

A LAKE NAMED ALICE¹

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Dean Premo Ph.D. noted, in the **Lake Alice Stewardship Program: Phase 1**, that you have to view and study Lake Alice as part of a larger landscape, if you are going to effectively understand it and the tightly connected ecological system of which it is a part.² The same is true of the history of Lake Alice.

When we purchased our place on Lake Alice, we were excited and curious. My wife asked, “How did Alice get its name?”³ We did not find out the answer to this question until almost seven years later, but that simple question lead to learning a fascinating story of glaciers, Indians, French *voyageurs* and *coureurs de bois*, lumberjacks, lumber barons and much more.

OF ICE & TIME

In Northern Wisconsin, we live in a landscape that was shaped by ice. In Canada, unmelted snow accumulated and compacted into ice thousands of feet thick. Between 50,000 and 10,000 years ago, this ice pushed southward in finger-like lobes called glaciers. Several of these glaciers advanced across the immense rock dome, the Northern Highland rock shield that extends down from Hudson Bay to cap northern Wisconsin. The part of the glacier that covered all of Oneida and Vilas counties and nearly two thirds of the of the upper part Lincoln County, is known as the Chippewa lobe.⁴ For those living around Lake Alice today, it is interesting to try imagine seeing an endless wall of ice a mile high, looming over us, rather than our beautiful lake views.

Our landscape was for the most part not created by the glaciers advancing and gouging out lakes or rivers out of the bedrock of the rock shield. The landscape we enjoy and marvel at today was created when

¹ **Cite as:** Barrows, Dave. 2009. A Lake Named Alice. i.p. of D.B.B.

² Premo, Dean and Kent Premo. 2009. Lake Alice Stewardship Program: Phase 1. pg 13-14

³ **Dave** and Linda **Barrows** purchased their home, WeGotAway in 10/02

⁴ Jones, George. 1924. History of Lincoln, Oneida and Vilas Counties. pg.13

the glaciers began to recede and blanketed the land with debris that it had picked up and carried in its descent into northern Wisconsin. When a glacier stopped advancing, the ice along its front edge melted as the ice behind it was pushed forward, depositing its sand, rock and gravel in ridges called moraines. Huge chunks of ice that had broken off and suspended in the debris, melted to form distinctive features, such as potholes and kettles.

Another way the contents of glaciers spread over the land occurred when the water streaming from their melting base carried sand, gravel and stone, depositing material to form an outwash plain. The Northern Highland Pitted Outwash extends from the Winegan Moraine along the upper Michigan border to Harrison Hills in northeast Lincoln County and includes the Northern Highland American Legion State Forest, most of Oneida and Vilas county forests and the northern units of the Lincoln County Forest.⁵

A mile high glacier exerted a pressure over a thousand tons per square yard, and it actually pushed the ground beneath below the water table as it advanced. As the glaciers retreated, some of the compressed ground began to rise. As in the moraines, huge ice chunks deposited in the outwash plain melted to form potholes, hollows and kettles. Water filled these depressions, creating some of the numerous kettle lakes in the Northern Highland Pitted Outwash region. Other lakes were formed by glacial debris damming streams. In this region, Vilas County has the greatest number of lakes. Oneida comes next. While in Lincoln County, lakes are not as numerous and chiefly found in its northern portion in the vicinity of Tomahawk, which may be regarded as the gate way into the lake region.⁶

Many of the Highland glacial lakes are small, irregular in shape and often interconnected by streams, creating an enchanting network of water. The rambunctious Wisconsin and Tomahawk rivers also originate in this outwash. The glaciers left the Highlands a rare and beautiful concentration of lakes, rivers and streams. Only in two other areas on earth, southern Finland and the Minnesota-Ontario boundary waters, contain as many lakes per square mile.

⁵ Willow Flowage Scenic Waters Area Master Plan Draft. May, 2000; Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, pgs. 86

⁶ Jones, George O. 1924. History of Lincoln, Oneida and Vilas Counties Wisconsin. pg.15, 19

In the Highland region, the soil types vary greatly over short distances because of the capricious way the glaciers dumped their material. Much of the massive deposits of sandstone that the glaciers carried into Wisconsin was ground down and then broken down by weather into a poor, sandy soil.⁷ Lincoln County has more farmland and developed its agriculture much more quickly than Vilas or Oneida because it was only partially covered by the glacier in its northern area.

The glaciers scoured all vegetation in their path, leaving an infertile, barren wake. It was the hardy jack pine, called the cactus of the north because of its ability to grow in sandy soil that took root in the Highlands. The organic matter from the jack pine eventually made it possible for white and red pine to take hold as well. It was the start of the magnificent coniferous forest that would play an important role in the region's history. Spruce, fir, cedar, hemlock and tamarack found niches in which to flourish. Beach and maple also gained a foothold.

THE WILDERNESS

As the glaciers receded, prehistoric Indians followed and hunted caribou and other animals that thrived in the cold, moist ecosystem of the glacial rim. About the time of the birth of Christ, a large community of Indians in southern Wisconsin traded with another Indian culture in northern Wisconsin for copper tools and goods.⁸ These and other Indian cultures came and disappeared. In latter part of the seventeenth century, Ojibwa immigrated from the mouth of the St. Lawrence to the east and began fighting for control of the Wisconsin area with the resident Sioux. Eventually, the Ojibwa (also Ojibway or Ojibwe) became the dominant tribe in northern Wisconsin, but flare-ups and fighting with the Sioux continued as late as 1862.⁹ The Ojibwa are also commonly referred to as

⁷ Premo Dean, and Kent Premo. 2009. Lake Alice Stewardships Program: Phase 1. pgs. 19-20 Describes the type of soil around Lake Alice as being only Type A (sandy types) and Type B (loam).

⁸ Mizaga, Vicki. 1988. The First 100 Years. Don Walker. pg.12 The climax of copper manufacturing in northern Wisconsin was from 200 B.C to A.D. 700 B.C. the southern Indian culture had collapsed.

⁹American Guide Series. 1941. Wisconsin. Hastings House. pgs. 26-31. In 1634, there was only one tribe of Algonquian stock residing in Wisconsin, the Menominee, who still reside west of Green Bay. Other branches of the Algonquian people, the Ojibwa, Ottawa and Potawatomie, were forced west into Wisconsin by the fierce Iroquois confederation. By 1654 Fox, Sauk, Miami, Huron and Kickapoo

the Chippewa, a European phonetic corruption of their name.¹⁰ Different communities of Ojibwa were identified with specific names, such Lac du Flambeau and Lac Coutre Oreilles. The Ojibwa are by far the largest tribal group in Wisconsin today.

The French were the first Europeans to set foot in Wisconsin. Jean Nicolet was sent in 1634 to find an easy waterway leading to Pacific Ocean and trade with China and India. Nicolet did not find the fabled passage, but did open up the exploration of a new land and contact with its inhabitants.

In 1660, Father Rene Menard, the first missionary in Wisconsin, was paddling down the upper portion of the Wisconsin River, when he elected to walk around a portage, while his companion took their small craft through the water. Father Menard never emerged from the woods and was never seen again. His cassock and kettle were later found in a Sioux lodge and it is probable that he was murdered.¹¹ Appropriately, an island accessible from Lake Alice by going under the Highway A Bridge and up the Wisconsin River has been renamed Menard's Island.

The French interest in Wisconsin may have started with hope of a northwest passage to the orient or a desire to do missionary among the Indians, but it soon focused on a more profitable venture, the fur trade. Although pelts from animals, such as the black bear and martins, commanded the best price, it was the numerous beaver and their pelts used to make fur hats was the bulk and back-bone of the fur trade. The fur trade brought European goods into the north woods. It also resulted in unions between the French traders and Indians. French surnames are not unusual among the Ojibwa.¹²

fled into Wisconsin too. There was immediate enmity between them and the resident Siouan tribes: Dakota, Iowa and Winnebago.

¹⁰ Mizaga, Vicki. 1998. *The First 100 Years*...pg. 4 The Ojibwa originally called themselves the *Anishinaabe*, meaning "Human Beings" or "The People." Ojibwa means "puckered" and refers to how the tops of their moccasins were stitched.

