



Photo by Jim Zons

STRATEGIC PLAN

A Guide to Improving Tainter Lake, Dunn County, WI

A five-year strategic plan to begin the journey of creating a cleaner, healthier Tainter Lake.

Created by:
Tainter Lake Rehabilitation District
Board of Commissioners
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Photo by Jim Zons

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INTRODUCTION

The Tainter Lake Rehabilitation District has developed a five-year strategic plan. This plan is based on a lake resident and property owner survey (Jan. 2024), community input through meetings/discussions (Feb./April 2024), TLRD commissioner input, and guidance from local/regional consultants. The purpose of this strategic plan is to create a set of goals to guide decision making and a comprehensive approach to research and project development for a cleaner and healthier Tainter Lake.

Thank you to all the community members, residents, and board members for their time and effort into making this document possible. This includes participating in surveys, community meetings, and board meetings. A special thank you to Renee Cance, PWS, CFM, and Senior Scientist of Short Elliott Hendrickson for her document review and guidance.

VISION AND MISSION

Vision

The vision for the Tainter Lake Rehabilitation District (TLRD) is a cleaner and healthy Tainter Lake for future generations.

Mission

Revitalize and protect Tainter Lake.

CORE VALUES

Action

Sustainable Conservation Practices

Collaboration

Education

Engagement

Accountability

Goals

The TLRD has identified five goals to improve the health and natural resources of Tainter Lake. The five goals are listed below and elaborated on in the following pages:

1. Improve water quality through nutrient management to reduce Blue/Green Algae (Cyanobacteria).
2. Reduction of accumulated sedimentation from the Red Cedar and Hay Rivers and shoreline erosion.
3. Prevention and intervention of invasive aquatic vegetation and other aquatic invasive species (AIS).
4. Build strong community partnerships, robust communication, and fundraising capacity with residents, property owners, and community members.
5. Protect the natural resources of Tainter Lake through the promotion and compliance of safe watercraft practices.

Goals/Objectives/Action Items

The five **goals** are stated and defined in this section. There are a number of **objectives** under each of the goals. The purpose of the objectives is to create a number of specific steps that have been identified in order to accomplish the goals. The objectives are further divided into a number of **action items** that will be taken to achieve the objectives. These steps will guide the management of the processes and allocation of resources for future projects.

While the stated goals will not change, the objectives and action items will be reviewed yearly and have the potential to be modified or changed to reflect evolving priorities and challenges facing the lake. The objectives and action items will be assigned and divided between the five years and the life of this strategic plan. The goals/objectives/action plans will be measured, reviewed and revised as a component of the TLRD Board of Commissioner annual planning and budget process. This planning, monitoring, and reporting process will aid in the effective management of Lake District resources.



Photo Provided by Adam Mucks

Goal #1: Improve water quality through nutrient management to reduce Blue/Green Algae (Cyanobacteria)

Definition-

Tainter Lake is plagued by blooms of cyanobacteria which progressively overcomes the lake from mid-June to September each year. The result is a lake which is unhealthy and unappealing for recreational purposes such as boating, swimming and fishing and a negative impact on aquatic vegetation and animals. By contributing to the effort to reduce the causes of algae blooms and direct interventions, the TLRD will aid in the improvement of the lake health and water quality.

Objectives-

1. Create a sustainable organizational structure to address water quality issues.

Action Items:

- a. Establish a standing subcommittee on water quality issues.

2. Assemble a body of research to support current and future water quality projects

Action Items:

- a. Identify causes of algae blooms and determine baseline data.
- b. Partner with UW-Stout to create research depository.
- c. Research methods of water quality improvements.
- d. Research and apply for grant funding options.

3. Select appropriate water quality improvement actions

Action Items:

- a. Identify water quality improvement activities.
- b. Present the Improvement activities and budget for approval at the Annual Meeting.
- c. Monitor and report yearly on the activities and measure progress against base line data.
- d. Identification of baseline data for yearly monitoring reports.
- e. Reduction of the carp in the lake.

4. Educate the public as to the water quality issues facing Tainter Lake.

- a. Identify feasible opportunities for public education.

5. Promote an additional monitoring site and expand monitoring metrics in both sections of (Upper and Lower) Tainter Lake.

Action Items:

- a. Coordinate the monitoring site with the WDNR.
- b. Add nitrogen and dissolved oxygen to the monitoring data.



