LAKE JOHN ASSOCIATION

REGULAR BOARD MEETING AGENDA
June 08, 2026
6:30 pm at Southside Township Hall, 8209 County Rd 3 NW, Annandale, MN 55302

Board of Directors (BOD)

OFFICERS	SECTION REPRESENTATIVES
President Joleen Sytsma	Section 1 Dennis Sjoberg
Vice President Chuck Wachter	Section 2 Neysa Silver
Treasurer Jon Bigalk	Section 3 Mark Fournier
Secretary Michelle Sutton	Section 4 John Greenwood
	Section 5 Becky Wachter
	Section 6 Kim Larson

REGULAR BUSINESS

1. Call To Order & Pledge of Allegiance

2. Attendance/Roll Call

3. Approval of Agenda - June 08, 2026

4. Approval of Previous Minutes - May 11, 2026 (attached pp 3-37)

5. Reports
   a. Financial as of May 31, 2026 - Bigalk
   b. Section Representatives - New Property Owners/Property Developments
   c. LID Liaison Report: May 21st meeting – Kosloski
      I. Sytsma update from LID funding question
   d. Committees
      I. Lake Health & Safety - Kosloski
         1. Lake Quality
         2. Water Level Monitoring: (attached pp 38)
            https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/lakefind/showlevel.html?downum=86028800
      II. Lake Stewardship Program - Greenwood/Kosloski
         1. Possible Lake John Stewards Tour in August to be coordinated with Events Planning Committee
         2. Order the Shoreland Guide to Lake Stewardship at a cost of $10 each to be handed out at the annual meeting, to new residents and residents that didn't come to the meeting.
      III. Culverts – Greenwood
      IV. Event Planning – Larson/Van Metre Co-chairs
         1. Annual Meeting – Saturday June 27th
            a. Setup, food, drinks and cleanup
         2. LJA Golf Tournament – August date secured
         3. Lake John Stewards Tour – August TBD

ONGOING BUSINESS

6. Migrating Bogs

7. Organization Updates
   a. MN Coalition of Lake Associations (MN COLA) https://mncola.org/events/list/ - Sytsma
      i. 06/06/26 10th Annual Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Roundtable in Crosslake
      ii. 06/16/26 MN COLA Annual Membership meeting

iii. 06/23/26 2026 Legislative Update Webinar with MLR Advocates
iv. 07/08/26 Genomic Surveillance of Zebra Mussel Populations Using Genotyping by
v. Sequencing

b. Wright County Coalition of Lake Associations (WC COLA): https://wrightcola.mnlakesandrivers.org - Kosloski
   i. 2026 WCCOLA Annual Meeting Presentations
c. MN Lakes and Rivers Association (MLR) https://mnlakesandrivers.org – Sytsma
   i. 06/23/26 2026 Legislative Update Webinar with MLR Advocates
d. MN DNR – Sytsma
   i. 2026 MN Boating Guide - https://files.dnr.state.mn.us/rlp/regulations/boatwater/boatingguide.pdf
   ii. Boater Education Requirements - https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/safety/boatwater/boater-education-law.html

8. Items from Past Agendas:
   a. Electronic copy of section lists to section representatives - Sytsma
   b. Email addresses added to LJA website for Section Reps – Fournier

9. Community Updates - Sytsma
   a. City Water/Sewer
   b. New Developments
   c. Wright County interim zoning ordinance and temporary moratorium – C. Wachter

NEW BUSINESS

10. Board of Directors Insurance renewal - Bigalk

11. Annual Meeting Planning – Sytsma
   a. Electronic Nomination and Voting process – C Wachter
      i. 2026 Nominations for President, Treasurer, Section Reps 2, 4, 6 – C Wachter
      ii. Section 3 Representative one year term to fill Mark Fournier's resignation
   b. Agenda TBD – Sytsma
      i. Guest Speaker - Joseph Schneider, President of MN Coalition of Lake Associations

12. Adjournment

OPEN FORUM Lake John Association Members

LJA Meetings	LID Meetings
2026 June 27- Annual Meeting July 13 - BOD August 10 - BOD September 14 - BOD	2026 June 18 - BOD June 27 - Annual Meeting July 16 - BOD August 20 - BOD September 24 - BOD
BOD Meetings: 6:30 p.m. @ Southside Township Hall Annual Meeting: 9:00 a.m. @ South Haven City Hall (following LID meeting)	

LAKE JOHN ASSOCIATION

REGULAR BOARD MEETING Minutes
May 11, 2026
DRAFT to be Approved June 8, 2026
6:30 pm at Southside Township Hall, 8209 County Rd 3 NW, Annandale, MN 55302

Board of Directors (BOD)

OFFICERS	SECTION REPRESENTATIVES
President Joleen Sytsma	Section 1 Dennis Sjoberg
Vice President Chuck Wachter	Section 2 Neysa Silver
Treasurer Jon Bigalk	Section 3 Mark Fournier
Secretary Michelle Sutton	Section 4 John Greenwood
	Section 5 Becky Wachter
	Section 6 Kim Larson

REGULAR BUSINESS

1. Call To Order
Sytsma called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. with those in attendance invited to recite the Pledge of Allegiance.
- Sytsma noted that no recording or transcripts of Board meetings are permitted.

2. Attendance/Roll Call
BOD Present: Sytsma, C. Wachter, Bigalk, Sutton, Fournier, Greenwood, Sjoberg, B. Wachter,
BOD Absent: Larson, Silver
Members Present: Kelly Kosloski

3. Approval of Agenda - May 11, 2026
Motion: by C. Wachter to approve the agenda as presented. **Seconded** by Sutton and **passed unanimously**.

4. Approval of Previous Minutes - September 08, 2025
Motion: by C. Wachter to approve the meeting minutes as presented. **Seconded** by Sjoberg and **passed unanimously**.

5. Reports
a. Financials as of April 30, 2026
Bigalk provided an update on the LJA's current financials. The total cash balance as of April 30th was $150,274.26. A total of 82 memberships have been received for 2026. Report attached to the minutes (attached pp 6-7).
Motion: by C. Wachter to approve the financials as presented. **Seconded** by Bigalk and **passed unanimously**
   I. QuickBooks Online conversion is in process and continues to move forward.

b. Section Representatives - New Property Owners/Property Developments.
Fournier reported awareness of a potential upcoming property sale in Section 3.

c. LID Liaison Report
Kosloski provided updates on recent LID activities, including aquatic invasive species treatment, water quality monitoring, and upcoming planning items. The 2026 curly-leaf pondweed treatment has been completed and follow-up surveys for Eurasian watermilfoil will determine if additional treatment is needed this year. The LID received a $1,500 AIS management grant from Wright County SWCD. Planning continues for the annual meeting, including director elections for Seats G, H, and I. The next LID meeting is scheduled for May 21 at 6:30 p.m. at Southside Township Hall. Additional details reviewed at the meeting are attached to the minutes (attached pp 8).

d. Committees

DRAFT

I. Lake Health & Safety: Additional details reviewed at the meeting are attached to the minutes. https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/lakefind/showlevel.html?downum=86028800

1. Lake Quality (attached pp 9-13)
   Kosloski provided a detailed report and summarized the lake quality. Lake John continues long-term monitoring of phosphorus, chlorophyll, and water clarity, with sampling conducted monthly from May through August. Trend data from 2024–2025 show phosphorus levels remain near thresholds that can contribute to algae blooms. Continued shoreline stewardship, nutrient-management practices and minimizing disturbances to the lakebed that causes phosphorus to be suspended in the water column remain priorities to maintain lake health.
2. Water Level Monitoring (attached pp 14-17)
   Kosloski provided a detailed report and summarized the water level. Lake John's water levels have remained above the Ordinary High-Water Level (OHWL) for several consecutive years. Annual averages for 2024 and 2025 were approximately 3–3.5 inches above long-term norms, and April 2026 recorded the highest spring elevation in the dataset. Long term trends remain stable, but recent years reflect a pattern of persistently higher water levels. The below link was included in the agenda packet:

II. Lake Stewardship Program - Greenwood/Kosloski
Greenwood and Kosloski reported that four members have received Lake Steward awards, with an additional three to four members having completed the stewardship quiz. Lake John remains the only lake in Wright County currently participating in this program.

A request was made to order ten large Lake Steward award signs at a cost of $43 each. **Motion** by Fournier to approve the purchase. **Seconded** by Sjoberg and **passed unanimously**.

Kosloski raised the idea of hosting a Lake Steward tour in August to visit award-recipient properties and highlight stewardship practices and see examples. The Board agreed to consider having the event committee coordinate communication, itinerary planning, and refreshments if the event moves forward. Sytsma will reach out to the Event Planning Committee members Kim Larson & Molly Van Metre, to discuss with Kelly.

