

“Guys on Ice II”—2015 KLA Fish Sticks Installation

Our team of workers was fantastic—especially how we worked so well together to get this work done in “beautiful conditions.” The temperature was 3 degrees when we started with wind chill increasing to -25 degrees. Team members were: Tom’s son in law, Tim Meindl, Tom Anschutz, Bill Andersen (from the island), Steve Cooney, Dave Hoffman (Liz’s husband), George Bezold (Walter Schoof’s nephew), and Mike Grimm from The Nature Conservancy. We can add Dan Barnowsky and his two man crew who “harvested” the trees from the Nature Conservancy land near the boat launch on Friday. Tom Anschutz, Tim, and I drove around the lake Friday late afternoon doing some plowing and visiting the unique challenges of the 7 sites. Dan Barnowsky and crew had move the cut trees to the ice on Friday so we could have “clear sailing” (pun intended) Saturday morning early. Tom Anschutz’ 4 wheel drive truck was the key to our success with the plow and the ability to drag trees. I was relieved on Friday night when we pulled one tree over in front of our property on the west shore—the trees would move on the ice!

Tom revisited sites on Saturday morning early clearing some snow paths to the sites. By 8:15, we hit the ice as a team starting on the west side of the lake at our place and Cooney’s. We had mechanical strategies in mind how we’d get these trees on the shoreline and on top of each other, be decided with our 8 guys, we could “wrestle,” lift, and hoist these trees as a team. We needed all the muscle and brains we had! The west side was more protected from the northwest wind earlier in the morning. Then, the winds really picked up. We moved the rest of the trees mostly to the south end: 2 at Bob Schoof’s, 4 at Bezold’s, 2 at Hoffman’s, and 2 at Leach’s. Doesn’t sound like much—but it provided, with the weather, all the challenges we wanted. These guys were such a cooperative team. There were quite a few times when guys just got “mowed over” while lifting and hoisting the trees as a group. Our feet sometimes were hard to move in the snow at the same pace the group was moving the trees—getting caught by a branch—every one of us hit the snow and ice at times. We started to secure the trees—got one set done, but needed to go to Nelson’s to purchase a bigger cable cutter. 3/8’s galvanized cable is big and strong. After one set, I decided we needed the whole team getting these trees placed and we would complete the securing at a later date in better weather conditions. With 24”+ of ice, we have some time. Steve Cooney and Dave Hoffman had their 4-wheel trucks on the ice as well. There were plenty of times we were 200’ from the east shore and we couldn’t even see land. Team members were very smart in protecting themselves and their skin with clothing and in-truck breaks. Mike Grimm from the Nature Conservancy was a great trooper as well. We would get one tree on shore so it could be attached to another live tree. Getting the second tree on top of the first tree wasn’t easy. Most of these trees were 8”+ in diameter and 30’-40’+ long. By the end, some of the trees awaiting delivery became almost lost in snow drifts by the boat launch—which became a challenge to move. We needed Tom Anschutz’ plow to get off the ice by the boat launch because the east side blowing/drifted snow had was really challenging us.

On behalf of all of the members of the board and our KLA, thanks guys, for all of your volunteer extra efforts. The grant provided resources for a lunch for volunteers at the Coyote (no, we didn’t sit out on the deck thank you very much)—and an opportunity for most of us who hadn’t worked closely together, to see what we looked like when our blizzard clothes were removed from our faces. ☺ I’ve already received a couple of requests for “fish stick placements” for next winter—some from folks I don’t even know, but read it in the Milwaukee Journal. I’m very pleased we will be able to combine some of our bulrush strategy experiments with our fish stick placements. We all can be proud of our efforts to improve the quality of Kangaroo Lake which we all love! Happy Valentine’s Day! ☺