

From the Lake Shores

Connors Lake • Lake of the Pines

LAKE ASSOCIATION



WATERS | VOLUNTEERS | FISH | FORESTRY

"Preserving and protecting our lakes for today and for future generations."

a newsletter for the Lake Association Members • Volume 33- December 2022

Words from the President

From the new President

Greetings, I hope that this letter finds you in good health and enjoying the fall season. As you know by now there has been some changes to the Lake Association Board, I am hopeful that we will continue to have success as we have in the past.

This past year the Lake Association put in buoys at musky bay to help slow the growth of the exotic weeds, which I'm sure a lot of you have seen on Connors Lake. We also have donated \$5,000 to start working on the walking trail at Lake of the Pines. The board also worked to complete a temporary fix with the DNR on the boat landing at Lake of the Pines, hopefully in the near future, both boat landings will undergo new construction.

For this upcoming year we are looking at a couple different projects to complete on both lakes. But in good news, the Fourth of July Fireworks at Connors Lake are back on! A date will be released closer to the event.

Thank you to the previous serving members of the board for all the hard work and dedication they put forth. I am looking forward to being the serving president of the Lake Association and am excited to see what the future holds for our two beautiful lakes!

Be safe over the winter months and looking forward to seeing you on the water next spring!

- Steven Lindahl



ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY APRIL 23 and OCTOBER 22, 2022 THANK YOU!

Thanks to all the volunteers who helped with this year's Spring (April 23) and Fall 2022 ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY on October 22: Cynthia Aigner, Debbie Arndt, Dave Bauer, George Bogdanovic, Chris and Ann, DeMeulenaere, Bob Feller, John and Paula Meisner, Dianne and Ed Peters, Kim and Mike Poncek and Pat, Tom Stram; and Matt Plath at Condos on Connors Lake for allowing us to use the parking lot for staging our clean-up efforts. (If I missed anyone or misspelled names I apologize and please let me know). This is a great way to encourage concern for the welfare of our local natural resources. Adopt-A-Highway is an activity that families can participate in together; children that are at least 11 years old or in the 6th grade can participate. We are out for the Adopt-A-Highway Clean-up 2 times a year; in late April after the snow is gone; and in late-September or early-October. We clean-up about 3 miles of roadsides and culverts from Hwy M & W, Tower Road to the DNR Offices on West Lane

If you would like to get your name on the volunteer list to be contacted for the next highway clean-up, please contact Dave Cooley at (920) 428-0755 or dec54914@prodigy.net.
NEXT ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY CLEAN-UP APRIL 2023



Flambeau River State Forest Property Updates

For the 2022 peak season we were able to get a few projects completed once again. There is a list below of what has been completed and what we may still be working on.

We were able to continue ATV trail maintenance work on the North end of the Forest. This work is currently ongoing but once it is all said and done, we should have another 3-4 miles rehabbed and resurfaced.

We were able to get a fix for the Lake of the Pines Boat Launch. This fix was needed as the ramp was becoming too difficult to use.

We installed the new signs for the Solar Lights, donated by the Lake Association, at both Connors Lake and Lake of the Pines

We were able to replace the decaying split rail fence at Connors Lake Picnic Area.



Connors Lake Ramp Improvements



Split Rail Fence Improvements

We have new informational kiosks going up at both Campgrounds, Connors Lake Picnic area and the Oxbo Trail System in the North. We are still completing installation, and these will be ready for additional information in the Spring.

We also added new certified playground chips to the Connors Lake playground and added chips to some of the tree rings within the picnic area.



Certified Playground Chips

We were able to bring the Firework Show back to the Flambeau this year! There was great partnership work with the Lake Association.

We worked on submitting an enhancement project application for the hiking trail at Lake of the Pines Campground. This project was approved, and a \$5,000 donation was received by the Lake Association! Thank you or this support! This money will be matched by the DNR and will also partner with additional monies for this trail to really transform this trail. We plan to have the entire trail re-surfaced, add benches, a kiosk, interpretive signs, and trail signage throughout.

