



Winter 2020

**Purpose:** *Protect, preserve & improve the environmental & esthetic quality of the Eau Claire Lakes Area Watershed including the lakes, rivers, shore lands, wetlands, forests, & attendant wildlife resources.*

The FOECLA Board accomplished a lot in 2019 and I want to highlight some of the actions that were taken. We could not accomplish much without the membership support we receive in both money and volunteered time. There is more we can do to protect, preserve, and improve this wonderful area we all enjoy. Please renew your membership and, if you are so inclined, contribute more.

The board's efforts in 2019 focused on three areas:

#### **Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention and Lake Health**

- We purchased a new dissolved oxygen meter for use on area lakes by local volunteers (WDNR Citizen Lake Monitoring Network).
- We made a commitment to financially support an effort by Douglas County staff to obtain a WDNR grant to hire an AIS Education, Prevention and Planning Coordinator (a large part of our service area lies in Douglas County, including the majority of Lower Eau Claire Lake and other lakes).
- We continued to support the Town of Barnes and its AIS Committee, which oversee boat landing monitors (Clean Boats/Clean Waters) and AIS remediation efforts.

#### **Community Development and Education**

- We sponsored 2 education events: Melissa Kjelvik (LEEP Coordinator) presented "Dangerously Bold: The Ecological Consequences of Boldness in Bluegill Sunfish" at our annual meeting in July, and Emily Stone (Cable Natural History Museum's Naturalist/ Education Director) presented "Call of the Loon" in August.
- We restored and updated the "Welcome to the Eau Claire Lakes Area" road signs.
- We expanded our award-winning Lake Ecology Education Program (LEEP) for Drummond School 7<sup>th</sup> graders. Last fall, we piloted a fisheries management module with a grant from the National Resource Foundation of Wisconsin's Go Outside Fund. This module was a big success as it integrated classroom work with outside sampling work and helped students understand the interconnection between the two. A huge "thank you!" to Carol LeBreck, Ted Eastlund and Carol Andresen for their hard work, and to the many volunteers and environmental professionals who make this program succeed year after year.
- We co-sponsored a program celebrating the return of the Silver Beach Elk to the Barnes Area Historical Association's museum.
- We presented our first annual \$1000 scholarship to Drummond High School senior Iris Wichman, who will be pursuing a degree in Environmental Studies.

#### **Safety on the Water**

- We printed and distributed waterproof boating safety cards with boating regulations and where/how to report water safety violations.

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Our work in 2020 has already begun. The Town of Barnes formed a Lakes Committee following the elimination of its water ski and jet ski ordinance. The Committee made many recommendations that we can help implement, including the boating safety cards we started distributing last year. The Committee also recommended placing 100- and 200-foot marker buoys on the lakes to help boaters stay the proper distances from shorelines and docks. We will be discussing the possibility of helping to hold meetings to educate the public about safety rules and boating regulations, along with information on how to report violations. Many of our members have told us that rules violations remain a serious issue. You can help by sharing your concerns directly with Town of Barnes board members – their contact information can be found on the Town website: <http://www.barnes-wi.com>.

High water and shoreline erosion are also very serious concerns for our membership. We have made numerous inquiries as to how the town, county or state can create a process for implementing a “Slow, No Wake” signage plan when needed. We would like the Town of Barnes to show some leadership on this issue in 2020 as shoreline erosion is happening at an alarming rate. If you have concerns about shoreline erosion, please contact Town of Barnes board members. We will continue to help bring clarity to this issue where and when we can.

Thank you for your time, consideration and donations. The entire community wants to keep the Eau Claire Lakes area at a high quality level. If you have questions or ideas, please send an email to [eauclairefriends@gmail.com](mailto:eauclairefriends@gmail.com).

Kevin Shriver  
President

### **2019 was another successful year for LEEP!**

Since 2009, we have been partnering with the Drummond Area School District to help seventh grade students become life-long lake stewards.

Our award-winning program delivers classroom lessons and one field trip each spring and fall. Our members help make this program possible.

Please consider joining us today!



Photo credit: Phyllis Olson



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