



WAWASEE AREA CONSERVANCY FOUNDATION

# CONSERVANCY VIEWS

Spring 2021

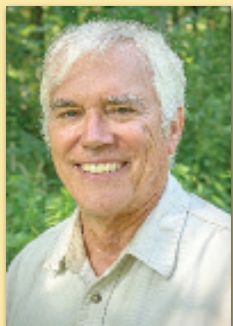
In this issue:

*Celebrating 30 Years*

*WINS - Year Two*

*Full Calendar of  
Educational Events*

# Message from the Chairman:



**Chris Roberts**  
WACF Chairman

Driving by WACF property the other day, my thoughts flashed back to my earlier years as a laker in the 1970's. Up at Wawasee for the weekend with friends, food, sun, warm water and good times, without a care in the world. Maybe our kids or grandchildren are at that place in their lives right now. These times and associated memories are irreplaceable. So is our lake.

My thoughts suddenly turned to, "What if no one was paying any attention to the environmental health of this area. What if there was no DNR, no conservation effort, no WACF? Would this place be substantially different today than it was 50 years ago? You and I both know it would. And that's why I believe so strongly in what we, along with our supporting donors and agencies, are doing.

It doesn't take long for a lake or an entire watershed to change to a point of no return when under pressure from all of us who enjoy it. Sounds kind of strange. We can hurt what we love. But, we can also help and enjoy at the same time. That's what WACF is all about. We're about education, we're about research, we're about answering resident questions about protecting the lakes. We're even about helping you make good, lake-conscious decisions about your property.

Our WINS (Wawasee Inlets Nutrition Study) is a groundbreaking, one of a kind, 3-year lake study that is attracting national attention. This data rich, super extensive look at Wawasee lake threats is opening everyone's eyes to what is really happening – not just what we think is happening. Because of this study, WACF is in a great position to be able to identify and address hot spots without having to guess. It's expensive, but incredibly worthwhile!

If you get a chance, seek out a WACF board member for a chat. You'll find a passionate lake lover who wants to help. As our mission statement says, "Preserving and enhancing the Wawasee area watershed for present and future generations."

Thank you so very much for your support.

Chris Roberts

# Memorials & Honorariums

Memorial and honorarium gifts have a lasting impact, like the lives and achievements they recognize. All memorial and honorarium gifts are directed to the WACF Endowment Fund establishing a layer of stability under the Conservancy and ensuring it's strong and lasting future. Interest income from the WACF Endowment fund is used for ongoing Conservancy expenses, operating costs and programs.

## 2020-May 1, 2021 WACF Memorials & Honorariums

### In Memory of:

Helen Alderfer  
Helen Alfrey and her  
100th Birthday  
Truman Arnold  
Jane Atkins  
Dawn Baker  
Paul Beck  
William Beemer  
Marianne Beesley  
Tim Borne  
Mary Lou Brewer  
Wayne and Alice Brockett  
Annet Lou Carroll  
Mary Agnes Carter  
David Cates  
Beverly Chambers  
Judy Christofolis  
John Connolly  
Kim Conrad  
Steve Cunningham  
Bill Currie  
Dottie and Bob Dickinson  
Larry Farver  
Marilyn and John Feighner  
Bernice Fiechter  
Cynthia Forgey  
Jeanne Gabrielsen  
Shirley Hope Gehl  
Neanne Gerber  
Ronald J. Gerling  
Kay Gibson  
Edward William Gingrich  
Grace Michael Gingrich

Benjamin William Gingrich  
Agnes Clyde Gingrich  
Dorothy Gitlin  
Richard (Dick) Green  
Larry and Rosie Griffith  
Griffith  
Danny Griffith  
James C. Haddon, Jr.  
Dr. Lloyd Hagedorn  
Rosemary and John Hague  
Patrick Hanlin  
Andrew and Laurie Hardie  
John Heidt III  
Dorothy Hite  
Kyle Hollon  
Tom and Judy Hughes  
Dr. Robert Hirschman  
Needham Hurst  
Bill Hurst  
Dr. George W. Irmscher  
Carole Jacquay  
Robert and Rosalyn Jones  
Patrick W. Kennedy  
Mike and Carol Kiley  
Phil Keim  
Mary Koehlinger  
Albert Kramer  
Charles and Dorothy  
Lehman  
Clara 'Nanny' Lopez  
Dr. Vance Lopp  
Eric Longenecker  
Maurice and Lucille Lung  
Debbie Macomber  
Bob McCallum  
James D. McCully  
Bill McNagny  
Larry Michael  
Lonnie and Thelma  
Meriwether  
Walt Miller  
Walter (Walt E.) Miller  
Clay Moody  
Deceased Morrison Island  
Members  
Phyllis Ann Myers  
John Naab  
E.S. and Virginia Needler  
Patty Norman  
Father Glenn O'Connor  
Eleanor Organ  
Don Osbourne  
Dr. William and Mary  
Patterson  
Carolyn Parmerlee  
Chris Peterson  
Kathleen Kiley Phillips  
Wanda Quinn Isenbarger  
Priscilla Rhode  
Jerry Riffle  
Elizabeth Robertson  
Sophia C. Salin  
William 'Bill' Nathan Salin  
Edward L. Sandman, Sr.  
Carol Schloss  
Douglas A. Schmahl  
Bob and Lucille Searfoss  
Dr. Alan E. (Bud) Sheline

