

# Lake Management Talk Sheet

## Why should we consider creating a Lake Management District (LMD)?

As members of the Rock Lake Community, it would be hard to put value on the contribution Rock Lake makes to our lives, economically, recreationally, socially, and all the intangibles that go with having a beautiful lake at our fingertips. We only have to imagine Lake Mills without Rock Lake to understand the value it brings to all of our lives.

At present, the management and care of Rock Lake falls to many different governmental and voluntary organizations, none of which controls all facets of lake management, care, and protection for future generations.

If we look at the 2018 Rock Lake Management Plan, which can be found on the Rock Lake Improvement Association web page under Lake Reports, we find the following organizations each have direct responsibility for some facets of Rock Lake Management:

- Town of Lakes Mills
- City of Lake Mills (Advisory)
- Rock Lake Improvement Association
- Joint Rock Lake Committee (JLRC)
- Jefferson County Land and Water Conservation Department
- Jefferson County Soil Builders
- Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR)

Jefferson County Planning and Zoning as well as the Army Core of Engineers also have an impact on Rock Lake and its riparian owners.

Although all these groups want what is best for Rock Lake, there are often competing agendas which interfere with smooth lake management and care.

Most LMD are formed because of serious lake issues. Due to the efforts of the above-mentioned groups, Rock Lake is not yet experiencing major issues, but there are concerns:

- Average phosphorus concentrations are increasing
- The average number of rare and intolerant fish species found at sampling sites declined from 2004 – 2017
- The DNR has designated adjoining water bodies as impaired due to excess nutrients
  - Mud Lake (2018)
  - Rock Creek (2022)
- Understanding and controlling sources of bacteria that lead to beach advisories and closures
- Lake level
- Negative impacts caused by wake boats

## Advantages of a Lake Management District (LMD)

1. Projects detailed in the Lake Management Plan would benefit from the oversight and actions of a lake management professional with adequate resources.

2. An LMD would provide the structure needed to foster a working partnership between lake stakeholders and the multiple current management groups.
3. An LMD with a future-focused vision and mission statement can concentrate on the long-term quality of Rock Lake.
4. An LMD can access multiple funding sources, such as State loans, grants, and taxation.
5. An LMD represents one of the purest forms of democracy. All lake property owners have a voice in lake management and control the budget.

### **Who will be in the proposed LMD?**

1. Riparian owners
2. Those with deeded lake access
3. Those with deeded lake rights

### **How will the LMD fund activities?**

We are proposing funding through taxation of LMD members. At the present time the mill rate is projected to be \_\_\_\_\_/\$1000 of assessed valuation.

### **What will this money be used for?**

Anything that will specifically add to the health and longevity of Rock Lake and the safety and enjoyment of lake property owners and other users. Examples include:

- Funding boat patrols
- Lake safety
- Aquatic invasive species
- Acquisition of wetland and other property
- Enhancing clean boat/clean water efforts
- Lake capacity management
- Water quality
- Erosion control
- Improvement of public areas and boat landings
- Long term planning to improve game fish populations
- Inventory of aquatic plants
- Wetland restoration
- Shoreline protection and beautification
- Lake level
- Non-point source pollution abatement, I.e., develop plan to address excess nutrients in Mud Lake and Rock Creek
- New technology evaluations (e.g., wake boats)

### **In Summary**

The proposed LMD would have enough resources and focus to effect positive change for the long term benefit of all Rock Lake stakeholders.

