



## Higgins Lake Property Owners Association

AuSable River Center, 211 North Main Street  
Roscommon, MI 48653

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Office Hours: M, W & Th from 9 am - 2:00 pm.

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

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### HLPOA BOARD MEMBER OPENING

Did you ever think you would like to serve on the HLPOA board? There is a board position waiting for you. This is a great opportunity to become involved in working for the good of Higgins Lake. If you are interested contact a HLPOA board member or send a biography about yourself to [HLPOA0@gmail.com](mailto:HLPOA0@gmail.com).

**Special Thanks** to Bob McKellar and Sally Voorheis for answering our Winter Newsletter request for a new color laser printer.

### President's Message

The coming of spring at Higgins Lake is a glorious and most welcome time of year. Ice-out date surely must be getting close, and we will be able to swim in the water rather than "fake swim" on the crystal clear ice.

Winter has continued to be a busy time for the HLPOA Board and committee members with an office move, plans for expanded water testing, monitoring DNR work plan for 2019, continued work with township and law representatives, and many more important issues being addressed, as you'll see in this newsletter. Thanks to all for your tireless help and continued support. Much appreciated! We welcome more participation either by joining the Board or serving on a committee.

Dedicated to Preserving the Quality and Beauty of Higgins Lake,  
Charlene Cornell, President HLPOA



### ANNUAL MEETING: DUE TO CONSTRUCTION AT THE HIGH SCHOOL THE MEETING SITE HAS BEEN CHANGED

The HLPOA annual meeting will be held July 13, 2019. The site of the meeting has changed for this year. Due to construction being done at Roscommon High School **the annual meeting will be held at the Roscommon Elementary School. The address is: Roscommon Elementary School, 175 West Sunset Drive, Roscommon, MI.**

Meet and Greet with coffee and donuts from 8:00-8:45am with the meeting beginning at 8:45am. **Mark your calendars for the date and new location.**

### MEMBERSHIP

The membership year for HLPOA runs from January 1st to December 31st. Thank you to the members who have paid their 2019 dues! So far 29 new members have joined in 2019. **If you have not paid your dues for 2019 please, MAIL TODAY!** It is from your annual membership dues that HLPOA is funded.

Some members have taken advantage of the bylaw provision which allows for an extra non-voting membership. Our bylaws allow for multiple memberships for those who share an ownership interest in a single riparian property. However, there can be only be one voting membership for that single property. This provision allows for a husband and wife or other ownership party to each purchase a membership in HLPOA.

### You Can Help!

- Encourage neighbors to join.
- If you have a new neighbor please call the HLPOA office so that we can welcome them to the lake.

# New Boating Law Effective 2019

New requirements to stop the introduction and spread of *Aquatic Invasive Species!*



## It's the law:

A person shall **NOT**...

- Launch or transport watercraft or trailers unless they are free of aquatic organisms, including plants.
- Transport a watercraft without removing all drain plugs and draining all water from bilges, ballast tanks, and live wells.
- Release unused bait into the water.



*Violation of the law is a state civil infraction. Violators may be subject to fines.*

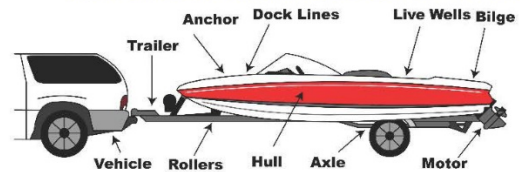
## Follow these steps:

1. **CLEAN** boats, trailers and equipment.
2. **DRAIN** live wells, bilges and all water.
3. **DRY** boats and equipment.
4. **DISPOSE** of unwanted bait in the trash.

[www.michigan.gov/invasivespecies](http://www.michigan.gov/invasivespecies)

Aquatic invasive species such as zebra mussels and Eurasian watermilfoil are often introduced and spread through recreational boating and angling activities and can have long lasting negative impacts such as reduced native species diversity, waterways choked with weeds and reduced opportunities for fishing, boating and swimming. Fortunately, boaters can help prevent the spread of invasive species with just a few simple steps:

- **INSPECT** boats, trailers and equipment and remove all mud, debris and aquatic plant material from trailers and watercraft before launching or retrieving a watercraft. Use a hose or power washer when available and dry all equipment thoroughly before leaving the access area.
- **DRAIN** live wells, bilges and all water from boats before leaving the access site. Disinfect live wells and bilges with a bleach solution (1/2 cup bleach to 5 gallons of water) when possible. Fish diseases and microscopic life stages of aquatic invasive species can be hiding in seemingly clean water, so draining is an important step.
- **DISPOSE** of unused bait in the trash. Do not release bait into the water. Release of bait and minnows can lead to the unintended introduction of aquatic invasive species.
- **DO NOT TRANSFER FISH** to water bodies other than where they were caught. This helps prevent the spread of both aquatic invasive species and fish diseases.



