



SAWM 2023 ANNUAL NEWSLETTER

As waterfront property owners, all of us have an obvious interest in what is happening to our waters, and we appreciate this opportunity to update you. For those of you unfamiliar with Shawano Area Waterways Management (SAWM), it is a volunteer, non-profit organization that exists for the benefit of the residents on Shawano Lake, the channel, and the Wolf River. Our efforts are performed in collaboration with the Wisconsin Lakes Partnership, UW Extension - College of Natural Resources Stevens Point, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, WAMSCO (Waterways Association of Menominee and Shawano Counties), and Wisconsin Association of Lakes, all of whom we have excellent working relationships with. We also contract with Onterra, LLC, lake management planners and aquatic environmental specialists, for guidance on planning and executing strategies for maintaining the ecological integrity of our waters. We also have a website at www.sawm.org and a Facebook page that is accessible to members and non-members. We recommend you check out the website and Facebook page for information on SAWM projects, updates, answers to frequently asked questions and more. We can also be reached by email at shawanolakewi@gmail.com or by phone at 715-304-9130. We welcome your feedback.

SAWM was very busy in 2022 with many activities to preserve and protect the Shawano Waterways. We would like to take this opportunity to update you on those efforts and ask for your support to ensure their continued success.

What has SAWM done for the Shawano Waterways over the last year?

The following major initiatives were the focus of our activities in 2022 and early 2023:

- 1. Submitted the permanent amendment application to FERC to maintain 802.9 msl water level in the Wolf River Pond upstream of the Shawano Paper Mill Dam.** This is our final opportunity to permanently restore the water level to its historic value and is SAWM's highest priority. SAWM will have spent near \$100k working to return the water level to its historic value. We can't provide enough thanks to our partners at NEW Hydro and Gomez and Sullivan for helping us navigate this final effort.
- 2. Replaced the County Highway HHH bridge with a wider and taller span for improved and safer navigation.** SAWM was instrumental in securing this improved design versus the original WI DOT proposal to replace the existing bridge in kind.
- 3. For the 8th consecutive year, SAWM ran the WI DNR sponsored Clean Boats Clean Waters program.** This is an initiative designed to reduce the introduction of invasive species in our waterways.
- 4. Continued to perform water quality long-term trend monitoring.**
- 5. Installed and maintained buoy marked and lighted navigation lanes in the lake, the channel and on the upper Wolf River.**
- 6. Applied for and received a WI DNR Recreational Boating Facilities Grant to replace one of SAWM's weed harvesters and transportation barges.** This new equipment will be operational for the 2024 boating season. SAWM's portion of the cost for this equipment exceeds \$300,000.

7. **Private weed cutting services were offered and used by nearly 100 members.** Weed harvester operational issues, exacerbated by lower water levels, created significant challenges and expenses. Our new equipment being purchased will resolve these issues.
8. **Initiated two additional Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) lake studies to be completed in 2023.** These studies are required as part of our WI DNR approved Comprehensive Lake Management Plan (CLMP) and maintains our eligibility for WI DNR Surface Water Grants.
9. **Updated SAWM Bylaws were approved by members at the Annual Meeting.**

What are the key priorities for SAWM in 2023?

1. Eliminating ice fishing debris left on the ice.
2. Complete the AIS lake studies and implement corrective action steps based on the findings of these studies.
3. Maintain buoy lighted navigation lanes.
4. Continue private and public nuisance weed harvesting.
5. Complete the purchase and delivery of our new weed harvesting equipment.
6. Improve our communication and increase waterway activity participation with our municipal partners.
7. Execute projects to improve our waterways fishery and wildlife habitats.

Comprehensive Lake Management Plan

A Lake Management Plan is a document that includes water quality sampling and evaluation, shoreline condition assessments, an update to the watershed assessment, fishery and fishery habitat assessment, analysis of the lake bottom core sediment, and aquatic plant surveys. To be eligible for DNR grants, SAWM is required to update its Lake Management Plan every five years. It is available to our members and non-members on the SAWM website.

As a result of the Shawano Lake Comprehensive Management Plan, SAWM has the following committees:

1. **Lake Quality Committee**

Objective: The objective of the Lake Quality Committee is to sustain healthy and safe Shawano Area Waterways through efforts to enhance, maintain and improve shoreland and aquatic habitat, water quality, safety and navigability. Additional efforts are focused on project and equipment funding, cost analysis, risk assessment, lake treatment strategies and data analysis. Members of the committee include SAWM board members and other volunteers from the community.

2. **Fisheries and Wildlife Committee**

Objective: The objective of the Fisheries and Wildlife Committee is to sustain healthy fish and wildlife populations that depend on Shawano Lake and its associated waters through projects that enhance and maintain shoreland and aquatic habitat and water quality. Members of the committee include SAWM members as well as representatives from relevant conservation and citizen organizations.

