

Higgins Lake Swimmer's Itch Organization

PO Drawer 665
Grayling, MI 49738



HLSIO Update July 8, 2016

Dear HLSIO Supporters, HLPOA Members and other Members of the Higgins Lake Community,

Attached is the second 2016 update from SICON LLC reporting on excellent progress this summer with our science-based, comprehensive Swimmer's Itch Control Program. We have some great news! Both our objective lake-wide snail infection rate metric and numerous reports demonstrate a dramatic decrease in Swimmer's Itch (SI) in Higgins Lake this summer over last year. In addition, under the leadership of the HLPOA and its talented lobbyist, John Lindley of Public Affairs Associates, and the Michigan Swimmer's Itch Partnership (MSIP), we were successful in obtaining a \$250,000 state grant for SI control and research efforts that will be available to MSIP lakes beginning October 1, 2016. But the fight is not over, this is a long term effort and we need to stay with our plan if we are going to ultimately win this battle. We have met or made substantial progress on all of our objectives and more, including:

- a) Retain SICON, the leader in SI knowledge and experience, for an effective, science-based comprehensive program that returns Higgins Lake to its place as a premier water sports lake in Michigan
- b) Support SICON's work on other lakes to accelerate learning (SICON now is working on 4 lakes)
- c) Build a partnership of Michigan lakes to join with us for the long term (We now have 24 lakes in the Michigan Swimmer's Itch Partnership)
- d) Build a network of top SI scientists and leverage their expertise (SICON is coordinating with top scientists in the US and Canada)
- e) Get support from the state of Michigan for MSIP control programs and research (Governor Snyder just signed a \$250,000 bill)
- f) Partner with a 501(c)(3) organization to obtain and manage the state and additional grants for MSIP (Partnering with Leelanau Center for Education)
- g) Retain an experienced program manager team to further increase the effectiveness of MSIP (MSIP will retain Susan and Brian Price formerly with the Leelanau Conservancy)

After years of frustration, we have made great progress in a very short time. We need your help to fund our 2016 Higgins Lake program and maintain the progress we have made! We've raised approximately \$70,000 toward our goal of \$245,000. We expect to get a share of the \$250,000 state grant, but it will be divided among MSIP members. In addition, the grant is effective at the start of the fiscal year which begins on October 1, 2016. So the majority of our funding still must come from private donors. PLEASE SEND YOUR TAX DEDUCTIBLE CONTRIBUTIONS TO:

Higgins Lake Swimmer's Itch Organization (HLSIO)
PO Drawer 665
Grayling, MI 49738

Thank You,

HLSIO Board:

Bill Carey, Neal Cooley, Ken Dennings, Dale McDonald, Ed Nellist, Bob Schneider & Jim Vondale

P.S. The HLSIO fundraiser dinner is scheduled for August 25, 2016. Last year's dinner was a huge success and we expect another sellout. An announcement on ticket availability will be made soon.