

Lake Lines

Burnett County Lakes & Rivers Association

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Group Effort Targets Invasive Species

by Dave Ferris and Kathy Oginski

Fall/Winter

Wisconsin's lakes and rivers and the wildlife that inhabit them are critically important to our economy and ecology. We take for granted that the lakes will always provide us with the beauty and recreation we seek at a moment's notice.

Unfortunately, our lakes and rivers are being threatened by invasive species, both plant and animal, that can forever change the ecosystem and harm the recreational activities that we've come to expect and enjoy on Wisconsin's, and specifically, Burnett County's 500+ lakes with 55+ improved boat landings.

Burnett County Conservationist Dave Ferris is determined to raise awareness with the users of the waters in Burnett County, even going beyond the continuing efforts of Burnett County to protect the waters of the state through a landing monitoring program using a college intern (funded by a DNR AIS grant) to check boaters and inventory lakes for AIS.

On the weekend of August 8, 2008, Ferris coordinated a group of concerned citizens to create a presence at the major landings in the county and conduct inspections as well as educate the public on the issues concerning Aquatic Invasive Species and VHS (viral hemorrhagic septicemia). The group consisted of members of the Burnett County Citizen Auxiliary (a volunteer group attached to the Sheriff's Department), the Burnett County Conservationist & AIS intern and a Deputy Conservation Warden "Water Guard." The auxiliary were assigned a lake or a group of lakes that were close to each other with the auxiliary members monitoring the landings all weekend as their schedules permitted. The AIS Intern was dispatched to busy lakes without an auxiliary presence.

For this event, as well as the rest of the boating season, informational packets had been assembled which included a letter telling about the presence of aquatic species in the lakes and many brochures outlining the steps the boater/fisherman can take to stop the spread of these invasives. These packets were left on the windshields of any parked vehicle and trailer that had launched but we weren't able to greet in person.

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President's Column

by Roger Noe

Fall! It is probably the most spectacular time of the year. The cool, foggy mornings watching the sunrise through the trees are followed by pleasant daytime temperatures which lead to cool, early evenings that begin to remind us all of things to come. WOW !!! We live in a beautiful place. Hopefully, you enjoyed our beautiful summer with family and friends at your spot on the lake or river. It was a lovely summer.

I spent a part of Sunday on Labor Day weekend monitoring the public boat landing on North Sand Lake. As part of the Clean Boats, Clean Waters Program, it was time well spent visiting with boaters entering and exiting the lake. I was pleasantly surprised at the level of concern that almost every boater expressed towards healthy lake issues. These included AIS (aquatic invasive species), VHS (fish disease), and general lake etiquette thoughts. Boaters were aware of the issues and the laws pertaining to them. It was indeed a pleasant and enlightening experience.

For those of us who have been on our lake or river for 50+ years, it would be easier to let someone else do it or respond "been there, done that". In my eyes, we have been blessed with a gift. North Sand Lake and all that it brings, Summer, Winter, Spring and Fall - has really been an integral part of our family. As I see it, those of us who have been so blessed really need to work towards giving back to that which has given us so much.

Through your lake association, the Burnett County Lakes and River Association, or whatever group you choose, give a bit of yourself back to that piece of nature which brings you to Burnett County and its wonderful resources.

Roger Noe,
BCLRA President

**Burnett County Lakes & Rivers
next meeting
Friday, October 31
9:00 am
Room 165
Burnett County
Government Center**



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Aquatic Invasive Species on the March

The Dangers of Water Gardening

By Chuck Druckery and Anne Warren

In the past few years the DNR and others have been educating boaters and anglers about the dangers of spreading exotic species on their boat trailers and in their live wells. You may have seen billboards, heard public service announcements, or been visited at your favorite boat landing by a local volunteer or DNR Water Guard officer about “stopping the spread.” While the threat from aquatic hitchhikers should be taken very seriously, it is not the only pathway for exotic species to invade our waterways. Water gardening, an increasingly popular pastime, is a significant threat that often goes unnoticed.

From the plastic garden pool with a built-in waterfall to the ½ acre landscape pond, enthusiasts spend nearly \$1 billion dollars per year building, stocking and growing their water gardens. To serve this demand, garden centers and on-line retailers now offer a huge array of aquatic and wetland plants in every form and color. While some of these plants are native, most are exotic species. An exotic species becomes “invasive” when it can tolerate a wide range of conditions, is easy to establish, grows aggressively, and spreads in multiple ways. Many of these factors are just what you look for in an easy-to-grow garden plant.

