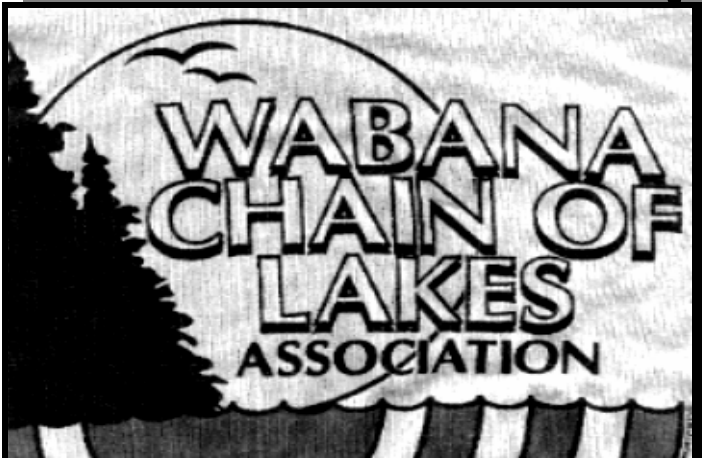


The Chain Letter of the



Visit our web site www.wcola.org
Add your items to it by sending to Mark Miner,
mminer@minergroup.com
To have your Chain Letter sent to you by
email, contact Jean Koewler,
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Dedicated to the care and preservation of our lakes, for the
enjoyment and safety of all

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Next Newsletter deadline: September 6, 2007

Officers:

- President: Dick Chambers 326-2809
- Vice President: Bud Sage 326-4535
- Treasurer: Jean Koewler 326-4302
- Secretary: Susan Lick 326-6837

Advisory Committee:

- Lloyd Adams 326-2130
- Steve Bryant 326-5473
- Nancy Ellsworth 326-8056
- David Lick 326-6837
- Roger Linder 326-2266
- Sherry Miner 326-0589
- Cathy Rudolph 327-0820
- John Zimmerman 326-1020

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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Hi, I hope everyone is having an enjoyable summer. We could certainly could use a little more rain though.

For quite some time our membership and advisory board have been trying to entice other people from other Township lakes to join our Association. It would be nice to have other areas and lakes to help with Secchi disk readings, record keeping and other activities. We have great records for Wabana, Bluewater, Little and Big Trout and Little Wabana. To have readings from other lakes would help residents to discover and repair problems before they become big. If you are interested please contact an advisor, names and numbers on the newsletter.

Hope to see you all at the August 18th meeting.

Thanks, *Dick*

MEETING SATURDAY AUGUST 18, 2007

8:30 A. M. COFFEE, TREATS, GREETINGS

9:00 A. M. PROGRAM

The program will be by Rian Reed, DNR Watershed Coordinator for northeastern Minnesota. He will speak on a subject of interest to all, the phosphorus sensitivity of Itasca County lakes. Rian will explain the process of determining the expected impacts of phosphorus loading on individual lakes, and how DNR intends to use this information to manage shoreline and watershed land use.

The public is invited, and bring a friend.

Bill Berg

10:00 A. M. BUSINESS MEETING

AGENDA FOR THE ANNUAL MEETING

This is the Annual Meeting, at which we elect officers. This year we elect a Vice President, to serve one year, to take the place of Bud Sage, and the Secretary and Treasurer to serve for two-year terms. (President and Vice President are normally elected in even-numbered years.) The Nominating Committee will probably present a slate of candidates, but nominations will be in order from the floor. It is important that members be present for this action.

1. Call to order
2. Introduction of members present
3. Minutes of last (June) meeting
4. Treasurer’s report
5. Discussion of Minn. Seasonal property owners association proposed donation
6. Committee reports: Water quality
7. Historical Committee
8. Bud Sage report
9. ICOLA President Dave Lick
10. Nominating Committee: Election of Officers
11. Election of Secretary for

two-year term

12. Election of Treasurer for two-year term
13. Election of Vice President for one-year term
14. Fall Road Cleanup
15. Other business
16. Adjournment

LOON COUNT FOR WABANA CHAIN

From Roger Linder

The following is the loon count info and report for this year.