III. Culverts
Greenwood reported that the culverts near 67 street by launch, 68th street near Lake Sylvia, and the two culverts on County Road 3 are all flowing properly. He is coordinating with Cody Alen at the Wright County Highway Department as needed.

ONGOING BUSINESS

6. Migrating Bogs – No movement was reported. Sytsma noted that she will check the permit date.

7. Organization Updates
   a. MN Coalition of Lake Associations (MN COLA)
      I. MN COLA Position Statement: MN Cola Position Statement on Enhanced Wake Activities
      Sytsma reported that MN COLA released its position statement on enhanced wake activities and U of MN project summary and was attached to the agenda packet.
      II. St. Anthony Falls Laboratory - U of MN Phase 2 Project Summary
      https://pub.umn.edu/safl/Boat-Report-2025/
      Sytsma shared the University of Minnesota St. Anthony Falls Laboratory Phase 2 project summary and recommendations:
         - When operating in planing mode, it is recommended that recreational powerboats similar to the ones studied here, should operate in 10 ft of water or greater to minimize impacts on the lakebed.

- When operating in sustained displacement mode (e.g., slow cruising), recreational power boats similar to the ones studied here, should operate in 10 ft of water or greater to minimize impacts on the lakebed.
- For most recreational boat users, traveling in waters less than 10 ft deep is unavoidable (e.g., going through channels, getting to and from boat lifts, docks, and launches, etc.). In these scenarios it is recommended to go as slowly as possible (i.e., slower than the displacement speeds tested here or no wake) to minimize the magnitude of the bow and stern pressure waves.
- Wakeboats should operate in 20 ft of water or greater when in semi-displacement (surfing) mode to minimize impacts on the lakebed.
- All boats have the potential to damage aquatic vegetation. The depth recommendations provided above are specified related to the lakebed but could also be interpreted as relative to the top of submerged vegetation. Since vegetation grows throughout the open-water season, this is a more difficult recommendation to specify. In general, boats should avoid areas of the lake with aquatic vegetation to minimize damage."

Phase 3 of the research study is underway, with shoreline impact results expected later this fall. A complete summary of the research study including recommendations was attached to the agenda packet.

It was stated that the peer review of U of MN was a scientific review. Others that are coming out might be peer reviewed and can be published but may not be scientifically backed.

b. Wright County Coalition of Lake Associations (WC COLA): https://wrightcola.mnlakesandrivers.org
Kosloski reported that she was appointed to the WC COLA Board. WC COLA continues communication with county commissioners regarding wake-related concerns. Educational materials, including Wake Safe maps, are available for posting at landings and distribution to lake residents. Maps must be ordered from MN Lakes & Rivers so it meets their requirements. It should be for all high speed activities. Recommendation for boaters to take the boating test to try and educate. Fatalities are going down, but the severity of injuries are high. The original reference materials were provided in the agenda packet. A written report with the detailed information verbally reviewed at the meeting is included at the end of these minutes (attached pp. 18-22).
Request to purchase the MNLRA map and post it at the public landing. Kosloski volunteered to order the map and work with the MNDNR and WCCOLA for the landing specifications and installation.
Motion by C. Wachter to approve. **Seconded** by B. Wachter and **passed unanimously.**

c. MN Lakes and Rivers Association (MLR)
Sytsma referenced an attachment in the agenda packet and reported on the June 3 meeting in Alexandria and encouraged individual membership to support statewide lake advocacy efforts.

d. MN DNR Roundtable
Sytsma provided an update on the MN DNR Roundtable materials that were attached to the agenda packet. The Association is not a member organization but contributes through member state taxes.

Kosloski requested that the Board review which lake and water advocacy organizations LJA is a paid member of for 2026 and consider contributions to the specified groups below, for a total of $300 in 2026 advocacy memberships and contributions. Two of the memberships have already been paid, and one payment will be sent by the next meeting. Sytsma will obtain additional information from Kosloski regarding the remaining two organizations.

- MN COLA – $50 (already paid)
- Minnesota Lakes and Rivers Advocates – $50 (already paid, $185 in April)
- Wright COLA – $100 ($25 membership + $75 contribution; payment to be sent by Jon)
- Minnesota Lakes and Rivers Advocates Protection & Education Contribution – $50
- Safe Wakes for Minnesota Lakes – $50

8. Items from September's Agenda:
   a. Electronic copy of section lists to section representatives

Bigalk reported that he has not maintained the Excel section list since the transition to QuickBooks at the end of last year. Sytsma will generate the current list from QuickBooks and send it to the Section Representatives.

b. Email addresses added to LJA website for Section Reps
Fournier reported that Dana said we have the information and access. Kosloski said there must be miscommunication as she is the Administrator. Fournier will check with Dana.

c. 2025 Lake John Survey Results published
Sytsma reported that survey results were included in the newsletter. Member comments will be distributed once email and mailing addresses are confirmed.

9. Community Updates

a. City Water/Sewer – Sytsma had no knowledge of any new updates.

b. New Developments – Sytsma had no knowledge of any new updates and reminded members not to assume new activity is approved without verification.

c. Solar Field - Sytsma reported she attended the Wright County meeting on behalf of LJA as directed by the LJA Board, to oppose the solar fields due to the close proximity to Lake John. The solar field project was approved by Wright County Planning & Zoning last fall. According to Koslowski, the approval prevented annexation by the City. Vegetation plans and construction hour limitations are in place per Koslowski. (attached pp 23-34)

NEW BUSINESS

10. Annual Meeting Planning
Sytsma provided a brief update on preparations for the Annual meeting.

a. Electronic Voting Research
C. Wachter reported that he is evaluating electronic voting options to simplify and secure the voting process. He reviewed features including payment verification, delivery methods (email/SMS), and administrative controls. Benefits include eliminating mailing costs and reducing the potential for errors or confusion during manual vote counting. Wachter will reconcile available email and cell phone contact information and may work with Section Representatives to gather any missing data.
Motion by Fournier to adopt electronic voting. **Seconded** by Sjoberg and **passed unanimously.**

b. Event Committee – Sytsma will reach out to the Events Planning Committee regarding the need for setup, food & drink, and clean up.

11. 2026 Nominations
Sytsma reported nominations will be needed for President, Treasurer, and Section Representatives for Sections 2, 4, and 6

OPEN FORUM Lake John Association Members

12 Request for Board Action – Public Comment at Wright County Public Hearing
Kosloski requested Board approval for the Lake John Association to submit a letter of support and provide public comment at the Wright County Board of Commissioners Public Hearing on May 19 at 9:30 a.m. regarding consideration of an interim zoning ordinance and temporary moratorium on data centers. The Board discussed the potential effects to Lake John and the need for further study by the county. Chuck Wachter volunteered to attend and deliver the prepared comment. Additional information verbally reviewed at the meeting is attached to the minutes (attached pp. 35).
Motion by Sjoberg to approve. **Seconded** by Sutton and **passed unanimously**.

13. Adjournment - Sytsma adjourned the meeting at 8:40.

LJA Meetings	LID Meetings

2026 June 8 - BOD June 27- Annual Meeting July 13 - BOD August 10 - BOD September 14 - BOD	2026 May 21 - BOD June 18 - BOD June 27 - Annual Meeting July 16 - BOD August 20 - BOD September 24 - BOD
BOD Meetings: 6:30 p.m. @ Southside Township Hall Annual Meeting: 9:00 a.m. @ South Haven City Hall	

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Lake John Association Inc

Statement of Activity

January 1-April 30, 2026

	TOTAL
Revenue	
Critical Needs/Invasive Species Fund Donation	6,065.00
General Fund Revenue	
Association Dues	2,370.00
General Fund Donations	2,240.00
Total for General Fund Revenue	**$4,610.00**
Total for Revenue	**$10,675.00**
Gross Profit	**$10,675.00**
Expenditures	
Memberships	50.00
Newsletter and Other Mailings Expenses	713.80
Office Expenses	106.40
Website Expenses	120.00
Total for Expenditures	**$990.20**
Net Operating Revenue	**$9,684.80**
Other Revenue	
Interest Income	1,964.28
Total for Other Revenue	**$1,964.28**
Net Other Revenue	**$1,964.28**
Net Revenue	**$11,649.08**