¹¹ American Guide Series. 1941. Wisconsin. Pg. 2, 31

¹² Jones, George O. .*History of Lincoln, Oneida and Vilas Counties Wisconsin*. 1924. H.C. Cooper, JR. & CO. pgs.6-8.French were not accepted by every Indian tribe. The fierce Fox, and their confederates, the Sauk, Mascouten and Kickapoo, waged war against the French for thirty years in Wisconsin until 1740, and their hostility blocked the French from exploiting the Fox-Wisconsin waterway. In close proximity, the Fox River accessed the Great Lakes, while the Wisconsin flowed into the Mississippi River so this area was of great strategic importance. The French and Indian war, began in1754 and ended in 1763, gave England control of Canada and the Northwest territory. French *voyageurs* and *coureurs de bois* were employed by the British and traded with the superior British

By the mid 1800's, the beaver population in northern Wisconsin was pretty well decimated and beaver hats went out of fashion in Europe.¹³ A few independent traders and posts remained, but northern Wisconsin was basically deserted until after the Civil War and the start of the lumber industry in late 1800's. The Ojibwa, who had become dependent of trade goods had to fend for themselves. There were a series of treaties with the American government, that promised provisions and annual payments, but these commitments were often not kept.¹⁴

The Treaty of 1854 established Ojibwa reservations in Wisconsin. But into the 1880's, scattered Indian settlements were found off reservation. There are accounts from this time of large bands of a hundred or more Indians riding into Tomahawk on horses to set up camp. Chee-kee-gwa, or Indian Pete, was well known personality and Ojibwa leader. Until his death 1905 at his cabin seven miles north of the city, Indian Pete led large processions of Indians into Tomahawk on the 4th of July. The town residents enjoyed watching the Indians staging pow-wows with drums and dancing along the river.¹⁵ The current 4th of July celebration in Tomahawk is called Pow-Wow Days, recalling a time when Indian drums reverberated through the town and across the water.

Over a hundred years after the signing, the terms of the Wisconsin Indian treaties were still under contention. In 1983, the courts determined how Indian treaty rights to hunt, fish and gather off reservation on the lands ceded by the tribes in the original treaties were to be implemented. Although created well after the original treaties,

goods. French remained the European language of the Wisconsin woods. In 1763, Pontiac, an Ottawa chief, united the tribes between the Allegheny Mountains and the Mississippi in a revolt lasting three years. For the most part, Wisconsin tribes refused to participate in the uprising.

¹³ Jones, George. History of Lincoln...pg. 7. The yearly harvest of Wisconsin fur amounted to 500 to 600 packs, valued at a quarter of million dollars, but the dishonesty of payment and poor quality goods from the French caused trouble with tribes like the Fox and their allies.

¹⁴American Guide Series. 1941. Wisconsin .pg. 32-34 The British ceded the northwest to America in 1783, but the British maintained their control over the tribes in Wisconsin and American influence was nominal. In the War of 1812, Scotch/British fur traders, voyageurs and Indians captured American out posts Mackinac and Prairie du Chien. By 1816, American authority was established and the British trade monopoly was broken. American settlement moved in aggressively. Grievances between Indians and white settlers climaxed in the tragic Black Hawk War of 1832 which ended Indian resistance of white expansion into Wisconsin. Thereafter the tribes ceded to the United States much of their land. Between 1825 and 1837, many Indian tribes were relocated west of the Mississippi. By 1856, Indian title to Wisconsin lands covered only a few reservations.

¹⁵ The Tomahawk Area Historical Society. Remembering Yesterday. pgs. 9-10, 20, 54, 56.

Lake Alice is in the ceded territory and subject to all the ramifications of Lac Courte Oreilles vs. Keist.

ENTERPRIZE IN THE PINES

The Forks, at the confluence of the Tomahawk, Somo and Wisconsin Rivers, was an attractive site at which Indians visited and camped. In 1858, Germaine Bouchard operated a ferry and tavern where the Tomahawk and Somo Rivers ran into the Wisconsin. Fur traders and Indians frequented Bouchard's outpost, which was called Tomahawk because the shape of a near-by lake resembled an axe blade.¹⁶ This was the extent of the habitation, until the arrival of the Tomahawk Land and Boom Company that was organized by William H. Bradley in 1881. In the spring of 1886, the city of Tomahawk was surveyed and laid out with its lots up for sale in Milwaukee in 1887. The **Lincoln County Advocate** noted in its July 16, 1887 edition:

It is a clearing in the woods, an opening in the heart of the great pinery, 25 miles due north of Merrill. The great jumping off place; it is on the Wisconsin River, away up where the logs come from – where the raging Tomahawk River comes cutting and scalping its way through the rough hard pan, eagerly scampering to join the waters of the “old Wisconsin” previous to their break neck plunge down the confined falls of the Grandfather Bull...northern Wisconsin is “pointing with pride” to the remarkable career of Tomahawk.

Tomahawk became a bustling town, a startling and remarkable overnight achievement, due to the vision and drive of W. H. Bradley. This lumber baron saw the Somo, Spirit, Tomahawk and Wisconsin Rivers as highways for massive flotillas of logs to be carried down to hungry sawmills. At conflux of these rivers, he could build not just a town, but an empire.

William H. Bradley was born in Bangor, Maine, in 1838, and was a teenager when he came west with his father to find their fortunes in the vast stands of lumber in Michigan and Wisconsin. When he arrived in Tomahawk 1887, “Colonel” William Bradley was already very

¹⁶ American Guide Series. 1941 Wisconsin. Pg. 379

successful businessman. A large, imposing man, he was called “Big Bill” by his mill workers. He had a long gray beard that gave him a patriarchal look. Impeccably groomed, he usually wore gray suits and always had a black cane topped with a gold handle in hand.

The Bradley Bank was started by William H. and, his brother, James W. Bradley in a small wooden building when Tomahawk was little more than a clearing in the woods. The first officers were: J.W. Bradley, president; Robert B Tweedy, vice president; and John W. Frohlich, cashier.¹⁷

Robert B. Tweedy was the son-in-law of the third Bradley brother, Edward Bradley.¹⁸ As the Bradley enterprises grew rapidly to include mills, a large box factory, tannery, electric generating dams, farms, grist mill, mercantile stores, the elegant Mitchell Hotel and other concerns, R.B Tweedy took on increasing responsibilities in the management of the Bradley interests, which would lead him to having a major role in the creation of Lake Alice.

UP RIVER AT A PLACE CALLED KING’S

While “Big Bill” was conducting business or entertaining guests in the posh, luxurious amenities of the Mitchell Hotel in Tomahawk, Lisum King and his wife operated a rustic station, three miles east on the Wisconsin River where an old military road, running north to Eagle River, crossed the river by a ford.¹⁹ Their clientele consisted lumberjacks, log drivers and “river rats,” who stopped here to sort out the logs that they had floated down the river, and travelers, arriving with wet feet after wading across the river. Both enjoyed Mrs. King’s warm food and lodging, if they needed it.

¹⁷ Jones, George O. History of Lincoln, Oneida and Vilas Counties Wisconsin.....pg

¹⁸ Of the three Bradley brothers, William was the only one to spend any significant time in Tomahawk.

¹⁹While W.H. Bradley was the quintessential Yankee entrepreneur, the Kings were of French Canadian and Indian descent. This racial combination is some times referred to as Métis, meaning mixed in French. Originally used in Manitoba, Canada referring to a people of French and Cree Indian extraction, who rebelled in 1869-70, when they were systematically pushed off their land, and forced into to Saskatchewan, where they again revolted in the Northwest Rebellion of 1885. Today many people of partial Indian ancestry in Canada and the northern parts of bordering American states, such as Wisconsin and Minnesota, refer to themselves as Métis.

Lisum and his brother, Charlie King, worked as log drivers and were known for their ability to break up log jams.²⁰ It is hard to imagine how dangerous the work was in the mills, logging camps and, certainly, on the rivers at this time. While guiding huge log flotillas down river, men became suddenly trapped and were crushed, when they crossed, jammed logs unexpectedly shifted. Some were never found, others appeared floating down stream and a few stayed hidden to emerge when the ice broke up following spring. A popular ballad of the time, lamenting the loss of a young log driver, poignantly asks if anyone knows where their loved one was laid to rest for when a body was found, sometimes it was just buried unmarked “on the spot” and the river drive continued.

