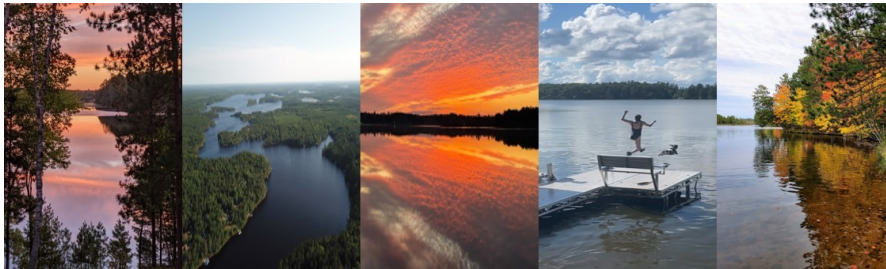


MINONG FLOWAGE ASSOCIATION



SPRING
2023
NEWSLETTER



From the President

Hello Minong Flowage Property Owners,

After a brutal winter here in the northwoods, I think we are all really ready for warm temps, sunny skies and time on the lake! Agreed?

The Minong Flowage Association is in great shape with a very energetic Board of Directors who frequently propose new ideas to be more efficient as well as to simply to have a little fun too. This coming summer, expect several fun, festive events to be hosted by the MFA Board of which everyone is invited. These will pop up on our Facebook group page and our website, as well as flyers and just word-of-mouth during friendly neighborhood conversations. I don't want to spoil the surprise so just remember these four words: food, games, parades, and ice cream! It is a goal of our current Board to foster a feeling of "community" within the various neighborhoods around the flowage. So I encourage you to get outside, go for a walk and introduce yourself to the new neighbors who just moved in, or go for a pontoon cruise during cocktail hour. And, of course, there's nothing better than sitting around a campfire in the evening listening to the loons and reminiscing with old friends and family.

The MFA Board is focusing on good business practices, expanding communications, building relationships with government agencies, and introducing technology whenever possible.

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Harlan Johnson, MFA President

here's some **DAM FACTS**

Washburn County owns the Minong Flowage Dam and the Washburn County Highway Department has responsibility for its operation.

The dam was originally built in 1937. A major renovation and expansion took place in 2013.

The day-to-day operation of the dam is conducted by Renewable World Energy (RWE) who has a long term lease with the county, allowing them to operate the dam and create revenue from hydro-electric power generated it generates. RWE sells the power generated to larger electric companies such as Dahlberg Electric where it is placed on the power grid.

From the President, *continued*

Several examples:

- Launched a new Facebook group page for our association. (Have you joined yet?)
- Revamping our public website with updated content, better user navigation, and more current events.
- Bringing us into the digital age with use of Microsoft 365 to help manage document collaboration, storage and access.
- Continually building better relationships with DNR representatives from both Washburn and Douglas Counties.

We have also made a few changes to the Board roster since our annual meeting last year. We have two interim board members, Marcia Vogt and Rich Fortman, who have graciously offered to fill vacated seats until our annual meeting in June. Additionally, Becky White has been named as Vice President to be more aligned with similar organizations as well as consistency with our By-Laws.

We encourage all association members to make every effort to attend the June 10th Annual Membership meeting. And non-members – a great time to seriously consider joining our association and attending the meeting as well. (You can conveniently join at the registration table prior to the meeting!) Many, pertinent topics will be presented and discussed, special guests invited, and best of all – a free BBQ picnic lunch right after the meeting! It'll be a great time to have a burger and meet other members or maybe get reacquainted with others you haven't have seen for a long time. Save the date – details included in this newsletter.

In closing, I know I'm speaking for all the Board members as I wish you and your family a great summer!

Harlan Johnson
President - Minong Flowage Association
johnson2424@yahoo.com
612-817-4490

**Dan Maxwell, long time MFA member and current
Lakes Management Committee member, will be a guest speaker
at this great upcoming event**

Save the Date
**NORTHWEST
WISCONSIN LAKES
CONFERENCE**

FRIDAY, JUNE 23, 2023
SPOONER HIGH SCHOOL

The Northwest Wisconsin Lakes Conference provides an annual opportunity for lake enthusiasts, local government officials, and others interested in protecting our water resources to take in educational presentations and network with conference attendees.

Details and registration links coming out soon on our website and Facebook page.

Lake Management Committee Updates

The Lake Management Committee is one of the committees operating under the direction of the MFA board and focuses primarily on activities associated with the ongoing management of invasive species in the Minong Flowage. The committee consists of membership volunteers, Dave Blumer our Lake Biologist under contract with the MFA, and at least one board member. Currently, the committee is focusing on two significant items, the creation of a new Aquatic Plant Management plan for the Minong Flowage, and the 2023 actions related to the maintenance and control of invasive species in the flowage.

