

Environmental Policy

The Higgins Lake Property Owners Association supports:

1. Maintaining the legal lake level established in 1926 as amended in 1982.
2. A comprehensive, science-based lake wide program to better understand and control Swimmer's Itch.
3. Efforts to reduce nutrient levels in Higgins Lake, including: the proper and frequent servicing and maintenance of septic systems, the use of phosphate free detergents, the preservation and restoration of shrubs and trees along the shoreline to utilize nutrients and reduce sedimentation, minimizing the use of lawn fertilizers near the lake and promoting green belts around the lake.
4. Sustainable development and land use practices, including: sound watershed management planning, the conservation of land around the lake and in the watershed, the preservation of old growth trees and plantings of trees that benefit wildlife, zoning regulations to maintain property values and ensure building densities which do not exceed the environment's capability to assimilate.
5. Efforts to reduce the impact of toxic substances in the lake, including: reducing hydrocarbon emissions from watercraft, reducing or eliminating the nearshore or in-the-water application of pesticides, herbicides and chemicals that are persistent and or become concentrated in the food chain (bioaccumulation).

The HLPOA does not support any activity that is unlawful or any regulated activity which is conducted without the necessary local, state and federal permits or that is conducted in violation of such permits.

Invasive Species

What are they?

Invasive species are plants and animals that are not native to a given location. Once introduced and established, they can spread rapidly and damage ecosystems by choking out native species, destroying habitat, transmitting parasites and releasing toxins.

The zebra mussel (*Dreissena polymorpha*) is a good example of an invasive species that has altered the biological community structure, affected the transfer of nutrients and virtually eliminated native freshwater clams in Higgins Lake.

What to do?

Here are some things you can do to help:

CLEAN boats, trailers and equipment.

DRAIN live wells and bilges of all water.

DRY boats, trailers, waders and equipment.

DISPOSE of unwanted bait, nonnative fish and aquatic plants in the trash.

DON'T PURCHASE invasive plants or animals that are restricted or prohibited in Michigan.

DON'T TRANSPORT or release invasive species into lakes, streams or ponds.

Report your finding to the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality by contacting:

www.michigan.gov/invasives

or the HPLPOA office at

www.hlpoa.org/contact-us

Donations for further environmental studies can be sent to the HLPOA, P.O. Box 55, Roscommon, MI 48653.

Higgins Lake Property Owners Association



Environmental Bulletin No.1

Invasive Species

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What To Look For

Starry stonewort (*Nitellopsis obtuse*) is a species of large algae native to Europe and western Asia. It has become established in one-fifth of Houghton Lake.



The round goby (*Neogobius melanostomus*) is a bottom-dwelling fish native to central Eurasia. A large population has become established in the Great Lakes and inland lakes. It can be spread by the sale and use of minnows for fishing bait.



Eurasian milfoil (*Myriophyllum spicatum*) is native to Europe, Asia and N. Africa and was introduced to the US between 1880 and 1940s. It crowds out native species and destroys habitat.



Zebra mussels (*Dreissena polymorpha*) are native to Russia. They filter phytoplankton (algae) from the water and have virtually eliminated freshwater clams from Higgins Lake. It is believed they affect nutrient cycling and algal community structures in lakes. There is hope in a new bacterial control that doesn't affect other aquatic life.



The Asian clam (*Corbicula fluminea*) is a small (less than 1 inch), yellow to brown clam with concentric rings. They are found on or in the lake sediments.



Watch List - Prohibited in Michigan
(*Potamopyrgus antipodarum*) The New Zealand mud snail is prohibited in Michigan but has recently been found in the East Branch AuSable River. It poses a serious threat to freshwater rivers, lakes and streams.



Report this species to: Seth Herbst, DNR 517-284-6223 herbst1@michigan.gov
Bill Keiper, DEQ keiperw@michigan.gov
and the HLPOA Office 989-275-9181.