



March 9th, 2015

Dear Citizen Lake Monitoring Network Volunteer:

2015 marks the 29th anniversary of the establishment of Wisconsin's Citizen Lake Monitoring Network (CLMN), initially known as the Wisconsin Self-Help Lake Monitoring Program. This unique collaboration unites citizens, biologists, lake managers, and researchers together in an effort to protect and understand the health of Wisconsin's lakes. Many of you have been tracking water quality on your lakes for over two decades! You're also catching early populations of aquatic invasive species (AIS), and working with local lake managers to address these invaders, often securing funding assistance from Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources grants. Currently, 885 sites on 709 lakes are being monitored by 933 volunteers, and 122 new water clarity volunteers joined the program in 2014! The work that all of you do for Wisconsin lakes is greatly appreciated.

For those of you with an Internet connection, you can find your annual report (including past reports), monitoring forms, satellite (remote sensing) schedule, and other resources at our redesigned CLMN website: www.uwsp.edu/uwexlakes/clmn. The feedback received from many of you via our CLMN volunteer survey (discussed below) influenced how this redesign was completed.

For those of you without an Internet connection, we have included your 2014 annual report with this packet. Your packet also includes materials for spring: datasheets, photocopied field sheets for use on the boats, a satellite (remote sensing) schedule for 2015, our new "Interpretive Guide to CLMN Water Quality Reports", and a postage-paid return envelope. Please check the data in the report against your records. If you find any errors, let us know. Please also let us know if you are interested in reporting data online or receiving your annual reports online instead of via U.S. mail. This helps us improve communication and reduce operational costs of the CLMN. If you don't have the ability to enter data online, please mail your 2015 data in the enclosed postage-paid envelope at the end of the season to Citizen Lake Monitoring Network-WY/4, WDNR, PO Box 7921, Madison, WI 53707-7921.

If you need anything for the season ahead, let your Regional CLMN Coordinator know, and please take a minute to measure the rope on your Secchi disc and Van Dorn sampler (if applicable) to make sure that the measurements are



still accurate—the rope may stretch over time. You can contact your Regional CLMN Coordinator with questions on how to interpret your data, or regarding training or equipment needs. Feel free to contact the Wisconsin DNR Central Office at dnrlakeb@wisconsin.gov or 1-888-947-3282 with database-related questions.

This year, the North American Secchi Dip-In monitoring event will take place June 27 – July 19, 2015. If possible, please take water clarity readings during this time frame. In addition to entering your data into SWIMS, you can optionally enter your data on the Secchi Dip-In website. Kent State University (Coordinator of the Secchi Dip-in) asks for additional information that our Network does not track. Even if you do not enter your data into the Dip-In website, we will provide your data to Kent State. For more information on the Dip-In, visit <http://www.secchidipin.org/>

Other Monitoring Opportunities:

- **Aquatic invasive species (AIS) monitoring** - only 26 volunteers reported AIS monitoring data in 2014. Please let your Regional CLMN Coordinator know if you would like to be part of this important effort to detect early populations of AIS so that they can quickly be addressed with minimal ecological harm. If you are monitoring for AIS and do not find any, please remember that it is still important to report the results of your monitoring. We would like to know how many of you are participating in this type of lake monitoring.
- **Water level monitoring pilot study** - a small group of lakes are being chosen for water level monitoring in 2015. This project is just beginning, so only a small number of lakes will participate this year.
- We are still collecting historical ice-on / ice-off data, as well as requesting these data from lakes with no previous records. All data can be entered online. You can find the ice record monitoring forms by clicking the “Ice-on Ice-off” button on our website www.uwsp.edu/uwexlakes/clmn.
- **2015 loon population survey** – Northland College is looking for volunteers to assist with a one-day loon survey that has been conducted every five years since 1985 to estimate the state’s loon population. 250 lakes across Wisconsin have been pre-selected, and many lakes still need a volunteer for this event. The survey takes place on July 18th this year, from 5:00-10:00am. Read more about this fun opportunity at <http://www.northland.edu/loon-population-survey.htm>
- **Water Action Volunteers (WAV)** – WAV is a statewide program for Wisconsin citizens who want to learn about and improve the quality of Wisconsin’s streams and rivers, coordinated by the Wisconsin DNR and UW-Extension. Volunteers interested in participating are encouraged to visit the WAV website to view the many training opportunities available this spring and summer. <http://watermonitoring.uwex.edu/wav/events.html>



