

2025

SLA Events Calendar

We hope you will add our events to your calendar, save the dates & plan to join us!

SLA Annual Meeting

Date: Sunday, April 27

Location: Wilds Golf Club

Annual Meeting Schedule

4:00 pm Registration / Social Hour

Appetizers / Cash Bar

5:00 pm Annual Meeting

6:15 pm Prize Drawing

May 26 | Pick Your Paddle -
Memorial Day

June 7 | Take a Kid Fishing

July 4 | 4th of July Boat Parade &
Boat Decorating contest

July 19 | Summer Concert

August 5 | Night to Unite

September 1 | Pick Your Paddle -
Labor Day

SAVE THE DATE

July 19 | Summer Concert with a
Live Band & Food Truck

5:00 pm - 8:00 pm

Spring Lake Regional Park - Lakeside

Spring Lake Association

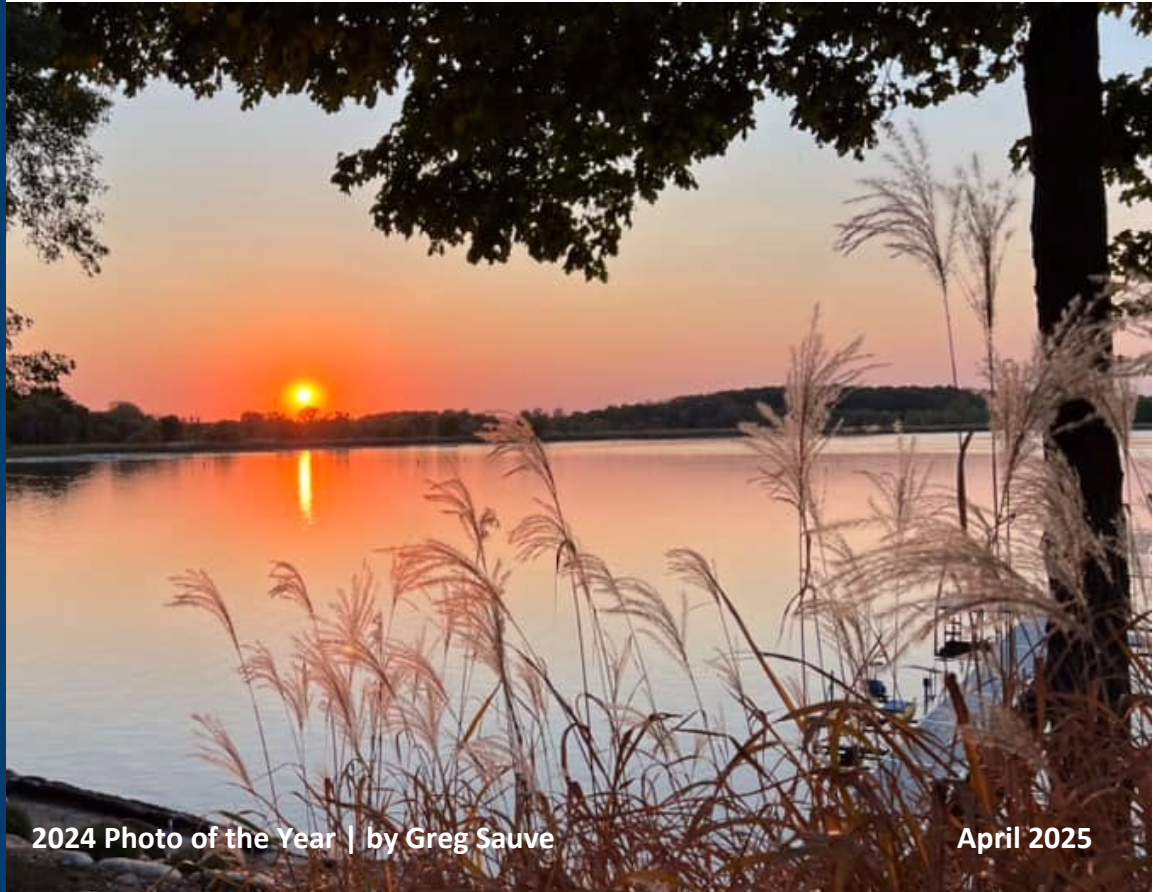
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2024 Photo of the Year | by Greg Sauve

April 2025

President's Message from Wesley Steffan



Blue Sky and Open Water
Spring Lake December 27, 2023

In Winter 2023-2024, we experienced one of the shortest ice season on record with Ice-In not occurring until January and ice-out occurring in early March. Rains that began in the Spring and continued on through early summer were responsible for lake levels reaching normal levels. Unfortunately, the rains also forced us to cancel two early season social events and modify another. Thankfully the weather cooperated and we were able to have a fantastic concert in July and an engaging Night to Unite Event in August.

