



Watercraft Operator's Permit, UMN Wake Boat Study, MN DNR Boaters' Survey MN COLA News

WC-COLA Annual Meeting

May 7, 2022

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MN COLA

Watercraft Operator's Permit

- Exact language is being debated but in general:
 - It would require anyone born after 1/1/87 to eventually complete boater education package
 - To be phased in over a five-year period beginning in 2024
 - Allow visitors of less than 60 days to follow requirements of their home state
- As of the beginning of this week: Heading to Conference Committee & omnibus bill
 - Currently, in House bill but not in Senate bill
 - First sponsored by Erin Koegel (DFL-Spring Lake Park) and Carrie Ruud (R-Breezy Point)
- Supported by the NMMA, MRAA, MLRA, MN COLA, and Tonka Bay Marine
- Manufacturers and retailers' proposal for a 200' setback from shore for wake boats is dropped

"Through a more formal boater education approach throughout Minnesota, we seek to unite the many stakeholder groups and create a strong civic partnership that will provide for recreational enjoyment, public safety, a strong lake-based economy and the long-term health of our waterways"





Watercraft Operator's Permit

- Rationale:
 - Rather than create new regulations telling people what to do why not create a requirement requiring people to learn what to do
 - Everyone realizes that the 200' setback has no technical basis
 - Testing indicates the setback from shore should be substantially further than 200' for the same wave energy, but testing has not been completed and setting distances now makes no sense
 - 2021 survey on Christmas Lake: "Boater Safety" was the most frequently identified response (57%)
- Contact your legislators and push for this common-sense solution
 - The bill has bipartisan support
 - Local: Representative Joe MacDonald and Senator Bruce Anderson



UMN St. Anthony Falls Laboratory (SAFL) Wake Boat Study

- Principle Researchers: Jeff Marr & Andy Riesgraf / SAFL
- Download full report:
<https://conservancy.umn.edu/handle/11299/226190>
- Download FAQs: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1CC3I2zt_TNE-eM5MP4W17xCMzxiZRLr9/view
- Conducted in Sept.-Oct. of 2020 on Lake Independence in Hennepin County
- Project was crowdfunded with substantial support from 200+ donors across the US



UMN St. Anthony Falls Laboratory (SAFL) Wake Boat Study

- The report covers technical findings, including wave energies produced by wake boats and non-wake boats, and provides useful comparisons in both numerical and chart form
- The report's objectives:
 - Measure height, energy, and power produced by both wakesurf boats and non-wakesurf boats under 'normal' operation conditions
 - '... move the discussion from anecdotal observations to actual numbers.'
(MSU Webinar, 4/26/2022)
- The report **does not** suggest policies or regulations concerning the use of wake boats; that is left to others



SAFL Wake Boat Study: Methodology

- Four boats tested: two non-wakesurf boats and two wakesurf boats
 - “Selected based on their size, operational characteristics, typical usage, and availability”
 - Maximum wave height and power and total wave energy measured at four distances from shore (225, 325, 425, and 625 ft)
- Boats evaluated under three conditions:
 - Condition 1a– speed of 10-11 MPH and creating the largest waves
 - Ballast tanks full on wakesurf boats; wave shaper attached on non-wakesurf boat
 - Condition 1b – speed of 10-11 MPH and creating the largest waves
 - Ballast tanks empty on wakesurf boats; wave shaper removed from non-wakesurf boat
 - Condition 2 – speed of 20 mph and planing
 - Normal operation for non-wakesurf boats



SAFL Wake Boat Study: Findings

- The two wake boats produced the largest waves under all conditions
- The smallest wave heights, lowest total wave packet energies were produced when any of the boats were planing
- For the wake boats whether the ballast tanks were full (Condition 1a) versus empty (Condition 1b) had only a small impact on max wave height and total wave energy at distances over 100 feet
- Under typical operation conditions (Condition 1a for wake boats and Condition 2 for non-wake boats) wake boats require >500 feet to attenuate to the same wave energy as a non-wake boats planing at 200 feet

Source:

