

Eagle River Chain of Lakes Association, Inc
Sunday, July 27, 2025 at 4109 Braywood Ln, Eagle River WI
Annual Membership Minutes-Approved

At 11:04 AM the annual membership meeting was called to order by President Chuck Berg with the Pledge of Allegiance. A quorum of members was confirmed and a list of attendees is on file with the Secretary.

President Chuck Berg opened the meeting with a year in review: Membership and volunteer support are at record levels and enthusiasm for our projects is high. The Board of Directors are hard working, engaged and enthusiastic. Everyone has a positive attitude, is readily available and brings varied backgrounds to the table. Our Eurasian Milfoil (EWM) efforts are ongoing and will be discussed in detail today. Mother Nature can throw us curveballs but we try to stay ahead of it as our board members and volunteers respond quickly to your concerns. The good news for 2025 is the three (3) year DNR grant awarded to the Unified Lower Eagle River Chain of Lakes Commission. The Commission continues to work very well with the WI DNR, Onterra and ERCLA in the fight against EWM. We have also seen a positive response to our Shoreline Restoration program and more projects are forthcoming. To talk about health and safety on the chain today, we have a Sheriff Deputy and a Warden in attendance to answer your questions.

Scott Peterson, Vice President of Finance and Nomination Committee member, presented the nominees for a two year term on ERCLA's Board of Directors: Cranberry Lake Captain Michael Queoff, Duck Lake Captain Marc Groth, Scattering Rice Captain Howard VanDyke, Watersmeet Lake Captain Hugh (Skip) McCann, Lynx Lake Captain Bill Krostue and Director Jody Voight. With no further nominations from the floor, the nominations were closed. President Chuck Berg entertained a motion to elect the Nominees to a 2 year term. Motion made and seconded by Tim Cross and Bill Marshall. Motion carried.

Secretary Teri Stecker asked for a motion to waive the reading of the 2024 meeting minutes and approve as provided in the handouts. So moved and seconded by Jim Logan and Vern Kramer. Motion carried.

Scott Peterson, Vice President of Finance, presented the 2024 Year End Financial report found in the meeting packet. Our primary funds continue to be with Peoples State Bank as they offer a very good interest rate. The account balance is monitored to be compliant with FDIC protections. Our taxes and WI Dept of Revenue filings are prepared by an independent accounting firm. Bill Marshall reported on an independent audit of ERCLA's financials and found everything to be in order. Motion made and seconded by Teri Stecker and Mary Ehler to approve the Treasurer's report as presented. Motion carried.

Dave Mueller, Otter Lake Captain, ERCLA's Aquatic Invasive Species(AIS) Coordinator and the Commission Treasurer's expanded on the WI DNR awarding the Commission a 3 year control grant for 2025-2027. EWM is in a monitoring and control phase and the \$150,000 grant money will be applied during the next 3 years to offset the expense of the Hand Harvesting by D.A.S.H. Aquatic Services, Onterra's early season survey and their late season peak biomass survey. Your individual lake report with EWM activity is on the Commission website noted on the top of the handout. ERCLA continues to contract interns for Clean Boats/Clean Water inspections at boat landings and ERCLA volunteers regularly take chemistry samples to monitor the water quality and health of our chain.

Marc Groth is Duck Lake Captain, ERCLA's Shoreline Restoration Chair and Commission Secretary. He reported on the partnership with Vilas County Land & Water Conservation Department's Healthy Lakes and Rivers Program. Their Grant funds are available up to \$1,000 reimbursement for improvements to your waterfront shorelines using any of these five best practices: fish sticks, native planting 350 sqft, diversion, rock infiltration and/or rain gardens. ERCLA committee members offer support for the direction of your projects and with grant writing. Marc also reported the WDNR requires our Aquatic Plant Management (APM) Plan renew every 5 years as a requirement for control grant fund eligibility. The WDNR grant timelines works with Onterra timelines, so the plan should be approved without issue. A WDNR biologist works alongside ERCLA with program advice. This renewal process starts this fall with our renewal

application to the WDNR and runs until Fall 2027 with a wrap-up meeting. The process includes significant planning, committee commitments, stakeholder participation survey, water quality assessment, aquatic plant surveys and reporting all results.

