

## MEETING MINUTES: CCCoLA JUNE 12, 2025

**PRESENT:** CAROL BERG (LEO LAKE), LARRY BICK (POPLAR LAKE), KATHY BOGEN LOON LAKE), JERRY CAPLE (GUNFLINT LAKE), BIZ CLARK (POPLAR LAKE), PATTI CRADDOCK (POPLAR LAKE), AL FLIEDER (ASPEN LAKE), GAIL GIESEKE (GREENWOOD LAKE), WOLFGANG GREINER (DEVIL TRACK), KATE KELNBERGER (WEST BEARSKIN), RORY LAIHO (SOUTH GREENWOOD LAKE ROAD OWNERS), MARGRE LIND MILLS (PIKE LAKE) JOHN MILLS (PIKE LAKE), GARY MACIEJEWSKI (TAIT LAKE), LARRY MONTAN (HUNGRY JACK LAKE) IRENE MULLEN (CARIBOU LAKE), LARRY MULLEN (CARIBOU LAKE), JERRY WILKES (DEVIL TRACK), ANN SULLIVAN (DISTRICT 4 COOK COUNTY COMMISSIONER) **GUEST PRESENTER:** JEFF FORESTER, MINNESOTA LAKES AND RIVERS

Item	Discussion	Action
Sign up for Volunteer Opportunities	There are several opportunities for CCCoLA members and others to volunteer to do educational outreach and hands-on activities this summer.	Please consider signing up for one or more of these events and encouraging your friends and neighbors to join you.
MCEA Booklets Available for CCCoLA members	Kathy made a personal donation to Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy and received 24 copies of their booklet Our Water is Our Strength, a Sulfide Mining Briefing Booklet. She recommended this booklet as a thorough yet concise source of information about the hazards of sulfide mining.	Members are encouraged to read the booklet and consider whether we want to order more booklets to share with the public.
Presentation and conversation with Jeff Forester Director of Minnesota Lakes and Rivers regarding the legislative session and other topics	<p><u>Legislative session</u></p> <p>Legislative session was difficult. State is facing a \$6 billion deficit in fiscal year 28-29. This fiscal year will be ok, but depending on federal cuts, the deficit in 2028-29 could be about \$15-20 billion. In previous budgets, Local Government Aid was cut and this put burden on Counties, so property taxes were increased. During this session, Governor Walz preferred to make budget cuts across the board.</p> <p>MLR was successful in convincing the legislature to forestall cutting AIS funding for 2 years. Funds for Lake Associations to request grants to address AIS were increased by adding to the surcharge on licenses. Lake Associations are spending about \$8 million to pay for treating AIS.</p>	

<p>Communities grants fund, which allocates \$28 million for community programs, was passed by the legislature. Funding for community-based AIS prevention and mitigation is now included.</p> <p>Now, we have 2 years. The issues are growing in number, impacts are greater, and they are more complex. The systems in place to deal with this are fragmented. ABC (Boundary Waters AIS Collaborative) group is important because we can convene groups that have authority, money, and expertise to bridge the silos and better coordinate resources.</p> <p><u>Focus of MLR moving forward</u></p> <p>MLR needs to “shift the context” and become a highly organized group of people who are working together to protect water in the State.</p> <p><u>Building the MLR Base</u></p> <p>To get to the place we need to get to, we need to be much bigger. MLR’s focus now needs to be on “building the base”.</p> <p>There are over 500 Lake Associations in Minnesota. Research by Concordia shows that there are roughly 200 members per Lake Association. Why don’t more people know this? There isn’t a single coordinated voice. Need to have a focus on building the base.</p> <p>MLR is very bipartisan—membership in MLR is composed of 48% Democrat 46% Republican leaning voters.</p> <p>MLR is working with a broad-based constituency to increase partnership with other stakeholders. “What affects our lakes is happening away from the lake”. We need a diverse group of stakeholders such as County Commissioners, DNR, Forest Service, other environmental advocacy groups, outdoor</p>	<p>Q: How can CCCoLA members help to build the base of MLR membership?</p> <p>A: Ask people to join! Promote at booths, newspapers, radio spots.</p> <p>Note: It costs MLR \$7.50 to have a member. Membership dues are up to individuals to decide the amount they contribute.</p> <p>Q: What would MLR want to do with an expanded base?</p> <p>A: Develop civic partnerships around the State</p> <p>Q: How does MLR distinguish itself between CCCoLA?</p> <p>A:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MNCoLA doesn’t have a lobbyist</li> <li>• MNCoLA doesn’t have staff</li> </ul>
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	<p>sports organizations, businesses, etc.</p> <p>MLR's base now includes County groups working on specific issues together. In this area, it's ABC for Boundary waters. It's important to bring lake associations together in more strategic ways. Issues will come and go, and we can have only partial success in any of them because we don't have a strong enough base. Currently, most lake associations are locally focused.</p> <p><u>Partnerships MLR is Developing</u>  Kathryn Hoffman Of Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy, is working with another person to bring together environmental groups to strategize how to respond to environmental threats.</p> <p>Midwest Active Citizenship Initiative is a model MLR is using to engage diverse entities around specific issues to better define the details of problem issues and bring resources to bear.</p> <p>Gaps addressed by the MACI structure: Leadership capacity, succession, how do you build political power over time?</p> <p><u>Call to Action</u>  MPCA in 2008 listed 43% of MN waters impaired. In 2022, 56%. To stem this trend, Lake Associations such as CCCoLA need to build membership of engaged shoreline property owners and others, do more robust educational outreach in our communities, and work in partnership with MLR and our local partners to address issues leading to degradation of waters and shorelands.</p>	
County Updates-- Ann Sullivan	<p>How Cook County is being impacted by State and Federal legislations:</p> <p>At State level, much budget negotiating was being done</p>	

