

MEETING MINUTES: CCCoLA JANUARY 11, 2024

PRESENT: KATHY BOGEN, BARB BOTTGER, JOHN BOTTGER, DAVE COLEMAN, PATTY CRADDOCK, BIZ CLARK, AL FLIEDER, CARRIE FRAMSTED , GAIL GIESKE, ASHLEY HATCHET, ILENA HANSEL ,KATE KELNBERGER, IRENE MULLEN, LARRY MULLEN, PETE RAUEN, ANN SULLIVAN, MARY HALVERSON WALDO

GUESTS: JEFF FORESTER, DISTRICT 3A REPRESENTATIVE ROGER SKRABA, DISTRICT 3 SENATOR GRANT HAUSCHILD

Item	Discussion	Action
Welcome and Introductions	All members introduced themselves and their Lake or Road Association affiliation. Jeff Forester, Minnesota Lakes and Rivers, Representative Roger Skraba, and Senator Grant Hauschild gave a brief introduction.	
Conversation with Representative Roger Skraba	<p>Representative Skraba noted he sits on the Natural Resources Finance and Policy Committee and therefore bills relating to the topics we are focused on will likely go through his committee. He noted that he and Sen. Hauschild work together on bills since they need support in both the House and Senate. He spoke to the priority topics CCCoLA has been focusing research, discussion, and action on:</p> <p><u>Get the Lead Out</u> Representative Skraba noted there was a bill to eliminate lead tackle during the 2023 session. The bill was scaled back and became a pilot to eliminate lead tackle on lakes where there are swans. It is the Representative's thought that lead tackle will eventually be eliminated. As far as lead shot goes, there are WMA requirements to use steel shot, and he feels lead shot will be eliminated as the industry converts. Kathy mentioned that a statewide ban on lead tackle could lead to more innovation and lower prices for lead-free tackle and is wondering if there's a possibility that Minnesota might pursue this policy.</p> <p><u>Septic System Compliance and Safety</u> The Counties are the ones that administer septic inspections, establish ordinances, and administer any septic assistance programs for residents. In St. Louis County, a septic inspection is required at the point of sale, but this is not the case in Cook County. Perhaps there are</p>	<p>To contact Representative Skraba: Rep. Roger Skraba (R) District: 03A 221 State Office Building * St. Paul, MN 55155 651-296-2190</p> <p>E-mail: rep.roger.skraba@house.mn.gov</p> <p>Legislative Assistant: Anne Larson 651-296-5884</p>

State or IIRB \$ to assist property owners with septic upgrades. Rep. Skraba could work with Sen. Hauschild to look into this. Rep. Skraba and Sen Grant Hauschild has been working with North Shore Waste to create a waste disposal system.

AIS Mitigation

Representative Skraba mentioned the issue of AIS being carried via fishing lines. This is particularly problematic in the BWCAW when dacron fiber line is being used. He has encountered Spiny Waterflea on his line on Lac la Croix..

Jeff Forester noted that since there is no Lake Association for the BWCAW, a group has been formed called the ABC Coalition (AIS Boundary Waters Coalition) which meets once a month. The group include SWCD from Cook, Lake, and St. Louis Counties, 1854 Treaty Authority, DNR, Forest Service, MAISRC, Quetico, Rainy Watershed, Voyageurs National Park. This group is currently working to update and condense the AIS signage at entry points. Other strategies might include boat cleaning stations at these points.

Pete Rauen asked if AIS have been found in the BWCAW. Jeff noted mostly Spiny Waterflea but also Zebra Mussels on the Western edge (Rainy Lake)? They have also been found in the Quetico. Big concern now is Hydrilla and Starry Stonewart. At a roadside inspection station 52% of boats had some type of violation and the majority of these were from out of state, so the risk is greatest from people coming up from Wisconsin through Duluth and up to the BWCAW. If there were mandatory inspections/ decontamination in Duluth and going up Highway 4, Highway 53, Highway 2, and Highway 61 this would address the majority of boats going into the BWCAW.

Pete noted that CCCoLA has tried to get something like this set up for the Gunflint Trail but there hasn't been much public support for it. Jeff noted 2 barriers: It's expensive and people worry it would impact

Could point-of-sale septic inspections be required statewide to ensure consistency?

Jeff welcomes all of us along with Rep. Skraba and Sen Hauschild to join the monthly meetings. He will send out this information to all interested.

