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# County, City, Community Foundation Respond to YLA Appeal for Lake Vision

By  
Doug Bach, YLA President

The YLA and all who love the lakes won a significant victory this fall when the Dane County Board included an unprecedented amendment authorizing \$140,000 for lake restoration planning and implementation. The City of Madison Common Council caught a bit of the spirit, as well, chipping in \$25,000 from its own budget. These funds are supplemented by an additional \$50,000 from the Madison Community Foundation, to be funneled through the non-profit organizations, Clean Wisconsin and Gathering Waters. The DNR has the process as a partner, and will dedicate staff time and possible future funding.

The call for a community vision to guide restoration efforts for the Yahara Lakes began in 2006 when local historian and YLA member, David Mollenhoff, delivered an inspirational speech to the North American Lake Management Society meeting held in Madison. The YLA picked up the cause in May of last year when it sponsored its highly successful conference, 'Realizing the Vision – the Future of the Yahara Lakes'. At that conference, YLA unveiled its own vision, and challenged local governments and the community to take on the charge for lake restoration.

The County is currently negotiating a Memorandum of Understanding with the DNR that lays out how

the two organizations will work together and with the community to advance the initiative. Calling the initiative Project CLEAN, for Capital Lakes Environmental Assessment and Needs, the draft MOU has four key elements:

- Engage government and community organizations to develop a common vision for the future of the lakes

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## Responding to YLA Vision Continued from page 1

- Model existing nutrient and sediment loadings to the lakes
- Develop attainable goals for reducing pollutants based on the vision and model results
- Identify specific actions needed to attain the goals.

The process is being further facilitated by the Dane County Lakes and Watershed Commission, who has formed a subcommittee to bring together County, City, DNR and non-profit staff to coordinate the use of resources and funds.

No one should expect that this initial funding will solve the issues facing the lakes, but these funding initiatives provide a hopeful start and a significant step in the right direction. YLA applauds these efforts and will remain an active player in the process. Please tell your County Commissioner and City Council Representatives that you support these efforts and hope to see more of the same in the future.

## The Vision Made Visible in Your Home

Don't miss the opportunity to own your own version of the YLA Lakes Conference last May featuring: David Mollenhoff, Historian; Dick Lathrop with the DNR & UW-Madison Limnology Dept.; Kevin Connors, Head of Land & Water Resource Division, just to name a few of the speakers. Introduction by Kathleen Falk. Cost \$25. Contact [yla@mailbag.com](mailto:yla@mailbag.com) or 848-1450 to place your order.

## The Membership Has Its Privileges!!!

We appreciate your consistent support & challenge you in 2008 to help increase our membership by encouraging your fellow neighbors to join this Lake Property Owners nonprofit organization which works to improve and preserve the lakes and rivers in the Yahara chain of lakes in south central Wisconsin. Benefits include: networking, education, representation, Lake Views quarterly newsletter, YLA member alerts, Annual banquet and our Web site [www.yaharalakes.org](http://www.yaharalakes.org). There is no better time to get involved!!

**Did you know** . . . the Yahara River is not the only water that empties into Lake Monona? Starkweather Creek on its northern shore and Murphy Creek near Olin-Turville park also feed Lake Monona.

# Progress Report

## Dane County Community Manure Management Feasibility Study

The feasibility study is nearing completion, with over half the sections written in draft format and the final report expected to be complete in less than two months.

As noted in the last update, the consultants – Strand Associates, along with sub-consultants from the UW-Platteville and Gene Kroupa Associates – had submitted several draft sections of the final report for County review, including:

- The summary of farmer survey responses
- The selection of clusters for detailed analyses
- Descriptions of technologies and markets
- Configurations/flow diagrams of eight systems for more detailed analysis

In the July update, eight technologies and configurations/flow diagrams that were proposed to be studied in more detail were listed. After further review, the list of technologies was modified, and an estimate was provided of the phosphorus separation that could be achieved for each system. These systems are:

### Individual farms

1. Fine solids separation (e.g., Dynapress) with polymer addition; solids to compost or other disposal. Phosphorus removal is estimated at 40-50%
2. Anaerobic digestion followed by fine solids separation and polymer, along with chemical phosphorus removal; estimated phosphorus removal is 60-80%
3. Fine solids separation with polymer addition and chemical phosphorus removal; solids to compost or other disposal. An estimated 60-80% of the phosphorus would be removed.

### Joint or community systems

1. Fine solids separation with polymer; solids to composting or other disposal. Phosphorus removal is estimated at 40-50%.
2. Fine solids separation with polymer; chemical phosphorus removal; solids to compost or other disposal. It is expected that 60-80% phosphorus would be removed.
3. Anaerobic digestion plus fine solids separation with polymer and chemical phosphorus removal; solids to composting or other disposal. 60-80% phosphorus removal is expected.
4. Fine solids separation with polymer; chemical phosphorus removal; drying and pelletizing; 60-80% removal of phosphorus is expected
5. Drying and combustion; this would remove nearly 100% of the phosphorus, which would be concentrated in the ash.

