1 Sub 1 to 2020 RES-419 AFFIRMING THE DANE COUNTY LAKE LEVEL MANAGEMENT GUIDE FOR THE YAHARA 2 **CHAIN OF LAKES** 3 4 Lake level management of the four major lakes in Dane County (Lake Mendota, Lake Monona, Lake Waubesa and Lake Kegonsa) is a challenging task, complicated by the occurrence of 5 extreme rainfall events and a wide range of public opinion on preferred levels. 6 Managing lakes to reduce severity and occurrence of flood events is a goal that our community 7 supports. Following the 2018 flood event, Dane County convened a technical work group 8 consisting of experts from Dane County, City of Madison, University of Wisconsin-Madison, and 9 Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to evaluate and model scenarios to improve flood 10 resiliency. The technical work group produced a report that was subsequently used be-by a task 11 force to review the findings and make policy recommendations. 12 The County Board adopted Res-227, 2018, The task force included a recommendation that was not previously vetted by the technical work 1413 group which is stated as follows: "Dane County will continue to implement any tools that may be Formatted: Left, Indent: Left: 0.08", Hanging: 0.41", 4514 available to lower lake levels to DNR designated seasonal minimum levels as soon as possible Space Before: 8.45 pt 4615 and work to maintain lakes at that level. This directive will be implemented where possible and 1716 to the extent that managing any given lake will not create flooding on other lakes or other 1817 unintended consequences." Similar language was also adopted in Res-227, 2018. In 2020, additional analysis was conducted by the technical work group to review summer minimum and midrange operation to determine if managing at the two different levels impacted flooding. The conclusions drawn from the analysis revealed that operating at either summer 2218 minimum or midrange had little or no impact on peak flood levels. The technical work groupand Formatted: Left, Indent: Left: 0.08", Hanging: 0.41", thev Space Before: 8.4 pt 2319 made the following recommendation: 2420 "Operation of water levels should follow the Dane County Lake Level Guide for the Yahara 2521 Chain of Lakes, which establishes midrange as the summer goal but provides flexibility for 2622 proactive management guided by weather forecasts. For example, when water levels are at 2723 midrange and weather forecasts predict rainfall in the future, the dams should be opened to 2824 increase flow and reduce water levels to summer minimum. Alternatively, when water levels are 2925 at summer minimum and weather forecasts predict dry conditions, the dams should be closed to 3026 reduce flow and increase water levels near summer midrange." Flooding does not occur on any of the lakes when they are within the DNR-designated range. 3227 Allowing for management flexibility within the range as prescribed in the Dane County Lake Level Management Guide facilitates achievement of the goals set out by the updated technical work group recommendation. is the most straight-forward approach to a complex situation. The directive to maintain lakes at summer minimums was well intentioned but had the unintended consequence of creating an expectation that it would reduce flood events. The Dane County Formatted: Left, Indent: Left: 0.08", Hanging: 0.41", Lake Level Management Guide for the Yahara Chain of Lakes was prepared by Dane County Space Before: 0.25 pt staff, adopted by the Lakes & Watershed Commission, and peer reviewed by professionals from the University of Wisconsin, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, USGS Wisconsin Formatted: Left, Indent: Left: 0.08", Hanging: 0.41", 3928 Water Science Center and private and public water resource professionals. Space Before: 0.25 pt 4029 NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Land Conservation Committee, Environment, 4±30 Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee and the Lakes & Watershed Commission, through 4231 their charge from the Dane County Board, to review and make recommendations on lake

- 4332 management, wish to express confidence in the lake level management and progress in
- 4433 improvements of water flow through the Yahara chain of lakes that the Dane County Land &
- 4534 Water Resources Department is implementing;
- 4635 BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Dane County Board of Supervisors and Dane County
- 47—Executive affirm that the Land & Water Resources Department has the flexibility to manage lake levels within the prescribed ranges proactively guided by weather forecasts. management of the Yahara Chain of Lakes shall follow the Dane county
- 48 Lake Level management Guide for the Yahara Chain of Lakes and that previous directives to
- 36 operate at the seasonal minimum are hereby rescinded.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that flood control is the primary management objective during periods of high water and that programs and projects such as aquatic plant harvesting and sediment removal will be utilized to improve management during flood conditions, which are caused by above-average annual rainfalls, high groundwater levels and intense storm events.

49 BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Land & Water Resources Department will publish operational dam changes that increase and reduce flow on the Land and Water website.

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