

To: Vilas County Lake Associations

Topic: VCLRA Shoreland Owners Initiative
Greet Your Neighbor Program

Vilas County Lakes and Rivers Association (VCLRA) has launched an initiative to connect with new shoreland property owners. This is an effort to provide resources and contacts to encourage shoreland property owners to become exceptional stewards of their property by providing guidance in doing the right thing for themselves, their lake, and their neighbors.

Shoreline development is the #1 threat to lake health and water quality in Northern Wisconsin. The 19,000 Vilas County lakeshore properties turn over on average every 5 years. The goal of this initiative is to connect neighbors and provide helpful tools and practices to best protect lakes and keep them as healthy as the day you moved there.

VCLRA wants to enlist participation of the lake associations to help personally greet new neighbors and provide materials such as welcome letters (attached example), business cards, brochures, and talking points (attached), etc. for responsible lake shore living. One on one, neighbor to neighbor connections are most effective. We encourage Lake Associations to create a "Greet Your Neighbor" program of your own! The welcome wagon approach is a friendly way to share your lake community's vision of water-front living, build a good relationship with newcomers, and invite them to join your lake organization.

Our initiative is composed of three components all provided for you:

- Business cards to connect new owners with VCLRA and valuable information.
- A new website outlining the New Shoreland Owners Initiative which includes a free membership in VCLRA and Wisconsin Lakes
- Materials to "Greet Your Neighbor"; to encourage face to face interaction with your new neighbors and shoreland owners.

Over 7,500 copies of our business cards (see attached) have been distributed in an effort to connect with new owners, encouraging ways on how to protect their property and their lake. These cards are shared with new owners through realtors, Lake Associations, title companies, chambers of commerce, libraries, County Land and Water office, County Zoning, and landscapers.

Our website houses all this valuable information as an opportunity to expose more of the lake community to support resources such as County Land and Water, UW Extension Lakes, Wisconsin Lakes, and the WI Lakes Partnership. You can find all this at <https://vclra.org/new-owner/>.

Lake Associations are encouraged to identify properties that have recently changed hands (see attached) and personally "greet your neighbors" with a welcome and perhaps some materials to encourage them to be good stewards of their newly acquired lake property they are so excited about.

VCLRA is available for assistance with any portion of this initiative.

Sincerely,
Vilas County Lakes and Rivers Board