behind closed doors and we will learn more about the State budget in the days and weeks to come.

Greater concern is with the Federal budget. Here are some ways in which Federal budget cuts will be felt in Cook County:

- Head Start is on the docket to be eliminated in Grand Portage.
- Funding for SNAP (Food Stamps) greatly reduced and this will affect Cook County residents who depend on this support for adequate nutrition.
- National Endowment for the Arts will impact the arts community.
- Libraries and museums funding will be greatly reduced.
- Funding for public radio and television is proposed to be cut and this will affect an important source of accurate, timely community news and information-- especially vital in rural areas such as Cook County.
- Money for repairs to the end of the Gunflint Trail has been eliminated.

Cook County did get State and Federal PILT (Payment in Lieu of property Tax) dollars. State PILT will be the same as last year. 5.7% of Federal will be sequestered.

County Commissioners are being conservative fiscally.

Plans for the Courthouse remodeling/expansion project are being scaled back. There will be anew 1-story addition to accommodate emergency management operations center. For security reasons, the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension will not allow the public to see the detailed plans.

The project design came up \$1 million above budget. Focus

	<p>is on ensuring the structure is well-built and will last over time. Some considerations: Technology, handicap accessibility, safety.</p> <p><u>Master Plan for the airport:</u></p> <p>Safety, radar, weather improvements. Improvements will be based on FAA requirements. There will be more places for aircraft that fight fires. More aircraft hangers, new fueling systems. Most use of aircrafts in Cook County are for emergency evacuation and fire fighting. Wildlife fencing is needed (and required by FAA) around the entire area.</p> <p>Highway Department: Mill to the Hill construction Important to stop at the light during construction! This will end toward the end of October. The project will add 1 more lane going up the hill so people can pass the logging trucks.</p> <p>No mow areas along roadsides are in place because there are invasive species in these areas so that the seed isn't scattered. Marsh Thistle was found along the Gunflint Trail and Wild Parsnip along a section of County Road 48.</p> <p>June 21, 9-1 is the County's e-waste event and household hazardous waste. Please share this information with your Lake/Road/Property Owners Associations.</p> <p>"Preserve the Bluff" is about raising funds to purchase undeveloped land on the bluff overlooking Lake Superior. The proposed development would also allow more water to pour into GM in rain events.</p> <p>The Highway Department had planned to apply for federal funding to cover the 2026 repairs planned for the last few miles of the Gunflint Trail. Those grant funds are no longer available.</p>	
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Lake Steward Program report	<p>The MLR Lake Steward program is simple and powerful strategy for engaging lakeshore property owners in understanding and implementing practices to improve water quality on their lakes. Lake associations send out a simple 10-question survey members can take to “score their shore.” Results go to a volunteer lake steward from the lake association, who then visits with the property owner. If the candidate’s property meets the Lake Steward standards, they are awarded a sign designating them as a Lake Steward.</p> <p>Devil Track and Hungry Jack property owners will be piloting a Lake Steward initiative this summer.</p> <p>July 5<sup>th</sup> shoreline planting will take place on Hungry Jack Lake With Northshore Natives.</p> <p>July 7<sup>th</sup>, Lake Stewards project on Devil Track will be shared at their annual meeting. Lily Carr, MLR program coordinator</p>	<p>Q: What happens with the quiz if there is no Lake Steward Evaluator?