

Caribou Lake Property Owners Association  
Labor Day Membership Meeting Minutes  
August 30, 2008  
Lutsen Resort

Board Members Present: Bill Dunn, Pres., Sally Westby, Vice. Pres., Louise Suomi, Treasurer, Marj Ryan, Secretary, Jesse Neihart, Bob Reid, Pat Vaughan, Larry Mullins, Bob Hewitt, Diana Kamp. Absent: Fred Morris

**Guest: Bruce Martinson, County Commissioner and Chair of County Board**

**Bruce Martinson, County Commissioner and Chair of County Board:** Mr. Martinson reported that a septic ordinance was being drafted that would regulate septic inspections at the point of sale. Another countywide issue regards calcium chloride application on county roads. The county is considering reducing the applications to county roads because of budget constraints, however, that is balanced with health issues regarding dust and environmental issues. A large amount of the county budget has been used up by several destructive storms that have occurred. Mr. Martinson noted that some people advocate that the application of the calcium hurts lakes and trees from the runoff. Some advocate that it is necessary to control dust from passing cars. The county is considering only applying where there is an erosion concern, on steep roads and on curves. The number of complaints about dusty roads was down this year even though applications were fewer but this was probably due to the very wet spring. One member commented that in her home district, anyone wanting the application must pay the county to do so on the road abutting his or her property. An informal pole of the membership was taken regarding the calcium application issue:

6 voted in favor of maintaining the current application amount

17 voted for a partial reduction in the application amount: limited to curves, hills and erosion areas

6 voted to stop application altogether

A question from the membership was made regarding any new information on land swaps. Mr. Martinson noted that this is a very public process and there was no new information at this time.

**Motion was made to approve the minutes from the Labor Day Meeting of September 1, 2007.** No comments from the floor occurred and voting for approval occurred with unanimous vote.

**Treasury Report:** Louise Suomi reported that as of August 30 2008 the balance in our checking account was \$4344.44. Expenses were reported to be for membership mailings and rental of the room at Lutsen Resort for the membership meeting.

**Water Quality and Lake Monitoring:** Pat Vaughan reported that the STARR Grant money was being put to good use with his testing of Caribou Lake and is he is being reimbursed for his expenses. The new Cook County Water Quality Monitor is Cindy Gentz. Pat continues to test for Chlorophyll A and Total phosphorous, clarity and temperature at 7 different sites around the lake. Pat pointed out the sites with a handout and overhead map for all to see. RMB Labs continues to process the results and information can be found on their web site. For information on how to view the results consult the Caribou Lake Web site <http://minnesotawaters.org/index.php?uberKey=1253>, click on Lakes & River Groups and proceed to Caribou Lake. Pat also reports that the temperature of the lake in early June was 62 degrees and in late August was 72 degree. Secchi disk reading varied from 5 1/2 feet to 9 feet. Reading of August 26, was 6 feet average. Pat Also reported that although the loons were on the nest for a total of 50 days, no chicks were hatched once again this year. Pat also provided an information packet detailing data collected and mapping of his sites. (Which will be posted on our web page.)

**Historical State of the Lake:** Bob Reid reported that our lake is unique in that we have many years of historical data assembled and according to data it appears that the lake is improving. Of course, the complete health varies from year to year and season to season. But the total phosphorous count this June/July was really good at 9-16. For comparison, a couple of years ago, the count was 27-30 and the goal was to keep it below 30. The number 15 is very good while the number 30 signified a lake on the edge of environmental collapse. In August the range was higher. This may be the natural tendency of the lake. Taking the average total over the many years reported, the total ranged from 15-30. It appears that our algae blooms that we have seen this year are considered nuisance rather than a health hazard. However, the test that ranks lakes clarity (Carlson TSI) puts us at 45 in early summer but 50 at the end of August. Compared to all lakes that puts us in the bottom 1/3 of lake quality. The reading of 45 puts us in the lower 1/2, so small changes can make a big difference in clarity. A report from the PCA and DNR in the 1980 and 1990 warned us of declining lake quality. The first reported algae blooms happened in 1994 and the focus switched from maintaining the health of the lake to attempting to improve the lake. This led to the

mandated septic improvements and information given about lawns and runoff issues. The goal was Awareness, Action and Accountability. CLPOA are now looking to create a Lake Management Plan that will lead the way to a healthy future for our lake. We welcome all to get involved!!! (Handouts were given detailing how we are to proceed to create such a plan.

