

Summer 2022



For the Love of Our Lakes

10TH ANNUAL GALA

Sunday, July 24

Cragun's Legacy Clubhouse, 11497 East Gull Lake Dr

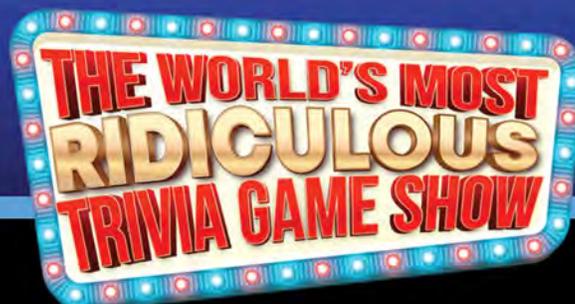
\$60 per person

SCHEDULE:

- 5:30 p.m. - Social & cash bar begin
- 5:45 - 6:45 p.m. - Appetizers & dessert service
- 6:45 p.m. - Raffle drawing
- 7 - 8:30 p.m. - Entertainment and live auction

E-BIKE RAFFLE

- A pair of Electra Townie Go!
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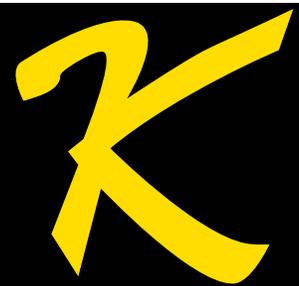


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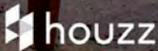
Tim Plude
DNR AIS
218-203-4354
timothy.plude@state.mn.us

You are always welcome to join us at our monthly Board of Directors' meetings on the second Wednesday of the month at 8:30 a.m. Meetings are held at Grand View Lodge in the Board Room within the Norway Center.



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It is with a great deal of sadness that I am informing you of Linda Harrier's resignation as the Chair and from the Board of Directors. Linda said that she cannot devote the time or the energy to leading GCOLA, as she needs to attend to helping her husband with his health issues. Linda served GCOLA on the Board of Directors since 2015 and has held the positions of Chair of the Board of Directors, Vice Chair, Communications Committee Chair and Gala Silent Auction Committee Chair. Her leadership, her communication skills and her professionalism will truly be missed. She was a committed leader of GCOLA. We offer best wishes and our prayers to Linda and her husband in the time ahead.

Per our By-Laws, as Vice Chair, I have accepted the position of Chair for the remainder of the Board year until the 2022 Annual Meeting. At that time, the Board can select a new Chair to fill out the two remaining years of Linda's original term. I am very happy to announce that Steve Frawley has volunteered and been ratified by the Board to be Vice Chair for our Board. Steve has been an active member of our Board since joining the Board in 2017. He currently is Chair of the Government Relations Committee and the Nominating Committee. He is on the 2022 Gala Committee. Steve has excellent leadership, organizational and communications skills and will be a welcome addition to our GCOLA Executive Committee.

Another organizational announcement is that Rick Quackenbush, our AIS Committee Chair has had to resign due to family and personal health reasons. As AIS Committee Chair for the last year, Rick led our AIS detection and prevention efforts and he also completed the Certified AIS Detector course. Tim Thoele, who is on our Government Relations Committee and Finance Committee, has accepted the very important position of AIS Committee Chair. In addition, the Board unanimously approved Tim Thoele as a Board member on May 11, 2022. We welcome Tim to our Board!!

Whee, that is a lot of changes. Now on to the business at hand. As I write this letter, ice out on the south end of Gull Lake in Steamboat Bay, where my wife, Pat, and I reside occurred on May 5. I have received reports that most if not all of the ice out on the entire Gull Lake Chain occurred that day or sooner. That is easily two to three weeks behind the median ice out dates of April 15 – 21. This puts a lot of pressure on the dock/lift installers to get our docks out and boats in the water.

As we have done in years past, this summer issue of the newsmagazine is being distributed to all Gull Lake Chain residents, rather than just GCOLA members. One goal for this broader distribution is to encourage all lake residents to

become members of GCOLA. Our membership is at an all-time high in excess of 1050 members, yet that is less than fifty percent of all Gull Lake Chain residents. We would love to see that increase to close to 100%. For just \$50 annual dues, you support the lake association's mission to ensure the highest water quality possible and promote recreational water safety on our lake chain. Ensuring placement, maintenance, and removal of the over 100 navigational buoys alone (which is fully funded by GCOLA) is worth the price of membership. If you are not yet a member of GCOLA, we would appreciate your consideration to become a member. This newsletter gives a great overview to many of the programs GCOLA oversees.

Another purpose of providing the newsletter to all Gull Lake Chain residents is to promote our 10th Annual Gala coming up on Sunday, July 24. This Gala will be different in several ways. First, we will be at a new venue, Cragun's Legacy Clubhouse. It is a wonderful venue and we will be able to enjoy it indoors and outside with great golf course views. Second, our Gala Planning Team decided to really shake it up for the entertainment. We will be entertained by a wild and talented duo billed as "The World's Most Ridiculous Trivia Game Show." Be prepared for an interactive and entertaining evening including prizes for game show winners. Please read details on the Gala in this issue. A big thank you to our Gala Planning Team listed in the article. The Gala is our sole fundraising event of the year and we are grateful for your support to make the Gala a success again this year.

If you are unable to attend the Gala this year and appreciate the programs GCOLA oversees, we would appreciate your support by considering a donation to GCOLA. Any donation to GCOLA is tax deductible.

Our Annual Meeting will be held on Wednesday, August 10 at Gull Lake Yacht Club at 7 p.m. We will conduct the meeting both in-person and virtually using Zoom, which enables a broader audience to tune in from home or attend in-person. We will allow ample time for Q & A at the end of the Annual Meeting, so here is your chance to share feedback or ask questions for our Board of Directors.

Enjoy this vibrant time on our Gull Lake Chain, safely enjoy the many aspects of open water again, and enjoy and protect our beautiful Gull Lake Chain.

I look forward to seeing you at the 10th Annual Gala and the Annual Meeting.

Thank you,
Uldis

10TH ANNUAL GALA



For the Love of Our Lakes

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A pair of Electra Townie Go!
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Tickets only \$20.



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For more information and to purchase tickets go to gcola.org.

**Mark your calendar! Gather your friends and neighbors!
Buy your tickets today!
2022's GCOLA 10th Annual Gala will be a Gala like none before!**

We will again celebrate the beautiful Gull Chain of Lakes with our 10th annual Gala, Sunday, July 24th, this year at Cragun's Legacy Clubhouse. It is a wonderful venue, which we will be able to enjoy indoors and outside with great golf courses views. The event will start at 5:30 p.m. with the popular social hour and reception, followed by a delicious, casual "come-and-go" style appetizer and dessert plates service 5:30- 6:45 p.m. At 6:45 p.m. the raffle drawing is scheduled and from 7 - 8:30 p.m. will be this year's entertainment and live auction for some great prizes. An evening of fun, friends, and good food, GCOLA's Gala 2022 is this summer's must-see event!

The GCOLA Annual Gala has two aims, to bring the community together and to fundraise to support the important goals of the Gull Chain of Lakes Association. This is GCOLA's only fundraising event and it helps to fund the work of the committees such as the Lake Steward program, loon conservation work, AIS identification and prevention efforts and many other programs to keep our lakes, shorelines and wildlife healthy and sustainable.

