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Now!

Restore Shoreline and Improve Water Quality

Greetings, Seasonal Property Owners:

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency recently put out a Press Release: [Environment-Friendly Tips to Restore Shoreline and Improve Water Quality](#). Many local papers have run the press release, and MSRPO applauds the effort. Good protection of shoreline begins with education, but education is only the first small step.

Regulation is also a key component, but as the recent [Star Tribune series](#) pointed out, Minnesota's regulations are woefully out of date, enforcement is uneven, and even tight restrictions are circumvented by the variance process.

In 2008 the [Minnesota Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan](#) listed over-development of shoreline as one of the most critical problems facing Minnesota. The plan rightfully pointed out the systemic problems with education, zoning and regulation efforts, and suggested a fourth tool -- incentives.

Today, if an owner holds a big stretch of undeveloped shoreline, they are paying a premium in property taxes. As others on the lake subdivide and develop, the property taxes on this resource spike. Many owners are forced to sell.

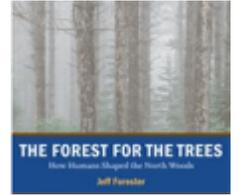
If we want to get serious about clean water, Minnesota must:

- Create a systemic tax change that shifts property tax off of those protecting shoreline and onto those consuming it.

MSRPO has put out a white paper, [Saving Minnesota's Lands for Public Enjoyment](#), that makes solid recommendations for how to create an incentive program for public values like recreation, clean water or habitat that are: 1) Revenue neutral. Local governments receive the same amount of property taxes. 2) Large enough to affect behavior and 3) Easy to administer.

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It is time for Minnesota to step-up and use incentives to help us protect our public waters, and leave the state in a better condition than when we found it. In the land of 10,000 lakes, where we have more miles of shoreline than Florida or California, Minnesota should lead the nation in innovative shoreline and water conservation while still supporting the wide range of recreational opportunities that make Minnesota such a great place to be.



Please stay in touch, and don't forget the primaries on August 10th!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeff Forester". The signature is stylized and somewhat cursive.

Jeff Forester
Executive Director
MSRPO Coalition
(952) 854.1317
jeff@msrpo.org