



Press Release: For Immediate Release

Kangaroo Lake Association's Fish Sticks Project

February 14, 2015, Kangaroo Lake, Baileys Harbor

Baileys Harbor, WI--The Kangaroo Lake Association, in partnership with The Nature Conservancy and partially funded by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, will begin placing "Fish Sticks" in Kangaroo Lake on February 14th, according to Tom Schneider, Kangaroo Lake Association president.

"The Fish Sticks project attempts to balance homeowners' desire to enjoy their lake property with habitat and shoreline where aquatic plants, large and small fish, birds, reptiles, animals and all of nature in general can thrive," said Schneider.

Fish Sticks are mid-sized trees that have been harvested elsewhere, transported to a lake and placed in the near shore, shallow water where they are then anchored to the shoreline.

The Nature Conservancy owns land on Kangaroo Lake and is donating about 14 trees from a planned tree thinning project, which Harbor Lumber of Baileys Harbor will cut and drag to the lake. Volunteers will move trees by hand and with ATVs across the ice and place and secure them in eight locations. Each location will have a Fish Stick complex of two trees placed perpendicular to the shoreline, crossed and secured to each other and to the shoreline with cable to prevent movement after ice-out when they will sink into the lake.

"This innovative conservation project will have multiple benefits for Kangaroo Lake," said Mike Grimm, conservation ecologist with The Nature Conservancy. "The partially submerged trees will provide habitat for many fish and invertebrates in the lake, protect the shoreline from wave erosion, provide calmer waters where submerged plants can get established, providing even more habitat for fish and other creatures. They will also provide resting and feeding sites for frogs, turtles, dragonflies and many lakeshore birds, particularly flycatchers and kingfishers."

A study conducted by the University of Wisconsin's Center for Limnology in northern Wisconsin and Upper Michigan showed that there are significantly more trees and other woody debris in undeveloped lakes than in developed lakes. Ninety-two percent of the life in a lake has its origin at the shoreline. When logs and trees are absent in the water at the shoreline, the number and size of fish decline. Songbirds disappear from the shoreline, frogs and turtles are all but eliminated and healthy aquatic plants are reduced significantly.

This approach to protect shoreline and improve fish habitat has been used successfully in other places, including Douglas and Bayfield counties where it helped reduce the impact of developments on lake shorelines.

A three-year Shoreline Preservation and Restoration Planning grant, which the Kangaroo Lake Association received from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources in 2014, supports the Fish Sticks Project and the Bulrush Restoration Project already under way on Kangaroo Lake.

"With the success of these first-year efforts, we hope more shoreline landowners will participate in our effort to balance the development that has occurred over the years with shoreline restoration according to Mother Nature," Schneider commented.

For more information, contact: Tom Schneider, President of the Kangaroo Lake Association, 608-217-9460; or Mike Grimm, Conservation Ecologist, The Nature Conservancy, 920-743-8695.