

SEED THE NEED UPDATE

Creating a "Platinum Prairie" at Pheasant Branch Conservancy to help the lakes

PG. 2

CONNECT WITH CLEAN LAKES

Seven ways to get involved with our work this spring and summer

PG. 4-5

LAKE-GRAM



SPRING & SUMMER 2022

Photo courtesy Robert Bertera, Lake Waubesa

MANY HANDS, FIVE LAKES

It takes a village. Stronger together. Working as one. No matter how you say it, the message is the same. The best way to move forward and achieve great things is when everyone is on board. That message is the same for lake health. A few of us may have started the movement, but it will take all of us to finish the task. As we head into summer, we're excited to work with people and groups across the watershed so we can improve our lakes, together.

Join Us!

Of course, the first thing you can do to help the lakes and stay informed is to become a Friend (individual) or Lake Partner (business/organization) donor (more on that on page 3 of this newsletter).

At your own home or business there are 10 simple actions we compiled at cleanlakesalliance.org/top10. Most of them are easy and inexpensive, and together they can lead to big impacts!

Summer Work Ahead

This summer three areas we are excited to focus on are the Clean Boats, Clean Waters program; our Volunteer Days; and of course, LakeForecast.

Clean Boats, Clean Waters - This summer, Clean Lakes Alliance will partner with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and Dane County in its first year participating in the Clean Boats, Clean Waters program. The goal is for inspectors to educate boaters about aquatic

invasive species and perform boat and trailer checks. We'll have monitors at various boat landings on lakes Mendota and Monona throughout the summer.

Volunteer Days - Making a big difference with beach or shoreline clean-up projects, invasive plant removal, and prairie reseeding, these days are open to all Clean Lakes Alliance donors. From now until late September, we'll host a group roughly once a week to advance these important watershed projects.

LakeForecast - If you haven't put this free app on your Apple or Android phone, now is the time! With more than 80 points monitored on all five lakes, the volunteer-led data collection helps populate the app with information that will help you pick the best spot on our lakes to visit this summer. After all, the lakes are dynamic, so if water isn't great in one spot, it might be better for swimming in another!



In partnership,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "James Tye".

James Tye
Clean Lakes Alliance
Founder & Executive Director

Watch for the Greater Madison Lake Guide this May, which will include our annual *State of the Lakes Report* at cleanlakesalliance.org/lake-guide



YEAR TWO OF "SEED THE NEED"

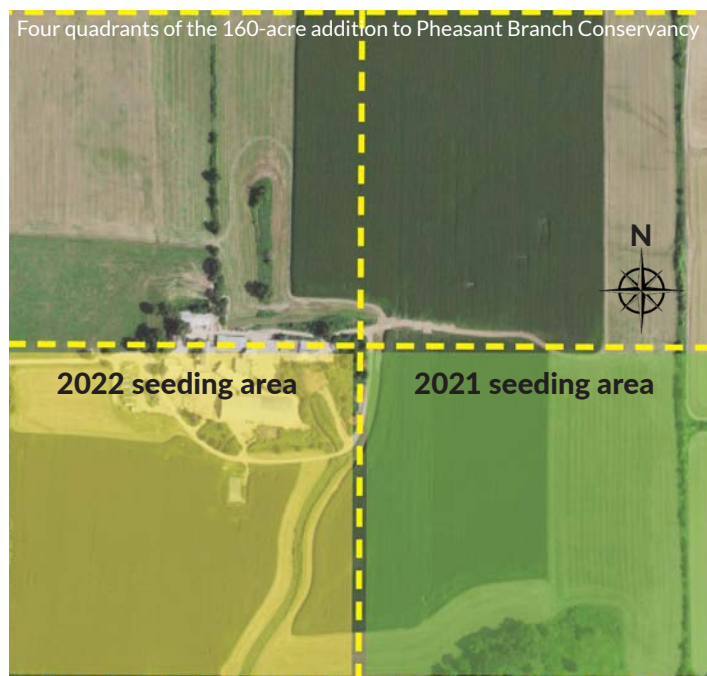
BY GARY SATER, FRIENDS OF PHEASANT BRANCH CONSERVANCY BOARD MEMBER

The Acker Farm parcel was purchased by Dane County in 2019. A partnership between the Friends of Pheasant Branch Conservancy and Clean Lakes Alliance in fundraising, along with the Dane County Parks team in seed acquisition and planting, have made this project successful. The second 40-acre quadrant within the 160-acre addition to Pheasant Branch Conservancy was planted in late February/early March of 2022 with a "Platinum" seed mix of more than 200 types of prairie and wetland seeds.

