



Friends of Lake Kegonsa Society, Inc.
P.O. Box 173
Stoughton, WI 53589-0173
September 2023

President’s Message ~ George Corrigan

Fall is upon us. I think of fall as a time to wind down summer activities and to prepare for winter. Many birds (and some people) prepare by heading south each fall. I enjoy seeing different types of birds as they migrate through. Already this year we’ve had several cormorants sitting in trees over the lake. It seems in fall we see more bald eagles and ospreys. I think we’ve had one or the other in trees along our shore each day for the past three weeks. We hear sand hill cranes more often at this time of year.

One of the less enjoyable fall preparations is removing boats, piers and lifts. That is happening now – recently one of the local barges was taking lifts out on our side of the lake. It is sad to see the season winding down, but hopefully you have had a nice summer.

FOLKS is preparing for winter by working with Pleasant Springs and Dunn to set the leaf pick-up schedule. The leaf pick-up is discussed in this issue, and updates can be found on our website. The schedule will be on the calendar, under events, and on the projects page. We will post a “Lake Alert” on the **FOLKS** website a day or two before each pick-up weekend.

Fall is also time for our annual survey. You’ll see the results below. **FOLKS** is planning a Fall Update & Social on Oct 26th (also discussed in this issue and on the **FOLKS** website). Please thank our Social and Education Committee for organizing this outing!

We won’t have final numbers on debris pick up until our next newsletter. But we are always looking for ways to improve and are hopeful that next year we will have tracking of the debris pick up barge and the harvesters. We are also looking for suggestions to reduce the amount of cut plants the harvesters do not pick up. The harvesters are paid for by Dane County, and we can make suggestions – but it is up to the County on whether to adopt them.

I look forward to seeing you at the Fall Update & Social!

-George Corrigan

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Save the Date for FOLKS Fall Update & Social

Save the date for the **FOLKS** Fall Update & Social on **Thursday, October 26th** at Springers on Lake Kegonsa. Please join us for this fun social gathering, meet your neighbors and learn more about what's happening around the lake. Our President, George Corrigan, will give a brief update on Dane County and **FOLKS** projects affecting Lake Kegonsa.

Fabulous door prizes! Cocktail Hour (Cash bar) will be 5-6 pm with the **FOLKS** Fall Update at 6pm. Please **RSVP** under Events on **FOLKS** website (www.kegonsa.org) by October 17th and bring a friend.

Lake Kegonsa Water Levels

As of September 28, 2023 the Lake Kegonsa level is **843.40'** (ft above sea level).

Lake	9/28/2023	Summer	Summer	Inches > Summer
	Lake Level (ft)	Minimum (ft)	Maximum (ft)	Minimum
Mendota	849.82	849.6	850.1	2.64
Monona	844.97	844.7	845.2	3.24
Waubesa	844.83	844.5	845.0	3.96
Kegonsa	843.40	843.0	843.5	4.80

The water level on Lake Kegonsa is currently at mid-range. **FOLKS** does not set the water level targets - Wisconsin DNR does. Nor does **FOLKS** adjust the dams – Dane County does. We do know that Dane County struggled with the lake level in June because of a lack of rain. For much of June the outflow was limited as much as possible. But **without rain the level was low even with very little water flowing out of Lake Kegonsa**. By July 11th we had had some rain and the level has been mid-range or higher since then. In November, Dane County will begin to transition to winter lake levels.

2023 Leaf Pick Up

FOLKS worked with the **City of Stoughton**, the **Town of Pleasant Springs** and the **Town of Dunn** again this year to provide leaf pick up around Lake Kegonsa.

Leaves should be in your yard ready to be picked up by noon on Friday of these weekends. Only one pass through the route will be made. The towns share the City of Stoughton's equipment and will be collecting leaves on the weekend.

Here's the schedule for the dates when the leaf vacuum truck will be on your street (**Notice specific pickup dates for your town**):

Town of Pleasant Springs:

The Town of Pleasant Springs will be vacuuming leaves on the weekends of:

- **November 11-12** and
- **November 25-26 (tentative)**

Town of Pleasant Springs Compost Site: Leaves can be dropped off at the compost site behind the Town Hall at 2354 County Highway N. The compost site is open daily from 7am to 3:30pm.

