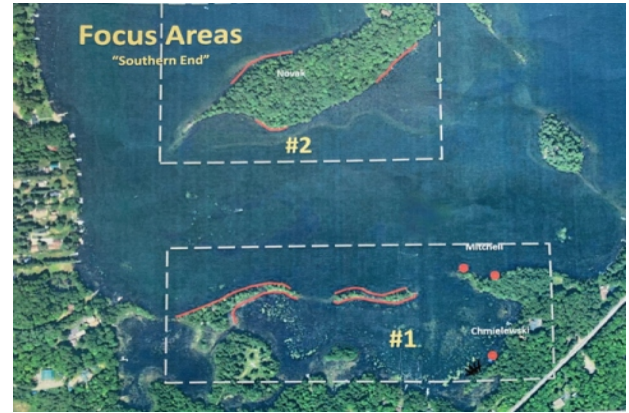


A total of 41 fish sticks were created this winter along southern Lucerne shorelines by LLAA volunteers and Ken Mihalko utilizing his skid steer. Two additional fish sticks have been built along the northern Lucerne shoreline.



Five fish stick tree clusters along the southeast shoreline of Anthony Island.  
(Andy Wienser photo)



Red lines indicate areas where fish sticks were built.

A couple years of planning culminated with a month of lake and Anthony Island preparatory efforts which was followed by a couple weekends of tree cutting, skidding and fish stick assembly that was completed on February 27. Trees were donated by the Novak family from Anthony Island.

### **What to expect now?**

The hardwood tree clusters will take a year or two to become waterlogged and settle into the bottom. Some of the trees may leaf-out this spring. The woody material will provide carbon and habitat for the shoreline web-of-life. There will be critters ranging from the microscopic to the visible that will provide a food chain that includes fish and those who feed upon fish. This includes bigger fish, loons, eagles, and people.

Our WI DNR fish stick permit is valid until 2025, and we have some cabling/anchoring materials remaining. If you have a shoreline area to consider for a future fish stick, or a shoreline tree fall that you would like to see secured in place, please contact me.

A final thought since we did this project to improve fishing habitat. There will be lots of opportunity to tangle fishhooks in these branches. Please consider using non-lead tackle! Studies have shown up to 50% of necropsied loons had lead poisoning from sinkers and jigs. A single small lead split shot sinker can be lethal to a loon after ingestion.



Using pre-cut cables, the fish stick tree clusters were tied together with aircraft cable and crimped by Mike Heim, Jim Wienser, Jenny and Jim Zach, and Dave Schlitz. Over the next week DNR Fishery staff, Greg Matzke and Katie Renschen, anchored each fish stick to the lake-bed through the ice. Additional volunteers included Matt Steeno, Rick Hermus, Dave Ebben, Ryan Siggelkow, Joe Heilmann, Ken Novak, and John Novak.

Thanks to DNR Forester Liz Wood and to Tim Sprink who connected our fish stick project idea to the Novak Family's Anthony Island Managed Forest tree harvest. Steve Kircher, Forest County Land and Water Conservation greatly assisted with the DNR permit application. The Forest County Potawatomi Community through the Town of Lincoln provided the financial grant to LLAA. WI DNR staff including Greg Matzke, Scott Van Egeren, Scott Toshner, Greg Sass, and UW Extension's Eric Olson and Lynn Markham all provided education, advice, and encouragement along the way.