



The COLA Update



Publication of Hubbard County Coalition Of Lake Associations

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Message from Pat Alberg, President of COLA

It has been a good summer for COLA. We sponsored public meetings on the Lake Protection project in June, the Shoreland Ordinance in July, and our first Lakeshore Management workshop in August. We were asked to help form lake associations on Turtle River in Beltrami County, Lake Bemidji (Beltrami), Lake Belle Taine, Bad Axe and Eagle Lake of Hubbard County. Through the efforts of Everett Miller, we found volunteers for 20 lakes in Hubbard County to do Secchi Disk readings for MPCA (Minnesota Pollution Control Agency) and volunteers for 11 lakes to do monitoring of water levels for DNR (Department of Natural Resources).

Our educational emphasis has benefited Hubbard County. Beth Kluthe reports that there has been a remarkable increase of individuals voluntarily applying for permits to install new on-site septic systems.

There are several counties that have asked to learn about our Coalition to pattern theirs similar to ours. The partnership we have worked for between individuals, government, and agencies will only grow into a better environmentally-sound community for Hubbard County. The road has been rocky at times, but the improvements have been rewarding.

We encourage the lake associations to continue their good work and emphasis on education. Contact your COLA board representative about any concerns you have. Articles for the next COLA Update should be turned in by December 15, 1990. ★

OPEN LETTER TO ALL PEOPLE CONCERNED ABOUT OUR ENVIRONMENT

Dear Civic Organizations and Clubs:

Several people who are concerned about the need for improved environmental education in the Hubbard County area have joined together in an attempt to raise funds to construct an Environmental Education building at the Hubbard County Fairgrounds.

The construction of this building is very timely because people are finally becoming aware of the harm we are doing to our environment and that we are truly stewards of the land. The future of the beautiful wilderness area we live in – and even the future of our planet – depends on what we do now in our generation. Expanded environmental stewardship education is a must.

Similar buildings in our area have been constructed at the fairgrounds in Detroit Lakes and at Perham. We are very much in need of such a building here in Hubbard County since

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Summer Residents: A word of caution

Many summer residents are now closing up their cabins for the winter. Just a word of caution on the anti-freeze you use: The type that normally is used in cars, that contains ethylene glycol, should NEVER be used in your cabin plumbing. A safer alternative is the type used in RVs that contains propylene glycol. The advantages of using RV anti-freeze are threefold – it is better, safer, and cheaper! ★

Water Day 1990

In July, Hubbard County had their first well water testing day. The event was sponsored by the University Extension Office and Environmental Services as part of the implementation of directives from the Hubbard County Comprehensive Water Plan. Residents were invited to bring in their well water samples to be tested. Approximately 150 Hubbard County Residents brought in their samples. On August 15 a meeting was held to distribute the findings to those who participated and give some basic information about water. Everyone with a private well should have their wells tested annually. It is the only way you will detect when changes start taking place. It is hoped the participants for Water Day 1990 will make it an annual event and that many more will begin that annual water test in 1991. ★



Local Lake Association News

Fish Hook Lake

by Louis C. Warren

THE EAGLES NEST... A number of homeowners on the north shore of Fish Hook Lake say they live in "The Eagles Nest." Government Lot 5 was platted in 1914 and designated as Eagles Nest Addition.

Residents for years have been asking, "Where is the Eagles Nest?"

In 1984, a pair of Bald Eagles decided that addition would be a nice place to raise their family. They chose a 57-foot white pine on the Warren property at the mouth of the Potato River.

Two fledglings were reared in a 3'x4' nest that was 3 feet deep.

In March 1986, Katie Haws and Jean Hushagen recorded "Bald Eagle Breeding Area: HU-13 (Hubbard County) Fish Hook Lake Eagle Nest Management Plan for the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources."

They observed in their report that a better nest tree was located 200 yards further north. The writer gained respect for Katie and Jean when a 1986 storm destroyed the nest and its supporting limb.

The Bald Eagles then took Katie and Jean's advice and chose the technicians' favorite tree about 200 feet from the Dr. and Mrs. Duane Ness home, where they reared to flight – two young ones in 1987, one each

in '88, '89 and '90 – for a total of eleven eaglets.

Bald Eagles attain their impressive white head and tail feathers in five to seven years. Eagles feed mostly on fish in rivers and small lakes. One eagle was observed delivering a snake to their screaming youngsters.

They still use the old nest tree as a roosting place to escape the constant tantrums of the young, demanding "More fish!"

A private road is the only land access to the nesting site, and that is zealously guarded by the Ness and Warren families.

Returning summer visitors' first concern is not how their cabin survived the winter, but "Are the eagles back?"

Bald Eagles were chosen by Congress in 1780 as our national bird. The majestic Bald Eagle has graced our country's emblem and skies for over two centuries and is protected in the 1940 Federal Protection Act and the amended Endangered Species Act of 1973. Violations are enforced by Federal and/or Minnesota Natural Resources Conservation Officers. ★

Other Lake Associations:

WHERE ARE YOU?