We did remove all the benches at both Campgrounds. These benches were old, rotten and did not pass our last safety checks. Currently, we have no plans to replace them.

The Connors Creek ATV bridge is still under construction. Planned to be open to traffic by the end of this month (October). There were some construction and engineering issues that arose but since have been taken care of. We are anticipating the project to finish up smoothly from here on out.

The rehab project on 9-mile Landing has been pushed back. There is a lack of contractors, and this project was unable to be hired out in time. It is scheduled for the 2023 season; I just do not know dates as of right now.

The Connors Lake and Lake of the Pines docks, along with the Fishing Pier are being stained and sealed this year. All items were pulled rom the water early this year to have this work completed.

We had highways signs installed for the Connors Lake Picnic Area, Connors Lake Campground and Oxbo Trail. These signs will help inform people of location and where to turn off these Hwy routes.

So overall we were able to get a good deal of projects and upgrades done again this season. We had excellent collaboration with the Lake Association and various members which allowed a few extra things to get done. We kept up with maintenance as always and were able to get some things painted such as doors, tables, kiosks, and some vault buildings. We continue to do everything we can to make the Flambeau a beautiful property and look forward to this Fall and Winter. Thank you!!



CONNORS LAKE / LAKE OF THE PINES LAKE ASSOCIATION
Cash Raffle 2022

The Cash Raffle Fund Raiser drawing was held at the Big Bear Lodge in September. The fund raiser this year was a huge success. All 100 tickets were sold. This is fantastic - it's been many years since all tickets were sold. We really want to thank everyone for making this a very successful year. Its you our members that made this happen. Thanks again.

The 2022 winners are as follows:

- 1st Place \$2,500.00 Ryan Krings
- 2nd Place \$1,000.00 Dan & Judy Gryga
- 3rd Place \$500.00 Michael Brommer
- 4th Place \$125.00 Tim Meehan
- 5th Place \$125.00 Matthew Allen
- 6th Place \$125.00 Steve Reisner
- 7th Place \$125.00 Cate Stram
- 8th Place \$125.00 Chuck Schwarting
- 9th Place \$125.00 Jamie Suchanek
- 10th Place \$125.00 Gordie Dukenrrschien



Respectfully,
Florian Wisinski
Connors Lake / Lake of the Pines Lake Association

Hello, I am Steven Lindahl. I was born and raised in Medford WI and have been coming up to Connors Lake since the early 60's with my parents and two siblings. When we first started coming up to Connors Lake there were no beaches and docks on the boat landing, it was just a gravel ramp to take your boat off. We used to unload the boat and then sleep in the back of my dad's '57 Desoto Station Wagon and in the morning my dad fired up the green Coleman stove and we used to eat breakfast on the back tailgate, they were the best of times!

The family has been on the lake since 1966 starting with my father and mother buying a cabin on Old Lodge Lane and then 16 years ago my wife and I bought our cabin on Johnson Road with our two girls.

This lake has been a part of my family for many years and this year got to introduce my first grandbaby to the area. We all love it up here and enjoy every memory we make through the years.

I am looking forward to helping the Lake Association make this even a better place for our future generations.

Thank you, Steven Lindahl



The “Shy” Wildflower ~ Tom Stram

Early spring violets are half-hidden, close to the ground (shy) and one has to look closely to appreciate their beauty. They are quite hardy and adaptable to a variety of habitats. They bloom early in the spring and are one of the best-known native wildflowers. The common blue violet is the Wisconsin state flower. The violet family (Violaceae; genus *Viola*) is a large world-wide family (400 - 600 species) found in temperate regions of North America. The majority have stems with leaves (5), stipules, and sepals. The flowers are symmetrical with two upper petals, two lateral petals and a lower petal that is a landing platform for pollinators. The lower three leaves are bearded.

Violets are notorious for hybridizing. Violets are commonly referred to as blue or shades of lavender to purple but some species may be white, yellow or pink. As light on the forest floor diminishes violets produce flowers that appear as unopened buds which can also produce seeds. Violets receive few visits from insects but the principal pollinators are butterflies. The fruits of violets are capsules that can “shot” out seeds up to 5 meters. Some violet species can propagate with runners. Violets are host plants of Fritillary butterflies. Violets have played a role in art, literature and history. They have served as symbols of faithful love, modesty and royalty. “If violet is for faithfulness, Which in me shall abide; Hoping, likewise, that from your heart; You will not let it slide”.