**Optical Brighteners:** Bill Dun reported that he conducted a test on the lake that looks for optical brighteners (which comes from detergents). Of the three sites tested all results were negative. Regarding invasive species, the concern still regards gypsy moths and the slowing of their progression westward. Our area was not treated this year. Bill warns everyone to also be on the lookout for milfoil.

**Reclassification Study:** Larry Mullins is the representative to Cook County Soil and Water Conservation District. He reported that currently they are reviewing shoreline classification. Caribou Lake is currently zoned as recreational development with few restrictions. We would like to have that changed to more restrictive development in order to protect water quality, lake habitat, aesthetics and property values. Cook County has determined that our lake is in the top 3 lakes to review for classification. The DNR classifications are: Special Natural Environment, Natural Environment, Special Recreational Development, Recreational Development and General Development. Funding for the project comes from STAR Grant, and Board of Water and Soil Resources.

**History of the Lake:** Sally Westby read from a delightful interview given by James Pecore about life on Caribou Lake in the 1920's and beyond. It was fun to note how different life was like on Caribou, for instance, when electricity came to the lake when certain roads were built and when the trees were logged, and how much things have changed in 80 years!

**Firewise:** A Big Thanks to our volunteers, Tom Fredien and (Sharon Hexum Platzer for monitoring the brush pit. Only one incident of illegal dumping occurred this summer and it appears that many people have taken advantage of this service. Even a couple of commercial operators who have been hired by property owners to clear their land have been using the site. Bill reported that it only took 1 1/2 months for the sign to be shot! This site closes Nov 1<sup>st</sup>, prior to deer hunting season.

**Fisheries Update:** Bill reported that he tagged along when the fish were shocked according to treaty rights granted to Native Americans. Just after ice was out the fish were shocked and data was collected. Results were to be available in February.

**Governance Committee:** Bob Hewitt reported that an audit was held and found all bills paid in a timely fashion and all else fine with the books. He reported that the bank is requiring specific names to be given for signage of checks rather than positions. Lance Johnson, second John Westby, made motion to authorize Louise Suomi and Bill Dunn to sign checks. Motion passed.

**Aerial Photographs:** Bob Hewitt displayed 18"x18" Color aerial photographs taken by the DNR that will be purchased in bulk to be used as gifts to guest speakers and others who deserve special recognition. Cost is \$24.00 per copy plus shipping & Handling if sent directly to your home. This is copywrited material. People interested in purchasing must do so by September 5, 2008 when the bulk order will be sent to the DNR. Board will determine amount of pictures to purchase. Bob Reid offered to frame the prints for \$30.00 each.

**Coalition of Lake Associations:** Diana Kamp gave a quick summary of the land that was sold from the school trust and spoke about what land is still owned by the school trust (many feet of undeveloped shoreline). She reported that money made from such sales goes to a permanent school fund spread amongst all the schools in the state, not just Cook County. It appears that pressure is being put on the legislature to aggressively pursue money from any avenue for the schools. We need to contact our legislatures and talk with them about pitting education against conservation and how this is not a good solution. We need to change the attitude from big money earned once to reasonable and consistent income for our schools to present shortsighted decisions. One possible solution is to negotiate trading prime land that produces timber with pristine shoreline and then creating wildlife manages areas. (Another example is John Foster and how he created a conservation easement for his land). Diana has put herself on the list of persons notified when public lands come up for auction. The DNR Website does identify which lands are intended for sale. This is a huge issue for lakes across the state and especially our lake that has so much shoreline in school trust hands. The membership wondered if there was some specific action or motion that could be made regarding this issue, i.e. resolution of membership to be given to our legislators. Diana also distributed a handout detailing other important issues facing our area lakes that COLA is addressing.

**Elections:** Four board members were up for re-election including, Jesse Neihart, Sally Westby, Vice President, Bob Reid, Bob Hewitt and Marj Ryan, Secretary. Jesse and Marj declined to be re-elected although upon “friendly pressure” from the membership, Jesse reconsidered and put himself back into the election pool. Marj, citing pressure of raising multiple teenagers still declined nomination. No replacement was found for the position and it remains open. Motion to re-elect was made slate presented and passed.

**New Subcommittee:** A new subcommittee focusing on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Flotilla was created with Captain John Westby as chair. Please contact him to help with this fun event!

**Spring Meeting:** Scheduled for Saturday, May 23, 2009.

**Adjourned:** 12:00 noon