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# Higgins Lake Property Owners Association

PO Box 55 308-B Lake Street Roscommon, MI 48653

Website: [www.hlpoa.org](http://www.hlpoa.org) Email: [hlpoa0@gmail.com](mailto:hlpoa0@gmail.com)

Ph.: (989) 275-9181 Fax: (989) 275-9182 Office Hours: M,W & Th from 9 am - 2:00 pm.

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**To Protect, Preserve and Enhance the Quality of Higgins Lake and Its Surrounding Watershed**

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**In this issue: Call to Action - Expansion of West DNR Launch Site, Swimmer's Itch and Elections**

## Membership

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Welcome to HLPOA's 2017 membership year! Thank you to the 257 members who joined by sending their membership dues by January 31. Well done! As of February 2, there are already 217 returning members and 40 new members. Some have taken advantage of the bylaw provision to obtain a non-voting membership. Our bylaws allow for multiple memberships for those with an ownership interest in a single riparian property, although there can only be one voting membership for that single property. Non-voting members are welcome and vital, supporting the work of the HLPOA and providing their input to the Board on matters they feel are important.

### You can help!

- **Encourage neighbors to join**
- **New neighbors? House just sold? Call the HLPOA office so we can welcome them to the lake!**

**Dianne Wagner - Membership**



*"Don't Forget the Sunscreen" - Courtesy Photo*

### Dear HLPOA Members,

I trust you are enjoying this updated newsletter format. I love it as we have multiple contributors covering many topics. Join me in a special thank you to Linda Brick for all her work in making this new design a reality. Thank you Linda!

Your thoughts as to how we can make the HLPOA as effective and impactful as possible are always encouraged. We occasionally hear from members who may have a different opinion as to our strategies to promote our goals. Again, we welcome your input. Please understand our focus is always to protect our lake and riparian interests.

Enjoy reading this newsletter and stay up to date with the activities of the HLPOA during these winter months. As always, in the best interest of the lake,

**Brad Gibson - HLPOA President**

Preparations are underway for the 2017 HLPOA Directory for your use this summer. **The directory will be mailed to your permanent mailing address in June, 2017.**

The directory is published for members' use. Inclusion is optional. As a courtesy, upon request, names of non-member family with ownership interest, may be included.

The directory includes members names, local address, permanent address and phone numbers. Included in the directory is general information about the HLPOA and its committees and ads from local businesses.

Revenues from ads cover costs of the directory and mailing. (Last year the directory was also a profit maker!)

### Please note

- **If you were in the 2016 Directory, your entry will be the same.** (Please see your entry and contact us for changes.)
- If you are new to the HLPOA, your information will be included **unless you contact us.** You may choose to share none, some or all of your contact information.
- We try our best to publish accurate member information. Please direct corrections, changes or requests by emailing or mailing to the **Communication Committee - Charlene Cornell 49 S. Franklin St., Chargin Falls, OH 44022** [hlpoamemberdirectory@gmail.com](mailto:hlpoamemberdirectory@gmail.com)

## Call to Action

### Expansion of the West DNR Facility

The letter (following on page 3) to Teresa Sherwood of the DEQ is a joint effort of the HLPOA Board and the Riparian Committee. It requests the DEQ re-evaluate their plans for an expansion of the West DNR Launch facility in light of serious environmental and safety concerns, as well as requesting a public meeting with adequate notice. Similar letters also have been sent by the Higgins Lake West Shore Association, Riparians on the West Shore and Ed Nellist, Supervisor of Lyon Township.

We strongly encourage you to copy the email addresses provided in the letter (and repeated below) and paste them into your email service provider to express your own views. We would ask you to comment about the importance of the DEQ/DNR in helping to protect the health and safety of Higgins Lake, concerns you may have about the continuous expansion of boat load and boat access on Higgins Lake by the DEQ/DNR including approval of a large marina at Amvets and the proposed West Launch expansion, your views about announcing short comment periods for affected Higgins Lake riparians in the dead of winter and the need for public meetings to allow riparians to voice concerns and get answers from the DNR/DEQ. We also encourage you to share your views with your state legislative representatives. Feel free to share this with other riparians who are not HLPOA members so they can weigh in. Your voice matters.

Thanks for your support.