The first 40-acre quadrant was planted in early March of 2021 while there was still adequate snow cover and colder temperatures to aid in the spreading and stratification of the

seed mix. Although last year was drier than desired, the first-year planting was deemed a success given how many seeds had already germinated. It may take several years for many of these seeds to come to life in this Platinum Prairie.

This addition to the Conservancy will become a rich source for seed collection in years to come for other Dane County natural lands. The addition is also critical to the watershed feeding Lake Mendota and the Yahara chain of lakes from the north and west. Considered a "workhorse wetland gem" by the Wisconsin Wetlands Association in 2009, Pheasant Branch Conservancy is home to critical freshwater springs, Pheasant Branch Creek, and extensive wetlands.



The Friends of Pheasant Branch Conservancy have successfully raised \$25,000 for both the first and second years of the Seed the Need campaign. Clean Lakes Alliance initially received a \$100,000 donation from the Alliant Energy Foundation to help restore the prairie and wetland area. The Friends of Pheasant Branch Conservancy joined in this effort with Dane County and Clean Lakes Alliance to raise a matching \$100,000 over four years to make this Platinum Prairie a reality.

We have now successfully reached the midpoint of this challenge with the second 40-acre parcel planted. Thanks to the Jim and Vicki Struve Family Foundation for a \$25,000 donation for the 2023 third quadrant planting, the Newcomb Construction Company for a \$5,000 donation, and countless others who have donated to Seed the Need along the way, we are making significant progress toward our matching \$100,000 goal.

For more details about Seed the Need and restoration of this land, go to www.pheasantbranch.org.

GROWING AN ALLIANCE OF SUPPORT

2022 CLEAN LAKES GRANTS AWARDED TO LOCAL INITIATIVES

\$25,000 to Seed the Need

Create a "Platinum Prairie" in the new 160-acre addition of the Pheasant Branch Conservancy

\$20,000 to Agriculture Innovation & Conservation

\$5,000 to Conserve an Acre to support Yahara Pride Farms and \$15,000 toward competitive agricultural grants

\$1,000 to Precision Agriculture

Support for Pheasants Forever's agricultural sustainability solutions

\$4,000 to UW-Madison Engineering Capstone

Support senior capstone projects that focus on designing more lake-friendly shorelines

\$10,000 to Lake Monona Waterfront for All

Planning initiative to redesign and revitalize 1.7 miles of Lake Monona shoreline

\$10,000 to Yahara CLEAN Compact

Support the implementation of priority actions identified in the *Renew the Blue* community guide

\$10,000 to Madison Parks-Warner Park Community Recreation Center KNOW Program

An initiative that provides an outdoor educational experience for underrepresented youth in our communities

\$10,000 to Community Mini Grants

Funds for community projects that benefit the lakes, provide educational programming, and inspire lake advocates

\$10,000 to Resilient Landscapes

Funds will be dedicated to efforts in the watershed to implement green infrastructure in our residential areas and parks

Our name says it all. We're not the Clean Lakes *Organization*, we are the Clean Lakes *Alliance*. And what that means is it's not just a few people moving the needle, but rather an entire group of people, businesses, and organizations. Through donations, that Alliance funds a significant portion of the important work taking place on our five Yahara lakes. The Alliance is growing, and if you aren't a part of it, we hope you'll consider joining.

Annual Campaign Under Way

This year, Clean Lakes Alliance has set the highest goal it has ever set for fundraising - \$650,000! Annual Campaign co-chairs Courtney Kruger - Vice President of Fiore Companies, and Dan Lee - Vice President of First Weber, Inc, will be out in the community throughout the year speaking on behalf of Clean Lakes Alliance hoping to attract more Friend (individual) and Lake Partner (business/organization) donors.