William Shakespeare mentions the scents, color and symbolism of violets in many of his works. Violets bloom in a garden dedicated to Shakespeare in New York’s Central Park. Violets are portrayed in art as well. Renaissance artists painted violets at the feet of the Virgin Mary as a symbol of her humility and the *V. tricolor* represents the trinity. Violets in history began with a Greek myth that tells of their creation by Zeus in a field where his lover’s tears fell.

There are many species of violets in Europe. English nurserymen crossed *V. tricolor* with *V. lutea* from Europe and *V. alpaca* from Asia which resulted in the large-flowered pansy so popular in garden centers today. Some violets have a distinctive aroma but they are only propagated by cuttings and the yield of compound responsible for the fragrance is minuscule and thus very expensive. Southern France produces items flavored with the essence of violets including candy coated almonds, chewing gum, custard and a liqueur.



Rhinebeck, NY is the home of a sweet violet with a heavy scent and lavender-colored flowers used for corsages, bouquets and crystallized for food decoration.

Reference for this article is a beautiful book; “Spring Wildflowers of the Northeast” by Carol Gracie.

Fall 2022 Eurasian Water-Milfoil Report

The fall 2022 Full lake Point Intercept survey of the entire Connors lake resulted in an EWM (Eurasian water-milfoil) frequency of occurrence of 4.5%. In Musky Bay, where most all of the EWM in Connors Lake occurs the frequency was unchanged from 2021 at 18%. In the NE bay there was a small dense bed with a frequency of occurrence of 3.7%. I noticed this bed for the past three years but it was between sample points for the official survey. Fortunately, there was no milfoil near the boat launch.

Lake of the Pines had an AIS (Aquatic Invasive Species) meander survey and no EWM was found. Overall, the EWM has not changed in regard to frequency of the plant in sample areas. Considering that no herbicide treatment was used, it shows that the EWM is NOT SPREADING in Connors Lake even when no herbicide is used. In the last newsletter I explained why this phenomenon may be occurring. The EWM in the NE bay is of concern. When the invasive weed was first observed in Connors Lake some 20 plus years ago it was very dense and widespread in the NE bay. It has been free of infestation until recently. As in Muskie Bay, the Aquatic Plan Management Plan stipulates that we cannot treat with a herbicide unless there is a frequency of occurrence of 30% or greater. We may however be able to remove the EWM with divers if a permit is issued and divers are available and cost effective.



Natural Connections

Bugling at Dawn

By Emily Stone
Naturalist/Education Director at the Cable Natural History Museum

The sky was just beginning to lighten into grays and pinks as we gathered at the Clam Lake Guard Station to meet Laine Stowell, elk biologist with the Wisconsin DNR. Slowly rolling down Highway 77 in our car caravan, we barely noticed as dawn broke.

Our first stop was just behind the storage facility at the end of a paved road with several small homes. Riding in the truck with Laine, I'd been privy to the steady beeping that signaled a cow with a radio collar was nearby. Driving with his left hand, his right hand gripped the pole of the big receiver antenna punched through his roof and spun it slowly. As the antenna pointed in the direction of the cow's VHF collar, the beeping grew louder. She was close, he said, between the side road and the highway.

Three years ago I wrote about how the presence of elk in the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest made it feel wild. On that morning we had hiked a mile or so into the woods on a dirt road. Today's urban adventure didn't convey the same mystique.

Parking at the end of the lane, we all tiptoed out of our vehicles and gently pushed the doors closed, minimizing sound however possible. Gathering around Laine, we listened as he put the small cow call to his lips, and squealed out several expressive notes. When that failed to elicit a response, he continued with the longer bull bugling device. The long, flexible tube was covered in camouflage, with shiny black pieces at both ends. Putting his lips to the mouthpiece, Laine let out a high-pitched wail. Hopefully, another bull would hear the bugle and take up the challenge.

