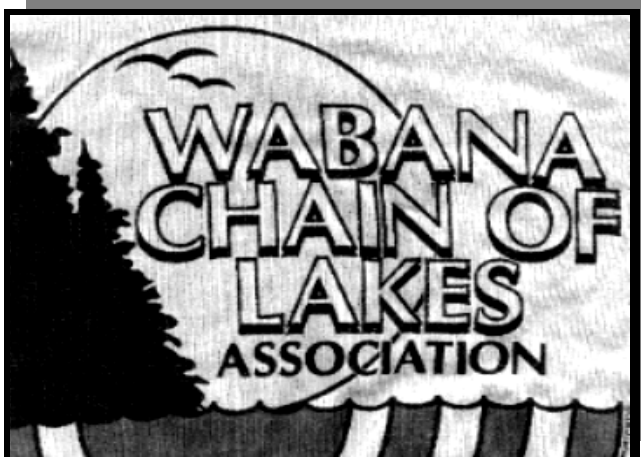


The Chain Letter

of the



Dedicated to the care and preservation of our lakes, for the enjoyment and safety of all.

August 2004

Volume 8, Number 4

Editor: Bill Downing, wdowning@uslink.net
38067 Forest Lane, Grand Rapids, MN 55744 218-326-4730
1834 Simpson St, Falcon Heights, MN 55113 651-644-9625

Officers:

President: Dick Chambers 326-2809
Vice President: Bud Sage 326-4535
Treasurer: Cathy Rudolph 327-0820
Secretary: Susan Lick 326-6837

Advisory Committee.

All the above, plus:

John Adams 326-2206
Steve Bryant 326-5473
Nancy Ellsworth 326-8056
David Lick 326-6837
Joel Solomon 326-5177
George Wilbert 327-1018
John Zimmerman 326-1020

CONTENTS:

FROM PRESIDENT CHAMBERS	1
BUSINESS MEETING JULY 17, 2004	1-2
LOON WATCH	3
INCREASED LAKESHORE VALUE	3-4
LEGISLATURE'S LOST CHANCE	4-5
ELECTION OF OFFICERS	5
2004-05 DUES ARE DUE JULY 1	5

After the August 21 meeting, the next meeting on September 18 2004 will be the last meeting of the year. Deadline for copy submission is Tuesday September 7.

FROM PRESIDENT CHAMBERS

The WCOLA has had a very nice summer so far and we hope everyone has. In the next few weeks volunteers from WCOLA will again do some clean up by the Unger bridge. We hope that everyone has enjoyed going through the channel with out worrying about the beaver sticks in the water.

The advisory committee has expressed their concern, to once again mention the fact that if you are planning to build on your property, to contact a Wabana supervisor to acquire a permit. Permits are required just as the signs state as you enter Wabana township. Recently some people said that they did not know that. I'm sure our supervisors would appreciate hearing from you.

One of the ways for information to get to our township members comes through our newsletter, If you have any information to share please contact an officer or our fine news letter person Bill Downing.

Hope to see you all at our next WCOLA meeting. August 21st. Take care and be safe.

Dick



BUSINESS MEETING JULY 17, 2004

Call to order. President Dick Chambers called the meeting to order with 25 members in attendance.

Program: No program today due to WCOLA's annual picnic event at 6:00pm.

Minutes: A motion was made by Bill Downing "to approve the two previous meetings minutes including a change from the May 22nd meeting, as printed in the newsletter". Approved.

Treasurer's Report: Read by Cathy Rudolph.

Balance as of 6-12-04	\$8,373.86
Received	
Dues	\$ 940.00
Contributions	\$ 144.00
Total Received	\$1,084.00
Paid Out	
Stamps	\$ 245.31
Address Labels	\$ 49.51
Printing	\$ 348.38
Total Paid Out	\$ 643.20
Total as of 7-17-04	\$8,814.66

Paid Households-----138

A motion was made by Art Merrill “to approve the treasurer’s report as read”. Approved

Itasca Coalition of Lake Associations (ICOLA): Dick Chambers invited members to the ICOLA annual meeting on July 21. Catherine McLynn gave a brief description of the North Central Lakes Pilot Project, part of the Governor’s Clean Water Initiative. The project involves the five counties of Itasca, Aitkin, Cass, Crow Wing and Hubbard and will be the keynote presentation at the meeting
A motion was made by Bill Downing “to contribute \$1,000. to ICOLA from the Wabana Chain of Lakes Association”. Approved.

Wabana Chain of Lakes maps are still available through Jack Velzen. He reported that in 6-8 months county plat information will be available on the internet.

Letters: A letter from David Lovelace, son of the late Mort and Marian Lovelace was read by Dick Chambers. He also renewed their membership as the “Lovelace Family”.

