

# FACT SHEET

## LAKE REDSTONE CRITICAL HABITAT REPORT

### Executive Summary

A Critical Habitat study was conducted from 2005-2007 on Lake Redstone, Sauk County, Wisconsin by lakes, fisheries, wildlife, ecology and water management specialists with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

Lake Redstone was chosen for the study for two primary reasons:

- 1) To protect areas within the lake that are most important for preserving the character and qualities of the lake; and
- 2) To preserve the places of special aesthetic beauty for the enjoyment of lake residents and visitors.

The Department has made a tentative determination that specific locations in Lake Redstone contain Critical Habitat that ensures a healthy aquatic system and maintain the cultural and aesthetic values of the lake (Figure 1). Figure 2 shows the location of important near-shore and shallow water habitat about which Critical Habitat designations are most concerned. Critical Habitats are called Public Rights Features in Wisconsin Administrative Code NR1.06. They are characteristics of a lake that fulfill the rights of the public for quality and quantity of water, fishing, swimming, navigation or natural scenic beauty.

The Critical Habitats (Public Rights Features) for Lake Redstone include:

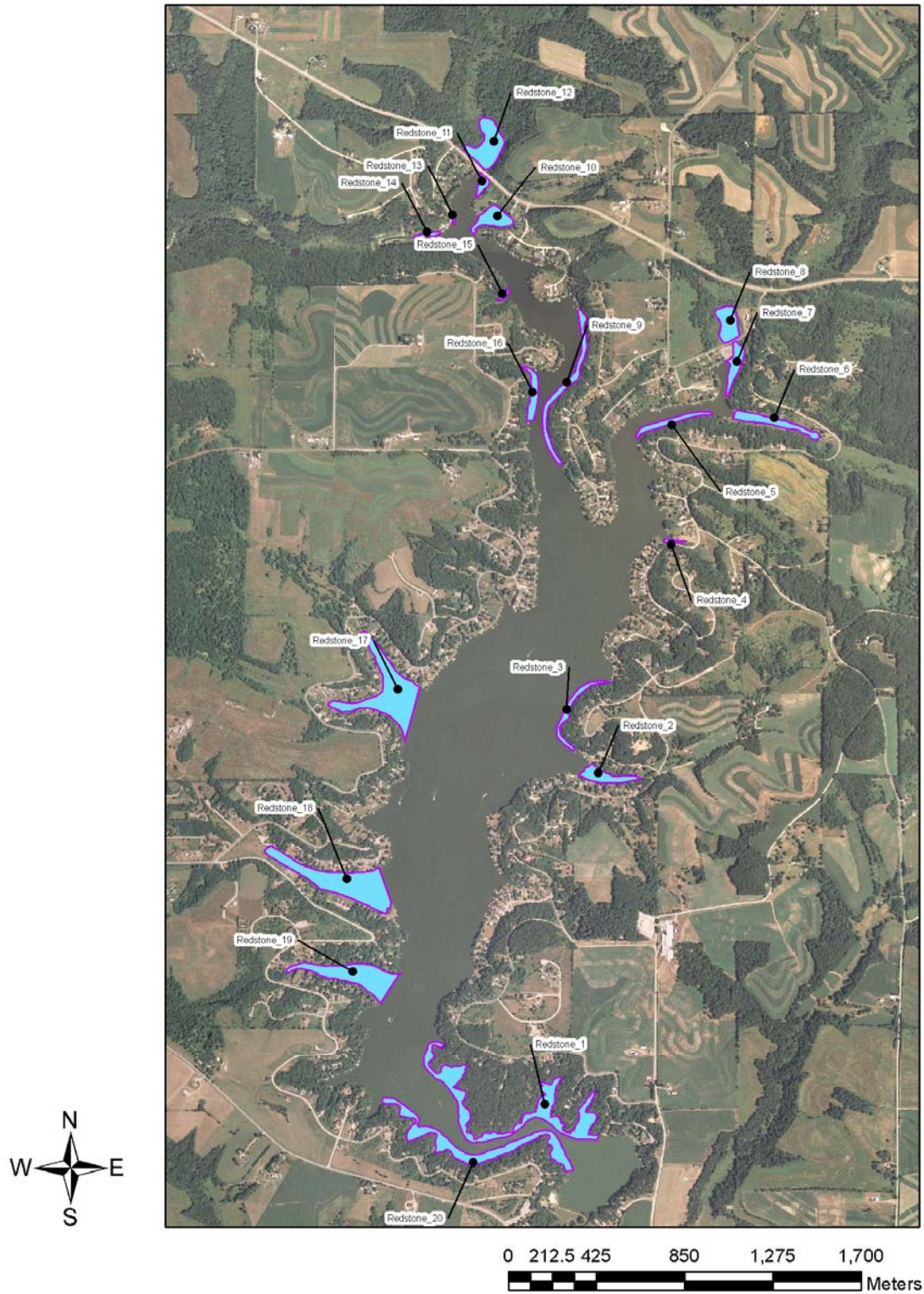
- Fish and wildlife habitat, including specific sites necessary for breeding, nesting, nursery and feeding;
- Plant communities and physical features that help protect water quality; and
- Reaches of bank, shore or bed which are predominately natural in appearance or that screen man-made or artificial features and have unique natural scenic beauty.