We'd like to hear from you for our next newsletter. (Report and/or articles due by December 15, 1990.) ★

Video Available

A 10-minute VCR tape, *Lake Protection: Everyone Contributes*, by Beltrami Soil and Water Conservation District, is now available on loan to anyone who wishes to view it. Copies are available from COLA, Environmental Services, and the SWCD in Park Rapids.

It is an easy, short tape to watch, but is packed with information – an excellent tape to show at your meetings! ★

User's Guide

The Mississippi Headwaters Board has developed a 40-page *User's Guide to Shoreland Development*. It will be available in October and is intended to be used with the video, *Lake Protection: Everyone Contributes*.

COLA will obtain a copy of this guide and make copies to have available. ★

Summer 1990: Ordinance Revision

This summer marked the beginning of many meetings, all aimed at the revision of the Shoreland Ordinances. The meetings will continue well into next year, with a hopeful adoption date by the county in the spring of 1991. After reviewing public input, the Hubbard County Planning Commission has begun their review of the ordinances. They started September 25 and have set Ordinance Revision meetings for October 16, October 30, and November 19.

If you still have ideas you want to share about the ordinance revision, send your comments to Beth Kluthe at Environmental Services Office, Hubbard County Courthouse, Park Rapids, MN 56470. When the ordinance has been completed, another public hearing will be scheduled (sometime this winter). COLA will sponsor a public meeting prior to the public hearing so the public will have a chance to review the proposed ordinance. ★

COLA's Copy Machine Has Arrived!!

We finally have our much-needed copier – thanks to your generous contributions. We didn't have enough for the duplexing model, but are very pleased with the quality machine we did get. The Sharp copier is located at Charlie's Marine in Park Rapids and is available for use by Lake Associations. (The COLA Board is still working out the amount – it will be less than you can have it done in town, but enough to cover the costs of operating the machine.) ★

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present facilities for the promotion of environmental education are almost nonexistent.

The new building will have space for displays by many conservation and natural resource organizations. It will be open to use by all local conservation organizations on a seasonal basis. It is expected that this building will be used to teach environmental stewardship principles to our school children as well.

The Environmental Education building will highlight our local natural resource heritage. There are plans to include several large fish tanks and animal pens as well as displays by several local groups and agencies.

In order to make this building a reality we need your help. We expect that the Environmental Education building will cost upwards of \$40,000. We would like to start construction of this building yet this fall and need a substantial part of our funding in the form of pledges and donations before we can start.

You have several options of how to assist with our project.

(1) Any party, organization, or business that will donate \$500 or more will be honored by having their name on a special plaque to be mounted in a conspicuous place outside the building.

(2) Any party, organization, or business that will donate over \$50 will have their name engraved on another plaque to be displayed inside the building.

(3) Any landowner who has pine timber may offer to donate a portion of this timber. The timber will be evaluated and will be considered the same as a cash donation.

We are going to construct a building that Park Rapids can really be proud of. I am sure that you also will be proud for having helped in such a worthy cause.

Make checks payable to: **Environmental Education Building Fund** and send them to **Box 113, Park Rapids, MN 56470.**

Sincerely,
Environmental Education Building Comm.

(Signed by: Ron Norenberg, Rob Naplin, Tom Stursa, Al Wickman, Chuck Yliniemi, Ted Pilgrim, Russ Johnsrud, Brita Sailer, Steve Maanum)

Lake Landscapes and Fertilizer Application

by Will R. Yliniemi, MN Extension Service – Hubbard County Agent, Park Rapids

Lake property and resort owners are generally perceptive when it comes to maintaining a quality environment. My "lake" is the reason why we either live or operate our business from there. It is critical that the quality of the water, either surface or ground water, continue to be maintained and that degradation sources to the "lake" be reduced and even stopped. All lakeshore owners have a combined stake in the environmental quality of their "lake" and so let us look at one aspect of what represents a potential contamination source for our lakes: **Fertilizer Application to Lake Landscapes.**

The potential of fertilizer (nutrient) contamination of surface and groundwater resources in a lakeshore setting is complicated by the fact that these water resources are so proximate to the point of application, and that the lakeshore is generally a sloping topography. A surface application of fertilizer to lawns and landscape plants can be moved into the lake very rapidly by runoff waters during a rainstorm. Also one must be aware that groundwater levels are often very near to the surface in lakeshore locations and can be very readily contaminated by leaching of surface applied fertilizers and chemicals.

An excellent tool in determining the nutrient status of the soils on your property is the soil test, which will give an indication of which nutrients are in adequate or short supply for turf and other plant growth. Generally, the sandy textured soils surrounding the lakes in southern Hubbard County have very high native levels of phosphorus. Adding fertilizers containing phosphorus simply is not a wise choice on these soils and could add to the phosphorus level in the lake. Native potassium levels tend to be adequate on these soils and may require minimal infrequent applications for sustaining plant growth. Organic matter tends to be low and represents the natural source for nitrogen. This would indicate that in most situations nitrogen may have to be added but must be applied in the correct amount (minimum) and at the correct time (spring) on these geologically sensitive soils.