CLMN Online Survey Results

Over 300 of you completed our online CLMN survey this winter. Your feedback was greatly appreciated, and the comments you provided are guiding us through many changes and updates to the program. I would like to take a moment to address a few specific questions and comments that were submitted by some of you:

Comment: *It would be helpful to have more assistance with interpreting my data.*

Response: We have created a new *Interpretive Guide to CLMN Water Quality Reports*, which provides helpful definitions and information to help you understand what your data means. Visit our website and click on the *Using the Data* button to find this new interpretive guide. Those of you receiving this letter in the mail have a hard copy of the new interpretive guide included in your packet. Remember that the larger *Understanding Lake Data* booklet is also available on our website for a more in-depth discussion on water quality data.

Question: *Why does it take so long to receive my annual report?*

Response: Most CLMN annual reports are complete and available online by the end of November. However, there can be a delay of several weeks before your final water chemistry analysis data are incorporated into your annual report. If you have internet access, you don't need to wait until this spring letter is mailed out – you can download your annual report at any time by visiting <http://dnr.wi.gov/lakes/clmn/>

Comment: *I would like to see annual reports from other lakes in my area. I would also like to see data from previous years on my lake.*

Response: The public can view annual reports from any lake reporting CLMN data. Go to <http://dnr.wi.gov/lakes/clmn/> and click on the county and lake you would like to view data from. Reports are available at this website for any year that CLMN data was submitted. In addition, after you click on your county and lake, you can click on “Secchi Graph” and “Trophic State Index Graph” to view charts of historical data from your lake.

Comment: *I do not know who is UW-Extension staff and who is WDNR staff.*

Response: The Citizen Lake Monitoring Network is a collaborative project between the UW-Extension Lakes Program and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. The CLMN is coordinated out of UW-Stevens Point by the Statewide CLMN Educator (Paul Skawinski), and local assistance is provided by five Regional CLMN Coordinators (Brenda Nordin – Northeast, Sandy Wickman – North Central, Kris Larsen – Northwest, Buzz Sorge – West Central,



and Rachel Sabre – South Central and Southeast). All of the Regional CLMN Coordinators are Wisconsin DNR staff (Sandy Wickman is partially WDNR and UW-Extension).

Regional CLMN Coordinators:

Brenda Nordin – Northeast Region 920-662-5141 Brenda.Nordin@wi.gov

Sandy Wickman – Northern Region 715-365-8951 Sandra.Wickman@wi.gov

Kris Larsen – Northern Region 715-635-4072 Kris.Larsen@wi.gov

Patrick “Buzz” Sorge – West Central Region 715-839-3794 Patrick.Sorge@wi.gov

Rachel Sabre – South Central and Southeast Region 262-574-2133 Rachel.Sabre@wi.gov

Comment: *The CLMN website is too cluttered and is not helpful.*

Response: We have re-designed the primary CLMN website to be more informative and easier to navigate. Please visit the new website and let us know what you think of the updates. We plan to add much more content to the CLMN website as the 2015 season progresses, so check back often for updates. www.uwsp.edu/uwexlakes/clmn

The CLMN section of the WDNR website is located here: <http://dnr.wi.gov/lakes/clmn/>

We are also taking action on your suggestions to shorten the training manuals, offer more training opportunities across the state (including during the summer season), increase program outreach through local media, create “refresher” training videos for each type of CLMN monitoring, and begin a new monthly CLMN E-newsletter. Due to budget constraints, we will only be able to offer this newsletter via email. If this letter came to you via U.S. mail and you would like to receive the E-newsletter, please provide us with an email address. You can send it to Pskawins@uwsp.edu.

As always, your suggestions and feedback are greatly appreciated – please contact us to let us know how we can improve the CLMN program!

Thank you again for everything you do to preserve Wisconsin’s legacy of lakes!

Paul Skawinski

CLMN Statewide Educator
UW-Extension Lakes Program
Pskawins@uwsp.edu
(715) 346-4853

Katie Hein

Lakes Monitoring Technical Lead
Wisconsin DNR
Catherine.Hein@wi.gov
(608) 267-2376

Jennifer Filbert

SWIMS Database Manager
Wisconsin DNR
Jennifer.filbert@wi.gov
(608) 264-8533