Indeed, a quick review of on-line retailers shows that many offer plants that are currently on the Federal Noxious Weed list or listed as a prohibited species by the Wisconsin DNR. These include such popular water garden plants as parrot feather, yellow floating heart, flowering rush, and water chestnut. These and other plants have already proven to be invasive in Wisconsin or other northern climates. And you cannot count on the retailer knowing what they can or cannot ship to each state. In fact, when researchers at the University of Minnesota placed 14 online orders for restricted plants all but one of them was filled!

Even when a water gardener does his homework and orders noninvasive plants, there is still a significant danger of receiving unwanted invasive species. Researchers in the same study ordered 681 plants ordered from 40 different suppliers and found that 93% of the orders also contained plants, algae, fungi, insects, or other animals they did not order. *What was alarming is that 10% of the orders contained aquatic invasive species such as hydrilla, giant salvinia, or purple loosestrife. These often occurred as plant fragments, seedling, or seeds mixed in with the desired plant.* With most invasive species a small plant fragment or a single seed is more than enough to start a new invasion! In fact, the hydrilla infestation in Marinette

Wisconsin Invasive Species Control List (Draft NR 40)

Prohibited Species

Fanwort	<i>Camboba Carolina</i>
Australian swamp crop/	
New Zeland Pygmy weed	<i>Crassula helmsii</i>
Dydimol/ Rock snot	<i>Didymosphenia geminate</i>
Brazilian waterweed	<i>Egeria densa</i>
Hydrilla	<i>Hydrilla verticillata</i>
European frogbit	<i>Hydrocharis morsus-ranae</i>
Oxygen weed/ African waterweed	<i>Lagorosiphon major</i>
Parrot feather	
Spiny naiad	<i>Najas minor</i>
Yellow floating heart	<i>Nymphoides pelata</i>
Water Chestnut	<i>Trapa natans</i>

Restricted Species

Flowering rush	<i>Butomus umbellatus</i>
Eurasian water milfoil	<i>Myriophyllum spicatum</i>
Curly-leaf pondweed	<i>Potamogeton crispus</i>

Watch Species

Mosquito fern	<i>Azolla piñata</i>
Pond water starwort	<i>Callitriche stagnalis</i>
Water hyacinth	<i>Eichhorina crassipes</i>
Indian swampweed	<i>Hygrophila polysperma</i>
Water spinach/swamp	
Morning-glory	<i>Ipomoea aquatica</i>
Dotted Duckweed	<i>Landoltia punctata</i>
Asian marshweed	<i>Limnophila sessiliflora</i>
Watercress	<i>Naturtium aquaticum</i>
Ducklettuce	<i>Ottelia alismoides</i>
Water lettuce	<i>Pistia stratoites</i>
Salvinia species	<i>Salvinia spp.</i>

For a complete list of all Wisconsin species under consideration for listing, and for definitions and additional information go to <http://dnr.wi.gov/invasives/classification/>

Big Top Chautauqua is Coming to Town!



On Sunday evening, **October 12, 2008**, at 6:30 pm, Communities United in Education will be honored to present the stellar performance of **Wild Woods and Waters** by Big Top Chautauqua in the Siren School Auditorium Theatre. For those of you who aren't familiar, they provide an evening of rousing entertainment combined with the rich history of our beautiful and beloved Northwest Wisconsin area. You can find out more at www.bigtop.org.

This year, the National Park Service celebrates the 40th anniversary of the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway and the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. **Wild Woods and Waters** was created by the Lake Superior Big Top Chautauqua to tell the story of how the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act protects the free-flowing waters of many of our nation's most spectacular rivers.

Wild Woods and Waters features the stories and songs of Wisconsin's greatest natural resources— from the St. Croix and Namekagon Rivers to the Great Lakes, from our wetlands and lakes to the dark forests— and includes a call for good stewardship to keep these vital waters safe for future generations. Threaded together with Bluegrass, this musical combines slide shows, readings, songs, dramatic reenactments and dancing. A Big Top performance is a true treat for any age.

