



Lake  
Redstone  
PROTECTION DISTRICT

# PROTECTION CONNECTION

SPRING 2025

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Of all the paths  
you take in life,  
make some lead  
to the lake.

~Unknown



PHOTO: KRISTIN GROTH

## LRPD board chairman's message:

The mission of the Lake Redstone Protection District (LRPD) is to protect and rehabilitate the water quality of Lake Redstone for its residents and the public. The LRPD took a major step by requesting the Town of LaValle board pass an ordinance that would prohibit use of wake enhancement equipment and operations. See more details on page 7.

At our annual meeting in August, we will say goodbye to Ken Keegstra and Pat Sullivan who have served many years on the LRPD board. We are looking for

volunteers to consider running for these open board positions. You will find serving on the board to be a very rewarding and educational experience. For more information, please see Volunteering on page 6 and Annual Meeting Information on page 3.

Have a safe and wonderful summer. If you have any questions or comments, please contact the board at [lrpd.board@gmail.com](mailto:lrpd.board@gmail.com).

Mike Mittelstadt, Chair LRPD Board

# Sediment control committee tackles sources of sediment and phosphorus

By Pat Sullivan, Chair Sediment Control Committee

Sediment reduces navigability of the lake and has caused two expensive lake dredgings in 1985 and 2019. Phosphorus in the sediment causes growth of microscopic algae which

phosphorus and sediment that enter the lake. Thus, reducing phosphorus coming from these other sources requires increased attention.

During the annual drive-around-

Redstone watershed are using modern soil conservation methods. See article on the Producers Group in this newsletter.

For 2025, Sauk County has again made available grant dollars to LRPD to address some of the more severe runoff-causing spots around the lake. In 2025, a Martin Meadowlark grant will be completed for the weir (dam) repair. The weir was damaged during the 2018 flood and is a source of sediment flowing into the lake.

Within the responsibility of the Sediment Control Committee is also DNR's Clean Boats Clean Waters Program. For years, Inspectors have been at two of the three boat launches and work with boaters regarding key aquatic invasive plant and animal species issues. Information collected is provided to the DNR for their use. With the high level of concern of invasive species moving from one lake to another, it is good to know how Clean Boats Clean Waters plays a big role in keeping invasive species out of Lake Redstone.

If you are aware of an area around the lake that should be put on the list for potential action, please send an email to [lrpd.board@gmail.com](mailto:lrpd.board@gmail.com).

Thanks go to the volunteers on the Sediment Control Committee: Paul Burke, Cary Dudzak, Dick Fish, Mike Mittelstadt, Brad Horner, and Ken Kidd. ■

PHOTOS: MITCH MCCARTHY, SAUK COUNTY



Examples of conduits for runoff being addressed by property owners and/or the Town of La Valle with assistance from Sauk County and the LRPD. It is not just shorelines that need to be addressed.

creates green color and reduces clarity. In the early days of Lake Redstone, and currently in other area lakes, phosphorus has caused blue-green algae blooms.

Sediment and phosphorus come from many sources, including from farms in the watershed. Years of work by farmers to reduce runoff have been successful, meaning that other sources such as culverts, gullies, and properties around the lake, account for an increasing proportion of the

the-lake by representatives from LRPD, Sauk County, and the Town of La Valle, the latest status on low spots such as culverts and gullies is collected, responsibility to address

issues are identified, and work prioritized.

Volunteers from the Lake Redstone Protection District again participated in the annual Cropland

Roadside Transect Survey drive around the watershed. It is led by Mitch McCarthy from Sauk County. This year's Transect Survey showed that most of the farmers in the Lake

Phosphorus causes growth of microscopic algae which creates green color and reduces clarity.



# Lake Redstone fishing club

By Nick Hewitt, President of the Lake Redstone Fishing Club

The Lake Redstone Fishing Club (LRFC) is a local group of area anglers. Anyone is welcome to join. Our club may interest those who are new to Lake Redstone and want to learn the lake and how to fish it. Many of us are experienced fishermen looking to share our knowledge and passion for the outdoors. We work closely with our friends at the Lake Redstone Protection District to monitor and improve our lake, as water quality impacts our fishery. We also work with the DNR and Sauk County Parks.

The Fishing Club meets monthly to discuss current fishing topics, learn about our lake, meet neighbors, and plan events. Annual events include a free ice-fishing Fisheree in January, an Earth Day clean-up of the Lake Redstone County Park, and a summer-time 'Whiskers' catfish and bullhead tournament. Several wooden "fish cribs" are built and placed in the lake every year by Fishing Club members to help increase lake habitat, too. The carp-a-thon, which removes carp from the lake (to the delight of the Protection District), was held in 2024 but will be on hiatus this year as we re-evaluate it.

