

Progress on the Bear Lake Stewardship Program

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The May 3, 2017 Progress Report on the Bear Lake Stewardship Program summarized activities that have occurred toward fulfilling the objectives outlined in a multi-year Lake Planning Grant awarded to the Bear Lake Protection and Rehabilitation District from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR). The major product of this project will be an Adaptive Management Plan – a document that will integrate the existing information about Bear Lake and its surroundings and include an updated Aquatic Plant Management Plan.

On July 14, 2017, an important educational component of the Bear Lake project took place with White Water Associates staff (Dean Premo and Angie Stine) leading a “floating workshop” via pontoon boats on Bear Lake to discuss the ecology of Bear Lake and its watershed. This well-attended event allowed a free exchange of information, ideas, and concerns. It involved several stops around the lake for discussion and presentation on a range of lake ecosystem topics.

In August 2017, White Water scientists will carry out a conductivity study on Bear Lake. Conductivity is a measure of the ability of water to conduct an electric current and is directly related to the amount of dissolved inorganic chemicals in the water. Possible sources of these chemicals are lawn fertilizers, salt runoff from roads, and leaking septic systems. The study compares conductivity levels around the lake shoreline with the “control” conductivity measurements taken at the center of the lake.

Over the next several months, additional information will be gathered about Bear Lake and White Water Associates will draft the Adaptive Management Plan and its various components. The draft will be submitted to the District for review and comments. After review comments are incorporated into the Draft Adaptive Management Plan, we will submit it to the WDNR for their final review.

