

**Cisco Chain Riparian Owners
Wake Surf Boat Survey
Summary Results, January 2024**

We thank all who took the time to fill out the WSB Survey included with our Fall 2023 Shore Lines Newsletter. The newsletter and survey were both emailed to our members for which we have email addresses, and a hard copy was mailed to the tax address on file for all Chain riparian owners. There are currently some 285 members in the CCROA as of January, 2024. We mailed some 607 copies.

We were pleased with the participation results: 106 surveys returned from a pool of 607 (17%). Some 98 checked “Yes” to “Are you a member”, which is 34% of the current 285 members. There were a few who checked “Yes” whose membership status has lapsed; you have been encouraged to renew your membership. Sixty-one (61) of you provided comments. All comments are provided in this document.

Over the last 3 years, the CCROA has been providing information on WSB operation. Our first WSB article was in our Fall 2021 newsletter. Interest in this topic grew in 2022, and we continued to publish updates on its development. The Spring 2023 newsletter included 5 voluntary unenforceable guidelines for the operation of WSBs while in “wake-surfing mode” together with the rationale and thoughts behind each guideline. Our website contains several links to WSB information. In our July Annual Meeting, we presented two speakers to further educate us. After all of this, this Survey was designed to gauge your feelings after you had these several opportunities to learn more.

Summary: *The respondents overwhelmingly support the published guidelines or more restrictive guidelines (94%). The vast majority (75-95%) are concerned about damage and safety issues; 7% are not. A strong majority feel regulations are required (80%), while 18% feel further education will be sufficient. 84% would support a local ordinance.*

Question 1. Do you approve of the guidelines? 94% support the guidelines or more.

Yes 92 (87%) No, Not Restrictive Enough 8 (8%)

No 4 (4%) No Response 2 (2%)

Question 2. Which of the following types of damage or safety issues associated with wake enhanced watercraft are you concerned about?

Vast majority (75-90%) of respondents are concerned about the issues; 7% are not concerned.

Question 3. Education is sufficient (18%); Regulation is required (80%),

Question 4. Would you support a local town ordinances on WSB operation?

Yes 84% No 15%

The detailed results of the survey are in the next 6 pages. All comments are included. The surveys were sequentially numbered as they were received. The “R” number preceding each comment below is a direct reference to those sequential numbers. The CCROA did not hire a survey/polling company to structure and conduct this effort. The results are what they are. Based on these results, we do believe the large majority of Chain riparian owners are concerned about WSB activity.

Eugene Clark, President, Cisco Chain Riparian Owner’s Association

**Cisco Chain Riparian Owners
Detail Wake Surf Boat Survey Results
including
Comments Submitted with Survey Response
Fall, 2023**

Wake Surf Boat Questions:

Over the last year the CCROA has provided information to riparian owners regarding the potential impacts of the use of Wake Enhancement Boats, or Wake Surf Boats (WSBs) on inland lakes. In May the CCROA board approved voluntary and non-enforceable guidelines regarding use of WSB's in Wake Surf Mode on the Cisco Chain. You can refer back to the full wording and rationale of the voluntary and non-enforceable guidelines on the CCROA website www.ciscochainroa.com. You will also find there the many studies shared and the CCROA whitepaper on the subject as well. The CCROA board adopted voluntary and non-enforceable guidelines regarding the operation of Wake Surf Boats on the Cisco Chain. Those guidelines recommend Surf Mode operation to be at least 500 feet from shore, in at least 20 feet of water, on a lake at least 500 acres in size, and that ballast tanks be dry prior to transport.

1. Do you approve of the CCROA Board's Recommended Guidelines for WSB operation on the Cisco Chain issued May 2023?

• Yes 92 No 4 No, the guidelines are not restrictive enough 8

Comments:

R1	Guidelines are perfect but need some means to self-police or enforce.
R2	Yes, but my husband and I prefer a total ban on wake boarding boats.
R6	Not opposed to recommendations so long as they remain "suggestions".
R7	Yes, and we feel they need to be broader.
R8	At least try the voluntary program for a couple of years before making laws.
R9	The acreage of a lake shouldn't matter as long as distance from shore and depth parameters are met.
R10	Yes, very reasonable.
R12	I agree with guidelines but 20' depth may be extreme, 15' may be enough.
R15	Yes, but I want guidelines to remain voluntary. Legal restrictions may lead to more and more legal restrictions.
R22	Yes, but I think the minimum size lake should be 1,000 acres and the minimum distance from shore should be 1,000 feet.
R25	Yes, but I think the minimum depth requirement should be 30'.
R26	No, but if there are guidelines, they should be consistent with MI DNR recommendations.
R28	Yes, guidelines are reasonable and in-line with DNR advice. Most WSB friends agree that existing statutory requirements are inadequate and most operate responsibly.
R30	Ban them!
R33	Thank you for your work on this issue.
R34	Yes, the damage these boats can cause to people and property is a high risk.
R35	Yes, WSBs should not be allowed on lakes smaller than 4,000 acres.
R36	Yes, but the key is that they are voluntary. If there is a lot of damage or numerous violations the voluntary guidelines could then be made mandatory.
R44	I don't feel this type of equipment is necessary or should be used on inland lakes.