We stood expectantly: ears open, breathing controlled, arms wrapped against the morning chill.

We admired the beauty of the morning light and dappling of fall colors. Silence. The elk were close, but not cooperative.

Elk were extirpated from Wisconsin in the 1800s due to over hunting and a rapid decline in habitat. In 1995, twenty five elk were released into the National Forest near Clam Lake, and the DNR now estimates the population to be 160-170 animals. Several dozen more elk are scheduled to arrive from a Kentucky herd this March. The new elk will boost the genetic diversity of this herd, and increase the population to the point where a limited hunting season can be considered.

Piling back into our vehicles, we caravanned to a couple more sites, each deeper into the woods than the last. Laine had woken up early to scout the area, and had located several cow-calf groups in the vicinity. During the rut—which starts around August 25 and can last into the middle of winter—where you find cows, you also find bulls. They were there...we could hear the beeps from their radio collars...but none made a peep in response to Laine's calling.

As the sun rose higher, we bumped still deeper into the forest. A long, narrow clearing appeared and we pulled off to the side. This was the ELF line, and its grassy clearing is one of the main reasons that this area was chosen for the elk reintroduction in 1995. The ELF was a U.S. Navy project that used extremely low frequency (ELF) radio waves to communicate with deeply submerged submarines. The transmitter operated from 1989 to 2004, and consisted of two 14-mile transmission line antennas in the shape of a cross, with the transmitter station at their intersection. The lines were removed in 2008. Its legacy is that some of the clearing that was once mowed for maintenance is now kept open for wildlife habitat. The elk like the freedom of movement and tender new growth that the cut area provides.

We walked several yards uphill, away from the cars and the valley of the Torch River. By now the group was getting a bit restless; still hopeful, but also resigned to the fact we might not hear any elk.

Laine made another cow call, and almost immediately the haunting bugle of a bull echoed in the distance. Did you hear it? We looked around the group in excitement. Not everyone had heard. Laine called again. The distant elk bugled again, and then, after a second's pause, another bugle sounded closer, and from a slightly different direction. We pointed in the direction of the sounds and grinned.

At least one of the bulls was pretty close, and in the opposite direction we'd been walking. Back down past the vehicles we ambled in the ELF clearing, and stopped on a knoll above the river. Laine and the two bulls called back and forth several more times. We even saw a flash of warm tan hair through the trees, likely feeding on the other side of the river.

Standing there in land cleared by the military, admiring the cast of sunlight and listening to the uninhibited sound of animals going about their essential business of mating, I was struck by the contrast of wild and human-contrived. The elk were extirpated because of humans. They returned because of humans. We found them by using very high frequency (VHF) radio collars in an area cleared for extremely low frequency (ELF) communication—both manmade. And yet, the elk paid almost no attention to us. Their instincts, their drive to mate and survive, are the same as ever.

The wildness of managed populations is a philosophical question that isn't resolved in my own head any more than it is decided among scientists or the public. We've complicated things, as usual. But still, I'm grateful for the opportunity to listen to the majestic bugle of an elk on a crisp fall morning just minutes from my home.
Special Note: Emily's book, Natural Connections: Exploring Northwoods Nature through Science and Your Senses is here! Order your copy at <http://cablemuseum.org/natural-connections-book/>.
For over 45 years, the Cable Natural History Museum has served to connect you to the Northwoods. Come visit us in Cable, WI! Our new phenology exhibit: "Nature's Calendar: Signs of the Seasons" is now open.

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The General Meetings are:

Memorial Day=May 27th

4th of July=We are not doing this one anymore.

Labor Day=September 2nd



Wisconsin's elk herd continues to grow across the two management zones, Northern and Central. Elk Management Zones, previously known as the Clam Lake and Black River elk ranges respectively. In 2022, there was an estimated 336 elk in the north and 130 in the central, continuing growth annually. Within the Northern Elk Zone, recruitment appears to be good across all 11 subgroups of elk. That range runs from the Flambeau River State Forest to Mellen, WI and as far east at Butternut, WI and west to the Chippewa Flowage.