Town of Dunn:

Town of Dunn will be vacuuming leaves on the weekends of:

- **November 4 - 5** and
- **November 18-19**

Town of Dunn main compost site: Leaves can be dropped off at the main transfer site at 4030 County Rd B. Normal operating hours:

- 1st and 3rd Saturdays of every month from 8 am to 3:45 pm
- Every Wednesday through the end of November from 2 pm to 4:45 pm.

The Town of Dunn also has centralized leaf collection drop-off sites near Lake Kegonsa at Amundson Boat Launch, Colladay Point Park and Fish Camp County Park during the leaf pick up season.

Procedures (same as prior years):

Please be very careful to keep sticks or brush out of your leaf piles, including in the leaf drop off sites. The leaf vacuum truck will **not** pick up sticks or brush which clogs the machine and could damage the equipment.

For efficient vacuuming, remember the following guidelines:

- Rake leaves to an area by the roadside, but don't place them on the pavement.
- Place your leaves in a row not more than 4' wide, not in a large pile.
- Place leaves at least four feet from any mailbox or utility pole.
- Clear the leaves from the street in front of your home if you can. Phosphorus laden runoff from storm drains and through leaves from steep yards flow directly into the lake.
- Try not to park near any raked leaves.
- Keep rocks, animal waste, tall grasses, brush and other non-leaf material out of the leaves.

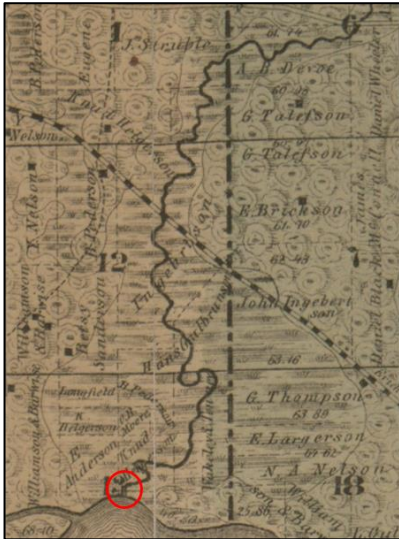
Other Ways You Can Help:

- Remind your lawn maintenance service not to blow leaves into the lake or the road.
- Remove the leaves from the street near your house and include them with your other leaves.
- Don't burn leaves which concentrates the phosphorus that may end up in the lake and contributes to air pollution.
- Volunteer to help rake leaves for people who need assistance.
- Talk with your neighbors about the leaf management project.

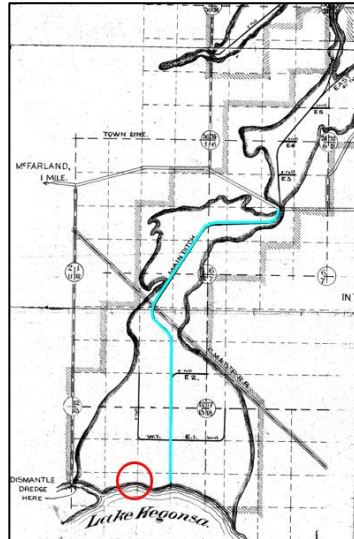
Thank you very much for your efforts to reduce the phosphorus entering our waterways.

Update on Door Creek "Suck the Muck" Project

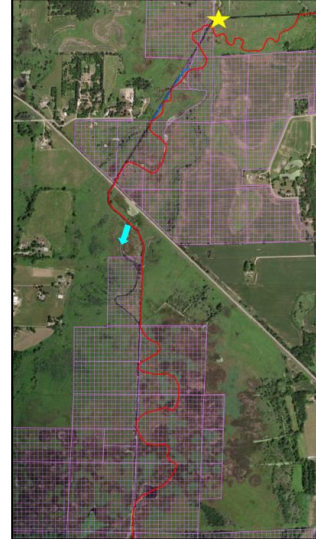
Members of the Dane County Land and Water Resources Department (John Reimer, Kyle Minx and James Brodzeller) updated the FOLKS Board on the Dane County legacy sediment project at the September Board meeting. They shared the following maps with us to show the original Door Creek, the straitening by the Drainage District and the planned re-meander of the creek



1860's Historic Door Creek Map



1920's Drainage District Straightening



Proposed Re-meander of Door Creek

The following summary was provided by James Brodzeller:

"The Dane County Land & Water Resources Department is planning a restoration project on Door Creek as it flows through the Door Creek Wildlife Area. Planning stems from implementation of the Door Creek Watershed Management Action Plan to improve water quality and the natural communities within the creek and surrounding wetlands.

