

# Small Scale Lake Management Planning Grant Report Summary



**Project Name and Number:** Madison Beach Party, Project Number SPL-221-10  
**Reporting Period:** April 1<sup>st</sup> – December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2010  
**Agency Reporting:** Public Health Madison & Dane County (PHMDC)  
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The Small Scale Lake Management Planning Grant from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources has made it possible to plan and host an educational beach party event at the Vilas Park Beach, Madison's busiest beach located on Lake Wingra. The goal of this project was to develop a strategy to educate the citizens about the causes of bacterial contamination at the beaches and the ways beach goers can modify their behavior to reduce negative impacts.

## Project Background

Six beaches, including Vilas Park Beach, in Madison on the Yahara lakes are on EPA's 303 d. Impaired Waters list. They are listed for excess *E. coli* bacteria causing the beaches to be periodically closed for swimming. The sources of bacteria at the beach can come from many sources. In Madison, bacteria generally originate from non-point sources, including storm water through the beach area carrying bacteria into the water. Wildlife and beach goers may also introduce bacteria into the swimming area.

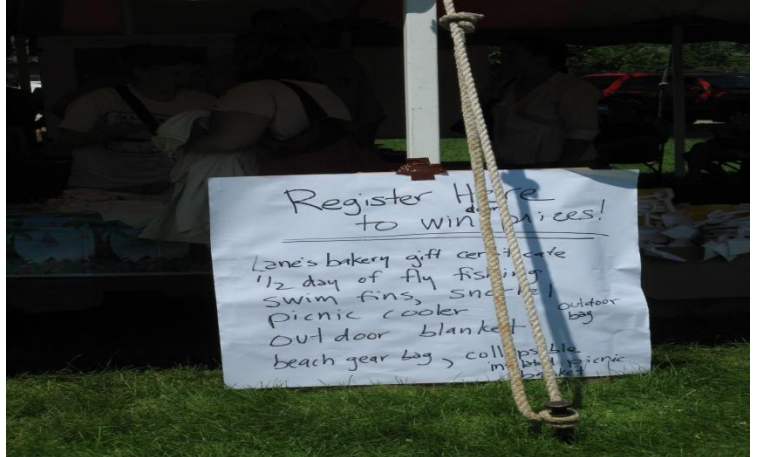
The City of Madison, Dane County and the Departments of Natural Resources and Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection entered into a memorandum of understanding to assess the beach bacteria issues. The Yahara Capitol Lakes Environmental Assessment and Needs (CLEAN) agreement made improving the health of our beaches a priority. The Yahara Lakes Legacy Partnership (YLLP) has articulated a vision for the future of the Yahara chain of lakes. One of the goals for the vision is to have beaches open for swimming and other forms of recreation nearly every day each summer. Plans are being developed to improve in-lake water quality and the storm water runoff through the beach site.

Partners from the City of Madison, Dane County, Dane County Lakes and Watershed Commission, community volunteers, Friends of Lake Wingra (FoLW) and WI Department of Natural Resources worked together to develop and implement the event plan. The overall purpose was to address the following themes:

- Yahara CLEAN publicity
- Introduce non-lake users, particularly younger generations to beaches and lakes;
- Increase awareness of the beaches and lakes and the opportunities they provide;
- Provide the opportunity to educate the public on enjoying and protecting our lakes; and
- Draw people to beaches/lakes to celebrate/appreciate the resources.

## Project Activities

The project team designed outreach and promotional materials, requested participation from other agencies and planned the set up in the park. Sponsorship and donations for game prizes and food were solicited and received from local businesses and institutions (for summary of donations, see Grant Payment Worksheet Form 8700-002).



### ***Donated prizes***

Information about the event was disseminated via e-mails, libraries, media releases, press advertisements, fliers and posters, listservs and websites ([www.danewaters.com](http://www.danewaters.com), [www.publichealthmhc.com/beaches/](http://www.publichealthmhc.com/beaches/), [www.myfairlakes.com](http://www.myfairlakes.com), [www.cityofmadison.com/parks/](http://www.cityofmadison.com/parks/))

The event took place on Saturday afternoon, June 26, 2010. A tent, tables, event decorations and banners were set up prior to the event and cleaned up afterwards

We sought information and collaboration from organizations that are interested in protecting lakes and beaches, such as Sustain Dane, friends/watershed and neighborhood associations on beach management topics. Various organizations participated and gave presentations of water resources related topics. Posters, displays and brochures on topics such as Sustain Dane's Rain Reserve Program, rain gardens, leaf projects, invasive species, sewer maps showing outfalls, beach monitoring for bacteria and harmful algae blooms, information from Clean Vilas Beach Coalitions, FoLW goose information and Dean Health Plan sun safety were on display.



**Poster sessions**

Presenters were available for demonstrations and for answering questions. Lakes and Watershed Commissioners volunteered to conduct games and quizzes on water quality topics and award prizes.



### ***Games and water quality quizzes***

Beach goers were educated on the concepts of watersheds and on the ways that people, wildlife and environmental conditions, such as excessive precipitation and flooding affect water quality. Citizens were encouraged to implement practices that reduce contamination at the beaches, including not feeding waterfowl, properly disposing diapers, using the beach house toilets, properly disposing litter and other practices.



***Food was purchased, prepared and served to over 250 participants.***

**Sharing Project Results** – Information from the Beach Party handouts were placed on the Health Department’s website under the Beaches section. A briefing of the outcomes of the event was also presented at a Lakes and Watershed Commission meeting. A press release was submitted to the local media. The success of this educational event will be documented and submitted for consideration for presentation at the annual Wisconsin Lakes Convention. Educational brochures created for this project may later be used in display boards at beaches.

