



Waterdogs Fishing Club

Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minnesota

Welcome to the Waterdogs Fishing Club!

As you may know, new members are accepted only when there is a vacancy in our membership, which is limited to 40 members, and upon the recommendation of a current club member. So being highly recommended, we look forward to getting to know you and having you as part of the club.

We all remember what it was like to be the new student or the new employee, and wonder what we had gotten ourselves into. So, we hope the following items will help you be a little more familiar with the club and will help you settle in.

About the Club: Founded in the Twin Cities in 1982, The Waterdogs Fishing Club is made up of anglers from all aspects of life with a variety of fishing interests. The club was founded with the purpose of allowing it's members to learn from each other, while enjoying the pleasures of fishing. The club's members adhere to a strict catch-and-release ethic while participating in club fishing outings.

Bylaws: Our club has developed its own bylaws to guide us in our decision making about tournaments, and all other club events. We strongly encourage you to read our bylaws and become familiar with the history of the club, our policies and procedures, our structure, and our tournament rules. Our bylaws are a "living" document and we encourage any member to suggest ideas on how we govern ourselves.

Participation: Our club thrives on participation. It's so important to the health and legacy of our club, we've written it into our bylaws: **we require minimum participation in at least 50 percent of all club tournaments and meetings.** Your participation is what makes being a Waterdog an enjoyable and rewarding experience for all of us. So please mark your calendar with dates for upcoming monthly meetings, tournament dates, special service events and the Lake of the Woods trip and try to make as many of these events as you can. Just showing up is essential!

But don't stop there. Bring new ideas to the club for special service projects. Share your thoughts, ideas and fishing techniques. Suggest topics for future speakers to present at the monthly meetings or suggest guest speakers if you know someone. Voice your opinions to spark discussions at the monthly meetings. It's all of the little things like those above (and more) that we can all do to make our time shared with each other all the more enjoyable, rewarding and educational.

Committees: Many hands make the lifting lighter. Our club encourages all members to actively volunteer and participate in at least one committee throughout the year. Some members participate in more than one. Also, there are opportunities to chair a committee and develop your leadership skills. Committees include: Tournaments, Annual Trip, Food, Photo, Newsletter, Annual Banquet, and Seminars.

Newsletter: *The Documentary* is the club's monthly newsletter, which is e-mailed to all club members prior to the next monthly meeting. The newsletter features a column from the club's president, the club calendar, fishing tips, member profiles and more.

Web Page: The Waterdogs have a Web page with information about the club, upcoming events, event results, pictures and helpful links. The Web address is <http://www.waterdogsmn.org/>

Boats: While many members own boats, this is not a requirement to be a member in the Waterdogs. In fact, the club is a great opportunity for non-boaters to enjoy boat fishing without ownership. Even if you own a boat, you may want to fish in other member boats for a few tournaments to see how other boats are equipped. We do require that a boat be equipped with a marine band radio for all club outings, and that all boats used in tournaments meet the minimum boat safety requirements for the State of Minnesota.

Monthly Meetings: The Waterdogs meet the first Thursday of every month throughout the year. Meetings start at 7:00pm and typically last from 1 to 2 hours. Many members arrive early (about 6 p.m.) to share a bite to eat with their fellow Waterdogs. Meetings often include both internal and external speakers on a variety of fishing topics. Our current meeting location is Tuttle's Bowling Alley, Shady Oak Road, Hopkins, Minn. The July meeting is typically conducted at Thorne Brothers in Fridley and is focused on muskie fishing and the annual LOTW (Lake of the Woods) trip. The November monthly meeting is always devoted to the annual banquet where members and their families get together.

Special Services: Performing community services have been a part of the Waterdogs' tradition since day one. Over the years the club has been involved in numerous activities for organizations around the metro area including: Adopt-a-River, Ron Schara's Cast-Aways for Kids, Ron Schara's Kids Fishing Clinics, Courage Center and many more.

Annual Trip: Every July, the Waterdogs head north for their annual trip, which has traditionally been devoted to fishing for muskies, or anything that will hit a muskie bait (including big pike, walleyes and smallies). While locations have varied over the years, the club has settled down for the past few years at the Angle Outpost (www.angleoutpost.com) on Minnesota's Northwest Angle, Lake of the Woods. Attendance is not required, but is strongly encouraged as it allows members time to get to know one another.

Tournaments: The Waterdogs schedule six to seven tournaments over the course of a season (from March through October). One or two of these tournaments may be two-day overnight outings. These tournaments take on a variety of approaches over numerous bodies of water. Single and multi-species tournaments have been held for walleye, stream trout, muskie, pike, bass, and crappie. All tournaments are catch and release. Popular metro area locations have included: Lake Minnetonka, White Bear Lake, the Mississippi River, Lake Waconia and the St. Croix River. Outstate destinations have included Lake Vermilion, the St. Louis River, Leech Lake, Lake Le Hommedieu, the Whitewater River, Clearwater Lake, Lake Mille Lacs and many more.

Year-End Awards: Over the course of the year, members receive points for their tournament results over the year as well as for their participation in Special Service events. During the annual banquet in November, awards are presented to the top anglers as well as for individual tournament winners. Additional awards for Captain of the Year, Swabbie of the Year, Weenie of the Year and Waterdog of the Year also are awarded.

Sharing Expenses for Tournaments/Outings: It is expected that boat partners divide their expenses evenly among themselves. Costs will always vary according to the boat, vehicle, and distance traveled. The non-boat partner is expected to pay for ½ of the boat owner's expenses for traveling to, during, and from a club tournament or outing. It is understood that a variety of circumstances can take place, so it is expected that partners discuss finances, travel arrangements, meeting times, etc., before the function to avoid bad feelings. Boat owners cannot charge partners for insurance, parts, repairs, or other problems that can develop while on a fishing excursion. However, non-boaters should understand that the cost of owning and operating a boat is more than the cost of gas, so don't be a cheapskate when it comes time to reimburse the boat owner. We realize it is often difficult for some people to ask for money, but please don't be afraid to ask. Non-boaters, please make a habit to ask the boat owner how much you owe.

Food Expenses: In recognition of the cost of owning, maintaining and operating a boat, the non-boater should pay for the meal expense of the captain for one main meal of the trip.

If you have any questions, suggestions or comments, please feel free to ask a fellow member or any one of us. We would like to do anything we can to make you feel comfortable and as much a part of the club as possible. Again, welcome. We're glad you're a Waterdog.