

## **Small Scale Lake Management Planning Grant Project Summary, Final Report**

**Project Number:** SPL-232-10

**Project Name:** Surface Water User Survey Implementation

**Local Sponsor:** Dane County Office of Lakes & Watersheds

**Billing Period** 4/1/2010 through 6/30/2011

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Since 2009, the Dane County Office of Lakes & Watersheds has worked with UW–River Falls Survey Research Center (UWRF SRC) to develop and implement several tools to gather data regarding recreational use of the county’s surface water resources. The Surface Water User Survey project, which includes four separate phases, is intended to gather data from as many of the surface waters of Dane County as possible. These survey projects intend to capture a snapshot of the economic impact of surface water recreation that will be useful in eventually developing a recreational use management plan sometime in the future.

We continued to work with David Trechter and Shelly Hadley, our contacts at the UWRF SRC, who developed the overall survey plan and tools. Sue Jones and I reviewed the general population survey developed by Shelly and David, which was designed to gather information on the number of Dane County residents (only) and how they currently use the surface water resources of the county.

The general population survey was implemented in the fall of 2010. It was mailed to 1,200 Dane County residents chosen randomly. The survey process included an introductory letter, initial mailing, a postcard reminder to non-respondents within 14 days of the first mailing, and a second mailing to non-respondents within 14 days of the postcard. In order to achieve estimates with a 95% confidence level (interval of 5%), 384 completed surveys were needed to be received. The 384 respondent goal was achieved and no further responses were counted despite being received since each additional response beyond 384 cost additional money to evaluate. The UWRF SRC mailed the letter of introduction, collected responses and input/scanned and “cleaned” the data from the returned surveys. Data gathered is in a spreadsheet format, with all personal identifying information removed and is attached to this report.

The data gathered from this initial survey helped to refine the intercept survey, which began in late May 2011, to ascertain where users are from and what activity(ies) they are engaging in. The final survey will target specific types of users, such as anglers, paddlers, boaters, etc. to gather economic data.

This project was the first survey tool in the second phase of a four-phase process: (1.) develop survey tools, (2.) implement three different surveys, (3.) analyze data and (4.) use the data to develop management plans and recommendations.

Included in this report is a copy of an actual returned survey from this project. Also included is a summary provided by UWRF SRC, as well as the data from the survey responses. Information gathered from the first survey tool helped refine the second survey tool, which is currently being implemented, and will conclude in May 2012. If awarded another grant, the third survey will be implemented in 2012.