



# Big Blake Lake Resident Survey

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Resources Department

### Big Blake Lake Resident Survey

The following survey is a component of a grant which was received to study Big Blake Lake. The survey should take approximately 5-10 minutes to complete. Responses will remain confidential. Final results will be compiled and used to guide management decisions for Big Blake Lake. Feel free to contact the Polk County Land and Water Resources Department with any questions at 715-485-8699. Surveys should be returned by June 1<sup>st</sup> to:

LWRD  
100 Polk County Plaza- Suite 120  
Balsam Lake, WI 54810

Thank you again for your participation!

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1. How many years have you owned property on Big Blake Lake? Note: If you own more than one property, please answer all questions for the property you have owned the longest.  
\_\_\_\_\_ years
  2. Which of the following best describes how you use your property?  
 Year-round residence  
 Seasonal residence (continued occupancy for months at a time)  
 Weekend, vacation, and/or holiday residence  
 Rental property/resort  
 Other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_
  3. How many days in a typical year is your property used by you or others? Just provide your best estimate.  
\_\_\_\_\_ days per year
  4. On the average day that your property is occupied, how many people occupy the property?  
\_\_\_\_\_ people
  5. Do you own shoreline property (including shared access points) on Big Blake Lake?  
 No, please skip to question 7       Yes
  6. Beginning at the water's edge, how would you describe the area measuring 35 feet inland (shoreline towards the road)? If you don't own shoreline property, please skip this question. Please check all that apply.  
 Mowed lawn       Stabilizing rock/rip rap  
 Un-mowed vegetation       Pier/dock  
 Shrubs/trees       Buffer zone/shoreline restoration  
 Undisturbed woods       Rain garden

# Mailed 217 surveys in May 2014

# 126 respondents, 58%

# Thank you!



# Big Blake Lake Owners

Property ownership: 21 years

People occupying property: 3.6

Number of days property used: 148 days

Most people are weekend residents (56%)

One third are full time residents (33%)