*Inspection points on boats, trailers, and vehicles for aquatic invasive species decontamination.*



DEQ Environmental Assistance Center: 800-662-9278

01/2019



## NEW HLPOA OFFICE LOCATION

The Higgins Lake Property Owners Association (HLPOA) relocated its office at the end of 2018. The HLPOA is now located in the AuSable River Center, 211 N. Main Street, in Roscommon. Our new space is one-third the size of our previous office and less than one-half the rent, with gas and

electricity included. We are able to use the common meeting rooms on an as needed basis at no cost.

The office is open Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday, from 9 am to 2 pm. It's a good idea to give Administrative Assistant, Kathleen Barger, a call, 989-275-9181, prior to visiting as her desk is not near the outside door.

## EXOTIC INVASIVE STARRY STONEWORT MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL SEMINAR

On March 15, 2019, Michigan Waterfront Alliance sponsored a conference addressing Starry Stonewort (SSW), the invasive species identified by the DEQ in Higgins Lake last summer. At least ten members from HLPOA, including Board members, Wayne Brooks, Bob McKellar and Charlene Cornell, and former Board member Brad Gibson, were in attendance.



Starry Stonewort is an aggressive algae which can take over the bottom land of a lake. It forms thick, low canopy meadows comparable in density to commercial benthic barriers. This dense biomass prevents the emergence of native rooted plant communities. It can prevent fish and other animals from accessing important spawning areas and affect the abundance and diversity of native flora and animal life.

The speakers were all subject matter experts and have had experience with it on lakes in Michigan. A couple points consistently made were that Starry Stonewort thrives in an environment occurring in Michigan and other upper mid-west lakes: clear, cold water, hard water, and plenty of sunlight.

Starry Stonewort is currently present in 75% of Michigan lakes. It has been around since prehistoric time because it has been able to adapt and change to its environment, unlike the dinosaurs.

It is evident that Starry Stonewort presents a serious threat to Higgins Lake. It is an aggressive invasive that we are faced with and is going to require a well-funded, unified action by the lake community to treat and control it.

All presentations from the Exotic Invasive Starry Stonewort Management and Control Seminar will

appear on the Michigan Waterfront Alliance website, [mwai.org](http://mwai.org).

## AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES GRANT PROGRAM APPROVED BY MICHIGAN LEGISLATURE

In the lame duck session of the Michigan Legislature, the Michigan Senate passed Senate Bill 1136 (SB 1136 of 2018) (PA 671 of 2018). This bill allows for the DEQ to establish an Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) funding program for lakes and waterways in the State of Michigan. The details for the grant process are still being created in Lansing, however there are some details that are known.

1. The program is being established to “provide grants for eligible applicants for eligible projects to control or eradicate inland lake aquatic invasive plant species using chemical, physical, or biological methods, or a combination of these methods”.
2. **An eligible applicant** must “be a legally constituted lake association or nonprofit organization, property owners association, homeowners association, lake board, or special assessment district, and have a “permit from the DEQ to conduct the control or eradication activities included in the project.”
3. **An eligible project** must have “vegetation management goals created by a **licensed commercial applicator or lake manager.**” All survey, control, eradication, and documentation activities have been compiled by a **qualified scientist, technician, licensed aquatic applicator, or university representative**”.
4. The grant application must be submitted to the DEQ by July 1st, 2019. By September 1st, 2019, the DEQ will notify the applicant whether its application has been approved.
5. There is a \$1.0 million appropriation to be used in accordance with SB 1136.

To view Senate Bill No. 1136 go to the HLPOA website at [HLPOA.org](http://HLPOA.org) and select the **Legislation** tab to open the document.



## REPORT FROM HLSIO

This summer will mark the fifth year that HLSIO will be funding a swimmer's itch control program on Higgins Lake. Over the previous four years, thanks in large part to the work of SICON and Swimmer's Itch Solutions, we have witnessed a consistent and dramatic decrease in the number of common merganser summer residents on the lake. We have also reduced the SI snail infection levels by 98% over that same time period, and, not surprisingly, the number and severity of swimmer's itch case reports has also been significantly reduced. Last year we transitioned into a lower cost SI maintenance program, and we expect our 2019 costs to be reduced even further as Swimmer's Itch Solutions trained a local team to trap common merganser broods this coming summer. But we are not resting on our past successes. Dr. Curt Blankespoor and his team will still be working on the lake, helping our trapping team and fitting captured hens with state-of-the-art GPS beacons in an effort to locate their nesting sites. These nesting sites that are discovered will be destroyed during the off season and may provide a significant long-term SI control benefit to Higgins Lake.

