

**Delavan Lake Improvement Association, Walworth County Conservation & Private Lakefront Property Owner work together to slow water & silt runoff from upland farms to the lake.**

The DLIA is an organization that advocates for clean water quality in Delavan Lake. Our lake is challenged due to the enormous size (over 24,000 acres) of the watershed and abundant cropland within its boundaries.

On July 12, 2017, Walworth County experienced multiple rounds of rain and flash flooding causing Delavan Lake to receive major amounts of sediment runoff. Property owners, Jay and Cindy Longbottom, who live on South Shore Drive, witnessed this runoff and were aware of the considerable sediment that enters the lake during lesser storms. Because Jay experienced the consequences of runoff, including eutrophication, on a lake in Minnesota during his youth, he recognized the risks for Delavan Lake and began taking steps to investigate.

“I learned about efforts to manage the Delavan Lake watershed and reduce damaging runoff through the DLIA and was pleased to hear that Walworth County was taking an active role in this effort”, reports Mr. Longbottom.

The DLIA partners with Brian Smetana of the Walworth County Conservation Department to identify farmers willing to establish cover crop, buffers & water control basins to help reduce cropland runoff. In this case, Brian’s task was to educate and convince the property owner and the operator of the farmland directly east of South Shore Drive to work with us developing a system to reduce sediment released from this spot.

Shortly thereafter, a meeting took place at the Walworth County office to discuss a project on private property directly east of South Shore Drive off County F. Brian developed a plan which consisted of the construction of a water control basin, waterway and a separate pond. In addition, the property owner agreed to allow a buffer around the basins for native plants including pollinators. This project was funded by private & public funds and individual contributions with no cost to the landowner who allowed the construction of these water control practices on their land.

After completion of the project, Mr. Longbottom noticed the improvement. “The benefits of the work were immediately visible, and I hope more projects like this can be completed as they will definitely protect landowners’ property from run-off damage and improve the lake water quality”.

This is one of the largest & most successful watershed projects the DLIA has participated in since starting its partnership with Walworth County Land Use & Resource Management Department.

As we continue to experience heavy rains and challenging weather conditions it becomes more important than ever to maintain a balance between soil and water. The DLIA is committed to finding new and improved ways to control sediment carrying phosphorous into Delavan Lake.

If you notice a runoff situation in your neighborhood, please feel free to contact the Delavan Lake Improvement Association to see if we can help. Together we can improve and maintain a clean, healthy and prosperous lake.

The Delavan Lake Improvement Association is entirely funded by membership and donations from the public. The DLIA is a 501(c)3 non-for-profit organization. For more information please visit our website at [www.delavan-lake.org](http://www.delavan-lake.org).

Mary Pat O’Connor, Delavan Lake Improvement Association