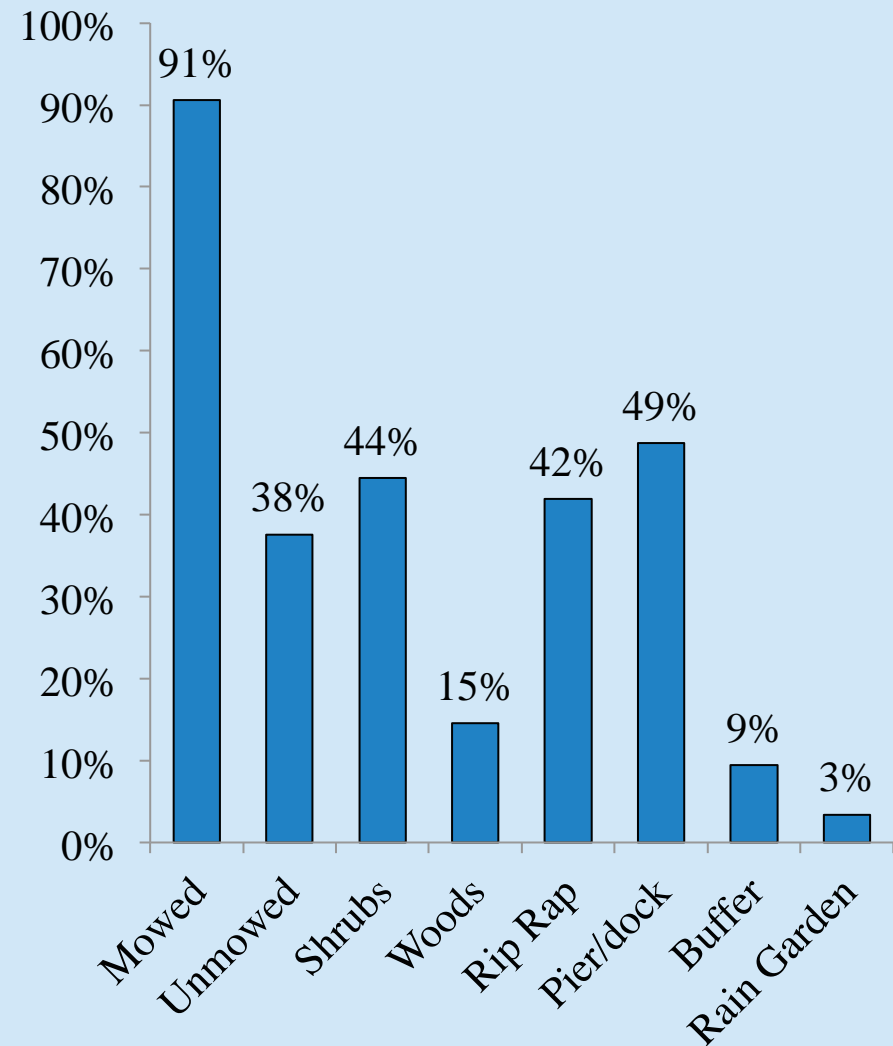
# Characterizing the Shoreline

Half of property owners think the amount of lawn on Big Blake Lake is just right,

one quarter think there is too much lawn,

and one quarter are unsure.

Most believe that buffers, rain gardens, and natives plants are somewhat (34%) or very important (37%) to the water quality of Big Blake Lake.



# A Positive Side Note

98% of survey respondents either don't use fertilizer or use phosphorus free fertilizers



# Activities Enjoyed on Big Blake Lake?

Peace and tranquility (93%)

Scenic view (89%)

Fishing (83%)

Motorized boating (80%)

Observing birds/wildlife (79%)

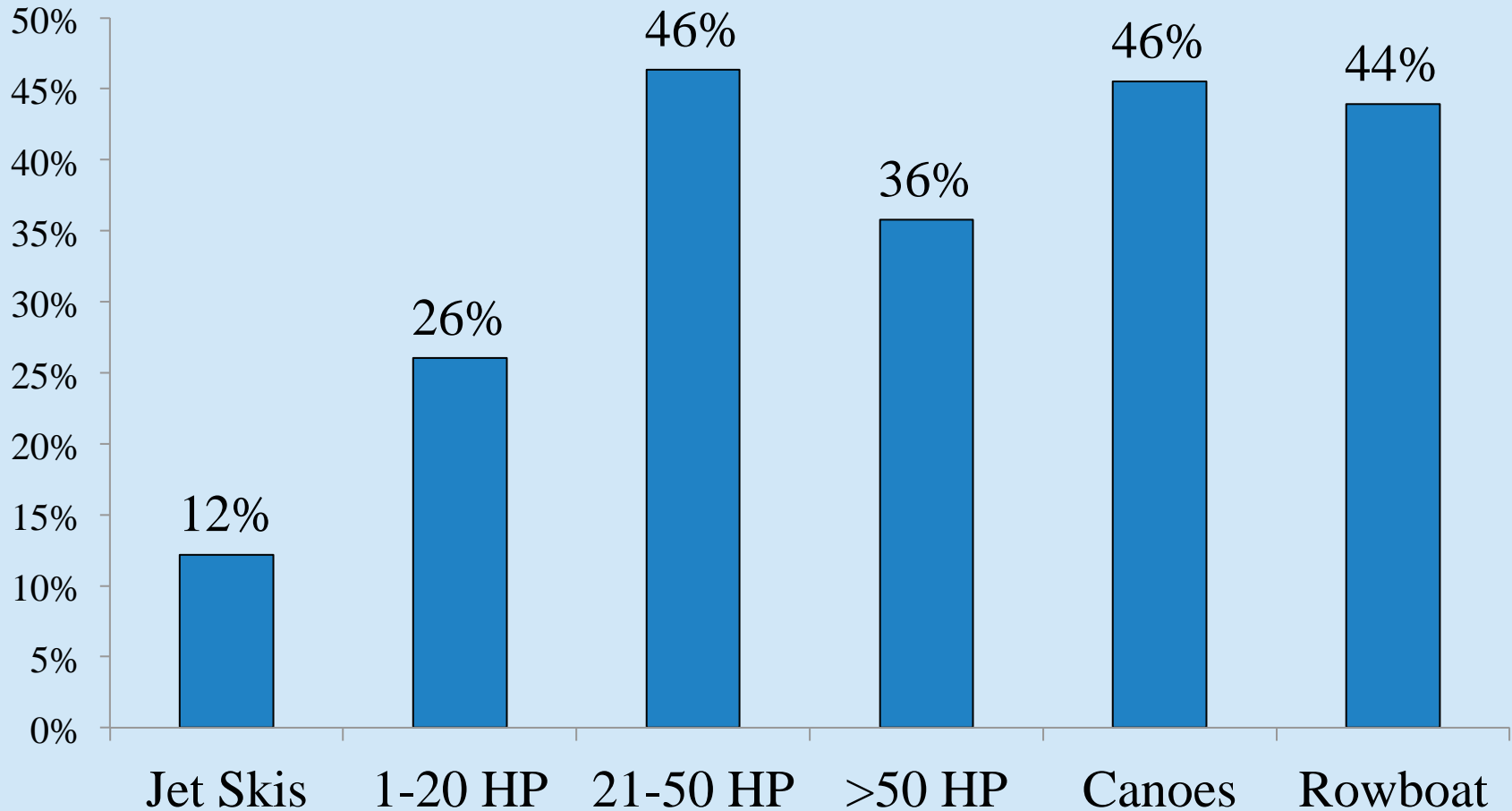
Swimming (70%)

