

Comments on Dock-Related Issues in Minnesota

October 1, 2007
Detroit Lakes, MN

26 people signed in; 6 comment forms received; 2 letters received

1) **What do you value about spending time on lakes and rivers? How do docks enhance or detract from these values?**

- I enjoy a natural shoreline with trees. I find large freestanding canopies offensive – the canopy takes up too much shoreline viewing.
- Boating, fishing, swimming. Docks don't impact at present.
- The natural beauty. We do enjoy sitting at the end of our dock to visit friends who may boat over, view sunset and sunrise, stay cool, access for boat, rest from a swim. But proliferation of docks, both in size and number, with associated boatlifts, detract from the natural beauty.
- We highly value any time we get on the water. Our dock allows us boating access. Our dock is a center for family lake activities.
- Our greatest joy is looking at the beautiful landscape/shoreline. Having lakes with excessive dock structures surely will diminish this enjoyment.
- Docks provide access to the water. All docks detract from the natural value of the lake.

2) **If you own or use a dock, what do you use it for?**

- Our 32' dock gets us out to 18-30" water; our pontoon and lift; and our Jet Ski lift. We swim off our pontoon in deep water.
- Getting to boat, loon watching and star gazing.
- We own a 60' x 8' aluminum frame wood section dock with small legal size platform at end. We also have one boat lift without a cover. See #1 above for uses. We have also used a swim raft, licensed with county, for 20 years.
- Access to boats. Support of beach play and swimming. Support of lake water irrigation of our law.
- It is our swimming platform, where we moor our fishing boat, and it's our favorite place to watch sunsets!
- Access to the lake.

3) **In your opinion, how large of a dock is needed for reasonable access to public waters? In what circumstances are large dock platforms reasonable for riparian access?**

- For residential: single 4' point of access to a T platform or similar. A shoreline "deck" is only appropriate as a landing for a steep slope stairway.
- The smaller the better.
- Water depth controls length. Normally a 50-60' dock x 8' is very sufficient. Dock platforms are very nice social spots, but room for 2-3 couples is plenty.
- 1 dock long enough to reach navigable waters. Limit to 4 feet wide. Large dock platforms are not necessary.
- The current DNR regulations should not be expanded. The general permit authoring a 170 sq. ft. platform should be eliminated.
- What is the justification for residential 8-foot dock width? It would seem that a 5-foot width is more than adequate. What is the justification for 170 square foot dock platforms? An 8-foot

square platform (64 square feet) at the end of the dock is adequate for boat loading. The purpose of the dock is to have access to the lake or river, not a living room extension.

| | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|--|-------------------|----------|---------|-------|----------------|
| 4) Docks contribute to shoreline crowding in your area. | | | | 2 | 4 |
| 5) The privatization of public waters concerns you. | | | 1 | 1 | 4 |
| 6) Docks that exceed 8' wide should require a license and fee. | 1 | | | 1 | 3 |
| 7) The amount of shoreline frontage covered by a dock should be limited. | | | | | 6 |
| 8) Dock numbers should be limited to 1 per lot. | | | | 1 | 5 |
| 9) Your community has adequate enforcement of local dock regulations. | 4 | 1 | | | |

10) Other thoughts or comments regarding docks in Minnesota.

- I am concerned about the addition of multiple marinas for PUD's. One slip per unit may quickly over come many Becker County Lakes. Limit number of boats and lift canopy size.
- Great focus of shoreland ordinances is to preserve natural beauty of shoreline when viewed from lake. Intense scrutiny of cabin location, size, decks, roof occupy much of county efforts. Results have been excellent, especially septic tank improvements. Uncontrolled docks and boatlifts are resulting in a blight on our shorelines, totally inconsistent with public policy and law of shoreline ordinances. Some entity must take charge of this. Logically, I believe county should, but I don't think they have the resources or stomach for it.
- On lakes that abut county and township road right-of-way in Otter Tail County, the sheriff and highway departments are very reluctant enforcing dock violations.
- One dock per property is all that should be permitted. One exception is not listed in DNR regulations. Please note that current regulations have no qualification for a second dock on peninsula and isthmus properties connected to two bodies of water. Special dock regulations suggested by the dock industrial complex for larger properties are discriminatory, suggesting

special privileges for the wealthy. A license and fees for oversized docks sounds like a loop hole for the privileged. A state dock license, not a county dock license, could pay for dock enforcement. Dock canopies or pavilions mar and block the view of the riparian natural shoreland. Shade for outdoor lounging is available on shoreland. Shade trees can be planted where none exist on the shoreland. Watercraft canopies like dock canopies become a fortress like barrier to the riparian natural shoreland. A canopy is more convenient for watercraft protection than a tarp over a boat, but as stated above it is at a cost to the view of the natural shoreland. One of these canopies is bad enough, but often there are three or more canopies. The flotillas of watercraft (often five or more) at some private properties rival commercial marinas. It would seem this issue should be tied to the dock questions.

11) We anticipate holding one or two meetings in St. Cloud this fall. The Meetings will be comprised of small-groups of stakeholders. The intent is to develop recommendations that address issues and concerns related to docks. Who would you recommend participate in these smaller group discussions, and why? How we contact them?

- COLA reps., as well as members of recent 5 county model ordinance group.
- Paul Tongen and/or Connie Buschette, Perham, Otter Tail County COLA.
- MN Waters, county COLAs, Star Tribune and local media.