The annual volunteer loon count was completed on July 24th by Paul Oberg, Dennis Koewler, Ken Zimmer and Roger Linder. Our results are combined with the rest of Itasca county. This effort is supported by the non-game wildlife fund. Pam Perry of the DNR is the coordinator and we are fortunate to have her scheduled as our guest speaker at our Sept 15th meeting. The following is a summary of our counts

Lake	Adults	Chick
Wabana	30	5
Blue Water	6	1
Big Trout	32	0
Little Trout	2	0
Total	70	6
2006	45	0
2005	45	8
2004	49	7
2003	54	9

HISTORICAL COMMITTEE

The following is a committee update from Roger Linder:

The historical committee has begun receiving replies from their request for residents info. Plans are underway to

store this info. at the Wabana town hall. We have had many reports of "tales" from the past as well as Photos being collected. We would appreciate copies of these photos to be keep in our files. If you are unable to make copies send the originals to us we will make copies and return Them to you. We realize that it takes work to gather history and appreciate all your efforts.

Okay, folks! Please raise your hand if you have completed and returned the Historical Committee's questionnaire that came with the July Chain Letter. Hmmm. Just as I thought, you meant to do it and put it aside on the desk, and now it's gone. Well, all is not lost. Thanks to Mark Miner and his work with the web site, you can get another copy. Just call up www.wcola.org, find the line that takes you to the Historical Committee's questionnaire, and print it out. Do it now!

A person asked me the other day if we meant to have historical data from people who do not own lakeshore. YES! Data are vital! You can't use information you don't have! Some day some ambitious and gifted author is going to write a history of Wabana Township, and we have families in the township whose ancestors were among the first settlers here—those descendants are the only ones who have that information available, and it's locked in their heads. Those brave and hardy people will be left out of the History, unless you act now. Get on it, please!

LOGGING HISTORY OF BALSAM TOWNSHIP

From Bill Berg

Here is a fine example of the kind of writing that should be preserved. Yes, it is about Balsam Township, but part of the Wabana Chain of Lakes is inside the present Balsam Township, and similar logging was carried out in Wabana township as well.

Balsam (T 58-R 24) and West Balsam Townships (T 58-R 25) were both surveyed in 1873, and most logging began shortly after that. It should be noted that there was some logging before 1873, most of it illegal. A map of that time shows little human activity; there was a "road" (likely an Indian trail) connecting the north central part of Crooked Lake with the confluence of Balsam Creek and the Prairie River. No settlements are listed for Balsam, but there were two homesteads between Trout and Spider Lakes, one with the name of Wheeler, and one with the name of Wilder.

With much of the Balsam area being situated on or near the Continental Divide, the logs were sent in two directions. Most went south, eventually ending up in the Prairie River and then the Mississippi. Other logs were floated north through the Gunn Lake and Rice River chain, and ended up in the Bigfork River and eventually the Rainy River.

The first areas to be logged in the Balsam area were along major rivers and creeks, such as the Prairie River, Balsam Creek, and Hanson Creek. Dozens of logging camps were established along these waterways, and the remains of but a few exist today. Shortly after the "inexhaustible" supply of white and red pine trees were cut along waterways, more logging camps were established on smaller creeks, and at inland sites. Using oxen and horses, the logs were sleighed or skidded to the waterways, where they were stamped to identify the logging company, and then sent on their way downstream to distant sawmills in Brainerd, St. Cloud, and the Twin Cities.

The log's downstream passage was facilitated by a series of dams at lake outlets, which raised the lake levels considerably. The dams were then opened, and the logs were poled and "sluiced" through the dam. The creeks and rivers were kept free of trees and brush by drive crews, who often just walked along the edges of smaller streams. Most log drives were in the spring, when water levels were highest. On larger lakes, the logs were floated together, held by boom logs that were chained together, and towed with a small steam or gas driven boat.