Charlie King, somewhat of a recluse, lived in a small, sparsely furnished log shanty that was a couple miles east of Lisum’s inn. A typical lumberjack, he would work in the woods or on the river, get paid and then hike into town, where most of his hard earned wages was spent in the taverns. Both King brothers avoided the hazards of their work and lived long lives. Lisum died in 1929 at the age of seventy. Charlie was a well recognized figure around town for many years who died at ninety years (or more) in 1954.²¹

When a dam was built over the ford by Lisum’s inn, unlike the lake it created, there was no doubt what to name it. That particular place had been so identified with the family for so long, it was called King’s Dam. The road, between the dam and town, undoubtedly the same trail Charlie trekked into Tomahawk for so many years on, was appropriately called King’s Road. Along King’s Road is Squaw Point where Chee-kee-gwa’s, Indian Joe’s, wife is believed to be buried.

Today, the water is too swift and dangerous to ford below the dam. A portage has been installed around King’s Dam to allow canoe and kayak enthusiasts to continue on down the river. As they carry their crafts around the dam to head down river into Tomahawk, it is a reminder of a time when this particular stretch of the river was active with log drives, settlers and travelers passing back and forth and stopping over at a place called King’s.²²

²⁰The Tomahawk Area Historical Society. Remembering Yesterday.....pg.73

²¹ Remembering Yesterday...pg.73

²² **LINCOLN COUNTY OUTDOOR RECREATIONAL PLAN** notes that while the number of residents that canoe or kayak is much less than those power boating, canoeing and kayaking

DAMMING CREATES OPPORTUNITY AND A LAKE

In its heyday, the annual cut of Tomahawk was between sixty to seventy-five million board feet of lumber and some 25 million shingles. The stands of old white pine were harvested until today there are very few virgin stands of pine in northern Wisconsin.²³ Pulp and paper production was seen at that time as a way to diversify. Upon W.H. Bradley's death in 1902, Robert B. Tweedy took over management of the Bradley holdings.²⁴ Just as Bradley, Tweedy built, sold and bought a number of businesses and was a dynamic force in the area's economy. In 1909, the Bradley Company under Tweedy's guidance began construction the King's Dam.²⁵

Newspaper articles from **The Tomahawk** communicate the excitement and anticipation of the dam and new mill.²⁶

participants are the fastest growing having increased by 413.7%. From on line, **Wisconsin River Centennial Trail: Rhinelander to King's Dam** notes for kayakers:: Miles 080 – 082 (eighty miles from the headwater of the Wisconsin River) Rhinelander to USH 8; miles 082-087 USH 8 to Hat Rapids (attractive); miles 087-091 Hat Rapids to Whirlpool Rapids(natural, scenic riffles, Class II rapids, then minor rapids); miles 091-099 Whirlpool Rapids to County A Bridge (fast water ends at Menards Island); miles 099-104 County A Bridge to Kings Dam (heavy boating & challenging west winds. The County A Bridge is where Lake Alice is considered to begin.

²³ White pine has a lifespan much longer than most trees. The white pine would grow to towering heights over 100 feet and their crowns would shade out competition, as well cause their sun starved side branches to fall off, producing tall straight trunks. Storms, drought, ice, fire, insects and diseases punched out holes in the pinery, allowing for a more diverse forest. Some of the white pine taken cut by loggers in the 1800's was over 400 years old. Pine floats very well and vast amounts were moved over the area's rivers. Most of the larger pine tree today date from the 1800's and are 90 to 100 years old.

The harvesting of the pinery allowed for a more diverse & colorful forest, as well as causing the white tailed deer population to grow immensely, according to Robert Willging, author of **On the Hunt: the History of Hunting in Wisconsin**, during a reception on Sept. 28, 2009 at the Tomahawk Library.

²⁴ On his death, W.H. Bradley had been a generous benefactor giving the schools, parks, churches, newspaper and hospital of Tomahawk a splendid start.

²⁵ Jones, George, 1924. History of Lincoln...pg. 79 Notes that the dam was build by the Bradley Company in 1909 or 1910, while the newspaper article says the dam is nearing completion in 1911. What was to be Lake Alice had been created in 1910, as the dam construction proceeded and the river was blocked and backed up.

²⁶ Jones, George. 1924. History of Lincoln... pgs. 71-72. Tomahawk has had a number of newspapers, including the **Tomahawk Blade**, **The Tomahawk** (1887) and the **Tomahawk Leader**, which published its first issue July 4, 1896. The present **Tomahawk Leader** carries on the tradition of its predecessors and is an excellent weekly newspaper.

The Tomahawk, Nov. 12, 1910:

THE TOMAHAWK is authoritatively informed that the power of the King dam, built by the Bradley Company, will be utilized to drive electric generators which will furnish electrical power...for a pulp mill and a paper mill The new dam will furnish 3,200 horsepower. The mills will be substantially built and the new manufacturing plants will be factors in the furthering the advancement of Tomahawk and development of this part of the country. The dam was built by the Bradley Company, another institution, which is and has been a potent factor in the developing the resources of northern Wisconsin.

The Tomahawk, Feb. 18, 1911 :

MUCH ACTIVITY AT NEW DAM

Pulp Mill Will Be The Most Modern On The River Dam Will Also Supply Power For Pulp Mill A trip to the new King Dam two miles east of the city will convince one that something is doing... which means a a whole lot in furthering the advancement and development of the city of Tomahawk and Lincoln County.²⁷ The dam which is conceded to be one of the best and most substantial on the river is about completed, and the and the construction of the new pulp mill is well under way.

These articles show that there was legitimate concern that the boom and growth that Tomahawk enjoyed would evaporate when the timber was exhausted.

The Tomahawk, April 8, 1911:

***TOMAHAWK'S PULP AND PAPER
MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES BUSY***

While Tomahawk is known as a lumbering town and there is still an abundance of raw material. Tomahawk is at present a paper manufacturing town... In the early days many were of the opinion that the lumber would soon be

²⁷ Jones, George. 1924. History of Lincoln... pg. 2. Lincoln County was erected from Marathon County under chapter 128 of the Laws of 1874.

Lincoln County Outdoor Recreational Plan notes: Lincoln County is 584,960 acres, with 15,000 acres in water. 16 townships; 2 cities, Tomahawk in the north and Merrill in the south...

gone and the town... would decrease in population... the Tomahawk Pulp & Paper Company's²⁸ are at the present Tomahawk's most substantial business enterprise.... the new Pulp mill at King dam will be put into operation in about two weeks... the grinder room... is provided with four water wheels, one is 500 horse power and three of 950 horse power. There are six grinders of the latest type... There is at present About 1500 cords of barked spruce bolts ready for the grinders... The importance of the paper industry in Tomahawk should not be under estimated.²⁹

A LAKE NAMED ALICE

The building of King's Dam and the expansion of the pulp industry was so greatly valued that the lake created by the King's Dam was almost given the appropriate name, if not too attractive name, of Pulp Lake. The first trip from the King's Dam up the impounded Wisconsin River was noted in **The Tomahawk**, July 29, 1911:

*The first motor boat trip made up the Wisconsin was enjoyed last Wednesday, by Messrs. A.G. Schutte, H.J. Taylor and and Frank Theiler. They went as far as Nigger Island³⁰ ... the water is clear as a mirror, and there is no difficulty in following difficulty in following the channel... It has been has been suggested to name this picturesque body of water Pulp Lake. **THE TOMAHAWK** would be pleased to receive other suggestions.*

The newspaper received many suggestions, but was captivated by one charming account. Robert B. Tweedy, the director of the Bradley

²⁸ Tomahawk Pulp and Paper Co was built by Anson M. Pride. After 1916, run by Charles B. Pride.

²⁹ Besides the dam & mill, a spur railroad was built to service the facility. Remnants of the old line can be seen in aerial photographs as a line cutting across the bay behind Pine Island southeast of the dam.

³⁰ Jones, George O. 1924, History of Lincoln... pg. 80. This offensive name was later referred to and mapped as Negro Island. The name is attributed to black rocks on the island. Folklore has this being an under ground railroad stop, but that is unlikely. Today, it has been renamed **Menards Island**. It is a local landmark, denoting how far motorized craft ascend up the Wisconsin River from Lake Alice. For kayakers, **Menards Island** is where the fast water ends. It is an appropriate setting to recall how Father Menard was lost, while descending the Wisconsin in the 1600's.

business interests, that built the King's Dam, married Edna Bradley, the niece of W.H. Bradley, in Milwaukee in 1891. Their three daughters visited and fished as the new dam was being completed in 1910. They made a tremendous impression on the men working there.

