



Grassroots Action Agenda Revision Update

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MN COLA's Two Agendas

1. Legislative Agenda

- Addresses current issues at State Capitol
- Work closely with lobbyists and others

2. Grassroots Action Agenda (GRA)

- Broad list of items that serve our mission to preserve, protect and improve the waters and shorelands of the State of Minnesota through advocacy, education, sharing of best practices
- Longer term goals

GRA Revision

- Process...
 - Met with GCOLA, CLHA, BCLARA, ACCL, and March Round Robin
 - Summarized positions on individual GRA points
 - Revised GRA with input from meetings
 - Presented revised GRA at MN COLA Annual Meeting
- What's next...
 - Meet with additional groups with 2021 GRA

Original 2019 GRA

- A. Better AIS Prevention and Control
- B. Better Protection for Our Waters
- C. Safer Boating and Better Fishing

New 2021 GRA

- A. Long-term Support of MAISRC
- B. Better AIS Prevention and Control
- C. Better Protection for Our Waters
- D. Recreation on Minnesota Lakes

A. Long-term Support of MAISRC

- This item has, by far, the strongest support among all groups
 - ‘top priority’
 - ‘critical necessity’
 - ‘DNR should take over some of the operational work of MAISRC and let MAISRC focus on research’
- Keeping MAISRC at the top of the GRA

B. Better AIS Prevention and Control

- Funding
 - Include lake and river associations in the use of AIS Program Aid Funds
 - Action: Meet with local county or watershed leaders to be sure that lake and river associations have a seat at the table when decisions are made about the uses of the money
 - Increased grants for AIS prevention and control
 - Action: Talk to your County Board members about the need for more funding for AIS prevention and push them to request it from their State Representatives and State Senators

B. Better AIS Prevention and Control

- Prevention
 - AIS fines at parity with hunting and fishing
 - Action: Educate your legislators about the vital need to enacting laws that have as much impact on changing behaviors as we have done for hunting and fishing; Work with your county, city and township units of government to get their licensed police officers trained on the AIS laws that they can enforce now
 - Improve boat inspection training
 - Action: Take action and communicate to your legislators and the DNR of the need for more aggressive inspection processes and better trained inspectors to stop the spread of AIS
 - Ensure science expertise is included on advisory boards
 - Action: Talk to your legislators and local elected officials about the need to have experts on policy-setting boards so that science can be brought to bear as AIS problems and potential solutions are being decided

B. Better AIS Prevention and Control

- Control
 - Faster/streamlined permitting for AIS control
 - Action: Talk to your legislators about the need to establish multi-year DNR AIS control permits
 - Allow innovative solutions for AIS control
 - Action: Ask your elected representatives to support legislative bills that remove unnecessary and delaying DNR “approvals” for work that is allowed by state statutes

B. Better AIS Prevention and Control

- Control
 - Close ramps when new AIS is detected
 - Action: Talk to your legislators and local elected officials about the need to rethink the policies around public accesses in light of the recreational and economic costs of AIS
 - Inspections and/or notifications of state AIS requirements at the border
 - Action: DNR and DOT are required by state statute to begin the dialog to see how this could be done - Talk to your legislators about getting started

C. Better Protection for Our Waters

- Use natural filtration of vegetative cover and buffers
 - Action: Contact your county Soil and Water Conservation District to publish recommendations to increase the native vegetation along shorelines; Consider creating a lake stewardship program
- Protect from animal waste and farm runoff
 - Action: Approach your County Board and ask them to formally support and approve variance mitigations that meet or exceed ordinance and rule-based protection of our waters and shorelines, and to not approve variances that fall short of that protection
- Protect from stormwater runoff
 - Action: Learn more about your city or town's stormwater management program. Is your city or town just barely meeting stormwater regulation requirements? Is there a way your community can do more?

C. Better Protection for Our Waters

- Require compliant septic systems
 - Action: Encourage your County Board and county staff to support measures that increase education about the harm of faulty septic systems, and to support programs that offer low or no interest loans for septic replacement
- Incorporate SWCD professional opinions in setting ordinances and allowing variances
 - Action: Approach your County Board and ask them to support shoreland ordinances that protect our waters, and to have expert Soil and Water Conservation District staff advise on proposed ordinances and variances

C. Better Protection for Our Waters

- Allow for alternative shoreland solutions that meet or exceed rules
 - Action: Approach your County Board and ask them to formally support variances that meet or exceed ordinance and rule-based protection of our waters and shorelines
- Be smart about new risks to water
 - Action: Talk to everyone you can at every level of government in the state to let them know that you don't think the environmental risks, both short and long term, are worth taking

D. Recreation on Minnesota Lakes

- Establish regulations for watercraft to minimize shoreline and lakebed erosion
 - Actions:
 - Consider requesting a surface water restriction at a regional or county level
 - Talk with your Minnesota Representative and Senator about getting consistent regulation on a state-wide level
 - Talk with the local marine dealers who sell the wake/surf boats and equipment to push the best practices with their customers
 - Work with your local and county governments for communication of the shoreline concern and the best practices for wake/surf boaters to reduce the impacts on shorelines

D. Recreation on Minnesota Lakes

- Do not stock muskies in non-muskie lakes
 - Action: Approach your legislators and local officials with the Muskie facts pertinent to your ecological concerns;
Request that lake associations have a seat at the table when Muskie stocking recommendations are being considered
- Establish a watercraft operator license program
 - Action: Discuss the benefits of requiring a boating license with your legislators
- Establish appropriate rules and regulations for lakes similar to MN state parks
 - Action: Talk to your county, township, and city officials about funding lake management with usage fees at non-DNR accesses

Let's get the same kinds of logical regulations in place for all lakes as we do for state parks

Removed from the 2019 GRA

- Get the various state departments to work together (MN Dept. of Ag, MN PCA, MN DNR, MN Dept. of Health)
 - Groups felt this was a legislative matter, not GRA
- Establish Freshwater Conservation Areas (FCAs)
 - Interesting idea; difficult to implement

GRA Revision – Next steps

- MN COLA Board to review & approve document
 - Over the next month
- Meet with additional groups to discuss 2021 GRA and obtain further feedback and support
 - Over the coming few months
- Final revisions and publication
 - Fall?



Grassroots Action Agenda