Brad Gibson  
HLPOA President

Teresa Sherwood, DEQ, email: [sherwoodt1@michigan.gov](mailto:sherwoodt1@michigan.gov)

Heidi Grether, DEQ Director, email: [GretherH@michigan.gov](mailto:GretherH@michigan.gov)

Keith Creagh, DNR Director, email: [creaghk@michigan.gov](mailto:creaghk@michigan.gov)

## Call to Action Continued on page 3

**Save the Date - HLPOA Annual Meeting - Saturday, July 15 at Roscommon High School**

**Have your voice heard, your vote counted.**



# Call to Action

## Higgins Lake Property Owners Association

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Ph.: (989) 275-9181 Fax: (989) 275-9182

<b>President:</b>	Brad Gibson	<b>Directors:</b>	
<b>Vice President:</b>	Charlene Cornell	Bill Case	Bob McKellar
<b>Secretary:</b>	Herb Weatherly	Ken Dennings	Jim Vondale
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Chuck Brick	Bob Hoffman	Dianne Wagner

January 30, 2017

Ms. Teresa Sherwood, [sherwoodt1@michigan.gov](mailto:sherwoodt1@michigan.gov)  
State of Michigan, Department of Environmental Quality  
Water Resources Division, Gaylord District Office  
2100 West M-32  
Gaylord, MI 49735-9282

Re: West Higgins Lake Boat Access Site

Dear Ms. Sherwood,

The Higgins Lake Property Owner's Association (HLPOA) represents more than 500 riparian property owners. Most reside and vote at Higgins Lake or other parts of the state of Michigan. We have a strong interest in the lake, including water quality and safety interests. Actions by the Michigan DEQ/DNR that negatively impact the lake affect all HLPOA members. Actions that benefit the lake benefit all HLPOA members. This letter supports and incorporates concerns expressed in letters of opposition on this matter filed by others.

The HLPOA has recently learned that the MDEQ/MDNR has again taken steps to expand access (pad expansion that will accommodate even larger boats) to Higgins Lake and perform maintenance at the West DNR Launch. This maintenance (pad replacement and fill) will negatively impact the water quality of the lake. This follows the recent permit authorization by the MDEQ for a major marina at a nearby site on the west shore of Higgins Lake. The MDEQ/MDNR ignored the concerns of HLPOA members and granted the marina permit. The HLPOA and affected property owners are currently challenging the granting of that permit in an administrative proceeding.

While we understand that Higgins Lake is a public lake, we have serious concerns that the MDEQ/MDNR are not properly considering the environmental and safety impacts of its decisions to continually expand public access to the lake using taxpayer money. The MDEQ/MDNR have previously been made aware of serious environmental and other concerns by lake residents at the West DNR Launch, including an increasing boat load on the lake. The HLPOA is opposed to the proposed permit in the absence of a showing that our concerns, including environmental and safety concerns, have been properly addressed.

The HLPOA has additional concerns about the timing and length of the comment period for this proposed permit. A 20 day comment period in the middle of winter when most residents are away from the lake does not provide reasonable notice or give affected property owners fair opportunity to provide comments. If the MDEQ/MDNR are serious about transparency and receiving meaningful input, they should revise the notice. Additionally, the concerns raised need to be discussed and resolved at a public meeting with adequate notice where affected persons can be present.

Brad Gibson  
HLPOA President

Cc: MDNR Director, Mr. Keith Creagh, [creaghk@michigan.gov](mailto:creaghk@michigan.gov)  
MDEQ Director, Ms. Heidi Grether, [GretherH@michigan.gov](mailto:GretherH@michigan.gov)

*Dedicated to preserving the quality and beauty of Higgins Lake*

## Did you know?

The HLPOA is a member of the Michigan Lake and Stream Association, Inc, a non-profit, state-wide organization dedicated to the preservation, protection and wise management of Michigan's vast treasure of inland lakes and streams. The corporation was created in 1961 and has **individual members** as well as more than 250 lake, river and stream associations such as the HLPOA.

Among its many focuses, the Association

- sponsors and arranges workshops, meetings and seminars to provide timely information about the use and wise management of lakes, rivers and streams,
- produces and distributes educational brochures,
- administers the MI Corps Cooperative Lakes Monitoring Program,
- informs associations of changes in state land and water use regulations and
- publishes *The Michigan Riparian* magazine.

