5. Enhanced Participation in Cross-media Statewide Network of Volunteer Monitors.

The Self-Help network is exploring the possibility of forming a statewide network with other Wisconsin monitoring efforts, such as, LoonWatch, Water Action Volunteer Stream Monitoring, and others.

6. Quality Support.

Support staff, located in Madison, are available to help you with database or data reporting questions and questions regarding awards and annual reports. Each region of the state has a Self-Help regional coordinator who is in charge of training volunteers and answering questions about equipment and sampling procedures.

7. Reduced Administrative Overhead (state, community, and citizen).

Volunteer help reduces the Wisconsin DNR's operating costs and helps streamline workflow. By having volunteers sample lakes that need to be monitored, the Wisconsin DNR saves time and money involved in having staff travel to those lakes in order to collect the data. Those staff can in turn concentrate their efforts on other lakes. It is a win-win situation. Additionally, it is the network's goal to keep monitoring and data reporting as simple and efficient as possible for the citizen volunteer.

8. Engage Others in Support of the Network.

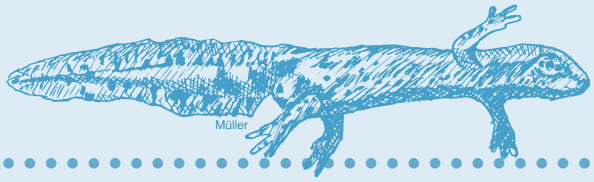
The Self-Help network is supported through a partnership, not just the Wisconsin DNR. The University of Wisconsin-Extension, Wisconsin Association of Lakes, and private entities are engaged in providing support and services to the statewide network.

9. Tie-in to National Lake Research and Monitoring.

Self-Help data is often used for lake research. For example, volunteer data has been used to successfully derive water clarity data on thousands of lakes from satellite imagery. You can see the results of this effort and learn more about satellite imagery and water clarity at **www.lakesat.org** or **dnr.wi.gov/org/water/fhp/lakes/selfhelp/shlmremo.htm**. Self-Help volunteers are also annual participants in the "Secchi Dip-in", an international effort to monitor lakes. Visit **dipin.kent.edu** online for more information.

10. Recognize and Appreciate Citizen Involvement.

At the end of each monitoring season, the Self-Help network provides awards to volunteers who have monitored for 5, 10, or 15 years, or volunteers who have taken 100 or 500 Secchi readings on their lake!



LAKE CLASSIFICATION *• A way of placing lakes into categories with management strategies best suited to the types of lakes found in each category. For example, lakes can be classified to apply varying shoreland development standards. They can be grouped based on hydrology, average depth, surface area, shoreline configuration, as well as, sensitivity to pollutants and recreational use.*

LIMNOLOGY *• The study of inland lakes and waters. The study of the interactions of the biological, chemical, and physical parameters of lakes and rivers.*

WATERSHED *• The area of land draining into a specific stream, river, lake or other body of water. These areas are divided by ridges of high land.*

What Will be Expected of Me?

As a **Secchi volunteer**, you will determine how the water clarity of your lake compares to similar lakes statewide and watch for long-term changes. As a **Chemistry volunteer**, you will continue to collect water clarity (Secchi disc) data every other week in addition to conducting more involved water chemistry sampling. If possible, you will collect water chemistry data four times a year; once during spring turnover (approximately two weeks after ice out), and once in June, July, and August. The Self-Help network will provide all of the equipment that you will need to collect your data.

Chemistry monitoring requires a minimal expense on your part. You will be responsible for providing your own distilled water for cleaning and filtering samples and also responsible for providing your own fuel for your boat. However, chemistry monitoring does require a substantial time commitment. Although Secchi disc sampling may only take a few minutes, lake chemistry sampling may take up to several hours to complete. The exact amount of time involved will depend on the size and depth of your lake and your familiarity with the sampling procedures. Like anything else, the more experience you have sampling, the smoother it will go. Volunteers who participate in chemistry monitoring will be asked to participate periodically in refresher sessions. These sessions ensure that everyone is familiar with current procedures and that all monitoring equipment is in good condition. Refresher sessions also provide an opportunity to meet other volunteers and to ask Wisconsin DNR staff questions about monitoring and lake issues.

There are three things that may influence your enjoyment when participating as a citizen volunteer: your overall health, the type of boat you use, and whether or not you have a sampling partner. While the sampling duties are not too physically demanding, you should be in good overall health. A fishing-type boat or pontoon boat is ideal for sampling work and will be safer and more comfortable than a canoe. A sampling partner will make your job safer, easier, and faster as one person can record data while the other collects samples.

Sample Schedule

A typical year of volunteer monitoring may look something like this:

February
All current volunteers will receive an annual report containing the data from the previous year. At this time, some volunteers will also receive awards for their service, including awards for 5, 10, 15, and 20 years of monitoring; and for 100 or 500 Secchi readings taken.

March
Monitoring equipment and supplies begin to be mailed out to volunteers.

April
The annual Wisconsin Lakes Convention. Volunteers begin monitoring approximately 2 weeks after ice out. Chemistry volunteers take a phosphorus sample. Secchi volunteers continue taking readings every 10-14 days throughout the open water season.

May
New volunteers are trained. (Chemistry volunteers take a phosphorus sample, if not taken in April.)

June
Chemistry volunteers take a chlorophyll and phosphorus sample during the last 2 weeks of the month.

July
Secchi readings are taken in conjunction with satellite dates. Chemistry volunteers take a chlorophyll and phosphorus sample during the last 2 weeks of the month.

August
Secchi readings are taken in conjunction with satellite dates. Chemistry volunteers take a chlorophyll and phosphorus sample during the last 2 weeks of the month.

September
Secchi readings are taken in conjunction with satellite dates.

October
Volunteers wrap up secchi monitoring for the season.

November
Volunteers ensure that all data has been submitted to WDNR staff in the Madison office.

December
Volunteers send any comments or needs to their regional coordinator.