



Higgins Lake Property Owners Association

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

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President's Message

Coming Soon! Summer 2023!

Your HLPOA Board and committee volunteers continue working for the betterment of Higgins Lake and the surrounding watershed. Please peruse this Winter 2023 Newsletter for information on some of our projects and accomplishments. It is with a great deal of gratitude that I thank all for their continued hours of dedication to Higgins Lake.



As a friendly reminder, please consider returning your dues envelope today, if you have not done so. Receiving dues and contributions in January is helpful as we plan for more accomplishments this year. We truly appreciate your continued support. The cutoff date to be included in the 2023 Directory will be moved up to May 1, to better enable us to distribute directories earlier.

In our unscientific study, January 20 is declared the official "It's Frozen Day"!

Again, a huge thank you from all of us.
 Charlene Cornell, President HLPOA

Dedicated to Preserving the Quality and Beauty of Higgins Lake.

Pharmaceutical Chemicals in Higgins Lake Waters Verified September 2022

The Michigan State University's Laboratory supervised by Professor Li has analyzed six samples of water drawn from nearshore locations distributed around the lake. The sampling took place on September 22, 2022. The samples were taken according to Professor Li's strict sampling protocols and the chain of custody was maintained from the drawing of the samples until personally received by Professor Li.

The results clearly indicate the presence of pharmaceutical contamination of the lake's waters. Higgins Lake is fed primarily by springs from groundwater, and the presence of these chemicals in the lake proves the existence of septic field connections to groundwaters in the watershed. To quote Steve King of the Central Michigan District Health Department:

"Since Higgins Lake is predominantly spring fed, the presence of pharmaceuticals in the lake water reinforces the connection that onsite sewage disposal has with groundwater and the lake. I would suspect that drinking water wells with detectable nitrates would have a similar mix of pharmaceuticals from upstream sources should the wells get tested. Just as we did not know if pharmaceuticals would be found in the lake, we don't know of any impacts to drinking water. This should be the next area to look at to see what residents might potentially be exposed to through consumption of groundwater."

To see the procedures followed and the resulting data click on the link below.

MSU – Testing for Pharmaceutical Pollution in Higgins Lake

Nitrites or Nitrates in well water (Steve King, additional study)

In consultation with the Central Michigan District Health Department, in early January, a letter was sent by them to a small number of residents whose wells have been tested previously and found to have high levels of nitrates in their water. If these individuals would be interested in having their wells re-tested at no cost to themselves for pharmaceutical or personal care product contamination (PPCP), they were asked to correspond with Fred Swinehart of the HLPOA for further information.

Although the quantities of the products that were detected are not believed to be a concern to human health, bioaccumulation of these products can be toxic to other organisms so further research is important to implement proper control methods for the source of these contaminants. Since Higgins Lake is primarily fed by groundwater, it is likely that these same products can be found in the groundwater. To verify this, the next logical step is to test water wells in the area for the presence of PPCPs. We are currently awaiting responses from the recipients of this correspondence.

MICHIGAN NATIONAL GUARD PLANS EXPANSION

The Michigan National Guard located at Camp Grayling has proposed an expansion of its footprint in northern Michigan. Currently Camp Grayling encompasses 230 square miles (147,000 acres) and has proposed adding an additional 253 square miles (162,000 acres) of public lands to its footprint. The reasoning for the expansion is to expand training for cyber and electronic warfare.

In November the National Guard came forward with an additional expansion proposal which would involve an increase in military airspace over northern Michigan and the Thumb. The area proposed would add another 1,633 nautical square miles to the existing 11,042 square mile airspace where military pilots train. The expansion would encompass parts of northeast Michigan east of I-75 as well as the northern part of Michigan's thumb. If approved there would be more flights, and more noise with jet fighters flying as low as 300 feet. The Guard says the existing airspace is too small for modern tactics.

