



# THE AGENCY NEWS

## A PUBLICATION OF FOX WATERWAY

## 2026 SEASON

### UPDATE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Fox Waterway supporters, Thank you for your care and concern for our Chain O' Lakes and the wonderful Fox River! Your purchase of a sticker to access the waterway makes you the primary caregiver of our dynamic waterway. In 2025, we sold over 21,300 stickers, as you may already know these are the primary means our Agency has to care for over 7,100 acres of waterway and nearly 500 miles of shoreline. These dollars assist our efforts to keep main navigational channels open for recreational uses, restore environmental quality, work to alleviate flooding, promote tourism, and work to enhance the quality of life along the waterway for residents and users alike.

These continued efforts, along with our efforts to open up new lines of funding through state, federal and other grant opportunities is crucial to enable our Agency the means to succeed in our mission. Our Watershed Plan was successfully adopted by the IEPA and enables stakeholders to qualify for grant funding for watershed projects to improve our waterways.

We have also secured \$2,000,000 in grant funding to purchase the Bauske Boat Basin Marina in Fox Lake. This is located off of Governor's Channel and Nippersink Channel to assist our efforts to minimize flooding, better alleviate on-going sedimentation challenges in that area, and increase our revenue, among other strategic benefits.

Our dredging work in 2025 has resulted in the removal of nearly 100,000 cubic yards of sediment and debris from your waterway. We alleviated 100's of customer concerns on the system and removed over 400 tons of natural debris consisting of trees, limbs, bogs, and more. We also removed 100's of tons of human made items, multiple beaver dams, and abandoned watercraft. We sold over 8K cubic yards of recovered soils totaling over 80k in revenue.



Joseph S. Keller  
Executive Director  
Fox Waterway Agency

In addition, we're excited to introduce our new online customer system for purchasing waterway stickers, designed to make managing your watercraft registration faster, easier, and more convenient than ever. This system allows you to securely manage your information online- no phone calls or paperwork required, save time and money, and renew online. Same-day pickup available, visit us at [www.foxwaterway.com](http://www.foxwaterway.com).

Thank you in advance for your patience as we roll out this improvement. Although we've made some big strides to improve your waterway, we have much more work to do! With your continued support we remain confident in our joint efforts to further preserve and enhance our precious waterways for future generations. From us to you we wish you and your family a safe and happy 2026 season!

Visit The FWA Webstore to Renew Online & Save Time



### BOATING SAFETY



### IMPORTANT DATES & NUMBERS

#### ENFORCEMENT

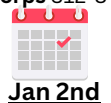
Lake County Marine Unit  
847-587-4471 or 847-549-5200  
McHenry County Marine Unit  
815-385-3239 or 815-338-2144  
IDNR Conservation Police  
847-608-3100

#### US COAST GUARD

Coast Guard Auxiliary  
800-336-BOAT  
Power Squadron  
800-296- USPS

#### PIERS & PERMITTING

IDNR 847-608-3100  
US Army Corps 312-846-5530



Renewal Cards Mailed Out

**May 1st**

1st Official Day of Boating

**May 15th -31st**

Navigation Buoys are Deployed

**Oct 1st- 15th**

Removal of Navigation Buoys

**November 1st**

IDNR Begins Winter Drawdown

### Vessel Safety Checks

Roger Quinlan - US Power Squadron  
847-343-0352

Call or Text for appointment

### USCGS SAFETY COURSE

(1 DAY- 8 Hour IN PERSON 9AM-5PM)

FEBRUARY 15th

MARCH 21st

APRIL 18th

MAY 16th

JUNE 20th

#### LOCATION:

Fox Waterway Agency

45 S. Pistakee Lake Rd. Fox Lake 60020

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)

### ONLINE SAFETY COURSE

America's Boating Club



Boating Safety Certificate **REQUIRED** for persons born after

Jan. 1, 1998

Boating safety courses help you grow in awareness, knowledge of what to do in each situation & ability to perform boat-handling skills that will help you enjoy boating & keep **everyone** safe.

