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Established 1983

Summer 2023

# The Big Chip News

## *View from the Chair*

by Mike Gardner CFAPOA Chair

Volunteers are vital to our organization. For the past 40 years we have placed a high value on the countless number of active volunteers. They have helped us reduce operation costs, improve service, and have offered critical specialized skills. This evolving system of diverse skills, experiences and knowledge has produced better relationships with the community and the Chippewa Flowage Partners Group.

Much of our work is directed towards maintaining our lake in the way it was cared for in the past and keeping it the beautiful unique wilderness, it has always been. We are actively monitoring invasive species, loons and promoting the value of natural shorelines. We support State and Tribal fisheries efforts, responsible recreation, and water quality best practices of all partners.

There currently are numerous ways to get involved. Plan to attend our upcoming Annual Meeting and Picnic to learn more regarding current activities and opportunities. There will be committee reports and an election of Board of Directors members. Our guest speaker will be John Detloff to present his research and forthcoming book titled *Whispers of the Past: History of the Chippewa Flowage*. John and his wife Brenda operate Indian Trail Resort. John is an accomplished Musky angler and guide and is the author of *Three Record Muskies in His Day: The Life and Times of Louie Spray* and *Top Water Tactics & Tales*.

Join us at Deer Run Resort on Sunday, August 6 at 11 a.m. Meet your friends and neighbors and consider your role as a volunteer in support of the lake. You will not be disappointed.

### Help Maintain Our Lake

Please call or text the DNR Violation Hotline when you see an infraction:

**1-800-TIP-WDNR  
(1-800-847-9367)**



## CFAPOA Annual Picnic

See Pg. 8 for details.

In recognition of our shared interests in protecting and preserving the unique characteristics of the Chippewa Flowage, we've ramped up our efforts to work more closely with the Lake Chippewa Flowage Resort Association. This includes the "Resort Report" which will highlight topics of interest from the resort association. If you have any questions or ideas in this space, please reach out to Dave Koenings or Dustin Pyykola.



# The Resort Report

by John Detloff

## The Birth of the Chippewa Flowage's Resort Industry (an excerpt from John Detloff's upcoming book, *Whispers of the Past*)

Created a century ago, the Chippewa Flowage is a most unique body of water. In describing this wondrous place, John Brackett, who first fished the Chippewa Flowage more than sixty years ago out of Indian Trail Resort, had written:

"It is a river; yet it is not a true river. It is a lake, indeed it contains many lakes; yet it is not a real lake. It was originally created by nature, later changed by man, and is presently controlled by both. It is as inconsistent in reality as its description is in words. It is as unpredictable in itself as are

the fish that have evolved in its depths."

Even before the Chippewa Flowage had been created in 1923, its original waters began attracting anglers, sportsmen, and outdoor enthusiasts to, first, Paul Lessard's stopping place, and later, John Berger's Eagle Nest Lodge and Billy DeBrot & George James's Pahquahwong Camp. These places served as the embryo of what was to become the Chippewa Flowage's resort industry.

Once the Chippewa Flowage was formed in 1923, it wasn't long before boat liveries, resorts, and

campgrounds began springing up to cater to the eager anglers who wanted to fish and explore the raw, uncharted wilds, and sometime treacherous waters of the Chippewa Flowage. Between 1923 and 1972 forty-five to fifty fishing and tourist related "mom and pop" businesses were established on this most unique body of water. Many of these businesses have disappeared with the tall standing timber that used to be scattered throughout the flowage... but enough of these resorts have survived to ensure visitors a fine place to stay, recreate, and fish.

## Musky Fishing on the Big Chip

by Terry Herder

Musky fishing water temperatures are rising and that means Musky will start transitioning to deeper areas making it advantageous to go trolling for them, but at the same time the temperatures could threaten the health of Muskies you catch.

Everyone has limits when they will want to stop fishing for Muskies when surface temperatures get warm. Many guides stop fishing for musky when the surface

Temps hit 80 degrees. Therefore, it will most likely be safest for the Muskies to fish for them during cooler hours in the day, early in the morning, or night fishing. You can also fish and troll for them during the day, but just be mindful of the water temperature.