DR

Lake John Association Inc

Statement of Financial Position

As of Apr 30, 2026

	TOTAL
Assets	
Current Assets	
Bank Accounts	
Lake Central Bank CD #1	33,881.41
Lake Central Bank CD #2	62,527.03
Lake Central Checking	53,215.82
Total for Bank Accounts	**$149,624.26**
Other Current Assets	
Undeposited Funds	650.00
Total for Other Current Assets	**$650.00**
Total for Current Assets	**$150,274.26**
Total for Assets	**$150,274.26**
Liabilities and Equity	
Liabilities	
Total for Liabilities	
Equity	
Retained Earnings	138,625.18
Net Revenue	11,649.08
Total for Equity	**$150,274.26**
Total for Liabilities and Equity	**$150,274.26**

DR

Information from LID Liaison:

LID Liaison Report: Kosloski provided the following updates:

- LID meetings held Sept. 18, Feb. 2026, March 19, and April 16-present/active at each as well as support/communication between meetings
- 2025 Eurasian water milfoil (EWM) treatment completed; follow-up survey planned for Spring 2026.
- 22.5-acre curly-leaf pondweed (CLP) treatment approved for 2026 at a cost of $10,550.
- CLP treatment completed April 25; additional EWM surveys will determine if further treatment is needed this year after evaluating the 10 spots treated last year
- Two starry stonewort assessments are planned.
- Water quality monitoring continues to show declining conditions; possible future inflow sampling near the boat landing discussed and not pursuing as it has not been in issue with previous assessments done - I will bring this forward again if monitoring shows cause
- Annual water testing cost remains approximately $300 - SWCD provides the kits - sends to RMB Laboratories (link on each report I submit to the LJA board with data on website)
- LID awarded a $1,500 AIS management grant from Wright County Soil & Water Conservation District.
- State AIS funding continues to decline, increasing local cost responsibility.
- East shore development plats updated for expansion of 10 lakeshore lots.
- Stolen boat-cleaning station tools at the DNR landing will be replaced - WSCD got approval from DNR for stations and provides the sign/tools with DNR approval on placement at each landing
- Annual LID 2025 financial report submitted to the county. LID property/assessment list updated for approval at 2026 annual meeting
- Annual meeting planning underway - continue coordination with LJA leadership.
- Director elections upcoming for Seats G, H, and I (terms ending 2029). Write-ins are an option.
- Recommended date for the 2027 Annual Meeting for LID/LJA Consideration: June 26, 2027 (per LJA bylaws 3rd/4th Saturday in June) a s it allows LJA time for planning/coordination with LID versus 3rd Saturday
- LID Board Members are Chair Steve Benzchawal, Secretary Peter MacMillan, Treasurer Adrienne Owens, Kirk Lindholm (water testing), Mark Goessl, Doug Van Metre, Rob O'Connor, Paul Fliegel
- Next LID meeting: Thursday, May 21, 6:30 p.m. at Southside Township Hall.

Lake John Water Quality Report & Lake Level Report
Prepared for the **May 11, 2026 Lake John Association** Regular Board Meeting

Lake John Water Monitoring - RMB Environmental Testing https://lakes.rmbel.com/
Monitoring Since May 19, 2003 (22 years)

	Sample Results			Trophic State Index (TSI)			
	Total Phosphorous (ug/L)	Chlorophyll (ug/L)	Secchi Disk (ft)	Phosphorous	Chlorophyll	Secchi	**TSI Avg.**
2025 September	**22.57**	8.74	7.50	48.80	51.40	47.00	**48.80**
2024 September	**22.24**	7.27	9.10	48.20	49.80	45.00	**47.20**
5-Year September Average (2021-2025)	**20.12**	7.12	9.00	47.25	49.50	45.00	**47.00**
10-Year September Average (2016-2025)	**29.94**	5.88	9.50	50.00	47.33	44.67	**47.11**
2025 August	**21.26**	9.79	6.50	48.00	53.00	49.00	**50.00**
2024 August	**29.87**	6.23	9.00	53.00	48.00	45.00	**48.00**
5-Year August Average (2021-2025)	**23.16**	8.30	8.00	48.80	50.80	47.00	**48.60**
10-YearAugust Average (2016-2025)	**21.58**	7.35	8.20	47.50	49.70	46.80	**47.80**
2025 Annual Average	**22.57**	8.74	7.50	48.80	51.40	47.00	**48.80**
2024 Annual Average	**22.24**	7.27	9.10	48.20	49.80	45.00	**47.20**
5-Year Annual Average (2021-2025)	**22.69**	7.60	8.53	48.68	49.14	45.86	**47.59**
10-Year Annual Average (2016-2025)	**23.01**	7.08	9.16	48.24	48.53	45.29	**47.18**

Total Phosphorous - want to be below 20 to 30ugl - lakes begin to show algae problems when levels rise above these levels
Chlrophyll - want below 10 ugl as a general recreational lakel (late summer chlorophyl below 10ugl)
Trophic State Index - combines total phosphorous (nutriends that fuel algea), chlorophyll (amount of algea), and secchi depth (water clarity) to convert into a TSI Score to describe the lake's trophic state.
TSI<30 - Oligotrophic (Very Low Productivity) ... very clear water, low nutriends, low algae, often deep, northern lakes
TSI 30-40 = Oligo-Mesotrophic ...clear water, slightly more nutrients, still low algae
TSI 40–50 — Mesotrophic (Moderate Productivity) ... Moderate nutrients, Moderate algae, Good clarity, Most Minnesota recreational lakes fall here, Balanced ecosystem
TSI 50–60 — Eutrophic (High Productivity) ... Higher nutrients, Frequent algae blooms, Reduced clarity, More stress on fish and aquatic plants
TSI > 60 — Hypereutrophic (Very High Productivity) ... Dense algae blooms, Very poor clarity, Often nuisance conditions, Can lead to fish kills

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Lake Quality

- Lake Quality - Lake John has been testing since 2003 -21 years of data on phosphorous (nutrient), chlorophyll (nutrient), and secchi (Secchi depth is a measure of water transparency and clarity, determined by lowering a black and white weighted disk (Secchi disk) into the water until it is no longer visible. It is a simple, inexpensive, and widely used method to estimate turbidity, light penetration, and algal growth (productivity) in lakes and ocean)
- Water samplings, which take about 2 hours each are done by LID member Kirk Linderholm in partnership with SWCD that provides the sample kits that LID pays for and sends to RMB laboratories for results annually for the months of May, June, July and August
- Since September 2026 LJA meeting (August analysis was not completed/posted)
- Why does LAKE QUALITY MONITORING AND ANALYSIS matter?
  Reports at regular meetings an annual meeting allows us to share/education the monitoring of trends so WE can take collective action individually and collectively to be proactive in improving the lake quality.
  If we are not proactive and hit a significant issue with nutrient loading or an aquatic invasive species (example Starry Stonewort, previously/ongoing is Eurasian Milfoil and Curly Leaf Pondweed) Lakes who are getting awarded grants provided by federal/state agencies are the ones that have been long-term monitoring and actively following their water quality and actively treating issues as they arise or pilot programs (Eurasian milfoil) - the data is needed to justify the grant awards as well as actions taken by the applicant (LIDs, LJAs) in educating, programming, etc. to mitigate water quality programs individually and collectively
- Sample results - what is closely monitored - Phosphorus above all else - why?
  because it is the "limiting nutrient" that fuels excessive algae growth, reducing water clarity, degrading aquatic habitats, and causing toxic blue-green algal blooms - it impacts the entire ecosystem from plants, animals, and human use (swimming, boating, fishing and other recreational activities)
- (MNPCA in partnership with SWCDs) Phosphorus occurs naturally, human activities have accelerated its accumulation. Rain and snowmelt wash phosphorus-rich fertilizers, soil, and organic materials (leaves and grass clippings) off the landscape and into water bodies. Breakdown of the primary sources of phosphorus:
  - Agricultural Runoff (Major Contributor): On a statewide basis, runoff from croplands and pastures, which carries fertilizer and manure, is the largest source of nonpoint phosphorus. Note: the amount of agricultural land around Lake John has not increased but the amount of regulation regarding when/what/how

fertilizers are applied have been - reducing the amount of phosphorous that enters Lake John due to agricultural runoff

- Urban Stormwater Runoff: Runoff from lawns, paved surfaces, and construction sites carries fertilizers and organic debris
  The rapid development due to annexation and residential properties on the Lake in the last 2 years is of concern as well as individual property owners landscaping projects that are not taking into account lake stewardship practices for their individual properties based on individual property characteristics - HUGE issue: green turf all the way to the lake with NO buffers/vegetation; secondary issue: riprap with no vegetation/all sand shoreline - heat island effect warming water temperatures more quickly which allows for earlier vegetation growth and increased phosphorous levels earlier which increases chlorophyll (potential for algae blooms)
- Internal Loading: Phosphorus that has built up in lake sediment over many years can be released back into the water, especially when oxygen levels are low or when disturbed by carp.
  Note: Lake John does have an acceptable level of carp based on the survey conducted by the LJA a couple years ago; however, increased motor boat activity is a concern - especially in areas under 10 feet and repeat passes of areas with boats operating at higher capacities thrusting water down that impacts the soil sediment up to 20 feet
- Atmospheric Deposition: Phosphorus deposited from the atmosphere through rain and snow.