R51	The guidelines are not restrictive enough. They need to be enforceable. WSB owners ignore voluntary guidelines.
R54	Yes. Other states are restricting time of operation. We should consider doing that too.
R61	Restrictions should be stronger!
R65	There needs to be strict enforcement to WSB operation before it is too late. They have overpowered southern lakes and it is only a matter of time before they decimate the Cisco Chain.
R66	The value of our properties depends on the care, condition, and traffic on our lakes. We have to have some control to maintain the beauty we have.
R67	Yes. The guidelines are well thought out and are a good compromise.
R70	Yes. Any responsible WSB operator is already following these guidelines.
R76	I recommend at least 30' of depth and lake size should be greater than 1,500 acres
R78	The guideline for lake size is too small. Should be greater than 1,000 acres and minimum depth should be 40'.
R82	These type of boats should not be allowed on any of the lakes.
R83	They do not belong on any lake on the Cisco Chain. None of the lakes are big enough to handle wake boats.
R88	I sincerely appreciate the information provided and the work that went into developing these guidelines.
R90	I am a strong supporter of the voluntary guidelines. Personal rights need to be balanced with environmental impact, safety, and the pleasant use of our lakes by multiple users.
R94	WSBs are too disruptive on our lakes.
R97	I think every one of the voluntary guidelines should be stricter.
R100	In my opinion they should not be allowed period! An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure!!
R101	I feel the voluntary guidelines are a little excessive and education is the best way to go.
R102	The shorelines, aquatic vegetation, and all wildlife is harmfully affected by this watercraft.
R106	Seems reasonable.
R107	I recommend banning this activity on the lakes.
R109	I would prefer that the voluntary guidelines were enforceable. I also would like the CCROA to post "No Wake" signs on all channels.

2. Which of the following types of damage or safety issues associated with wake enhanced watercraft are you concerned about? (Mark all that apply):

- a) (☐ 96) Shoreline erosion from large high energy wakes: banks and vegetation
- b) (☐ 93) Increased turbidity/reduced water clarity/bottom scouring etc. from downward propeller thrust
- c) (☐ 86) Safety of others on the water (e.g. kayaking, swimming, paddle boarding etc.
- d) (☐ 85) Disruption of other activities (e.g. fishing, boating, enjoying the outdoors, etc.)
- e) (☐ 90) Disruption of wildlife (e.g. loons, aquatic vegetation, aquatic birds, fish, etc.)
- f) (☐ 85) Risk of introduction of AIS via water in ballast tanks
- g) (☐ 77) Damage to docks and/or boats
- h) (☐ 64) Noise
- i) (☐ 7) None of the above

Comments:

