

How to Form a Lake Association

People who live on lakes have some advantages not available to other citizens. They also have some unique responsibilities which may be difficult for them to deal with as individuals. Sharing and meeting with others with common interests can both stimulate problem solving and provide solutions that may not be otherwise available.

A lake association may help you and your neighbors in many ways to:

- Develop a partnership with your lake neighbors.
- Gain awareness of your neighbors' lake interests.
- Develop a communications network for sharing lake news.
- Raise awareness of lake issues in the community.
- Launch fund raising events and apply for grants.
- Develop a wise, long range lake management plan.
- Gain strength in numbers. The group's opinions and needs can be constructively represented in dealing with government officials and agencies.
- Gather information and present educational programs for your membership and other lake users living within the community.
- Conduct data collection on a broad range of lake concerns (water quality, real estate developments, lake use conflicts).
- Gain a historical perspective from longtime residents.

Typical Projects for Lake Associations

- Establish contracts for aquatic plant removal.
- Form groups for monitoring water quality.
- Buy and operate an aquatic plant harvester (with the required permits).
- Develop long range lake management plans.
- Develop plans for funding weed control and water quality projects.
- Negotiate with government entities for grants to fund weed control and water quality projects.
- Conduct educational programs relating to both the effect of and possible sources of plant nutrient loading of the lake waters.
- Conduct boating and swimming safety training programs.

What To Expect

- Expect divergence from your own philosophy and expectations about how a lake should be used or managed. If an organization is formed over one issue or point of view, the prospects for long-term success may be limited.
- Costs and funding matters are nearly always controversial issues. Approach them with caution, particularly in the early stages of forming an association.

