

Yahara Lakes Advisory Group 2: 2012 Final Recommendations

**Total Votes for
Recommendation**

1. Water Levels

1A	Clarify implementation of Lake Mendota level orders when summer maximum are exceeded during high flows. (DNR)	22
1B	Evaluate the winter minimum water levels orders on all the Yahara System to meet the public interests. – eg. fish and wildlife habitat.	22
1C	Centrally coordinate the operation of all permitted dams on the Yahara System to maximize efficiency in the system.	22
1D	Develop operating orders to address operation of the Stoughton Dam in the event of a high water emergency based on modeling analysis.	22
1E	Strive to operate Lake Kegonsa’s water level at the midpoint of the summer range from June 1 through September 1.	21
1F	Retain current water level orders until an observational network and modeling indicates a need for change in order to better balance public and private interests.	20
1G	Coordinate lake levels in the Yahara River system and particularly Lake Mendota to remain high enough (summer minimum - 849.6) from March 15 to mid-May to allow fish to spawn, young fry to grow to sufficient size to survive once water levels are lowered as determined by Dane County and DNR Fisheries.	19
1H	Explore water level orders that recognize that Lakes Monona and Waubesa act as one lake.	18
1I	DNR should establish winter maximum lake levels.	15
1J	Do not deliberately operate the lakes below current minimums as a means to provide flood storage.	14
1K	Retain the existing lake level orders for the Yahara System.	14
1L	Manage Lake Mendota close to its summer minimum of 849.6 feet MSL instead of the near the summer maximum of 850.1 msl in order to provide more storage for major runoff events.	11
1M	Establish target “median” levels for the lakes	7

2. Watershed Management

2A	Protect and restore, and in some cases, acquire wetlands in the Yahara System to improve hydrology, flood storage capacity, water quality, fish and wildlife habitat.	22
2B	Support a study to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Determine where it is technically and economically feasible for infiltration opportunities for existing development; - Determine where it is technically and economically feasible for infiltration standards for existing development; and - Investigate opportunities to retrofit infiltration systems for storm water systems discharging to the Yahara System. 	22

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2C	Review the requirements regarding infiltration associated with the development and drainage/pumping of enclosed depressions by a Technical Advisory Team (similar to that which generated the recharge requirements).	22
2D	Study new construction regulations for hydric soil areas to see if new rules are needed to guide and/or restrict construction in areas susceptible to basement flooding from shallow ground water that leads to basement dewatering needs and pumping which increases runoff to the lakes. ¹	22
2E	Inventory and evaluate the effectiveness of installed storm water practices including storm water outfalls, and promote to property owners and developers effective retrofit practices that help restore natural hydrology, such as enhanced infiltration, rain gardens, disconnecting impervious areas, and green roofs.	21
2F	Convene a technical advisory group to explore standards that would require the detention of the 100-year storm event in the Yahara Watershed.	21
2G	Further restrict development and redevelopment on lots where a portion of the lot is within the 100-year flood plain such that the lowest entrance openings must be 2 feet above the regional flood elevation.	20
2H	Establish countywide regulatory requirements to protect and enhance significant infiltration areas.	20
2I	Convene a technical advisory group to determine if it is technically and economically feasible to increase the infiltration above the infiltration standard for new development and redevelopment.	20
3. In-Lake Management		
3A	Support aggressive aquatic plant harvesting in the Yahara River to maximize flow when lake levels are high.	22
3B	Evaluate all permitted dams on the Yahara System to determine if necessary upgrades designed and implemented to allow for more effective and reliable operation.	22
3C	Continue to investigate flow enhancement options, such as dredging, pumping, by-passing, constriction removal, etc. on the Yahara System using the observational networks and models based on the new INFOS information presented on May 18, 2012.	22
3D	Continue to respond to flooding situations by enacting emergency slow-no-wake orders for boating during times of extreme high water to protect property and the environment.	21
3E	Dredging should be considered to aid in navigation in lake areas with shoaling problems.	18
3F	Designate the upper Yahara River (from Highway 113 north), a 'Slow No-Wake' water-body, to protect the public's investment in native shoreline/land and marsh vegetation restoration efforts.	20

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3G	The early Native American fish weir and the underwater corduroy log bridge (some refer to as the "Douglas Dam") located on the bed of the Yahara River between Lower Mud Lake and Lake Kegonsa are important cultural artifacts to our region's history and should not be altered or removed to enhance river flow or boat navigation.	16
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4. Analyses

4A	Support the continued development, implementation and maintenance of an observational network and models to optimize lake levels and river flows of the Yahara Lakes System.	22
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4B	Analyze sediment hydraulics and flow dynamics in the Upper Mendota and Cherokee Marsh area to determine if methods are available to restore and maintain a navigation channel, and an implementation plan for this work should be established.	22
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4C	Study the public and private interests of lowering the summer minimum and maximum of the Yahara Lakes.	18
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4D	Create a navigation draft/depth standard for specific areas on the chain of lakes system.	12
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5. Education and Outreach

5A	Develop educational material and incentives for landowners to promote the floodproofing or removal of structures in low lying areas.	21
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5B	Continue a public education effort on the system of controls and allow them to be tracked on an advertised web site on a daily basis.	21
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5C	Develop informational materials for riparian landowners describing the dilemma or balance between high and low lake levels and climatic variation that balance public interests of less flooding versus reduced access.	21
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5D	Have a concise, accessible, easy to understand data center for past historical no-wake orders complete with thorough information as to when enacted and released, the corresponding water levels, and the type of restriction placed.	21
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6. Other

6A	Reconvene YLAG2 to update progress on recommendations in 2 years.	22
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6B	Establish a single, full-time Lake Management position within Dane County.	21
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