

Making Waves – A Summary of the Current Lake Planning Grants

The two planning grants that were submitted by RLIA in August have been selected for funding by the Wisconsin DNR. The goal of the grants is to create a management plan for the Miljala Channel tributary that includes a design for a best management practice to control the sediment, nutrient pollution, and bacteria entering Rock Lake. Funding for the grants is supported 25% by RLIA money or in-kind labor and 75% through DNR funds.

To develop the management plan a number of activities were identified in the grants to provide the proper data and public support. Detailed information on the grants can be found on the RLIA website in the Lake Reports/Topics section. The activities include a variety of tasks including additional sampling, site assessment, and increasing stakeholder involvement.

A key step in the project is determining the location a practice may be implemented and the potential impacts on the area. Much of the land in the tributary is privately held and requires landowner approval for any work or management practice implementation. Discussions and meetings with the landowners have already been held and will continue to be held throughout the project. Their input and insight is imperative to the success of the project. The RLIA is committed to working with all of the stakeholders to determine a reasonable and workable solution to this issue.

One aspect being explored is the need for additional sampling to help define the degree of the problem. Testing to determine the source of the sediment and the water transporting it to Rock Lake is being investigated. Initial sample results also indicated the presence of bacteria in the tributary. The need for more detailed bacteriological testing is being considered with experts to establish if the results were naturally occurring or constituted a substantial risk. Testing protocols are also being examined to help determine the source of nutrients being transported through the tributary, in particular the dissolved phosphorous.

A variety of site assessment work included in the grants will aid in the development and design of the best management practice. A drainage tile survey in the area will help determine the source and inflow rates of water into the tributary. Detailed topographic surveys and a wetland inventory will assist in locating the placement of a management practice as well as the potential up and downstream impacts. Also included in the grants is a wildlife inventory that can be used to incorporate design features within the management practice for habitat improvement.

Currently the RLIA is working with professionals from Jefferson County and the Wisconsin DNR, technical experts in the field, and landowners of the effected area to determine the required work. The input from these stakeholders will be used to create a request for proposal (RFP) that will be sent out for bid. This stage of the project is vital

as the remainder of the project builds on this base. The RLIA board is working to release the RFP in mid-April and the work beginning shortly thereafter.