The LRFC raises funds to stock large, 5-8 inch fingerling walleyes in

order to improve and sustain walleye angling opportunities on our lake. According to the Wisconsin DNR, walleyes are the most popular sports fish in our state. While we have great forage and habitat for walleyes, there is very little natural reproduction potential in Lake Redstone. Since 2018, the Fishing Club has supplemented the population of Lake Redstone's marble-eyes with every-other-year stocking. In fact, last fall we stocked 6,000 walleyes. The DNR's most recent fisheries survey showed that the large fingerlings survive and thrive very well. Angling reports agree.

The bragging board, another well-known activity of ours, is visible at the North End Tavern. You have to be a Fishing Club member to get your name on there, but we welcome those who are motivated to join our club after they've caught a brag-worthy fish. We cap off the fishing season with awards in the fall and a UTV raffle, which raises a lot of funds for our walleye stocking and fish cribs.

The Fishing Club is a not-for-profit conservation group. Our mission is to enable positive fishing experiences by promoting conservation, education, recreation and safety. We offer a \$1000 Outdoors Career scholarship,



Gary Rodgers with his 17.5 inch bragging-board-winning Crappie.



Cindy Becker with her 25 inch walleye.

## LRPD ANNUAL MEETING

Saturday, Aug. 2 ■ Details TBA

We hope you'll come to our annual meeting that will last about an hour and a half. We'll talk about many successes and plans for this year.

### LOVE THE LAKE AND WANT TO HELP IMPROVE IT?

Please consider running for the commissioner seat open this year. These are very part-time, paid positions with occasional virtual meetings. You can work full time, live out of the area, and be a commissioner. Contact any board member for more information. To become a candidate, you will need to send a short biography to the LRPD Board Secretary at P.O. Box 313 in La Valle or [ken.keegstra@gmail.com](mailto:ken.keegstra@gmail.com).

A meeting reminder and agenda, proposed budget, and biographies of board candidates will be mailed in early July. ■

awarded to a high school senior who is pursuing a career in conservation. The LRFC also built, and maintains, the fishing line disposal tubes at the lake's boat launches. We hope you consider joining us; Membership forms are available online and at the North End Tavern. We offer annual memberships for just \$10, and family memberships for \$20. ■

# Understanding water quality is a murky business

Ken Keegstra, LRPD Chair Water Quality Committee

Many factors influence water quality in Lake Redstone. The water quality committee works diligently to understand these factors and to address solutions that will lead to improvements.

Phosphorus is the major nutrient that decreases water quality. It causes increases in algal and plant growth (see the 2024 newsletter for more info on aquatic plants in Lake Redstone). The phosphorus comes from multiple sources and identifying them is important. Some of it comes from remote regions of the watershed and enters via the inlet streams. The district recently completed a 4-year study in collaboration with the US

Geological Survey to evaluate this source of phosphorus and sediment. See articles in earlier newsletters for details and the Producers article in this newsletter for more recent updates.

One important conclusion from these studies is that most of the phosphorus and sediment enter the lake during large rain events.

Another source of phosphorus is runoff from shorelines around the lake. Details on this important source

of phosphorus is described in the article following this one.

A third source of phosphorus is goose poop. There are many geese on

Lake Redstone and they appear to be increasing in number. The magnitude of the goose problem was carefully

described by Tom and Sue Walters and Ken and Sue Kidd, who served as a subcommittee on this topic. They also explored various options for addressing the problem as described

*Continued on next page*

## Phosphorous comes from multiple sources

## Up to \$5500 available to reimburse you for runoff improvements

By Brad Horner, LRPD Commissioner

In 2024, \$10,193 was reimbursed by the LRPD to six property owners (one reimbursement was on the behalf of 11 property owners) for improvements they made to their property. Additional thousands of dollars were reimbursed by Sauk County and the DNR.

The reimbursement programs were created to reduce sediment and phosphorus runoff from lakefront properties. Lakefront properties are a major of sediment and phosphorus entering the lake. Sediment causes navigational issues

and earlier-than-necessary dredging of the lake. Phosphorus causes green color, reduces oxygen in the lake, and could cause blue-green algae blooms. Methods that qualify for reimbursement include but are not limited to:

- Diversion of water
- Rain Garden
- Rock Infiltration
- Bioengineering with natural fiber products (e.g. natural fiber rolls and logs, blocks, and mats)

- Vegetated buffer (350 sq. ft. minimum)

Note: Installation of riprap does not qualify for reimbursement because it does not address runoff.