The World's Most Ridiculous Trivia Game Show

We are excited to announce a new entertainment event, booked by our Gala committee. This show is hosted by two entertainers who have done stand-up comedy, hosted game shows and worked alongside some of the big names in the comedy business.

They bill this event as:

48% Trivia + 48% Crazy Game Show + 5% Math = 100% the best time you've ever had!!

Join us for the fun and win prizes – and sometimes those with NO points even win big!

Live Auction

This year, instead of a silent auction for our 10th Annual Gala, we will have several live auctions during the entertainment portion of the program with one of our Trivia hosts as auctioneer. Be ready to bid on a number of wonderful prizes.

E-Bike Raffle

Win a pair of fabulous Electra Townie Go! 7D Step-Thru electric bikes, valued at \$3499. These Electra Townie e-bikes combine comfort and control with the power and fun of an e-bike featuring a fully integrated battery with 3 levels of support. Win these e-bikes and be the envy of the Paul Bunyan trail! Only \$20 per ticket, you will want to purchase several and increase your chances to win!

Drawing will be held on Sunday, July 24, 2022 at 6:45 p.m. at Cragun's Legacy Clubhouse, 11496 East Gull Lake Dr, East Gull Lake, MN 56401. Sponsored by Gull Chain of Lakes Association License #X-93369. You need not be present to win and must be 18 or older to purchase a ticket or win a prize. Winner is responsible for any applicable fees or taxes and delivery expenses.



Buy your tickets today!

This is a great opportunity to catch up with friends, neighbors and talk to your GCOLA board members.



Gala Tickets

Tickets are \$60 each and can be purchased through the GCOLA website at www.gcola.org or from a Board member. Ticket sales will be limited and based on safe social distancing guidelines. We recommend you purchase your tickets today before they run out. You do not need to be a GCOLA member to attend.

E-Bike Raffle Tickets

Tickets can be purchased by making your check payable to GCOLA Raffle and mailing it to GCOLA, PO Box 102, Nisswa, MN 56468. Please provide the following required information:

- Name
- Address including city, state, and zip code
- Phone number

We are not able to accept credit card payments due to the State of Minnesota gambling requirements.

The GALA promises to be a fun-filled and entertaining evening for all who attend so make plans to join us!

Seeking Volunteers who want to have FUN!

Do you like to be involved? Volunteer 30 minutes of your time during the GCOLA Gala and help us serve up the fun! Volunteers are needed to help at the registration tables, at the e-bike raffle. No experience is necessary! Seeking volunteers for 30-minute slots between 5 p.m. and 7 p.m. Contact Uldis Birznieks at pub@scicable.com or 218-820-7318 and be part of the team For the Love of Our Lakes!

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Adam & Jacqueline Kalenberg • Margaret
 Amy & Sean Harguth • Gull
 Beth Zahn • Gull
 Brad & Paula Green • Margaret
 Brett & Theresa Christofferson • Gull
 Carol Muller
 Charles & Deanna Albrecht • Gull
 Dale Womeldorf
 Emily Nahan • Roy
 Eric & Jami Deal • Gull
 Far End Partners • Gull
 James & Vicki Lundeen • Gull
 Jason & Christine Norring • Spider
 Jay & Donna Fauchald • Margaret
 Jesse Zahn • Gull

Jillaine Savage
 Joseph & Joanne Schlavin
 Mark & Susan Rotty • Nisswa
 Nate & Deborah Thompson • Margaret
 Patrick & Stacey Taylor • Gull
 Paul Martin • Gull
 Paul Lukas
 Portu Family LLC • Gull
 Robert & Mary Dimke • Upper Gull
 Susan & Jerry Jirsa • Nisswa
 Tim & Diane Thorpe • Gull
 Timothy & Jennifer Norman • Gull
 Toni Carlson • Upper Gull
 Wayne & Brenda Vanosdol
 Wayne & Janet Anderson • Margaret



GULL CHAIN of LAKES ASSOCIATION

OUR TOP PRIORITIES AT A GLANCE

AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES (AIS)

- Inspect 24 boat launches for AIS
- Fund 3,300+ boat inspections annually
- Financially support the U of M AIS Research Center

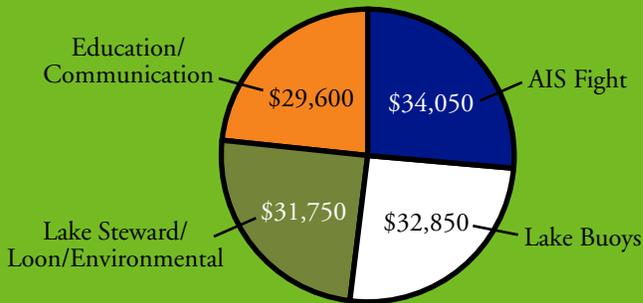


GOVERNMENT RELATIONS



- Advocate for lake issues with state legislators
- Interface with county and local governments
- Share with neighboring lake associations

2022 BUDGETED PRIORITIES



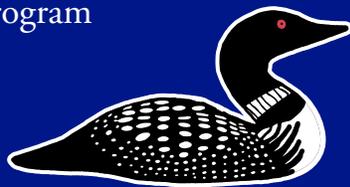
ENVIRONMENTAL

- Water quality monitoring
- Light pollution education
- Education on improving lake water quality



LOON CONSERVANCY

- Loon population surveys
- Loon-safe boating program
- Get the Lead Out (loon-safe fishing)



LAKE STEWARD

- Lake Steward recognition program
- Shoreland habitat protection and enhancement
- Tree giveaway



GET INVOLVED

- 1050+ family & business members strong
- Exciting volunteer opportunities
- FUN! Annual Summer Gala Event

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SAFETY & RECREATION

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- Boat Safety classes 75+ kids per year
- Partner with local sheriff departments



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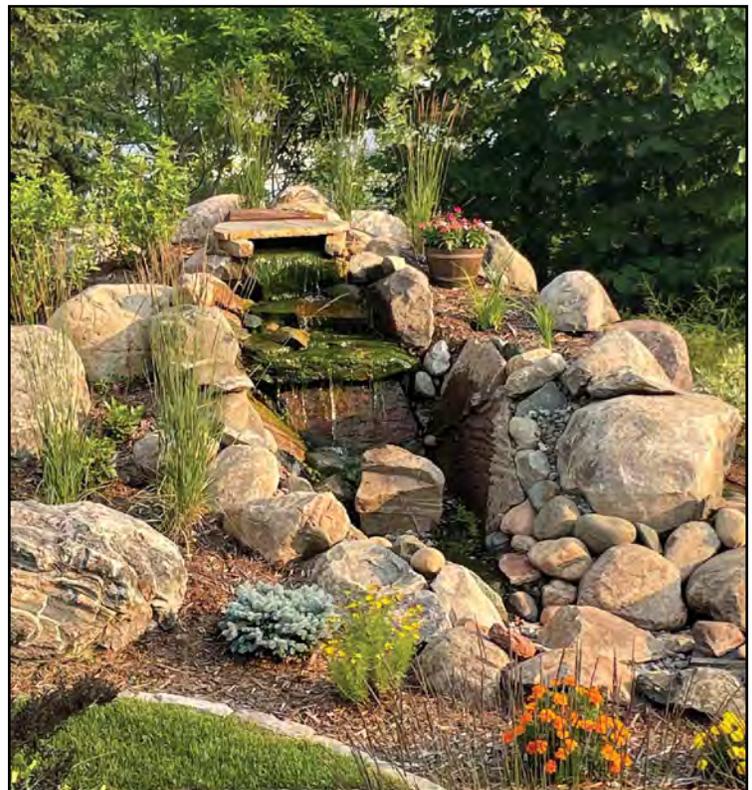


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YOUTH BOAT SAFETY CLASSES

*Jay Chaney,
Safety & Recreation Committee Chair*

GCOLA, in conjunction with the Crow Wing and Cass County Sheriffs' departments, are proud to be able to offer youth safety classes this summer at the Gull Lake Yacht Club. As last year, we will be offering three different dates. Class dates are June 9, June 10 and June 16. All classes will begin at 9 a.m. and last approximately four hours. These dates were announced on our website as well as our Facebook page earlier this year, in April. Class sizes will be limited to 25 students and all participants will receive a lifejacket to take home, courtesy of GCOLA as well as a pizza lunch, courtesy of Zorbaz Gull Lake.

