### WISCONSIN LAKES PARTNERSHIP



Testimony to the Speaker's Water Quality Task Force
September 4, 2019
UW-Stout, Menomonie

Michael Engleson, Wisconsin Lakes
Eric Olson, UW-Extension Lakes Program
Dick Lamers, Red Cedar Watershed Conference
Rod Olson, Red Cedar Watershed Conference



# PROTECTING IN PARTNERSHIP OUR LEGACY OF LAKES

Speaker's Water Quality Task Force Sept 4, 2019

Eric Olson
UW Extension - Lakes



Lakes!

• 15,000+ Lakes in WI

Most are small, <5 acres</li>

• 3,000+ lakes >24 acres

**Tourism Driver** 

Real Estate (\$100B?)

Quality of Life

**Ecological Value** 



Enjoying a boat ride with a view of Hotel Beulah in the background

#### 1894 Lake Beulah Protective Association forms in Walworth County

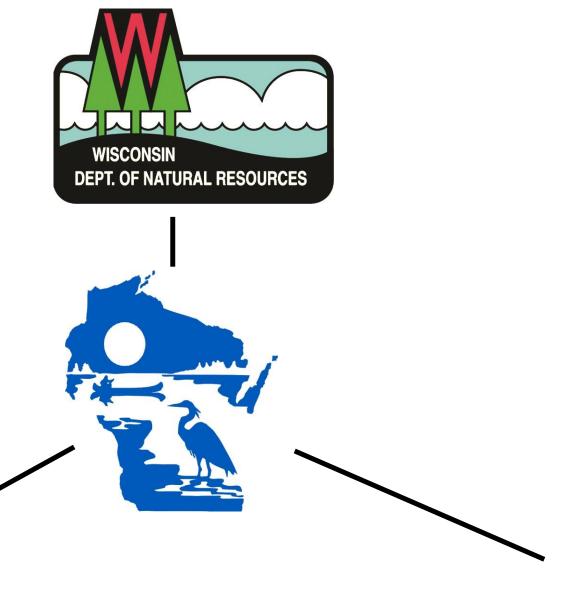


Lowell Klessig



"...local property owners were the only group with enough personal interest and proximity to manage individual lakes. However, voluntary lake associations do not have legal authority or financial ability to carry out most management schemes."