Joanne Spurgeon  
Terry E. Smith  
Eloy C. Stevens  
Mark Stimson  
Michael Surso  
Linda Heckaman Swank  
Dick Tillman  
Tom Tuttle, Sr.  
Charles Walker  
Dr. John Wallace  
David Warshauer  
Jack Wirick  
Ken and Barbara Woodruff  
Matthew Wuebker

### In Honor of:

Donn Baird  
John and Linda Earnest,  
50th Wedding  
Anniversary  
Mr. & Mrs. Bob Loose  
John and Becky Marler  
John S.A. Maxson  
Larry Michael  
Dave and Cindy  
Newcomer  
Pete and Ginny Nicholas  
Celia Ristow  
Pamela Juday Schumm  
Lee and Sue Theis, 50th  
Wedding Anniversary  
Bob and Jane Wildman

# Highlights from the Executive Director

## Celebrating 30 Years ....



**Heather Harwood**  
WACF  
Executive Director

Thirty years ago, a small group from the Wawasee Property Owners Association, wanted to focus on environmental issues with a mission to preserve and enhance the watershed for present and future generations. It was 1991, and WACF was born. Now, more than ever, we are all beneficiaries of their vision. It happened, and continues to happen, thanks to

dedicated volunteers and supporters motivated by a common cause. A big thank you to all WACF friends, supporters, and partners.

We've been busy over the past year, completing our Turkey Creek Tributary stream stabilization project, and habitat restoration at the Gordy Lake Preserve.

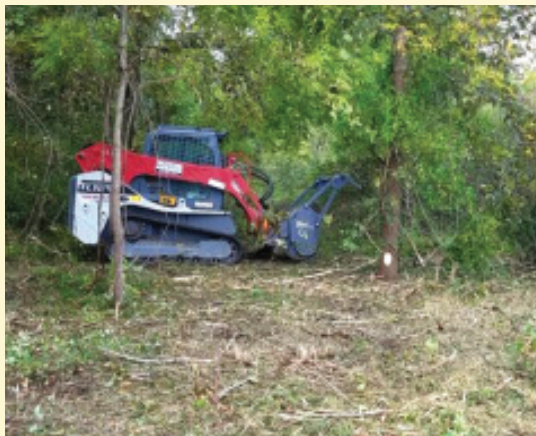
And we have even more initiatives underway this year:

- **invasive plant monitoring, removal, and habitat restoration** both in the lake and on the land in partnership with IDNR's Lake and River Enhancement and the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

- **promoting healthy shorelines**, led by Joan Szyal and Bill Hess, with



Turkey Creek Tributary stream stabilization



Gordy Lake Preserve habitat restoration

native plantings and glacial stone diminishing wave action and protecting the Eco-zones.

- Events at Between-the-Lakes including 'Fishing with the DNR' for kids, on Wednesday, July 7 at 9am. Our friends at the DNR provide fishing poles and we'll see what we catch!

We are blazing trails on the Zimmerman Preserve

on Johnson Bay with our new tractor! The new tractor allows Jeff Herdrich, WACF Land Manager, more options for work on our properties.

- If you want to learn more about **boating**, the eco-zones, and stirring, join WACF with Dr. Nate Bosch, Lilly Center for Lakes and Streams, and the Lake Patrol on **Boating Etiquette** at the Syracuse Community Center Saturday July 17, at 11am. Please be safe and careful boating this summer, watch out for others, be wake cool and don't stir the lakebed. Stirring is bad for water clarity and quality!