The state of Minnesota requires anyone 12-17 years of age to possess a Minnesota Watercraft Operator's permit to operate a motorized boat over 25 HP. Upon the completion of this in person, "hands-on" class your student will receive the necessary permit. In addition to classroom testing, they will also have the opportunity to operate a boat with a sheriff's deputy. As always, the class is free of charge to all participants and registration is on a first come first served basis and students must be 12-17 years of age. In the event that all three classes



reach capacity, the course can be taken online via the MN DNR's website. There is a fee for their online course.

We are grateful to our volunteers who make this event possible as well as the Gull Lake Yacht Club for the use of their wonderful, waterfront facility.

Safety and good habits start early. This class will provide the necessary foundation for the youth in your family, as they pursue the lifelong passion of boating.

To register for the date of your choice, contact Mary Kay Larson at 218-831-5656.



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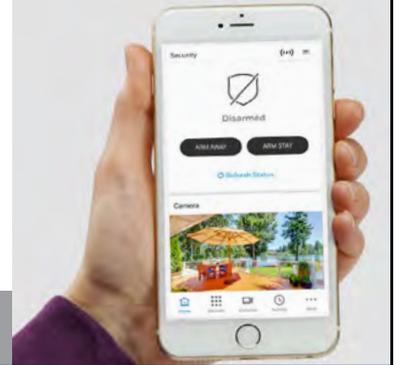
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FIREWORKS HARM OUR LOONS AND EAGLES

Sheila Johnston,
Loon Conservancy Committee Chair



*Fireworks ready to launch into loon chick rearing area.
Please do not do this!*



An Upper Gull chick hatched just in time for Fourth of July

What do you imagine when you think of Fourth of July at the lake? Waking up to the early morning calls of loons on the water? Watching a bald eagle land in the top of a towering white pine while you drink your coffee on the dock? Or boats decked out in red, white, and blue, burgers on the grill, tubing with the grandkids, and, of course, fireworks! Private fireworks displays have become part of the Fourth of July tradition for many families.

While we may ooh and aah over the colorful explosions, it's easy to overlook the damaging impact fireworks have on loons, bald eagles, and other wildlife. The sudden lights and loud sounds are often seen as a threat to loons, nesting bald eagles, great blue herons, and other nesting birds. The panicked tremolos of loons create a constant chorus of distress during lakeside fireworks displays.

Dr. Marge Cahak Gibson is the founder of Raptor Education Group, Inc. She is a recipient of the National Conservation Achievement Award, and she has been a wildlife rehabber for over 50 years. Dr. Gibson said, "Independence Day fireworks, and the new "tradition" of private fireworks displays of illegal explosive types of fireworks over and in the water pose tremendous dangers for loons." On the Gull Lake Chain these private displays are often no longer limited to the Fourth of July, but they boom from mid-June to mid-August. Dr. Gibson said, "The most damaging fireworks are the explosive types that are launched into the lake or into eagle and loon nests." Underwater explosions stun fish and loons. Adults leave their chicks, chicks get disoriented by the noise, and they become

separated in the chaos. This is extremely dangerous for chicks as they cannot survive without the protection of their parents. Wildlife rehabbers get calls reporting adult loons and chicks "walking" on roads in a stunned state. When brought into rehab, some never recover. Add excessive nighttime holiday boat traffic into the fireworks mix, and it is a recipe for disaster.

On the Gull Lake Chain, loons are typically rearing chicks during "fireworks season". If it is a late hatch, some chicks will only be a day or two old on the Fourth of July. Last year fireworks were launched into the chick rearing areas on Upper Gull. One pair lost a chick over the Fourth of July, and it was found on the shore of a neighboring lake.

Eagles are also traumatized by fireworks. Dr. Gibson saw five young eagles that were injured or killed because of explosive fireworks near their nest. One was frightened by the sound and flew through the firework. She died because of her injuries and the careless actions of humans.

Litter from firecrackers, bottle rockets and other explosives can be choking hazards for wildlife and may be toxic if ingested. Fireworks also have the potential for starting wildfires, particularly in dry or drought conditions.

Minnesota has some of the strictest fireworks laws in the Midwest. Certain non-explosive and non-aerial fireworks are permitted. Anything that flies or explodes is prohibited. Examples of prohibited fireworks are firecrackers, bottle rockets, missiles, and Roman candles. Let's do loons, eagles, and other wildlife a huge favor and say no to private fireworks



Two-year-old bald eagle

displays! We can enjoy the safer and beautiful displays offered by our local cities, resorts, and businesses, and dogs and cats will be happier too!

Photos by Sheila Farrell Johnston

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This may be the first constellation our kids and grandkids learned to identify. On warm, cloudless, moonless summer evenings, we would go down to our dock to look at the stars. The constellation Cygnus and the Milky Way were visible. Even though the grandkids are grown, our family still likes sitting out at night to look at the stars.

But the night sky isn't as bright as it was. More development of the lake shore has brought more outside lighting of the shore. Bright lights now shine across the lake and down the shore from neighbors. Even at a distance, light entering our stargazing eyes from the periphery can cause our iris to close a bit. This, of course, diminishes our ability to see the stars. The solution is for people to

use only dark-sky light fixtures for all their outdoor lighting. These fixtures direct light downward only. No light escapes to be seen across the lake or along the shore. Everyone is happy. People have their safety lighting. People have their unimpeded stargazing.



Please be part of the solution:

Only you can help the sky be dark by ensuring that your outdoor lighting does NOT shine across the lake or down the shore to your neighbors.

GULL CHAIN OF LAKES ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL MEMBER MEETING

Wednesday, August 10, 2022 – 7 p.m.