The Tomahawk, August 12, 1911:

LAKE ALICE

*Many names have been suggested for the name of Tomahawk's new lake above the King Dam, but the name which meets with the approval of a great majority of those interested in naming this beautiful sheet of water is **Lake Alice**. This name was suggested by a number of men who worked on the construction of the new dam and this is the reason for making their suggestion:*

One day last summer the Misses Alice, Dorothy and Laura Tweedy after watching the men at work for a time decided to try their luck fishing. Miss Alice had a place above the dam as her fishing place, while the other young ladies fished below the dam. Miss Alice was favored with the best luck and when the other two young ladies discovered this one of them said: "Let's go fish Alice's Lake." The workmen heard this and from then on, many of the men referred to the water above the dam as Lake Alice.

So here's all kinds of good luck to Alice while fishing at Lake Alice in the future and may the lake always remain as beautiful as it is at the present time.³¹

Lake Alice has retained its beauty. Public access for fishing from shore on the King's Dam property allows current anglers to enjoy a day of fishing, just as Alice and her sisters did a hundred years ago.

Less than a month after the first boat trip up Lake Alice and the Wisconsin River, there were numerous sightseers and fisherman boating

³¹ This article, as well as the others cited here from **The Tomahawk**, were found by our fellow Lake Alice Association board members, **Andrea and Hank Michaud**, who located them after viewing page after page of old newspapers at the Tomahawk Public Library. Thanks to their patience, we know not just how Lake Alice got its name, but the excitement of the building of the dam and how early travelers on the lake were impressed by its beauty.

on Lake Alice. The fisherman were interested reaching previous hard to get to the trout streams, as such Spring Creek and Trout Creek, that run into the Wisconsin and Pine Creek, that merges with the stream fed Green Meadow Lake to form the Pine Creek Flowage part of Lake Alice.

The Tomahawk, Aug. 26, 1911:

Lake Alice above the King dam is attracting much attention among sportsmen and pleasure seekers. There is no channel in this new lake. It is all channel. But just now the numerous motor boat owners are interested in finding the outlet of the various streams that empty into Lake Alice. Although a motor boat ride up the Somo river is delightful and the scenery picturesque, it is the opinion of many that Lake Alice surpasses the Somo river in this respect.

THE ALLURE OF ALICE

Although a man-made phenomena, Lake Alice has all the charm and allure expected of a north woods lake. An early description of the northern Wisconsin lake region could just as well describe early Lake Alice, when it says: "...it is not its geographical or geological importance that has made it famous, but its irresistible appeal to the tourist, sportsman, health seeker, and the lover of the beautiful in nature."³² It is beyond all things a paradise of the fisherman...The fishing season is long, beginning early in the spring and lasting well into the fall. Trout abound...unexcelled bass fishing, with plenty of pickerel and perch. The muskellunge, or "muskie," is plentiful... there is plenty of tackle to be had, with bait for every sort of fish, together with canoes, boats and camping outfits... Also there are experienced guides and congenial to be had for trips... Yet the tourist who loves to get close to nature has no

³² D.N.R. 2000. Willow Flowage Scenic Watters Area Master Plan Draft . pgs. 86. Notes that: the region was a pinery and contained a rich mixture of white, red and jack pine prior to European settlement. Much of the region still contains abundant pine, however, aspen and paper birch increased substantially early in this century following the harvesting of the pine...The northern third of Wisconsin is part of a large eco-region called the Laurentian Mixed Forest.. The regions forest is about 25% aspen and white birch, 30% northern hardwood, 25% forested wetland and 20% pine... The region has 350 species of terrestrial vertebrates,30 species of major trees and 1,200 plant species.

need to “rough it”...the hospitable log cabin or more awaits him at the end of his daily trips.”³³

Lake Alice became a much visited lake with active seasonal cottages, resort cabins and tourist sites lining its shoreline. It was a special place where many came to have their “up north” experience. Because of this heavy and democratic use, Lake Alice was referred in town as the “poor-man’s Nokomis.” Some of these resorts, such as the Red Arrow and Weegies are no longer in existence and many of the seasonal cottages have become condos or converted into year-round homes and north woods getaways. [See Sidebar at end of this document, p33 for a personal account.]

As a popular tourist destination, Lake Alice was an important resource and attraction, that helped support the local economy through tough times. In the 1940’s, **WISCONSIN A Guide to the Badger State** described Tomahawk and the area around it as “Paper and pulp , furs and farming keep the city alive through the winter; in the summer it earns what it can from selling fishing tackle and bait, groceries, gasoline and bathing suits to the... tourists hurrying northward... By 1890...the mill hands, trades people, industrialists, and railroad were all making money. But the boom collapsed as suddenly as it began. With timber exhausted, the sawmills closed, then the paper and pulp mills: only one continues to operate, working sporadically.”³⁴

Presently, Tomahawk is fortunate to have large employers, such as Harley Davidson (400 employees), Packaging Corporation of America Mill (450 employees), Daigle Brothers, and a host of other businesses, that are great corporate citizens, sponsoring many community events, enriching our town’s quality of life. There is an excellent blend between industry and tourism that gives the local economy balance and diversification.

Lake Alice still has its charms and mystique for today’s visitor, as well as accommodations at Pine Pointe Resort, Zipp Inn, Lueth Landing and the Surewood Forest Campgrounds. Out door columnist, Jeff Lampe, in an article about fishing Lake Alice for his Illinois audience, noted that

³³ Jones, George O. 1924. History of Lincoln...pg 15

³⁴ American Guide Series. 1941. WISCONSIN A Guide To the Badger State. pg. 379

the appeal of northern Wisconsin is more than catching fish, that there is something transformational and therapeutic of being on a lake enclosed by pines and birch, with eagles over head and returning each night to the camaraderie around a bonfire and recalling the day's adventures.³⁵ He also lamented the fact that this "up north" experience is becoming harder to come by as the resorts that once lined Lake Alice are disappearing, as more of them are converted into year around homes or condos.³⁶

There is a real concern about the impact of increased development on the lake's shoreline and if it will threaten vulnerable, fragile ecosystems, such as shallow bay areas. A proposed condo development in the Edgewater Golf Course Bay included plans to dredge a shallow bay for a marina. This project was abandoned and critical spawning areas were spared damage. Lake Alice Association President Glen Mott,³⁷ defined the Lake Association's position as "encouraging responsible development, but discouraging ill conceived projects that threaten fragile areas." Also, there is a strong desire to preserve the large islands and island clusters on Lake Alice as they are with minimal development. The Lake Association investigated purchasing the fifty-four acre Krull Island to preserve its unique ecological and aesthetic values.

A FISHERY TO SAFEGUARD

Because of its large shallow, stump-filled bays, Lake Alice has been a good fishery since its creation. Its natural reproduction was enhanced by stocking in 1938, when some 3,000 adult bluegills, 3,000 adult crappie and 50,000 walleye fingerlings were introduced. Stocking abruptly stopped in 1969, because fish had high levels of mercury. Lake Alice

³⁵ NCRPC 2006. LINCOLN COUNTY RECREATIONAL PLAN 2007-2011. pgs 85 The area's weather is described as: climate continental type - summers warm, but not excessively hot with cool and comfortable nights - Winter long, cold, snowy - Mean annual precipitation 32 inches - Snow cover on ground & ice on lake December - April, -growing season frost free 124 days May 22 - Sept 23 - Prevailing winds NW in fall through Spring from South remainder of the year - Wind spend 4-15j mph -Winter conducive to snowmobling & cross country skiing due to long duration of snow - Summer camping, fishing

³⁶ Lampe, Jeff.. September 24, 2006. **Journal Star**. pg. D12.

³⁷**Glen Mott, LLA President**, is the LAA's main spokesman. His drive, energy and persistence pushed needed reforms to protect Lake Alice through the system. More than an orator, Glen has made numerous wood duck nesting boxes for the lake and his welding skills have helped lake residents with many problems, like a broken log crib(Thanks!). **Glen is the LLA's best contact on any question concerning the LAA and its position on any issue Lake Alice (715-453-7378).**

waters were polluted and degraded by the effects of paper mill and industrial pollution coming down river from Rhinelander.

Fishermen on Lake Alice even commented on fish they caught in the Pine Creek section of the lake, that was fed by trout streams, as tasting fine, but those caught from the Wisconsin River to the dam, as having a terrible odor and taste when cooked. The Clean Water Act of 1978 instituted the regulations and enforcement, that were needed to clean up the system. Today, Alice has healthy water and is a great fishery.