Picture of Red Cedar Delta by Jeff Corley

Goal #2: Reduction of sedimentation accumulation of the Red Cedar and Hay Rivers and prevention of shoreline erosion

Definition-

Sedimentation is the by-product of erosion. The sediment that has been deposited in Lake Tainter is primarily due to sand banks along the Hay and Red Cedar Rivers (mostly the Red Cedar) washing away with the flow of the river. The island-like formation of sediment blocks lake access to homeowners, and limits travel to all lake users.

Sedimentation, shoreline erosion and runoff not only contribute to the filling in of the lake, but nutrients in the soil and sand add to the nutrient load of Tainter Lake.

Objectives-

1. Build the capacity of the TLRD to address challenges and opportunities in an organized and meaningful manner.

Action Item:

- a. Appoint a standing Sedimentation Committee.

2. Monitor the progress of sedimentation of the Red Cedar and Hay River deltas

Action Items:

- a. Conduct historical assessment of sedimentation growth.
- b. Monitor yearly channel depths.
- c. Partner with local, county, state and federal organizations to address erosion sites on the Red Cedar River.
- d. Report yearly the results of the sedimentation monitoring.

3. Research and study solutions to facilitate the reduction of sedimentation

Action Item:

- a. Develop a plan for navigation channel improvement.
- b. Research methods of opening channels economically.
- c. Develop a proposal for sedimentation reduction.
- d. Implement remediation and continue channel depth measurement.
- e. Contribute to the reduction of erosion sites upstream of Tainter Lake.

4. Research and develop a voluntary program to reduce shoreline erosion

Action Items:

- a. Write grants for shoreline improvement (Healthy Lakes Grant).
- b. Educate property owners of possible best practice of shoreline maintenance and of county/state shoreline ordinances.
- c. Educate elected officials from Dunn County and the state legislature about the challenges of improving water quality and reducing sedimentation.

5. Explore grant or other funding opportunities to address the sedimentation challenges.



Photo Provided by Chuck Tack

Goal #3: Prevention and intervention of invasive aquatic vegetation and other aquatic invasive species (AIS).

Definition-

Tainter Lake is facing the challenge of controlling the influx of invasive and nuisance aquatic vegetation. A sustainable aquatic plant management program to address the aquatic invasive vegetation is the primary tool for this effort. This plan must balance the protection of beneficial plants with the management of invasive species plants. TLRD will also address other AIS on a situational basis if other species are detected in Tainter Lake.

Objectives-

1. Build the capacity of the TLRD to address challenges and opportunities in an organized and meaningful manner.

Action Items:

- a. Appoint the Aquatic Plant standing committee.

2. Monitor the presence and prevalence of invasive aquatic vegetation

Action Items:

- a. Conduct periodic assessments of Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) plant types and their encroachment.
- b. Map the extent of dense vegetation where navigation is impaired.
- c. Periodic assessment of location, density, and variety of AIS.
- d. Educate the public of invasive aquatic plants.

3. Develop an aquatic vegetation management plan

Action Items:

- a. Contract for consultancy in management plan development.
- b. Seek grant funding for the development of an aquatic vegetation management plan.
- c. Research cost benefit of self-performing aquatic vegetation harvesting.
- d. Identify teaming partners for monitoring efforts (DNR, UW, county, volunteers, etc.)

4. Create intervention strategies as AIS species are identified (animals).



Goal #4: Build strong community partnerships and robust communication with residents and property owners.

Definition-

Tainter Lake is a small piece of the Red Cedar basin and the Menomonie area. As a component of this bigger picture, it is important to connect to the various communities and communicate with the people and institutions that support and use this natural resource. People working together are vital to creating a healthy lake system through providing human, financial and research resources. The communication of information that is timely, accurate and relevant concerning efforts to improve the health of Tainter Lake is foundational and vital to building a strong lake community.

Objectives-

1. Reduce the reliance on tax dollars for major lake district projects

Action Items:

- a. Establish a standing committee for the purpose of fundraising.
- b. Hold a community and/or fundraising event each year.
- c. Develop a fundraising and accounting tool that allows interested parties to donate to specific projects.
- d. Design an electronic platform for donations and planned giving.
- e. Honor donors and charitable givers yearly.

2. Communicate with lake district residents and community members in a timely and meaningful manner.

Action Items:

- a. Develop and maintain a comprehensive email roster of Lake District residents and community members.
- b. Seek shareholder participation in all standing or ad hoc committees.
- c. Subscribe to a software vendor to develop community connections and communications through email.
- d. Share TLRD information and educational material through a variety of methods.
- e. Engage the public in reporting of TLRD action items and collect feedback on progress towards TLRD objectives before December each year (survey, community meetings, etc.)