- We continue studying our stream inflows and outflow so that we can determine priorities and react. Our Ecology Committee, under the direction of Ecology Chairman, Beth Morris, leads the **Wawasee Inlets Nutrient Study (WINS)** along with Dr. Jerry Sweeten and his team in this data-driven water testing study and analytics.

- Our Education Committee, under the direction of Education



Fishing with the DNR, Wednesday, July 7th, 9am



New tractor provided by funding from George Hardie and Jeff Herdrich

Chairman Linda Earnest and WACF Education Officer Pam Schumm, lead programming for kids and adults, promoting good stewardship and why it's so important. We also hope to see you at our Lake-Talk-and-Eats, and our 10-lakes canoe trips this summer!

Without our great volunteers and supporters, WACF would not be able to complete these projects to preserve and enhance our lakes for present and future generations. Thank you for your support!



The original group: (from left to right): Al Campbell, Ted Rogers, Bob Myers, Harriett Inskip, Betty Knapp, Cindy Brumbaugh, David Culp, and Helen Alfrey

# WINS Year 1 vs. Year 2 Data: Some Dramatic Differences

By Beth Morris  
Ecology Committee Chair



What a difference a year can make!

Last year we were hunkered down, largely isolated from each other to prevent the spread of COVID-19. We stuck with our "pods," binge-watched shows on TV, and helped Amazon's bottom line with our on-line shopping. And now with the widespread availability of vaccines, life is starting to get back to normal.

And what a difference a year can make weather wise! Spring of 2019 brought so much rain that it delayed planting crops until late May and early June because the fields were too wet. In contrast, there were two big rain events in 2020, one in January and one in May, and then the remainder of the year was quite dry.

We are fortunate to have the ongoing WINS study that captured statistically significant data (15,841 samples in 2020!) to help us compare the amount of sediment that flowed into, stayed in, and left the lake in these two very different years of rainfall. However, two years does not define a trend, so we must be cautious about drawing definitive conclusions or inferring a pattern or trend.

For those of you not familiar with WINS, the Wawasee Inlets Nutrient Study is a 3-year study to quantify the amount of nutrients and sediment coming into, going out of, and staying in the lake. Why does that matter? Nutrients and sediment can lead to eutrophication -- the slow dying of a lake when the nutrients feed excessive weed and algae overgrowth over time. In its extreme, fish can no longer thrive, recreation is severely curtailed, and property values are impacted. WACF's goal is to prevent this from happening by using WINS data as a baseline to set priorities for projects aimed at "shutting off the tap" of excess nutrients and sediments coming into the lake. They say an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure, and that's why we are investing in this study.

## Rainfall Amounts and Timing Have an Impact

In 2020, we had 25% less rain than 2019 -- 30.7 inches compared to 40.5 inches. Total nitrogen loading ("loading" is the amount that came in during a year) was about 26% less in 2020, phosphorous loading was roughly 30% less in 2020, and total suspended solids (sediment) was 159% greater in 2020. Like we said, what a difference a year can make! Rainfall amounts, timing, and its intensity when it falls had a big impact on water quality indicators as the data shows.

	Increase or Decrease in 2020 over 2019
Total Nitrogen Load	↓ 26%
Total Phosphorous Load	↓ 30%
Total Sediment Load	↑ 159%

From May 10 to May 28 there was 4.5 inches of rainfall with 3.8 inches from May 14 to 18. Those rain events brought in over 60% of the annual load of sediment and over 50% of total nitrogen and total phosphorus. That shows the impact of sustained, heavy rains when the fields are at their most vulnerable.

## The Difference in Flushing

Because of the lower total rainfall in 2020, the residency time (the amount of time a drop of water stays in the lake before flowing out) increased by 60% to 3.59 years over 2019, and the Flushing Rate (the rate of replacing the entire volume of the lake in a year) decreased by 40% to 0.28. Another way of saying that is that 28% of the water in the lake was replaced in 2020 compared to 45.5% in 2019.

And what about nutrients? Phosphorous is the "limiting" nutrient, meaning that growth of algae and weeds in the lake depends on how much phosphorous or "food" is there. Not much phosphorous means not much weed growth. Excessive phosphorous causes weeds and algae to grow more than normal. How much is too much? The water quality target concentration for Phosphorus is just 0.03 mg/L or 30 parts per billion. One part per billion is a very small quantity and can be thought of as being equivalent to one cube of sugar in an Olympic swimming pool.

