

## **A Cooperative Spirit**

The District owes its origins to the concerns and visions of a broad range of people and organizations. City, County, officials, local representatives of state and federal governments, lake associations, lake property owners, businesses and local professionals were all part of the effort to establish PRWD.

In subsequent years, this ethic continued in several forms. The early managers, themselves broadly representative of the local business and professional community, recruited an advisory committee comprised of 21 people, including governmental officials, elected representatives, businessmen, lakeshore property owners, and lake association members. The advisory committee prepared the Overall Plan which governed the activities of the District for a large part of its history.

Most of the District's projects and other activities were jointly conceived and funded. Especially noteworthy has the involvement of the City of Detroit Lakes. For example, the City worked closely with the District in developing its state-of-the-art sewage treatment plant and evaluating its impact. Extending sewage treatment areas, and stormwater treatment, and water quality monitoring often have been joint efforts. Similarly, the District worked closely with County officials in its acquisition of land for Dunton Locks Park and road-upgrading projects. Weed harvesting projects were advocated and paid for by lakeshore residents, sometimes with support from State and local governments. District managers and staff often were called upon by state and local governments to review proposals that might have some impacts on area lakes. Local politicians often were instrumental in obtaining funds for District efforts.

From its inception, The District has perceived itself as a coordinating agency. Not only were the District's goals of protection of lake water quality, and its enhancement widely-shared, but they usually have been accorded a high priority among residents and officials. Only rarely in its 40 years did the District's programs or practices become the target of citizen or governmental animus.