3. **Education and Communication Committee**

Objective: This committee is the outreach arm of the SAWM organization. Its focus is to inform all stakeholders that use, share, or benefit from the greater Shawano Lake resource the importance of maintaining it for future generations. This committee is also responsible for recruiting new members

and raising operational funding for the organization. The effectiveness will be measured by tracking the annual number of members and fundraising dollars collected.

We welcome anyone who is interested in volunteering with SAWM to join any of our committees.

Buoy Maintenance and Repair

For your safety, SAWM places and maintains the buoys on the lake, channel, and river. The cost of maintaining the buoys and lights is a significant expense covered by SAWM. Every fall, the buoys are pulled for the season and the lights are removed from the buoys and bridges. The cost of a buoy is \$146. The cost of a single light for a buoy or bridge is \$277. Please use caution when navigating near the buoys!

How can you help?

We need your support. ***Please encourage your neighbors to join SAWM!*** There are about 1,370 property owners on Shawano Lake, the channel, and the river. ***Last year we had about 700 members, about half of the total property owners. 100% of the property owners benefitted from the efforts of SAWM but only half of the property owners supported these efforts!!*** As a lake association, we can't force anyone to be a member, but hopefully from this letter you will recognize the benefit SAWM provides. Our efforts help maintain a healthy lake environment, which improves the recreational use of the lake for you and improves the value of your property. Our efforts to maintain higher water levels alone have already cost us about \$100,000. We will purchase a new weed harvester and barge this year as our equipment is truly on its last leg. The new equipment will cost over \$600,000. In addition to project-based expenses, our recurring costs include chemically treating seven buoy lanes, maintaining and placing buoys and navigational lights, and collecting floating weed beds, as well as participating in the Clean Boats, Clean Waters program. We apply for grants where possible and fortunately, we receive generous support from the local municipalities of Wescott, Washington, City of Shawano, Richmond, Cecil, and Shawano County, ***but member dues and donations make up the largest revenue source for SAWM. We need everyone to step up to help maintain the quality of our waterways. Everyone benefits, and we're only asking you to pay \$50 per year to help out. Please consider doing your part.***

Donations

By law, a lake association cannot charge more than \$50 annually for membership. In addition to the annual dues, many of you choose to make an additional contribution to SAWM. These donations are always appreciated and last year almost one half of our members made additional donations totaling just over **\$36,000!!** This was an increase of more than \$5,000 over the previous year! Let us see if we can beat this total this year!! Our generous donors are now too numerous to list but each one is greatly appreciated – ***thanks to all of you!***

What else do I need to know?

Communicating with all property owners is critical if we are going to be successful in meeting the challenges facing our Shawano waterways. We need you to be informed. This year the **SAWM Annual Meeting** will be held on **Saturday, June 3 at 9:00am at the SHAWANO SKI SHARKS SHOW SITE at 211 Riverside Dr. in Shawano. Rain date: June 10.** We would appreciate your attendance whether you are a member or not. It provides a great opportunity to get an update on the association and lake related topics and to hear from local DNR and Law Enforcement officials. We will also have our annual election of officers and directors.

We need to keep you informed throughout the year.

Current SAWM members receive a weekly email newsletter. This is a cost-effective way for us to communicate with property owners on various issues and the activities taking place in the Shawano area.

Other important information:

Chemical Treatment of Weeds – Navigation Channels. We will use chemical treatment to control weed growth within designated areas of the lake mainly along seven buoy lanes. Thanks to SAWM member Bart DeFere for the time and money he has invested in gaining and maintaining the certifications necessary to handle this spraying on behalf of SAWM. Our spraying costs would be substantially higher if we had to hire an outside contractor to provide this service.

Weed Harvesting - The harvesting of weeds in public areas will continue this year along with the ability to pre-pay for private cutting around your dock on the lake and channel. Private cutting is a service provided only to SAWM members. The cost for private cuttings this year is \$200 per cutting if requested and paid for by June 1. After June 1 the cost increases to \$300 per cutting.

Local Business Support

We would also like to send a special thanks to our 2022 business members that paid to advertise in our email newsletter. Please thank them with your patronage and support their business.

SAWM Board of Directors

Todd Dobberstein – President	Jeff Knope
Bill Monfre – Vice President	Roger Knueppel
Zach Pedersen – Treasurer	Jeff Puissant
Karen Monfre – Assistant Treasurer	Ron Schumacher
Carla Osborne – Secretary	Paul Seidenstricker
Jeff Brunson	Dave Zelinger
Wanitta Charnon	Tony Zielinski
Bart DeFere	