In 1983, walleye stocking started again and continued until 2000. Over 400,000 walleyes were introduced in this period. After 2000, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) became reluctant to stock Lake Alice because it might introduce disease, exotic species or lead to the gene pool becoming tainted and weakened.³⁸

The WDNR wants Lake Alice managed as a self-sustaining system. This recognizes the current fishery as being very good and capable of maintaining its current healthy populations levels of fish if managed properly. The goal would be a balanced community of predator and prey species so that muskellunge, northern pike, bass and pan fish would all flourish. The management would utilize creel limits, size limits and fishing season dates to achieve this goal.³⁹

If there is not to be any stocking and supplementing the natural fish populations in the future, the importance of having the correct regulations for the lake is essential. The wrong regulations would slowly, but progressively degrade the system, causing long-term harm to the fishery.

Recognizing the seriousness of this challenge, the Lake Alice Association⁴⁰ entered into a series of open meeting with local and regional Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Conservation Congress representatives and concerned citizens about the resource

³⁸ Dean, Premo, and Kent Premo...pg 27

³⁹ Premo, Dean, and Kent Premo. 2009...pg. 28

⁴⁰ The Lake Alice Association was organized in 1999 and incorporated under Chapter 181 Wisconsin Statutes in 2000. The Association exists for the benefit of the general public. The purpose of the Association is to protect, preserve and improve the integrity of Lake Alice and its ecosystems through education of and communication between concerned citizens.

management of Lake Alice. In a series of open meetings, information was shared. With “everything on the table,” issues, such as slot sizes for walleyes, comprehensive fish surveys and fishing seasons, were all discussed in depth.

In the January, 2008 issue of the **Lake Alice Association Newsletter**⁴¹, Neal Pietenpol⁴² summarized the conclusions of these meetings and the actions that all the participants agreed were necessary to maintain lake Alice as “one of the better fisheries:”⁴³

DNR Rule Change and Proposal for Lake Alice at the April of 2008 Spring Hearing. As you remember, we were working on a rule change for a slot size on Walleye as well a proposal for the regular season (not year round) for game fish on the Wisconsin River from Rhinelander down through Lake Alice. both were forwarded to the DNR statewide review team for consideration.

The proposal for a regular Wisconsin inland season, 1st Saturday In May to the first Saturday in March for game fish and 0 bag, catch and release for Bass until the 3rd Saturday in June from Rhinelander Dam to Kings Dam passed and will be voted on at the Spring Hearings.

The slot size proposal was 14” to 18” on Walleye with a 3 fish limit. You could have 2 fish under 14” and 1 over 18” or 3 fish 14” or under. This will be coming up now as a Conservation Congress resolution. Our committee will try to get it bumped up to a DNR rule change for 2009.

We feel the change to a regular season, like the rest of the state will help our fishery the most. This will eliminate the tremendous amount of fishing pressure on a small section of the Wisconsin

⁴¹ **Lake Alice Association Newsletter** is edited by **Michael** and **Kris Toelle**, whose efforts have made it a quality publication, that has done a great job in communicating LAA concerns, its positions on issues and has enhanced the image of the LAA in the community it serves..

⁴² **Neal Pietenpol** is a LAA board member, committee head, past Conservation Congress representative, who has had a life time interest in the improvement and enhancement of the of quality fishing and hunting experience in Wisconsin. Always willing to share his opinion and wisdom (as well his waders), he is an excellent contact on conservation issues (715-612-6302).

⁴³ Dave Seibel, fish biologist quoted in Premo, Dean. and Kent Premo. 2009....pg.26

when the Walleye, Northern and Smallmouth Bass are spawning.

With the invasion of Invasive Aquatic Species, VHS, Shore land Development, and change in water quality, we should at least try to preserve our fishery so that the next generation can enjoy the wonderful recreation opportunities on Lake Alice and the Wisconsin River...

We are getting excellent cooperation and guidance from the DNR Fishery specialist Steven Avellemant of Rhinelander, John Kubisak, who is the DNR biologist from Rhinelander, and Dave Seibel who is the fish biologist out of Antigo....

This documents the high degree of involvement of both the LAA, Conservation Congress members, and WDNR in crafting the final proposal for the vote at the Spring Hearings. In a later conference, LAA was informed that after review by the WDNR at state level, the slot limit proposal needed further study and “more biology.” This additional information would be acquired in Lake Alice’s next lake survey. But as fish biologist Dave Seibel commented: “The WDNR tends to survey Lake Alice fish populations fairly infrequently (it is a large and expensive undertaking). Surveys were conducted in 1977, 1982 and 2003. It will be ten or twelve years before another one is done on Lake Alice.”⁴⁴

Always a well-known and a much-used fishing lake, the recent years of drought has made Lake Alice the focus of even greater fishing and recreational pressure. Many surrounding lakes and flowages experienced significant drops in water levels, while Lake Alice levels remained constant because of the King’s Dam being a hydroelectric generating facility and the water levels it requires.⁴⁵ Lake Alice’s constant water levels attracted boaters and fishermen that usually used other bodies of waters. Business shut downs and lay offs in Merrill and Rhinelander put more fishermen on the ice and Alice was covered with increasing

⁴⁴ Premo, Dean, and Kent Premo. 2009...pg. 28 Side note: WDNR did find the time and money to perform a fish survey from April 15- 30, 2009 on Lake Mohawksin.. The results of this Mohawksin survey and a future one for Lake Alice are part of the criteria cited to the LAA by the WDNR for determining regulation changes, such as slot limits.

⁴⁵ Premo, Dean, and Kent Premo. 2009...pg 14

numbers of shanties, that continued the heavy fishing pressure on the lake's fishery.

Lake Alice and the Wisconsin River upstream of the lake had for years a continuous fishing season. While other lakes were closed in the spring, Lake Alice was a magnet and focus of heavy pressure of the "spring run" that focused on harvesting spawning game fish. WDNR fish biologist, Dave Seibel, noted, that while "Some of the walleye population spawns in the lake...A good many walleyes travel from the lake up the Wisconsin River for spawning."⁴⁶

The river above Lake Alice is relatively narrow and confined. The management practices used on larger systems should not be considered applicable to this situation. Even the limit of walleyes allowed is significantly higher for the river above the HWY A Bridge than for the much larger lake. The continuous season made the lake's adult walleyes especially vulnerable to both legal and illegal exploitation, as they migrated up into the river.⁴⁷

Not surprisingly, a very few in a very short time were able to remove a lot of fish. Ironically, there were those who vehemently objected to the decision of *Lac Courte Oreilles vs. Keist*, because of a visceral aversion to the image of a large egg-laden fish being rendered helpless by a blinding light and then removed at the end of a spear before they even had a chance to procreate. What is the difference if a fish is speared off its spawning area or taken by hook & line?

The supporters of the easy up river "shooting fish in a barrel" harvest are at odds with sportsmen who believe that nature should be allowed to take its course, letting the fish population replenish each year without interruption and then allow these fish to return back to the lake so they can be sought after to the benefit of many more anglers, including the elderly and disabled, who can not brave the spring weather, as well as the vast majority of tourists, that contribute so much to the local economy.

⁴⁶ Premo, Dean, and Kent Premo .2009...pg. 28

⁴⁷Local wardens Rich Peters and Ron Nerva both supported the proposed change and its ability to stop illegal, over-harvest of fish on the Wisconsin River between Rhinelander and King's Dam during this time.

There is danger of becoming “walleye blind,” when considering the correct way to manage a fishery, and ignore other populations of fish, such as bass. The continuous season of Lake Alice created a loop-hole that allowed bass to be fished off their spawning beds. While bass in surrounding bodies of water were regulated and protected, unregistered bass tournaments descended on Lake Alice to take advantage of the aggressive instincts of the bass protecting their nests. When a male bass is removed from its spawning bed, the nest and its eggs are devastated within minutes by crayfish and panfish and the reproduction of that species can be severely affected.

