

PCLIA Lake Legacy Initiative Strategic Plan

Lakes in Minnesota are personal. Often, we describe our properties as “the cabin” or “the lake”, as if it’s the only one. This initiative isn’t just about starting programs—it’s leveraging funding to educate members and family of all ages to understand and promote the health of the lake, the lake experience, and our investment. This includes fostering pride in our lake, leaving our lake cleaner and safer than we found it, and creating a legacy for generations to come. This plan is designed to turn that vision into reality.

I. Mission and Vision

- **Mission:** Through high-impact educational programs and grants, empower our lake community with knowledge and tools to:
 - Protect and improve water quality that increases our enjoyment of the lake and enhances native habitats for fish and wildlife.
 - Provide for safe and respectful recreation on our lake.
 - Engage our lake’s youth to provide a foundation for future generations to enjoy lake life.
- **Vision:** A lake community where informed residents, visitors, and youth actively safeguard clean water, shoreline health, and fish and wildlife – year after year.
- **Time horizon:** Annual updates to strategic plan.
- **Guiding principles:** Science-based, community-led, youth-inclusive, measurable outcomes, leveraging partnerships and previously developed programs.

II. Situation and Stakeholders

- **Situation Analysis:**
 - **Strengths:** Passionate volunteers, high level of pride in lake, existing virtual and in-person touchpoints.
 - **Weaknesses:** Fragmented outreach, reach limited by lake association membership, busy summer season limits engagement.
 - **Opportunities:** Access to a significant new funding source, driving membership in lake association.

- **Risks:** Limited time / attention span of membership especially in summer season, competing priorities, invasive species spread, lack of resources to act in Lead roles, inability to meet metrics in years 1, 2 or 3.
- **Key stakeholders / target audience:**
 - Lakeshore owners, visitors and guests, youth.

III. Strategic Priorities and Outcomes

Priorities	Owner	3-year Outcomes
MN Lakes & Rivers Lake Steward Program	Lake Steward Program Lead	Establish a Lake Steward program to improve shoreline management and water quality.
Youth Engagement Program	Youth Engagement Program Lead	Engage youth on the lake to create a greater appreciation for and increased safety on the lake.

IV. Programs and Grants

1. Lake Steward Program

- **Offerings:** Free site assessments, native planting plans, contractor list, tie into existing shoreline stabilization grant program, “Shoreline Steward” yard signs.
- **Education:** 50% discount on Shoreland Guide to Lake Stewardship booklet, training on shoreline stabilization.
- **Metrics:** Assessors trained, properties assessed, properties awarded Steward status. Long-term trends include water clarity, lake health score, water quality score, phosphorus score, and total phosphorus measurement as reported by the [DNR Lake Finder](#).

2. Youth Engagement Programs

- **Mini-grants:** Provide stipend to youth completing [Minnesota Boaters Safety Course](#).

- **Experiences:** Lake Life Workshops (fishing, canoeing / kayaking instruction), boating safety course.
- **Metrics:** Number of workshop participants, number of youths completing Boaters Safety Course.

3. Future Programs

- **General Education:** Pending identification of a program lead, educational presentations and materials from organizations such as the Raptor Center, Loon Center, Watershed District, Crow Wing County, DNR and other state agencies could be pursued.
- **Acquisition of Physical Assets:** As this initiative matures and if sufficient funds were available, we may pursue investments in physical assets such as property or establish incentives for property donations to the extent they are consistent with the general preservation goals of this initiative.

4. Specifically Excluded

- **Aquatic Invasive Species Management:** While education on invasive species is within the scope of this initiative, spending for invasive species management is excluded as this is covered elsewhere within the PCLIA budget.

IV. Funding, Governance, and Operations

- **Fund structure:** Create new Lake Legacy Fund to maintain separate accounting of funds. Fund with initial contributions and others, as received.
- **Designation:** Expenditures limited to items identified in strategic plan. Board approval required for all expenditures.
- **Reserve policy:** Maintain a minimum of 12 months of expected expenses, protect principal for multi-year stability.
- **Conflict of interest:** Time committed by Board members expected to be without compensation.
- **Governance and roles:**
 - PCLIA Board to provide program oversight, including approval of strategic plan and updates, budget expenditures, and review of KPIs at each Board meeting.
 - Create Lake Legacy Initiative Sub-Committee responsible for:

- Execution of strategic plan
- Recommendation of grants and expenditures
- Tracking and presentation of KPIs
- Roles within sub-committee include:
 - Chairperson
 - Lake Steward Lead
 - Youth Engagement Lead
 - Additional advisory sub-committee members

VI. Metrics

Initiative	Metric	Target	Date
MN Lakes & Rivers Lake Steward Program	Number of assessors trained	4	May 2026
		6	October 2026
	Number of properties assessed	10	October 2026
		20	October 2027
		40	October 2028
	Number of properties awarded Steward status	5	October 2026
		10	October 2027
		20	October 2028
	Long term trends (current measurements provided as a baseline)	Water clarity	4.1 meters
		Lake health score	75
Water quality score		62	
Phosphorus score		77	
	Total phosphorus	12 µg/l	

Initiative	Metric	Target	Date
Youth Engagement Program	Number of youths completing Boaters Safety Course	10	October 2026
		25	October 2027
		40	October 2028