In addition, we were able to complete several lake improvement activities with our lake partners which included the following: installed a floating dock & buoy channel and created & hung a boating etiquette map at the boat ramp. We also continued our on-going management of Curly Leaf Pondweed and Eurasian Water Milfoil.

The SLA Board has been busy planning for 2025 with our focus on increasing membership and engagement through our on-going communication, education and social events. SLA extends an invitation for each of you to attend our numerous events throughout the year. Please see the events calendar.



In addition, we will continue to focus our lake improvement efforts with the continued support from the DNR (boat ramp enhancements), PLSLWD (water quality and AIS Management) and the Sheriff's office (Boat Operator Certification). Effective July 1, 2025, a Watercraft Operators Permit will be required for all those born after July 1, 2004. Please see the separate article on page 7, for an opportunity for those completing the course, to win one of ten \$50 Visa gift certificates.

I would also like to personally invite everyone to attend the **SLA 2025 Annual Meeting on Sunday, April 27**. This is a great opportunity to learn more about the SLA, hear from guest speakers, enjoy complimentary appetizers, meet others from our lake community and have an opportunity to win a prize in our prize drawing.



Volunteers Needed for Carp Management

Did you know | Carp cause serious damage to native fish populations because they out-compete other fish for food and space. While searching for food, Carp reduce water clarity by uprooting aquatic vegetation and stirring up bottom phosphorus-containing sediments, which contributes to algae blooms.

Your Role | **Carp Espionage Spies Needed!** The Prior Lake-Spring Lake Watershed District (PLSLWD) needs more eyes and ears out on the lake to help us locate carp! By being our “carp spies,” volunteers will play a key part in better identifying carp groups, migration routes and spawning areas. Please visit our website at PLSLWD.org and search for Carp Espionage to register to be a volunteer.

Our Role | The PLSLWD will remove the carp from our lake and block them from their spawning location. In 2025 the PLSLWD and the SLA will also stock bluegills in the Desilt Pond, where carp spawn as Bluegills feed on carp eggs.



The MN DNR is launching this new electronic license system in 2025. The system will allow access to licenses, boat registrations, boater safety training and harvest reporting (starting in March 2025, plain 8.5 x 11 paper licenses will still be available). The DNR is working with Minnesota IT Services (MNIT) and external vendor PayIt Outdoors to launch the new system.

There is also a new boater safety training program that will begin implementation in July of 2025. The electronic licensing system will help boaters find, enroll in and pay for safety courses. Upon completion of training, you will also be able to purchase your license and print your certificate.

Scott Soil and Water Conservation District

CONSERVATION NEWS



Homeowner Funds Available for Pollinator Habitat and Shoreline Buffers

Homeowners who are looking to add a pollinator habitat or spruce up an eroding shoreline can reach out to the Scott Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) for help. The Scott SWCD office serves all residents in Scott County and helps interested homeowners implement conservation projects that reduce erosion, improve water quality and develop wildlife habitat.

The conservationists and natural resource specialists at the Scott SWCD office provide expert technical assistance and project guidance completely free of charge. And the best part: grants are available to help offset the cost of project supplies!

What types of projects can I do?

The Scott SWCD assists with many different types of conservation projects that improve our local soil and water quality. Project categories are based on land use and the office has specialized programs to serve residents in urban and shoreline areas with their Natural Landscaping Program. The projects that fall under this program include:

- **Pollinator gardens:** small plantings of native grasses and flowers.
- **Raingardens:** Small rainwater catch basins of native grasses and flowers.
- **Pollinator meadow:** Lawn conversion from turf to native grasses and flowers from seed.
- **Shoreline buffer planting:** Native flower and grass plantings that protect shorelines.

How does the project process work?

Natural Landscaping projects are intended to do more than just add beauty to your property; they're designed to increase pollinator habitat, reduce water & erosion issues and improve soil quality.

In order for these projects to accomplish those goals, it's important to install the project that's right for your property. That's where the Scott SWCD comes in; the SWCD office offers free site visits and technical assistance for project planning, installing and maintenance. SWCD project technicians typically start the project process by meeting landowners at their property for a site visit to determine project site, size, function and more. They will also provide resources like native plant distributors, local contractors and maintenance tips to make sure a project functions as intended for many years to come. Technicians work with landowners every step of the way to help answer questions and provide expert advice throughout the entire process.

What grants are available?

The Scott SWCD is always available to provide free technical assistance for conservation projects, but residents who are interested in entering into a cost-share contract with the office are eligible for grants that help offset the cost of plants and other building materials for Natural Landscaping Programs.

- **Pollinator gardens** are eligible for \$1/sq. ft. up to \$500.
- **Pollinator meadows** are eligible for \$1,000/acre up to \$2,000.
- **Raingardens** are eligible for \$2/sq. ft. up to \$1,000.
- **Natural Shoreline Buffers** are eligible for \$2/sq. ft. up to \$6,000.