Non-motorized boating (47%)

Ice fishing (45%)



# Watercraft and Use



**A quarter of respondents use their watercraft on other waterbodies**

# Concerns for Big Blake Lake

**High or Medium Concern**  
**By 75% of respondents**

New invasive species entering  
the lake

\*Expansion of curly leaf  
pondweed

\*Excessive aquatic plant  
growth

Excessive algae blooms

Lack of water clarity of quality

Increased nutrient pollution

Decrease in overall lake health

**Low or No Concern**  
**By 60% of respondents**

Excessive noise level on the  
lake

Decreased wildlife populations





# Current Conditions on Big Blake Lake

**Water level:** too low (81%)

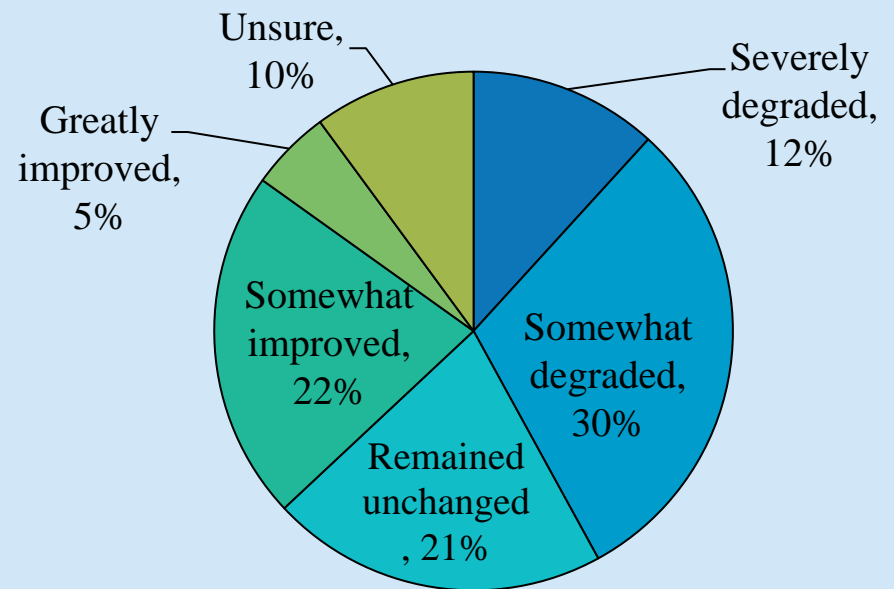
**Water quality:** fair (54%) or good (26%)

