

Water is Life...and the quality of water determines the quality of life. ~ Vision Statement of the Lake Superior Binational Forum



A beautiful Lake Superior sunrise from Cloud Bay, Ontario.
Thank you to Glen Dale of Neebing, Ontario for sharing this photo.

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Welcome to the Lake Superior Binational Forum's Water is Life Newsletter.

The goal of this newsletter is to share information about lake issues and activities with those who care about the world's largest freshwater lake.

This newsletter was sent to you because you have indicated support of Lake Superior, the Lake Superior Binational Forum, or other related lake issues. If you would prefer not to receive this newsletter, you may [SafeUnsubscribe](#).

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**\*\* Celebrate \*\***

In 2011, the Lake Superior Binational Program celebrates 20 years of work to protect & restore the lake's natural resources!

[Check It Out!](#)



[Website](#)



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**Check Out These Links**

[Keweenaw Now](#)

[Climate Idols](#)

## Binational Forum Member Highlights

In each issue of this newsletter we will highlight a Forum member representing a different sector on both sides of the border. This issue we introduce you to Jody Davis of Terrace Bay, Ontario, and Rev. Jon Magnuson of Marquette, Michigan.

### [Jody Davis, Terrace Bay, Ontario](#)

Jody is an active member of the Binational Forum, serving as a representative of the Local Elected Officials sector. He also serves as a member of the Forum's Outreach and Sustainability Committees.

He is an elected city councillor in Terrace Bay, a town of almost 2,000 Canadians on the far north shore of Lake Superior. Jody, the town council, and community groups have organized Lake Superior Day events for the last three years, including a public beach cleanup event, food, free kayaking and boat trips, and other activities.

Terrence Bay also supports an [Annual Hazardous Waste Collection Day](#), which has been very successful and popular with local residents who bring chemicals to the event where they can safely be disposed. The town was recently named "Northern Ontario Entrepreneurial Community of the Year 2010-2011." In addition to volunteering with the Forum, Jody is a member of the Jackfish Area of Concern remedial action committee. Jody is proud that the committee has been able to move that area into what is called an "Area in Recovery" category. [Click here to read the rest of this story...](#)

### [Rev. Jon Magnuson, Marquette, MI](#)

When he's not representing the faith community sector for the Forum, Jon is very active with building robust coalitions of diverse groups to reach common goals through his work as the director of the nonprofit group The Cedar Tree Institute in Marquette.

"I've become increasingly aware that my efforts with The Cedar Tree Institute and participation in the Lake Superior Binational Forum to restore and protect Superior is a healing of the spirit for those who live in the Great Lakes Basin," Jon said. "This work has become a new common ground where diverse religious traditions and faith communities in



Jody Davis helps unload a vehicle at a household hazardous waste collection event held with Binational Forum support in October, 2009. The event was also supported by Environment Canada, the Ontario Ministry of Environment, Stewardship Ontario, and the Town of Terrace Bay.



Rev. Jon Magnuson

[Environmental  
Defense Fund](#)

[More About Us](#)

What is it?



Click on the picture to  
find out!

**Lake Superior  
Binational Forum's  
Environmental  
Stewardship Award.**

Are you helping to  
protect or restore the  
Lake Superior Basin?

Do you know of  
someone who is?

Our annual awards  
program opens for  
nominations on  
**February 1, 2012.**

Here's the simple  
[nomination form!](#)

our region meet and serve a great and new common good. Songs and prayers increasingly frame our projects as we participate in an ecological Great Awakening." [Click here to read the rest of the story...](#)

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## **Binational Program Environmental Stewardship Award Winner: Alex Mayer, Houghton, MI**



Mr. Alex Mayer (left) is pictured with Mr. Bruce Lindgren, US Co-Chair (right), at the Awards Ceremony on the shores of Lake Superior.

The Binational Forum sponsors an annual Environmental Stewardship award in six categories.

We announced winners in our last newsletter, and this issue we focus on Alex Mayer, the 2011 winner in the Adult Individual category.

Huron Creek in Houghton County, Michigan, had a long history of neglect and abuse, until Alex Mayer came along in the late 1990s. Through Mayer's perseverance, numerous partnerships

and restoration projects have been established to ultimately restore sections of the watershed to a more natural state.

[Click here to read the rest of the story...](#)

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## **Become a Friend of Lake Superior!**

This summer the Forum launched a friends of the lake program called **Lake Superior Stewards**. The purpose of the program is to connect with people who care about Lake Superior and who want to be kept updated on important lake issues that need public comment and information.



*Click on logo to regist*

Who are our friends so far?