</p> <p>A: The survey goes to Lily Carr at MLR who will contact one or more volunteers in our area to do the lake steward visit with the property owner.</p> <p>Larry Montan shared that the training to be a Lake Steward is straightforward and takes about 2 hours. CCCoLA members who are interested in becoming Lake Stewards can connect Lily Carr at MLR. Here is the link to information about the program:  <a href="https://mnlakesanddrivers.org/lake-steward/">https://mnlakesanddrivers.org/lake-steward/</a></p>
Review and approval of May 8, Meeting Minutes		<p>Al Flieder made a motion to accept the May 8, 2025 minutes.</p> <p>Gary Maciejewski seconded the motion.</p> <p>There was no discussion on the motion, and it passed unanimously.</p>
Review and approval of Treasurer’s report	<p>May 31 Financial Statement Summary:</p> <p>Revenue 9/30/2024-5/31/2025 \$150</p> <p>Expenses 9/30/2024-5/31/2025 \$500.37</p> <p>Ending balance May 31, 2025. \$570.04</p> <p>Accessible Funds \$581.85</p> <p>Checking account balance 5/31/2025 \$730.04</p>	<p>Patti Craddock made a motion to accept the Treasurers Report.</p> <p>Jerry Wilkes seconded the motion.</p> <p>There was no discussion and it passed unanimously.</p> <p>If you haven’t already, please send your 2025 lake association or individual dues to:</p> <p>Gary Maciejewski  P.O. Box 323 Lutsen,  MN 55612-0323</p>

<p>Election of Steering Committee members for 2-year terms.</p>	<p>The Steering Committee is composed of 5-7 members who collectively take on the CCCoLA administrative tasks of establishing meeting locations and agendas; leading and recording minutes of CCCoLA meetings; collecting, disbursing, and accounting for funds; communicating with the membership, affiliated organizations and partners, and the community; responding to new opportunities and challenges that emerge between meetings; arranging for guest presenters and other opportunities to keep the membership well-informed on priority topics.</p> <p>Steering Committee members are elected for 2-year terms. Current members are: Kathy Bogen (Chair/Secretary), Gary Maciejewski (Treasurer), Barb Bottger, Al Flieder, Margre Lind Mills, Pete Rauen.</p> <p>2-year terms for Kathy, Gary, Al, and Pete are up as of this meeting. Kathy and Gary are interested in serving for another 2 years. Al and Pete would like to step down. Larry Bick has been shadowing Pete and is willing to join the Steering Committee.</p> <p>Barb Bottger and Margre Lind were elected in 2024 and their terms will end June of 2026.</p>	<p>Kathy asked if anyone else in addition to Gary, Larry Bick, and herself are interested in joining the Steering Committee. Patti Craddock expressed interest.</p> <p>Kate Kelnberger made a motion to vote for the slate of candidates: Kathy, Gary, Larry Bick, and Patti</p> <p>Biz seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion passed unanimously.</p> <p>Thanks to all who have agreed to serve on the Steering Committee!</p>
<p>Meeting Reflection</p>	<p>Always energizing. Informative and how to be involved. Thanks Jeff—Really appreciated you coming in person and sharing such valuable information!! Appreciate Kathy's communication and coordination. Good to hear from Ann. Thanks to steering committee. This Board is possibly the most informed group in the County—County Representative (Ann S.) looks forward to these meetings. People don't just listen—they take action.</p> <p>Follow-up items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ATV mater plan input</li> <li>• Boater Certification begins July 1</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forest Service 5-year plan</li> </ul>	
Adjournment		Meeting adjourned at noon.
Next Meeting		<b>Thursday, July 10, 10-11:30 a.m. at the Cook County Community Center 317 West 5<sup>th</sup> Street, Grand Marais</b>