**Change in water quality:** graph

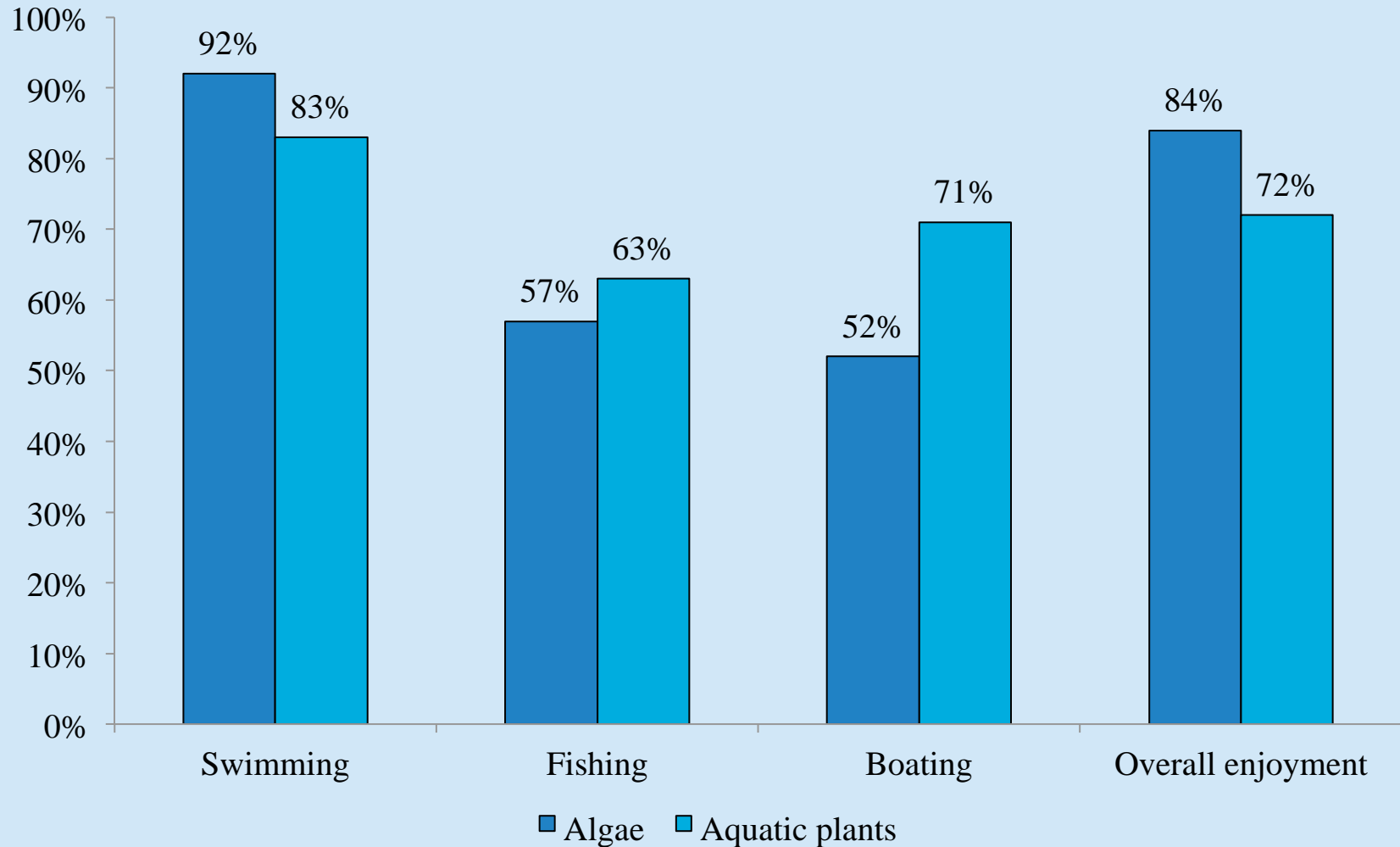
**Months algae growth is a problem:** July (66%) and August (88%)