3. Research the potential advantages/disadvantages of developing a comprehensive lake management plan.

Action Items:

- a. Engage a consultant to aid in the writing of a management plan.
- b. Combine all existing TLRD plans and write a comprehensive lake management plan.

4. Develop partnerships with local, regional and state organizations

Action Items:

- a. Actively partner with UW-Stout and support at least one lake research or improvement project.
- b. Actively participate with other local and regional groups in conservation projects and/or initiatives impacting Tainter Lake.
- c. Educate the TLRD Board of the current conservation issues and practices affecting lake water quality and management.



Goal #5: Protect the natural resources of Tainter Lake through the promotion and compliance of safe watercraft practices.

Definition-

Water-based outdoor activities are very popular on Tainter Lake. This includes a number of activities from pontooning around the lake to floating in an inner tube off your dock. It is the goal of the TLRD to not only protect the natural resources of the lake, but to promote the safe use of water craft. This stewardship is not only targeting the minimizing of shoreline erosion, introduction of Invasive Aquatic Species (IAS) but the safe use of water craft. The use of Tainter Lake should be a safe and enjoyable experience for all who use the lake.

Objectives-

1. Build the capacity of the TLRD to address the challenges of safe water-based outdoor activities.

Action item:

- a. Appoint a standing Boating and Safety Committee.
- b. Meet on a regular schedule.
- c. Monitor potential future threats to the lake environment and/or safety concerns.

2. Develop local ordinance(s) that will protect and promote safe water-based activities.

Action item:

- a. Develop Slow-No Wake ordinance.
- b. Monitor and adjust the existing ordinance to minimize erosion and maximize boating safety.

3. Monitor potential future threats to safety or natural resources

Action item:

- a. Research potential threats.
- b. Educate or inform the TLRD Board of Commissioners of these threats.
- c. Recommend a course of action to minimize the threats.

4. Educate the public of safe watercraft use and the impact on the natural resources of Tainter Lake.

Action item:

- a. Conduct community meetings to share information and listen to public concerns.
- b. Improve signage at the boat landings.
- c. Provide information to the public through newsletters, podcasts, articles, and social media.

Appendix 1: Accomplishments

Accomplishments 2023-24

Tainter Lake Rehabilitation District completed the following activities:

- Applied and received a Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Surface Water Grant for strategic planning.
- Developed and implemented a comprehensive Board of Commissioners with four active ad hoc committees with three recommendations for lake district action.
- Development and recommendation of Safe Boating Ordinance.
- Completion of two Annual Meetings with project proposals and Commissioner elections.
- Active participation in regional conservation organizations.
- Developed cooperative relationships with UW-Stout science and research departments.
- DNR plant-weed survey (July 2024) on Tainter Lake at no charge to TLRD (savings of up to \$5000).
- Conducted a number of community input sessions for long-range planning.

Appendix 2: Plan Chart by Goal/Objective/Action Item

TARGET
YEAR

Goal #1 Improve water quality through nutrient management to reduce Blue/Green Algae (Cyanobacteria).

Objective 1. Create a sustainable organizational structure to address water quality issues

Actions a Establish standing subcommittee on cyanobacteria issues

Objective 2. Assemble a body of research to support current and future water quality projects

Actions a Identify causes of algae blooms and determine baseline data

b partner with UW-Stout to create research depository

c Research methods of water quality improvements

d Research grant funding options

Objective 3. Select appropriate water quality improvement actions

Actions a Identify water quality improvement activities

b Present the improvement activities and budget for approval at the Annual Meeting

c Monitor and report yearly on the activities and measure progress against base line data

d Identification of baseline data for yearly monitoring reports

e Reduction of the nuisance aquatic species (e.g. carp) that contribute to poor water quality

Objective 4. Educate the public as to the water quality issues facing Tainter Lake

Objective 5. Promote an additional testing site and expand monitoring metrics on both sections of Tainter Lake

Actions a Coordinate the monitoring site with the WDNR

b Add nitrogen and dissolved oxygen to the monitoring data

Goal #2 Reduction of sedimentation accumulation of the Red Cedar and Hay Rivers and prevention of shoreline erosion

Objective 1. Build capacity of the TLRD to address challenges and opportunities in an organized and meaningful manner

