

DOING THE RIGHT THING FOR OUR LAKES AND RIVERS

# Liquid Gold: The Value of Water Quality

Clean lakes and rivers in the North are not just beautiful – they are critical to the regional economy. Clean water directly benefits every lake property's value. To appreciate the economic benefits of clean water, consider:

- Many northern Wisconsin towns get more than half their assessed value from shoreline property. Some get over 90 percent.
- A UW-Madison study in Vilas and Oneida Counties found that property values could drop by 15 to 17 percent due to impaired water quality, presence of invasive species, and loss of scenic beauty and wildlife habitat.
- The tourism industry depends on our high-quality lakes. Visitors spent more than \$215 million in Oneida County in 2015, according to the state Department of Tourism.
- Many small businesses rely on water based recreation for most their sales. Many business owners would like to live here to enjoy the high quality of life that goes with a clean lake.
- High-quality lakes help attract doctors, other professionals, entrepreneurs and retirees. Their assets, incomes and spending power enrich the local economy, yet do not require major spending on infrastructure.

We risk losing these economic benefits if the quality and scenic beauty of our lakes are impaired reduced by too much shoreline development. Lake quality, once lost, is very difficult to restore.

Our local economies depend on shoreline protection. Each lake is its own unique, complex system; each county has its own needs and values. Local, fair and efficient shoreline protection ordinances are proven to help maintain lake quality.

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

***Did you know...***  
*A Northwoods study has shown that impaired lake quality can reduce lake property values by \$30,000 per parcel.*

**OCLRA**

ONEIDA COUNTY  
Lakes and Rivers Association