Lowell Klessig
 Chair, Environmental Resources Unit UWEX







### Rough Annual Budgets



\$900k staff and program

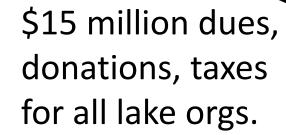


Extension
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

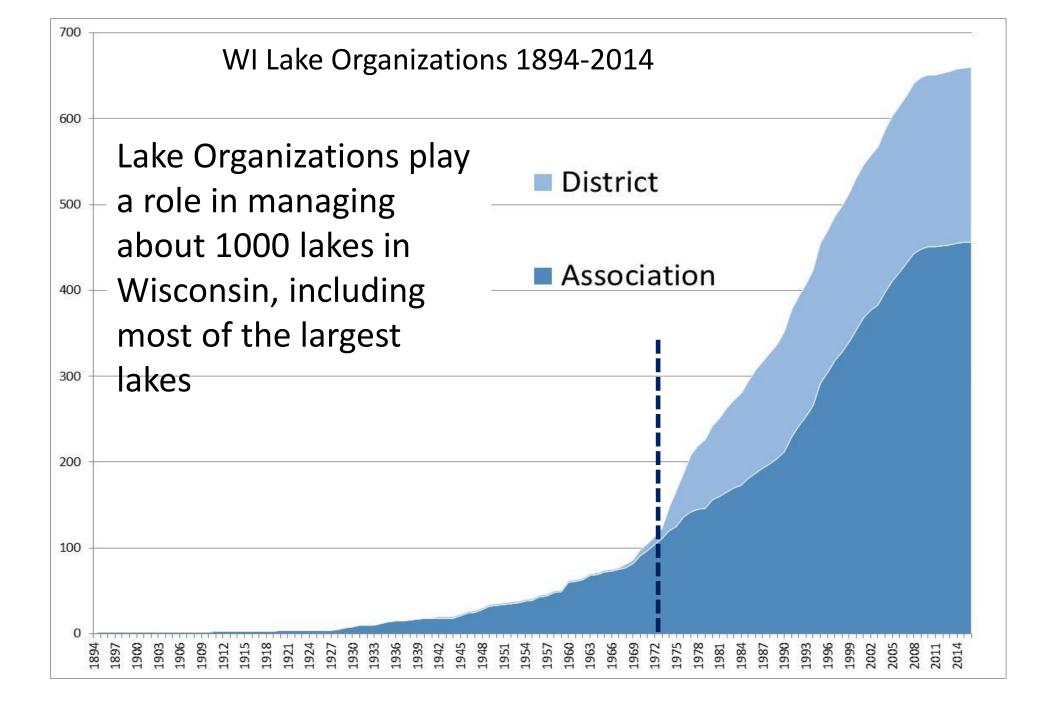


\$3 million staff and program

\$6 million grants







#### 2019 Lake Organizations in Wisconsin

- 562 Lake Associations
- Budgets vary a lot!

- County with most: Vilas (84)
- Clean Lakes Alliance (Madison): \$1.3 million

- 242 Lake Districts
- Budgets also vary

- County with most: Waushara & Waukesha (20 each)
- Total Lake District Revenue (2018): \$9 million