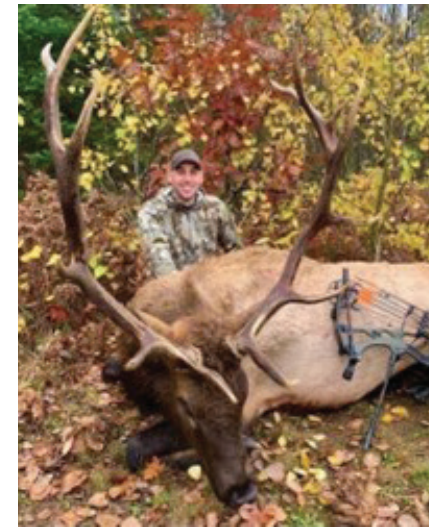
Research and monitoring efforts continued to be executed by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) in 2022 across the management zone. 49 elk were trapped, GPS-collared, and released covering in 3 of the 11



groups of elk. 15 of those elk were relocated from an agricultural area at the southern end of Flambeau River State Forest to the greater Clam Lake area, due to a high amount of farm crop damage and loss over the past couple years. Other efforts included tagging a portion of elk and deploying collars for various monitoring needs including habitat use, home range size and location, mortality causes and movement during key times of the year like the elk rut (September and October), calving season (Mid-May through June), and over winter, when food sources are limited. Another major effort included collaring mature aged cow elk over winter to track and monitor during the calving season. The department used this opportunity to address research needs related to calf survival during the first year of life. After one year of age, survival of elk increases greatly, with mature adult elk having high annual survival rates annually. A decision was made per the Wisconsin Elk Advisory Committee to support the need to search the area for an elk calf after isolated assumed-pregnant cows are identified using GPS-collar locations. During the 2022 calf

season, small groups of volunteers, partners, and WDNR staff were used to sweep the area of those identified cows, looking through the ground cover for a hiding calf. These 2-5 day old calves blend in perfectly with their surroundings taking a keen eye to spot while hiding in brush, grasses, logs, depressions, or any other material they can hide against. When found the calf is aged, weighed, GPS-collared, ear tagged, then left back to hide in the location where the cow elk can return. Due to technology advances, 2022 was the first time GPS calf collars were deployed improving the amount of data return on these calves. This calf is then monitored over the next year or more to track survival, as well as movements, group interaction, and habitat use. If a mortality is detected, an alert triggered by the collar remaining stationary for 4 hours, WDNR staff then investigate the location to determine why the mortality alert was triggered. Of 11 calves collared across the range, three mortalities have been observed currently, including two from predators and one non-predation event. Three calves were collared by groups that use the Flambeau River Station Forest and as off now, all three are still alive with their respective groups. This effort, excluding spring of 2023 because of process change, will occur in the coming springs to increase data collection to provide updated calf survival efforts for population modeling into the future. Another research effort occurring is Snapshot Wisconsin, a citizen-based science effort where volunteers operate cameras within a monitoring grid system, are used to identify elk group sizes, calving production, and bull age class ratios and monitored by the department. One of the three monitoring grids overlays the Flambeau River State Forest and the greater Lake of the Pines and Connors Lake area.

Fall of 2022 marked the start of the fifth modern day elk hunting season in Wisconsin, again occurring throughout the entirety of the Northern Elk Management Zone. During the spring months, Wisconsin Elk Advisory Committee,



Wisconsin DNR, and Wisconsin Natural Resources Board approved a harvest quota of 8 total bull elk to be taken. Per ceded-territory treaty rights, Ojibwa tribes declared the take of 4 bull elk and Wisconsin licensed hunters had the opportunity to harvest the remaining 4 tags of the 8-bull quota. Both tribal and state-licensed hunters harvested 4 bull elk. This was also the final year the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Wisconsin Chapter, hosted an independent raffle selling 1,660 applications for Wisconsin residents for one of the final tags with the remaining three individuals being randomly drawn from 25,415 applicants in the DNR draw process. All state licensed hunters are drawn at random for a once-in-a-lifetime tag. This \$10 application also benefits elk management, earmarking \$7 to go back into habitat, research, equipment, and monitoring of Wisconsin elk. Of the harvested bulls, 1 was taken that frequently uses the Flambeau River State Forest and was the first modern day archery harvest, a mature 7x6 bull. Additionally, two other state hunters harvested known-aged mature bulls at 9.5 and 13.5 years of age, the later marking the oldest hunter harvested bull to date.