**GULL LAKE YACHT CLUB
19696 LOVE LAKE RD, BRAINERD**

ZOOM OPTION IS ALSO AVAILABLE

Zoom Link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84190897479?>

Password: [SS9kODIDQzkvQzNSbzh4NlFZNnVqdz09](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84190897479?pwd=SS9kODIDQzkvQzNSbzh4NlFZNnVqdz09)

Phone: 312-626-6799 • **Meeting ID:** 841 9089 7479 • **Password:** 982339

THE MEETING WILL INCLUDE:

- Annual election of board members • Financial summary
- Updates on GCOLA activities and issues affecting the Gull Lake Chain
- Question and answer session



Lakeside Living

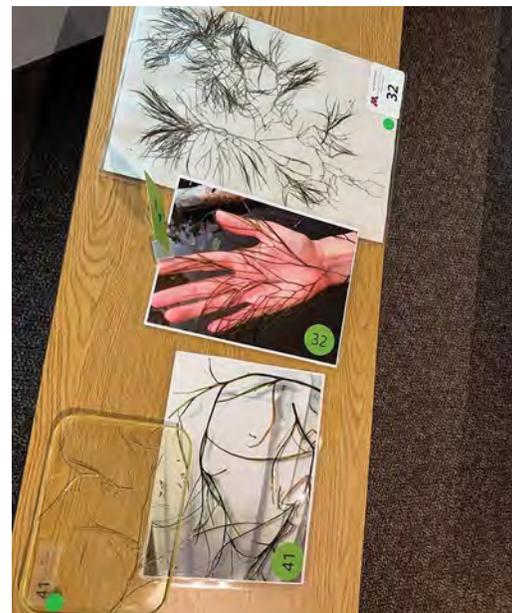


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AIS CERTIFICATION EVENT



A hands-on AIS (Aquatic Invasive Species) certification course sponsored by Cass County and Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center (MAISRC) was held on May 6. Over fifteen people attended, including some of our own GCOLA members. Larry Friedrichs had this to say about the course: “The class was very informative, and everyone is excited to use their new skills to support AIS detector activities.” Attendees learned identification of certain types of non-native plants, animals, and other organisms that have evolved to live primarily in water. One goal of the course is early identification of AIS in order to prevent or minimize infestations in the Gull Lake Chain. *Photos by Dana Gutzmann*

Dive Guys

AQUATIC WEED REMOVAL

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Remove lake weeds! • Shoreline Cleanup • Hazardous Object Removal (sticks, rocks, zebra mussel buildup)

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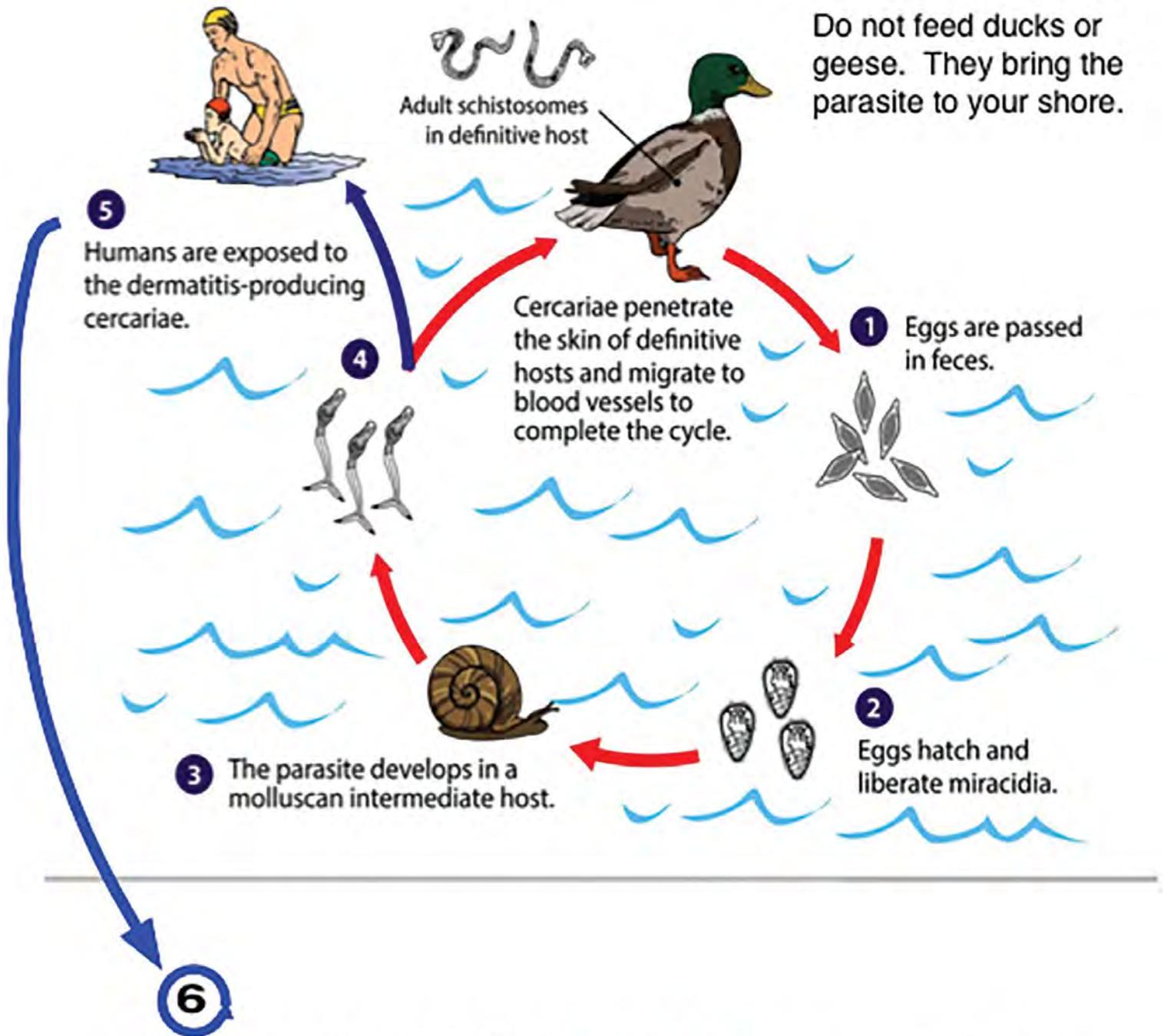
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2. Toweling off all water from entire body.

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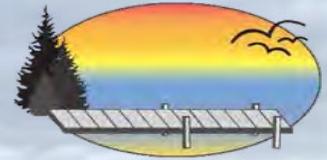
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VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Steve Frawley, Nominations Committee Chair

As we enter another season of fun and recreation on the Gull Lake Chain, several volunteers are needed to work on one of the GCOLA committees supporting our efforts. Think about how your help can support our mission, meet new people and be part of one of the state's largest and most successful lake associations serving over 1,000 members. The time commitment required may vary but is typically from two to four hours per month. Here are the committees that are currently looking for volunteers:

Committee	Committee Chair	Contact
Membership	Claudia Allene	218-513-8922
Safety & Recreation	Jay Chaney	760-213-2424
Environmental	Robert Eliason	218-568-7868
Fisheries	Steve Frawley	612-750-2633
Loon Conservancy	Sheila Johnston	sheilafjohnston@me.com
Communications	Kathy Lundberg	kathylundberg@comcast.net
Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS)	Tim Thoele	612-834-3088



Loon Survey Volunteer in Training

If you would like to learn more before becoming a volunteer, contact the appropriate Committee Chair. You can also learn more about several of the committees by reading the GCOLA "What We Do" page 31.

BOARD MEMBER PROFILE - JOEL MEYER



Joel Meyer is currently on the Safety and Recreation committee of the GCOLA board and has been a board member for two years. He is an active volunteer who helps to coordinate the annual placement of buoys, along with the memorial designations of buoys, and all aspects of safety and recreation important to GCOLA members. Joel and his wife Jane have been on the east side of Gull Lake since 2005 and very much enjoy all aspects of lake life: boating, fishing, snowmobiling, waterskiing and especially sunsets on the lake.

When not at the lake, he and Jane live in Litchfield MN, where Jane is a 5th grade teacher and Joel is a franchisee with Papa Murphy's Take N' Bake Pizza, which he has done for 23 years. Prior to that he taught high school mathematics and coached football and wrestling in Litchfield.