- 73% live within the Lake Superior Basin
- 80% are from the United States
- 58% promise to take shorter showers
- 60% promise to turn off computers when leaving work/home
- 54% promise to turn off the water when brushing your teeth/shave
- 63% promise to replace incandescent light bulbs with energy saving bulbs.

Haven't registered yet? It's easy and takes about a minute to do on our web site. Tell us your name and email address and then let us know what will you do to protect the world's largest lake. We'll mail you a free window cling and information alerts to keep you up to date about developments around the lake.

To read about previous winners.

=>[Click here!](#)

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[Northland College](#), the office of the US Forum Coordinator, has been headquartered at the Sigurd Olson Environmental Institute (SOEI) on the Northland college campus for 20 years.

Northland College - a private environmental liberal arts in Ashland, Wisconsin - is one of two schools in the nation to receive the highest score for sustainable education and research, according to data from the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education.

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[EcoSuperior](#) - A nonprofit environmental educator center in Thunder Bay, Ontario, serves as the office for the Canadian Forum coordinator.

We will also put your zip code on [our map](#) that shows where all of our stewards live. Currently we have Lake Superior Stewards in three countries! Please join us as we continue to inform lake users about issues and actions by becoming a Lake Superior Steward today. Thank you to all who have made the commitment to become Stewards of our great Lake Superior.

Allison B. who lives in Western Australia has this to say about becoming a Lake Superior Steward, *"I grew up in Marathon Ontario and am extremely passionate about Lake Superior. I currently live in Australia but miss the greatest of the Great Lakes every day and want to do something to help."*

Another testimony of a Lake Superior Steward: *"We own a small, growing family charter sailing business on the north shore of Lake Superior. We specialize in sailing that is "sustainable" and are proud of our low carbon footprint. We take participants to pristine areas and inspire them to take care of our precious Lake."* - Katya G., MN.



Naomikong Point is a small point of land along the south shore of Lake Superior in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. This point defines the eastern boundary of Tahquamenon Bay and the southwestern part of Whitefish Bay.

*Photo courtesy of John Godin, Dollar Settlement, MI.*

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## Forum's Open Public Meeting Held in Grand Marais, Minnesota

The Lake Superior Binational Forum held its third meeting of the year in the lovely community of Grand Marais, Minnesota, in September. We enjoyed the gorgeous weather, the unique geological features that make this region so unforgettable, the artistic flavor that captures the spirit of the North Shore, and the friendly and knowledgeable people. Check out a [slideshow](#) of some of the things we appreciated while holding our public meeting.

At our public meeting we heard comments from residents who expressed concerns about issues such as:

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Environment Canada is the federal agency that oversees national environmental protection and restoration programs.

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EPA LaMP

How much of the Lake Superior Binational Program's targeted toxic chemicals list have been reduced through management goals?

[Click here](#) -- for a report on updated goal accomplishments.

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### Fun Facts about Gitchi Gumi!

The deepest point in Lake Superior (about 40 miles north of Munising, MI) is 1,300 feet (400 meters) below the surface.

Over 300 streams and rivers empty into Lake Superior.

The average underwater visibility of Lake Superior is 27 feet, making it easily the cleanest and clearest of the Great Lakes. Underwater visibility in some places

- The lack of safe landings for recreational boaters on the lake's north shore
- Impacts from stormwater runoff from paved surfaces that run downhill and pollute the city harbor
- How mining in the nearby Superior National Forest and Boundary Waters Canoe Area might affect tourism
- Whether Lutsen Resort should be allowed to take millions of gallons of water a year from the Poplar River for snowmaking.



A bumper sticker spotted in Grand Marais, MN during the September Meeting.

We also heard from these speakers who talked about watershed protection and eco-development programs going on in the North Shore:

- Rick Schubert, Coordinator, [Flute Reed Watershed Partnership](#) , "Managing Stormwater Runoff and Reducing Stream Sedimentation on the Flute Reed River." Minnesota Waters awarded this volunteer group the 2008 Minnesota Waters Citizen Monitoring Program of the Year.
- Bruce Carman, Project Coordinator, [Silver Bay EcoPark](#), "Green Economic Development in Silver Bay." The link takes you to the PowerPoint presentation.
- Ilena Berg ([Cook County Water Plan Coordinator](#)) and Biz Clark (Chair of Coalition of Lakes Association), "Citizen Stewardship of Lakes and Natural Environment"
- Billy Blackwell of the [Grand Portage Band](#) of Lake Superior Chippewa gave a blessing for the meeting.

Four times a year the Forum meets in host communities around the lake. We offer an open public meeting during which specialists talk about important issues affecting the lake and the community, and we also offer time for the public to tell us what's important to them.

