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June 23, 2025

Lake Beulah Management District
P.O. Box 71
East Troy, Wisconsin 53120

Potters Lake Protection & Rehabilitation District
P.O. Box 808
East Troy, Wisconsin 53120

Subject: 2025 Lake Protection Mitigation Suggestions

Dear Chairperson Bergin:

Dear Chairperson Schulz:

The Town has recently heard from multiple independent groups regarding Wake Enhanced boating—one calling for a full ban, and the others advocating for common-sense restrictions. If the damage caused is truly significant, it raises the question of why proactive mitigation steps haven't already been implemented. I'd like to recognize Potter Lake Protection and Rehabilitation District (PLPRD) for their progress in many of these areas and Lake Beulah Management District (LBMD) for their focus on many of these issues in recent meetings.

The purpose of this letter is to recommend immediate, practical actions by the Lake Districts on each lake, including enhanced safety measures, public education, clear communication of any restrictions, and improved enforcement.

As entities formed under Chapter 33, both LBMD and PLPRD levy taxes on riparian owners, collected by the Town, to fulfill their mission of protecting lake quality. I encourage the Lake Districts to also engage individuals and organizations already active in these discussions to help carry out meaningful solutions.

By bringing all voices together under the leadership of the Lake Districts, we have an opportunity to reduce division and focus on shared responsibility for our lakes.

Please find my suggestions below:

- Please study the Chapter 33 State Statute, Chapter 30 State Statute and Town of East Troy (TOET) ordinances pertaining to water and inland lakes. I have summarized chapter 30 and the TOET Ordinances in Exhibit A and B respectively attached to this letter.
- **Buoys.** Mark slow-no-wake areas and mark obstructions/shallow sections of the lake with navigation buoys.
 - Slow-no-wake zones based on 200' from shore, per Town Ordinance Title 16. Rule of thumb provided by DNR is locate slow-no-wake buoys using line-of-sight methods to avoid too many buoys on the lake.
 - These buoys also provide police an objective line of sight method for ticketing boaters who disobey boating rules.

- Danger buoys can be used to warn boaters of rocks, cables, stumps, dams, excessively shallow zones, critical habitat/sensitive areas, etc.
- It is worthwhile to secure a DNR Permit for the buoys placed on the lake to both; a) establish the Lake Districts as the definitive authority on the lake and b) establish acceptable standards with the DNR from which all other private permit requests will be evaluated or measured against. Here is a link to a 26 page DNR document. You can also go to the TOET website for the summary I provided at the 6/9/2025 board meeting.
[https://storage.googleapis.com/juniper-media-library/269/2025/06/\(9C1\)%20DNR%20Creating%20Local%20Boating%20Ordinances,%20Placing%20Waterway%20Markers%20&%20Estimated%20Timeline.pdf](https://storage.googleapis.com/juniper-media-library/269/2025/06/(9C1)%20DNR%20Creating%20Local%20Boating%20Ordinances,%20Placing%20Waterway%20Markers%20&%20Estimated%20Timeline.pdf)
- **Clean Boats Clean Waters Program**– This is a great program whereby the DNR provides a Grant opportunity to offset some of the costs associated with managing people at the launch.
 - This effectively gives the Lake District some DNR authority to inspect boats but, can also be used to educate, hand out brochures/lake maps, communicate the rules, tally boat color/registration information, inspect boats going on/coming off the lake for Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS), inform people of designated areas for skiing/sailing/wake boats, etc.
 - Potter Lake has an active Clean Boats Clean Waters program which has been in effect for a few decades. I believe they apply for and receive a DNR Grant every year in the amount of \$4,000 which I believe is the maximum amount. Potter Lake’s program is generally active on weekends and holidays.
 - This could be expanded to include every day of the week during the summer if deemed necessary. The only impact would be potential added costs to the respective Lake District to employ people or find volunteers to be at the boat launch.
- **Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Weeds** – This is probably my biggest concern among all the issues being presented over the past months. I think this threat is much bigger than wake boats and probably has the largest potential for damaging our lakes going forward because we have absolutely no control over boats coming on and off the lake. There are two things I would like you to consider:
 - **Clean Boats Clean Waters** (mentioned above) is an excellent program which provides the Lake District eyes and ears at the boat launch. Of course their primary responsibility is to inspect boats coming on and off the lakes, however having that physical body at the launch provides so much more opportunity to gather data, educate boats and stress the rules. With the threat of AIS, it is fair to be a little more firm with visitors and stress the rules are a serious obligation.
 - **Anglers & Fishing Tournaments** – If there is one area that screams AIS to me, it is the sheer number of fishing boats coming on and off the lakes. There are a significant number of fishing boats coming on/off Potter Lake and they aren’t running fishing tournaments. I’m not sure how many fishing

