

**Pelican Lakeshore Owners Association  
P.O. Box 52  
Orr, MN 55771**

October 27, 2008

Ms. Amy J. Loiselle  
Area Hydrologist  
Minnesota DNR – Waters Division  
7979 Highway 37  
Eveleth, MN 55374

Re: Pelican Lake (69-841) Outlet Dam and Water Level Issues  
St. Louis County, MN

Dear Amy,

As you know, the community surrounding Pelican Lake continues to be very concerned with the relatively low water levels and ill effects of those current levels on the community's environment and economy. The purpose of this letter is to make you aware of the formation of a nonprofit lake owners association, its mission, and its members' strong advocacy for raising the water level of Pelican Lake to a level the community is accustomed to, as well as to request a meeting as soon as possible with you and other representatives of the DNR.

The Pelican Lakeshore Owners Association was formed in late May, 2008. A well attended organizational meeting was held in early June, 2008. The owners of over one hundred lakeshore and island properties have become members of the Association. A short "mission statement" covering the Association is enclosed with this letter. The dam and the lake's water level continue to be a primary focus and concern of the Association and its members.

Since the reconstruction of the dam in 2002, we, as local citizens, have done our best to communicate our concerns over the relative height, design particulars (e.g., the hole in the dam - or other mechanism/design - that either purportedly simulates a prior "leak" and/or serves as a fish route), and the quality of construction of the dam. We hope that the formation of the Association will quickly improve communication among the Association, the community, and the DNR. As growth and development continue, the urgency and importance of protecting one of our most valuable resources becomes even more necessary. We must find an acceptable and sound resolution on the relatively low water level, the dam's design and the construction issues. The past dry seasons only exacerbate the already low water level – but we firmly believe the problem is not just drought related.

We understand the need for research, studies, and data; they are required to make any changes, including those we believe to be necessary. We have reviewed the October 24, 2007, draft Hydrologic and Hydraulic Re – Analysis report. We have also reviewed again some of the DNR press releases relating to the project's status. Since we are not experts, it is difficult for us to understand the status of the DNR's efforts, the different divisions or departments of the DNR that are involved (besides you, are Trails and Waterways involved?), the likely timing of future actions, and the range of potential outcomes from the current course of action. In fact, we are not exactly clear on the proposed range of courses of action. It appears that, at a minimum, the dam will be raised to the "authorized elevation." Two alternatives are also noted, but they appear to

address only a short term increase in water levels. The middle bay of the structure will not be changed. Why? At a meeting with you and others in the summer of 2007, the "hole" in the dam apparently was serving as a "fish ladder." Does the "hole" (height difference in the bays?) now serve a different purpose? Why is there a "hole" or "leak"? Can the dam's authorized level be increased permanently? Does that require a different course of action, even legislative action?

In a face to face meeting, perhaps these questions and others can be answered in plain language so that the Association's members, as well as other citizens in the area, will be better informed. We strongly feel that it is in the DNR's, the Association's, and the community's best interests that the status of the project and potential alternatives be clearly discussed and understood – in layman's terms – in order to avoid great disappointment in the final outcome later.

As our recent, primary point of contact with the DNR, we ask that you provide the Association directly with copies of any analyses and/or findings and update us on a consistent, periodic basis. Likewise, we will be proactive and initiate more frequent contact with you and the DNR. Over the years, local citizens have forwarded a signed petition and numerous letters communicating our community's concerns. We strongly urge that communication with the community needs to be as high as possible. The Association should serve as an excellent vehicle for efficient communication to our 100 plus members, and those members will provide information to others.

In past meetings, DNR employees, including Commissioner Holsten, advised that they will make themselves available to meet with local citizens concerning the dam. We respectfully request that you, Mr. Mike Peloquin, Assistant Commissioner Bob Meier, and, if possible, Commissioner Mark Holsten meet in the next few weeks with a small number of representatives of the Association (some or all of the seven members of its Board of Directors) to discuss the dam, its status, planned actions, timing, other options, and our concerns. If there are other DNR employees from other departments that should join us (e.g., Mr. Scott Kelling, Trails and Waterways), please include them. We want to meet fairly soon, before further steps are taken, to make sure we understand exactly what is being contemplated, what courses of action are not being pursued, and to address other concerns – before it is too late. We also want to provide a status report to the Association's members after that meeting.

Amy, we do appreciate your time and efforts and we look forward to scheduling a meeting. Please contact me at (651) 688 – 6774 at your earliest convenience. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Dan Donovan, President  
Pelican Lakeshore Owners Association

Enc/

cc: Mr. Mike Peloquin  
Mr. Bob Meier  
Mr. Mark Holsten  
Directors – Pelican Lakeshore Owners Association

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The Pelican Lakeshore Owners Association (PLOA) is a non-profit corporation that was organized in the State of Minnesota in 2008. The members of PLOA are owners or lessees of property on Pelican Lake in St. Louis County, Minnesota.

### MISSION STATEMENT

The PLOA is formed for the following purposes:

- To serve as an organized voice for its members with governmental agencies and the public;
- To address issues that may adversely impact the lake, its use and enjoyment, its ecological integrity, and its condition as a natural resource;
- To monitor the condition of the lake and the impact on the lake from any development of the lakeshore or other nearby property;
- To provide a source of volunteers to assist with lake or watershed projects; and
- To monitor and improve water quality, water clarity, and fish, waterfowl, and other wildlife habitat.

Pelican Lake is a large (12,000+ acres) recreational body of water providing year round activities for local residents and tourists, as well as supporting numerous businesses on the lake. We are dedicated to maintaining the overall quality of the lake and its environs to ensure its preservation now and for future generations.