

## NEWS RELEASE



**For immediate release**

### **BIG PINE LAKES ASSOCIATION NAMED COMMUNITY CONSERVATIONIST**

**St. Paul, Minn.**—The Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (MASWCD) and Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) have awarded the Big Pine Lakes Association with the 2008 Community Conservationist Award. The Pine Soil and Water Conservation District nominated the group for the award.

The award will be presented at the 72<sup>nd</sup> annual MASWCD convention, to be held Dec.7-9 at the Crowne Plaza Riverfront, St. Paul, Minnesota. The award provides Soil and Water Conservation Districts with the opportunity to nominate an individual, business, company, municipality, or organization for concern, cooperation, and/or implementation of conservation practices in a community environment.

In materials provided in support of the nomination, Pine SWCD noted that the Big Pine Lakes Association has provided leadership in the areas of erosion sediment control, stormwater management, and land-use conservation planning.

The Big Pine Lakes Association is working closely with Pine SWCD to improve the quality of the lakes as well as the river and creeks that run into the lakes. The Lakes Association Water Quality Committee Chair, Jim Lauer, has provided critical leadership, working with the SWCD, property owners and the state Department of Natural Resources.

Conservation efforts have included stabilizing shoreline in order to reduce erosion, improve water quality and enhance walleye spawning habitat. Lauer has worked on correcting damage to the one of the creeks caused by improper culvert placement and subsequent stormwater damage. He has also worked with the DNR to develop a demonstration lakescaping interpretive site to help educate the public on proper plant selection for shoreland buffer zones. In addition, Lauer has cooperated with the Pine SWCD in the development of a monitoring plan for Big Pine Lake, Pine Lake and the incoming creeks.

Pine SWCD Manager Jill Carlier commented on the success of Lauer and the Big Pine Lakes Association by stating, “Jim Lauer’s dedication to the lakes is admirable. He has taken the lead on many projects, put in many hours, and accomplished many things. He is an inspiration to all. The newfound energy in the lake association and the new willingness of the volunteers to improve the quality of the water resources in their community is incredible.”

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