# Update On Piers

By  
Chuck Dykman

An update on last year's legislative action on piers is easy. A lot of sound and fury, legislative posturing and special interest lobbying. But after all was said and done, the result was - Nothing! There was Senate's the "Great Compromise" which involved all the special interests, the assembly and the Governor's office. But in the end, a power struggle developed between Governor Doyle and Speaker Gard. The speaker inserted a minor change in the permitted configuration of boat loading platforms (we call them decks), the Senate reluctantly agreed, but the Governor vetoed the bill, asserting that Speaker Gard had gone back on the "Great Compromise" that everyone had agreed upon. YLA and several YLA members took part in the ongoing discussions, although YLA was not one of the players in the great compromise. Still, YLA's views on workable and fair pier legislation was heard, and some of YLA's views were included in the compromise. Was it YLA's actions that did this? Who knows? Everyone takes credit for legislation that passes, but only a few brag that a bill they supported failed.

So, that leaves YLA members (and everyone else) governed by two statutes, 30.12 and 30.13 and an administrative rule, NR 326, the DNR's "Pier Planner" (not a rule or a statute) and various municipal regulations. The most important are the statutes. 30.12(1g) effectively limits piers to no wider than 6 feet, no longer than the 3 foot water depth or the length necessary to moor a boat or use a boat hoist, *whichever is less*. Decks which exceed 6 feet in any direction are not permitted. 30.13 also regulates piers, possibly in conflict with 30.12. Its restrictions are more subjective. A pier is permitted if it doesn't interfere with public or private rights, doesn't violate any municipal ordinance and doesn't prevent the free flow of water beneath it. No court case has examined the relationship between the two statutes. NR 326 prohibits piers that extend beyond the line of navigation (generally the 3 foot water depth) or the length of the boat using the pier unless the riparian shows a need for a longer pier. An interesting note: If adjacent pier owners

have a dispute, the DNR will determine each's riparian rights under NR 326.07. Since the "Pier Planner" is not a rule or statute, it shouldn't be "law," though a court case says that it is a "starting place" for a reasonableness determination by the Department of Administration's Division of Hearings and Appeals in a dispute over boat hoists. Check with your municipality for any rules pertinent to the municipality. For instance, Monona has a requirement that a pier must be set back at least 7 feet from any side yard lot line. (A "don't crowd your neighbor" rule)

You can see the need for legislative change. Rep. Scott Gunderson has revived the bill Governor Doyle vetoed, minus the part that the Governor said breached the "great compromise." Rep. Gunderson's office says that there will be a hearing on the bill "soon" and that it will probably be passed in the Assembly and sent to the Senate. YLA will post the meeting date on its web site. YLA and its members will continue to advocate for changes in the statutes.

## Calendar of Events

Lakes & Watershed Commission Meetings: Second Thursday of month at 5:15pm One Fen Oak Court Room 234

Bundle up and enjoy the winter activities this four-season city has to offer. Sled, skate, ski, snowshoe or snowmobile at one of our many parks. Cross-County Ski along a candle-lit path at **Lake Kegonsa State Park** in **Stoughton**. The next Candlelight Ski will take place on **February 10** from 6-9 p.m. And on most Sundays, take a guided walk along the snow-covered trails at the **UW-Madison Arboretum**.

**Christy's Landing** on Lake Waubesa: **February 3rd** - Annual Superbowl of Golf! **February 9th** - McFarland/Waubesa Snowbirds Radar Run

Call Christy's for more information. 608-222-5391

## Know Your Lakeshore . . .

### SuperStar Status . . . . in 1907

By Don Sanford

The Red Gym is a Madison landmark. Today it serves the UW campus as the Campus Visitors Center and much more. One hundred years ago the Armory was Madison's largest performance venue.



*UW Boathouse circa 1909*

When it opened on May 24, 1894 the building was hailed as the finest and largest building of its kind on any university campus in the United States. Students and officials requested better facilities for athletic and military training. Armories also answered the need for facilities that would help address the growing concerns about response to civil unrest and riots that seemed to be sweeping the country in the late 1800's. Madison architects Conover and Porter designed the building to answer both needs.

Outside, the massive wooden doors, small windows and red brick turrets give the visitor only the smallest hint of the interesting spaces inside. Upon entering the building on opening day you would have found a 196 x 106 foot-gymnasium; the commandant's office, complete with a fireproof safe for the storage of ammunition; bowling alleys and a swimming "tank" on the first floor.

On the second floor, a drill hall (160 X 93 feet) and the gun storage room. On the third floor, another gymnasium (160 X 65 feet). On the same floor were rifle ranges, a running track, meeting rooms, rowing machines and other apparatus.