Quick handling and a return to the water, maybe a picture and release. The future of the fishery depends upon your ability to handle them properly.

Good luck and tight lines.



John Merlak with a beautiful 36 inch. Quick picture and release.

## 'Tales from the Boat Launch'

by Terry Hollinger, CBCW Inspector/Educator

It was a pleasant Sunday afternoon in mid-May. The fishermen (persons) and pleasure boaters had kept the CC North boat launch quite busy. I was amazed at how quick and orderly they backed in, untethered and launched their boats. A few snafu's, but nothing out of the ordinary.

One truck who's turn had come started to pull forward to back in. The two involved were obviously father and son. I'm 72, Dad had to be 80-ish and his son in the mid 40s. As the old man was unchaining the boat, I noticed the son (not a toddler) was just standing off to the side while Pop did the chores.

The son was very natty in appearance. Fancy purple sneakers. Plaid Bermuda shorts, a Polo type shirt and a pair shades that probably cost what the boat did. The one thing I noticed was there wasn't a bow line. As Dad eased the boat in the water his son stood on the dock and didn't seem to pay any attention to the boat as it entered the water.

Well, the father backed in and the boat began to float. Not a strong current which made everything seem like slow motion. The younger seaman began to sense all was not right. He looked over to me and said "rope", I replied 'bow line'. Now dad jumped out of the truck and they both looked around for somebody to do something.

After the boat got about 10-15 yards down wind, Junior stripped off the shoes, shirt, shades and his dignity dove in and swam for the retrieval. After the situation was

righted, the son dressed and drove the truck to their rented cabin leaving dad the boat.

This saga is not over yet. After the son left with the truck the boat wouldn't start. For a good hour the old guy tried to call someone to come help. After he and I were talking, I said if I had it to do over again I'd be a marine mechanic. Sound travels well on water, soon a boat with 3 fishermen showed up, asked if someone needed help. The three were all boat mechanics.



You can help prevent  
**Shoreline Erosion**  
Keep shorelines natural      Follow zoning ordinances  
Plant Native Plants      www.wisconsinlandwater.org  
www.sawyercountygov.org  
**CFAPO**  
CHIPPewa FLOWAGE AREA  
PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION  
Abide by regulations  
https://townofhayward.com  
SLOW  
NO  
WAKE

# Charting a Future for the Chippewa Flowage Fishery

by Max Wolter



Managing a fishery in a large, popular water body like the Chippewa Flowage requires a lot of planning. Every year we make plans for what information we will gather in our surveys, what fish we stock, what regulation changes we propose, and what habitat or access projects we might want to take on. Our plans for the Chippewa Flowage are not made on a whim. We have specific goals and objectives for the fishery that can be found in the [Chippewa Flowage Fisheries Management Plan](#) (CFFMP).

The CFFMP was finalized in 2007 at the end of a process that began in 2005. The plan includes public input gathered from anglers, resort owners, guides, and tribal representatives. There are goals for each important fish species along with specific size and abundance objectives. With these goals and objectives, the CFFMP establishes a picture of what we want the Chippewa Flowage fishery to look like.

It's an attractive picture, too. A fishery that meets all the goals and objectives of the CFFMP would have these characteristics:

1. Above average walleye abundance with 20-40% over "legal size" of 15 inches
2. A moderate density musky population with about 1 in 25 fish over 50 inches
3. Moderately abundant crappie, with 20-40% over 10 inches
4. Low abundance of bluegill, but with 5-15% over 8 inches
5. Abundant smallmouth bass and lower density largemouth bass, both with a sizable portion of fish over 17 inches
6. Low density northern pike with good size

This outlines the fishery we have been working towards over the last 15 years as we have undertaken a variety of

management actions, including regulation changes, stocking, habitat improvements (tree drops), harvest campaigns, and modifying drawdown strategies. In some cases, you can see where an initiative was designed to help address a specific objective in the CFFMP. For example, the Pike Improvement Project aimed to reduce pike abundance and improve size which would help meet the objectives for that species. Other actions like tree drops are expected to benefit several species simultaneously.