To apply, visit <https://www.scottswcd.org/tacs-urban> or call the office at 952-492-5425.

Note that all cost-share contracts with the Scott SWCD are reimbursement-based, meaning that landowners will install their desired project and be reimbursed with grant funds after the project is completed. For full terms and conditions, for cost share contracts, contact the Scott SWCD office.

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Who is Prior Lake-Spring Lake Watershed District (PLSLWD) and What Do They Do?

The PLSLWD includes the management of 14 major bodies of water, over 700 wetlands, one County Ditch, and the Prior Lake Outlet Channel (PLOC). The PLSLWD covers about 42 square miles in Scott County, MN. Water in the PLSLWD primarily flows from the southwest to the northeast through Spring, Upper Prior and Lower Prior Lakes, and continues flowing north through the PLOC to the Minnesota River near Valley Fair amusement park.



**PRIOR LAKE
SPRING LAKE
WATERSHED DISTRICT**

The PLSLWD was established on March 4, 1970 by order of the Minnesota Water Resources Board (MWRB) under the authority of the Minnesota Watershed Act (Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 112). The order was in response to a petition filed by resident land-owners within the watershed on June 24, 1969. This citizen petition sought establishment of the PLSLWD for the purposes of wisely managing and conserving the waters and natural resources of the watershed. Lake associations initially petitioned the PLSLWD to construct an outlet to carry stormwater from its landlocked lakes in 1973.

This led to the development of the PLOC System, which receives water from Prior Lake and the surrounding watershed and transports it to the Minnesota River.

Waters Managed by PLSLWD:

Tier 1 Lakes | Lakes within PLSLWD that receive the most public use and have historically received the greatest amount of prior investment include Spring Lake, Lower and Upper Prior Lake and Fish Lake.

Tier 2 Lakes | Lakes within PLSLWD that have a TMDL (Total Maximum Daily Load) of pollutant allowed, and/or have received significant, recent or planned investment into the resource include Sutton Lake, Pike Lake, Arctic Lake and Buck Lake.

Tier 3 Lakes | Lakes that have no known water quality impairment and/or need more information to make management decisions include Swamp Lake, Haas Lake, Crystal Lake, Rice Lake, Cates Lake and Jeffers Pond.

Prior Lake Outlet Channel (PLOC) | A 7-mile long channel that works to address highly variable lake levels on Prior Lake and as a trunk stormwater system for the cities of Prior Lake, Shakopee, and the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community.

The Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) | Volunteers Needed

The CAC is a valuable part of the PLSLWD. The CAC consists of residents who advise the Board and staff on issues related to lakes and other water resources.

Role of the CAC:

- Assist with the development and implementation of the education and outreach activities of PLSLWD.
- Make recommendations to the PLSLWD Board and staff on water resources concerns and District activities.
- Communicate to the PLSLWD Board its meeting contents, activities and recommendations.

Join the CAC | For more information about the Citizen Advisory Committee, please contact Danielle Studer at 952-440-0069.

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Spring Real Estate Trends

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Spring is coming! Believe it or not, real estate activity can tell me that. According to recent statistics from the Minneapolis Board of Realtors, home inventory is increasing, prices are rising and buyers are facing multiple offers. As you can imagine, the chill of winter can dampen these key stats in the housing market. As the +24" of ice we had on our lake this year thins, I expect the 2025 real estate market to heat up.

Impact of Higher Interest Rates

The market has faced headwinds of higher interest rates. The challenge is that would-be home buyers are having to decide to walk away from a 3% interest rate, sometimes less, to purchase a step-up home at higher interest rates around 6.5%. This limits the buyer pool for new homes. However, this could be changing as home buyers begin to make the decision to move on, forging forward in search of their step-up homes in hopes of lower rates in the future. (Don't hold your breath for any 5% rates in the near future).

The Lakeshore Real Estate Market

The lakeshore real estate market is always exciting, with major remodels, tear-downs and rebuilds, ranging from cabins to luxurious homes. Though it comes with a price. The median sale price for a lakeshore home in Scott County is \$875,000 as of February 2025. However, this doesn't tell the whole story. In some cases, homes are sold to a private buyer who may tear down the current structure to rebuild or take on a major remodel. Unless the purchase is made by a builder for resale, these improved homes rarely come to market in the short term, meaning the \$850,000 purchase price of the home now becomes a \$2+ million home upon completion. Though lakeshore buyers are less dependent on lower interest rates since lake life is a lifestyle change, you can bet that as we move into summer, any lowering of interest rates will peak the demand for lakeshore property, as with any real estate purchase.


Bottom Line

The lakeshore market remains a unique and dynamic segment, often driven by lifestyle changes. As we move into 2025, buyers and sellers alike should be prepared, with advice from a real estate professional, to navigate this dynamic landscape, taking advantage of the opportunities that arise in this exciting and evolving market. The real estate market on Spring Lake is poised for an exciting summer.

