

Lake Monitoring Activities and Volunteers in the Town of Plum Lake, Vilas County, Wisconsin

Since we were established in 2005, the Lakes Committee of the Town of Plum Lake has trained volunteers in in-lake and lakeshore monitoring. During the first several summers, we did extensive shoreline and in-lake sampling in each of our 37 lakes with public access in order to establish a baseline on the vegetation in these lakes. The in-lake plant and crayfish surveys indicated that no invasive plants were present and rusty crayfish were present only in previously known lakes. This sampling was done under the direction of Dr. William Sloey, Professor Emeritus, University of Wisconsin Oshkosh, by volunteers from the Lakes Committee's membership and by a few other volunteers from the community.

The next step was monitoring shorelines. For this we needed more volunteers. As part of our 2009 DNR grant we reached out to the several lake associations in the Town of Plum Lake asking for their members to help with the project. A training session was held in early July at the Plum Lake Golf Club. Dr Sloey, Ted Ritter, Vilas County Invasive Species Coordinator and Sandy Wickman of the DNR conducted the session. Sampling materials were distributed and people were asked to sample their lakeshore and bring the samples back to the golf club that day for identification by Dr Sloey and Ms Wickman. This was a very successful day with 54 people attending. Of course, volunteers were asked to continue sampling for the rest of the summer..

In 2010 we held a similar session as a refresher for the prior volunteers and for new volunteers. In addition to training, replacement materials were distributed. Fourteen new volunteers were trained and asked to continue monitoring until September.

Also, in 2010, we conducted training sessions at meetings of the Ballard, Irving, White Birch Lakes Association and at the Star Lakers Picnic for members of the Star Lake Lakes Association and other interested members of the community. Most are still monitoring. Additionally, two intensive crayfish trapping sessions were held, one on Star Lake and one on Plum Lake. These sessions were conducted, by volunteers trained by Dr. Sloey, other members of the Lakes Committee and by our 2010 University of Wisconsin Oshkosh intern under the protocols used by the University of Notre Dame. The study was prompted by work by Craig Roessler of the DNR. Over 30 volunteers participated.

Finally, in 2010, Chris Wise commenced monitoring water clarity and chemistry in Plum Lake. We also have a very active CBCW program run by Jan Wise with volunteers and a student intern from UW-Oshkosh each summer.

Prepared by

Chris A. Wise
Chair,
Lakes Committee of the Town of Plum Lake

