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## Tree drop planned on Shadow Lake

Angie Landsverk

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The city of Waupaca and Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources are working together to find ways to restore Shadow Lake's shoreline.

One of the recommendations for the lake is a tree drop, and the city hopes to start such a program this winter.

A study about lakes showed the No. 1 issue nationwide, particularly in Wisconsin, was the lakes lacked a natural habitat, said Ted Johnson, a water resource specialist in the DNR's Wautoma office.



Johnson was among those who attended an informational meeting Thursday, Oct. 31, by Shadow Lake to discuss the idea of a tree drop.

He recommended the program to the Friends of Mirror/Shadow Lakes as part of the lake management plan for the two lakes.

"It's something we can control," Johnson said.

A tree drop would benefit the fish and wildlife, he said.

The city will need to acquire a permit from the DNR to do a tree drop.

The permit, which costs about \$300, would be good for three years and could be extended, Scott Koehnke, a water management specialist in the DNR's Shawano office, told the group.

"We're talking about dropping them on the shoreline, but everything is on the table," Johnson said.

He said the fish and wildlife benefits of doing so are well documented.

Adding wood to a lake creates calm areas and that attracts fish, said Al Niebur, a fisheries biologist in the DNR's Shawano office.

Johnson said it also attracts herons, frogs, turtles and aquatic insects.

Koehnke said hardwoods are preferred for tree drops, because they last longer.

The city plans to do a tree drop on Shadow Lake this winter.

Johnson said tree drops are done during that time of the year, because it is easier to slide the trees around when everything is frozen.

It will be up to the city as to how many trees it drops on the lake and whether it does so all at once or in phases.

Niebur recommends cabling trees together with rope and tying boulders to them, so that when the ice melts, the trees sink.

"I like to tie boulders," he said. "because it's a natural material. Once the ropes decay away, you are left with natural materials."

Johnson said the city will have to plan where it wants to drop trees on its shoreline space.

"City crews will do the work here with DNR assistance," he said.

Koehnke said doing a tree drop on Mirror Lake could also be a possibility off of city property.

"The wood just offers a different habitat. It attracts everything," Niebur said.

Dropping trees in various areas also spreads out the fish populations, so they are not concentrated in one area, he said.

Koehnke said the city should also think about how such a project can benefit the local economy.

"When you make Shadow Lake a tourism attraction for fishing and bring natural shorelines back to properties, property values go up, data shows," he said.

A tree drop is just one way the city is working to create a more natural shoreline on Shadow Lake.

Aaron Jensen, the city's director of parks and recreation, said the Phase II grant for a renovation project at South Park includes \$10,000 for shoreline restoration.

"We're talking about doing a demonstration area with native plants and grasses," he said.

Restoring shorelines also helps to filter things out of lakes.

Jenson said the shoreline restoration project would also show area property owners how a shore with native plants and grasses can look nice.

"Hopefully, landowners, will catch on to that," he said.

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