"The lakes are valuable resources for the entire community and are worth every effort we can make for them to improve," said Lee.

"People flock here to spend time near the water. Healthy lakes attract businesses, create jobs, and boost our economy," added Kruger.

Your Dollars in Action

Clean Lakes Alliance awards \$100,000 in grants each year throughout our community. The more we can raise now, the sooner we will be able to put those dollars to work this summer. We will look to fund more lake improvement projects, hold more community-focused educational programs and volunteer days, and continue to expand LakeForecast so even more people can access important lake data before they plan a visit to a beach or a park. Having awarded more than \$1.3 million in grants over the last 10 years, we know your donation dollars truly make a difference.

We hope you will use the envelope in this Lake-O-Gram to make your commitment to the lakes. Of course, if you prefer, you can always visit cleanlakesalliance.org/donate to make a donation online.

We're excited with all the potential 2022 holds and look forward to continuing to build our growing Alliance of lake supporters and advocates.

View of Lake Monona waterfront and Madison's Isthmus
Photo courtesy Robert Bertera



7 WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

READY TO TAKE THE NEXT STEP TO SUPPORT OUR LAKES? DIVE IN WITH CLEAN LAKES ALLIANCE THIS SPRING AND SUMMER TO PROTECT, IMPROVE, AND ENJOY OUR LAKES!

1 LOOP THE LAKE

Join us in-person to bike the “Lake Loop” around Lake Monona on Saturday, June 18th. Registration for the event includes a super-soft event tee compliments of Lands' End to show everyone you rode a bike to support our lakes. Can't make it to ride in person? Join us virtually Saturday, June 11th - Sunday, June 19th to participate from anywhere. As always, kids 10 & under receive a free shirt with a paid adult!

cleanlakesalliance.org/loop-the-lake



2 SURF 'N TURF

Tee it up, then reel it in at this unique event. Teams of three start off the day with 18 holes of scramble golf at The Legend at Bergamont on Thursday, July 14th. After a provided lunch, teams fish a catch-and-release tournament on Lake Waubesa. The more inches of legal game fish you catch, the more strokes you take off your golf score! The event ends at Christy's Landing with a steak dinner. cleanlakesalliance.org/surf-n-turf

3 SWIM AT DEVIL'S LAKE

Swim at a lake outside of the Yahara Watershed to benefit the Yahara lakes! Training triathletes and recreational swimmers alike will enjoy this race at a new location! Whether you're training for IronMan Wisconsin, or looking to challenge yourself with a distance swim, the Big Swell Swim at Devil's Lake is an event that caters to all swimmer levels. cleanlakesalliance.org/big-swell



4 VOLUNTEER WITH US

Volunteer at an event with Clean Lakes Alliance this summer or volunteer at a beach cleanup! Whether you want to cheer on riders in our Loop the Lake Bike Ride or collect debris alongside local waterways, we have a fun opportunity for you to support our lakes. cleanlakesalliance.org/volunteer



5 TAKE ACTION AT HOME

Simple actions at your home can add up to a big impact for water quality in our lakes. Rain barrels and rain gardens help hold back or slow stormwater from reaching the lakes. These actions are part of a larger list of 10 we have on our website that everyone can do to make a difference. cleanlakesalliance.org/top10



6 LAKEFORECAST

Lakeforecast is a great way to engage with our lakes by staying up-to-date on lake and beach information. The measurements collected by our volunteers keep track of water clarity and temperature, as well as beach conditions and any cyanobacteria (blue-green algae) blooms. Know which locations are most enjoyable on a particular day by downloading the LakeForecast app for free from the Apple and Android stores. lakeforecast.org



7 LEARN ABOUT THE LAKES

Join us in person at The Edgewater or virtually on the second Wednesday of each month for expert talks and presentations about the lakes. Free to 2022 Friend and Lake Partner donors, these talks dive into important topics and allow for questions from anyone attending. cleanlakesalliance.org/clean-lakes-101



Every summer, Madison Schools & Community Recreation (MSCR) operates three pontoon boats at Tenney Park that offer an opportunity to get out on the water. Available for drop-ins, specialty trips, and private rentals, the boats are all captained by volunteers. Terry Walker has volunteered as one of those captains for the past eight years and not only encourages people to use the pontoons, but also to consider volunteering as a captain.