On the habitat front, Wisconsin DNR - Flambeau River State Forest and Sawyer County Forestry staff continue sustainable forestry practices with timber harvests occurring throughout the landscape. These timber sales, primarily aspen coppice harvests and to a lesser extent northern hardwood stands, provide critical young forest habitat for elk, deer, grouse, turkey, woodcock, and many other game and nongame wildlife species. These timber sales generate fast growing, nutritious saplings that provide food, cover for hiding and moving, and in some areas open space for increased visibility. These sales are occurring throughout the area increasing age class diversity for timber stands and spacing to allow elk to move large distances to avoid pressures like predation, hunting or other recreation, weather conditions, and seasonal seclusion behavior like breeding and calving. Department wildlife staff are also focusing on large blocks of wildlife openings to increase forage available to elk. For years, a wildlife openings complex has been maintained throughout the area totaling about 100 acres of tilled, planted, and annually mowed wildlife openings on the FRSF and Sawyer County Forest. The openings average around 5 acres in size. They are planted in a mixture of forage vegetation like grasses, clovers, and other legumes that will regrow annually. Maintenance work also includes mowing about 45 miles of hunter walking trails that access these openings or wind about the area. A different concept being executed is the use of fire to promote open grassy and young successional cover in larger blocks. Prescribed burning allows the WDNR staff to keep these areas open by burning designated units every 3-5 years. This greatly benefits many species of wildlife providing larger blocks of cover and forage. Typically speaking these burn units are 50-100 acres in size. Spring of 2021 was the first modern day effort of prescribed burning on Flambeau River State Forest property. Burns will be planned every year moving forward on both Flambeau property and Sawyer County Forest. Both are investing effort into improving wildlife habitat annually reviewing areas to promote grasses, open landscape, or oak regeneration. Oak is not a strong component of the greater area but have been identified as species to promote moving forward. The oak family are typically long-lived trees that provide acorns, another in forage option on the landscape. Oak is fire resistant, which allows implemented fire to reduce competition allowing oak seedlings and saplings to establish in full sun.

Many processes continue with Wisconsin's elk management, currently with WDNR elk program staff moving into winter trapping and collaring season. This is an annual workload used to monitor and handle elk. Staff will also be using the coming winter months to gather and analyze all information related to our elk herd producing a herd estimate for the 2023 year. Finally, there are many partners that go into management of Wisconsin elk, and the WDNR appreciates all partners, including local individuals, groups, and other volunteers that reach out with information regarding elk. Thank you to all who are interested in the WI elk program. For further elk information including public meetings and meeting minutes, general information, or anything else elk related, please visit dnr.wisconsin.gov and search "elk" for WDNR elk management page.

Josh Spiegel – Wisconsin DNR Wildlife Biologist 12/9/22

Lake Profile

Walleyes reign on Lake of the Pines and Connors Lake

By WON Staff

Connors Lake and Lake of the Pines (LoP) are neighboring waters located within the Flambeau River State Forest, about 17 miles east of Winter and 20 miles west of Phillips. Wisconsin's twin cities of Loretta and Draper are about the same distance to the north.

Because of their location in the state forest, Connors and LoP are popular destinations for anglers and hunters, since the DNR maintains state campgrounds on each lake. Connors Creek, a small navigable stream, flows from LoP into the north end of Connors Lake. From the south end of Connors the creek drains to the North Fork of the Flambeau River. Connors Creek is designated as a fish refuge between LoP and Connors. No fishing is allowed from April 1 to May 14.

Although the lakes are located in Sawyer County, the DNR fisheries team out of Park Falls (Price County) often joins forces with the Sawyer County crew to survey the lakes. The teams have spent a quite a bit of time running spring and fall surveys on the two lakes between 2012 and 2019, and that work will continue. Survey reports are available through the 2019 work.