New Aquatic Plant Management Plan

In 2015, after two years of work by the MFA and negotiations with the DNR and Tribal Resources (GLFWIC), a 5 year APM was drafted and agreed upon by all parties. That plan has extended through 2023 by the DNR but needs to be updated. The Lake Management Committee is writing up a new plan with a goal of completion by late summer/early fall. This timeframe allows the MFA to apply for corresponding grant funding to continue invasive species management efforts. Creation of the new plan again requires new negotiations with the DNR and Tribal Resources.



Concerns about the preservation of the wild rice beds in the very NE portion of the flowage and east of Smith Bridge, have been expressed once again by GLIFWC. At this point we do not know how this may impact our ability to have an APM plan that provides us sufficient flexibility to address the invasive species management challenge.

Currently the Lake Management Committee is attempting to arrange an in-person meeting with the DNR and Tribal Resources personnel to determine what challenges we face in creating a new APM plan. The objectives of the Lake Management Committee is to create an APM plan for the next five years based upon science and common sense, that protects the wild rice, and also provides sufficient management tools and strategies to control invasive species so that our membership can maximize their experience on the flowage.



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more

DAM FACTS

Minong Flowage is supposed to be maintained at a level between 1010 and 1011 feet above sea level with a target of 1010.8 feet. This can be challenging at times of spring runoff, 100 and 1000 year precipitation events, and periods of droughts.

About two years ago, RWE installed an automated monitoring system allowing pool levels to be checked without having to drive to the dam site. This appears to be helping RWE be more responsive to changing conditions.

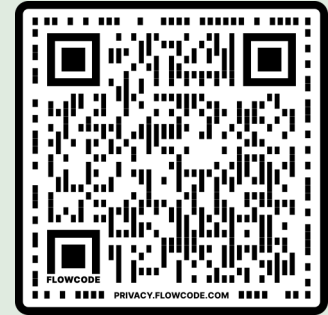
The Minong Flowage Association Board of Directors maintains a strong working relationship with the Washburn County Highway Department regarding the operation of the dam. The cooperation and support of the highway department was critical to the recent winter drawdown executed on the flowage.

If there are questions, concerns or complaints regarding the operation of the dam, please contact the MFA board or a Lake Management Committee member.

Let's get digital. Digital. We want to get digital!

We've been working hard to bring the MFA up to speed in the digital world. Our biggest accomplishment is adopting the use of Microsoft 365 for electronic storage of all our documentation. And there is a lot! We also use this platform to conduct virtual meetings when needed. Hats off to Brian White to get this all in place.

And keeping with getting digital, we are adding QR codes to physical communications as well as future signage at the boat landings and various other locations on the flowage. It's a great way for someone to quickly get information with a click of their smart phone camera. Try it out!



Lake Management Committee Updates, *continued*

2023 Maintenance and Control Activities

The fall 2022 Eurasian Water Milfoil (EWM) survey indicated that the winter drawdown the previous winter did a good job of reducing EWM in depths of water less than 5 feet, which is essentially the same amount (feet) the lake level was lowered. Unfortunately, the fall survey also indicated that EWM was not reduced at depths greater than 5 feet and in fact expanded during the summer of 2022. As a result, there was over 120 acres of deep water milfoil in the Minong Flowage last fall.

Historically, EWM has not done well at deeper depths in the flowage, so we hope that maybe the amount of deep water milfoil may lessen in 2023, but this remains a concern and thus the priority we have placed on getting a new APM plan done and a possible grant application submitted this fall to the DNR.



Eurasian Water Milfoil

The Lake Management Committee has reviewed with the MFA Board possible actions to be taken this year and received approval for the committee to proceed with the application for an aquatic herbicide treatment permit from the DNR. This permit would potentially be used to proceed with herbicide treatments of EWM in the Pogo's channel area and the County Park area during a May/June timeframe. Our current DNR grant does not allow the use of grant funds available for any herbicide control actions initiated by the MFA, so any expenses will come directly out of the MFA treasury. A final decision on whether to proceed with treatments will be made by the MFA Board once we know if we will receive a permit.



Zebra Mussels

The current position by GLIFWFC regarding herbicide treatments on the flowage may be a factor in whether the DNR grants us this treatment permit. Other invasive species management activities will include ongoing monitoring for Zebra Mussels, Spiny Waterfleas and continued surveying and removal of Purple Loosestrife.

MFA Lake Management Committee
Steve Johnson
Joe McGrath

Dan Maxwell
Harlan Johnson

Water Safety & Access Updates

New Buoys on the Lake to Help Guide Boaters

by Paul Gundersen

Placement of new buoys supplied by the Minong Flowage Association are larger and have very clear, large graphics.