Actions a Appoint a standing Sedimentation Committee

Objective 2. Monitor the progress of sedimentation of the Red Cedar delta

Actions a Conduct historical assessment of sedimentation growth

b Monitor yearly channel depths

c Partner with local, county, state, and federal organizations to address erosion sites on the Red Cedar River

d Report yearly the results of the sedimentation monitoring

Objective **3. Research and study solutions to facilitate the reduction of sedimentation**

- Actions*
- a* Determine develop a plan for navigation channel improvement
 - b* Research methods of opening channels economically
 - c* Develop a proposal for sedimentation reduction
 - d* Implement remediation and continue channel depth measurement
 - e* Contribute to the reduction of erosion sites upstream of Tainter Lake

Objective **4. Research and develop a voluntary program to reduce shoreline erosion**

- Actions*
- a* Write grants for shoreline improvement (Healthy Lakes Grant).
 - b* Educate property owners of possible best practice of shoreline maintenance and of county/state shoreline ordinances
 - c* Educate elected officials from Dunn County and the state legislature of the challenges of improving water quality and reducing sedimentation

Goal #3 Prevention and intervention of invasive aquatic vegetation and other aquatic invasive species (AIS).

Objective **1. Build capacity of the TLRD to address challenges and opportunities in an organized and meaningful manner**

- Actions*
- a* Appoint the Aquatic Plant standing committee.

Objective **2. Monitor the presence and prevalence of invasive aquatic vegetation**

- Actions*
- a* Conduct periodic assessments of Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) plant types and their encroachment
 - b* Map the extent of dense vegetation where navigation is impaired
 - c* Periodic assessment of location, density, and variety of AIS
 - b* Educate the public of invasive aquatic plants

Objective **3. Develop an aquatic vegetation management plan**

- Actions*
- a* Contract for consultancy in management plan development (if needed)
 - b* Seek grant funding for the development of an aquatic vegetation management plan
 - c* Research cost benefit of self-performing aquatic vegetation harvesting
 - d.* Identify teaming partners for monitoring efforts (WDNR, UW, county, volunteers, etc.)

Objective **6. Create intervention strategies as AIS species are identified (animal)**

Goal #4 Build strong community partnerships and robust communication with residents and property owners.

Objective **1. Reduce the reliance on tax dollars for major lake district projects**

- Actions*
- a* Establish a standing committee for the purpose of fundraising
 - b* Hold a community and/or fundraising event each year
 - c* Develop a fundraising and accounting tool that allows interested parties to donate to specific projects
 - d* Design an electronic platform for donations and planned giving
 - e* Honor donors and charitable givers yearly

Objective **2. Communicate with lake district residents in a timely and meaningful manner**

- Actions*
- a* Develop and maintain a comprehensive email roster of LD residents and community members
 - b* Seek shareholder participation in all standing or ad hoc committees
 - c* Subscribe to a software vender to develop community connections and communications through email
 - d* Share TLRD information and educational material through a variety of methods
 - e* Engage the public in reporting of TLRD action items and collect feedback on progress towards TLRD objectives before December each year (survey, community meetings, etc.)

Objective **3. Research the potential advantages/disadvantages of developing a Comprehensive Lake Management Plan**

- Actions*
- a* engage a consultant to aid in the writing of a management plan.
 - b* Combine all existing TLRD plans and write and write a Comprehensive Lake Management Plan

Objective **4. Develop partnerships with local, regional and state organizations**

- Actions*
- a* Actively partner with UW-Stout and support at least one lake research or improvement project
 - b* Actively participate with other local and regional groups in conservation projects and/or initiatives impacting Tainter Lake
 - c* Educate the TLRD Board of the current conservation issues and practices affecting lake water quality and management

Goal #5 Protect the natural resources of Tainter Lake through the promotion and compliance of safe watercraft practices.

Objective 1. Build the capacity of the TLRD to address the challenges of safe water-based outdoor activities

- Actions* *a* Appoint a standing Boating and Safety Committee
- b* Meet on a regular schedule
- c* Monitor potential future threats to the lake environment and/or safety concerns

Objective 2. Develop local ordinance(s) that will protect and promote safe water-based activities

- Actions* *a* Develop Slow-No-Wake ordinance
- b* Monitor and adjust the existing ordinance to minimize erosion and maximize boating safety

Objective 3. Monitor potential future threats to safety of natural resources

- Actions* *a* Research potential threats
- b* Educate or inform the TLRD Board of Commissioners of these threats
- c* Recommend a course of action to minimize the threats