R1	#1 Concern is damage to lake bottoms. Operation in less than 20' of water likely causes severe long term damage to vegetation.
R7	We bought our home in 2001. In 2002 I marked the shoreline with a piece of rebar. That rebar is now 3' from shore.
R9	I'm concerned with all of the above from any watercraft...not just wake boats.
R15	Your negative attitude is extreme. At this point in time, there isn't a problem with WSBs. These boats are used for such a short time-a few weeks each summer. Mother Nature has year-round effects that we all live with. Stop trying to micromanage our freedoms!
R22	I'm concerned about b) as I do not believe WSBs will adhere to 20' of depth guideline.
R25	Most lakes in our area are too small for such high power and noise. The wake makes it impossible for small vessels to navigate.
R26	All watercraft present issues. Responsible use is key.
R35	WSBs represent the complete opposite of what small Northwoods lakes are all about.
R43	WSBs have been nothing but a nuisance while fishing or trying to enjoy our pontoon boat. The waves they generate are ridiculous.
R44	WSBs should be restricted to large bodies of water...Lake Superior, Lake Michigan...
R51	The wave from a WSB radically pushed my 21' boat and almost moved it onto the dock!
R55	There are only a few areas on the Chain where WSBs can be operated without harming the lake.
R61	While kayaking last summer (close to shore) I was almost knocked out of the kayak by wake boat waves. My husband's large fiberglass fishing boat got knocked around and he also was nearly knocked overboard.
R65	These boats are extremely disruptive to the waters they are allowed to operate on. It leaves very little pleasure for others trying to enjoy the lakes.
R66	Erosion is a huge issue on our shore. Increased turbidity/redistribution of phosphorous from the lake bottom to the water column, caused by WSB downward prop wash, contributed to toxic algae blooms which made our lake unsafe for swimming from early July 2022 through the remainder of the 2022 season. This was horrible. When WSBs are on our lake we must get off. We have a loon nest near us that is at risk from the big WSB waves. We have invested a significant amount of money in our Cisco Chain retirement/family escape home. The summer of 2022 was frightening as the algae bloom severely restricted our use of the lake from early July on. Property values will plummet if that continues. We must preserve our lakes!
R67	I have witnessed all these issues on our lake. One WSB on the lake ruins all other activities.
R75	The Chain does not need these types of boats!
R76	I would prefer to ban the wake functionality of these boats.
R82	These boats have no place anywhere on the Cisco Chain as they are nothing but destructive to all of the vegetation, the shoreline, and the ecosystem all of which are fragile and dear to our lives up north.
R83	Especially concerned about nesting loons.
R88	Even if guidelines, regulations, and ordinances are followed, it won't prevent all of the destructive power WSBs will have on our lakes. We know we are inviting an activity that will most likely result in some property damage and harm to others enjoying lake activities. It is heart breaking to me to know that my fear of having my kayak submerged or capsized by a large wave will confine me to my lake and prevent me from exploring the still beautiful Cisco Chain. Our lakes are just too small to support WSB activity!

R97	What most concerning is that there are multiple negative impacts
R99	I would like to see them banned.
R100	These boats will damage shorelines and make it impossible to have a boat tied to a pier. We spend enough to try to prevent/treat aquatic invasive species and these boats will introduce more and more.
R101	It depends how people use their boats. All boats could be of concern.
R102	Wake enhanced watercraft are fine if used in larger and deeper bodies of water, but not on the Cisco Chain.
R109	These large boats (also Jet Skis that come too close to shore) are damaging our shoreline. I am disabled and walk in the water with a walker. The surf boats see me but do not slow down. They are dangerous and very rude.

3. Do you believe that: (pick one)

a) (19) further education is sufficient to ensure safe usage of WSB's.

b) (85) statutory regulations or local ordinances are necessary to regulate the use of WSB's.

Comments:

R1	I strongly support local regulation.
R8	Let's try to educate our guests and neighbors as to the proper use of WSBs and let's have periodic safety officer patrols to make people aware without having heavy handed laws.
R12	Education is vital as many wake boaters may not be aware of environmental concerns.
R28	Need both.
R30	These types of crafts do not belong on inland lakes.
R35	Need to prevent the damage before it is too late and not reversible.
R51	Statutes or ordinances are necessary as WSB owners will not comply with voluntary guidelines.
R57	Statutes/Ordinances needed rather than education because of the high number of visitors. Need to enable the DNR to enforce.
R59	Signage regarding voluntary guidelines should be posted at all boat launch facilities on the Chain.
R65	They need to be regulated and regulations need to be enforced!
R66	Statutes/ordinances are necessary. The short comings of education were on display this last summer as we watched the same surf boat travel back and forth across our lake every night for weeks on a course clearly contrary to the voluntary unenforceable guidelines.
R67	The boating industry has spent a lot of money on an educational campaign directed at surf boat owners in which they urge owners to follow their recommendations for surf boat activity. Their recommendations include "minimize repetitive passes". Yet on nearly every evening this past summer we watched a surf boat go back and forth across the same course on our lake. Further our lake is smaller than the minimum size suggested by the CCROA voluntary guidelines. Surf boat operators may follow their own industries guidelines and the voluntary guidelines advanced locally when it is convenient for them to do so. State statutes and/or local ordinances are necessary because surf boat operators demonstrate their disregard for education and for voluntary local guidelines on a daily basis. Anyone who observes the lakes can see that. Believe your own eyes.
R76	We need regulations to prohibit the use of the wake functionality of these boats.
R82	We need a total ban.