Alan Wirt is Vilas County Land & Water Department Conservationist and Department head. There are 5 top reasons we travel north: Loons, Campfire, Fireflies, Sunsets and Water. Stewardship is up to everyone and they have programs to help waterfront property owners. Eurasian Watermilfoil (EWM) is a symptom of ecology issues and we (collectively) are the problem. Previously DNR grant work, stream work and water quality costs were shared program with county funds. They carefully monitor the water trend in WI River where it leaves this county going south. A top priority of VCL&W is its goal to enhance clean, good water. We need to protect water from saline (Salt) issues, phosphorus and other chemicals. ERCLA's regular chemistry tests, recordkeeping and reporting accuracy are vital in monitoring water quality on the Chain.

Lawrence Esslinger, WDNR senior treaty fisheries biologist in Woodruff shared that habitat on the chain was surveyed in Spring 2025. Results show strong, healthy fishery. Other lakes show walleye fisheries are suffering. Protect what is here, as walleye habitat is very sensitive. Broadcast spawn on rocks and gravel. Panfish has a broad basis for reproduction. The fact that no fish stocking is needed on the Chain is a positive sign of healthy lakes. WDNR cannot manually reproduce the effects of nature in the fish stocking process. Q - Small fish size limit to increase walleye? A - WDNR considers size of harvest but no minimum length is recommended as it promotes stunting. They want the habitat to increase in size naturally. Q - Perch has black spots is it a disease? A - natural occurrence in nature after lengthy reproduction. It is not health harming and if you fry fish to well done it will kill any parasite. Q - Minocqua walleyes are not reproducing? A - It's clear water habitat reduces aquatic plants. The Chain has stained water which is good for walleyes, perch is abundant and musky is high density and high catch rate.

Jason Molle, Vilas County Sheriff Deputy and Recreation Officer reported the Sheriff's patrol was on the Chain for 15 days so far in 2025. Officers gave 47 warnings, 17 tickets, responded to 1 accident and received 2 called in complaints. During the 4th of July Holiday weekend patrol officers were on their own time. Sheriff Department is under staffed and can't give more hours. Funding is not the problem as hiring personnel is limited.

Tim Price is WDNR Conservation Warden at the Eagle River Station for 20 yrs with prior experience at Lake Geneva and Walworth Counties. Team of 3 Conservation Wardens are in Vilas County at Eagle River, Presque Isle/Land O'Lakes and Sayner/St Germain locations. Warden boats are unmarked and they checked anglers on the Chain this morning. They also handle summer complaints and inspections for shoreline, piers and wetland fill. Tim answered specific questions: Wearable life jackets and throw cushion must be immediately accessible on your watercraft. Under age of 12 life jackets must be worn. On paddle boards a life vest must on board but not required to be on. If pulling rafts and tubes behind watercraft all users need life vests on, regardless of age. If Lily pads are anchored no vests are required, if unmoored life vests are required. Buoy permitting starts at WDNR and municipality's local levels and goes through upper management to finalize and approve. Tim was involved in the Eagle River buoy process with the City. The orange/red Balls and markers in riparian zones need to follow WDNR rules on size and distance to be legal. Lastly, please share the natural resources and use common courtesy and common sense out there.

Larry Springer, Deerskin River Riparian, indicated sediment is from 2001 removal of a dam and the remedy is hydraulic dredging. Sediment affects spawning, water quality, property values and limits owners access to the Chain's waterways. The Governor vetoed the line item in the Budget so they are looking at alternatives. Larry penned an article, Understanding River Dredging and the Deerskin Situation, at: pdwire.com

Motion made by Jeff Emmerich and seconded by Teri Cohen to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed.

2025 Meeting of Members adjourned at 1:00 PM.

Minutes prepared by ERCLA Secretary Teri Stecker