Bass are fun to catch, easy to let go and give a lot of fight and excitement through out the fishing season. Beyond their recreational value, bass are an very important component in control of the rusty crayfish. An Invasive Species, an unchecked population of rusty crayfish, which are in Lake Alice, will decimate natural, native aquatic plants to the detriment of native fish, amphibian and bird populations. As fish biologist, Dave Seible noted: “Smallmouth bass and rock bass are important controllers of this AIS crayfish.”⁴⁸

There are some that rightly value bass as a great game fish, while others dismiss it as a “green carp,” in order to make their case for management practices favoring other species. Bass, as well as carp, have their own role in a healthy fishery. As fish biologist, Dave Seibel said: “Redhorse, suckers, and trout perch are also critical members of the fish community and must be present if the system is to be considered healthy.”⁴⁹

We can no longer afford the opinions of the ecologically ignorant and biased or allow their preferences for easy targets of spawning fish, like bass, to jeopardize our system by reducing a species that is an important biological control and allowing an AIS to run rampant. Protection of the bass population was an important consideration by the LAA in its efforts to make the regulations on Lake Alice and its portions of the Wisconsin River to be consistent with all the other inland waters in this part of the state, as well as the same as the entire Wisconsin River above.

⁴⁸ Premo, Dean, and Kent Premo. 2009...pg. 29

⁴⁹ Premo, Dean, and Kent Premo. 2009....pg 27

Sponsored by the LAA, the DNR rule change read:

Question: Open Season on Lake Alice, Hat Rapids Flowage and connecting portion of the Wisconsin River

Make open seasons on the portion of the Wisconsin River system from Rhinelander Paper Mill (St. Regis) Dam downstream to **Kings Dam**, including Hat Rapids Flowage and **Lake Alice** consistent with other inland waters in northern Wisconsin. This change would protect gamefish from harvest during spawning in March and April. This encompasses about 22 miles of the Wisconsin River system.

The angling season on this stretch of the Wisconsin River has been open continuously for largemouth bass, northern pike, and walleye since 1970 while all surrounding water are subject to the general inland open seasons for these species. At that time, the river was highly polluted, and closed seasons were not needed to protect fish that people either did not want to eat or couldn't safely eat. The Wisconsin River has undergone a dramatic restoration in response to cleanup mostly due to the passage of the Clean Water Act in 1972. It now supports improved populations of fish that are safe for human consumption. However, many anglers believe that high exploitation during spawning seasons when all surrounding waters are closed for gamefish is impacting abundance and size structure, especially of bass and walleye. The public voted in favor of a resolution to follow the same seasons as other inland waters in this part of the state by 78% and 71% margins at the 2007 Lincoln and Oneida spring hearings, respectively.

Question: Do you favor making the open season on the Wisconsin River system from Kings Dam (Lake Alice) upstream to the St. Regis Dam (Rhinelander Paper Mill) consistent with the general inland open season in northern Wisconsin? For largemouth bass, smallmouth bass, northern pike, and walleye, this would change the open season from continuous to the first Saturday in May through the first Sunday in March. In addition, the daily bag limit for largemouth and smallmouth bass would be 0 (catch and release only) from the first Saturday in May through the Friday before the third Saturday in June.

In Lincoln County, the Congress was held in the Tomahawk High School gym on April 14, 2008. There were speakers to both sides of the

issues. Glen Mott and Neal Pietenpol gave the most persuasive, concise arguments for the measure. After his father Phil Zipp spoke in favor of the Question, Greg Zipp, a well-known fish guide, stood to support the passage of the Question and said, “ You may not like it, but we all know what the RIGHT THING to do is.”

That night the right thing was done and vote in Lincoln County was 116 to 81 in favor of the Question. Of the 72 counties in Wisconsin, 68 voted in favor, 8 voted no (4 of these were decided by 3 or fewer votes) and one voted a tie. Of the counties, 88% voted in favor of passing the question. The state wide vote was even more dramatic: 2279 yes-1251 no. Later that year, the representatives of each county of the Conservation Congress voted and gave it even greater support, with some representatives, such Oneida County, voting in favor of the Question when their county vote had been no. At the Governor’s Board, the measure was presented for approval by the DNR and spoken for by Glen Mott, representing the LAA. It then moved on to the legislature and was approved.

February 20,2009, the DNR issued a news release, **New Regulation changes game fishing on the Wisconsin River between Rhinelander and Kings Dam**. From the headwaters of the Wisconsin River down to King’s Dam were properly governed by the same consistent regulations. After the King’s Dam, the river has a hodge-podge of different statutes. Finally, the spawning fish of Lake Alice and the vulnerable river flowing into it were protected just like all the other gamefish in surrounding waters and were no longer easy targets.

This material, the collective reasoning behind the needed reform, and an account of the whole process has been presented in some depth because there has been misinformation circulated in a persistent attempt to reverse this rule change. When listening to discussions about this topic, one can now determine what is being distorted and more importantly , which view best serves the long term interests of Lake Alice, its wildlife, fish and the many who use it recreationally. Persuasive arguments and distortions can be used to cloak rather selfish desires and a wanton so-long-as-I-get-mine-to-hell-with-everyone-else mentality.

A PLAN FOR LAKE ALICE

Steve Avelallemant, the Northern Region Fishing Specialist, was an effective coordinator throughout the whole rule change process. He let a lot of different opinions be expressed and yet kept a diverse group on track. This created a dynamic in which all participants felt comfortable. Kevin Gauthier, WDNR Water Resource Management Specialist, was also a key participant and the LAA felt very comfortable in getting his guidance on the need for and reasons why Lake Alice should develop comprehensive a lake plan.

The LAA board scheduled a meeting with Kevin Gauthier at the WDNR Rhinelander office. He concisely outlined the reasons why an association should pursue creating a lake plan and all the elements that the WDNR felt necessary in a successful lake plan. He emphasized that having such a plan in place would be of great value in getting assistance of the state and WDNR to address any issues or help fund any challenges the lake may have in the future.

Lake Mohawksin, just on the other side of King's Dam, as well as other area lakes, had become infested with the AIS, Eurasian Water-Milfoil. This invasive formed dense mats that had choked out native plants, reducing the habitat need by fish, wildlife and even made some areas unnavigable. Eventually, Mohawksin received grants totaling \$200,000 to address their infestation.⁵⁰ Usually introduced to a body of water by a boat trailers, an invasive, such Eurasian Water-Milfoil, could get a foothold in the shallow bays associated with the highly used boat launches on Lake Alice. If such an infestation was to occur, a lake plan would be of great value in applying for aid from the state in the form of grants to combat problems.

A lake plan is much more than a potential revenue stream. In its best form, a lake plan would **assess**: the fishery, aquatic habit, watershed and water quality; **describe**: land uses, habitat conditions and ecological relationships; and **identify**: water quality problems, sources of pollution, endangered areas, potential threats to habitat, fish and wildlife. This information would be tracked, evaluated, updated, revised and analyzed

⁵⁰ Buelow, Jed. Sept.15, 2009. "Mohawksin Friends look to double milfoil treatment". **Tomahawk Leader**. pg 7

to ultimately produce a strategy that will help **protect** and **enhance** the entire lake system. It would incorporate immediate yearly goals within the context of an adaptive management plan that would be implemented for decades.

The LAA board came out that meeting believing that Lake Alice needed and would benefit greatly from a comprehensive lake plan. The information and insights, that Kevin Gauthier had provided, made it very clear that LAA would need professional guidance to be successful. The application process to initiate the plan was complex and criteria based. If you submitted a plan that was incomplete, it would be passed over in a competitive process, as better conceived plans were accepted. Requirements in the plan, such as a point-intercept survey, which is an extensive rake survey and identification of aquatic plants at numerous GPS points across the lake, required expertise far beyond the abilities of the Association and its members.

LAA started interviewing firms that specialized in creating lake plans and already had experience in Wisconsin and the WDNR process. Surprisingly, one was little more than a chemical company that wanted a contract for expensive yearly treatments, basically offering strategic poisoning rather than strategic planning. Another firm, that was well used in the area, offered a substantive plan, but intended to execute it within a year. Quick results, but it meant that the grant applied for through the state would be for a very large sum, of which LAA be responsible for a co-pay of 25%. These proposals might have had more appeal if Lake Alice had an AIS threat for which immediate treatment was already decided upon as the course of action. The LAA board did not see in them the vision and long term commitment, that Kevin Gauthier had described.

The search for a firm to provide the professional guidance, that the LAA needed, led to a road trip to Amasa, a small town in Michigan's Upper Peninsula, to meet with Dean Premo, Ph.D., President of White Water Associates, Inc. The company was established in 1985, as an independent environmental laboratory and ecological consulting firm. Although lake planning was not its primary focus, there was no doubt that White Water Associates, Inc., and the family that guided it, was highly qualified and had needed the technical expertise.