**Aquatic plants:** too many (69%) or healthy amount (29%)

**Months aquatic plants growth is a problem:** June (46%), July (74%), and August (67%)



# Uses Impaired by Algae and Aquatic Plants



# Curly Leaf Pondweed (CLP)

Half of respondents can definitely recognize curly leaf pondweed and another 20% probably can

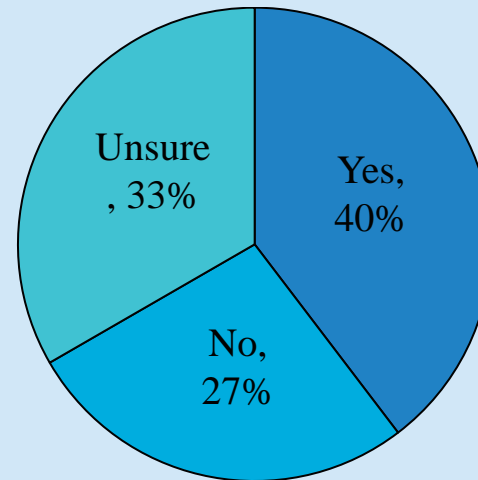


Paul Skawinski, UW-Extension Lakes

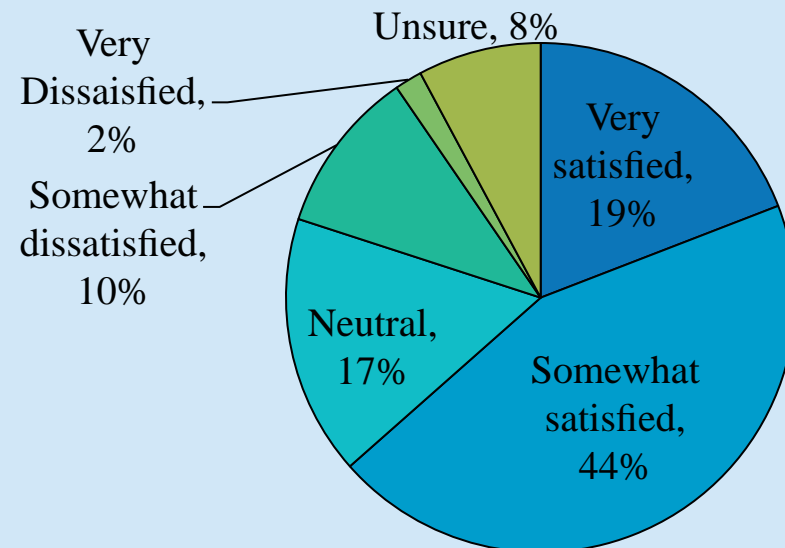


# Aquatic Plant Management Program

Is the current program effectively controlling nuisance aquatic plant growth?



How satisfied are property owners with the aquatic plant harvesting program?



