



Minnesotans *for Healthy Lakes*

Newsletter
Fall, 2006

Dear Members and Other Friends of Minnesotans for Healthy Lakes (MHL):

Minnesotans for Healthy Lakes (MHL) is an organization of Minnesota citizens, who join together to maintain and enhance the water quality of Minnesota lakes and their usability for recreational purposes. We engage in citizen education, advocacy with the DNR, and lobbying of elected representatives to bring about improvements in practices, rules, and statutes regarding the care and good stewardship of our lakes. We focus particularly on more aggressive treatment of invasive species of aquatic weeds to prevent their continuing spread in Minnesota waterways.

This is our Fall Newsletter, to keep you up-to-date on the activities of MHL.

1.) MHL convenes meeting with Legislators, DNR, and lakeshore property owners:

The culmination of a great deal of effort to gain the attention of key legislators to the concerns of lakeshore property owners came on October 23rd in a meeting at the Capitol with legislators and the DNR. Also in attendance were officers of the Homeowner's Associations (HOA's) of 10 lakes, including 6 of the grandfathered lakes. These HOA's represented nearly 6000 lakeshore property owners, and their representatives were extremely effective in challenging the conservative practices mandated by the DNR in controlling aquatic weeds.

This meeting was very successful in getting grassroots involvement and in giving several legislators a direct exposure to the weaknesses of the DNR position. We received a strong endorsement of our position from Senator Gen Olson, who has agreed to sponsor our bill in the Senate. Senator John Marty, current Chairman of the Senate Environment and Natural Resources Committee, said that he would give this issue strong consideration for a Committee hearing in the upcoming session. However, since the elections, Senator Marty has moved into a different Committee Chair position and Senator Satveer Chaudhary of District 50 was named to take over the Senate Environment Committee. We will be working to open discussions with Senator Chaudhary regarding the concerns of MHL and still hope to get Committee hearings this session.

Now that the elections are behind us, we are proceeding to identify new authors for our bill in the House and to refine our bills for both House and Senate review in the coming session.

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2.) Update on the Rule Changing Process:

The rule changing process, which will attempt to significantly reduce the amount of weed control which property owners will be allowed, has moved very slowly. The DNR has been saying right along that they intended to have the full language of the new rules available for public review and comment this fall. This will not happen. It will push into 2007 and beyond. Lest you think that this is a good thing however, remember that so long as they can approve/deny/reduce Permit Requests for weed control at their discretion, time is their friend! That is, they may be in no hurry to get these proposed rules officially on the table since they can implement them unofficially, and have been for the past 2 (plus) years!

Even though this process is stretching out, we are calling upon our constituents to take action *now*, by contacting their newly-elected representatives to express their concerns regarding aquatic plant management practices. Please see the letter attached to this newsletter as one suggested approach to express concern on this subject. Feel free to edit the text to meet your personal preferences, and send the letters as soon as possible, by either e-mail or regular mail. The names and contact information of your Representatives and Senators can be obtained from our website under the "Grassroots" tab, or by calling 1(800) 657-3550. We need to get the attention of our newly-elected representatives to the issues facing Minnesota lakeshore property owners, in order to gain their support early in the legislative cycle.

3.) Visit our Web Site:

If you have not visited our web site lately, we invite you to do so. We add information in the form of technical articles and correspondence periodically. If you are not familiar with MHL, this will help you get acquainted with us efficiently. See www.mnhealthylakes.org

4.) Tax Exempt Status Approved:

We recently received notification from the Internal Revenue Service that we have been certified as a 501c3 tax exempt organization. As a result, your dues and contributions to MHL are fully tax deductible. The receipt you receive from us early next year for dues/contributions in 2006, will so state this fact.

5.) Will you stand with us?

More than ever, we need your financial support if we are to continue our role as advocate for Minnesota lakeshore property owners. This is a particularly important year for us as the new rules get in front of the public and we begin working with a slate of legislators who will be in office for several years. We are managing our expenses wisely and are getting maximum mileage from the income we receive. *However we can't continue without expanded property owner support. This is not a sprint, it is a marathon and we need to know if you are standing with us!*

We are asking you to submit your 2007 membership dues of \$40 and contributions to the address shown at the bottom of our letterhead, before the end of 2006. Remember, they are fully tax-deductible.

Thank you for your support.
Bill Iacoe, Executive Director