Lead Sinker Exchange: Ken and Barb Zimmer reported on the exchange in Grand Rapids and announced upcoming exchanges in other communities.

Wabana Township Ordinance: Regulation of subdivisions and towers in the shoreland overlay district and the overlying Itasca County Ordinances

was brought forth by Dick Chambers. Recent complaints of environmentally detrimental activity in the WCOL area initiated discussion and sharing of information. George Colburn suggested the proper processes and ordinances be included on-line as a link in the WCOLA web site. Bill and Janette Booth described a potential change in the Little Wabana area. County and township permit and ordinance information will be included in upcoming newsletters.

Association Officers: WCOLA President and vice president are up for re-election. Bill Downing suggested a nominating committee be formed as per association by-laws. Volunteers were Bud Sage, Steve Bryant and Bob Sage. Art Merrill moved that a vote of confidence for the nominating committee be taken. Approved.

Water Testing: Bill Downing requested he be replaced in his role on the water testing efforts. David Lick will discuss this with Bob Gephart who has helped initiate the testing in the past.

Water Use Management: Bluewater Lake resident Bob Sage described a use issue by the Bluewater Covenant Bible Camp of a slalom water-ski course, set up on the north end of the lake. Discussion followed. Letters can be sent to the Bluewater Covenant Bible Camp Board of Directors.

County Commissioner update: Commissioner Catherine McLynn reported that filings for offices close on Tuesday, July 20. A position is open on the soil and water board. Suomi and Horseshoe Lake Association project examples. Success of Deer Lake Road for wildlife concerns. Sale of lease lots inexpensively by the county. Reminder to participate in primary elections.

David Lick suggested voters look into candidates from all districts. Bud Sage noted his support for Catherine McLynn’s re-election.

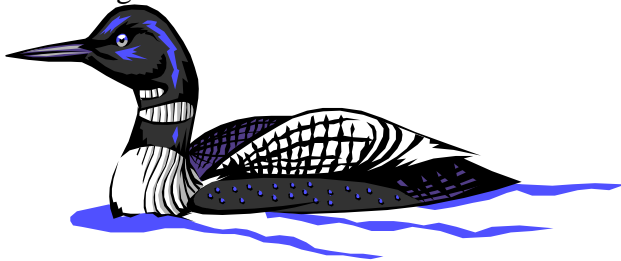
WCOLA Shirts: Ideas for new polo style shirts with a WCOLA logo of some sort be investigated. Dick Chambers requested volunteers to help.

August Meeting: August 21. Program: Chris Cavanaugh from the DNR Fisheries.

Meeting adjourned.
Susan Lick, Secretary

LOON WATCH

From Roger Linder

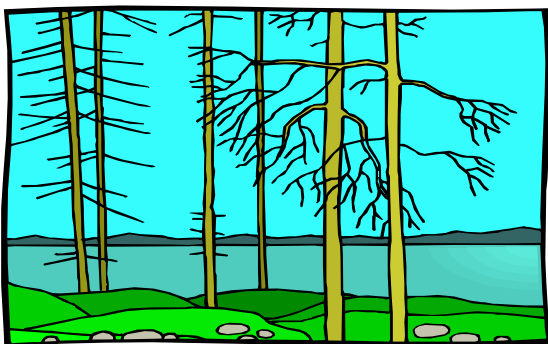


On July 26th, Ken Zimmer, Dennis Koewler, and Roger Linder [assisted by Bob and Judy Madigan from Blacksburg VA.] spent a very beautiful morning completing the annual loon survey. We had waited hoping to see more chicks. There was a report by Barbara Gleason who lives on the island in Wabana that the island eagles had killed two chicks. This was apparently not a good year for chicks, last year Wabana had 7 versus the one counted this year. The results are as follows.

LAKE	ADULTS	CHICKS	TOTAL
Wabana	16	1	17
Bluewater	6	2	8
Trout	24	4	28
Total	46	7	53

The total is essentially the same as last year when we had a total of 54 on our chain of lakes, 9 of those being chicks.

INCREASED LAKESHORE VALUE



Remembering the outstanding action of the Wabana Township Supervisors last year, in making the Township's regulations regarding lake development more restrictive than those contemplated by Itasca

County's Commissioners, I read the following article with great interest. It is reprinted from the July 2004 MLA Lake Bulletin, published by the Minnesota Lake Association. No doubt other lakeshore owners will be interested as well, and all residents of Wabana Township will be glad to see that the expected outcome of their Ordinance is borne out in these hard facts, as determined by researchers from the University of Wisconsin.

Lake Restrictions Make Lakeshore Property More Valuable

SEATTLE - People are willing to pay more to live on a lake that's protected from degradation, often related to lakeshore development. These findings are part of a report from an interdisciplinary team of researchers at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, which investigates the ways human beings create and respond to environmental change.

