

# Lake Lines

Burnett County Lakes & Rivers Association



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## The Two Most Important Minutes of Boating

by Buck Gooding

### Fall/Winter 2005 Issue



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Most of us realize how fortunate we are to live in a state with such an abundance of lakes, rivers and wetlands to enjoy. This has become a primary reason to live or own property in Wisconsin. Maintaining our clean waters becomes more difficult with each passing year. We all have become aware that a major problem facing us today is the increase of invasive aquatic species such as Zebra Mussels and Eurasian Water Milfoil (EWM). These are only two of the many types of invasive species that can affect our waters.

Although we used to feel confident that these problems did not exist in the "Northland," we now know that Zebra Mussels have been found in the pristine waters of the St. Croix River, as well as in the fishing waters of Mille Lacs. Until two years ago, Burnett County was free of Eurasian Water Milfoil (EWM), but we now have found that at least two of our lakes have been invaded. There are presently several counties in southern Wisconsin with as many as fifty lakes that have serious EWM problems, and it continues to spread rapidly. That's the bad news.

The good news is that we **can** stop the spread of EWM and other invasive species by following some good conservation methods. The state of Wisconsin in 2004 developed a preventative program called Clean Boats/Clean Waters. Sponsored by the Wisconsin DNR, the UW-Extension, and the WI Association of Lakes, this program has been very successful in combating the spread of invasive species. Since the beginning of the program, over 640 volunteers have attended 44 training workshops to receive instruction in how these invasive species threaten our waters, how to organize a volunteer inspection program at boat landings to check for problems, and how to record and report data collected during inspections. One of these training workshops was held in Siren, and Burnett County Lake associations have steadily increased their volunteer efforts to participate in this program by positioning volunteers at local boat landings on weekends and busy holidays. The goal is to educate boaters on how and where invasive species are most likely to "hitch a ride," and how to rid their boats and trailers of vegetation.

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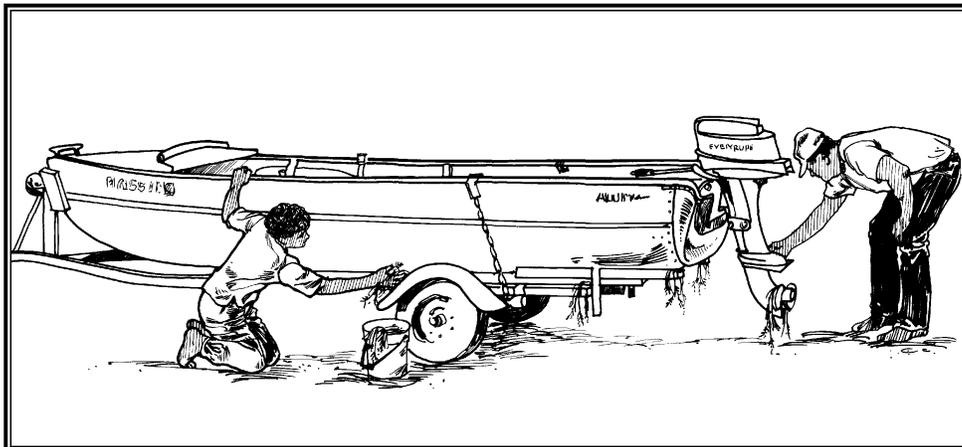
The Two Most Important Minutes of Boating —continued

The statewide data collected indicates the following results:

- Since 2004, volunteer watercraft inspectors have logged 3,783 hours at boat landings.
- Volunteers inspected 8,794 boats and made contact with 18,372 boaters.
- 86% of the contacts were from Wisconsin and 70% were launching boats for fishing.
- 3% of all inspected boats had vegetation attached as they approached the landing to launch. **9% had vegetation attached as the boat was pulled from the water and left the landing area.**

As of August 1, 2005, there are 624,121 boats registered in Wisconsin. This means that 9% of the registered boats in Wisconsin—56,000 boats - are pulling out of the water carrying aquatic plants that could potentially invade another body of water with EWM or other invasive species.