With 15 years of combined management effort by DNR, LCO Conservation Department, U.S. Forest Service, and private groups like CFAPOA, and information from numerous fisheries surveys, we are in a position where we can start to grade our success/failure at achieving different objectives in the CFFMP.

Walleye were the top species of interest when we gathered public input on the Chippewa Flowage fishery and have been the target

*Continued on Page 5*

*Fishery, continued from Page 4*

of much of our management attention. The 2022 population estimate and creel survey provided excellent data to assess whether the objectives in the CFFMP were being met for this species. We are pleased to report that actions over the last 15 years have delivered a population that meets both abundance and size objectives. That doesn't mean everyone is going to catch a legal walleye every time they go fishing, but it does mean that the population is in good shape and we have been able to steer it to where we said we wanted to be.

Muskellunge are a much more challenging species to make an assessment for. The CFFMP has objectives for The Chip to have a certain number of muskies (0.3-0.4 per acre, or roughly 4,600-6,100 individual adults). The problem is that we have never been able to conduct a true estimate of the number of adult muskies in the Chippewa Flowage because of its size. As such, this is the kind of objective that we may need to reconsider in the future. We may be able to use other measures of muskellunge abundance, such as angling catch rate.

Each of the panfish species can be assessed separately. Crappie abundance has generally been where we want it to be, but size has been inconsistent. Similarly, bluegill and perch size have been below our objective range. However, before we can get too concerned about panfish size not meeting objectives we need to see

how the populations respond to the recently reduced bag limit. Panfish also provide an important reminder of how inter-connected abundance and size are in our fisheries. Take bluegill, for example. When bluegill abundance is very high, we have very little chance of meeting the size objective. That's part of how these objectives are designed. If abundance is in a healthy range, we expect size to follow suit.

There are a handful of objectives that were crafted in 2007 that look unattainable today, based on the last 15 years of accumulated experience. For example, we have rarely seen smallmouth bass abundance that is close to the objective (this is particularly true on the west side). Largemouth bass size is also far lower than the objective in virtually all survey years. These are objectives that may need to be recalibrated if the CFFMP is updated in the future.

The northern pike objectives represent an area where a lot of work is needed AND where we might have to recalibrate based on experience and limitations in surveying. Like musky, we have never done an estimate of the total number of pike in The Chip, which makes it impossible to assess our objective. We CAN say that size is far lower than the objective.

This sort of analysis might look like a lot of technical jargon for people that don't intimately follow fisheries happenings. However, I hope that hearing these details gives people a sense that there is "a plan" for the fishery, in addition to a means to measure whether that plan has been successful.

Importantly, there is a critical role for anglers and property owners to play in crafting such plans. As I allude to several times throughout this article, there are a number of reasons why the CFFMP might need to be updated. Some objectives are outdated or out of sync with what we have observed and there are new management tools that were not a part of the conversation in 2007 (e.g. habitat drawdowns).

Furthermore, we have to be open to the possibility that angler preferences have shifted in the last 15 years. Perhaps a focus on walleye as the top species (as it was in 2007) is no longer in line with angler preference. Maybe there is greater interest in harvest for a species that anglers previously wanted managed for catch and release, or vice versa. We can make assumptions about these kinds of things, but it is more accurate and straightforward to simply ask people. Besides, anglers want and deserve to be brought into conversations about the management of THEIR natural resources.

I hope this article serves as a primer for folks on the fisheries management plan and process. It is my goal to update the CFFMP some time in the next couple years. Look for meetings and online surveys that will come out as a part of that process, which I will plan to distribute directly to CFAPOA and the resort association. This process will be open to all and transparent and will lead to better management of this gem of a fishery into the future.