The Badgers played basketball here until the Field House opened in 1930. The building was used for political gatherings featuring William Jennings Bryan and Robert M. ("Fighting Bob") LaFollette.

Now what about our superstar? Pablo Casals, Ignatz Paderewski, and the Russian and New York Symphony Orchestras all performed here. W. T. Purdy performed his new fight song, "On Wisconsin," here in 1909. They were big names, to be sure. But it was the arrival of John Phillip Sousa and his band on November 27, 1907 that put the Armory on Madison's cultural map.

Sousa was a musical superstar long before anyone defined the term. Sousa and his band were the first to travel more than a million miles on their concert tours. Two concerts were scheduled that day. Sousa was on the podium for the matinee. However, the great bandmaster was ill that evening. Coronet player Herbert L. Clark, veteran member of Sousa's band was on the podium for the evening concert. A reviewer for the Wisconsin State Journal noted that it was a pleasure to hear "such splendid and well played instruments."

Stop in sometime and imagine what it must have been like to enter this grand building 100 years ago. It only would have set you back 75 cents for a reserved seat. Listen carefully. Perhaps you can hear "By the Light of the Polar Star" echoing in the rafters.

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**Don Sanford** is a Captain on the Betty Lou Cruise Line. He is currently researching "On Fourth Lake, *A Social History Tour of Lake Mendota*." He welcomes your comments, recollections and anecdotes at: [dpsanford@charter.net](mailto:dpsanford@charter.net) or at 255-1508.

Reprinted from The Capital Times

## Vision and Cooperation Vital to Lakes Cleanup

*Letter to the Editor from Peter Nowak*

Kudos to The Capital Times for Rob Zaleski's reporting, and your recent editorial, on the status and future of the Yahara lakes. Besides the newfound sense of urgency you describe, we need one additional element to improve water quality in our lakes: a more imaginative and creative sense of the possible when looking for solutions.

Yes, manure is the major source of nutrients entering the lakes. But more cost-sharing funds, more holes in the ground lined with concrete, or even more regulation are not the answer. These proposed solutions do not acknowledge the unique constraints faced by livestock farmers living in our watershed, and they fail to simultaneously address multiple city and county problems.

A dairy farmer operating in the vicinity of the Yahara lakes faces very different challenges than a dairy farmer operating, for example, in Dunn or Clark counties. I can assure you that Dane County farmers understand that proper management means spreading manure according to agronomic needs and the capacity of the environment to absorb it. So why does it end up in our lakes?

The simple answer is that farmers have no control over production costs or market prices; the only way to increase income to meet rising costs is through expanding herd size. More cows, more manure. Then comes the kicker: Development leaves less land on which to safely spread manure. It also means higher prices for existing land, congested roads hindering distribution of manure, and more complaints about odor when manure is spread on cropland. Now, before we seek the quick fix and tell these farm families, many of whom have been farming in this area for well over a hundred years, to sell their land to developers and move elsewhere, it is time to seek out more imaginative approaches.

One of the most promising -- community biodigesters -- is mentioned in the Zaleski article. The process of "digesting" manure to produce methane

as an energy source is an old technology that in its modern form is often too expensive and too complex for each farmer to adopt. But a cooperative approach could make it technically and financially feasible, especially if we factor in benefits such as farmland preservation in the Yahara watershed.

Let's sweeten the deal by pointing out that we can also help address climate change by investing in community biodigesters. (A recent article in the journal *Science* pointed out that the bioenergy source that most effectively reduces overall greenhouse gas emissions in an environmentally sound fashion is not ethanol from corn or switch grass, but rather animal manure.)

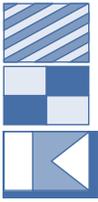
Community biodigesters will also help keep municipal food wastes out of the landfill, reduce our reliance on imported agricultural fertilizers, and produce homegrown energy.

How much energy could the 48,000 cows in Dane County produce? How many farmland preservation dollars can we save by finding new ways to help keep existing farms profitable and in business? To what extent could we enhance the profitability of area businesses by providing a local source of heat or energy? We're not adequately exploring these questions because we are still locked in yesterday's debate on the inadequate policy approaches of the last century.

The sense of urgency that developed out of the Yahara Lakes Association conference, co-sponsored by UW-Madison's Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies last spring, is only the beginning. Investing in strategically designed and located community manure biodigesters could prove to be much more than a convenience to Dane County livestock farmers. These devices could address multiple problems in a cost-effective fashion, create an alliance between farmer and city dweller, and perhaps most importantly, demonstrate the kind of creative thinking and innovation our children and grandchildren will need to address complex environmental problems they will face.

*Peter Nowak is a professor of environmental studies in the Nelson Institute at UW-Madison.*





## NEWSLETTER

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