### Free Watershed Property Guide Available

Watershed groups are encouraged to take a look at this free planning guide available for download on the University of Wisconsin-Superior's web site. It's called "[Lake Superior Watershed Rural Property Guide: Ashland, Bayfield, Douglas, and Iron Counties in Northern Wisconsin.](#)" While it offers information about some Wisconsin areas, the main information is useful for anyone in the entire basin wanting to protect riparian properties.

Please watch future newsletters for information about upcoming public meetings. We will also have links to speaker presentations, slideshows, audio clips, and short videos of public comments in our newsletter.



reaches 100 feet.

It's so big that in the summer, the sun sets more than 35 minutes later on the western shore of Lake Superior than at its southeastern edge.

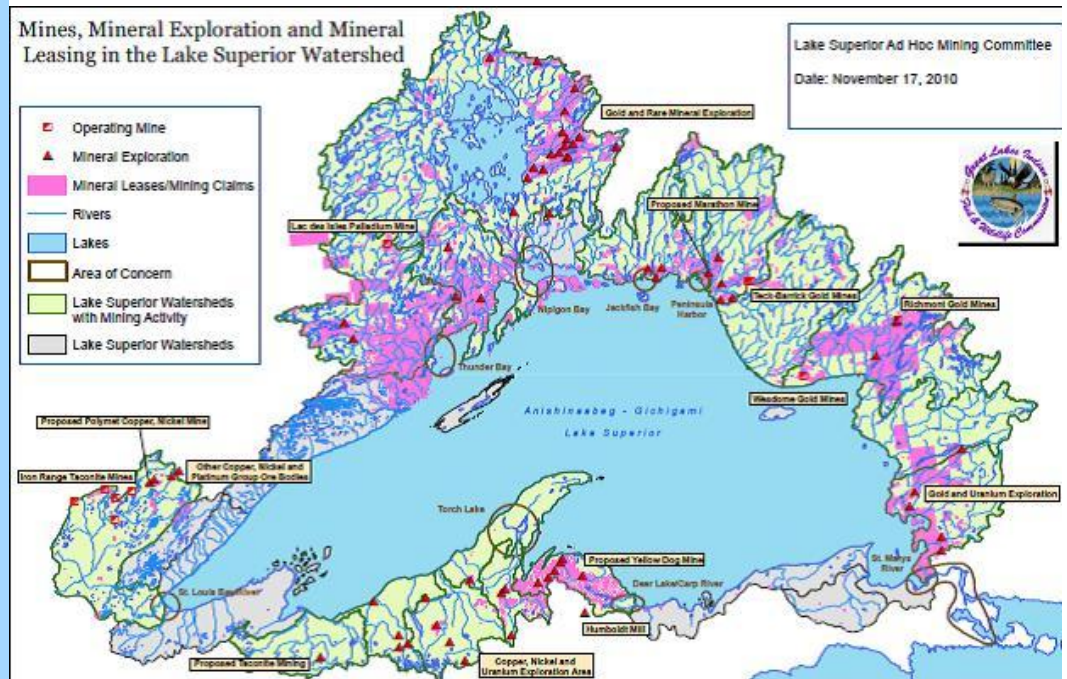
Source: MN Sea Grant

## Mining in the Lake Superior Basin

Through a Great Lakes Restoration Initiative grant administered by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the Forum will spend the next two years investigating how mining activities around the lake may impact the economies, natural environments, and social environments of local communities. The Forum will offer three open public input sessions in Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin that allow multi-stakeholders with diverse perspectives to hear presentations from specialists.

The Forum neither supports nor opposes any one mine in the basin. However, the group does intend to bring specialists with diverse perspectives to the meeting to allow the public to hear fact-based and scientific information about mining impacts. The Forum hopes that by offering a balanced arena for discussion, the public can hear how mines may impact communities in meaningful ways that allow people to make well-informed decisions.

The Forum is also developing a fact-based web portal that can be used as a reference site for people looking for information to help make sound decisions about mine sites. This web site will be available in January 2012.



Here is a map of proposed and existing mines in the Lake Superior basin provided by the Lake Superior Ad Hoc Mining Committee.

## **Binational Forum will host a Public Meeting on Mining- March 23, 2012**

The Lake Superior Binational Forum will host a public meeting on Friday, March 23, 2012 in Ashland, Wisconsin, from 12:30 to 5:00 pm at the [AmericInn](#), State Hwy 2 East. The public session will focus on the economic, environmental, and social impacts of the mining industry around the basin. The final agenda will be posted on our web site in February.