*Continued on Page 6*

# Charting the Flowage

Continued from Page 5

Table 1. Status of abundance and size-based objectives for the Chippewa Flowage Fishery for important fish species based on the Chippewa Flowage Fishery Management plan. Determinations of whether an objective is met is based on available DNR survey data and in some cases professional assessment. Color coding is used to denote when objectives are met (green), not met (red), met inconsistently (yellow), or more information is needed/no objective exists (blue).

SPECIES	ABUNDANCE OBJECTIVE STATUS	SIZE OBJECTIVE STATUS
WALLEYE	Currently MEETS objective. Expected to continue if recruitment continues	Currently MEETS objective
MUSKELLUNGE	Has not been measured. May need new objective with other metrics	Typically BELOW objective
BLACK CRAPPIE	MEETS or EXCEEDS objective in most years	Meets objective INCONSISTENTLY, but reduced bag limit may lead to improvements
BLUEGILL	EXCEEDS objective in all surveys. May need new objective	Typically BELOW objective, with some signs of improvement over last few years. Reduced bag limit may lead to improvements
YELLOW PERCH	None developed	Typically BELOW objective, but sampling limitations exist
SMALLMOUTH BASS	Typically BELOW objective, especially for surveys on west side	Generally MEETS objective
LARGEMOUTH BASS	Meets objective INCONSISTENTLY	BELOW objective in all surveys. May need new objective
NORTHERN PIKE	Has not been measured. May need new objective with other metrics	BELOW objective in all surveys. May need new objective



# Spring Fling

@ Treeland Resorts



# Membership Update

by Patty Swaffield

## Welcome New Members

## Steward

John & Dawn Bina  
Dan & Marcia Hardy

## Lifetime

## Contributor

Angie Bowe  
Charles & Joanne Keyes  
Eric & Susan Locher  
Rob & Rebecca Nesse  
Paul & Dawn Tweed

## Membership Levels

\$25: Individual/Property | \$26 to \$124: Contributor – newsletter recognition. | \$125 to \$999: Steward – newsletter recognition and a gift. | \$1000 and up: Lifetime Conservationist – newsletter recognition, a gift, and lifetime membership.

\* Contributor  
\*\* Steward  
\*\*\* Lifetime



You can now find archives of Board Meeting Minutes at [CFAPOA.org](http://CFAPOA.org).

[CFAPOA Board Meeting Minutes](http://CFAPOA.org)

# CFAPOA Annual Picnic

## Deer Run Resort

### Sunday, August 6, 2023

Annual meeting at 11:00 a.m. followed by a FREE picnic lunch.  
Bring a dessert if you can.

SUMMER

50/50 Raffle!



<https://cfapoa.org/invasive-species>

Name	East	West
Dan & Julie Hayden		1, 2
Mike & Lynn Muench	M, P	
Jim & Jan Evenstad		12
Gary & Lind Crank		3, 5
Christine and Jayson Grams		13
LCO Conservation Dept.	H, I, Z	
Brian & Juliane Novak	S	
Alan & Lynda Fish		8, 17
<b>Up for Adoption</b>		<b>18</b>
Greg & Amy Sanders		10, 11
<b>Up for Adoption</b>	<b>U</b>	
Chris & Patti Jeffords		4
Jerry & Nancy Johnson		6, 9
Robyn McAlpine		7, 14
Roger & Kathy Kisch	W	
Rob and Rebecca Nesse	J	
Dustin & Steph Pyykola	O	
Chris & Jess Conrad	A2	
Rick & Linda Olson	R	
Tony & Laurie Schubert	T	
Dave Carland Family and Friends	X	
Brent and Jeanne Drapeau	E1, E2	
Steve & Jane Richardson	W	
Mark and Joni Zich		15, 16
Bruce and Gina Dingman	D	
Mike & Phyllis Gardner	Q	
Dennis Clagett	Y	
Linda Treland	A1	

# Controlling Invasive Species

by Dennis Clagett

The Wisconsin DNR has a website listing the lakes in the state with their associated invasive species. I have no idea if is current, but I doubt it as they don't list Purple Loosestrife. However, it could be that our Adopt-A-Shoreline program aimed at eradication and control has been and overwhelming success. Twenty years ago, the Chip was thick with it.