Here's where the interaction between rainfall and the loading of sediments and nutrients gets really interesting. It relates to flushing. Despite the total phosphorous load coming into the lake in 2020 being 50% less than 2019, the impact of the dry summer and fall on the flushing rate (40% less) meant that more phosphorous stayed in the lake instead of being flushed out. In fact, the concentration of phosphorous in the lake in 2020 was two times higher than in 2019.

## WINS Years 1 and 2: Comparing Dry and Wet Years

	2019	2020	Change in 2020 over 2019
Cumulative Rainfall	40.5 inches	30.7 inches	↓ 25%
Residency Rate	2.2 years	3.59 years	↑ 60%
Flushing Rate (rate of water replacement in lake)	0.455 (45.5%)	0.28 (28%)	↓ 40%
Total Phosphorous Annual Load	10,646 lbs	7,452 lbs	↓ 30%
Concentration of phosphorous in Lake Wawasee*	0.04 mg/L	0.086 mg/L	↑ 200%

\*Calculated from the Vollenweider Model

This doesn't mean that water quality of Lake Wawasee is rapidly declining based on data from just two years. Trends are detected over many years, and we will continue to study this while we work to "shut off the tap."

## WACF Takes Action

While we can't control Mother Nature, WACF is vigorously pursuing actions aimed at correcting the root causes over the long term. Details of Year 2 data reaffirms that we should initially concentrate efforts in two key subwatersheds: Martin Creek (contributed the highest load of phosphorous and sediment per acre in both years) and Dillon Creek (contributed 2nd highest load of phosphorous and sediment per acre in both years). This is a huge undertaking that can't be done by WACF alone. Working in partnership with local like-minded organizations, WACF is in the process of identifying more detailed studies within these subwatersheds as well as projects to be undertaken in partnership to "shut off the tap."

## What YOU can do

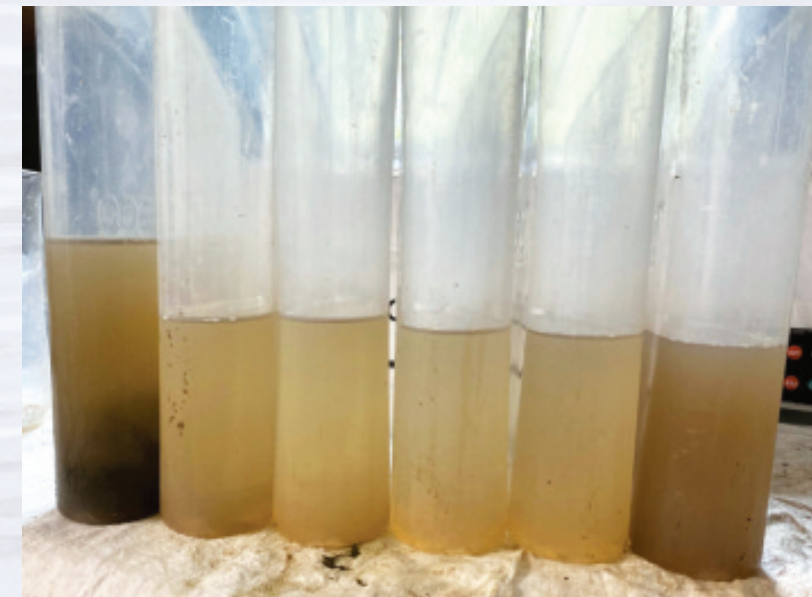
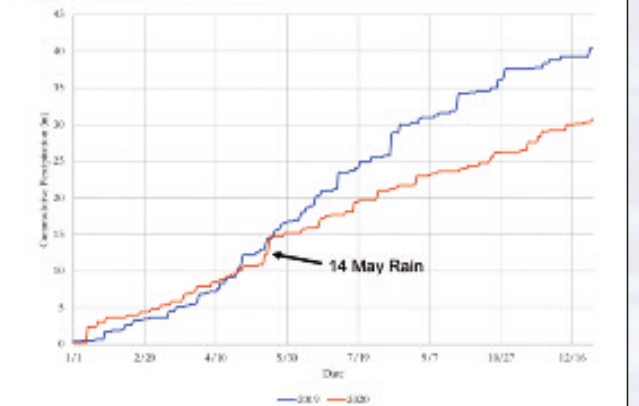
In addition to what comes in from the streams, there is run-off into the lake from our roofs, our yards, our patios and decks. You can make a difference by doing the following:

- Make sure that any lawn chemicals used on your property do NOT contain phosphorous.
- Plant native plants as a buffer between your lawn or patio and the lake to soak up run-off before it gets to the lake.
- The lake bottom contains phosphorous too. Don't stir up the lake bottom. Watch for a plume behind your boat no matter what your lake activity.