# Actions to Manage Big Blake Lake

Bring the dam on Big Blake Lake up to code: 91%

Programs to prevent and monitor invasive species: 89%

Enhance fisheries: 78%

Upgrade non-conforming septic systems: 71%

Install shoreline buffers and rain gardens: 61%

Install farmland conservation practices: 54%

Lake fairs and workshops: 44%

Enforce slow no wake zones: 44%



# Actions to Manage Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS)

Harvesting CLP: 90%

Monitoring to detect new AIS: 89%

Clean Boats, Clean Waters: 86%

Educational programs: 72%

Trainings to identify and manage AIS: 69%

Herbicide control of CLP: 54%

Boat landing cameras: 37%

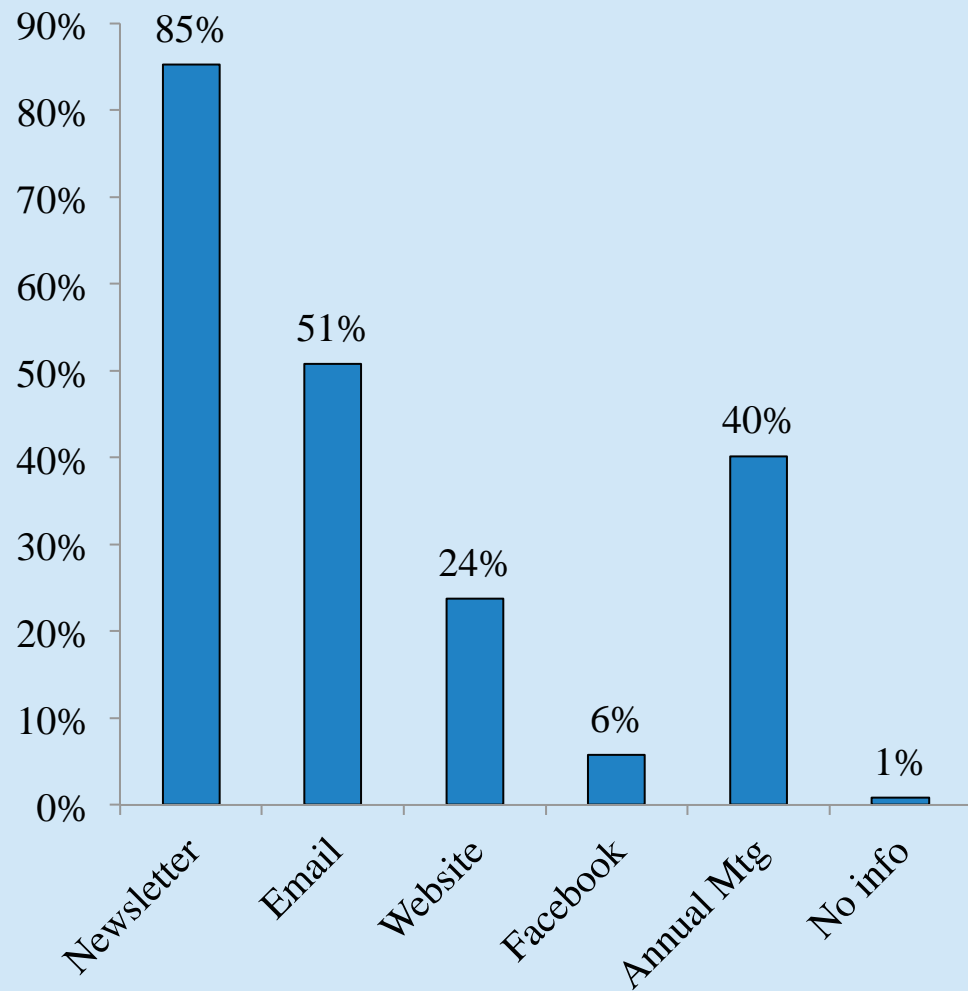
Boat wash stations: 35%



# Communication



Half of property owners were unaware of the Facebook page and another third have never visited the page.



# Grant Update





## **2015 is the last year of a three year grant!**

### Projects completed include:

- In-lake monitoring for chemistry, algae, zooplankton, plants, and CLP turions
- Lake resident survey
- Education efforts including: The Landing Blitz, Citizen Lake Monitoring, and Clean Boats, Clean Waters

### Projects yet to be completed include:

- Pontoon Classroom: **Saturday, June 13<sup>th</sup> from 12-2 at the North Boat Landing**
- Development of a Lake Management Plan