Jeff also volunteered to set up a meeting specifically on AIS with Rep. Skraba and any of us who wish to have further discussion.

Sen. Skraba asked Jeff if he has pursued a Clean Water Legacy grant to coordinate the ABC group. He thinks funding would help with getting these entities to get together to work on the AIS issue.

Kathy will follow up with Jeff on getting the information about the ABC meetings out to CCCoLA members.

	<p>tourism.</p> <p>Kathy asked if Rep. Skraba could see a bill for boat inspections and decontamination as described coming out of the House Environmental Committee. Rep. Skraba is trying to figure out how the State could be involved. There would be a need for cooperation among State, Federal, and County entities. The DNR has a lot on their plate right now, but a discussion on this topic could happen. Jeff noted that the ABC meetings seem to be where all the entities meet together and there is a need for this.</p> <p>Larry wondered if having a shorter legislation session will hamper getting environmental bills passed. Rep. Skraba feels there will be plenty of time. He noted that what gets introduced and the speed with which bills are decided will be up to the Democrats as they are in the majority. Rep. Skraba will be able to do a “meet and greet” in Grand Marais likely in March.</p> <p>Al Flieder mentioned that CCCoLA has been supportive of HF 2791, authored by Representative Pursell, to ensure OHV trails are clearly marked for OHV users. This will make it clear which are for OHV use. Trails not marked for OHV use should then not be used by OHV’s. This will improve safety and reduce environmental and trail damage on non-OHV areas.</p>	<p>Ann Sullivan is willing to facilitate an event in Grand Marais. She could also invite others in the County to attend.</p> <p>Representative Skraba will look into HF 2791. He notes that Trail maintenance will become a huge issue.</p>
<p>Approval November 9, CCCoLA Minutes</p>		<p>Al Fieder moved to approve. Pete Rauen seconded. Motion approved unanimously.</p>
<p>Legislative Priorities and Schedule for MLR</p>	<p>Jeff Forester mentioned that bills were passed in the 2023 legislature for which follow-through seems to be lacking.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Port of Entry inspections • Boater Education and Certification • Mandatory Decontamination of Infested Watercraft • Requiring DNR to develop a 5-Year Coordinated AIS Mitigation 	<p>On the MLR website, the tools under the <u>Citizen’s Action Network</u> is a convenient way for CCCoLA members to follow bills and communicate with legislators. Here’s the link: https://www.congressweb.com/MLRA/</p>

	<p>program. Note: The Statewide AIS Advisory Committee members were unaware the legislation had passed. Need to coordinate AIS work improved efficiency and effectiveness. (note: 4 main entities working on this and expending resources DNR spends \$8 million, Counties spend \$10 million, Tribes spend \$6 million, Lake Associations \$6 million annually)</p> <p>Issues to be addressed in the 2024 Legislature:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase AIS fines • Increase the AIS surcharge on boat licenses (\$20 per 3-years. This would fund the Minnesota AIS Research Center, DNR, and Lake Associations working to mitigate AIS spread) • Carrying Capacity for Lakes (looking at how many boats can be used on specific lakes at one time) • Scientific research to better understand shoreline ecology, climate impacts on freshwater lakes, 	<p>Jeff also mentioned that had-written notes to legislators are the most effective way to communicate throughout the legislative session.</p>
<p>Legislative Priorities and Schedule for MNCOLA</p>	<p>The MNCOLA priority list can be used as a resource for us to follow as we track bills moving the legislature.</p> <p>Biz noted that the work needed in Cook County is septic inspection and repairing or removing failing septics. This program is limited by lack of funding to pay for inspectors and to assist property owners with updating septics. There is State \$ for low-interest loans to assist property owners. Jeff believes the low-interest loans for septic system upgrades can be applied for through a bank.</p> <p>Minnesota, through the MPCA, has a small community wastewater treatment program through the Minnesota Public Facilities Authority has low-interest loans and technical assistance grants up to \$60,000</p> <p>Another area that requires continued funding is the citizen scientist water sampling.</p>	<p>Please note the MLR website bill tracker is an easy way for members to learn about the bills and to access resources for providing input on them.</p> <p>At our February 9 CCCoLA meeting, we will ask Neva Maxwell and Mitch Everson to meet with the Septic work group. There will then be a report out on the topic when we come back together at the end of the meeting. If members who are not on this work group have questions they would like addressed, they can be shared in advance with those on the committee.</p>
<p>Watershed Plan Public Input Meeting</p>	<p>Ilena will be up at Seagull Community Center for the One Watershed plan. Patty Craddock also plans to attend in person. Several other</p>	<p>The announcement about the Watershed Plan is posted on the</p>

