

Phantom Lakes Boat and Ice Patrol 2022 Report

Members of the PLMD,

While that past several years have been extremely challenging for several reasons, including staffing levels and equipment restrictions, we continue to do our very best to provide excellent service to our lake community. We could not begin to achieve this goal without the continued partnership with the PLMD. We value the relationship we have been able to forge through our shared commitment to making Upper and Lower Phantom Lakes a safe and enjoyable recreational destination during all seasons. We appreciate your commitment and look forward to maintaining our valuable partnership into the future. We cannot say “thank you!” enough.



2021-2022 Ice Patrol Recap

During the 2021/2022 winter, for the second year in a row, we did not get a UTV from Mukwonago Yamaha. Due to this, we could only patrol utilizing the department owned snowmobiles, weather permitting. This resulted in only having 1 day where we patrolled the lake with the snowmobiles. We chose to make that a public relations day rather than an enforcement day, so we did not make any stops or write any citations for violations. Throughout the winter, we maintained a presence at the boat launch, monitoring the lake as much as possible, and we responded to any complaints from the lake that were received. Moving forward, we are looking into purchasing our own UTV so we can once again patrol the ice on a more regular basis.



2022 Boat Patrol Recap

The 2022 boating season went by very quickly this year. Overall, we had a good season in spite of continued struggles to find adequate staffing. For the season, we patrolled Upper and Lower Phantom Lakes for 208.25 hours, which is an increase compared to the last several seasons. The hours break down to 161.25 hours of patrol time, and 47 hours of administrative time, well within the 30% administrative hour threshold set by the DNR. During our patrol time, we conducted a total of 32 boat stops, resulting in 21 citations and 43 warnings. The most common violations this season were registration violations, battery violations, and PFD violations. In addition, we made 1 boating while intoxicated arrest, and cited 3 individuals for underage drinking. This season, we also assisted 10 vessels for various reasons.

As always, lake residents are encouraged to contact our boat patrol to have a free inspection of their boats conducted by lake patrol officers. The officers will do a complete safety check of the boat, in order to ensure that all boats have the proper safety equipment on board and in proper working condition.



Personnel Changes

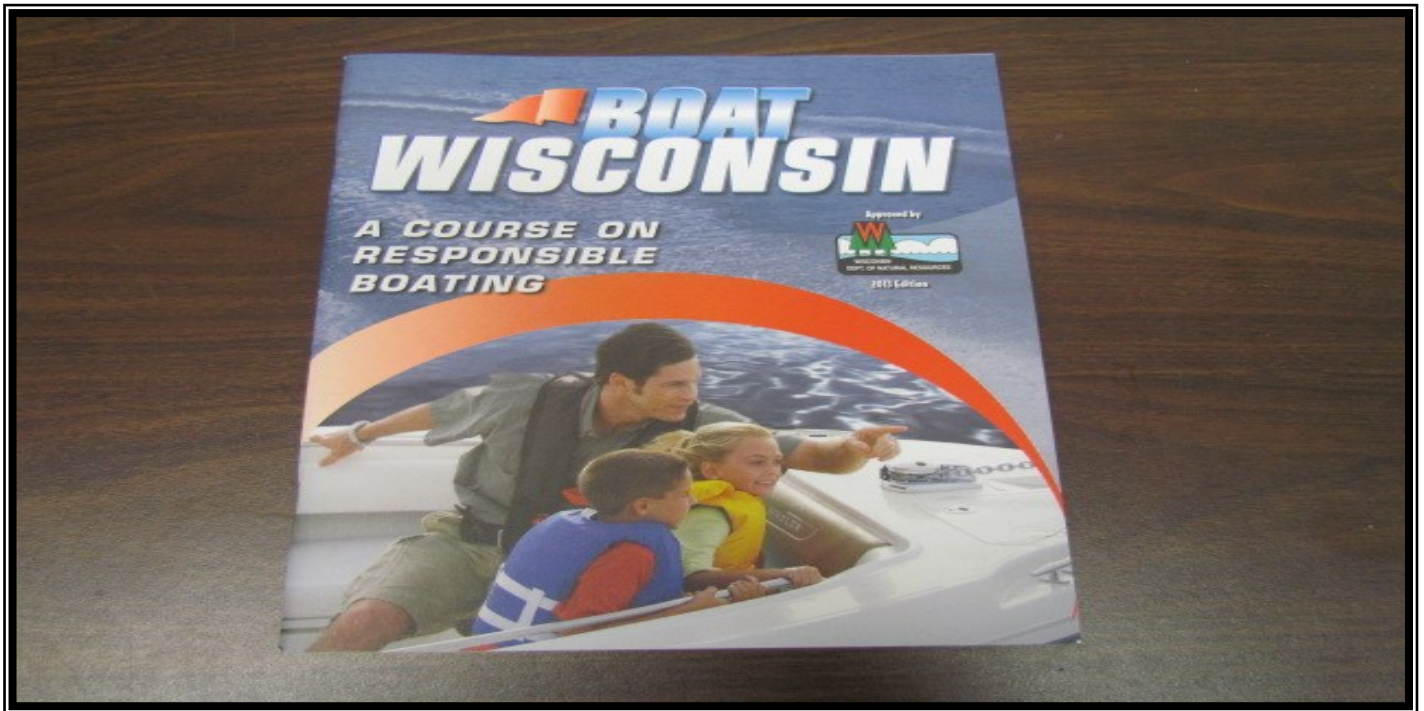
This season, we welcomed two new part-time officers to the patrol. John Ennis (left) recently retired as a Lieutenant from the Walworth County Sheriff's Office. He brings extensive boat patrol and emergency management experience, including dive training. Gust Petropoulos (right) comes to us from the City of Milwaukee Police Department, where he retired as a homicide detective. While Gust does not have prior boat patrol experience, his wealth of law enforcement experience will greatly benefit the department moving forward. Unfortunately both officers have additional part-time responsibilities with other agencies, so we must share them, resulting in fewer hours than we would like from each of them. However, we are grateful for the hours they are able to contribute.

Moving forward, the chief and I have discussed raising the pay rate for our part-time officers. We have not had an increase for part-time officers since 2019, so we believe that another increase is warranted. Our hope is that a substantial increase will help us to attract additional officers, and allow us to be a more attractive option to our current part-time officers, which will in turn lead to them working more hours for our department. Our goal is to tie the part-time officer rate to our starting rate for full-time officers.



DNR Safety Classes

This past year, after a 2 year break, we conducted a boat safety course. The course was very successful, with 18 students passing the test. We look forward to conducting a combination snowmobile and ATV course. As of now, we have not been able to add that class to our schedule, but hope to do so later this fall. Knowing the value of these classes, I am personally committed to continuing to offer them as long as we get enough students signed up for each class.



As always, I would like to take the opportunity to thank the members of the PLMD for being our partners in the continued effort to keep Upper and Lower Phantom Lakes safe throughout the years. I cannot tell you how much we appreciate the generous financial commitment of the PLMD each year to help us provide this vital service to our community. On behalf of Chief Czarnecki, I once again respectfully request that you consider maintaining your financial donation to the Town of Mukwonago Police Department so that we can maintain the safety of our lakes. We are committed to making our community as a whole as safe as possible. Keeping our lakes safe and fun for all to enjoy is one of the most important ways we can do that. I look forward to continuing our efforts together for years to come.

Respectfully,

Sgt. Eric Schmidt