To be clear, HLPOA is not against the military! We are against the Michigan National Guard and its history of natural resource abuse. PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances) pollution from past use of firefighting foam at Camp Grayling have tainted local drinking water supplies and water bodies like Lake Margrethe. These chemicals have been linked to harmful health effects in

humans and animals. They are called "forever chemicals" because they hardly break down over time.

HLPOA is opposed to both of the proposed expansions by the Michigan National Guard. We encourage all members to contact the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Governor Gretchen Whitmer and your representatives and lawmakers to voice your opinions and concerns.

CONTACT INFORMATION TO VOICE OPINION ON CAMP GRAYLING EXPANSION

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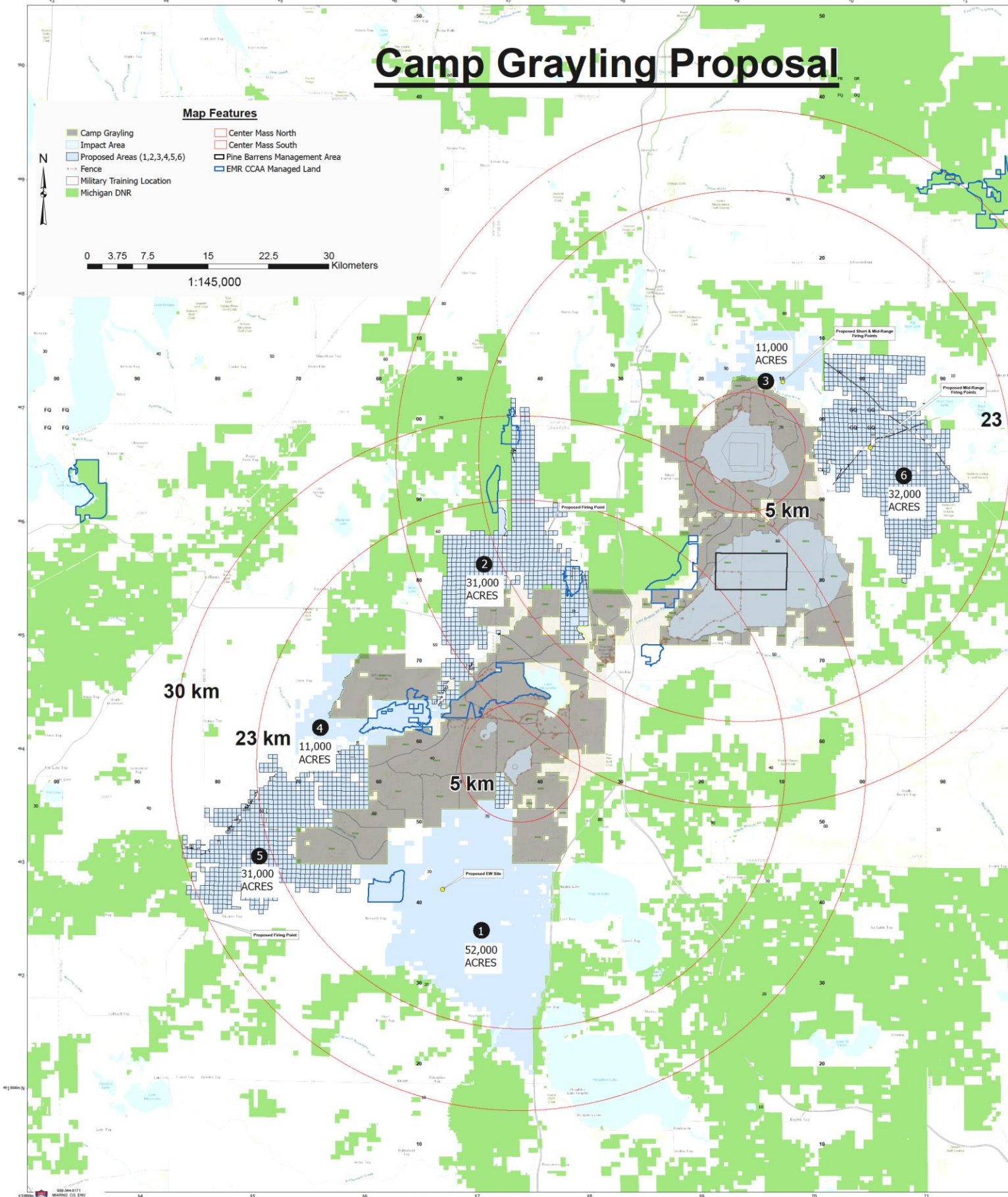
See Map and Proposed Area below along with HLPOA letter in opposition to the expansion.