They have two grown children also living in Litchfield and his daughter and fiancée are planning a wedding on Gull Lake this summer. They feel fortunate that Joel's father also lives on the lake and they enjoy many boat rides into Wilson Bay to visit.

He and Jane enjoy antique boating and can be found on the lake in the summer in either their 1931 Hutchinson "Scram" or in their 1937 Garwood "TimePiece".

They look forward to retiring on the lake and doing more of all of the things they enjoy!

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LAKESHORE – A TREASURE TO PRESERVE

We all have seen the evaluations on our property tax statements recently. Those evaluations have gone up significantly this year. Lakeshore property has always been valuable, and as more and more people desire the lake experience, lakeshore property has become a treasure. Much like a valued treasure, lakeshore property is highly sought yet hard to find. On the Gull Lake Chain, undeveloped lakeshore on a buildable lot with a nice beach and easy water access is almost non-existent. Thus developers and prospective property owners are turning to environmentally sensitive lakeshore lots for development.

GCOLA, as stewards of the Gull Lake Chain, understands the fine line between environmental preservation and the desire for people to have a lake experience. Given a number of recent potential development cases that would impact the Gull Lake Chain environment, GCOLA is taking an active role in providing input to local governmental entities for those development cases. In this article, I will first provide some basic background information and then provide a summary of GCOLA's involvement in a number of those development cases.

In looking at the lakeshore property development issues, we need to understand the key elements that governmental entities consider when making decisions regarding lakeshore development and who has decision authority for what in those cases. Three key governmental definition elements are ordinary high water level (OHWL), jurisdiction, and shoreline district.

1. Ordinary High Water Level (OHWL) - For lakes, Minnesota Statutes 100G.005 defines the ordinary high water level (OHWL): “the ordinary high water level is an elevation delineating the highest water level that has been maintained for a sufficient period of time to leave evidence upon the landscape, commonly the point where the natural vegetation changes from predominantly aquatic to predominantly terrestrial.” The figure shows the OHWL as being below the record high water level and just above the average water level. Since the Gull Lake Chain is a reservoir, the OHWL is the operating elevation of the

normal summer pool. The OHWL is used for determining building setbacks, etc., for your lakeshore property.

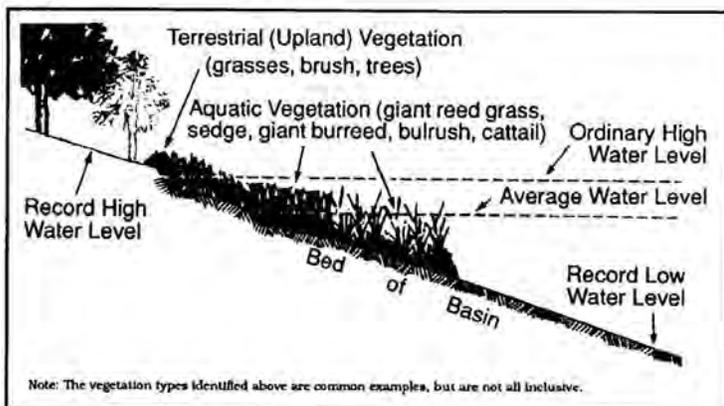
2. Jurisdiction – It is important to understand which governmental entity has regulation responsibility along lakeshore. The Minnesota DNR has regulatory responsibility starting at the OHWL and outward in the water. From the OHWL and back towards the land, either the county or the municipality/city has the regulatory responsibility. Thus, if you reside in Lake Shore, East Gull Lake or Nisswa, those municipalities have regulatory responsibility for your shoreline from the OHWL and back towards the land. If you do not reside in those municipalities, then your county (Cass County or Crow Wing County) has regulatory responsibility for your lakeshore from the OHWL and back toward land. If regulations for the same item are different for the municipality and the county, the municipality regulation has precedence.

3. Shoreline district - Another term commonly used by governmental agencies for land use ordinances is “shoreline district.” In Minnesota, except for Cass County, the shoreline district is defined as “an area within 1,000 feet of the OHWL of water bodies and 300 feet from rivers.” In Cass County, in which 75% of the Gull Lake Chain resides, the shoreline district is defined as an area within 1,320 feet of the OHWL of water bodies. Thus, Cass County is the one county in all of Minnesota that takes exception to the 1,000 feet from the OHWL. The City of East Gull Lake, which resides in Cass County, defines the shoreline district as an area within 1,000 from the OHWL of water bodies even though Cass County has the 1,320 foot standard.

GCOLA has provided input to local governmental entities on a number of lakeshore development projects. A summary of GCOLA's efforts is as follows:

East Gull Lake Heliport

In 2020, a part-time resident of East Gull Lake (EGL) proposed building a private heliport on his lakeshore property within the shoreline district. GCOLA sent a letter to the EGL Planning Commission strongly recommending that they disapprove the proposed ordinance amendment because of the potential adverse impact on the environment (nearby eagle nests, loons, tree removal, etc.) and the potential adverse impact on recreational safety (boaters, swimmers, paddle boarders, etc.). The EGL Planning Commission voted against the amendment and the City Council voted unanimously against the amendment. In early 2022, that same EGL part-time resident once again came forward with the same ordinance amendment. He mailed a glossy card to EGL postal customers and many Gull Lake residents asking them to visit his website and select one of two options he identified for the



heliport, both within the shoreland district. A third option he did not identify was to land his helicopter at the EGL airport or the Brainerd airport. GCOLA sent a letter to the EGL Planning Commission and the EGL City Council once again strongly recommending that they disapprove the proposed ordinance amendment because it could impact recreational safety, the Gull Lake environment, wildlife and residential properties with noise, wind and downward air velocity. About two hours before the EGL Planning Commission meeting on March 29 to decide on the proposed ordinance amendment, the application was withdrawn by the part-time resident. GCOLA was prepared to provide a statement opposing the proposed amendment at the Commission meeting.

Crow Wing County (CWC) Heliports

In the summer of 2021, the same part-time EGL resident purchased property in near-by Crow Wing County and submitted a conditional use permit to build a helipad on that property; CWC did not have any ordinance restrictions on helipads. Since the proposed helipad site was near a small natural environmental lake, the CWC Planning Commission tabled the measure and commissioned a study on private heliport/airport regulations. The study revealed that six of seven northland counties prohibited heliports in their shoreland districts. As a result of the study, CWC proposed Change #6 to their Land Use Ordinances that would prohibit private heliports in the shoreland district. GCOLA sent a letter to the CWC Environmental Services strongly recommending approval of Change #6. On April 12, the CWC Commissioners unanimously approved the Change #6 ordinance amendment. Portions of the GCOLA letter to Crow Wing County were quoted in the front page article in the Brainerd Dispatch on April 14. GCOLA would like to thank CWC Commissioner Bill Brekken (also a former GCOLA Board Member) for leading the effort to get this ordinance amendment approved.

Crow Wing County Sensitive Shoreline Development

With a number of planned development projects in CWC to subdivide shoreland parcels and build walkway systems through sensitive wetlands to access navigable water, the CWC Commissioners requested county staff to prepare a resolution for a year-long moratorium on such projects. Being aware of the importance of this resolution, GCOLA, the Whitefish Area Properties Owners Association (WAPOA), and the Pelican Lake Association (PLA) joined forces to write a joint letter to the CWC Commissioners strongly recommending approval of the resolution plus additional conditions for the resolution. The three lake associations (with over 3000 members) had representatives, including Linda Harrier, former GCOLA Chair, at the April 12 Commission meeting. The CWC Commissioners unanimously voted for an all-out ban on administrative subdivisions within the shoreland

district and a year-long moratorium on any new boardwalks or other structures crossing wetlands for access to navigable waters.