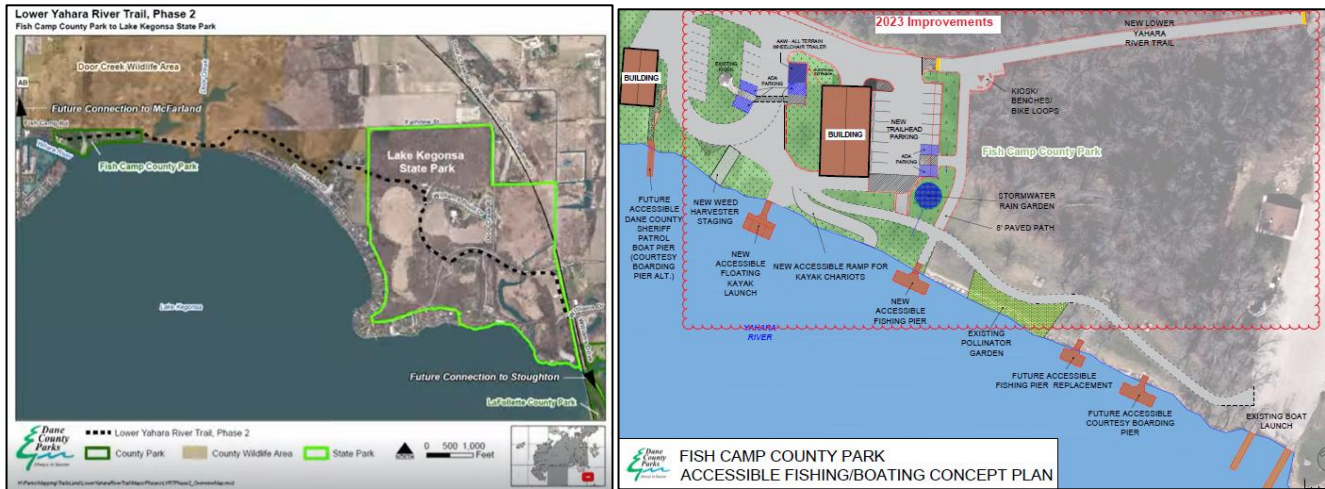
Conservation practices placed throughout the watershed since the plan's inception in 2016, such as grassed waterways and harvestable buffers along streams, have helped achieve upwards of 60% of the nutrient reduction goal to reduce phosphorus delivery to Lake Kegonsa. Another large source of phosphorus entering the lake is from eroded soil that has accumulated in the bed of Door Creek for over a century, commonly referred to as legacy sediment. Following substantial conservation efforts to address erosion in upland areas, restoration targets have shifted to the creek itself and adjoining wetlands. In particular, the two-mile stretch of creek extending from County Highway MN to the confluence with the lake, where restoration goals include:

- Realignment of the creek to its previous flow path
- Removal of phosphorus laden sediment from the current channel
- Creation and improvement of aquatic and terrestrial habitat
- Protection of high quality wetland areas

The Door Creek Drainage District has granted their approval following demonstration that the project will result in no net increase in water level rise. Information about the project will be presented to the Town of Dunn's Board at their meeting on October 17th at 7 PM (Town of Dunn municipal building, located at 4156 County Highway B in McFarland).

Update on Fish Camp Park and the Lower Yahara River Trail

A number of **FOLKS** board members and others attended the press event at Fish Camp County Park on September 28th. We've included a map of Phase 2 of the trail, the Fish Camp improvements and the full press release below.