Dr. Dean Premo, a Certified Senior Ecologist, is a nationally recognized expert in biodiversity and ecosystems, whose scientific leadership and consul had been sought by institutions, such as the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, National Wildlife Federation, Natural Research Council, college of Natural Science at Michigan State, Great Lake Indian Tribes and the Michigan Technological School of Forestry.

Kent Premo, M.S., a systems support scientist, is an outstanding technical editor and writer, whose skills at creating scientific and educational publications, would be a great benefit to any project like ours.

Dr. Bette Premo, the White Water Chief Executive Officer, was the principal scientist for water quality and aquatic ecosystem assessment related to FERC relicensing projects for major hydroelectric companies. She has extensive experience in writing and procuring grants for municipalities, schools, universities and corporations. In addition to her CEO duties, she manages the laboratory staff and consults on data quality control issues.

Recently, Kent Premo and Dr. Bette Premo helped our neighbor, Oneida County, develop a geographical information system (GIS) for its 1,200 lakes and then assisted Oneida in the classification and designation of these numerous 1,200 lakes for purposes of shoreland ecosystem management and zoning regulations.

Dr. Dean Premo discussed with members of the LAA the purpose of the lake plan, the application process and showed examples of publications and lake plans that White Water had done. The material was impressive in its contents, layout and design. More importantly, it contained the strategic focus and long-term perspective, that the LAA board was looking for in a lake plan. Dean quipped that Bette had to approve a taking on such a project and that she normally would only allow White Water to be involved in only one lake plan a year.

White Water, Inc. was contracted by the LAA and applied to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) for a large-scale lake management planning grant on January 1, 2009. The application was successful and the WDNR gave LAA a grant of \$10,000 to fund the plan's first year, from March of 2009 to March of 2010. This, along with

a generous grant of \$500 from the Tomahawk STAR Foundation, as well as \$2,500 from the Association's fund raising efforts, provided the start up capital needed to underwrite the project's first year was in place.

Initially, the focus would be on gathering and reviewing information, establishing a coalition of participants and producing the first iteration of an Adaptive Lake Management Plan. Dr. Premo said: "The plan will not be a cookbook telling you what to do next. Instead, it will change as findings are made and news issued arise." From the start, it was conceived as a dynamic entity, evolving and improving to fit the needs of the Lake Alice watershed with the long term goal establishing a stewardship, that would perpetuate a healthy Lake Alice and its surrounding ecosystem far into the future.⁵¹

White Water and Dr Dean Premo provided a vision to the Lake Alice Stewardship Program, that was broad, substantive and inclusive. They effectively utilized the resources of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the application of the WDNR Headwater Basin Integrated Management Plan (2202) to Lake Alice and have made the WDNR an valued shareholder in the process. They have identified organizations, such as the Lincoln County Land Information and Conservation Department, that will be important participants in the future. They were also instrumental in getting the Tomahawk High School as a partner.

Two science teachers of the Tomahawk High School (THS), Todd Fredrickson (an Environmental Science & Biology teacher) and Jen Pfannerstill (teacher of Advanced Placement Biology) were interested in a project that would engage themselves and their students in a real-world environmental project. In a meeting, White Water scientist Dr. Dean Premo, LAA board members and THS faculty discussed the prospects of a collaborative effort on the lake study and management planning for the Lake Alice watershed.

⁵¹ Premo, Dean, and Kent Premo. 2009..pg 18 " **In order to have a more practical sized watershed with which to work in the Lake Alice Stewardship program, we delineated a sub-watershed that extends from Kings Dam up to the point where Trout Creek enter the Wisconsin River...The Lake Alice sub-watershed is approximately seventy-four square miles (47,000 acres) and located entirely within Lincoln County, Wisconsin.**" This recognizes the interrelationship of Lake Alice and the navigable portion of the Wisconsin River above it.

LAA was already highly committed and eager to contribute to the plan. The project-based learning that THS students would participate in, would of great help and value. White Water would provide the expertise of their scientists and their immense experience of successfully implementing and coordinating such projects. The Lake Alice Stewardship Program became a collaborative effort, having a much greater impact, study and scale, than other lake plans that are little more than a documentation of good & bad plants and water clarity. It is a partnership, that has good synergy and the promise of great results.

In the fall of 2009, a field trip was organized on Lake Alice with members of the LAA providing pontoons to carry over forty THS students, their two teachers and Dr. Premo for a complete tour around the lake. The outing was much more than a sight seeing excursion, Dr. Premo assigned tasks for each boat, that would be combined to create a written and digital photographic record of the lake, delineating its shoreline and attributes. Specific activities, such as testing for water clarity, were documented as well.

The field trip was a great experience, especially for the LAA members. The participation of THS students and teachers infused the project with a new energy. It was great to be see a new generation getting involved in the issues of resource management, that many LAA members had devoted so much time and energy to. During the lunch at Pine Pointe after the outing, Bruce Oradei commented: “We want them to be aware that this will all be theirs some day. That our concerns now will be theirs in the future.”⁵²

IMMEDIATE AND FUTURE CHALLENGES

In the November, 2009 LAA monthly board meeting, the success of the THS outing was recapped. The agenda also included preparation of a detailed checklist for the upcoming *Alice in Winterland* fishery. This popular winter event, occurring in the second week of February, is the

⁵² **Bruce Oradei** is a LAA board member, past Town of King Supervisor, the Vice President of the Lincoln County Lakes and Rivers Association and a good rope man to have when a felling a tree. LAA was a participant in the forming of Lincoln County Lakes and Rivers Association and LAA board member, **Hank Michaud**, was its first V.P. Bruce’s comments were also used by Jed Below in the **Tomahawk Leader** in an article about the event.

LAA's primary fund raiser. The revenue that it generates is used to fund the lake plan, scholarships for THS students, the Association's news letters and all the other LAA activities. The status of our web site was also discussed.

Our old web site had crashed and never really recovered. Board member Mike Sigl had just coordinated the creation of a new site, www.lakealice.info, with a new web site manager. It was exciting to be back on line and be able to post current information and pictures of our events. The site could now evolve and become a major repository for the information collected through the lake plan process that anyone interested in Lake Alice could review. Hopefully, users will one day be able to access interesting related links, such as current community and fishing information, as well.

We also hope that this new web site will become a place where stories and reminisces about the Lake Alice experience can be posted. That it will document the community life of Lake Alice, in much the same way as the Tomahawk Area Historical Society's excellent publication, **Remembering Yesterday Memories of Tomahawk**, contains recollections from many contributors, whose individual stories create a very interesting a first hand, historic tableau.⁵³

There were two guest presentations, as well. Chris Hamerla, Lumberjack Aquatic Invasive Coordinator Lincoln, Langlade & Forest Co., brought a book that he had compiled with photographs of native aquatic plants and invasives, such as the Eurasian Water-Milfoil. He offered to let this be posted on our web sight.

Ben Niffenegger, Shoreland Protection Specialist for Lincoln County Planning & Zoning, also brought information that could be posted for the benefit of Association members, interested in rehabilitating and renewing their shorelines and properties with native, non-invasive plants.

⁵³ **Mike Sigl**, a board member, whose patient efforts have really brought the LAA into the electronic age, is the coordinator and filter through which all web site entries pass. We encourage any one who wants to contribute their Lake Alice experiences to submit them to Mike at gbfdcapt4b@yahoo.com. All submissions may subject to editing and LAA retains the privilege to reject any submission.

Both offered to give presentations at the Association's spring meeting, that occurs in June each year. Both also volunteered to tour the lake and offer their expertise and suggestions during the summer.

The information and expertise that Chris and Ben offered will help LAA begin fulfilling one of the 15 Actions (& Objectives & Outcomes) that White Water had developed for LAA to focus on.⁵⁴ In this case, increase the awareness of landowners and encourage good shoreline stewardship, that preserves or restores natural shorelines.

The Lake Alice Stewardship Program Phase 1 as sent Dr. Dean Premo was reviewed. **Part 8. Lake Alice Special Attributes**, that the LAA had contributed, was in this iteration and the **Lake Alice History** was the last segment needed from the LAA.⁵⁵

There was discussion concerning remarks made at a Lincoln County Lakes and Rivers Association meeting about removing water from Lake Alice. Lake Alice is a fairly shallow lake best described as an "impoundment." Its water level is controlled by the King's Dam (operated by Tomahawk Power and Pulp and controlled by the Wisconsin Valley Improvement Company (WVIC)).⁵⁶

The WVIC manages some 20 reservoirs in the Wisconsin River system through a license from the Federal Energy Regulation Commission (FERC), that was reissued in 1996. Since the King's Dam has continued to generate electricity, the FERC license agreement stipulates that the water level of Lake Alice be kept within certain parameters. This gives Lake Alice a constant water level, while surrounding reservoirs experience fluctuations.