R84	The answer for the Cisco Chain is NO WAKE BOATS!
R88	If there are no statutory regulations or local ordinances I feel WSB operators will do whatever they want!
R97	No amount of education will deter individual's belief that they have unfettered rights to recreate as they wish.
R101	Start with education as this county does not need laws and regulations for everything.
R102	Regulations are necessary; I believe abuse will occur without them.
R103	I think that a large enough portion of the people who recreate on the chain are no-local vacationers (owners or renters) and that it would be hard to provide sufficient education-or to ensure that everyone practices safe usage.
R109	I see no possibility WSB safe usage without statutory regulations and oversight.

4. Would you support town ordinances which restrict the enhancement of waves by Wake Surf Boats operating in Wake Surf Mode: the enhancement of wakes by the use of ballast tanks, ballast bags, mechanical fins or by the continuous operation at transition speed (off plane)?

- Yes 89 No 16
- Township of your property: 81 Watersmeet 20 Land O' Lakes

If Yes, what wake surf mode restrictions would you support?

- (88) Minimum water depth, or ban
- (89) Minimum distance from shore, or ban
- (84) Minimum lake size, or ban
- (48) A ban on Surf Mode Operation in Town Lakes

Comments:

R1	They should only be used on large/deep Lakes
R2	Prefer a total ban.
R5	Min depth of 20', 500' from shore, and min lake size of 500 acres
R9	Min depth of 20', 500' from shore but no minimum lake size, the minimum lake size of 500 acres pushes all the surf boats to Big Lake or 1000 Island lake.
R12	We have enough ordinances
R22	I support all restrictions but want a complete ban.
R32	Ban surf mode operation throughout the country except maybe on the Great Lakes.
R35	The minimum lake size should be 4,000 to 5,000 acres
R51	Wake boats will eventually kill most sports on the Cisco Chain!
R54	Restrictions are hard to enforce. Better to avoid that problem by banning surf mode operation on the Chain and on all Town Lakes.
R67	I support the most restrictive measures possible. Why should we permit a small minority to ruin these gorgeous lakes for everyone?
R78	I prefer a ban over restrictions.
R102	I prefer a ban. If no ban then I support all the restrictions.
R105	I'm not opposed to a ban but I would especially like to see the University of Minnesota phase 2 study results before permanent decisions are made.
R109	All of the above would be heartily supported.

Other Questions:

The CCROA's goal is to "Promote Safe Fun on Clean Lakes". The CCROA currently advocates for its members and other riparian owners of the Cisco Chain by:

- Managing Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) remediation and prevention on the Chain.
- Securing and administering government grants that support AIS remediation and prevention.
- Stocking walleye on the Cisco Chain.
- In partnership with The Invasive Species Control Coalition of Watersmeet (ISCCW), coordinating boat inspections at boat launches to deter the introduction of new AIS.
- Providing information/education to Cisco Chain Riparian Owners.

1. Are there any other initiatives that you would like to see the CCROA get involved in?

R4	Cut the sand cut deeper as it is filling with sand.
R6	Stick to your goals and not in governmental controls-this is not your job! Don't act like a homeowner's association. Stay in your lane.
R8	Promoting more patrol officers available to promote more safety practices. Just their appearance makes people more law abiding.
R12	Better communication on emergency services to serve Chain, fire, ambulance, ...also a membership directory.
R16	Boating safety and rules
R19	Terrestrial invasive species remediation and prevention on the chain.
R23	Work with DNR to set up boat safety checks in spring at 1000 Island landing.
R25	A method of enforcement.
R26	Foster togetherness through a sense of community.
R31	Stop owners with walking easements from installing illegal piers and lifts.
R32	Provide law enforcement on all of the lakes.
R47	Tighten enforcement of laws regulating docks.
R58	I think you guys are doing a good job of managing the Chain without over managing.
R64	Why can't we get the DNR to stock the Chain? They stock other bodies of water that do not get nearly the pressure that the chain gets.
R66	More Walleye please.
R72	Limit the number of fishing tournaments on the Chain. Work with resorts to assure that their boat launches have proper boat cleaning equipment, and that the equipment is used.
R84	You are doing a great job! Thank you.
R93	Better buoy markings of shallow areas.
R101	Educate home owners, resort owners, and resort patrons as to the damage they can cause on our lakes.
R104	Install slow no wake buoys
R105	I love the AED/CPR education being done and would be interested in helping with that effort.
R109	We need enforceable guidelines and rigorous oversight to protect our lakes and shorelines.

2. Are you a CCROA Member?

- Yes _98_ No _7_ (11 indicated "Member Yes, but are not on active list)

If No, what is the reason you haven't joined the CCROA?

R52	We are new to the area and would like to join the CCROA.
R84	I will be joining.