

Cason & Associates, LLC
LAKE & POND MANAGERS

- Pond Management Consulting
- Pond Development & Construction
- Professional Applicators
- Fish Stocking & Surveys
- Aquatic & Wetland Plantings
- Aeration Systems & Fountains

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Grow Huge Fish!

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Everyone loves catching big fish. Whether it is on a lake or your backyard pond, we all enjoy the thrill and sense of accomplishment that comes with reeling in trophy fish. For some of us, being able to grow bragging-sized fish is the main reason we own private lakes and ponds. However, to grow huge fish, the fishery must be balanced and there needs to be adequate forage.



An aquatic ecosystem can be imagined as a pyramid of interconnected food chains. At the top lies the top consumers, which contains predatory fish like bass and walleyes. In the middle levels lies the secondary and primary consumers, which include panfish, minnows and aquatic invertebrates. At the bottom are producers, such as aquatic plants, algae and phytoplankton. When there are gaps or shortages in any of these tiers, the fishery can become unbalanced and stunted. In ponds and small lakes, it is often the primary consumer tier that is missing or in short supply, which includes minnows.



If your lake or pond is top heavy with predators, there will not be enough forage for them to reach desirable sizes. For most pond fish, high density equals slow growth and poor size structure. To grow trophy fish, it is essential to maintain lower densities. How low this density needs to be depends on pond fertility and forage abundance. Electro-fishing and fyke-netting surveys are two important methods for assessing fish populations and removing over-abundant fish.

A strong minnow forage base is critical to growing large gamefish and panfish. Minnows provide a valuable soft-finned source of protein and nutrients, which enhances growth rates, gamete production and survivorship. Minnows are prolific and can spawn multiple times a year. If conditions are favorable, a self-sustaining population of minnows can be achieved. Unfortunately, in smaller lakes and ponds, minnow mortality rates may out-weigh recruitment due to a lack of habitat cover or too many predators in the system.

REMINDER: If you would like to order fish for spring delivery without increased delivery charges, the deadline is **May 1st**. See the order form inside or call us at **1-877-309-8408** to place an order. Orders are on a first come, first served basis. Don't wait until the last minute!



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In other words, minnows may not achieve a self-sustaining population in your water. This is why we recommend stocking minnows every year to ensure your fish are growing to their full potential.

Along with minnow stocking, supplemental feeding with a protein-based fish pellet can also increase growth rates; particularly for species such as bluegills, trout and catfish. Look for fish meal-based food and avoid fish food that is primarily made with soy protein if you want your fish to provide quality table fare. Supplemental feeding can be done by hand or by using a timed feeder, such as a Texas Hunter® fish feeder.



All fish in this article came from a Wisconsin pond that is stocked with minnows annually and is supplementary fed weekly.



Call or email Cason & Associates today to ask about fish stocking, fish feeding and fish surveys. We are Wisconsin's primary resource for all your fish management needs.

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Aquatic Plants and Your Environment

When it comes to aquatic plants, many people consider them as a nuisance at their favorite fishing or swimming hole. Whether it is the constant process of cleaning off your lure, the feeling of the plant against your leg while swimming, or the large beds of “weeds” that can form on the surface preventing you from enjoying the water, aquatic plants get a bad name. In most of these cases, vegetation becomes a problem due to poor management practices or the introduction of exotic species. To prevent aquatic plants from growing out of control, management practices, such as herbicide treatments and removal of exotic species and re-introduction of native species, may be warranted. When properly managed, aquatic plants, both emergent and submergent, offer many benefits to ponds and lakes.

Nutrient Control: Smaller waterbodies, especially ponds, are susceptible to algae blooms fueled by nutrient-rich water. Shoreline plants act as a natural filter and are proven to absorb pollutants and nutrients before they reach the water. Submergent plants also soak up excess nutrients within the water column that would otherwise promote algae growth.



Erosion Control: Bare shorelines risk having eroded banks. Soil erosion causes poor water quality due to suspended particles in the water and can lead to poor productivity within the waterbody. This can affect plant growth and fish growth and spawning success. Planting your shoreline with emergent and submergent plants is one of the best ways to reduce soil erosion and sediment in your water.



Habitat: A diverse habitat is the bottom foundation for having a healthy fishery. Emergent plants provide important living spaces for many organisms that fish prey upon such as aquatic insects, crustaceans, snails and minnows. Emergent plants also serve as a nursery for young fish, while submergent plants provide cover for larger-sized fish. Native flowering emergent plants also provide critical habitat for pollinators, which are in sharp decline.



Food: Many animals rely on aquatic plants for food. Waterfowl love the seeds and tubers (root structures) of many plants. An emergent planting can be customized to attract waterfowl.



Aesthetics: Many emergent plants have vibrantly colored flowers that blossom throughout the year. By planting these plants along the shoreline, these plants add additional color to your pond or lakefront. A healthy pond or lakefront not only looks pleasing, but can also aid in your property value.

Cason Associates can help you customize an aquatic planting on your pond or lakefront. We can also help you manage your “weed” problem if they are out of control. Aquatic plants are important. Get the most from your waters by encouraging native plants and controlling invasives. Call us today!

