

A Practical Lake Assessment

This assessment is meant to be adapted for use by landowners around an individual lake so that they can gain a better understanding of the "state of their lake". The input received will be a useful tool for both lake residents and users, so decisions can be made that are appropriate for their lake.

This tool is designed and provided by Bill Klase, UW Basin Educator and Sandy Gillum, Town of Washington (Vilas) Water Resources Committee. (Designed to be printed on 8.5" x 14" paper)

(name of) Lake

1. Years of ownership: (circle one)

1-5 6-10 11-24 more that 25 years

2. When do you use your lake property? (check one)

- Year-round (primary residence)
- Only live at the lake in Spring, Summer, and Fall (secondary residence)
- Secondary residence plus a few winter days
- Weeks and/or weekends in summer, plus some fall and winter days
- Weeks and/or weekends in summer only

3. Lakeshore frontage in feet: (circle one)

0-50 51-100 101-150 151-200 201-250 251- 300 300+

4. Why did you buy property on this lake?

(select 3 and rank 1, 2 and 3 with 1 being the most important)

- Abundance of wildlife including fish
- Cost of property
- Easy distance from primary residence
- Family home/vacation home
- Investment
- Number of lake users
- Place to participate in favorite lake activities
- Setting
- Tradition of lake vacations
- Water clarity (clearness)

5. What activities do you enjoy most on this lake?

(select 3 and rank 1, 2, and 3 with 1 being the most important)

- Canoeing or kayaking or rowing or sailing
- Entertaining / spending time with family and friends
- Fishing – during open water
- Ice fishing
- Just the view
- Motor boating under 25 hp
- Observing wildlife (on land, in water or in sky)
- Peace and tranquility
- Riding personal watercraft (e.g. jet ski)
- Swimming or Snorkeling or SCUBA
- Water skiing or tubing

6. Describe the area on your property between the water's edge and 50-feet landward:

(check all that apply)

- Steep slope (includes a rise of greater than 10-feet)
- Gentle slope (includes a rise of less than 10-feet)
- Flat
- Retaining structure (rock, concrete, wood, sheet metal)
- Beach
- Wetland edge (bog, or saturated soils at any time of the year, or mossy)
- Dry
- Naturally rocky
- Naturally sandy
- Some eroding areas
- Stable soils – no erosion evident
- Natural landscape including a mix of trees, shrubs and ground cover plants
- Only a few trees and/or shrubs and no ground cover
- Maintained grass or lawn
- Few or no trees and shrubs
- Walkway to lake is simply a path

7. What features are along your shoreline and in your near-shore area (from water's edge 30-feet out into the lake)? (check all that apply)

- Downed tree(s) and/or shrubs
- Trees and/or shrubs overhanging the water
- Dense aquatic vegetation
- Sparse aquatic vegetation
- Aquatic vegetation does not grow in this area
- Aquatic vegetation cleared from swimming area
- Aquatic vegetation cleared for boat access

8. In recent years, what term best describes the water clarity of the lake in each season? (check one under each season)

- | <u>Spring</u> | <u>Summer</u> | <u>Fall</u> |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Crystal clear | <input type="checkbox"/> Crystal clear | <input type="checkbox"/> Crystal clear |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A little cloudy | <input type="checkbox"/> A little cloudy | <input type="checkbox"/> A little cloudy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Very cloudy | <input type="checkbox"/> Very cloudy | <input type="checkbox"/> Very cloudy |

9. To what degree has the lake changed over the last 5 years or since you bought your property, if owned less than 5 years? (check one in each column)

- | <u>WATER</u> | <u>PLANTS</u> |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> No change in clearness | <input type="checkbox"/> No change in plant abundance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clearer | <input type="checkbox"/> Fewer plants |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cloudier (or greener) | <input type="checkbox"/> More plants |

10. Over the last 5 years or since you bought your property, if owned less than 5 years, how have the following characteristics changed on the lake? (circle either more, less, or no change in)

- | | |
|---|---|
| Wildlife | There isMoreLessNo Change in |
| Game fish | There isMoreLessNo Change in |
| Water | There isMoreLessNo Change in |
| Motorized recreation | There isMoreLessNo Change in |
| Quiet water sports
(e.g. kayaking//fishing/sailing/swimming) | There isMoreLessNo Change in |

11. Do you have any concerns about owning your lake property? If so, what 4 issues concern you the most? (rank 1, 2, 3, and 4 with 1 being the highest concern)

- No concerns
- Amount of aquatic plants
- Changes in the natural environment
- Changes in evening and/or early morning activities on the lake
- Investment value
- Level of boat traffic
- Lake level
- Land use around the lake
- Peace and tranquility
- Presence or threat of aquatic invasive species
- Property taxes
- Septic systems around the lake
- Slow-no-wake areas
- The fishing
- Time/space for non-motorized recreation (e.g. fishing, canoeing, SCUBA, etc.)
- Water clarity at the end of your dock
- Water clarity in the middle of the lake

12. Please answer this question, only if you utilize some kind of watercraft on the lake. When you think about your family's uses watercraft over a years time, what is the % of use of each type of watercraft? (Total should equal 100% Example: 55% pontoon & 45% canoe)

- % Canoe, kayak, rowing craft, paddle boat, or sailboat
- % Fishing boat
- % Personal watercraft
- % Pontoon
- % Ski boat

Note: Please feel free to remove or add any questions you feel are relevant to your lake.