This rise in property value is just one of the preliminary findings presented at the annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS). Taken together, the initial results point to the importance of understanding the reciprocal interaction between ecological and human systems—something the Wisconsin scientists argue is key to developing effective management strategies.

One of the emerging environmental issues in Wisconsin is the development of the state's Northwoods region (also known as the Northern Highland Lake District) that's speckled with thousands of freshwater lakes. A decade ago, before the area's population grew by 15 percent**, anglers on nearly any of the region's lakes could dip their lines into the water and quickly catch fish. But, as more residents have moved into the area, fish abundance has declined, threatening many qualities of the lakes that attract people to the area.

** (Note: Minnesota's Central Lake Region has grown by more than 25 percent in the last decade).

Development tends to have a homogenizing effect across an area, giving lakes similar water qualities and similar fish and plant communities, says Stephen Carpenter, a UW-Madison limnology professor and one of the project's leaders. But, as he and his colleagues note, identifying exactly how humans alter these lakes is only one part of the equation. To understand how lakes change over time and to develop effective management strategies to mitigate predicted changes, researchers must determine how people—particularly fishermen and lakeside residents—may respond to changes in these freshwater ecosystems.

"When most people think about the dynamics of ecological systems, they think only of how humans influence them," says Tim Kratz, a senior scientist at UW-Madison's Center for Limnology and the group's pre-

sender at the AAAS meeting. "But lakes also influence human activities and behaviors. They guide, for example, where people fish or where they decide to build their cabins."

As Carpenter and UW-Madison economist William Brock learned through mathematical modeling, the collapse of the fish population at one lake can ripple to nearby lakes—anglers wanting to hook as many fish as possible, are likely to move to another lake that promises more nibbles on the line. Once overexploited, the anglers are likely to move again, until fish populations in all area lakes are depleted, says Carpenter.

But not all human responses to changes in a lake's ecosystems are negative, according to research by one scientist in the group. In fact, some can lead to a "win-win" situation that protects the lakes while increasing the value of the property surrounding those lakes. When the quality of lakes begins to break down, lakefront property owners can respond in two ways, says Bill Provencher, an environmental economist at UW-Madison. "They can take action collectively, such as by forming associations that govern lake use, or they can take action privately by moving off the lake."

In 1999, residents in Vilas County, Wisconsin decided to take collective action: they enacted and continue to enforce a lake classification system that customizes development restriction on a lake based on its level of development and sensitivity to environmental change. The regulations, for example, require new lots on ecologically sensitive, undeveloped lakes to be at least 300 feet wide along the lakeshore, compared to the state minimum of 100 feet.

Because the county ordinance is one example of how people have responded to the changes in the environment, the interdisciplinary team of UW-Madison researchers wanted to evaluate the economic and ecological outcomes of these regulatory actions. Provencher focused on property value, which he says is an indirect marker of the economic value of the ordinance. Property value, he explains, can capture competing positive and negative effects of the ordinance on lakeshore residents, such as the assurance that the lake will be protected from future overdevelopment, but also limitations on how residents can use their property. The Wisconsin economist says the "win-win" outcome—when the lake classification scheme is both economically and ecologically beneficial—depends on whether the positive economic effect of the ordinance outweighs the negative economic effect.

To determine the overall effect of the classification system on property value, the Wisconsin economist and his collaborators looked at the actual market sales of more than 1,100 lakefront properties sold in Vilas County from 1997 to 2001. For transactions occurring after the zoning restrictions were implemented in 1999, the researchers compared the relationship between selling price and

level of development restriction. The economic effect of the ordinance is generally positive, as reflected in higher property prices, says Provencher, referring to preliminary findings.

The findings show, for example, that the zoning restrictions for Trout Lake—a less developed, 3,816 acre lake in the Northwoods—raises the value of land along the lake from \$633 to \$715 (about 12.6 percent) per foot of shoreline. Similarly, the price of land around Presque Isle Lake—a smaller and even less developed lake in the region—increased from \$410 to \$510 per foot (24 percent). Provencher says the preliminary results suggest that the lakefront homeowners, willing to exchange rights and money to live on a healthier lake, value environmental preservation. At the same time, they also suggest that preservation is valuable economically because it enhances the worth of land surrounding restricted lakes.

This positive connection between the environment and economics could encourage more people to respond collectively to ecological change in northern Wisconsin, notes Provencher: "Economics is the language of public policy. If a policy makes people better off financially, while protecting the environment, it's an easier sell."