Is a Floating Fountain Right for Your Pond?

Nothing is more relaxing than watching the elegant patterns and hearing the soothing sounds created by a water fountain. A stunning nighttime display can be created by directing clear or colored lights into the spray pattern. There is no question that a floating fountain adds aesthetic appeal to a pond, but fountains can do so much more.

One of the most frequent comments we hear from customers is they value their fountains for the peaceful background noise they create. The sound of rushing water drowns out stressful noises from road traffic, lawn mowers and noisy neighbors. Few people know that fountains also do an excellent job of aerating a pond. Fountains have the highest oxygen transfer of any type of aerator, and can mix oxygen down to depths of 6-7 feet. If used in conjunction with a diffuser air system, they can send oxygen to greater depths. Oxygenating a pond is important for maintaining fish survival, improving water quality and preventing organic muck deposition. Floating fountains are also important tools for mosquito control. The surface disturbance they create prevents certain mosquitos from surviving their larval stage. Fish farmers also use fountains as overhead cover for fish, such as trout. The surface disturbance they makes it difficult for fish eating birds to locate their prey.

With the many benefits fountains provide, choosing the right fountain can be frustrating. Today, there are so many options to choose from. Where do you even start?! Cason & Associates is your authorized Wisconsin dealer of Kasco Marine® fountains. Over the years, we have had experienced with a number of different brands of fountains and have found Kasco® fountains to be the best. These high-quality systems are long-lasting and are backed by Kasco’s exceptional warranty and customer support. These features make Kasco® fountains the least expensive to purchase, maintain and operate.

Kasco® offers two main types of fountains: the xStream series and J-series, which are decorative fountains, and the VFX-series, which are aerating fountains. Both the decorative xStream series and J-series fountains, and the aerating VFX-series fountains come with multiple nozzles, offering a variety of spray patterns. They are all corrosion resistant, energy efficient and have the capability to add colored or clear lights to create a spectacular nighttime display. All Kasco Marine® fountains are complete packages including an assembled motor, control panel, thermoplastic float, power cord and mooring lines.

Choosing a fountain should be fun and enjoyable. Don’t let today’s market overwhelm you. Let our trained staff help you determine which fountain is best for your needs. Call us today for pricing and more information.



Let us do the work for you!

We offer all of the following services, so you can spend more time enjoying your fountain:

- Assembly and installation of new fountains
- Spring installation, fall removal and winter storage
- Cleaning, testing and repairs



Stream Restoration and Habitat Improvement

Streams provide some excellent fishing opportunities in Wisconsin. Whether it is a cold-water trout stream, a cool-water smallmouth bass and walleye stream or a lazy, meandering largemouth bass and catfish creek, streams can be a real asset to private landowners. Unfortunately, many of our streams have been degraded by brush encroachment or over-grazing by livestock. Both of these issues lead to widening of the stream channel and slowing of current which, in turn, leads to increased sedimentation. Increased sedimentation and slowing and warming of stream water often degrades the fish community.

While many landowners own stream frontage, few are aware there are companies out there, such as Cason & Associates, that will conduct stream improvement projects to benefit fisheries. Cason & Associates will help you with planning your stream improvement project and obtaining the necessary permits. In addition, we offer the follow stream services:

- Shoreline stabilization using bioengineering techniques
- Installing fish structures
- Channel restoration
- Invasive species control
- Fish surveys
- Tree and brush removal



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In 2017, Cason & Associates continued its on-going habitat restoration project along the Pine River in Bayfield County, Wisconsin. The goal of this project is to improve sections of the river to its original state of a flourishing trout and salmonid stream. Canopy thinning, seeding of native grasses along eroded shorelines and the installation of half-log covers and K-dams to improve habitat for trout and salmon were implemented. Initial observations revealed trout and salmon were utilizing the habitat structures that were installed.



Blowdown covering stream



Tag alder choked bank



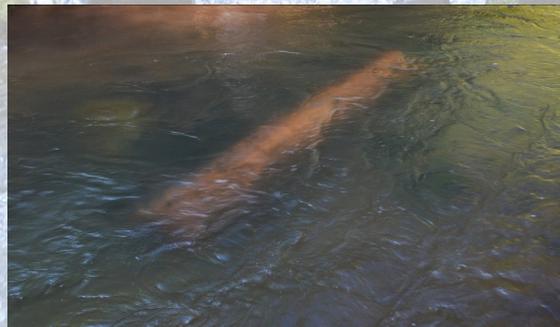
Logjam covering stream



K-dams create a plunge and a pool, creating habitat



Tag alder thinning & brush removal allows sunlight to reach the stream, thus, increasing productivity



Submerged half-logs provide overhead cover for fish and aquatic invertebrates

Rivers and streams are important and special ecosystems. Restoring these systems not only provide property value, they also provide recreational opportunities, such as fishing and wildlife-watching. If you have a river or stream flowing through your property, call the professionals at Cason & Associates to see how we can restore and improve this fragile resource on your property.