**Safety is always #1 on the water**



SCAN ME!



[Shop | Fox Waterway Agency](#)

We're excited to introduce our new online customer system, designed to make managing your watercraft registration faster, easier, and more convenient than ever. Visit us at [foxwaterway.com](http://foxwaterway.com).

With this new system, you can securely manage your information online. No phone calls or paperwork required.

#### \* New this season \*

Log into your account with a phone number or email and your boat information will be readily available for a quick and convenient renewal process!

You can choose to pick up your sticker in store, or have it shipped to you!

# STAY UPDATED

Follow our Social Media Pages

**FOLLOW**



FOLLOW US



SUBSCRIBE TO OUR CHANNEL



## FWA WATERSHED UPDATE...

Exciting progress continues in our efforts to enhance water quality on the Fox Chain O'Lakes! Since the Illinois EPA approved our watershed-based plan in early 2024, volunteers, staff, and community partners have been working together to put key recommendations into action. In 2025, local organizations and businesses have shown strong support by adopting resolutions and exploring Best Management Practices to improve water quality for everyone. Many more informational videos and other information were uploaded and shared through Social Media or at various community events.

**We all love the Chain, Let's help keep it clean**



*Looking ahead, a major stormwater project near Route 59 and Petite Lake—driven by residents, supported by Lake Villa Township and Lake County Stormwater Commission grants—will kick off in spring 2026. Plus, thanks to a PEARLS grant from The Wildflower Plant Propagation Committee of McHenry County, the Fox Waterway Agency is creating a demonstration rain garden to help manage stormwater at our headquarters. Be sure to watch for the garden's progress as you travel the channel to McDonald's in Fox Lake!*

*Don't forget to subscribe to our YouTube Channel for informational videos and follow us on Facebook and Instagram!*

# RICH TOP SOIL FOR HOME GARDENS & BUSINESSES

One of Lake and McHenry counties best resources for successful gardening is the use of FWA's reclaimed topsoil. The soils are nutrient rich with natural fish fertilizer which improves soil health and increases soil fertility by providing the primary nutrients necessary for plants to thrive. Proceeds are used to further preserve your Chain O'Lakes & Fox River.

**Please note that FWA is unable to deliver soil.**

To make arrangements to purchase contact Anita at **847-587-8540**



### DIRT FIELD HOURS:

**Monday - Friday 6a - 2p**

Some Saturdays (weather dependent)

or by appointment.

### Contractor

Soil Special \$15/Cubic Yard (Semi/6 Wheeler Quantities)

### Contractor/Home Garden

Soil Special \$20 / Pick-up Truck (Pickup Truck Load Only)

## PROJECTS~PAST & FUTURE

Sediment removal projects continued in 2025 on the following projects:

- Orchard Heights Channel mouth Phase 1 completed
- Orchard Heights Channel Phase 2 started in the fall and will continue through the winter, weather permitting. Estimated completion spring 2026.
- Nippersink Creek main navigational channel dredging is ongoing and will continue heading North in 2026. Total estimated Cubic yards to be removed 125,000-150,000 for the project.
- Mallard Ave/Heart O' Lakes Channel mouth off of Grass Lake was hydraulically dredged and pumped to the Cooper's Farm Sediment Dewatering Facility SDF.
- Ackerman Island SDF, Maintenance and cleanout of the holding cells to make capacity for future dredge material will commence November 2025 thru May 2026
- Check the FWA website periodically for project updates.

**Total Cubic Yards removed 2025 86,155**

**Nippersink Creek 2022 28,161**

**Mallard Dr/Heart O Lakes 43,729**

**2023 28,414**

**Orchard Heights Phase 18,656**

**2024 26,444**

**Nippersink Creek 2025 23,770**

**2025 23,770**

**Total removed to date 106,789**



**Preserving our great Fox Waterway for all!**

45 S. Pistakee Lake Rd. ● Fox Lake ● IL ● 60020

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www.foxwaterway.com