

Town of Plum Lake Lakes Committee Report

February 2025

First, we would like to thank the Town Board for its continuing commitment, support and funding of the Lakes Committee without which the Lakes Committee could not carry out its many activities. The Lakes Committee was founded in 2005 and is an all-volunteer committee. Anyone interested in protecting the health of our lakes is welcome to join.

2024 Committee Activities – funded by grants from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the Town of Plum Lake and Vilas County

- Lake Management Plan –
 - Approved Lake Management Plan for the Town of Plum Lake available on the Town website and a hard copy available for review in the Town Offices and Sayner Library.
 - The Plan contains both lake specific and general Town activities for future lake management.
 - One of the management actions is to perform quantitative vegetation monitoring with new point intercept surveys beginning in 2025. We have received a Surface Water Planning Grant with Onterra, LLC to perform these surveys on Plum, West Plum, Star and Little Star.

- Camera Surveillance at Town Landings –
 - Seven cameras operated on six town lakes (Ballard, Irving, Laura, Plum, Razorback and Star) for a total of 19,887 inspection hours.
 - 34,953 videos capturing 4,305 boat launches; six violations of state law noted in 2024
 - Committee actively working with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) on enforcement.
 - Active in 2025

- Clean Boats/Clean Waters (CBCW) –
 - In-Person Monitoring of Lake Landings
 - Approximately 1200 hours of monitoring by interns from the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh (UW-Osh) plus local citizens employed by the program
 - Lakes monitored – Ballard/Irving, Lake Laura, Plum (Statehouse Point and Town), Razorback and Star Lakes
 - 921 boats were checked for invasive species at the landings by the CBCW program.
 - Active in 2025

- Rapid Response Surveys
 - The Discovery Center conducted Early Detection Rapid Response Surveys, Spiny Water Flea Surveys and Fisheries Habitat Surveys on Star, Plum, Razorback, Laura, Ballard, Irving and White Birch Lakes.

- During its survey of Plum Lake the Discovery Center detected a suspect watermilfoil plant. Evaluation by Onterra LLC and genetic testing by the University of Montana identified the strain as a hybrid watermilfoil which appears unique to Plum Lake and to more closely resemble its Northern Water Milfoil parent rather than the invasive Eurasian Water Milfoil parent. The recommendation was to monitor the plant which will be performed by Onterra LLC during its planned surveys of Plum Lake.
- Active in 2025 with surveys on Razorback, Laura, Ballard, Irving and White Birch Lakes.
- Little Star Remediation -
 - Hand removal and disposal of Eurasian Water Milfoil (EWM) from Little Star performed in July and August 2024 by Aquatic Plant Management. Harvesting was based on mapping survey of plants conducted in June by Onterra.
 - Active 2025 - ongoing effort to control the spread of EWM in Little Star
- Fish Sticks (Healthy Lakes Grant) -
 - Intended to increase coarse woody habitat in lakes
 - Grants obtained for Plum, Laura and Star Lakes
 - Completed first of three sites on Plum Lake in February 2023
 - Worked on two Plum Lake sites and completed six fish stick bundles on Lake Laura in January and February 2025. Lake Laura installation included assistance from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission, Vilas County and Lake Laura property owners.
 - Active in 2025 to include Star Lake
- Boat Decontamination -
 - In cooperation with Vilas County voluntary boat decontamination was available at Star Lake and Plum Lake Statehouse Landing.
 - Active in 2025
- Enhanced Wake Ordinance -
 - Worked with the Plum Lake Town Board to develop and pass a Boating Regulation Town Ordinance restricting certain enhanced wakes to all waters within the Town of Plum Lake.
 - Installed ordinance signs at public landings within the Town of Plum Lake.

Committee Leadership in 2024

Chair - Bob Jackson

Vice Chair - Joe Heitz

Treasurer - Doug Pinney

Secretary - Lynn Wiggins