Key Factors Making It Worse

- Increased Runoff: Increased, intense rain events mean more water is washing over the land, picking up phosphorus.
- Shoreline Development: Removing natural vegetation along shorelines decreases the land's ability to filter runoff, allowing more nutrients to enter the water - not just fertilizer/herbicides but runoff from neighbors/roofs (asphalt)/roads (oil, garbage)
- According to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), roughly two-thirds of the total phosphorus load to Minnesota lakes and rivers comes from nonpoint sources (Nonpoint source pollution in Minnesota refers to diffuse, scattered sources of phosphorus that are washed into lakes and rivers by rain or snowmelt, rather than discharging from a single pipe. These unregulated sources make up the majority of Minnesota's phosphorus load, urban stormwater, sediment erosion, and septic systems.
- Phosphorous is the primary nutrient that needs to be watched carefully

- Total Phosphorous - want to be below 20 to 30ugl - lakes begin to show algae problems when levels rise above these levels (this results in an increase to chlorophyll levels, and we want a 10 ugl or lower as a general recreational lake late summer
- Trophic State Index - combines total phosphorous (nutrients that fuel algae), chlorophyll (amount of algae), and secchi depth (water clarity) to convert into a TSI Score to describe the lake's trophic state.
- TSI<30 - Oligotrophic (Very Low Productivity) ... very clear water, low nutrients, low algae, often deep, northern lakes
- TSI 30-40 = Oligo-Mesotrophic ...clear water, slightly more nutrients, still low algae
- TSI 40–50 — Mesotrophic (Moderate Productivity) ... Moderate nutrients, Moderate algae, good clarity, Most Minnesota recreational lakes fall here, Balanced ecosystem
- TSI 50–60 — Eutrophic (High Productivity) ... Higher nutrients, Frequent algae blooms, Reduced clarity, more stress on fish and aquatic plants
- TSI > 60 — Hypereutrophic (Very High Productivity) ... Dense algae blooms, very poor clarity, often nuisance conditions, Can lead to fish kills
- September 2025 Water Quality Trend Assessment focused on Phosphorus Levels
    - Short-term trend, Stable from 2024 → 2025
    - Medium-term trend, slightly worse than the recent 5-year average
    - Long-term trend, considerably improved relative to the past decade
    - Overall, this suggests: Long-term improvement, Recent stabilization, but phosphorus remains high enough to support nuisance algae under favorable conditions
    - Practical Implications, Recreational quality is acceptable most of the time, some risk of algae blooms still exists, continued nutrient management is important to avoid regression
- August 2025 Water Quality Trend Assessment
    - Short-term trend, Strong improvement from 2024 → 2025
    - Medium-term trend, slightly better than the recent 5-year average
    - Long-term trend, essentially stable relative to the past decade
    - Overall assessment: August 2025 represents good recovery from a poor 2024 season, Nutrient levels were currently moderate rather than excessive, conditions remained near the threshold where warm-weather algae issues can still occur
    - The elevated phosphorus in August 2024 may have been influenced by Heavy rainfall/runoff, Fertilizer or watershed inputs, Sediment resuspension, Low-flow or warm-water conditions, Internal phosphorus release from sediments. The lower 2025 value suggests those stressors were reduced or better controlled.

    - Overall Water Quality Outlook: August's phosphorus levels indicate: Water quality is fair to moderately good, Not pristine, but not severely nutrient-impaired; Continued nutrient management remains important to prevent future spikes like 2024
- Annual 2025 Water Quality Trend Assessment
- Short-term trend, Stable from 2024 to 2025
- Medium-term trend, nearly identical to the 5-year average
- Long-term trend, slightly lower than the 10-year average
- Overall trend appears stable to mildly improving
- Overall Water Quality Condition: The phosphorus data indicates: A relatively stable aquatic system, No evidence of rapid degradation (although we are degrading overall according to more qualified reports from Wright County SWCD and MPCA), Nutrient concentrations that are manageable but still elevated enough to warrant monitoring
- Overall condition: Moderate water quality, Better than many eutrophic lakes but low enough phosphorous for consistently clear-water conditions
    - Wright county lakes that are eutrophic or hypereutrophic: Maple Lake, Ann Lake, Emma Lake, Little Waverly Lake, Pleasant Lake, Fish Lake, Mud Lake, and Pelican Lake
    - Management Implications: To maintain or improve conditions:
        - Continue controlling watershed runoff, Limit fertilizer and nutrient inputs, protect shoreline vegetation and wetlands, Monitor summer algae activity and oxygen levels
        - IMPORTANT: Because current values are close to eutrophic thresholds, relatively small phosphorus increases could noticeably worsen algae growth and clarity.

DR

Lake John Water Level - MN DNR LAKEFINDER https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/lakefind/index.html

Readings since July 26, 1974 (51 years)

	Elevation	Elevation Reading to OHWL	
2025 Annual Average *19 readings*	1054.10	**6.78**	Above
2024 Annual Average *17 readings*	1054.13	6.23	Above OHWL
5-Year Annual Average (2021-2025) *115 readings*	1053.84	5.60	Above OHWL
10-Year Annual Average (2016-2025) *376 readings*	1053.84	5.88	Above OHWL
2026 April Average *2 readings*	1054.22	**8.64**	Above
2025 April Average *2 readings*	1054.07	6.78	Above OHWL
5-Year April Average (2021-2025) *12 readings*	1054.02	6.23	Above OHWL
10-Year April Average (2016-2025) *33 readings*	1053.97	5.60	Above OHWL
2025 October Average *2 readings*	1053.99	**5.88**	Above
2024 October Average - no readings - NA	-	-	-
5-Year October Average (2021-2025) *9 readings*	1053.58	0.96	Above OHWL
10-Year October Average (2016-2025) *19 readings*	1053.61	1.32	Above OHWL
2025 September Average *2 readings*	**1054.06**	**6.72**	Above
2024 September Average *2 readings*	1054.09	7.02	Above OHWL
5-Year September Average (2021-2025) *15 readings*	1053.76	3.11	Above OHWL
10-Year September Average (2016-2025) *31 readings*	1053.76	3.12	Above OHWL
2025 August Average *3 readings*	1054.21	8.52	Above OHWL
2024 August Average *3 readings*	1054.25	9.00	Above OHWL
5-Year August Average (2021-2025) *19 readings*	1053.81		Above OHWL
10-Year August Average (2016-2025) *71 readings*	1053.84	4.10	

OHWL
1053.5

Top 3 Water Levels - Since 1974			
Highest	August 2024	July 2019	August 2023
Lowest	October 1988	September 1988	April 1988

The most recent reading (Aug 17, 2025) is slightly lower than the August 2024 average but remains above OHWL. August 2025 levels are stable and consistent with recent years.

July 2025 levels were slightly higher than July 2024. Both years show consistent elevation above OHWL during summer months.

2025 and 2024 annual averages are notably higher than the 5- and 10-year averages. This suggests a recent upward trend in lake levels over the past two years.

Water levels in 2025 remain consistently above OHWL, with minimal fluctuation between July and August. Compared to long-term averages, recent years show elevated lake levels, possibly due to increased precipitation or reduced evaporation.

Recommendations/Considerations Continue regular monitoring to track seasonal and annual fluctuations. Assess shoreline infrastructure for potential impacts from sustained high water levels. Coordinate with watershed managers to evaluate hydrologic inputs and potential climate-related influences.

Report prepared and submitted by LJA Member Kelly Kaslaski for the May 11, 2026 to the LJA Board.