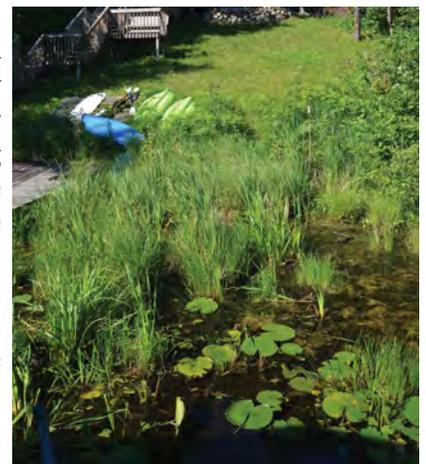
Roy's Landing

A preliminary plat was submitted to the Nisswa City Council on April 19 for development and subdivision of property between Bass and Roy Lakes into six lots with lake access. After reviewing the material for the application, GCOLA submitted a letter to the Nisswa Planning Commission questioning the adherence to a number of ordinances by the applicant for the development. The development would include a 7 ½' x 100' boardwalk through sensitive wetland for lake access. At the Nisswa City Council April meeting, the Council tabled the Roy's Landing application until the May meeting. The Council also tasked the Planning and Zoning (P&Z) Commission to review the approved Crow Wing County moratorium for sensitive wetlands (see Crow Wing County Sensitive Shoreline Development) and provide recommendation on whether it was appropriate for the City of Nisswa to follow suit. GCOLA is planning to submit a letter to the Nisswa City Council and P&Z Commission recommending that they approve an ordinance to concur with the recently enacted Crow Wing County moratorium on boardwalks in wetlands and ban on administrative subdivisions.

Spider Ridge Development

This single family residential subdivision would have nine units on a 34 acre tract in Lake Shore. The DNR has approved seven boat slips and one day use slip on the Roy/Spider Lake Channel. The project appears to comply with the City of Lake Shore ordinances. GCOLA reviewed the extensive documentation for the development, which included the preliminary plat and the staff report to the Lake Shore P&Z Committee, and then wrote a letter to the Lake Shore P&Z Committee stating GCOLA was taking a neutral position on the project.

As noted earlier, GCOLA is not against new development around our Gull Lake Chain as long as the developments are done in a responsible manner with a focus on the environment. We will continue to be vigilant as "stewards of the Gull Lake Chain."

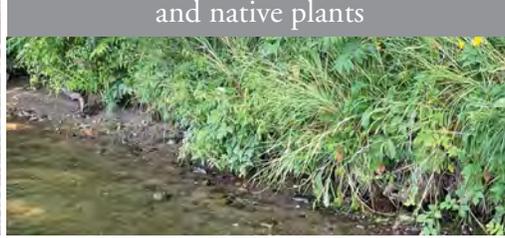


LAKE STEWARD ASKS

A. Bare rocks added to shoreline



B. Biodegradable “logs” and native plants



C. Mowed lawn down to the water



WHICH SHORELINE PROTECTS OUR LAKES BETTER?

1. ANSWER, Protect Our Lakes Better: B.

Great fishing happens in lakes where fish spawn near naturally vegetated shorelines that offer abundant food for their growth. Placing rocks on a shoreline (A) degrades fish habitat. Rocks pass along energy by reflecting the force of wave action down and to the sides, “scouring” habitat in the lakebed and adjacent properties. Rocks also heat up, warming the water so that it holds less dissolved oxygen for fish to breathe, and they displace the abundant wildlife whose habitats are at the water’s edge. Naturally vegetated “living shorelines” (B) absorb the force of waves, filter runoff from the land to keep nutrients and algae out of the water, cool the water, especially if there are trees overhanging at the water’s edge, and provide great habitat for fish, birds, butterflies, and other wildlife.

WHICH SHORELINE PROTECTS YOUR PROPERTY BETTER?

2. ANSWER, Protect Your Property Better: B.

Why don’t those big heavy rocks (A) protect shorelines better than vegetation? Surprisingly, it is the very fact that rocks are heavy and unyielding that makes them so damaging to shorelines, by wave scouring and loss of habitat. Living shorelines, on the other hand, are resilient and absorb energy to protect the land. Naturally vegetated shoreline is not to be confused with turf grass that is mowed down to the water (C). Mowed grass is a monoculture with shallow roots and is a setup for shoreline failure, causing “bank slumping”, where sections of soil separate, leaving crevasses. The solution is not to pile rocks on top, but rather to restore native vegetation to protect the land, the lake and the wildlife. It can be so easy: just stop mowing! However, if there are significant erosion issues, bioengineering is the solution that protects while also preserving water quality and habitat. The Lake Steward program has funding available to assist with living shoreline projects.

How Bioengineering Creates a Living Shoreline Better than Rocks

Building naturally vegetated shorelines in high erosion areas requires a trick: reinforcement with natural materials such as coir logs (pronounced “COY-er”) that are built by rolling plant materials into biodegradable fiber blankets made from coconut husk. (Impermeable plastic sheeting cannot be used because it smothers plant growth.) Coir logs can actually build more shoreland! And they are less costly. According to Crow Wing Soil and Water, “...after widespread ice damage in recent winters, we’ve seen re-vegetated shorelines with properly installed, vegetated coir logs out-perform Rip-Rap, with little to no movement or damage and full protection of previously threatened or failing shoreline.”



Photo by Cass County Soil and Water Conservation District, July 2011



Photo by Ron Faust

Shoreline restorations with coir logs

Bioengineered Living Shorelines for High Wave Energy Erosion on the Gull Lake Chain

Two families who received the GCOLA Lake Steward Award actively sought bioengineering solutions for shoreline erosion after they had worked with Crow Wing and Cass County Soil and Water Conservation Districts when they built homes. Joe Mucha and Kathy Kelly, on the east side of main Gull, had diverted drainage to rain gardens to protect Gull Lake. By 2017, as seen in panorama photo, the elevated land on the left side of their dock was holding well, because they had allowed plants to grow within old riprap to hold the shoreline.



Kathy Kelly and Joe Mucha



Close view of the Mucha/Kelly bioengineered shoreline showing lush vegetation that is not only protective, it also offers a fun place for young children to walk along, looking for tiny frogs and other wildlife.



Panorama photo of Joe and Kathy's entire shoreline in August 2021. Left of dock: old riprap with plants. Right of dock: bioengineered shoreline four years after project completed.

However, there was substantial erosion on the right where elevation was closer to the water level. On the day of the project, a truck pulled up with what Joe called “a long snake” that turned out to be coir logs! The logs were placed along 100 ft of shoreline to the right of the dock and anchored in place with wooden stakes. Plant plugs and willow branches were planted between the coir logs, which biodegrade over several years, leaving deep, firm-rooted willows and other native plants to provide strength and resiliency. The exceptional result is seen in the photos: increased, stable shoreline, despite strong westerly winds across a wide portion of main Gull Lake (“fetch”) that directly exposes their property to forceful wave action.