- Five “No Wake” and two “Slow 5 mph” speed limit are being placed in Pogo’s channel leading to the County Road T bridge.
- Four large “Milfoil Area” buoys will be anchored and very visible at the last big bend at the south end of the lake towards the dam.
- Three new buoys will be in the channel leading to the dam.



The MFA has contracted with Whitetail Docks for placement and removal.

Wake Boats becoming Detrimental to Minong Flowage

by Harlan Johnson

The use of high-powered wake boats is highly discouraged on the Minong Flowage. Two serious problems have become very evident in recent years and are currently being discussed by many lake associations, the DNR and the state of Wisconsin.

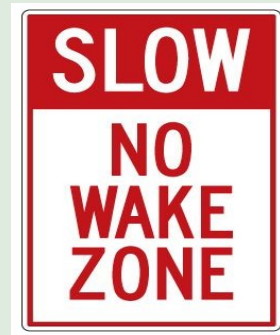
- The wake boat, by design, creates a pressure wave downward to approximately twelve feet causing lake bottom disruption in shallower lakes including the majority of the Minong Flowage. Published studies have documented a noticeable trail of ripped up aquatic plants floating on the surface in the path of a passing wake boat in shallow water.
- Boaters may or not be aware that wake boats are therefore recommended for use in lake water consistently *12 feet or deeper*. The Minong Flowage has an average depth of only 9 feet.
- Additionally, huge waves created, on purpose, by the wake boats are more powerful as they reach the shoreline causing extensive erosion.

Whereas it may be exciting fun when riding a wave generated by a wake boat, it simply needs to be done on a much deeper, larger lake, not on the Minong Flowage.

REMINDER

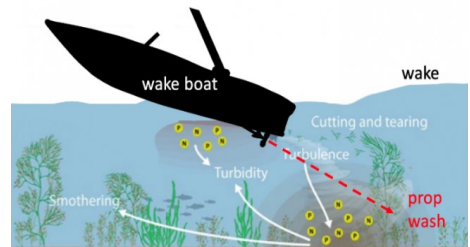
Slow/No Wake Zone is 100 feet of any:

- Shoreline (including islands)
- Dock, Pier or Raft
- Buoyed restricted area



For more details, go to :

<https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/statutes/statutes/30/v/66/3/b>



“It is definitely a hot topic not only in Wisconsin, but across the nation.”

Ashley Vande Voort, Douglas County Land Conservationist

Clean Boats, Clean Waters

by Paul Gundersen

The Clean Boats, Clean Waters Program provides training to volunteer or paid boat landing inspectors to educate waterway users on how they can prevent the spread of Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS). Inspectors perform boat, trailer, and equipment checks, distribute informational brochures, and pass along important AIS related information.

The CBCW Program is a “front line” defense against the spread of AIS, teaching citizens where invasives are most likely to hitch a ride on their equipment. If you are interested in learning more about the CBCW program on the Minong Flowage, contact Paul Gundersen or any of the board members.



You can also find more information at the University of Wisconsin-Extension at dnr.wi.gov/lakes/cbcw.



Boat Launch Fee

by Steve Johnson

The question of why is there a “Fee Box” located at the County Park boat launch is occasionally asked by Minong Flowage property owners as well as visitors. The boat launch fee box was installed by the County Park in support of the Minong Flowage Association’s management efforts to control invasive species, primarily Eurasian Water Milfoil back when initial management efforts began around 2008.

The County Park provides ALL fees collected at the boat landing as an annual financial donation to the MFA in support of costs incurred by the MFA each year in invasive species management efforts on the flowage. Since the establishment of the boat launch fee, tens of thousands of dollars have been donated to the MFA by the County Park. The park officials do not police the payment of the fee, it is a voluntary payment by all users of the boat landing, whether they be property owners, campers, or day users of our lake.

Occasionally a park worker or a Clean Boats Clean Waters representative working at the landing will mention the fee box and/or suggest a donation, but they are doing so on their own initiative and concern for the health of the lake. The MFA encourages and thanks all property owners who use the landing and contribute to the boat launch fee revenue. If you choose to not place a donation in the fee box, please respect the park and CBCW personnel at the landing, they are only supporting the MFA and its management efforts on the lake.

Newsletter Distribution Policy

The Spring Newsletter is the only newsletter sent to all known Minong Flowage and Cranberry Flowage Stakeholders regardless of their association membership status who have a valid email address. It announces the date of our annual meeting and conveys about plans and activities regarding the care and management of our lake. All other newsletters, and general correspondences, will only be distributed to MFA members.

The MFA’s preferred method of communication to and from members and local residents is email. If you received a printed version of this newsletter—this will be the final newsletter you will receive by US mail. To continue receiving future newsletters, the MFA requires your current email address. If you are unable to receive communications in a method other than email, please contact the President or Vice President the email addresses or phone numbers listed on Page 8.