Join us for this outstanding evening of entertainment. Advance tickets: \$15 Adults/ \$12 Seniors & kids 12 and under; Tickets at the door: \$20 Adults/ \$17 Seniors & kids 12 and under. **Reserve your tickets now. Call Community Ed Office 715.349.7070.**



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www.wildrivers40.org

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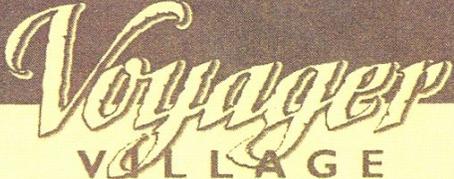
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County likely came from plant fragments on nursery stock from an east coast mail-order water garden store.

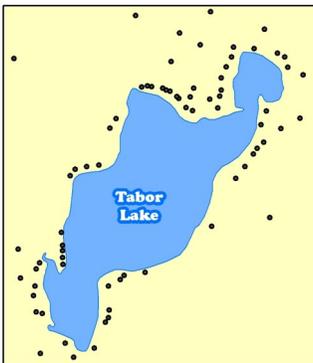
So what is the aspiring water gardener to do? Consider using native species. There are many native aquatic and wetland plants that look good and can fill your needs. While it's good to use natives, it's best to avoid collecting plants from the wild. The disturbance you create, especially when digging in wetlands, opens an area for invasive species to come in. Shop around and find growers that carry native species.

If you must use exotic plants, acquaint yourself with the DNR list of prohibited and restricted species (see the attached list). **These plants should never be used.** When you receive plants, verify that your order is correct. To help remove aquatic hitchhikers, rinse the plants well in several changes of tap water until they are clean. Be on the lookout for snails, newly sprouted plants and plant fragments.

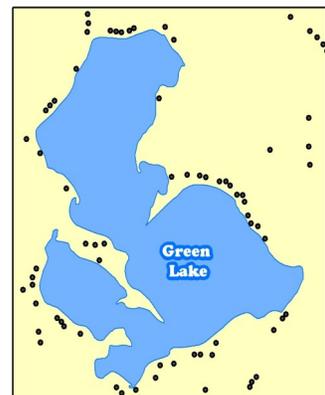
When disposing of water garden plants it's vital that you do it correctly. **Never, never, never dispose of water garden plants or drain your water garden into a natural lake, pond, stream or wetland.** Unwanted plants should be disposed of in the garbage. Composting is risky because many seeds and tubers are very hardy and resistant to drying, decay, and high temperatures. Even native water garden plants should not be released to nearby waters since they may not be native to that particular lake or stream and any new introductions, even native ones, can cause problems.

So help do your part to prevent aquatic invasive species. Keep checking your boats and trailers for aquatic hitchhikers, **AND** know what you are planting in your water garden! Of course, if you do find any invasive aquatic species in our lakes and streams, please report them to the DNR or Marinette County LWCD. For information on safe water gardening, visit <http://www.seagrant.umn.edu/ais/watergardening> or http://www.oar.noaa.gov/spotlite/archive/spot_water_garden.html.

Two New Lake Associations Created In 2008



Two new lakes associations were created in 2008. In the Town of Swiss, Tabor Lake was created through the efforts of Greg Woods. Greg lead the way by mailing property owners on the lake and surrounding properties and held a couple of meetings to develop support for the association. A large group of people participated in the meetings and ultimately agreed to form the association. The board of directors will be formed this fall.



Green Lake Association was also formed this year. Located in the Towns of Oakland and Jackson, Green Lake was formed by the efforts of Hud Gelein. The Green Lake Association held an educational meeting this summer. The board members of Green Lake Association are: Hud Gelein, President; Jamie Warndahl, Vice-President; Linda Gott, Treasurer; Anne Gelein, Secretary; Dan Bertuleit, Herb Dalglish, Sherree Nordine, Wayn Lockwood. The association has 42 members out of 74 property owners on the lake.

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The focus for the weekend was placed upon high traffic landings with special attention being given to the lakes that have invasive species like Eurasian Water Milfoil and Curly Leaf Pond Weed present, or were close to lakes with invasive species present. The event started Friday evening with inspections of many of the landings. The Deputy Warden and County Conservationist visited a number of landings in different parts of the county. Some of the lakes checked were Round, Trade, Wood, Clam, Yellow, Lake 26, Johnson, Mudhen, and others. Some of the auxiliary members were working their assigned landings as well.

On Saturday, the Deputy Warden and County Conservationist worked several other landings without a landing monitor and responded to any needs of the auxiliary. The morning started out with a phone call from an Auxiliary member stating that a vehicle and trailer launched prior to his arrival and had many dried aquatic plants present on the trailer. Dave Ferris and Deputy Warden Kathy Oginski arrived at the landing to inspect and determine if the weeds had been present prior to launching and it was obvious that they were. A Sheriff's Deputy was called and he issued a Burnett County Ordinance citation for transport of aquatic plants in Burnett County.