As the logs were floated downstream, the streams such as the Prairie River gradually got larger, and a Wannigan accompanied the log drive. The Wannigan served as a floating kitchen, dining hall and resting place. Wannigans were a common feature on Mississippi River log drives.

BLUE BOOK

From Dennis Koewler

Historically, when local fishermen catch a nice fish and put it in the Blue Book, they say the fish was caught in another lake from where it was caught. In the eight years we have been up here, it appears that people from out of state want their name in the Blue Book. More and more people seem to be fishing our chain of lakes because of information given in the Blue Book. An example from last year's Herald Review: "Largest Walleye Caught Comes Out of Wabana.." This was in large print to give it added emphasis. In a local restaurant, nearby tables were talking about having to go to Wabana because the fish were really biting. Is the advertising of large fish caught in the best interest of our chain of lakes?

One resort where we stayed for many vacations issued a patch for the largest fish of each type caught through that resort. The clients were rewarded without the advertising on a larger scale.

EDITORIAL: LAKE ASSOCIATION

From Bill Downing

My neighbor Libby Bunge Capps and I attended the Annual meeting of the Itasca Coalition of Lake Associations, and I need to tell you that I was very interested and impressed, both by the earnest environmental interest of those people there, and the results they are obtaining. This was my first visit to the organization's meetings, but it will sure not be my last.

I see that Dave Lick, President of the Itasca Coalition of Lake Associations, is on our WCOLA agenda for the MEETING SATURDAY AUGUST 18, 2007. I hope he will give us a full discussion of what the group is doing, and its hopes for future.

My question is, why aren't there more WCOLA members regularly attending those meetings? My answer is NOT apathy. I think it is more like complacency—people are happy with the way things are and see no reason to worry

The WCOLA organization began seventeen years ago in response to a couple of unexpected crises: One, the MDNR insisted on putting boat-in campsites on our chain of lakes when none were planned anywhere else; and two, a serious problem with the Bluewater Road construction. After we organized, we battled, and won one, the road. We lost the campsite battle—we were too new, small and weak!—and if it were not for the continued vigilance of some WCOLA members over the years, those sites would now be dumps.

Our organization has done a great deal since its inception, in water quality, surface activity, public access, septic system regulation, and others, as well as providing a fine framework for neighbors to come to know neighbors. And it all is done by Volunteers—no tax money spent.

Does anybody think that the present calm and unthreatening condition will continue indefinitely? We cannot be so foolish and complacent! For example: All the land on the north side of Wakeman Bay—all that fisherman's paradise—is Minnesota State land. How permanent is that likely to be? With tax money tight, roads crumbling, bridges collapsing, will this valuable asset remain free from political tugs-of-war? Who will fight the environmental fight? A strong WCOLA backed by a strong ICOLA can do a great deal.

Similarly, Buck man Cove, Diamond Point, the north side of Interlachen ("Little Trout") and 99% of the Trout Lakes are part of Chippewa National Forest. Strong interests are working for commercialization in our sacred National Parks—how long can National Forests hold out against forces that have lots of money and political power? We can have a loud voice, if we are organized, now, and have functioning committees and watchdogs. We can't wait for the crisis, and then organize. We "average"

people MUST maintain strength. Who said, "Constant vigilance is the price of freedom"?

One more example: a lot of the wild shoreline that we love to chug around on our pontoon boats is held by private people or groups, and they are being taxed to the point where it is unsustainable by ordinary people. Please mentally picture some or all of these sold: legal-sized lots side by side, with houses and docks, around the Island, the south side of the Wolf Point narrows, Arrowhead Point, Murphy Bay, and Boathouse Bay, Government Point, Sand-yarc, and all of Simmons Bay. Got the picture? Would the view of all those houses be worth the trip? Brainerdization is just around the corner! Can taxes be held down for people who just want to maintain undeveloped lake shore? Many in the Minnesota Legislature are trying to get a Blue Waters Bill through. Can you help?