For more information on the LRPD program go to [lakeredstonepd.org/shorelineimprovement](http://lakeredstonepd.org/shorelineimprovement).

For more information on the Sauk County and DNR programs contact Mitch McCarthy at [mitchell.mccarthy@saukcountywi.gov](mailto:mitchell.mccarthy@saukcountywi.gov) or 608-477-3192. ■



A typical half-acre lot with grass running up to the shoreline, puts a dime thickness of soil/sediment (over a ton) into the lake each year.



A shoreline with vegetated buffer added in 2024. The property owner received \$2,143 in reimbursements.



A shoreline with a vegetated buffer and natural fiber products installed in 2024. The property owner received \$5,500 from three government programs.

PHOTOS: MITCH MCCARTHY-SAUK COUNTY



elsewhere in this newsletter.

Finally, some phosphorus comes from the phosphorus-rich sediment at the lake bottom; the sediment contains phosphorus that entered the lake over the past 50+ years. When powerful boat engines stir up the sediment, some of the attached phosphorus is released into the water. Understanding the quantities of phosphorus that comes from each of these, and potentially other sources, requires additional study.

One important aspect of understanding water quality is to sample the water in Lake Redstone and measure various parameters. Volunteers have performed water sampling multiple times each year for almost 50 years. The current water sampling team is led by Tom Walters and includes Tom Albert, Chuck Ecklund, Ken Keegstra, Ken Kidd, Jay Kolb, Pat Litza, and Tom Wagner, who participate as their schedule allows. They measure water clarity, water temperature and oxygen levels at various depths at three locations in the lake. They also collect water samples that are sent to the State Laboratory of Hygiene for analysis of phosphorus and chlorophyll levels and occasionally other chemicals such as iron levels.

All the data is stored in the SWIMS (Surface Water Integrated Monitoring System) Database. It can be viewed using a new DNR tool – the Surface Water Explorer at [dnr-wisconsin.shinyapps.io/WaterExplorer](https://dnr-wisconsin.shinyapps.io/WaterExplorer). Chlorophyll levels were particularly high in 2024 reflecting high levels of various species of algae. In 2025, the district plans to work with experts from the WDNR to determine what types of algae are present at various times during the summer. The goal is to determine whether blue-green algae are present, and if so, at what levels.

Thanks to Paul Burke, Pat Sullivan, and Brad Horner who serve on the Water Quality Committee. ■

## Education and Outreach Committee 2024 Actions and 2025 Plans

By Brad Horner, Chair of LRPD Education and Outreach Committee

### 2024 Actions

A highlight of 2024 was when the Education and Outreach Committee partnered with other volunteers from the LRPD, and management and staff from Juneau County and Sauk County, to plan and conduct the “Conservation By Lake Redstone” event on July 26th at the McWilliams farm near section 11.

About one-fifth of the properties around the lake had an attendee! We served 164 meals to lake families and other lake stakeholders. The overall objective of the day was to educate lake residents on the sources of sediment and phosphorus coming into Lake Redstone and what is being done/can be done about it. Kids and adults got to interact up-close-and-personal with farm animals.

Many attendees were likely surprised to hear that most of the farmers in the watershed have runoff from their fields and pastures largely under control, and how they do it.



*Have you noticed these signs around our lake on properties which have had runoff improvements?*

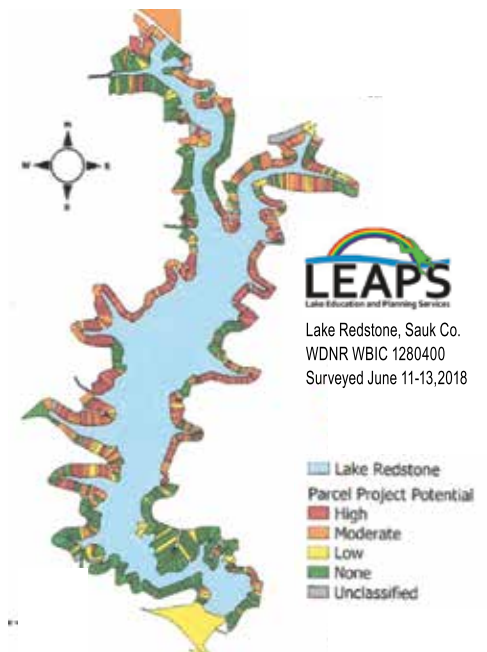
You may have seen the Lake Champion signs springing up around the lake. These are offered to property owners who received LRPD reimbursement for improvements made to their property to reduce runoff. Past, unreimbursed improvements may be eligible for a sign as well. Contact [lrpd.board@gmail.com](mailto:lrpd.board@gmail.com)

to get one if you are proud of what you have done on your property to prevent runoff! In addition, both Sauk County and the DNR offer signs for property owners who received reimbursement from them.