The 2017 Annual Conference is April 21 & 22 at Crystal Mountain. HLPOA Vice-President, Charlene Cornell, attended the 2016 conference and will return this year. Charlene will share topics discussed and information disseminated at the conference with the HLPOA Board and membership.

Visit the HLPOA Website and click on the link to go to the Michigan Lake & Stream Association website or *The Michigan Riparian* link. There you may read archived articles.

## Interested in self-education?

The Michigan State University Extension offers the knowledge and resources of MSU to individuals. Again this year, "Introduction to Lakes", a six-week online course specially designed for citizens and professionals alike who are interested in learning about inland lakes will be offered in late 2017.

## Swimmer's Itch Update - Jim Vondale

The HLPOA board continues to coordinate closely and support the efforts of the Higgins Lake Swimmer's Itch Organization (HLSIO) and the Michigan Swimmer's Itch Partnership (MSIP) in the fight against swimmer's itch. Jim Vondale is an HLPOA board member, President of HLSIO and a co-chair of MSIP with Ted Fisher from the Crystal Lake and Watershed Association. Dianne Wagner has been elected a Director of HLSIO replacing Ken Dennings who recently retired from the HLSIO board.

In December, 2016, MSIP, an informal partnership of 24 Michigan lake associations, signed a letter of understanding to partner with Tip of the Mitt Watershed Association (Tip) located in Petoskey. Gail Gruenwald is the Executive Director of Tip and experienced in lake association issues. Susan Price, formerly of the Leelanau Conservancy, is working for Tip as MSIP's project manager. MSIP's Steering Committee, consisting of representatives of Higgins, Gogebic, Crystal, Glen, Leelanau, Long, Portage, and Lime lakes, is leading the state-wide swimmer's itch fight.

MSIP representatives, including Dianne Wagner, will be meeting with representatives of the DNR and DEQ on Feb 8 to discuss important swimmer's itch issues facing Michigan lakes, including future permitting plans and funding for swimmer's itch.

HLSIO, Glen Lake, Lake Leelanau and Crystal Lake are working together and have separately retained HLPOA's lobbyist, John Lindley, for 2017 to seek another \$250,000 state appropriation to fight swimmer's itch.

The HLPOA board works closely with and strongly supports MSIP and HLSIO because it believes a long term, science-based, focused, creative and coordinated effort is needed to effectively fight swimmer's itch. The HLPOA board also believes clear metrics to measure success are an essential part of an effective effort. The HLSIO has led the successful, science and metric-based swimmer's itch control program on Higgins Lake. The MSIP promotes sharing of information among Michigan Lake associations, combining resources and influence and advancing swimmer's itch state-of-the-art. That includes reducing the cost of effective, science-based control programs, advancing new qPCR genetic-based lake infection measurement technology (discussed at the June 2016 Swimmer's Itch Symposium at Roscommon High School), making this technology easily and affordably available to Michigan lakes, and using drones to find merganser nests (being tested by biologists at Glen Lake.)

## What can you do? Help Wanted

- **Attend the Annual Meeting, July 15**
- Volunteer - the more hands, the easier the tasks. The more minds, the richer the ideas. You do not need to be a full-time resident to help. In this age of electronics, even board members can attend meetings from afar!
- Sometimes volunteers are needed for one-time tasks such as preparing bulk mailings, collating, hostessing, or chasing down a job quote. Can you be "on-call"?
- Do you have an area of special interest? Environmental? Legal? PAC? Join a committee or donate to a fund.
- Do you have an area of expertise? Finance/Accountant? Computer whiz? Graphics? Social Media? **Right now, we could especially use professional tax preparation help and a social media manager!**
- Provide your email address with the HLPOA to reduce mailing costs. We do not share email addresses.
- **Like us on Facebook!**

Contact the HLPOA office at  
989-275-9181 or [hlpoao@gmail.com](mailto:hlpoao@gmail.com)



## Election Committee - Ken Dennings

The HLPOA Board is seeking candidates who might want to place his/her name on the ballot for election to the eleven member Board of Directors at the July 2017 Annual Meeting. Eligible candidates must be current members of the HLPOA.

