

DAILY CITIZEN

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SEELEY LAKE

DAM PLAN FACES PUSHBACK



AMBER ARNOLD, STATE JOURNAL

William Noll, 10, of Baraboo, wears waders as he explores the dam on Seeley Lake during a visit with his mom and a friend at a public easement area in North Freedom on Tuesday. A landowner is proposing to remove the dam, which would drain the 52-acre lake, making it part of Seeley Creek.

DNR tentatively approves structure's removal, despite opposition

JOHN GITTINGS
jgittings@wiscnews.com

A pair of Sauk County landowners hoping to drain a 52-acre lake to restore the area's natural floodplain and native vegetation has run into opposition from local residents who treasure it as is.

Seeley Lake, located nine miles west of Baraboo, was formed in the late 1940s by building a dam on what is now its northeast end, according to Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources engineer Jon Wagner, who also noted that dam-like structures have been in the area since the 1850s.

Wisconsin natives Jane and Richard Dana, who have a home in Arizona, have owned much of it and its surrounding

land since 1986, according to the DNR and Sauk County records. The lake has long been accessible to the public, though, with a small parking lot and public easement, and is a popular spot for fishing and other recreation.

The couple now is asking the DNR for permission to slowly deconstruct the dam, draining the water and allowing it to become part of the area's Seeley Creek.

But in many residents' view, that would be "destroying a wetland," according to Sauk County Board Sup. Brian Peper, whose District 25 includes the Seeley Lake area.

"Our concern is the people of the area," said Matt Schmidtke, a town of Freedom resident who lives near the lake with his

wife, Kathi. "People come out here all the time wanting to just get away. It's part of the community and (has) been part of the community for so long."

What's in the plan?

Jane and Richard Dana are long-time environmentalists.

They're founders of the Baraboo Range Preservation Association, they've served on the International Crane Foundation Board of Directors, and Jane Dana helped produce the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro and launch Green Cross International the next year in Kyoto, Japan.

The Seeley Lake land is part of 400-

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Wisconsin Planned Parenthood pauses abortions

Organization considering legal action amid Medicaid funding cuts in Trump bill

SCOTT BAUER AND GEOFF MULVIHILL
Associated Press

Planned Parenthood of Wisconsin will stop scheduling patients for abortions starting next week as it works to find a way to provide the service in the face of Medicaid funding cuts in President Donald Trump's tax and spending bill, the non-

profit said Thursday.

Abortion funding across the U.S. has been under siege, particularly Planned Parenthood affiliates, which are the biggest provider.

The organization warned earlier this year that about half its clinics that provide abortion could be closed as a result of a ban on Medicaid funding for Planned Parenthood for services other than abortion.

The measure was part of the tax and spending law President Donald Trump signed in July. Initially, a judge said reimbursements must continue, but a federal

appeals court this month said the government could halt the payments while a court challenge to the provision moves ahead.

Planned Parenthood services include cancer screenings and sexually transmitted infection testing and treatment. Federal Medicaid money was already not paying for abortion, but affiliates relied on Medicaid to stay afloat.

The remaining Planned Parenthood clinics in Louisiana — where abortion is banned — are scheduled to shut down at the end of this month.

Planned Parenthood of Wisconsin said

in a statement that it is trying to see as many patients as possible between now and Tuesday. The federal law takes effect Wednesday. It is not scheduling patients beyond that date and the organization believes the move will allow it to continue seeing other Medicaid patients. The organization said it was working with providers across the state to make sure patients are referred quickly and receive timely care.

It is also considering taking legal action, the group said.

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