UMN SAFL
Project Report No. 600

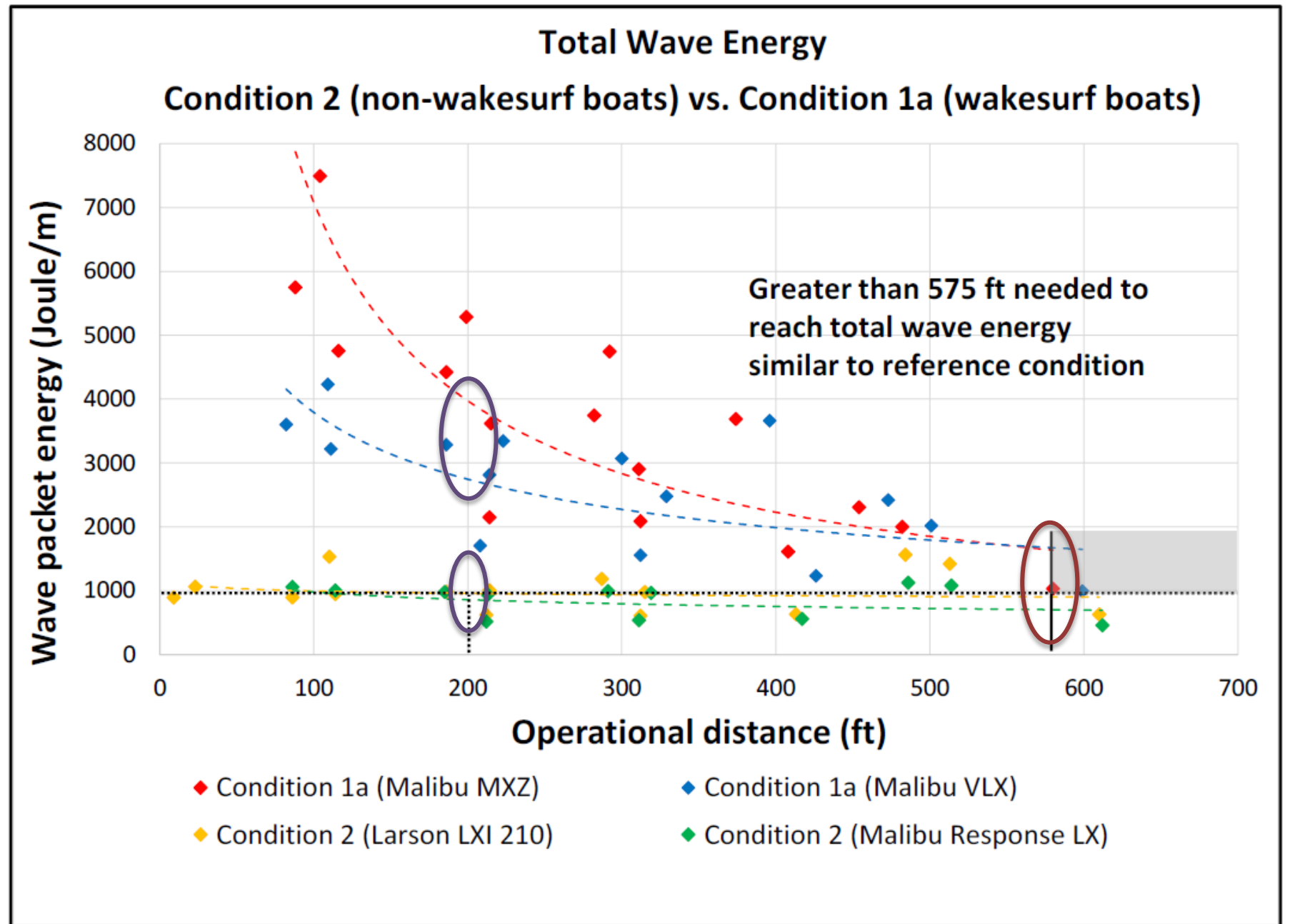


Figure 46. Illustration of a potential method for estimating the operational distance needed to reduce the total wave energy of the wakesurf boat to reference levels associated with Condition 2 (planing) of the non-wakesurf boats (black horizontal dashed line).



SAFL Wake Boat Study: What's Next?

- Planning for Phase 2 underway
- Funding mechanism? Crowdsourcing? Mid-May?
- Phase 2 is expected to focus on the prop wash issue and the impact on downward forces



2020 MN DNR Boater's Survey

(a few highlights)

- Users Profile
 - Older than average; half own lakeshore
 - Three-quarters say boating is important part of life and most own more than one boat
- Users Activities
 - Most common activities: riding, fishing and swimming
 - Half used a non-motorized boat during the year
- Experiences
 - Why?: top three: rest & relaxation; socialization; and fishing
 - **87% satisfied with Minnesota boating; 70% satisfied with regulation enforcement**
 - Concerns: 34% high wakes; 30% too fast or too close; ~25% jet skis and wakesurf boats
 - Among lakeshore owners' concerns rise to 39% for high wakes
 - **Lakes are too crowded: 80% of respondents**

<https://files.dnr.state.mn.us/aboutdnr/reports/boating/2020-mn-rec-boating.pdf>



2020 MN DNR Boater's Survey

(a few highlights)

- Public Water Facilities
 - 79% use public launches; 2/3 of these folks 3+ times/year
 - Large majority of launch users are pleased with the facilities
- Safety & Equipment
 - **90% have life jackets but few use them all of the time**
 - 42% support some restrictions on wake boats in shallow water and on small lakes
 - **94% indicate need for some kind of wake boat restrictions**
 - Most want lake-specific restrictions rather than statewide restrictions
 - More than half oppose extending jet ski times



What's Up at MN COLA?

- Mission: MN COLA is a volunteer organization with the mission of preserving, protecting and improving the waters and shorelands of the State of Minnesota through advocacy, education, and sharing of best practices.
- MN COLA issued a survey this week
 - Intended to be a longitudinal study where in a year or so we go back and survey again to measure progress
 - We are focused on communications and delivering value to members and friends
 - Survey issued from MinnesotaCOLA@gmail.com
- This year's educational focus is on lake resiliency
 - Four member meetings/year
- Developing a Newsletter
- Redeveloping Website
- MN COLA Mail List
 - Get on our list: contact@mncola.com





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