- ~60 Districts raised \$0 in 2018
- 22 Districts with budgets > \$100,000

#### Beaver Dam Lake District Barron Co. 2018 Budget

REVENUES	EXPENSES

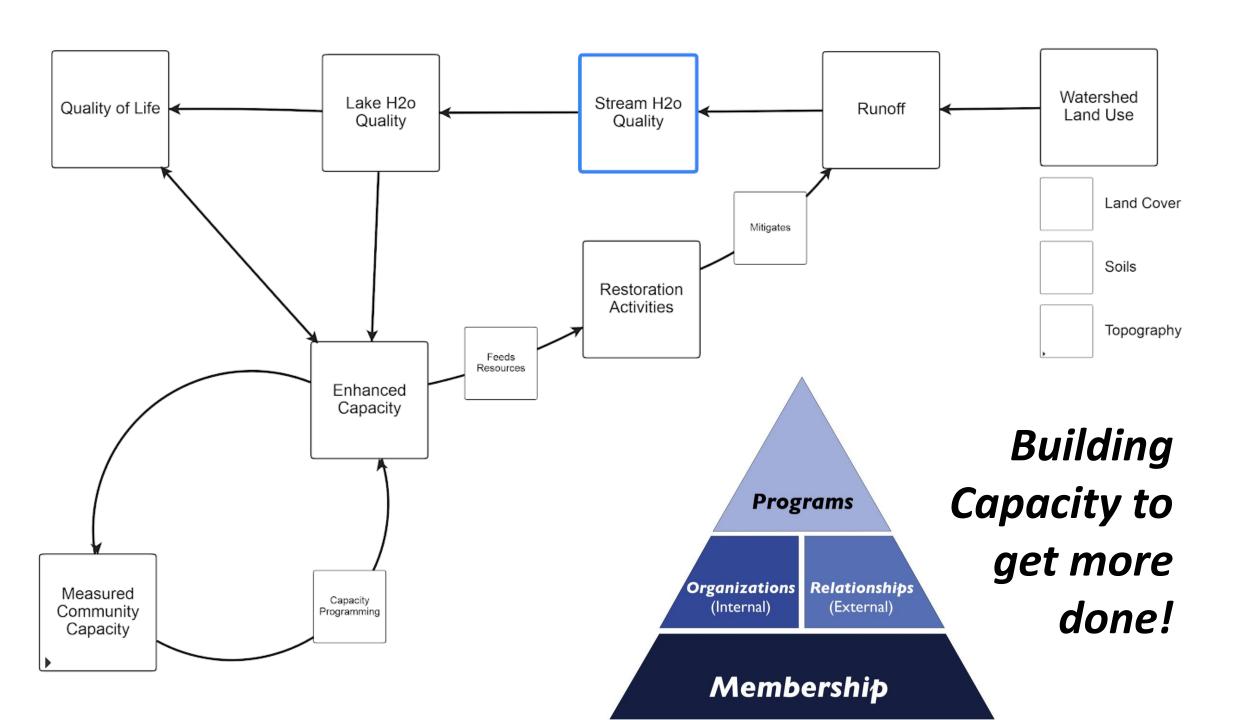
Tax Rev. (Est mil rate 0.94)	\$210,723
Grants Remaining	
LPT-50416 NE Library Lake	
Storm water Pond	\$ 48,662
LPT-53217 SW Library Lake	
Storm water Pond Construction	\$ 94,524
LPT 55417 Fish Sticks Project	\$ 3,318
LPT-57718 Jeffery Blvd.	
Storm water Pond Improvement	\$200,000
Highway 63 Bridge Study – Unspent	\$ 40,000
Milfoil/CLP Control – Unspent	\$ 45,000
Transfer from Cash Reserves	\$ 76,029
Total Revenues	\$718,256

