

Bayfield County Lakes Forum Communications Outreach

Final Report for SPL-214-10

In 2010, the Bayfield County Lakes Forum was awarded a \$4,000 small lake planning grant by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. The grant was to be used to improve the education and communications efforts of this countywide lake association. Specifically, the grant allowed the BCLF to expand its newsletter, send many individuals to training events that centered on lake issues and improve the BCLF website, BayfieldCountyLakes.org.

Because this DNR small lake planning grant was awarded to the Bayfield County Lakes Forum, the organization succeeded in greatly improving its ability to communicate with its member lake groups, non-member groups, individual shoreland property owners, general lake users, Consortium members, political leaders and the general public. The BCLF also was able to help educate and train many individuals by using these funds. The following is an excerpt from a news release that offers a profile of the success of this project:

. . . The grant helped the BCLF offer a number of education and outreach projects and publish its 2010 newsletter. The BCLF later received the Northwest Wisconsin Waters Consortium's top newsletter award.

"With the help from this grant, 8,000 BCLF newsletters were published and distributed. They contained articles that encourage responsible use of our water resources and help folks make sound decisions regarding their waterfront properties. The feedback we received was all great, especially the newsletter award from Northwest Waters," Brakken said.

"The grants come from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources water resources account. They are funded by the marine fuel tax also known as the 'motor boat gas tax'," Brakken added. "It's the tax we all pay when we buy gas for our boats. No additional taxes or public funds are used. These grants are wonderful opportunities for lake organizations who wish to educate folks about the sensitive nature of our waters. Best of all, they do not impact the budgets of Bayfield County or the State of Wisconsin," he said.

The Bayfield County Lakes Forum is a citizen volunteer organization not linked with the Bayfield County government. It represents over 20 lake associations and one lake district as well as the many non-organized lakes and streams in the county. The BCLF works to preserve and enhance the scenic, natural, recreational and economic values of Bayfield County lakes, streams and shorelands. All lakes are encouraged to participate and individual memberships are available for anyone who is interested in fostering clean, safe and healthy waters in our county.

The BCLF grant was matched by over \$1,900 invested in the project by the BCLF along with contributions from its Directors. In addition, over 550 hours of work were donated by over 70 individuals supporting the project. . . .

(The complete press item was submitted for publication in the Sawyer Co Record and the Bayfield County Journal. KUWS radio also received a copy.)