

Summary to Date of MN Star Lake Board

The Star Lake Board was created as a result of Chapter 363 of House File Number 1812 Section 17 (103B.701) STAR LAKES. The legislation is intended to acknowledge and reward lake and river associations using citizen stewardship to make their surface waterway the best it can be. The convening of the Board was assigned to the Board of Water and Soil Resources under the guidance of Julie Klocker, Assistant Director, who invited Judy Alnes of MAP for Non-Profits to facilitate the establishment of the board. The Board subsequently voted to retain Ms Alnes to guide us through the initial stages of the process.

Our first meeting was October 9, 2008, at the Eagle Lake Community Center in Maple Grove. The 10 appointed board members elected 5 at large citizen members from a pool of self selected candidates. At this meeting Senator Mary Olson shared the Legislature's vision for the Star Lake Program. Jon Pratt of the Minnesota Council of Non Profits attended the meeting to help frame the context.

Top priority was getting incorporated as a non-profit organization to meet the legislative mandate and to open more channels of potential funding. Three members took on the responsibility of developing the incorporation documents with the help of a MAP attorney. The Board also proposed some preliminary programmatic objectives.

- **Establish application process for Star Lake/Star River**
 - **Develop criteria for Star Lake/Star River designation**
 - **Create information to identify benefit of Star Lake/Star River status to prospective applicants**
 - **Provide guidance for successful application**
 - **Create list of potential partnering organizations**
 - **Work with Partner Organizations to continue development of educational information and resources for lake/river associations wanting to achieve status**
 - **Work with private and public entities to leverage financial resources**
 - **Continue developing administrative structure including staffing needs and establish a reporting process**
 - **Develop Legislative budget request by mid-January**
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When the full board convened for our second meeting on November 19, 2008, there was expanded discussion on the above topics and approval of amended language for Articles of Incorporations and Bylaws. Previously unaddressed questions were brought to the table and addressed by various members of the Board.

A meeting originally scheduled for December 15 was snowed out and rescheduled for January 5, 2009. As of this meeting we had received our incorporation documents meaning we are legally organized. Our Articles of Incorporation are filed and Bylaws are in order. We are officially the Star Lake Board doing business as Minnesota Star Lakes and Rivers.

Senator Mary Olson and Executive Director Marian Bender of MN Waters attended the January meeting. Senator Olson encouraged our action on establishing detailed criteria to become a Star Lake or River and stressed the fact that there had to be value associated with the designation. Ms Bender provided information on how her organization helps lake and river associations get started and nurtured. Senator Olson and Ms Bender stressed the need for technical expertise that agency staff can provide to complement citizen stewardship.

The Star Lake Board feels we are in an excellent position to manage effectively the disbursement of Clean Water, Land, and Legacy Amendment funds to volunteer citizen lake and river organizations. These organizations have already proven they are committed to, and will continue to be committed to, protecting and improving water quality in Minnesota's lakes and rivers. With the volunteer efforts of these groups we will be able to maximize the value of the dollars available for water quality projects consistent with the Star Lake and River criteria. We will therefore be requesting \$250,000 from the 2009-2010 Amendment revenues to meet the legislative mandate of evaluating and designating Star lakes and rivers. This funding will also be used to match any private donations or grants received through the Star Lake Board.