

The Cherokee Marsh News

Oct / Nov 2021



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Revisions made to Cherokee Golf Course plan

Jan Axelson

We've reported previously on the proposed plan to renovate the Cherokee Golf Course, located in the Town of Westport. Westport's Plan Commission requested a response to the concerns we raised about the renovation.

Jeffrey Kraemer of Heartland Ecological Services provided this response:

Cherokee has made revisions to their proposed project to further minimize wetland and waterway impacts. Wetland impacts have been reduced from nearly 10 acres to approximately 2 acres and all impacts to waterways through filling (1.33 acres) have been eliminated. Cherokee still proposes dredging of waterways for maintenance and water quality improvements; deep excavation and enlargement of a few of the existing ponds for water quality and obtaining construction fill material; and will be replacing undersized/perched culverts with appropriately sized and placed culverts while incorporating many clear span bridges and boardwalks to minimize wetland impacts. Cherokee is also proposing to restore all the wetlands on their property (33.5 acres) plus will create wetlands on-site to offset the wetland loss while also purchasing wetland mitigation credits.

[Read more about the response to our concerns.](#)

We will continue to follow and report on this project.

Project history

Read about the announcement for plans to modernize the Cherokee Golf Course in our [April / May newsletter](#).

Read about the DNR's request for more information for the permit in our [June / July newsletter](#).

Friends submit comments on golf course permit application - [Aug / Sept newsletter](#).



Snapping turtle nest protected

In early June, member Wendy Murkve reported that a snapping turtle was laying eggs near the curb on Wheeler Rd in Cherokee Marsh - South Unit. She asked if anything could be done to protect the nest from predators.

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources provides plans and instructions for a cage that keeps raccoons and other predators from digging into the nest and getting the eggs.

Making the cage out of 1 x 2 inch or 1 x 3 inch wire fencing ensures that the openings are wide enough for young turtles to pass through. Burying the cage 4 inches in the ground keeps digging animals from reaching the eggs. Stakes hold the cage in place.

Volunteers Jim Mand and Shirley Mand helped build and install the cage, and Jim and Wendy kept careful watch on it. City mowing crews were informed and carefully mowed around the cage all summer until late September when we observed a hole indicating the the turtles had left the nest.



[Protect turtles on the move: build a nest cage, report crossing hotspots, slow down near wetlands](#) (Wisconsin DNR)

[Learn more about snapping turtles](#) (Urban Ecology Center)



Seed bags made by volunteers put to good use

Last spring, we put out a call for volunteers to sew bags for collecting seeds. Our volunteers stepped up, and the bags are being put to good use collecting seeds at Westport Drumlin and other nearby State Natural Areas.



Thanks to volunteer bag makers Janet Battista, Sally Bowers, Marcia Finger, Sheila Lynch, and Ginny Nelson and to Mary and John Binkley for providing the colorful bags.



Help lead the Friends

The Friends of Cherokee Marsh board of directors are volunteers elected by the members to plan and manage the activities of the group. We welcome new directors who have an interest in helping with our mission to protect, preserve, and restore Cherokee Marsh.

We're especially interested in folks who have skills or interest in any of these areas: working with volunteers, member communications and social media, working with children and schools, fundraising, public advocacy, and grant writing. But most important is enthusiasm and a willingness to help work toward our goals.

Our members elect directors at our annual meeting each January.

If you are interested in joining our board or finding out more about it, contact me at janaxelson@gmail.com, (608) 215-0426, or contact any other board member or come to one of our monthly meetings. We meet on the third Wednesday of the month at 5:30 pm either outdoors at the Warner Park rainbow shelter or in the Warner Park Community Recreation Center, 1625 Northport Dr. Contact us to confirm time and location. All of our meetings are open to the public.

Jan Axelson, President



State Senator Melissa Agard (fourth from left) and staff members joined us for a paddle on the upper Yahara River. We enjoyed the clear water, with great views to the bottom, and seeing the growth of native aquatic plants.



