

LILLY LAKE NEWS

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Lilly Lake Pre-Dredge ~1977

- ◆ Max Depth: 6 ft
- ◆ 30 ft of underlying organic sediments
- ◆ Heavy weed growth
- ◆ Poor water quality
- ◆ Fish kills common
- ◆ Restricted recreational use.

Lilly Lake Post-Dredge ~1981

- ◆ Max Depth: 22 ft
- ◆ 800,000 cubic yards of sediment removed
- ◆ Improved water quality
- ◆ Reconnection to groundwater
- ◆ Recreational use greatly enhanced

DREDGING OF LILLY LAKE

PART 1

For many of us, it is difficult to imagine what Lilly Lake used to look like. We take for granted the clear water, the swimming beach, and recreation opportunities. If you are one of the more “experienced” residents, you probably have some stories about what the lake was like. In the next few editions of this newsletter, the story will be told of how the lake went from a shallow, poor water quality lake to one of the higher quality lakes in southeastern Wisconsin.

Historically, problems with the lake were well known (see side bar, and photo below) and several efforts over the years were implemented to improve the lake. In 1974, the Lilly Lake Restoration District was formed by a Town of Wheatland resolution after advisory petitions and public hearings indicated that the majority of the residents were in favor of its formation. The first annual meeting was held in August 1974. In 1976, the name “protection” was added to the name.

Finances for the project (totaling \$730,000) were obtained in three ways: local property owners in the district would pay \$225,000, state grant and contributions of \$155,000 were obtained, and the remaining \$350,000 came from the federal EPA Clean Lakes program.

One of the main obstacles for the project was to find a disposal site for the dredge spoils. After an extensive search, an inactive gravel pit was located about two miles southeast of the lake and an additional 160 acres of farmland were found nearby.

Agreements had to be made with the landowners not only of the gravel pit and farmland, but also approximately 11 landowners between the lake and the disposal sites where the pipeline carrying the dredge material was placed. The lake was to be hydrologically dredged, meaning a barge with a long arm with a cutter head at the end would cut away at the bottom sediments creating a slurry which would then be sucked into a pipe and pumped all the way to the disposal site. This slurry would then settle.

After a long period of grants, permits, leases, and meetings with residents, government officials, attorneys, tax experts, engineers, technicians, and contractors, the dredging began on July 17, 1978. What a day that must have been for everyone working on the project! Check out the next newsletter for the “rest of the story”.

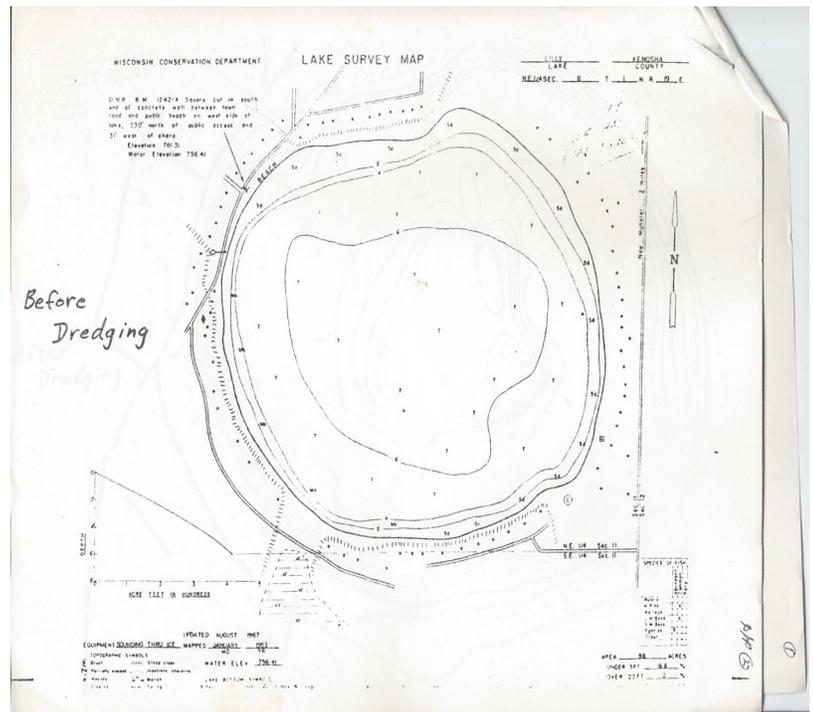


One of the many fish kills in Lilly Lake that occurred prior to dredging.

DREDGING, CONTINUED



An aerial photo in the 1970s of Lilly Lake prior to dredging. You can see how shallow the lake is and the dense weed growth.



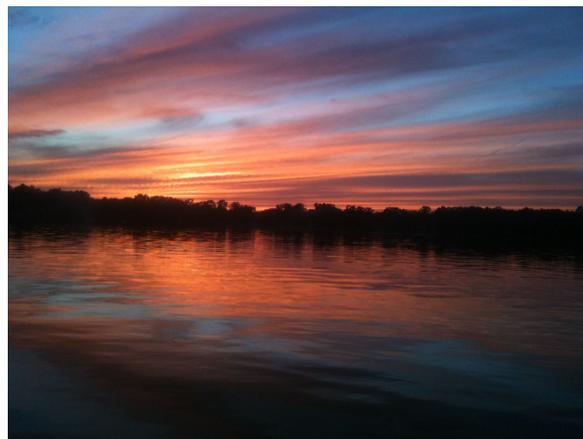
This bathymetric map of Lilly Lake was created prior to the dredging. Although it is hard to see, the maximum depth was only six feet. The dredging plan was to remove approximately 800,000 cubic feet of sediment.

FINALLY! WINTER IS OVER!

Planning for 2014

Do you have an idea for our community? Want to include something in the newsletter?

Please contact:
Mike Adam at
balooadam@yahoo.com
or 262-537-2413.



Lilly Lake in Summer 2013. Photo from Marc Kaiser.