Stable 94 cents/thousand mil rate \$200,000 value: \$188/year

Mailings, Notices, Mtgs.	\$	3,000
Grant Matches		
LPT-50416 NE Library Lake		
Storm water Pond		9,481
LPT-53217 SW Library Lake Storm water		
Pond Construction		142,525
LPT-57718 Jeffery Blvd. Storm water	_	
Improvement	2	267,000
Milfoil/CLP Control with Plant Surveys	1	55,000
Aquatic Plant Mgmt. Plan-ongoing		5,000
Insurance		6,000
Boat Landing Monitors		8,100
Fireworks		1,000
Water Safety		650
Walleye Stocking		0
Website Updates		500
Education/Conference		2,500
Shoreline Restoration Site		2,500
Highway 63 Bridge Study		40,000
Land Acquisition		70,000
Storm water Pond Maintenance		5,000

Total Expenses

\$718,256





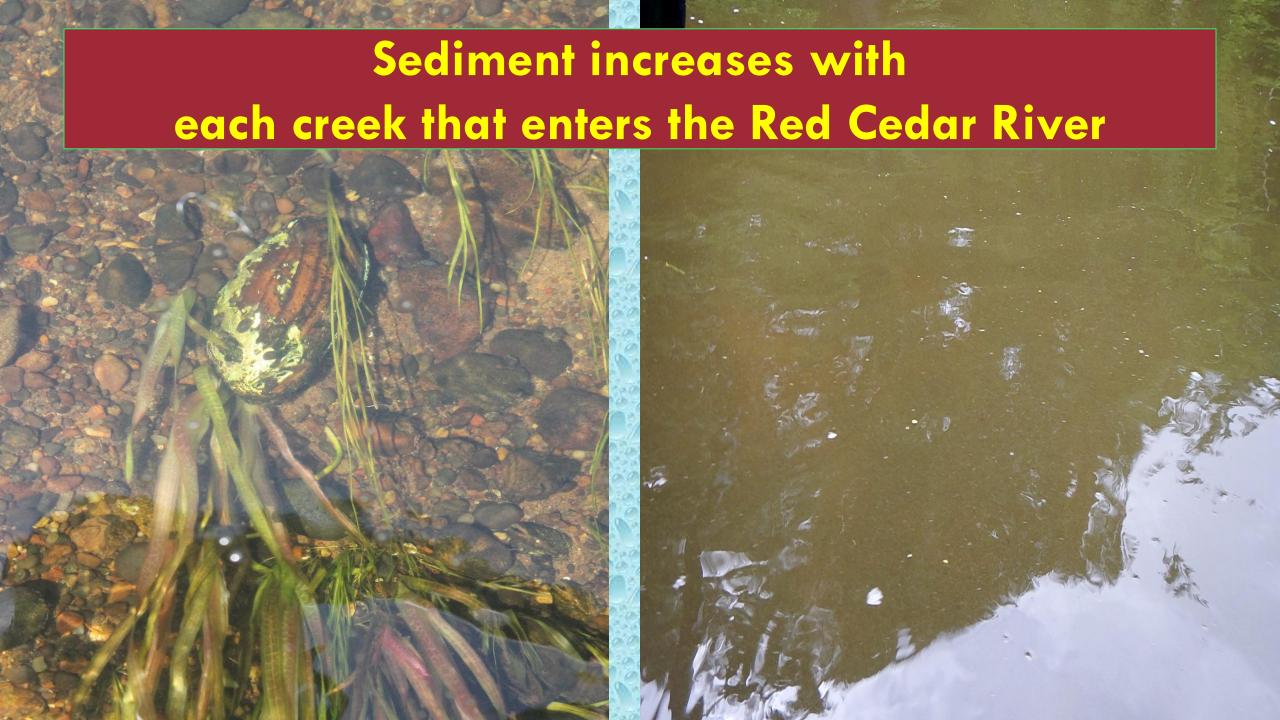
### The Red Cedar River Conference















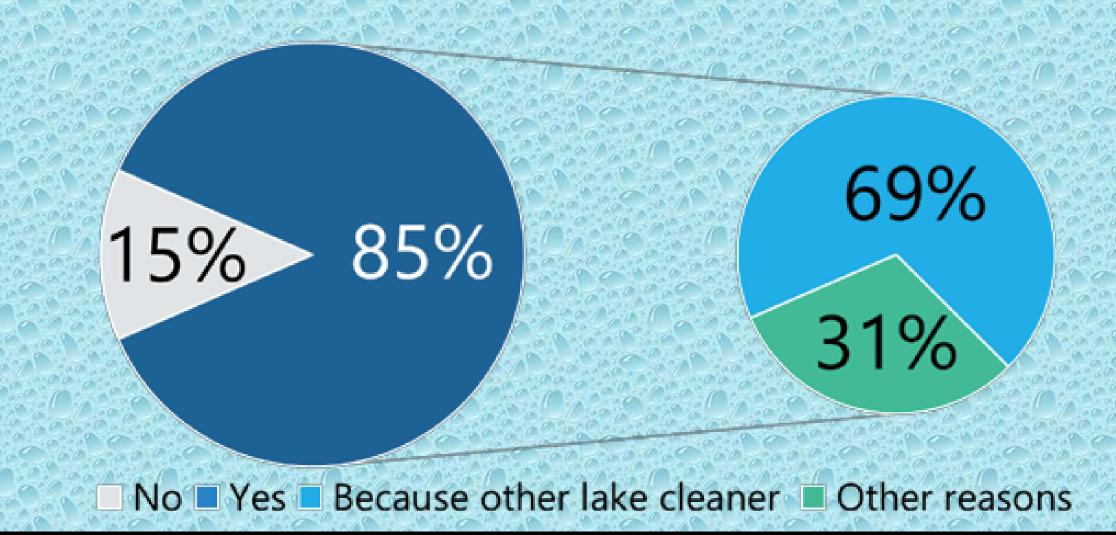
### Paddle Soup off Dick Lamer's Dock, Tainter Lake, Wisconsin



The Future of the Chetek Chain, Rice Lake, Red Cedar Lake, Balsam, Birch and Big Chetec Lakes







### **Perceptions and Reality**

86% of Tainter Lake residents say they have a buffer strip on their lakeshore.

A County study revealed only 35% had a recommended 35-foot buffer. 22% have a partially effective buffer of 12-35 feet.











What Can We Do? What is being done? What needs to be done a whole lot more?

