

Reduced Wake Committee

Two motions are to be voted on at the August 15th annual meeting. The following is a brief history of each motion to give you some insight into the process for each motion.

Motion 1: When the lake level reaches the Ordinary High Water Mark (OHWM) of 1153.1 ft. elevation above sea level, the entire lake will be declared a no wake zone for all watercraft until the elevation returns to a level less than the OHWM as determined by the DNR measuring post.

Last summer's unusual frequent heavy rains coupled with the Fox Creek culvert being dammed by beavers, led to historic high water. In speaking with many people on the lake, no one could remember water levels that high on the lake.

The committee determined that at this level there was damage to lakeshore property from waves or wakes from boats. We all discussed that to implement a "No Wake" it must be a rare occurrence and should be called extremely infrequently.

Our committee discussed how we should decide on when to call for a "No Wake" zone and we all agreed that it must be scientifically based and measurable with accuracy. We contacted the DNR and Polk County to see what they recommended and they stated that the DNR has the historical information from each lake and it is used for measuring set back and high water levels. It is called the Ordinary High Water Mark (OHWM) that is historically derived elevation of the lake during high water times. For Bone Lake it is 1153.1 ft above sea level.

The DNR installed a measuring device on John Ukura's dock that is installed in the spring and removed in the fall. It is referenced to fixed points on John's home that are fixed. Every Thursday, John takes a measurement and sends it to the DNR.

In reviewing the lake elevation data that was taken as the water rose by a surveyor per Phil Foster's request, the rain amount itself did not get us to the OHWM. Somewhere between September 19th, 2019 and October 22nd, the lake level went from 13.5 inches below the OHWM to 2 inches below. The last days of October, we calculated the level actually reached approximately 4 inches above the OHWM due to the beavers damming Fox Creek culvert. So this was a rare situation that got us to the OHWM and quickly went below the OHWM once the dam was removed. The Bone Lake Management Board has now implemented a weekly process to insure that Fox Creek culvert is open and we are weekly tracking the lake elevation.

It was decided by the committee to pick the OHWM as our trigger for a "No Wake" zone for the entire lake for all water craft. It will stay in force until we go back below the OHWM.

Based on the data, we believe this situation will happen very infrequently and later in the season.

Motion 2: Bone Lake Management District (BLMD) will purchase and place a buoy in the water at the end of Indian Point, in southeast area of Bone Lake. The exact location and type of buoy will be determined with the DNR to reduce the erosion happening along the shoreline.

The BLMD has received complaints about this erosion happening there for a number of years and it continues to erode at a faster rate as we have seen an increase in boating activity and new larger boats.

In committee discussion, we all admitted that at times we have been guilty of coming within the 100 feet boating ordinance due to the point geography and the very deep water very near the shoreline.

Education on boating distance ordinances needs to improve so that all boaters recognize the limits and act on them. We concluded that the best way to achieve compliance at a minimum cost is to have a buoy placed in the area to keep boaters at the correct distance and speed. The exact type of buoy and location will be discussed and with the DNR who has to approve buoy use on the lake.

The process for proceeding after an affirmative vote by the lake property owners on either motion is for the proposal to be sent to the DNR. If the DNR approves the request, there will be public notices and public hearings at both towns. It will then be moved on to the Town of Georgetown and the Town of Bone Lake for review and agreed upon by their board. Both towns must adopt the exact same ordinance in order for it to proceed. Once adopted, it will be posted and we will then take the action to complete the ordinance.

Cary Olson

Reduced Wake Committee Chair