

Testimony in Favor of Responsible Wakes Petition

Good afternoon, my name is Phil Nies and I am Vice President of the Sawyer County Lakes Forum, Sawyer County, Wisconsin. The Forum represents the 300 lakes and all lake associations in Sawyer County, Wisconsin.

The Forum **strongly supports** the Responsible Wakes petition as presented.

In 2018, a limited but growing number of wake boats were causing damage to the Sawyer County shoreline and lake beds. The Forum researched the standards to be used in an ordinance to allow use without banning wake boats. After researching the distance from shoreline necessary to protect our lakes, it was determined that 500 feet was minimal protection and 1,000 feet the optimal distance based on the scientific data. Politically, 700 feet was settled on. An ordinance was presented to the County Board with 700 feet from the shoreline with assurance of passage.

It was later determined that counties, per Wisconsin statute, cannot enact water ordinances, only cities, towns, and villages can.

Since 2018, the Forum has been going town by town using the original county ordinance as a template. To date, the four major towns in Sawyer County with lakes and three towns in Bayfield County to the north have enacted the ordinance which has raised awareness and resulted in saving our lakes from further damage.

An outreach to the wake boat owners has resulted in compliance. The intended goal of the ordinance is volunteer compliance and not issuing tickets for violations.

The Forum fully endorses and supports the Responsible Wakes petition and hopes with passage Vermont becomes the template for Wisconsin and the nation in the protection of our lakes for future generations.

Thank you.

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State of Wisconsin, County of Sawyer

This signature was acknowledged before me on January 27, 2023 by Phil Nies.

Notary's signature



Erica Warshawsky

Notary's expiration date: 03/05/2023



February 15, 2023

Town of Bass Lake, Sawyer County Motorboat Wake Protection Area Ordinance
No. 2018-10-08

An ordinance to regulate boating upon all the waters within the Town of Bass Lake, Sawyer County, Wisconsin and prescribing penalties for violation thereof:

The Town Board of the Town of Bass Lake, Sawyer County, Wisconsin does ordain as follows:

Section 1 – Applicability and Enforcement: The provisions of this Ordinance shall apply to all the waters within the Town of Bass Lake, Sawyer County. This ordinance shall be enforced by the officers of Sawyer County.

Section 2 – Intent: The intent of this ordinance is to provide safe and healthful conditions for the enjoyment of aquatic recreation consistent with public rights and interests and the capability of the water resources to minimize shoreline erosion.

Section 3 – State Boating and Safety Laws Adopted: State boating laws as found in ss. 30.50 to 30.71, Wis. Stats. are adopted by reference here.

Section 4 – Penalties: Wisconsin state boating penalties as found in s. 30.80, Wis. Stats., deposits established in the Uniform Deposit and Bail Schedule established by the Wisconsin Judicial Conferences are hereby adopted by reference and all references to fines amended to forfeitures and all references to imprisonment are deleted.

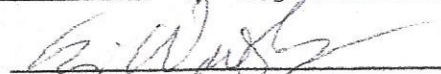
Section 5 – Severability: The provisions of this ordinance shall be deemed severable and it is expressly declared that the Town of Bass Lake, Sawyer County would have passed the other provisions of this ordinance irrespective of whether or not one or more provisions may be declared invalid. If any provision of this ordinance or the application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the ordinance and the application of such provisions to other persons or circumstances shall not be affected.

Section 6 – Motorboat Wake Prohibition Area: No person shall operate a motorboat, as defined in s. 30.50(6), Wis. Stats. on the waters within the Town of Bass Lake, Sawyer County in a manner to enhance an elevated wake for over 50 feet in length closer than 700 feet from any shoreline, dock, pier, raft or other restricted area(s) within the Town of Bass Lake, Sawyer County. An elevated wake is a trail of disturbed water left by the passage of a watercraft in excess of 24 inches. Such prohibited operation shall apply to wake enhancement watercraft by the use of ballast, mechanical hydrofoil(s), uneven loading or operation at transition speed. Transition speed means the speed at which the boat is operating at greater than slow-no-wake speed, but not fast enough so the boat is ^{planning} planning.

Section 7 – Posting Requirements: The Town of Bass Lake, Sawyer County shall place and maintain a synopsis of this ordinance at all public access points within the jurisdiction of the Town of Bass Lake, Sawyer County pursuant to the requirements of NR 5.15, Wis. Adm. Code.

Section 8 – Effective Date: This section will become effective upon its passage.

Passed this 12th day of November, 2018

Attested by: 
Erica Warshawsky, Clerk