



From this to this.....

As the sunlight grows stronger and puddles appear, thoughts turn to open water and warm breezes. Soon our sandhill cranes will appear as will the under-appreciated red-winged blackbirds whose calls lure us to explore their watery domain. And then, kayaks and canoes will seek these waters, pass by this kiosk and wonder what is to come.

A year ago grants were being written and submitted in search of funding an interpretive sign mounted upon a kiosk at the Knight Lane boat landing bordering the Park and specifically, Pope Lake State Natural Area. The State of Wisconsin has very wisely designated Pope Lake and surrounding lands in 1984 as a state natural area, "to locate and preserve a system of examples of all types of biotic communities and significant natural features native to the state...for education, research, and most importantly to secure long-term protection of the state's genetic diversity for the benefit of future generations".

Imagine hundreds passing by a colorful and informative sign that invites their senses to explore on a completely different level an area unrevealed. Paddlers already appreciate the clear waters, bird life,

flowers, and fish but not the “why of it”. What is the lake’s history? Why is the land special? What secrets does it hold? Why might they treasure it and protect it?

To that end, the Friends voted to support applications for the project, receiving \$2500 as a grant from the Environmental Stewardship Fund within the Community Foundation for the Fox Valley Region and \$5100 from the Waupaca Area Convention & Visitor Bureau. Schmeekle Reserve, UWSP is currently researching and moving toward designs for consideration, with a goal of early summer installation .

The Friends are very grateful for their generosity and will be installing plaques upon the kiosk in recognition.



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