**So — the most important two minutes of boating are the last two!** That's the time it takes to clean all the vegetation from your boat and trailer and eliminate water from live-wells. Remember also that unused bait should not be released into the water, but should be placed in a trashcan or on land a safe distance away from the water. Following these simple procedures can greatly reduce the spread of invasive aquatic species and help maintain our beautiful Wisconsin waters for the enjoyment of all citizens!



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## Stay Connected With BCL&RA and Other Lakes Associations

We have developed an e-mail hot line within Burnett County for Lakes and Rivers information. Do you and your lake association want to be connected? Only short informational notes will be sent when "hot items" come to our attention. You will be given information to pursue on these issues if you desire. Sign up with you name and the lake/river group you are connected with. E-mail that information to [frkruger@juno.com](mailto:frkruger@juno.com) with a short note that you wish to be included in the BCL&R "hotline."



## 2006 NW Wisconsin Lakes Conference - Volunteers Needed

Would you like to meet and work with enthusiastic lake volunteers, get to know researchers and other professionals working on lake issues and be a part of organizing one of Wisconsin's great lakes conferences? This conference receives great reviews and hosts some of the state's best lake scientists, educators as well as policy makers and political officials (*Governor in 2004 and State Attorney General in 2005*). The conference planning committee is in need of a Burnett County representative to help out on this five-county citizen event. The conference planning committee meets about six times during the year; assignments vary depending on your particular skill and interest. If this is something you want to be a part of, please call Fred Kruger (635-7788) or John Haack (635-7406). The first planning meeting is scheduled for November 7 in Trego. Consider this opportunity and call if you would like more information.

### Burnett County Lakes & Rivers is Looking for More Participants

The Burnett County Lakes & Rivers Board is looking for several more people who would be willing to work with our Board, serving on Committees of your choice, or even serving on a possible expanded Board of Directors.

Current terms are for three years as a Board member. There are positions open for a President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer, which are two-year positions.

Committee people serve varying term lengths, depending on the project. If you are interested, please call Susan Wallin at 715-259-7766 or email [swallin@eraparkside.com](mailto:swallin@eraparkside.com).

Fred Kruger

## Sensible Shoreland Lighting



Many of us can remember sitting on a dock on a crystal clear summer night, the water as flat as glass, the inky black surface mirroring the sky, the great white Milky Way, a falling star tracing a path across the heavens.

Unfortunately, this precious part of our heritage, the outdoors with only the light of the moon and stars, is fading away. "Dusk to dawn lights obscure our view of constellations, meteor showers, planets and the landscape lit by the moon. Many children now see the wonders of the night sky only in pictures at planetariums. The fading away of the night sky is an issue, not only in cities, but also in the countryside and in developing waterfront communities.

As a 24 hour society concerned with safety, utility and security, the United States wastes as much as one billion dollars a year on lighting that provides neither safety or security, but simply lights up the night sky. Most glare and sky glow is unnecessary. The lights that temporarily blind us or obscure our view of the night sky comes mainly from poorly designed and inefficient light fixtures.

Following (on the opposite page) are some simple ways to focus your lighting on the ground or on your buildings. The full booklet is available through your local UWEX office (Publication GWQ031).



### **Aquatic invasive species focus of fall conference**

*Join us October 19th and 20th at Lake of the Torches in Lac du Flambeau!*

This conference will bring together staff from Federal, State, Tribal and County governments, as well as Lake Association leaders, volunteer coordinators and other non-government entities involved in the fight to protect regional waters from invasive species. Perspectives from states (Wisconsin, Minnesota, Michigan), tribes (both on reservation and ceded territories), counties, volunteers and researchers will be represented to discuss their roles in aquatic invasive species management, the resources and assistance they can offer and what they need from others.

