



# *TAINTER MENOMIN LAKE IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION, INC.*

July 8, 2013

Menomonie City Council,

Thank you for inviting Tainter Menomin Lake Improvement Association (TMLIA) to be part of the discussion regarding Wolske Bay at the special Menomonie City Council meeting scheduled for Monday, July 8 at 6:00pm. We first want to thank Mayor Knaack and the City Council for initiating this discussion about the impaired condition of Wolske Bay and for exploring options to mitigate one of the most extreme algal conditions in Lake Menomin, or for that matter in the region. The water condition of Wolske Bay is not only unsightly and generates repulsive odors for several months of the year, it poses a significant public health threat and an economic threat to our community.

On Monday, June 24, 2013 TMLIA hosted a tour of Lake Menomin for a Red Cedar River Basin study that included the Red Cedar River upstream to the Cedar Falls Dam. The tour was very revealing about the present conditions of the shoreland and water in and around Lake Menomin. On Friday, June 28, 2013 the association examined Wolske Bay and surrounding areas to get a more detailed account of factors that may be contributing to the extreme algal build-up, including blue-green algae (cyanobacteria) in Wolske Bay.

Based on recent examinations, research and collective knowledge, TMLIA offers these observations and recommendations to improve the long-term water quality in Wolske Bay and in Lake Menomin:

## **1. ELIMINATE STORM WATER DISCHARGE DIRECTLY INTO WOLSKE BAY**

Eliminate the storm water discharge that dumps significant amounts of organic matter, grass clippings, leaves, pollutants, and sediment directly into Wolske Bay. A large culvert located in Wolske Bay drains a significant portion of North Menomonie from street catch-basins on the upper bluff. The city should explore improved methods to handle this storm water. On Friday, June 28, a dense algal accumulation was observed, along with blue-green algae at this discharge site.

## **2. REDESIGN AND REDIRECT WAKANDA PARK STORM WATER DISCHARGE**

Wakanda Park is a short distance up stream from Wolske Bay. At the south end of the park, a large culvert discharges storm water from a major portion of North Menomonie and from the Wakanda Park directly into Lake Menomin. While it is unclear how much storm water from this source migrates to Wolske Bay, it certainly adds significant pollutants to Lake Menomin and to downstream locations. In July of 2012, a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) plan submitted by WDNR was approved by the Environmental Protection Agency for Lake Menomin and Lake Tainter. This plan established new water quality standards for Lake Menomin and Lake Tainter. Therefore, the City of Menomonie should update the 2004 Storm Water Plan and give high priority to eliminating storm water discharge that directly affects Lake Menomin

## **3. REDUCE AMOUNT OF IMPERVIOUS SURFACES ADJACENT TO WOLSKE BAY**

Presently there are acres of blacktop pavement adjacent to Wolske Bay and most of the run-off goes directly into the lake. At a casual glance, it appears there may be more blacktop adjacent to Wolske Bay than water in the bay. Given the steep slope of the hill, the slope of the parking area at the bottom of the hill, the slope of Lakeside Park parking lot and the roadway, the City should examine ways to reduce the amount of the impervious surfaces adjacent to the lake and consider retention ponds to capture run-off.

## **4. CONSIDER REDIRECTING OR VACATING A MAJOR PORTION OF WOLSKE BAY ROAD**

The city should examine the feasibility of redirecting or closing a significant portion of Wolske Bay Road. There are alternate routes available for the present traffic from North Menomonie. This may provide an opportunity to install a significant vegetative buffer along Wolske Bay and Lake Menomin. Also, algal blooms are more abundant and more intense as water temperature rises. Run-off from pavement and storm drains likely increase water temperatures in and around Wolske Bay. On July 3, 2013 pavement temperature on Wolske Bay Road was 122.7 degrees with associated soil temperature as low as 70.3. Reducing the amount of pavement and utilizing vegetative buffers, along with retention ponds would

reduce direct run-off and likely reduce water temperature. Pervious pavement options could also be explored.

**5. AUDIT ALL PUBLIC BOAT LANDINGS AND PARKING LOTS TO ENSURE RUN-OFF DOES NOT FLOW DIRECTLY INTO THE LAKE**

Lakeside Park has a massive parking lot and boat landing that drains directly into Lake Menomin. This is unfortunate since it adds pollutant load to Lake Menomin, especially near Wolske Bay. Directing run-off at boat landings and parking lots to retention ponds could greatly reduce pollutants and high temperature run-off entering Lake Menomin.

**6. CREATE A SIGNIFICANT WATERFRONT BUFFER ON PUBLIC LANDS**

Presently the shoreland in city parks have limited vegetative buffers. Vegetative buffers filter run-off, improve habitat and minimize run-off temperature along our waters. The city has an opportunity to promote better conservation practices and the use of vegetative buffers. Informative signage could educate park users on waterfront buffers.

**7. ENCOURAGE OR REQUIRE CITY WATERFRONT RESIDENTS TO INSTALL VEGETATIVE BUFFERS ALONG WATERWAYS AND ASK ALL CITY RESIDENTS TO REDUCE YARD WASTE AND POLLUTANTS THAT FLOW TO STORM SEWERS.**

Each private landowner has an opportunity to filter run-off and improve water quality by not mowing the full width of their lakefront lot completely down to the water. All residents throughout the city should identify how they can reduce yard waste and pollutant discharges to street catch-basins and storm sewers.

**8. REDUCE ABUNDANCE OF CARP AND OTHER ROUGH FISH IN LAKE MENOMIN**

Carp and other rough fish significantly disturb sediment in Wolske Bay and Lake Menomin creating a release of phosphorus from sediment. In core tests conducted by Cedar Corporation on 5/29/13, the sediment in Wolske Bay measured 900 mg/Kg of Phosphorus-a high level. Carp were observed churning up sediment in Wolske Bay the week of July 1, 2013. This sediment disturbance reintroduces phosphorus to Wolske Bay and the lake. TMLIA will explore cooperative methods and resources with WDNR and other conservation groups to determine the appropriateness, feasibility and methods of reduction.

**CONCLUSION**

Given the multiple contributing factors to the impairment of Wolske Bay, a plan to dredge the east side of Wolske Bay is not recommended at this time. To adequately justify dredging, it is important to first resolve the causes and conditions that contribute to algal growth and the impaired waters. Any positive results that may come from dredging will likely be short-lived and the previous impaired conditions would likely reappear in the near future. Resolving fundamental causes and conditions that support algal growth in Wolske Bay and Lake Menomin would be a better long-term strategy.

Tainter Menomin Lake Improvement Association, WDNR and Dunn County are working on various initiatives upstream to improve water quality that directly influences the condition of Lake Menomin. TMLIA is committed to assist the City of Menomonie in efforts to improve water quality in Wolske Bay and Lake Menomin. The city has made significant and impressive progress in recent years to improve the strategies for better water quality in our community. We urge the City Council to review the new publication: "Restoring Water Quality in the Red Cedar River Watershed" and to visit [www.TainterMenomin.MyLakeTown.Com](http://www.TainterMenomin.MyLakeTown.Com) to review the approved TMDL and information that will be helpful to restore our waters. Also, please reference <http://dnr.wi.gov> for more information.

We hope these observations and recommendations can help shape a course of action to improve the long-term water quality in Wolske Bay, Lake Menomin and downstream. Let's all work cooperatively and productively to solve this public health problem and enhance our lake community!

May our water run clean!!

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