DRAFT

Lake Water Levels

- Annual 2025 Water Level Trend Assessment
  - Lake Quality - Lake John has had water levels recorded by the MN DNR since 1974 – testing since 2003 -51 years
  - The current Wright County Water Surface Use Ordinance, which includes regulations for high water (such as slow-no wake restrictions), was last amended/adopted by the Wright County Board of Commissioners on August 21, 2012 - only applies to Bertram Chain of Lakes (Bertram, Long, Mud and First Lake), Cedar Lake, East and West Lake Sylvia, Howard Lake, Lake Ann, Pleasant Lake, Lake Charlotte - Ordinance does not apply to Lake John when the county issues high water - no wake ordinance in Wright County - only applies to the listed lakes
  - July 11, 2019 - The Wright County Sheriff's Office officially declared a high-water emergency (MN Adm. Rules 6110.3700 Subp. 9) for Lake John in Southside Township. This emergency declaration became necessary after potential property damage was documented by the Sheriff's Office on Lake John. There were signs posted on access to Lake John, specifically the public access as well as a private access on Nevens Avenue NW. Boaters on Lake John were required to observe the 150 feet no wake requirement. The year's heavy rain totals made water levels in many of Wright County's lakes extremely high. The Sheriff's Office will continue to monitor Lake John as well as other lakes within Wright County and asks for the public's cooperation in adhering to this emergency declaration as well as being mindful of high-water levels in lakes throughout the county.
  - All averages are above the OHWL, indicating sustained high-water conditions rather than isolated spikes, consistently above OHWL conditions
  - 2024 and 2025 are nearly identical in elevation: Difference = only 0.03 ft (~0.36 inches).
  - The 5-year and 10-year averages are essentially the same elevation (1053.84 ft), suggesting: Long-term water levels have been relatively stable.
  - Recent years are not dramatically changing the long-term trend.
  - Recent annual averages (2024–2025) are about: 0.26–0.29 ft (3.1–3.5 inches) higher than the long-term averages. This suggests slightly wetter or higher-water conditions in the most recent years.
- April 2026 Water Level Trend
  Levels are consistently above OHWL-Every annual and April average exceeds the OHWL by approximately 5.6 to 8.6 inches. This indicates: Persistent high-water conditions, Continued inundation influence along shoreline and wetland margins, No evidence of

- April levels are higher than annual averages
  Spring measurements exceed annual averages by roughly: 0.1–0.4 ft (1–5 inches), which is typical of: snowmelt runoff, spring precipitation, reduced evapotranspiration early in the season. This suggests the system responds seasonally but remains elevated even outside peak runoff periods.
- 2026 April conditions are notably high
  The 2026 April average: 1054.22 ft,8.64 inches above OHWL, is the highest value reported. Compared to the: 10-year April average (1053.97 ft), the 2026 level is: 0.25 ft (~3 inches) higher. This is above-normal spring conditions in 2026.
- Long-term stability with recent upward deviation
- The 5-year and 10-year annual averages are nearly identical: both 1053.84 ft, showing long-term stability. However: recent annual averages (2024–2025), and especially April 2026, are measurably higher than long-term means.
- Variables to consider short-term wet cycle, increased precipitation/runoff, or temporarily elevated basin storage conditions.
- Overall: The record supports a finding of sustained high-water conditions in April with:
  - long-term water elevations consistently above OHWL, recurring elevated spring water levels, and unusually high April 2026 conditions relative to historical averages. The data does not indicate instability or extreme fluctuation, but they do suggest a persistent high-water regime with recent years trending moderately wetter than the long-term average.

- October 2025 Water Level Trend Assessment
  - October water levels historically remain only slightly above OHWL, averaging about 1 inch above normal during the 5-year and 10-year periods. In contrast, October 2025 water levels were significantly elevated, approximately 4.5 to 5 inches higher than long-term October averages. This suggests delayed seasonal recession, prolonged high-water retention, or wetter-than-normal late-season conditions. Overall, while autumn water levels typically decline seasonally, the October 2025 readings indicate unusually persistent high-water conditions extending later into the year than normal.
- September 2025 Water Level Trend Assessment
  - September water levels consistently remained above the Ordinary High-Water Level (OHWL), with long-term 5-year and 10-year averages showing stable seasonal conditions. However, September 2024 and 2025 levels were approximately 3.6–4.0 inches higher than historical averages, indicating sustained elevated late-season water conditions. The similarity between the 2024 and 2025 readings suggests a continuing high-water pattern rather than

isolated events. Overall, the data indicates prolonged water retention and wetter-than-normal conditions extending through late summer and early fall.

- August 2025 Water Level Trend Assessment
  - August water levels consistently remained above the Ordinary High-Water Level (OHWL), with long-term averages showing stable seasonal conditions. However, August 2024 and 2025 levels were approximately 4.5–5.3 inches higher than historical averages, with August 2024 recording the highest August elevation in the dataset. The consecutive elevated readings indicate persistent high-water conditions rather than isolated seasonal variation. Overall, the data suggest sustained watershed saturation and prolonged elevated water levels extending through late summer beyond the normal spring runoff period.
- 2025 Annual Water Level Trend Assessment
  - All annual water levels remain above the Ordinary High-Water Level (OHWL), showing a consistently elevated system over time. The 5-year and 10-year averages are identical, indicating strong long-term stability. However, 2024 and 2025 annual levels are about 3–3.5 inches higher than historical averages and are nearly identical to each other, suggesting a sustained recent increase rather than a one-year anomaly. Overall, the data reflects stable long-term trends with a modest but persistent shift toward higher water levels in the most recent years.

DRA

WC Cola meeting info:

a. Wright County Coalition of Lake Associations (WC COLA) in partnership with MNCOLA Mission: "to work together with Lake Associations and public agencies to protect and improve water quality through state and local resources. To better manage the water and land resources the WCCOLA will address issues and possible solutions from a water shed perspective."

President's Presentation - Mary Ellen Nichols

- Recommend and provide an educational resource
- Identify environmental issues & disseminate information
- Promote and advance goals of protecting and improving county lakes and rivers
- Express consensus viewpoints of lake associations to government officials and agencies
- Encourage LJA board members and LJA members to join WCCOLA email list
- MN COLAs 3 Priorities: Water Quality, AIS, Enhanced Wake Activities
- County Commissioners and Wright Soil and Water Conservation District Supervisors - no commissioners were present, 1 SWCD supervisor present
- Elected Officers (President, VP, Treasurer/Corresponding Secretary, Recording Secretary - all elected uncontested)

Treasurer's Report - Kris Becker

- 16/47 lake associations paid dues, 2025 was highest membership to date, 8 of 16 lake associations paid the base dues with 9 lakes contributing extra

Wakesurf Research Updates and WCCOLA Efforts - Kris Becker

Note: The research is primarily funded through a crowdfunding campaign via the SAFL Healthy Waters Initiative (The St. Anthony Falls Laboratory (SAFL) Healthy Waters Initiative (HWI), established in 2020 by the University of Minnesota, is a research program focused on protecting and improving Minnesota's lakes and streams by studying human impacts on aquatic ecosystems. Its primary goal is to provide science-based data on topics like recreational boating, shoreline erosion, and water quality to guide stakeholder decisions). Over 200 individual donors, lake associations, and private citizens contributed to the study, with additional support from the Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) (The Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) is a permanent, constitutionally dedicated fund established in 1988 that uses a portion of Minnesota State Lottery proceeds to protect, conserve, and enhance the state's air, water, land, fish, and wildlife. It provides a long-term, stable funding source for environmental projects and research.) The University of Minnesota St. Anthony Falls Lab (SAFL) wakesurf and boat wake research is designed to be, and is reported as, peer-reviewed, independent research. Opposition to the University of Minnesota St. Anthony Falls Lab (SAFL) wakesurf research has primarily come from boating industry representatives who argue the studies rely on flawed methodologies, lack formal peer review, and are driven by stakeholder funding rather than independent, rigorous science - it should be noted that the majority of opposition relies on studies conducted in labs (not on waters) and is not peer reviewed per research standards for publication.

U of M St. Anthony Falls Lab (SAFL) Wakesurf Research Phase 1 (published).

- Objective: Evaluate wave height, energy, power of wakesurf boats; compare wakesurf boats (+aftermarket wake shaper) to a non-wakesurf boat
- Key Findings: Wave Characteristics Compared to regular power boats, wakesurf boats produce substantially greater wave: Heights (2-3x) Energy (3-9x) Power (6-12x)
- Key Findings: Wave Characteristics • Wakesurf boats require distances between 500-600+ feet to reduce wave height/energy/power to levels equivalent to non-wakesurf boats in planning mode.

U of M St. Anthony Falls Lab (SAFL) Wakesurf Research Phase 2 (published).