Burnett County is fortunate to have an active county-wide lakes and rivers association (BCLRA) that has a pilot project (using a DNR AIS grant) to use automated cameras on several (7) of the county's busiest landings. This is assisting greatly in the AIS prevention program, with citations issued from video evidence under the county ordinance.

All in all, the enhanced and coordinated coverage of numerous boat landings at one time provided many educational and enforcement opportunities. It is our hope that continued efforts such as these will help protect Burnett County waters from any future invaders.



Citations Issued Under New County Invasive Species Ordinance

Burnett County along with Polk, Oneida, Bayfield and Washburn counties have implemented an "Illegal to Transport" county ordinance. These ordinances prohibit any launch or transportation of any boat and/or trailer with aquatic or terrestrial plants on them. So far, Burnett County has had one guilty by default (a fine of \$154.50) and has four citations pending adjudication under this ordinance. This ordinance is valuable in controlling the spread of invasive plants and animals from one water body to another as local sheriff's deputies are able to stop vehicles with aquatic plants present on their boats, motors, trailers and vehicles on roadways and issue citations for the violations.

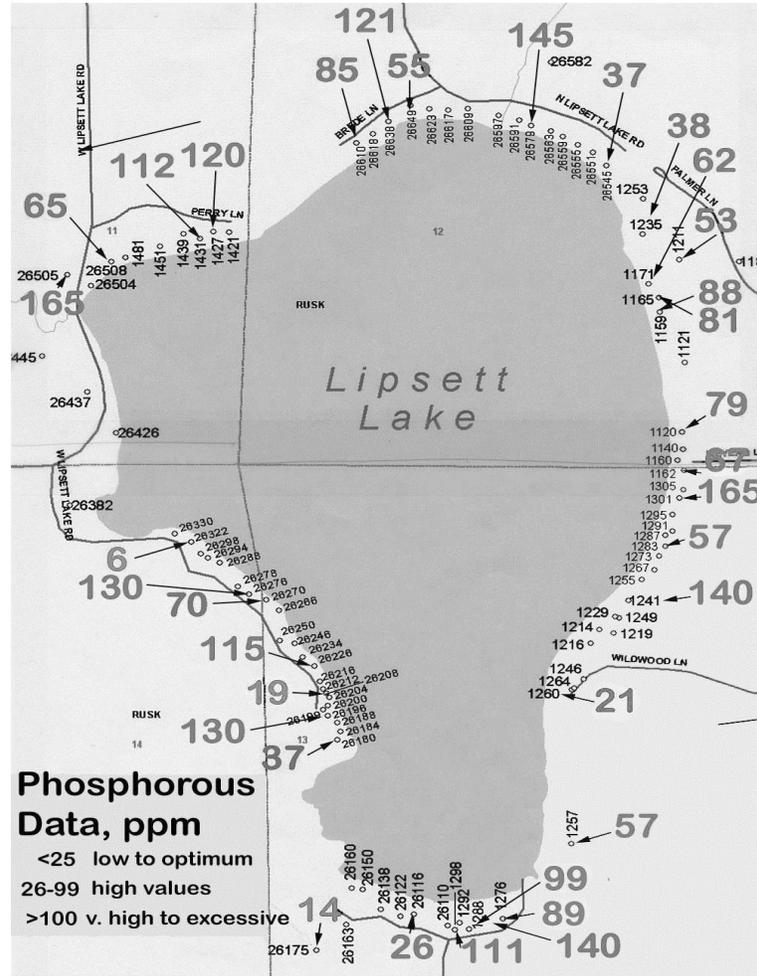
Lipsett Lake Association Grant Activities by Robert Baker

In the spring of 2007, Greg Heber, President of the Lipsett Lake Association was awarded \$3,000 from the Wisconsin DNR to coordinate a number of educationally related activities in and around Lipsett Lake. Below is a summary of the results to date.

A 4X8 ft sign was constructed and placed at the public access asking lake users to make certain to inspect their boats, trailers, and equipment and remove and visible plants, animals, and mud in an effort to avoid the introduction of exotic aquatic species to the lake.