Faced with this challenge was an effort equal to the Fish Crib all volunteer program where almost 1000 fish cribs structures were placed in the Flowage. That program ended, but the Adopt-A-Shoreline program lives on, working diligently at controlling the remaining pockets of infection and new growth hot spots.

Unfortunately, our Eurasian watermilfoil (EWM) continues to be problematic and our Adopt-A-Shoreline volunteers have few control options. However, some success at control has been achieved by lowering the water levels about 5 feet from full pool level (1313') before winter freeze-up around November 15.

How effective this has been will be documented this year and in future years with an aquatic plant survey allowing an accurate method for evaluating the early drawdown's effectiveness. This is new program is being implemented with the cooperation of the U.S. Forest Service, WDNR, LCO and CFAPOA. The CFAPOA will take the lead, with help from the LCO, and be headed-up by board mem-



ber Mark Zich. Mark will need volunteers from the membership to attend a training class from 10 am to 12 am at The Landing July 26, 2023 Contact Mark at [Markzich@rocketmail.com](mailto:Markzich@rocketmail.com) or you can contact me and I will connect you with Mark.

As to our other troubling invasive: purple loosestrife: This is where our Adopt-A-Shoreline program started many years ago and has been remarkably effective in controlling both its population and spread.

So, a big thank you to all you volunteers! We always need new and younger members to step in and become part of this program. You are welcome to contact me to sign up. Please contact me with questions or observations. 715 462 4814 or [rclagett@centurytel.net](mailto:rclagett@centurytel.net)

# Native Plant Sale Success

by Tony Schubert

We completed our first annual Native Plant Sale on May 27th. Thanks to all the individuals who purchased and planted these plants. Their efforts will add to our natural community and beautify their properties. There were 4 different collections of plants sold by Dragonfly Gardens. These were Woodland for shady areas, Wetland for shorelines or wet areas, Prairie for sunny dry areas and Short/Dry/Butterfly plants specifically for pollinators. The 2 inch potted plants were delivered in great condition. A flat of 32 plants were purchased for only \$60.00 each. Our members could order any number and type of collections they wanted.

We had 27 Native Planters order 43 flats of plants, making a total of 1,376 native plants getting



new homes at the Chippewa Flowage. That is a terrific start to this program. We want to expand this sale next year. If you want to check out how these plantings are doing, give me a call or email. I would be happy to show you what I have done with them. These plants are pretty easy to care for. My Prairie collection needs about 1/5th the water that my grass lawn is now consuming.

Have a great summer. Please email me if you want to be contacted for next year's sale. [tonycontract@gmail.com](mailto:tonycontract@gmail.com).

## Categories of Drawdowns Performed on the Chippewa Reservoir.

This information was developed in consultation with the Chippewa Reservoir Partners Group and will be used to help educate the public to the various drawdowns that may be utilized over the life of the dam.

Drawdowns throughout the history of the reservoir have been performed during the summer and winter months. Drawdowns of up to 22 ft. have been performed during the winter months whereas drawdowns of around 3.5 ft. have occurred during the summer months. Recently, conditions have allowed for coordination of drawdowns that have the potential to reduce invasive species prevalence and improve aquatic habitat, specifically for fish. The categories of drawdowns that are performed on the Chippewa Reservoir are summarized below:

- **Drawdown 1: Summer Drawdown** (June 1 to September 30)
- **Drawdown 2: Winter Drawdown** (December 1 to March 31)
- **Drawdown 3: Habitat Manipulation Drawdown** (October 1 through March 31)
- **Drawdown 4: Construction Drawdown** (variable dates)
- **Drawdown 5: Emergency Drawdown** (variable dates)

Visit the CFAPOA Website for a [complete summary](#) and description of each drawdown.