- Lakebed and Water Column (Below-Surface Impacts) Objective: • Assess prop thrust impacts on lake bottoms at various lake depths. • Evaluate water quality impacts of lake bottom disturbance caused by prop thrust
- Lakebed and Water Column (Below-Surface Impacts) Key Finding #1: All powerboats have potential to damage aquatic vegetation in shallow water. All boats should: a) Avoid lake areas with aquatic vegetation. b) Stay in depths of 10 feet or greater when in slow-cruising and planning modes. c) Trim motor and go even slower when in less than 10 feet of water
- Lakebed and Water Column (Below-Surface Impacts) Key Finding #2: Wakesurfing impacts lakebeds at much greater depths than standard powerboats. Wake boats should operate in 20 feet of water or greater when in surf mode to minimize lakebed disturbance

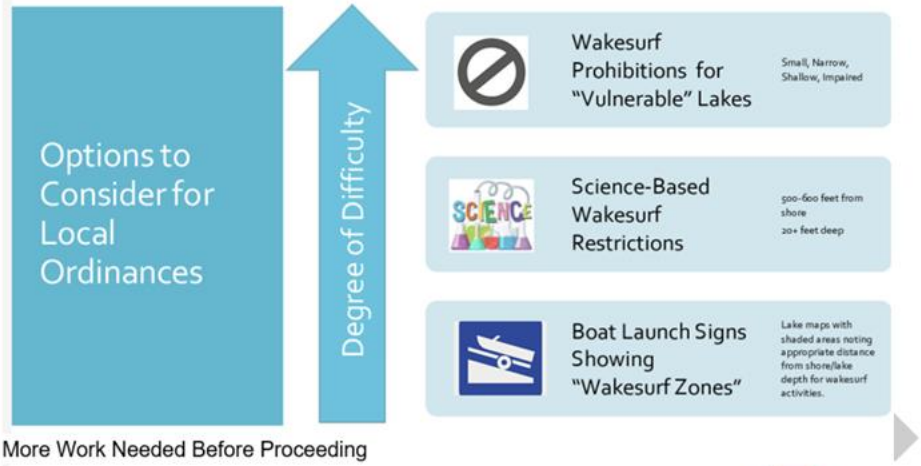
Phase 3 (underway).

- Wind-vs. Boat-Generated Waves: Impacts on Lakebeds, Shorelines, and Water Quality Research
  Timeline:
  Research/Data Collection: 2024-2025
  Data Analysis: 2025-2026
  Published Report: Summer 202

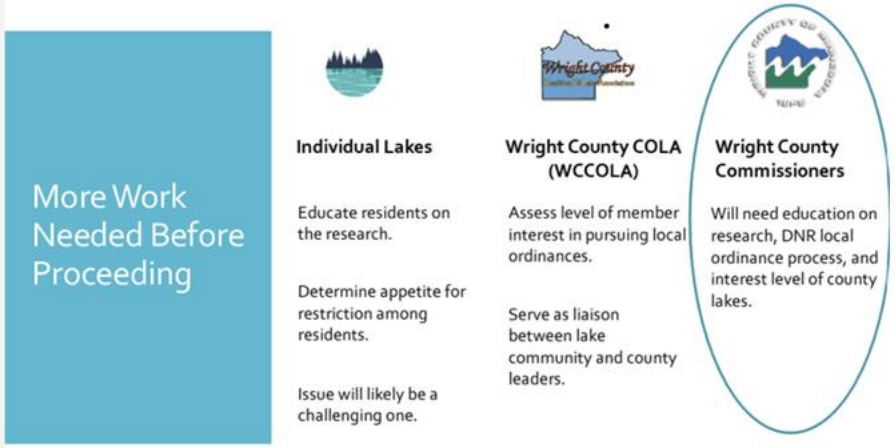
- Broad Implications of Wakesuring on Lakes
  Significant environmental impacts on:
  Shoreline erosion, Lake bottoms, Aquatic plant habitats, Fish spawning areas, Water quality (↑ phosphorus and algal blooms) Safety issues: Increased risk of AIS spread (ballast systems) Recreation equity
  Statewide regulations unlikely in the near term
- What can WE do in MN?
  • Pursue local county ordinances. • DNR has a process for this →"Local Surface Use Zoning" (click here for details). Caribou Lake (near Lutsen) is the first MN lake to regulate wakesurfing through this process. Click here for more info.

Cook County Board unanimously approved lake association's petition request.
Click here for more info.

- Options to Consider for local Ordinances



- More Work Needed Before Proceeding



- WCCOLA Efforts to Date:
  - Summer 2025: Met with Wright County. Covered U of M Phase 1 + expected Phase 2 findings. Once Phase 2 was published, sent summary of research, implications, and our local ordinance proposals.
    - Wright County Response
      Spring 2026: Support boat launch signage idea. Indicated that several advocacy groups (pro/con) were discussing statewide restrictions with lawmakers this legislative session. Would prefer

to see statewide restrictions vs. patchwork of local ordinances. Want to see how things play out legislatively before considering local options.

- What Can Lakes Do Right Now? Get Wakesurf Zone Signs Installed at your Launch(es)!

DNR Public launches. Other (private, city, county, township, federal) → permission from landowner. DNR reviews for message, font size, overall size, color, & placement. No DNR approval fee. Prefer a 12 x 18 or 18 x 24 sign (larger might be possible but will depend on space availability and may lengthen approval time). About 2-3 week approval time (existing location & pre-approved design). New MLR designs (11 x 17 or 17 x 11) for sale are DNR approved. The previously sold version was NOT.

- What Can Lakes Do in the Next Year or Two? Educate, Assess, Document, & Report!
  Educate Your Residents Share research & U of M SAFL underwater and overhead drone videos. • Assess/Survey Your Residents Understand level of support/opposition for reasonable restrictions (larger lakes) or limited prohibitions (small, shallow, impaired). • Document, Document, Document Journal critical incidents (date, issue, action taken). ØGather visual evidence (pictures/videos). • Report (Serious/Dangerous Behavior) Sheriff's non-emergency line. Create law enforcement record of safety issues. Boat registration number.
- WCCOLA Next Steps
  Remain in Contact with Wright County Assess county's appetite for local ordinances if statewide regulations don't happen in coming years. •Determine Level of Member Patience How long do we wait to see if statewide action happens? What if county board does not want to pursue local ordinance route? •Do We Consider Formally Organizing? Constituent pressure campaign.

Wright SWCD Updates - Alisha Ohara (Water Management

- New Lake Report Cards for 2025 will be completed in May (share at June Meeting)
- AIS Funding continues to be defunded at state and federal level; reduced for this year and next, and 2028 expect a significant decrease to county by at least $65,000; have cut decontamination program and minor cuts to everything else for 2026, 2027; unknown what will have to be cut in 2028
- Photo Contest - can submit online to win cash prizes

MN Lakes & Rivers Lake Steward Program, Lily Car
Arc GIS app tool for evaluators has been updated, provided spring training
Lake John Association - first/only lake doing the program; Kelly offered to be county resource in assisting area lakes in getting their Lake Association approval and field questions/support
Primary Focus - Natural Shorelines (50% of MN's natural shorelines are gone due to shoreline

development rate of 1-2% per decade; much of the development is due to social pressure and norms - program focus is shifting the social norm in favor of shorelines that protect water quality

MN Watercraft Operator Permits Update
Recommend ALL ages take the mndr.gov/boating course -
21-day dry law (boat lifts/docks/swim rafts/etc) - may not be placed in another body of water for a minimum of 21 days

Boating-related fatalities in Minnesota reached a historic low of 7 in in 2025 (9 in 2024 and 2023), continuing a downward trend from previous years (spike in 2021). This milestone occurred despite a high volume of boaters on the water - fatalities dropped into the single digits for the first time in 2023
35 non-fatal incidents reported in 2025 (highest types of non-fatal boating incidents were 6-collision with another watercraft, 6 person impacts boat (slips, trips, falls, or strikes surface on or in a boat, and 6 towed watersport mishaps (while non-fatal-the injuries involving wakes are significant (lowest number since 1970
Contextual Factors - New Legislation - Watercraft operator's permit went into effect July 1, 2025, MN DNR points to enhanced boating safety awareness and education as major factors in improved safety record; COVID-19 impact: boating interest and associated accidents rose during the 2020 pandemic but have since trended dow; accident causes: despite lowerr numbers, the majority of fatal boating accidents in 2025 and 2024 involved victims not wearing life jackets -

MN Boat Wrap Recycling Program
Building a program to help MN's boating community collect and recycle boat wrap through accessible collection services and helpful resources - wraprecycleright.org - was a collection one day in Big Lake this spring
Wrap Recycle Right is the branded program of a nonprofit stewardship organization that represents boat wrap producers and develops and operates a recycling program under Minnesota's Boat Wrap Stewardship Law (Minn. Stat. § 115A.1416)—the first such law in the United States.

