

Sen. Cowles: Safety first: Raise Shawano Lake's water level

Posted on Tuesday, Jun 5, 2018

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MADISON- Recently, a decision by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) to lower water levels on Shawano Lake by approximately 5 inches has drawn criticism from frequent lake users. Senator Robert Cowles (R-Green Bay) and Representative Gary Tauchen (R-Bonduel) released the following statement after the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) expedited an opinion that they would have no objection based on an evaluation of natural resources concerns to raising the water levels in Shawano Lake:

“As another Wisconsin summer kicks off, decisions made by government regulators in Washington D.C. are putting a damper on summer plans for thousands of people. Shawano Lake is pivotal to our region’s tourism. From reeling-in that trophy-sized fish to taking-in the Shawano Ski Sharks show to meeting some of your neighbors at a sandbar party, Shawano Lake is synonymous with summer for many. This decision not only could ruin summer fun for many residents and visitors, but it may negatively impact local businesses and property values, lead to more boats being damaged on the water, and threaten the health and safety of boaters who are now subjected to more dangerous structure just below the lake’s surface.

“As legislators representing Shawano Lake, we knew action was necessary when some local property owners brought this issue to our attention. Shortly after our inquiry, the DNR determined that they have no objection to raising the water levels. With this information in-hand, today we sent a letter to FERC requesting immediate action to raise the water levels on Shawano Lake back to historic levels. It is our hope that FERC takes the prompt and necessary action to right this wrong done to

property owners and those who recreate on Shawano Lake so they can get back to enjoying their summer. Until any such decision, boaters should be cautious to ensure that safety from the lower water levels on Shawano Lake is the top priority for all water users.”