

Horseshoe Lake Public Inland Lake Protection & Rehabilitation District 10th Annual Meeting Minutes - August 16, 2025

Call to order at 9:00 AM by President Steve Eichman at Beaver Town Hall with approximately 30 people in attendance.

“State of the Lake” Presentation: Dave Blumer of LEAPS was unable to attend, but he prepared a presentation to share. A copy of his presentation is available on the HLAKE.org website. Dave is cutting back the number of lakes he works with, but he is still willing to help us out with lake monitoring and education on a project-by-project basis. Short-term this will work, but long-term we may need to find another consultant – especially if we have an increase in invasive species in the future.

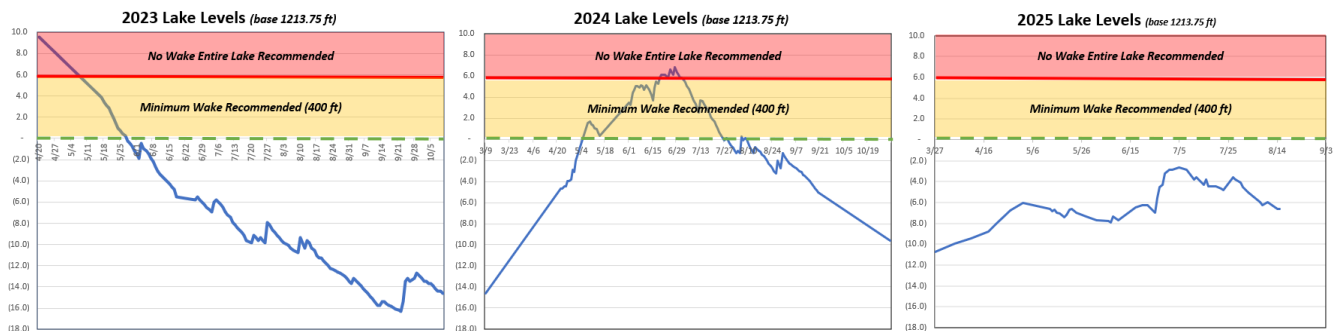
Horseshoe Lake is in good shape right now and we have an Aquatic Management Plan in place through at least 2027. The first slide shows where milfoil was found this spring, where we used divers for manual removal and where we released beetles to help control purple loosestrife. After the DNR did not allow us to treat milfoil in 2020-22, we did do chemical treatment of targeted areas in 2023 and 2024. In 2024, we also used Diver Assisted Suction Harvest removal (DASH) covered by a grant. For 2025 we only did manual removal using divers targeted areas with high and low concentrations of milfoil. We also worked with LEAPS to rear and release beetles to help control purple loosestrife in hard-to-reach areas. A fall survey will be done by Matt Berg to identify where we still have milfoil present.

We do not have Zebra Mussels in the lake, but they are a serious concern as they have been found in nearby lakes. Continued boat landing monitoring is our #1 defense against the introduction of these or other invasives species. Always make sure to check your boats and your guest boats before launching them into our lake. LEAPS has helped us with boat landing monitoring the past two years. In 2025 – they inspected over 125 boats. For 2026 – we will need volunteers to do some or all of our boat inspections if LEAPS is not available to assist. We will apply for a CBCW grant from DNR to help cost-share these expenses but will not have any other grants available in 2026.

Shoreland Preservation Committee Report: Craig Firl gave an update on what has been discussed by their committee, which was formed at last year’s annual meeting. The primary concern is minimizing shoreland erosion when the water levels are high, like they were in summer of 2025 and in the spring of 2024. In visiting with Polk County Zoning and DNR, we found there is no “official” high water designation (zoning uses your erosion line). We also found there are no specific state regulations restricting wake based on high water levels or boat type (other than 200 ft no wake for PWC vs 100 ft for other boats).

Using three years of data from our Polk County-installed lake height gauge (shown below), we attempted to identify what lake levels should be considered high and what wake restrictions would be recommended to minimize erosion. Based on this data, we came up with three lake level “stages” with recommended wake restrictions to reduce damage during high water periods.

- **NORMAL** (Standard WI DNR wake restrictions - no boat wake within 100 feet of dock/shore)
- **CAUTION** (No wake within 400 ft. of shore) - level reaches 1313.75 ft above sea level
- **CRITICAL** (No Wake on entire lake) - level reaches 1314.25 ft above sea level (*6” above Caution*)



In 2023, we started extremely high until early May, then didn't really drop to safe levels until Memorial Day. In 2024, lake levels were very low to start the spring but then rains in May and June put us in the Caution level or above for almost two months, with the lake levels peaking right around July 4th. In both cases, by the time we put out warnings - it was too little, too late. So, our goal is to be proactive in identifying when the lake is getting at levels which put our valuable shoreline at risk and then alerting everyone with recommendations to minimize wake damage.