If each of us does a small part, we can make a difference! And of course, you can donate to WACF to support this and many other efforts we lead to preserve and protect our watershed for generations to come.

## Cumulative Rainfall

- 2019= 40.5
- 2020= 30.7



May 17-18, 2020 water samples from Dillon Creek Inflow



Sediment plume entering Lake Wawasee from Dillon Creek on May 18, 2020.

# Education Team is Back in Business

By Pam Schumm  
Education Committee Chair



There is so much going on this year and we couldn't be more excited!

WACF was buzzing with activity on May 1 as we celebrated our 6th annual

Earth Day Festival with 19 vendors and over 200 people attending the event! Activities included looking at the beautiful raptor birds; making seed balls; identifying different ducks found in our area to watching arrowheads be made. There was a fun scavenger hunt; information about Kosciusko Water and Woodland Invasive Partnership (KWWIP), Syracuse Trails and Tippecanoe Audubon; even muzzle loaders explaining how these old rifles work. Kids could get their face painted, learn about a monarch life cycle, and make a butterfly net as well as learn the struggles a bird experiences as they migrate by playing a game. There were wood carvers there with their birds, duck decoys and fish spearing lures. Also, attendees signed a pledge to help keep our water clean and learned about the difference in runoff rates between land covered in vegetation vs. covered in rock. Mark your calendars for the same weekend next year and make it a point to come see us at WACF!

If you are looking for something to keep the kids engaged and outdoors, we have even more planned at WACF:

- Our **Lake Talk and Eats** series has something for all ages and interests. They will be **June 5, July 3 and Aug 7**.
- **June 5th from 9 to 11 am** is our Native Plant Sale at Ruddell pavilion at the WACF Education Center. The program begins with a presentation by Casey Jones of the Tippecanoe Audubon Society who will give us a birding perspective on the value of native plants. After the presentation you have an opportunity to purchase native plants from area vendors.
- **June 8th from 9 am to Noon** is our first ICAN Play Date. I SPY a great time at our WACF Trails in Syracuse. Play a game of I SPY as you explore the trails plus complete two crafts! It's free but please register at [pam@wacf.com](mailto:pam@wacf.com).
- **June 10th from 6 to 8 pm** is our second ICAN Play Date. We're having a family hot dog roast! Bring your own chips and drinks, we will provide the hot dogs. Eat in the pavilion then explore the trails playing BINGO. Expect to get wet as some of the items will be netting macroinvertebrates in the water. Again, it's free but please register at [pam@wacf.com](mailto:pam@wacf.com).
- **June 18th from 7:30 am to Noon** our summer canoe trips are back! Finally we have the weekly canoe trips through the 10



Catching critters at our annual Bug Fest.

headwater lakes in our watershed. These sell out quickly so you will want to get your name in early by contacting [aldotcam@gmail.com](mailto:aldotcam@gmail.com). The \$5.00 cost will be collected at the beginning of the trip.


- **June 21st from 7 to 8 pm** is our annual Pollinator Workshop. Join us at WACF in the Ruddell Pavilion co-sponsored by TWF, KSWCD, Lilly Center Lakes and Streams. Free plants for a complete garden will be provided to the first 30 registrants. Please register at [pam@wacf.com](mailto:pam@wacf.com).
- **July 3rd starting at 9 am** is our best attended event of the year – the Annual Bug Catch!

We start at Ruddell Pavilion with a short introduction about the critters that can be caught in the lake and their value to the environment. Then kids and parents will head to the lake to find these critters with nets that we provide. Please bring life jackets and water shoes for your little ones and prepare to get wet.

- **Wednesdays in July starting at 9 am** – Wetland Adventures are back!  
**July 7th** is fishing with the DNR at our Between the Lakes property, 5814 E Pickwick Dr. The event starts at 9 am. Free poles and bait will be provided. Bring the youngsters and enjoy a morning of fishing. The next 3 Wednesdays will be at the WACF Education Center and will begin promptly at 9 am. Be sure to attend the opening activity as it sets the stage for the rest of the activities. There will be educational crafts and games for elementary children accompanied by an adult.
- **July 31st starting at 10:30 am** is the Annual Lake Celebration. Join us at WACF in the Ruddell Pavilion to learn what we've accomplished in 2021.