### 2025 Plans

The primary Education and Outreach activity in 2025 will be assisting in the conduct of the next Shoreline Assessment to be performed by Sauk County. This will include photographing and rating of the first 35 feet from the shoreline for every property on the lake. The last time this was done was in 2018 (summary graphic below).

### 2018 SHORELINE ASSESSMENT RESULTS



There will be follow-up communications with property owners regarding the results of the 2025 assessment, and assistance in addressing the red and yellow rated properties.

Thanks to Sue Walters and Jay Kolb for being E&O Committee members. ■

# Lake Redstone producers' commitment to conservation pays off

By Dustin Ladd, Juneau County

PHOTO BY DUSTIN LADD- JUNEAU COUNTY

This past year — 2024 — marked the 5th year of funding from the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture for the producers of Lake Redstone watershed. The focus of this year's grant was regenerative farming practices, including cover crops, no-till, and planting green. The group's main focus outside of conservation practices is educational programming for our farmer and non-farm neighbors.

The Redstone farmers have been a grant-funded watershed group since 2019. They've received grants totally \$166,000 for conservation in the Redstone watershed. This year's grant totaled \$18,000 and impacted 2,100 acres of conservation practices. With 2025's grant already awarded, the group will be working to increase participation and continued implementation of regenerative farming practices.

Discovery Farms, an on-farm research partner with UW-Madison Division of Extension Agriculture Water Quality Program, recently wrapped Edge of Field Monitoring in 2023; and data is now available. The two edge of field sites collected data



Lake property owners gathered for lunch at the 2024 field day event held at the McWilliams Farm.

from 2019-2023. The result showed that the conservation practices being implemented on the farm, such as no-till, cover crops, and perennial grass plantings, all play a key role in keeping sediment and nutrients from entering Lake Redstone.

This year's educational programming included a field day at the McWilliams Heritage Farm, Folk & Forest School including partners from Sauk County, the Lake Redstone Protection District, and the USDA-NRCS. At this field

day event farmers and the Lake Redstone community came together to learn about managed grazing, soil health, the McWilliams farm, folk & forest school, and activities happening within the LRPD. With over 160 participants it was our most successful field day event. There were also several co-hosted pasture walks that focused on custom grazing on rented property, overwintering cattle, and dairy grazing in the hills. ■

## LOVE YOUR LAKE Volunteer to help

*The LRPD volunteer needs will keep changing with new initiatives and grant requirements. Whether you can donate a few hours per week, month, or year — in person or virtually — we'd love your help doing this rewarding, important work.*

**BOARD COMMISSIONER** ■ If you love the lake, please consider running for the LRPD board. The commissioner attends monthly meetings and quarterly special meetings. Commissioner positions are compensated. Most commissioners work on committees that also meet on a quarterly basis. Many of the meetings have virtual options, so being a full-time lake resident is not required. There are many education opportunities available, so having a background in lake biology is not required. You just need a desire to maintain and improve the quality of Lake Redstone.

**HELP WITH EVENTS** ■ The annual meeting and other special meetings and events called by the board need organizers and set up people. We especially need help with our annual meeting this August.

**INTERESTED?** ■ Contact any board member at [lrpd.board@gmail.com](mailto:lrpd.board@gmail.com).



# The proposed wake enhancement ordinance

By Mike Mittelstadt and Brad Horner, Commissioners of the LRPD

The mission of the Lake Redstone Protection District (LRPD) is to protect and rehabilitate the water quality of Lake Redstone for its residents and the public. Consistent with this, the LRPD has requested the Town of LaValle Board to pass an ordinance to prohibit the operation of wake enhancement equipment on Lake Redstone. The proposed ordinance would NOT impact traditional recreational water sports such as tubing, water skiing, or wake boarding with a rope! There is no desire to regulate or ban other boats on the lake. For more information about the proposed ordinance, please visit: [lakeredstonepd.org](http://lakeredstonepd.org).

Wake enhancement boats have greatly increased in number on Lake Redstone. They have been banned on hundreds of Wisconsin lakes.

