

# *Manitoba Association of Cottage Owners*



MACO's position as of July 21 2009



## **Lake Winnipeg Research Consortium**

### ***Background to the Issue:***

The Lake Winnipeg Research Consortium Inc. (LWRC) is a non-profit organization that was established in 1998 to facilitate multidisciplinary scientific research and to create educational opportunities on Lake Winnipeg following the 1997 Red River "Flood of the Century". The LWRC was incorporated in 2001, received charitable status in 2008 and its continually growing membership, currently at 32 agencies, includes First Nations communities, several cottager associations including the Manitoba Association of Cottage Owners, universities and government departments.

### ***Cautionary Notes:***

Cottages, wherever they may be, are often situated on or near lakes and rivers, and the quality of the water in those lakes and rivers is of vital interest and concern to cottagers. Recently we have seen declines in water quality throughout the Lake Winnipeg watershed and the LWRC's research is specifically focused on that issue within Lake Winnipeg itself.

### ***Budget Implications:***

The costs of protecting the environment will not be cheap but it need not be expensive if we can understand how it occurs and how we can mitigate it..

### ***Policy or Program Implications: What is current Policy or Program for this issue?***

As members of the LWRC through MACO, cottagers can become informed about and understand the real nature of Lake Winnipeg's problems.

### ***Action Taken by MACO:***

Financial support provided by MACO has been used to help develop the LWRC education program whereby students come on board the research vessel MV NAMAQ for a hands-on field trip.

### ***MACO's Recommendations for the Future:***

By taking the initiative on an individual basis and altering their own behaviour, cottagers can play a key role in remediating the problems currently facing Lake Winnipeg as well as those facing water bodies throughout the watershed itself.

### ***Position of MACO***

- Environmental protection is critical if cottagers are to enjoy the pristine qualities of our shorelines and wetlands. Water protection is thus important.