

The Chain Letter

of the



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

September 2010

Special Mailing

WCOLA - OFFICERS

President: John Zimmerman Jr. 327-3188

jwzimmerjr@gmail.com

Vice President: Lloyd Adams 326-2130 lradams_94@msn.com

Treasurer: Jean Koewler 326-4302 djkoewler@q.com

Secretary: Arthur L. Merrill 327-5492 artgaro@paulbunyan.net

SPECIAL WCOLA MEETING CALLED

As you know from your September "Chain Letter" the DNR / USFS have asked Wabana Township, WCOLA and individuals living on or near the chain of lakes to consider writing letters of support for the proposed Wabana Lake Dam / Fish Passage project. A public meeting was held to explain the project in detail and answer questions on September 1st, having been advertised in the August "Chain Letter". The public meeting was well attended. A summary of the discussion including an overview of the project, its potential benefits and concerns was published in the September "Chain Letter" (the newsletter summary is reprinted below this note).

We had a good discussion of the project and WCOLA's involvement at last Saturday's meeting. Unfortunately, of the members who attended last Saturday, only 6 had

seen the DNR/USFS presentation. The funds are from USFS timber sales, it is a competitive grant situation and the decision will be made before our first meeting next spring. So while it is necessary for us to decide our involvement soon – we had time to delay the vote a month beyond the September WCOLA meeting. Those present felt that listening to each other talk about the project was not as good as hearing it again from the experts. So before taking a vote on our involvement (or making personal decisions as individuals about writing a letter) we decided to see if we could set up a second meeting with the DNR/USFS. That has been arranged and will be held on Tuesday, October 5th, 2010 at 7:00pm at the Wabana Town Hall.

I hope as many of you as can turn out for the meeting and discussion afterwards. At that time, if the members present feel well enough informed – we will discuss and then vote whether or not to support this project as an organization.

Thank you – John Zimmerman

Public Meeting: Wabana Town Hall, Fish Ladder Passage

On Wednesday, September 1, 2010, before the monthly Wabana Town Board meeting, there was a presentation about improving fish passage on Wabana Creek.

Eric Raitanen, US Forest Service, and Jeff Tillman, DNR presented information about the unique opportunity to improve fish passage at the Wabana dam by building natural rock weirs at and below the present dam. This change would not alter the level of Wabana but would improve the walleye and northern pike fishery in the chain by increasing genetic diversity.

Exotic species of fish such as common carp are currently blocked at the Brainerd dam and have been for many years. There would be almost no risk of exotic species of snails, crayfish, or plants moving upstream into the Wabana chain. Several large dams downstream on the Prairie and Mississippi rivers prevent exotic species of fish from moving upstream.

One of the best defenses against carp introduction is to maintain a clean water condition as carp need a high nutrient load to thrive.

Sandy Verry, hydrologist, explained the design of the rock weirs and how they control water levels. Verry had several pictures of other projects similar to the Wabana weir project.

The majority of the persons present were in favor of the improvement to fish passage on Wabana Creek.

The Forest Service asked for letters of support from WCOLA, the Wabana Town Board, and individuals so that the project could go forward.

Also discussed was a project to change the culvert under Co. Rd. 49 to alter the flow of water. The possible options are:

1. a bridge
2. large box culverts
3. open bottom arc

SEPTEMBER 2010

Special mailing – Meeting
Announcement

WCOLA has called a special meeting in order for more of our members to hear more about the USFS and DNR Wabana Lake Dam / Fish Passage. This meeting will be at Wabana township hall:
Tuesday, October 5th
And will begin promptly at 7:00pm

THE CHAIN LETTER OF THE
WABANA CHAIN OF LAKES ASSOCIATION
Jean Koewler, Treasurer
32040 Wakeman Bay Trail
Grand Rapids, MN 55744