

AN ASSESSMENT OF LAKESHORE DEVELOPMENT
AROUND SELECTED LAKES
IN OTTER TAIL COUNTY, MINNESOTA

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this thesis is to gain a better understanding of lakeshore development around 17 lakes in Otter Tail County, Minnesota. The 17 lakes were selected for study because they had experienced a higher rate of development growth between 1970 and 1980 than similar lakes in the county. Four specific objectives were addressed during the course of the study: 1) the identification and analysis of the physical and cultural factors that resulted in increased lakeshore development; 2) the identification of environmental and social problems associated with lakeshore development; 3) an examination of existing land use regulations and their effectiveness in influencing lakeshore development; and 4) the development of a set of recommendations for improving lakeshore development evaluation procedures and land use regulations.

The study lakes were found to have similar physical characteristics. These characteristics were not significantly different from other lakes in the same classification. The lakes did not exhibit significant levels of pollution or other environmental problems according to state and local officials. Pollution was noted by lakeshore property owners as the most serious development related problem. A sense of crowding and lake use problems were additional property owner concerns.

The majority of lakeshore property owners supported shoreline land use regulations. State and local officials believe that the regulations have improved the quality of lakeshore development. Existing lakeshore development evaluation techniques in Otter Tail County utilize physical or other objective information. Local officials may be able to improve their development monitoring procedures if property owners were consulted. Current land use regulations appear to be

effectively controlling development around the lakes. Lake use regulations may be needed on some lakes to reduce user conflicts.