Camp Grayling Proposal

Map Features

- Camp Grayling
- Impact Area
- Proposed Areas (1,2,3,4,5,6)
- Fence
- Military Training Location
- Michigan DNR
- Center Mass North
- Center Mass South
- Pine Barrens Management Area
- EMR CCAA Managed Land

0 3.75 7.5 15 22.5 30 Kilometers
1:145,000





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President: Charlene Cornell, **Vice Pres:** Greg Semack, **Secretary:** Herb Weatherly, **Treasurer:** Bruce Carleton
Directors: Wayne Brooks, Jack Cornell, Curt DeVoe, Becky Gibson, Bob McKellar, John Ogren, Fred Swinehart

January 5, 2023

Shannon Lott
Department of Natural Resources
P.O. Box 30028
Lansing, MI 48909

Director Lott,

On behalf of the Higgins Lake Property Owners Association (HLPOA), we are writing to you to express our opposition to the expansion of Camp Grayling. HLPOA is a membership of over 500 households on the shores of Higgins Lake, whose mission is to "protect, preserve and enhance the quality of Higgins Lake and its surrounding watershed." We feel that this expansion from the current 147,000 acres to 309,000 acres is unwarranted and harmful to Michigan's public lands.

This proposed expansion is public land, set aside for the citizens of Michigan, many of whom come to recreate there. It is also part of a pristine wilderness housing irreplaceable ecosystems, important wetlands and habitats for many species of wildlife.

The Michigan National Guard has a history of contaminating public lands and waters. In 2019, a plume of PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances) was traced back to Camp Grayling. PFAS is a contaminant/carcinogen that has been linked to harmful health effects in humans and animals. PFAS are often called "forever chemicals" because they hardly break down over time. Residents of Lake Margrethe are still dealing with the consequences.

The Michigan National Guard is the largest Guard base in the nation. The reason for the proposed additional land is to "expand training, specifically opening up for cyber and electronic warfare exercises." It is unclear what kind of activities would be included in "electronic warfare" and why this could not be conducted on the existing Camp Grayling property.

The protection of this important natural resource is absolutely essential. Given the history of Camp Grayling contaminating the environment and water, the HLPOA Board of Directors, on behalf of our membership, oppose the proposed expansion of Camp Grayling.

As you make your decision, we ask that you please consider these points.

HLPOA Board of Directors

Dedicated to preserving the quality and beauty of Higgins Lake

Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Status of the Fishery Resources Report November 17, 2022

Mark Tonello, Fisheries Management Biologist, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, recently compiled a Status of Fishery Resources Report for Higgins Lake. In his report, he states, "Nutrient enrichment has been a very hot topic among the Higgins Lake community in recent years, although it has been a documented, ongoing problem for decades (King et al. 1991; Minnerick 2001; Martin et al. 2014; Jermalowicz-Jones 2020). There is no doubt that nutrient enrichment of Higgins Lake is occurring, and that a significant amount of the nutrients come from septic system effluent leaching into the lake through the groundwater. If the nutrient enrichment continues at this pace, much of the deeper areas of the lake will become hypoxic, and therefore unusable for fishes. In other words, within a few decades, it could become impossible for species like Lake Trout, Rainbow Trout, Brown Trout, Lake Whitefish, Rainbow Smelt, and Cisco to thrive or perhaps even survive, in the deeper parts of Higgins Lake (Dr. Mark Luttenton, Grand Valley State University, personal communication). In addition, algal blooms could continue to get worse in Higgins Lake, potentially including blooms that are toxic to humans and their pets. The warmer water temperatures seen in recent years (attributed to climate change) may also serve to exacerbate algae bloom issues. Jermalowicz-Jones recommended the installation of a lake-wide sewer system to reduce nutrient inputs into the lake (2020). We agree with that recommendation, and therefore, we wholeheartedly support the efforts of the Gerrish Lyon Utility Authority (GLUA) to install a sanitary sewer system in the Higgins Lake watershed."