#### Red Cedar River Water Quality Partnership

- UW Extension
- City of Menomonie
- NRCS Barron County
- TMLIA Lake Association
- WDNR
- Dunn County Land and Water Conservation Division
- Barron County Land and Water Conservation

- Co- Chair of the Red Cedar River Conference
- Barron County Farmer
- UW Stout REU
- Red Cedar Lakes Association
- Rusk County Land Conservation



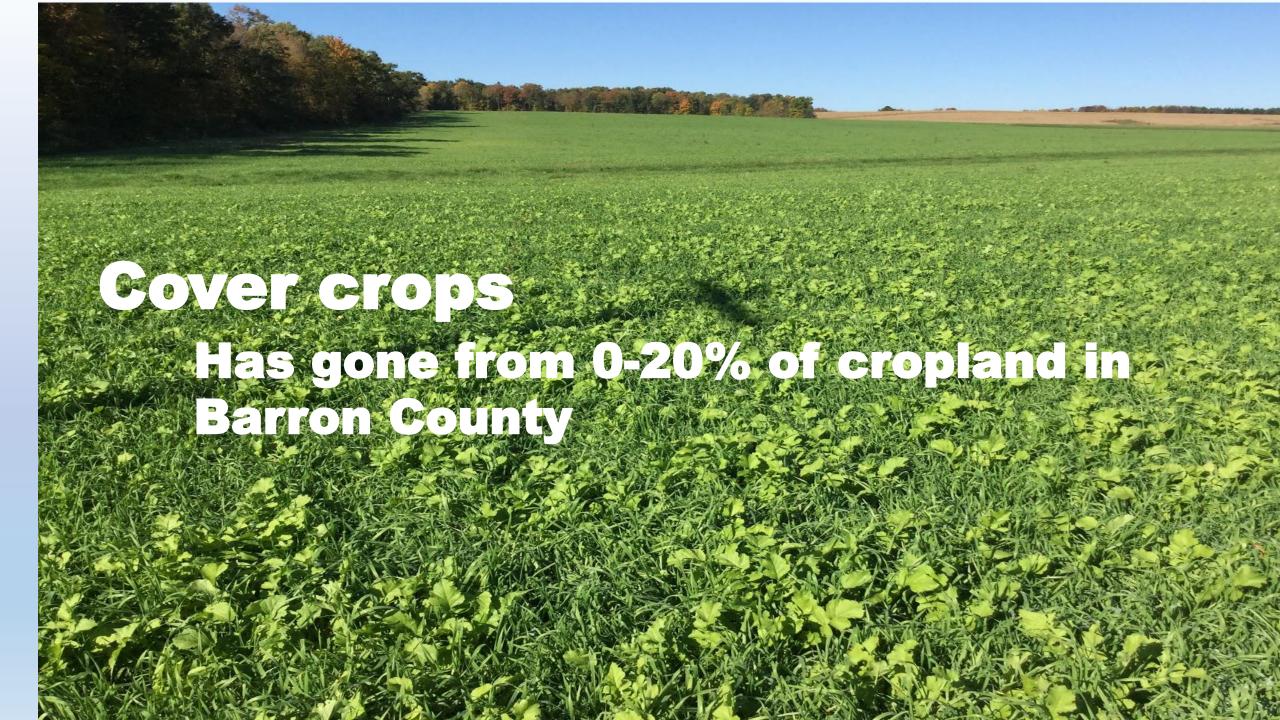






## No-till planting A steady increase since 2011







## The public has a vested interest in protecting soil and water resources

- Loss of soil productivity diminishes the agricultural economy
- Degrades lakes, rivers and wetlands
- Harms our quality of life in Northern Wisconsin.

# What can the Legislature do to Support these Changes?



We must actively assist the land managers of the watershed in finding methods to protect the soil for the future.









#### Wisconsin Lakes Policy Suggestions

- Increase funding for County Conservation departments to \$12.4 million, annually
- Maintain or increase funding for Producer Led Councils, but also require reporting and feedback to collect info on best practices
- Fully fund the nutrient management planning program
- Fund programs that help farmers move to practices that reduce runoff and preserve soil health
- Encourage collaboration and partnership between producers, citizen groups, government, and others; for instance, Governor Evers budget proposed an additional \$1.5 million for the surface water grant program that, if appropriated, could go to these sorts of efforts
- Continue the work of this committee until Wisconsin reaches viable solutions to the water quality problems the Taskforce has spent so much time learning about!

#### WISCONSIN LAKES PARTNERSHIP

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