

# Lake Koshkonong dredging complete

By Jeff Brown  
Reporter staff

A year-long experimental dredging project on Lake Koshkonong is complete according to Rock-Koshkonong Lake District chairman Brian Christianson.

In a press release issued on Tuesday, March 4, Christianson said the contractor hired by the lake district recently put the finishing touches on the project by adding a layer of rock to a berm that separates Mud Lake from Lake Koshkonong.

Additionally, said Christianson, officials with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the state Department of Natural Resources recently provided the lake district with a detailed accounting of their in-kind contributions to the project, which enabled the lake district to close the books on the project. Almost all of the in-kind contributions were in the form of staff time; additionally, the DNR made a \$100,000 grant to the lake district for the project.

The dredging project began in earnest last February, when two 40,000-pound excavators crept out onto the frozen surface of the lake fifty yards offshore from the boat launch by the North Shore Inn and hacked slabs out of the ice. Bulldoz-

ers later moved the slabs into place along the shore of Stinker's Bay to form a 200-yard ice road east to Mud Lake.

A rise in the water level beneath the ice last spring made the ice road necessary to allow big quad-axle dump trucks to drive across the surface of the lake without damaging the lake bed.

Once the ice road was complete, the excavators dredged up silt and muck

(called dredge spoil) from the bottom of the shallow lake and loaded it into the dump trucks, which hauled the dredge spoil to the area along Stinker's Bay where the shoreline between Mud Lake and Lake Koshkonong had nearly eroded away.

Workers used rock and the several thousand cubic yards of dredge spoil to build a berm separating Mud Lake from Lake Koshkonong. Without the

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**A year-long experimental dredging project by the Rock-Koshkonong Lake District is complete. In this photo an excavator pulls up slabs of ice last February.**

(Edgerton Reporter photo/Jeff Brown)

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berm, said Christianson, Mud Lake would soon have become merely another bay of Lake Koshkonong.

That would have meant the end of the largest northern pike hatchery on the lake, which is located in Mud Lake away from the ravenous reach of the lake's carp. Carp feed on northern pike and walleye fry but are kept out of Mud Lake by a carp gate. If Mud Lake became a bay of the lake, carp would be able to swim around the carp gate.

"Mother Nature brought us a drought last year, which enabled us to dredge on a dry lake bed and dra-

matically reduce construction costs for the berm," said Christianson.

Christianson said speculation the dredging was done to deepen the lake bed and allow bigger boats to traverse the lake was unfounded.

"A team of engineers determined this site was the windiest spot on the lake," said Christianson. "If we are to continue dredging, fortifying more shoreline, and possibly building islands to help break wind fetch, we must prove to the DNR and the Corps that this site can withstand sediment filling in the footprint we dredged."

Wind fetch is the length of water over which wind travels and is a measure of the power waves accumulate when blown over large bodies of water. Lake Koshkonong covers 10,500 acres and is the state's eighth-largest lake, and waves whipped up by the wind batter and sometimes damage the shoreline.

"The property taxpayers of the RKLD paid for this project," said Christianson. "Their legacy is an improved lake and river for future generations to enjoy, whether hunting, fishing, bird watching or boating."

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