Although the two lakes share nearly the same fish species, the fisheries are not exactly a mirror image of each other. While the lakes are similar in bottom substrate – mostly sand or gravel – water color differs. LoP had much darker water (5-foot average visibility) than Connors (13-foot average). That could lead anglers to believe daytime walleye fishing on LoP might be a tad easier than on Connors. This report will cover survey reports from Connors Lake.

DNR crews handled 12 fish species in recent netting and electrofishing surveys. Walleyes were the predominant predator; yellow perch the most common panfish. Northern pike were scarce; spring fyke netting captured five pike. Seven fall electrofishing surveys average 5.4 pike per night, with the longest in each sample ranging 23.6 to 29.7 inches. In 2013-14 anglers caught 58 pike and harvested 17 that ranged 21 to 30 inches.

Two netting and seven electrofishing surveys caught one to 19 largemouth bass. Of those surveys, the fall 2019 shocking sample had the most and the longest largemouth bass (20.2 inches). Fall shocking catch rates of 1.0 to 3.7 largemouths 8 inches or longer per mile of shoreline from 2014

through 2019 suggest abundance declined since 2005 (36 per mile of shoreline). Anglers caught 584 largemouths in 2,174 fishing hours, keeping 6.7% of their catch.

Historically, Connors has had few black crappies. The crew caught only two in fall fyke nets specifically set for crappies. Some anglers told the creel clerk that they fished for crappies in 2013-14, but caught none in 485 angler hours.

From early spring 2013 netting and shocking surveys the walleye population was estimated at 2.53 adults per acre, falling just short of the Flambeau River State Forest Lakes Fishery Management Plan's goal to have three to five adults per acre. But, walleye size exceeded angler expectations – the plan calls for 25% to 35% of walleyes in

LAKE OF THE PINES & CONNORS LAKE — SAWYER COUNTY

Source: Division of Fish and Wildlife, Department of Natural Resources. ©Copyright 2018 Sportsman's Connection. All Rights Reserved.

Lake Profile

Lake of the Pines/Connors

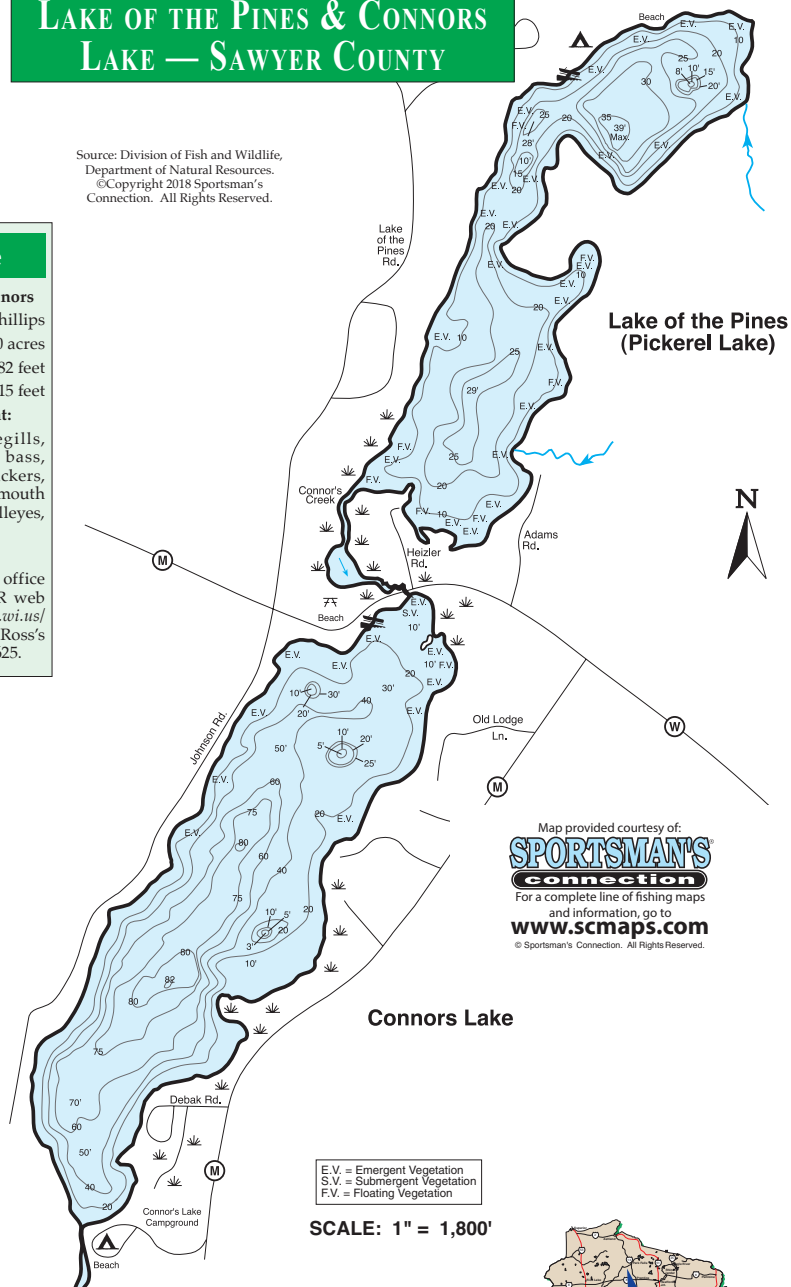
Nearest town.....Winter/Phillips
Surface area.....273/410 acres
Max. depth.....39/82 feet
Water clarity5 to 15 feet

