



Bulrush Mapping Clark Lake 2018 Summary

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Introduction

Studies since 1986 have shown a reduction in the Clark Lake bulrush population. The UW Stevens Point study of 2006-2007 suggested several interventions and that monitoring should consist of yearly density evaluation at five designated points and every 5 years an all lake mapping. CLAA began the annual density studies in 2017. The all lake mapping study was done in 2018.

This report compares results to the 2006 study. The results can be used to guide further decisions about bulrush protection and re-establishment projects.

Summary

The overall loss of acres of bulrush since 2006 is between 20-32%.

The greatest loss occurred in the East Bay and Southeast corner of the lake.

Interventions instituted since 2006 were analyzed. The No Motor zone showed a stabilization and even a small improvement overall. The Sensitive areas showed a reduction although only slightly less than areas without this designation. Neither of the No Wake zones showed better survival when compared to beds without any interventions.

Overall density seems to be shifting downward. The qualitative rating system used in 2018 was consistent with results from the 2018 quantitative density study.

43% of the acres currently fall into the fair to good rating but the number of beds and total acres that have had a decline in their rating since 2006 is significant.

About half of the current beds are confined to 1 foot or less of water. These beds are small and account for less than 5% of all acres of bulrush.

10 beds account for almost 98% of acres lost.

Individual bed configuration changes can assist in evaluation and planning.

Discussion

The results confirm a lake wide reduction in bulrush acreage, health and density. This trend has been documented since the mid 1980's and the causes are multifactorial. CLAA should focus on studying and modifying member use of the lake to hopefully reduce this trend.

The no motor zone at the north end of the lake is an example of a successful intervention. The breakdown of beds close to the periphery of the zone reveals their fragility.

Review of individual bed configuration and sequential aerial photographs confirms shoreline modifications and near shore human activities are significant factors contributing to the loss of the bulrush. To create a positive future impact, CLAA plans to encourage individual properties to convert to a natural shoreline, establish a wide vegetative buffer, designate limited width pier access routes and limit all activities in depths under 5 feet.

The fragmentation of the large bed in East Bay despite the No Wake zone suggests human activity away from the shore also contributes to bulrush loss. This is more problematic since it would require support for solutions concerning public use of wide swaths of the lake.

The CLAA board needs to discuss and chart a course of action consistent with our member's vision of lake preservation, rehabilitation and lake use.

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This is just the summary of the full report which will be available on the CLAA Water at [2018 Bulrush Mapping complete.](#)

Google maps: [2018 Bulrush screenshot map](#)
[Bulrush map compare 2007 and 2018](#)