These are all volunteer positions, without the benefit of compensation, however, there is great satisfaction in serving on one of the oldest (formed in 1935), most active and progressive inland lake association in the State of Michigan . . . where you can make a difference in protecting the body of water we lovingly call Higgins Lake.

In July there will be four Board of Director positions with expiring terms. Candidates and their qualifications will be presented by mail to the membership in advance of the Annual Meeting. The election will take place at the Annual Meeting and successful candidates will serve as HLPOA Directors for a term of three years.

It would be especially beneficial to have a volunteer on the Board who is currently (or was, prior to retirement) an Accountant/Tax Preparer. These specialized skills would be appreciated.

The HLPOA Board of Directors meets monthly at the HLPOA Office in Roscommon on the third Monday of each month at 9:00 am. The HLPOA provides and recognizes conference call participation for any director who is unable to attend a monthly meeting.

Please take advantage of this opportunity to serve on the HLPOA Board and submit your written application, including contact information and a brief background by May 8<sup>th</sup> to:

HLPOA Elections Committee  
PO Box 55  
Roscommon, MI 49653

*Correction, with apologies: In the December, 2106 Newsletter, the last line of the article to welcome David Udy was accidentally omitted. Thank you.*

David Udy is the new supervisor in Gerrish Township. The HLPOA endorsed his candidacy opposing Frank Homola. Mr. Udy has been a strong proponent of the Higgins Lake Swimmer's Itch Organization and the hiring of SICON biologists to implement a three-year, science-based Swimmer's Itch Control Program at Higgins Lake. Mr. Udy also voiced his support in the formation of the Michigan Swimmer's Itch Partnership to share strategies and consolidate efforts toward controlling the infectious cercariae parasite that has invaded *many of northern Michigan's inland lakes*.

## Sincere Thanks

Since the December newsletter, the following have generously donated funds from \$10 - 500 to support the HLPOA in its endeavors:

### To the General Fund

Herb Weatherly  
 Chuck & Linda Brick  
 Charlene Cornell & Ric Blamer  
 Mary Louise Warne  
 Robert Zuzula  
 Mark Dupuie & Elizabeth Jones  
 Eloise Madison  
 Fred Swinehart  
 Donald & Elaine Grunzine  
 Michael Novello  
 David Dionise  
 Francis & Cathy Fitzgerald  
 Dirk & Lisa Waltz  
 Donald Hanson  
 John & Sue Vandenburg  
 D. John & Christine Ogren  
 Betty J. Thomas  
 Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Kane  
 Joseph Stowell  
 Don & Marie Heys  
 Richard & Barbara Bos  
 James & Judith Shepard  
 Tom & Carol Thomson  
 John & Lois Elder  
 Daniel & David Ferwerda  
 Henry & Joyce Leopold  
 Davie & Karen Jordan  
 Judy George  
 James & Monica Goble  
 Sally M. Voorheis  
 Roger & Cathy Spalding  
 Thomas & Phyllis Hall  
 Sisters of Mercy  
 Duane Lach  
 Alice Bonta  
 Ron & Sharon Pike  
 Dennis & Nadine Corte

### To the Legal Fund

Mary Louise Warne  
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 Fred Swinehart  
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 Dennis & Loretta Hill  
 Kim Kane  
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 The Galehouses & Sweeneys  
 David & Lisa Brown  
 Duane Lach  
 Robert Blamer  
 Larry & Judy Beckert  
 Dennis & Nadine Corte  
 Don & Barbara Richards

### To the Environmental Fund

Bob & Diane Wagner  
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 Dirk & Lisa Waltz  
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 D. John & Christine Ogren  
 Don & Marie Heys  
 Richard & Barbara Bos  
 John & Kimberly Bohenic  
 John & Carolyn Allaben  
 Suzanne Fabian  
 David & Karen Jordan  
 Gil & Linda Burm



**2016 - 2017 HLPOA Board:** President - Brad Gibson, Vice President - Charlene Cornell, Secretary - Herb Weatherly, Treasurer - Chuck Brick. Directors: Bill Case, Ken Dennings, Bob Hoffman, Bob McKellar, Jim Vondale, Dianne Wagner. Administrative Assistant - Kathleen Barger



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