

# Lake Steward Initiative

By Richard Gallea, Land Use Committee

In the spring issue of The Chain Link, I described a program that was launched last year by Minnesota Lakes and Rivers (MLR), an advocacy group founded in 1993. MLR actively promotes many best practices for lakes and rivers, and has developed strong partnerships at the state legislature and with government entities like the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The Lake Steward program has been embraced by many lake associations across the state, with some groups having signed up dozens of shoreline owners. The first step is to take a 10-question quiz about your shoreline, which covers questions like:

- fertilizer & pesticide usage
- septic maintenance
- stormwater runoff
- percentage of native shoreline buffer
- aquatic plant management practices

If your responses meet MLR's criteria, you are considered a Lake Steward! After taking the quiz, an SRCLA volunteer is notified of your interest and will contact you to see if you have any questions about your shoreline (this is NOT mandatory).

Because we didn't receive any notifications of SRCL residents having taken the quiz this past spring and summer, I reached out to MLR and discovered that, due to a clerical error on their part, the Sauk River Chain of Lakes was not added to the drop-down list that MLR uses to categorize quiz-takers by their home lake system.

So, if you took the quiz this year, your interest in the program wasn't forwarded to me as the program intended. If you took the quiz previously, **please consider retaking it!** Homeowners that meet the Lake Steward criteria receive a cool metal sign that can be displayed at the end of their dock or along their shoreline

The Chain has many unique sections of shoreline along its 78 miles, and even if you decide not to become a Lake Steward, you can still protect aquatic habitat and water quality. If you have any questions about general lakescaping or native buffer options, please contact me

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**Take the Quiz Today!** <https://mnlakesandrivers.org/lake-associations/lake-association-programs/lake-steward/>  
(Sorry about the long URL! You can Google "MLR Lake Steward program" and find a direct link, if you'd prefer).

## Caution Buoy Update

By Brad Matuska, SCRLA President

Under the direction of the Stearns County Sheriff's Office (SCSO), the SRCLA placed two 'Caution' buoys on an experimental basis at the confluence of Great Northern Lake and Krays Lake. This is not an enforceable 'No Wake Zone,' but the intent in placing the buoys is to improve safety. We have received more comments in favor of the continued use of the Caution buoys than against them. If you feel strongly - either for or against - these buoys, please let us know by emailing [bradmatuska@gmail.com](mailto:bradmatuska@gmail.com). We will continue to monitor your comments and act accordingly. Thank you!