Activities Committee

Annual Meeting and Family Picnic

Our 2023 Annual Meeting will take place on June 10 at the Wascott Town Hall,, followed by a BBQ picnic for all association members. We look forward to seeing you there!

July 4th Wascott Parade—NEW!

We are excited to announce the Minong Flowage Association will be joining the fun in the annual July 4th Wascott Parade!

If you've ever been part of this fun, middle-of-the-Northwoods parade, you certainly know how to have a great time. If not, this is the year to be completely entertained. Details to follow but here's a little hint for those in the know...



If you would like to help out at either of these events or other activities we have up our sleeve this summer, please contact any of the committee members.

MFA Activities Committee

Dave Vogt

Becky White

Adrienne Banaszynski

Marcia Vogt

Harlan Johnson



Minong Flowage Association
return of the
Annual Summer Picnic

 **Free BBQ Picnic for all association members**
burgers – brats – salads – beverages
RECONNECT & MEET YOUR NEIGHBORS

Saturday, June 10, 2023
Wascott Town Hall
Annual Meeting
9:15 – registration, coffee & pastries
10:00 sharp – meeting call to order
Picnic immediately after meeting is adjourned

Like to help out or have questions? Contact us at minongflowage@gmail.com

Fish Population by Electroshock and DNR Creel Survey

by Steve Johnson

In late April or early May, the DNR plans to conduct an electroshock fish count just upstream from the wild rice areas in the very NE area of the Minong Flowage. This is the area known for spawning of walleye as noted in previous fish population counts. There is concern that this fish count may not be able to be conducted due to a tremendous number of trees and limbs that fell across the narrow lake channels last winter. An update of this event will be provided at the MFA annual meeting.

Throughout the upcoming summer months, a Washburn County DNR fisheries technician will be present on the Minong Flowage simply to ask fishermen what species are being caught and how many. Not intended to be a fishing license check – simply a survey to record and use the data for fish population management in the future.

Final Tidbits from the Board

By-Laws Update

We have been updating our Association's By-Laws to be a bit more aligned with similar lake associations as well as clarification on a few topics to avoid confusion in the future.. The proposed, amended by-laws document will be emailed to all members prior to our annual meeting (June 10th) to allow time to read through the revisions before discussion, make edits if needed, and a member vote.

Help Wanted! - Board Member Election

There will be 3 Board positions open in June. Two of those positions were filled on an interim basis by two MFA members in good-standing. This appointment was done by the current board as allowed for in the Association's By-Laws. The two interim board member have the option to be candidates for official election to the board at the June 10th Annual Meeting. There is one more open board position (9th seat) which will be also be filled by election at the Annual Meeting. We encourage all members in good-standing that have an interest in serving on the board to contact Harlan Johnson (see contact info on cover story) or any other board member prior to our annual meeting.

Serving on the board is an excellent way to learn more in-depth on how/why our Lake Management Plan is executed, how we work with area stakeholders, meet new people, and the list goes on. We meet on a quarterly basis, sometimes even remotely. Whether you are one the flowage part-time or year round, if you enjoy our lake community and would like to get involved to keep it well managed and maintained (and have some fun too) - we would love to hear from you.

Volunteerism = Funding = Quality of Lake Life

Any. Bit. Helps. There are numerous ways to help out, whether it's an hour here or there with Clean Boats/Clean Waters, pitching in at our Annual Meeting, or doing an everyday (every weekend?) chore of pulling weeds or preserving the shoreline, it all adds up.

A major part of funding aquatic weed control and various other DNR-related projects on our lake comes from logged volunteer hours that is easily done on our website. While it might seem tedious, Dan Maxwell (Lake Management) works very hard to translate volunteer hours into terms and figures the DNR requires to provide funds for various projects in and around the flowage. Every viable hour logged equates to \$12 per hour for funding. Last year alone we logged over 2,000 hours, which equates to more than \$24,000 that we can submit to the DNR for funding. That is HUGE—and it can be even more.

We urge everyone to hop onto our website to log their volunteer hours. And yes, we are working to make this a faster, easier process. This is very important and much appreciated by the MFA Board. Thank you!

BOARD ROSTER effective 4-15-23

President	Harlan Johnson	612-817-4490	johnson2424@yahoo.com	June 2024, end of 1st term
Vice President	Becky White	612-325-2119	beckydwhite@hotmail.com	June 2024, end of 1st term
Treasurer	Adrienne Banaszynski	612-384-6550	adrienne.banaszynski@gmail.com	June 2024, end of 2 nd term
Secretary	Brian White	651-260-1101	brian.white@yahoo.com	June 2024, end of 1st term
Director-at-large	Dave Vogt			June 2024, end of 1st term
Director-at-large	Paul Gundersen			June 2024, end of 1st term
Director-at-large, interim	Marcia Vogt			June 2023, interim term ends
Director-at-large, interim	Rich Fortman			June 2023, interim term ends