

Higgins Lake Swimmer's Itch Organization
P.O. Drawer 665, Grayling, MI 49738

July 9, 2017

Dear Higgins Lake Swimmer's Itch Organization (HLSIO) Supporters,

This is the third year of HLSIO's swimmer's itch reduction program for Higgins Lake. Your HLSIO board, supported by the HLPOA board, has been working hard to bring you the leading swimmer's itch reduction program available in the world. We have once again delivered excellent results. Your HLSIO board wants to thank all HLSIO supporters for their generous contributions. None of this would have been possible without your strong support.

Attached is the first update from our 2017 HLSIO swimmer's itch program provided by Dr. Curt Blankespoor and his team of highly qualified scientists (Swimmer's Itch Solutions www.swimmersitchsolutions.com.) As you will see, we are continuing to make great progress in our fight against swimmer's itch on Higgins Lake. Our snail infection rate metric continues to show a reduction in infected snails (no infected snails have been identified so far this summer out of more than 4000 snails collected) and swimmer's itch reports by lake users are down again. Four broods have been moved from Higgins Lake so far this year (a total of 55 ducklings), a reduction from past years. The average daily resident merganser count this summer was down again from 11 last year to just 6 this year.

Our science-based program remains focused on capture and relocation of brood ducks that become highly infected and remain on the lake all summer. They are the primary cause of swimmer's itch on Higgins and other lakes. The HLSIO program has had a 100% success rate in each of the three years of the program removing all brood ducks from Higgins Lake. We continue to coordinate closely with other lakes in the Michigan Swimmer's Itch Partnership (MISIP), including a 5 lake pilot program that includes Crystal, Glen, Higgins, Leelanau and Lime.

MISIP was successful in obtaining another \$250,000 appropriation from the Michigan legislature in the July 2017 state budget. That brings total state swimmer's itch support to \$500,000 over two years. MISIP allocated \$89,000 from the June 2016 state appropriation to support HLSIO, the largest allocation of any Michigan lake program. We will work to obtain an additional allocation from the June 2017 appropriation for Higgins Lake.

Dr. Blankespoor and his team will present a summary of the 2017 HLSIO program and answer questions at the July 15 HLPOA annual meeting. Please plan on attending if you are an HLPOA member. If you're not a member, please join and support HLPOA and the HLSIO program.

The annual HLSIO Fundraising Dinner hosted by Jim and Laura Witt (Jim's Collision) with dinner (Prime Rib buffet) compliments of Fred's of Roscommon (Neal Cooley) will be held on Thursday, August 24, 2017 from 6-9 pm. Tickets are \$100 per person. You can buy tickets at Jim's Collision, Fred's or by contacting any HLSIO board member. HLSIO is a 501(c)(3) organization. Your tax deductible contributions to HLSIO can be sent to HLSIO, P.O. Drawer 665, Grayling, Michigan, 49738.

HLSIO board

Bill Carey, Neal Cooley, Dale McDonald, Ed Nellist, Bob Schneider, Jim Vondale, Dianne Wagner