



Higgins Lake Property Owners Association

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HLPOA Newsletter

President's Message

September/October 2015

HLPOA Members,

I hope you have some time to enjoy Higgins Lake this fall. It is a wonderful time of the year. We now have little boat traffic and still have many beautiful days ahead.

The Past Year:

I am extremely proud of our efforts the past 11 months. Your surveys revealed that swimmer's itch was your primary concern regarding Higgins Lake. Two HLPOA Board members (Ken Dennings and Jim Vondale) were the driving force in the formation of the Higgins Lake Swimmer's Itch Organization (HLSIO). The HLSIO Board contracted with Sicon LLC to help educate the Higgins Lake community about swimmer's itch, conduct research regarding our problem, as well as remove and relocate the Common Merganser ducks to break the life cycle of the parasite causing swimmer's itch. Sicon LLC removed nearly 100 mergansers between late May and the end of July. Through tremendous efforts HLSIO is near its financial goal of financing Sicon LLC's project in its initial year of a three year program agreement. They are continuing to work to fully fund Sicon LLC's efforts and would appreciate your support by making a donation to HLSIO at PO Drawer 665, Grayling, MI 49738. A PowerPoint presentation detailing SICON's efforts is available on the HLPOA website.

Other accomplishments included restatement of the Articles of Incorporation and the revamping of the Bylaws to make our organization truly member driven and improving transparency of the Board's actions. The new Articles and Bylaws can be found on the HLPOA website. Thank you to all the Bylaw committee members who contributed many hours of dedicated service on the committee. We also enhanced our website by including board meeting minutes.

HLPOA Board Structure:

Our incredibly talented and diverse board is moving to an increased committee structure to do the bulk of the work for our members. These committees are not simply sub-committees of the board; we have enlisted participation from the membership to serve as well. The committee chairs determined at the August board meeting are as follows: Environmental - Dave Batchelor, Riparian - Jim Vondale, Election -

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Ken Dennings, Membership- Dianne Wagner, Swimmer's Itch - Ken Dennings, Local Government- Herb Weatherly, Finance – Bob McKellar, Communications – Charlene Cornell, Website Administration – Chuck Brick, Friend of Higgins Lake Award – Bill Case and PAC – Brad Gibson. We will be reporting on their progress in future communications.

Challenges Ahead:

Most of you know Gerrish Township embarked on a separate duck suppression program after HLSIO hired Sicon LLC. Gerrish signed a contract with Northpoint Fisheries Management (NFM). HLSIO asked Gerrish to coordinate their separate program by having their program commence once Sicon LLC was finished at the end of July. Had Gerrish adopted HLSIO request, the two programs could have complimented one another rather than creating a conflict. Recently Sicon LLC filed a complaint with the US Fisheries and Wildlife Service against Gerrish Township contending the Township violated their permit. Since then Lyon and Gerrish Township held a joint meeting and it was determined to ask the two professional organizations (Sicon LLC and NFM) to meet to see if their two programs can co-exist without impeding each other. The HLPOA Board supports a coordination of the two programs. As you may recall a resolution supporting the Sicon LLC program was passed at the annual meeting in July. We believe such a coordination would likely lead to a reduction of swimmer's itch as well as increasing our chance of receiving some governmental funding for the programs. We will keep you abreast of events as they unfold.

The Board will also be establishing our goals for the next year. Those will be shared with you as they are developed.

Coming Soon:

Complete profiles of all HLPOA Board members and our office system will be available soon on our website. It is important for you to know the people who are serving us. We will notify everyone once the biographies are uploaded.

Remember to "Like" the Higgins Lake Property Owners on Facebook as items will be posted regularly.

As always, in the best interest of our wonderful lake,

Brad Gibson

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