## AMVETS LAWSUIT

The lawsuit brought by the Higgins Lake Property Owners Association (HLPOA) and the Northwest Lakeshore Property Owners Association (NLPOA) against the AMVETS Dept. of Michigan DBA AMVETS Lodge over their plan to become a marina in a residential zoned area has begun. In September 2018, Bill Carey representing HLPOA and NLPOA filed a complaint in Roscommon County Circuit Court naming the AMVETS Lodge as the defendant in the case. The complaint was processed in the Roscommon County Circuit Court in October 2018. Service of the Summons and Complaint was initiated in November, 2018 and served on the AMVETS in December, 2018. On January 29th, 2019 the law firm representing the AMVETS, Plunkett Cooney, answered on their behalf with a general denial of the charges. The defendants have initiated the discovery process and the plaintiffs are currently preparing their response.

It is important to understand that the AMVETS is not part of the American Legion/Camp Curnalia organization. HLPOA values the support that Camp Curnalia has given Higgins Lake over the years, including the generous cash contribution that was made to the Swimmers Itch program on Higgins Lake. The AMVETS Lodge is located to the south of Camp Curnalia on the West Side of Higgins Lake.



## RIPARIAN COMMITTEE REPORT

On January 4<sup>th</sup>, the latest meeting of the HLPOA and local law enforcement took place. In attendance were Roscommon County Sheriff Stern, Gerrish Township Police Chief Hill, Gerrish Township Police Lieutenant Patchin, Prosecutor Beebe, Lyon Township Supervisor Ed Nellist and Gerrish Township Supervisor Dave Udy, Director of Central Dispatch Vance Stringham, Fred Koenigbauer, HLPOA President Charlene Cornell and HLPOA Vice President Greg Semack. Of special interest at this meeting was how residents could report violations anonymously and how illegal anchors could be removed from Higgins Lake.

With the help of Vance Stringham from Central Dispatch, a document was created that will detail the most successful method a riparian can use to create an anonymous report. This document was derived from one originally researched and written by HLPOA member Jason Trautz. We will be publishing the document on our website prior to the upcoming summer season. It should be noted that circumstances may make anonymous reporting impossible and that it would be better to report anonymously by phoning 989-275-0911 than by simply calling 911. 911 calls require a greater amount of information be recorded that may not later be removed. Residents should use the 911 number only for true emergencies.

There will be an effort to identify and remove any anchors that are repeatedly used for illegal mooring. The HLPOA may be working with a local contractor to remove certain anchors after the winter thaw. Of particular interest will be auger type anchors that have been left illegally in the lake bottom. These are determined to be abandoned property and will be removed with the oversight of local law enforcement members.

Spring 2019

Our Riparian Committee will be focusing upcoming meetings on enforcement of sound and speed laws on the Lake and riparian bottomland issues. The committee is appreciative of the collaborative work being done with local law enforcement as we work toward solutions to our commonly held interests.

### **HIGGINS LAKE SEWER STUDY PROJECT**

Steps have been taken by the Township Boards for Lyon, Beaver Creek, and Gerrish Townships to move forward with the sewer study project that was started in October. Application filings have been recorded and the process of creating a feasibility study is now about to begin. Fleis and VandenBrink Engineering of Traverse City will be responsible for the study which will provide the options available to the area to better protect the water quality of Higgins Lake.

Studies have shown that septic effluents are entering the lake from aquifers that contain septic fields. These nutrients support the growth of both native and invasive weeds such as Eurasian Milfoil and our newest serious threat, Starry Stonewort. Some human sourced bacteria is also to be found. All of these contaminants tend to enter the lake in the shallow waters near shore where most human recreational activities take place. A well designed sewer system would eliminate a significant source of pollution from our lake and greatly help to assure a clean and healthy environment for future enjoyment of our lake.

Many thanks to the township boards for moving this project forward. We will continue to update our members as this project continues.

### **THANK YOU BRAD GIBSON**

We wish to thank Brad Gibson for his years of service on the HLPOA Board. Brad served two different times on the HLPOA Board totalling 20 years. He was VP for more than a decade and served two years as President. Also, Brad was one of the founding members of the Higgins Lake PAC and served as Chairperson on two separate occasions. He served on the communications committee, handled social media posts and developed a membership packet to recruit new property owners.

### **CHUCK BRICK BIO**

After approximately a year's absence, the Board is pleased to welcome the return of former HLPOA Board member/Treasurer, Chuck Brick. Chuck first joined the Board in July of 2014 and assumed the duties of Treasurer a few months later. During Chuck's tenure as

Treasurer, he was responsible for bringing in a CPA firm to perform a professional audit of the HLPOA's 2015CY finances, the first such audit in the association's long history.