Phil and Karen Saari had a private contractor use similar bioengineering techniques on their shoreline in 2012, partly funded by Cass County Soil and Water and GCOLA. They



Phil & Karen Saari



Phil and Karen Saari: wooden peg that held coir logs in center of photo still visible years after their bioengineering project. Trees near shore shade and cool the water, helping fish thrive.

received the Lake Steward Award in 2021 for their naturally restored shoreline, preservation of wetland areas and spirited removal of invasive plants from their upland with restoration of natives over a two-year period. We are tremendously proud of all our Lake Stewards for their care for our lakes.

How You Can Help

It's simple: Take the Quiz! to rate your lakeshore and leave an email address.



Scan the QR code, or go to gcola.org, click on Lake Steward on our home page. Become a Lake Steward and a leader for clean water!

Talk to your neighbors about mowing less, letting plants grow along shorelines and avoiding rocks and boulders that harm the lakes. The Lake Steward web pages have photos and information, including about cost-share funding. We all benefit from “Clean Water, Healthy Habitat”.

Read *The Water's Edge*, a straightforward and informative guide located at <https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/lakescaping/maintaining-and-restoring-natural-shorelines.html>

Read *Natural Shorelines for Inland Lakes* by searching “natural shorelines for inland lakes” online for an excellent homeowner's guide with superb color photos in pdf form.

Watch YouTube video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=71q6eH0WtkQ> Restore Your Shore with Coir Logs Crow Wing SWCD

Email us at lakesteward@gcola.org for suggestions for native landscapers or more information about funding for shoreline projects.

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS UPDATE

Steve Frawley, Government Relations Committee Chair

Your Government Relations committee has been busy during the past few months on several fronts. We recently sent a letter to 26 local and key statewide legislators indicating our position regarding the February 1 released University of Minnesota St Anthony Falls Laboratory (SAFL) study results. The study indicates wake waves produced during wake surfing are measurably larger than non-wake surf boats in terms of wave height, total wave energy and maximum power. This powerful energy creates danger for swimmers, operators of smaller motorized and unmotorized watercraft, and potentially increases shoreline erosion and detrimental effects on the lake ecosystem. We encouraged the Minnesota legislature to limit these impacts by:

- Mandating education and training for operators of artificially enhanced watercraft,
- Crating meaningful distance buffers between artificially enhanced wake boats and other watercraft,
- Preventing artificially enhanced wake watercraft from operating close to shorelines,
- Limiting use of enhanced wake technology in shallow water.

Finally, we asked that legislators consider sponsoring a bill based on the above findings.

We spoke to Representative John Poston last week as part of our Government Relations discussions with key state legislators. We started by reviewing our 2022 GCOLA Legislative Priorities, which were developed with input from GCOLA members. The top priority is **Consider regulations (distance from shore, lake depth) for watercraft creating enhanced wakes that are a safety issue, cause shoreline erosion and sub-surface ecological damage.** Representative Poston indicated his concern about issues surrounding lake depth, which will encompass phase two of the SAFL study, next to commence. He's also working on funding for water patrols in utilizing help from law enforcement and mentioned that both Crow Wing and Cass counties' budgets have not changed since the 1980s. Along these lines, he discussed his work with the Cass County Sheriff in helping provide directional and navigational buoys for the channel area leading into and out of the Bar Harbor restaurant area. He is willing to propose a doubling in funding from the current \$88,000 for Cass County.

Representative Poston also indicated that **Aquatic research in the AIS/MAISRC funding** (GCOLA legislative priorities number two and three), typically occurs in a budget year, and

this year is a policy year in the state legislature. He indicated there will be continued discussion on these issues in the future; that he supports funding, and he believes funds will be appropriated next year.

When asked about our number four legislative priority, **No more stocking of Muskies in the Gull Chain**, he indicated this is a DNR, not a legislative issue and we would not be seeing anything coming out of the legislature on this.

Next, we discussed the status of the Boat Operators Permit Bill originally authored by Senator Ruud which has now been replaced by HF 3787 authored by Senator Koegel, district 37A. According to Representative Poston he believes this bill will probably pass in the House, but not go forward in the Senate.

Another item discussed with Representative Poston focused on the re-districting that has occurred around the state. Re-districting occurs every ten years and this year's change has resulted in significant re-districting impacting our elected officials in both the Minnesota House and Senate, according to Poston. Three of GCOLA's ardent supporters, including former Senate Majority leader, Paul Gazelka from East Gull Lake, Senator Carrie Ruud, district 10 from Breezy Point, and Representative, John Poston, district 9A from Lake Shore, all have seen major changes due to re-districting. Senator Ruud, who chairs the Environment and Natural Resources Policy and Legacy Finance committee, lost her party endorsement to Senator Eichorn, district 5 from Grand Rapids. She still has the option of running as a candidate in November if she chooses to do so. Senator Gazelka's district has also been redistricted. Morrison county now becomes the critical area replacing the Brainerd lakes area according to Representative Poston. Local Representative Josh Heintzeman's district 10A was only slightly impacted and he has received his party endorsement. Representative Heintzeman has also supported several GCOLA initiatives in the past. Finally, Representative John Poston, who previously considered running for a senate seat, has elected to retire due to significant re-districting changes. Senator Paul Utke, district 2, will continue in the Senate seat recently considered by Representative Poston. Once again, Representative Poston's advocacy role will be sorely missed by GCOLA and the Government Relations committee.

We appreciate all the efforts of the current legislators on behalf of GCOLA's priorities.

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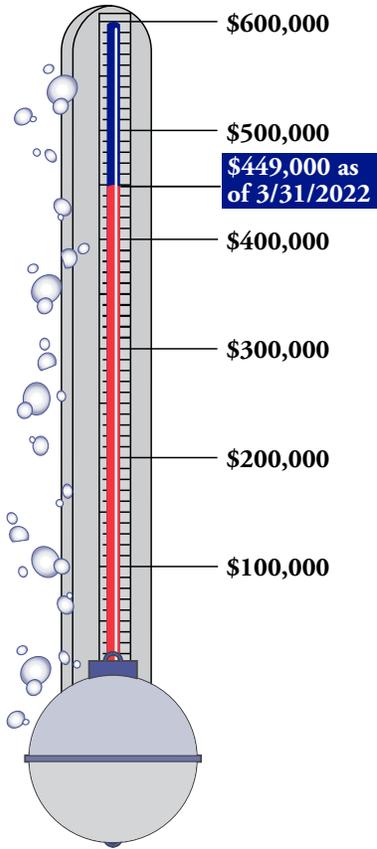


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AIS Contingency Fund

GCOLA maintains easy access to these funds in case of an AIS emergency on the Gull Lake Chain. To donate to this fund go to <https://www.gcola.org/shop>, download the donation form and mail with a check to GCOLA, PO Box 102, Nisswa, MN 56468.

Thank You!



JOIN YOUR NEIGHBORS

Claudia Allene, Membership Committee Chair

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Photo by Todd Myra



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PHOTOS WANTED



Photo by Claudia Allene



Photo by Greg Beck

Do you have photos taken around the Gull Lake Chain that you'd like to share? We always need pictures for the newsmagazine, website and social media. We especially have a shortage of fishing, boating and other fun activities on the lakes! You will be given credit for any photographs appearing in the newsmagazine and a description of the picture is helpful. Your snapshots can be sent at full size (minimum 300DPI) to Sue Friedrichs at info@gcola.org.