tournaments are sponsored on Lake Beulah in one season, but anglers and tournaments in general have the potential to far surpass the number of other boat types coming onto the lakes. All boats have small amounts of water stored in engines, as well as bilge water, bait bucket water, bait itself, boat hull and trailers. I also noticed a Beulah fishing tournament advertisement that read, stay below 50 MPH and it is suggested to wait until you get to 15' of water before powering up. If there is a way to limit the number of tournaments, or provide more significant incoming/outgoing inspection of boats at the launch, that might have a huge impact on AIS and quagga mussel infiltration to the lakes.

- **Education** - Create a brochure communicating all boating rules, **suggested** boating areas, i.e. skiing/sailing/surfing zones, maybe surf direction, kayaking/paddle boarding zones, swimming zones, etc. There are many lake districts launching communication programs to inform boaters of specific lake guidance, to communicate acceptable locations on the lake for specific boating types and to communicate proper boating etiquette and behaviors;
 - <https://districtofpowerslake.com/> – Lake District of Powers Lake has an extensive educational program and wake surf zones. Under LAKE LIFE tab on the website is included; boater safety, rules, surf patterns & common sense.
 - Beulah Responsible Boaters (BRB) reached out to me letting me know they are pursuing two avenues of positive action on this issue:
 - They have reached out to the US Coast Guard for boater safety training classes.
 - They are working on an information pamphlet, brochure or mailer which will provide recommendations and possible designated wake zones on a map of the lake.

Maybe LBMD could collaborate with them to save both organizations time, effort and money. Might be a good source of ideas for PLPRD. I have contacts who could help.

- **Riprap on Shoreline** – the DNR does allow riprap on the shoreline to protect against shoreline erosion which is heavily caused by the high winds creating waves which hit the shorelines hard. I have no idea what level of erosion is happening from wake boat usage, but I know one of the major causes of shoreline erosion is high winds and this mitigation approach will reduce wear and tear on the shoreline. Ice damming is another cause of shoreline erosion. Chapter 30 discusses the use of riprap for shoreline erosion protection. The waves created by the aggressive winds coming out of the west sometimes cause white caps on Potter Lake which I can easily see as a major contributor to shoreline erosion. I'm sure it is even worse on Beulah!

The DNR provides a permit exemption on riprap if you meet certain requirements. Requirements include but are not limited to; you may not exceed 200 linear feet of shoreline on an inland lake, riprap must be clean field stone or quarry stone with a diameter of no less than 6 inches and no greater than 48 inches, the toe of the riprap cannot extend more than eight feet waterward of the ordinary high-water mark, the

riprap must follow the natural contour of the shoreline and you must use filter fabric or clean-washed gravel as a filter layer under the riprap. Most pier companies are educated on these requirements for an exemption but here is a DNR document.