Wright County AIS Tool Stations - Topi Priority: AIS Prevention
Top priority of Lake Associations Only so many levers to pull • Contract Launch Inspections • Volunteer Inspections • Law Enforcement • Education
LID purchased from Wright SWCD last year
Examples: Eurasian Watermilfoil, Starry Stonewart, Zebra Mussels, etc. In the last 30 years: • 54 Wright County Lakes have at least one AIS infestation
Today 1/3 of Lake Access Locations Covered • 61 Viable Lake access points • 16 Installed / Pending Tool Stations • 5 CD3 Stations • 5 County administered access points at play
What's included? DNR Approved Sign w/Eye bolts for tools Grabber Tool Post Tools/Hardware Bundle

Approval from access owner (DNR sites are pre-approved) • Photo needed for placement • Pay for it • $150 (LID purchased) • Someone agrees to maintain it (Steve Benzhawal)• Put them out in the spring, remove and store them in the fall and keep an eye on the tools, replacing anything that is damaged or missing - in process of replacing

September 23, 2025

Southside Township Board
PO Box 520
Annandale, MN 55302

RE: Community Concerns and Recommendations Regarding Proposed Solar Field Development near Lake John

I am writing on behalf of concerned residents of Lake John regarding the proposed development of a solar field near Lake John. Lake John is located within 1,000 feet of the proposed solar field. As members of this community who cherish the ecological, recreational, and aesthetic value of our lake, we wish to bring thoughtful attention to the "lake effect" associated with large-scale solar installations situated near lakes and rivers.

Introduction

Lake John is a treasured, limited natural resource very susceptible to pollution and the pressures of development. It provides habitat for diverse plant and animal life, supporting recreational activities, and contributing to the well-being and livelihoods of many residents and the general public. While we recognize the local government's commitment to renewable energy, we believe it is crucial to carefully consider the unique interactions between solar fields and lake environments. Recent studies and community observations have highlighted the potential risks—collectively referred to as the "lake effect"—that warrant a closer look before further actions are taken.

Understanding the Lake Effect of Solar Fields

The "lake effect" describes a range of environmental and microclimatic changes that occur when solar panels are installed near lakes. This phenomenon encompasses several key aspects:

- **Albedo Changes:** Solar panels absorb more sunlight than natural lake surfaces, which can alter local temperature and energy balances.
- **Microclimate Alteration:** The installation of solar arrays can modify wind patterns, humidity levels, and evaporation rates around the lake.
- **Wildlife Habitat Disruption:** Solar fields may disturb or fragment habitats, affecting birds and other species that rely on lake environments.
- **Reflection and Glare:** Solar panels can increase glare and reflected light, potentially impacting both wildlife and recreational users of the lake.

Potential Environmental Impacts

Let us consider in detail how solar field development near lakes can impact the environment:

Effects on Water Quality

Runoff from solar installations—including lubricants, cleaning agents, and construction debris—can introduce pollutants to the lake, altering its chemical composition and threatening sensitive species. Currently, the Lake John Association is diligent is performing water tests especially for phosphorus, chlorophyll, Secchi disk which all affect and measure water quality.

Impacts on Plant and Animal Life

Lakes and their surrounding wetlands are vital habitats for birds, amphibians, fish, and mammals. Solar field construction can lead to loss of vegetative cover, habitat fragmentation, and disruption of migratory routes. Reflected light from solar arrays may confuse birds or disrupt nesting, while noise and human activity associated with maintenance could disturb resident species. **According to Research Ecologist, Robb Diehl at the Northern Rocky Mountain Science Center, US Geological Survey in Bozeman, MT, between this study and other research, the strongest evidence to date of a lake effect is for the so-called water obligate birds that require water for take-off and landing such as our MN loons require.**

Socio-Economic Considerations

Our community relies on the lake for recreation, tourism, and sometimes even subsistence fishing. Any degradation in water quality or accessibility could reduce property values, discourage visitors, and diminish the lake's cultural and economic significance. Additionally, the visual impact of large solar fields may be seen as a detriment to the natural beauty and tranquility of natural lake areas.

Recommendations

Given the complexity of the lake effect, we urge you to re-evaluate and adopt a cautious approach to solar field development in proximity to lakes.

Comprehensive Environmental Assessment

Before approving any project, a thorough Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) should be conducted, specifically addressing:

- Water quality monitoring
- Wildlife and habitat protection
- Microclimate studies
- Long-term effects on recreation and scenic values

Community Engagement

Public hearings should be held to gather input from residents, ecologists, and relevant organizations. Transparent communication will help identify priorities, concerns, and potential compromises.

Best Practices in Site Selection and Design

Solar fields should be sited away from critical habitats, migratory corridors, and sensitive areas. Where possible, installations should be designed to minimize glare, runoff, and infrastructure footprints. **As mentioned earlier, Lake John is within 1,000 feet of the proposed solar field.**

Ongoing Monitoring and Adaptive Management

Establish a framework for ongoing monitoring of environmental conditions, and commit to adjusting operations based on observed impacts. Partnerships with local universities or research institutions can support data collection and analysis.

Safeguarding Recreation and Aesthetics

Protect access to the lake for fishing, swimming, boating, and other recreational uses. If solar fields are ultimately approved, which we hope they are not, consider visual screening or creative landscaping to reduce the visual impact of solar fields near lakes and rivers.

Conclusion

We request that you seriously consider the "lake effect" of solar fields located near lakes and rivers which are vital assets in MN that require careful management to ensure their health and long-term viability. We ask that you proceed in harmony with the natural and social environments that define our community. **By carefully considering the risks and lake effects, engaging the public, and committing to responsible stewardship, our local government can ensure that solar field development does not happen near lakes and rivers resulting in both environmental health and community well-being.**

Thank you for your consideration of this matter. We look forward to your response and to working collaboratively toward solutions that safeguard Lake John and other lakes and rivers in Wright County.

Respectfully,

Joleen Sytsma, Lake John Association President

320-309-6474

CC: Barry Rhineberger, Wright County Planning and Zoning; Chris Uecker, Wright County SWCD Board Chair; and James Bedell, MN DNR

September 8, 2025

Mr. Barry Rhineberger
Wright County Planning and Zoning
3650 Braddock Ave NW, Suite 1600
Buffalo, MN 55313

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Joleen Sytsma, Lake John Association President

320-309-6474

CC: Chris Uecker, Wright SWCD Board Chair and James Bedell, Area Hydrologist, MN DNR

September 23, 2025

Mr. Chris Uecker, Board Chair
Wright County SWCD
311 Brighton Ave S, Ste C
Buffalo, MN 55313

RE: Community Concerns and Recommendations Regarding Proposed Solar Field Development near Lake John

I am writing on behalf of concerned residents of Lake John regarding the proposed development of a solar field near Lake John. Lake John is located within 1,000 feet of the proposed solar field. As members of this community who cherish the ecological, recreational, and aesthetic value of our lake, we wish to bring thoughtful attention to the "lake effect" associated with large-scale solar installations situated near lakes and rivers.

Introduction

Lake John is a treasured, limited natural resource very susceptible to pollution and the pressures of development. It provides habitat for diverse plant and animal life, supporting recreational activities, and contributing to the well-being and livelihoods of many residents and the general public. While we recognize the local government's commitment to renewable energy, we believe it is crucial to carefully consider the unique interactions between solar fields and lake environments. Recent studies and community observations have highlighted the potential risks—collectively referred to as the "lake effect"—that warrant a closer look before further actions are taken.

Understanding the Lake Effect of Solar Fields

The "lake effect" describes a range of environmental and microclimatic changes that occur when solar panels are installed near lakes. This phenomenon encompasses several key aspects:

- **Albedo Changes:** Solar panels absorb more sunlight than natural lake surfaces, which can alter local temperature and energy balances.
- **Microclimate Alteration:** The installation of solar arrays can modify wind patterns, humidity levels, and evaporation rates around the lake.
- **Wildlife Habitat Disruption:** Solar fields may disturb or fragment habitats, affecting birds and other species that rely on lake environments.
- **Reflection and Glare:** Solar panels can increase glare and reflected light, potentially impacting both wildlife and recreational users of the lake.

Potential Environmental Impacts

Let us consider in detail how solar field development near lakes can impact the environment:

Effects on Water Quality

Runoff from solar installations—including lubricants, cleaning agents, and construction debris—can introduce pollutants to the lake, altering its chemical composition and threatening sensitive species. Currently, the Lake John Association is diligent is performing water tests especially for phosphorus, chlorophyll, Secchi disk which all affect and measure water quality.