Russ Patten talked to other lakes about what they are doing when water is high and how they deal with wake boats. The most successful efforts have been around education of the impact of wakes from all boats and what to do to minimize impact of wakes. It is not just about wake-boats or ski boats, as any boat can create an adverse wake. He has prepared a draft of an educational brochure that can be shared with lake owners and their guests about the impact of waves and boating safety. This would include a map of the lake and what our recommendations are based on lake levels. We also recommend improving signage at the boat landing to let people know when levels are high and put caution/warning flags on the buoys.

There was discussion about additional boating restrictions around time of day for skiing or limiting boat usage. It was reinforced that common sense and common courtesy would solve most of these issues. Craig Nackerud shared that the Town of Beaver has already granted the Lake District the right to set boating restrictions (if we ever need to get to that point). But we would have the risk of ligation, plus still have the continued issue of who would enforce new boating rules, when we don't have a DNR presence on the lake to enforce existing rules.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the establishment of the recommended lake levels for the **Caution** and **Critical** stages, recommendations for wake restrictions at those levels and the creation of educational information brochure on boating safety and shoreline preservation. After additional discussion, the motion was passed unanimously. Russ will get additional input on his education brochure and finalize it in time to share with lake owners next spring. We will also create improved signage for the boat landing, yellow and red flags for buoys at high water levels and finalize a plan for communication to owners when water levels reach cautionary or critical stages.

Lake Patrol: We did see the Sheriff's department out on the lake a couple times this summer, but they have minimal resources available. Polk County did get approval to add a second rec officer in 2025 but then promoted the current one so still only had one this summer. We do have the potential to "pay" for extra days of lake patrol by Polk County (appr \$125 per visit) if resources are available. After additional discussion, the consensus was that we are already paying them in our taxes, so let not spend more money just for education. We can always revisit this in the future if our education plan isn't effective.

Treasurer Report: The current financial report was included in the meeting handouts and mailed out with the meeting information. We currently have \$5,542.87 in checking plus \$11,823.19 in CDs, plus a \$12,000 CD in the Aquatic Invasive Species Emergence Control Reserve Fund inherited from the Lake Association when the Lake District was created. The reason we are have extra cash onhand is because our 2023-24 grant covered most of our milfoil control and lake management expenses the past two years (we won't have this in the future).

Our main expenses in 2025 were \$3000 to hire the DiveGuys to do manual milfoil removal (four divers), \$2000 for hiring LEAPS to help do CBCW boat inspections (Clean Boat, Clean Waters) at the landing, \$1319 for our liability insurance and our LEAPS lake management expenses and fall lake survey. We spent just under \$1000 to replace the decking on the dock at the boat landing (thanks to Craig Firl and Joe Waldo for installing it).

On the revenue side, in February we received \$11,188 from the DNR for 2024 cost-share reimbursement on our 2023-24 Milfoil Treatment/Research Grant, \$9300 in tax revenue, \$2250 cost-share reimbursement for 2024 expenses through our CWCB grant and approximately \$800 in interest. We got an extension to use the remaining \$3000 from our 2023-24 grant to help our 2025 manual milfoil removal expense and fall survey. We will submit that information to the DNR in November, but we won't get reimbursed until after the 1st of the year.

For 2026, we will again budget \$6000 for milfoil control (average cost for treating and/or manually removal), \$4000 for CBCW (\$3000 covered by grants if we get enough volunteer hours), and our regular liability insurance, lake management expenses for LEAPS and fall survey by Matt Berg. We will increase member communications budget to cover additional expenses around the Shoreland Preservation initiatives and education mailings. We will also need to replace and/or repair at least some of our buoys for 2026. I recommend we keep our annual tax assessment flat at \$9300/year and will work down our CD balances over the next couple of years to offset expenses (other than the milfoil emergency fund).

The treasurer report and 2026 budget were approved.

Water Quality: Steve Eichman has been doing the water quality tests the past several years. The water clarity was exceptionally clear this spring. The April SECCI disk reading was at 14 feet, in May it was 22 feet down, in June the clarity was 16 feet and in July it was down to 8 feet (fairly normal, sometimes it is less than 2 that time of year). Thanks to Steve for continuing to do this. Let him know if you are interested in going out with him to take readings (or taking over this project at some point).

Election of Board Commissioner: Steve Eichman's 3-year term is expiring. He agreed to run again and was unanimously re-elected to another three-year term.

Polk County: There are a couple places on the lake that still have junk which needs to be removed. Polk County continues to fine them, but no cleanup plan in place yet.

Lake Directory/Website

We keep a lake directory with this information and share it only with those who provide email information. Please send any changes to hlake.treasurer@gmail.com. A form for new owners is on <http://hlake.org/> website. Russ Patten has updated the hlake.org website onto a newer format. Please look at it and let Russ know if you have any questions or suggestions for improvement. Again – a big thanks to Mike Foster (and Gail) for all of the years Mike was on the board and managed our website.

Go to <http://hlake.org/> for more info on the lake district. Also – join and follow our Facebook page (search Horseshoe Lake Horseshoe Lake Public Inland Lake Protection and Rehabilitation District)

Meeting was adjourned at 10:40 AM.