Whether or not more lakeshore communities will adopt restrictions to protect the value of their lakes and homes, the UW-Madison group says that more research should consider how humans may react to ecological change, as they are players both acting and being acted upon by their environment. "We want to be able to understand the causes of long-term changes observed in ecological systems, and we want to develop effective mitigation or management strategies," says Kratz. "We will have little chance of doing this if we don't understand how humans influence and respond to ecological change."

LEGISLATURE'S LOST CHANCE



The Minnesota legislature missed a great chance to gain additional money to preserve open space, when it failed to pass a bonding bill this year. Finger-pointing at either political party will do no good—many opportunities have died because the two could not get together. The following article

was published in the July 2004 *Embrace Open Space Newsletter*, in the "Capitol 2004 Wrap-up" column by Cordelia Pierson.

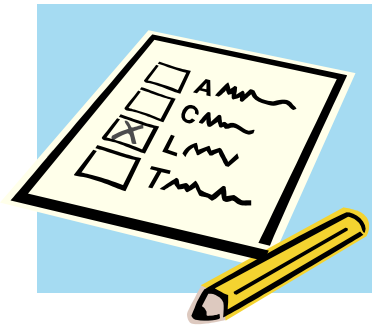
Legislators missed a critical opportunity to protect our region's natural areas, lakes, rivers, and wetlands during this session. In even-numbered years, legislators ordinarily pass a capital investment bill that includes funding for land acquisition and restoration. This legislature's failure to act is particularly difficult for three reasons: 1) it follows last year's vetoes of vital regional natural area funding; 2) fast rising land prices and development pressures mean future protection efforts will cost more; and 3) we now risk losing more than \$100M in public and private funds that these state investments would have leveraged.

This list summarizes the requests of key advocates who were poised this session to conserve vital natural areas, and the House position and Senate leadership position in its last bill (which did not pass):

- Metro Greenways (DNR): \$4M requested; \$1M Senate, \$0 House
- Scientific and Natural Areas (DNR): \$2.98M requested; \$500K Senate, \$300K House
- Local Initiative Grants (DNR): \$2.5M requested with \$11M in applications; \$2M Senate, \$5M House
- Metro Parks and Trails: \$10.46M requested; \$7M Senate and House
- Wildlife Management Areas (DNR): \$20M requested; \$10M Senate, \$6M House
- Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (Dakota County): \$23M requested; \$23M Senate, \$20M House
- Local Road Wetland Replacement (BWSR): \$4.362M requested; \$3M Senate and House

The lack of a budget agreement and the search for ways to close the remaining budget gap could also delay current bonding for projects underway, with landowner agreements in place or in process. This could be devastating for land conservation because it harms relationships with key landowners. On a positive note, more legislators today are aware of the importance of natural areas, parks, and trails in their communities and throughout the state, and hopefully more will help advocate for open space protection and restoration in the future.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS



According to our Wabana Chain of Lakes By-Laws, August is the time for the Annual Meeting, at which we elect some officers for the coming two years. The By-Laws Committee is still working on the changes that need to be made to bring the By-Laws up to date, to fit current practices. At the July 2004 meeting President Chambers named a Nominating Committee, as mentioned in the Minutes, and they will bring a slate of nominations for officers to fill terms that are coming to a close. There will be a time for nominations from the floor, in addition to the slate of nominees presented. A good turnout of members voting will give the new officers a feeling that they have a mandate from the membership. Please be there.

2004-05 DUES ARE DUE JULY 1

Treasurer Cathy Rudolph reported at the July meeting that we had 138 member households. That's down a bit from last year, but no doubt there are people who paid dues at that meeting who were not included. And others, since then, have probably sent in dues. But there are always those who have let the matter slip a little, and for those, there's a reminder. Send twenty bucks to Cathy, at the address on the other side of this sheet, marked 2004-05 dues, and it will bring you up-to-date.

Who is eligible for membership? Everybody! According to the By-Laws, anybody who subscribes to the aims and objectives of the Association is eligible for membership! You don't need to own property on any of the lakes, or even in Wabana Township, or anywhere, to be a potential member. Offspring of present members who live elsewhere are especially welcomed as members.

Wabana Chain of Lakes Association

**ANNUAL MEETING AND
ELECTION OF OFFICERS:
AUGUST 21, 2004.
TREATS AT 8:30 A.M.
PROGRAM AT 9:00
MEETING AT 10:00
YOUR ATTENDANCE IS
URGENTLY REQUESTED!**

**PROGRAM COMMITTEE
HAS ARRANGED FOR
CHRIS CAVENAUGH
FROM THE DNR'S DE-
PARTMENT OF FISHER-
IES TO SPEAK TO US.
YOU WON'T WANT TO
MISS IT!**

Ms Cathy Rudolph, Treasurer
36542 Havenwood Drive
Grand Rapids, MN 55744