

Upset by the Loss of Lake Protections? Take Action.

Aldo Leopold said, "One of the penalties of an ecological education is that one lives alone in a world of wounds."

In a time when it seems critical protections for our lakes and our environment are being rolled back, it's easy to feel alone and powerless. But you don't have to. You can take action – and have plenty of company when you do. Here are some proven ways to make an impact.

- **Do your homework.** Understand the issues inside and out. Know your allies and your opponents. Take Bob Dylan's advice and know your song well before you start singing.
- **Join up.** Groups speak louder than individuals. They carry weight with decision-makers and have resources to make themselves heard. Join your local and county lake associations. Explore groups like the River Alliance, the League of Conservation Voters, and Wisconsin Lakes.
- **Get politically active.** Support candidates who care about the environment. Don't just vote. Work on their campaigns. Canvass door-to-door or join a phone bank. Make a donation.
- **Engage with elected officials.** Attend their town halls and listening sessions. Testify at hearings. Write to your representatives. Emails are fine; old-fashioned letters can carry more weight. Consider following up your letter with an email. State your case firmly but politely. Tell why the issue matters to you.
- **Share your passion.** Talk about your issues with like-minded friends. Broadcast your views on social media.
- **Be seen in the media.** Submit letters to the editor. Submit a longer op-ed column. Use the comment sections on new stories. Always be civil. Call in to radio talk programs.

These ideas are for starters. Consult with your favorite organization for advice on other forms of action. No matter how hard it gets, don't give up. Join other committed people and multiply your power.

One in a series of articles sponsored by the Oneida County Lakes and Rivers Association (www.oclra.org). For more information, contact Bob Martini at 715-282-5896 or email to webmaster@oclra.org. OCLRA encourages the use and distribution of this material by lake associations, their members, and other parties concerned about water quality.

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

—Margaret Mead

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