

A bill for an act
relating to natural resources; providing a process for designating star lakes and
rivers; allowing for placement of star lake and river signs on highways; requiring
a report; proposing coding for new law in Minnesota Statutes, chapters 103B;
173.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

Section 1. **[103B.701] STAR LAKES OR RIVERS.**

Subdivision 1. Definition. For the purposes of this section:

(1) "lake association" means an organized association for the purpose of addressing
issues on a specific lake or river, a lake improvement district, or a lake conservation
district; and

(2) "board" means the Board of Water and Soil Resources.

Subd. 2. Application. (a) A lake association may apply to the board for designation
as a star lake or river. The applicant must include a copy of a comprehensive management
plan for the lake or river.

(b) After review of the application, the board shall determine whether designation
as a star lake or river will be granted. The designation as a star lake or river becomes
effective the day following designation by the board. The board shall publish the decision
on a star lake or river designation in the State Register, including the effective date
of the designation.

(c) The star lake or river designation is effective until the earlier of:

(1) five years after the date of designation; or

(2) when the board finds that the lake association is not fulfilling the requirements of
this section or of the comprehensive lake or river management plan submitted.

(d) Within six months before the expiration date of the designation as a star lake or river, a lake association may apply to continue the star lake or river designation under this section.

Subd. 3. **Eligibility.** A lake association applying for designation as a star lake or river must:

(1) develop and update a comprehensive lake or river management plan as provided in subdivision 4;

(2) maintain a membership or participation of at least 50 percent of the private shoreland owners;

(3) participate in the Pollution Control Agency's citizen water quality monitoring program under section 115.06, subdivision 4; and

(4) meet at least annually with staff from the Department of Natural Resources and other appropriate state agencies in the development and monitoring of the comprehensive lake or river management plan.

Subd. 4. **Comprehensive lake or river management plan.** (a) A comprehensive lake or river management plan must include a summary of adopted shoreland zoning ordinances in the area and any specific further restrictions supported by the lake association and must address:

(1) increases in native vegetation in the littoral area of the lake or river, when appropriate;

(2) increases in native vegetation on the shoreline areas of the lake or river, when appropriate;

(3) prevention, reduction, or elimination of aquatic invasive species in the lake or river;

(4) increasing or maintaining a healthy diverse fishery that is appropriate for the lake or river;

(5) how the lake association will assure its involvement with total maximum daily load stakeholder processes for any impaired waters that are identified within the watershed of the lake or river;

(6) how the lake association will assure its involvement in public input opportunities for various local comprehensive and project-specific planning and zoning processes;

(7) how the lake association will train and supply volunteers through approved programs to generate data needed by state and local agencies in an appropriate format;

(8) education opportunities for shoreland owners and other entities that conduct activities affecting the quality of the lake or river; and

(9) other activities that will coordinate with or enhance other state and local water management efforts.

(b) The comprehensive lake or river management plan shall be updated within five years of adoption by the lake association.

Subd. 5. **State resources.** State agencies may consider star lake or river designation in determining the allocation of financial and staff resources.

Subd. 6. **Board duties.** (a) The board must work with private and public entities to leverage the resources available to achieve maximum results for Minnesota star lakes or rivers. The board may assist lake associations with finding appropriate technical and financial assistance that is available and make recommendations to state agencies regarding the manner in which technical or financial assistance can be most effectively delivered. To the extent that money is available, the board may provide direct financial assistance to meet specific needs of lake associations, when financial assistance is not otherwise available, for:

(1) completing a comprehensive lake or river management plan when the lake association does not have an existing management plan and the association is committed to the goals of a plan, as specified in subdivision 4; and

(2) addressing specific issues of the lake or river to achieve or maintain the goals of the lake or river management plan for lake associations that have achieved a star lake or river designation.

(b) By December 1 of each even-numbered year, the board shall submit a report to the legislature on the activities for which money has been or will be spent for the current biennium, the applications for designation, and the star lakes or rivers designated by the board.

Sec. 2. [173.0855] STAR LAKE OR RIVER SIGNS.

Subdivision 1. **Authority to erect.** (a) A county, statutory or home rule charter city, or town of Minnesota that contains a star lake or river designated under section 103B.701 may request the Department of Transportation to erect star lake or river signs under section 161.139. One sign may be erected at each approach to a lake or river within the right-of-way of an interstate or other highway that passes over the lake or river in the Department of Transportation's eight-county metropolitan district or near or over the lake or river in greater Minnesota. The Department of Transportation must bill the cost of the signs erected under this section to the requester.

4.1 (b) An official lake or river sign on the right-of-way of an interstate or other highway
4.2 may be replaced with a star lake or river sign by the Department of Transportation under
4.3 section 161.139.

4.4 Subd. 2. **Sign standards.** The Department of Transportation shall design and
4.5 manufacture the star lake and river signs to specifications not contrary to other federal
4.6 and state highway sign standards.

4.7 Sec. 3. **CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE.**

4.8 By January 15, 2009, the Board of Water and Soil Resources shall submit
4.9 recommendations to the chairs of the house and senate committees having jurisdiction
4.10 over natural resources for the composition and authority of a citizens advisory committee
4.11 to provide input to the board on the process of designating lakes and rivers under
4.12 Minnesota Statutes, section 103B.701.