The Association monitored the public access from the fishing opener in May until late October through the Clean Boats, Clean Waters program. 324 hours were spent monitoring, 196 boats were inspected, and 408 people contacted. 64% of the boats leaving the water had vegetation on them, most of which was removed by the boat operator or Association members. 20 of the 130 boats inspected (16%) had last been used in a lake infested with exotic species such as Eurasian Water Milfoil.

Thirty-four parcels completely surrounding the lake were sampled for soil nutrient analyses. All participants were offered \$10-off coupons for phosphorous-free fertilizer at ACE Hardware in Spooner. Only the phosphorous data are summarized here. 30 of the 34 samples had high to excessively high levels of phosphorous, ranging between 26 and 165 parts per million (ppm). Since some of the samples came from undeveloped parcels with native vegetation and from properties where the owners have never used any type of fertilizer, the high phosphorous levels appear to be related to the glacial geology in northwest Wisconsin rather than to fertilizer overuse. Studies in Polk County have shown that the glacial deposits, especially the sand and gravel units, have naturally high phosphorous concentrations. Lipsett Lake is located in the knob and kettle topography associated with the gravel-rich Hertel ice margin (moraine) that formed about 14,000 years ago.



Our results make it clear the phosphorous bearing fertilizer is NOT needed near Lipsett Lake since the soil already contains more phosphorous than plants can possibly use. See data on the attached figure.

In August 2007 Cheryl Clemens, Burnett County Conservation, presented a workshop on shoreline restoration for Association members. This was a hands-on workshop where participants brought photos of their lake shorelines for planning and design purposes. It also included site visits to lakeshore properties and recommendations for the appropriate plants to improve both the natural beauty of the lakeshore and the habitat for aquatic animals. Each participant received up to a \$50 reimbursement for the purchase of native plants from the DNR grant.

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Stage gauges for measuring daily changes in water level were placed in the inlet and outlet streams and on a dock directly in Lipsett Lake. A total 257 readings were made between early July and late October by Doris Perry, Tom Twining, and Don Loftus and showed how precipitation events effected water levels in the lake more rapidly than in the outlet stream. The inlet stream levels fluctuated considerably with no apparent relationship to precipitation events. This may be related to a cranberry operation that periodically impounds and releases water into the inlet stream. Hopefully additional readings this summer will shed light on this puzzling result. Velocity measurements were made monthly in the inlet and outlet streams and were used to calculate the discharge of both streams in cubic feet per second. Results showed that for 9 of the 10 months we have data, the discharge of the outlet stream is equal to or exceeds the discharge of the inlet stream, again suggesting an influence from the cranberry operation on the volume of water entering the inlet stream. Almost 100 hours have been spent monitoring water levels and flow rates.

Separate from the DNR grant described above, during the summer of 2007 Lipsett Lake was selected for a survey of aquatic plants. The survey was coordinated by Dave Ferris, Burnett County Land and Water Conservation Department, conducted by Matt Berg, Endangered Resources Services and was cost-shared (\$1262.50) with Burnett County Land and Water Conservation Department. 316 points were sampled and 179 sites were found to have vegetation (macrophytes). Plants were found on 40.7% of the entire lake bottom and 79.6% of the shallow south end of the lake. Two measures of the health of the plant community in the lake were high; the Simpson Diversity Index was 0.92 on a scale from 0 to 1.0, which is very high, and the Floristic Quality Index was 43.1, which is much higher than the average of 24.3 for the Northern Lakes and Forest Region of Wisconsin.

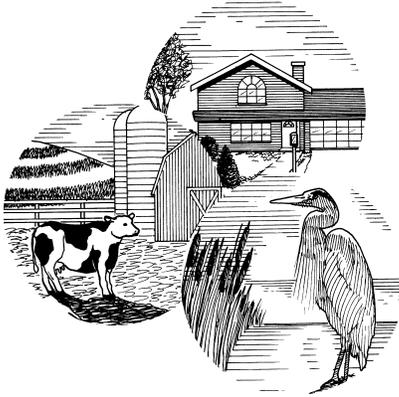
In summary, the small-scale planning grant from DNR has allowed the Lipsett lake Association to:

- ◆ Add a layer of protection from exotic species through the “Clean Boats, Clean Waters” program and the sign placed at our public access.
- ◆ Obtain soil-nutrient data showing fertilizer application near the lake is not needed.
- ◆ Organize a workshop on shoreline preservation to improve the beauty and aquatic habitat of our lakeshore.
- ◆ Gather data on water levels and inflow and outflow discharge that are essential for developing a Water Budget for Lipsett Lake.
- ◆ Cost share a survey of aquatic plants, which is the first step in developing an Aquatic Plant Management Plan.



