



NEWS RELEASE

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For further information, contact PLA President Adam Proehl: adam@nordicclick.com or 952-261-2205 or Jan Alswager at 612-245-6151 or jalswager@gmail.com

LEGISLATURE APPROVES FUNDING OF BOAT LAUNCH REPAIRS

In the closing hours of the just completed legislative session, the Minnesota Senate and House of Representatives passed a major bonding bill which specifically dedicates important funding for boat ramp repairs on Scott County lakes. The Prior Lake Association and Spring Lake Association initiated the funding request late last year with both Spring Lake Association President, Wesley Steffan, and Prior Lake Association President, Adam Proehl, testifying before House and Senate committees during the 2023 session.

The lake associations' funding request was presented at the capitol by Senator Eric Pratt and State Representative Ben Bakeberg and was spearheaded by PLA board member Jan Alswager. The bonding money will fund upgrades at the Spring Lake boat access as well as the two Prior Lake accesses as part of the \$2.6 billion infrastructure bill passed by both houses of the legislature and expected to be signed by Governor Tim Walz. \$35 million of that is earmarked for docks and other improvements to boat access infrastructure across the state.

Last fall both lake organizations led an effort raising emergency funds for temporary fixes of the Spring Lake access as well as the Sand Point access on Prior Lake. The urgent action by the two volunteer groups resulted in \$10,000 of repairs made to both launch sites so that boaters could safely get their boats off the lake amid low water levels late last year.

PLA President Proehl said the state funding is "absolutely necessary to ensure our respective water bodies are accessible for public use. We're grateful for the support of our local legislators and the DNR in making this money a reality."

Ms. Alswager praised the DNR for their attention to the local access problems and credited Senator Pratt and Representative Bakeberg "for carrying our water for us."

"We worked tirelessly to obtain this urgently-needed funding during a time when countless worthy financial requests were being made by legislators, governmental entities and other organizations throughout the state," she explained. "We had many hurdles to overcome before we could claim victory for our local lake users but thanks to the PLA and SLA boards, and our legislators, our local boat accesses will be repaired and upgraded."

Spring Lake Association president Steffan added that the success of the lobbying effort by the two lake associations "is another great example of how our lake association boards and our hundreds of dues-paying members contribute to the betterment of our communities and water resources."

"Our two lake associations do a lot more than just promote boat safety," added PLA president Proehl who's organization sponsors the annual Fourth of July fireworks. "Our two groups donate and support other lake-involved organizations, we assist in fish stocking as well as rough fish removal, conduct lake clean-up efforts, promote family fishing and boating activities, help in lake research and are working cooperatively with entities such as the watershed district to control the spread of milfoil and other invasive species."