Spring Lake Boat Ramp Update

Last fall, the first two phases of the Spring Lake Boat Ramp were completed and consisted of the floating dock and a buoy channel leading to the ramp. We are excited to report that we recently communicated with the DNR and have been informed that DNR engineers have begun working on phase three which includes improving the existing concrete ramp structure. The DNR is hoping to complete the design this Spring. Once the design is finalized, they hope to select a contractor and complete the work sometime this Summer. The construction work is anticipated to last five days and will result in the ramp being shut down during this time. We will continue to keep you informed on its status as information becomes available.

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Introducing Sgt. Autenrieth and Deputy Trapp



The Sheriff's Office is pleased to introduce Sgt. Spencer Autenrieth and Deputy Ryan Trapp, who will now serve our lake communities as part of the Recreational Safety Team. They succeed Sgt. Jake Edwinston, who has joined the other patrol sergeants and now oversees the K-9 unit, and Deputy Max Kes, who has transitioned to a role as a detective.



Sgt. Spencer Autenrieth began his career with the Sheriff's Office in 2006 as a Corrections Officer, a role he held for nine years before becoming a Deputy. From 2016 to 2019, he was our Rec Safety Deputy, making his return to this area of service a natural fit. "I'm excited to come back to Recreational Safety and connect with the communities around our lakes," said Sgt. Autenrieth. "Ensuring that people can safely enjoy our lakes and outdoor spaces is something I take great pride in."



Deputy Ryan Trapp joined the Sheriff's Office in 2022 and gained hands-on experience as the temporary Recreational Safety Deputy in 2024. Before joining the team, he worked in law enforcement with the National Park Service, where boating safety was a key part of his responsibilities. "I love the outdoors. Working on the lakes allows me to help others while spending time in a setting I truly enjoy," said Deputy Trapp. "I'm looking forward to building strong relationships with the community and keeping our lakes safe and enjoyable."

Watercraft Operator Training

Ten \$50 Gift Cards will be given away!



Minnesota Watercraft Operators (MWO) Permits have always been a requirement for youth between the ages of 12-17. A revised provision will require a MWO permit for residents based on the following birth years and effective dates:

- Jul 1, 2004 (effective Jul 1, 2025)
- Jul 1, 2000 (effective Jul 1, 2026)
- Jul 1, 1996 (effective Jul 1, 2027)
- Jul 1, 1987 (effective Jul 1, 2028)

The SLA along with the Scott County Sheriff's Office strongly encourage all boaters to take and pass the available on-line boating training. The Boat Certificate Training website is <https://www.boaterexam.com/usa/minnesota>.

Drawing

SLA is again sponsoring a drawing for anyone who successfully completes the Online Boat Training Course by August 1, 2025. Drawing will be held in August for a chance to win one of ten \$50 VISA gift certificates. To be eligible for the drawing, email a copy of your certificate to board.sla@gmail.com by July 31.

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☐ **Donation** | Please consider adding a donation to help with Spring Lake Water Quality & Education Initiatives.

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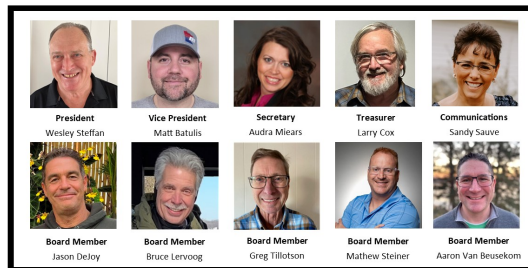
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2025 SLA Board Members



Officers | 3-Year Terms

Wesley Steffan | President | 2021- 2027

New Matt Batulis | Vice President | 2021- 2027

Audra Miears | Secretary | 2021 - 2027

Larry Cox | Treasurer | 2024 - 2027

Sandy Sauve | Communications | 2020 - 2026

Board Members | 2-Year Terms

Jason DeJoy | 2023 - 2027

New Bruce Lervoog | 2025 - 2027

New Matthew Steiner | 2025 - 2027

Greg Tillitson | 2024 - 2026

Aaron Van Beusekom | 2024 - 2026

2025 SLA Board Changes

Welcome and Congratulations to our new Vice President and two new board members whose terms start on May 1!

- **Matt Batulis** | Vice President
- **Bruce Lervoog** | Board Member
- **Matthew Steiner** | Board Member

The SLA did not hold elections for these board member positions because:

- Matt will be serving out the last two years of Patsy Lundquist's term.
- We have two board members leaving and two more joining.

The following board members will be leaving the board at the end of April 2025:

THANK YOU for all of your contributions to Spring Lake Association!

- **Patsy Lundquist** | Vice President
- **Ken Rodning** | Board Member



Spring Lake Association

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