Why is Comprehensive Planning Important?

by Mike Kornmann



One of the most significant policy making processes is now underway in Burnett County. The comprehensive plan for the county and some towns and villages will create a vision for what these communities will look like in twenty years. Although required to be completed by the state, Burnett County has a history of planning. In 1998, the county's first land use plan was adopted. This plan provided a framework for our current zoning code through a lake classification study. It also was the catalyst behind the Shoreline Incentive Program (SIP) which provides a \$50 tax credit to shoreline property owners who permanently protect their shoreline with natural vegetation. The comprehensive planning committee will update the 1998 land use plan and also address eight other topic areas.

The comprehensive planning process will direct decision making in nine topic areas. The plan, once adopted, will create a vision for Burnett County for everything from economic development to transportation to land use. The plan will be the guiding document for the Burnett County Land Use Committee and other committees. Private land owners can choose to use the plan to guide their land use and other decisions as well.

Comprehensive planning creates a vision for the county. This vision will be implemented by a variety of strategies that can include regulation, incentives, cooperation, and education to name a few. Zoning is not the only tool to implement the plan.

How can you get involved in the comprehensive planning process?

- ◆ Attend planning commission meetings and provide comments during the "public comments" section of the meeting
- ◆ Read updates on: [www.burnettcounty.com/comp plan](http://www.burnettcounty.com/comp_plan)
- ◆ Submit written comments through the county web site
- ◆ Read the on-line newsletter
- ◆ Participate in public information meetings
- ◆ Read public displays located throughout the area

Continued from Page 10

The benefits of planning include making informed policy decisions. The planning process includes public input and discussion by elected officials about where the County should go and how it should go about doing it. These discussions are critical to developing the comprehensive plan. The plan can also balance a number of competing interests.

With our challenging financial times, the comprehensive plan is an even more critical tool for capital improvements. Roads, parks, and building projects are identified in the plan and used to guide financial decisions. The role of infrastructure planning is covered in several areas including transportation, utilities and community facilities, land use and others.

One thing we must remember is comprehensive planning is not a silver bullet for all of the issues facing our county. It does not replace leadership or any active community organization. Citizens must participate during the process and afterward to implement the plan.

Many people live and visit Burnett County because it has 500 lakes and over 14 rivers and streams. The comprehensive plan is a tool to help us manage the change that continues to occur. The plan can be a positive tool for our community, lakes, and rivers. Please take time to participate in the process and make your thoughts known. Currently, the Burnett County Planning Committee is in the process of identifying planning issues. **Take part and create your future today!**

Units of Government participating in the Multi-jurisdictional Planning Process

1. **Town of Dewey**
2. **Town of Siren**
3. **Town of Daniels**
4. **Town of Wood River***
5. **Town of Trade Lake**
6. **Town of Anderson**
7. **Village of Grantsburg**
8. **Town of Sand Lake***
9. **Town of Webb Lake**
10. **Town of Oaksnd**
11. **Town of Union**
12. **Village of Webster**
13. **County of Burnett**

**Not required to complete a comprehensive plan*

A comprehensive plan defined by state statutes is required to have the following:

- A written and adopted public participation plan

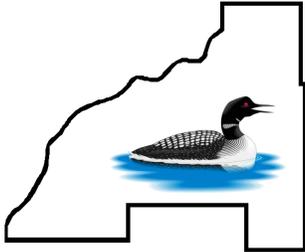
Nine elements

1. Issues and Opportunities
2. Housing
3. Transportation
4. Economic Development
5. Agriculture, Natural Resources and Cultural Resources
6. Utilities and Community Facilities
7. Land Use
8. Intergovernmental Cooperation
9. Implementation

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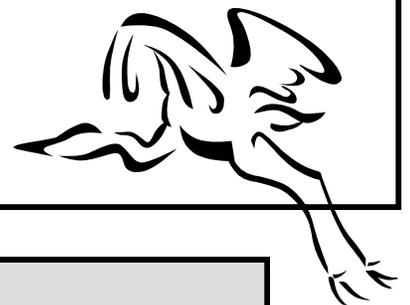
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THE LAKE
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BURNETT COUNTY
RIPARIANS

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Lake Lines is online at:
<http://burnett.uwex.edu>

Click on Community Development and then, Lakes & Rivers