NEWSLETTER

Issue 32 December 6, 2023

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Reminder: 3rd Annual Tree Sale Ends Soon!

The deadline for submitting your orders for the third annual **14 Mile Watershed Alliance Tree Sale** is **December 15, 2023**. This is a great opportunity to purchase native trees to improve your property. So get your order in soon!

Click HERE for a printable copy of the Order Form

Newsletter and Survey

We recently mailed a newsletter to 3,500 residents of the Rome lakes. Included with the newsletter was a survey to identify residents' most pressing concerns as well as hear their ideas regarding water quality issues and opportunities. A copy of the newsletter appears below.

View the newsletter online

View the survey results online

14 MILE WATERSHED ALLIANCE

THIS IS HOW A WATERSHED WORKS!

WHO WE ARE:

We are a volunteer group of motivated citizens working to improve both the surface and the groundwater of the 14 Mile Creek Watershed by providing important information and education to all stakeholders.

In the past five years since we began as a citizen-led committee of Tri-Lakes Management District with the support of the Town of Rome, we've learned that there is no easy or quick solution that will instantly reduce phosphorus and nitrogen in the watershed. Water quality has been identified as an important issue affecting everyone in the watershed, not just recreational lake users. Many of our upstream neighbors grow cranberries or vegetable crops that are dependent on good, clean water. Additionally, all of us drink from the groundwater, so we all have to be part of the solution.

Approval of the Nine Key Element Plan became the motivation behind the committee's recently expanded mission statement and goals, and the driver for us to reorganize as a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation and make our group more open and welcoming to all stakeholders from Plainfield on down to Lake Petenwell. So, from our perspective the hard work is just beginning.

Please get involved at 14Mile.Org

WHAT WE DO:

Much of our efforts going forward will be focused on supporting the goals of the Nine Key Element Plan. This plan is a roadmap to address the water quality issues that this watershed faces.

Education of all watershed stakeholders on the issues, causes and possible solutions for the future is our foremost priority. To this end, we are employing several means of sharing information on best practices that have been shown to bring results in other areas of the state. We communicate through our newsletters, monthly meetings open to the public, a weekly presence at the Farmers Market in Rome, booths at local events and our annual State of Our Lakes event held in June.

TOGETHER, WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE! *JOIN US*

14 Mile Watershed Alliance: Working together to improve our watershed

Come Join Us!

As stated in the introduction to the 14 Mile Watershed Alliance, our main mission is to support the goals of the Nine Key Element Plan. As a young organization, we are at the beginning of the journey to better water quality. Our current activities, such as the creation of our newsletter, our presence at the various local events such as farmers markets, staging our annual State of Our Lakes informational meeting, and water testing take time and effort. We can do so much more, and this is where you come in.

If you care about our lakes, streams and groundwater quality and wonder what you can do to help, please consider joining our group. It's a great opportunity to learn about all of the factors that have combined to bring us to the current state of our water quality. You will get to meet other stakeholders that have the same goals in mind:

- Conservation Professionals from the DNR, UW-Extension, Adams County
- Other citizen-led watershed groups
- Farmer-led watershed groups
- Local property owners

We are looking for creative ideas to promote best practices that will start to turn the tide toward improved water quality. If you are interested, please go to 14Mile.org for more information.

TOGETHER, WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Watch for us at these Community Events!

Rome Farmers Market – each Friday 9 am – 1 pm

Annual State of Our Lakes – held in June

Lake Sherwood Craft Fair – the Saturday closest to the Fourth of July

Camelot Frolics – third Saturday in August

Arrowhead Craft Show – Labor Day Weekend

YES, I want to help improve the 14 Mile Watershed!
Enclosed is my gift of ___ $25 ___ $50 ___ $100 ___ Other
Gifts of $25 or more are eligible for a membership!
Name _____
Address _____
City, State, Zip _____
Phone _____
Email _____
Receive news and updates! We will never share or sell your contact information.
Thank you for your support!
Send contributions to: 14 Mile Watershed Alliance, Phil Rockenbach, Treas., 1433 Rapids Tr., Nekoosa, WI 54457

Photo by John Picken, Wikimedia Commons

Thank you

The 14 Mile Watershed Alliance would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to the individuals and organizations who financed the founding of the organization or have supported the continuing education, outreach, and research being accomplished in the 14 Mile.

Adams Co Land & Water Conservation Dept
Lake Sherwood Property Owners
Lake Camelot Property Owners
Lake Arrowhead Property Owners
PACRS
Rome Home Town Players
Town of Rome
Tri-Lakes Mgmt District
UW-Extension Dane County
Visit Rome WI
WI DNR
WI Potato and Vegetable Growers Association
Richard Anderson
Frederick Antin
Bob Benkowski
Larry and Linda Berger
Scott Bordeau
Rob Crane
Robert J. Frederick
Criste Greening
Barb Herreid
Alan Knotek
Steven Lippelt
Gus Mancuso
Dave and Sandi Melville
Steve Nowicki
William O'Donnell
Philip Rockenbach
Don Ystad
Michael Ystad

Photo by Yinan Chen, Wikimedia Commons

A Plan for Protecting the Lakes

by Kyle Kettner

In the 1960s, a development company run by N.E Isaacson began laying the groundwork for what we now call the Tri-Lakes in the Town of Rome. These lakes are Camelot, Sherwood, and Arrowhead. These lakes are relatively young, compared to many of the 10,000-year-old glacial lakes in Wisconsin. Yet, like most lakes in the state, these man-made lakes already face man-made challenges. Excessive vegetation in the water ("weeds") and algae blooms are a common challenge. Currently, vegetation is managed through cutting carried out by Tri-Lakes Management. Algae blooms pose a particular challenge because there isn't a simple solution, like mechanical removal of weeds. Both the excess vegetation growth and algae blooms are caused by excessive amounts of nutrients entering the water.

Nitrogen and Phosphorus are essential nutrients for plant growth and occur naturally, just like the calcium you need to eat for strong bones. However, too much of a good thing can become a problem. Extra nutrients added to the land, such as fertilizers, add more to our waterways than they can handle. The problem is much like trying to go on a diet. There's no easy answer, though sometimes diets work better for some people than others. The same is true of trying to put the Tri-lakes on a nutrient diet!

The efforts of the 14 Mile Watershed Alliance and the good practices they promote help the lake stay on its diet, by reducing nutrients entering the water from the shoreline and land around the lakes. But the community around the lakes isn't working alone. In 2020, Adams County and the Wisconsin DNR completed a comprehensive management plan called the "9 Key Element Plan" for the 14 Mile Creek Watershed (see the map on the back of this newsletter).

The 9 Key Element Plan lays out specific steps, called milestones, that need to be taken to reduce the amount of nutrients entering the streams and groundwater from the land within the watershed. This includes the area around the lakes, but also includes all the farmland, forests, and marshes that contribute to the water that drains into the Tri-Lakes.

To get answers to commonly asked questions go to tinyurl.com/fourteenmile and click on the "Nine Key Element Plan button under the interactive map.

You can also contact Kyle Kettner, Watershed Coordinator, by calling 608-474-0698 or email at kyle.kettner@co.adams.wi.us