Fish species present:

Black crappies, bluegills, pumpkinseeds, rock bass, yellow perch, white suckers, smallmouth bass, largemouth bass, northern pike, walleyes, and muskies.

For information:

DNR regional fisheries office (715) 635-2101, the DNR web site <http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/water/fish/fish>, or call Ross's Sports Shop, (715) 339-3625.



spring fyke nets to be 15 inches or longer. Walleyes are sustained by natural recruitment with no record of stocking since fry and fingerlings were planted several times from 1933 to 1951.

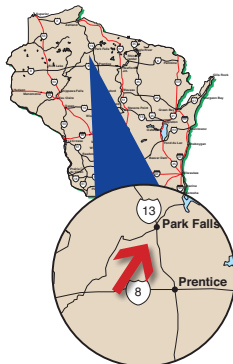
Of note, electrofishing catches of spring-hatched walleyes per mile of shoreline in fall shocking surveys has shown a downward trend since the 1990s. Still, the population continues to produce year classes to replace the adults that die to angling and natural causes. From ring counts on cross-sectioned dorsal spines, it's estimated that walleyes in Connors Lake grew at a rate near the average among populations in northern Wisconsin. Walleyes reached 14.3 inches after four growing seasons (range 12.3 to 18 inches) and 18.4 inches after six seasons. The abundant supply of

small yellow perch is probably the main reason why the walleyes can grow at average and faster-than-average rates. Walleyes were the most sought-after fish in Connors, receiving 29.6% of the directed fishing effort.

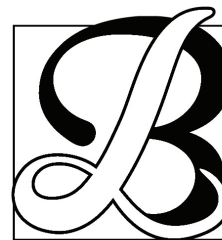
The high catch rate and mediocre length distribution of muskie in early spring 2013 fyke nets closely matches those in lakes classified as A2 muskellunge waters, which offer fast action, but few big fish.

Muskies in Connors did not meet the size objective in the fishery management plan – that 10% to 20% of fyke net catches be 42 inches or longer. Connors has a long history of stocking dating to 1936. From 2000 through 2019, Connors received 10- to 12-inch muskies in alternate years.

All 851 fingerlings stocked



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into LoP since 2009 and all untagged muskies surveyed in both lakes since 2015 received coded PIT tags to identify each fish. Seven muskies tagged in LoP were recaptured 3.1 to 8.5 years later in Connors. One of those immigrants returned to its home lake. Only one muskie tagged in Connors was later found in Lake of the Pines.

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WEDNESDAY - CHICKEN *ALL YOU CAN EAT

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