Impacts on Plant and Animal Life

Lakes and their surrounding wetlands are vital habitats for birds, amphibians, fish, and mammals. Solar field construction can lead to loss of vegetative cover, habitat fragmentation, and disruption of migratory routes. Reflected light from solar arrays may confuse birds or disrupt nesting, while noise and human activity associated with maintenance could disturb resident species. **According to Research Ecologist, Robb Diehl at the Northern Rocky Mountain Science Center, US Geological Survey in Bozeman, MT, between this study and other research, the strongest evidence to date of a lake effect is for the so-called water obligate birds that require water for take-off and landing such as our MN loons require.**

Socio-Economic Considerations

Our community relies on the lake for recreation, tourism, and sometimes even subsistence fishing. Any degradation in water quality or accessibility could reduce property values, discourage visitors, and diminish the lake's cultural and economic significance. Additionally, the visual impact of large solar fields may be seen as a detriment to the natural beauty and tranquility of natural lake areas.

Recommendations

Given the complexity of the lake effect, we urge you to re-evaluate and adopt a cautious approach to solar field development in proximity to lakes.

Comprehensive Environmental Assessment

Before approving any project, a thorough Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) should be conducted, specifically addressing:

- Water quality monitoring
- Wildlife and habitat protection
- Microclimate studies
- Long-term effects on recreation and scenic values

Community Engagement

Public hearings should be held to gather input from residents, ecologists, and relevant organizations. Transparent communication will help identify priorities, concerns, and potential compromises.

Best Practices in Site Selection and Design

Solar fields should be sited away from critical habitats, migratory corridors, and sensitive areas. Where possible, installations should be designed to minimize glare, runoff, and infrastructure footprints. **As mentioned earlier, Lake John is within 1,000 feet of the proposed solar field.**

Ongoing Monitoring and Adaptive Management

Establish a framework for ongoing monitoring of environmental conditions, and commit to adjusting operations based on observed impacts. Partnerships with local universities or research institutions can support data collection and analysis.

Safeguarding Recreation and Aesthetics

Protect access to the lake for fishing, swimming, boating, and other recreational uses. If solar fields are ultimately approved, which we hope they are not, consider visual screening or creative landscaping to reduce the visual impact of solar fields near lakes and rivers.

Conclusion

We request that you seriously consider the "lake effect" of solar fields located near lakes and rivers which are vital assets in MN that require careful management to ensure their health and long-term viability. We ask that you proceed in harmony with the natural and social environments that define our community. **By carefully considering the risks and lake effects, engaging the public, and committing to responsible stewardship, our local government can ensure that solar field development does not happen near lakes and rivers resulting in both environmental health and community well-being.**

Thank you for your consideration of this matter. We look forward to your response and to working collaboratively toward solutions that safeguard Lake John and other lakes and rivers in Wright County.

Respectfully,

Joleen Sytsma, Lake John Association President

320-309-6474

CC: Barry Rhineberger, Wright County Planning and Zoning; James Bedell, MN DNR and Southside Township

September 23, 2025

Mr. James Bedell
MN Department of Natural Resources
1035 S Benton Dr
Sauk Rapids, MN 56379

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Joleen Sytsma, Lake John Association President

320-309-6474

CC: Chris Uecker, Wright SWCD Board Chair and Barry Rhineberger, Wright County Planning and Zoning and Southside Township

Wright County Board of Commissioners Public Hearing on Data Centers:

Wright County Board of Commissioners Public Hearing to consider ordaining and adopting an emergency interim zoning ordinance instituting and emergency moratorium on data centers.

Wright County Board of Commissioners Public Hearing May 19th at 9:30 a.m. to consider ordaining and adopting an emergency interim zoning ordinance instituting an emergency moratorium on data centers for up to twelve months.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, that the Wright County Board of Commissioners, during its regular meeting on Tuesday, May 19, 2026, at 9:30 A.M., will hold a public hearing to consider ordaining and adopting an emergency interim zoning ordinance instituting an emergency moratorium on data center.

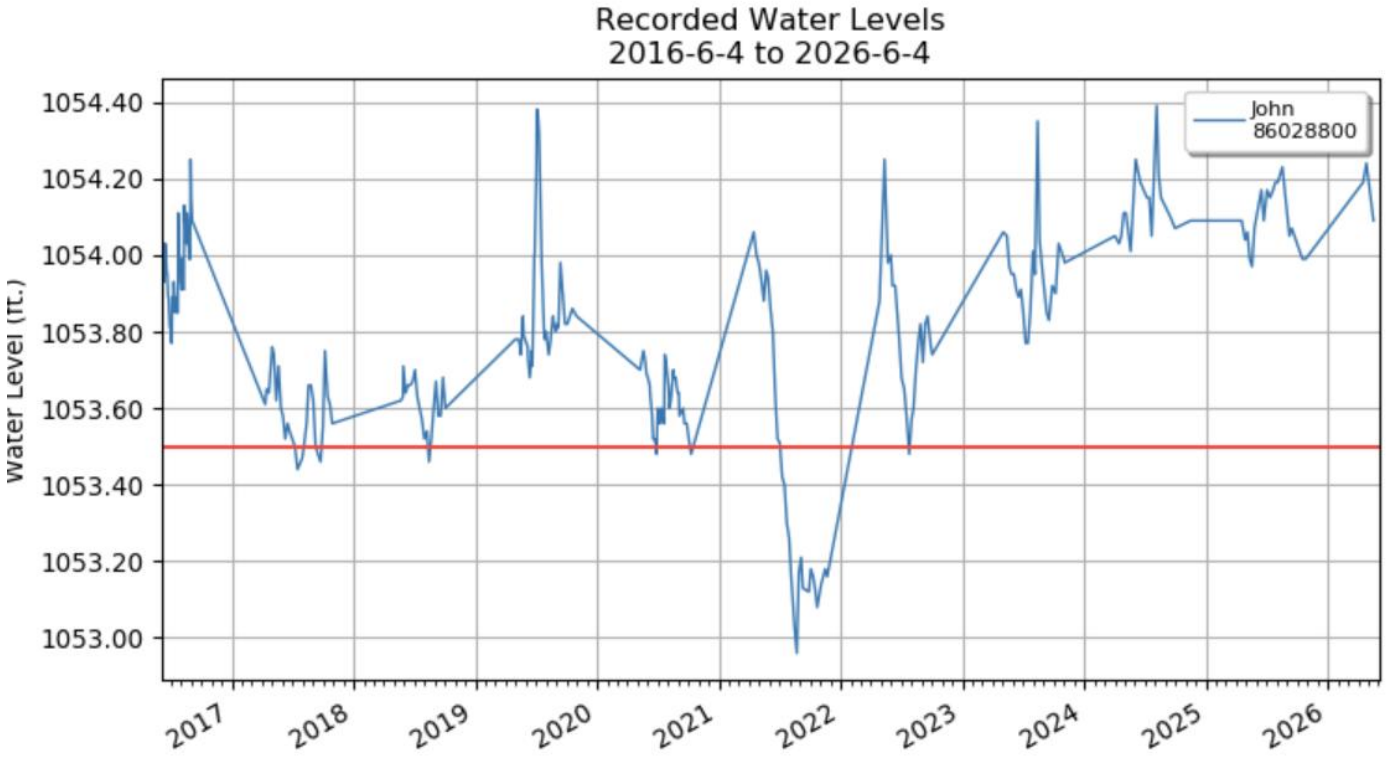
The Wright County Board of Commissioners will be reviewing and discussing a proposal to institute an emergency moratorium, for up to twelve months, for data centers. The Wright County Board of Commissioners upon the adoption of any moratorium will undertake a process to study and conduct hearings on amending or adopting official controls relating to data centers.

Written comments must be submitted to Wright County Planning and Zoning at 3650 Braddock Avenue, Rm 1600, Buffalo, MN 55313 by 4:00 p.m. on May 18, 2026 to receive full consideration by the Wright County Board of Commissioners.

This matter is being brought forth by Wright County Planning & Zoning, which has zoning authority in **Wright County townships**. If approved, this would have no impact on a planned data center moving forward in the City of Monticello because cities have their own zoning authority. While the county is interested from hearing from residents regarding the proposed county moratorium, the discussion will not involve or impact the process moving forward for the proposed data center in Monticello.

Request for Board Action: May I respectfully request Board Consideration and approval of

- submitting a letter in support of the moratorium
- Attending and speaking at public meeting (Kelly would be willing to speak on behalf of the LJA if a prepared comment beyond the letter is prepared - this is recommended action by WCCOLA as with the short turn around time they are not taking an active measure collectively but will be monitoring and providing information out if the moratorium is approved)


Recorded Water Levels
2016-6-4 to 2026-6-4
Water Level (ft.)
1054.40
1054.20
1054.00
1053.80
1053.60
1053.40
1053.20
1053.00
2017
2018
2019
2020
2021
2022
2023
2024
2025
2026
John
86028800