Keep streets leaf-free for clean waters

More than 50% of the annual amount of phosphorus in urban stormwater can come from leaves in the street. When it rains, stormwater flows through leaf piles in streets creating a “leaf tea” that is rich in dissolved phosphorus. This leaf tea travels through storm sewers making its way to our lakes, rivers and streams. Too much phosphorus can lead to toxic algae blooms, low oxygen levels and green murky waters, none of which are good for animals living in the water or those of us who use it for recreation.

In the fall, timely removal of street leaf litter can reduce the amount of phosphorus in urban stormwater by 80% compared to no leaf removal. You can help by:

Safely removing leaves from the street in front of your home before it rains.

- Following your community's guidelines for leaf collection or recycle leaves on your property. Many communities offer curbside leaf pick up or free access to yard waste drop off sites.
- [Signing up to receive Leaf-free Streets Rain Alerts](#) this fall (Oct. 1- Nov. 30). Alerts will be issued 1-2 days before a significant rain event reminding you that it's time to remove street leaves.

[Learn more about leaf-free streets for clean waters.](#)



Upcoming events

[Sign up](#) to receive notices about upcoming events and volunteer opportunities including announcements for last-minute events and volunteer opportunities that don't make it into the newsletter.

[See the full calendar](#) for latest information.

Prairie seed collecting

Friday, Oct 7, 9 am – 12 noon

AND

Friday, Oct 14, 9 am – 12 noon

Yahara Heights Park, Caton Ln entrance.

5198 Caton Lane, Waunakee, WI 53597

[map](#)

[Sign up](#)

Wear long pants, a long-sleeved shirt, closed-toed shoes, and hat. Bring work gloves if you have them. Bring drinking water.

Sponsored by Dane County Parks and the Friends of Cherokee Marsh

Hayrides and hikes

Saturday, Oct 23, 1 – 4 pm

Check calendar at Cherokeemarsh.org to confirm date and time

Tour Cherokee Marsh on a tractor-pulled hay wagon, take a short guided hike, or do both!

Hayrides are \$3/person (age 2 and under free) to offset the cost of Parks staff time. Volunteers from the Friends of Cherokee Marsh will lead free, short nature hikes.

No reservations needed. Show up any time from 1 pm to 3:30 pm for a hayride or a hike. Sponsored by Madison Parks and the Friends of Cherokee Marsh.

Cherokee Marsh Conservation Park - North Unit, 6098 N Sherman Ave. Follow N. Sherman Ave. north to the parking area at the end of the gravel road.

Help collect seeds in State Natural Areas

We are partnering with the DNR to collect seeds in nearby State Natural Areas on third Wednesdays and Thursdays in Aug, Sept, and Oct. Most of the sites are a little beyond the Cherokee Marsh watershed, but many of the seeds will be used to restore new prairie at the Westport Drumlin. [Learn more and sign up.](#)

Bird and nature adventures

Sun, Oct 3, 1:30 pm – 3 pm, Fall colors at Cherokee with arborist Sean Gere

Sun, Nov 7, 1:30 pm – 3 pm, Ice age geology with emeritus professor, geology and geophysics, David Mickelson

AND

first Sunday of EVERY month, year-round, ALWAYS 1:30 pm – 3 pm

Cherokee Marsh Conservation Park - North Unit, 6098 N Sherman Ave. Follow N. Sherman Ave. north to the parking area at the end of the gravel road.

Contact: Paul Noeldner, paul_noeldner@hotmail.com, 608-698-0104

[Madison Parks bird and nature adventure page](#)

Self-guided nature adventures

Get ideas for your own self-guided nature adventures at Cherokee Marsh and other locations.

tinyurl.com/selfguided-adventures

Board meetings

Wednesday, Oct 13, 5:30 – 7 pm

Wednesday, Nov 17, 5:30 – 7 pm

Our board of directors is responsible for planning, coordinating, communicating, and managing our activities. Everyone is welcome to attend board meetings. We've resumed in-person meetings at the Warner Park rainbow shelter or in the Warner Park Community Recreation Center. Contact janaxelson@gmail.com to confirm location.

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