A GREAT WAY TO SEE THE LAKES

BY TERRY WALKER, MSCR VOLUNTEER



When I first volunteered for the MSCR pontoon program eight years ago (that's me on the left waving with the kids), I had never driven a boat! The good news is MSCR has an excellent training program, and after a couple of months, I was ready to give rides to clients.

Besides the enjoyment of getting out on the lakes a couple of times a week, I have met some very interesting and enjoyable people that come to take pontoon rides. We serve a broad range of people with themed cruises for youngsters, accessible trips for senior centers and assisted living centers, and narrated lake tours and private events.



A few years ago, I was scheduled for one of the youth pirate-themed cruises. I saw this young girl about three or four-years-old coming across the parking lot with her mother. She was dressed in a complete pirate costume and marched right up to me, put her hands on her hips and asked, "Is everything ship shape, Captain?" Whether it's young kids on their first ride, or military veterans who were at Pearl Harbor, it's always rewarding to watch the excitement the MSCR pontoon rides bring to customers.

The lakes are an important and significant feature of Madison. The MSCR pontoon program is a great way to get out on the lakes and see them from a different perspective. If you're like me, and you have time in the summer, volunteering to drive one of these boats is a great way to help the community access our beautiful lakes.

The MSCR pontoon program runs from June through September with rides available nearly every day of the week.



To learn more about volunteering or schedule a ride visit:
mscr.org/our-programs/outdoor/pontoon-programs

Or email: eapeffer@madison.k12.wi.us



Photo courtesy James Winkelman

COMMUNITY RAIN GARDEN, COMMUNITY EVENT

BY JAKE BLASCZYK, WATER SUB-GRANT TEAM CO-CHAIR

The Dudgeon-Monroe Association's WATER (Water Action to Encourage Responsibility) initiative began with a sub-grant proposal submitted to the University of Wisconsin-Arboretum in February 2020. Based on discussions with educational and environmental experts, Wingra School staff, and City of Madison Engineering Division, a proposal which included a large rain garden was submitted and accepted. The engineered design will keep stormwater on site, preventing it from eventually reaching nearby Lake Wingra.

Last year, the 1,500 square foot rain garden and swale was set in April, with digging starting in early August. By mid-September 27 volunteers, totaling 63 person hours, completed planting 1,200 prairie plants. Volunteers were from several different neighborhoods and organizations. Eighty Wingra School students also planted as part of class activities and several teachers will continue using the gardens in their lesson plans.



Photo courtesy James Winkelman



With the rain garden construction complete, WATER is now turning its attention toward community engagement and education.

Lake Wingra Watershed Gathering

On Saturday, May 21st from 1-4 p.m., the Dudgeon-Monroe Neighborhood Association's WATER Team is inviting the entire community to a free, family-friendly event. With homeowners and representatives from 25 organizations, including Clean Lakes Alliance, the event will help folks learn more about water stewardship and ways to protect our lakes.

Speakers and topics include:

- Storyteller Andi Cloud, a member of the Ho-Chunk Nation
- Homeowners with rain gardens and rain barrels
- Homeowners who have planted prairies in their yards
- Urban vegetable gardeners
- Climate change experts describing the impact on our lakes and ways to lessen effects
- Water management to address flooding
- Lake monitoring and tracking harmful chlorides

Meanwhile, as warm weather returns, consider visiting the rain garden located in Dudgeon School Park (Wingra School) at 718 Gilmore Street, Madison, WI.

For more information on the Lake Wingra Watershed Gathering, visit facebook.com/lakewingrawatershedgathering



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CLEAN LAKES ALLIANCE LAKE-O-GRAM SPRING & SUMMER 2022



Volunteer Day cleanup at Esther Beach Park on Lake Monona, 2021