

Small Scale Lake Management Planning Grant Project Summary, Final Report

Project Number: SPL-270-11

Project Name: Surface Water User Survey Implementation

Local Sponsor: Dane County Office of Lakes & Watersheds

Billing Period 4/1/2011 through 12/31/2012

Prepared by: Marcia Hartwig

Contact Information: 608-224-3746, hartwig@countyofdane.com

Since 2009, the Dane County Office of Lakes & Watersheds has worked with UW–River Falls Survey Research Center (UWRF SRC) to develop and implement several tools to gather data regarding recreational use of the county’s surface water resources. The Surface Water User Survey project, which includes four separate phases, is intended to gather data from as many of the surface waters of Dane County as possible. These survey projects intend to capture a snapshot of the economic impact of surface water recreation that will be useful in eventually developing a recreational use management plan sometime in the future.

We continued to work with David Trechter and Shelly Hadley, our contacts at the UWRF SRC, who developed the overall survey plan and tools. The general population survey developed by Shelly and David was designed to gather information on the number of Dane County residents (only) and how they currently use the surface water resources of the county. It was mailed to 1,200 Dane County residents in the fall of 2010. The data gathered from this initial survey helped to refine the intercept survey, which began in late May 2011, to ascertain where users are from and what activity(ies) they are engaging in.

Interns interviewed people at landings, beaches, walking paths and other locations on or near the water. The survey sought primarily what activity people were engaging in and where they were from. It also sought how many others were along and if overnight accommodations were part of the trip.

Included in this report is an example of a survey from this phase of the project as well as summaries provided by UWRF SRC.

This project was the second survey tool in the third phase of a four-phase process: (1.) develop survey tools, (2.) implement three different surveys, (3.) analyze data and (4.) use the data to develop management plans and recommendations.

The final survey will be implemented the fall of 2013 and will target specific types of users, such as anglers, paddlers, boaters, etc. to gather economic data. After the completion of the final survey, all data from all the surveys will be analyzed together to develop a picture of the lakes’ economic contribution.