8-27-2007

To: MN DNR

Re: Dock Rules

Ginny Imholte
[REDACTED]

Detroit Lakes MN 56501
[REDACTED]

As a resident of South Shore of Big Detroit Lake, I support the efforts of the DNR to regulate the ever increasing number of large docks. Each year Detroit Lake becomes less natural and more urban in appearance. We are losing shoreline to large sand blankets, removal of native vegetation, and an overgrowth of dockage for multiple watercraft.

I support:

1. Limiting one residence to one dock.
2. A residential dock should abut the shoreline with a 4 foot wide maximum; then branch to an allowed configuration. Docks should be limited in length and square footage.
3. Large decklike structures along the shoreline should be prohibited.
4. A limit of 2 watercraft slips should be allowed per 50' lot; consider more as lot size increases.
5. Large freestanding canopies should be prohibited.

Since the population is now into developing marginal lakefront property, strict controls must be in place to protect native emergent vegetation when a dock is installed and the installation of excessive sand blankets should be prohibited.

Thank you for adding my thoughts to the record.
Your deliberations are appreciated by numerous lakeshore residents.

Ginny Imholte

Ginny Imholte
[REDACTED]

Kent Lokkemoe, Director
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources: Waters Division
500 Lafayette Road
St. Paul, MN 55155

page 1 of 2
24 September 2007

Dear Mr. Lokkemoe,

Thank you for the DNR Dock-/Related Issues meeting in Detroit Lakes. I was informed of the meeting by our Hubbard County COLA, Ken Grob. I saw no DNR notices of dock meetings in the media, but perhaps I missed them. I attended this meeting because of the need to replace our dock in the future. The presentation of dock abuses was surprising and alarming. The issues appeared to be DNR protection of lake and river ecology versus the greed of dock manufactures, dock dealers, realtors, as well as shoreland property owners.

Publication of Dock Regulations

The Detroit Lakes meeting was very informative, as I have never seen any DNR publications of dock regulations. I venture that one person in many thousands of shoreland property owners could state what Minnesota DNR dock regulations are at this time. It is good to know that dock regulations exist and are being belatedly enforced. I am curious to know how the overly generous dock dimension regulations of 2002 and 2007 came into existence. I saw no notices of public information meetings related to changes in these regulations. Who lobbied the legislature for these changes?

Dock Size

What is the justification for residential 8 foot dock width? It would seem that a 5 foot width is more than adequate. What is the justification for 170 square foot dock platforms? An 8 foot square platform (64 square feet), at the end of the dock is adequate for boat loading. The purpose of the dock is to have access to the lake or river, not a living room extension.

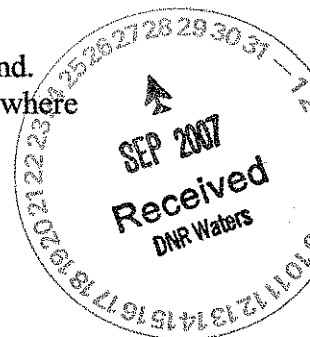
One Property, One Dock

One dock per property is all that should be permitted. One exception is not listed in DNR regulations. Please note that current regulations have no qualification for a second dock on peninsula and isthmus properties connected to two bodies of water.

Special dock regulations suggested by the Dock Industrial Complex for larger properties are discriminatory, suggesting special privileges for the wealthy. A license and fees for oversized docks sounds like a loop hole for the privileged. A state dock license, not a county dock license, could pay for dock enforcement.

Dock Canopies, Pavilions

Dock canopies or pavilions mar and block the view of the riparian natural shoreland. Shade for outdoor lounging is available on shoreland. Shade trees can be planted where none exist on the shoreland.



Watercraft Canopies, Pavilions

Watercraft canopies like dock canopies become a fortress like barrier to the riparian natural shoreland. A canopy is more convenient for watercraft protection than a tarp over a boat, but as stated above it is at a cost to the view of the natural shoreland. One of these canopies is bad enough, but often there are three or more canopies.

Commercial Marinas, Private Marinas

The flotillas of watercraft (often five or more) at some private properties rival commercial marinas. It would seem this issue should be tied to the dock questions.

Summary

Thank you for doing your duty, protecting Minnesota's environmental resources. These Dock-Related meetings appear to be the result of "stakeholder" (Dock Complex) pressure to quickly pass still larger dock regulations for the 2008 season, with a minimum of public input. Future meetings should include representative from "stakeholders", Minnesota Waters, County COLAs, Star Tribune and local media.

Please continue to enforce current dock regulations and delay any new regulations until the public is better informed. The Dock Complex seems to be willfully ignorant that excess of their products is "killing the Golden Goose" or lakes from which they derive their livelihood.

Docks, platforms, and watercraft garage issues are physically connected to shoreland and should be part of new all state Minnesota shoreland ordinances the legislature and county officials have failed to enact.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Lyle Laske


Nevis, MN 56467

Cc.

Mark Holten, DNR Commissioner
Senator Mary A. Olson
Senator Rod Skoe
Representative Larry Howes
Representative Brita Sailer
Representative Kent Eken

Dennis Anderson, Star Tribune
Ron Schara, Star Tribune
Molly Zins, Minnesota Waters
Ken Grob, Hubbard County COLA
Doug Kingsley, DNR Fisheries Supervisor
Henry Drews, DNR Regional Fisheries Manager