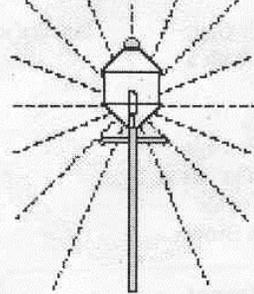
Conference and registration information is available online. The registration deadline is October 3.

# Preserve the Night.

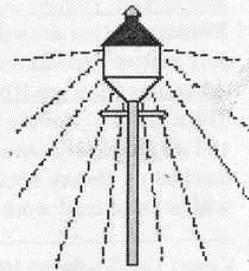
## Sensible Shoreland Lighting.

Night lighting, and its effect on others and ourselves, is something we should all be sensitive to. Lighting that is too bright, that shines out onto the water or into a neighbor's property, can destroy the beauty of the night.

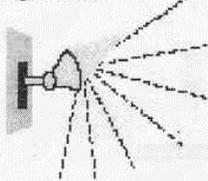
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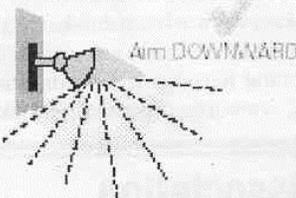
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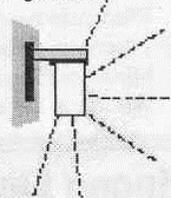
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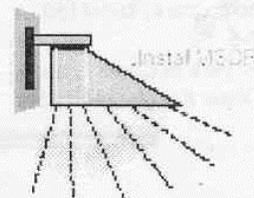
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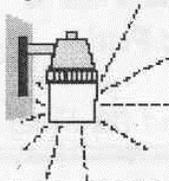
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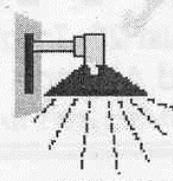


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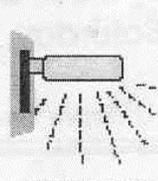
FLOODLIGHT

To this



OPAQUE REFLECTOR

Or this



SHOEBOX

### Don't over-light.

Choose lights that meet your specific needs without lighting the entire area.

### Eliminate glare,

the most common lighting problem. Shield fixtures so direct rays of light cannot reach the eye.

**Aim fixtures away from the water** and neighboring property.

**Avoid rotating or flashing lights.**

*Guidelines from Sensible Shoreland Lighting, available at UW-Extension and Wisconsin DNR offices.*

### Use full cut-off lighting.

This means no light is emitted above the horizontal. Full cut-off fixtures are more effective and actually increase safety since they produce very little glare that can dazzle the eye and reduce ability to see.

### Retrofit existing fixtures

with shields to reduce glare.

### Avoid dusk-to-dawn security lights.

A more effective approach is a motion detector, because a moving person will be more noticeable when he or she is suddenly illuminated.

### Did You Know?

Once adapted to the dark, our eyes are sensitive enough to see a single candle 10 miles away.

## The Totogatic ~ Wisconsin's Next State Wild River

by John Haack - UWEX

"Totogatic" - however you spell or pronounce it - brings to mind canoeing, hunting or fishing on a clean and wild river for many people in Northern-Wisconsin.

### The River's Path

The Totogatic flows approximately 70 miles through portions of five counties in northwest Wisconsin. It begins in southern Bayfield County, just upstream of Totogatic Lake. From the lake, it flows westerly through Sawyer, Washburn, and a small portion of Douglas County, crossing back into Washburn and eventually ***emptying into the Namekagon River in Burnett County.*** It is impounded by four dams forming Nelson Lake in Sawyer County, and the Totogatic, Colton, and Minong Flowages in Washburn County. The shoreline is relatively wild for much of the river's length. A substantial portion of the land along the river is in public ownership as state, county or federal land. There are also tracts of industrial forest land.