Designation as Critical Habitat may affect decisions on Waterway and Wetlands Permits under Ch. 30, Wis. Statutes. These include activities such as grading on the banks, dredging, placement of pea gravel beds or sand blankets, boat ramps, new or replacement piers, recreational devices such as rafts or trampolines, and shoreline erosion control (subject to appropriate site-specific wave energy calculations). This DOES NOT necessarily mean these activities will be prohibited, but that they will undergo more careful review to ensure that the activity does not adversely affect the critical habitat in the area. Currently, these reviews are routinely done for Ch. 30 permits on Lake Redstone, so substantial changes in permit decisions in the Critical Habitats are not expected.

Designation as Critical Habitat may also affect decisions on permitting of Aquatic Plant Management (APM) under Ch. NR107 and NR109 of the Wis. Adm. Code. These activities will undergo careful review to ensure that the activity does not adversely affect the sensitive ecosystem in the area. This is already routinely done on Lake Redstone, so few if any changes in APM permit decisions should be expected unless an updated APM plan specifies changes.

There are 20 areas designated as Critical Habitat for Lake Redstone (Figure 1). Fourteen of these are classified as Sensitive Areas for their aquatic vegetation and six are classified as Other Critical Habitat for their natural scenic beauty and/or fish and wildlife habitat values. All are classified as Public Rights Features.

# Lake Redstone Critical Habitat - Draft



**Figure 1. Lake Redstone Critical Habitat (Public Rights Features)**

## **General Recommendations for Lake Redstone**

The following are the general recommendations of the study to promote and protect the health of Lake Redstone:

- 1) Maintain natural shoreland buffers of native vegetation to protect water quality, fish and wildlife habitat and natural scenic beauty;
- 2) Maintain snag and cavity trees for cavity nesting species, canopy trees for roosting and perching of birds and downed trees for wildlife habitat;
- 3) Maintain the unique natural beauty of the sandstone cliffs and rock outcrops;
- 4) Maintain hemlock-white pine relicts, minimize tree removal and maintain vegetative visual buffers that screen development;
- 5) Maintain overhanging trees and shrubs, fallen trees along the shoreline and large woody cover and boulders in the water for fish and wildlife habitat;
- 6) Encourage lakefront property owners to plant native vegetation (trees, shrubs, perennial forbs and grasses) as a buffer zone to reduce shoreline erosion and runoff of nutrients and other pollutants that affect water quality;
- 7) Minimize removal of native aquatic vegetation to protect fish and wildlife habitat;
- 8) Require permits for aquatic plant management by chemical, manual or mechanical means;
- 9) Limit aquatic plant management to methods to specific to exotics and/or for navigation channels and reasonable swimming or fishing areas;
- 10) Update the Aquatic Plant Management Plan every 5 years to reflect current lake conditions and emerging management techniques;
- 11) Control invasive plants;
- 12) Maintain aquatic invasives signs at all boat landings to educate lake users about protecting the lake from introduction of new exotic species and consider establishing a Clean Boats, Clean Waters watercraft inspection program;
- 13) Assess location and dimensions of proposed grading on the banks, dredging, placement of pea gravel beds or sand blankets, boat ramps, new or replacement piers, recreational devices such as rafts or trampolines, and shoreline erosion control (subject to site-specific wave energy calculations) to protect water quality, fish and wildlife habitat and natural scenic beauty;
- 14) Encourage use of biologs and native vegetation for shoreline erosion control, subject to review of site-specific wave energy calculations;
- 15) Plant native woody vegetation at the Ordinary High Water Mark and native perennials in riprap;
- 16) In locations of actively eroding shoreline, consider expanding slow-no-wake zones to reduce erosion caused by boating.



**Figure 2. Location of important near-shore and shallow water habitat about which Critical Habitat designations are most concerned.**

**Public Informational Meeting**

A public informational meeting and open house will be held May 3, 2008 from 10 a.m. to noon at the Fire Station in LaValle. The purpose of the meeting is to present the findings of the study and allow the public to ask questions of the lake, fish and wildlife, ecology and water management specialists that performed the study. If requested, a public hearing will follow the meeting to allow citizens to provide any additional technical information on the sites that may affect the Critical Habitat designations.

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If you would like to know more about the Critical Habitat designation and the statutes and rules that apply, or would like to see the Critical Habitat Study report contact Susan Graham, Lake Management Coordinator, DNR South-Central Region at 608-275-3329 or [susan.graham@wisconsin.gov](mailto:susan.graham@wisconsin.gov) or refer to <http://dnr.wi.gov/lakes/criticalhabitat/>.



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