Press Release: Dane County Kicks Off Construction for Phase 2 of Lower Yahara River Trail & Accessibility Improvements at Fish Camp County Park

Today (Thursday, Sept 28th), Dane County Executive Joe Parisi joined Land & Water Resources Department staff and outdoor recreation advocates to kick off construction for Phase 2 of the Lower Yahara River Trail, as well as accessible fishing and boating improvements at Fish Camp County Park. When complete, the park space will provide more opportunities for Dane County residents and visitors to enjoy the outdoors, regardless of age and abilities.

"Since its completion in 2017, the Lower Yahara River Trail has become a beloved feature in the Dane County community," said Dane County Executive Joe Parisi. "We are thrilled to kick off construction on Phase 2 so even more residents and visitors can easily access this picturesque outdoor recreation destination and enjoy Dane County's natural resources."

Phase 2 of the Lower Yahara River Trail will span approximately 2.75 miles from Fish Camp County Park to Williams Drive at Lake Kegonsa State Park and will include an approximately 4,000 ft. helical pile boardwalk and a 90 ft. clear span bridge over Door Creek. An approximately 16-stall parking lot with a kiosk and bike racks will be constructed on the east side of the Fish Camp net house. The parking lot will provide access to both the Lower Yahara River Trail and accessible shoreline improvements.

Viewing platform bump-outs similar to what was constructed at the Yahara River crossing on Phase 1 of the trail and opportunities to exit the boardwalk for shoreline/marsh access are included in final plans. The proposed trail will transition from an elevated boardwalk to an at grade paved surface near the ATC transmission lines at the west end of the existing natural surface path. The paved trail will follow the existing natural surface path east to the Swamp White Oak grove where it will transition to a boardwalk to bypass the oak trees on the north side.

An approximately 14-stall parking area is proposed on Fairview Street that will provide off road vehicle parking for area residents to access the trail. Decorative split rail fencing, signage and buffer plantings will also be included.

Construction will begin in the fall of 2023 and be completed in the fall of 2024. Wisconsin DNR assisted with coordinating trail design in Lake Kegonsa State Park. Wisconsin DOT and Wisconsin and Southern Railroad provided design input on the proposed railroad crossing at Williams Drive. KL Engineering served as the design engineer, and Janke General Contractors will be the construction contractor, based out of Athens, WI. County Executive Parisi allocated the \$6.75 million in funds needed to complete Phase 2 of the Lower Yahara River Trail in previous county budgets.

Dane County Parks is also planning improvements to the kayak launch area of Fish Camp County Park, including a new accessible floating kayak launch pier and an accessible walk-in kayak ramp. A new accessible fishing pier and relocation and improvement of the County's lake management aquatic plant harvest off-load site are featured in the plans. The improvements will also include a rain garden and ADA parking upgrades.

"Everyone deserves the ability to connect with the outdoors and appreciate what our natural resources have to offer," Parisi said. "These accessibility and boating improvements will make it easier for Dane County residents and visitors of all ages and abilities to enjoy the outdoor offerings of Fish Camp County Park."

The accessible kayak launch at Fish Camp will complement upstream landings at McFarland's Jaeger Park and Babcock County Park that provide access to the stretch of the Yahara River from Lake Waubesa to Lower Mud Lake and Lake Kegonsa.

This is part of an ongoing Dane County Parks initiative to develop system-wide improvements at county lake access sites in partnership with the Foundation for Dane County Parks, Madison Fishing Expo, and Access Ability Wisconsin. Dane County has committed \$900,000 to accessible improvements throughout the Dane County Parks System. Private donors and the Foundation for Dane County Parks have contributed another nearly \$150,000 in matching funds towards accessible fishing and boating improvements:

- **FOLKS** (Friends of Lake Kegonsa Society) - \$5,000
- Sally Wilmeth & Terry Geurkink and the Jenni & Kyle Foundation \$55,000
- Foundation for Dane County Parks:
 - *Tom Krauskopf - \$40,000*
 - *Donna Hilgendorf - \$30,000*
 - *Friends & Family of Donna Hilgendorf - \$3,485*
 - *Other Donations (Muskie's Inc., Madison Community Foundation, Courtier Foundation) - \$9,325*

The total cost for these improvements at Fish Camp County Park will total \$550,000. Construction work will begin in the fall of 2023 and be completed in the fall of 2024.

There is much more information on the Dane County Land and Water Resources website at <https://lwrp.countyofdane.com/CurrentProjects>.

