

Bayfield County Lakes Forum Communications Outreach

Report for SPL-150-08

Because of the DNR Small Lake Planning Grant awarded to the Bayfield County Lakes Forum, this organization succeeded in greatly improving its ability to communicate with its member lake groups, non-member groups, individual shoreland property owners, general lake users, Consortium members, political leaders and the general public. The BCLF also was able to help educate and train many individuals using these funds. The following is an excerpt from a news release that offers a profile of the success of this project:

“This new education grant is very similar to our 2008 grant,” said BCLF President Jim Brakken of Cable. “Last year we received \$3,000 from the DNR, making it possible for us to publish our ‘prototype’ newsletter, revise and upgrade our website and send folks to lake education events. It was such a success that we decided to apply again this year. With the help from this grant, 5,000 BCLF newsletters were distributed. They contained articles that encourage responsible use of our water resources and help folks make sound decisions regarding their waterfront properties. The feedback we received was all great. The funds also allowed us to send 44 folks from our county to the Northwest Lakes Conference and 11 more to Clean Boats – Clean Waters training. The CB-CW training gives participants in-depth knowledge of aquatic invasive species and qualifies people to work as landing monitors,” he concluded.

The BCLF grant was matched by over \$1,900 invested in the project by the BCLF along with contributions from its Directors. In addition, over 800 hours of work were donated by over 70 individuals supporting the project.

“This project also allowed us to create a new BCLF logo and revise and publish our membership brochure,” said Brakken. “Without this grant and the DNR’s Small Grant Program, we would not have been able to conduct these important outreach and communication projects,” he said. “Several of our regional partner county-wide lake groups are now looking into similar efforts.”

“This \$3,000 grant was awarded to the BCLF by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. It is funded by the marine fuel tax also known as the ‘motor boat gas tax’, Brakken added. “It’s the tax we all pay when we buy gas for our boats. No additional taxes or funds are used. These grants are wonderful opportunities for lake organizations to educate folks about the sensitive nature of our waters without impacting the Bayfield County or the Wisconsin State budget,” he said.

The BCLF is a citizen volunteer organization not linked with the Bayfield County government. It represents over 20 lake associations and one lake district as well as the many non-organized lakes and streams in the county. The BCLF works to preserve and enhance the scenic, natural, recreational and economic values of Bayfield County lakes, streams and shorelands.

Copies of the BCLF newsletter can be ordered at www.bayfieldcountylakes.org and lake groups wishing for assistance in writing similar grants should contact jim.brakken@yahoo.com. Individual memberships in BCLF are also available on the website.