Remember, when you select fertilizers for application, attention must be given to the analysis numbers on the fertilizer container. An analysis such as 20-10-10 represents the percentage of Nitrogen, Phosphorus and Potassium (N-P-K). If a nutrient is not needed, then the fertilizer selected should not contain that particular nutrient.

If a fertilizer cannot be purchased which contains the analysis you want, then consider the option of having the proper analysis custom mixed for your situation. When fertilizer is applied to turf, it should be watered into the soil, or if possible, incorporated into the soil to minimize the potential of surface runoff. Some lakeshore owners may be able to sustain adequate plant growth without additions of fertilizer, however, in most cases this is not practical and as a result grass and plant growth will suffer, which can make those soils more susceptible to erosion and runoff into the lake.

Lush dark green manicured lawns in a lake property setting may look nice, but all those additions of fertilizers and lawn care chemicals represent a threat to the lake environment. Conversely, a poorly maintained lawn with very weak sparsely populated stand of grass and other plant materials also has the potential of doing damage to the lake environment by not holding the soil in place.

The goal of lakeshore property owners should be to maintain adequate plant growth and yet minimize the amount of fertilizer and other chemicals used. Soil test information sheets and sample bags are available at the Hubbard County Extension Office. Test your soil before you apply any soil amendments. If you would like more information on soil testing, turf or plant material selection, contact the Hubbard County Extension Office (732-3391).

Remember, we all have a stake in maintaining the environmental quality of our lakes. Fertilizer and chemical applications to lake property are an aspect of that quality we can personally monitor. ★

The Environmental Network

by Bobbi Thomas

Last spring a group of citizens, agency representatives, schools, businesses, churches and conservation groups participated in many *Earth Day* activities that extended over a week-long period. Most people taking part felt it was a very worthwhile effort and wanted to see such cooperation extended into the future.

Maurice Spangler and Brita Sailor co-chaired the *Earth Day* effort and are also chairing *The Environmental Network* (TEN). Like COLA, such a network has a better chance of addressing mutual concerns and working toward effective solutions.

Coalitions of conservation groups have succeeded in worthwhile ways in other areas of the country. The political strength is considerably greater than that of individuals or groups going their separate ways. Hopefully we could help get some bad laws changed. One such law that has come to our attention is in connection with "irrigation permits." The DNR is required by law to issue such a permit to the applicant as long as a sufficient supply of water is available. Many people, especially nearby property owners, feel other considerations should be evaluated before such permits are granted.

TEN gives a monthly "Pat on the Back Award" for local effort that benefits the environment. In August, the award went to Super Valu for providing, at reasonable cost, reusable cloth tote bags that could save numerous disposable paper and/or plastic bags, and for making available toilet tissue called "Green Forest" made of recycled fibers. For September, the group decided COLA's Lake Management Conference, which was the first ever held in Hubbard County, deserved the award. Both awards reflect TEN's interest in increasing public awareness of such things as good consumerism and environmental education. It was encouraging to hear of other local efforts worthy of such consideration. Most will also receive some kind of recognition eventually.

(continued in next column)

COLA's First Lake Management Workshop

by Pat Alberg, Association President

On August 18th, Chateau Paulette on Little Sand Lake was the date and setting for the (hopefully) first annual Lake Management Workshop. About 50 participants attended. There was a mixture of lake residents, Lake Association board members, Hubbard County Planning Commission, and Board of Adjustment members, as well as Public Agencies.

We were pleased to have Tim James as our moderator. He did a great job and played a big role in making the conference a success. The very talented guest speakers made the day beneficial to all the participants. We would like to thank Jeff Hrubesh, Tim Flathers, Bill Patnaude, Jack Fredrick, Bruce Paakh, Marty Jessen, and Gene Strommen.

Topics for the conference were: *Tri-County Lakes Initiative - Local Lake Protection; Impact of Septic Systems on Lakes; Little Sand Septic Survey and Lake Assessment Report; Flathead Lake Management Plan: Multiple Use Management Planning to Protect Water Quality; Lake Minnetonka 25-year Management Plan.*

Due to inclement weather, the boat tour of Little Sand Lake was not possible, but to cap off the day, the participants broke up into small group sessions and the facilitators helped them with a process to make their own Lake Management Plan.

If you have any ideas for our next conference (dates - location - topics), please let us know. Your suggestions are welcome. Contact any member of the COLA Board. ★

While the group is still in the process of getting organized, the environmental concerns they share are getting some much needed attention. It would be nice if TEN could earn the same kind of respect and appreciation as COLA has received.

TEN meets the second Monday of each month, usually in the Courthouse basement. Notices appear in the "Coming Events" section of *The Enterprise*. Judy Bellairs of the North Star Chapter of the Sierra Club attended as guest speaker on Oct. 8th. The next meeting will be Nov. 12. Usual meeting time is 7:00 p.m. Please feel welcome! ★

Septic Systems

It's very important to remind everyone who has their own on-site septic system NEVER to use additives. A properly installed septic system does not need them. In fact, it can do more harm and may actually cause the system to fail. ★



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Coalition Of Lake Associations

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