A leathersmith hard at work

- **August**  beginning at 9:30 am is our Farm Tour. This adult-only event is free but requires registration through [pam@wacf.com](mailto:pam@wacf.com). This tour will help you understand how farming is done today with water quality and the environment in mind.
- **August 7th** is the annual Lilly Pad Cruise. Over the lunch hour, learn how we are working to protect the water quality in Lake Wawasee. You'll need to purchase tickets for this event through [pam@wacf.com](mailto:pam@wacf.com).



Special visitor on Earth Day, Handler Danielle and her Barred Owl.

Thank you for your generous support of WACF, allowing us to provide a comprehensive education program about our watershed. Stay up-to-date with all of our events from our Facebook page. We hope to see you this summer!

## Helping Us Make A Difference

by Priscilla Brown  
Development Officer



In my new role here at the WACF, one of the most common questions people ask me is, "Where does my money go?" I enjoy answering this request as it gives

me a chance to highlight our work and promote transparency between the organization and its supporters. It also tells me that our donors are thoughtful and deliberate about their gifts and want to know that their contributions are making a difference. When I attend meetings

***A new website is in the works! ... it will bring you valuable, up-to-date information, ... easier ways to participate in online giving.***

such as the Ecology and Land Management committees, I am reminded how much every dollar given is making a direct impact upon a cleaner watershed, benefitting our entire community.

Initially, we planned on bringing back The Event, our summer social, this June, but like so many of you have experienced coming out of this past year, we recognize that re-opening and re-booting certain activities are going to take time. This is one of those situations. Like all our events and activities, we want to do it right, not rushed and look forward to creating a wonderful gathering in 2022.

Our Waco Pavilion Society continues to grow, and our board is sharing some wonderful ideas as how to best commemorate the gifts and

the givers. We thank those who have already stepped forward to join. This special group has committed to giving \$1,000 annually which specifically supports operations. It costs roughly \$200,000 every year to keep WACF running. This includes upkeep on properties, utilities, salaries and computer software services and fees, as well as marketing and advertising. Having these costs covered frees up more time to research and write grants, plan educational programming, connect and collaborate with partners in the field, and maintain our properties and growing trails. Would

you consider joining the Waco Pavilion Society today? Checks can be written to the WACF for the full amount, or you can give

online via Paypal through our website. There's also an option to give monthly at the cost of \$83.34.

This brings me to our final announcement: a new website is in the works! Not only will it bring you valuable, up-to-date information, it will also include easier ways to participate in online giving. In an attempt to be the best stewards of the gifts we are given, this transition will take a few months so we ask for your patience.

Thank you all for your dedication and support of WACF with your time, talent, and treasure – especially during this past year. While it felt like the world stopped, you continued giving generously and we are humbled and honored by your encouragement of our mission and work.



The bird watchers from our Bird Walk on May 8th.



11586 N. SR 13  
PO Box 548  
Syracuse, IN 46567  
Phone: 574.457.4549  
Email: info@wacf.com

### WACF Officers and Directors

Chris Roberts

*Chairman*

John Bearss

*Vice-Chairman*

Heather Harwood

*Executive Director*

Donn Baird

*Treasurer*

Priscilla Brown

*Development Officer*

Jeff Herdrich

*Land Management Officer*

Pam Schumm

*Education Officer*

Nancy Nelson

*Administrative Assistant*

Russell Anderson

Daniel Berkey

Terry Clapacs

Linda Earnest

Robert Fanning

William Hess

Catherine Hoffman

Jay Jorgensen

Tom Kelley

Dan Kiley

Bill McCully

Beth Morris

Shannon Silcox

Joan Szynal

Rick Winter

Thomas Yoder

# Safe Boating Zones

Do you know the safest areas of your lake to pull tubers? We do and we've created a decal to help you identify the best places for your summer boating fun.

For both Syracuse Lake and Lake Wawasee, it is important to avoid shallow areas when doing boating activities that might stir up the lake bottom. The decal shows them in red. Help us drive our mission of protecting our lakes by reducing property damage, sediment stirring and adding phosphorus back into the water by taking things easy in these locations.

The good news? There is plenty of space for boating fun! Check out the green areas on the decal where the water is deep and look for them the next time you are out. Identifying and using these areas for pulling tubers, skiers and wake surfers is the best way to ensure good water quality and preservation of our lakes.

We've included a decal in this newsletter mailing. Add it to your boat or personal watercraft to help you remember the safe eco-boating zones and if you need more copies, please let us know at Pam@WACF.com. Thank you for all you do to support WACF and our watershed!

