

# Interest growing in lake plan

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A plan to manage lakes in Portage County is starting to get attention in other counties.

Eighteen Portage County lakes now are under management plans, thanks to collaboration with the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point Center for Watershed Science and Education, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and more than 175 community members in the county.

Nancy Turyk, a water scientist at UWSP, said there's been a lot more interest in managing lakes than there was 10 years ago.

"One of the biggest changes is that interested citizens have formed groups to talk about their lakes," Turyk said. "That was the first step. Many did not have organizations prior to this."

Management plans help to identify potential uses and problems the lake may have. The lake could have problems with invasive species or eroding shorelines, for example.

In Plover, Springville Pond was overgrown with Eurasian watermilfoil, and invasive species which stifles the growth of other aquatic plant life.

Through working with the lake management plan established by the Springville Pond Committee, most of the invasive plants have been cleaned up and much of the shoreland vegetation has been restored.

Turyk said that Marathon and Waushara counties are looking to imitate the success of the program.

Wausahara County is collecting data on 33 of its lakes in hopes to start implementing plans to manage them. They will be looking to UWSP for guidance in developing management plans.

In Marathon County, UWSP faculty are working with citizens to collect data on 11 lakes in the county.

Turyk said they've received requests for other counties as well. One of the more challenging areas is Vilas County, which has more than 1,500 lakes.

UWSP water expert George Kraft said the management plans are making a huge impact in the area.

"If you don't manage them, they go to heck on you," Kraft said.

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