

WICOLA ANNUAL MEETING
JUNE 16, 2007
SILVER RAPIDS LODGE

PRESENT: About 50 people plus Joe Geis, guest speaker from DNR/Fisheries

1. Meeting opened promptly at 10:00 AM by Charlene Mason, President. Charlene introduced guest Doctor Thomas Clifford, member of the Lake County Board of Supervisors

2. Vice president Paul Haraldson introduced Joe Geis, DNR/Fisheries. Joe presented a 45 minute talk about the local fish population, its history and current management. Among the points he covered were included the following, including questions raised by the audience during his talk.

- “Historical Fish Population Assessment, on the White Iron Chain of Lakes”. The DNR has used gill nets, scale samples to age fish, one sample taken in mid-late August. Use the same net sets at the same location each year; test for water clarity, max depth, etc.
- Joe presented slides showing walleye gill net catches in Garden Lake 1965-2004. Question was raised whether or not there were any data to indicate if fish is natural or planted? The short answer is “No”. The same techniques are used for both fish populations and don’t discriminate.
- White Iron Lake last stocked in 1984.
- South Farm Lake below average walleye population; Farm Lake at/above average. These Class 8 lakes will always be at/below average levels.
- Stocking doesn’t necessarily improve fish population.
- If you don’t have natural reproduction, stocked fry will offset the natural population; you get too high numbers, growth rate slows down and the fish don’t survive over winter
- 40% of Walleyes in Minnesota are harvested on 20% of lakes.
- Don’t know what happened in mid-late 1970’s to spike population.
- Pretty stable Walleye population in recent years.
- Used to stock every; year, now stocking every other year or 3rd year
- Seeing a lot of natural reproduction; getting good natural reproduction. Walleye growth seems to be at an average growth rate
- Have individual Lake Management Plans. For Farm, Garden, South Farm,; lakes are close to average but seem to experience slow growth-
- The next assessment is in 2008 for White Iron Lake; no stocking plans.
- How to create an environment conducive to fish population:
 - Water quality
 - Improve shoreline where spawning occurs and fry spend time
 - Dark water lakes don’t support as large a fish
Population: there is slower growth and a lower population than clear water lakes.

3. Minutes of last years meeting presented for approval. Pat Billings moved to approve the minutes, Patty Moser seconded, motion passed unanimously.

4. Fiscal Report 2006 presented by Don Ortley. Larry Squillace moved, Rich Moschel seconded; motion passed unanimously.

5. Nominations for the Board were presented. Don Ortley, Peter Davis, Larry Squillace. Ray Theobald were nominated. No other nominations were presented. Peg Pinckney moved to close nominations, Ken Wichman seconded, approved unanimously. Lisa Squillace moved to accept the

nominees, seconded by Jim Pinckney. Motion passed unanimously. Larry Squillace will fill in for Laura Moberly for the balance of 2007-2008. George Nieman's retirement from the Board is accepted. Ray Theobald will serve for the balance of 2007-2008. Lisa Squillace assumes the role of Hospitality Chair person.

6. Charlene Mason presented the written President's report. Special recognition and thanks were paid to volunteers.

7. Web site update: About 6 persons have reviewed the web site, which contains:

- Water quality reports
- Activities
- Board Meeting minutes
- Lake Management Plans (for other lakes)
- Water levels

It was agreed that the web site could use some improvement; the Board will take up this matter at subsequent Board meetings

8. Annual Meeting discussion. Meeting here at Silver Rapids is nice, easy to get to, don't need tables, just chairs. Some discussion of timing, e.g. Father's Day weekend? Move later or earlier (schools not out)? Suggested that all use Email to question/get feed back on date.

9. Water monitoring costs were presented and discussed. There was general agreement that a dues increase to \$20.00 /year was perfectly reasonable in view of the magnitude of WICOLA's efforts and the potential mining on Birch Lake. Sheldon Ajax moved, Shelley Moshel seconded and the motion to increase dues to \$20.00/year effective 1/1/08 passed unanimously. The new money will be distributed toward lake monitoring reserves.

10. President Mason raised the question of WICOLA projects for the future. What do you want the Board to do? A number of comments/suggestions were made:

- 1) Water Quality Testing -Is the testing general to the overall quality of the lakes or can you test specific areas. Yes, specific spots can be for a small testing fee, e.g., specific E. coli testing can be done
- 2) Recipes/social activities
- 3) Island clean up and building on islands (similar to Lake Vermillion). Need to work w/DNR
- 4) Board be involved w/zoning commissions in St. Louis and Lake Counties
- 5) How much of chain is public land vs private land? (Requires research)
- 6) Compile land ownership on computer-(Katherine Hanson)
- 7) Group to look at Zoning ordinances (shoreline)
- 8) Reduce fishing limits for Chain
- 9) Map out w/digital photos the lake shorelines
- 10) Inventory of septic systems by research in Duluth & Two Harbors
- 11) Inventory of well research. How many folks draw water from lake
- 12) Tax assessment issues. Rising tax issues
- 13) More publicity to gather all Chain households
- 14) Fishing Sub Committee to examine limits.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:30 AM. Ken Wickhman made the motion to adjourn. It was seconded by Sherry Moshel and passed unanimously.