⁵⁴ Premo, Dean, and Kent Premo. 2009...pgs. 48-51. Series of 15 Actions: 1) conduct temperature and dissolved oxygen profiles, 2) work closely with the WDNR to understand and manage the resource, 3) assess rusty cray fish presence, 4) amphibians survey, 5) have and maintain informational kiosks at landings, 5) point-intercept survey for aquatic plants, 6) periodic assessments of AIS, 7) implement WDNR water quality sampling, 8) pursue protection of Krull Island, 9) wetlands identification and mapping, 10) Aerial and digital photography documentation of shoreline, 11) monitor loon nesting success, 12) monitor bald eagle nesting and success, 13) educate and reward good shoreline stewardship, 14) field trips with THS and 15) update adaptive management plan, that will be implemented and the goals of the Lake Alice Stewardship Program..

⁵⁵ **Dave Barrows** started to compile and write the history in November of 2009.

⁵⁶ Premo, Dean, and Kent Premo. 2009...pg. 14

The drought-like conditions of the last three years is similar to those in 1910, when north woods had less than 19 inches of rain (normal precip is above 30). The impact of water level drops on tourism and WVIC management of the system was reviewed by the State Board of Forestry and WVIC was found to be acting in good faith. In 1913, water level limits were established. From this time, Lake Alice and the entire system have been managed accordingly.⁵⁷

Glen Mott, LAA President, said that the LAA will categorically oppose any proposition that proposes the modification of current regulations of the water levels of Lake Alice. It would violate licensing agreements that were supposed to be in effect for decades and management practices that WVIC had used for almost a century.

It is even doubtful that if any additional water was drained from Lake Alice that less water would be taken from other parts of the system. There is no doubt, that such fluctuations in Alice's water level would have a serve impact on several ecologically sensitive areas.

The valuable spawning and nesting habitats found in hundreds of acres in the, as noted by the WDNS fish biologist assigned to our lake, " the entire eastern bay (often known as the "Pine Creek Flowage," where Pine Creek enters the system) forms a crucial habitat complex. The northerly extending bay off King's Dam Reservoir zone of the lake (the Golf Course Bay) is also an important shallow, well-vegetated habitat."⁵⁸ If water levels are reduced, these vital areas, essential to the lake's health, maintenance and reproduction of fish, birds, invertebrates and mammals, will be devastated, even destroyed. The Wisconsin River portion of the system is even more vulnerable.

The Wisconsin River portion of the Lake Alice sub-ecosystem includes 12,094 acres of the Menard Island Area Recourse, which is managed by the WDNR. This is a relatively narrow and shallow river corridor of immense ecological and recreational value, that could be left high and dry if the water level of Lake Alice were lowered. It would be tragic if recently protected spawning fish, migrating up from the lake to this

⁵⁷ Miazga, Vicki. 1988. *The First 100 Years*...pg. 31

⁵⁸ Premo, Dean, and Kent Premo. 2009...pg. 28

portion of the river, as well as nesting loons, would now have their habitat destroyed by draining. It would be a devastating blow to tourism and the lake's economy, as well.

As long as the FERC license remains in effect and King's Dam continues to produce electricity, it is highly unlikely that there will be any change in the management of Lake Alice's water level. But the facility is a 100 years old and the up-keep and licensing process is very expensive. The LAA has to remain vigilant and react to any suggestion of excessive draining and be able vocalize the extensive, detrimental impact it would have.

The board members present also discussed and voted unanimously to send a delegation to the Warm Water Committee of the Conservation Congress, in December, to voice the Association's disapproval of a question before the committee, that asks the Congress to consider reversing its recent over whelming approval of protecting spawning fish Lake Alice and its portion of the Wisconsin River.

These are not all the items discussed that November night, but provide a good overview of the both the immediate and future focus of the LAA and its ongoing mission to protect, preserve and improve the integrity of Lake Alice through prudent management, education and communication. Years from now, the history of Lake Alice will hopefully be an account of how the LAA was successful in these endeavors. So that the sentiment expressed in **The Tomahawk** a hundred years ago will still ring true:

So here's all kinds of good luck to Alice while fishing at Lake Alice in the future and may the lake always remain as beautiful as it is at the present time.

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Sidebar: Memories of Lake Alice

A personal account by Jim Wunsch, Lake Alice Property Owner (2/25/2008)

I am originally a Marshfield man. Born in nearby Rozellville in 1938, my family moved to town when I was four. We started taking a vacation shortly after, and I will always remember loading up the 1930 Chevrolet and taking the 3.5 hour trip to Tomahawk and Pine Creek Resort on Lake Alice. This resort was on the eastern most end of the lake on what was then, old highway "D". My dad and uncles seined minnows from a small creek near Marshfield, and we transported them in an old milk can, which was mounted on the front bumper of the car. Sometimes when we went through Tomahawk, we would stop by the old Tourist Information Hut on main street and look at pictures of fish and get an ice cream cone.

Arriving at Pine Creek Resort was always exciting. The old cabins were indeed rustic with an icebox rather than a refrigerator. Ice harvested from Lake Alice in the winter was stored deep under sawdust in the icehouse, and it was from there that we retrieved the blocks as needed. We also stored the fish we caught in the icehouse, wrapping them in waxed paper and burying them deep in the sawdust and marking the spot with a stick.

And did we catch fish? The fishing was always great. The first year we were there a guy caught a northern that was so big they took a picture of it next to me, and it was longer than I was. We generally fished fairly close to the resort because outboard motors were pretty rare. The stumps across the lake were eight feet high back in those days and loaded with crappies and blue gills. There was no such thing as a spinning rod back then. You caught the majority of your fish on worms and minnows. The minnows we transported from Marshfield kept nicely all week in a screened live box in the lake, and the worms and night crawlers were kept in an apple crate covered with ferns and parked under the cabin where the icebox vent dripped cool water. Fishing was still always best in the morning or evening. Of course, when the kids were bedded down after dark, mom and dad could walk over to the bar and socialize with other adults.

Twenty years passed. I am then married with four young daughters and living in Sheboygan Falls, Wisconsin. We know the people who ran Al's Point Resort on Lake Alice. They are from Marshfield as well. We decide to vacation at one of their cabins in 1966. My parents and other siblings in my family joined us in the years that followed. And in 1968 my father Elmer found out Hal DeRoche was selling lake frontage from his Pine Creek Resort property. He was quick to buy the first lot from Hal (110 feet, \$2,500), and in 1969 my brothers and I helped him build a cabin on that property, which I own today. The cabin has undergone quite a transformation during the last 40 years: a garage, a boat shed, a pontoon shed, an adjoining back lot to burn brush and park vehicles, and some internal improvements as well. In late September of 1983 when the lake was drawn down 5.5 feet to repair Kings Dam, we built a fish crib just out from our pier. That crib is still there today and still a popular fishing spot on the lake.

The lake has changed too. In the mid 1990's, the 485 acre property directly across from our cabin, which was a tree farm owned by Ed Stiegerwald, was finally developed and 20 or more properties were sold with cabins quickly following. Virgin shoreline gone forever. Surely the fishing is not what it was. While it was very common to go out and catch 50 crappies or bluegills in the 1970's and 80's, it is a struggle now to catch a half dozen. Bass fishing with a surface bait was something I always enjoyed, but I don't even try anymore. It was hard to find an ice shanty on our end of the lake in those early years. Now it's like a city out there in some places. I surely wonder how the lake can be expected to produce enough fish for that kind of pressure. On the bright side, the northern fishing is still good, and there certainly are more walleye in the lake than there were years ago.

There was such a concern over the years with the development of larger boats and PWC's, but it seems to me to be offset by the pontoon boats. People are finding that a great way to enjoy the lake is from the comfortable seat of a quiet, slow-moving pontoon. There is no better way to enjoy a summer day in northern Wisconsin than to cruise around on a pontoon boat. And if you find yourself doing just that, and you happen to see my pontoon ("Rosebud") go by, wave and say hi. I'm the guy in the tan hat.



**Building a fish crib during the draw down
on Lake Alice -- September 1983.**