If we want to hold fast to our clear and fish-filled lakes, we'll have to maintain wooded shores, spawning beds, and calm waters. That means belonging to, and working for, our Wabana Chain of Lakes Association, and attending and working for the ICOLA. I urge you to attend the next ICOLA meeting,

SEASONAL PROPERTY

One of our WCOLA members, George Colburn, was recently elected to the governing board of the MSRPO, the Minnesota Seasonal Recreational Property Owners. Congratulations!

There are not a lot of MSRPO members in Itasca County, which is a surprise, considering that a large majority of the lakeshore in this County is owned by non-residents, and they have no vote where they own the property. Until George won a seat, there was nobody on the board who owned property in Itasca County.

All members are urged to read the information about the organization at MSRPO.com to see what the it is doing for them, and has been doing for decades. To quote from their web site:

"MSRPO speaks for recreational property owners at the State Capitol, seeking tax fairness for families that own cabins, lakeshore, hunting shacks and seasonal property in Minnesota. We know that

cabins are where family happens in Minnesota, and we aggressively defend that way of life...

"Our grass roots activism on behalf of our 6000-plus members has earned us some political clout at the Capital. What's more, when MSRPO members vote they do so in force—an average member's household contains three or four voting-age individuals...

"Given uncertain state budget projections, those gains we've earned could quickly vanish. And Minnesota's property tax code is still tilted against seasonal property owners. Only with the help of thousands of MSRPO members can we solidify our position and achieve meaningful property tax reform."

Dues to MSRPO are voluntary, and average about \$53, but it is urged that whether or not one can afford the dues, one should join, and add to the numbers of concerned citizens. There is strength in numbers!

FROM "MINNESOTA WATERS"

Minnesota Waters has been accomplishing great things since its formation from two groups, the one concerned with lakes, and the one concerned with rivers. One of our members recently said to me that "water is the gold of the twenty-first century". Some quotes from the Minnesota Waters newsletter interested me, and will interest all those concerned with this vital resource:

Bush grant: "Minnesota's lake, stream and watershed stewards, as well as Minnesota Waters, have the great fortune of finding a partner and champion in one of Minnesota's premier community foundations.

"The Bush Foundation believes that it's the citizens, the fabric of our state's local communities armed with generations of ecological knowledge, who understand and are leading the way through taking actions today to protect their community's lakes and streams.

"To that end, the Bush Foundation recently awarded Minnesota Waters a three-year Watershed Stewardship Program grant for work with lake and stream stewards in communities across the state. The Bush

Foundation's critical support exemplifies the leadership and commitment necessary to further the resources and tools needed for Minnesota's watershed stewards.

“ Today communities throughout Minnesota can celebrate the continuing support of one more vital partner dedicated to local protection for our state's most prized natural resources. The Watershed Stewardship Program (WSP) expands, further empowers and mobilizes citizens dedicated to protecting and restoring Minnesota's lakes, streams and the watersheds draining to them.”

Citizen Monitoring Program “Minnesota Waters Volunteer Monitoring Surface Water Assessment Proposal for Clean Water Legacy Act funds was awarded \$376,000 by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency...

“This grant will enable Minnesota Waters to enhance and expand support for citizen monitoring, specifically working towards getting more of Minnesota's lakes and rivers waters assessed to see if they meet designated water quality standards. Thirteen projects total were awarded grants totaling \$1.01 million dollars.”

Proposed Wild & Scenic River Rules. “The MN DNR is proposing amendments to rules governing the management of the stretch of the Mississippi River from St. Cloud to Anoka designated as Scenic and Recreational under the Minnesota Wild and Scenic River Act. According to the DNR, these new rules are driven by a need to allow cities to manage their development, and to make the cities more accountable for their development decisions. Minnesota Waters has concerns about the proposed rule changes weakening protection of the river.”

This is the August 2007 issue of the Wabana Chain of Lakes Association's “Chain Letter”.

**MEETING SATURDAY MORNING,
AUGUST 18, 2007, WITH TREATS AT
8:30, PROGRAM AT 9:00, AND
ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING AT
10:00.**

THE CHAIN LETTER OF THE
WABANA CHAIN OF LAKES ASSOCIATION
Jean Koewler, Treasurer
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