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WHAT WE DO

YOUR LAKE ASSOCIATION IS WORKING FOR YOU

Aquatic Invasive Species Committee (AIS)

- Coordinates with the City of Lake Shore Police Department to provide watercraft inspections for invasive species at the County Road 77 boat landing.
- Conducts two inspections at 24 locations to look for AIS.
- Donates annually to the University of Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center (MAISRC) for zebra mussel research.
- Fulfills AIS prevention needs including establishing a boat power wash station at the Gull Lake Recreation Area public access ramp managed by the US Army Corps of Engineers.

Communications Committee

- Maintains a website (www.gcola.org), a member group email service and a Facebook page (@GullLakeChain) to provide timely communication.
- Issues four newsmagazines per year to keep members informed about association programs and important issues affecting the Gull Lake Chain.

Environmental Committee

- Monitors water quality of our lakes and stream inlets through quantitative chemical analysis. Samples are collected by GCOLA volunteers and analysis completed by a licensed environmental laboratory.
- Measures water quality during the summer by secchi disk readings taken by GCOLA volunteers.
- Promotes star gazing and northern lights viewing through educational initiatives on light pollution.

Finance/Audit Committee

- Oversees the Gull Chain Preservation Endowment Fund and AIS Contingency Fund which provides long term funding for stewardship activities.
- Manages budgeting process.
- Supervises financial statements and audit process.

Fisheries Committee

- Attends annual Avid Angler discussion led by DNR and local fishing guides and outdoor media.
- Stays informed on fishery-related research from the University of Minnesota AIS Research Center.
- Reports findings in GCOLA newsletter.

Gala Committee

- Plans and executes annual fundraising Gala, including silent auction, trip raffle, and event sponsorship.

Government Relations Committee

- Works with state legislators the DNR, state agencies and local government units on lake issues and concerns.

Lake Steward Committee

- Invites all lakeshore owners to Take the Quiz and receive the Lake Steward Award for managing shoreland to protect lake water quality.
- Provides funding for approved shoreland naturalization projects.
- Conducts a Tree Giveaway each spring to promote naturalization of shoreland to protect water quality.

Loon Preservation Committee

- Conducts a yearly loon count in the spring and late summer.
- Educates boaters on loon-safe boating practices.
- Promotes the Get the Lead Out loon safe-fishing program.
- Supports loon reproduction activities including loon nesting platforms.

Membership Committee

- Conducts membership development programs to recruit and retain individual, family, and business memberships.
- Recruits new members through the Lake Ambassador program.

Safety & Recreation Committee

- Purchases, installs, and maintains one of the premier navigational buoy systems (90 buoys) in the State of Minnesota. We also install 20 no wake enforcement buoys for the sheriff's department.
- Provides free maps, with boating rules and regulation, at three public landings.
- Partners with Cass and Crow Wing County sheriffs to provide free boat safety training for approximately 75 youth per year.
- Works with county sheriffs on safety and enforcement issues including donations for night vision equipment, a range finder, and life jackets.

Photo by Pat Rugloski



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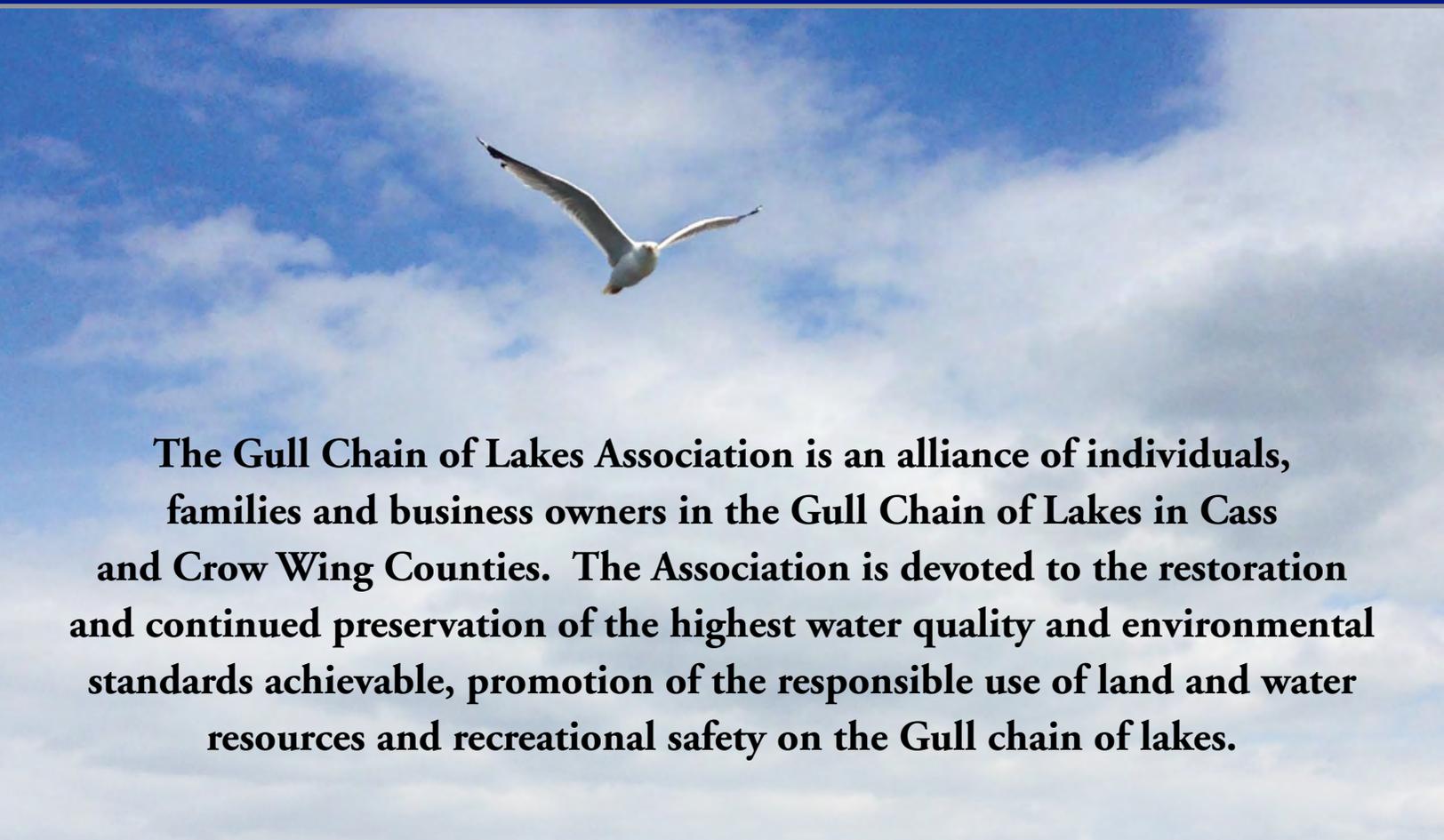
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MISSION STATEMENT

Photo by Joey Halvorson

A large, high-quality photograph of a seagull in flight, centered in the lower half of the page. The bird is white with a dark wingtip, flying against a bright blue sky with scattered, light-colored clouds. The image is framed by a dark blue horizontal band at the top, which contains the title and photo credit.

The Gull Chain of Lakes Association is an alliance of individuals, families and business owners in the Gull Chain of Lakes in Cass and Crow Wing Counties. The Association is devoted to the restoration and continued preservation of the highest water quality and environmental standards achievable, promotion of the responsible use of land and water resources and recreational safety on the Gull chain of lakes.