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NEWS RELEASE:
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Shawano Lake is (Finally) Open for the Summer

SHAWANO– Senator Robert Cowles (R-Green Bay) released the following statement after the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) issued a temporary order today to raise Shawano Lake back to the historic 30-year lake level starting immediately and running for the duration of this summer:

“I’m incredibly pleased to learn of FERC’s decision to raise the water level again this summer. Shawano Lake is a prime recreation hub, and a fun and relaxing place to live and visit. This order comes just in time to allow residents and visitors to continue enjoying their weeknights, weekends, and vacations like they always have: safely on Shawano Lake.”

Today’s order is the latest development in a story dating back to early 2018 when FERC ordered Shawano Lake levels to be drawn down by approximately five inches. This break from historic water levels resulted in concerns from lake-goers for their safety and ability to recreate as even lower lake levels on the already shallow Shawano Lake exposed more structure on the lake bottom resulting in potential hazards that could lead to injury or property damage. Lower water levels also limited access to the lake at public boat launches and on the shorelines and docks for waterfront property owners.

This 2018 order to lower lake levels was reversed by the 4th of July weekend after Senator Cowles and Representative Gary Tauchen (R-Bonduel) learned about the issue from Shawano Area Waterways Management in early June and helped to expedite the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and FERC processes to raise water levels. However, this was only a temporary reprieve for the summer of 2018, and more action was required for lake levels this year and beyond.

“Today’s decision is just the latest step in keeping Shawano Lake at historic levels, and now we begin to focus our attention on keeping lake-levels higher long-term. I look forward to the continued effort to receive a permanent order to keep Shawano Lake open for boaters all summer and every summer.”

The temporary order to raise the Shawano Lake levels was necessary to let lake-goers enjoy recreating in the water early this summer while a permanent order is working its way through a more tedious FERC process. It’s anticipated that a decision on a permanent order will be available before the next boating season.

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