Objective 4. Educate the public of safe watercraft use and the impact on the natural resources of Tainter Lake

- Action* *a* Conduct community meetings to share information and listen to public concerns
- b* Improve signage at the boat landings
- c* Provide information to the public through newsletters, podcasts, articles, and social media

APPENDIX 3: Maps and Related Information

Monitoring Locations

2024

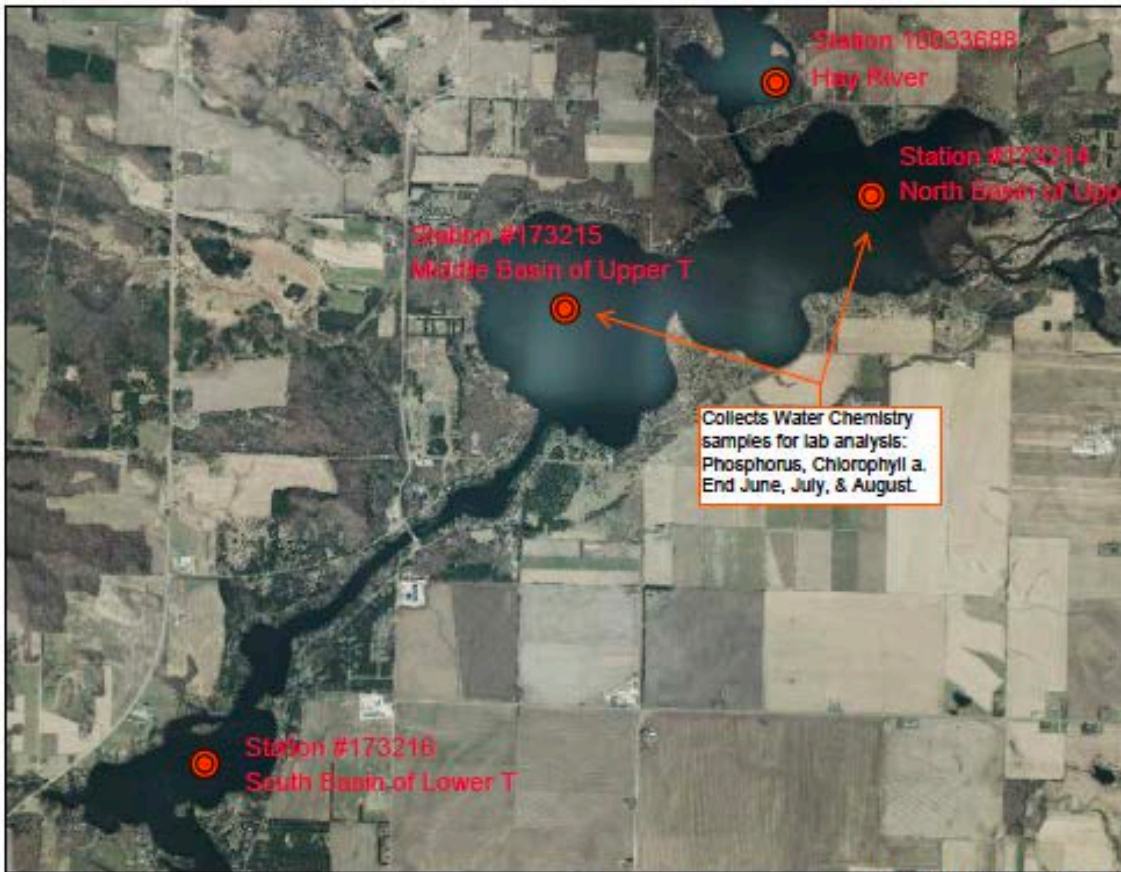
Legend: Some map layers may not be displayed
 Latest Leaf Off Imagery

-  County Boundaries
-  Major Roads
-  State Highway
-  County and Local Roads
-  County HWY
-  Local Road

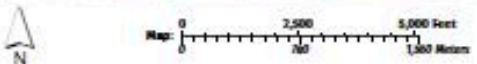
Data collected at all locations:
 Water clarity (secchi disk),
 Temperature.

When: April-Sept.,
 every 8 days.
 Since 1990

Notes:



Collects Water Chemistry samples for lab analysis:
 Phosphorus, Chlorophyll a.
 End June, July, & August.



Service Layer Credits:
 EN Basic Basemap WTM Ltd., 2020 Leaflet

Map projection: NAD 1983 WGS Wisconsin 10'

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