### Governor's "Conserve Wisconsin" Proposes Wild River Protection & Follows Local Interest in Protection

Recently, the Governor announced his environmental package that includes a proposal to protect wild rivers in NW Wisconsin. The initiative will begin a process to ***potentially*** add both the Totogatic and the Upper St. Croix River to the list of State designated Wild Rivers. This announcement follows low key local discus-



sions. Washburn County citizens sponsored an initial request to investigate the possibility of adding the Totogatic River to the states "Wild River" designation. During the past two years interested citizens worked with area stakeholders and the Department of Natural Resources to investigate this opportunity. Recently, the Friends of the St. Croix Headwaters, a citizen-volunteer organization in the Gordon-Solon Springs area, requested state-level support to protect and honor the headwaters segment by designating it as a "Wild River."

### Why Seek "Wild River" designation

In the 1977 edition of ***Canoeing the Wild Rivers of Northwest Wisconsin*** (published by Northwest Canoe Trails Inc.) the Totogatic was described as:

*"...one of the few remaining near-wilderness streams in Wisconsin. The river and surrounding country are little changed since the last log drives in the early 1900s. Rough rock outcrops, rolling terrain, open marsh, and dense woodland provide constantly changing scenery for the canoeist. Most of the native species of wildlife can be seen on this trip..."*

Because of extensive public ownership, this 27-year-old description is mostly accurate yet today. The river has a very wild character with forested banks, waterfalls, rock outcroppings, and relatively few road crossings. Fishing is good, with many cool-water game species present and several tributaries that support trout. There are stretches offering a

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## Totogatic—Continued

challenge to whitewater canoeists, as well as quiet water segments through forestland and one area named the "Dismal Swamp". There are presently no municipal, industrial, or commercial wastewater discharges to the river.

No new Wild Rivers have been added to the State's list since 1979, when the Pike, Pine, and Popple Rivers were the first rivers so designated. The Totogatic seems to have been left behind when the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway was established, and when the state designated waterbodies as Outstanding and Exceptional Resource waters. It is a resource well deserving of this level of protection so that it will stay wild in the future. This designation would provide long-term, cohesive protection along the length of the river, rather than relying on county-by-county public ownership and zoning for protection.

### Will this Happen

Discussion is needed with the public, local river groups and county administration in each of the five counties the river passes through. Garnering local support through county boards, county forestry and zoning committees, lake and river organizations, outdoor groups, and quiet sports enthusiasts should lead to county board resolutions supporting the measure. Discussions are needed with local legislators requesting their support. Public meetings will need to be held to explain the designation, discuss concerns, and gather grassroots backing.

To officially gain this designation, Chapter 30 of the state statutes needs to be changed (by the state legislature) to add the Totogatic to the list (either as specific segments or the entire river). This legislative change would in effect also make the Totogatic an Outstanding Resource Water under Administrative Code NR 102. The Department of Natural Resources would then need to update NR 102 and NR 302 to reflect the statutory change. The Governor's announcement only begins this process so; stay tuned for more discussion and local meetings.

## What's in a name?

The name "*Totogatic*" comes from the Ojibwa word "*Totogan*" meaning "place of floating logs" or "boggy river" (according to Romance of Wisconsin Place Names, Heartland Press, 1988). Plat books, maps and tour books show a couple of spellings for the river and its namesake flowages. "*Totagatic*" and "*Totogatic*" are used interchangeably in these reference materials (sometimes both are used on the same page)! Pronunciation is varied between "*Tuh-TO-ga-tic*", "*To-TO-ga-tic*", "*To-to-GAT-ic*" and just "*TO-ga-tic*" according to long-time local residents. Each of these spellings and pronunciations seems to have a strongly defended local following, and devotees of one will consider use of the others as incorrect.

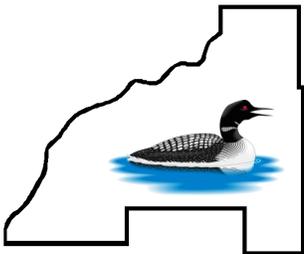


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## Inside This Edition

**BURNETT COUNTY  
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SIREN, WI 54872**



**THE LAKE  
NEWSLETTER FOR  
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RIPARIANS**

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