Here is the link for Mark Tonello's informative report on fishery in Higgins Lake.

[Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Status of the Fishery Resource Report November 2022](#)



Higgins Property Owner's Association Dues for 2023

For those of you who have recently joined HLPOA or renewed your membership, thank you. Your Board members continue to attend local meetings, Roscommon County meetings, participate in State-wide lake organization programs, meet with Roscommon leaders, and organize projects to study and enhance the quality of the lake throughout the year. Please check our website for updates and watch for our quarterly newsletters, as well as, timely email Blasts for HLPOA activities.

May 1, 2023 is the last day for dues to be received in order to be in this year's HLPOA Membership Directory.

Please support Higgins Lake Property Owners Association if you have not already done so, with your paid membership for 2023. The membership form is on our website www.hlpoa.org. Please note: dues this year are \$115.00.

Trim Oak Trees Now

The time to trim oak trees around Higgins Lake is **NOW**. Oak trees are at high risk of spreading Oak Wilt during April through July. This is due to the high number of flying beetles spreading the fungal spores during the summer months. Oak Wilt is a fungus that moves from tree to tree. Red oaks are more vulnerable and can die within weeks of being infected. White oaks can be affected also. To report Oak Wilt infections go to: <http://www.michigan.gov/ForestHealth> To get information from a qualified oak wilt specialist in Roscommon County contact, Julie Crick, crickjul@anr.msu.edu

Shoreline & Shallows Conference, March 9, 2023

“Improving Habitat for People, Fish and, Wildlife”

Find out about the latest information using woody structures “fish stick” and “turtle logs” for erosion control. Michigan Natural Shoreline Partnership is holding a conference on March 9, 2023, 9:30 am – 4:30 pm. This in-person conference will be held at the Michigan State University Kellogg Conference Center. Learn about the current state of Michigan's shorelines through the National Lake Assessment and the future state of bioengineering, aquatic plants and an overview of the best management practices associated with the updated shoreline permits. For more information and to register go to: <https://www.shorelinepartnership.org/shoreline--shallows-conference.html>

STATE OF MICHIGAN ISSUES FISH CONSUMPTION WARNING

A Consumption warning has been issued by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) for rainbow smelt caught in Higgins Lake. The warning is due to a recent study showing elevated levels of PFAS (Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances) found in tested fish. No more than four servings per month of Rainbow Smelt taken from Higgins Lake should be consumed. For more information, go to: [Bridge Magazine](#).

Gerrish Township Zoning Ordinance, Environmental Protection, Section 12.4 Lighting

A. No lighting shall in any way impair the safe movement of traffic on any road.

B. Lighting associated with a commercial, industrial, or other non-residential uses shall comply with the following:

1. A wall, fence, or berm, at least four (4) feet in height, shall be erected to prevent headlight glare from shining onto adjacent residential property. Such wall/fence shall in no way impair safe vertical or horizontal sight distance for moving vehicles.

2. Exterior lighting shall be designed and installed so that the surface of the source of light shall be hooded or louvered to the greatest extent practical to ensure that:

1. all emitted light is directed downward onto the lot or parcel upon which the light source is located.
2. light sources shall not be visible from beyond the lot lines and shall be so arranged to reflect light away from adjacent properties.
3. no more than one foot candle power of light shall cross a lot line five (5) feet above the ground.