<https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/sites/default/files/topic/Waterways/checklist/ExemptionChecklist-Riprap.pdf>

- **Policing and Enforcement** – If more policing and enforcement is desired, PLPRD or LBMD could offset the police hours on the lake by funding the overtime component of the hourly wage. However, Lake Beulah almost exclusively benefits from this police patrol as there are no patrols on Potter Lake! I’m not sure if PLPRD desires police patrols at this time, but that is up to them.
 - The DNR will reimburse up to 70% of the hours spent by the police’s Water Patrol but will not reimburse any overtime pay components. Most police officers work Water Patrol after their regular 40 hours, so overtime comes into play as they are unionized and the rules are strict. The current DNR reimbursement rate to the town, considering state budget cuts, is about 58%, but it’s still a viable program from my perspective because over 50% of town costs to patrol waters are being paid by the DNR.
 - Under Chapter 33, PLPRD and LBMD is authorized to create a Water Safety Patrol which acts as effectively lifeguards on the water, alerting people to bad behavior and helping people in trouble. Chief Gorecki would gladly train them and support them. Chief Gorecki grew up on Lake Geneva, so he is very familiar with this type of program. NOTE: This would strictly be a privately funded or volunteer service and is not qualified for DNR reimbursement since the town already has an established Water Patrol through the town’s Police department.
- **Non-riparian boats/watercrafts stored and launched on the lake** – I have heard from many individuals that there are practices on Lake Beulah that will tend to promote more traffic which are very different from practices on Potter Lake who seems to have a manageable situation today.
 - There are many on Lake Beulah who do not live on the lake who are mooring a boat/watercraft at a friend’s pier.
 - I hear property owners are renting out space at their homes for boat trailers to get around the launch limitations dictated by spaces at the boat launch parking lot.
 - I’m told there are yet others with up to 10 boat slips on their property who are **renting out slips**. Town ordinance 16.10.050(4) does permit, based on shoreline requirements, no more than 10 boat slips without requiring a marina permit. I’m not saying this is a problem today, but I think you need to look at all potential causes of increased traffic before drawing conclusions to ban specific activities.
- **Other watercraft access not controlled through the boat launch** contributing to the increased traffic on the lake.
 - The Yacht Club launches and moors (overnight at times) sail boats regularly from their property on East Shore Drive. Again, I’m not saying this is a

problem today, but I think you need to look at all potential causes of increase congestion before conclusions can be drawn to promote banning specific activities. How many boat launches on average are conducted through the Yacht Club each week?

- Town Camps under Town ordinance 16.10.150(2) are exempt from obtaining a marina permit for; B'nai B'rith Beber Camp, Camp Edwards YMCA, Divine Word Seminary Camp, Camp Charles Allis Association and Alice Chester Center on Lake Beulah. And Salvation Army on Army lake. They also are obligated to protect the lake. This is additional boat traffic not controlled through the boat launch. How many boats does each camp have?

I don't have all the facts so I have no idea how pervasive these practices are, but it seems that there is potential to create much greater traffic on the lake than might be apparent simply by looking at the parking lot spaces at the boat launch. The number of boat launch parking spaces are limited by the DNR with the intent of limiting the numbers of added boats coming onto the lake. These other practices will increase boat traffic, will create more activity on the lake, and will add to unsafe conditions, shoreline erosion and lake churn. I strongly believe a significant part of the challenge on all lakes today are larger boats, larger and larger motors and too much traffic.


I am sending this letter on behalf of the entire board. These suggestions are shared in the spirit of collaboration, aiming to identify potential sources of the lake challenges voiced by many in our community—challenges that are common to lakes everywhere. The first step for each Lake District is to thoroughly assess all possible causes of disruption, prioritize them, and then develop targeted solutions.

This letter reflects concerns raised in recent months regarding lake degradation. I have dedicated significant time to understanding these complex issues, and the suggestions provided here represent high-probability opportunities for meaningful, short-term impact. They are offered as ideas for consideration—meant to support your Lake District boards as you continue to lead the protection and improvement of our lakes.

Many other districts have adopted creative and respectful approaches to managing lake use, and I encourage exploring similar paths. On behalf of the entire board, I hope these thoughts help focus your near-term mitigation efforts on the most commonly observed lake disturbances. As the town considers broader actions, it's crucial for the Lake Districts to honestly evaluate and address these apparent sources of disruption.

Please inform the Town Board what actions you are planning to take so we can support your efforts where appropriate.

Sincerely,



Joseph G. Jones, Chairman
Town of East Troy

Cc: Town of East Troy Board & Town Clerk