Chuck spent over 35 years in the automotive industry as an Engineer and Manager, eventually retiring from Chrysler's Truck Chassis Engineering Div. in 2007. The Higgins Lake cottage they bought in 1994, after spending 25 years vacationing at Higgins Lake, eventually gave way to a new lakefront retirement home in 2012. He has been happily married since 1975 to Linda who is currently serving as President of the Friends of Roscommon Area District Library. They raised two children who are now married and have seen fit to bless them with four lovely granddaughters in the past four years.

Due to a variety of personal circumstances competing for his time in late 2017, Chuck found it necessary to resign from the Board with much reluctance. Near the end of 2018, Chuck found he was, once again, able to consider contributing in some meaningful way to the community in which he and Linda live and approached the HLPOA Board to offer his services. The rest, as they say, is history.

<p><b>REMEMBER TO PAY YOUR 2019 DUES</b></p> <p><b>YOUR MEMBERSHIP HELPS KEEP HIGGINS LAKE BEAUTIFUL</b></p>
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## Sincere Thanks

The following have generously donated funds to support the HLPOA and its endeavors:

**General Fund**-Dennis & Tina Doyle, Donald & Elaine Granzine, Tom & Carol Thomson, Irene Bacsanyi, Tom & Michele Foster, Donna Hujak, Constance MacClaren, Steven & Cynthia Popp, Riddlemoser Cottage LLC, Gary Wells, William & Therese Shortt, James & Spring Clarke, Connie Price, Fred & Sioux Cowper, Mark & Ginny Yushak, Joseph & Marie Antoni, John & Teresa Hamilton, Gerald Jusco, Mark & Barbara Richter, David & Karen Jordan, Calvin Phillips, Gerald & Lois Trapp, Brad & Becky Gibson, Rust Demings, Julie Swinehart, George & Terry McIntosh, Dr. Roger & Cathy Spalding, Gary & Rita Gregoricka, Donald Hanson, Ken Hudson, Alice Bonita, Albert Koegel, Lee McDoniel, Barb Cantley, Dennis & Nadine Corte, Paul & Kate Duhaime, Walter & Jennie Lach, Greg & Carol Larson, Thomas Kachorek, Mark Dupie & Elizabeth Jones, Gregory & Sharon Greene, Margaret Balesky, Tim & Christine Sheerer

**Environmental**-William & Mary Stockwell, Doug & Jeanie Graham, James & Victoria McCarthy, Scott & Janice Montross, Nancy Albosta Perry, Craig Trojan, Robert & Mary Louise Warner, Wayne & Jill Schoeppach, William & Therese Shortt, James & Spring Clarke, Glenn & Jane Fausz, John & Sue Vandenberg, Mark & Ginny Yuschak, John & Penny Dressel, Jerry & Bonnie Venn, Gil & Linda Burm, William & Sheryl Isenstein, David & Karen Jordan, Calvin Phillips, Robert & Clarice Williams, Frank & Maureen Yaquinto, Bob and Dianne Wagner, Eleanor Heusner, Peter Anderson, Dr. Roger & Cathy Spalding, Chuck & Linda Brick, Kevin & Anne Kleinsmith, Graham & Randi Long, Denise Saunders, Fred Swinehart, John Manley, Barb Cantley, Martha Clapp, Thomas Beierle, Walter & Jennie Lach, Bernadette Gariglio, Dave & Dan Ferwerda, Mark Dupie & Elizabeth Jones, Curt Bryers

**Legal**-Dan & Nanette Guggemos, John & Lois Elder, Patricia Dennis, Robert & Mary Louise Warner, William & Therese Shortt, James & Spring Clarke, Galehouse & Sweeney Families, Clark & Betty Purdy, John & Penny Dressel, Kimberly Roberson, Carroll Baker, David & Karen Jordan, Calvin Phillips, Herb Weatherly, Gary & Kathleen Trock, Rust Demings, Robert Perry, Wayne & Marilyn Rendell, Dr. Roger & Cathy Spalding, William & Linda Wichers, Dean & Karyn Elson, Barbara & Don Richards, Edwin & Suzanne Voss, John & Jeiselle Ortisi, Robert McKellar, Barb Cantley, Dennis & Nadine Corte, Jason & Karen Trautz, Walter & Jennie Lach, Mark Dupie & Elizabeth Jones

Be sure to visit the HLPOA website at [www.hlpoa.org](http://www.hlpoa.org) for all the current information about Higgins Lake  
Contact the HLPOA office 989-275-9181 or [hlpoa0@gmail.com](mailto:hlpoa0@gmail.com)

**HLPOA Board:** President, Charlene Cornell; Vice President, Greg Semack; Secretary, Herb Weatherly; Treasurer, Bruce Carleton. **Directors:** Wayne Brooks, Marc Lutz, Bob McKellar, John Ogren, Fred Swinehart, Chuck Brick.