C. Lighting within platted subdivisions, site condominiums, and multiple family developments, shall comply with the following:

1. Exterior lighting in excess of six (6) feet above the ground below shall be designed and installed so that the surface of the source of light shall be hooded or louvered to the greatest extent practical to ensure that all emitted light is directed downward onto the lot upon which the light source is located, and that the light source shall not be visible from beyond the lot lines and shall be so arranged to reflect light away from adjacent properties.
2. No more than one foot candle power of light shall cross a lot line five (5) feet above the ground, excluding light emitted from an approved neighborhood street lighting system.
3. Subsections (1) and (2) above shall not apply to outdoor recreation and amusement areas, and similar outdoor use of light, provided the lighting is designed with baffling and glare guards to ensure that no more than one foot candle power of light shall cross a lot line five (5) feet above the ground in a Residential District, and such lighting is turned off during hours the facility is closed to the public.

Lyon Township Lighting Ordinance Section 1405

Exterior Lighting All lighting for parking areas or for the external illumination of buildings and uses shall be directed from and shall be shielded from adjacent residential districts and shall also be so arranged as to not adversely affect driver visibility on adjacent thoroughfares.



Higgins Lake Property Owners Association History

To start at the beginning, the prime activator in the organization of the lake property owners was Arthur A. Meyer, an electrical engineer for the Detroit Edison Company. As early as 1926, Mr. Meyer was campaigning for lake welfare, preserving the beauty and purity of Higgins Lake. The need for a property owners' association became apparent. Mr. Meyer was joined by three friends in forming the nucleus of Higgins Lake Property Owners' Association in 1934. Those sharing with Mr. Meyer were L.B. Benkert, Paul Bruske, and C.P. Schneider. This quartet became a firm force working for realization of worthy objectives. On July 15, 1935, Articles of Association of Higgins Lake Property Owners' Association were "duly filed" and "said Company" was authorized to commence business.

(Non-Profit) Articles of Incorporation of the Higgins Lake Property Owners' Association were filed on January 17, 1940. The purpose stated: To promote the general welfare of the owners of property on the shores of Higgins Lake, Roscommon County, Mich. The names of the incorporators are Howard W. Peirce, M.D., A.H. Pearson, P.H. Bruske, C.P. Schneider, M.D., A.A. Meyer, and L.B. Benkert.

Descendants of two of the 1935 Articles of Association signers still enjoy summers at Higgins Lake today. The Meyer clan first settled on Almeda Beach and the Bruskes in what is now known as Pinewoods. As expected, these families have intriguing memories of their early beginnings at Higgins.

Arthur Alexander Meyer was a 1908 electrical engineering graduate of the University of Michigan and,

as family legend has it, the first with those qualifications to be hired by Detroit Edison. This reference to Detroit Edison is very relevant since Mr. William C. Miller Sr., who had a cottage on Almeda Beach, was an executive of Detroit Edison and often invited employees to visit. It's believed that Art Meyer's first such Miller visit occurred in 1925. The following summer, the family rented a cottage, most likely at Chaney's Point in the Highland Park area, and purchased a 60' lot before leaving. The Meyer cottage was built the next year, in 1927. Sometime in the 1930's, contiguous properties were purchased so the Meyers had 300' on Almeda Beach. Working with Paul H. Bruske, Lawrence B. Benkert, and Dr. Schneider, Art Meyer founded the Higgins Lake Property Owners' Association, and became the first president. Several years ago, his daughter, Roberta, shared recollections of knocking on doors to recruit members!

Family members of another HLPOA founder, Paul H. Bruske, continue to enjoy life at Higgins, too. Paul was brought to Higgins Lake by his father, Reverend A. F. Bruske. Reverend Bruske was a Presbyterian minister in Saginaw. He was recruited by those in the Cottage Grove camp to travel up to Higgins to conduct Sunday services for the loggers and families in Cottage Grove. In return, Reverend Bruske was given a lot in what is currently known as Pinewoods. He subsequently purchased the lots on both sides of his, one for his daughter, the other for his son, Paul H. Bruske. Not only is Paul remembered as one of the four founders of the HLPOA, but also founded Pinewoods Camp.