The main body of Lake Redstone ranges from 6-20 feet in depth, with

the average being 14 feet. Abundant research has found that wake enhancement boats stir the bottom down to at least 20 feet. Churning of the bottom releases trapped phosphorus which feeds microscope algae, reduces clarity and oxygen, impacting fish and plants. Of major concern with the increase of phosphorus is the potential for blue-green algae blooms.

The stirring of the bottom negatively impacts fishing in two ways: 1. The habitat of game fish (e.g. muskies, walleyes, and crappies), is disturbed, and 2. Plants are ripped out, so the bottom becomes oxygen poor.

Shorelines are impacted, too. Big waves have caused rip-rap to wash into the water and fish nests along the shoreline are disturbed.

View a six-minute video about the impacts of large wakes on Wisconsin lakes at [lastwildernessalliance.org](http://lastwildernessalliance.org).

PHOTO: VECTEEZY.COM



Wake boats create very large waves.

In addition to the negative impacts of wake enhanced boats on water quality, shorelines, fish, and plants, there are negative impacts on the safety and enjoyment of lakes by fishermen, kayakers, canoers, swimmers, and people in other boats.

A new major concern is that wake boats are now being advertised as producing waves over 4 feet high vs. the waves that currently appear to be 2-3 feet high on Lake Redstone. ■

## Lots of geese ... and a plan

By Sue Walters, LRPD Volunteer

Lake Redstone has a large and apparently growing geese population. In April 2024, Ken and Susie Kidd, and Sue and Tom Walters, surveyed Lake Redstone by boat and counted 87 goose nests on the shorelines of the lake. Each nesting couple produces 3-6 eggs, so the likely goose population in 2024 was in the 270-500 range. Those that survive the year are likely to return the next year and reproduce with another 3-6 eggs.

In addition to the nuisance factor in yards, each goose produces at least one pound of feces each day. These can end up on lawns and in the lake. The feces contain bacteria, parasites, nitrogen, and phosphorus, which contribute to algae growth. Microscopic algae cause clarity and



PHOTO: SUE WALTERS

**PUBLIC MEETING ON GEESE** April 26 ■ 10am ■ La Valle Town Hall

**IMPORTANT:** Before geese can be rounded up, property owners need to give written permission to allow USDA personnel to gain access to their property. Permission slips can be obtained on the LRPD website, filled out, and emailed to the [lrpd.board@gmail.com](mailto:lrpd.board@gmail.com), mailed to PO Box 313 La Valle, WI 53941 OR picked up at the April 26th meeting.

color issues in the lake.

There has not been a lake-wide effort to control geese...until now. At the March monthly LRPD meeting, the Board heard from Mike Jones from the USDA. He shared details of the assistance that they have been

providing lakes since 1999 to help control geese populations. Several nearby lakes have successfully used the goose roundup method, which usually decreases the geese population by 70-90%. Sometimes, a second roundup is needed in a few years. ■



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## BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

## LAKE REDSTONE PROTECTION DISTRICT

Find board meeting agendas, minutes, newsletters and other info at:

[lakeredstonepd.org](http://lakeredstonepd.org)

To receive emails from the LRPD on important topics, send a request to:

[lrpd.board@gmail.com](mailto:lrpd.board@gmail.com)

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our website:



*Protecting and rehabilitating the water quality of Lake Redstone for its residents and the public.*

Chairman: Mike Mittelstadt ■ [mbmittelstadt@gmail.com](mailto:mbmittelstadt@gmail.com)

Secretary: Ken Keegstra ■ [ken.keegstra@gmail.com](mailto:ken.keegstra@gmail.com)

Treasurer: Dave Crockett ■ [lrpd.treasurer@gmail.com](mailto:lrpd.treasurer@gmail.com)

Assistant Treasurer: Pat Sullivan ■ [gsully8@comcast.net](mailto:gsully8@comcast.net)

Vice Chairman: Brad Horner ■ [bhorner1486@hotmail.com](mailto:bhorner1486@hotmail.com)

LaValle Town Rep: Ray Demaskie ■ [raydemaskie@townoflavalle.us](mailto:raydemaskie@townoflavalle.us)

Sauk County Rep: Peter Kinsman ■ [peter.kinsman@co.sauk.wi.us](mailto:peter.kinsman@co.sauk.wi.us)

BOARD MEETINGS are monthly at 6 p.m. on the second Tuesday at the La Valle Town Hall on 324 Highway 33

Agendas are posted at:

- The La Valle Post Office
- The Town of La Valle Hall
- Hartje's Travel Center, Market & Hardware in La Valle

NAMEPLATE AND MASTHEAD PHOTOS: TOM WALTERS