Speakers will talk about how mining operations might affect the lake and the resources in the basin, how the Lakewide Management Plan outlines ways to protect the lake, and the importance of understanding a lakewide perspective of cumulative impacts on the waters of Lake Superior. Speakers will provide fact-based information about economic impacts, and how sovereign nations are responding to proposed mine sites.

## **Our Next Public Meeting to be held January 2012 in Thunder Bay, Ontario.**

The Lake Superior Binational Forum will meet in Thunder Bay on January 27th and 28th, 2012. The January 28th meeting is open to the public and will run from 08:00 a.m. to 12 noon at the Oliver Road Recreation Centre, 563 Oliver Road. There is no charge to attend. To view meeting agendas and related resources for this January Meeting => [click here](#)



Citizen Science Volunteers get involved with 'World Water Monitoring Day' in March!

## **Want to Help Lake Superior? Become a Citizen Science Monitor!**

2011 has been a big year for scientific monitoring all around the basin, as many scientists and researchers increased their data collections in the Coordinated Science and

Monitoring Initiative for Lake Superior. Data is collected on everything from air quality to lake bottom sediments to create a clearer picture of conditions in Lake Superior ecosystems. A process has been developed to coordinate science and monitoring activities among agencies to occur on a multi-year rotational cycle for all five Great Lakes.

For example, the Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission is a partner in the Binational Program's Superior Work Group and its monitoring programs. [Click here](#) to read about how the Commission is monitoring Lake Superior's lake sturgeon population.

As a public involvement group, the Forum was interested in connecting basin volunteers to citizen science monitoring opportunities, since many agencies rely on citizen-collected data to supplement research efforts. We have simple directories posted on our web site that list volunteer opportunities in our three lake states. Check them out to see how you can help!

[Michigan Citizen Monitoring Groups](#)

[Minnesota Citizen Monitoring Groups](#)

[Wisconsin Citizen Monitoring Groups](#)

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Numerous governments and agencies are charged with managing the lake under goals established in a [Lakewide Management Plan \(LaMP\)](#). These include employees in federal, state, provincial, and tribal/First Nations

governments.

### **Want to let them know what you think?**

Use the [Speak Out](#) button above to let governments know what you want. We'll include your comments in a report and submit it to our Binational Program partners to help them know what lake users are talking about.

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### **What is the Lake Superior Binational Program?**

The Lake Superior Binational Program represents a partnership of federal, state, provincial, and First Nations/tribal governments working together with citizens to ensure the protection of the Lake Superior basin ecosystem.



### **What is the Lake Superior Binational Forum?**

The Forum was created in 1991 when the Binational Program members recognized the importance of having a citizen stakeholder group to give input to agencies and governments about how to manage the lake. The Forum is a citizen stakeholder group of 12 American and 12 Canadian volunteers who work together to provide input to governments about management efforts and to educate basin residents about ways to protect and restore the lake basin's natural resources.

The Forum has three main purposes:

Review the Lakewide Management Plan (LaMP) and give input to governments about management strategies. The forum helped establish a strict schedule of point source chemical reductions over 20 years under The Zero Discharge Demonstration Program.

- Inform the public about LaMP goals and activities and conduct outreach campaigns to share information about priority issues.
- To give the public (lake users) opportunities to have their comments and feedback heard and acted upon by governing agencies.

[Click here to read more about the Lake Superior Binational Forum and its members.](#)

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## A Story About Beach Restoration: "Goulais Bay - Best of Intentions, Unintended Consequences"

Thanks to Binational Forum member Klaas Oswald, Sault Ste Marie, Ontario, for sharing this true story with us. Klaas's long-time colleague and friend, Jack Mihell of Ontario, wrote the story based on his own life's experiences.

Jack writes:  
*This is a story with a sad ending, involving unwise shoreline manipulation.*

*The scene is Goulais Bay, a large shallow horseshoe shaped bay of Lake Superior, containing no islands. My family purchased a half-acre lot with 100 feet of shoreline in the late 1950's.*

*The backshore rises very gradually, with a foot and a half of organic material over beach sand. The foreshore, if that is the proper term, also falls very gradually, such that one may walk almost a half mile out without having to swim. [Click to read the rest of the story...](#)*



Photo by Andrew Pakula, Ontario, Canada

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The Forum welcomes submissions of your photographs and articles about projects related to the Lake Superior basin. The Water is Life newsletter is produced four times per year. The newsletter is funded by a Great Lakes Restoration Initiative grant through the US Environmental Protection Agency.

Please send your stories, photos, and announcements to: [binationalforum@northland.edu](mailto:binationalforum@northland.edu).

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