

Rice Lake Protection and Rehabilitation District: *The Facts on Management Planning*

Why a New Management Plan?

The Rice Lake Protection and Rehabilitation District is charged with managing Rice Lake. To date, most of the District's efforts have focused on weed harvesting. Many areas of Rice Lake are relatively shallow and would be impaired by curly-leaf pondweed, an exotic invasive plant that becomes prevalent throughout the lake if left unchecked. This harvest is permitted annually through the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) under a Lake Management Plan developed and in use since 1994.

Why a New Plan?

- The current plan is 14 years old and outdated.
- Technology and techniques for controlling curly-leaf pondweed have been improved since the last plan was implemented.
- The 1994 plan and current harvesting is increasingly at odds with WDNR philosophies, making obtaining the annual harvest permit and meeting permit requirements increasingly difficult.
- WDNR has a new Aquatic Plant Management Strategy that does not allow for the harvest of native aquatic vegetation unless "Impairment of Navigation" and/or "Nuisance Conditions" are adequately documented.
- Individual harvest permits for native species will not be issued after January 1, 2009, unless they are condoned under the auspices of an approved management plan.
- Sources and methods of controlling phosphorus fertilizer that washes into Rice Lake from the rivers, storm sewers, and shorelines were not being addressed.
- An updated and approved plan will make the District eligible for future WDNR Lake Grants for control of the curly-leaf pondweed.
- An updated Management Plan will improve the health of Rice Lake, which is a valuable resource to the Rice Lake area and the State.

- how members view the current state of the lake.
- the level of community support and understanding for the suggested management alternatives.

Survey results will be used to focus management recommendations and the education and implementation plan.

Management History

The history of lake management on Rice Lake will document previously completed management planning studies, resulting recommendations, and implemented management activities. Additionally, the District's history and involvement in regard to locations/parcels of special concern, including the Broten site (Alcatraz), the Lumbering Hall of Fame site, the old city dump, Hospital Bay, and the Birchwood Manufacturing, will be summarized.

Gather and Interpret Existing Information

Existing information about Rice Lake that can influence management recommendations will be collected, reviewed, analyzed, summarized, and used as part of this planning effort.

Storm Sewer Load Analysis

An estimate will be made of the amount of nutrient and sediment run-off from the storm sewer pipes draining to Rice Lake. Areas contributing the most will be ranked based on their impact to the lake. Publicly owned land in areas with the greatest impacts will be identified and evaluated. The plan will suggest potential Best Management Practices that can be designed and built to reduce runoff impacts.

Travel Corridor and On-Lake Watercraft Census

To identify travel corridors on the lake, volunteers will observe and map boat traffic throughout the summer. This mapping will also locate public access points, harvester loading and unloading points, and public and

The Work Plan: Components Scheduled to be Performed and Used in Planning

Aquatic Plant Survey

The Aquatic Plant Survey will be used to identify invasive species and **document** aquatic plant distribution and abundance.

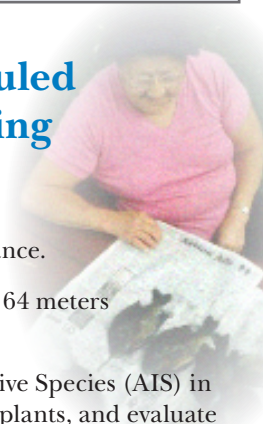
Aquatic plants will be sampled and identified at points spaced 64 meters apart, totaling 854 points for the entire acreage of Rice Lake.

The aquatic plant survey will be used to identify Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) in the lake, document distribution and abundance of all aquatic plants, and evaluate the potential impacts of management options as the plan is developed.

Sociological/Community Survey

A survey will be distributed to all District residents. The survey will seek to determine:

- general lake use patterns of District members.



private dock locations. Areas of the lake with inadequate depth for boat traffic will be shaded on the map.

Shoreline Survey

The type of shoreline cover around Rice Lake and the susceptibility of the shoreline to erosion will be determined in a shoreline survey. The results will be used to recommend protection or improvements to the shoreline.

Amphibian Survey

Amphibians are dependent on the near-shore aquatic vegetation, shoreline vegetation, and water quality of Rice Lake making them a good indicator of change in these factors and useful in gauging the success of the management plan. Volunteer monitoring, using guidelines outlined in official Wisconsin Frog and Toad Survey Methods, is fun and easy to do. The survey will serve as an educational tool and will be used to help monitor the impacts of activities implemented as a part of the management plan.

Bird Nest Survey

Nest locations of osprey, eagles, and loons in and around Rice Lake will be identified and mapped. Areas of the immediate shoreland and upland adjacent to the lake known to be sensitive to wildlife will be assessed and mapped. This effort will be used to help identify wildlife using Rice Lake which is an important part of any management plan. It will also be used to help monitor the impacts of activities implemented as a part of the management plan.

Watershed Loading and In-Lake Water Quality

Rice Lake has a large watershed. Nutrient run-off from the fields and forests of the watershed is the fertilizer that drives aquatic plant growth in Rice Lake. Several past studies and additional analysis by the Barron County Land and Water Department will be used to assess watershed impacts to Rice Lake

and make recommendations in the plan.

The Army Corp of Engineers completed an extensive monitoring effort to determine nutrient loading of Rice Lake and compared these to the nutrients released from lake sediments. The study predicts in-lake water quality changes due to reduction in nutrient loading. The study results will be used in the management recommendations.

Education

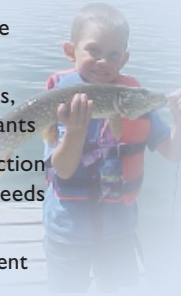
The Lake District will organize and facilitate a “Shoreline Demo Days” in conjunction with the official opening of the new Lumbering Hall of Fame Park located at the at the new City boat landing across the river from the Rice Lake Chamber of Commerce and Knapp-Stout Park on September 27, 2008 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. The day will be free to the public and serve to educate those attending regarding past and present conservation practices; their impacts to our forests, land, and water; and what we can do now and in the future to help. The day will include hands-on projects, including establishing a shoreline buffer and planting the Lumber Hall of Fame Tree Walk. Additionally, information on the

ongoing lake management planning efforts and AIS identification and prevention efforts will be presented.

Volunteers will conduct “Clean Boats, Clean Waters” monitoring at the launch sites on Rice Lake to educate boaters on the importance of not spreading exotic species.

This fact sheet is available on the Town of Rice Lake webpage www.townofricelake.com and on the City of Rice Lake webpage under documents www.ci.rice-lake.wi.us. In the future a link will be provided for a new Lake District webpage currently under development to disseminate information about current and future District activities including survey results and management planning efforts. A Powerpoint presentation describing the District’s Management Planning efforts has been developed and volunteers will present the information to area civic groups. A similar Powerpoint presentation will be developed at the end of the planning effort to highlight results and management recommendations. Contact Dan Penzkover at 236-4015 or Dave Blumer at 236-4028 to schedule a presentation.

The Plan: Rice Lake Management Plan Components

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1. Identification of problems and threats
 2. Description of historical control actions
 3. Characterization of the aquatic ecosystem
 4. Assessment of fisheries, wildlife, and aquatic plants
 5. Identification of protection and/or enhancement needs for natural resources
 6. Definition of management objectives
 7. Identification of target levels for aquatic plant control
 8. Identification of all possible management alternatives
 9. Feasibility factors for all possible management alternatives
 10. Management recommendations based on feasibility, need, and benefits
 11. Definition of potential adverse impacts
 12. Development of a prevention and rapid response plan for new or future Aquatic Invasive Species
 13. Monitoring and evaluation recommendations for current and long-term management activities