

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Think New York, Detroit, Chicago, Milwaukee, Minneapolis, St. Paul, St. Louis, and on and on. They built water filtration and treatment plants for their water needs using the surface water from their rivers and lakes. When suburbs grew, they did it the cheap way by drilling a deep well and putting up a water tower instead of building a filtration plant using surface water. Now that it's evident that underground water sources have finite limits, we need to return to using more surface water. This costs more, but is the only way to achieve long-term sustainability. But rather than each suburb trying to solve its own water supply problem, this can most cost-effectively be done on a metrowide basis. Of all the projects our Metropolitan Council has done, the design and construction of the metropolitan sanitary sewer system is conceded by all to be its crowning achievement. Now is the time for the Met Council to "complete the circle" and construct a surface water purification and delivery system to serve the entire metropolitan area.

Merton Bartsch  
White Bear Lake

### Grandchildren applaud judge's decision

I commend Justin McCarthy for his knowledge of the U.S. Geological Survey and Department of Natural

Resources studies of White Bear Lake as well as his conclusion that our Minnesota representatives and senators displayed a lack of leadership and a lack of knowledge of our lake in passing HF4003 and SF3573.

Let me add a few additional points to McCarthy's recent letter to the editor. Previous generations knew that lake levels on White Bear Lake fluctuated and installed high-capacity wells to maintain the lake level for fishermen, for sailors, for swimmers and for general recreation by Twin Cities residents. Previous generations simply did not know why our lake fluctuated, but they knew our community relied on our lake for both commercial and recreational uses.

Fast-forward to today: two "static" studies by the USGS and the most recent "dynamic" study by the DNR confirm we are depleting our aquifer through the use of municipal wells and that our aquifer can no longer recover from today's high water usage during the summer months. In other words, the use of our aquifer for drinking water is no longer sustainable.

Judge Margaret Marrinan and her staff studied all the research on White Bear Lake levels and recognized the Twin Cities obtained 70 percent of our drinking water from surface water, i.e. the Mississippi River, 50-plus years ago; however, today 70 percent of our drinking water comes from groundwater, i.e. the Prairie du Chien-Jordan

Aquifer. Judge Marrinan simply said the DNR has a legal requirement to protect our natural resources for future generations and provided incentives for our communities to restore the use of surface water as a source of our drinking water.

My grandchildren applaud Judge Marrinan's decision but not that of our Legislature.

Mike Downing  
White Bear Township

### Depleting a natural resource

Thank you, Judge Margaret Marrinan, for trying to make our politicians realize that our groundwater supply is not infinite. And no compliments to our short-sighted government officials who think that they can defy reality and continue to deplete this valuable resource with no adverse consequences. To the White Bear Lake City Council: you don't speak for all of us. Of all persons, you should be the most ardent defenders of our lake and its underground water supply.

Traditionally, cities grew where there was a bountiful surface water source such as a large river or lake.