# Chippewa Flowage Aquatic Plant Survey Coordination and Future Planning

by Mark Zich

As most of the Chippewa Flowage recreationalists know we have, like many other area surface waters, concerns regarding aquatic invasive plant species. This is one of the reasons CFAPOA have volunteers and paid summer staff dedicated to working diligently on the Clean Boats Clean Waters Program. However, also as many of you know we have Eurasian water milfoil (EWM) present in the Chippewa Flowage and we attempt to mitigate the spread of EWM by periodically implementing a Habitat Drawdown (lower water levels 5 feet from October 1 to November 15 and 3 additional feet the rest of the winter) in cooperation with Xcel Energy and the Chippewa Flowage Partner's Group.

A question that has always been at the forefront of Partner's Group discussions has been how effective have the Habitat Drawdowns been in limiting the spread of EWM. Without doing aquatic plant surveys we do not have a way to evaluate the effectiveness other than random observations and intuition. This is about to change and it started with U.S. Forest Service's Ginger Molitor organizing a meeting conducted June 22, 2023 at the U.S. Forest Service's office in Hayward. Representatives from the U.S. Forest Service, WDNR, LCO and CFAPOA were present at the meeting.

Results of the meeting discussion included the following action items:

1. CFAPOA will take the lead, with help from the LCO, to complete a WDNR grant application in the Fall of 2023 to fund a Flowage-wide aquatic plant survey in 2024. This survey will identify all aquatic plant species present at each sample point and will be a duplicate of the 2016/2017 survey conducted by LCO and Northland College. This was a 2,800 point survey which typically takes a couple of months to complete.
2. A "subset" 652 point survey will be conducted July 26 to August 11th, 2023 to identify only EWM. The results will be compared to the 2016/2017 survey and also provide a baseline of locations of existing EWM. In general, a survey consists of navigating to a specific latitude and longitude by boat, lowering a double-sided rake to the bottom, collecting a sample of plants present, identifying the presence or absence of EWM and documenting the depth, time, location, and other observations. Four groups will be present at The Landing July 26th to be trained by LCO staff on how to conduct the survey. Representatives conducting the 652 point subset survey include staff from U.S. Forest Service, WDNR, LCO and volunteers from CFAPOA.
3. Following the 2023 EWM subset survey and the 2024 full 2,800 point survey the goal will then be to conduct a EWM subset survey every year using CFAPOA volunteers interspersed with a full 2,800 point of "all aquatic plants" survey conducted by an experienced, paid, third-party company or staff every 8 to 10 years.
4. In the future, data collected, analyzed and mapped during the surveys will be presented to stakeholders and CFAPOA to help us all better understand how both invasive and natural aquatic plants impact the Chippewa Flowage.

CFAPOA currently has two volunteers willing to be trained for the 2023 EWM subset survey and a typical survey boat contains three people. Driver, rake operator and data recorder. If anyone else is interested in volunteering for 2023 survey or future 2025 survey please contact [Markzich@rocketmail.com](mailto:Markzich@rocketmail.com). As mentioned previously, training will be provided by the LCO using their pontoon and equipment from 10 am to 12 am at The Landing July 26, 2023.



**CHIPPEWA FLOWAGE AREA PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION**  
**PO BOX 555**  
**HAYWARD, WI 54843-0555**

**ELECTRONIC SERVICE REQUESTED**

**CFAPOA** is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation, formed to generally promote, encourage and foster the interests of all property owners. Its major objectives are: to keep the Chippewa Flowage area clean and safe for all people; to protect the environment; to provide a forum for the collection and exchange of ideas; to support acquisition of land for protection and conservation; and to pursue any other lawful objectives that may benefit this pristine lake, its wetlands, wildlife and tributaries.

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR**

August 6, 2023  
*(Annual Picnic)*

**Board Meetings**  
 August 10, 2023  
 September 7, 2023  
 October 12, 2023

Board meetings are currently held at 6:00 p.m. in person at the Town of Hunter Hall and/or on Zoom. Visitors are welcome to join. Contact Mike Gardner at [mgardner@northflow.net](mailto:mgardner@northflow.net)



**CFAPOA Board of Directors**

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