<p>Friday, January 26 10-noon</p> <p>Minnesota North College Vermilion Campus- Fireside Lounge 1900 E Camp St Ely, MN</p> <p>Seagull Lake Community Center 12059 Gunflint Trail Grand Marais, MN</p> <p>Join Zoom Meeting https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89311461684</p>	<p>CCCoLA members plan to attend virtually.</p> <p>There is a lot of implementation \$ coming with the plan. Ilena encourages us to reach out if we have ideas for protecting the watershed. State Watershed-Based implementation funding is available, and it can be matched with Federal \$.</p> <p>Biz asked if there are any issues that may be problematic with the plan. Ilena responded that shoreline buffers and forestry issues will be important for Cook County.</p> <p>Ilena noted that on January 30th 10-noon, there will be a meeting to discuss recreational suitability of the watershed with the MPCA and other partners. It will be on the Teams platform.</p> <p>Ilena noted that the Lake Superior North Watershed plan is being updated.</p>	<p>CCCoLA and MLR websites to increase County and Statewide awareness.</p> <p>Kathy will reach out to Ilena regarding the January 30th meeting to ensure we have information about the Teams link for interested CCCoLA members to join in.</p>
<p>Conversation with Senator Grant Hauschildt</p>	<p>Senator Hauschildt noted that he feels Northern Minnesota is the most beautiful area of the State and he is happy to represent this area. He was adamant about being on the Senate Environment committee last session and noted that some of the most historic legislation relative to the environment was passed. Among these are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outdoor recreation opportunities Co-authored the bills for investments in fish hatcheries and boat landings. • Not raising fees for State Park use and fishing licenses. <p>Need to address the issue of invasive carp coming up the Mississippi. There was a bill introduced in the 2023 session, but it didn't pass.</p> <p><u>Get the Lead Out</u> Sen. Hauschildt would like to explore the issue of lead tackle with the DNR. He is meeting with Bob Myer from the DNR soon and could ask about this. He is willing to look into this.</p>	<p>Ann Sullivan mentioned that she is willing to organize an event in March for the community to meet with elected officials. Representative Skraba said he's available Friday or Saturday in March and that it would be great if Senator Hauschildt could coordinate so both could attend.</p> <p>Ann noted that there are CCCoLA members who would be willing to testify in the legislature when bills come up pertaining to CCCoLA priorities.</p> <p>To contact Senator Hauschildt:</p>

	<p><u>Septic Systems</u></p> <p>Senator Hauschildt worked on bills during the 2023 session to increase funding to rural communities for municipal septic system improvements.</p> <p>New initiative to explore the priorities of District 3. “Northland Strong” to learn more about priorities</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strong Families (child care, elder care, etc.) 2. Safe Communities (support for rural emergency services) 3. Innovative Economies 4. State that Works (making sure Minnesota has a well-run government.) 5. Protecting our Outdoor Heritage <p>Biz mentioned that there can be overlapping interests in the demands of industry, tourism, and the environment. She is wondering how these interests can be reconciled. Sen. Hauschildt noted he is willing to have open conversations and that it is important to work together to get desired results. He remarked that it is important to listen to the expertise of those who have the in-depth knowledge and to trust them.</p>	<p>Senator Hauschild’s Capitol Office 95 University Avenue W. Minnesota Senate Bldg., Room 3111 St. Paul, MN 55155 651-296-1789</p> <p>Cell # (218) 580-0845</p> <p>Legislative Assistant: Jamie Hysjulien 651-296-1789 jamie.hysjulien@senate.mn</p>
Closing reflection	<p>Great to see everyone. It was exciting to have our legislators join us for the meeting! Great kick-off for 2024. Great to have Ann, Jeff, Rep. Skraba and Sen. Hauschild at our meeting to share and answer questions. Thanks, Kathy for organizing the meeting and inviting our legislators to join. It is great for us to be meeting year-round. Jeff would like to write this up for MLR. Thanks to all for collaborating with other organizations and our governmental entities. It was good to hear from Rep. Skraba on the uphill work to get the lead out of our tackle. A powerhouse meeting. The meeting was hopeful, inspiring, empowering. Grateful for this meeting. Connection. Passion everyone feels for the issues. Learning.</p>	
Adjournment		Meeting adjourned at noon.