Please note: The canoe/kayak launch entrance to the park is now closed since construction has begun.

FOLKS 2023 Members Survey

Thanks for taking the time to respond to the 2023 **FOLKS** member survey - your feedback helps the Board of Directors find new projects and direct funding. **176 households (44%)** responded which is a great response rate.

- **71% of our members thought the lake was pretty good or very good this summer.**
- Most members thought the weeds were too thick. Aquatic plants were considered abundant in all areas and 57% of our members thought there should have been more harvesting.
- A number of members complained about the low water levels. It was a very dry year. As we noted above, due to limited rainfall early in the year the lake was low in the spring but was within the DNR target range for the rest of the summer.
- Our members are behind **FOLKS** projects (especially the very popular leaf program and debris pick up project) and are taking a number of positive actions to help the lake.

The full survey results are below.

Q# 1- FOLKS website: www.Kegonsa.org

- I use the new updated website often 9%
- I use the new updated website once in a while 46%
- I didn't know **FOLKS** had a website 14%
- I'm aware of the website, but have not used it 32%

Q# 2- How well does our website meet your needs (helpful information, ease of use, visually appealing?)

- The FOLKS website meets my needs very well 41%
- The FOLKS website meets my needs somewhat 16%
- The FOLKS website doesn't meet my needs very well 1%
- I don't use the FOLKS website 43%

Q #3- Leaf Vacuuming. FOLKS works with the Town of Pleasant Springs, the Town of Dunn and the City of Stoughton to provide a leaf vacuuming program. Do you use this service?

- I used the leaf vacuuming service and I think it is worthwhile 61%
- I didn't use it, but I think it is a worthwhile program 34%
- I probably won't use the service and prefer other **FOLKS** projects 5%

Q #4- Aquatic plant growth. We would like to know how it has been near your property. Please choose the answer for where you live and how much growth.

Aquatic plants	None	Limited	Abundant
• Northeast Shore	0%	2%	98%
• Southeast Shore	3%	26%	72%
• Southwest Shore	0%	29%	71%
• Northwest Shore	0%	3%	97%
• Yahara River	0%	9%	91%

Q #5- Dane County Aquatic plant harvesting.

- We felt there was enough harvesting this summer 43%
- We thought there should have been more harvesting 57%

Q #6- *FOLKS* Aquatic Debris pick up project. *FOLKS* runs a project to provide regularly scheduled collection days for aquatic debris on Lake Kegonsa and the near North Yahara River in cooperation with Dane County.

- I used the debris pick up service and believe this project is worthwhile 47%
- I didn't use the service, but believe this project is worthwhile 44%
- I probably won't use this service and prefer other *FOLKS* projects 9%

Q #7- Zebra Mussels. We would like to know how it has been near your property. Please choose the answer for where you live and the abundance of zebra mussels.

	We didn't notice any	Same as last year	Many more than last year
• Northeast Shore	53%	42%	6%
• Southeast Shore	38%	56%	6%
• Southwest Shore	26%	70%	4%
• Northwest Shore	33%	63%	4%
• Yahara River	50%	25%	25%

Q #8- If you fish in Lake Kegonsa, how was the fishing this summer

- We don't fish, so we don't have an opinion 67% of members
- Fishing was better than ever this year 7% of fishermen
- Fishing was about the same as last year 44% of fishermen
- Fishing was as bad as we can remember 49% of fishermen

Q #9- How did you think the condition of the lake was this summer?

- Very good this summer 14%
- The lake was in pretty good shape much of the summer 57%
- The lake was in bad shape much of the summer, which limited our use 29%

Q #10- Your interest in the following *FOLKS* projects and events. Please check all that you think it would be worthwhile for *FOLKS* to pursue.

- Reduce run-off into the lake 72%
- *FOLKS* members social get-togethers 56%
- Identify ways to increase fish in Lake Kegonsa and improve fishing 51%
- Projects for wildlife around Lake Kegonsa 48%
- Expand water sampling on Lake Kegonsa, Door Creek and the near Yahara River 47%
- Educational seminars (i.e. speakers from Dane County, DNR, etc., Native Plant Workshops, Wildlife Seminars) 45%
- Rain garden and shoreline buffer garden projects 39%
- Rain barrel education and distribution 27%

Q#11 – Do you think *FOLKS* should continue to support the following area projects?

