Rock Creek CRP

The Rock Creek drainage basin has been again accepted in the Farm Services Administration's Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). The program is designed to take sensitive agricultural properties out of crop production and place them into protected conservation set-aside areas. Drainageways and highly erodible slopes, as well as soil composition, are the principal factors in determining eligibility for this program. The annual CRP payments from Rock Creek and the Flagstad Farm pay most of the property taxes on the Conservancy's land. Compliance with this program is carefully monitored by the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

The drainageway through the north 20 acres of the prairie on the Rock Creek Conservation Area carries runoff from 1500 acres of agricultural land extending to the village of Centuria. Sediment and phosphorus in this runoff water used to flow unchecked into Rock Creek and then into Deer Lake. The native prairie established by the Conservancy with the assistance of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, has served to reduce phosphorus coming from this 2300 acre watershed by more than 90%. One result is a dramatic improvement in the water in Rock Creek – the largest source of spring water flowing into Deer Lake.

The Conservancy owns a large portion of Rock Creek as well as most of the springs which flow to the creek. A new section of trail takes you along the upper portion of Rock Creek leaving the current trail between the prairie and the bridge. The flow of spring water along the basalt boulders is well worth the hike. Use caution when using this trail in the rain or the spring – it is slippery when wet!

2011 CONSERVANCY OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

Phillip Foussard, President
Jim Miller, Vice President
Tom Pesek, Secretary/Treasurer
Mark Boyken
Cal Dinham
Mollie Keys
John Marinovich
Tom McBride
John Patterson
Tom Walther
John Wright

Dedicated to the Preservation of Deer Lake

The Deer Lake Conservancy is a tax exempt organization incorporated in the state of Wisconsin and also registered in Polk County. The purpose of the organization is to preserve Deer Lake and the surrounding land that contributes to its natural, scenic and recreational value. As a 501C (3) corporation, any contributions are fully deductible from federal and state income tax. Contributions may be in the form of cash, securities, property and land easements.

Contributions should be sent to

Deer Lake Conservancy
P.O. Box 1139
St. Croix Falls, Wisconsin 54024

Interested individuals may also contact Jim Miller by phone at 715-483-3338

Deer Lake Conservancy Report

Summer Edition **JULY 2011**

New Treatment for Farm Runoff

Watershed 1 on the northeast corner of the lake remains a significant source of phosphorus to Deer Lake. A pond installed back in 1998 removes phosphorus attached to sediment particles, but dissolved phosphorus, such as that found in animal manure, still makes its way to the lake. Dissolved phosphorus is immediately available to cause algae blooms.

An exciting new treatment option provides the Conservancy an opportunity to remove the dissolved phosphorus from this drainage. An iron filing sand filter is proposed for the area where the pond is currently located. It is the iron that binds dissolved phosphorus. Once the filter is installed, water will be held only for a short time – no more duckweed! This treatment technology was tested at University of Minnesota labs and trialed for stormwater treatment in the Twin Cities. With the help of our new consulting partner Emmons and Olivier Resources and the University of Minnesota, this technology is coming to Deer Lake!

We are waiting the results of a Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources grant application to partly finance this project and continue the Direct Drainage Project. We will share more information about the iron filing sand filter at the annual meeting. Hopefully we can share good news about the grant as well!

Conservancy Receives Stewardship Award

The St. Croix River Association presented its annual stewardship award to the Deer Lake Conservancy on May 6, 2011. This award is presented to a group or individual "that has demonstrated good stewardship of the natural resources of the St. Croix River and/or its tributaries."

The St. Croix River Association press release states "During its relatively short existence the Conservancy has made dramatic strides in improving the water quality of Deer Lake. Runoff of phosphorus into the lake was reduced by half in the decade from 1997 to 2006. The lake has transitioned from eutrophic (nutrient rich with profuse and unsightly algae bloom and aquatic weeds) to mesotrophic. Deer Lake is one of the only two lakes in Wisconsin where this has occurred, the other being Mirror Lake, which is surrounded by the Mirror Lake State Park.

2011 Annual Meeting

Please join us for
our Annual Meeting
Saturday, July 9th
9:00 a.m.
Trollhaugen Convention Center

OWNERS REDUCE RUNOFF TO DEER LAKE

Several owners completed waterfront runoff projects this past year. The Deer Lake Conservancy's Direct Drainage Project provided the resources to help them along the way. The aim of the waterfront projects is to capture, infiltrate, and purify runoff water and reduce erosion. Runoff water carries nutrients and sediments which lead to algae growth. With the great success we've had in reducing phosphorus from the larger watersheds, these smaller waterfront projects have increased in importance. Owners enjoy the knowledge of doing their share to protect the lake and are able to appreciate the beauty of native plantings and correction of unsightly bare eroded areas.

PARADE OF PROJECTS

A quick tour of some of the projects follows. These projects provide great examples of the methods we use to capture runoff and reduce erosion. Not all completed projects are shown. Many thanks are extended to these owners who took the initiative to improve their properties and protect Deer Lake!

BOATHOUSE REMOVAL WITH NATIVE PLANTINGS

Owners Dorothy Goldie and Ralph Schwartz enjoy an improved view to the lake with the boathouse gone. They are looking forward to watching the growth of the native plants used to stabilize the bank.
Boathouse Removal: Cross Country Excavating
Native Plantings: Balsam Lake Pro-Lawn

RAIN GARDENS AND DIVERSIONS

Rod and Terri Johnson installed a series of rain gardens on their property. Runoff flowed from Pinewood Road right down their driveway and to the lake causing considerable erosion along the way. Rain gardens are flat depressions that allow the water to soak into the ground. Trench diversions are used across the driveway.
Landscaper: Abrahamson Nurseries

This rain garden captures water that comes all the way down Northpoint Road. The landscaper removed heavy soil and replaced it with sand to allow better infiltration at this garden at the home of Mark and Patty Thayer.
Landscaper: Abrahamson Nurseries

FREE WATERFRONT SITE VISITS AVAILABLE

CONTACT:
Cheryl at
Harmony Environmental
harmonyenv@amerytel.net
715.268.9992

RAIN GARDEN AND ROCK TRENCH
Nancy Deschane and Dean Sather get a view of this rain garden as they enter their driveway. A rock trench below the roofline of the garage captures additional water which was causing erosion to a stream that flows to the lake.
Landscaper: Abrahamson Nurseries

UNDERGROUND INFILTRATION
This underground infiltration device works well situated below Dick and Susan Ward's garage. The downspouts are connected to buried plastic cells which are lined with filter fabric. These AquaBlox provide temporary storage for water until it can soak into the ground. Except for a small outlet pipe, the end result is not visible from the surface.
Landscaper: Balsam Lake Pro-Lawn

ROCK INFILTRATION
Areas filled with rock are another option for creating water storage to allow for infiltration. Dennis and Cam Raedeke envisioned this rock infiltration area designed like a dry creek bed to alleviate erosion from runoff from the road and driveway.
Landscaper: Abrahamson Nurseries

Annual Flagstad Farm Celebration

Hosted by the Deer Lake Conservancy

Join your Deer Lake friends and neighbors for refreshments, live music and appetizers at the Flagstad Farm
Saturday, July 23, 2011 6-9 PM

Come see this natural jewel, enjoy a walk on the trails through uplands and wetlands. See the best view of Deer Lake!
All ages and guests are welcome