



January 2019

Thank you to all DLIA members and donors who contributed to a very successful 2018. We now focus our efforts toward 2019 and continuing our work to improve lake water quality. Last year we stressed the need for agricultural conservation in the watershed and supported many local farmers with cover crops, buffers & native plants.

As we continue in that vein, the DLIA would like to bring more education to our members about Phosphorus which is the main source of over excessive plant growth and algae.

- Phosphorus is a natural element and an essential nutrient for plant growth and is found in minor amounts in healthy lakes and streams.
- Small increases can have a devastating impact on water quality which can cause summer algal blooms and stimulate plant growth. (1 lb. of phosphorus can produce 500 lbs. of algae) 1
- Excess plant growth stimulated by high phosphorus inputs can impair uses of waterways affecting boating, fishing, swimming and have a negative impact on property values & tourism.
- Sources of phosphorus are agricultural practices, human activities such as racking leaves into the lake, fertilizers & faulty septic systems.

The Delavan Lake watershed is more than 26,000 acres and over 50% of it is farmed. Therefore, the DLIA will continue to focus upon working with local farmers to convert cropland to no-till (minimizing the amount of disturbance to the soil) and cover crops (using plants designed to manage soil erosion). We are happy to report over 20% of the watershed cropland is farmed by no-till practices, but significantly more is needed. This conversion comes with a cost, as it requires about \$15/acre for no-till and \$45/acre for cover crop.



This photo is a northern tributary of Jackson Creek at Petrie Road which illustrates the connection to soil and water. The land just to the north is one of the DLIA cover crop locations. Slowing agricultural runoff into streams like this is one of the most effective ways of reducing phosphorous in Delavan Lake.



The cropland to the north of this wildflower field was planted in rye grass this fall. The generous members of the DLIA funded this 40-acre cover crop parcel in late 2018. The DLIA supported 8 farmers and funded over 100 acres of farm projects in the watershed during 2018.

Education by Walworth County Land Use & Resource Management and UW Extension has contributed greatly in assisting farmers with these best management practices. The good news is many farmers are learning the benefit to soil health as they implement these practices. The DLIA continues to work with the County in education and financial assistance to farmers.

The DLIA needs your help! Membership and donations are the only sources of revenue for the Association. We encourage you to think of your contributions as investments in Delavan Lake. The reduction in phosphorus and sediment levels in the lake will earn a return on investments in the form of fewer algal blooms, reduced nuisance aquatic plants, improved navigation, fishing and increased property values.

Please join the Delavan Lake Association and consider making an investment in the future of our lake.

If you already support the DLIA, please tell your neighbors & friends!

Looking forward to another productive year!

The Board of Directors of the Delavan Lake Improvement Association.

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