- Dane County phosphorus sediment removal (Suck the Muck) in Door Creek 90%
- Dane County dredging the Yahara River below the LaFollette dam to reduce flood risk 82%
- Clean Lakes Alliance projects for area watersheds/lakes 78%
- Dane County Lower Yahara River Trail 64%
- Fish Camp County Park (Native plant gardens, mulching, picnic tables, bench and sign maintenance, improvements historic 1937 buildings) 61%
- Rock River Coalition projects for Door Creek watershed (into Lake Kegonsa) 57%
- Dane County Humane Society Wildlife Center 44%

Q#12 - How have you improved lake conditions? Mark all that you've done.

- Removed leaves from my property to keep them and the high phosphorus leaf run-off out of the lake 86%
- Picked up litter & pet waste 64%
- Reduced fertilizer use 59%
- Reduced salt use in the winter 58%
- Collected cut plants from the lake (for barge pick up, to compost, to dry and take to the Town sites) 48%
- Removed leaves from the street to keep them out of lake run off areas 46%
- Directed run off away from the lake through a shoreline garden, rain garden, redirecting a downspout to lawn or a downspout garden or installed a rain barrel 37%
- Home composting 19%
- Volunteered for lake projects 9%
- Other: Planted native plants along the shore and on steep hillside, picked up dead fish, rescued turtles, used lake water to water lawn 3%

Q#13 - Residency

- Year-round resident 71%
- Only part time 29%

Q#14 - Age Bracket

- 35 or under 1%
- 36-50 9%
- 51-60 17%
- 61-70 36%
- 71 or over 38%

Q#15- How many years have you had your place on the lake or river?

- 0-5 years 18%
- 6-10 years 15%
- 11-20 years 19%
- 21-30 years 19%
- 31 years, or more 29%

Other comments, suggestions and project ideas.

We had a number of people say they'd like to volunteer for projects and a few ideas for the board to discuss. Once again, **Thank you** for making **FOLKS** stronger and better.

Water Information and Safety



In Wisconsin **all vessels** (including canoes, kayaks, and paddleboards) must have at least one USCG-approved wearable life jacket for each person on board. Every person on a personal watercraft must wear a USCG-approved life jacket. All vessels 16 feet or more in length must have one USCG-approved throwable personal flotation device onboard that is immediately accessible. Sailboards and windsurfers are exempt from life jacket requirement but are highly encouraged to wear one.

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Yahara Lakes Association, Ltd.

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Steve Schmitt
(Owner)

We Love Lake Kegonsa and You!!



BEN LADICK
IT Service Manager

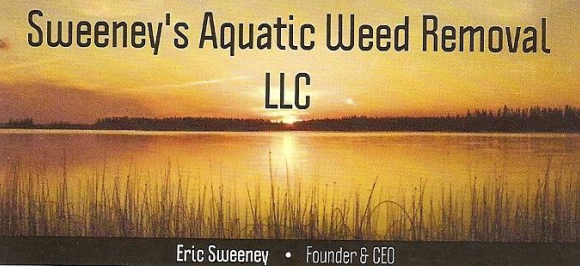
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For More About **FOLKS**,
Visit our website at www.Kegonsa.org and

on Facebook  at facebook.com/kegonsa/

or on X (Twitter)  @LakeKegonsa

Please Support Your Lake Association - Renew
Your **FOLKS** Membership.

This year's dues remain \$20.00 for households
and \$30.00 for businesses.

If you have any questions regarding
membership, please contact:
Connie Hagen at chagen001@gmail.com
or George Corrigan at corrigan@corrigan.pro

Send news of interest to **FOLKS** :
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FOLKS Lost and Found

List lost and found items on the Website
(www.kegonsa.org), Facebook page or contact
Eric Olson at eolson.folks@gmail.com

FOLKS board meetings are held the second Tuesday of each month except for a
couple of months in the winter. The public are always welcome.
Next Meeting is October 10, 2023, 5:30 – 7:00 PM, Stoughton Country Club

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