

WICOLA
White Iron Chain of Lakes Association

History and Membership

The White Iron Chain of Lakes Association (WICOLA) was formed in August of 1993 with the purpose of education and support to the shore land and immediate watershed owners of the White Iron Chain (Garden, Farm, South Farm, and White Iron Lakes). The purpose of the organization, as stated in its By-Laws, is "... to enhance, promote and protect the interests of property owners of White Iron, Farm, South Farm, and Garden Lakes, the continuous waterways, and the surrounding watershed. It promotes good lake management through testing, education and support."

WICOLA's Board of Directors consists of 9-12 members. The elected members, who serve 2 year terms, are the President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and lake representatives from Farm, Garden, and White Iron Lake (2). In addition, persons selected by the Board fill the slots of Publicity, Newsletter, and Hospitality Chair, as well as the Newsletter Editor. The Board is responsible for conducting the affairs of the Association, subject to the majority views of the Association members as expressed at Annual or Special Meetings.

WICOLA uses a calendar year for both its terms of office and its fiscal year. The elections for Board members take place at the Annual Meeting, generally held in June of each year, and the members so elected take office until the following January 1. Board members selected by the Board take office as soon as the Board ratifies their appointment or date selected by the Board.

WICOLA draws almost all of its members from persons holding property on the White Iron chain of lakes, although a few members live either on surrounding lakes or join because they are interested and want to support the activities of WICOLA. The membership has grown over the years from the original 36 charter members to over 225 members in 2007. Our current membership represents over half of the properties on the chain which have a building valued at more than \$0.

The major communication links with our members are a three times a year Newsletter; an occasional (during the summer) electronic bulletin to members who have e-mail access; and a web site hosted by Minnesota Waters. All Directors are expected to respond to concerns voiced by the members, whether it is to answer the concern or bring it to the appropriate person's or the Board's attention.

In addition, WICOLA has become one of the leaders in Minnesota in monitoring water quality, through an active crew of volunteers taking Secchi disk readings and regular sampling and laboratory analysis for chemicals in the water. In 2007 testing for heavy metals will be added to the sampling process.

In 2006 a major survey was sent to all of the property owners on the chain of lakes as well as any WICOLA members who did not live on the chain. The results of this survey were printed in the fall/winter issue of the WICOLA Newsletter and will form the background for additional projects undertaken by the Board in the future.