Two others signed the Articles of Association of the Higgins Lake Property Owners' Association in 1935. They were Lawrence B. Benkert and Curt P. Schneider, M.D. Although information on these families has yet to be found, Roscommon County deed records show the Benkerts were property owners in Lyon Manor in 1919, and the Schneiders on Chicago Beach in the Southwest corner of the lake in 1936. These four were joined by Alan H. Pearson, who bought property in Highland Park in 1918, and Howard Peirce, who purchased property in Whittington Park in 1923. In 1940 Articles of Incorporation were signed by these six.

Although, at this time, little is known of several of these families, the quest for more stories continues. We owe thanks and gratitude for their foresight in laying the

foundation of HLPOA as we continue to strive to “preserve, protect, and enhance the beauty of Higgins Lake and the surrounding watershed.”

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Happy New Year! Mark Your Calendar for These Stargazing Events

Here are a few the Celestial events in 2023 that can be seen with the naked eye in a dark sky. A Supermoon is a full moon that appears bigger and brighter than average; this occurs when they are as close to Earth as possible. For more information about “Night sky” go to: <https://www.highpointscientific.com/astromy-hub/post/night-sky-news/2023-astronomical-calendar>

February 5, Full Moon

March 7, Full Moon

Thank you to our donors:

General Fund

John & Carolynne Allaben, Robert & Michell Angst, Jeff & Emily Barker, James & Spring Clarke, David & Dianna Drake, Paul & Kat Duhaime, Lois Elliott, Francis & Cathy Fitzgerald, Scott Flowerday, Jeff & Michelle Gardner, Glenn & Susan Gelderbloom, Mary Grant, Susan Ann Gregoricka, Ken & Nancy Hayward, Robert Hoffman, Thomas & Mary Lou Jennette, David & Karen Jordan, Kyle & Kevin Keeley, Duane Lach, D. Craig & D. Vance, Tom & Grete Martin, Tony & Lisa McKerchie, Mills Cottage, Brian & Catherine Nichols, Daniel & Mary O’Keefe, Barbara Richter, Susan Ruhl, Greg & Susan Semack, Pat & Vicki Springstead, John & Sue Vandenberg, Robert & Dianne Zuzula

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April 6, Full Moon

April 21-22, Lyrid Meteor Shower

May 5, Full Moon

June 3, Full Moon

June 7, Arietids Meteor Shower, peaks June 7

July 3, “Buck Supermoon” antlers of male deer (bucks) are in full-growth mode

August 1, “Sturgeon Supermoon” prime time for catching sturgeon in the Great Lakes

August 13, Perseid Meteor Shower, peak August 13

August 31, “Blue Supermoon” second full moon in calendar month

September 29, “Harvest Supermoon” closest to the start of autumn (light is used to harvest crops)

October 21-22, Orionid Meteor Shower

October 28, Full Moon

November 27, Full Moon

December 13-14, Germinid Meteor Shower

December 26, Full Moon

Vintage Maps

Vintage Higgins Lake Maps available for purchase.

Order your 1936-1937 Map of Higgins Lake. (Map only, mat and frame not included)

Looking for a great gift or addition to your lake decor?

Exclusive to Higgins Lake Property Owners Association members...Vintage 1930's map of Higgins Lake suitable for framing.

Please submit \$50.00 to further support our organization and receive your 14" x 11" print. Make Checks payable to HLPOA.

Exclusive offer to Higgins Lake Property Owner Association members



Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Number of Maps _____ @ \$50.00 = _____

Make check out to HLPOA. Send to: HLPOA, PO Box 55, Roscommon, MI 48653

2022-2023 HLPOA Board: President - Charlene Cornell, Vice President - Greg Semack, Secretary - Herb Weatherly, Treasurer - Bruce Carleton. Directors: Wayne Brooks, Jack Cornell, Becky Gibson, Curt DeVoe, Bob McKellar, John Ogren and Fred Swinehart. Administrative Assistant - Kathleen Barger.